



PRACTICES OF PASTNESS, POSTWAR OF THE DEAD, AND THE  
POWER OF HERITAGE: MUSEUMS, MONUMENTS AND SITES IN  
COLONIAL AND POST-COLONIAL ZIMBABWE, 1890-2010.

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## DEDICATION

**To:**

**Enika Jini - Dhan'a - For her resilient, nurturing spirit!**

*Eee, maita Shoko Vbudzijena*

*Ewoi Soko,*

*Vbudzijena, Mukanya*

*Hekanhi Mbereka*

*Makwiramiti, mabomu-bomu*

*Vanopona nekuba*

*Vanamushamba negore*

*Makumbo mana muswe weshanu*

*Hekani Soko yangu yiyi.....!!!*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AHD	Authorised Heritage Discourse
ANC	African National Congress
BAAS	British Association for the Advancement of Science
BSAC	British South Africa Company
BSAC	British South Africa Police
CAMPFIRE	Communal Area Management for Indigenous Resources
CHM	Cultural Heritage Management
CNC	Chief Native Commissioner
DA	District Administrator
EMA	Environmental Management Authority
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
LMS	London Missionary Society
MP	Member of Parliament
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirayi
MLF	Matebeleland Liberation Front
NAD	Native Affairs Department
NADA	Native Affairs Department Annual
NC	Native Commissioner
NCA	National Constitutional Assembly
NMMR	National Museums and Monuments of Rhodesia
NMMZ	National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe
PCC	Peoples Caretaker Council
QVM	Queen Victoria Museum
RF	Rhodesian Front
RCM	Rhodesian Chamber of Mines
RCE	Rhodesian Centenary Exhibition
RSA	Rhodesian Scientific Association
RENAMO	Mozambique National Resistance Organisation
SAAAS	South African Association for the Advancement of Science
SAHA	South African History Association
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
UCT	University of Cape Town
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, & Cultural Organisation
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU (PF)	Zimbabwe African National Union, (Patriotic Front)
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African Peoples Union
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation
ZBCTV	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation Television
ZHFT	Fallen Heroes Trust of Zimbabwe
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe African People's Revolutionary Army
ZLP	Zimbabwe Liberators Platform
ZMHS	Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences
ZNLWVA	Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines the meanings, significances, and roles of heritage across the colonial and postcolonial eras in Zimbabwe. The study traces dominant ideas about heritage at particular periods in Zimbabwean history, illustrating how heritage has been deployed in ways that challenge common or essentialised understandings of the notion and practice of heritage. The study adds new dimensions to the understanding of the role of heritage as an enduring and persistent source terrain for the negotiation and creation of authority, as well as for challenging it, linked to regimes and the politics of knowledge. This work is part of an emerging body of work that explores developments over a long stretch of time, and suggests that what we have come to think of as heritage is a project for national cohesion, a marketable cultural project, and also a mode of political organisation and activity open for use by various communities in negotiating contemporary challenges or effecting change.

While normative approaches to heritage emphasise the disjuncture between the precolonial, colonial and postcolonial periods, or between official and non-official practices, results of this study reveal that in practice, there are connections in the work that heritage does across these categories. Findings of the study shows a persistent and extraordinary investment in the past, across the eras and particularly in times of crises, showing how heritage practices move across landscapes, monuments, dispersed sites, and institutionalised entities such as museums. The thesis also points to a complex relationship between official heritage practices and unofficial practices carried out by local communities. To demonstrate this relationship, it traces the emergence of counter-heritage practices, which respond to and challenge the official conceptualisations of heritage by invoking practices of pastness, mobilised around reconfigured archaeological sites, human remains, ancestral connections, and sacred sites. Counter-heritage practices, undertaken by local communities, challenge hegemonic ideas about heritage embedded in institutionalised heritage practices and they contribute to the creation of alternative practices of preservation. I propose that attention to the relationship between institutionalised heritage practices and community-held practices helps us to think differently about the role of local communities in defining notions of heritage, heritage preservation practices and in knowledge production.

## **NOTES ON NAMES, TERMINOLOGY AND TENSE**

### **Mashonaland, Matebeleland**

Mashonaland and Matebeleland are two regions in Zimbabwe named after the majority language groups in each of these regions. Mashonaland was named thus to refer to one of the two regions that the country was divided into following occupation by the British South Africa Company (BSAC) in 1890. The name designated the extent of territory under the administration of the BSAC as distinct from the remainder of the territory that was directly under the control of the Ndebele king, Lobengula, which was also named Matebeleland upon British occupation in 1893. The provinces were named after the dominant language groups in each region. In 1923, the territories became part of the self-governing colony of Southern Rhodesia and both became part of the five provinces that made up the Rhodesian colony until 1980. Currently Mashonaland is constituted by four provinces, that is, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland Central, as well as Harare Metropolitan province. The Matebeleland region currently consists of three provinces; Matebeleland North, Matebeleland South and the Bulawayo Metropolitan provinces.

### **Settlers, Settler Government**

In this thesis, the term “Settlers” refers to white immigrants who settled in Rhodesia after the British South Africa Company (BSAC)’s colonial occupation in 1890. The thesis adopts Ronald Weitzer’s definition of settler states in which he describes them as, “societies that are founded by migrant groups who assume a superordinate position *vis-à-vis* native inhabitants and build self-sustaining states that are *de jure* or *de facto* independent from the mother country and organized around the settlers’ political domination over the indigenous population” (Weitzer, 1990: 25). In the thesis, the term is used interchangeably with “Rhodesians,” referring to white citizens of Rhodesia between 1890 and 1979. “Settler government” refers to the various governments instituted by the settlers between 1890 and 1979. These governments include the British South Africa Company (BSAC) rule from 1890 to 1923, Responsible Government (1923- 1953), the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland government (1953-1964) and the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) government from 1965 to 1979.

### **Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, Zimbabwe**

The name Rhodesia is used in discussions and characterisation of the territory that is now Zimbabwe, between 1890 and 1979. The name "Rhodesia", derived from Cecil Rhodes, came into official use in 1895, to refer to the area under BSAC control, which is present-day Zambia and

Zimbabwe (Gray, 1956). The Zambezi River divided the land; the area to the north was officially designated "Northern Rhodesia" in 1911, and has been Zambia since 1964, while the area to the south, was named "Southern Rhodesia" in 1901. Southern Rhodesia was changed to just "Rhodesia" after 1964, was briefly renamed "Zimbabwe-Rhodesia" in 1979 and eventually became Zimbabwe in 1980 (named after the Great Zimbabwe archaeological site). In this thesis, these terms are used in reference to the periods in which they were applied or as they are referred to in documents and direct quotes.

### **A Note on Tense**

Throughout the thesis, I invariably use the past tense. However, in my last three chapters and parts of the concluding chapter, I make use of the present tense in describing events and activities that are current and ongoing, even as I completed the writing of the thesis. While describing them in the past tense would be appropriate, it would not give the sense of contemporaneousness or adequately highlight the ongoing nature of the activities. Therefore, the deliberate adoption of the present tense, rather than the past tense in these chapters is meant to highlight a major aspect of this thesis, that is, the contemporary and ongoing nature of the practices analysed.

## **PREFACE**

In a significant way, this study was influenced by my own professional experience in the museum and heritage sector in Zimbabwe. For five years, I was employed by the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ), a state funded agency for management and preservation of the country's natural and cultural heritage. From 1999, I was employed as an Assistant Curator of Ethnography based at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences (ZMHS) for five years. During my tenure at the second oldest and second largest museum in Zimbabwe, I was directly responsible for over 8000 "ethnographic objects" housed in what was previously named the Queen Victoria Memorial Museum (QVM). This assemblage of objects had accumulated through donations, bequests, exchanges, and research activities since the museum was established in 1903, 13 years after the occupation of the territory by the British South Africa Company (BSAC). However, as I joined the institution my work and that of other curators looked beyond the museum, especially at a time in which the museum was strategically positioning itself for greater relevance by attracting a diverse patronage. One of the major challenges was that while a few objects in the museum had generated excitement over the years, most of the collections were confined to museum storerooms and remained inaccessible to the public.

Being a Curator of any discipline in the NMMZ subjected one to the multifocal nature of the legal and institutional set up of the organisation. I had to deal with monuments, in addition to my museum work such as collection, documentation, exhibition, and research. At the time when I joined the institution in the late 1990s, issues concerning spiritual or sacred sites, and intangible heritage, were beginning to be very topical. For this reason, the ethnography portfolio included administering requests by local communities to have their sacred sites explored, researched, or declared "national monuments". In response to this, the organisation adopted an interdisciplinary approach, which brought together experts such as archaeologists, historians, and anthropologists to conduct what they termed "ethno-archaeology" surveys. These surveys mainly consisted of oral interviews with the community and archaeological surveying and mapping of sites. This approach demanded constant contact with communities where several issues around sacred sites were beginning to claim attention.

At this time also, projects such as the maintenance and protection of liberation war sites were also coordinated by the NMMZ. Each museum was tasked with taking care of the provincial war graves located in their respective provinces. Thus, at this time not only did we perform our roles of collecting, classifying, storing, exhibiting, and preserving objects and material, but we also took care of the archaeological monuments under our museum's jurisdiction and we engaged directly

with local communities concerning their sacred spaces. The linking of museums with protection of sites and monuments was a legacy of the history of NMMZ, stemming from when national museums and the organisation responsible for preservation of archaeological and historical monuments, the National Monuments Commission, were amalgamated in 1972.

Working with archaeological and sacred sites, and the communities associated with such sites, made us aware of the divergence between the official constructs and those of the communities in their understanding of heritage. The challenge that this gap posed required an approach that unsettled strict disciplinary approaches. This collapsing of the strict disciplinary inclinations was a challenge but also an opportunity for us to see how the functions of the NMMZ and the relevance of sacred places were connected. Our work became strongly linked with what was happening outside the museums as we accommodated the local communities' perceptions and requests for access to archaeological sites and for us to recognise sacred sites. In addressing this, as professionals, we sought to create a balance between the grounding of our institution in disciplines such as archaeology or ethnology and the spiritual and social perceptions of sites by local communities. During the ethno-archaeological surveys, as our archaeologists explored the landscapes for archaeological traces, the communities pointed to burial grounds where their ancestors were interred and to sacred caves, groves, pools, and ritual sites to the ethnographers.

These experiences awakened us to the need for a different way of seeing sites, recording or writing about them even when such approaches challenged our routine practices as museum curators. This exposure to an institution that combined museum technical activities with protection of archaeological, natural, and historical monuments as well as the spiritual and sacred sites inspired this study and influenced my deliberate approach of linking museums, monuments, and sites. These experiences of the deep-seated ways in which communities related to "their" sites and the insights gained from interacting with them motivated me to explore questions about the role of heritage in contemporary contexts. I sought to analyse the different understandings and approaches to heritage, both the official concepts and the unofficial constructs. This experience and these aspects of my own professional life as a practitioner in the museum/heritage influenced the choice of my topic and my deliberate focus on museums, monuments, and sites. This is probably because in my day-to-day work these places were "managed" concurrently. This experience of working both in the museum and with communities provided an opportunity for me to link official discourses on heritage, professional practice, and local- community-based practices.

This study was also inspired by the need to understand what I perceived as differences in the discourses on the practice of heritage in post-independence Zimbabwe (1980) and those of post-apartheid South Africa. In my postgraduate studies, I had started reading various texts that on the one hand highlighted the developments prompted by the new political dispensation in South Africa after 1994 in opening up new forms of heritage. On the other hand were works that offered critical analyses of the changes. Numerous writings highlighted the new developments in key policy changes in the heritage sector with new museums, monuments and sites created across South Africa (Saunders, 2007a, Witz, 2006; Rasool, 2000, 2006; Corsane 2004). Others focused on the complex relationship that South Africa had with memory and history, highlighting the contradictory investment in heritage sites and museums among competing constituencies and the tensions involved in the rush to produce new histories for post - 1994 South Africa (Davison, 1998; Nuttall & Coetzee, 1998; Coombes, 1994; 2003; Rasool, 2000).

Yet others looked at continuities in the heritage and museum sector highlighting various strategies museums adopted to deal with former ideological biases and looked at the ways the country could deal with its past, a complex amalgam of colonialism, slavery, and apartheid (Dubin, 2006; Davison, 2001, 2005). Others addressed the strategies that emerged in the sphere of public culture in post-apartheid South Africa and explored the tensions and conflict in the attempts to recast heritage practices in contemporary South Africa (Murray, Shepherd, & Hall, 2007; Rasool 2006; Shepherd, 2007). Recent work on heritage in South Africa ranges from Daniel Herwitz's (2011, 2012) examination of heritage and its co-option by political instruments and apparatuses in the functioning of the postcolonial state, to Lynn Meskell's (2011) scrutiny of the tensions and conflicts inherent in the practices of conserving natural and cultural heritage, influenced by local and internationalised discourses of heritage preservation (Meskell, 2005, 2011a, 2013, Pikirayi, 2012).

In spite of the persistent dissonance and conflicts over representation, the discourses of heritage in post-apartheid South Africa and the emergence of new museums and monuments, generated space for debating notions and practices of heritage. For me, the value of all this literature was in highlighting the absence of any degree of vibrancy in discussions or writings about heritage practices in Zimbabwe. The political changes after 1994 in South Africa opened up debates and discussions around heritage policies and practices, something I could not locate in post-1980 Zimbabwe, at least not to the degree to which it emerged in post-1994 South Africa. In Zimbabwe post-1980, the new government pronounced a "policy of reconciliation" but there were no major debates or systematic policies for changing the heritage sector or for "decolonising" the museums. There was no "storming of the Bastille" as far as the cultural features of the colonial era were

concerned (Munjeri, 1990; Fischer, 2010). The changes in official projects of public memory and commemoration were rather subtle and mainly included removal of some colonial statues from public spaces and renaming of cities, towns, buildings, and streets. This difference between the South African and the Zimbabwean experience prompted in me a desire to investigate the diversity and dynamics of change within heritage practices in post-colonial contexts. My desire was to create a text that would fill in this gap in the relevant literature by creating an account of the “history of heritage” in Zimbabwe. However, as my work evolved over the years, it has taken a narrower but focussed approach, picking on specific activities that highlight how heritage practices linked with changing political landscapes in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe.

## CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### Introduction

Drawing from scholarship on social memory and recent literature in heritage studies, this thesis investigates the extent to which heritage was used in negotiating and validating social and political claims for both government and citizens in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe. My analysis also drew from my experiences as a museum curator in Zimbabwe. In particular, the thesis focuses on ways in which heritage continually plays a part in broader contestations around identity, ideas of belonging, claims to power and concepts of history, across the eras. I approach this from the understanding that heritage is social construction and mode of cultural production (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1995; Graham, *et al*, 2000; Peckham 2003; Harvey, 2007; Smith 2006). Any critical assessment and theorisation of heritage should include an enquiry how processes of heritagisation are an “entanglement of knowledge, politics and property” (Kuutma, 2009: 5; see also Shepherd, 2008; Herwitz, 2012)). I therefore look at the history and development of heritage management discourses by examining the intellectual histories, the institutional contexts, genealogies and formulations of heritage in Zimbabwe.

Adopting a multidisciplinary approach that draws from history, anthropology, and museums and heritage studies, my research design utilised selected in-depth interviews, observation, and analysis of archival documents to provide an insight into the processes of heritage creation and commemorative culture and into why they remain critical sites for negotiating issues around identities, resources, and political authority. Notwithstanding the diverse and broad nature of definitions of “heritage,” for this work, “heritage” includes museums, monuments and heritage sites as well as the diverse ways that people and societies define and practice what they understand as heritage, outside the scope of formal cultural heritage institutions (Corsane, 2005; Harvey, 2001; Smith, 2006). This work sees these spaces, and practices so powerfully embedded in Zimbabwean history and linked to regimes and politics of knowledge, as central in shaping the processes by which groups articulate their relationship with the past.

A central aspect of the thesis is investigating how meanings of heritage have been constructed and institutionalised in Zimbabwe, and how this elicits responses from local communities. Two particular aspects will be investigated serving as analytical tools to unravel the different social and political aspects surrounding heritage discourses and practices in Zimbabwe. The first major approach is to demonstrate the persistent importance of the use of the past by highlighting the extraordinary investment in heritage practices over a long stretch of time. Secondly, the thesis

challenges binaries embedded within narratives that accentuate clear distinctions between official versus unofficial, black versus white, or pre-colonial, colonial versus postcolonial heritage practices.

While most studies treat these categories individually and in isolation, and perceive them as disconnected, this study keeps them within a single frame of reference, with the aim of revealing synergies, entanglements, and continuities. David Harvey (2007, 2001) has pointed us to value of exploring the development of heritage processes over a long term in that it allows space for an analysis that leads to a deeper understanding of the historically contingent and embedded nature of heritage practices. He states that the approach enables us to engage with debates about the production of identity, power, and authority throughout society (Harvey, 2007, 2001).

The approach of seeing across the usually separated temporal demarcations of pre-colonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods also contributes to emerging approaches in African studies that seek to problematise these divisions by foregrounding linkages across the eras. Following Joost Fontein, this methodology challenges the normative approach that, “divided its labour according to a particular temporality, which assumes that discrete pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial periods are not only identifiable, but also properly meaningful...” (Fontein, 2013:241). Commenting on the desirability of approaches that look across time, Nich Shepherd gives a very useful proposition when he argues that, “one of the questions that confronts us in thinking about questions of cultural heritage, memory and history is the need for more complex conception of time. This is not modern, linear, successive time, but time more complexly and ambiguously scripted in terms of notions of simultaneity, co-presence, sudden eruptions and returns” (Shepherd, 2012:1).

Therefore, this thesis suggests that an analysis of the changing nature of heritage practices is one way through which we can understand ideological formations on issues of identity, power, and authority facing Zimbabwe at specific moments in its history. In making an analysis over such a long stretch of time, I focus on selected practices to demonstrate how heritage featured as a key aspect of contemporary political and social issues. In investigating the heritage practices in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe, the study attempts to bring about what Fontein describes as, "a sensitivity to the complexities and depth of human, and particularly Zimbabwean, interrelations with landscape; linking personal biographies, group reminiscences, memory and place in new understandings of the spatial and spiritual dimensions of peoples' lives" (Fontein, 2010:3).

Thus, my analysis extends from the late 1890s when the idea of establishing the first museums in Zimbabwe was mooted, to the present, with a particular focus on postcolonial (post 1980)

developments. However, I also refer to the pre-colonial period (pre-1890) and argue that a look over a long stretch of time and across the eras reveals continuities and linkages and allows a broader understanding of the significance of heritage in Zimbabwe.

Though this thesis emphasises the idea of entanglement across the eras, it is crucial to state that the concept of heritage is something which comes into being at a certain point in western thought, and did not match neatly onto understandings of practices of pastness which might have prevailed in Zimbabwe in precolonial times (Herwitz, 2012; Harvey, 2007; Lowenthal, 1985,1989). The idea of heritage has its legacies within the master narratives of western science, perpetuated by disciplines such as in archaeology, history and anthropology. In this configuration of heritage, cultures have to be studied and categorised before they disappear. Yet, to say that ideas about heritage and knowledge production always goes in one direction is way too simplistic, hence the need to unpack what heritage means in societies that exist outside formal contexts.

A major aspect of the thesis is the analysis and problematisation of the relationship between official and unofficial notions and practices of heritage. Therefore, rather than looking at official conceptualisations of heritage as entirely exclusive and hegemonic, my approach sees heritage as a flexible and malleable social and cultural construct that embraces wide-ranging activities on the part of many different groups. In this perception, heritage becomes something that can be appropriated and used by various groups, both “official” and “unofficial.” Thus, instead of trying to seek clear definition of what a Rhodesian or Zimbabwean heritage is, I find the fluidity and subjectiveness of heritage as important in analysing its ever changing significance and its constantly shifting significance (Harvey, 2007, 2001). Pursuant to this, I move between memorial landscapes, museum objects, archaeological sites, memorials, and sacred places, analysing how they get configured as part of heritage and are consistently invoked in validating claims. I propose that heritage can be seen as involving a set of specific activities that can be openly invoked to advance political, social, or cultural claims by a variety of players seeking change.

While the thesis traces the growth of institutionalised heritage and practices of commemoration, it also attempts to problematise the relationship between official and unofficial practices. I analyse how interaction between them particularly in the postcolonial period was stimulated by the re-emergence of practices of pastness that had been disavowed during the colonial period. Partly borrowing from Cornelius Holtorf (2012)’s concept of “*pastness*,” I highlight ways through which local communities responded to, and engaged with institutionalised practices of heritage. In an attempt to resolve what he perceives as “an unhelpful dichotomy in the debate between materialist and constructivist approaches to authenticity” in the field of archaeology, Holtorf refers to the

concept of pastness as a possible solution to the problem (Holtorf, 2013: 429). According to Holtorf, pastness is authenticity that is a result of a particular perception or experience, created in the present and derived from, among others, the material clues of objects. In his perception, authenticity becomes a product not just of objective, materialist conceptions but also of a triangulation with abstract, subjective patinas of meanings given to materials or places. According to Holtorf, the concept of pastness answers the need of the heritage sector to focus on how people experience the past and to address people's connection and meaningful engagements with the past (Holtorf, 2012, 2013).

For this thesis, practices of pastness are understood as activities undertaken by local communities, manifesting as long-held associations with specific places. They are specific ways in which local communities relate to the past and manifest through concepts of sacredness, ritual practices, oral histories, and claims of ancestral ties to landscapes or sites. Practices of pastness manifest as several activities embedded in oral traditions, locally produced histories, rituals, forms of visitation or other everyday activities that foreground age-old traditions but are deliberately altered, reworked, and foregrounded in the present as a crucial aspect of the local communities' history or culture. Though practices of pastness exist at the margins of official concepts of heritage and are marginalised by disciplines, museum activities, and official heritage preservation practices, they are never totally eradicated. Instead, they survive in different forms, within day-to-day activities and they re-emerge in permissive political contexts, validating communities' claims.

While I use the notion of collective memorialisation and its link to place, as well as the concept of governmentality to analyse how official heritage practices are constituted to serve the interests of the state, I draw from James Young (1997)'s notion of counter-monuments to examine the relationship between institutionalised heritage and local communities. This allows me to highlight that in responding to the hegemony of official heritage constructs, local communities flag their practices of pastness as a form of counter-heritage. The concept of counter-heritage highlights how unofficial heritage practices reference official heritage practices while at the same time demand a different way of dealing with the past. However, rather than operating in isolation from each other, they (official heritage practices and counter-heritage practices) form a relationship in which official heritage institutions accommodate unofficial heritage practices. This relationship blurs the boundaries between the two and provides an opportunity for challenging the hegemony of official heritage practices and institutionalised disciplines. Epistemologically, the new relationship has potential to foster alternative ways of knowledge production, based on acknowledgement and integration of knowledge and worldviews held by local communities.

I situate my work among recent works that have begun the process of evaluating the global, local, and transnational dimensions of heritage discourses and preservation practices, challenging the characterisation of heritage as mainly a product of political power and authority. By emphasising the local or the unofficial practices, these works have highlighted the importance of community-based practices in challenging marginalisation in postcolonial contexts (Gnecco, 2014; Harvey, 2007; Shepherd 2008, Harrison, 2013, Smith et al, 2003, Smith and Waterton, 2009; Campbell and Smith, 2012). I also draw from recent approaches that seek to establish a firm theoretical and methodological footing for the heritage issues - critical heritage studies (See Waterton & Watson, 2014, 2013; Winter & Waterton, 2013; Winter, 2013, 2014; Witcomb & Buckley, 2013; Harrison, 2013; Rassool, 2013; Boonstra, 2012; Carman & Sorenson, 2009; Smith, 2006, 2012; Hall, 2005; Smithsonian 2005; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1995; Lowenthal, 1985, 1997; Robson, 1972). Pursuant to this, I draw from works that see the notion and practices of heritage as ambivalent and flexible sites of active cultural construction and see beyond expert or materialistic constructions of heritage by acknowledging alternative, unofficial, and subaltern ideas about heritage (See Smith, Shackel, & Campbell, 2011; Labadi, 2010; Shepherd, 2005, 2008; Smith 2004, 2006; Munjeri, 2004).

In focussing on the “monuments,” “museums” or “objects/relics,” the thesis acknowledges and problematises the legal definitions of these categories as applied in Zimbabwean heritage legislation. For instance, these terms acquired a specific but exclusive reference to officialised definitions of spaces or materials of archaeological, historic, scenic, or scientific interest as defined by the various legal instruments (NMMZ, 1902, 1936, 1972). These definitions canonised a lopsided official heritage cannon and inspired a preservation regime that left out places, objects and practices that were valuable for black communities. In recognition of this, the use of the term “sites” in this thesis refers to places excluded or marginalised by the official or legal constructs. These include sacred places, ancestral lands, ritual sites, burial grounds and other memorial sites considered valuable by local communities. I use a few cases studies to demonstrate how these places, sacralised by dead bodies of ancestors and deified in the public sphere by rituals or commemorative activities became spaces for performing heritage, across the eras.

Accordingly, a crucial aspect of this work focusses on the interplay between dead ancestral bodies, memorialisation, and heritage practices, a central feature running throughout the colonial and postcolonial eras. In reference to this connection in the immediate postcolonial period, Richard Werbner (1991,1998) talks of “the postwars of the dead” - a struggle over memorialisation which persistently features in memorial practices where the use of sacred sites and human remains, or the remains of the ancestors, become powerful points of organization and mobilization of the past” (Werbner, 1998: 98). In highlighting this as a uniquely Zimbabwean aspect, Werbner (1998:

98) remarks that, “Zimbabwe is exceptional in the extensive sacred landscaping of the countryside ... by graves and shrines” (Werbner 1998b, 99). This thesis explores this persistent interplay between heritage practices based on space (landscapes, sites, and monuments), ancestors, and claims to belonging, political legitimacy, or access to resources in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe. Ultimately, this work’s overall aim is to provide an insight on the complex processes of heritage making and commemorative practices in Zimbabwe in order to offer new perspectives on why heritage remains a critical site for negotiating issues around identities, resources, and political authority.

## **Literature Review and Conceptual Frameworks**

This research employed a multi-disciplinary theoretical framework drawn from bodies of writings in history, anthropology and museums & heritage studies. To examine the way in which discourses and practices of heritage are historically contingent and linked to the idea of nation, my approach combined works on social memory, with the Foucauldian notion of governmentality and emerging theories in heritage studies such as Smith’s (2006) theory of Authorised Heritage Discourses (AHD). The work of Maurice Halbwachs on collective memory, Benedict Anderson's concept of imagined communities and Pierre Nora's notion of sites of memory, provide a framework within which I analyse how the Rhodesian and Zimbabwean states made use of their past, in attempts to forge social cohesion (Halbwachs, 1980, 1992; Anderson, 1983, 1991; Nora, 1989, 1998). Michel Foucault’s work (1991) on governmentality and emerging literature on the nature of heritage and its political or social functions in postcolonial contexts highlight the ambivalent ways in which disciplines, heritage preservation institutions and local communities are highly interrelated (Smith, 2001, 2004, 2006; Holtorf & Fairclough, 2013; Herwitz, 2012).

These diverse works provide an analytical framework through which I examine the development and relationship between seemingly two contrasting constituencies, state- supported official practices and community-based practices. In particular, these works point to the complex ways in which local communities continue to engage with the “globalisation of archaeology and heritage” (Appadurai, 2001:35). The works provided a framework through which to analyse how marginalised practices can assert their own position against marginalisation, creating possibilities of new relationships (Gnecco, 2014; Haber, 2012; Shepherd, 2003, 2007; Waterton, 2005; Waterton & Smith, 2009; Meskell, 1998, 2002a, 2011). Literature on memorial landscapes, practices of commemoration, archaeological heritage and the use of the past in Zimbabwe provides the background for this study, showing an extraordinary investment in practices of memorialisation and highlighting how particular places persistently feature in practices of commemoration and

heritage practices across the colonial and postcolonial eras (Werbner, 1998; Ranger, 1999; Fontein, 2006, 2009).

### ***Memorialisation and the making of heritage: museums, sites and place***

The relationship between memory and identities and has long been a central theme in debates on collective identities and the making of nation states. A number of scholars, particularly the works of Halbwachs, Anderson, and Nora have drawn our attention to the ways in which personal memories become reshaped into collective memories by forms of political interventions, particularly through “official” acts or objects of commemoration (Halbwachs, 1980; Anderson, 1983; Nora, 1989). These works proved the theoretical basis from which I analyse how museums, memorial landscapes, monuments, and sites influenced official practices of commemoration as well as heritage discourses and practices in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. Their works on social memory, nation building, and heritage are particularly important for this study in that they highlight how practices of memorialisation become bureaucratically controlled and how they are linked to identities, knowledge, and political authority. Therefore, I would like to look at heritage as a social practice that has material, intellectual, and social facets deeply influenced by political economy. As any social practice, heritage practices are implicated in power relations that they produce or alienate through the creation of a particular narration of the past that legitimise diverse forms of domination, particularly for nation-states (Anderson 1983).

Many studies on social or collective memory have shown us that recollections of the past are influenced by political interests in on-going social struggles for either resources or the meaning of events. In fashioning a relationship to the past in the public sphere, “sites of memory” become vehicles through which “imagined communities” form (Nora, 1989; Anderson, 1983). A study of these sites as *lieux de memoir* or places of memory (Nora, 1989) provides a model for tracing underlying continuities and discontinuities in national identity politics and highlights how visual and material representation of the past remains a central aspect of the performance of history and heritage. This resonates with Pierre Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) idea that the physical transformation of places of memory reflects the struggle among political actors for the symbolic capital embodied in and represented by these sites.

The works draws attention to the ways in which notions of the past become controlled, rooted, or reproduced in representations of particular places. The works point us to how memories of the past are anchored in places, become visualised in monuments and are given a public existence through practices of commemoration. Halbwachs (1980) argued that individual memory develops in interaction with that of social networks and the larger community. He was captivated by the

qualities of particular sites and examined their role in the formation of shared collective memory. “Space”, wrote Halbwachs, “is a reality that endures, it can unite groups of individuals and believers concentrating and moulding its character to theirs” (Halbwachs, 1980: 8). In stating this, Halbwachs highlighted the important role of the materialisation of memory, arguing that the “collective memory” of a nation is represented in part by the memorials it chooses to erect and thus we can read a lot from that which a nation chooses to memorialise in physical monuments and more significantly that which it chooses not to memorialise. He also showed that collective memory is sustained through a continuous production of representational forms, where particular narratives and images are reproduced and reframed, yet also questioned and contested (Halbwachs, 1980; Anderson, 1991).

Studies on social memory, stretching back to Émile Durkheim and his notion of the conscience collective (1893), have been criticised for essentialising memory. For instance, the major criticism of Halbwachs is of his “essentialist and homogenising views of the idea of “collective” densities and their overemphasis of the role of the state in mediating these “collective’ impulses” (Ho Tai, 2001: 5). Although the concept of collective memory is criticised for overemphasising the role of the state and assuming the existence of a consistent and coherent spread of collective memory that hegemonically filled up national space, the notion remains valid for analysing official constructs of heritage. A thesis whose central concern is to analyse how practices of commemoration and heritage practices linked with the changing political and social dispensations stands to benefit from Halbwachs’ formulation of collective memory as performative – that is, a reconstruction, and an appropriation of the past used to meet or influence present needs.

Thus, while agreeing that the foregrounding of the agenda of the nation and “collective imaginings” marginalises activities that exist outside of the state’s framing, I see value in the argument that the nation and its practices of memorialisation are a cultural product whose history needs to be critically interrogated rather than taken as stated (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1993). By pointing to the idea that “national identities” are historical constructions that are constantly reconstituted according to presentist agendas, Hobsbawm and Ranger, (1993) highlighted that rather than being primordial entities, national identities are generated by symbolic processes that emerge and dissolve in particular contexts of action (Handler, 1992:30). This posits the necessity of always historicising, contextualising, and problematising the notion of national collective identities.

Halbwachs’ formulation of collective memory also points to the link between shared identities and memory as expressed through the material manipulation of myths and symbols. This aspect has

been a central concern of many other scholars (Bodnar, 1992; Gillis, 1994; Smith, 2000; Tilley, 2006) and links with my analysis that focusses on analysing the manifestations of practices of heritage and memorialisation linked to specific spaces in Zimbabwe. In making this analysis, I draw from Halbwachs and Nora's foregrounding of the linking between the materiality of memorial sites, political processes, and practices of memorialisation. Halbwachs's conceptualization of the means by which memory is activated in the present relies on the notion of 'landmarks'. These, he argues, engender recollections and act as prompts for action in the present. He argues that collective memory "does not preserve the past but reconstructs it with the aid of the material traces, rites, texts and traditions left behind" (Halbwachs, 1992, 175).

According to Nora, memories crystallised in sites of memory are a prominent part of narratives that are constructed to generate support for political aims and certain cultural practices (Nora, 1989, 1998). Nora points us to how sites of commemoration help to form rituals and a rhetoric that seeks to exalt distinctiveness of individual nations. Nora's (1989, 1998) work was concerned with the historical phases through which the state appropriates and reworks historical symbols towards creating a nationalist master narrative. Nora's work particularly drew my attention to the importance of rupture in the generation of collective memory, when he argues that in moments of social stress or fracture, the desire to collect memories that can be shared increases. He focuses on the concept of sites of memory, where important political and cultural events take place. Nora's argument is that memorialisation relies entirely on the "materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording, the visibility of the image" (Nora, 1989:7).

Nora sees memory as consisting of an array of historical traces and he argues that real environments of memory out of which memory arises spontaneously can no longer be sustained. Consequently memory needs to be artificially created, fixed and represented in the form of *lieux de mémoire*; material, symbolic and functional at the same time (Nora, 1989). For Nora, the proliferation of "sites of memory" and the externalisation of memory in the form of monuments, memorials, or commemorative performances become a platform through which national memory is materialised and officialised to create social and political cohesion. This framing links well with my objective of assessing the role and function of heritage making in times of political and economic emergencies, where visual representation of narratives of cohesion in the public sphere would have been very important, making sites of memory very central.

Also underpinning this research's conceptual approach is conception of space, as being key in influencing the politics and practices of memorialisation. In relation to the link between the place and memory, Martin Hall talks of it as theatre of memory and suggests that "material culture, the

tangible traces of memory, play a central part in this theatre of memory” (Hall, 2001:50). The work of Christopher Tilley (2004) and Edward Said (2000) links notions of identity, place, landscape and heritage and illustrates how political regimes appropriate space through placement of their symbols and icons in the landscape and the fabrication of national myths. Nigel Thrift's (2003)'s ideas also point to how conceptions of space and its use for social memory is important and but also very flexible. He asserts that space:

...can be stabilised in such a way that they act like political utterances, guiding subjects to particular conclusions. But, as a counterpoint, the fabric of space is so multifarious that there are always holes and tears in which new forms of expression can come into being. Space is therefore constitutive in the strongest possible sense and it is not a misuse of the term to call it performative, as its many components continually act back, drawing on a range of different aesthetics as they do so (Thrift, 2003: 2022–3).

While the works of Halbwachs and Nora and others highlight the importance of place, in shaping practices of memorialisation, the works of Foucault, Anderson, and others have fundamentally demonstrated how institutions and disciplines are central in determining the role of places, sites and objects as part of the struggle for the control of the past (Foucault, 1986; Anderson, 1991; Dubow, 2000, 2006). These works are crucial for a study that seeks to show how these institutions and practices operated and how they enabled the state to exert governmentality and control. For example, these works show how the museum has been a setting in which forms of control and bureaucratisation have been located, making it a very important institution in knowledge production especially in colonial contexts (Foucault, 1986; Anderson, 1991; Dubow, 2000, 2006; Lord, 2006). Foucault's work for example, views the museum as an enlightenment institution that embodies state power and strives to order the world according to universal rules and the concept of a total history (Foucault, 1986). He likens the museum to a “heterotopia - a space of difference, a space that is central to a culture but in which the relations between elements of a culture are suspended, neutralized, or reversed” (Foucault, 1986:178). From his perspective, museums are institutions whose technical practices seek to categorise, classify, and order the world into a universally intelligible object or phenomenon (Foucault, 1977, 1986).

Anderson echoes Foucault's theorisation of the disciplinary power of official institutions in the production of knowledge, highlighting the museum's central role in knowledge production and control through deploying disciplines (Archaeology, Ethnology, and History) in the construction of identities (Anderson, 1991, 1993). My study particularly draws from Anderson's revised edition of *Imagined Communities*, which acknowledged the fundamental peculiarities of colonial Africa and considered three other sites as central in framing colonial identities (Anderson, 1991). In his argument, the museum, the census and the map shaped the way in which the colonial state

imagined its dominion—“the nature of the human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its ancestry” (Anderson, 1991: 245). He shows, for example, how the map and the museum became important technologies of British imperialism and instruments of knowledge-production and the creation of new identities and in the maintenance of colonial rule.

Relevant to this thesis is Anderson’s highlighting of how museums formed part of institutions in the colony that were involved in the production of knowledge and how knowledge production was closely related to colonial conquest. According to Anderson, the colonial experience, specifically the “classificatory grid” created by colonial censuses, maps, and museums, established boundaries and limits and definitions for peoples, places, and histories (Anderson, 1991). These institutions, places, and practices shaped the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion, “the nature of the human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain and the legitimacy of its ancestry” (Anderson, 1991:164-165). Institutionalisation of museums and disciplines was key in the process of establishing technologies of government and disciplines played a central role in the processes of knowledge production in the colonies. Anderson argues that “the museums and museumising imagination were political and the disciplines such as archaeology that developed within the museum successfully disinterred, unjungled, measured, photographed, reconstructed, fenced off and analysed ancient sites” (Anderson,1991:179).

The importance of Anderson’s work is in highlighting the crucial link between scientific or intellectual traditions, institutionalisation, and their link to contemporary political realities and ideologies. Thus, his work demonstrates a fundamental aim of this study, which seeks to show how and why the past persistently attracts official control. Anderson argues that colonial regimes attached themselves to antiquity as much as military conquest or as an integral part of the process of talking effective control of the new place (Anderson, 1991). Here as Anderson argues, “monumental archaeology” allowed the state to appear as the guardian of local traditions where sacred sites were incorporated into the map of the colony. To effectively achieve this, legislative control was used to empty sites of people, and to disavow the rituals and practices held by local communities. Anderson argues, “museumised this way, they were repositioned as regalia for a *secular* colonial state” (Anderson, 1991:252).

Therefore, Anderson’s work also provides us with an analysis of the processes that resulted in the lopsided relationship between “Western” knowledge and local or indigenous knowledge in colonial encounters. He argues that the emergence of archaeology within the confines of the colonial museum served an ideological purpose in that the reconstructions always denied the place of local peoples as the architects of the archaeological monuments. The significance of officialisation of

the past was reflected in how monuments, recorded on colonial maps contributed to forming “historical maps where the colonial regimes began attaching themselves to antiquity as much as conquest so as to create alternative legitimacies” (Anderson,1991:182). Thus, Anderson’s treatise on museums and the political and ideological role of disciplines lays a good theoretical foundation for understanding the role of institutionalised practices in processes of knowledge production and how these are always linked to politics or ideology. Such an approach sets a conceptual framework from which we can continue investigate and historicise how institutional and disciplinary practices have operated as key spaces for determining official or authorised constructs of heritage.

However, in taking this approach, it is important to acknowledge the various criticisms that have been levelled against works on social memory, the concept of sites of memory and theorisation on imagined communities. For instance, as in Halbwachs’ work, critics of Anderson and Nora’s projects have condemned their focus on the nation-state and its suppression of countervailing voices. Nora’s emphasis on the link between materiality and practices of memory has been criticised for romanticising the role of sites of memory (Confino, 1997; Hue-Tam Ho Tai 2001). Others suggest that national official practices based on sites and unofficial practices are not mutually exclusive in the way Nora seems to suggest but that these practices are “mutually reinforcing”, albeit in the context of the emergence of a “hierarchy of memory activities” (Savage, 1994, 146). Responding to Nora and Anderson’s focus on ways in which the state appropriates and reworks historical symbols towards creating a nationalist master-narrative; some studies have shown how communities form their own relationships with projects of commemoration as a response to statist narratives (Bodnar, 1992; Young, 1993, 1992; Stuken, 1997).

Nonetheless, Anderson, and Nora’s emphasis on the materiality of memory raises important concepts useful in understanding the link between state narratives of nation and group or individual identities. Jay Winter (1997), though arguing that Nora’s work tends to re-inscribe the nation rather than problematise it, notes that it remains a useful framework for understanding the link between materiality and acts of memory making and commemoration. Commenting on the link between memory and place in Canada, John Walsh & James William Opp suggest that Nora’s attention to sites of memory and the politics surrounding them, allows us to ask important questions about who guides processes of remembering and towards what end and why specific commemorative projects take particular forms (Walsh & Opp, 2010). Following Anderson’s discussion on the role of museums and disciplines in colonial encounters in Southern Africa, studies have also shown how through “discovery, the siting, surveying, mapping and naming, science opened up new territories for conquest and ultimately possession of the new territories” (Meskell, 2003:150). These range from works that highlight how archaeology was established as a

key aspect of colonial domination (Shepherd, 2002, 2002a) to, those that show that one of the arenas in which South African nation building project articulated itself prominently was the realm of knowledge production, what Saul Dubow calls a “South-Africanisation of science” (Dubow, 2000, 2006). In Zimbabwe, Daina Jeater (2005, 2007), eloquently articulates how “Rhodesian native policy” and its dealings with Africans was entrenched by scholarship, fantasy, and science.

Works cited in this section linking memory and space are crucial in providing a basis for investigating and analysing the political contexts within which institutions and spaces such as museums, monuments, or sites operated in the bureaucratisation of practices of commemoration, and in influencing the policies and practices of heritage preservation in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe. The works underscore the various ways in which institutionalised heritage practices are a site for the negotiation and creation of authority linked to regimes and the politics of knowledge. However, this study does not view the activities associated with these official sites of memory and institutions as completely hegemonic. Rather, my approach looks for contexts where these spaces and practices presented opportunities for the possibility of challenging their dominant position. Thus, as much as museums or heritage preservation institutions participate in authorising versions of the past, this study hypothesises that the museums, sites and official commemorative practices, intermittently confer opportunities for marginalised communities to challenge the hegemony embedded in state supported official practices, by foregrounding local practices.

### ***Governmentality and control of the past***

In discussing the nature, role, and function of state-supported control and institutionalisation of heritage practices in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe, this thesis sees Michel Foucault’s governmentality thesis as a useful conceptual framework. Governmentality theory provides a clear way of thinking about and analysing heritage practices, particularly how they relate to official control and manipulation. Of relevance to this study is how Foucault’s work was concerned with issues of knowledge construction and practice; in particular, the power–knowledge relations underlying forms of expertise, and the relations of power underpinning dominant discourses. For Foucault, the relationship between power and knowledge is vital, and he identified knowledge as a particular technique of power (Foucault, 1991). For instance, Foucault’s governmentality thesis illustrates how knowledge is entwined with public policy issues and wider political debates over cultural identity and how it plays an influential role in the regulation and arbitration of practices of heritage (Foucault, 1979, 1980, 1991, 2003). As argued by Foucault, the notion of governmentality includes bodies of knowledge that present themselves as “scientific,” and that contribute to the privileged position of official or institutionalised practices (Foucault, 1979).

The concept of governmentality highlights the importance of political control in the knowledge-power nexus and highlights how expert knowledge become mobilised by bureaucracies in creating “technologies of government” (Foucault, 1991; Smith, 2001; Bennet, Dibley, & Harrison, 2014). Recent works such as that of Laurajane Smith and others have linked Foucault’s concept of governmentality to the discourses and practices of heritage, arguing that the desire to control these practices manifests itself in state-initiated heritage preservation policies activities that are arbitrated by disciplines such as archaeology. According to Smith (2001, 2007), archaeological knowledge becomes mobilised by public policy-makers and becomes implicated in the governance of cultural identity constituting what she describes as Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD) (Smith, 2006).

Smith proposes that “this mobilisation of expert knowledge and language as a technology of government renders the world knowable and controllable for those in power” and that the consequences of this process is that “material culture, as ‘heritage’, becomes a resource of power in the politics of identity and archaeological practice” (Smith, 2001:99; Smith & Waterton, 2001:97). Discussing how heritage gets controlled and promoted by states (with the support and legitimacy granted by global discourses), Gnecco remarks that, “the joint venture of governmentality and the market has transformed the heritage realm...it has accelerated the pace of institutional processes aimed to turning sites, landscapes, foods, and rituals, into heritage loci of universal appeal, ready for the tourism industry and for symbolic control” (Gnecco, 2014: 10).

The works on governmentality discussed above are crucial for this study in that they highlight how governmentality involves official control and bureaucratisation of heritage practices for political, ideological, or commercial purposes. For instance, the works foreground the role of archaeology, as the discipline that underwrites and validates regimes of care on monuments and sites, which is associated with an epistemic violence that disavows alternative modes of relating to the sites (Gnecco, 2014; Smith & Waterton, 2001). The effect of this is that indigenous communities who for generations lived with the archaeological sites and formed their relationships with these sites are sidelined, as scientific values and conservation ideals take the centre stage (Smith, 1994, 2001; Smith & Waterton, 2009, Meskell, 2011).

Laurajane Smith and Emma Waterton highlight this alienating effect of scientific disciplines in their discussion on the interface between archaeology, cultural heritage management (CHM), and the ideals of community participation (Smith & Waterton, 2001). They argue that cultural CHM practices, validated by science, foreground institutionalised or official forms of knowledge and in the process relegate other forms of knowledge to the periphery. Accordingly, “archaeology sets the language that frames the dialogues with other forces such as ancestors, gods and territory”

(Smith & Waterton, 2001:97). For Smith (2006), “scientific” values become institutionalised through the language of the discipline, and material sites become constituted as AHD. AHD privileges the position of experts, who are seen as “stewards or caretakers of the past... and that idea that the proper care of heritage, and its associated values, lies with the experts, as it is only they who have the abilities, knowledge and understanding to identify the innate value and knowledge contained at and within historically important sites and places” (Smith, 2006: 29-30).

According to Smith, AHD is “based on the Western national and elite class experiences, and reinforces ideas of innate cultural value tied to time depth, monumentality, expert knowledge and aesthetics” (Smith, 2006:29). Authority is heavily anchored within state-sanctioned agencies and international bodies, which legitimise dominant narratives. Promoted by the state and authorised by institutions such as the museum, the hegemonic definitions promote the idea that:

Heritage is about a common national inheritance ...and set of innate values; that it concerns a singular past that must not be tampered with ...that it is evidenced through monuments and tangible assets as opposed to other forms of expression, ...and that it derives from a universal aesthetics of taste and value largely determined by expert rather than lay judgement (Dicks, 2007: 59).

However, governmentality also sets the stage for the possibility of investigating disciplines and their relationships to practices that exist at the margins of official or institutionalised constructs. The major criticism of the governmentality thesis is “the degree to which it tends to over privilege knowledge as a resource of power at the expense of other, more concrete forms of political power” (Smith, 2001:99). Critics of the concept of governmentality have also argued that while the concept of governmentality provides a very promising tool for the analysis it overemphasises the role of the nation state, excluding all forms of “fragmented sovereignty”(Lemke, 2002).

Thus, the critics acknowledge a fundamental point that governmentality does not deal adequately with the consequences of challenges to expert knowledge by non-expert interests (Smith, 2001, 2006). Therefore, institutionalised heritage discourses and practices are not monolithic and are subject to challenge and contestation. We can argue that much as Smith’s conception of AHD foregrounds official practices, it also points to how dominant or official practices set the stage for conceptual frameworks that seek to examine contexts in which dissenting voices struggle to advance alternative conceptions (Dicks, 2007). In challenging or responding to official practices, marginalised groups request a more inclusive approach to heritage, leading to a complex and dynamic process of meaning-making.

The way marginalised groups engage with or challenge official heritage practices is an area that has recently attracted increased scholarly attention. For instance, recent literature on heritage practices

has sought to move away from heritage's persistent equation with physical places such as sites, buildings, and material objects and from seeing heritage as exclusively a preserve of official control (Smith, 2006; Dicks, 2007; Harvey, 2001, 2007). These works emphasise the idea that heritage should be seen as a dynamic cultural process in which the past furnishes the resources for conflicts and disagreements about what should be valued. Commenting on the role of disciplines in influencing what gets to be canonised as official heritage, recent works have also begun to criticise the privileging of expert knowledge over those practices considered as marginal, grassroots or unofficial (Haber, 2007, 2012).

Haber highlights the role of archaeology in entrenching a focus on materiality in its disciplinary framework, which posits the idea that the past can only be known and dealt with through its material aspects (Haber, 2012). According to Haber, this focus on "authorship, date, and purpose of the material remains in deep time exclude other non-material aspects from the past such as descent and memory" (Haber, 2012:59). This situation he finds untenable in the postcolonial context and he proposes what he terms "the un-disciplining of archaeology", suggesting different methods of engagement with indigenous knowledge for example, in creating "new approaches to disciplinary practice" that he also refers to as "disciplines at the frontier" (Haber, 2012:59). Where Haber (Haber, 2007, 2012) talks of "undisciplining" archaeology, Christobal Gnecco (2014b,2013) proposes the need for an "alternative archeology" and a "bottom-up" approach that "destabilises the dominant, multicultural conception of heritage, especially by positioning alternative conceptions of time, past, ancestors, life" (Gnecco, 2014 : 1)

In relation to the possibility of the discipline of archaeology engaging with marginalised knowledges, Haber suggests that:

These are not academic tasks to be done in isolation, but conversations to develop in the borderlands. The conversation about the hegemonic place of archaeological discourse helps localizing archaeological metaphysics. It may produce a move towards local epistemes (considering conversations with local theories of history, ontologies, and regimes of care; and accepting the instability implied in being-in those conversations). ... Social movements, local communities, indigenous peoples, popular cultures, are already mixing and weaving relationships, and producing counter-hegemonic theorization from the exteriority of the West (Haber 2012: 62-63)

Haber's suggestions recommend a conversation that unsettles and disrupts the hegemonic position of the disciplines and the normative practices of institutions of control such as museums or heritage agencies. His suggestions are critical for methodologies and approaches that seek to shift away from the fixation with strict and exclusive disciplinary standards. This framing is crucial for my thesis, which sought to analyse how the official constructs of heritage and associated forms of governmentality, inspired by hegemonic knowledge practices, are engaging with the practices that

have existed at the borders of official practices. Thus, Haber and Gnecco's ideas are significant in dealing with and analyzing unofficial heritage practices based on sacred places and rituals that emerged quite strongly in the postcolonial Zimbabwe. Of unique significance is the analysing and foregrounding of how these counter-heritage practices interfaced with the institutionalised disciplines and the processes of cultural heritage management.

### ***Hegemony, marginalisation and counter-practices***

A great deal of attention has been paid to the ways in which the ideologies of nationalism and national identities have been consciously articulated and legitimised in terms of heritage. Most literature on collective memory or official heritage has always taken the concept as a metaphor for the state (Anderson, 1983; Nora, 1989). However, this emphasis on practices of collective memorialisation, cultural patrimony or national heritage and their social and political role in fostering national cohesion overlooks the existence of fissures. The approach fails to highlight how practices of memorialisation usually elicit parallel acts of memorialisation in response to or in opposition to those projected by the state. Thus, while the emphasis on "collective memory" or "authorised heritage" is valid in showing us how states control and influence official heritage practices, it fails to foreground the importance of smaller, localised heritage practices (Anderson, 1983; Nora, 1989). Nonetheless, though the works on collective memory, imagined communities, or on governmentality and AHD, focus on the centrality of bureaucracies and state-controlled forms of memory practices, they also show that as much as sites and state sponsored practices of commemoration serve interests of nationalistic politics, they are also places of fracture and dissonance (Smith, 2006, 2007).

Works that criticise the reduction of memory to collective identities highlight how social, cultural, or ethnic groups respond to the official constructs of a homogenous collective memory by invoking individual, local, or regional heritage. The idea of nation and memory as socially and ideologically constructed is also strongly contested, especially by competing political communities who also place value in challenging "national memory" by foregrounding local constructs. Thus, the processes of memorialisation and of identity and heritage creation is neither autonomous nor unidirectional (Moore and Whelan, 2007). Harvey (2001), highlight how in contrast to Nora's ideas of institutionalised memory, there exists parallel to this, memories and practices of ordinary people, unrecorded or documented in the official annals but existing in oral traditions and everyday activities. I use James Young's concept of counter-memory to highlight how governmentality and institutionalisation of heritage stimulate alternative practices from marginalised local communities (Young, 1997, 1993). Young's concept of counter-monuments

provides a framework within which to understand these alternative forms of engagement adopted by communities in response to the hegemonic approaches. In reference to previously marginalised heritage practices that emerge to challenge the hegemonic practices, I adapt Young's formulation to propose the notion of counter-heritage practices, to refer to the emergence of practices of pastness that make reference to, yet at the same time subvert and challenge the official heritage practices.

Using the responses to post-First World War conceptions of monuments and war memorials, Young demonstrates how state-based practices of memorialisation stimulated responses from the grassroots, particularly those who feel unrepresented or misrepresented by the state practices. The effort by Young partly derives from Foucault's conception of "counter-memory" which he designates as the residual or resistant strains that withstand official versions of history (Foucault, 1977). According to Foucault's framing, counter-history and counter-memory offer a critical approach to practices of remembering and forgetting which is crucial for resisting oppression and dominant ideologies. Foucault refers to these as subjugated knowledge- "a whole set of knowledges that are either hidden behind more dominant knowledges but can be revealed by critique or have been explicitly disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity" (Foucault, 1980:82).

According to Young (1997), the counter monument is a useful concept around which to analyse memory and practices of commemoration because it challenges hegemonic national activities both politically and aesthetically. In the context of European practices of memorialisation, specifically in post-world war Germany, counter monuments were created "as a response to the classic extrusive and often "masculine" identity of state memorials" (Young, 1993:75). Counter monuments did not seek to be static and physically imposing, but rather were flexible and mobile. Counter monuments also confronted the state driven notions of memory, subverting, and challenging them and "specifically seeking to discard the recognized tenets of the memorial and employs specific strategies to flaunt the selective forgetting and repetitive enclosure that are part of traditional memorials" (Leung, 2011: 3). Young (1993) argues that the counter monument was primarily fabricated, as a political act of subversion. Thus, counter monuments are postmodern constructs that diametrically oppose the traditional memorials and monuments in their occupation of space, seeking to memorialize the past through physical absence and negative space.

Young argues that, even as the state generate projects meant for creating collective memories or unified "imagined communities", the approach of "collective memories" can never be taken as

given. He maintains that the sites on which these collective memories are rooted often become sources of contention, power struggles, and competing interests. He argues that, by co-opting, creating, altering, contesting, ignoring, or removing particular monuments, political actors engage in a symbolic dialogue with each other and with the public in an attempt to gain symbolic capital, prestige, legitimacy, and influence (Young 1997, 1993). It has been shown that though the design, execution, and the meanings of public memorials are subjected to the will of those with the political and economic power, this framing invites responses from communities who feel less represented. These marginalised communities respond and react to the official canons by creating alternative genealogies based on their own experiences.

Thus, the notion of counter-heritage highlights how the marginalised or unofficial practices challenge the materialistic approaches embedded in institutionalised heritage practice. Commenting on the values of this framing, José Medina argues that its “important and emancipatory potential resides in challenging established practices of remembering and forgetting by excavating subjugated bodies of experiences and memories, bringing to the fore the perspectives that culturally hegemonic practices have foreclosed” (Medina, 2011:9). The value of Young’s approach is in showing us how memory is inherently fragmented, contested and rather than being “collective” it can manifest itself in dissonant forms (Young, 1997, 1993). Young also reiterates that, because monuments, memorials and other 'sites of memory' privilege particular collective interpretations of the past over others, they represent inherently contentious and political spaces. He posits that it is through the highly contested nature of memorial sites that groups and individuals are often able to appropriate them to affirm their own narratives of the past and to emphasise their own collective voices.

Literature on the changing nature of the practice of commemoration also shows that marginalised local communities have agency even in the face of homogenising state projects on public memory. In complementing James Young’s notion of counter memorials, Marita Sturken talks of tangled memories and post-memories as part of responses to hegemonic commemorative practices (Stuken, 1997). Richard Roberts (2000) argues that even though the memorialisation of the past and the invention of rituals are part of the maturation of statist narratives of power and legitimacy, these narratives are never completely hegemonic. The construction of a national narrative always stimulates what Florencia Mallon has termed “counter hegemonic discourses based on local, regional, and subaltern perspectives” (Mallon, 1995: 10). According to Jay Winters and Michael Levine, collective commemoration is characterised by the recovery and assertion of memory by groups and communities who position their own counter-memories parallel to the official narratives (Lavine, 2006; Winter, 2006). Responding to the notion that commemorations were top-

down affairs imposed by ruling elites on a passive populace, John Bodnar (1992) uses the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C to show how commemoration interweaves what he called official and “vernacular” memory. For Bodnar, while official memory is driven by the desire by the state to mythologize itself and maintain the loyalty of its citizens, unofficial memory practices are driven by the need of ordinary people to pursue their social and political concerns in their local communities.

Talking about the relationship between the official and the unofficial practices of memorialisation, John Gillis (1994) shows us how the position of counter practices are in themselves influenced by the hegemonic practices. He observed that “counter-hegemonic discourses” are always stimulated by the creation of the national historical narrative and are themselves structured in deep ways by that narrative. According to him, it can be argued that contrary to Nora, other "realms of memory" exist and persist outside the field of official memory shaped by the nationalist project (Roberts, 2000: 522). Jose Medina (2011) acknowledges that as much as official histories seek to create and maintain unity and continuity by imposing an interpretation on a shared past and, at the same time, by silencing alternative interpretations of historical experiences, they invite counter-histories which try to undo these silences and to undermine the unity and continuity that official histories produce. Martin Hall’s work on the “layered” memorial landscapes of the Cape of Good Hope foregrounds the existence of diverse and sometimes parallel conceptions and relationships with space and refers to “counter-memories that look for contradictions and uncertainties ...” (Hall, 2006:189).

In her discussion of “Authorised Heritage Discourse”- Smith also acknowledges that alongside this professional and authorised discourse is a range of popular discourses and practices. According to Smith, some of these practices reference and may take their cue from the professional discourse, though they will not necessarily be reducible to it (Smith, 2006:4). Smith remarks that:

At one level heritage is about the promotion of a consensus version of history by state-sanctioned cultural institutions and elites to regulate cultural and social tensions in the present. On the other hand, heritage may also be a resource that is used to challenge and redefine received values and identities by a range of subaltern groups (Smith, 2006:3).

Thus, in many parts of the world, evidence has shown that while official heritage practices are largely influenced by state sanctioned programmes of remembering and forgetting, these often exist in parallel to counter claims from the marginalised (Meskell, 2002, 2011,2013; Weiss, 2007, Shepherd; 2007, 2013 ). For instance, Smith’s recent work highlights that contrary to assumptions embedded in discussions that foreground AHD, studies also show that heritage is becoming an increasingly significant resource for communities as they seek to remake themselves and represent themselves in matters of heritage (Smith, 2009: 5; Smith, *et al*, 2003 2011).

Following these concepts, a fundamental aspect of the thesis is also to highlight how the institutionalisation of heritage practices continually engenders a complex relationship with community –based practices. The above-mentioned views are useful for understanding the responses to official forms of control in the postcolonial era in Zimbabwe and identifies with literature in heritage studies that shows the emergence of claims from local communities, who highlight heritage practise that are different from official practices, yet seek to be recognised as part of official heritage. The accommodation of unofficial practices by the official heritage practices is often expressed as community participation, seeking to respond to claims by indigenous communities to control their past (Smith & Waterton, 2009; Chirikure *et al*, 2008).

The importance of accommodation of local knowledge has implications for addressing the failure of the participatory approaches that have been identified in concepts such as community archaeology or community participation in heritage management (Waterton, E. 2005; Waterton and Smith, 2009). This failure has been identified as embedded in their assimilationist and top-down nature rather than what Smith terms a “bottom-up substantive” approach (Smith, 2001:37, Waterton, 2005). Writings in Southern Africa for example, highlight the unequal power relations that have limited the effectiveness of community participation in archaeology or heritage in Africa (Shepherd 2007, 2008; Chirikure & Pwiti, 2008; Meskell, 2002, 2011; Chirikure, Manyanga, *et al*, 2010). For some, a solution to this lies in approaches that seek to recognise and accommodate, at an equal level, the veracity of locally produced knowledge and practices (Garuba, 2012; Gnecco, 2013, 2014; Haber, 2012).

### ***Heritage from below: local communities and heritage***

An important aspect of this thesis is to analyse the importance of heritage practices, particularly how discourses and practices of heritage persistently held a central place in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe. A mapping of the continued existence and interaction between official and unofficial discourses and practices of heritage reveals their importance in contemporary society. Several authors have already focussed on attempting to explain why heritage still matters particularly in postcolonial Southern Africa (Peterson, 2011; Shepherd, 2007; Coombes, 2003; Rassool, 2000). Here, heritage has remained a crucial element of states’ ideals of fostering cohesive national and social identities and political and social cohesion in periods of change (Herwitz, 2012; Hamilton, Harris & Hatang, 2011). However, the familiar notions of heritage that relate to national pasts or for reinforcing citizens’ common collective identity are increasingly being challenged. For instance, research has shown the significance of heritage in allowing groups to mobilise around sacred sites, material cultures, and the remains of the dead in the course of struggles around rights,

resources, and representation (Shepherd & Ernsten, 2007; Shepherd, 2007; Ndoro, 2005; Fontein, 2006, 2009; Rassool, 2000, 2011).

According to Shepherd “the notion and practice of heritage occupies a paradoxical conceptual space in that on one level it exists fundamentally as a corporate entity , as a set of values, and objects held in common but on another level it is always experienced from an individual standpoint” (Shepherd, 2008:117). He argues that this paradoxical nature provides a key understanding of its social effects. For local communities, heritage offers a language through which to discuss contested issues of culture, identity, and citizenship in the post colony. Shepherd remarks that:

The notion and discourse of heritage operates as one of the principal sites for negotiating issues of culture, identity, and citizenship in the postcolony. The discourse becomes a way of mediating and nuancing alternative modes of citizenship in the postcolony. The ambiguity of the notion of heritage allows it to hold together in the same frame, an apparently contradictory set of contents... The discourse allows and provides for a way of speaking in a context in which histories, identities, and bodies of experience are fractured, ambivalent and in competition (Shepherd, 2008:124).

Shepherd's theorisation goes beyond the notion that heritage only serves to authorise a narrative of the nation in that it sees questions of heritage as being crucial in the negotiation of social rights and entitlements. Thus, according to Shepherd, as a sphere of practice in public life, heritage presents a set of opportunities for confirming and contesting settled identities, and versions of self and nation. The value of heritage lies in that it “opens up critical space in the public sphere in which to imagine new forms of being, new forms of identity and new conjunctions of place and person” (Shepherd 2008: 124). This view of heritage destabilises essentialised approaches to heritage and highlights new approaches that foreground smaller processes through which societies build local or individual associations to heritage, usually for negotiating contemporary challenges.

This thesis postulates that the idea of an alternative form of engagement in heritage practices implies acceptance of the value of practices that exist outside of the standards and rigours of disciplines, such as recourse to dead ancestors or notions of sacredness. The desirability of recognising and accommodating unofficial practices has been highlighted by Harry Garuba (2003, 2012) or Alejandro Haber's (2009) work on animism in which he shows the possibility of creating new languages around animist thought, as a “site for transcending the rigid dualisms consecrated by the modern/western epistemological order” (Garuba, 2012:5). According to Garuba, the logic of animist thought provides an opening for thinking other histories of modernity beyond the linear, teleological trajectories of the conventional historical narrative, thereby challenging the structure of the colonial order of knowledge (Garuba, 2003, 2012).

Scholarly research in heritage studies and practices within heritage management institutions, have also highlighted the need for according space to marginalized communities, particularly through community involvement (Chirikure and Pwiti, 2008; Smith 2001; Smith and Waterton, 2009, Smith, et al 2003). Recent work has begun to question role of national and global heritage agencies such as the effects of UNESCO's notion of universal heritage and its political and social consequences, as well as questioning the role of experts in defining or influencing heritage practices (Meskell, 2012, 2013, 2013b; Waterton and Smith, 2010; Labadi, 2013).

This thesis follows this trend of analysis by examining cases where community- based ideas about heritage interact with official notions to produce implications for our “understanding of the nature of heritage, the processes of its management and the role of expertise within management.....overthrowing the ways in which heritage is defined and understood” (Smith *et al*, 2013:65). The concept of counter-heritage is helpful in revealing and foregrounding the marginalised practices in the processes of knowledge production. In carrying out this analysis, I draw from the suggestions by Haber who proposes the need for seeing beyond the confines of the disciplines. The importance of the foregrounding of previously silenced worldviews is reiterated by Haber who also advocates new ways of knowledge creation, what he terms “knowledge at the frontier that help us move from hegemony to heteroglosia” (Haber, 2012:62). Haber postulates that in building up archaeological knowledge, the scientific institutions must genuinely reach out to alternative forms of knowing that are held by traditional custodians. Thus according to him:

(Archeological) theory in the border is not just about knowing, but about life... It is not enclosed in the academy but in conversation among inhabitants and dwellers...Theory in the border is not Western” (Haber 2012:62).

Shepherd also highlights the importance of engaging knowledge and experiences generated and held by local communities. He proposes the need for “a sense of humility and an epistemic openness in acknowledging the contribution of competing local and indigenous conceptions of deep time” (Shepherd in Haber and Gnecco, 2007:405). He remarks that “archaeology needs to be understood as a form of social and political practice in a contested present with all of the kinds of entanglements and ambiguities that go along with this process” (Shepherd in Haber and Gnecco, 2007:405). These sentiments echo Foucault's (1977) notion of counter-memories and subjugated knowledges, “those that have been buried or masked in functional coherences or formal systematisations”, which according to him should be dug up, by new forms of scholarship (Foucault, 1977:7). Foucault argues that, “by resurrecting these buried and masked blocks of historical knowledge, the critique of institutions, discourses, and hegemonic histories becomes possible” (Foucault, 1977:7).

These remarks about archaeology highlight how disciplines operate and why it is important to look beyond the standards set by official practices. They point to the possibilities offered by new relationships with local communities in influencing heritage discourses or heritage preservation policies and activities. Rodney Harrison and David Byrne talk of a process of ‘counter-mapping’, highlighting the social attachments that local people form to place. As a methodology, counter-mapping focuses on recording alternate, ‘hidden’ or non-mainstream social geographies and gives voice to marginal and subaltern understandings of the past, allowing recording and understanding the heritage associated with local everyday practices rather than as envisaged by experts (Rodney, 2011: 1; Byrne, 2008b, Thomas & Ross, 2013)

Therefore, the concept of counter-heritage practices shows how previously marginalised communities seek to deploy the language of heritage, a language and practice that marginalized them, as a vehicle through which to address contemporary issues. In relation to the practice of heritage in post settler-societies, Herwitz (2012) offers valuable insight into why heritage-making remains critical to the cultural politics of decolonization. He describes how postcolonial nations begin to think of themselves in terms of heritage and how the acts of remaking heritage, is a thriving industry in almost every postcolonial setting. Herwitz also highlights a key aspect of this thesis’ approach when he points to the connected ways in which heritage practices work across the colonial and postcolonial eras, showing that postcolonial states adopt heritage practices inherited from the colonial era. He argues that postcolonial states enter the heritage game, engages with the past and employ the same regimes of care as their colonial predecessors. Thus, his work postulates the enduring and wide-ranging way in which postcolonial societies continually invoke and use their past to address contemporary issues.

The contribution of my study to the debate on the nature and function of heritage is that it shows how practices of pastness engage with and challenge hegemonic practices, and how the later accommodates the unofficial practices, in ways that show that their relationship is not always antagonistic. While literature on community participation in heritage management or community archaeology describe these practices in ways where the power relations are top-down and skewed against the local communities, this thesis seeks to further problematise this relation, pointing to a different power dynamic. The thesis suggests that part of the responses to the marginalisation caused by official practices manifest as community-based counter-heritage practices. Counter-heritage practices manifest in invocation of practices of pastness based on recourse to notions of sacredness mobilised around dead bodies and ancestral ties to landscapes and sites.

Through counter-heritage practices, local communities define themselves in opposition to official history and state-imposed practices of commemoration, yet they seek to be recognized as part of official heritage. Counter-heritage practices are buttressed by invoking local traditions, which are reworked and adapted to suit present needs. The counter-heritage practices, in response to the hegemonic tendencies of insititutionalised practices, draw from a different archive and manifest as happenstance, improvisation or juxtaposition, particularly in moments of resource scarcity. This coexistence of official heritage practices and counter-heritage practices further points to the complexity of colonial experience and consequently of the colonised's complex encounter with modernity. In the postcolonial era, counter-heritage practices validate local communities' claims in the present offering, the possibility for alternative relationships in heritage preservation practices.

### **Background: Memorialisation and the Use of the Past in Zimbabwe**

This thesis engages in a close reading of heritage practices whose trajectory is closely associated with specific landscapes, monuments, and sacred sites in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe. In recent decades, a range of new approaches to the study and interpretation of the cultural landscape have been adopted by specialists from disciplines such as archaeology, anthropology, sociology and architecture. The cultural landscape is now conceived of as an emblematic site of representation, a locus of both power and resistance, and a key element in the heritage process (Mitchell, 1994; Tilley, 1994; Jacques, 1995; Schama, 1995). These studies foreground the significance of the past in the contemporary construction of identity and draw particular attention to the powerful role of monuments and commemoration as sites of cultural heritage (Moore and Whelan, 2007). The works demonstrate how the past is remembered and acted out through landscapes, monuments, commemorative ceremonies and archaeology, all of which work in constituting an official public memory that becomes part of a group's heritage (Pischief, 2012).

This thesis draws substantially from the secondary literature on landscapes, archaeology and heritage management in Zimbabwe, particularly the large corpus of writings on Zimbabwean attachment to landscape<sup>1</sup> and on the role of ancestral spirits and their link to practices of memorialisation in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe (Ranger, 1967, 1977, 1999; Lan, 1995; Moore 1998, 2005; Ndoro, 2005; Fontein, 2006). These works set the background to this study by showing how practices of commemoration or heritage practices have been previously studied in Zimbabwe. This background is crucial in demonstrating the persistence of heritage discourses and

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<sup>1</sup> In referring to this term, I go along with explanations of the term that highlight human attachment to landscape and perceive landscape as a cultural process that enables people to find identity in landscape and place. In this framing, landscape therefore is not just about nature but also about how humans interpret nature and ascribe values to landscape for intangible – spiritual – reasons (Mitchell, 1994; Tilley, 1994; Jacques, 1995; Schama, 1995).

practices of commemoration in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe. In particular the social history of Zimbabwe has in recent years produced a range of in-depth analyses dealing with the impact of the liberation war (second *Chimurenga*)<sup>2</sup> upon postcolonial identity formation and ideological formations. There are numerous studies on the “postcolonial memorial complex” specifically its association with narratives of the liberation war and celebration of war heroes by Richard Werbner (1996, 1998), Norma Kriger (2003, 2006), David Buuck (2011), Jeremy Brickhill (1995), Katja Uusihakala (2008), Ian Phimister (1995, 2003, 2010, 2010a, 2012), Josephine Fischer (2010) and others. I particularly find Richard Werbner’s formulation of “the postwars of dead” important in showing how places connected to the dead, become sacralised and are used as sites of commemoration, on account of their containing ancestral human remains.

While there has been substantial writing on memorial landscapes and related issues, there is a shortage of critical literature on heritage practices in Zimbabwe, a gap which this thesis attempts to address. The gap is related in part to the privileged position of larger memorial landscapes and archaeological sites and the discipline of archaeology starting in the late 1890s in Rhodesia. Due to this privileging, since the 1890s, writing on practices of commemoration and heritage preservation activities in Zimbabwe has been dominated by a huge focus on the rich archaeology of Zimbabwe and the popularity of specific memorial landscapes. Literature has tended to concentrate on the technical, political, and cognitive issues around the development of archaeology, highlighting the development of archaeology and its links to nation and the protection of archaeological monuments and sites (Ndoro, 1999, 2005; Pikirayi, 2006, 2012; Fontein, 2006, 2006a). The Matopos landscape and archaeological sites, particularly the dry stone walled Zimbabwe type-sites such as Great Zimbabwe, Khami, and Dhlodhlo dominated early archaeological and historical research as much as these sites were central in shaping identities and in influencing preservation policies (Baines, 1877; Bent, 1896; Hall & Neal, 1902, Hall, 1905; Burke, 1969).

Activities at these sites also influenced heritage discourses and practices across the colonial and postcolonial periods and consequently an abundant literature emerged focussing on these places (Ranger, 1999; Pikirayi, 2001; Ndoro, 2005). The emphasis on archaeology resulted in a large corpus of literature on Great Zimbabwe, while the spiritual importance of the Matopos and its

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<sup>2</sup> *Chimurenga* is a Shona term that means “struggle for freedom”. The term has been commonly used in Zimbabwean to refer to ‘wars of independence’ against colonial rule that culminated in Zimbabwe’s independence in 1980. The *first Chimurenga* was the war waged against the British (BSAC) colonial imposition in 1896/7 and the *second Chimurenga* refers to the second liberation war (1970-1980). The *third Chimurenga* refers to the ‘war of economic emancipation’ started by the ZANU PF government in the late 1990s manifesting in the process of land acquisition from white farmers and redistribution to landless blacks.

association with white colonial history turned it into the most written about landscape in Zimbabwe. The “Great Zimbabwe controversy” is one of the long-standing debates on the link between archaeological sites, knowledge production, and ideas of nation and political control (Kuklick, 1991; Mufuka, 1981; Ndoro, 2005; Fontein, 2006). Thus, as Pwiti (1996) has clearly articulated, cultural heritage management and archaeological research in Zimbabwe have been the by-products of colonialism, a trajectory that dates back to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He also highlights the trajectory of these practices particularly how the management of the cultural heritage and archaeological research were done without the involvement of the indigenous populations. However, he also shows us how when the country became independent from British rule in 1980, however, the new political environment placed new responsibilities on heritage managers in the face of increasing calls for involvement from Communities living in areas where the sites to be managed are located. A direct result of this was as the heritage management regime attempted to accommodate the local people previously alienated from their past, the process was characterised conflict between official heritage management policy and practice on the one hand, and the views of local communities on the other (Pwiti, 1996; Pwiti and Mvenge, 1996; Taruvinga & Ndoro, 2003).

These interventions show how the project of colonial and postcolonial archaeology led to a double alienation and marginalisation of indigenous associations with archaeological sites and memorial landscapes. On one level, the disciplinary practices of archaeology, with a large focus on large archaeological sites in Zimbabwe led to the dominance of scientific values at the expense of local interpretations and relationship with sites. The scientification of archaeological sites coupled with official preservation practices that barred physical access to the sites by local communities and outlawed the ritual practices. The work of Ndoro (2005) and Fontein (2003, 2006) on Great Zimbabwe shows how the professionalisation and scientific approaches to heritage preservation obfuscated the spiritual values associated with these sites. The alienation of the local communities led to negative perceptions of the discipline of archaeology and heritage preservation activities, resulting in incessant conflicts between the official agencies and local communities at archaeological sites (Pwiti, 1996; Fontein, 2006; Katsamudanga, 2009).

While this study finds value in the literature, I find a limitation in that the literature has largely focussed on large sites and landscapes, ignoring the smaller sites, considered important by local communities. The corpus of literature on archaeology and communities in Zimbabwe is crucial but it continues to approach heritage from the standpoint of official or authorised discourses thereby failing to highlight the complex ways in which community-based practices continue to engage with and challenge the hegemony of institutionalised practices. Though I accept

explanations that highlight the relationship between the official practices and community-based practices as characterised by the marginalisation of unofficial practices, I also see a more complex relationship between them. Thus, as community-based practices were pushed into the background, unrecognised by the formal system, they took different forms only to reappear when the political environment permitted. This explains for example, why in the postcolonial moment, and particularly after 2000, claims based on community-based heritage practices re-emerged with greater vigour, challenging the activities of disciplines and official heritage preservation agencies.

Nonetheless, some works have started to focus on smaller local sites and on showing the various ways in which local communities relate to archaeological sites, outside of the framework of the official constructs of heritage. Ndoro (1999, 2005) and Fontein (2006)'s work on Great Zimbabwe pointed to the various, if contested ways in which local communities ascribe their own set of values to archaeological sites and how they use their identities to lay claims to custodianship of the sites, which they would wish to use for rituals and other traditional practices. JoAnn McGregor's interesting study in Northwest Zimbabwe on what she calls "the social life of ruins" demonstrates how archaeological sites are continuously adapted by local political social and religious forces outside of the official or scientific framing, to negotiate and make claims (McGregor, 2005). She argues that the local intellectuals' promotion of this heritage is an important aspect of a defensive mobilization of cultural difference on the part of a marginalized minority group. McGregor notes that local intellectuals use the past to "redress their sense of marginalization, and seek to promote and popularise versions of their history and culture related to the ruins, linked to notions of discrete tribes and languages (McGregor, 2005:333).

Literature from colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe points us to a deep-seated and strong connection to landscapes across colonial and postcolonial periods, described by Fontein as "a particularly Zimbabwean interrelation with landscape; linking personal biographies, group reminiscences, memory "(Fontein, 2010:3). For some, this material and symbolic investment in land and landscapes is considered uniquely profound and peculiar in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe (Alexander, 2007). In acknowledgement of this fact, Uusihakala declares, "the symbolic investment in sacralising the landscape in Zimbabwe seems to be an ongoing, fervent process, very much on the contemporary agenda" (Uusihakala, 2008: 16). Concerning this, Richard Werbner notes that:

Zimbabwe is exceptional in the extensive sacred landscaping of the countryside.... Nowhere else in this part of Africa has the politics of nation-building been so significantly advanced through contradictory appropriation, both in memory and memorial, of the land's human remains; nowhere else ... has there been so much memory politics for the symbolic winning of the sacred terrain, so much contesting of legitimacy as a sacred bond with the land (Werbner, 1998: 99).

Jocelyn Alexander in her book, *The Unsettled Land* (2006), also underscores the centrality of land in Zimbabwean historiography. She asserts that land has been a metaphor with manifold meanings in Zimbabwe. She highlights how a fantasy of an “empty, unproductive land ripe for occupation runs through the colonial and postcolonial historiography of Rhodesia” (Alexander, 2001:5). Alexander argues that colonial conquest, eviction, and agrarian intervention made land central in Rhodesian and Zimbabwean configurations of power. On the one hand, while the settler state saw the land as empty and unsettled, for the blacks, on the other hand, the establishment of settler rule rested on violent dispossession through wars of conquest in which African land was taken, cattle looted and labour exploited (Alexander, 2006:5). Alexander concludes that, the issue of land has remained “unsettled” in the way of being unsolved for the past century making it an on-going contested issue marking the Zimbabwean experience.

This connectedness to landscapes and ancestors is evident in the substantial focus of the relevant literature on landscapes in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe dominated by a plethora of literature on the Matopos and other sacred places (Ranger, 1989, 1999; Bhebhe, 1978; Chennells, 1995). Ranger’s work in the Matopos reveals a strong link between landscape, spirituality, and practices of commemoration (Ranger, 1996, 2003). So great has been the emphasis on Zimbabwean archaeology and landscape studies that Terence Ranger remarked that, “as much as the Great Zimbabwe sites have dominated archaeological preservation discourses, the sacred sites of the Matopos and associated spiritual sites dominate studies on the spiritual sites” (Ranger, 2000:53).

Though earlier research mainly focussed on settler perceptions and relationships to landscape, recent work has begun to focus on “African” perceptions of landscape challenging the earlier works where Europeans in Africa were seen as having shaped landscapes and where “landscape was something that colonialism did to Africa” (Ranger, 1977: 46). In response to these subjective views and constructions on landscapes, several authors began to highlight the “African” relations to landscapes, which earlier accounts pushed to the background. These works tally with the agency accorded to the everyday practices as foregrounded by de Certeau (1984). They foreground the importance of smaller, locally based sites, in contrast to the attention to the bigger “national” sites elevated by previous studies. For instance, David Moore, drawing from James Scott’s (1990) conclusions on the role of space in subaltern resistance, spelt out how the Black inhabitants of Kaerezi in eastern Zimbabwe, always saw the surrounding landscape as saturated with power, meanings, and historical struggles for land rights (Moore, 1993, 2008, 2009). Recent work by Gerald Mazarire in Southern Zimbabwe has given fresh insights into the long associations and attachments to landscape maintained by local communities. Drawing from oral histories, Mazarire

revealed how central the idea of landscape is in thinking about the making and meaning of oral history, arguing that landscapes contain both history and historiography, and that the locals ascribe their own interpretation to landscapes (Mazarire, 2003, 2006, 2007).

The huge corpus of literature on connections to landscape is very valuable in demonstrating the deep-seated investment in and connection to landscapes in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. Yet in most cases, the memorial landscapes, historical monuments, or archaeological sites are seen in terms of White versus African or colonial against postcolonial perceptions. While this study acknowledges the value of such divisions, it also proposes an approach that flags the complex intersection across these divides. The central approach in this study is the investigation of the extent to which heritage is deployed in negotiating or validating political, social and cultural claims across spatial or time-bound binary delineations. The study is therefore a significant addition to the writing on heritage practices in Zimbabwe.

This thesis also borrows from the emerging body of literature that embarks in a critical analysis of the use of the past in postcolonial Zimbabwe. This literature provides a background for this study in showing the political aspects of the control and use of the past in Zimbabwe. Richard Werbner and Norma Kriger's work pioneered a critique of the political dimensions of the use of the past postcolonial Zimbabwe included the works of (Werbner, 1998; Kriger, 1995, 2006). The works digressed from the overly nationalist narratives that characterised early writing on newly independent Zimbabwe. Theirs works largely focussed on the early colonial state's manipulation of the past and the activities of liberation war veterans. Their work pointed to the contested nature of project of memorialisation and how these created what Werbner characterised as a "crisis of the postcolonial memorial complex" characterised by manipulation of the liberation war (Werbner, 1998:73).

Recent literature in Zimbabwe has begun to show how the past, as well as practices of heritage have increasingly been subjected to state control, particularly in times of political challenge. In demonstrating the state's increasing control of the past, Ranger talks of a "politics of memorialisation" (Ranger, 2009a), of "uses and abuses of history" (Ranger, 2005) and of "nationalist historiography, patriotic history and the struggle over the past" in Zimbabwe (Ranger, 2004). Ranger's work stimulated a plethora of works criticising the state's manipulation of the past in attempting to forge social and political cohesion amid a period of political tension and threats to its legitimacy (Miles-Tendi, 2008, 2009, 2010). Other works highlight the hegemonic nature of the state-inspired projects of memorialisation that marginalise other regions such as Matebeleland (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2007, 2011; Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Willems, 2009, 2010). As understood by

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007) and others, the defining characteristics of “patriotic history” are the central roles ascribed to land and race, circumscribed by loyalty to the liberation movement in the shape of ZANLA/ZANU PF (Phimister, 2012, 2010, 2010a). Ian Phimister argues that the state’s hold on Zimbabwean historiography has spelled what he describes as “the end of History” in Zimbabwe (Phimister, 2012:27).

While there has been a commendable build-up of works analysing the politics of the use of the past in Zimbabwe, the focus of most of the literature has been on the use of the past in the postcolonial era. Attention to the politics of commemoration or the use of the past in the colonial era has not been given as much attention. The few works on colonial practices largely focussed on the link between memorial landscapes and white identities in Rhodesia. These include Ranger’s treatise on the appropriation of landscapes by settlers and the ensuing contests on practices of heritage between the settlers and the Shona and Ndebele groups in the Matopos (Ranger, 1989; 1999). Recent work by *McGregor* (2009) or Hughes focussed on the white associations to nature, particularly water, in what Hughes refers to as whites’ “hydrological heritage” (Hughes, 2010, 2006, 2006a).

These works were useful in that on one level they highlight a persistent investment in practices of commemoration, and heritage preservation activities that were closely linked to specific places across the eras. On another level, they point to the ambivalences and contests associated with the use of the past in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe. Nonetheless, regardless of the persistent significance of the discourses of heritage in Zimbabwe, the area remains largely under-theorised as most literature and preservation management systems still look at heritage places and activities through an uncritical lens, where disciplines such as Archaeology are unquestionably given a central position in validating “authorised heritage.” Thus, this work seeks to trace and problematise the long genealogy of heritage practices in Zimbabwe by highlighting the diverse and changing meanings of places, sites, and objects. It seeks to contribute to critical theoretical frameworks that try to explain the role of heritage in post settler settings. Therefore, the thesis explores the ways in which processes of commemoration and practices of pastness organised around museums, monuments and sacred sites took shape, influenced by changing political contexts, and conversely how changing political contexts produced and framed specific practices of heritage.

In making this analysis, I argue that the concept of entanglement offers an interesting approach to examining how heritage discourses and practice are more interrelated in space and time. Instead of looking for rupture, I search for linkages and continuities connecting precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial practices. As its key analytical approach, this thesis attempts to bridge the genres of

writing that treat these periods separately. This framework is crucial in underscoring the connections and continuities and in analysing and destabilising the binaries engrained in discussions of the changes from pre-colonial to the colonial and postcolonial periods. Sarah Nuttall highlights the importance of recognising the connections when defines entanglement as, “a condition of being twisted together, or entwined, involved with...It speaks of an intimacy gained, even if it was resisted or ignored or unwanted. It works with difference and sameness but also with their limits, their moments of complication” (Nuttall, 2009:1).

According to Nuttall, there is value in disrupting the rigid, linear dualism between centre/periphery and coloniser vs. colonised to highlight “circuits, layers, webs and overlapping fields” (Nuttall, 2009: 2). In relation to seeking such an interconnectedness, Isabel Hofmeyr (2007, 2008) and Achille Mbembe (2001) argue that the “postcolony” is a place in which the past and present are intertwined and entangled in multifaceted ways. They suggest an “interlocking of pasts, presents, and futures” where “not only do time and space become displaced, and entangled, but so do identity and subjectivity, these latter dependent upon the ever-changing political imaginary constantly acted upon by those governing and those governed” (Terretta, 2002: 162). Carolyn Hamilton proposes that categories and institutions forged under colonial rule should not be viewed as wholesale creation of white authority but as a result of “complex historical entanglements of indigenous and colonial concepts” (Hamilton, 1998:3 4).

The concept of entanglement highlights the complex and interrelated nature of the relationship between pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial discourses and practices of heritage. I find this approach crucial in analysing connections and continuities in the uses of heritage across these periods in Zimbabwe. Rather than looking at the changes from the pre-colonial to the colonial and postcolonial periods as strictly divided, the approach proposes that the interactions across these periods were fluid and interconnected. Thus, for the discourses and practices of heritage, focusing on the fluidities and interconnectedness across the pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial periods can show the interdependent relationships and demonstrate the dynamics of power relations within and across the epochs, highlighting how they relate to, and draw from on each other. Such a focus on entanglements allows one to problematise dichotomies such as colonial and postcolonial, modernity and tradition, official and unofficial heritage, that are embedded within the normative discussions on heritage.

### **Methodology and Data Collection**

My methodology was largely influenced by my background and my position as curator in NMMZ, an organisation that brings together museums, monuments, and sites in its preservation activities.

I further examined the colonial archive, read historiographical texts and consulted legal, institutional and policy documents. I also visited monuments and sites, attended and observed rituals and practices of commemoration, and followed these with targeted oral interviews. My approach of concurrently considering these places in a single frame is a direct result of an urge to demonstrate the linkages between them and my way of taking readers on the journeys that I took between the spaces.

My work as a “Curator/ Heritage Manager” in an institution that jointly managed and controlled museum and monuments and arbitrated the local communities’ associations with these sites, influenced my bringing together of these three aspects in my study. Working within NMMZ made me aware of how deep-seated the connections between landscapes, museums and monuments were. As a Curator of Ethnography”, my portfolio ranged from ethnographic research and writing to caring for the ethnographic collection as well as being the point person for the museums’ contact with communities, particularly in spiritual matters concerning objects and sites. So strong was this association of our department with spiritual issues that we were always called to deal with issues that were seen as “spiritual” in nature. At one time we developed a reputation as the department that collected and dealt with issues around witchcraft and goblins (*zvikenambo*), and we collected a few of these (or what was left of them) after they had been discovered and exorcised in some suburbs in Harare.

Within the museum, as a Curator of ethnography, I worked with a large pool of archaeologists. While all other museums had fully fledged departments of archaeology and monuments’ inspection, our Ethnography department at ZMHS was the only one dedicated to “ethnographic” issues within the whole organisation, consisting of more than 5 large museums in the five regions (provinces). We collected, documented and curated the collection, working with an inventory and classification system developed way back in the 1960s in the museum. I also worked with researchers from other research institutions interested in the ethnographic collections. I acquired substantial knowledge not only of the collection and its archive in the museum, but also got exposed to the emerging issues around access to and conflicts over custodianship and use of sites of spiritual importance by local communities. Outside the museum, I would engage with developers, local authorities, chiefs, and local religious leaders on issues around their use of and preservation of sites. I made occasional visits to archaeological sites such as Great Zimbabwe, Khami or the Matopos to address issues around the local communities’ participation and access. I visited sites such as Ntabazikamambo (Manyanga) where local spirit mediums were beginning to lay very strong claims for custodianship. I also made trips to sacred places such as the Shavarunzi, Chitungwiza, Maringove and Nharira to listen and attend to concerns of the local spirit mediums.

These experiences, my own professional biography in the museum and the relationships I made, and the insights I gained from working, studying and networking in the Zimbabwean heritage sector encouraged me to explore questions on the link between heritage practices, identities and politics. Working with local communities where there was on one hand unending contests over custodianship of local sacred sites and on another an extraordinary association with these sites and traditions, prompted me to ask questions on why heritage continued to hold such a central place within the local political and religious cosmos. Ancestral association, local tribal and family histories, rituals and traditions held a central role within these communities in ways that even the NMMZ as a state supported heritage management agency was having challenges to cope up with. As they sought to be recognised by the NMMZ, local communities were clear in how they preferred to retain total control of these areas. As the NMMZ attempted to accommodate the emerging requests from communities, several areas of tension occasionally emerged between the institution and the local communities.

Thus, my experiences as a heritage manager assisted me in developing a self-reflexive approach, which has been an essential element of my methodology and my analysis. My PhD research, carried a few years after I had left the institution, accorded me a level of embeddedness in the workings of an institution in which I had worked for years. The advantages of this embeddedness lay in that, based on previous knowledge and exposure in NMMZ, I had a good level of exposure to the institution and was familiar with the materials I was studying and I could readily engage with them. I was therefore starting at a position where I could easily locate the materials, thereby reducing my data collection efforts. I thus had a good level of access to materials, systems, and activities that I had been involved with as an employee of NMMZ. However, the familiarity also meant that as a researcher, I had to step out of my close connections with the material in order to allow a degree of critical engagement and reflexivity. It was in this “stepping out” where I began to reflect on and examine the activities of the organisation I had carried out as an employee and in the process challenge assumptions inculcated by years of experience in the organisation that I was now studying.

I therefore scrutinised policy documents, legislation, reports, and other documentary evidence associated with the NMMZ and its predecessor organisations. I visited, with professionals in NMMZ, sites, monuments and museums. The documentary archive from the NMMZ and its predecessor organisations such as the Rhodesian National Museum, the Queen Victoria Memorial and the Commission for the Preservation of Historic and Natural Monuments and Relics (National Monuments Commission), formed the biggest documentary source from which I drew information on Rhodesian official approaches to commemoration, memorialisation and

museumification. These official documents included legislative texts, correspondence, speeches, policy documents, media reports, and annual reports. These institutions, as well as the manuscripts section of the National Archives in Harare, hold part of this documentary archive. I relied on the official documents in the various archives and analysed museum collections, exhibitions and inventories at the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo and the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences in Harare, which are the two oldest of the five state museums in the country. The two museums hold the oldest and most comprehensive documentary archives on the workings of the NMMZ. I combed annual reports, newsletters, the objects inventories, projects reports, newspaper clippings, to gain a deeper understanding of the working of the NMMZ and its predecessor organisations.

The colonial documentary archive at the National Archives of Zimbabwe is rich in original primary documents and a collection of secondary sources on early colonial historiography from which I drew information on early Rhodesian practices of commemoration and settler historiography. It was in reading texts relating to the founding of the colony and the corpus of texts that developed around it up to the 1970s that I was able to glean information about the central role of specific events and personalities in the founding of Rhodesia. I analysed files, correspondences, reports, and scientific publications of the various scientific committees such as the Rhodesian Scientific Association, the Rhodesian Early Pioneers, and Settlers Society. These were crucial in providing information on the value of these institutions in framing the colonial approaches to museums and the development of science, and the veneration of settler narratives of origin. The photography collection at the National Archive offered me an opportunity to get a visual impression of various commemorative activities, old monuments, and commemorative practices, over and above what the written accounts provided. The very acts of photographic practices themselves were part of the commemorative practices. What was selected to be photographed and archived tells us about what activities the photographers saw as significant to record. Thus, what was included and left out of the photography archive reflects the nature and significance of specific commemorative practices.

One major element of my methodology was to visit monuments and sites where I had opportunities to observe people's interactions and responses to places. In visiting memorials, shrines, sacred sites and other spaces, I was able to gain an understanding of the visual and symbolic aspects of the sites that enabled me to infer how they operated. It is only in visiting sites such as Great Zimbabwe, the National Heroes' Acre, Provincial Heroes' Acres, Matopos, and sacred sites such as Nharira Hills, Chitungwiza, Ntabazikamambo, and Mazowe that I began to have deeper understanding of how they operate visually in space and symbolically. In visiting the

Ntabazikamambo sacred and archaeological site, walking with the medium and listening to her narrations, I was able to see how the spirit medium- cum- custodian mediated her authority between herself, the NMMZ and other local interests. Through interviewing the spirit medium in the Mazowe cultural landscape, on-site, walking across the various sacred places, I gained insight into the various complex issues connected to local politics and claims to land. I was also able to see how the spirit medium perceived her role in the highly contested landscape and her role in the cultural and political history of the country. The visits to sacred places, burial sites, and carrying out of interviews onsite allowed me to observe the deep connection my informants had with the physical aspects of their landscapes. This deep connection became more explicit as and when the informants pointed to spaces in the landscapes such as gravesites, ritual spots, sacred pools, ritual huts as they wove their narratives for me.

Visits to the museums augmented the visual impressions and documentary evidence offered by the photographic archive and the site visits. The museums' exhibition halls constituted a primary source that became important for me in analysing the museum practices, the schemas of selection, classification, and interpretation through permanent and temporary exhibition. I studied the organisation of exhibition galleries in both museums and this assisted me in extracting biographical details of the collections and objects. I also engaged intensively with selected objects in the museum collection such as the *Ngoma Lungundu* (Ark of the Covenant) and the Mukwati walking stick. I traced the movement of these objects and pursued documents, correspondence, media articles, and the various activities associated with their mobility with the aim of creating some backstories on the objects. I used the activities around these objects to tease out the nature of collection practices in colonial and postcolonial museums in Zimbabwe. The personal objects and collections associated with two colonial historical figures, Cecil John Rhodes and Robert Edward Codrington enabled me to analyse the place of the museum objects in post-colonial contexts. I analysed exhibitions on the two figures in the museum and examined the objects, documents, and secondary literature on their activities. Through a reading how these figures were curated in the museum exhibitions, I gained insights into the nature of Rhodesian practices of museumification and how the inherited aspects of the colonial past associated with these collections have been dealt with in the postcolonial era.

The documentation and databases of the Ethnography collections and the Archaeology Survey at the ZMHS were useful in providing detailed information on the biographies of the various objects and monuments. In the ZMHS ethnography section, I was able to look at accession registers, and collections databases and to look at the ethnographic collection. In the Archaeology Survey, diaries of early archaeologists and scientists, grid maps, the databases of sites, national monuments,

excavation reports, and monuments inspection reports provided vital information on the operations of the institutions over time. For instance, the library section of the museums contained well-preserved “scrapbooks’ with annotated newspaper cuttings on museums, archaeology, and other matters from as early as the 1920s. These allowed me to determine the interesting dynamic between the operation of museums, and the public’s views and interests in matters relating to the country’s archaeological and historical aspects.

Another key element of my methodology lay in attending and observing selected commemorative events and rituals. This selective participant observation was fundamental in providing information on the importance of the places at which the activities were carried out. I attended commemorative practices and rituals such as burials of liberation war heroes, which enabled me to link the physical, the ritual, and performative aspects of the sites. In July 2010, I attended the Heroes Day commemoration and in August 2011, during my fieldwork period, I was able to attend the burial of Solomon Mujuru, a retired Zimbabwean Army commander, who upon his death, was declared a “national hero” and buried at the National Heroes’ Acre in Harare. Participating in these rituals enabled me to experience, first hand, how state commemorations are held. This allowed me to make a link between the visual aspects of the shrines and their symbolic use and I was able to record the narratives projected from such spaces. I was able to observe the fervent nature in which the practices of burial became key in asserting the state’s agenda of unity and cohesion. Observing the burial activities revealed how these sites are used as platforms for giving a public life to the narrative of nation. During my fieldwork, I also made visits to site museums and interpretive centres at monuments and sites, which exposed me to how these sites connect with the public and what types of information they communicated.

Therefore, relying on a self-reflexive approach, my methodology combined a reading of the colonial archive and official repository of the heritage preservation agency, the NMMZ, with selected moments of observation complemented by targeted structured interviews. My fieldwork targeted revisiting selected museums, monuments, and sacred sites where I had worked when I was still employed by NMMZ. This methodology enabled a closer reading and analysis of the various activities carried by the institutions and allowed me to question and interrogate these activities, in which I had been previously engaged, allowing a deeper and more critical look at the genealogy of heritage practices in Zimbabwe.

## Outline of Chapters

This thesis is organised into three sections. The first section consisting of Chapters One to Three, lays out the necessary background by investigating colonial practices of commemoration, museumification, use of historiography and their links to the making of a white settler heritage. This chapter introduced the study and has provided the analytical, theoretical, and methodological frameworks that influence this study. Chapters Two and Three examine a deep-seated and long-standing investment in practices of commemoration based on landscapes, museums, and archaeological sites that runs through the Zimbabwean past. They highlight the processes of institutionalisation of settler heritage and explore how settler identities were expressed through the discourse of heritage. The second section consisting of Chapter 4 builds on the background provided in the first section by focusing on the developments in postcolonial era, investigating the continuities and entanglements across the colonial and postcolonial period. I interrogate the ways in which the postcolonial state dealt with an inherited heritage framework and outline the various attempts at to redressing the colonial imbalances. I pair official heritage practices with local community-based practices to investigate the nature of the encounters between them. The final part of the thesis, Chapters Five and Six, further investigate the role played by practices of pastness mobilised around sacred places and human remains and how these were invoked in a period of political and economic challenges facing the country. These practices of pastness are central to new notions of heritage and to emerging ideas about how it is talked about, managed and protected.

### *Chapter Two*

The *second* chapter provides a background to Rhodesians' relationship with their past by examining the incoming settlers' connection to landscapes, monuments, and practices of memorialisation, in their attempts to create a "Rhodesian identity." The chapter traces the emergence of "settler heritage" based on an extraordinary investment in landscapes and practices of memorialisation. In fashioning a white public sphere, public memorials and commemorative events were deployed to foster a sense of Rhodesian nationalism. The chapter also critically points us to the connectedness between indigenous notions of space and settler practices of commemoration, showing how specific places persistently featured in discourses and practices of heritage across the eras. The chapter draws attention to how settlers selectively adapted and appropriated the practices and spaces of indigenous communities, creating a strong link to heritage that was derived from the colony's prehistoric and historic past, and indigenous traditions, deliberately mixed with European

ideals of monumentality. However, the chapter also shows how in practice, colonial heritage practices in the early colonial period were fragmented and were pushed by individual interests, corporate interests, and an emerging intellectual community rather than by the BSAC government.

### *Chapter Three*

The *third* chapter investigates the place and function of heritage in the later colonial period. It looks at the link between intellectual traditions, state legislation, and the entrenchment of a white heritage. It highlights the role of archaeology and other disciplines in influencing the officialisation of the use of the past in Rhodesia. The chapter illustrates growing state interest in the country's prehistoric and historic eras in a period characterised by increasing entrenchment of white settler political and economic claims. It highlights the emergence of state-based forms of control and the bureaucratisation of museums, monument making, and the practice of archaeology instituted by the state after the end of BSAC rule in 1923. In this period, the role of science within museums was key in the colonial state's control of the use of the past. The museum became central in nurturing scientific disciplines that participated in identifying, mapping, collecting, and classifying of the colony's natural, prehistoric, historic material aspects. These disciplines and technologies of government were key in establishing the colony's grip on knowledge, as part of claim to territory. The bureaucratisation and formal regulation appropriated sites and materials for archaeology and heritage discourse. Internally, this control was crucial for the government that was establishing its hold on the colony's political economy. In the context of the imperial relationship with Britain as well as regional and international geopolitics, the period was characterised by the colony's need to negotiate its place in a rapidly changing environment. The control of the past was an important element of these negotiations.

### *Chapter Four*

The *fourth* chapter moves between museums, collections, objects, and sites, analysing the nature of the postcolonial encounter between an inherited official heritage and emerging claims from local communities. The postcolonial state inherited official heritage practices that were at odds with the lived realities of local communities, leading to complex encounters between official heritage and previously marginalised community-based practices of pastness. The chapter highlights the challenges faced by a system that was attempting to navigate the vestiges of a colonial past in an unstable postcolonial socio-political context. It looks at the function of museums and sites after 1980 to show the complex interactions between a colonially-derived museum and marginalised local communities. In response to the officially prescribed practices, the chapter draws from Young's concept of counter memory to articulate how in response to official heritage, community-

based counter-heritage practices developed around claims to archaeological sites and museum objects.

Counter-heritage practices manifested in the re-siting of the commemorative impulse, which after 1980 was dispersed, organised around reconfigured archaeological sites, sacred sites, and ancestral lands. In a new political dispensation ushered by political independence, local communities asserted their claims to sites by invoking long-held practices of pastness, rooted in their histories and traditions. The interaction between “official” and “unofficial” heritage practices, charted a new approach to heritage that foregrounded practices of pastness previously marginalised from the official heritage practices. The practices of pastness in referencing official heritage conferred agency on the local communities and began a process that conflated the official/unofficial binaries. Ultimately, the chapter highlights how in practice, and when seen across the colonial and postcolonial eras, the function of heritage remained a form of mobilisation which demonstrated continuity rather than a break with the past.

#### *Chapter Five*

In *Chapter Five*, the study examines another re-siting of the heritage impulse, the re-emergence of practices of pastness that were based on sacred sites. I investigate the contexts in which this heritage, embedded in local communities’ traditions, became a basis for a resurgence of claims based on sacred sites in a context of emergency. The claims based in sacred sites acquired a particular force in post-2000 Zimbabwe, showing how in contemporary crises, communities reached out to heritage to validate claims for resources. The chapter draws from activities at selected sites and foregrounds the role of activities around sacred sites in challenging hegemonic heritage practices. The emergence of practices of pastness offered a platform for communities to lay claims and to call for attention from the state. In doing this, they referenced the official forms of control by requesting to be recognised and have their sites listed as national monuments. These practices of pastness that existed outside the official notions of heritage re-emerged and invoked a different archive based on the dead as well as ancestral ties to land and rituals. While the inherited museums became preserved as sepulchres from the colonial past, the heritage impulse became externalised, dispersed and visualised in reconfigured archaeological sites and sacred sites. Yet, the foregrounding of these practices that had existed at the margins created a new form of relationship with official institutions, blurring the divide between them.

#### *Chapter Six*

*Chapter Six* investigates how heritage features as cultural capital for both the state and dissenting communities in a period characterised by acute political and economic challenges. This chapter

argues that liberation war historiography and public acts of memorialisation based on the war dead, was deployed by the state to reaffirm its authority in times of political and economic challenges that characterised the post-2000 era in Zimbabwe. The narrative of the liberation history which was absent in the museum was given a public life in these monumental spaces. The state deployed institutional control through the NMMZ to constitute the spaces as components of “national monuments” in the same vein as other archaeological and historical monuments. Framing elements of the war as “liberation heritage”, the NMMZ, a state sponsored institution mandated to manage museums and monuments, participated in, and facilitated the public life of liberation narratives. Nonetheless, the chapter also traces how the state’s recourse to human remains stimulated counter-practices that also mobilised around a different set of human remains to register dissent. The chapter draws attention to how aspects of the liberation war packaged as official heritage, remain central in Zimbabwe’s contemporary political and cultural scene.

### *Chapter Seven*

The final chapter presents the concluding remarks highlighting how the empirical material presented in this thesis has raised several theoretical points that also have implications on heritage preservation practices and processes of knowledge production. Firstly, developments in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe confirm that heritage is a project of ideology that is dependent on ambivalent temporal entanglements (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1995). It is an entanglement of knowledge, politics and commercial interests (Shepherd, 2008, Herwitz, 2012). Yet, the events over a long stretch of time in Zimbabwe, demonstrate how monuments, museums and sites, constituted as heritage are platforms through which communities continually negotiate their identities and validate various political, cultural, and economic claims. Secondly, the work also suggests that the approaches that separate pre-colonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods in talking about heritage practices limits our understanding of the connections across the eras. The evidence for challenging the temporal separation is encapsulated in how ideas and practices about heritage or the uses of heritage display connectedness and continuities across the eras. Fourthly, the developments in Zimbabwe affirm the theorisation that heritage is more than just a discourse or language through which claims can be made, but that heritage practices are also a set of political activities that are activated by the marginalised to effect change.

The thesis also particularly highlights the complexity of interaction between official and unofficial heritage practices by proposing the notion of counter-heritage practices. Mobilised around sacred places, human remains, ancestors and rituals, these practices that for a long time existed outside of the official definitions of heritage are used by local communities in claiming recognition. Such

counter-heritage practices demand attention from the state and reference official heritage practices leading to a blurring of the divide between official and unofficial heritage practices. Thus, the concept of counter-heritage practices points to a complex relationship between hegemonic disciplinary practices and marginalised knowledge practices.

Lastly, attention to practices of pastness points to the various ways in which the local and marginalised groups continue to engage with and challenge the hegemonic position of “Authorised Heritage Discourses” (Smith, 2006) encapsulated in institutionalised and global heritage preservation discourses. I suggest that relationship between museums and other official heritage institutions as the sites of production knowledge and the local or indigenous communities as “ethnographic” sites is being reworked in the present, giving possibilities of unsettling the hegemonic aspects of this relationship. The work highlights how a critical assessment and theorisation of heritage is connected to knowledge production. The prevalence of practices of pastness and the emergence of counter-heritage activities suggests the possibility of new relationships between official heritage preservation practices and unofficial practices and consequently between official disciplines and marginalised knowledges.

## CHAPTER TWO: SETTLER HERITAGE: MEMORIAL LANDSCAPES, MONUMENTS AND PRACTICES OF COMMEMORATION IN EARLY SOUTHERN RHODESIA, 1890-1936.

*Every nation has its own imagery, its gods, angels, devils, or saints who live in the nation's traditions, whose stories and deeds she tells heirs to her charges and so wins them over by impressing their imagination (Hegel quoted in Avineri, 1974:21).*

### Introduction

This chapter examines the nature and function of practices of commemoration and memorialisation in early Rhodesia. Partly drawing from secondary literature on the association between settlers and landscapes and an analysis of official primary reports of commemorations, the chapter shows how historiography, monuments, and performance were deployed, constructing an exclusive white public sphere. It demonstrates Rhodesia's longstanding and extraordinary investment in practices of memorialisation and how these were used to articulate a unique settler and Rhodesian identity. In the sense utilised by Halbwachs, the burials, monuments, memorials, rituals and acts of commemoration by the settlers became deliberate acts of "landmark marking" that transformed the landscape into a "psychic terrain; symbolic spaces that fix, or attempt to fix, collective remembering and act as prompts for a shared identity" (Halbwachs quoted in O'Keeffe, 2007:6), albeit exclusively for the white public. This, however, required a strategy that combined appropriated local idioms with European concepts of sacralisation of space. Consequently, in creating their associations to place, incoming settlers selectively appropriated sites and landscapes that were seen as having religious or historical value by indigenous black communities. Settler heritage was thus a combination of the country's local historical roots with imperial settler ideals, activities of early settlers (pioneers) and the British South Africa Company (BSACo). This resulted in transformation of African sites and cityscapes into palimpsests through a deliberate strategy that sought to dominate the African idiom while effectively imprinting European modernity on the African landscape.

### Ode to Country

In setting the background to this chapter, I refer to a selection of poems that represent part of the plethora of literary, musical, or creative works relating to the way in which early settlers regarded and imagined archaeological sites, landscapes and historic monuments in Rhodesia. The poetry relates to settlers' use of myths of origin and relationships to monuments, landscapes and other sites that developed in early Rhodesia and encompassed the entire colonial period. Nora Kane's (1954) piece entitled "The Rhodesian Pioneer," praises events and personalities associated with

the founding of the Rhodesian colony. The poem gives praises to the 1890 “Pioneer Column”, a militarised group that marched from South Africa, signalling the colonisation of the country in 1890. The poem applauds Cecil Rhodes, the founder of the British South Africa Company (BSAC), the Shangani and Mazowe battles, the two best known battles between the BSAC troops and the Ndebele (1893) and Shona (1896) respectively (Kane, 1954).

The second poem narrates the story of the BSAC pioneers and portrays a story of heroism, conquest, sacrifice, bravery, and adventure. The poem refers to the remains of pioneers buried in the open Rhodesian veld as those “whose memory should never be forgotten” and how the annual 12<sup>th</sup> September commemoration at Cecil Square in Salisbury, was key in keeping the memory of these pioneers (Carruthers, 1926:3). The third poem entitled "Great Zimbabwe" describes the Great Zimbabwe archaeological site in detail before asking the question which for many decades has preoccupied the minds of many Rhodesian settlers, "who were the builders of Great Zimbabwe?" and the answer provided in this poem is "no man knows" (Jones, 1949: 4). The poem appeals to the Great Zimbabwe archaeological monument, referring to it as a *terra nullis* - an empty land (Jones, 1949:15). Related to the above poem, Andrew Lang's poem "Zimbabwe", views the Great Zimbabwe site as associated with the early settlers' quest for gold (Lang, 1929:5).

These poems represent a small portion of the vast literature displaying settler cultural attachments to landscapes, monuments, and urban spaces after 1890. Such appeals to archaeological sites and narratives of the BSAC's Pioneer Column demonstrate their centrality in the symbolic aspects of space in Rhodesia as interpreted by the settler community and foistered on the entire nation. This demonstrates that in early Rhodesia, there was an intensive attention to archaeological sites, landscapes, and monuments and this attention influenced how the past was used throughout the colonial period. If they could demonstrate and confirm through science, that the massive archaeological structures strewn across the land had foreign or European connection, no matter how distant, they could validate their presence in this land. The settlers realised that if they could effectively appropriate the key sites and landscapes such as the Matopos and imbue them with white associations, they could firmly establish a white heritage to compete with the long-established indigenous practices.

Commenting on the importance of the creation of settler heritage David Hughes remarks that:

Imperial colonizers do not seize land with guns and plows alone. In order to keep it, especially ..., settlers must establish a credible sense of entitlement. They must propagate the conviction that they belong on the land they have just settled... all the while excluding natives from power, from wealth, and from territory, overseas pioneers must find a way to include themselves in new lands (Hughes, 2006a: 1-2)

Thus, in stating and entrenching the claim to belonging, settlers made use of landscapes, sites, and historiography and memorial practices in shaping practices of their worldview and asserting a sense of belonging. The settlers' appropriation of landscape included inscribing new associations and new symbols to the land through renaming and the erection of monuments celebrating their victory, triumph, and progress.

### **A View of the World: Ancestral Landscapes, Rhodescapes, and Memorialisation**

No discussion on landscapes, practices of memorialisation or and practices of heritage in Zimbabwe can be complete without considering the unique link between landscapes and identities. In discussing the interaction between settlers and Africans in Rhodesia, Hughes (2006, 2010), draws us to how settlers, who he refers to as "Euro-Africans" appealed to nature in creating what he called "an imported heritage" (Hughes 2006: 823). There is a vast literature that shows that in Rhodesia, nature was central in state building and in shaping white identities as it has been in shaping post-colonial nationalism, local identities, and politics (Reed, 1967; Chennells, 1989; Ranger, 1977, 1987). The Matopos landscape presents a clear case of how landscapes imbued with multiple layers of values became consistently appropriated, by diverse groups over time. From the 1890s, the Matopos became a space where notions and practices of heritage between indigenous groups and settlers clashed (Ranger 1989; West & Ndlovu- Gatsheni, 2009). Its deep prehistoric past, its links to an enduring African religion, its appropriation by whites and its conversion into a white memorial/historic landscape sacralised by the presence of human remains and monuments, shows how materiality became key in shaping ideas and notions of heritage.

With its unique geomorphological formations, archaeological sites, associations with the *Mwari* religion and burials of Ndebele kings, the Matopos elicited attention from Cecil Rhodes. Throughout the colonial era, settlers viewed the landscape as a white memorial landscape, while black communities continued their association with its spiritual value, deriving inspiration for their resistance to colonial rule. It was in the Matopos, more than anywhere else in the country that settler conceptions of space interlocked with African ideas and relationship to land. In the period after independence, the place maintains, in an ambivalent manner, a central role in the local and national cultural constructions, with implications for local identities.

The Matopos hills were declared a world heritage landscape in 2003. The landscape is considered to be intricately linked to cultural beliefs and historical events stretching into deep time (NMMZA, 2005:7). The Matopos is deemed to have been occupied for more than 500 000 years and contains

rock art stretching back to 10 000 years ago<sup>3</sup> (Cooke, 1959; Walker, 1995, 1996). Interspaced within its unique geomorphological formations of granite inselbergs, whalebacks, dwalas, and castellated hills are sacred shrines important for rituals on fertility, rainmaking, burial, and healing (Ntoi, 2006; West & Ndlovu- Gatsheni, 2009). Oral traditions highlight the Rozvi, the Kalanga and Ndebele groups' associations with this landscape (Ntoi, 2006; Munjeri, 1989). For the Mwari religion, whose influence spanned as far afield as parts of South Africa, Botswana, and Mozambique, this space has always been considered the domicile of the Gods, a place where the landforms represent points of communication with the spiritual world (Ranger, 1999). More importantly, the landscape contained important historical attachments such as the burial of Cecil Rhodes and King Mzilikazi, as well as the major battles fought between the BSAC and the Ndebele in the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The historic, cultural, and religious value of the Matopos to the black communities, its unique geomorphological makeup, and its diverse archaeological materials attracted attention from the incoming settlers. This attention to and eventual appropriation of the Matopos by settlers created conflict between settlers and indigenous populations throughout the colonial era.<sup>4</sup> Here, white conceptions of space and white historical associations entangled with Rozvi, Ndebele and Kalanga religion, and traditions. The rich archaeology of the Matopos provided a perfect backdrop for both the indigenous and white associations with the place. Describing the attraction of the Matopos, Cranmer Cooke, a Rhodesian archaeologist who also served as Chairperson of the Commission for the Preservation of Monuments and Relics remarked:

The Matopos have an attraction that is all their own... the Matopos are... our very own, and very near to the heart of our country ....To some of us the Matopos will always be a place apart, a place that speaks of all that is deepest and best in our love of our native land" (Cooke, 1965:3).

The Matopos, one of the most sacred landscapes for the Shona and Ndebele, became a focal point of this inscription. Cecil Rhodes decided to turn the Matopos, into his burial place, carried out as the penultimate activity of an elaborate burial ceremony that spanned two countries in which he had spent most of his life. Rhodes admired "the grandeur and loneliness of the Matopos" and

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<sup>3</sup> The Matopos is considered to have the largest concentration of rock art sites in the country, with between 3500 and 6000 sites (NMMZ, 2005a).

<sup>4</sup> There is a long and sustained scholarly work on landscapes in Zimbabwe. Terence Ranger frames the landscapes in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe as white landscapes and shows how settlers 'wrote' landscapes in Rhodesia and appropriated them through art. There is a cluster of writings about white identities and landscapes (Chennells, 1995; Ranger, 1977, 1987, 1989,1999.) .Recent studies have also focused on other aspects of landscapes such as memory, human rights or violence (McGregor & Ranger, 2000; Ranger 2000, 2007 ); politics of landscape (McGregor, 2009) and also an increasing focus on African relationships to landscapes with a focus on smaller and localised relations (Mazarire 2003, 2007; Moore, 1998, 1999)

declared his desire to be buried on the hill he renamed “the View of the World - Worlds View” (Stead, 1902:16).

After his death in 1902, Cecil Rhodes was buried at the spot that he had chosen as indicated in his will. His burial was provided for in his will, a document that also “immortalized” him through numerous and generous donations and bequests that included various organisations in Southern Africa and England. To seal the Matopos as a white memorial landscape associated with heroes of the pioneer period, Rhodes also indicated in his will that his compatriots should be buried there. The remains of the 33 Allan Wilson Patrol members which had since 1894, been buried at Great Zimbabwe were reburied at the Worlds View in 1904, two years after Rhodes' death (Nobbs, 1956). Other personalities buried in the Matopos included Leander Starr Jameson, the first Administrator of Rhodesia, former president of the BSAC, and former Prime Minister of the Cape Colony (1904-1908). Leander Starr Jameson, who died in 1917, was reburied at World's View in 1920 (Ranger, 1999; Maylam, 2005). When the first Prime Minister of Rhodesia, Charles Patrick Coghlan died on August 14, 1930 he was also buried at Worlds View (Cooke, 1965).

The white sacralisation of Matopos consecrated through the burial of Cecil Rhodes and some of his heroes and Worlds View, was consolidated with the erection of monuments at the site (Stead, 1906:4). Also provided for in Rhodes' will, was a memorial erected a few metres from Rhodes' grave (Figure 1).<sup>5</sup> He also set this as a special burial place when he indicated in his will that he desired the hill to be preserved as a burial place, and that no other person would be buried there unless the government approved. Thus, the place was set apart as a special and exclusive burial place for only those people “who deserved well of their country” (Stead, 1902:17).

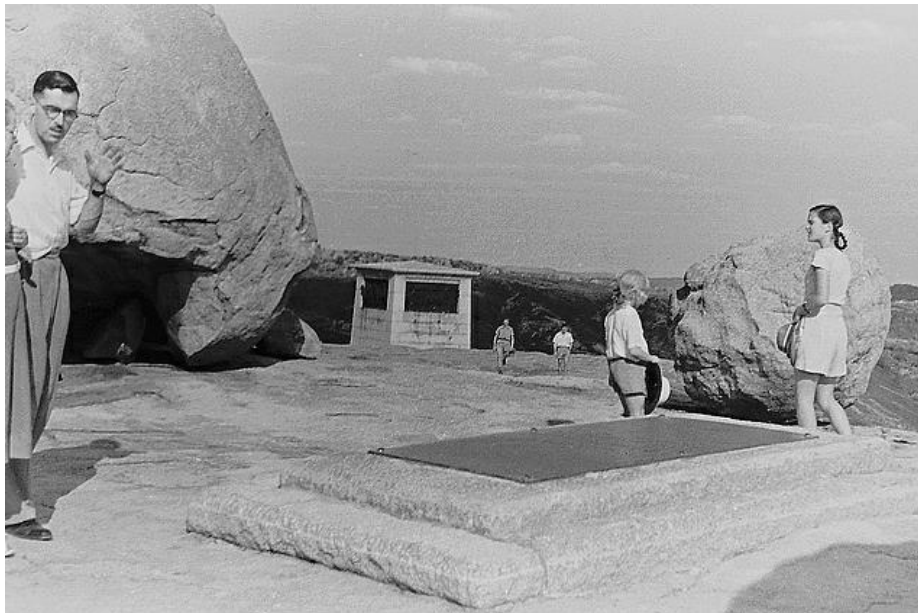
This monumentalisation was associated with typical silences about Ndebele narratives or their religious and cultural association with the place. This deliberate omission and marginalisation of Ndebele history is characteristic of all colonial projects of monumentalisation and practices of commemoration. If the commemoration sidelined the stories about the Ndebele engagement in the events celebrated, the monumentalisation also appropriated the sacred sites that were held in esteem by the Ndebele. The settlers' practices of memorialisation turned the Matopos space into what the settlers considered the holiest place in the country, “as a shrine - the future Rhodesian Valhalla' - and a recreation area for Rhodesian whites” (Ranger, 1989:220). However, the Matopos was also considered the holiest place by local black communities because of its association with the centuries-old Mwari religion, rainmaking rituals as well as the burial of Ndebele Kings and

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<sup>5</sup> The memorial to the Shangani Patrol was erected at the World's View in July 1904, and dedicated by Bishop Gaul of Mashonaland on 5 July 1905. The memorial is a 10metres high oblong, flat-topped granite structure designed by Herbert Baker (see Figure 1).

Chiefs. The progenitor of the Ndebele state, King Mzilikazi who died in 1868, was buried there with several other Ndebele chiefs. Elaborate rituals and rainmaking ceremonies were held at the various shrines in the landscape and were visited by pilgrimages from as far as Mozambique, northern parts of South Africa and Botswana (Nyathi & Ndiweni, 2005; Ntoi, 2006).

Thus, the Matopos was indeed a conflation of parallel heritage practices where as described by Ranger, “the black myth of the hills interacted with white imagination” (Ranger, 1989: 240). The hills for many generations had been a pilgrimage site for the *Mwari* adherents with its own elaborate forms of visits for burials and rituals (Ranger, 1999; Ntoi, 2006). For some, the hills were a special heritage of the pre-Ndebele inhabitants of the area, the Banyubi, who practiced the Mwari religion (Munjeri, 1986). For others, the hills were central to the Ndebele heritage itself, the burial place of Mzilikazi and thus the focal point of Ndebele cultural nationalism (Ranger, 1989; Munjeri, 1986). Although the Ndebele had no tradition of visiting graves, in response to the increase in settlers visiting Worlds View, the Ndebele started conducting ceremonies at Mzilikazi’s grave after the 1940s (West & Ndlovu- Gatsheni, 2009; Nyathi and Ndiweni, 2005). However, for the Ndebele, the landscape had always been used for other religious reasons. The Ndebele, who arrived in the area in the 1830s, had adopted the Mwari religion and considered the shrines such as Njelele, Zhilo, Wirirani, and Dula to be sacred (Bhebhe, 1978). The Matopos, which were associated with the anti-colonial wars of 1893 and 1896, provided inspiration in the 1950s for the emergence of political resistance against colonial domination and the war of liberation (Ranger, 1999).



**Figure 1: Rhodes’ grave and the Shangani Memorial, Matopos, 1953**

The photography section of the National Archives of Zimbabwe contains numerous images of visitors, tourists and special visits by foreign dignitaries showing how the grave became a central element of how to see and experience the Matopos, Bulawayo and indeed the country, Rhodesia. Source: National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ).

In choosing his burial site, Cecil Rhodes was doubtlessly not only captivated by the beauty or “grandeur and loneliness” of the Matopos, but t also by the appeal of spiritual significance that the hills held for the Ndebele and other groups. According to Ranger, to white Rhodesians, the site epitomised the sublime beauty of the country, its mysterious and magical spirits, as well as its colonial origins and in Rhodes’ mind, it was to be turned into a site that could be visited by all whites (Ranger, 1999). Ranger also remarked that for the white Rhodesians, it was precisely this accessibility that emphasized that this was now their land (Ranger, 1989, 1999). More importantly, according to Ranger, it was in the Matopos where “there was the deepest-rooted and most direct clash between different ideas of 'heritage' and how best to preserve it”, between the settlers and local black populations (Ranger, 1989:218).

Because of its historical and spiritual association with white heroes, the Matopos was intricately linked to white identity. Through various acts of inscription, the landscape was turned into a monument, a physical manifestation of white presence in the country entrenched by the establishment of sacred burial grounds and the erection of physical monuments. This was facilitated by the colonial land alienation policies that physically removed Africans from this land. The landscape’s value was also shown by the fact that after Rhodes’ funeral in 1902, his presence in the Matopos inspired various forms of visitations and pilgrimage to this landscape throughout the colonial period. The funeral procession from Cape Town to the Matopos was in itself an elaborate performance, a ritual befitting a king and was meant to entrench and present Rhodes as important to both South Africa and Rhodesia.<sup>6</sup> Through his burial procession, Rhodes re-enacted the pioneer occupation of Rhodesia. From the Cape to Bulawayo, his body travelled by train stopping in major cities in South Africa where he had economic interests. The procession came with Zeederberg’s coaches, buckboards, Cape carts, utility carts, and ox-wagons, all drawn by spans of mules as well as a big contingent on horseback (Shee, 1968). This started what Paul Maylam (2002, 2005) referred to as an immortalisation of Rhodes, which was achieved through a network of monuments and his philanthropic donations such as the Rhodes Scholarships and other land or financial bequests.

Therefore, Rhodes and his colleagues became white ancestors whose remains were interred in one of the most sacred landscape in the Matopos. Through the presence of white encesstral bones, the Matopos landscape became cultural capital for settler descendants who considered the presence

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<sup>6</sup> After Cecil John Rhodes’ funeral service in Cape Town, the coffin travelled by train to Bulawayo. The journey lasted five days, with stops at all major stations along the way, where thousands of mourners lined the flower-laden platforms. On arrival in Rhodesia, the body was laid in state at the State House in Bulawayo and another funeral service was held at the Drill Hall before the coffin was transported by ox-wagon to the Matopos Hills where he was buried on 10 April 1902.

of their ancestors in the area as an integral part of how they imagined themselves as Rhodesians. The Matopos were turned into “the monumental centre of the white Rhodesian nation and the site of many subsequent Rhodesians’ commemorative efforts” (Ranger, 1999:40). The bones of Cecil Rhodes and other founders validated the claim to this place, and to whites’ right to be in the country. The hills became a site of rooting white Rhodesians into the African landscape through symbolic descent from Rhodes, the ancestor deity of white Rhodesia (Uusihakala, 2008:57). In his will, Rhodes had consecrated the importance of the place by making sure that the Matopos would be kept in pristine condition by donating it “to the people of Rhodesia” (Stead, 1902:5). The will provided for the construction of a railway line from Bulawayo to the Matopos to facilitate the movement of Rhodesians into the area.

For its value as a heritage site associated with white ancestry, the area around Worlds View received protection by the state especially from commercial ranching and farming interests. Because of its association with Rhodes and the 1893 and 1896 battle sites, all considered important elements of the colony’s history, the Matopos was legally protected (Ranger, 1999). The Rhodesian government declared the Matopos a protected area in 1926, and officially turned into a Game Reserve in 1930, putting an end to the threats from land buyers. In lobbying for the area to be declared a national park, E.A Nobbs, the Director of Agriculture listed the pre-historical and historical sites in the hills, cave-paintings, the *Mwari* caves, battlegrounds, indaba sites, the graves of Rhodes and Mzilikazi as part of his justification. In 1936, the Rhodesian parliament declared that no further burials would take place at the site, thereby entrenching this place and its relationship to the founding of the colony (Ranger, 1999).

Annual pilgrimages, tourist itineraries, and rituals of commemoration at Worlds View became part of the sacralisation of the landscape throughout the colonial era. Through these visitations, the site indeed became a “Valhalla” as Rhodes had intended, enjoyed by a patriotic Rhodesians and admirers of Rhodes and those seeking the pleasures of the national park. Throughout the colonial period, several official activities of commemoration were held at Worlds View. For example, on the 25th anniversary of Rhodes’ death in 1927, a memorial service was held at the Matopos, something that became an annual event on the calendar of events, which included Rhodes’ birthday, his death, and the 12 September, (Occupation Day) celebrations. While blacks visited the Matopos for religious purposes, white Rhodesians visited the Matopos and Rhodes’ grave and the Wilson memorials for enjoyment and for inspiration.

To cement the importance of the Matopos in Rhodesian imagination, the Matopos also became a key destination for foreign dignitaries who included the British royal family. For instance, the

Prince of Wales visited the Matopos in 1928, Prince George in 1934, whilst King George VI, Queen Elizabeth, and two Princesses visited the Matopos in 1947. Part of the celebration of Rhodes' centenary in 1953 included a national pilgrimage of Rhodesians to the site, and on 5 July 1953, the Queen and Princess Margaret together with more than 3000 people gathered at Worlds View (Maylam, 2005). In the same year, Rhodes scholars from all over the world visited the site. Thus, Rhodes' grave became a symbol that promoted the growth of colonial nationalism; it played an important part in forging a Rhodesian white identity as evidenced by the fact that, through the colonial period, all new settlers were expected to visit Worlds View (Maylam, 2005).

As part of white appropriation of this landscape, the grave and indeed the Matopos became the subject of literary works, painting, and works of popular fiction (Ranger, 1999). Cecil Rhodes inspired a large and diverse representation, manifesting in biographies, poetry, plays, and films.<sup>7</sup> For example, during the 1953 Rhodes centenary celebrations, commemorative silver crowns (125,000) carrying Rhodes' head were struck by the royal mint - the only occasion up to that time the royal mint had ever struck a coin with the head of a commoner (Maylam, 2002).

The commemorations of Cecil Rhodes and other historical figures were consecrated by legal designation of spaces associated with them as "national monuments," provided for by the 1936 Monuments and Relics Act. After the formation of the National Monuments Commission in 1936, Worlds View, the Rhodes-Nyanga estate and the Rhodes Indaba tree were some of the first places to be declared as national monuments.<sup>8</sup> Black communities considered most of these places associated with Rhodes to be spiritually important. For instance, as in the Matopos, the Rhodes' Nyanga estate included important archaeological relics, as it was located within an archaeologically rich and naturally appealing area (Summers, 1952, 1958; Soper, 2007). At Nyanga, as in other

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<sup>7</sup> Paul Maylam discusses in detail, the various literary productions of Cecil John Rhodes spanning almost a century. During the writing of this thesis, various commemorative events held included the centenary of his death (2012); the Rhodes Trust and Rhodes Scholarship Centenary (2003) and the centenary of the Founding of the Rhodes University (2004). Between August and December 2012, the University of Cape Town Special Collections section celebrated the Rhodes Memorial Centenary through an exhibition on the architecture of the memorial that is located a few hundred metres from the university. Other interesting events inspired by Rhodes include the recent establishment of the Mandela-Rhodes Foundation (2004) and the donation by the De Beers Company of an office block which was renamed "Mandela-Rhodes building". Designed by Herbert Baker, the building was constructed for De Beers at the behest of Cecil John Rhodes and was completed in 1902, shortly before his death. The Mandela Rhodes Foundation, a leadership development programme for Africa, was established in 2003 by agreement between the Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Rhodes Trust <http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/rhodes-alumni/mandela-rhodes-foundation#sthash.PMtrdf3C.dpuf> (Accessed 14 May 2012).

<sup>8</sup> The Rhodes Indaba Tree was a tree where Rhodes held meetings with the Ndebele political leaders to end the war between the Ndebele and the BSAC in 1896 (Cooke, 1972). The Indaba site was an anthill on which Rhodes, Collenbrander, Dr Saeur, and Vere Stent sat when they negotiated for peace with Ndebele chiefs to end the 1896 war. The Worlds View farm, his personal estate was also declared a national monument in 1938 while the Rhodes summerhouse was declared a national monument in 1952. Further to this monumentalisation, the Rhodes Stable and the Rhodes' Hut, at Government House in Bulawayo were both declared national monuments in 1957. Rhodes' hut was a small hut that had been constructed at his orders on the site of Lobengula's last capital.

landscapes, archaeological sites such as the Nyanga pits and the surrounding terraced hills were mythologised and subjected to colonial archaeology in the same way as at archaeological sites such as Great Zimbabwe. In interpreting these archaeological sites, several archaeologists proposed theories of large-scale exotic influence linking Nyanga to the Phoenicians (See Bent, 1971; Bruwer, 1965; von Sicard, 1946).

The acts of memorialising Rhodes were also prevalent in several other institutions throughout the colonial period in Rhodesia. For example, one of the several institutions named after Cecil Rhodes, was the first art gallery to be established in the colony, which was named the Rhodes Memorial Gallery. The idea of a National Gallery was a brainchild of one of Rhodes' closest allies, James Macdonald, who in 1943 gave funds for its construction (Curling, 2007). In addition, Rhodes was widely commemorated through nomenclature and schools, suburbs, and streets were named after him in most towns and cities.



**Figure 2: Rhodes' hut in Bulawayo**

The hut, constructed on Lobengula's last kraal was used by Cecil Rhodes on his visits to Bulawayo. The hut was declared a national monument in 1937. Source: Cooke (1972).

After Rhodes' death, various landscapes associated with him were turned into national parks further entrenching their appropriation into settler memorial or leisure landscapes. For instance in 1926, Rhodes' Nyanga estate was turned into the Rhodes-Matopos National Park (Stead, 1902). The converting of these landscapes into national parks increased the alienation of surrounding black communities as the areas became more closed off from the local communities and got entrenched as destinations for settler pilgrimage and tourism.

The Rhodesian landscapes were entrenched as central to the Rhodesian memorial complex. As a result, these were permanently imprinted within the memory of the Rhodesian white public, as

evidenced by the forms of visitations, rituals, and commemorations at the site. Human remains of white ancestors, literary works, and monuments converted the landscapes into important aspects of settler heritage. Through these activities and inscriptions, the landscapes and sites could no longer be viewed as exclusively black landscapes, but as being associated with white ancestors and heroes, whose remains were also interred together with black ancestors.

### **Rhodesians Making History: Pioneer Historiography and White Heroes**

One of the defining features of Rhodesian practices of commemoration was the central role given to the process of the founding of the colony. Cecil Rhodes, the Pioneer Column of 1890, and the 1893 and 1896/7 wars became central features in the settlers' memory throughout the colonial period. This historiography, captured by the accounts of those who had been involved in it and written about by professional and non-professional historians, inspired generations of Rhodesians. For example, Ian Smith invoked pioneer history on proclaiming UDI, when he remarked that, "The mantle of the pioneers has fallen on our shoulders to sustain civilisation in a primitive country" (Smith, quoted in Mungazi, 1998:132). This mobilisation of historical mythology based on the founding process was central to the imagination of settlers and became a recurrent theme in Rhodesian history.

As early as the 1900s, various associations based on voluntary interest groups were formed focusing on the colony's recent past through compilation and publication of pioneer experiences. Intellectual projects started by independent societies were instrumental in giving a public life to the narrative of the birth of the colony. An elaborate corpus of writing by descendants, enthusiasts, amateurs, and historians grew out of the early history of the colony. These included the Rhodesia Pioneers and Early Settlers' Society founded in September 1904. Other societies included the Pioneer Corps Association (Mashonaland, 1890) which was formed by people who had participated in the occupation of Mashonaland. Those who directly participated in the conquest of Matebeleland in 1893 founded the Columns Society in Matebeleland in 1934, while the British South African Police (BSAP) Corps association was founded by the police force that had provided protection to the Pioneer column as it moved into Mashonaland in 1890.

The societies amalgamated in 1940, to form the Rhodesian Pioneers and Early Settlers Society whose main objective was to perpetuate the memory of the 1890 pioneers. As part of its activities, the society maintained a register of all 1890 pioneers, collected documents on the occupation of Mashonaland and assisted those members in financial need. Its activities included intellectual projects that sought to record, preserve, and publish the colony's early history. The importance of these intellectual projects was encapsulated in the society's objectives, which included "To record

and encourage the preservation and publishing of the history of the early occupation of the country: together with the names of those men and women whose struggles against almost insurmountable difficulties enabled Rhodesia to become a valuable addition to the British Empire (RH11/4. NAZ).

Part of the objectives of the association was to maintain *esprit de corps* amongst pioneers and to undertake commemorative and traditional services in honour of Cecil Rhodes and of the pioneers and early settlers of Rhodesia. This tradition was fervently perpetuated in particular through the commemoration of the foundation of Rhodesia, through the ceremony of the Hoisting of the Flag on the 12th September in each year in Salisbury by a descendant of a member of the 1890 column.

Unlike the previous pioneer associations whose membership was restricted, the amalgamated association was more open. It accepted membership from "any person who on or before 31st December 1896, was resident in Mashonaland, Matebeleland or the Tati District". The association also opened membership to missionaries, hunters, traders, and others who were in Rhodesia before 1898 and "all who assisted in the repression of the rebellions in Mashonaland and Matebeleland of 1896 and 1897" (Jones, 1953:143). This opened membership to any white citizens who had any link with the early history of the colony.

The pioneer societies popularised a version of history that focused on the founding of the colony, the recollections of the pioneers and the achievements of the BSAC. For the association, the activities of the Pioneer Column, the occupation of Mashonaland and Matebeleland in 1890 and 1893 respectively, and the first military encounters in the wars of resistance by the Ndebele and Shona groups in 1893 and 1896/9, proved useful in building a narrative of heroism. Leonard, A. Glynn's *How we made Rhodesia* (1896) is one of the earliest writings on the pioneer experience. Based on the author's personal diaries and letters written while he was stationed at Fort Maclousie and Fort Tuli, near the southern borders of what is now Zimbabwe, this important work is typical of a pseudo-historiography that developed around the founding of the colony, a narrative that was popularised throughout the colonial period.

So crucial was the history associated with the founding process that in the 1940s the national museum appointed Curators of Pioneer History, whose role was to curate the pioneer events as part of the museum's public history programme (NMMR, 1969). In this period, the collation of reminiscences remained crucial; a generation after the Pioneers had taken part in the occupation. For instance, Neville Jones' *Rhodesian Genesis: The Story of the Early Days of Southern Rhodesia* was compiled from the reminiscences of some of the pioneers on behalf of the Rhodesia Pioneers' and Early Settlers' Society (Jones, 1952). In 1954, Jeannie Marr Boggie compiled the *Experiences of*

*Rhodesia's Pioneer Women: Being a True Account of the Adventures of the Early White Women Settlers in Southern Rhodesia from 1890* which was later completed by Jessie M. Lloyd in 1960 (Boggie, 1954; Loyd, 1960). The surveys identified and recorded biographical details of each pioneer. Further work was done by Hugh Marshall- Hole and Colonel Hickman, a former commander in the BSAP, who became authorities on pioneer history, collecting biographies of the pioneer corps and their families in works such as the *'Men who made Rhodesia: A register of those who served in the BSAC'* (Hickman, 1960) or *Pioneer Days in Southern Rhodesia* (Hole, 1967). *'The Pioneer Corps'* by Robert Cary, presents one of the most comprehensive mini biographies on the members of the Rhodesian Pioneer Corps and their descendants (Cary, 1975).

One of the active societies in the compilation of pioneer experiences was the Rhodesia Africana Society founded in 1953. Harry Cripwell, R.C Howland, and B.W Lloyd, all of whom had worked for the Native Affairs Department for many years (*Rhodesiana*, 22:1970), inspired the founding of the society. The first official meeting of the society coincided with the 1953 Rhodes Centenary celebration in Bulawayo. The society was formed to further the interests of collectors of Rhodesiana, and to assist in the preservation of books and documents relating to Rhodesia (*Rhodesiana*, 1: 1956). Unlike the other associations that restricted memberships to those involved in the occupation of the colony or their descendants, in this society, membership was open to all white settlers.

Some of the intellectual projects focused on giving a public life to the early colonial experiences through publication and circulation of historiographical accounts on early Rhodesian history. For example in 1968, the *Rhodesian Africana Society* started the *Rhodesian Reprint Library project*, which aimed to publish reprinted series of early books, a brainchild of a former Rhodesia Railways public relations officer, L. W. Bolze. The Gold Series included 36 volumes while the Silver series had 24 volumes, all focusing on various aspects of early Rhodesian history. The project was “dedicated to the early Rhodesian pioneers and early settlers, in honour of the men and women who pioneered Rhodesia” (Hermans, 1974:235).

From 1968, four to six facsimile reprints of rare and out-of-print books were published each year. Most of the books focused on the early history of Rhodesia. The books, considered important collectables, were made available to members of the society, and were sold to the public (Hermans, 1974:235). By 1975, the *Rhodesiana Reprint Library* had reproduced copies of histories, diaries, personal accounts, and historical reconstructions that had been written since the 1880s as more

European travellers, hunters, missionaries, adventurers and colonists increasingly visited Rhodesia.<sup>9</sup>

The *Rhodesiana* journal, one of the intellectual projects of the Rhodesia Africana Society, gave a public life to the narratives of the early history, devoting most of its space to the early history of Rhodesia. Reviewing the achievements of the journal at the association's 1967 annual meeting, the Chairperson remarked that its role was to:

Show that Rhodesia is a country with a history, with traditions, not just a collection of people from many parts of the world...Rhodesia has its heroes, legends and that in its creation there was bravery and gallantry (*Rhodesiana* 16, 1967: 86).

By 1970, when the publication ceased, 40 issues had been published creating a detailed collection of writings on the early history of Rhodesia. The articles included in the 40 volumes of the journal ranged from small anecdotes, to detailed personal experiences, and accounts of the social, political, and economic development of the young colony. In the various series of the journal, companies inserted advertisements, linking themselves to the process of occupation of the colony. For example, The Rhodesian Railways Company, whose first train reached Bulawayo in 1897 labelled itself 'the birth of a lifeline'. The Standard Chartered Bank boasted of being the first bank in Salisbury and Bulawayo, while the Meikles Brothers Company called itself 'a pioneer company' (*Rhodesiana* 18, 1968: 138). The publications also took advantage of the various important events in the history of the colony. For instance, the journal issue 18 published in 1968 had a special issue on the 75th anniversary of the occupation of Matabeleland. These articles reflected a diversity of disciplines, personalities, and interests with a common focus on the early history of the colony.

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<sup>9</sup> The Golden series included accounts on early travellers, hunters and explorer to visitors to the country such as F. C. Selous' (1893) *Travel And Adventure In South-East Africa*; the *Victoria falls of the Zambezi* by Eduard Mohr (1876); the *Recollections of an Elephant Hunter* by William Finaughty (1896); the *Autobiography of an Old Drifter* by Percy M. Clark (Clark, 1936) as well as *Ex Africa* by Hans Sauer (Sauer, 1893). The series also focused on the BSAC's encounter with Ndebele and Shona and the 1893 and 1896 wars such as in *The Downfall of Lobengula* by W. A. Wills and I. T. Collingridge, regarded as the BSAC's official version of the Ndebele War or *With The Mounted Infantry and The Mashonaland Field Force*, by E. A. H. Alderson, a chronicle of the military campaign of the 1896 rebellion and *With Plumer In Matabeleland*, Frank W. Sykes' account of the suppression of the 1896 war (Alderson, 1898; Wills & Collingridge, 1894; Sykes 1897). A number of books in the series focused on pioneers as in *How we made Rhodesia* by A. G. Leonard; *Great Days* by Frank Johnson; *Adventures in Mashonaland* by R. Blennerhassen and L. Sleeman, *Sally in Rhodesia* by Sheila Macdonald (1924) and *Memories of Mashonaland* by G. W. H. Knight-Bruce. Books of a biographical nature included *With Rhodes in Mashonaland* - D. C. de Waal, Rhodes: *A Life* by J. G. McDonald or *Melina Borke - As told by herself* (Borke, 1939; de Wall, 1896; McDonald, 1927). *One man's hand* by J. P. P. Wallis, was a biography of Charles Coghlan, Southern Rhodesia's first prime minister (1924-1927) (Wallis, 1950) while *Kingsley Fairbridge: His Life and Verse* was the author's autobiography focusing on his philanthropy in Rhodesia (Kingsley -Fairbridge, 1927). Cecil Rhodes: *The Man and His Dream* by Herbert Baker was an early biography by his architect, Herbert Baker (1934). The *Pioneers of Mashonaland* by Adrian Darter (1914) focussed on biographies of pioneers while *Fact and Fiction* by F.W.T. Posselt, focused on African customs, laws, religion and institutions (Posselt, 1927). Others focused on the early attention to archaeological sites such as R.N Hall & W.G Neal's *The Ancient Ruins of Rhodesia* and J. Theodore Bent's *The Ruined Cities of Mashonaland* (Bent, 1896; Hall & Neal, 1904).

It is important to highlight that academic historians later critiqued the “unscholarly” nature of these early publications. For example, David Beach (1986) commented on *Rhodesiana*, calling it, “an amateur historical journal with a less academic tone” (Beach, 1986:23). However, these intellectual projects gave much needed space to the ordinary settlers who desired to have their personal stories entrenched in the Rhodesian master narrative. Certainly, when the “library” was produced, it was regarded as such by the settlers and most of the books in the series were regarded as “collectables” (Hermans, 1974). The fact that such writings were consistently maintained and reproduced up to the late 1970s, even when academic history had now been established at institutions such as the Rhodesian University, shows how important these were considered to be.

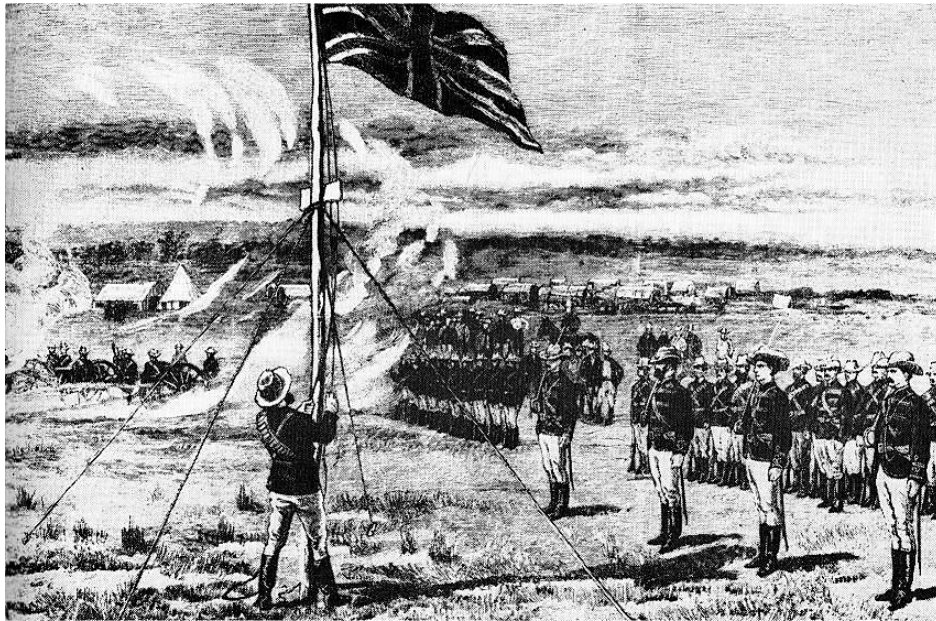
By offering space to amateurs, such publications became spaces for the highlighting of the ideals of settler nationalism, outside the rigours of professional standards of publication. It was in their amateurism that the publications offered space to the common person, pioneer descendants and amateur enthusiasts, allowing them to take part in the construction of the narrative of the colony’s past.

### **Memory in Stone: Pioneer Forts and Memorials**

The process of the occupation of the country in 1890 remained one of the most prominent events in colonial history. The story of the Pioneer Column and BSAC conquest of Mashonaland and Matebeleland constituted a central part of the practices of memorialisation throughout the colonial era. White intellectual history, personal reminiscences, autobiographical works, and other documents captured and preserved aspects of the colony’s early history. However, this period was also captured in various physical remnants that conferred a visual existence of pioneer history in the public sphere. Scattered across the country, physical monuments associated with the country’s history included military and defensive forts, settlements, and battle sites associated with the early years of colonisation. The importance of these sites lay in that they were officially preserved as monuments and some of them became venues for various practices of memorialisation. The Pioneer Column which embarked on the process of military occupation of the colony in 1890, left in its wake, an elaborate network of places that were transformed into official “monuments” by the colonial state.

On July 11 1890, the BSAC Pioneer Column crossed the river Tuli into Matebeleland, proceeding northeast and then north over a distance of about 650 kilometres and settled in an area explored

by F. Selous a few years earlier called Mount Hampden ( See Figures 3 & 4).<sup>10</sup> Monuments, laagers, and defensive forts physically marked this process as the column moved from the south to Mashonaland. These forts gave a strong physical and visual manifestation of the colonisation process. They became part of the invention of a “myth of origin” for the settlers. As much as the intellectual projects associated with pioneer historiography created a public sphere for the narrative of birth, the forts, battle sites became visual markers of this experience.



**Figure 3: The raising of the Union Jack at Cecil Square, Salisbury, 12 September 1890**

Cecil Square, the first place the Pioneer Column permanently settled, was used for the annual flag raising ceremony and other commemorative events until 1979. Source: National Archives of Zimbabwe.

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<sup>10</sup> Using the Rudd Concession signed between Lobengula and Charles Rudd on behalf of the BSAC, Rhodes obtained a Royal Charter from the British Government allowing him to colonise the country. Frank Johnson led the actual occupation, while Frederick Selous, a hunter with close knowledge of Mashonaland, agreed to join the effort as a guide. Johnson selected for his column, 180 civilians, 62 wagons, and 200 volunteers. A further party of 110 men, 16 wagons, 250 cattle, and 130 spare horses later attached itself to the column (Becker, 1979).



**Figure 4: Pioneer routes and forts, 1890**

Source: Map adapted from Garlake (1965)

The Pioneer Column created settlements and military forts as they were moved up north (Figure 4). The route and the forts became the nuclei on major roads as well as major towns and cities for the colony. Two forts were constructed at Victoria, one in 1891 and the other in 1892, from which the nucleus town of Fort Victoria emerged (Garlake, 1965). The forts at Fort Victoria marked the entrance of the Pioneer Column into the Mashonaland Highveld in 1890 (see Figure 5). As the column proceeded northward, Fort Charter was established and ultimately Fort Salisbury at a site they named Cecil Square.<sup>11</sup> The place at which the settlers decided to settle permanently was under the jurisdiction of Chief Neharawa, a Shona chief who by then was so important that Cooke (1972)

<sup>11</sup> At Cecil Square, the Union Jack was hoisted on September 12, 1890 to signal the occupation of Mashonaland. From this square, the capital city Salisbury developed into the largest metropolis in the colony.

complained that it was a pity that settlers chose to name the city after Lord Salisbury rather than chief Neharawa.<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 5: The Victoria memorial at Providential pass, Masvingo-Beitbridge Road**

The Victoria memorial, national monument 129, is characteristic of the numerous stone memorials constructed on historical routes or important battle sites all over Rhodesia (See appendix 1). The central column shows holes on which a plaque describing the memorial was located. The abandoned nature of this memorial is characteristic of many colonial memorials. Source: Author, 2011.

The settlements constructed during the occupation of the country also extended to other parts of the colony. Other forts were established as the pioneers occupied areas to the east of Salisbury, towards Mozambique. These included Fort Penhalonga, which was built by a small force that occupied Manicaland. Others include the Trek Memorial, built near Chipinge, which commemorated the Afrikaner trekkers - the “Pioneers of Gazaland” who passed through this area between 1893 and 1895 (Garlake, 1965).

Thus, the forts and settlements established during the occupation of the colony, spread over the country's landscape from the Tuli River in the South, to Salisbury and eastward towards Umtali, became visual symbols of settler conquest. Covering a distance of more than 800 kilometres, the pioneer track became a seminal aspect of Rhodesian practices of commemoration. The ‘historic route’ was consecrated by occasional visitations and would later be complemented by other monuments following the 1893 and 1896/7 wars in providing an elaborate visual image of colonial

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<sup>12</sup> This was accomplished soon after 1980 when Salisbury was renamed Harare, believed to be derived from Neharawa, the local chief's name.

conquest. These military engagements led to another materialisation of memory through defensive forts, battle sites, and cemeteries. The Ndebele (1893) and Shona and Ndebele (1896-7) wars against the settlers led to the creation of defensive forts scattered across the whole country, all of which were turned into national monuments after 1936. This was achieved through a Rhodesian Memorial Fund set up in 1896, with the purpose of establishing both general and personal memorials to those who had died during wars. The fund also sought to provide relief for those who had suffered during the wars and for the construction of museums, libraries, and hospitals (*Rhodesiana* 22, 1970:5).<sup>13</sup>

The importance of these forts and battle sites is shown by the fact that over the years, the BSAC, the families of the deceased and historians attempted to reconstruct events that took place at these sites. So important were some of the memorials that throughout Rhodesian history, citizens were encouraged to visit them. Cranmer Cooke, in his guide to the monuments, described these memorials as "places to which every Rhodesian should pay a visit" (Cooke, 1972:53). At these sites, personal stories and experiences linking the monuments with individual biographies were visualised through concrete memorials. The route and forts were tied to stories and experiences that were shaped by personal and family reminiscences. The monuments became a central aspect of the coercive moulding of settler identity.

Throughout the colonial era, these physical manifestations of the early colonial experience became entrenched through forms of visitation. For instance, the Rhodesian Schools exploration society formed in 1952 made several expeditions to explore the pioneer route. In 1961, the society attempted an expedition from Mcloutsie trekking along the Pioneer Column's route to parts of South Western Zimbabwe (*Sunday Mail* 1/3/1964). In 1964, Colonel Hickman went on an expedition in search of Camp Cecil where the pioneers had camped before marching into Fort Tuli in 1890 (*Rhodesian Herald*, 7/10/1964).

Besides these physically imposing monuments, the story of colonisation was mythologised in other forms. The visual and literary reproductions of the military escapades and the experiences of the "founding" society were very prevalent in Rhodesian history. They had a strong visual presence in the landscape, in the archive, and other literary works such as music, poetry, film, and prose creating a rich visual and imaginary corpus of the past. From Mazowe to the Matopos, the

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<sup>13</sup> The committee worked with the Native Affairs Department and Native Commissioners to locate graves and battle sites in their areas. One of the earliest historical memorials to be created was the 1893 'Rebellion' monument in Bulawayo's main street, constructed in memory pioneers who lost their lives during the "Matebele Rebellion". Other forts and memorials linked to the 1893 war against the Ndebele included Fort Inyati and Mangwe Fort, John Lee's House, Fort Adams near Empandeni, Fort Luck, Fort Inugu in the Matopos, Fort Usher and Fort Umlugulu as well as the Lager site at Bembesi (Appendix 1).

monumental aspects of the early history of Rhodesia create an elaborate visual presence (Figure 6). For example, the Shangani battle<sup>14</sup> became an integral part of the Rhodesian narrative, with Allan Wilson and his party woven into the Rhodesian narrative as heroic figures. The battle became a subject of literary productions.<sup>15</sup> Their “Last Stand” became a kind of national myth or as Lewis Gann wrote, "a glorious memory, Rhodesia's own equivalent of the bloody Alamo massacre and Custer's Last Stand in the American West" (Gann, 1965: 8).

The 1896 depiction of the patrol's “Last Stand” by Allan Stewart, became one of the most popular paintings displayed in state buildings and museum galleries (Figure 6). The remains of the Shangani Patrol soldiers were moved to Worlds View in 1904 and a memorial<sup>16</sup> to the Patrol was erected and dedicated by Bishop Gaul of Mashonaland in July 1905. In 1895, 4 December was declared "Shangani Day", an annual Rhodesian public holiday until 1920, when it was included as part of “Occupation Day”, which commemorated events associated with the occupation of the colony. So central was the place of Shangani in Rhodesian narratives that John Parker, when referring to the graves of the 33 soldiers and Cecil Rhodes at Worlds View ironically remarked, “It is not too far from the truth to suggest that in white Rhodesia’s hierarchy of religious idols, God comes 35<sup>th</sup>” (Parker, 1972: 20).

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<sup>14</sup> The Shangani Patrol, comprising 34 soldiers, were all killed during the war against the Ndebele in 1893. The troops, commanded by Allan Wilson, also referred to as Wilson's Patrol, were attacked near the Shangani River in Matabeleland, resulting in a battle that is commonly referred to as *Wilson's Last Stand*.

<sup>15</sup> Other artistic representation of the Shangani battle included the play, *Cheers Boys Cheer*, by Augustus Harris and Henry Hamilton produced in England in September 1895. This play is considered to have initiated the Shangani patrol's increasing mythological status (Parsons, 1998).

<sup>16</sup> The Memorial, designed by Herbert Baker, is an oblong, flat-topped, 10m stone structure. On each of the memorial's four sides, the names of the members of the patrol are engraved. The main inscription reads, "To Brave Men".. "Erected to the enduring memory of Allan Wilson and his men who fell in fight against the Matabele on the Shangani River December 4, 1893. There was no survivor."



**Figure 6: The Last Stand. Painting by Allan Stewart**

This painting dated 1900, was done by Allan Stewart. The painting, a romanticised depiction of the Shangani battle, became iconic, displayed in major buildings and public spaces. Source: Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum. [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/archive/3/3c/20120404082908%21Shangani\\_Patrol%2C\\_Allan\\_Stewart.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/archive/3/3c/20120404082908%21Shangani_Patrol%2C_Allan_Stewart.jpg) (Accessed 14 June 2013).

It is important to note that while these monumentalised events foregrounded settlers' historical events, they also marginalised Shona and Ndebele versions. They highlighted acts of bravery of white participants while pushing those of blacks to the fore. For example, the 33 white soldiers who died at Shangani were presented as more heroic than the over 400 Ndebele fighters who died on the same battle, a version of history that becomes challenged in the museums after 1980 (see chapter 4).

### **Heritage Palimpsests: Monuments, Memorials and Rhodesian Cityscapes**

The practices of memorialisation and the creation of monuments in Bulawayo and in Salisbury, the two largest cities, showed how the colonial state made direct use of palimpsest as a conquest strategy. Cultural conquest was as important a strategy as the military conquest and Cecil Rhodes and the BSAC were aware of the value of such an approach in early Rhodesia. The early settlers realised that space in the new colony needed not only to be conquered militarily but also to be re-organized to create a white public sphere, particularly by establishing racially demarcated "cityscapes" (O'Neill, 2009). The palimpsest while it drew from the local idiom, it also sought to neutralise and dominate. Therefore, European mapping, architecture, nomenclature and monuments were superimposed on sites connected to black history and culture became a deliberate strategy meant to imprint European modernity. In his recent book, *Bulawayo Burning*,

Ranger (2010), demonstrated the effect of this strategy when he refers to Bulawayo as a story of three cities. The book argues that there were three cities, two established by Lobengula and a third Bulawayo that was constructed by Rhodes. Lobengula is first Bulawayo (now a national monument and reconstructed site), abandoned in preference for a second Bulawayo, which he burnt down in 1893, as he retreated from the BSAC forces. The third city, Rhodes' Bulawayo, grew from the nucleus of Rhodes' hut, which he constructed directly on the site of Lobengula's second capital after defeating the Ndebele in 1893.

The strategy of appropriating spaces associated with Ndebele history is shown by Rhodes' direct involvement in the establishment of the city. The city of Bulawayo was a product of a military campaign led by Patrick Forbes, who invaded Lobengula's capital in 1893. So vital was this link to the BSAC's military conquest of the area that Oliver Ransford described Bulawayo as the "historic battleground of Rhodesia" (Ransford, 1968). Cecil Rhodes arrived in Matebeleland in December 1893, a month after its occupation by the BSAC and ordered that the town be called *Bulawayo* and that it should be laid as close to Lobengula's capital as possible (Ransford, 1968a). Rhodes was directly involved on the initial physical survey of the area and insisted on having a cottage for himself directly at the site of Lobengula's kraal and next to Lobengula's indaba tree (Ransford, 1968a). Next to this site, Rhodes ordered the construction of the Government House, his "second Groote Schuur" (Ransford, 1968). Rhodes' hut, a small thatched hut that he would stay in whenever he visited Bulawayo was built on the site of Lobengula's former capital (Figure 2). He also ordered that the *Indaba* (meeting) tree, which Lobengula used for his meetings, should be preserved (Jack, 1979). This occasion was captured in a Bulawayo newspaper which read, "*le roi est mort, vive le roi*" to which was added, "Then idleness, now industry" (Ransford, 1968:361).

The nucleus of the city planned by Patrick Fletcher was therefore super-imposed on the foundations of Lobengula's Bulawayo, which shows the settlers' appropriation of the area's rich historical past. In reference to this deliberate use of a palimpsest, Jack asserted, "modern Bulawayo owes its origins to the commercial aspirations of the BSAC, and to Rhodes; the area is known to have been occupied by various cultures over many centuries. In fact, the evidence of strata of tenancy can be seen in many places around the city," (Jack, 1978: 5). For Oliver Ransford, Bulawayo was "a symbol rather than a place" (Ransford, 1968:7).



**Figure 7: The ‘Rebellion memorial,’ and the Cecil Rhodes statue in the background, Main Street, Bulawayo**

Bulawayo city was characterised by its wide roads, interspaced by public monuments. These became the stages for various commemorative activities throughout the colonial era. These two monuments were pulled down in 1981. Source : ([http://images-00.delcampe-static.net/img\\_large/auction/000/148/745/660\\_001.jpg?v=1](http://images-00.delcampe-static.net/img_large/auction/000/148/745/660_001.jpg?v=1)). (Accessed 14 June 2013).

By 1904, as a tribute to the founder, a statue of Cecil Rhodes was placed at the centre of the growing city of Bulawayo, whilst the streets in the city and the sprouting residential areas were named after the heroes of the Pioneer Column (Figure 7). As the city grew, the streets were named after historic figures in the colonial state and hence names such as Rhodes, Selbourne, Five, Abercorn, Wilson, and Borrow, as BSAC heroes were included on the sketches of the town plan (Ransford, 1968a). After the 1896/7 wars, a “memorial to the fallen in the Matabele wars of 1893/1894 and the rebellion of 1896” was commissioned and built at the centre of the main street in Bulawayo (See Figure 7).

The Allan Wilson Memorial Hospital was also built in tribute to the memory of those who died in the 1893 war. To consecrate its link to the fallen heroes, Mrs Heyman, the widow of a Captain Heyman, laid the foundation stone on 31 October 1894 (Ransford 1967). The hospital’s main gate was named Grey Scouts Memorial. The gate was constructed by survivors of the 1896 war in memory of their fellow Grey Scouts who had died at the battle of Umgusa in 1896 (Jack, 1979). Four wards at this memorial hospital were named after Heyman, Fitzgerald, Kirton and Jude and other wards added later were named after other pioneer heroes (Ransford, 1968). As Ashworth argues, the naming and renaming of streets and buildings became a claim upon space, a powerful

act where the act of naming became an act of owning that excludes those whose names have been erased (Ashworth, 2007).

In 1932 the statues of Charles Coghlan, the first Prime Minister of the colony and the bust of Alfred Beit, an entrepreneur and philanthropist, were erected near the Bulawayo City Hall (Jack, 1979). In 1951, a “Pioneer memorial pool” was constructed adjacent to the Bulawayo City Hall creating a precinct that included a network of memorials in the city centre. The Pioneer memorial pool consisted of a fountain in the form of a lion's head. One side of the memorial carried a plaque showing a mounted pioneer in relief and on the other side was another plaque honouring the 1893 columns. On the entrance to the city council buildings, was a panel (bass relief) depicting the first of the four meetings (*indabas*) held in the Matopos between Rhodes and Ndebele chiefs to end the 1896 war between the BSAC and the Ndebele in 1896 (Figure 22).<sup>17</sup>

The association between the city of Bulawayo and the BSAC continued for decades so much that by 1979, Jack Alex remarked that Bulawayo owed its origin to the commercial aspirations of the BSAC and to Cecil Rhodes. This also explains why one of the biggest commemorative events to celebrate the life of Rhodes was held in this city in 1953. So important was this connection that even the characteristic wide streets in the city were credited to Rhodes who desired to see ox-drawn wagons turning easily within them (Jack, 1968). Thus, the city of Bulawayo was ultimately associated with Rhodes, while with its proximity to the Matopos and other archaeological and historic sites around it, made it distinctive in that compared to any other city, it had the largest concentration of historical memorials.

For many years, Bulawayo remained the nerve centre of commemorative activities, hosting the biggest anniversaries, fairs, and commemorations within its wide streets dotted by monuments to the early history of the colony. By the 1930s, Bulawayo had become Rhodesia's “most populous and go-ahead town, centre of the railways and the country's economic capital” (Gann, 1965:314). Cranmer Cooke, a member of the Commission for the Preservation of Monuments, declared “Bulawayo as a town full of history of the Matebele people and of the early travellers, hunters, and pioneers” (Cooke, 1965:4).

Throughout the colonial era, Bulawayo was considered the cultural hub of the colony, so that in 1968 the Prime Minister Robert Tredgold remarked that:

Indeed, it is a matter of special interest that so many of the most colourful and stirring occasions in our country have associations with Bulawayo and adjacent areas. The land of

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<sup>17</sup> The panel showed Hans Sauer, Johan Colenbrander, Vene Stent and Jan Grootboom together with Cecil J. Rhodes and the Chiefs, and councillors of the Ndebele. The panel was designed and cast by Sergeant R. Vignali and was considered the largest bronze plaque in Southern Africa at the time of its production (Jack, 1979).

the greatest of black kings; the scene of the 1st settlement of the white man north of the Limpopo ... the stopping ground of the legendary hunters and adventurers, the field of testing battles culminating in a romantic peace making, then the steady growth of a modern city in the space of a man's lifetime.....In Bulawayo we see a splendid memorial to the work of many men (Tredgold, 1968: xi)

Tredgold's remarks point to the central place given to the rich precolonial history and the early colonial history in the making of modern Rhodesia. The city was an object, a testimony to the struggles for entrenchment of settler modernity in a place that had previously been considered to be backward. The linking of the city to the colony's founding was prevalent throughout the colonial period.

This perception of the city as part of the colony's major historical and cultural events was appropriated for tourism purposes throughout the colonial era. For instance, a 1953 Bulawayo City council guide entitled "How to see Bulawayo" suggested a tour itinerary that covered a network of monuments and historic places in the city. It included the City Hall - "erected on site of the original laager at Bulawayo in 1893, a walk past the statue of Charles Coghlan- the colony's first PM, the bust of Alfred Beit, (a friend and supporter of Rhodes), the Rhodes Statue, the Great War memorial, and the rebellion memorial in Main Street" (*Bulawayo City Guide*, 1953:35). The tourist guidebook further suggested sites such as the National Museum, Government House, and excursions around Worlds View, Pomongwe Caves, Silozwane Caves, Fort Usher and Khami ruins. This itinerary encapsulated the prehistoric, the historical, and the mystic elements of Rhodesia.

In 1968, the official brochure *Bulawayo: No Mean City*, produced to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the third city described Bulawayo as:

A friendly city that is full of history. Every visit by the royalty, every important anniversary, and every national celebration is tackled with boundless energy and utmost goodwill. The Prince of Wales visit in 1924, the King's in 1947, the queen mother in 1953, the 50th, 60th anniversaries, the centenary of Rhodes all brought a flood of memories and recollections (*Bulawayo City Guide*, 1968:7).

Such associations were considered not only as historically important, but were also seen as testimonies to Rhodesia's importance in the British empire. For a colony that had been established by a private initiative, constituted by a mishmash of white communities of different European identities, this link to the imperial order was critical in placing Rhodesia as an important and legitimate player in British imperial politics. Thus, individuals such as Rhodes became associated with Bulawayo and its surroundings more than any other place in Rhodesia, creating various "Rhodescapes" in the country as an act of entrenching the Europeanisation of this land. In Bulawayo, Rhodes had found the Rhodesian equivalent of Cape Town. In his will, he donated the

Matopos to the people of Bulawayo; he planted 100 orange trees at the Government House and at the Bulawayo Memorial Hospital. He had plans to link the Government House and the city centre by a splendid avenue flanked by “native fig trees” (Jack, 1979:18). As argued by Maylam, all these schemes warrant us to describe Rhodes as an “ecological imperialist”, because, “trees like settlers were for him an instrument of colonization” (Maylam, 2005:154). As such Bulawayo “considered itself as particularly Rhodes’ town” (Ransford, 1968:149). His funeral on 8 April 1902 included a public grand parade from the Drill Hall, a building whose foundation he had laid the year before he died, to the Matopos.

In Salisbury, precolonial history also became confounded with early colonial history, creating an urban space built on foundations of appropriated indigenous history, but “purified” by a settler worldview. Salisbury grew from a fort established by the Pioneer Column in 1890, superimposed on the foundations of land and sacred places that belonged to the Neharawa and Mbare chiefs. The appropriation of the land was achieved through establishment of various memorial and nomenclature changes. Some of the earliest memorials in Salisbury included the 1903 Queen Victoria Memorial museum and library, which was constructed as a tribute to Queen Victoria (see Figure 8). The Anglican Cathedral, designed by Herbert Baker and constructed in 1913, was essentially conceived as a war memorial to those who died in the 1893 war and the First World War, cementing the cathedral with the history of the colony (Jack, 1980). A war memorial in the church included inscriptions of names of some members of the Shangani battle casualties (Hickman, 1969).

Over the years, several monuments were constructed in Salisbury, which included the Cecil Rhodes gate to the Salisbury memorial gardens as well as the Physical Energy statue, considered Watts’ most ambitious sculpture and erected in 1928 (Brown, 2007). The Rhodes statue was erected in Salisbury in 1964 after being moved from Zambia soon after the country attained independence from the British. The Rhodesia Memorial gate at the Moffatt Street in the Salisbury gardens was built in 1972 (Jack, 1980). Places associated with Rhodes, particularly Cecil Square and the Rhodes statue were considered the most historic parts of Salisbury (City of Salisbury Guide, 1957: 25).

The statues and other memorial places described above became centres for various practices of memorialisation. For example, wreath-laying ceremonies were held every year to commemorate Cecil Rhodes and Founders Day. These commemorations were held at Cecil Square and Rhodes’ statues in Salisbury and Bulawayo respectively. Thus, the monuments, memorials, as well as buildings, created elaborate cultural itineraries that gave a visual depiction of the history of the founding of the colony. As in the landscapes of the Matopos, these “urbanscapes” were also

appropriated and turned into white public spheres through the physical imprint of European monuments. Lobengula's old Bulawayo became Rhodes' new Bulawayo and this was physically etched through a re-ordering of space into white space (Figures 2, 7 & 9).

In both Bulawayo and Salisbury, the architectural traditions and layout of the cities reflected European traditions. This was not just about architecture however, but also about creating a footprint for settler history. Statues, public squares and other monuments became an important process of cultural writing on to these spaces (Figures 2, 7 & 9). The socialisation of the cities into white public spaces was entrenched by the racial topographical ordering of urban space that limited the movement of black people into certain areas of the cities, preserving them as white enclaves (Raftopoulos & Yoshikuni, 1999). Therefore, monuments enabled historical itineraries that were useful in the entrenching of the urban space into racialised cultural landscapes that exclusively memorialised settler achievement. These itineraries, partly borrowed from blacks' associations to space, yet they excluded blacks as they sought to superimpose European values. The physical reengineering of space created a racially exclusive European space in the cities and this was later on entrenched by the harsh laws that restricted the interaction of black and white people and strictly regulated and controlled the movement of black Africans into white designated areas. Thus, the urban spaces became what Martin Hall (2006) describes as "expressions of identity, and a means of shaping the relationships between those who inhabit them... palimpsests in which buildings, street layouts and monumental structures are interpreted and re-interpreted as changing expressions of relations of power" (Hall, 2006: 12).

Ultimately, the various practices of commemoration, coupled with physical monuments and memorials turned the Rhodesian urban space and landscapes into "national" landscapes that drew heavily on imagery, memory, and myth. Intellectual history based on events from pioneer history, inscribed on monuments and memorials created heroes out of the story of origin as well as of the pioneers. All these practices of memorisation appropriated space, turning it into an integral part of a white public sphere that excluded black communities. Thus, the spatial organisation through monuments, nomenclature, and performance turned the landscapes and urban spaces into "technologies of control where monumental spaces became tapestries of particular ideologies and worldviews" (O'Neil, 2009: 93). In the Rhodesian case, they entrenched an exclusive settler modernity based on difference from the local black populations.

### **Performing Heritage: Exhibitions, Fairs and Anniversaries**

One of the ways in which Rhodesians sought to articulate and entrench settler heritage in the public sphere was through performance. These practices of commemoration rehashed the

narrative of the birth of the colony, highlighted the heroic deeds of the settlers especially the pioneers, and celebrated the development of Rhodesia into a “modern” state. The most conspicuous of these practices of commemoration was the re-enactment of major historical events, the celebration of anniversaries, exhibitions, and fairs, all of which gave a visual presence to the narrative of the birth of the colony. The 1933 anniversary of the occupation of Matebeleland, the silver jubilee celebrations (1943), Rhodes centenary in 1953, the 100th birthday of Rhodes and the 75th anniversary of the colony in 1968 are examples of the numerous acts of commemoration, all acted out in public, and invoking episodes from its early history- its ‘pioneer’ past.

This commemoration of anniversaries was stimulated by the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the occupation of Matebeleland. The 1933 celebration was meant to commemorate the anniversary of the entry of the BSAC troops into Bulawayo in 1893.<sup>18</sup> The anniversary was proposed by the Society comprising members of the 1893 column and was organized by a special committee sponsored by the municipality of Bulawayo and the Southern Rhodesian Publicity Association.<sup>19</sup> The commemoration was a product of debates between Bulawayo and Salisbury over whether to have a 40<sup>th</sup> rather than a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and whether to combine or separate the celebrations for the occupation of Matebeleland and Mashonaland. (*Matebeleland 40th Anniversary Report, 1933*). The major objective of the anniversary was to celebrate those that had participated in the occupation of the country in the 1890s. The justification for holding the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1933, rather than a 50th anniversary was that most members of the Pioneer Column were ageing and dying and that waiting for a further ten years would lose more of them (*Matebeleland 40th Anniversary Report, 1933*).<sup>20</sup>

The major focus and theme of the commemoration was to honour the efforts of the pioneers who took part in the occupation of Matebeleland in 1893. The activities put the short history of the colony in the public sphere. The anniversary was an act of performance, invoking pioneer historiography through drama, re-enactment, carnivals, and pilgrimages. The major highlights included the reunion of pioneers, the exhibition of Rhodesian historical relics in the national museum, and a pioneer banquet at the Palace Hotel. One of the main acts was the elaborate

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<sup>18</sup> In 1893, the BSAC troops had marched into Matebeleland, 3 years after they had settled in Mashonaland. They managed to defeat the Ndebele and this led to the flight of Lobengula, marking the end of his rule. The BSAC was then able to establish their rule in this part of the country.

<sup>19</sup> The composition of the organising committee for the celebrations showed these diverse interests. Edwin Anderson Alderman represented the Southern Rhodesian Publicity Bureau and his mandate was to market Rhodesia and attract immigrants and tourists; Friedrich Wilhelm Traugott Posselt was the acting Superintendent of Natives, representing the Department of Native affairs; Major J.S Bridger represented the interests of the BSAC and the mayor of Bulawayo; whilst councillors represented the interests of Bulawayo

<sup>20</sup> The committee went ahead with the 40th anniversary and in 1943 commemorated the 50th anniversary though on a lesser scale than that of the 1933.

pageant that invoked the history of the colony with a carnival procession through the city and a masked carnival ball at the Grand Hotel. The carnival procession, which meandered past the major historical spots and statues in the city, vividly re-enacted the history, culture, and development of the colony. The procession moved through the various important monuments in the city, which included the Drill Hall, the town house, Rhodes statues and the rebellion monuments. The procession included floats containing many aspects of Rhodesian history, ranging from a replica of the Ndebele war memorial to a Welsh cottage and the old Zeederberg coach (*Matebeleland 40th Anniversary Report 1933*). Voided of indigenous people, the monumentalised historical and cultural itineraries entrenched the exclusivity nature of the urban space as an exclusively white public sphere.

Dramatisation of the early history of the colony was done through a play titled “*The Pioneers*” at the Palace Theatre. Linking the settler colonial past within a European inspired heritage the play was enacted in complete Victorian era garments, with a backdrop of the Matopos landscape. The scenes depicted the major events in the colony’s history such as Allan Wilson's Last stand, as well as Rhodes’ Indaba in the Matopos. According to the organising committee’s report, the play was meant to “commemorate the pioneering work of those steadfast men and women who laid the foundations of our existing society” (*Matebeleland 40th Anniversary Report, 1933:5*). Its centrality in the anniversary is shown by the fact that it was the only act that was performed daily during the 6 days of celebrations. The dramatisation was meant to show the central place that pioneers held in the Rhodesian narrative of nation. Pioneers were regarded as heroes who had braved the difficulties of settling in a new land, wars with local tribes, and the challenges of setting up a modern, industrialised colony.

To highlight the importance of the founding of the colony, major activities during the anniversary were centred on the surviving members of the Pioneer Column. The pioneers' reunion at the Palace Hotel included the surviving pioneers and the widows of those who died in the 1893 column. The surviving pioneers signed a “roll of honour”, a document that was deemed “Bulawayo's most treasured historical document” (*Matebeleland 40th Anniversary Report, 1933:5*). Two banquets and a masked carnival ball were held specifically for the pioneers. To cement the importance of this event, the participants received loyalty messages from King George, General J.B.M Hertzog - Prime Minister of South Africa and Godfrey Huggins, the Prime Minister of Rhodesia. Further, the pioneers capped this experience by holding a meeting at the site of the Rhodes Indaba tree (*Matebeleland 40th Anniversary Report 1933*).

The city's wide roads, monuments, and memorials provided a grand stage or open theatre on which the colony's past was re-enacted to a mostly white audience. Activities were held at historic sites and memorials such as the "Rebellion" memorial, the Drill hall, the City hall as well as around the city's main street. For instance, on 4 November 1933, the surviving pioneers assembled at the foot of Rhodes' statue, in memory of the day they invaded Bulawayo forty years earlier. On the last day of the festivities, they embarked on a pilgrimage to Rhodes' burial site in the Matopos, laying wreaths and offering prayers in a service presided over by Neville Jones, who delivered a speech in tribute to the early missionary workers in Rhodesia (*Matabeleland 40th Anniversary Report, 1933*).

This co-option of the colony's past by the state had important ideological dimensions for the young settler state. For instance, the 1933 celebration had a significant contribution to how Rhodesia related to her. One important consequence was that the anniversary catalysed the state's involvement in the colony's past, an element that hitherto had been left to independent societies, city councils and other benevolent associations. The state involvement eventually led to the creation of state - supported institutions for the preservation of the colony's history and culture. The activities of its organising committee members laid the groundwork for the nationalisation of museums in 1936 and the formation of the National monuments commission (1936), the National archives of Zimbabwe (1938) and the Rhodes memorial art gallery. The use of the past became an important aspect that had to be subjected to the colonial state's control. Coming after 1923, when the colony had voted to be "self - governing", this past was instrumental in establishing the cultural, and political uniqueness of Rhodesia.

The enthusiasm and mood of the celebrations spurred the impulses to institutionalise and formalise the Rhodesian past and this was seen as necessary for the cultural development of the country. Commenting on the necessity of the state's involvement in creating institutions to take control of the colony's past, the *Bulawayo Chronicle* remarked that "no country can aspire to its full development which considers only material progress and omits to consider its cultural life" (*The Bulawayo Chronicle, 3 /11/1933*). Part of the 40th anniversary celebrations had included an exhibition of Rhodesian historical documents and objects at the Rhodesian national museums and this became the basis for canvassing the state to establish national historical collections that would be constituted into the national archive.

According to the anniversary's official report, the activities stimulated a new interest in the history of Southern Rhodesia (*Matabeleland 40th Anniversary Report, 1933:23*). Museums and other memorial institutions were now seen as crucial in the construction of this modernity. Following the 1933 celebrations, reports of increasing interest in the collection of materials associated with the early

history of the colony were recorded. These materials aptly termed *Rhodesiana* included “everything Rhodesian- from an old cannon found in Lobengula’s kraal to a soapstone ornament found at Great Zimbabwe, from an arrow to a bullet of the rebellion, from a leaflet of an early printing press to a card of a modern baguette” (Toch, 1934 :4).

Three years after the Bulawayo anniversary, Rhodesia participated in the 1936 Empire Exhibition in Johannesburg, South Africa (McLean, 1937). Here, the Rhodesian story was given another public life, albeit in an international setting. The narrative of a small country born out of the heroic acts of Cecil Rhodes and the BSAC pioneers was depicted in the Rhodesia pavilion. The catalogue to the Rhodesian pavilion contained a narrative of the successes of the BSAC in transforming Rhodesia into a modern state (BSAC, 1936).<sup>21</sup> The biggest of the performances however took place in 1953, when Bulawayo hosted one of the largest commemorative events in the region, the Rhodes centenary celebration. The centenary commemorated the 100th birthday of Cecil Rhodes. According to the organisers of the anniversary, the three month event was “to commemorate the centenary of the birth of the founder of the two Rhodesias and the birth of two of his colleagues, Leander Starr Jameson and Alfred Beit and the 60th anniversary of the founding of Bulawayo” (*CARC Catalogue, 1953:7*).

While Cecil Rhodes and his colleagues were being celebrated, commercial business was also taking place within the 50 acres of the exhibition space.<sup>22</sup> The exhibition was one of the most ambitious events of its kind ever undertaken in southern Africa and lasted for over three months with over 20 countries participating, and honoured by a royal visit. The sheer number of participants and the massive infrastructure that went with it demonstrated the scale of this activity. It was a massive affair that literally led to the construction of a town within a city,<sup>23</sup> as temporary townships were constructed to accommodate African workers and a “centenary city” was built to accommodate European participants. It is estimated that more than 1 million people attended the exhibition during the three months of activities (Jack, 1979). The planning of the exposition included massive logistics in what was called “operation airlift” where 40 airplanes transported the Halle Orchestra,

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<sup>21</sup> *The BSAC Historical Catalogue & Souvenir of Rhodesia: The Story of Rhodesian told in a series of pictures*, Empire Exhibition, catalogue, shows how the Rhodesian exhibition venerated the chartered company in Rhodesia, with objects and photographic prints from the Witwatersrand University, Gubbins Museum of Africana; the Librarian of Parliament, Cape Town, The Rhodesian Archives

<sup>22</sup> A large area was devoted to exhibits on light and heavy industries, a Motor Show. Another hall, “the Court of Services” displayed banks, building societies, travel agencies, shipping companies and airlines. Other exhibits included the Government Pavilions, the Court of Rhodes, the Hall of Africa, the Court of Cities, the Rhodesia Ideal Home exhibit, the Southern and Northern Rhodesia Government exhibits, a conference hall and press and broadcasting rooms.

<sup>23</sup> 2250 dwellings sheltered over 4000 people and arranged in nine catering blocks, named after key historic figures including Cecil Rhodes, David Livingstone, Alfred Beit, Major Colenbrander, Charles Coghlan, Courtney Selous, John Moffat, and Allan Wilson and others (*CARC Catalogue, 1953*).

the Royal Opera, the Saddlers Wells Theatre Company, and many others to Bulawayo. Centenary city consisted over 2250 new houses to accommodate over 4000 participants (*CARC Catalogue, 1953*).

Though the exhibition was seen as a cultural and commercial exchange platform - “a window shop for the African continent”, it was indeed more about Rhodesia entrenching her place in the geopolitics of the 1950s (*CARC Catalogue, 1953: 4*). The activities and the visual aspects of the commemoration displayed aspects of settlers’ cultural, political, and economic achievements in Rhodesia placing them within the context of the British Commonwealth. Thus, the international cultural aspects of the anniversary were deliberately made grandiose.<sup>24</sup> Through this anniversary, Southern Rhodesia, which had consolidated its political position in the region by taking a central role in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in the same year, invoked its best-known politician and founder, Rhodes. The exhibitions presented Southern Rhodesia as an economically and politically strong entity, with a well-developed economic infrastructure, shown in the hundreds of pavilions displaying Rhodesian products and services.

As in the 1933 celebration, here performance was used on an even bigger scale, combining white citizens’ active involvement in the enactment of settler history and culture. One of the most grandiose acts of performance was the Rhodesian pageant, which was a massive outdoors theatrical production meant to bring to life the short history of the colony. The “pageant of Rhodesia” had a cast of over 200 Europeans and about 100 Africans (*CARC Catalogue, 1953*). It presented a snapshot overview of the colony’s history and development, highlighting the founding myth and the heroic deeds of pioneers. Its prologue depicted an unchanging African scene, creating an ideologically infused false notion of stasis of the indigenous populations. An “African village” opened the pageant and remained unchanged until the arrival of the Ndebele, then the appearance of Rhodes, the signing of the Rudd Concession, the Pioneer Column's journey, their arrival at Salisbury, life in early Salisbury, the 1893 and the 1896-7 wars, the Shangani Patrol, the Jameson Raid, the Mazowe Patrol and the Rhodes indaba in the Matopos. Parallel to this, the exposition highlighted the perceived sanctity of settler modernity. The narrative related the development of the colony’s history and culture evoking all major historical events and figures in the short history of the colony. For example, the pageant ended by showing an impression of a modern Rhodesian street dominated by a statue of Rhodes watching over the people of his country (*CARC Catalogue,*

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<sup>24</sup> One of the major attractions was the bill of fair provided by some of the most famous musicians and dancers from all over the world. The Halle orchestra, the Royal Opera flew to Rhodesia in what was said to be the biggest airlift undertaken up to that time (Jack, 1979). Other acts included the Saddler Wells Theatre Ballet, John Gielgud's Shakespearian Company, the Edinburg Pipe band, and the Royal Opera House. John Gielgud staged and starred in a production of Richard II, while John Barbirolli's Hallé Orchestra gave 14 concerts (*CARC Catalogue, 1953*).

1953). Thus, in a theatrical act, the whole story of the birth and development of the colony was displayed for the mainly white audiences.

A central aspect of the anniversary was the various exhibitions, displaying the political and economic spheres of the colony. For instance, the main historical exhibit was contained in the “court of Rhodes.” This space contained a historical exhibition devoted to the life and work of Rhodes and the collection was “the largest collection of Rhodes relics ever brought together under one roof” (*CARC Catalogue, 1953:7*). The central feature of the exhibit was the diorama of Rhodes, Colenbrander, Saur, and Stent's meeting with the Ndebele chiefs in the Matopos 1896 (Figure 23).<sup>25</sup> Thus, the exhibition through simple household utensils, personal items and other memorabilia highlighted the central place that Rhodes occupied in the historiography of Rhodesia. However, the Rhodes centenary was as much about the Rhodesian past as it was about contemporary Rhodesian politics and the economy. While the celebration emphasised the political history of the colony, it was also meant to highlight the colony's economic development through demonstrating how an industrialised and “modern Rhodesia” was a perfect destination for European immigrants. The “court of cities” showed how cities in Rhodesia had developed and highlighted the economic opportunities they offered. The court depicted the life and growth of the cities of Salisbury and Bulawayo and other towns. An area covering 10 acres was devoted to light and heavy industries, whilst in the “Court of Services”; banks, building societies, travel agencies, shipping companies, and airlines were represented (*CARC Catalogue, 1953*).<sup>26</sup> In addition to the government pavilions and commercial section, the non-industrial section of about 70,000 square feet housed the Post Office, the Hall of Africa, the Court of Cities, and the Rhodesian Ideal Home Exhibit (*CARC Catalogue, 1953*).

More importantly, the 1953 anniversary was also a public demonstration of European modernity imprinted in a city associated with the history of one of the strongest pre-colonial states, the Ndebele. Modelled after European 18th and 19<sup>th</sup> century Great Exhibitions and Fairs, this display of the supremacy of settler history or modernity was meant to highlight settler difference from the local populations. This was manifested in how the history and traditions were shown in a

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<sup>25</sup> The event was described as “the most important episode in Rhodes life as it led to the end of the Ndebele Rebellion” and the peaceful settlement of the country thereafter (*CARC Catalogue, 1953*). A copy of the painting makes a central part of a diorama depicting the Indaba in the hall of Kings, Natural History Museum today (Fig.6)

<sup>26</sup> Other exhibitions included the Southern and Northern Rhodesia Government exhibits, a Conference Hall and Press and Broadcasting hall. The “court of cities” showed how cities in Rhodesia had developed and highlighted the economic opportunities they offered. The court depicted the life and growth of the cities of Salisbury and Bulawayo and other towns.

paternalistic way at the centenary. While the anniversary commemorated Rhodes, the exhibition was also celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1983 conquest of Matebeleland.

The paternalistic nature of the commemoration was more than obvious in the way it represented blacks. The only part that showed African history or culture was the African village, described by the coordinators as having two aims; “firstly, to show to European visitors how Africans lived in rural areas and secondly, to present the best possible examples to all visitors of native arts” (*CARC Catalogue, 1953:9*). The village displayed the “home life” showing huts constructed at the stand by the various groups. Carving and craft-making were also carried out in real time for the audiences (Hove & McAlister, 1953: 3). At the centre of the African village were parties of dancers who performed for visitors. The Shona and Ndebele were represented as marginal, primordial tribes whose history and traditions were a curious appendage to that of settler modernity. They were thus subjected to the curious gaze of the mostly white patrons at the exhibition. The special guide created for this section of the anniversary said it all, “here you will be able to see how the Africans live in rural areas, watch them work on their skills and handicrafts, hear their music, watch their dances and buy a souvenir if you like” (Hove & McAlister, 1953: 3).

The important political dimensions of the exhibition were strongly tied to contemporary geopolitical political changes. Thus, the celebration was a show of progress for the colony based on the personage of Rhodes. Rhodes was flagged to highlight the identity of the Rhodesian state that in this period sought to resist incorporation into the South African union and faced challenges from the emerging black nationalists. In putting up this show, Rhodesia claimed the image of Rhodes as belonging to the Rhodesian nation, as opposed to South Africa where Rhodes had built part of his empire. Buried in the Matopos, monumentalised in stone in a city that he literally designed, Rhodes was part of what Rhodesia sought to be after World War 2 - an autonomous and self-sufficient colony (*CARC Catalogue, 1953*).

The exhibition was held in the 1950s, a period when forces of change were beginning to put pressure on the Rhodesian regime to accommodate African nationalists in the politics of the country. The Rhodes centenary coincided with the officialisation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1953. The Federation was seen partly as a response to the perceived threat from the Afrikaner influence from South Africa and partly as a response to the increasing pressure for political change coming from the liberal sectors within Rhodesian politics and Britain (Gann, 1965; Shutt & King 2005). Reviewing the Rhodes centenary, Shutt and King highlight how the post - Second World War increase in immigration required the Rhodesian state to educate new white Rhodesians on the founding myths of the colony, as a rallying point for settler nationalism. In

doing this, Southern Rhodesians were anxious to emphasise their status as British subjects in contrast to Afrikaner nationalism in South Africa (Shutt & King, 2005).

According to Shutt and King:

The need to emphasise the myths of the colony's foundation, even if they appeared enduring and stable, came about because post-war challenges deeply affected how they might be used to bolster white power in Southern Rhodesia. First, the arrival of immigrants ignorant of the colony's myths and history, as well as worries about post-war shortages, meant that the pioneer story emphasised the hardships of building a country as much as the triumph of European civilisation in southern Africa. Secondly, the 1948 election victory of the National Party (NP) in South Africa and establishment of Federation in 1953 provided an impetus for Rhodesians to embrace their British heritage and the Rhodes myth with fresh urgency, in counterpoint to the growing anti-imperial sentiment exhibited in South Africa (Shutt & King, 2005:35).

Shutt & King (2005) also argue that the Rhodes Centenary served as a timely reminder to South Africa, which in 1952 celebrated the 300th anniversary of Jan van Riebeeck's landing at the Cape, that Rhodesia remained steadfastly British. By presenting Southern Rhodesia as a rapidly developing colony, the celebrations depicted the colony as a good destination for potential white immigrants. Thus, a central aspect of the centenary was to highlight Rhodes and the British Royal family as central to the Southern Rhodesian identity. Rhodesian early history, British imperial heritage, and white Rhodesian economic progress based on Cecil Rhodes' colonial dream were showcased at the exhibition. The exhibition was perceived as a symbol for Rhodesian political distinctiveness and its desire for political sovereignty.

The various practices of commemoration cited in the last two sections shows how practices of memorialisation based on archaeological sites, historical monuments, or memorials authorised and entrenched settler traditions, histories, and meanings, identities in the public sphere. They became one way in which settlers validated their own sense of belonging, while allowing them to also negotiate the local and regional political dynamics.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have traced the genealogy of settler heritage practices, demonstrating a long and enduring use of the past, which was manifested through investment in historiography, landscape, memorialisation, and commemorative practices. The settler society, which had been constituted from various European nationalities, needed to inculcate a sense of cohesion amid economic uncertainty and military challenges from the Shona and Ndebele. This sense of belonging was entrenched through preservation efforts centred on pioneer historiography, monuments, and acts of commemoration. The chapter has also shown that the public sphere in Rhodesia was largely

conceived of as a white public sphere and this had the effect of the heritage of black Africans being pushed to the background. However, in appropriating local landscapes and archaeological sites, settlers adapted the Shona and Ndebele historical and spiritual associations with these places, creating palimpsests on landscapes, sites, and land. The chapter has shown how the practices of memorialisation were largely fragmented, pushed by individuals and interested societies with little support from the state. These practices displayed an extraordinary investment in landscapes, monuments, and practices of memorialisation characteristic of heritage practices in both colonial and post-colonial periods in Zimbabwe. The next chapter further analyses this by exploring how between the 1930s and the late 1970s, heritage practices became institutionalised through museums and how the growth of disciplines influenced preservation activities.

## CHAPTER THREE: COLONIAL HERITAGE CANONS - ARCHAEOLOGY, MUSEUMS, AND INSTITUTIONALISATION, 1937-1980.

*"Rhodesia began to take a scientific interest in her past as soon as she acquired her present" (F. Clements, Quoted in The Rhodesian Herald, 08/04/ 1964:2).*

### Introduction

The previous chapter examined practices of commemoration organised around landscapes, urban monuments, and pioneer historiography in early colonial Rhodesia. Maintained by independent societies, city governments, and other interest groups, this heritage was used to inscribe settler heritage and modernity on the Rhodesian landscape. In this chapter, I explore the various ways in which the colonial state further institutionalised and bureaucratised this heritage entrenching a white heritage through reworking of their past formalised in institutions such as museums and preservation institutions. I highlight how museums became places that identified and collated the colony's natural, historical, and cultural features, framing a colonial epistemology that undergirded an official heritage needed by Rhodesia in negotiating her place in contemporary national and regional geopolitics.

Following Smith (2006), I analyse how intellectual and institutional practices articulated a dominant set of ideas about heritage that normalised a set of assumptions and meanings of heritage, which privileged activities of professionals and the state and in the process excluded a range of popular ideas and concepts of heritage. I examine the intellectual practices and look at genealogies of formulations of official heritage in colonial Zimbabwe. I approach this from the view that institutionalisation, particularly museum technical activities are a site of power - .the power of collecting, classifying, and interpreting (Anderson, 1991; Hooper-Greenhill, 1992). The functions of museums and other heritage institutions are always linked to contemporary political and ideological concerns, therefore analysing their practices helps us understand of the ways in which they are related to the "circulation of knowledge,... and regimes of governing" (Bennett et al, 2014:147).

Developments in Rhodesia confirm the Foucauldian ideas that reorganization of knowledge, linked to the emergence of disciplinary and regulatory control is intertwined with new forms of power and domination (Foucault, 1970, 1974, 1975). The practices of identification, naming, documentation, and study of the natural and cultural aspects of the colony made it more knowable to the settlers.

## **“The Great Rhodesian Unknown”: Great Zimbabwe, Archaeopolitics<sup>27</sup> and Control of the Past**

Zimbabwe has been studied in many various ways: pure speculation based on some fashionable theory; meticulously careful excavation; the use of esoteric knowledge and unproven techniques; the methods of comparative ethnology and comparative architecture; the application of African legends and the most dangerous of all... “common sense”. It has been a playground of treasure hunters and scientists; cranks and architects; of amateurs and of all not a few professionals. It has been photographed, painted, filmed, and televised. ...It is very widely known yet to most people it is *the great Rhodesian unknown* (Summers, 1963:3-4).

The above is a preface to Roger Summers’ (1963) book on the Great Zimbabwe archaeological site.<sup>28</sup> His comment highlights the overwhelming attention given to this archaeological site over in Rhodesia. Great Zimbabwe stimulated a lot of interest in Zimbabwean archaeology such that any description of the development of the discipline in Zimbabwe starts from this specific site. The way this site has been studied and appropriated speaks to the complex link between archaeological sites, growth of scientific disciplines such as archaeology and discourses of heritage and practices of preservation in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe. The attraction of Great Zimbabwe and activities around this site have shaped the development of Rhodesian archaeology and influenced archaeological preservation activities. This site and many of its type occupy a central role in popular discourses on Zimbabwean politics of identity, what it means to be Zimbabwean, constructions of a “national” culture and promotion of cultural tourism.

Great Zimbabwe is located in the southern part of the country, and is part of a network of over 300 sites, referred to by archaeologists as “Zimbabwe type sites or Zimbabwe culture sites”.<sup>29</sup> This network of freestanding dry stonewalls stretches from Mapungubwe in Northern South Africa, to the Zimbabwean Highveld and parts of Mozambique and Botswana (Pikirayi, 2001, 2006). The sites are well referenced in local oral traditions by the Shona and their dialectic subgroups, claiming long-term links to the sites (Beach, 1984, 1994; Mufuka, 1981; Chigwedere, 1980). The link

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<sup>27</sup> David Lindsay (2006) used this term in reference to the contests over the preservation, interpretation and use of archaeological sites in the USA. His work specifically looked at the conflict over preservation between the USA Federal government’s preservation bills versus communities that sought to reduce the federal state’s control of land use on the pretext of preservation laws.

<sup>28</sup> Roger Summers received archaeology training at the London University Institute of Archaeology before coming to Rhodesia in 1947. He served in the National Museums and Monuments Commission from 1947 – 1972 as a “Keeper of Antiquities” in the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia. He also served as chair of the Southern Rhodesia Historical Monuments Commission from 1954 to 1959.

<sup>29</sup> The Zimbabwe tradition/culture refers to the development forms of social organisation that appeared on the Zimbabwean Plateau and adjacent regions from the early second millennium AD to the nineteenth century. It is divided into three broad periods: Mapungubwe (AD 1200-1280), Great Zimbabwe (AD 1270-1550) and Khami (AD 1400-1830) (Pikirayi, 2013). A distinct feature of these states is the development of monumental stonewalled architecture, which attained its zenith during the Great Zimbabwe and Khami periods (Garlake, 1970, 1973, 2002; Pikirayi, 2001). The purpose and function of this architecture has been the subject of considerable discussion in both the archaeological and historical literature (Beach, 1980, 1994; Huffman, 1981, 1986a, 1996).

between the sites and Shona ancestors, well embedded in local traditions, has been confirmed by archaeologists (Caton-Thompson, 1931; Summers, 1963; Pikirayi, 2001). For many, these sites have always been the abodes of the ancestors and have been considered as spiritual shrines (Ndoro, 1999, 2005; Fontein, 2006, 2011; Mufuka, 1981).

Great Zimbabwe elicited international attention way before the country was colonised. This attention started from the Arabs and the Portuguese who had been trading with the Shona from the Eastern coast of Africa (Pwiti, 1991, 1996; Pikirayi, 2001). These early encounters made mention of a powerful African kingdom based at the site in the 19th century and from then on, the site became subject to myths and legends, circulated by accounts of travellers, hunters, and missionaries (Summers, 1971; Garlake, 1973). From these accounts, the site generated European interest in the archaeology of the country, which resulted in a long-standing debate on the origins of the site. This debate, rooted in the 15<sup>th</sup> century Arab and Portuguese myths, and publicised by early travelers, adventurers and missionaries, found fertile ground in the project of colonisation.

Cecil Rhodes and the settler society marveled and held on to the “mystery” of Great Zimbabwe, Ian Smith censored knowledge production at the site, and African nationalists derived inspiration to fight against the colonial regime, while the new independent state named itself after the site. Throughout the colonial era, Great Zimbabwe became the most well-known archaeological site in the colony, attracting scientists, treasure hunters, politicians, and tourists. In the postcolonial era, it is claimed by contesting clans from the surrounding local community and is regarded as one of the premier national spiritual sites. It remains a prime tourist attraction, whose popularity is second only to the Victoria Falls, another “national monument” in north-western Zimbabwe.

The “Great Zimbabwe Controversy” is a longstanding debate on the origins of Great Zimbabwe that in many ways represents the link between the discipline of archaeology, colonisation and marginalisation of indigenous knowledge. The interpretations stemming from the work sponsored by the BSAC affirmed the foreign origins of the site, which they attributed to Phoenicians or Arabs (Bent, 1896; Hall & Neal, 1902, 1904). These interpretations sparked the debate with those who believed that the sites were creations of the Shona ancestors (Bent, 1896; MacIver, 1906; Caton-Thompson, 1931). For over a century, the Great Zimbabwe controversy pitted academics, and the public who advanced the local authorship of the site, against those who propagated a foreign, European or Arabic influence.

A peculiar aspect of Great Zimbabwe is how the site has been seen as a symbol of authority - a seat of political power (Pikirayi, 2013). Oral traditions and contemporary local community-based associations confirm the site to be an important religious shrine, a seat of ancestral powers

(Mufuka, 1981; Fontein, 2006). Early Arabic and Portuguese accounts linked the site to a powerful civilisation. Further, European travellers and missionaries in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century identified the site as the centre of powerful political and economic power in the region. This association with political and religious power is encapsulated within the debates on scientific interpretations of the spatial aspects of the site encapsulated in works such as Thomas Huffman (1996) and many others (See Bent, 1896; Garlake, 1973; Beach, 1998; Matenga, 1995; Pwiti, 2007). Many archaeological interpretations have confirmed how the spatial and architectural aspects of the site are directly linked to religious and political power (Garlake, 1973; Huffman, 1996; Pikirayi, 2001, 2006, 2013). Pikirayi (2013) asserts that the construction of monumental architecture in the Zimbabwe culture was a process of constructing social and political power through the manipulation of ideology.

Archaeological interpretations have also established, albeit in a highly contested manner, the spiritual aspects of the site as represented by the symbolic and religious aspects of its spatial organisation and the sanctity of the motifs, objects, and relics recovered from the site. These include the Great Zimbabwe birds, ritual figurines and the Chevron pattern (Huffman, 1981, 1984, 1996; Summers, 1963; Garlake, 1973; Matenga, 1998). These elements were persistently adapted as national symbols or as part of corporate emblems throughout the colonial era and beyond.

It is partly because of Great Zimbabwe's association with political and religious authority and links to a powerful mystic past that the site persistently attracted appropriation and control from successive governments. For instance, efforts by the early Rhodesian state to claim archaeological sites as their own 'heritage' was used to undergird colonial conquest, based on beliefs about its ancient, non-African origin. To endorse this appropriation, supported by settler intellectual and discursive traditions sponsored by the BSAC, the site was turned into the centre of Rhodesia's commemoration of its pioneer heroes. Most spectacular was the burial of the Allan Wilson Patrol in the late 1890s at Great Zimbabwe (Ranger, 1999; Kuklick, 1991).

Thus, Great Zimbabwe has been written about extensively, producing a large body of literature on its history and interpretation. However, for this study, the value of this site lies in the way in which it became central in not only the development of archaeology in Zimbabwe and the sub region, but also by how activities around this site (and other archaeological sites) shaped heritage discourses in the country. The central place assumed by archaeology, as well as archaeological monuments and sites in the discourse and practices of heritage in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe, can be traced to events at Great Zimbabwe. Archaeology became central in appropriating and establishing and these sites as crucial aspects of Rhodesian heritage. The role of

the discipline of archeology is seen in the massive investment placed in archaeological investigations on Zimbabwe type sites beginning with Bent's study commissioned by the BSAC in 1896 (Bent, 1896).

By locating the significance of the site in deep time, archaeology pushed to the background the spiritual and ritual significance of the site. Archaeology was seen as more valid than any oral references, even in the presence of overwhelming evidence of the local communities' use of the site (Mazarire, 2013; Pikirayi, 2012; Fontein, 2006; Chanaiwa, 1973). Thus, colonial archaeology affirmed the "national" significance of the site, and influenced the way the sites were continually appropriated (Chanaiwa, 1973). The Great Zimbabwe controversy and its associated corpus of writing, both academic and in other spheres such as the media, became part of the colonial historiography that deliberately intellectualised these sites as part of the collective colonialist mythology targeted at stripping Africans of their associations with the site (Chanaiwa, 1973; Trigger, 1984, 1995; Mahachi, 2008).

Projected as settler heritage, underwritten and affirmed by science, the archeological sites were constituted as part of settler identity. The value accorded to this material heritage resulted in the establishment of protective legislation. The colonial state recognised the value conferred by this material heritage and put up some of the earliest forms of control of archaeological sites in the region. To forestall the negative effects of the destructive activities of early explorers and treasure hunters, mechanisms for the control of the use or exploitation of archaeological sites were put in place.

The earliest effort to regulate the activities and protect sites from destruction was the 1902 Ordinance, a legislative order that was meant to protect archaeological monuments. The 1902 ordinance aptly named the "*Better Protection of Ancient Monuments and Ancient Relics Ordinance*," sought to improve the protection of monuments from further damage by treasure hunters. In the ordinance, monuments were defined as "all buildings of stone or brick or ruins of such buildings, stone circles, *timulli*, tombs, tombstones, alters, pillars, statues, idols, or anything similar erected or constructed prior to 1800" (*Ordinance 9, 1902:1*). The ordinance also protected relics, which were defined as, "phalli, images, engraved or worked stone, metal or pottery, robes or garments embossed, rings, anglets or bracelets constructed or made by early inhabitants at the period before 1800" (*Ordinance 9, 1902:1*).

The enactment of the 1902 Ordinance marked the emergence of approaches that formally constituted archaeological sites as "national heritage" to be protected by the state. The ordinance made it a criminal offence for anyone to destroy, defame, or remove any protected monument or

relics and gave the Administrator, the highest political authority in the colony, the powers to regulate excavations of archaeological sites. All citizens were called up to report any discovered archaeological sites. The government was given the right to acquire control of any sites or land around archaeological sites, upon agreed compensation.

As the state's desire to control archaeological sites increased, it was realised that the 1902 ordinance excluded other elements such as rock art, which was beginning to receive a lot of attention from the settler population.<sup>30</sup> As a result, in 1911 after a series of reports of rock paintings in the country were publicised mainly through Rhodesian Scientific Association (RSA) publications, new legislation was put in place. The 1912 Bushman Relics Act was particularly created to fill this gap. The new legislation was mainly aimed at extending state protection to Rhodesian rock art, now firmly established through various archaeological studies as an integral part of the colony's prehistory (Hall, 1911, 1912; Molyneaux, 1903; Mennell & Chubb, 1908). The enactment of this new legislation was also influenced by events in South Africa where the 1911 Bushmen Relics Protection Act had been put in place to regulate the protection of mainly Bushman human remains in South Africa (Hall & Lillie, 1992; Shepherd, 2002, 2002a). The Act defined Bushmen Relics as "any drawings or paintings on stone or petroglyph of the kind believed to have been executed by Bushmen or other Aborigines including any anthropological contents of the graves, caves, rocks, shelters, middens or shell mounds" (*Ordinance 15, 1911:1*).

In spite of the 1902 and 1912 ordinances, the regulation and control of the practice of archaeology was limited, as the laws did not make provision for any institution to enforce and monitor the provisions of the Act. Thus, the practice of archaeology before 1936 remained largely unregulated and conducted by "antiquarians" (Pikirayi, 2007; Beach, 1998). This period was thus associated with unsystematic plunder of sites and as a result, archaeological evidence was lost due to the activities of amateur archaeologists who used poor methodologies and lacked excavation techniques in their arrogant attempts to deny the local origins of archaeological sites. In fact, most reports show how excavations went on, conducted for personal interest, curiosity or for acquisition of "antiques" or minerals. Written correspondence in the Rhodesian Museum shows how in the early years, settler farmers and white communities around cities absorbed themselves in "discovering" archaeological materials, which they excavated and sent to the museum. Even in the time when Rhodesian archaeology was attracting international attention, the works of many local amateurs and/or international enthusiasts remained largely uncontrolled.

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<sup>30</sup> For instance, the first paper read at the 1899 R.S.A conference by A.J. C Molyneaux was on rock paintings in the Tuli district. Between 1899 and 1912, several members of the Association had brought to light the existence of rock art in many parts of the country, prompting the need for extending legal protection to rock art.

The lure of the country's archaeological sites manifested itself in the proliferation of "antiquarian" activity, which for many years remained unregulated. For example, Leo Frobenius' work in Mashonaland, which partly prompted the passing of the 1936 Act, went on with no approval (Garlake, 2007). Fobenuis was a German ethnologist who travelled throughout Southern Africa collecting ethnographic objects and tracing rock art in the region between 1928 and 1930. Fobenius travelled to Rhodesia in 1929 tracing rock paintings at various sites in the country (Garlake 1997). The proliferation of amateur/antiquarian work testifies to the huge interest in the colony's prehistoric past within the white settlers. However, the prevalence of "amateur archaeology" was seen by critics as a result of the failure of the 1902 and 1912 ordinances (*Bulawayo Chronicle*, 19/03/1936).

The increasing activities of amateurs in Rhodesian archaeology prompted a shift that led to the state institutionalisation of the practices. However, it was the events in the late 1920s, specifically the 1929 British Association for the Advancement of Science's South African meeting and the expeditions sent to Rhodesia that acted as catalysts for the major changes that came after 1930. The visits by the 1929 expedition to Rhodesia affirmed Rhodesian archaeology internationally, and highlighted the necessity of a systematic approach to the practice of archaeology in the country (Garlake, 1997). This international significance of Rhodesian archaeology is also shown by the fact that up to the mid-1930s, the Cape Town museum held the largest collection of archaeological relics from Rhodesia (Whyte, 1973).

With the increasing popularity of Rhodesian archaeology and concern about the negative effects of the unregulated work of amateurs, plans for a new Act were put in place after 1933. The period after 1930 was also characterized by increased pressure on the colonial state to take an active role in the preservation of the colony's past. Events such as the 40th Bulawayo anniversary celebrations (1933) and the work of the 1936/7 Carnegie Commission's recommendations to nationalise museums stimulated the colonial state to be more involved in the preservation of the colony's past. It was only after the passing of the Monuments and Relics Act in 1936 that a more formalised and structured regulatory framework was established. The Act established the Commission for the Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments (the National Monuments Commission), which became instrumental in developments after 1936, when archaeologists working for the National Monuments Commission started collaborating with the national museums. As a result, all-archaeological material excavated at sites became the property of the National Monuments Commission and kept at various museums in the country.

Thus, Great Zimbabwe became central in the Rhodesian imaginary and took a dominant place in the development of archaeology as a discipline and its mediation of the cultural links to archaeological materials in the Rhodesian psyche. Rhodesian archaeology captured the imagination not only of archaeologists but also of politicians and the wider white public. Members of the public were educated on the values of prehistoric sites and objects and were requested to report any archaeological findings in their areas. Acknowledging the value of Rhodesia's past became a civic duty for its white inhabitants; as a 1955 media report remarked, "archaeology even for the uninitiated has a great fascination and many is the person we have seen digging furtively a stone" (*The Rhodesian Herald*, 15/5/1958).

Describing the public interest raised by archaeological discoveries at Graniteside and Hatfield in Salisbury in 1957 and 1958, the media reported that "an enthusiastic crowd of people [were] helping the museum staff with excavation...amateurs, even mothers and children in prams" (*The Rhodesian Herald*, 15/5/1958). In 1964, the Director of Great Zimbabwe made an appeal to the public to donate to the museum any relics that may have been picked from the site (*The Sunday News*, 21/7/1964). Another appeal in 1970 by the Director of the National Monuments Commission requested the public to help in the "hunt for clues of the Rhodesian past," by handing in "objects turned by the plough and the spade" shows how the public was expected to be conversant with the material past of the colony (*The Sunday News*, 15/12/1970). The director of the Monuments Preservation Commission, Cranmer Cooke requested, "Farmers, builders, gardeners to turn up relics of Rhodesian prehistory...anything from pottery to human skeletons...Sites of this nature may constitute the missing chapter in our history" (*The Sunday News*, 15/12/1970).

Public interest in Rhodesian archaeology among the white public was manifested in many forms, particularly through popular amateur activities. This interest however grew in the 1950s into a more formal system. For example, the "discovery" of the Graniteside Archaeological site in Salisbury in 1958 stimulated the formation of the Prehistory Society of Mashonaland by amateurs who were "interested in things historic and archaeological" (Whyte, 1973: 53).<sup>31</sup> The activities of this society, which in 1965 grew into the Prehistory Society of Rhodesia, comprising amateurs, students, professionals and institutions, typifies the enduring interest from the settler public in Rhodesian prehistory. The society grew out of individual interest in archaeology and became one

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<sup>31</sup> The Society owned a comprehensive library in collaboration with the NMMR and produced its own newsletters and a journal, *Rhodesian prehistory*, in which the works of the members were published. The activities of the society encapsulate the attraction of settler Rhodesian public to preciosity, which had manifested in the prevalence of "amateur" archaeology throughout the colonial era.

of the oldest amateur interest groups that still exist today. The society held regular lectures, and undertook archaeological excursions to major archaeological sites. Due to the 1936 Act, however, members could not excavate sites without the approval of the Commission. They therefore worked with archaeologists from the Commission in carrying out archaeological expeditions.

Archaeologists and curators employed by the National Museums and Monuments commission constantly maintained contact with this public interest in the country's prehistoric past. The public cooperated in identifying and reporting new sites to the museums while the archaeologists provided an identification service, to answer the queries of the public on matters concerning prehistory. This interface with the public expressed itself in the 1960s in the efforts to "educate and to satisfy the general curiosity about man's past" by offering an annual course administered at a private educational institution – the Ranch House college, which became the first institution to train Rhodesians interested in archaeology (Huffmann, 1973:28).

Several media articles from the period between the 1930s and the 1970s in the ZMHS scrapbooks show that even as the debates on Rhodesian archaeology were raging, the settler public's opinion as represented in newspaper commentaries never diminished (ZMHS, n/d/6). Even as scholars in the 1960s and 1970s had shown that the site was indeed of indigenous origin, the public opinion remained adamant, marvelling in the perception of the site as a mystery that no one could solve. In fact, the work of the National Monuments Commission and archaeologists received a lot of criticism on this basis in the 1970s.

One particular comment shows how a substantial part of the settler public continuously held on to interpretations that denied African associations to archaeological sites. In response to Ray Inskip's reaffirmation of the indigenous origin of Great Zimbabwe, one commentator remarked that, "the question is not who carried the stones, but who designed Great Zimbabwe" (*Property & Finance*, 2/10/1970:4). In the 1970s, opinions such as these found fertile ground in the Rhodesian right-wing politicians who sought to curtail the appropriation of these sites by black nationalists. For example, Colonel G. Hartley, the Rhodesian Front (RF) Member of Parliament for Fort Victoria raised a motion urging the Minister of Home Affairs to order curators at Great Zimbabwe to "present all theories relating to Zimbabwe absolutely impartially" (*The Despatch*, 2/11/1970). In his view, not acknowledging the "foreign origin" theories and interpretation and highlighting only the "local origin" interpretation was seen as encouraging black nationalism and was ultimately bad for Rhodesian tourism.

It is in the context described above where disputes over the interpretation of Rhodesian archaeology manifested itself politically that the strategy of placing the NMMR under the Ministry

of Internal Affairs for controlling knowledge became useful. Populist interpretations long held by the white public emerged publicly and met a political environment that was willing to entrench these interpretations.

Thus, the direct link between the country's archaeological materials and the establishment of colonial control, adopted the symbolic significance of the sites as seats of power, stretching back to the pre-colonial era. So important is the association that while the colonial state was named after its principal protagonist, Cecil J. Rhodes, the postcolonial state was renamed after the Great Zimbabwe archaeological site. Great Zimbabwe and its relics inspired a visual iconography that ranged from motifs for currencies, the coat of arms, flags, architectural designs, and company logos (Pikirayi, 2006).<sup>32</sup> Thus, in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe, archaeological research and preservation activities have been characterised by the use and appropriation of archaeological sites for political and ideological purposes (Garlake, 1982a)..

Thus in Rhodesia, archaeology became a “handmaiden of colonialism” (Haber & Gnecco, 2007:405). For the postcolonial state, archaeological sites represented a physical expression of a past African civilisation, an aspect that needed to be reaffirmed in the postcolonial era. Therefore, Great Zimbabwe's intersection with ideals of power, authority, and identity took a central place in charting the trajectory of heritage practices in Rhodesia. As the next sections show, archaeology and other disciplines within the museum worked in appropriating these spaces, foregrounding preservation of the material aspects of the sites rather than the spiritual aspects. This was entrenched by legislation and institutional policies that framed the sites as important national heritage places.

### **Disciplining the Colony: The Rhodesian Scientific Association.**

The work of the Rhodesian Scientific Association (RSA), an interest society formed to promote the study and advancement of science and to facilitate the acquisition and dissemination of scientific knowledge, was instrumental in nurturing scientific research and publication in Rhodesia. Drawing its inspiration from the British Royal Society, the British Society for the Advancement of Science and its South African counterpart, the RSA was formed in 1899, making it the first institution to focus on the development of disciplines in Rhodesia. Commenting on the origins of the Association, a former Chairperson of the RSA, J.C.F. Hopkins, remarked that the Association was formed for “advocating science and promoting scientific ideas in the colony” (Hopkins, 1938:

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<sup>32</sup> For example, the Rhodesia Coat of Arms (1924-1980) contained an image of one of the soapstone birds from Great Zimbabwe and was meant to “serve as a reminder of the country's past, including its prehistory” (Dept. of Internal Affairs, 1967:3). Across the colonial and postcolonial periods, Great Zimbabwe inspired a diversity of literary genres of song, poetry, and nomenclature.

70). In its first year, the association encouraged its 193 members to make an exhibition of collections of insects, plants, minerals, archaeological relics and photographs of rock paintings.

The RSA's direct involvement in the formation of the Rhodesian museum, established the central role the museum played in nurturing scientific disciplines. The RSA was also instrumental in the collecting activities of the museums in the early years, its members largely contributing natural history specimens, minerals, and archaeological relics (Hopkins, 1938). As early as 1901, the Association had requested the City of Bulawayo to provide land to build a museum. The Association recognised the value of the museum as the institution through which the development of various scientific disciplines could be nurtured and it saw its role as "an unofficial Department of Archaeology" (Hopkins, 1938: 71). Throughout its life, as part of its intellectual engagement, the RSA organized lectures, discussions, exhibitions and had a long history of scientific publications (Hopkins, 1938).

The RSA's interest in disciplines was as varied as its membership and the Association was interested in a diversity of subjects, including natural history, geology, and archaeology. In 1902 a Meteorological committee was formed which collected a large amount of statistics and advised Government regarding the issue of rain gauges to persons all over the Colony. Later, a grant was made to Fr. Goetz enabling him to commence his work in astronomy and meteorology, which culminated in an account of rainfall patterns in Rhodesia, published in the *Proceedings* in 1908. Another committee, at the request of Government, prepared a full report on climate, rainfall, soils and grasses for the information of settlers (Hopkins, 1938). The Association saw itself as a *defacto* government research unit, and the early efforts of the Association became the foundation of many government departments later established by the colonial government in dealing with education, diseases, agriculture, and other areas.

The activities of the RSA were linked to contemporary international intellectual traditions, establishing its place as a credible institution in the region and internationally. These crucial links emerged in the Association's close links with the South African Society for the Advancement of Science and consequently that of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, thereby locating the Rhodesian Association within imperial scientific networks.

It was through the activities of the Association and its links to international scientific associations, that Rhodesian archaeology became strongly linked to South African archaeology. In 1927, the South African Association held its meeting in Salisbury with individuals such as Dorothea Bleek carrying out some work on Rhodesian rock art (Bleek, 1927). The British Association for the Advancement of Science sent an expedition from South Africa and engaged archaeologists to study

Great Zimbabwe further on the two occasions on which it held meetings in association with its South African protégé in 1905 and 1929.<sup>33</sup> The preparations for the conferences in South Africa led to more international collaboration and research (Garlake, 1997). This link between the South African and Rhodesian disciplines also resulted in collaboration between Rhodesian and South African archaeologists. For instance, the first practising archaeologist attached to the National Museum in Bulawayo was the former London Missionary Society (LMS) missionary, Neville Jones, who worked with the South African archaeologist J.A.H Goodwin (Jones, 1926). Samuel Impey attempted to interpret rock art panels 'discovered' at a farm near Great Zimbabwe in 1926, whilst Raymond Dart and Peter van Riet Lowe were frequent visitors to Rhodesia (Garlake, 1997).

The Association's intellectual projects were crucial in providing platforms for the dissemination of results of scientific investigations and discoveries. The work of their members was publicised through various conferences and meetings, but it was its journal *The Proceedings of the Rhodesian Scientific Association* founded in 1901, that took a central role in publishing on Rhodesian science, making it the first academic journal on science in the colony.<sup>34</sup> The subjects covered in the journal were as varied as the interests of the Association's members, touching on natural history, archaeology, mining, geology, history, and anthropology. Its motto "Science in Rhodesia is a Part of Your Science" captured the crucial role that science played in the colony (*Rhodesia Science News* 6/2, 1972: 146).

Thus, the RSA created the most credible community of amateur and professional scientists in the colony and its role in study and dissemination of scientific disciplines persisted throughout the colonial era. Through its conferences and its publication, *Proceedings and Transactions of the RSA*, the work of amateur scientists in fields ranging from archaeology, entomology, botany and metallurgy among others, found an outlet for their research activities. The RSA provided the earliest platform for debating research in the various disciplines and became pioneers in academic publication and the various intellectual disciplines in Rhodesia.<sup>35</sup> As such the journal as well as the Association's

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<sup>33</sup> In 1905, the British Association sent Theodore Bent and in 1929, they sent Gertrude Caton-Thompson and Samuel Miles Burkitt. Burkitt had an interest in rock art and made a tour of the region in 1927 after which he lobbied the support of South African Prime Minister, J.B.M Hertzog to invite the British Association to Southern Africa. The 1929 conference also brought a team of German artists and excavators to Southern Africa led by Leo Frobenius. While Frobenius was denied permission to investigate Great Zimbabwe by the Rhodesian Government in favour of Caton-Thompson, between January and May 1929 his team made over 400 copies of rock art paintings in the eastern districts of Rhodesia (Garlake, 1997).

<sup>34</sup> The *Transactions of the Rhodesian Scientific Association*, was published as a multi-disciplinary journal producing papers on many aspects of science in Rhodesia and remains the oldest scientific journal in the country.

<sup>35</sup> For example, the RSA contributed immensely to the growth of scientific professions most of whom were based in the museum way before the first university in 1956. By 1975, the proceedings and transactions of the Rhodesian Scientific Association had covered 75 Archaeology papers, Entomology 53, Sociology & Anthropology 27, Zoology 17, and Meteorology 9 and Pedagogy 6 (Hopkins, 1938).

conferences presented a platform for publicising discoveries of an archaeological nature.<sup>36</sup> Hopkins echoed that the activities of the Association were tied to the “scientific heritage” of the country and to him, having a journal that included a wide variety of literature ‘from the incredible and professional to the amateurish and useless,’ did not matter (Hopkins, 1938:71). It is within this intellectual community that the museums in Rhodesia were formed and played a central role as institutional seats for research, publications, and presentation of the country’s natural, historical, and scientific heritage.

### **Museums and Disciplines in Rhodesia**

In Rhodesia, the museum occupied a central role in knowledge production from the early colonial period onwards. Museums became the spaces where science was deployed as part of the colonial project of getting a grip on knowledge and as part of the process of “ordering Africa intellectually and politically” (Tilley, 2007:2). The practice of early archaeological research, the collection of natural history or geological specimens and later, the canonisation of historical and natural monuments were done under the auspices of the museum. The advent of museums in Rhodesia was located within a specific scientific tradition and the institutions were viewed as important for the advancement of science and knowledge in the new colony. With their origins being as early as in 1899, just nine years after the occupation, the museums nurtured scientific research long before the introduction of universities or other state funded research institutions.

Throughout the colonial period, the Rhodesian museums were involved in various collecting activities, amassing a substantial build-up of archaeological, geological, ethnographic and natural history collections. While the collection activities by amateurs may have been inspired by curiosity, those by scientists, administrators and missionaries were influenced by the need to collate, study and contain the various aspects of the new country. Commenting on the value of science in early Rhodesia in his welcome speech to delegates to the 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the South African Museums Association in 1964, the Mayor of Salisbury, F. Clements, commented that "Rhodesia began to take a scientific interest in her past as soon as she acquired her present" (*Rhodesian Herald*, 08/04/1964:2). This remark underscores the consciousness of the early settlers of the role and importance of knowledge production in the formative years of the colony.

The founding of the Rhodesian museums was therefore steeped within an intellectual context dominated by a group of settlers with a passionate interest in generating knowledge about the

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<sup>36</sup> For instance, Mollyneax's paper on rock paintings in the Tuli district near Matopos was one of the first papers to be read at the association (Mollyneax, 1903). Most of the archaeological discoveries made by amateur archaeologists and later by professional archaeologists found the journal to be the most effective outlet for their research.

colony's environmental, natural, and cultural resources. The Rhodesia Scientific Association and the Rhodesia Chamber of Mines (RCM) jointly founded the Rhodesian Museum in 1901.<sup>37</sup> The origin of the Rhodesian National Museum was also strongly tied to the colony's political and economic priorities, especially mining and agricultural activities. Its formation, like many things in early Rhodesia, was associated with the BSAC. In 1901 Cecil Rhodes, on his last visit to Bulawayo received requests from the RCM and the RSA to support the establishment of a museum (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report*, 1903). The RCM wanted a museum to accommodate their growing collection of Rhodesian mineral specimens, while the RSA desired a museum as a home for displaying and preserving results of their research activities (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report*, 1901). However, while the museum was envisaged as a scientific institution, it was also seen as part of the early settler memorial practices and was to be erected as "a memorial to the Rhodesians who fell in the Boer War" (Hopkins, 1938: 69). It was Rhodes' suggestion to form a museum that created a link between the two entities that would survive for several decades. Both entities were interested in the geology of the country and had a common interest in Rhodesian minerals. Long before the Rhodesian Geological Survey was established to map the geology of the country and regulate mining activities, the Rhodesian Museum began to focus on the geology of the colony. The makeup of the administrative structure for the Rhodesian Museum reflected these various interests. The Rhodesian Scientific Association and the RCM made up the museum committee with nominees from the Bulawayo municipality. The Administrator of the colony became the patron of the museum, while the Mayor of Bulawayo became one of its trustees (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report*, 1910).

The establishment of the museum was influenced by colonial mining concerns as evidenced by the active participation of the RCM and the Geological Survey formed in 1911. Mining companies became important subscribers to the museum and some of the earliest scientific publications in the colony were on Rhodesian geology. The geological section of the museum proved to be of value and a resource for the prospectors and miners who used the facilities for verification of stones and minerals and the earliest reports of the museums reveal this important work of the museum (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report*, 1903). So important was the role that the annual reports of the museum show that the number of prospectors who availed themselves of its services was nearly equal to the number of visitors to the museum.

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<sup>37</sup> The Rhodesia Chamber of Mines was formed in Bulawayo and Salisbury in 1895 to promote and protect interests in the mining industry.

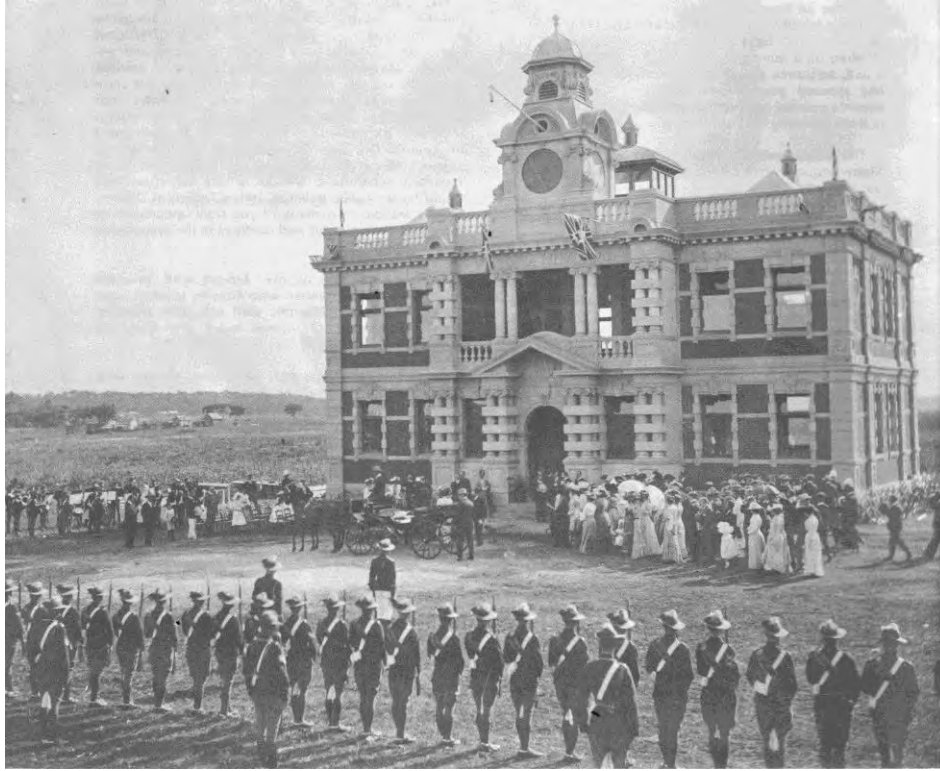
One major outcome of the establishment of the Rhodesian Museum was the professionalisation of scientific research. Attempts to professionalise the disciplines within the museum in a period where few scientists existed in the country is encapsulated in the museum's practice of appointing specialists in the various fields of science. Initially referred to as "honorary keepers", these scientists worked on a voluntary basis, carrying out collection and research activities in the museum. Through their work, the museum was firmly established as the premier scientific institution in the colony. Over the years, the museum established its role and had one of the largest collection of specimens in the various disciplines, rivalling older museums in the region such as the South African Museum (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report, 1903*).

The works of some of the early enthusiasts marked the beginning of the relationship between the museums and the professionalisation of disciplines. The origins, development, and professionalisation of natural science disciplines also developed out of the Rhodesian National Museum. In 1907, E.C Chubb was the first scientist to be appointed Curator, Zoologist, and Taxidermist by the museum. However, in these early years, the museums struggled to raise funds and this hampered its scientific programmes (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report, 1907*). In 1911, George Arnold, an entomologist, was appointed as the curator. In addition to his interests in Entomology, Arnold started an elaborate collection process, turning the museum into a centre for the collection of natural history specimens. The works of natural history scientists such as A.J Molyneux, A.M MacGregor, G. Bond, and M.A Raath consolidated the museum as a centre for scientific research and publication (Whyte, 1973).

Neville Jones, who had been an independent archaeologist, established the Department of Prehistory and Ethnology in 1932 (*Rhodesian Museum Report, 1932*) charting the beginning of what was seen as a more professionalised approach to archaeological research within the museum. Neville Jones contributed to the formation of a "national historical collection" which was key to the making of the historical collection for the museum (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report, 1936*). By the 1930s, the scientific programmes of the Rhodesian museum were firmly established and some twelve scientific disciplines were researched among the three museums in the country.

In Salisbury, the museum foundation was laid in 1901, barely ten years after the establishment of the colony. The formation of the museum in Salisbury was located within the imperial traditions of memorialisation, specifically the commemoration of Queen Victoria who died in January 1901. The city "felt that she could not be allowed to disappear from their lives and they decided that something must be done to perpetuate the memory of the grand old lady for posterity" (Whyte, 1973:3). The decision was made by a committee to erect a suitable memorial in the capital of

Rhodesia to which all the inhabitants of Rhodesia could contribute. The final decision was to erect a library and museum, a public hall, and a statue of the queen (Figure 9). Thus, the QVM was an outcome of the desire by the settlers to maintain their imperial heritage, and their need to imprint modernity in the new city. These elements were encapsulated in the constituting of a museum as a memorial to the British queen.



**Figure 8: Official opening ceremony of the Queen Victoria Memorial, Salisbury, 1903**

The Queen Victoria memorial building was one of the first multi-storey structure rising visibly from the then sparsely populated Salisbury. Source: Bell-Cross, (1973).

The founding of the QVM was conceived as a citizens' project and a befitting memorial to the British Royal family by white Rhodesians. The processes of the construction of the museum saw people from various sectors of the settler society taking an active role. The museum committee was made up of more than 60 individuals from the various sectors of the settler society. The administrator of the colony granted a piece of land in Salisbury and funds for the project were collected from all over the country by subcommittees from Europeans and blacks. In March 1902 the first piece of museum legislation, the Museum Ordinance was passed to provide for the management of the memorial. To entrench the museums' link with British imperial tradition, the official opening of the museum was planned to coincide with the coronation of King Edward VII, in June 1902 (Whyte, 1973).

Thus, the origin of the QVM was steeped in the desire to create a settler memorial complex that linked the settlers with their imperial traditions. Such acts of memorialisation were crucial in producing a sense of cohesion among the settlers by creating a shared history based on their imperial links with Britain. Eventually completed in 1903, the museum building was typical of Victorian monumental architecture of that time. The building was indeed a conspicuous monument, the only material manifestation of a shared settler history in a period of economic and political uncertainty. Rising from an open Mashonaland veld, the memorial was a testimony to the supremacy of settler modernity (Figure 8). To consecrate its place in the colony's short history, the memorial was linked to the pioneers and dedicated to "the enterprising heroes who wrestled the possession of our Southern continent from barbarism establishing an enlightened settler government...those who have won Rhodesian for the Empire" (Whyte, 1973:4). Therefore, even when the museum was like "Hubbard's Cupboard- a museum with nothing in it," it was still valued for its links to colonial practices of memorialisation (Whyte 1973:5).

The QVM's important place in settler culture was confirmed through some of its earliest acquisitions. The first recorded objects to be accessioned in May 1903 were a set of medallions presented by the City of London. Its links to Rhodesian prehistory was consecrated through the museum's acquisition of the relics recovered from the earliest archaeological excavations at Great Zimbabwe. In 1903, the museum committee requested the government to hand over the objects from the archaeological site. These were handed over in 1906 and were divided equally between the QVM and the Rhodesian Museum in Bulawayo.<sup>38</sup> These relics brought an increase in international visitors, mainly from South Africa, who wanted to "study matters relating to the Great Zimbabwe ruins and Bushman paintings" (Whyte, 1973: 8). When in 1930, the British Museum requested a loan of archaeological relics from Great Zimbabwe; the museum became established on the international scene and began international exchanges with museums in the United States of America (USA), Sweden, Germany, and South Africa.

In 1911, the QVM began its public function after a request by the Director of Agriculture for public access to the Agricultural Department's exhibitions that were located in the memorial building. In 1912, plans were made to employ a taxidermist, J.C.D Wilde, who started to create a

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<sup>38</sup> The earliest collection of archaeological objects and relics began in the period just before the colonization of Rhodesia with the collection and export of relics from the Zimbabwe ruins (Matenga, 1998). For instance, Willie Posselt, a hunter-explorer collected Zimbabwe soapstone birds from the Great Zimbabwe site (Posselt, 1924). The earliest archaeological collections included objects from Richard N. Hall's work at Great Zimbabwe. In 1905, the largest donations to the two museums were the prehistoric objects collected at Great Zimbabwe, Nyanga, Dholhlo, and Khami, recovered from the archaeological excavations of the work of Randall McIver commissioned by the BSAC (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report*, 1905). In 1929, the museum received donations of 34 stone objects that were donated by Van Riet Lowe (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report 1929*).

public gallery for the museum. The settlers' fascination with Rhodesian nature manifested itself in one of the earliest permanent exhibits in this public museum. In 1913, Wilde completed the "*In the Rhodesian Jungle*" exhibit, one of the first permanent exhibits of the museum, which had been originally commissioned by the BSAC to be also displayed at the Grahamstown in South Africa to advertise the hunting prospects in Rhodesia (Whyte, 1973). Throughout the colonial era, the natural history dioramas officially referred to as "open habitat displays" would take substantial parts of most of the museum displays, where archaeological objects, vegetation and wildlife of each region was put on show for the public.

Thus, by taking objects from the land, museumising them through collecting, classifying and displaying them, the museum participated in the containment of the natural and cultural aspects of the new colony. The study and display of these specimens was part of the settlers' process of familiarising themselves with the new colony. Exhibitions in the museums sought to identify, collate, study and show the natural, cultural, and historical aspects of the new colony. Over the years, the exhibitions in the museum reflected the settler society's fascination with the colony's prehistory, nature, and culture. These elements were identified, collated, studied, classified, and displayed for the settler public. This process of "knowing" the new country was one way in which settlers could assert their presence in the land. E.R Pletts captured this crucial role of the activities of the museum in the process of familiarising settlers with the colony when he remarked that:

The QVM has gathered some of the treasures to present them to the visitor in a way in which it is hoped they will feel the character of the land (Pletts, 1973:36).

However, the early years of the museum were also riddled with acute financial difficulties. Operating the museum from donations and support from a few organisations proved challenging. In 1908, the museum committee made its first attempt to gain full financial support from the state through its request to be turned into a "national museum." The Legislative Council turned down the request for fear of financial commitment (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report*, 1908). Thus, up to 1936 the Rhodesian Museum remained in the private hands of well-wishers, maintained by small grants from the government, the municipality and member subscriptions. The museum remained a "foundling without a parent or guardian" (Whyte 1973:9), a factor that severely limited its public role.

Regardless of the financial and administrative challenges, the Rhodesian museums, born out of the desire to identify, collect, and study the colony's natural, historical, and cultural elements were key in providing information and knowledge for the settlers. As confirmed by E.R Pletts, "for the visitor to the country, the museum serves as a window to the many exciting scenes and sights of Rhodesia" (Pletts, 1973:37). According to one commentator, "museums in Rhodesia endeavoured

to answer the question of the ordinary citizen- the housewife, the farmer, the industrialist, the teacher and the child... each can find in one of Rhodesia's museums something which will give a greater understanding of his own complex environment and his place within it" (*NMMR, 1969: 8*).

### **National Museums, Monuments, and White History, 1936-1979**

As indicated in the preceding section, in early Rhodesia, it was interest groups that spearheaded the establishment of museums, with little or no assistance from the state. During this period, the BSAC felt that the responsibility over the running of museums, or any institutions that focussed on the colony's past, would be a financial strain. On several occasions, the government turned down requests from museum committees, for government to take financial responsibility for the museums (*Rhodesian Museum Report, 1908*). The associations and the local municipalities funded the activities of the museums, in many cases under very limited budgets.

It was only in the mid 1930s after the end of BSAC rule that museums started to receive stable financial support from the state. This process was stimulated in 1932, when Henry Miers and F.S Markam were commissioned by the Carnegie Corporation to carry out a study of all Commonwealth Museums (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report, 1936*). The exercise also referred to as the Carnegie Commission recommended improvement of museums in Rhodesia through nationalisation and access to government funding (Miers & Markam, 1932). As a result, a motion was passed in 1934 to nationalise all the museums in the territory (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report, 1934*). At a conference held to discuss the modalities of nationalisation in 1936, recommendations to nationalise the Rhodesian Museum and the QVM were adopted (*Rhodesian Museum Annual Report, 1936*).

Besides the legislation that controlled museums, the period also witnessed enactment of new legislation for the control of archeological, natural and historical sites. By the 1930s, earlier legislation such as the 1902 and 1911 ordinances were seen as grossly inadequate in the protection and preservation of the material vestiges. The 1936 Monuments and Relics Act replaced the 1902 Ancient Monuments Protection Ordinance and 1912 Bushmen Relics Ordinance. The Ordinances excluded materials that were increasingly being recognized as crucial aspects of the past in the colony, such as natural/scenic sites and the colony's early historical monuments and memorials, now scattered across the country. The passing of the new Act was also partly a response to the adverse effects of the increase in the activities of "antiquarian" archaeologists, which destroyed archaeological sites (Garlake, 1982a). By the 1930s, Rhodesian Archaeology was receiving a lot of international attention and this put pressure on the government to protect the sites (Garlake, 1982a). There was also an influence from South Africa which had repealed its 1911 Bushmen

Relics Protection Act and replaced it with the Natural and Historical Monuments, Relics and Antiques Act of 1934 (Deacon, 1993; Shepherd 2002a; Hall and Lillie, 1992).

The from the National Monuments Commission, established by the 1936 Act began the process of control of all museums by the state, a legacy that existed until 1980 and beyond.<sup>39</sup> The National Monuments Commission controlled archaeological work and objects collected from archaeological excavations were deposited in the museum. The commission continued to take an increasing role in the establishment of discipline and in the ensuing years, major work within the museum was achieved by scientists from the National Monuments Commission such as Keith Robinson (1955-1961), J. Antony Whitty, (1955-1961), Cranmer Cooke (1951-1987), Peter Garlake, (1964- 1970), Roger Summers (1947-1969) and Thomas Huffman, (1960s-1970s).

The Commission put in place an elaborate administrative structure for the identification, regulation, and control of archaeological, historical, and natural sites. Archaeological activities became state regulated and funded through the National Monuments Commission.<sup>40</sup> This was a fundamental shift from the 1902 and 1911 ordinances, which had not provided any administrative structure for the control or funding of archaeological practice. After 1936, the Commission contributed to the emergence of a new phase in the development of Rhodesian archaeology. Amid increasing international attention to Rhodesian archaeology stimulated by the popularity of Great Zimbabwe, the period witnessed the emergence of what was described as a “professional” approach to archaeology, in contrast to the period when ‘antiquarians (Pikirayi, 2007) dominated it. From 1936 onwards, all excavations by non-professionals would only be allowed if they were made in collaboration with a “competent archaeologist.” As a result, the Act marked the death of “antiquarian archaeology”. While the efforts of the “antiquarians” were acknowledged as crucial in establishing and shaping the practice of the discipline, after the 1940s, the antiquarian was seen with disdain and associated with unprofessionalism and destructive approaches (Jones, 1954; Pikirayi, 2001).

The 1936 Act charted a very specific definition of “monument” and “national monument” based on the relative scientific, or historical value of the materials. The Act ushered in new terminology

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<sup>39</sup> After the 1950s, two more museums, the Umtali Museum opened in 1964 through an endowment from the Beit Trust and the Gwelo Military, opened in 1974 were also turned into state museums (Whyte, 1973). There was never development of substantial private museums in colonial or postcolonial Zimbabwe save for the Railway museums operated by the National Railways company or a few other small museums based on companies, so much that the world of museums in Zimbabwe is still a state prerogative.

<sup>40</sup> The Commission consisted of nine members appointed by the Prime Minister and headed by a Director. They were supported by a team of monuments inspectors, surveyors and archaeologists all of whom were located in the Rhodesian National Museum and the QVM.

that influenced heritage protection practices throughout the colonial period. Its definitions reaffirmed the material and scientific value of sites. Monuments were defined as:

Any building, ruin, remaining portion of building or ruin, or stoner circle, alter, pillar, statue, tumulus, grave, cave, rock shelter, midden, shell mound, believed to have been constructed or used by bushmen or other Aboriginal inhabitants of the colony or any people who visited the colony before 1 January 1890 (Monument and Relics Act 1936, in Cooke 1969:12).

The Act expanded the categories that were protected. Rather than focusing just on archaeological monuments, the new Act recognised other categories such as natural features, historic buildings, and objects. It created a hierarchy of the sites, with a clear distinction between “monuments”, “ancient monuments”, “relics,” “national monuments” and “ancient workings.” Ancient workings were defined as “any shaft, cutting, tunnel, or stope which was made for the mining purposes” (*Monument and Relics Act 1936*, in Cooke, 1969:13). The definition of monuments was also extended to include land that contained archaeological or historical materials or that had distinctive or beautiful flora and fauna, waterfalls, grottos, trees or old buildings. Relics were defined as “any fossil of any kind, drawing, or painting on stone, or petroglyph” (*Monuments and Relics Act 1936*, in Cooke 1969:13).

One major work of the Commission was to identify, map, and document all archaeological, historic, and natural sites in the country. The process initiated systematic identification, documentation and mapping of the archaeological sites and memorials in the country. The Commission created a register of all sites through a system of surveys and mapping exercises. The mapping activities culminated in a documentary archive, referred to as the Archaeological Survey that was formally constituted in 1948 in the Rhodesian national museum. The Commission's reports show how the district commissioners were useful in the identification and reporting of new sites within their districts. In 1938, a circular was sent to all farmers asking for information about sites of interest in their areas. Maps were circulated to District Commissioners on which they were requested to plot sites known to them. In 1938, the Commission sent questionnaires to all Native Commissioners in each district asking for details of any prehistoric remains in their areas (*National Monuments Commission Report, 1937*).

The mapping activities of the Archaeological Survey created a cartographic representation of the archaeological richness of the colony. The 1:25000 and 1:50 000 maps divided the whole country into grids where all discovered sites were continually plotted onto as and when they were “discovered”. Therefore, the Survey made the archaeological heritage of the colony more visible and more accessible for researchers, tourists, museum visitors or the public.

This canonisation of heritage sites culminated in the process of listing of selected sites in the “national monuments list.” The sites that were selected for listing were considered to be of special historic importance or to be of scientific or scenic value. Through its categorisation of heritage as natural reserves and features, stone ruins, colonial relics and monuments and rock paintings, the list entrenched a perception of heritage as material and as linked to white worldviews. Among the first sites to be listed were Victoria Falls and major stonewalled archaeological settlements such as Great Zimbabwe, Khami, and Dhlodhlo. The national monuments list brought together archaeological sites such as Great Zimbabwe, with natural or scenic sites such as the Victoria Falls, as well as memorial sites connected to various important individuals or events (Appendix 1).

In the listing, colonial history, particularly war memorials and battle sites were given more prominence than any other category in the listing, privileging settler history.<sup>41</sup> This category highlighted settler conquests, bravery, and loss (Appendix 1).<sup>42</sup> They glorified white achievement and demarcated the conspicuous visual imprint of white history across the country. Thus, the most prominent elements on the list were Rhodesian pioneer memorials that marked the colony into a network of memorial sites, creating a particularly white “historyscape.” Scattered across the Rhodesian landscape, the memorials, and monuments were a material manifestation of the Rhodesian past in the public sphere (Figure 10). The sites were seen as an integral part of the Rhodesian landscape and were perceived as key aspects of Rhodesian cultural itineraries, sacralised by pilgrimages and memorial events. Scattered throughout the Rhodesian landscape, the canonised monuments became cartographic markers, socialising the Rhodesian land into a connected network of memorial sites.

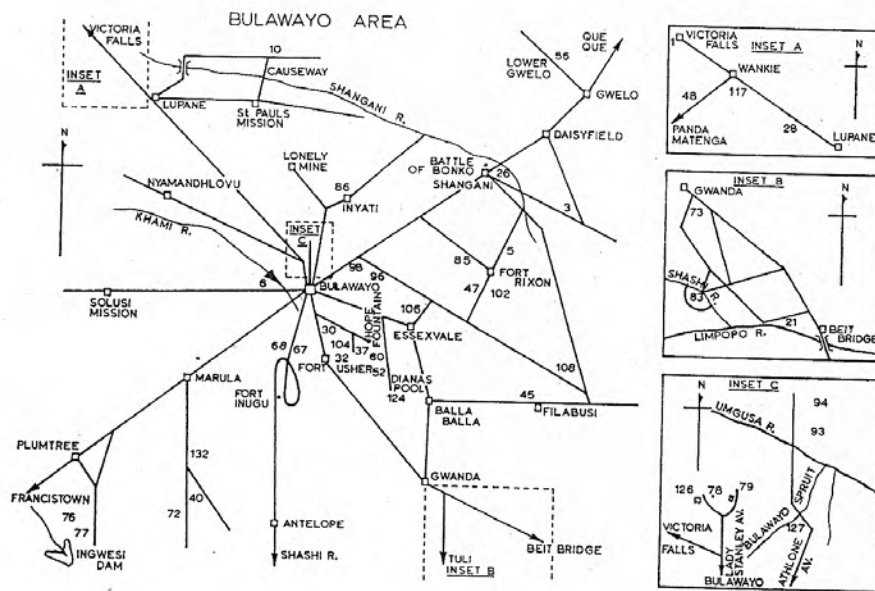
The importance of the creation of monuments is shown in the way the listed monuments were used. The sites became prime tourist destinations and created a network of tourist itineraries. Celebrations of city anniversaries such as the 40th anniversary of Bulawayo (1933), the Rhodes centenary (1953) and other numerous memorial activities associated with the founding of the colony were held at the monuments. In the 1950s, many city guides show how towns and cities were described and advertised in relation to archaeological and historical sites around them (Figure 9). For example, Fort Victoria became famous for being the first town to be constructed by the

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<sup>41</sup> The first site on the list was Victoria Falls, which was linked to David Livingstone who visited the site in 1855 and was believed to be the first white person to see them. Other proclamations in the same year included Great Zimbabwe and other the various archaeological excavations conducted at the turn of the 19th century. Many other archaeological sites such as Khami, Dhlodhlo, most of which had fallen victim to treasure hunters, were also listed.

<sup>42</sup> Currently, of all the monuments on the list, more than half are of associated with colonial history. The imprint of these monuments is so significant that it overshadows all other categories of monuments. Within the colonial monuments, pioneer sites form the biggest percentage. The pioneer route, for example, has seven monuments; Fort Tuli, Pioneer Crossing, Fort Victoria, Fort Charter, Fort Salisbury and Thomas Moodie’s grave (See Appendix 1).

Pioneer Column as they entered the country (*Guide to Fort Victoria, 1929: 13*). The 1929 official guide for Fort Victoria town described the city as a “pioneer town...a corridor of history,” taking pride in its association with Great Zimbabwe and the 1893 Shangani Patrol, whose troopers came from the town (*Guide to Fort Victoria, 1929: 5*).



**Figure 9: Cities as viewed in association to national monuments and memorials.**

The monuments are depicted in the maps as numbers. Such maps outlining the monuments around the cities were used in city guidebooks for purposes of attracting tourism. Source: Cooke, (1965).

Nevertheless, as the sites created an itinerary of physical markers linked to white perceptions of nature, history, and culture, the sites embedded a one-sided memorial complex that foregrounded settler experiences while marginalising the experiences of blacks. For example, the Victoria Falls was listed as a monument on account of its natural beauty rather than for its links to the Tonga myths and legends which considered the site as *Mosi oa Tunya* (the smoke that thunders), a sacred place. The site became a key tourist site, and its cultural significance for the Tonga, embedded in their oral histories, nomenclature, rituals, and historical associations was pushed to the background.

At most archaeological sites that were proclaimed as protected places, spirit mediums were barred from using these sites for their rituals (Fontein, 2006). Once a site was nominated on to the list, all the rituals were either strictly controlled or completely banned. Rituals were seen as an interference with the materiality of the sites and the conservation/preservation of the sites foreshadowed the local communities' associations with these sites. Therefore, the process of nomination resulted in the cordoning of all the national monuments from the local communities,

leaving the sites as preserves of the Commission, archaeologists and monument inspectors and tourists. National monuments were made accessible to the white pursuits of entertainment, tourism, film, and photography (Chipunza, 2005).

The alienation of local values was entrenched by land policies. The passing of the 1936 Act came only five years after the passing of the Land Apportionment Act that saw massive removal of black communities from their ancestral land to demarcated reserves. The passing of the Land Apportionment Act of 1931 led to the alienation of black people as local populations were moved from their lands to pave way for the racially segregated land settlement. More than 80% of the heritage sites fell under land designated as European only, resulting in physical and spiritual alienation of African communities from their heritage (Pwiti & Ndoro, 1999; Ndoro & Pwiti, 2001; Chipunza, 2005).

A major policy change in the regulation of museums, national monuments and archeological sites occurred in 1972 when the two separate organisations; the National Museums of Rhodesia and the National Monuments Commission were amalgamated into the National Museums and Monuments of Rhodesia (NMMR). This amalgamation was effected through the National Museums and Monuments of Rhodesia Amendment Act (1972). The Act consolidated the two departments creating a unified legal institutional structure for museums and monuments. The NMMR was given enhanced powers to control the functions of national museums and the National Monuments Commission. The 1972 Act established a board of trustees whose role was to administer museums and monuments as well to provide policies and structures for the management of museums and the preservation of historical and natural monuments and relics or objects of historical or scientific value (NMMZ Act, 1972). The technical aspects of the new 1972 Act did not differ much from the 1936 Act.<sup>43</sup> Definitions of monuments remained the same and the processes of listing and other control remained quite similar to those laid down in 1936.

Thus, what emerged from the processes of identifying of historical, the monuments, and natural sites as national heritage after the 1930s, was a profound marginalisation of locals' associations with these places. Yet, notwithstanding the onslaught from land policies that separated communities from their ancestral lands and a colonial heritage legislation framework that cordoned off the sites and barred access by local communities, the practices of pastness associated with these

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<sup>43</sup> As in the 1936 Act, the protection mechanisms for monuments and relics were mainly done through declaring some of the monuments as "national monuments". The act also made it mandatory for all citizens to notify NMMR of discovery of ancient monument or relic by the owners or occupiers of the land upon which such ancient monument or relic is discovered. In such a case, the board was given power to compulsorily acquire monuments and relics or any land in connection with a national monument. No persons were allowed to excavate, alter, destroy, damage, or remove from its original site or export any national monument, ancient monument or relic or any part thereof; without the written consent of the Executive Director.

sites were not completely obliterated. The practices' relevance within local societies were so strong that the detachment of local communities from these spaces only meant that they had to survive by taking a different form. The long held practices, embedded in local traditions remained intact, preserved and acted out in rituals and everyday activities within communities. In other cases, communities resorted to covert activities, getting into informal agreements with farm owners to be allowed access to their sacred sites or ancestral burial grounds to carry out rituals (Ranger, 1987). It is also possible that as communities were moved to different places, they either adopted the sacred sites in the new places they were resettled in or created new associations with new places. Nonetheless as a testimony to their resilience, these practices of pastness survived for generations and would resurface in the postcolonial moment, seeking recognition in a new political dispensation of black majority rule that was more permissive of such practices (see chapters 4 and 5).

### **Museums, Archaeology & Usable Pasts: The Political Aspects of Heritage in Rhodesia**

The preceding sections have demonstrated how in Rhodesia, archaeology and other disciplines, played a central role in the processes of interpretation, use and control of the country's past. However, developments in the colonial period need to be seen in relation to the colonial state's desire for control over land, human and economic resources, and its domination over black communities. The context within which bodies of knowledge became intelligible and authoritative (Foucault, 1974, 1975), were linked to the changing dimensions of political power in colonial Rhodesia. The activities of museums and the increasing control of archaeological sites should be understood within the context of the changes in the colony's political history, particularly in its relations with Britain and other countries in the region. The changing relationships influenced the way in which approaches to the material and historic past were approached by the colonial state. A major reflection of this was in the policy changes regarding the state's direct involvement in the preservation of the past, which took place after the 1920s.

That early settler politics drew from the power of heritage is demonstrated by the fact that from the very moment that the settlers arrived in the region they would later call Rhodesia, they began to name and claim land and appropriated the historical, cultural, archaeological aspects of the new colony. Natural and historical aspects of the new land became a central aspect of the settlers' process of knowing and belonging in the new land. The importance of this heritage in asserting and entrenching claims of belonging was achieved by foregrounding European difference, partly by adapting local practices but also by marginalising and disqualifying indigenous knowledge and categories of thought. Through institutionalisation, settler histories, experiences, and cultures were

given legitimacy and visibility in the public sphere. Through official heritage, settlers validated themselves as belonging to the land. Through these practices, settlers created difference in order to disqualify other ways of knowing by pushing local practices to the background.

As highlighted earlier, prior to 1936, state control of the past had been minimal as individuals, amateur scientists and interest groups were left to carry out their activities. For instance, the excavation of archaeological sites and the founding of museums remained largely outside of state control except for Rhodes and the BSAC's interest in the interpretation of Great Zimbabwe. Though legislation was passed as early as 1902 and 1903 to control archaeological sites and to form museums, the state's direct involvement was limited. In contrast to the early colonial period where practices of heritage were fragmented, in the period after 1920, the state took a central role, by deploying legislation and academic disciplines within the museum to establish control over the country's history, archaeology, and nature.

While heritage practices in the early colonial state were fragmented and were mainly initiated and maintained by non-state actors, after 1923, the state increased its control over the country's past. In the 1930s, there was a strong link between archaeology and museums, encapsulated in increased regulation of their activities by the state. The practices of identification, excavation, storage, and display of the archaeological material was based in museums, creating a strong connection between museum practices and the discipline. Thus all the debates around interpretations of archaeological material and monuments played out from the museum and ultimately move out to other platforms such as local and international scientific meetings, scientific journals and in political rhetoric. This control over the past was crucial for a colony that was consolidating itself as a self-governing entity after the end of BSAC rule in 1923.

The increased state was manifested through state initiated legal and institutional structures that bureaucratized the practice of archaeology and other disciplines, and put the function of museums under state control. Assisted by the various policy documents and pieces of legislation, archaeological knowledge and expertise became actively institutionalised as a technology of government that mediated and regulated use of these sites.

Politically, the period around the 1930s was when Rhodesia was on one hand consolidating its hold on the political and economic aspects of the colony while on another hand it was establishing independence in relations with Britain. In the same period, Rhodesia also had to deal with mounting pressures to integrate with the South African union. Therefore, the Rhodesian state had to assert its independence and distinctiveness amid the geopolitical relations of the day, while at the same time it sought to entrench a hold on the political and economic domains of the colony.

As noted earlier, in 1923 Rhodesia decided to be self-governed rather than be subsumed into the South African Union or remain as an appendage of the British Empire. These pressures made the cultural aspects of the colony important in negotiating its space within the geopolitics of the day.

Between the 1930s and the 1960s, the increasing control of the colony's past was related to other major developments such as the passing of legislative acts that sought to consolidate the appropriation of the colony's politics and economy. During this period acts were passed, appropriating the colony's resources and Africans' land and labour and becoming the basis upon which white capital developed. As Robin Palmer shows, the pinnacle of white dominance in Rhodesia was entrenched, through a racialised land distribution system (Palmer, 1977). From 1890 to 1936, key land policies and other statutory instruments for controlling the economy were instituted, enabling the settlers to secure economic and political dominance. The most important were the 1931 Land Apportionment Act and the 1934 Industrial Conciliation Act. The Land Apportionment Act allocated 51% of the land for white use, 30% allocated for the African Reserves and for private African purchase, while most of the remainder was unallocated and retained as 'state' land (Weintzel, 1991; Palmer, 1977). The 1934 Industrial Conciliation Act legalised an industrial colour bar that segmented black and white labourers into different reward structures and disallowed competition between them and mobility across this racial chasm (Gann, 1965, 1970). Later, the 1951 Land Husbandry Act and the 1969 Land Tenure Act attempted to alleviate the problems created by the earlier Land Acts.

Ultimately, the land policies and other economic policies established within the first 40 years of the founding of the colony, laid the basis for a racially unbalanced economic and social setup between whites and blacks. The Acts became instruments through which inequality between blacks and whites was entrenched and through which white economic and political dominance was established. The legislation had wider repercussions on the economic, political, and social status of the black communities. For instance, the land policies created an uneven pattern between the large-scale commercial sector and communal areas creating persistent tension around land, in what is commonly referred to as "the land question" or the "land issue/problem" (Moyo, 1995; Mlambo, 1972; Palmer, 1977). This aspect persistently remained at the core of the country's political and economic environment. Indeed now as in the past, the land issue characterised by McGregor (2006) as "*the unsettled land*" remains the root of the political tension within the country and with Britain (Palmer, 1977; Moyo, 1995).

The effect of the land policies resulted in the entrenchment of white appropriation of the economy, and also led to a break in ties between the displaced blacks and their association with their ancestral

lands. Studies have shown that most of the archaeological sites in the country, many of which had ritual significance to the displaced populations were located in areas that were designated as white areas (Pwiti, 1996; Pwiti & Ndoro, 1999). This displacement was further entrenched five years later by the 1937 Monuments and Relics Act, which ceded control of archaeological, historical, and natural sites to the state. In this process, the discipline of archaeology became crucial in mediating the relationship between the materiality of sites and the use of this past, remaking the places as part of the “national” heritage.

One of the major challenges facing the state throughout the colonial period, particularly in the time before the end of the Second World War, was that of the struggle to attract more white immigrants into the country (Mlambo, 2002, 2008). Studies on trends in Rhodesian immigration show that in this period, the state was under pressure to attract more immigrants into the colony (Mlambo, 2002, 2008; Hughes, 2010). Josiah Brownell (2010), in discussing the fall of the settler state after UDI, shows how Rhodesia from 1890 was involved in the “a perpetual hidden war of numbers” (Brownell, 2010: 5). Brownell argues that the fact that the settler population never reached over 6% in over 90 years, meant that the successive colonial governments were always conscious of the need to consolidate and guard the vulnerability that this statistic posed to settler existence. This fragile demography shaped many aspects of Rhodesian policies and its approach towards nurturing of white Rhodesian nationalism. Thus, in a period when the settler state sought to attract more settlers from Europe, consolidate its sovereignty and to carve out a unique identity, the material past became important in dealing with this challenge. The historical and cultural features of the new colony were meant to present it as a unique and interesting destination for white settlement.

The political use of heritage was manifested in the fact that historic and cultural aspects were repeatedly evoked as one medium through which the colonial state consistently sought the ideal of a unique and unified Rhodesian identity. After the 1930s, this showed in the state’s deliberate strategy of controlling the past, by appealing to the colony’s prehistory. Disciplines focused on scientific and technological aspects of the material past. They adopted and foregrounded a European derived notion of monuments, making it a point of reference for white identities and for highlighting their difference from the black population. The Rhodesian white public was encouraged to be actively involved in the collation of objects in the museum and was legally required to make personal contributions to the identification of archaeological, natural or historic sites. These collection and site mapping activities produced an opportunity for both the museum and the public to participate in the construction of a collective white identity and heritage.

As highlighted earlier, the museum acted as the institutional location of archaeological practice, and all the debates on archaeological sites took place within the confines of the museum. The ideas of heritage were regarded in a specific way, as particularly related to these officialised spaces, linked to white histories, experiences or associations. The notions and definitions of “monuments” denoting physical materialistic grandeur rather than abstract values were popularised. The notions and definitions of “monuments” denoting physical materialistic grandeur rather their importance to black communities were popularised. The categorisation of sites as “national monuments” created a hierarchy that appropriated the sites for a “national” significance rather than emphasising local associations.

During the 1950’s, amid an improving economic outlook, Rhodesia’s desire to affirm its position in the sub-region culminated tow important political events, that is, the creation 1953 Federation with Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, a political and economic union that lasted for 10 years and the 1965 declaration of Independence from Britain. In the Federation, Southern Rhodesia emerged as the dominant of the three partners. However, in this period, another challenge came from international and local pressure for political concessions with the African nationalists seeking decolonisation (Godwin & Hancock, 1994; Watts, 2012). As the Federation dissipated amid the decolonisation impulse, the rise of white liberal politics and changing internal politics in the region, Rhodesia responded by defying these pressures and declared herself independent from Britain in the 1965 Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI). (UDI) announced that Rhodesia, a British colony in southern Africa that had governed itself since 1923, regarded itself as an independent sovereign state. Britain, the Commonwealth, and the United Nations all deemed UDI as illegal. Economic sanctions, the first in the UN's history, were imposed on the breakaway colony (Watts, 2012).

Amid near-complete international isolation, Rhodesia continued as an unrecognised state a position which roused international tension within the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth, and the United Nations (Watts, 2012). The 15 years following UDI were characterised as, “the Rhodesian crisis” or “the Rhodesian problem” (Watts, 2012; Brownell, 2011; Smith, 1979). During this time, Rhodesia continued to a bigger challenge from the “winds of change” - from African nationalists demanding political reforms which threatened to upset white domination. The Rhodesian Front, the political party behind UDI, sought to thwart the political pressure from liberal politicians, African nationalists and the international community by the reinforcement of white supremacy. Consequently, after 1965 as Rhodesia faced a crisis of political legitimacy, rising instability from the activity of independent movement and economic sanctions,

the control of the past became important.<sup>44</sup> This period of internal instabilities, threats from African nationalism and alienation by the international community was characterised as “an affront against history” (Chennells, 1995: 197).

The period after UDI was characterised by an extreme settler nationalism that sought to protect itself from the onslaught of black African protest politics. In this context, as the black nationalists appealed to their glorious past by invoking archaeological sites such as the Great Zimbabwe, the Smith regime heightened its control of information at these sites to quell this rising cultural nationalism. The period after UDI saw increased censorship of local origin theories of Great Zimbabwe and the revival of the “foreign origin theories” of the late 19th century. New Rhodesian censorship laws insisted that interpretations of pre-colonial structures should be “balanced.” Any information or article on Great Zimbabwe claiming that the site was built by Africans had to contain an equal number of words explaining that they might, on the other hand, have been built by the Portuguese or the Phoenicians (De Baets, 2002). These theories, which in the 1890s were used to justify the colonial occupation, were in the 1960s re-invoked at a time when they were being re-appropriated by black nationalism.

There was an increased interest by the state in various types of monuments as well as in declaring archaeological, historical, and other material traces as monuments. Museums were turned into state institutions, as was the control of the practice of archaeology and monuments through the work of the Monuments Preservation Commission. Work by archaeologists such as Brewer (1965) and Mullan (1965) reignited the foreign origins theory even against the work by professional archaeologists such as Peter Garlake, Roger Summers, Keith Robinson, and many others whose research linked the site to the Shona ancestors (Summers, 1963; Robinson, 1966; Garlake, 1973). In the same period, writings such as Bent’s (1896) or Hall’s (1905), which interpreted the sites as of foreign origins, were re-awakened by intellectual projects such as the “Silver and Golden series” publication of the Rhodesian African Society.

The implications of the proclamation of UDI were that Rhodesia, in the midst of international isolation, had to project an image of a distinctive, independent, or self-made colony that could weather the storms of change in the 1950s. Soon after the declaration, vestiges of British ties were removed and replaced with symbols and terminology intended to be more “Rhodesian” (Nyoka, 1970). For instance, each UDI anniversary was commemorated annually as “Independence Day” up to the late 1970s. The Union Jack and Rhodesia's Commonwealth-style national flags were

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<sup>44</sup> Various pieces of legislation were passed to censor and control intellectual activity. These included the Emergency Powers (Control of Publications Act) 1966 and the Law and Order Maintenance Act (1966). Most of these institutions and laws were placed under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the same ministry in which the NMMR was located.

discarded and replaced by a new flag, while the national anthem, "God save the Queen" was formally dropped in 1974 and replaced by "*Rise, O Voices of Rhodesia*." (Smith, 1997).<sup>45</sup> The UDI state increased its hold on history and the heightened interest in pioneer historiography manifesting in a revival of the public interest in old Rhodesian books was witnessed. Thus, the UDI government adopted a centrally controlled form of cultural nationalism. This was the time of UDI "patriotic" music, while John Edmund became famous for his patriotic music and Clem Tholet's "*Rhodesians never die*", or his "*The last word in Rhodesia*" became iconic of the UDI musical genre (Frederikse, 1984).<sup>46</sup> In the changing of its national icons, the UDI government used the 1890 Pioneer Column, and the victories of the 1893 and 1896 wars to infer a heroic past in a period when the regime was being alienated internationally.

Thus, the control of the past became crucial for UDI as the country struggled for legitimacy at both local and international levels.

## Conclusion

This chapter has described how control of the disciplines embedded in the function of museums was crucial in constituting an official settler heritage for the later colonial state. The institutionalisation of all institutions dealing with the past became a strategy for the state in foregrounding Rhodesia's unique cultural aspects in the context of changing regional geopolitical relations. The technical aspects of monumentalisation through archaeology and legislation created a discourse about heritage places that separated heritage places from the local communities. For instance, the national monuments list that became the key aspect of the official heritage preservation practices confounded sites as only associated with archaeology. With the objectification of the archaeological qualities implicit in labelling the places "archaeological sites" or "monuments" the physical and scientific qualities assumed a dominant position over the other traditional, cultural and historic qualities, particularly those held by local black communities.

This chapter has also shown the political aspects of heritage making, showing how the processes of institutionalisation of the colony's past reflected not only the ideological and intellectual

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<sup>45</sup> Other changes included the replacement of the Rhodesian Pound with the Rhodesian dollar (Tanser, 1975). In 1965, references to the Royal emblems were removed, for instance, the prefix "Royal" was dropped from the Royal Rhodesian Air Force, and Royal Rhodesia Regiment emblems while regimental flags were redesigned (Tanser, 1975). Later that year, a system of new Rhodesian honours and decorations was created to replace the old British honours (Tanser, 1975).

<sup>46</sup> John Edmund's discography included titles like "*Friends, Rhodes, Countrymen*," "*The Shangani Patrol*," "*God's Country*," "*Rebels and Rogues*," "*Rhodesia, what a time it was*" and many others (Frederikse, 1984). My online research alerted me to the resurgence of an interest in the Rhodesian cultural aspects such as music, books and other mementos manifesting themselves in many online platforms where ex-Rhodesians communicate, create online archives and trade in Rhodesian mementos (See [www.johnedmond.co.za](http://www.johnedmond.co.za) or [www.rhodiemusic.com](http://www.rhodiemusic.com) ( Accessed 13 May 2012).

traditions of the day, but how they were also linked to contemporary political changes. If the settlers in early Rhodesia used landscapes, urban monuments and historiography to inculcate a sense of belonging, between 1936 and 1979, the state's control of museums, historical, natural, and archaeological elements became important in entrenching settler hegemony and power in a period of change. The power of heritage manifested in how the later colonial state's hold on the country's past became more centralised after 1965, a period when the state was facing political challenges and where new demands were placed on heritage production, a fact which is reflected in state censorship projects concerned with the colony's past.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: HERITAGE MASTER PLANS - COMMUNITIES, EMERGENT SPACES, AND COUNTER - HERITAGE PRACTICES IN POSTCOLONIAL ZIMBABWE, 1980-2000.**

*So the two conquerors, the two founders, Mzilikazi and Rhodes, would lie not far apart, atop the mountain, each at once interred and enthroned (Maylam, 2002:1).*

### **Introduction**

The preceding chapters set a background to this thesis by analysing the nature, meanings, and functions of heritage in the colonial era in Zimbabwe. They showed how in the early colonial period, the development of a settler heritage was based on an extraordinary investment in memorial landscapes, monuments, and historiography, which partly appropriated and institutionalised the local idiom in creating an exclusive white public sphere. This chapter marks the beginning of the second part of my thesis, which examines dominant ideas about heritage in the postcolonial era, when the political context changed from settler rule to black majority rule. The chapter shows that in 1980, the postcolonial state inherited an official heritage canon that was at odds with the realities of local communities. This chapter summarises the encounter between inherited official heritage notions and practices against emerging claims from local communities.

The chapter is organised in two sections, both highlighting the complications faced by a system in attempting to deal with an inherited colonial past. The first section shows that after 1980 rather than being obliterated, the inherited settler heritage was sepulcherised as emerging heritage practices became externalised from the museums into multiple sites dispersed in the landscape. The second part draws from biographies of selected museum exhibits and objects to show a changing relationship between a colonially derived museum and previously marginalised local communities. I suggest that biographies of museum objects can be used in adopting a reflexive approach to about the practices inherited from the colonial museum. While the colonial museum's concern to develop an objective, systematic representation of nature and the local cultures as knowable by the Western subject, activities around objects in the postcolonial era makes us rethink the position of conventional museology and to accommodate new ways of knowing.

I use selected sites, exhibits, and objects to demonstrate the role of practices of pastness in challenging hegemonic state-based notions and practices of heritage and in forging a different relationship between the official and community-based practices. In response to an inherited official heritage, counter-heritage practices emerged, manifesting as claims to archaeological sites

and museum objects. These practices were performative and invoked traditional religious practices, and long held ritual or historical associations, yet they also demanded to be recognised as official heritage. The chapter highlights a changing relationship between heritage institutions and local communities, while on another it also shows how sites, objects, and practices of pastness participated in a different kind of history writing.

## **Part I, Living with the Past: Continuity and Change in Heritage Practices**

### ***Inconvenient pasts: living with the colonial past***

The Africa Unity Square in Harare is a green patch with a central fountain and a flagpole situated at the place where the Union Jack flag (the British flag) was raised for the first time in 1890 (Figure 1). The Square became the venue for various commemorative events throughout the colonial era. Today, the park is a resting place for people going around their business in the Harare central business district. However, the place and other colonial memorials scattered across the country, have been subjects of debates over how the colonial past is memorialised in independent Zimbabwe. For instance, in June 2012, there was a call to re-design the park and to change its set-up from being "a symbol and remnant of British colonialism" (*The Herald*, 4/06/2012). A local newspaper reported that ZANU (PF) intended to alter the Africa Unity Square, as it was seen as one of the last symbols of British colonialism (*The Herald*, 4/06/2012). A cabinet minister remarked that the government did not mean to destroy all colonial edifices and referred to the existence of various colonial memorials as proof of that fact. However, according to the Minister, Africa Unity Square, a site where the British hoisted their flag in 1890, was different in that it "reminded people of 'that' moment" (*The Herald*, 4/06/2012).

Two months later, in Bulawayo, another politician strongly condemned the protection given to colonial statues and other memorials in the city. The Governor of the Matebeleland province deplored "some buildings symbolic of the long-lasting effects of colonialism, 32 years after independence". He remarked that, "the painful aspects of colonial history have been left intact through these plaques and monuments, hence the need to do away with some of them which offer no relevance to our present situation" (*The Chronicle*, 2/08/2012). Referring to the colonial memorials in the Matopos, the Governor argued that:

The irony surrounding these places and other Rhodesian memorial sites dotted in the city is that they are well-maintained at the expense of some liberation and historical monuments in the city that are not receiving due attention because of neglect. ..Thousands of dollars have been spent glorifying a sad part of our history yet barely some two kilometres from the coloniser's grave lies one of the greatest Ndebele kings, Mzilikazi (*The Chronicle*, 2/08/2012).

In another criticism of the continuing existence of colonial memorials, Alexander Kanengoni, a writer and politician, condemned their prevalence. He called for the country to start “creating monuments that celebrated achievement of black Zimbabweans” (*The Patriot*, 5/4/2012). In this article, Kanengoni alluded to the importance of not erasing the colonial monuments but of creating new monuments that would engage in a conversation with the colonial memorials, which, in his view, offered an unbalanced portrayal of the past. For him, a balance would only occur through listing of sites associated with the liberation war on the national monuments list.

The comments above show the existence of tensions concerning colonial and postcolonial practices of commemoration. The colonial memorials dotted around the country, maintained by state agencies, continue to be subject of contempt for some, while for others, they remain an important part of the country’s history. This tension was present in my own personal encounter with the various manifestations of Rhodes’ memorials. On several occasions, I visited Rhodes’ former estate in Nyanga, his burial place in the Matopos and had worked around his memorabilia exhibited in the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo as an employee of NMMZ. Nevertheless, it was my encounter with Rhodes’ memorials in Cape Town that prompted me to confront the ambivalence associated with the memorialisation of Cecil Rhodes. Around the city of Cape Town, several aspects of Rhodes’ legacy are manifest in buildings, statues and a museum, while institutions that benefitted from his philanthropy still proudly carry his name, such as the Mandela-Rhodes Foundation, or Rhodes University in the Eastern Cape.

At the University of Cape Town (UCT), I encountered Marion Walgate’s statue of Cecil Rhodes situated in front of the Jameson Hall <sup>47</sup> (named after his close ally who he is buried with in the Matopos). This statue, a bigger version of the one in the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo (Figure 22), occupied a very public space. The information on the interpretive panel, part of what UCT calls “Heritage @ UCT,” reads:

Rhodes’ imperialist and racist attitude to Africa causes much controversy today, but without this section of the Groote Schuur estate, which he donated for the founding of a university, UCT would probably not have come into existence... Just as young Afrikaners in the 1930s and 1940s were uncomfortable on campus, which provided a daily reminder of Rhodes and Jameson, today many students question the way in which these figures continue to be memorialised (Heritage @ UCT Exhibition Panel, 2010).

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<sup>47</sup> The Jameson Hall was named after Rhodes’ close associate Leander S. Jameson. UCT is indeed a big part of Cecil John Rhodes’ legacy. It is located on land donated by Rhodes. A few meters from UCT is the imposing Rhodes Memorial. Designed by Herbert Baker and Francis Macey, the memorial was financed by public subscription raised from citizens of Cape Town (Maylam, 2002, 2005). The monument was constructed in 1912 and today an inscription at this picturesque landmark boldly states that the monument was dedicated “*to the spirit and life work*” of Rhodes.

The information on the panel highlights the complexity of the acts of commemoration of Rhodes, many years after his death. The existence of Rhodes' memorials confirm the resilience of the "Rhodescapes," showing that no matter how riled some sections of society may be, these memorials hold their own in the public sphere. For example, in spite of the calls to obliterate Rhodes from the geography of postcolonial Zimbabwe, his grave is protected under the NMMZ Act, which makes any tampering with the grave illegal. In 2012, the Director of NMMZ argued that the World's View monuments were important tangible aspects of the country's past and that destroying the grave would erase an important part of the country's history (*The New Day*, 21/02/2012).

Others opposed the proposals to obliterate Rhodes' legacy by acknowledging Rhodes as a crucial part of Zimbabwe's past and a tourist attraction, stating that "in many ways, Bulawayo lives off its past" (*The Chronicle*, 13/8/1998). In 1999, Robert Mugabe responded to calls to remove Rhodes, by arguing that Rhodes had to continue paying tax, through attracting tourists to Zimbabwe (*The Chronicle*, 9/8/1999). In 2010, the Governor of Matebeleland, who in his maiden speech in parliament in 1980 proposed to remove Rhodes from Matopos, spoke against the removal arguing that, "We fought against Rhodes' evil deeds.... we are still demanding our land from the whites...villagers around Matopos are more concerned about losing their livelihoods selling curios to tourists than about the disposition of Rhodes' bones" (*The Chronicle*, 21/3/2010).

Thus, the decision to retain Rhodes' grave in the Matopos shows the complexity and tension associated with the preservation of colonial memorials in postcolonial Zimbabwe. Postcolonial heritage practices attempt to bridge the tension between requests to remove colonial vestiges and the importance of these vestiges in creating a balanced reading of the history of the country, especially colonial history. While Rhodes' bones in the Matopos are for some, "heritage that hurts" (Muringaniza, 2004), or "the baggage of our history" (*The Herald*, 28/05/2013), certainly for the state, these bones have a place in the country's historical narrative, if only to show the brutality of the colonial state. Rhodes' continued presence in the Matopos also shows how the past, made visible through the presence of human remains associated with ancestors, are platforms for engaging with contemporary issues (See Chapters 5 and 6).

### ***The baggage of history: sanitisation and accommodation***

Official heritage practices in post - 1980 Zimbabwe can be understood within the context of the prevailing political changes following the end of settler rule, as well as the advent of liberal economic policies adopted by the Zimbabwean government in the 1990s. One of the key changes that influenced post -1980 social and political developments in Zimbabwe was the reconciliation

policy. In 1980, a policy of national reconciliation was part of the political settlement espoused by the ruling party ZANU (PF). As advocated by the government, reconciliation sought to extend an olive branch to the settler society, while appeasing the various nationalist parties that had fought in the liberation war and contested elections separately in 1980 (Shamuyarira *et al*, 1995; De Waal, 2002). The policy was a compromise steeped in the 1979 Lancaster House Agreement that ended the liberation war, and the constitution that emerged from it (Raftopoulos, 2003). The policy embodied a series of compromises over minority rights, in particular on the future of land ownership in the country, and guaranteed white representation in parliament (Raftopoulos, 2003). The leader of the new government, Robert Mugabe, elaborated the policy of reconciliation in the first major national broadcast in April 1980.

Though the message of reconciliation was never translated into a coherent policy, it set the tone for the postcolonial state's consolidation of power, a factor that was perhaps a major priority of the ruling party, ZANU (PF), after 1980 (Sachikonye, 2003). Therefore, it was only after the 1990s, with the implementation of the 1992 Heritage Masterplan, that any policy offered guidelines for the operation of museums or other heritage institutions. In the first decade following independence, heritage was linked to the political and academic agenda, subsumed within the state's policy of reconciliation, though there were no officially sanctioned guidelines issued by the government. Various interventions in the cultural politics of post-1980 Zimbabwe can be located within the context of the politics of reconciliation, which emphasised compromise, tolerance and accommodation, rather than confrontation between the former colonial authorities and the new black majority government.

In the cultural geography of the postcolonial state, compromise was manifested in the accommodation of colonial memorials and heritage practices inherited from the colonial period, between 1980 and 2000. This is demonstrated by the fact that there was no major policy shift in heritage policies after 1980. Heritage institutions continued to be governed by the legislation inherited from the colonial era, with only cosmetic changes such as titles to be in congruence with the new nomenclature. In spite of the various moves to transform the cultural topography of the newly independent Zimbabwe, a great deal remained unchanged in the management of museums, sites and monuments. Unlike the South African experience post-1994, in post-1980 Zimbabwe, there were no major changes in legal and institutional mechanisms governing the role of museums or other historic sites (Mazel & Ritchie, 1994; Wright & Mazel, 1991; Ucko, 1994; Munjeri, 1990). As Munjeri asserts, as far as cultural policy issues were concerned in post-1980 Zimbabwe, there was no "storming of the Bastille" (Munjeri, 1990:15). For instance, the 1972 NMMZ Act remained

the major legal instrument for controlling museums, monuments, and sites and no major changes were made in the interpretation of these. The NMMZ remained in the revamped Ministry of Internal Affairs, which was renamed the Ministry of Home Affairs. The role of the institution as the country's heritage preservation agency continued, and heritage legislation continued to prioritise the material and scientific value of sites and historically significant memorial sites, appropriating them for national social and political cohesion, rather than for their local significance. Thus, though there were a few changes, the process of decolonising the museum and heritage sector was not prioritised. In fact, most of the policy interventions such as the 1992 Heritage Masterplan did not make provisions for conventional museums. For this reason, most museums remained unchanged and continued to have a colonial outlook in their collections and exhibits (Mazel, and Ritchie, 1994). Thus, the museums inherited from the colonial era became sepulchres, or "museums of museums", where artifacts, collections and exhibits collected and installed in the colonial era were kept for their significance as antiques from a bygone era.

However, this is not to say that there was no impetus to change the cultural framework of the new independent nation, but that it was not as explicitly expressed through legal or policy instruments, as was the case in the post-1994 South Africa. The desire to change the cultural framework of the new independent state was reflected in Robert Mugabe's speech at Zimbabwe's independence celebrations in 1980. He promised that national independence would give the country "a new perspective, and indeed, a new history and a new past" (Garlake, 1982b: 15). Some of the post-1980 official policies for altering the cultural geography of the country included the Names Alteration Act (1983), the National Heroes Act (1984), and the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe Act (1985).

According to Josephine Fischer, to achieve a "new past" in the post-1980 era, the state became involved in the process of re-inscribing the national landscape (Fischer, 2010). This was done through changing the settler memorial complex by a remaking of national holidays, revision of place names and removal of some Rhodesian monuments.<sup>48</sup> Fischer argues that the post-independence government considered "the geographic mediation of national identity a significant decolonising site" and that the changes "simultaneously disrupted the Rhodesians' creditable version of history, disallowing identification with colonialism and thereby disrupting white self-privileging" (Fischer, 2010: 76).

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<sup>48</sup> Fischer (2010) provides a detailed description of the processes, contests of the remaking of the holidays, national symbols, place names albeit amid protests from the white Rhodesian community who saw the silencing of Rhodesian history as unfair.



**Figure 10: The Physical Energy statue at the National Archives, Harare**

The horse and rider statue designed by James Watt “represented the strength and vision of Cecil John Rhodes”. It was located in central Salisbury, removed in 1981, and placed at the back of the National Archives building. Information regarding the history and significance is still shown by a display panel next to the statue even though it is now located away from public view. Source: Author 2011.

All colonial statues were deposited at the National Archives in Harare and the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo (Figure 11). Even though the statues were removed from public places, they continued to live on at institutions mandated with stewardship of the country's history and heritage. As Ashworth espoused it, this inherited “heritage” was “contained and marginalised as curious, colourful, somewhat quaint survivals from the past that can now be treated as museum artefacts or antique pieces” (Ashworth *et al*, 2007:111). Ashworth argues that the complete obliteration of these sites and monuments was avoided because these “vestiges or monuments of the vanquished” were needed to demonstrate the victory of the new regime. In the postcolonial narrative, there had “to be an enemy whose existence and actions provoked and then legitimated the struggle and the martyrs and heroes require oppressors and villains” (Ashworth *et al*, 2007:112). In the postcolonial period, the use of these inherited spaces, materials and objects lay in that they were visual traces of colonialism in the public arena. The colonial memorials were invoked at various stages to demonstrate the brutality of the colonial governments to the black population in Zimbabwe. This made the memorials “artefacts of colonial oppression ... good for credibility and for bolstering a new narrative” (Ashworth *et al*, 2007:118).

Thus, following independence in 1980, as part of the process of decolonising the cultural geography, Zimbabwe began the renaming of cities, towns, and streets. Old names were changed, by replacing names of British colonialists with those of black nationalist leaders. Several colonial memorials and statues were removed from public view, while official holidays were changed to reflect the new political dispensation. New commemorative spaces were also created such as the National Heroes Acre. These war memorials became the principal monuments of the post-colonial government (See Chapter 6). Other activities included the renaming of historic zones and incorporation of new historic buildings such as Mai Musodzi Hall, Stodart Hall, Robert Mugabe's houses, and the Zimbabwe grounds, all linked to individuals or events that were considered to be significant in the anti-colonial struggle.

Probably the most conspicuous act of reclamation of the country's archaeological past manifested in the adoption of the name Zimbabwe for the newly independent state. It is interesting to note that the newly independent state was renamed after an archaeological site, Great Zimbabwe, which for over a century had been appropriated by the colonial state. As early as the 1960s, African nationalist political parties had adopted "Zimbabwe" as part of the titles of their organisations. This name, literally translated into "House of Stone" referred to Great Zimbabwe and its associated dry stone walled ruins scattered across Zimbabwe (Garlake, 1973). While Rhodes had consecrated the country by giving it his name, the new independent government sought to exorcise Rhodes' spirit by renaming the country after the largest archaeological site in the country, a site that Rhodes had also recognised for its cultural and political worth and whose objects he was fascinated with all his life. If Rhodes and the BSAC and later colonial governments had appropriated this site for justifying occupation, the new postcolonial state used the same site to also validate and assert their claim. Great Zimbabwe became the most important site for the postcolonial state as it had been for the colonial state. While the messages projected were different, the uses were similar in both eras in that the state used the physical and symbolical aspects of the archaeological site to foster political and social hegemony.

Therefore, after 1980, the change in the political landscape resulted in the expectation that museums and sites were expected to appeal to previously marginalised local communities (See Garlake, 1982; Ucko, 1994; Munjeri, 1990, 1990a). The turnaround of museums and archaeological sites entailed, among other things, representing groups that had not been represented before and addressing the biases in collections and displays. However, this desire for transformation manifested not in major policy decisions, but within a process that accommodated inherited practices as it engaged emerging counter-heritage practices. This approach was different from the attitudes that later emerged after 2000, where the state started to deploy a specific "cultural

nationalism” embodied in what Ranger termed “patriotic history” and what Willems and Ndlovu-Gatsheni, characterised as a ZANU (PF) “cultural nationalism” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Willems, 2009, 2010).

### *Emergent spaces, local communities and counter-heritage practices*

In spite of the absence of formal policies governing museums immediately after 1980, some structural and administrative changes were made. For instance, in 1981, the NMMZ adopted a decentralisation policy where the five major national museums evenly distributed in the country, became epicentres of museum work in the five regions (Ucko, 1994). Each museum became the headquarters in its region and its mandate included managing all archaeological, historical or natural sites located within its demarcated range. Within this framework, the QVM was devoted to human sciences, with a focus on archaeology and ethnography, and was renamed the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences.<sup>49</sup> However, the rate of change within the museums was seen as too slow and inappropriate. For example, museums were criticised for failing to change the biases inherent in colonial museums (Garlake, 1982; Munjeri, 1990, Mazel & Ritchie, 1994). Peter Garlake, who had served in the NMMR for many years, made a scathing attack on the slow pace of change after 1980. He remarked:

The role of museums in the colonial or neo-colonial society has always been to entertain the tiny leisured elite of colonist, comprador or foreign tourist. The people’s culture is both pillaged and denigrated from their social environment....Museums have a vital role of teaching ordinary working people about themselves, their country and history. ... To achieve this, museums must above all be accessible not just to apprehensive crocodiles (lines) of neat school children shepherded through alien portals but also to ordinary people at the end of the working day (Garlake, 1982: 31).

In response to increasing criticism of the lack of change within the inherited museums, the state, rather than making a radical overhaul of the museums, made attempts to introduce new types of museums, which were expected to serve the interests of mainly rural communities. It provided financial support for site museums, interpretive centres and community museums, constructed around archaeological sites and near local communities. However, an earlier effort was a project on constructing “Culture Houses” across the country. Located in rural areas, the culture houses were supposed to be constructed in all the 54 districts. These places would be used as centres for cultural activities in the districts (Ucko, 1981, 1994). Highlighting the desire by government to bring museums to the rural communities, Peter Ucko remarked that, “as opposed to more distant

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<sup>49</sup>Peter Ucko (1994) suggests that the 1981 administrative museum policy of moving the whole country’s research and reserve collections of local cultural materials to the Queen Victoria Museum in Harare stifled any interest of local groups in their own heritage.

pasts, the approach adopted here is in tune with the Zimbabwean concept of a multifaceted and dynamic ‘past’ safely housed under local control” (Ucko, 1994:237). Nonetheless, the culture houses project achieved limited success due to lack of financial support as well as confusion over the roles and uses of the cultural centres. This resulted in only one district, Murehwa, having a cultural house constructed (Ucko, 1994).

In the late 1990s, there was also an emphasis on community museums, which were expected to offer space for the cultures of underrepresented minority groups. In 2004, the BaTonga Museum, presenting the life, history and culture of the Tonga people in Zimbabwe, became the first community museum to be officially opened. The idea was initiated by the Binga Crafts Centre Management Board and was funded by MS Zimbabwe (Danish Association for International Cooperation) and the Binga Rural District Council (ZMHS, 1994). By 2011, further plans were put in place to collaborate with more local communities in order to build more community museums, especially among the minority ethnic groups such as the Nambya, the Hlengwe and others (Chipunza 09/09/ 2011).

As envisaged by the NMMZ, community museums were supposed to be “community-based institutions that revive and propel the culture of local communities... to empower smaller communities through promotion of their cultures as well as their languages ...as part of the broader cultural equity programme” (<http://www.nmmz.co.zw>). Community museums were seen as an alternative to the colonial museum, where “the new concept removed the curator as the “god-father” of the museum who has been replaced by the community with him working to get the best out of the community talent” (Chipunza, 09/09/2011). A senior official of NMMZ remarked that "we have to move from the inherited colonial, conventional and orthodox museums, which were built by settlers mainly to understand the country’s natural heritage as well as to using human sciences to understand the mind of the African for exploitative purposes" (Chipunza, 09/09/ 2011).

Consequently, community museums created exhibits that included the artefacts and voices of local communities, whose histories had been misrepresented by official history and marginalised from public culture. While they were envisaged to provide a platform for self- representation to the local communities, the museums were also imagined as contributing to economic empowerment of the Tonga, a tribal group perceived to have been side-lined in the process of modernising Zimbabwe. At the Batonga museum, locals participated in workshops, performances, and sale of crafts. Nonetheless, while such projects were remarkable for having responded to the needs of long ignored communities, and in, contrast with traditional museum practices, were developed

with community consultation and participation, they still remained bogged down by financial and administrative challenges. Eventually they were given back to the NMMZ, reverting to the state, rather than remaining independent and community owned.

Though the museums in postcolonial Zimbabwe remained largely unchanged, however, efforts to establish new heritage places were taking root elsewhere. In spite of the slow pace of change in the museum, one area where there was change was in relation to emerging claims to archaeological sites, particularly those that were considered as having special spiritual significance for local communities. These new places emerged around reinterpreted archaeological and historical sites outside of the museums inherited from the colonial era. As the heritage practices began to move to new places dispersed in the landscape, local communities, who had been marginalised from archaeological sites, ancestral landscapes and other spiritually important sites during the colonial era, started claiming access to these sites. From the early 1980s onwards, local communities increasingly demanded access in order to carry out rituals at several archaeological sites and monuments protected by the NMMZ. The archaeological sites, which had been fenced off and controlled by scientists and heritage professionals, were regarded by local communities as their ancestral places and hence their shrines (Fontein, 2006, 2006a; Pwiti, 1996; Pwiti & Ndoro, 1999).

However, the increasing claims from local communities living around the sites sometimes conflicted with professional heritage management despite the fact that official heritage management practices now sought to engage local communities at these sites. The period after 1980 was thus characterized by tension and conflict between official heritage management practices on the one hand, and the views, perceptions and expectations of local communities on the other (Pwiti, 1996; Pwiti & Ndoro, 1999; Pwiti & Mvenge, 1996). In an effort to address these tensions, the NMMZ began to embrace community participation in the management and protection of sites by accommodating the demands for access from local communities through opening up the practice of both archaeology and heritage management activities. Community participation was partly modelled on the participatory management concept developed by the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE), an initiative for managing wildlife that had been hailed as a successful community empowerment model that leveraged community benefits and wildlife conservation (Ndoro, 2004).

After 1980, Archaeology was seen as the discipline that could reconnect local communities with the archaeological sites, in cases in which they had been separated from such sites and from their ancestral lands by colonial heritage policies and land legislation. The Archaeology Unit set up in the University of Zimbabwe's History Department and the NMMZ became institutions that,

through research and preservation activities, would reconnect sites and their communities. The role of archaeology in “decolonising” heritage practices was reflected in NMMZ’s organisational structure after 1980. For instance, in all its administrative regions, NMMZ maintained a team of Archaeologists and Monument Inspectors whose role was to carry out archaeological work and maintain archaeological sites in the regions. In 1981, although NMMZ decentralised its functions according to disciplines, such that each regional museum was to focus on specific disciplines, the importance of Archaeology was shown by the fact that in spite of regional specialisations, each region had to carry out archaeological work (Ucko 1994).

This role of archaeology is also shown by the fact that after 1980, in the academy, the discipline of archaeology was strongly gaining space particularly with the establishment of an archaeology unit at the University of Zimbabwe in the 1980s (Pwiti, 1994). While foreign archaeologists, local white professionals, and amateurs had dominated colonial archaeology, in the postcolonial era, the discipline was given a new face by opening up the practice to black archaeologists. Thus, with the training of black archaeologists and scholars, prehistory was seen as key in dealing with the challenges of inherited knowledge and heritage practices that had for over a century foregrounded science, monumentality and materiality at the expense of community-held practices (Pwiti, 1994, 1997c, 1999).

By the 1990s, in both the NMMZ and the University of Zimbabwe’s archaeology unit, community archaeology was perceived as crucial in fostering a new dimension to archaeology and to heritage management practices. In archaeological research, consultation with and the involvement of local communities was seen as having the potential to empower previously marginalised communities, particularly the indigenous and local communities that had lost rights to their heritage in the colonial era (Chirikure & Pwiti, 2008). Thus, according to Pwiti, following political decolonisation, the discipline of archaeology in postcolonial Zimbabwe saw itself as part of the process of restoration of lost cultural values and pride (Pwiti, 1994). Archaeological research and site management practices were viewed as one way in which to deal with what Chirikure characterised as “unfulfilled promises”, that is, the empowerment of local communities in relation to local archaeological sites (Chirikure *et al.*, 2010).

Accordingly, archaeology, a discipline that since the 1890s had contributed to the appropriation of sites was now to be reframed to adopt an approach that resurfaced the practices and interpretations of marginalised communities. It was now clear that the local communities, who had for many years maintained spiritual and symbolic connections to the spaces could no longer continue to be overlooked. The frequent claims from the local communities had to be accommodated, and

custodians had to be appointed from local communities, whilst some sites were opened for occupation by spirit mediums. The urge to engage communities by archeologists and heritage managers was so strong that even where no immediate direct communities claimed association with sites such as Khami, the heritage managers struggled to link the site with displaced communities (Chirikure, *et al* 2010).

At some sites, the NMMZ attempted to combine conservation concerns with the economic potential of the sites by engaging in financially gainful projects with communities. A good example of this was at the Ziwa archaeological monument in the eastern part of the country, which was hailed as a success story of the endeavor to balance preservation with economic benefits to local communities (Shumba, 2003). At Ziwa, NMMZ and the local communities became involved in joint tourism and other income generation projects with commendable success (Shumba, 2003). From the late 1990s, onwards, this approach was attempted at many archaeological sites throughout the country with varying degrees of success.

However, attempts by the NMMZ to bridge the divide between official heritage conservation processes and the local communities' economic, social and cultural claims were not without problems. The approach faced challenges stemming from the fragmented nature and the existence of multiple, competing interests among communities. For instance, NMMZ's attempts to demarcate boundaries, create buffer zones, and regulate access to sites resulted in conflicts with local communities. Conflicts caused by such disjuncture were recorded at sites such as Manyanga and Domboshava sites where clashes emerged over use and access rights to the sites (Manyanga, 1999, 2003). At many of the sites, local communities quarreled for rights of custodianship.

While the infrastructural improvement and the development of sites for tourism was propelled by economic developmental ideals in the 1990s, these initiatives also offered local communities spaces for negotiating social and economic concerns. As official heritage practices foregrounded the scientific and material values of the sites, local communities highlighted their practices of pastness. While colonial heritage preservation practices had marginalised the spiritual uses of sites and relegated local knowledge to the periphery, in the 1990s local communities increasingly vied for the opening up of sites for their rituals. For example, at Domboshava, while the NMMZ saw the site as an archaeological site whose key value lay in the archaeological deposits and rock art, for the local communities their rituals were seen as more important than the archaeological material.

The activities at Domboshava attested to the long-held spiritual and religious attachment local communities had with the site. For instance, the site manifested a long spiritual attachment with the presence of a well-preserved forest called *Ndambakurimva* (cannot be tilled), a forest believed

to be protected by the spirits and which the local communities for years had considered as sacred (Figure 11). Rainmaking ceremonies and other rituals were held at the site, and the local communities saw no problem in lighting fires during their ritual activities, which the NMMZ saw as a threat to the conservation of the site (Figure 12). Meanwhile, the local communities felt that the sacredness of the area had been desecrated because of lack of respect for traditional customs and the sacredness of the site. According to the local elders, these sacred places were where the ancestors appeared to the spirit mediums, regulating the material, social and spiritual lives of the descendants. The local communities also pointed to sacred spots such as the Chevaroyi and Chiburitsirwa hills, where “witches were cleansed of their witching tendencies by washing in a nearby sacred stream” (NMMZ, 2000:4).

The developments at Domboshava exemplified the level of compromise that the NMMZ adopted in accommodating emerging claims from local communities. For instance, in 1999, a new interpretive centre constructed onsite included an exhibition that gave space to local traditions, myths and rituals associated with the site. The information at the site was translated into Shona and the exhibition and information brochures highlighted the local communities’ association with the site. The interpretation linked the site to the periods “before modern times” where it was “a domain of the ancient spirits” (NMMZ, 2000:2). Some places were opened up for communities to continue carrying out their rituals (NMMZ, 2000).



**Figure 11: The sacred *Ndambakurimwa* forest at Domboshava**

Located a few metres from the interpretation centre, the sacred forest has been protected from use by taboos and restrictions by local communities over many generations. Source: Author, 2011.



**Figure 12: A rock art panel and a sacred tunnel used for rainmaking at Domboshava**

Located on a panel with rock paintings, this ritual site was fenced off and communities were barred from using it for ritual purposes. The rituals, which included lighting fires in the tunnels, negatively affected the paintings. Source: Author, 2011.

As the NMMZ increased its attention to sacred sites after 2000, conflict over archaeological sites and monuments erupted around the regulation of activities at the sites and over requests for occupation of the sites by descendent communities (Chipunza, 09/09/ 2011). The various contesting custodians sought to settle in the landscape, a factor that was at a tangent with the NMMZ's ideals of preserving national monuments and landscapes. For instance, at Mazowe, the descendant families sought to reoccupy the area, which they considered their ancestral lands. At Nharira, the spirit medium Mushore and the traditional custodian of the landscape demanded to be resettled in the landscape. Even after the landscape had been delineated as a national monument, Mushore still lamented that the demarcated boundaries had left out other important sacred sites (Mushore, 05 /01/2009).

The local community in Mazowe argued that the existing boundaries of the Mazowe valley monument, as demarcated by the NMMZ, excluded important cultural areas. In dealing with the increasing conflicts among multiple rival claimants as well as between NMMZ and local communities, the organization adopted wider stakeholder consultation to mediate the contending claims. For most sites, NMMZ drew up management and action plans, which involved stakeholders and local communities. The plans were meant to regulate use, showing how the

organisation prioritised a participatory approach through stakeholder consultation (ZMHS, 2008). All the sites nominated as national monuments were required to have a management plan. Management plans were made in consultation with stakeholders and were expected to recognise and acknowledge all the various interest groups at each site. The NMMZ approached the traditional political and religious hierarchies and appointed representatives into management committees for sites (NMMZ, 2005a).



**Figure 13: A ritual hut at Manyanga (Ntabazikamambo) archaeological and spiritual site**

This was a part of about five temporary huts used by local communities for various rituals. The local communities conduct rituals on site throughout the year. The site is kept by a spirit medium and is still open for tourists. Source: Author 2011.

This participatory approach was also influenced by the involvement of the country in the UNESCO World Heritage Convention. Zimbabwe participated in the world heritage convention in the mid-1980s, having Manna Pools, Great Zimbabwe and Khami archaeological monuments, the Victoria Falls and the Matopos placed on the world heritage list between 1984 and 2003. The 2005 management plan for the Matopos shows how the formation of management committees included various stakeholders such as the NMMZ, Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, Rural District Councils and the Zimbabwe Tourism Board. Key stakeholders included local communities as represented by traditional leaders, chiefs and village headmen (NMMZ, 2005a).

These site management committees were mandated with mediating the interests of all stakeholders at sites by acknowledging the multiple interests of the various state agencies as well as those of the community. The plans also sought to include the community values such as the sacred and spiritual aspects of sites (Figure 14). Sites were no longer seen for their scientific, aesthetic or historical value only but also for their spiritual values. This model was replicated at various sites in the country with varying levels of success. Rather than marginalising local stakeholders, the approach emphasised consensus-building with the various stakeholders and local communities. Local communities were encouraged to collaborate with state agencies in the preservation of their sites, a process that was expected to benefit from the financial proceeds anticipated from increased tourism activities at the sites.

One important outcome of the changing relationship between the experts and local communities was that the experts and heritage preservation institutions had to carry out work in collaboration with chiefs and spiritual leaders. The local communities were given more responsibilities in taking care of sites, particularly those that were linked to local histories, traditions and religious practices. My visits to a number of these sites confirmed the important role given to local authorities in regulating access and use of sites. For instance, access to the Mazowe, Ntabazikamambo and Nharira sites was sanctioned by spirit mediums. The spirit mediums took care of the sites, regulated access and coordinated all the rituals carried out at the sites. Besides being custodians of cultural activities and historical narratives, spirit mediums acted as a link between the larger community and heritage preservation institutions. They employed oral narratives, pointing to sacred spots in the landscape to validate their claim to places. Temporary and permanent structures constructed for conducting rituals were found at many of the sites (Figures 13 & 14). In cases where the local communities were not resident in the area, the spirit mediums became the community representatives, usually staying onsite. The spirit mediums were considered by NMMZ as the official custodians of the sites, and were given the freedom to regulate activities at the site, in consultation with experts from the NMMZ, who would advise local communities on conservation issues.

### ***Marketing the past: The Heritage Masterplan, communities and difference***

In response to the desire for archaeological heritage to contribute to the economic wellbeing of the country and of the communities, in the 1990s, the Heritage Master plan set the strategic direction for NMMZ for the next few decades. It was the first formal policy strategy document governing the practice of archaeological heritage after 1980. The Plan's ideals reflected a need to create a balance between democratising heritage practices and the opening of sites for economic

activities. The Masterplan was a product of international donor support and partly a product of the state's liberal economic policies in the 1990s, as well as a direct result of the wish by the heritage management agency, NMMZ, to improve the management and protection of archaeological sites in the country. In the 1990s, Zimbabwe witnessed an era of economic liberalisation through the Economic Structural Adjustment programmes (ESAP). In this period, in response to the current economic policies, the focus in the heritage management sector was geared towards the development of sites for economic benefit, particularly through value addition to tourism (Pwiti, 1997). According to Pwiti (1997:2), "the Masterplan represents an unprecedented and comprehensive effort in the postcolonial era to provide a national conservation strategy, to involve local communities, to address both local and domestic tourist concerns, to make monuments a local educational resource for the young, and to generate revenues".

The plan, the biggest effort by the postcolonial government to provide a conservation strategy also envisaged an increase in the involvement of local communities in heritage preservation efforts to address the increasing claims from communities (Pwiti, 1997). However, in spite of its partial success, the plan reflected the priorities of the official heritage practices in the 1990s. The development of archaeological and historical sites shows how in the post-colonial era, they were perceived as being more important than the museums that had been inherited from the colonial era. The Plan emphasised the need to address colonial imbalances by reconfiguring archaeological sites and historic sites located in rural environments. To highlight this dimension, the Plan deliberately excluded conventional museums and focused on archaeological sites, most of which were located in outlying rural areas, away from the cities.

This link between heritage preservation and government's current economic policies, was stressed in the Master plan's preamble, which highlighted the Plan's desire to fulfil the government's first and second Five Year Development Plans (1986-1991 and 1992-1996) (Collet, 1992). The donor-supported plan sought to put in place "a plan for the development, and conservation of specific heritage sites, and an administrative structure to manage the sites. The Plan was hailed as a flagship strategy for taking Zimbabwean "cultural heritage management into the 21<sup>st</sup> century" (Pwiti, 2007: 80). However, the emphasis of the Plan was on turning archaeological resources into marketable commodities, mainly through the promotion of tourism. It advocated extensive marketing of the country's archaeological sites to both local and international tourists. It suggested a need for the construction of physical structures, interpretive infrastructure, and other tourism services at selected sites.

According to the Plan, tourist activities were important in providing economic opportunities for the local communities. Pursuant to these ideals, detailed plans were put in place, and financial resources were directed for developing infrastructure and visitor facilities at monuments that were considered to have “high development potential” (Collet, 1992:1). The Plan categorised all archaeological sites and historical monuments according to their potential as leisure resources, and their likely contribution to income generation and national development strategies. As part of the plan to improve infrastructure and services in these outlying sites, several site museums and interpretive centres were established at archaeological sites and historic monuments around the country (Collet, 1992).

Though the Heritage Master plan was the first coherent policy to address heritage management in the post-independence era, its success was limited. The plan certainly elevated selected sites, developing more interpretive infrastructure and tourist support services, but due to financial limitations, this was never extended to all sites as required in the plan. In spite of the desire to redress the past imbalances and increase economic benefits to local communities, most of the site museums developed under the plan became subject to contestation at local community level. Struggles over control of the sites earmarked for development in the plan erupted between the NMMZ and local communities. Further, tensions also emerged from competing claims among local communities. Conflict rose out of different perceptions on the use of these sites as well as over rights to custodianship and ownership of the sites.

In the interactions between the preservation agency and communities, it emerged that the notion of “community” was not about homogenous groups with shared common values as would have been desired by state heritage institutions. Rather, communities around the sites were often disparate, fragmented and in conflict. These conflicts were particularly evident at various sites included in the Master plan. These included many archaeological sites that were also considered to be of enormous spiritual significance for local communities such as Great Zimbabwe, Ntabazikamambo, or Domboshava. At sites such as the Old Bulawayo historical site and the Domboshava rock art site, these tensions between communities and NMMZ evolved in a profound degree.

The Old Bulawayo historical site project was aimed at reconstructing King Lobengula’s first capital to turn it into a theme park (Hughes & Muringaniza, 2005). This site was established as the Ndebele capital by Lobengula in 1870 and was abandoned after Lobengula established his second capital in the present day city of Bulawayo in 1881 (Becker, 1979; Ransford, 1968; Ranger, 2010). Lobengula had taken over from his father Mzilikazi who had settled in this area in 1837 after a long march

from KwaZulu-Natal (Becker, 1979; Ranger, 2010). Arriving in this region, the Ndebele consolidated themselves into a strong state, subsuming various sections of the Rozvi people into their social and cultural system (Bhebe, 1978, Ranger 1999).<sup>50</sup>

The NMMZ asserts that reconstructing the Ndebele king's site was done in order to “develop an ‘authentic’ portrayal of a past Ndebele society” (NMMZ, 2011). The Old Bulawayo site that had been in a dilapidated state since Lobengula abandoned it in 1881 was to be reconstructed and “brought back to life”, complete with various activities being carried onsite by the Ndebele (Collet, 1992; Makuvaza, 2011). The choice of presenting the site as a theme park drew from the ideals of economic growth provided in the Heritage Master plan. It also satisfied the objectives of creating alternative spaces for representing histories, cultures, and traditions of groups that had been marginalised by colonial forms of heritage. Mostly located in the outlying rural areas, these sites were expected to present cultures, history, and traditions, in dynamic, interactive ways rather than through the static and patronising methods of the museums located in the cities. The living museums presented a chance for increased participatory approaches and an active involvement of the local communities in the presentation of their cultures and traditions.

Besides the economic prospects expected from tourism revenues as envisaged in the Heritage master plan, this project also addressed a peculiar need for addressing the marginalisation of representation of the Ndebele in Zimbabwe's postcolonial cultural politics. For the community in Matebeleland, Old Bulawayo - a resurrected seat of Ndebele political power - was seen as a process of recovering the Ndebele history and placing it in the public sphere to afford it space to demystify the stereotypes that were created around Ndebele history and culture (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008, 2009). By seeking to portray an authentic 19<sup>th</sup> century Ndebele capital, the project gave a public existence to the Ndebele past, making it a visible part of national heritage. Ndebele history and culture would be foregrounded in validating claims to citizenship and the group's place in the history of the country could be given a visual existence at the same level as Great Zimbabwe or the National Heroes' acres in other parts of the country.

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<sup>50</sup> The Old Bulawayo site consisted of a “central royal enclosure” surrounded by a tall palisade of wooden poles and contained two interpretive centres, which displayed the history and material culture from the Ndebele (Figure 15). Inside the palisade was the reconstructed village made of several dome-shaped wood and thatch beehive huts, a two-roomed brick house that belonged to Lobengula and a wagon shed, also built for Lobengula. Outside the central part of the settlement was a cattle enclosure, and an open space believed to have been used for meetings and military parades, as well as spaces occupied by several important people in the kingdom and houses belonging to “commoners”. Further from the site were fields that had supplied agricultural produce for the settlement. A few metres from the enclosure is a site where the London Missionary Society (LMS) first set up its mission station and next to it was the indaba tree, a waiting place for missionaries and European concession seekers before they were given audience with Lobengula in the 1870s.



**Figure 14: The Interpretive Centre at the Main entrance to the Old Bulawayo historical site**

Source: Author, 2010.

The activities at Old Bulawayo also show how such projects gave a platform for local communities to (re)engage with practises of commemoration and the making of public pasts in postcolonial Zimbabwe. On the one hand, the site was indicative of the state's ideal of creating alternative spaces where cultures, practices, and narratives that had been marginalised during the colonial era could be given a public existence. On the other hand, the project highlights the participatory approach adopted by the NMMZ, which sought to engage local communities in heritage projects. For instance, the NMMZ conducted research for the project in consultation with local communities, acquiring information from the colonial documentary archive, archaeological evidence, and oral histories. The local community carried out part of the reconstruction of the site, deriving from knowledge and practices that linked the Ndebele to their Zulu connections (Nyathi, 2008; Makuvaza, 2011).<sup>51</sup>

At the same time, archaeology was used to underwrite the interpretations of the past, thereby foregrounding the role of scientific knowledge probably at the expense of the contemporary Ndebele associations with this space (Murray & Manyanga, 2008; Hughes & Muringaniza, 2003; Gaffney, Hughes & Gater, 2005). The project envisaged constructing new structures,

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<sup>51</sup> From 1994, the site was subjected to archaeological inquiry such as Geophysical surveys in establishing the spatial interpretation of the settlement that was needed for the reconstruction (Gaffney *et al*, 2005). Archaeology was used to excavate the spatial layout as well as to establish a cultural history of the sites using objects unearthed from the site (Murray & Manyanga, 2008).

superimposed on the archaeological foundations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century structures. The focus on physical structures and resurfacing of the original foundations of the site led to disjuncture as some aspects of scientific evidence clashed with contemporary perceptions of space. For instance, archaeological evidence had suggested that the palisade wall at Old Bulawayo was made from thatch rather than wooden poles as the consultations with the Zulu had established. Nonetheless, the community insisted that the wall should be reconstructed with wood. (Gaffney, Hughes & Gater, 2005). When archaeological objects associated with Shona groups excavated from the site were displayed in the site museum, there was an uproar from the Ndebele community in 2005, who considered the display of Shona objects at the site to be inappropriate (Nyathi, 1998; Hughes & Muringaniza, 2005; *The Chronicle*, 04/05/2005).

Tension also emerged in the discussions over the “national” character of the site, relative to the local significance of the site and the desire for total ownership and control of the site by local communities. While the site was seen by the NMMZ and the state as of national significance, whose value transcended Ndebele culture and history, for some members of the Ndebele society the site was expected to represent an exclusively Khumalo and Ndebele past (*The Chronicle*, 04/05/2005). This was strongly felt, so much so that the Ndebele complained about non-Ndebele staff who had been appointed to manage the site, a fact that demonstrated a desire by local communities to have exclusive powers at this site (Makuvaza, 2011).

Thus, elements of this project show how on one level the local community desired to use the site to foreground Ndebele history and traditions but on another level challenged the value of the site as a national heritage site. In looking at the site as exclusively Ndebele, they challenged the aims of the state heritage agencies that sought to foreground the role of the site in national, social and political cohesion. As, local custodians of traditions and custodians of history differed with the scientific evidence presented by archaeologists, ethnographers, and professional historians, they flagged their own conceptions of space and requested the interpretation of the physical and spatial elements of the site to tally with their own histories and traditions rather than interpretations fixed by archaeological evidence.

Nonetheless, in spite of the contests, the site became a space for the renegotiating of Ndebele history. For example, in response to the absence or misrepresentation of Ndebele history and culture in the city museum, Old Bulawayo offered an alternative space for articulating the Ndebele past. This was evident not only in the iconographic and architectural features of the site, but also in the forms of representation employed at the site. Curated in collaboration with local elders, the

two exhibition spaces at the site foregrounded Ndebele history and culture, locating white history within a narrative that highlighted Ndebele political and cultural astuteness.

In contrast to the representation of the Ndebele in the city museum, the site museum and Interpretive Centre focused largely on the Ndebele, with a sign on the entrance of the site boldly highlighting this mission, “*Amandebele :The Rise and Birth of the Ndebele State*” (Figure 14). The exhibition drew from Ndebele oral traditions and was complemented by information from the archaeological excavations carried out at the site (Hughes & Muringaniza, 2005). Ndebele cultural practices were showcased through various cultural materials selected in collaboration with members of the Khumalo family. The Khumalo genealogy, totemic praises and other literary associations were traced back to the Zulu in South Africa and were shown through a timeline beginning from Mzilikazi’s flight from Shaka, in the 1820s to the death of Lobengula in 1893.

The exhibition flagged Bulawayo’s central place in the history of Zimbabwe and highlighted the Ndebele state’s “historical legacies” that include its proximity to the Matopos, having the second largest language group in the country and the fact that the modern city of Bulawayo was founded on Lobengula’s capital. At this site, Cecil Rhodes, in comparison to his large presence in the city museum, was given very little space, portrayed as the progenitor of colonial occupation. In this exhibition, Cecil Rhodes became “an imperialist who used the maliciously acquired concessions to take over the country” (Old Bulawayo Exhibition, 2011). He was portrayed as a villain who instigated the death of Lobengula and the annihilation of the Ndebele state. In the exhibition, photographs and colonial documents such as the Rudd Concession (1888) are interpreted as material evidence of the treachery and brutality of the colonial venture.

Although the layout of Old Bulawayo and planned activities were meant to reflect the history and traditions of the Ndebele, the findings at the site also reflected the various layers of Zimbabwean history, particularly Ndebele relations with Shona groups and Europeans. It was here where Lobengula established the seat of his powerful kingdom, interacting with the Rozvi polity in the 1830s. It was also here where Ndebele contact with the outside world, particularly European missionaries and colonialists seeking concessions took place. Such interaction with Europeans had been memorialised by the colonial state through the listing of the site and the nearby London Missionary Society (LMS) site as well as the “Indaba tree”, (where European missionaries and concession seekers waited before they were allowed to Lobengula in the 1880s), (see Appendix 1).

Thus, for the Ndebele, Old Bulawayo, though engrossed in contests over custodianship or interpretation of history and traditions, presents a space where a particular narrative of Ndebele history and culture can be showcased.<sup>52</sup>

### *Practices of pastness, communities, and local heritage*

This part of the chapter has shown that while the policies governing official heritage practices partially changed after 1980, the NMMZ continued to deal with the difficulties of accommodating the needs and aspirations of local communities in the context of a narrow legal framework inherited from the colonial era. However, developments in this period showed how the heritage practices, as envisaged by the state were expected to deal with the imbalances of a heritage practices inherited from the colonial era. Therefore, the post -1980 official heritage approaches were largely located within the political objectives of balance, redress, participation of previously marginalised groups and ideals of economic empowerment of local communities. The case studies highlighted in this section indicates that the emergence of debates around involvement and non-involvement of local communities in heritage practices, a factor that began to give local communities the opportunity to highlight their long held traditions in participating in how they are represented. On one level, the community claims and practices allowed them to elicit attention and to validate other economic and political claims, particularly associated with resources. On another level, their accommodation by the official heritage management agencies also began to alter the nature of relationship between communities and state supported heritage initiatives.

Though the post -1980 discourses and practices of heritage were still characterized by what Nick Shepherd describes as "delimited and denatured notions of stakeholders or interest groups" (Shepherd in Haber & Gnecco, 2007:409), some of the projects such as site museums, interpretive centres and community museums were envisaged to provide opportunities for self representation to the communities. Policies such as the Heritage Masterplan were meant to increase the participation of the local communities and carry Zimbabwe's heritage management programmes into the twenty-first century (Pwiti, 1997).

Thus, in the immediate post-colonial period, the state attempted to take archaeology and museum practices away from the formal institutions and expose them to non-academic actors and collectives. This may have partly led to a "misrecognition of community heritage" (Waterton &

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<sup>52</sup> One of the practices of the Ndebele in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was to move their capitals periodically to different areas. This was done for defensive purposes and for finding better supply of resources. Old capitals were done by burnt before moving to a new capital. Ironically, the reconstructed Old Bulawayo site burnt down in 2011 from a veld fire and the NMMZ is making plans to fundraise for the second reconstruction of the site from the ashes.

Smith, 2010) or a situation of “unfulfilled promises” Chirikure, et al, 2010) in terms of community participation, responses from local communities shows that the communities preferred to use the sites to highlight local associations, histories or traditions. Regardless of the conflicts and tensions, the link between local communities and sites that had endured for generations, persisted and re-emerged strongly, foregrounding local values. For instance, irrespective of the popular framing of Zimbabwe type-sites as symbols of the Zimbabwean nation and a heroic pre-colonial Shona past, the sites were now claimed by local communities. Communities’ associations with these sites ranged from the memories incorporated in traditional ritual performances, oral traditions relating to myths of origin and chiefly genealogies, to the history writing efforts of local custodians of the past. In contrast to the common perceptions by officials and archaeologists, and the understandings of the ruins of national importance, in this period, local communities approached the sites emphasising family and clan associations (McGregor, 2005; Ndoro, 2005; Fontein, 2006).

The second section of this chapter uses selected objects to show how processes of collecting, classification and presentation in the colonial museum also presented an opportunity of traditional custodians of the past to participate in challenging old forms of representation embedded in the museums. These counter-heritage practices also referenced but challenged the official practices within the museum by flagging the ancestral and the ritual associations to specific objects and relics. Local communities appealed to their spiritual, symbolic, or religious attachment to specific objects in the museum and used them to enter the museum, challenging disciplinary practices within the museum, and in the process blurred the division between official and unofficial discourses and practices.

## **Part II: The Postcolonial Museum: Sepulcherised Pasts and Counter-Heritage Practices**

### ***Preserving the colonial past: the “Halls of Man and Chiefs”***

*The Hall of Man* and the *Hall of Chiefs* are the major exhibits at the Natural History Museum, displaying archaeological, historical, and cultural history. *The Hall of Man* displays the development of humanity from prehistoric times to the present. From stone tool technology, prehistoric architecture, writing, and the Egyptian calendar to the microscope and a model spacecraft - the Apollo- the gallery highlights the move towards modernity (*The Hall of Man*, 2010). However, the arrangement objects and the explanatory text highlight the difference between the old and the new, the traditional and the modern as well as the African and the European (Figures 16-18). For instance, the health showcase displays objects associated with healing, where one panel depicts the role of missionaries in medicine, contrasted to a panel that displays elements of ‘traditional’

medicine (Figure 17). The role of missionaries in medical advancement through the work of Robert Moffatt is placed alongside an exhibition showcasing traditional healing practices, captioned as “harmful magic” (Figure 17 and 18). The warriors’ gallery shows an array of traditional weapons with Ndebele shields and spears and a life size cast of a “Ndebele warrior” in full regalia and arsenal alongside European weapons (Figure 17). In a substantial way, the classification and arrangement posit a crude tradition and modernity binary.



**Figure 15: A showcase in the Hall of Man, Natural History Museum**

The showcase in the Hall of Man, Natural History Museum shows the value of ‘solving the puzzle of the past’. The display highlights the importance of archaeology and shows objects recovered from Great Zimbabwe and other archaeological sites. Source: Author, 2010.



Figure 16a



Figure 16 a & b : Displays in the ZMHS and the Natural History Museum

Figure 16 a shows a diorama on Hunter-Gatherer communities in the ZMHS. 16b is a display in the Natural history museum's Hall of Man with an interesting contrast between the showcase on traditional medicine (*Nganga*) and the one of 'modern' medicine (Physicians). This kind of juxtapositioning of the "traditional" and the "modern" dominates most galleries in the human sciences section of the museum. Source: Author, 2010.



**Figure 17: A military history exhibit in the Hall of Man, Natural History Museum**

Exhibition showing the Maxim gun used by BSAC soldiers in the 1893 wars against the Ndebele. In the background are the military ware used by the Ndebele. Source: Author 2010.



**Figure 18: A display case showing objects brought by missionaries**

Source: Author

The “Hall of Chiefs” displays objects, relics, documents, photographs and other memorabilia associated with key players in the country’s political history. The main figures showcased include

Lobengula and Mzilikazi, leaders of the Ndebele state as well as Robert Codrington<sup>53</sup> and Cecil Rhodes, leaders of the BSAC. The Rhodes collection, which takes up the bigger part of the Hall of Chiefs, is used in a narrative on the life and achievements of Cecil Rhodes. In the centre of the gallery, a bronze sculpture of Rhodes, sits opposite a bust of Lobengula (Figures 19 & 20). Lining the gallery walls are Rhodesian flags, Rhodes' certificates, cutlery, clothing, furniture, and a handwritten copy of his will (Figure 21). A plaque explains how Rhodes was "a perfect example of someone who, in a short lifetime, accomplished many works" (*The Hall of Chiefs*, 2010).

In the other part of the Hall of Chiefs is the exquisite ethnographic collection put together by Edward Codrington (Figure 22). This collection of ritual objects was assembled during Codrington's wars of conquest of tribal groups from present day Zambia and Malawi between 1890 and 1903.<sup>54</sup> The collection was donated to the Rhodesian National Museum by his family in 1935 and has since then formed a huge part of the Hall of Chiefs. The installation of the collection in the museum was facilitated by funds donated by the Carnegie Trust in 1936 (*Rhodesian National Museum Report, 1936*).

Objects collected by Codrington, a close ally of Rhodes and administrator of the present day Zambia and Malawi reflect the centrality of these figures in Rhodesian history, kept and preserved by a state museum in the postcolonial era. As in Rhodes' collection, the Codrington collection of ethnographic objects is displayed to immortalise the achievements of the collector rather than the source communities (Figure 22). Even as presented today, three decades after the end of colonial rule, the naming, captioning, arrangement of objects celebrate the work and contribution of the collector rather than the artistic, cultural and historical significance of the objects collected from Yao, Ngoni, Wemba and Chewa groups. In this exhibit, there is barely any acknowledgement of or reference to the source communities, leading to a silencing of local voices and interpretations of these important historical, religious, and artistic materials.

These silences on local histories are also shown in that even where there was inclusion of Ndebele historic figures like Lobengula and Mzilikazi, the narrative was still deliberately crafted to bolster the story of colonial conquest, marginalising that of these political figures. The objects displayed in the Mzilikazi and Lobengula case entrench this one sided narrative in a way that is oblique and patronising. These include an artistic impression of Mzilikazi, an early 19<sup>th</sup> century cavalry sword

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<sup>53</sup> Robert Edward Codrington (1869 –1908) was the British colonial Administrator of the two territories ruled by the British South Africa Company (BSAC) which became present-day Zambia and Malawi.

<sup>54</sup> The collections were made between 1893 and 1907, the period during which Codrington was in Southern Africa, first as a Sergeant in the Bechuanaland Police and later as Administrator of northern and northwestern Rhodesia.

that belonged to Mzilikazi and a leather belt said to have been worn by Mzilikazi.<sup>55</sup> Of note is the fact that most of the objects in the Lobengula and Mzilikazi case are objects given or donated to the two leaders by Europeans. The objects curiously depict the two Ndebele political leaders within the context of settler history. The story of the demise of the Ndebele kingdom is located within the story of the success of Rhodes in taking over their political empire and imposition of British imperial rule. For example, in between the Lobengula and Mzilikazi cases are two cannons used in the subduing of the Ndebele in 1893.



**Figure 19: Lobengula, Hall of Chiefs, Natural History Museum**

Source: <http://www.naturalhistorymuseumzimbabwe.com/data/uploads/archaeology/013.jpg> (Accessed 11 January 2013)

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<sup>55</sup>Part of the objects associated with Lobengula include a revolver set “made for the Duke of Abercorn and intended as a gift to Lobengula,” a silver beer mug “given to Lobengula by trader J.L Fry”, a Victorian smoking cap, a writing case, and a bracelet and golden chain “given to Lobengula as a gift by Her Majesty Queen Victoria” (The Hall of Chiefs, 2010)..



**Figure 20: The Cecil Rhodes exhibition, Hall of Chiefs, Natural History Museum**

This is a small part of the gallery displaying the story of Cecil Rhodes in the Hall of Chiefs. In the foreground is a miniature of Marion Walgate's pensive looking Rhodes. Source: Author, 2011.



**Figure 21: A museum diorama depicting Rhodes' meeting with Ndebele chiefs in the Matopos in 1896, Hall of Chiefs, Natural History Museum**

The site at which this meeting took place was declared a 'national monument in 1937. Source: Natural History Museum <http://www.naturalhistorymuseumzimbabwe.com/data/uploads/archaeology/013.jpg> (Accessed 11 January 2013)



**Figure 22: A display case showing Robert E. Codrington with “his” collection, Hall of Chiefs, Natural History Museum.**

Source: Author, 2010.

Therefore, the Hall of Chiefs displaying Rhodes and Codrington, installed in the 1960s was an attempt to highlight the centrality of white ancestors and the role of pioneers in the making of modern Rhodesia. In the museum exhibitions, direct reference to white heroes was visualised through European-made memorabilia, and objects from the late Victorian period.<sup>56</sup> The Hall of Chiefs, installed in the newly opened museum building in the 1960s, positioned settler history and heritage as distinctive.

Nonetheless, in the postcolonial era, the history exhibitions in the museum have been preserved, remaining mostly unchanged and rehashing colonial history and personalities. While the museum personnel explain these unchanged museum displays, as the result of the lack of financial resources for replacing them, their existence also reflects an approach that seeks to accommodate colonial history with the purpose of integrating it as part of the postcolonial historical narrative. For instance, the story of Mzilikazi or Lobengula can only be considered to be complete when it is presented in a dialectical dynamic to that of Rhodes, the BSAC and early pioneers.

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<sup>56</sup> Part of the displays at the QVM included a “European house” setting complete with furniture, utensils and regalia from the late Victorian period (Figure 21). The Umtali Museum was built around a collection of Victorian military and transport antiques (NMMZ, n/d /1).

Thus, the museums, with their large holdings of objects and documents assembled in the colonial era, steeped in that period's intellectual traditions, preserved in the present, become sepulchres of the colonial past. In them, the colonial past, even though undesired, is preserved and kept, for purposes of reminding the citizens of the colonial experience. Instead of the museum being perceived as a tainted archive from the colonial era, the museum exhibitions, even those foregrounding white colonial history can be regarded as spaces where black communities in independent Zimbabwe can reflect on the colonial past. For the museum officials, and perhaps for the politicians, the continued preservation of colonial history and figures is not necessarily seen as perpetuating the hegemony of a white past, but it is seen as an opportunity for reflecting on, challenging, and questioning colonial history. The incessant invocation of the NMMZ Act in refuting the recurrent calls to expunge Rhodes from the Matopos and from the museum are a clear example of this complex relationship between the colonial past and contemporary forms of representation (Godwin, 1988, *The Herald*, 28/05/2013).

### ***Confronting the colonial past: new sites and new histories***

While the NMMZ maintained and preserved the colonial objects in most of its museums, it also created other spaces for articulating narratives that challenged those shown in the old museums. Museums such as the Gweru Military Museum engage in a dialogue with the colonial history exhibited in the museums. Though it displays the history of the Rhodesian military, police, and air force, this museum also offers space for highlighting a narrative of the past that highlights the achievement of black heroes. The museum uses colonial objects, relics, and photographs such as military uniforms, flags and medals, copies of the Rudd Concession, portraits of Cecil Rhodes and images of the hoisting of the Union Jack, to present a narrative that challenges the description of history as presented by colonial historiographical accounts. For example, the process of colonisation is demonstrated through portraits of Cecil Rhodes, a copy of the Rudd Concession, a map of the pioneer route, an ox wagon, the Union Jack, and BSAC medals of honour. Though presented in a critical way, the narrative in this museum does not venerate colonial figures as heroes, rather it locates their stories in venerating African resistance to colonialism.

Whilst Rhodes and the BSAC pioneers were portrayed as victors in the Natural History Museum exhibits, in the Gweru military museum, African heroes are portrayed as resilient in the face of military odds. The 1893 Battle of Shangani (*The Last Stand*) is narrated from the perspective of Ndebele informants saying that, "on 5 December 1893, the Imbovhane regiment wiped out a patrol led by Allan Wilson during the famous battle of Pupu" (Gweru Military Museum, 2011). While *The Last Stand* was portrayed as a triumph story of the white soldier, here it is subverted on

a huge canvas showing Ndebele warriors bravely fighting white soldiers at Shangani in stark contrast to Allan Stewart's famous depiction (Figure 22). Thus, while Allan Stewart's painting, the *Last Stand* (Figure 6) depicted the Shangani patrol as heroes, in this museum a new painting portraying the same event depicts them as villains.

The wars against colonial rule, the *Chimurenga* occupies a substantial part of the museum. Here, Mbuya Nehanda and Kaguvi, leaders of the first *Chimurenga* are not villains or murderers as depicted in colonial historiography but heroic leaders of the war who are represented in the gallery by larger than life statues and paintings. The narrative then moves through the first and second World Wars by highlighting the contribution of African forces in the wars (Gweru Military Museum, 2011). The "Matebele rebellion" is presented as the "1893 first war of resistance to colonisation". The Shangani Battle becomes the Battle of Pupu in which the "Ndebele were defeated after a heated resistance due to poor arms and the superiority of the Maxim gun" (Gweru Military Museum, 2011). Lobengula is also projected as the "commander in chief of the war of resistance". The Mazowe battle is seen as an important event and the killing of the settlers in 1897 in Mashonaland are presented as part of a large coordinated war.



**Figure 23: The Battle of Pupu (*Shangani Battle*) painting in the Gweru Military Museum**

In contrast to Allan Watson's *Last Stand* (Figure 6), in this painting the Ndebele warriors are foregrounded and romantically depicted as victors. Source: Author, 2011.

One other area identified for redressing the imbalances inherent in the presentation of colonial history was at colonial memorials scattered across the country. Colonial forts and historical

monuments had been protected and preserved in a way that privileged narratives of settler heroism, marginalising those of black resistance (Beach, 1996). In the past few decades, the NMMZ started to reconsider the place of colonial memorials in relation to the experiences of blacks in the various events that the memorials commemorated. In my interview with the Chief Monuments Inspector in 2010, he made it clear that the thrust of NNMZ's monuments programme was to enlist all the sites associated with African heroic events and individuals (Chipunza, 5/2/ 2010). He lamented the biased nature of colonial memorialisation, which created memorials and monuments that sidelined black experiences, stating that there was need to reframe the sites as “places of the victors. ... sites where the spirit of *Chimurenga* originated” (Chipunza, 5/2/ 2010).

As described in Chapter 2, some of the 1893 and 1896/7 battles were given a strong visual and literary life through art, film, fiction, song, and monuments that also excluded experiences of black Zimbabweans. However, today black communities living around these sites seek to re-inscribe their own narratives and experiences of these encounters. In the contemporary period, local communities confer new meanings on these sites through relating their own narratives of these encounters and through rituals and practices of memorialisation. Through rituals and acts of visitation, local communities foreground their own version of wars by narrating versions passed down through generations orally. As evidenced during interviews with local chiefs at these sites, oral history mixes with traditional religious practices and rituals, constituting these sites not only as historically important but also as sacred places (Mbuya Nehanda 5/01/2010; Chirimanyemba, 4/07/2009).

At these sites, local communities emphasise their own version of the war, challenging what has been presented on history texts. For instance, while written historical narratives show that Mashayamombe was killed and captured during the battle, oral tradition suggests that Chinengundu killed himself in the face of defeat rather than let himself be killed (Chivero, 5/12/2010). Even though the colonial practices of commemoration foregrounded the military aspects of the site by listing it as a national monument, the site is more than just a battle site to local communities. In describing the site, Chief Chivero highlights the sacredness of the site, which more than just a battle site, is also a burial place for his ancestors (Chivero, 5/12/2010). In the contemporary period, the sites are seen as the abodes of important spiritual and political leaders and are sacralised by rituals and other forms of visitation. The sites offer local producers of history the opportunity to rewrite their own experiences. Personal interviews with informants revealed the pride they have in pointing to places, battle sites, and graves while narrating their version of events that challenge those already canonised in official historical accounts. It was also clear that, though

local communities desired to have the sites protected by the NMMZ, they preferred to retain full control of what happened at these sites.

### ***Museum objects, changing contexts and counter-heritage practices***

This section looks at a form of counter-heritage practice that challenged official heritage practices around museum objects and relics. From the 1990s, a few objects and relics emerged, referencing but challenging the museumising processes to which they had been subjected. This section discusses three objects that represent the way in which relics transplanted from black communities through projects of museum science and collection, rise in the postcolony to challenge and unsettle the functions of a system that contained them for nearly a century. These include a part of the Zimbabwe bird excavated from Great Zimbabwe in the 1890s, a sacred *tsvimbo* (walking stick) associated with a spirit medium Mukwati and the *Ngoma lungundu*, a wooden drum believed to be a replica of the biblical Ark of the Covenant.

These three objects, associated in various ways with colonial museum practices, show how in a postcolonial context, some museum objects have played a role in challenging hegemonic museum practices. The life stories of these objects show how parallel meanings exist, sometimes in conflict with each other. It is clear that objects, in this case, mean one thing to the local communities and another to museum collectors and that while museums operate on the bases of Western categories, local communities and descendant tribes do not. Through these objects, a dialogue was made between museum and local communities and knowledge and experiences were shared while the old museum categories were questioned and re-interpreted. While very little has changed in the way the postcolonial museum collects, classifies and categorises objects, in terms of museum and heritage preservation practice, these engagements show how working with collections can be a dynamic process, including many voices and diverse knowledge, without ranking or passing value judgements between the official and the unofficial. Dialoguing with communities becomes an active process where community knowledge and associations are used to challenge inherited categories, meanings, omissions and silences.

An interesting observation is how these objects, a in the way of changing audiences, improved signification by reconnecting objects that had lost their original meaning, infusing them with new voices. For museums that struggle with the challenges and limitations of ethnographic collections inherited from the skewed intellectual practices of the colonial era, engagement with source communities presents an opportunity for giving meaning and relevance to these “dead” objects (Adorno, 1983; Oyo, 1994; Abungu, 2002). While the colonial collecting practices appropriated objects in that objects were taken and placed in institutions (museums) where the original owners

or the creators had no control over the meaning of the object, in the postcolonial period, local communities seek to challenge processes of confinement and meaning-making. For local communities, objects and relics are not just about the past, but they are also about the present. The entrance and the involvement of local communities in revaluing the objects and relics, allowed the objects and the communities to speak and be heard in the museum and in the public sphere.

The Zimbabwe soapstone birds have occupied a special place in the history of colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe (Figure 24). Various archaeologists, who place the birds at the centre of religious practices during the peak of the Great Zimbabwe state, have highlighted the spiritual and symbolic value of these relics (Huffman, 1985, 1996; Summers, 1963; Matenga, 1998). From 1890 onwards, the stone-carved Zimbabwe birds travelled across continents appeared on national flags, coat of arms or banknotes and coins, becoming the most conspicuous national symbol in both Rhodesian times and after independence. Valued for their spiritual aspects, the relics had a very mobile existence, changing hands and travelling far from the country. Willie Posselt, a hunter, took the first bird from Great Zimbabwe in 1889 after discovering four birds on a hill in the Eastern Enclosure (Posselt, 1924). In 1891, Theodore Bent retrieved the birds and started the mobility of the birds that would span three continents for a period spanning over a century. Bent deposited the birds in the South African Museum in Cape Town and Cecil Rhodes purchased some of the relics (Bent, 1896). Most of the birds remained in South Africa until 1981 when they were repatriated back to the Great Zimbabwe Site Museum (Matenga, 1998).

The return of a part of one of the birds from the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin in 2003, facilitated activities that reiterated the political value of these relics, while at the same time highlighting their role in challenging processes of museumification. The return of the upper part of one of the birds led to the reunification of the two pieces, previously separated during the colonial era. The repatriation process started after the President, Robert Mugabe, attended an exhibition at the Royal Museum in Belgium in 1998, where the relic was exhibited (Munjeri, 2009). From then, diplomatic efforts were initiated to facilitate the repatriation of the bird to Zimbabwe where it was given on “permanent loan” from the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation (Munjeri, 2009).



**Figure 24: A Zimbabwe Bird in the museum at Great Zimbabwe**

Source: <http://static.panoramio.com/photos/large/30823490.jpg> (Accessed 14 July 2013)

The reunification of the two parts of the relic was seen as an important moment in the history of post-independence Zimbabwe (Munjeri, 2009; Dewey, 2006). Wrenched from the most revered site in the country, the relic's 'homecoming' was considered particularly symbolic. The object's return was thus thrust at the center of appropriation by the state, and was seen as an important 'national relic'. The repatriation of the relic, a century later, was related to contemporary geopolitics in post - 2000 Zimbabwe.

At the official reception for the repatriated bird, held at State house in May 2003, Robert Mugabe reiterated the importance of the relics as national treasures, while at the same time linking the relic to the current struggles over land and other resources. He remarked that, "Zimbabwe birds are the country's most valuable assets. ...like our land reform programme, today's ceremony allows us to proudly assert ownership over our national resources and treasures ...the sacred bird will now join other birds as they rest and watch over our country" (*The Herald*, 15/05/ 2003). The spiritual and symbolic value of the relics were therefore linked to contemporary debates on the redistribution of natural and economic resources through the government's accelerated land redistribution programme.

To entrench the cultural importance of the relics in the country's political and cultural polity, the bird's return to Great Zimbabwe was planned to coincide with the national assembly of chiefs in

March 2004. The President handed over the repatriated bird to Chief Charumbira, who is a descendant of one of the three chiefs claiming custodianship of Great Zimbabwe. At this ceremony chiefs from all the districts countrywide hailed President Mugabe for the return of the bird and for “handing over” land to blacks (*The Herald*, 15/05/2003). The president of the Chiefs' Council proclaimed that, “... this bird was not the only thing that was stolen but many other things and we want that heritage back..... the return of the lower part of the bird is crucial as it comes at a time when people have reclaimed their land” (*The Herald*, 15 /05 2003).

While the repatriated Zimbabwe bird demonstrates the link between heritage objects and politics in a period of economic challenges, another relic, the Mukwati walking stick, also collected and exported during the colonial era, points not only to the symbolic and spiritual importance of these objects, but also to how they became platforms for challenging processes of museification. The relic is a small traditional walking stick that is believed to have belonged to Mukwati, a Shona spirit medium who was active in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Figure 25). Mukwati is one of the three important religious personalities who played a central role in the earliest protests against the colonization of the country (Ranger, 1967). He was connected to the organisation of the Ndebele war of resistance against the BSAC in 1896 working with another religious leader Kaguvi until he was killed in 1897 (Ranger, 1967).

Mukwati was directly linked to the Manyanga (Ntabazikamambo), a spiritual site in south-western Zimbabwe and became a messenger of the Mwari religion (Ranger, 1985, 1999; Lan, 1985; Clarke, 2008). He was one of the last high priests of the Mwari religion and served in the Matopos (Ranger 1985, 1999; Lan, 1985; Ntoi, 2006). Mukwati's ‘stick’, believed to possess supernatural powers, was collected by Powell, who had been one of the BSAC military leaders at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Chipunza, 2000). Powell started the Boy Scout movement in the Matopos and was a key player in the suppression of the early wars of resistance in Matebeleland between 1893 and 1897. After his death, the relic was moved as part of his estate back to the United Kingdom. After having been away for more than a century, in 1998, the Mukwati walking stick was repatriated from London and was officially handed over to the NMMZ (*The Herald*, 22/06/1998).



**Figure 25: The Mukwati Walking Stick, Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences**

According to the agreement between the NMMZ and the descendants of Mukwati, the object is supposed to stay covered in a black ritual cloth. It can only be opened in the presence of the spirit medium and should be handled by male staff only. Source: Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences (Ethnography).

Herbert H. Mandunya, working through the Restoration of Revered African Sites, an organisation that sought to “reconnect African communities with their sacred sites and relics” was instrumental in the repatriation of the relic (Matosi Speaks, 1/98:1). Mandunya who claimed to be a direct descendant of Mukwati was able to track down the descendants of Powell, who helped with the identification of the stick in Powell’s collection (*The Herald*, 9 /04/ 1999). After several negotiations, the stick was handed over to the Mukwati family who subsequently passed it on to the museum for “safekeeping” (Chipunza, 2000).

Nonetheless, though the relic was deposited in the museum for safekeeping, the object was not to be treated like any other museum object. The process of museumification allowed the family to carry out activities that were not ordinarily part of museum preservation activities. For instance, the movement of the relic between the Powell collection, the Mukwati family and the museum was accompanied with rituals coordinated by the descendants of Mukwati. After accepting the custodianship of the relic, in 1999, an exhibition was mounted at the ZMHS, to give a public life to the returned stick (Chipunza, 2000).

Objects like the Mukwati stick emerged as an expression of the need for dealing with the museum’s tainted past collecting and presentation practices. In this process, the museum became crucial in

giving a public life to a relic that was linked to an important spirit medium. Rituals associated with the return of the object were meant to attract attention to the object in the public sphere. At the official handover ceremony, the deliberate involvement of the political figures and chiefs in “unveiling” the object, was intended to reaffirm the place of the Mukwati spirit as a “national” spirit medium on the same level as Nehanda, Kaguvi or Chaminuka. This move was also meant to demonstrate the importance of the traditional chiefs and spiritual leadership in the country.

Thus, the museum space, itself regarded as a product of colonial knowledge practices that had marginalized traditional objects, was used for conferring a public existence to the relic. The museum became a sacred space, where rituals associated with national spirits could be held. It was colonial collecting practices that had appropriated this cultural object, an ancestral relic from the local communities, and it was the same institution inherited from the colonial era that was now used to re-establish the object’s spiritual significance in the public sphere.

When it was deposited back into the museum, the object challenged the relationship between museum experts and the local community. Even though the relic was deposited in the museum collection, this time its spiritual significance was fully acknowledged, respected and documented by the museum. The ownership of the relic was negotiated between the museum and the descendants of Mukwati. Through a permanent loan of the object by the family to the ZMHS, the museum was given a custodial role, while the ownership remained with the descendants of Mukwati. The ZMHS would keep the object “safe” by properly preserving it, and exhibiting it in the museum. However, the Mukwati family and other spirit mediums would be allowed exclusive access to the relic as and when their rituals demanded. As the descendants agreed to cede custodianship of the relic to the museum, they prescribed their own taboos, rituals and restrictions to be observed by the museum experts when handling the object. For instance, one of the requirements was that the stick should always be wrapped up in a black cloth and that women, even female museum workers, were not allowed to touch the relic (Chipunza, 2000). Further, the cloth could only be opened with due consent of the Mukwati family members and /or a spirit medium of the late Mukwati or their appointee.

Thus, through one object, the source community became powerful, challenging the conventional museumification roles that often privileged the authority of the museum experts over those of the source communities. The object and its existence in the museum storeroom gave a sense of ownership of the object and the museum space to the source community. For the NMMZ, this development was hailed as a crucial step in changing the way museums operated in the postcolonial period. One museum curator commented that:

The handover of the stick to NMMZ represents NMMZ's new role in independent Zimbabwe...NMMZ will no longer be viewed as repositories of objects for tourists' view but active keepers of a live culture.... For the first time the NMMZ received an object of high spiritual value handed over together with its powers unlike where curators went out to collect "mute" pieces from their owners who would part with the artifact forever (Chipunza, 2000: 7).

The crucial role that museum objects played in challenging the official practices are also manifested in the story of the *Ngoma lungundu*, a wooden drum linked to the vaRemba. The next section summarises how this relic also unsettled museum practices and challenged hegemonic knowledge practices.

### **The case of the *Ngoma lungundu***

The *Ngoma lungundu* is a mystical drum believed to belong to the vaRemba.<sup>57</sup> Research by a British anthropologist Tudor Parfitt drew a connection between the *Ngoma lungundu*, a museum relic (Figure 26) in the ZMHS, and the biblical Ark of the Covenant (Parfitt, 2008). Studies conducted in the 1990s concluded that the vaRemba were descendants of the "lost tribe of Israelites" known as the Cohen (Spurdle & Jenkins, 1996; Thomas, Parfitt *et al*, 2000; Zoloth, 2003; Parfitt, 2002, 2003; Parfitt & Trevisan, 2003). Based on these studies, Parfitt concluded that the *Ngoma lungundu*, a mystical object described in Venda and vaRemba oral traditions was linked to the Judeo-Christian Ark of the Covenant (Parfitt, 2008). After his "finding" of the object in the ZMHS in 2007, Parfitt documented his 20-year mission to find the ark in his book *The Lost Ark of the Covenant: The Remarkable Quest for the Legendary Ark* (2008).

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<sup>57</sup> I use the term VaRemba, to refer to a cultural group who in other works are also referred to as Lemba , VaLemba or Remba. They are a southern African ethnic group found in Zimbabwe and South Africa, and with smaller groups in Mozambique and Malawi. Since the late twentieth century, there has been increased media and scholarly attention to their claims of partial common descent to Jewish or Arab ancestry.



**Figure 26: Part of the *Ngoma lungundu* travelling exhibition, Natural History Museum.**

The object exhibited in the exhibition was a cast replica of the original *Ngoma lungundu*, (shown in the first image) which according to the museum could not be put on display due to security concerns. The display pedestal was derived from stone walled structures of the various Zimbabwe type archeological sites. Source: Author, 2010.

Parfitt, a professor of Jewish Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), had spent time with the vaRemba group in Mberengwa, south-west of Zimbabwe. It was during this time that he was exposed to vaRemba oral traditions about a drum-like object called the *Ngoma lungundu* (Parfitt, 2008). These narratives, coupled with the previous genetic study of the vaRemba, convinced Parfitt of the link between the *Ngoma lungundu* referred in the oral traditions and Judaic Ark of the Covenant whose whereabouts he had been searching for years. Linking this with the

oral narrations on the migration of the vaRemba and their origins from the Middle East, coupled with scientific evidence confirming a genetic link between the vaRemba and the Jews, Parfitt embarked on a long search for the *Ngoma lungundu* (Parfitt, 2000, 2003).

A photograph of the *Ngoma lungundu* among the vaRemba in Mberengwa, in the 1940s, taken by a Swedish missionary, Harald von Sicard, was vital evidence for Parfitt's theory. He traced the photographed object to the Rhodesian National Museum in Bulawayo and ultimately identified it at the ZMHS in 2007 (Parfitt, 2008). Here, located in the ethnographic collection, Parfitt identified an old round wooden-like drum and asserted that the object was a replica of the Ark of the Covenant. Through a wooden splinter taken from the museum object, the drum was carbon-dated to about AD1350, a period that coincided with the pinnacle of the Great Zimbabwe civilization (Pikirayi, 2006).<sup>58</sup>

Tudor Parfitt's claims through his book, though contested by many, started a process that linked this museum object to the biblical Ark of Covenant. The object which hitherto was in an ordinary museum storeroom was identified, retrieved and authenticated as one of the most important religious relics not only for the vaRemba but for the whole country if not for all Christendom. In 2010, the relic was exhibited at the ZMHS before it was moved to the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo. In the same year, a scientific symposium was held at the University of Zimbabwe to debate the veracity of Parfitt's claims. Following the exhibition and the symposium, the *Ngoma lungundu* became headline news locally and internationally. For example, following the opening of the museum exhibition and the scientific symposium, between February and June 2010, numerous newspaper articles were published on the *Ngoma lungundu*. The opening of the museum exhibition in Harare in 2010 attracted scores of people, including academics, religious leaders, ministers and historians who attended the unveiling of the "Ark".

Therefore, the museum object was pushed into the public domain, raising a number of issues. The retrieval of the *Ngoma lungundu* also raised a discussion on the identity of the vaRemba, as they saw themselves as the custodians of this important spiritual relic. As indicated earlier, various ethnographic and scientific studies have been carried, linking the vaRemba to a Semitic origin

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<sup>58</sup> Tudor Parfitt was not the first person to link the *Ngoma lungundu* to the biblical ark. In 1943 Harald Von Sicard, a German Missionary working in south-western Zimbabwe wrote ethnographic accounts of the VaRemba in Mberengwa District in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe and presented the same theory (Von Sicard,1956). European interest in the archaeology of Great Zimbabwe had also made a strong case on evidence of a prehistoric link between the Lemba and Great Zimbabwe. In the late 1960s to early 1970s, this link was propagated by the works of Gayre of Gayre and James E Mullan (Gayre, 1970, 1972; Mullan,1969). In South Africa, Junod, Mudau and Schutte also highlighted the link between Remba identities and a Jewish and Arab ancestry (Junod, 1908, 1927; Shutte, 1978; Mudau, 1940). Earlier references to the *Ngoma lungundu* had also been produced in the early writings of traveller and artist Thomas Baines, after his second excursion in 1877 (Baines, 1877).

(Kirby, 1934; Stayt, 1931; von Sicard 1956, 1962; Ruwita, 1997; Soodyall, Morar and Jenkins, 2002). By identifying the *Ngoma lungundu*, a venerated religious relic, Parfitt connected the vaRemba to one of the most venerated spiritual objects in Judaeo-Christian traditions. For the vaRemba, a minority group in Zimbabwe, their link to *Ngoma lungundu* connected them not only to the biblical Ark of the Covenant but also associated them with the building of Great Zimbabwe, the most important heritage site in the country. Such an association would reaffirm them as important participants in the country's glorious past. At the local community level, there were claims and counterclaims by groups such as the Hwesa in parts of Zimbabwe who possessed similar objects.

The major significance of the *Ngoma lungundu's* public life was the way it was linked to vaRemba and Great Zimbabwe, challenging the long-established interpretations of the origins of the site. Though Parfitt did not directly claim that the vaRemba had built Great Zimbabwe, he dated and placed the *Ngoma Lungundu* and the vaRemba at the same time when Great Zimbabwe was a thriving political entity and claimed some kind of association between the two (Parsons, 1997). By Carbon dating the relic to the same time when the Great Zimbabwe was at its pinnacle and thereby linking the vaRemba to its construction, Parfitt's suggestion revived a debate on theories of the foreign origins of Great Zimbabwe. These interpretations had been advanced by archaeologists since the late 1890s by people such as Bent, Hall and Neal or Mullan (Bent 1896; Hall & Neal, 1902; Mullan, 1969). The Remba links to an Arab ancestry and hence to the construction of Great Zimbabwe had been largely dismissed by the work of people like McIver, Caton-Thompson, Garlake, and others (McIver, 1906; Caton-Thompson, 1931; Garlake, 1973).

Therefore, attributing Great Zimbabwe to vaRemba creation challenged the now scientifically established knowledge on the origins, role, and significance of the dry stone-walled sites scattered across the country as of purely local origin. This aspect of his interpretation infuriated local archaeologists and for this Parfitt received substantial criticism in the press (Burrett, 2010; Hubbard, 2010; Manyanga, 2010). In spite of the criticism, Parfitt's work started a process that retrieved a museum object that for many years had existed out of the public sphere, undocumented and of little relevance to communities, as typical of the thousands of other ethnographic materials in the museum. At a time when Zimbabwe was emerging from a period of political and economic turmoil, the confirmation of the object as an important religious relic was seen as a symbolic of the restoration of the country's image. So strong was this link that there were allegations of the object having been taken to the President's official residence for "security" purposes (*The Sunday Express*, 06/04 2009).

## Conclusion

This chapter has summarised developments in heritage practices in the post-independence era. It highlighted connections and continuities between the practices of heritage inherited from the colonial era and emerging claims from local communities. In this period, heritage practices were seen as an important resource in the new postcolonial state as they were envisaged as sources of empowerment for local communities and as a contribution to the economy mainly through tourism organised around archaeological, natural, and historical sites. The chapter showed that the state's articulation of heritage after 1980, manifested in heritage projects that were designed to accommodate an inherited colonial past but were also largely influenced by contemporary ideals of political reconciliation, restitution, nation building, and economic development. Though there was no major policy change for controlling heritage practices after 1980, museums, monuments and sites were expected to accommodate local communities, a goal that was accomplished in the various projects that sought to create alternatives to colonial forms of commemoration and representation.

The chapter also showed the emergence of counter-heritage practices from local communities who mobilised around reconfigured archaeological sites and objects/relics collected in the museum. In allowing communities to enter the museum or archaeological sites not just as spectators but also as active agents, curators and connoisseurs of their past, the museum allowed a level of self-representation. Though the success of some of the projects was limited due to contests over custodianship, this process transformed closed and static sites, collections and objects into "living" sites, that relied on an unstable archive used by a different knowledge system. Counter-heritage practices did not totally oppose the official constructs of heritage, but rather referenced and worked with official agencies, enabling local communities to elicit attention from the state. Yet, the practices began to challenge the hegemony of institutionalised heritage and deconstructed the overbearing focus on the material aspects of objects and sites and museum generated meta-narratives, by bringing in rituals and traditions as active agents in heritage-making.

## CHAPTER FIVE: RECALLING ANCESTRAL VOICES - SACRED SITES AND PRACTICES OF PASTNESS, 2000-2010.

*What happens between all the "two's" ... such as between life and death, can only maintain itself with some ghost... So it would be necessary to learn spirits. Even and especially if this, the spectral, is not. Even and especially if this, which is neither substance, nor essence, nor existence, is never present as such (Derrida, 1993: xvii).*

### Introduction

The previous chapter examined the relationship between heritage practices inherited from the colonial era and emerging counter-heritage practices in the postcolonial period. The chapter showed how heritage practices in the postcolonial era were mostly based on dispersed sites claimed by local communities, rather than in museums. This chapter extends this analysis by examining counter-heritage practices emerging at sacred sites and ancestral places, foregrounding how these activities allow local communities to challenge the hegemony of official heritage practices. Drawing on the political and religious role of ancestors and spirit mediums, local communities have recourse to sacred ancestral places, foregrounding practices of pastness embedded within their traditional practices. Activities such as rituals, as well as the presence of ancestral remains in the form of graves and other materials of ritual importance, turn these places into local “historyscapes.”<sup>59</sup> Through highlighting these associations, local communities are able to make claims for resources and demand attention from the state. One outcome of the veneration of sacred places has been that they foster a new relationship with state-based official heritage preservation activities. The practices emerge strongly after 2000, demanding official recognition. As heritage agencies accommodate these community-based practices, the “official” versus “unofficial” divisions in heritage practices becomes blurred.

### Ancestral Places, Spirit Mediums and Local Claims

The Nharira hills, are a patchwork of granite outcrops outside Norton, about 30 kilometres west of Harare. The hills are at the centre of debates concerning conflicts over use, ownership, and custodianship of sacred sites in Zimbabwe. Over the past 50 years, these hills have been associated with one spirit medium, Sekuru Mushore who belongs to the Nyamweda clan. The landscape has been the site of traditional rituals and rain -making ceremonies and is considered the domain of the ancestral spirits of the Nyamweda clan. Located in the hills are sacred shrines, burial places, and old homesteads (*matongo*), all of spiritual significance to the Nyamweda. The area continues to

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<sup>59</sup> Fontein (2009a, 2009b) uses this term to refer to the various ways in which local communities inscribe their own association with landscapes or archeological sites in order to validate their claims for ownership or to challenge the silence of unrepresented pasts in mainstream preservation activities.

be regarded as sacred and since Mushore's death in 2009, the custodianship of the shrine has been passed on to his eldest son, Kawanzaruwa, who continues to lead ritual in the hills.

For many years, Sekuru Mushore was given access to the sacred shrines by the owners of the commercial farm on which the hills are located. Mushore's ancestors were forcedly resettled in Mhondoro communal area following the passing of colonial land policies that demarcated the area as European land. However, for many years, the farm owners acknowledged and respected the requests by the Mushore and the Nyamweda clan to carry out rituals at the shrines. Up to the 1990s, Mushore had an agreement with the farm owners to carry out rituals without permanently settling on the farm. However, in the mid-1990s, Mushore negotiated to settle on part of the farm on the basis that he wanted, “to maintain his ancestors’ graves and appease ancestors” (*Letter from Hinde to Executive Director NMMZ, 5/09/1995*). Mushore eventually moved to the hills permanently in 1993 along with his family.

In 1995, Mushore requested the Ministry of Home Affairs, through the NMMZ to have this land designated as a national monument, on the basis that it was an important national spiritual site. However after 2000, coinciding with the beginning of the ZANU (PF) government's accelerated land reform programme that sought to acquire land from white commercial farmers for redistribution to landless blacks, Mushore demanded that his family and other members of the Nyamweda clan be allowed to settle permanently at the site . This culminated in numerous legal battles with the farm owners. As the conflict gained prominence, the NMMZ was requested to designate the area as a “national monument”. The hills were given “national monument” status in 2000, demarcating a part of the estate as a protected area and leaving the farmer to occupy the undemarcated parts (ZMHS, 1995a). Nevertheless, conflict over ownership of the landscape did not end with the conferment of national monument status. The landscape continues to be a site of contestation between the Nyamweda Chiefs and Chief Zvimba who both claim chiefly jurisdiction over the area in which the sacred sites are located.

The Mazowe valley, located about 30km north of Harare, is a sacred landscape associated with the Hwata and Chiweshe clans. The area is synonymous with Mbuya Nehanda (Charwe)<sup>60</sup>, a spirit

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<sup>60</sup> The Oracle of Nehanda is long held in Shona traditions and legends as important territorial spirit. Various accounts exist on the genealogy of the oracle but the oracle is considered the most influential in Shona cosmology dating back many centuries (Buscher, 1980; Abraham, 1966). The Nehanda oracle became so powerful and well known and her spirit has lived on in various spirit mediums. Though there are always numerous claims to the mediumship of the spirit, the most famous medium was Charwe also referred to as *Mbuya Nehanda* (Gelfand, 1959; Abraham, 1966). Charwe was executed in 1897 by the BSAC for her alleged involvement in the murder of Pollard, a white official, and for her role in the coordination of the 1896/7 war. Her involvement in this war has remained contested in academic literature. While some confirm the active involvement of Nehanda and other religious leaders in coordinating the war, others are sceptical of this fact, arguing for example that the war was not as cohesively coordinated and that the

medium famed for her involvement in the 1896-7 Shona war (*First Chimurenga*) against BSAC occupation. It is in this landscape that Charwe is believed to have coordinated the 1896/7 anticolonial war in Mashonaland. A prolific oral tradition grew around Mbuya Nehanda's name, highlighting her part in the uprising, her refusal to convert to Christianity and her defiance in the face of arrest. She is particularly well known for the last words she is said to have uttered before she was executed, "My bones will rise again to win back freedom from the Europeans' (Mutswairo, 1982; Vera, 1993, Zhuwarara, 1994).<sup>61</sup> These words are said to be a prophecy that motivated nationalist activities and inspired the armed struggle (*Second Chimurenga*) that brought independence from settler rule in 1980 (Shoko, 2006; Mutswairo, 1982). The words echo the valley of bones episode in the *Book of Ezekiel* – a frequent reference point for the Southern African liberation struggles ( See Dunton, 2013) In time, Nehanda's political influence was celebrated through various acts of memorialisation, commemorating her heroic acts. In song, poetry, and in myth, Mbuya Nehanda came to represent the spirit of resistance and became a prominent cultural icon in post-independent Zimbabwe.

Part of the legacy of Mbuya Nehanda is her direct link to the Mazowe (*Gomba*) landscape, in Mazowe, north of Harare. This landscape was declared a national monument by NMMZ in March 2007 for its spiritual and historical significance. The conferment of national monument status on the landscape was a culmination of efforts over the preceding two decades to recognise and formally acknowledge Nehanda and protect the landscape. Traditional leaders from the Hwata and Chiweshe clans, whose ancestors had occupied the area before they were forcibly removed after the 1931 Land Apportionment Act, championed the call for the preservation of the Mazowe landscape.

In the the Mazowe landscape is a cluster of sacred sites scattered over several former white commercial farms, all associated with the spirit of Nehanda and other local ancestors. The network of sacred sites include Shavarunzi, which is Charwe's stronghold, Chipinda hill, Chivi, Chemachinda, and the Maringisa hills, where various chiefs, spirit mediums, and ancestors are buried. Shavarunzi hill, on the western bank of the Mazowe River, was the headquarters of Nehanda mediums (*homwe dza Nehanda*) (NMMZ, 2005c). This hill is the centre for the main

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involvement of the religious leaders was minimal and at best very localised (Ranger, 1967; Cobbing, 1977; Bhebhe, 1979; Beach, 1998; Lan, 1985; Charumbira, 2008).

<sup>61</sup> This statement was uttered by Nehanda Charwe just before she was executed in 1897 for her alleged role in the war of resistance but specifically for her conviction associated with the killing of the Native Commissioner for Mazowe District, Henry Pollard (Lan, 1985; Beach, 1998; Charumbira, 2008). This statement has been seen as a prophecy that referred to the rise of the liberation war (*Second Chimurenga*), in the 1950s-1980 (Lan, 1985; Shoko, 2006).

religious ceremonies and is considered the most sacred place by the Hwata, Gutsa, Negomo, and Chiweshe chieftainships, who still conduct rainmaking ceremonies and other rituals on the hill.

Thus, the sacred places and the spirits of the places are described in a language that is couched in mystery, reverence, awe and even fear. According to the elders and spiritual leaders, the spirits of Mazowe occasionally appears as a long snake that stays in the Mazowe dam (ZMHS, 2005/2). The Hwata and Chiweshe communities also consider the section of the Mazowe River passing through the *Gomba* area to be sacred. Aspiring candidates for chieftainship are authenticated by having to wash in the Mazowe River and walk to Shavarunzi hill. Those who fail to cross the river will have failed the test of authenticity. Attempts to usurp power by anyone who fails the test, would result in them falling ill and eventually dying (ZMHS, 2005/2).

A pertinent aspect that confers value on the Mazowe hills is that the area is associated with the early forms of resistance to white conquest. Besides the several colonial memorials commemorating BSAC casualties, informants talk of fortified caves that were used for hiding during Ndebele raids (following the establishment of a Ndebele polity in the south-western parts of Zimbabwe) and the *First Chimurenga* wars (1893 & 1896-7). In the Musekure and Mbewe hills, the Hwata and Chiweshe people sought refuge during Ndebele raids and the *First Chimurenga*. The hills also sheltered women, children, food, and domestic animals during times of war.



**Figure 27: The arrest of Mbuya Nehanda (Charwe) spirit medium in 1897**

Source: National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ).

The landscape is considered a major landmark in the history of the country because the *First Chimurenga* (1896-7) continued for a considerably longer period in the area than elsewhere. Some of the most prominent battles during the 1896/7 war of resistance were fought in this area. At

Baradzanwa/Chebanga, the Mazowe battle was fought between Chief Hwata's people and the BSAC soldiers in 1896/7, resulting in the capture and subsequent execution of Mbuya Nehanda (Charwe) in 1898 (Figure 27). As explained by the descendants, Hwata Chiripanyanga who became Chief in 1892 and Mbuya Nehanda (Charwe) played a central leadership role in mobilising the Hwata people against British settlers during the *First Chimurenga* in this area. The importance of this area in the military events in the early colonial period was commemorated through various memorials. Memorials to events in 1896/7 include Fort Mazowe (National Monument number 121) and Fort Alderson (National Monument number 155), which were built to thwart Shona military activities in the Mazowe area in 1897 (Cooke 1969). The 1896 Mazowe battle fought in this area, together with the 1893 Shangani battle, remain the two most famous military encounters in early Rhodesia (Howland, 1963). Speaking of the importance of the sacred sites in the Mazowe area, a Hwata family representative described the landscape as “the fontanel of the cultural heritage of Zimbabwe (*nbova yenyika*)” (ZMHS, 2009:2).

Chitungwiza -cha -Chaminuka is another sacred shrine situated about 45 kilometres south of Harare. The site is located near Chitungwiza, a town named after this site and constructed in the 1950s to accommodate the excess of African labourers in Harare. The site is associated with the spirit of Chaminuka, another important “national” spirit medium believed to have provided guidance to Shona communities as they resisted colonisation in the 1890s. The contemporary Chaminuka medium, Pasipamire, is said to have provided inspiration for the Shona to resist colonial occupation (Abrahams, 1956; Mutsvairo, 1958; Ranger, 1982; Berliner, 1993). Pasipamire stayed at this site before he was allegedly killed by the Ndebele at the end of the 19th century (Woollacott, 1976; Ranger, 1982). The site is claimed by the descendants of the 19th century medium Pasipamire, while Chief Rwizi from Mhondoro communal area claims chiefly jurisdiction over the site.

While the Chitungwiza site has not received as much public attention as Mazowe and Nharira Hills, it is associated with a spirit medium considered to be one of the most important national spiritual leaders, Chaminuka (Bucher, 1980; Lan, 1985; Kwenda, 2003). The mystery surrounding the spirit of Chaminuka generated substantial interest from early European travelers, writers, and historians creating an elaborate narrative around the spirit medium. The earliest writings on Chaminuka were by Frederick C. Selous, the late 19th century traveler and hunter who first revealed Pasipamire to the rest of the world in his book, *A Hunter's Wanderings in Africa*, (1893). He referred to Pasipamire as “a very powerful *Umlimo* (God)” and located him at the Chitungwiza site.

After Selous' account, more stories grew up around Chaminuka eliciting the attention of early settlers such as F. W. T. Posselt who in 1926 wrote about Chaminuka's mystical powers calling him "Chaminuka the Wizard" (Posselt, 1926; Woollacott, 1976). In 1928, the missionary Arthur Shearly Cripps also wrote his *Chaminuka: The Man Whom God Taught* (Cripps, 1928). By the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, further attention to Chaminuka was highlighted through the works of Michael Gelfand in his 1959 book, *Shona Ritual with Special Reference to the Chaminuka Cult*.<sup>62</sup> In this literature, Pasipamire was seen as a hero who predicted the coming of whites and carried out various mystical acts (Ranger, 1982). Later, more writings on Chaminuka<sup>63</sup> such as Donald Abraham's *The Roles of Chaminuka and the Mbondoro cults in Shona Political History*, (1966), highlighted how the Chaminuka myth was an inspiration to the nationalist movement (Ranger, 1982; Samkange, 1978; Mutswairo 1978, Mutswairo, 1983). In 1972, Lawrence Vambe drew from F.C Selous' account referring to Chitungwiza as "the Mecca of Shona religious pilgrimage and national aspiration" (Ranger, 1982: 356).

These literary representations of Chaminuka as a central part of Zimbabwean cultural nationalism during the wars of liberation were entrenched by other forms of memorialisation. For instance, in 1972, ZANLA forces named one of their war-zones in the northeast of Zimbabwe after Chaminuka (Lan, 1985). In many songs sung during the war of liberation, Chaminuka was venerated together with other spirit mediums for inspiring the war (Pongweni, 1982). After 1980, a Chaminuka Street featured in several cities and one of the major government office blocks was named after Chaminuka. Chitungwiza, a high-density dormitory town south Harare, formed in 1978, was named after this sacred site.

The developments at Mazowe, Nharira hills and Chitungwiza sacred places are a small part of a larger development in which further claims for recognition of sacred places associated with local communities emerged. For instance, Marungudzi Hills in Masvingo Province is a sacred site in the Mushawasha area composed of three main sacred hills, Gwangwadza, Ngomahuru, and Marungudzi, which constitute part of a series of hills considered most sacred in the area. In their

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<sup>62</sup> According to Ranger (1982), the publication relied on one key informant, Muchetera Mujuru, who claimed to be possessed by Chaminuka, and offered a centralized, hierarchical model of Shona religion, with the Chaminuka spirit and its medium at the top thereby linking it to the political dominance of the Rozvi.

<sup>63</sup> In literary works, Pasipamire became a central theme in Shona novels and poems as manifesting in the first Shona novel, *Feso* (Mutsvario, 1957), which also contained a poem "Nabanda Nyakasikana" dedicated to a Zezuru mythical spiritual figure, Nehanda (Kahari, 1988). This was followed by other works such as Herbert Chitepo's poem, *Soko Risina Musoro* (Chitepo, 1958) which made direct reference to Chaminuka as a key spirit medium in the country. Much later, Berliner's book on the Mbira musical instrument linked Chaminuka to one of the country's most popular music genre and instrument (Berliner, 1978). Stanlake Samkange's book, *Year of the Uprising*, and Mutswairo's *Mapondera, Soldier of Zimbabwe* and *Chaminuka, Prophet of Zimbabwe* were based on portraying Chaminuka as a hero of the liberation wars in the same vein as Kaguvi and Nehanda (Samkange, 1978; Mutswairo 1978, Mutswairo, 1983).

description of the hills, the chief and spirit mediums linked these hill to other sacred sites in the Masvingo Province, in places such as Mwenezi, Chiturivadzimu in Beitbridge, Great Zimbabwe, and Mapungubwe in South Africa (NMMZ: 2005). The Marungudzi hills are believed to have tunnels and caves with mummified bodies and a stream with three sacred perennial waterholes. The sacred hills are associated with the Nehoreka spirit medium while the Ngomahuru hills are famous for a mysterious big drum, believed to be a symbol of power and authority and which was used for rituals performed by the Mhizha clan (NMMZ: 2005).

These sacred places are imbued with stories, mystic figures, and legends that have survived for generations. Local leaders cite these associations in making claims over custodianship. For instance, in another sacred place, the Nerumedzo sacred forest in Bikita district is believed to be the home to the spirit of a mystical figure, the four-eyed Nerumedzo (Nemeso). Nerumedzo is not just a mystical figure; he is also considered to be an ancestor who has to be appeased by gifts and rituals so that the local communities, his descendants, can prosper. Nerumeso is shrouded in mystery and is talked about in hushed tones. According to local oral traditions, Nerumedzo was born a twin and is believed to have been killed following a tradition that condemned twins as a bad omen (NMMZ, 2005). His spirit is still believed to roam the forest and influences the seasonal migration of an insect *Harurwa*, the stinkbug (*Pentatomidae or*) which is considered a delicacy in the area. The brewing of beer and sacrificial appropriation of the Nerumedzo spirit has become an annual ritual and the forest is protected and monitored by a spirit medium and the local chief (NMMZ, 2005).

At the Maringove sacred hill, which is located in Zvimba District in Mashonaland West Province, the Beperere, descendants of the *Gushungo/ Tsivo* totem claim that the Maringove sacred hill is associated with Negondo, an ancestral figure renowned for being a great fighter (*Dyoranyika*). Locating themselves as descendants in this land, the interviewees reiterated that Maringove is a mountain where their ancestor, Beperere resided and that Beperere had apportioned this land to his two sons, Dununu and Govere (Chirimanyemba, 4/07/2009). The interviewees also linked the sacred hills to important local traditional and cultural practices, arguing that the Zvimba chieftainship derives its strength and spiritual inspiration from rituals conducted from the Maringove (Chirimanyemba, 4/07/2009). For example, during the succession of chiefs, the authentication and validation of a successor's eligibility to succeed is carried out by spirit mediums in the Maringove forest. Further to that, the Maringove is a sacred ancestral burial place. The ancestors of the Zvimba area were buried in the Maringove in sacred caves and the traditional granaries, ritual objects and relics in the hills pointed to their religious importance (Muringa & Zhou-Chokuda, 2009).

According to the community, the sacredness of the mountain is also manifesting through mysterious events that occasionally happen in the hills (Bvocho & Chabata, 2009). For the descendants, the Maringove harbours blessings for the Zvimba clan of the Gushungo/Tsivo totem, and hence its protection and preservation is seen as crucial. According to the local chiefs, the ancestors interred in these hills guide the Zvimba people in all spheres of life including protection against adversaries during wars (Chirimanyemba, 4/07/2009). For this reason, various rituals are carried out to appease the ancestors or to ask for rain and other blessings. Annually, they take a buffalo (*nyati*), a white cow, a white sheep and climb the mountain and sacrifice these animals to the ancestors (Chirimanyemba, 4/07/2009).

### **Ancestral Spirits and the Quest for National Cohesion**

As indicated in the preceding section, as the emerging claims to sacred places after 2000 manifested as local claims to ancestral places, they also referenced the long established religious and political significance of spirit mediums. A key aspect of the veneration of sacred places was their link to the postcolonial state's objective of promoting political and social cohesion, through an appeal to "national" spirits. This appeal to a shared ancestral past found good ground among the populace due to society's long established traditional religious system. Thus, specific spirit mediums and sacred places were invoked as part of the postcolonial state's "national" heritage, whose significance was expected to appeal to all citizens in the country. The eminence of these spiritual mediums-cum-heroes is steeped in the Shona traditional religion that elevated dead ancestors into hierarchies.<sup>64</sup> The central place given to spirit is deeply embedded in the local religious and traditional cosmology where certain spirits were regarded as territorial spirits (*mbondoro*) or lion spirits (Abraham, 1966; Bourdillon, 1982; Chigwedere 1980; Bucher, 1980). The territorial spirits controlled all facets of existence, were central in arbitrating the political processes, and were considered as the guardians of the land (Gelfand, 1959; Schoffeleers, 1978). These mediums' influence transcended the regional, ethnic, linguistic, or political divides.

An example of the centrality of the influence of religious and spiritual aspects emerged for example in the *Mwari* religious practices, firmly rooted in the traditions of various Shona groups. It was a monotheistic belief system that was believed to influence the values and way of life, including the

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<sup>64</sup> In pre-colonial Shona culture, there was great emphasis on ancestry with the general belief being that when a woman or man died, they became a *mudzimu* (ancestor) who could be communicated with and provide protection for living family members. Upon death, chiefs and founders of clans were elevated to a higher order of ancestors whose protection and guidance extended beyond the jurisdiction of their immediate descendants. These spirits were known as *mbondoro* (Gelfand, 1959; Abrahams, 1966; Schoffeleers 1978, Bucher 1980, Lan 1985). Nehanda, Kaguvi and Chaminuka are all acknowledged as important and revered *mbondoro* (spirits).

social, economic, political and even military systems. These practices resulted in activities such as rituals, pilgrimages and shrines that linked various ethnic groups across the country (Ranger, 1967; Bhebhe, 1979; Ntoi, 2006). These practices were connected to specific places such as the Matopos or sites such as Great Zimbabwe. For instance, the Mwari religion was based at Njelele in the Matopos and Ntabazikamambo (Manyanga) hill. These were also connected to several satellite shrines throughout the country, where ritual activities, pilgrimages and other cultural events facilitating communication between the sites were held (Bhebhe, 1978; Ntoi, 2006). The political relevance of the spiritual aspects was revealed in the fact that traditional spiritual practices were persistently harnessed in key moments in the history of the country.

The centrality of spirit mediums in Zimbabwe has a long historiographical trajectory that has been acknowledged by historians, anthropologists and archeologists (Gelfand, 1959; Abraham, 1966; Daneel, 1970, 1995; Bucher, 1980). Work that is more recent has demonstrated the close link between spirit mediums and restitution through claims to resources such as land (Schoffeleers, 1978; Spierenburg, 2004; Shoko, 2006; Fontein, 2004, 2006c, 2009). Sacred spaces such as the Matopos, associated with religious activity and burial of ancestors feature as a dominant motif in Zimbabwean political imaginations. These associations with sacred spaces and rituals also intricately intersect with the country's prehistory, formation of settler identities and colonial resistance, making them highly contested (Makuvaza, 2008; Ranger, 1999; Nyathi, 2003; Ndlovu, 2003; Nyathi, Ndiweni & Bidi, 2005).

However, the Nehanda and Chaminuka spiritual oracles are considered the most influential, with very long histories and elaborate oral traditions stretching back many generations (Gelfand, 1959; Abrahams, 1966; Schoffeleers, 1978; Bucher, 1980; Lan, 1985). The importance of these oracles was greatly enhanced by the activities of the mediums they possessed at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century such as Charwe, Gumboreshumba, or Pasipamire for the Nehanda, Kaguvi, and Chaminuka spirits, respectively. Though there has been debate on the nature and level of involvement of spirit mediums in the coordination of the 1896-7 wars, the spirit mediums are widely believed, to have been the brains behind this struggle.<sup>65</sup> In oral accounts, popular history and in what has been termed "nationalist" and "patriotic" histories (Ranger, 2004), the centrality of the spirit mediums in the first and second *Chimurengas* was considered incontestable (See Dawson, 2011).<sup>66</sup> Certainly,

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<sup>65</sup> There has been a longstanding academic debate on the role of spirit mediums in the organisation of the 1896 wars. Basing on analysis of the colonial archive, the works range from Terence Ranger's characterisation of the role of spirit mediums, to Julian Cobbing's rebuttal of the political or military influence of the religious order in the 1896-7 war (See. Ranger, 1967, 1982; Cobbing, 1977; Lan 1985; Beach, 1998; Charumbira, 2008).

<sup>66</sup> For a detailed analysis of the academic debates on the role of spirit mediums in the wars see Dawson (2011). The foregrounding of the colonial archive in attempts to confirm or deny the involvement of the spirit mediums stands in

the trio of Charwe, Kaguvi and Pasipamire, became cult hero ancestors synonymous with the 1896/7 wars, as well as for having inspired the nationalistic movements and the liberation war (Ranger, 1967, 1982; Lan, 1985).

There is indeed an ongoing relationship between the liberation war and spirit mediums in Zimbabwe, a past that continues to be put to use by the state in the public sphere (Spierenburg, 2004; Kriger, 1995, 2003; Werbner, 1998). The political activities of the mediums entrenched their place as mystic hero ancestors who were key players in one of the most important events in the history of the country- the struggle against colonial rule. It is argued that, as the BSAC administration became more wary about spirit mediums, their popularity as heroic inspiration gradually increased among the black population and ultimately acted as a rallying point for the nationalists (Ranger, 1967; Charumbira, 2008). The execution of Nehanda and Kaguvi in 1898 guaranteed their place as martyrs and heroes who paid the ultimate sacrifice for resisting colonialism.

Thus, embedded in the local religious beliefs, constructions of the importance of spirit mediums was entrenched during the liberation war in the 1950s. For instance, ZANLA made use of Nehanda, Chaminuka and Kaguvi's heroic roles in the 1896/7 war as inspiration. They were portrayed as strategists, heroes and martyrs who inspired the struggle against colonialism, as characterised in the accounts of Terrence Ranger and David Lan (Ranger, 1979; Lan, 1985). From the 1950s onwards, through a variety of memorialisation activities and through literary works, these hero ancestors became firmly established as prominent in the country, particularly among blacks in their struggle against colonial rule. Literary constructions around the figures of Nehanda, Kaguvi and Chaminuka inspired liberation songs, poetry, and other art forms. For instance, Mutswairo's *Feso* (1958), considered to be the first Zimbabwean novel published in a vernacular language was inspired by Chaminuka (Zhuwarara, 1994). This novel, together with, Lawrence Vambe's book *On trial for my country* (1974), inspired by the same spiritual figure were banned by the government out of fear of their potential influence on the black masses who were by this time actively resisting minority rule (Lan 1985).

By the end of the liberation war in 1980, the image of Nehanda, Kaguvi, and Chaminuka as warrior ancestral spirits was well established in Zimbabwe's rural areas (Ranger, 1996). They were also seen as the inspiration behind nationalist movements against the Ian Smith regime in the 1960s (Ranger, 1967, 1982). Popular historiographical and literary accounts continued to refer to the spirit

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opposition to approaches outside of the academy, that draws from oral reminiscences and oral traditions to highlight the crucial role played by the ancestors in these important events.

mediums as heroes (Zhuwarara, 1994). After independence, works such as Yvonne Vera's *Nehanda*, and Solomon Mutsaers's *Mweya waNehanda* (1988) and *Chaminuka: Prophet of Zimbabwe* (1983) continued to venerate the heroic deeds of spirit mediums for their role in the First and Second *Chimurengas*. For example, Yvonne Vera's *Nehanda* revisited the First *Chimurenga* and explored the political agency of women throughout the struggle for independence (Vera, 1993). *Nehanda* has featured in gender discourse to confer space in the representation of women in the anti-colonial struggles (Weiss, 1986; Charumbira, 2008; Jirira, 1995).

After 1980, the mediums continued to be venerated and memorialised in monuments and in the renaming of streets and buildings. After 1980, projects of memorialisation continued to highlight the centrality of the spirit mediums and heroes to citizens in the public sphere. *Nehanda*, Kaguvi, and *Chaminuka* mediums were memorialised in many different ways; ranging from statues and buildings to poetry, song, and street names. For instance, Mbuya *Nehanda* maternity hospital is a major maternity wing at Parirenyatwa hospital, Zimbabwe's largest referral hospital. Pioneer Street in Harare's central business district, named after the efforts of the 1890 Pioneer Column was after 1980 renamed Kaguvi Street and lies parallel to Mbuya *Nehanda* Street, formerly Victoria Street. The Mbuya *Nehanda* Children's home in the outskirts of Harare takes care of orphaned children, while *Nehanda* radio, is an online media platform offering current news. Other manifestations of the commemoration of Charwe include the Mbuya *Nehanda* statue in the Parliament of Zimbabwe and the *Nehanda* and Kaguvi sculptures in the National Archives of Zimbabwe. In contemporary political rhetoric, Charwe continues to be portrayed as a martyr and a victim of colonial brutality.<sup>67</sup>

Thus, as advanced by Charumbira, the story of *Nehanda*, and other national ancestors "shows that the socio-cultural and political meaning of the symbol of Mbuya *Nehanda*, vigorously rubs history and memory against each other in Zimbabwe" (Charumbira, 2012:1). The cultural construction of national heroes such as *Nehanda*, *Chaminuka*, and Kaguvi continue to be presented in political rhetoric as one whose influence transcends ethnic boundaries. In the constructions, *Nehanda*, *Chaminuka*, and Kaguvi mediums gain more power and influence than others do, a factor seen by some as entrenching the political and cultural hegemony of the Zezuru dialect (Kwenda, 2003; Grand, 2009). Commenting on this dominance, Ranger remarked that, "it sometimes feels that in

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<sup>67</sup> For example, this manifested in debates associated with a tree in central Harare that was believed to be where Charwe was hanged in 1888. In 2007, there were suggestions that the tree should become a memorial of all the hangings of the *First Chimurenga* (Muringa, 2007). When the tree fell due to a car accident in 2011, there was a media frenzy with some papers highlighting Charwe's heroic role while others castigated the state's patronisation of Charwe.

popular rhetoric the Zimbabwean past consists solely of Great Zimbabwe and Mbuya Nehanda" (Ranger, 1988: 3).<sup>68</sup>

Nonetheless, the Nehanda, Chaminuka, and Kaguvi legends, popularised by historiography, monuments or literary works, continue to be seen by the state as vital in demolishing regional and ethnic chauvinism, paving way for political cohesion. These ancestral ties continue to hold a central role in politics, history and culture in Zimbabwe and the sites and places associated with ancestral spirits continue to be preserved as key aspects of heritage. The next section shows, how these aspects are invoked by communities to legitimise claims, particular in times where there is increasing competition for resource

### **Recalling Ancestral Voices: The (Re)emergence of Sacred Sites**

The enduring significance of the importance of sacred places has resulted in increasing contests over the use and custodianship of the sacred sites. This manifested strongly at some archaeological sites such as Great Zimbabwe or Ntabazikamambo (Manyanga), where competing claims for custodianship have fervently emerged (Manyanga, 2003; Ndoro, 2005; Fontein, 2006). As indicated earlier, this kind of tension has also been recorded at other sites such as Mazowe, Nharira and Chitungwiza where battles for control and use of sacred places emerged. Since the early 2000s, the sacred places witnessed increasing attention from various sectors of society. Certainly, the Zimbabwe National War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) - a grouping of freedom fighters - regards these sites as important in cleansing the country of the challenges it has been facing. Media reports between 2011 and 2012 reveal that several groups visited sacred sites in an attempt to "cleanse" the country.<sup>69</sup>

These visits attracted wide condemnation from chiefs in the Matebeleland region who saw these cleansing activities as illegal and unsanctioned. The local chiefs argued that they had a right to sanction and control any activities at these shrines and proceeded to close the shrine so that they could cleanse it from what they perceived as a desecration by the group of war veterans (*The*

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<sup>68</sup> A recent manifestation of this critique emerged at one of the prime arts event in Zimbabwe the Harare International Festival of the Arts (HIFA). At its 2012 edition, HIFA commissioned and staged a play entitled "The Last Days of Nehanda" a political satire that criticised the partisan manipulation of Nehanda Charwe's memory. Satirising the political appropriation of Nehanda, the play remarked that Nehanda was a "woman who never belonged to a political party" (*The Zimweye*, 19/02/2011).

<sup>69</sup> Media reports claim that November 2011 and May 2012, over 1,000 pilgrims from outside Matebeleland entered into the Njelele sacred shrine in the Matopos hills without seeking approval from the local traditional leadership, something that did not go down well with the latter (*The Herald*, 11/09/2012). In August 2011, a group of over 560 people, some of them war veterans, visited the Matopos National Park and performed rituals at the Njelele sacred shrine where they reportedly left stones and bones collected from ZIPRA camps in Zambia (*The Herald*, 11/09/2012).

*Herald*,11/09/2012). The emergence of claims and contests based on sacred places highlighted above demonstrate the central role that practices of pastness occupied in heritage discourse and practices in postcolonial in Zimbabwe. The increasing pace at which sacred places were reclaimed and foregrounded by local communities shows how on the one hand the locals desired to reinscribe the sites with localised meanings, while at the same time using them to elicit attention from the state. So important were the sites that they invited attention from a broad spectrum of interests. Families, clans, chiefs, spirit mediums, local government authorities, environmental conservation organisations and Christian organisations, especially the African Independent Churches all laid claim to the sacred sites.

Thus, in the contemporary, these mythic hero ancestors continue to play a crucial role in the state's project of fostering a cohesive cultural nationalism. For instance, after the 2008 elections which were characterised by widespread violence, sacred shrines associated with the Mwari religious activities, such as Njelele, Ntabazikamambo and others were seen as crucial in government's national healing agenda that was adopted to deal with the conflicts caused by the violence (Mashingaidze, 2010). These sacred sites were expected to "foster an *esprit de corps*, engender a spirit of togetherness and solidarity...by encouraging the use of traditional approaches to conflict resolution at a time the nation is seized with the national healing agenda" (UNESCO, 2010:11).

Nonetheless, parallel to these sites that were deemed as having a national appeal, there emerged another type of appeal to the sacred places. This manifested in claims that referenced the "national" importance of the places but at the same time advancing local values. These sacred sites are special places within specific geographical areas, linked to local history, traditions and rituals. In these places, the links between the physical and spiritual aspects of landscape as articulated by local communities are very strong and the local communities perceive the areas as "ancestral landscapes"- places connected to their ancestors. The oral narratives from the local custodians and the several activities carried at these places confer and affirm the spiritual importance of the sites.

One of the key features of the heritage legislation is that the NMMZ Act also provides for compulsory acquisition of the site as well as land on which declared national monuments are situated (NMMZ Act, 1972). It is probably this provision in the Act, that chiefs and spirit mediums saw as useful, in allowing them to reclaim their ancestral lands by appealing to official heritage laws. The NMMZ, revealed how for the past 10 years, there have been increasing calls and requests for the NMMZ to recognise sacred landscapes and to put them on the national monuments list. Turning sacred places into national monuments affords the sites increased protection, and elevates their significance since they would be acknowledged to be of national importance. Partly because

of the link between heritage sites and land, after 2000 there were frequent calls from the community, spirit mediums, and chiefs invoking the NMMZ Act, seeking listing of ancestral lands and places associated with spirit mediums and rituals.

Previously, the NMMZ was content with dealing with the pressure from local communities around large sites such as Great Zimbabwe, Matopos Hills, Domboshava, and others. However, since 2000 the NMMZ observed increasing claims from various communities for official recognition of sacred sites. Following these frequent claims, between 2004 and 2010 the NMMZ embarked on a programme to nominate more sites on to the national monuments list. This programme was meant to put more sites relevant to the activities of blacks on to the list. This would be achieved for example by expanding the categories of protected sites to include sacred sites and liberation heritage sites (Chipunza, 5/10/2010).

After 2000, ancestral lands and sacred places became central in the production of community-based narratives, influenced by the ideals of cultural nationalism and the policy of land redistribution espoused by the state. During this time, increasing requests by various local community groups to be allowed to return to their ancestral lands or to have their sites recognised and protected by the state, shows how local chiefs, previously displaced by colonial land policies invoked custom, tradition and their ancestral ties to the land to validate land claims. Official recognition of these aspects as part of official heritage was seen as important in authenticating these claims. Requests for official recognition by the local communities was one way of highlighting the national significance of their sites as well as validating their local association.

### **Ancestral Places, Land Claims and Politics of Boundaries**

A common aspect of most sacred places presented in this chapter is that they are all located on previously white owned commercial farms. In spite of having been resettled to other places, the communities had maintained links with the landscapes through ritual performances and occasional pilgrimages over the years. In their claims to these areas, local communities argue that their ancestors occupied these lands before colonial occupation, making these areas their ancestral lands, in which they have a right to be resettled. However, this link between the sacred sites and traditions, land, or political influence has made the activities around these sites to be highly contested. At these sites competing claims for ancestral and genealogical ties from various contenders, emerge with several groups jostling for control and for a right to custodianship.

Thus, sacred places have emerged as a central aspect of increasing competition for land. The accelerated land redistribution policy did not implicitly have culture as a category for reallocating

land, yet local communities resorted to invoking their long-held ties to specific geographical areas to justify their requests for resettlement. As the local communities struggle to reclaim their ancestral land, during the accelerated land redistribution programme, they find heritage legislation as one way through which they could validate their claims to these areas. Hence, at various sites, the rival claimants made recourse to their ancestral ties, narrating long-held traditions and clan genealogies that placed their ancestry in these specific areas.

These oral narratives were seen by the spirit mediums as validating their claims to these lands. For example, for many years the Nyamweda community sought to have the Nharira Hills ceded to them making requests to the District Administrator, the Provincial Governor and ultimately to the President's office. In one request in the late 1985, the Nyamweda were prepared to purchase the land from the government. However, in their 1995 appeal to the President, the Chiefs requested the President to intervene in securing Mushore's permanent stay in Nharira hills, either by declaring the hills as a "national sacred shrine" or by acquiring the land from the farm owners (*Letter from Ministry of Home Affairs to Executive Director, NMMZ, 8/9/1995*). The request was eventually sent to the Ministry of Home Affairs and ultimately to NMMZ. In choosing this route, the community believed that their claims based on ancestral ties were adequate in justifying their request for repossessing their "ancestral lands".

Mushore cited his clan's long-held connection and history of occupation of the Nharira hills and surrounding area and cited his clan's praise poetry. His narration directly located his ancestors at Nharira, a fact that he corroborated by pointing to sacred spots and graves on the land. In what he called *kusuma*, a process of communicating with ancestors through reciting totemic praises, Mushore kept daily contact with his ancestors who reside in this place. Part of Mushore's totemic praise poetry directly makes reference to the Nharira hills, linking the natural aspects of this specific area to his clan. His clan's totemic praise poetry mentions this specific land. It partly reads:

<i>Moyo Zuruvi,</i>	Moyo Zuruvi
<i>Vemabwe machena</i>	Those from a land of white rocks
<i>Ve Nharira'</i>	Who hail from Nharira (Mushore, 5 /01/2009).

In Mushore's view, this direct reference to the name of the area and to his clan is confirmation of his clan's direct link to this specific site. To him, the existence of his ancestors' remains and spirits in the hills confirms that the ancestral spirits never left the area in spite of the community having been forcibly removed from it. Mushore justified his right to resettle in the area by arguing that this area was where his clan, the Nyamweda people "lived before the white man came" (Mushore, 5 /01/2009). He also justified his claim by stating that remains of his great ancestors, Botemupote,

Mhanguramasango, Dzimbahwe, Mutimwari and Mambo were interred in a secret underground cavern (*ninga*) in the hills (Mushore 5 /01/2009). The process of narrating his history and traditions becomes an act of claiming ownership of the land and a valid reason for his call to repossess this ancestral landscape. He gives a personal account of his clan's history, excluding all competing interests in the area (Mushore 5 /01/2009).

Mushore's desire to move back into this area on the pretext of an enduring ancestral tie was clearly shown in the numerous legal battles between Mushore and the farm owners in the area. In 2009, he demanded compensation from the owners of a farm that formed part of the Nharira Hills, the Lion and Cheetah Park, for the alleged desecration of the sacred Bvopfo Hills. He argued that the farm owners had tampered with and removed human remains and other sacred artefacts (*NewZimbabwe*, 11/12/2009). In a lawsuit, Mushore listed items that he wanted to be returned by the farm owners. These included knobkerries, ritual axes, clay pots, beads, granaries, smelters, and the human remains of more than 40 chiefs, headmen and warriors of the Zuruvi clan (*NewZimbabwe*, 11/12/2009). In making these claims, Mushore sought financial compensation and requested the farmers to be moved from the area so that his clan could take charge of their cultural material contained in the hills.

Thus, for Mushore, the Nharira landscape is part of his imaginary, strongly linked to his clan's history and traditions. His relationship to this land is multi-layered, encompassing personal and collective memory, history, and narrative. However, he is not rigidly bound by tradition in his expressions of landscape. Instead, his sources of inspiration range from the profound to the mundane, from the past to the present, as well as from the deeply personal to the political.

One of the major issues highlighting the significance of sacred places in a period of increasing competition for land, manifested in the disputes over custodianship among competing chiefs, resulting in conflicts over boundaries. These conflicts over boundaries were exacerbated by the redistribution of previously white-owned commercial farms in the government's accelerated land resettlement programme after 2000. As the former white settler farms were redistributed, disputes over boundaries and chiefly jurisdiction emerged sites such as Chitungwiza, Mazowe and Nharira. During the colonial era particularly after the passing of the Land Apportionment Act of 1931, most of these ancestral areas were demarcated as white commercial farming areas. As the new boundaries were demarcated, chiefs were confined to specific geographies in the communal areas and did not have control over white commercial farming areas near them.

However, the post 2000 land redistribution programme, in opening these areas for resettlement by black communities, opened up competition over chiefly boundaries. As a result, among

different chiefs and proximity to or cultural and historic links to sacred places became important for justifying claims for control of the areas. For example, in the Mazowe area, about six clans claimed direct connection to the area including the Hwata clan led by a spirit medium who claimed to be the genuine spirit medium of Nehanda (Sadomba, 2008).

The contests over the sacred places at Nharira hills also spilled into long standing disputes over geographic boundaries between Chief Nyamweda and Chief Zvimba. When quizzed about chiefly jurisdiction, the spirit medium, Mushore of the Nyamweda chieftainship alluded to the need to differentiate between political or administrative boundaries versus what he termed “traditional/spiritual boundaries” (Mushore, 5 /01/2009). In 2012, commenting on the dispute between the Chief Nyamweda and Chief Zvimba, Kawanzaruwa, Mushore's son and successor, stressed the importance of solving this dispute because,

If the wrangle is not settled once and for all, it will cause a war between the two chiefdoms. Chiefs from Mhondoro want to use political influence to take over my territory. Instead of using the traditional boundaries, they are resorting to political boundaries, encroaching into my territory in the process. I will fight for my ancestors' land (*The Herald*, 13 /07/ 2012).

A meeting called by the provincial administrator to try to resolve the dispute ended in a stalemate with disputes continuing between Chiefs Nyamangara, Dununu and Chimbamauro, whom Kawanzaruwa alleged were encroaching on to his territory (*The Herald*, 13 /07/ 2012).

Therefore, the increasing activities and contest around sacred sites are not just about culture and traditions. The increased competition and conflict over custodianship among the communities point to these places as crucial in articulating and validating claims to political influence and to resources such as land. In a period of increasing change articulated by the state's policies on land redistribution or economic compensation for black communities, links to sacred places becomes good cultural capital for local leadership.

### **NMMZ, Sacred Places and Counter-Heritage Practices**

As indicated in the earlier sections of this thesis, one aspect that emerged in the postcolonial period was increasing requests by local communities to re-establish their links with archaeological sites, historical monuments, and museums (see Chapter 4). These emerging claims to sacred aspects associated with archeological sites and sacred landscapes was accommodated by NMMZ, partly as a response from the pressures from communities but also as a response to the emerging global concepts on community heritage, manifesting for example in adoption of the 2003 UNESCO convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage.

In 2003 the NMMZ had hosted a huge ICOMOS, International conference on “*Place – memory – meaning: preserving intangible values in monuments and sites,*” following which the NMMZ and a government advisory committee, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee embarked on several projects that sought to integrate intangible cultural heritage in the management and preservation of sites. Most of these projects were based on sacred sites and sought to recover, revive and promote the importance of these sites, in collaboration with local communities (NMMZ, 2010b). Though such activities practise of pastness associated with the sites were given attention through ethnoarcheological surveys, consultative meetings, workshops, mapping and documentation exercises, exhibitions and other research activities (UNESCO, 2010).

Even as it faced numerous challenges particularly related to contests over custodianship and use of these sites, the NMMZ established itself as a mediator in the competing interests. Steeped in the UNESCO practices on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), such moves reiterated the importance of traditional religion and its associated shrines as part of official heritage (UNESCO, 2010:11). For NMMZ, the demarcation of sacred places linked to local traditions enabled them to create a balance in the national monuments list, which as it currently existed was dominated by archaeological, natural sites as well as colonial memorials (Appendix 1). The result of the interaction between NMMZ and local communities around sacred places was that it challenged the position of official heritage practices. For example, though the heritage legislation had no provisions for the protection of “spiritual” aspects of heritage places, NMMZ was compelled to accommodate sacred places on the national monuments list. The NMMZ Act defined monuments as material remains with historical, archaeological, paleontological, scientific sites or areas with “distinctive” geological formation and old buildings (NMMZ Act, 1972). Thus, sacred sites did not fit into this legal definition of monuments because the NMMZ Act exclusively mentioned physical sites and monuments with no mention of sacred places.

The calls for the listing of sacred places challenge the long-established notions and categories of what was officially considered official heritage. Regardless of the fact that sacred places existed outside of official preservation activities, the NMMZ has to accommodate them. This accommodation can be seen in the justifications for nomination made by NMMZ. For instance, the NMMZ’s nomination proposal for the Mazowe landscape acknowledges the role of the spirit medium Charwe stating that, “the fight was directed by Charwe, a member of the Hwata family who emerged as the spiritual bastion of the Shona resistance” (NMMZ, 2005c:1). The proposal also describes Mbuya Nehanda as, “a medium of the legendary Nehanda and a member of the Hwata family... a legend of the African struggle against European imperialism” (NMMZ, 2005c:2).

The NMMZ acknowledges the spiritual and historical ties associated with the landscape, justifying protection based on intangible rather than material aspects. For Mazowe, NMMZ proposes that the area should be preserved:

.. largely for its spirituality and historicity rather than physical appearance because the spirit of Nehanda has remained in our midst today in a variety of ways.. The Mazowe Dam holds the sacred waters of the landscape which are associated with supernatural forces and living traditions ... (NMMZ,2005c:1).

The proposal for nomination of the Chitungwiza shrine also reiterates this link between ancestral ties and national significance of the sacred site declaring that:

The site is of national significance because Chaminuka was a national spirit (*Mbondoro*) who played a very important role in the liberation of Zimbabwe from the yokes of colonisation by providing spiritual guidance. ... Chaminuka's spiritual significance transcends the physical boundary of the site (ZMHS 2010a:1).

Commenting on the shift towards preservation of sacred sites based on their local spiritual and historical values, the Chief Monuments Inspector at the NMMZ remarked that:

Now commemoration has moved from monuments to social ways of commemoration that take a living form. In this, ceremonies and activities around certain heritage places are promoted in the form of rituals and other practices... (Chipunza, 09/08/2011).

In the process validating and confirming the value of the sacred places, the NMMZ was forced to draw from oral histories as provided by chiefs and local elders – the purveyors of local histories and custodians of local traditions. The narratives from these local producers of history leads to the acknowledgement of locally produced narratives linked to specific areas and places. Reports from the ethno-archaeological surveys show how local communities have become active participants in the creation of narratives about their past, articulating their own perceptions on the value on heritage places. These traditional custodians adapt, alter and reconstruct the past through oral histories and through the various ritual activities that they coordinate and carry out at the sacred places. While they seek to have their sites declared national monuments, they retain a role in regulating use and access to the sites, as the traditional custodians.

The invocation of ancestors and ancestral landscapes also continue to challenge official heritage practices by relying on a different archive. Rather than focussing on the materiality of sites, the practices of pastness rely on notions of the sacred, ritual, myth and oral narratives of origin to lay their claims. For instance, the narratives by spirit mediums create foreground stories of mythical figures, animals and “strange” or extra normal activities, all confirming the presence of the ancestral spirits and asserting the sacredness of the places. Sacred objects such as ritual pots, grain bins, and ritual cloths affirm the sites as “living heritage” places, connected to the spiritual and religious activities of contemporary societies. Temporary ritual shelters (*misasa*), traditional snuff

(*chambwa*) and ritual sticks commonly used by spirit mediums (*masvikiro*), when consulting ancestors mark the various ritual spots in the landscape, presenting material evidence for ancestral presence and ritual importance of these places. Archeological materials such as ceramics, stone and iron implements as well as rock art mark the sacred sites' enduring historic and spiritual value.

The resurgence of the practices of pastness based on sacred ancestral places has fostered new relationships between NMMZ and local communities, challenging the hegemony of experts in the relationship between NMMZ and traditional custodians. While heritage managers had maintained an upper role in the preservation of heritage places, at sacred places the traditional hierarchy of chiefs and spirit mediums retained more authority in determining what happened at the sites. The official heritage agency (NMMZ) has to negotiate with chiefs, spirit mediums, and elders when carrying out research or preservation activities at the site. For instance, at certain sites researchers are not allowed to take photographs or to record the proceedings of meetings with local leaders (Muringa, 2007). Information is gathered through interviewees chosen by the local leaders. In some of the interviews, the spirit mediums "consult" the spiritual world (*kupira or kusuma*) and the interviewers talked to the spirit rather than the mediums (*homme*). Spirit mediums, elders and chiefs conduct tours of the sacred places, identifying and showing the sacred spots, graves and relics in the landscape.

The emergence of sacred places also shows that the discourses and practice of heritage could no longer be influenced solely from the NMMZ experts' point of view but that perceptions about heritage have to integrate local values. For the local communities, the material remains from the past should be given new values, negotiated in the present. Thus, as NMMZ searches for archaeological and documentary evidence to corroborate the value of the sites and to determine their cultural significance, local communities continue to foreground the spiritual values of the places embedded in their traditions. For example, the landscapes, as understood by chiefs, spirit mediums and descendants, are complex sacred places that are consecrated by the presence of ancestral remains and practices such as rituals. The land is infused with spiritual, religious, and symbolic meanings, revered, and shared by the clans.

These values manifest, for example, in old homes (*matongo*) and other material aspects. Reference is made to ancestors and spiritual beings who created places or left their marks such as old ancestral homes (*matongo*), ancestral graves, and ritual places. These physical vestiges are imbued with oral traditions manifesting in family or clan genealogical narratives, praise poetry or song, nomenclature, myths and legends. The connections to the ancestral lands is seen as enduring as

association which the descendants never lost, even in instances where the communities had been physically dislocated from specific geographical boundaries.

Thus, for the descendants, the land is the ancestors' burial place, an ancestral home and everything in this land is considered sacred and deserves to be protected by the descendants as one way to honour ancestors. This land becomes intelligible through acts of ritual and narration. The paths through which a spiritual custodian traverses the landscape to access the various ritual and sacred spots, becomes an act of claiming the land and a display of his intimate spiritual connection to the land. The land becomes consecrated by ancestor presence and claimed in the present through stories, narratives, and rituals. The oral reminiscences turns these places into "historyscape" where narration met nature, place, and objects. The narratives were constantly adapted, altered, changed or reframed to suit contemporary needs, becoming a useful past, adapted to suit the demands of the moment. In stating claims to the lands, strong emphasis is placed on claiming descent from original inhabitants, the ancestors.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated how local communities made recourse to sacred places and practices of pastness, using them to elicit attention from the state and to validate their claims to resources, especially in a period of heightened competition for resources. The chapter also showed that the invocation of the traditions was not just about fixed identities and traditions, but that local communities altered and reframed the past and traditions, using them to deal with contemporary challenges and to validate their claims to resources such as land. The ancestors' importance as political actors in history and in traditions gave their descendants a right to be heard and a right to resources, the least of which was a right to their ancestral lands. In the context of post-2000 Zimbabwe, through its policy of land redistribution, the state created a conducive environment for such claims to resurface in a profound way. A pertinent outcome of the elevation of sacred places as part of official heritage is that it facilitated a different relationship between communities and heritage agencies, allowing previously marginalised communities to foreground their long – held practices of pastness. The accommodation of practices of pastness created an entangled discourse on official heritage.

## CHAPTER SIX: “MY BONES WILL RISE AGAIN”: LIBERATION HERITAGE, UNSETTLED SPIRITS, AND POST WARS OF THE DEAD, 2000-2010.

*“The Past as a battlelefield in Rhodesai and Zimbabwe” (Kaarsholm, 1989:156).*

### Introduction

The preceding two chapters highlighted the emergence of heritage activities based on practices of pastness, manifesting in activities centred on dispersed sacred places. By invoking their ancestral ties to archaeological sites and landscapes, local communities challenged official hegemonic heritage practices, calling for access to and use of sites. This chapter focuses on another form of displaced space associated with the dead, namely burial places for soldiers who died in the liberation war (c1964-1980). It shows how the state referenced the dead, used the heritage discourse, mobilising activities around human remains and burial places as part of its strategy to appropriate the past. I see “Liberation heritage”, as rooted in the state’s desire for control and subjective manipulation of the past in the 1990s, what Ranger (2004) has described as “patriotic history.” I argue that, after 2000, in a period of acute political and economic challenges, liberation heritage became dominant, through an increasing appeal to human remains, invoking and using them as places where “patriotic heritage” activities could be carried out in the public sphere.

The eminence of the liberation heritage two decades after independence stresses how state heritage practices were being articulated as part of the government's responses to increasing challenges to its legitimacy. In a period when the state was facing political challenges, liberation heritage provided for the creation or extension of rituals, organized to enhance the visibility of political authority (Foucault, 1975: 172). This use of the past emerged around the institutionalisation of the visual, oral, and material elements of the war through the state’s key heritage preservation agency, the NMMZ. Thus, as Charwe had prophesied, once again her bones, and those of dead heroes from the *Second Chumurenga* “rose”, appropriated by the state.

The chapter also shows how the state’s increasing control of public memory based on the liberation war resulted in erasures and silences, provoking counter-practices from those who felt marginalised by official practices. The liberation war narrative became fossilised while debates on contemporary political and economic issues became embedded within an exclusive and paternalistic heritage discourse. The liberation war framed as official heritage became a tool for the state and for dissenting communities in dealing with challenges of legitimacy and marginalisation respectively. Ultimately, the chapter shows how the liberation war has remained central in how the past is constantly utilised for negotiating contemporary political issues in

postcolonial Zimbabwe. Here also, the dead bones become instrumental in sacralisation of place, rituals, forms of visitation and acts of public commemoration.

### **Unsettled Spirits: Human Remains, Graves, and the Use of the Past**

Talk about deceased heroes dominates the Zimbabwean media during annual commemorative events, particularly the Independence Day in April, the Heroes' and Defence Forces days in August, as well as the Unity Day in December. During my fieldwork in April 2011, three newspaper articles focusing on the war dead caught my attention. One was titled "Chimoio visit: An eye opener" (*The Herald*, 29/04/2011); the other one remarked that "ZANU (PF) turning to departed spirits" (*The Financial Gazette*, 15/04/2011) and the last talked about "The wailing bones of Chibondo" (*The Herald*, 10/04/2011). All three articles were related to the way in which the dead are constantly invoked in discussions on the liberation war in postcolonial Zimbabwe. They talk to the way in which as argued by Mbembe's notion of necropolitics, "death, and the human body have been inscribed in the order of power" (Mbembe, 2003:12). The first two articles narrated the case of frequent trips made by the ruling ZANU (PF) officials to sites where guerrilla fighters were massacred by the Rhodesian Front (RF) regime in the late 1970s. Places such as Nyadzonia and Chimoio were refugee camps located in Mozambique, where civilians and soldiers were bombed, leading to many deaths between 1976 and 1979.<sup>70</sup>

The last article focused on the remains of liberation war victims discovered in a disused mine shaft in the Mount Darwin District in the north-eastern parts of Zimbabwe in early 2011. The article was particularly interesting in how it highlighted the contests over human remains in postcolonial Zimbabwe. In March 2011, a group of former freedom fighters, the Zimbabwe Fallen Heroes Trust (ZFHT), discovered a disused mine shaft with the remains of an estimated 1 000 people, believed to be of women, children and liberation war fighters killed by RF forces in the 1970s (*The Herald*, 10/04/2011). The ZFHT had been carrying out such exhumations across the country since 1980 to give their dead colleagues decent burials. For many years, such activities had remained low-key and rarely aroused public interest. However, in March 2011, following the activities of ZFHT and the discovery of human remains at Chibondo, the government became involved in the activities of the ZFHT. Government spokespersons were quick to claim that the discovered human remains were evidence of the atrocities of the RF regime (*The Daily Mail*, 3/31/2011). The government argued that the Rhodesian Front (RF) government, was guilty of human rights

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<sup>70</sup> It is estimated that more than 3000 refugees and ZANLA soldiers were killed in Nyadzonia, whilst 5000 refugees were wounded at Chimoio and Tembwe camps in Mozambique a combined air and ground raid conducted by the Rhodesian Security Forces in November 1977 (Petter-Bowyer, 2003). Hundreds of Zimbabwean refugees were also massacred at Freedom Camp and Mkushi in Zambia in 1978 (Raftopoulos & Mlambo, 2009)

violations that far outweighed any accusations of rights abuses currently levelled against the ZANU (PF) regime (*The Herald*, 10/04/2011). As a result, the work of the ZFHT which had hitherto been ongoing unnoticed, suddenly received a great deal of attention from across the political spectrum.

In April 2011, the NMMZ, working in conjunction with the ZFHT, continued with the reburial of the exhumed remains from Chibondo. In a public show of solidarity, Zimbabwe's only television broadcasters, the state sponsored ZBC TV, aired television documentaries of the exhumed bodies, pointing to the bones as evidence of the brutality of the colonial state. The Ministry of Media, Information, and Publicity offered transport to journalists and members of the public to go and see the evidence of atrocities committed by the colonial regime. As they denounced the colonial state and economic sanctions, visitors to the gravesite sang and danced, chanting slogans against the main opposition party, the MDC (*The Herald*, 10/04/2011).

However, some sectors of the society felt that the exhumations and reburials were a ploy to conceal evidence, as some of the bodies were believed to be those of victims of violent activities in the 2008 general election (*The Financial Gazette*, 1/04/2011). Others, especially in Matebeleland, described the debate over the human remains in relation to the marginalisation of the Matebeleland region arguing that the remains of *Gukurabundi*<sup>71</sup> victims from the 1980s deserved equal attention but had been side-lined for decades (*The Financial Gazette*, 1/04/2011). Opposition parties argued that the ruling party ZANU PF was manipulating the human remains to gain political mileage over the main opposition party, the MDC-T. They argued that ZANU-PF sought to use the exhumation activities to bolster its political influence at a time when its legitimacy was increasingly being questioned locally and internationally (*The Daily Mail*, 3/31/2011). For example, in response to the exhumation activities, the opposition party ZAPU not only condemned the activities but immediately announced that it would embark on a parallel process of exhumation of ZIPRA fighters killed during the liberation war and of those who died during *Gukurabundi* (*The Financial Gazette*, 1/04 /2011)

Civic organisations and human rights advocacy groups felt that the government, by not carrying out proper forensic investigations, was deliberately concealing the real identity of the victims. They felt that the mass grave was a crime scene that had to be attended to by the police and forensic experts so that they could identify the victims and determine the cause of death. (Amnesty

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<sup>71</sup> *Gukurabundi* in Shona refers to the early rain that washes away the chaff before the spring rains. However, the term has been used to refer to an internal military clash in the 1980s between ZANU PF led new government and suspected dissidents in Matebeleland and parts of the Midlands provinces. It is alleged that over 30 000 people were killed among other effects such as rape, torture, and displacement during the clash (CCJP, 1997; Brickhill, 1995). The violence ended after ZANU PF and ZAPU reached a "Unity Agreement" in December 1987, in which the parties merged and shared responsibilities in government.

International, 06/04/2011). Following such concerns, a high court ruling ordered the ZFHT to halt the exhumations following an interdict by the Zimbabwe People's Liberation Army (ZIPRA) war heroes association. Affiliated to an opposition party, ZAPU, the group demanded that the exhumations in the Mount Darwin District, and any other part of the country be carried out by forensic experts, as the remains could be evidence of criminal activities (High Court HB 61/11, 2011).

While all these disputes were taking place, the “resurfacing” of bones from the war was seen by some cultural organisations as a sign of the need to appease the war dead. Chiefs, spirit mediums, and cultural activists attributed the economic and political challenges facing the country to retribution from the “unsettled” spirits of the war dead still scattered and unaccounted for in the Zimbabwean landscape (*The Sunday Mail*, 11 /08/ 2013; Shoko, 2006). Therefore, the ZFHT continued to look for mass graves across the country and collaborated with the NMMZ and local authorities to provide the dead with decent burials (Shoko, 2006). For chiefs, spirit mediums, and other cultural activists, the fate of the country was related to the appeasement of the dead soldiers' spirits. The spirits of the dead would only “settle” after their bodies had been identified, properly reburied and after traditional cleansing rituals had been carried out (*The Manica Post*, 25/04/ 2013). In one reburial exercise, the chairperson of the trust attributed the political and economic problems facing the country to the failure by the traditional and political leadership to appease the wandering spirits of the fallen cadres. He stated:

What these people are saying is that we died while liberating Zimbabwe and it is 33 years after gaining independence, and we are still lying in mass graves in the bushes. They are demanding decent re-burials. Their spirits are wailing, and wandering in the wilderness, looking for somewhere to put their heads to rest. .. They orchestrated the current status quo to draw your attention. Meet their demands and you will get back your political space (*The Manica Post*, 25/04/ 2013).

The commotion over the bones of Chibondo represents the central place accorded to the dead, particularly the bones and spirits of the war dead in the Zimbabwean political space. The resurfacing of the bones and the discussions they stimulated, shows how dead heroes are related to contemporary political and social processes, linked to claims for political power, and contest over economic resources in postcolonial Zimbabwe. Politically, the disputes over the Chibondo bones show how the state developed a strategy to use the war dead in a period of political and economic crises.

The intensified recourse to the past by the state has been spurred by political developments in Zimbabwe, where from the late 1990s when ZANU (PF)'s dominance of the political space has

been challenged by other political players (Raftopoulos, 2003, 2009).<sup>72</sup> The post-2000 period in Zimbabwe has frequently been described as the Zimbabwean crisis, “a particular configuration of political and economic processes that has engulfed the country and concentrated the attention of the region since 2000” (Raftopoulos, 2009: x; See also Primorac, 2010; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003). Raftopoulos asserts that, the emergence of the MDC party in 1999, and ZANU (PF)’s defeat in the 2000 constitutional referendum, led the government to start resisting what they perceived as neo-colonial influences in Zimbabwean politics. In this context, recourse to bones and spirits of dead fighters became key in reasserting and foregrounding the legitimacy of the ruling party, amid increasing challenges from opposition parties.

After 2000, sites associated with the liberation war became part of the state’s manipulation of the past and control of public history, or what Terence Ranger has termed “patriotic history” (Ranger, 2004). This appeal to the past resulted in promotion of a partisan and sanitised version of history that focused on the three anti-colonial wars, the 1893 and 1897 wars (*First Chimurenga*), the guerrilla war (*Second Chimurenga*) and the accelerated land redistribution exercise (*Third Chimurenga*) (Ranger, 2004). This version of history venerated the contribution of the ruling party, marginalised alternative accounts, and categorised citizens either as patriots or as sell-outs, depending on their attitude to the sanitised versions (Ranger, 2004, 2005, 2009a). The medium for entrenching this kind of history was the state-monopolised electronic and print media. In these forums, the official version of the Zimbabwean past was propounded and publicised through “organic intellectuals”, who published, in the media, a sanitised version of the colonial past (Miles-Tendi, 2008, 2009, 2010). Robert Muponde describes these activities as ZANU PF’s privatisation of Zimbabwean history (Muponde, 2003). In an elaborate form of cultural nationalism, a version of history that foregrounded ZANU PF was also popularised through state sponsored cultural events and activities such as national *biras* (rituals) and musical galas, held in major cities (Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Willems, 2009, 2010).

Therefore, in a period where the state sought to harness the past in order to bolster its political image, the officialisation of the liberation heritage offered a public life for this version of the country’s past. The state used public acts of commemoration based on the graves of the war dead, to give a public life to the official history. After 2000, the focus for rallying support became encapsulated in the policies that emphasised the reclaiming of natural resources and the economy.

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<sup>72</sup> In a closely contested election in 2008, the MDC-T defeated ZANU PF but failed to get a majority vote, leading to a runoff in which MDC-T boycotted, citing irregularities and state sponsored violence against voters after the first election. What followed these highly contested events was a Unity government in which the three major parties, ZANU PF, MDC-T and MDC-M shared political authority for the next 5 years. This was the first major upset to ZANU PF’s political dominance since 1980.

The fact that such policies were constantly given a public articulation at activities carried out around shrines, and practices of commemoration, shows how heritage practices were seen as a conduit for articulating issues and for dealing with contemporary political and economic challenges.

### **The Antecedents: The National Heroes and UNESCO Heritage Discourses**

The direct association between the dead, practices of commemoration and contemporary political processes in post 2000 is not peculiar to Zimbabwe to this period only. The central role played by human remains in negotiating current political and economic issues has been prevalent elsewhere in the region. For instance, in post-apartheid South Africa and post-independence Namibia, the dead have become cultural capital for governments as well as for community-based pressure groups, who invoke the existence of human remains to make claims for social and economic redress (Shepherd, 2007, 2013a; Rasool, 2011; Becker, 2010, 2011, 2011a; Melber, 2003; Marschall, 2003, 2006).

For Zimbabwe however, the recognition of heroes and setting apart of special places for memorialisation can be traced back to the early colonial period. As indicated in chapter 2, antecedents to this included the elaborate appeal to Rhodes and other white heroes in monumentalised places by the settler society through the colonial era, such as the setting apart of Worlds View as a special burial place for settler heroes. After 1980, the postcolonial state immediately embarked on its own process of memorialising liberation war heroes. This was particularly evident in the creation of the National Heroes Acre in 1981 and declaring commemorative public holidays such as the National Heroes Day celebrated in August. The National Heroes Days replaced the Founders days that had been used to celebrate the occupation of Rhodesia, while the National Heroes Act provided for the designation of national heroes and the rendering of state assistance to dependants of heroes (National Heroes' Act 13, 1984).<sup>73</sup>

Thus, it can be argued that postcolonial commemorative practices, linked to the liberation war in Zimbabwe were directly linked to ZANU PF's search for political legitimacy in the postcolonial era (Werbner, 1998; Kriger, 1995, 2006; Christiansen, 2008; Baines, 2009). In asserting the political

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<sup>73</sup>National hero status is the highest honour conferred to individuals for having outstandingly served in the war of liberation. National heroes are buried at the National Heroes Acre in Harare. Other categories include liberation war hero (formerly provincial hero) and liberation hero (formerly district hero) which accords burial at provincial and district Heroes' acres, respectively. Though the exact number of heroes buried at all the acres could not be ascertained, by June 2010 there were approximately 93 heroes buried at the National Heroes Acre, 30 at the Mashonaland East heroes acre, 45 at the Mashonaland central provincial acre. Mashonaland West province had approximately 30, Bulawayo province 600, Harare province 400, Manicaland province 300, Matebeleland South province 24 and Midlands province 142 (Chipunza, 2000).

nature of practices of memorialisation, Kriger asserted that the postcolonial positioning of the ZANU (PF) government as the legitimate leaders and protectors of the nation based on their liberation war credentials was an integral part of the nation-building project after 1980. The symbolic status of the liberation war became “an important emotional symbol and source of legitimacy for the governing élite” (Kriger, 1995:139).

It is also important to note that activities associated with “liberation heritage” in Zimbabwe are also partly embedded in the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)’s concepts of heritage. Through processes of identification, documentation, and commemoration, liberation war events, figures and stories were recognised as part of official heritage. UNESCO accepted the ‘liberation heritage’ category and has already started providing support in identification, documentation and preservation of the material, documentary and oral aspects of the liberation wars in Africa (UNESCO, 2011). Pushed mainly by countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, “liberation heritage” seeks to recognise spaces, individuals and institutions that were crucial in the anti-colonial struggles, and protect them as part of universal heritage.

In 2009, South Africa was one of the first African countries to submit its liberation heritage for tentative listing, which was seen as a vehicle to encourage understanding, nation building, economic development, and inclusive citizenship.<sup>74</sup> The South African liberation heritage route includes a series of sites linked by a common historical narrative of the liberation struggle and experience. The South African heritage route is already on the world heritage list and “Liberation Struggle Living Archive” is already nominated on to the UNESCO memory of the world list, points to how elements of the liberation struggles have managed to establish themselves as part of a universalised official heritage discourse. For Zimbabwe, it is the work of NMMZ that establishes the visual and oral and aspects of the war as part of national heritage.

### **Aesthetics of Power: The Public Life of the Liberation War**

Drawing from the attention to the liberation struggle in official histories and influenced by emerging discourses of liberation heritage cited above, the NMMZ extended its mandate to this aspect which was previously not under its jurisdiction. NMMZ became the platform through which official narratives of the liberation war were institutionalised and given a visual existence in

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<sup>74</sup> The Liberation Route is composed of a network of sites linked to major events and personalities in the anti-apartheid struggle. These include, Robben Island, University of Fort Hare, Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication, Nelson Mandela Sites, Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe House, Steve Buntu Biko House and Zanempilo Clinic, Constitution Hill, Chief Albert Luthuli Museum, Hector Peterson Memorial, Sharpeville, Sol Plaatjie House, Liliesleaf Farm and the Avalon Cemetery. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5459/> <http://liberationheritage.co.za> (Accessed 27 July 2013).

the public sphere. The liberation heritage project in NMMZ was encapsulated in the concept of Heroes' Acres and the rehabilitation of war graves located in neighbouring countries. As currently defined by the NMMZ, the notion of liberation heritage aims to identify, collect, and preserve documentary, visual, and oral traces of the liberation war. In 1994 the NMMZ carried out a feasibility study on the preservation of Heroes' Acres and recommended the taking over of Heroes' Acres from the Ministry of Public Works to ensure "proper documentation, preservation and to facilitate gazetting of the sites under the NMMZ Act" (NMMZ, 1995: 3).

From the mid-1990s, the NMMZ became actively involved in the management and preservation of Heroes Acres. The NMMZ, deploys its "technologies of government" to confer "heritage" status on the liberation war. Conferment of monument status, as provided for by the NMMZ Act, is one way in which any element becomes canonised as national heritage and was used in establishing the liberation war as part of official heritage. The oral, material, and symbolic aspects of the war were constituted as part of "authorised heritage discourse" (Smith, 2006). This is manifested in the aim as encapsulated in the NMMZ draft policy for liberation heritage. The draft showed how the NMMZ values the acts of identification, documentation, protection, preservation and presentation of liberation war places (Mupira, 2010).

An NMMZ draft "Policy Document for the Management of Liberation War Heritage" *defined* liberation heritage as:

An inheritance from the struggle against colonial rule from 1893 to the present. It comprises, tangible and intangible and movable and immovable vestiges of the country's liberation struggle. The tangible movable elements include objects (weapons, machinery, vehicles, uniforms), photos, documents, diaries, films, statues, graves, etc. The tangible immovable elements include Heroes' acres, military camps, monuments, buildings, memorials, battle and massacre sites, etc. Intangible heritage comprises tradition, oral history, performance (songs and dance), ritual, memory, legends, skills, techniques, and knowledge systems associated with the liberation struggle (Mupira, 2010:3).

Thus, the liberation heritage programme aims at memorialising Zimbabwe's liberation history by preserving the material and the symbolic aspects of the war.

The placing of this past into the hands of NMMZ, the state's premier heritage agency, seems to be driven by a deliberate desire to "heritagise" this past. Here, the confounding of this past as part of the country's official heritage, consecrates it as one of the most significant aspects of the country's history and culture. This is entrenched by symbolic, iconographic and architectural links with the country's premier archaeological sites as well as traditions associated with rituals for the dead, an aspect I explore later in this chapter. Commenting on the transfer of management of Heroes' Acres from the Ministry of Public Works to the NMMZ in 1995, the then chairperson of

NMMZ remarked that the resolution was a landmark in that it redefined the term “monument”. He argued that the concept of monument, which for many years focused on colonial and archaeological monuments and colonial architecture, would have to accommodate liberation heritage sites (NMMZ, 1995:1). In his address, the chairperson of the NMMZ board highlights the link between physical monumentalisation, rituals of commemoration and the importance of “unforgetting”. He remarked:

A product of the experience of Zimbabweans marked in soils of the country and in neighbouring countries and made an indelible ink taken from the blood, sweat and tears of Zimbabweans. No one will be able to repay them but we owe it to them that this ink is embodied in some tangible form...unless we are consistently reminded of the futility of the oppression and inherent damages that lie in the inequitable distribution of resources, we will invariably fall into the same bottomless pit (NMMZ, 1995:1).

Thus, a major element of the liberation heritage initiative is the identification and rehabilitation of mass graves in neighbouring countries and the carrying out of rituals of cleansing and commemoration. Since 1996, the NMMZ has embarked on massive rehabilitation programmes targeted at all sites where Zimbabwean civilians and soldiers were buried during the war. The project, divided into five phases, entailed identification of liberation war sites, traditional acknowledgement of dead heroes, physical rehabilitation of graves, erection of shrines, war memorial plaques and site interpretive centres and ultimately the conservation, presentation and promotions of the heritage (Nkiwane, 2000). Several sites were identified and rehabilitated in Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania, and Botswana (Nkiwane, 2000).<sup>75</sup>

A unique aspect of the project was that it was framed in ways that linked with traditions and ritual associated with burial rites. It was therefore not just about physical monumentalisation, but also acknowledging the spiritual and ritual aspects. The process of turning the liberation war into part of official heritage also referenced the spiritual aspects. The act of monumentalising and commemorating was envisaged as part of the appeasement of the “unsettled” and dislocated spirits of the war dead. As a result, the second phase focused on conducting cleansing rituals that brought together chiefs, elders, and spirit mediums from Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Zambia. This linking of the liberation war with cultural and ritual practices is something that would appeal to the public, whose cultural ideals of respect for the dead and for the ancestors was engrained in their cultural milieu.

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<sup>75</sup> The sites in Mozambique, Chimoio, Nyadzonya, Doroi, Chibawawa, Nyangawo, Tembwe, Maroro, Mavonde, Mapai and Madulu were identified and earmarked for preservation. In Zambia - Freedom Camp, Nampundwe, Mkushi, Mulungushi, Kabanga, Kavalamanja, Sinda, and Solwezi; Botswana - Selebi-Phikwe, Dukwe and Francistown; Angola - Luso and Boma; Tanzania - Nachingwea, Morogoro, Mgagao, and Iringa (Nkiwane, 2000).

Referencing this unique cultural and ritual dimension, the NMMZ, Chiefs and other traditional leaders carried out several rituals before, during and after the process of exhumation and reburial ((Nkiwane, 2000). For instance, in accordance with local traditional burial practices, samples of soils from the graves were collected and repatriated to Zimbabwe as symbolic representation of the return of the spirits of the dead to their home country. This repatriation was carried out in association with traditional rituals meant to welcome the spirits of the deceased soldiers. Some of the repatriated ashes were placed in the *tomb of the Unknown Soldier* at the National Heroes Acre to signify a symbolic return of the spirits of the war dead (Nkiwane, 2000). The presence of human remains at these monumentalised places was key in demonstrating the value of the war in the contemporary context. The reburial of the soil taken from the mass graves in Zambia and Mozambique signified the return of the dislocated spirits, whose ideals were supposed to be upheld by the citizenry.

To complete the making of the burial places into national heritage places, the NMMZ invoked its mandate, employing its technologies of study and control, thereby constituting the burial places as monuments. In a bid to enhance the protection of the rehabilitated graves in neighbouring countries, the NMMZ, working in collaboration with Zambia's Heritage Commission and Mozambique's Department of Culture, signed memoranda of understanding to facilitate the designation of these sites as historic monuments to enable the respective governments to protect and maintain these sites (Nkiwane, 2000). At burial sites, the remains were exhumed by archaeologists, who in the process collected objects and memorabilia that were kept as part of the military history collection. Graves were rebuilt, and human remains reinterred in more “decent” graves. Identification of the individual casualties was not done, as this was deemed difficult or unnecessary as all soldiers used pseudonyms during the war to avoid persecution of their families back home.

A central aspect of the process of turning the burial places into official heritage sites was encapsulated in the listing of the graves as national monuments, the highest status that is given to any site of importance. In 2005, a consultative forum held by the NMMZ to review the national monuments list and to recommend new sites for listing, highlighted the need for adding provincial heroes' acres, war detention centres, restriction camps and historic buildings associated with liberation war icons to the national monuments register (NMMZ, 2005). Following this, a policy framework for the management of provincial Heroes' Acres was developed in consultation with various stakeholders (Mupira, 2005). The policy sought to guide the NMMZ and other government departments on how to deal with issues such as conferment of hero status, construction of graves, upgrading of graves, and maintenance and preservation of Heroes' Acres. In this context,

NMMZ's role was defined as that of "managing the shrines through preserving and upgrading the graves, maintaining the sites, providing the Zimbabwean public and others with information on the struggle and the significance of fallen heroes" (Mupira, 2010:5). NMMZ would also collate information regarding the liberation war such as constructing a database of people who participated and disappeared or died in the war.

The placing of heroes' graves under NMMZ presented a new dimension to the definition of "monuments". The graves were turned into national monuments, whose physical and symbolic aspects were subjected to the disciplines of archaeology, history and other museological practices. The various sites, monuments, and shrines became officialised and were turned into places where rituals of commemoration were carried out. The visibility of these places operated in the public sphere to entrench the liberation war as the most crucial element in the country's history. As a result, the narrative of liberation history was officialised through the annual and funeral activities at the national Heroes' Acres that were simultaneously carried out at the provincial and district sites, as well as at war shrines outside Zimbabwe.

The placing of the Heroes' Acres and the rehabilitation of war graves under the custodianship of the NMMZ consecrated the importance of the sites as national shrines that were part of official heritage. Through the protection provided by the NMMZ, the shrines were projected in the same way as archaeological sites, historical monuments and other elements that constituted official heritage. Thus, the NMMZ participated in the state's ideal of bringing together the bones of dead soldiers into centralised spaces to create a visible memorial complex. Sculptured to be physically appealing, maintained and preserved by a state agency (NMMZ), and projected as a material and symbolic manifestation of a past that was vital in the making of a free, sovereign nation, these heritage sites articulated the state's project of cohesion in space.

The National Heroes' Acre in Harare exemplifies how these sites operated in space to give a visual manifestation of the narrative of war and act as important spaces for practices of commemoration marshalled by the state. Located on a hill 7 kilometres from the city centre, the shrine is the biggest place where burials of heroes become important vehicles through which the state conferred a public existence of the country's important past. The shrine spans about 57 hectares and is strategically located on an elevated hill with 360-degree views of the city. The towering monument can be seen from many parts of the city and its undisturbed natural environment of indigenous trees is endearing amidst a growing urban metropolis. Its shiny black granite entrance is eye catching, its granite walls and graves are visibly attractive, and its eternal torch lights the city skyline continually.

The visibility of the “national shrine” was deliberately planned to give the site a strategic and symbolic place in the geography of the city. The site was elevated on higher ground to allow terracing space for graves and for public seating areas. These graves were supposed to be set apart from any ordinary cemetery. Writing the feasibility report in 1995, the Minister of Home Affairs acknowledged the importance of constructing provincial heroes’ acres as places that would be regarded as “sources of inspiration for the present and future generations” (NMMZ, 1995:3). He remarked, “It is this that forms a dividing line between a Heroes Acre and an ordinary cemetery” (NMMZ, 1995:3). In 1994, the Zimbabwean President officially handed over the custodianship of the Heroes Acres to the NMMZ, and acknowledged the uniqueness of these cemeteries as shrines that, “symbolise the deep reverence with which we regard our heroes and ideals they embodied” (NMMZ, 1995:4). Another commentator also reiterated that the shrines were “revolutionary universities and places of education that lead to the perpetual existence of heroes” (NMMZ, 1995: 6). Thus, the shrines had to be physically imposing, strategically placed and easily accessible “to all those who seek to benefit from the mirror” (NMMZ, 1995: 6).

The appropriation of human remains was encapsulated in the iconographic aspects and architectural style of the National Heroes Acre. The central design aspect drew from the country’s rich archaeological and recent historical past, combining symbolic motifs, sculptures, and murals. Here familiar names feature. From the reference to Great Zimbabwe archaeological site, to images of Nehanda, Kaguvi and Robert Mugabe as well as the depiction soldiers and masses, the iconography on the site presents the familiar official narrative on the birth of Zimbabwe. Located in a place sacralised by the presence of buried bodies of leaders of the war, and consecrated by burial ceremonies and occasional rituals of commemoration, the Heroes Acre thus provides a grand stage for the performance of the country’s past, in the public sphere.

The main features of the National Heroes Acre monument include the *Statue of the Unknown Soldier*, which is a bronze sculpture that consists of three figures, one woman, and two men meant to represent those soldiers who were not accounted for (Figure 28).<sup>76</sup> An elevated concrete platform in front of the Statue of the Unknown Soldier, serves as a ceremonial resting place for a hero’s casket at official burial occasions. Behind the *Statue of the Unknown Soldier* and flanking both left and right side are terraced rows of graves, encircled by granite walls, decorated with the sacred Chevron pattern, all adapted from the Great Zimbabwe archaeological site (Figures 28 & 30). On two adjacent freestanding walls, bronze relief panels depict the course of the liberation struggle.

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<sup>76</sup> For a more detailed account of the visual and iconographic details of the monument, see Kriger, 1995; Werbner, 1998; Maritz, 2007)

The pictorial scenes on the murals present a visual narrative of the anti-colonial struggles beginning from the 1890s to 1980 clearly showing well-known figures such as Mbuya Nehanda and Robert Mugabe. The highest point of the monuments, elevated in the hill behind the graves is a 40-metre tower carrying an “eternal flame” that continuously beams light, which symbolises triumphal victory and the desire for freedom (Heroes’ Acres Guide, 1999:9). Thus, a large part of the architecture and decorative motifs of the monument are linked to the key figures and events in Zimbabwean history and to the most revered Zimbabwe-type archaeological monuments (Figures 28 & 29).



**Figure 28: The National Heroes’ Acre, Harare.**

The Statue of the Unknown Soldier is the main stage for burial ceremonies. The base of the *tomb of the Unknown Soldier* contains the cairns with soil taken from mass graves of the victims of Rhodesian Forces raids in the late 1970s in Mozambique and Zambia. The terraces, which contain the graves, are decorated with the Chevron motif, an adaptation from the Great Enclosure at the Great Zimbabwe archaeological monument. Source: Author.2011.



**Figure 29: A war memorial at a “massacre” site in Mozambique**

The design of the memorial is also adapted from the Great Zimbabwe's Great Enclosure and Conical Tower motifs, reinforcing the connection between the country's archaeological past and contemporary acts of memorisation and commemoration. Source: Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences.

As indicated earlier, the architecture and iconography of the national heroes' acre directly derives from the Great Zimbabwe archaeological site while the shrines at the massacre sites adopt the motif of the phallic tower at the Great Zimbabwe enclosure (Figure 29). The narrative of heroes etched in stone and bronze and sacralised by a link to Great Zimbabwe, establishes this cemetery as a sacred shrine, one of the country's most revered places. This inference to Great Zimbabwe entrenches the importance of this site as symbolic of a sacred seat of power and authority. So important was this connection between the country's liberation war and archaeology that Great Zimbabwe was the preferred site for the National Heroes' Acre but this was shelved because of plans to nominate the site on to the world heritage list (Fontein, 2009, 2010).

Thus, reference to the Great Zimbabwe archaeological monument and the emblematic Zimbabwe Bird are meant to conjure up pride in the pre-colonial past. The visual and iconographic features of the Heroes' Acres and the shrines directly reference the important archaeological sites, thereby conferring the places with the same level of significance. This also shows how the official heritage projects across the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial eras influenced each other. The direct link to the Great Zimbabwe archaeological site is interesting given that Zimbabwe type-sites are prevalent in parts of Mozambique and Botswana where some of the rehabilitated mass graves-cum- shrines are also located.

Here archaeology intersects with an important recent event, the fight against colonialism. Archaeological motifs and symbolism create a backdrop for the veneration of historical figures

such as Nehanda, Chaminuka, Mugabe, ordinary soldiers and those heroes buried in the graves onsite. The link between the heroes' shrine and the Great Zimbabwe, an important archaeological site confirms and entrenches the significance of the place. By referencing both the recent past, the liberation war, and linking it with the rich archaeological past, the Heroes Acre draws from the visual and symbolical aspects of an archaeological monument whose significance has always been linked to political authority.

Thus, both the Great Zimbabwe and the Heroes' Acres operate as places linked to heroic ancestors, who in the contemporary context validate claims to political power and influence. This visual iconography was replicated at the provincial and district Heroes' acres, creating a "sacralised inscription of hierarchy upon the landscape" (Werbner, 1998: 78). Thus, these graves located and centralised in the capital city, the modern day seat of power, appropriate the individuals' story of heroism, and locate it as an integral part of official history. While Great Zimbabwe is linked with a network of more than 3000 other sites across the country (Pikirayi, 2006), the national heroes' acre is linked in dispersed spaces through provincial Heroes' Acres, district Heroes' Acres, battle sites and other unidentified war graves scattered across the country.

For the public, the space provided for commemorative activities completes the spectacle, a grand parade of official history in the public sphere. The work of the heritage preservation agency, the NMMZ, provides an institutional home for the official history, preserving, maintaining, and presenting the visual aspects of the narrative on a day-to-day basis. The NMMZ, through its research and exhibition programme facilitates the public existence of the liberation war narratives on site. Museumising processes based on collected objects, recovered bones and a photography archive give another public life to the liberation war narrative. The heroes' acres gallery and the site museums at provincial shrines offer spaces where liberation history is interpreted and presented to the public. On my various visits to the national heroes' acre, the exhibition gallery at the entrance of the shrine exhibited a collection of material objects, personal mementos, and photographs of the liberation war. These objects were recovered from the numerous former ZANLA, ZIPRA military, and refugee camps in Mozambique, Zambia, and Tanzania. The items, excavated by a team of archaeologists and historians from the NMMZ, included personal items such as watches, jewellery, clothing, and ammunition.

Since 2000, a number of temporary exhibitions have been erected in the gallery, which is the first point of entry into the shrine. Some of the exhibitions included the heroes' biographies while an exhibition on the rehabilitation of war graves displayed the grotesque pictures of death and destruction following the infamous bombing of refugee camps in 1979 in Mozambique and

Zambia. Another was an exhibition on women in the liberation struggle. The exhibitions used objects and other visual and material traces associated with the liberation struggle to tell the story of the war. The visual presentation drawing largely from a photography archive of the liberation struggle is narrated in a way that evokes an emotional response. Scenes of violence, beatings, and torture are interspaced with those of important leaders of the struggle.

The exhibition of the war history is repeated at some of the nine provincial Heroes Acres where interpretive centres and site museums have been built. The exhibitions at provincial acres display a common narration of the liberation war. However, this generic storyline is adapted to fit the specific history of each province. Each site had a roll of honour- a list of all the heroes buried at that particular site, as well as the story of major battles fought in that province. This is probably meant to inculcate a sense of ownership of the site by the local communities. The common narrative included themes and sub-themes that rehash the popular narrative of the progression of the fight against colonialism as presented in major history texts. The common storyline included themes such as “the process of colonisation and occupation of the country”, “the first *Chimurenga*”, “the rise of nationalism”, “Liberation war strategies”, the role of political parties and individuals as well as the “masses” (National Heroes Gallery, 2010). Thus, the exhibitions retrieved a small part of the liberation war archive, an archive that largely remains closed, and privately controlled by the individual political parties rather than a public archival organisation.<sup>77</sup>

This museumisation of the liberation heritage is expected to culminate a “Zimbabwe Revolutionary Museum” to be constructed at the National Heroes Acre, an elaborate plan for which already exists.

### **Patriotic Heritage Activities: Rituals and Forms of Visitation**

The official master - narrative built around and exhibited at liberation heritage sites is further entrenched by performance and rituals mediated by the state, further expanding the public life of the history of the war. It is in the activities at official commemoration events of the war where we see a strong link between heritage practices and contemporary political and economic challenges. As the Heroes’ Acres and other spaces associated with the liberation war operate visually in space, they are also sacralised by routine rituals of memorialisation and visitation. For instance, the burial of a hero is regarded as a national event in which all citizens are expected to participate in, recognize or appreciate. As such, people are expected to converge at the shrine to witness burials

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<sup>77</sup> The archives associated with the activities of the major liberation movements remain in private hands rather than any public organization. The Mafela Trust maintains the ZAPU archive while ZANU PF keeps its archive at its headquarters in Harare. Access to and use of the archives remains strictly controlled by the respective organisations.

or annual heroes' day commemorations. For example, during burials and heroes' day commemorations, people from all over the country are transported to the site. The Heroes' Acres are all designed to provide seating space for mourners and members of the public. For instance, the national heroes' acre has a seating capacity of over 5000. At the annual heroes day ceremonies and at burials of heroes, the public occupy the terraced grand stand while the officials who usually include the various diplomatic mission representatives, ministers and other senior officials sit around the *Statue of the Unknown Soldier* which gets turned into the centre stage for the performance (Figures 30-34).



**Figure 30: A crowd attending a Heroes Day commemoration, National Heroes' Acre**

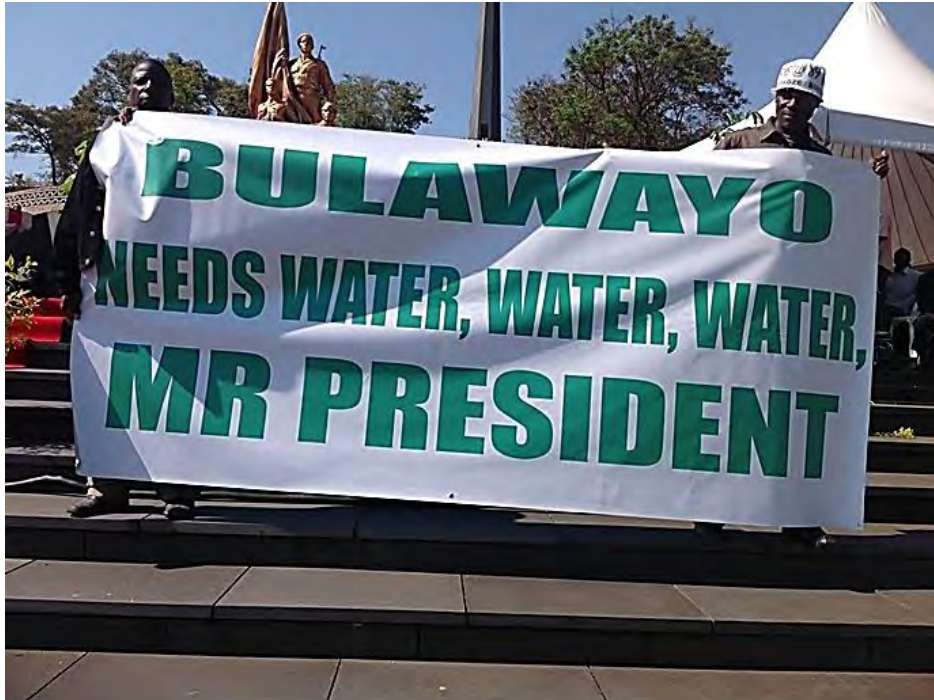
Heroes' Day commemoration at the Heroes' acres. The area around the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier becomes the main stage of the ceremony. The Zimbabwe bird is displayed on one of the two mural walls. Source: Author: 2011.



**Figure 31: A Hero burial at the National Heroes' Acre**  
Source: [www.sundaymail.com](http://www.sundaymail.com), 11/08 2013, (Accessed 14 August 2013).



**Figure 32: Performers at Heroes' Day celebration**  
Source: [www.sundaymail.com](http://www.sundaymail.com), 11/08 2013, (Accessed 14 August 2013).



**Figure 33: Message posters at a Heroes Day commemoration, Heroes' Acre.**

This poster drew attention of the government to the long-standing problem of water shortage in the Bulawayo city. Several other posters and banners referenced topical issues such as the land reform, “economic sanctions, opposition political activities and the political interference by the international community in Zimbabwean political affairs.”

Source: [www.sundaymail.com](http://www.sundaymail.com). 11/08 2013, (Accessed 14 August 2013).

The conferment of hero status and the burial rites are also orchestrated in the public sphere to confer a visibility. For instance, preliminaries to burial at the national shrine include a scrutiny by ZANU (PF)'s Politburo - the supreme body that formulates and decides on policy matters.<sup>78</sup> The Heroes' Day commemorations held at the Heroes' Acres are broadcast live on all television and radio stations are in themselves a display of power and authority. These festivities are well choreographed using the heroes' Acre monument as the backdrop (Figures 31-34). This display of power is repeated at provincial Heroes' Acres and district Heroes' Acres where the president's speech is read by the local politicians. The choreography of power gets entrenched the following day in the annual Defence Forces Day commemoration held at the nearby national sports stadium, with more speeches and military displays from the army, air force, police and prison services.

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<sup>78</sup> The burial process starts with the deceased hero “lying in state” overnight at their home before burial. If the deceased comes from out of Harare, they spend an extra night at an army military camp in Harare. On the day of the burial, the body is transported to Stodart Hall, a historic building in the oldest African township of Mbare, which is linked to nationalist activities in the 1960s. Body viewing is then accorded to the wider public before the body is ferried across town on an open military carriage, winding through numerous suburbs to the heroes acre. On reaching the heroes' acre, the casket is displayed in full national colours on an elevated granite pedestal near the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The highlights of the burial include the President's speech, a gun salute, a military fly-past, and laying of wreaths, then the interment of the body of the deceased.

The speeches at heroes' burials or Heroes Day commemorations are the highlights of the proceedings and reflect the importance of these spaces in articulating the state's position on issues facing the country especially in moments of challenges. For instance, the President's speeches at the shrine always focus on messages that address various challenges affecting the country at that moment. The speeches turn the heroes' acre into "a sacralised arena where messages are communicated to the citizens and to the world" (Buuck, 2011:3). In many ways, the heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country are shown as exemplary of patriotic citizenship that should be emulated by all. To show how the site is a special place for those who upheld the values of patriotism as envisaged by the state the heroes' acre is described as reserved for only those whose activities and support for the ruling party were consistent. In a recent burial, the President remarked that the National Heroes' Acre was not "for sell outs, but patriotic Zimbabweans who sacrificed their lives to liberate the country from the colonial white regime" (*The Herald*, 22/2/2013).

The president usually starts speeches at burials with relating biographical details of the deceased, highlighting their contribution to the liberation war. The bulk of the speeches however always move to other issues of national concern. Some of the most contested issues are articulated from this space. For instance, in response to local and international criticism of the post-2000 accelerated land reform programme, the President reiterated in his 2003 Heroes' Day commemoration speech that the heroes shrine was a reminder of the importance of control of land and other key resources (*The Herald*, 12 /08/ 2003).

Further, in his 2005 Heroes' Day speech, in defending the accelerated land redistribution policy, he reiterated the fact that Zimbabwe was a sovereign state and that land appropriation and the third *Chimurenga* was part of honouring the desires of dead heroes. He stated that the best way of honouring heroes lies in "upholding sovereignty and territorial integrity" and the creation of a socio-economic environment that would benefit people, particularly from the land. Connecting the dead heroes to land issues, he remarked, "...the land has been freed and today all our heroes lie on the soil that is emancipated. Their spirits are unbound, free to roam the land they left shackled, thanks again to the *Third Chimurenga* (*The Herald*, 12/08/ 2003).

Amid increasing calls for political reforms and criticism over human rights abuses, the 2005 Heroes Commemoration speech was clear in its intention to warn and caution opposition political parties, specifically the MDC and its perceived link to a foreign-influenced regime change agenda (*The Herald*, 13/08/ 2005).

These speeches and other activities at the Heroes Acres are facilitated in the public sphere by the state-owned print and electronic media, which play a huge part in creating more publicity for the events. During these commemorations and rituals, space is offered for eulogies from public entities and corporates bodies to pay tribute to the political establishment and the dead heroes. Media articles and documentaries articulate a specific message on heroism, patriotism, sovereignty and the need to “preserve the gains of independence.” During these acts of commemoration, a very specific language develops around eulogies, speeches, and media activities.<sup>79</sup>

While the Heroes Acres within the country have been at the centre of commemorative activities, the sites in neighbouring countries attract their own forms of visitation. The war graves and shrines in Zambia and Mozambique have presented a platform for forms of visitation by several interest groups. These visitations and pilgrimages to the sites usually increase in August every year, in commemoration of the Heroes and Defence Forces Days. The visits are from the broad spectrum of the Zimbabwean public including politicians, journalists, war veterans, police, and others. The youths, particularly those born after the end of the war are especially encouraged to visit these sites to see for themselves the effects of the war in which they could not participate (*The Herald*, 5/07/2011; *The Herald*, 20/04/2011; *The Herald*, 19/09/2011).

During the visits, people are shown the mass graves by survivors of the military encounters, while some hold rituals at the shrines. Survivors and witnesses recite their gory experiences to the visitors. The visitations and narrations of the war experiences are expected to convince the citizens of their responsibility to the war dead who sacrificed their lives. The speeches by politicians during these pilgrimages articulate the role of citizens in upholding the ideals of the dead heroes, perhaps through their support of the current government, whose members fought together with the dead heroes. Thus, acted in space, survivors and political leaders point to war graves and shrines, entrenching an official narrative of a past that is tied to the current political leadership.

The above remarks point to the way in which the heritagisation of the war past is a key element in negotiating contemporary political issues in Zimbabwe. The activities and imagery around heroes acres and liberation war sites point to the way in which the liberation war holds an important place in the political space, almost creating an impression that participation in the liberation war seems to be one of the central requirements for holding political positions. Liberation war credentials became central to validating political authority. For instance, in 2011, referring to MDC-T's

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<sup>79</sup> The language talks of “the gallantry of the heroes”, sacrifices and refers to the civic duty of all citizens to honour and respect this sacrifice by upholding that which the dead heroes fought for. Citizens are urged to “jealously guard the sovereignty” and independence of the country and avoid “unpatriotic’ activities that can expose the country to the “imperialistic motives” (*The Herald*, 10/08/2010). Parallel to this, state television and radio stations run documentaries, panel sessions, and discussions on relevant topics on the liberation struggle.

Morgan Tsvangirayi's ambitions for the presidential office, it was alleged that the senior military officers vowed that they would never support a president who did not have liberation war credentials even if they won free and fair elections (*The Financial Gazette*, 8/10/2011; *The Zimbabwean*, 29/05/11).

All this points to the way in which the heritagisation of the war past is a key element in negotiating contemporary political issues in Zimbabwe. However, as the next section shows, this recourse to the dead consistently attracts challenges and contests from those who seek alternative versions to be given equal representation in the public sphere. This aspect has been evident particularly in a regional dimension, pushed by politicians and communities in the Matebeleland region. However, as the next section shows, this recourse to the dead consistently attracts challenges and contests from those who seek alternative versions to be given equal representation. This aspect has manifested particularly in a regional dimension, particularly pushed by politicians and communities in the Matebeleland region.

### **Unsung Heroes/ Unsettled Bones: Matebeleland Counter - Commemorations**

In reference to the hierarchialised forms of commemorating the liberation war heroes, Kriger notes that one way in which the ZANU PF regime constructed symbols of national identity out of the liberation war was a testament to their "commitment to hierarchy, bureaucratic control, and top-down decision-making" (Kriger, 1995:145–146). The state's commemoration and memorialisation of the liberation struggle that presents a sanitised narrative in order to inculcate political and social cohesion, has led to the suppression of alternative histories and failed to acknowledge or highlight the role of other bodies that had been involved in the liberation war, such as opposition political parties. For example, the selection and conferment of national hero status has been criticised as partisan, with many commentators requesting an independent nomination process rather than a ZANU (PF) driven process (Kriger, 2003).

Some have argued that ZANU-PF has usurped the Act and reduced patriotism to party loyalty and failed to recognise certain individuals as national heroes (*The Zimbabwe Independent*, 5/09/2010). Since 1980, no members from the opposition parties have been buried at the national shrine, vindicating critics who have argued that the honour is a preserve for ZANU-PF members. Meanwhile, some important political personalities who have been denied hero status. These include Ndabaningi Sithole, James Chikerema, Lookout Masuku and Canaan Banana, all of whom took key leadership roles in various political parties and organisations, but had at some point fell out of ZANU PF's favour (*The Zimbabwe Independent*, 5/09/2010).

The challenge to ZANU (PF)'s sanitised use of the past through commemorations has emerged particularly in the Matebeleland region. The reactions from the region were partly inspired by perceptions and feelings of exclusion and marginalisation of Ndebele-speaking people since 1980 (Musemwa, 2004). The hegemony of ZANU (PF) and political dominance of Shona speaking groups have characterised the post-1980 relations between Matebeleland and Mashonaland regions. It has been suggested that the politics emerging from Matebeleland region has been that of protest to perceptions and realities of exclusion, marginalisation, and domination (Musemwa, 2004; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008, 2009). The launch of radical pressure groups such as the Matebeleland Liberation Front (MLF) or the revival of ZAPU in 2010 are seen as a direct result of the feelings of exclusion of politicians from Matebeleland (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2012). MLF calls for complete secession of the Matebeleland and Midlands regions from Zimbabwe to form an independent nation – *Mthwakazi* (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008, 2009).

Subsequently, the challenge to the state sponsored official practices of memorialisation manifested in requests for parallel, region-based practices of commemoration. For instance, there have been increasing calls by opposition political parties and cultural groups from Matebeleland who desire to have different commemorative practices that focussed on the events peculiar to this region. An event pertinent to this region was the *Gukurabundi*, whose acknowledgement was considered as integral in the quest for “truth and reparation” for the affected residents of Matebeleland (Eppel, 2003; CCJPZ, 1997). *Gukurabundi* features as a central aspect of the Matebeleland past, and is seen as being suppressed, marginalised and silenced by the post-colonial state (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011, 2012; Alexander, McGregor & Ranger, 2010).

Therefore, the feelings among these marginalised sections of the Zimbabwean society is that postcolonial memory complex remains dominated by the ruling party ZANU PF and continues to overshadow the experiences of other players in the anti-colonial wars. The urgency and significance of the feelings of marginalisation from the Matebeleland region have been reflected in manifested in the activities of one particular civic organisation, the Mafela Trust. The Trust was established in 1989 by a group of ex-combatants of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) to research and document the political and military activities of ZAPU and its political wing, the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA), during the liberation war in Zimbabwe and *Gukurabundi* (SAHA, 2012, Brickhill, 1995). Among many of its activities, the Trust is currently the

official custodian of the ZAPU archives, holding part of the documents associated with the party's military activities in the liberation war.<sup>80</sup>

The work of the Trust point to dissent over lack of representation of the painful past of the post-1980 era in Matebeleland. Sentiments over the marginalisation of Matebeleland experiences have been highlighted since the 1980s, where the state's effort for national unity is perceived as suppressing Matebeleland's painful past (Kriger, 2003). The Trust operates independently from the state and its activities have existed parallel with state projects of commemoration. For example, in the 1990s' Mafela launched numerous such as the 'Fallen Heroes' project which aimed at the identification and commemoration of ZIPRA soldiers who died during the liberation war. The trust also launched the 'War Graves' project, which sought to the locate and exhume ZAPU war graves (Kriger, 2003).

All these activities and projects bear testament to the Mafela Trust's determination to recover the ZAPU/ZPRA history (SAHA, 2012, Brickhill, 1995). More importantly, the Trust and its activities can be seen as an expression of a need to create space for representation of ZAPU war activities that were being side lined after 1980. In their efforts to document the experiences of the low rank soldiers and rural communities, the Mafela Trust took an alternative approach to the state's project of creating hierarchical heroes' acres. The organisation undertook visits to ZIPRA operational areas across Zimbabwe, identifying and locating liberation war fighters, graves, and listing all the people who had died in or outside Zimbabwe, and those who disappeared during the liberation war. Their work includes completion of war death registers, rehabilitation of war graves, biographies of liberation war experiences and digitization of all valuable records, parallel to state initiatives (Brickhill, 1995).

Thus, certain aspects of the history of Matebeleland remain "hidden histories" and any efforts to bring them into the public sphere have been curtailed by the postcolonial state (Ndlovu, 2003; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2007). Nonetheless, calls for opening up space for appeasement and commemoration of the region's past persistently surface. One aspect of the desire for alternative practices of memorialisation in Matebeleland has persistently manifested in

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<sup>80</sup> The fact that the ZAPU archive has remained in dispersed places, sometimes outside of the country, more than three decades after the end of colonial rule, talks to the continued politicisation of the processes of production of histories associated with the liberation struggle in postcolonial Zimbabwe. ZANU PF has also retained control of its own archive, rather than surrendering to the National Archive. Thus, the privatisation of the war archive by both ZANU PF and ZAPU archive indicates the preference by the parties' leadership to retain control over use and access of this archive, separate from that of the state institutions. This different from practices elsewhere in the region where liberation movements have ceded their archives either to state institutions or to educational or research institutions (Maaba, 2010)

calls for veneration of local sites of memorialisation. For instance, some activists suggested establishing the Matopo Hills as the national burial shrine for politicians based in Matebeleland (*The New Zimbabwe*, 05/09/2010/). Matebeleland based pressure groups such as Mthwakazi Liberation Front (MLF) once lobbied for the exhumation and repatriation of the body of the late Vice-President Joshua Nkomo from the National Heroes Acre in Harare for reburial in Bulawayo or Matopos (*Bulawayo24.com*, 06/07/ 2011). They also proposed the declaration of July 1, the day on which Nkomo died, a national holiday in honour of the late Joshua Nkomo. In 2011, ZAPU threatened to exhume all ZAPU politicians from the National Heroes Acre after Thenjiwe Virginia Lesabe, another ZAPU politician was denied national hero status (*The Standard*, 13/02/2011; *The Daily News*, 21/02/2011).

As a response to the state's monopolisation of memorial practices, over the years some politicians from Matebeleland and other opposition political groups have refused to be buried at the National Heroes Acre shrine. For example, in September 2010, the MDC boycotted several burial ceremonies at the National Heroes' Acre after Gibson Sibanda, a senior member in the MDC was denied national hero status. In October 2010, Welshman Mabhena was declared a national hero but had allegedly expressed his desire to be buried in Bulawayo rather than at the National Heroes Acre (*The Herald*, 07/10/ 2010). ZAPU officials who have refused to be buried at the National Heroes Acre or denied hero status have opted to be buried at Lady Stanley, a cemetery reserved for senior citizens in Bulawayo. The Lady Stanley cemetery is beginning to emerge as the Heroes' Acre for politicians from the region.

Tensions surrounding commemoration of Matebeleland heroes have also emerged in the debates on memorialising the late Joshua Nkomo, the founder of ZAPU and the country's late deputy President. Various groups from Matebeleland felt that the state has not given adequate attention on commemorating Matebeleland politicians. As a result, counter commemorations have been on the increase in Matebeleland, organized around Joshua Nkomo, responding to, and challenging the state forms of memorialisation. In 2010, the state erected two statues of Nkomo in Harare and Bulawayo (Figure 34). However, the project was shelved due to tensions between the government and the family representatives, allegedly over the size of the statue, and over the location of the Harare statue (*The Financial Gazette*, 17/10/2012; *NewZimbabwe*, 15/09/2010). The issue in Harare was eventually erected in 2013 (Figure 34), while the one for Bulawayo is still outstanding.



**Figure 34: The statue of Joshua M. Nkomo in Bulawayo's Main Street**

The statue occupies the exact spot where the statue of Cecil John Rhodes used to occupy (See Figure 7). This street was renamed after J.Nkomo in 2013. Source: Author.

Other privately initiated commemorative projects based on Nkomo included the Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo National Foundation (JMNNF)'s Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Museum at his home in Bulawayo. The formation of a museum based on private funds, separate from the NMMZ, the state's premier heritage and museum agency, points to the desire by the Matebeleland to rescue the Ndebele past from appropriation by the state (Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Willems, 2010; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009). The Joshua M Nkomo Scholarship Fund, created by ECONET Wireless, the largest mobile telecommunications business, speaks of how the elevation of Nkomo has been appropriated by private organisations.

Efforts at presenting alternative accounts based on ZAPU versions of the war have also been undertaken, though some have received criticism and censorship from the state. For instance, in 2011, an exhibition titled "*ZAPU through Zenzo Nkobi's lens*" based on Zenzo Nkobi photographic archive from the South African History Association (SAHA) was installed in the Bulawayo National Art Gallery (SAHA, 2012).<sup>81</sup> The exhibition, which was a collaboration between the Mafela Trust, the Bulawayo National Gallery and SAHA showed images of ZAPU and ZIPRA activities in the 1970s and the *Gukurabundi* period. The materials produced as part of these projects form the bulk of the Mafela Trust collection at SAHA and include paper-based and digital materials, photographs, oral history interviews and video material. The aim of the exhibition was

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<sup>81</sup> The collection comprises Zenzo Nkobi's images portraying the activities of African liberation movements in exile from the early 1970s to the early 1990s. These images cover the African National Congress (ANC) and Zimbabwean refugee and military camps in Zambia and Botswana in the 1970s (SAHA, 2012).

“to tell the untold story of the activities of ZAPU and its armed wing, ZIPRA operation” (*The Daily News*, 14 /10/2011). This exhibition was covered widely in the Zimbabwe media because it was seen as “making history” and reversing historical exclusions embedded on the official histories. In 2010, Owen Maseko’s visually provocative exhibition of paintings, graffiti, and installations that focused primarily on the *Gukurabundi* era, but also challenged ZANU (PF)’s political oppression in recent years was banned (*Zimeye*, 26/03/ 2010).

Thus, it can be argued that, the issue of public commemoration and the state practices of collective memory are arenas where the Matebeleland region contested against the Shona dominance by articulating, in the public sphere, a form of Ndebele nationalism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009, 2009a). While the state mobilised bones of the war dead, Matebeleland felt the bones of the Matebeleland atrocities were still an “unresolved” issue. For Matebeleland, the state project on the making of heroes excluded the role of Ndebele leaders like King Lobengula, Joshua Nkomo and politicians from the region. Where they were acknowledged, they were appropriated to bolster the legitimacy of the ruling ZANU PF party (Ndlovu, 2003; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, and Willems, 2009). The counter-commemorations in Matebeleland continue to challenge state-based practices of commemoration as they reference the marginalisation of the region, especially the silences associated with the tragic events in the region such as *Gukurabundi* (*Nehandaradio.com*, 21/09//2012). The bones of *Gukurabundi* remain “unsettled” together with the political issues they represent in the geopolitics of post independent Zimbabwe.

## **Conclusion**

As suggested by Benedict Anderson (1991), the direct mobilisation of the war dead in post 2000 Zimbabwe echoes the link between a narrative of nation and the dead. Anderson postulates that nations fashion their narratives “by deaths... the nation’s biography takes the suicides, martyrdoms, assassinations, executions, wars, and holocausts to serve the national purpose” (Anderson, 1991: 205-206). In this period, an investment in the war past and the inclusion of the liberation war as part official heritage was a strategy meant to articulate the state’s legitimacy and to project the narrative of national cohesion and sovereignty during a period of economic and political challenges. It particularly highlighted how burial spaces of the war dead were sacralised, thus providing public platforms for the liberation war discourse, bureaucratised as part of official heritage. Nonetheless, while the state deployed the discourse of heritage to confer a public life to its version of the past, local communities who felt marginalised also used the same discourse to challenge their marginalisation.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

*The dead are not dead. They are always around us (Vera 1994:27).*

### Introduction

This thesis sought to analyse the role, function and significance of heritage practices organised around museums, monuments and sites over a long stretch of time, across the colonial and postcolonial eras in Zimbabwe, all the while keeping the precolonial in view. Results from the analysis points to several key theoretical and conceptual interventions on the political and social dimensions of the use of the past. The study has revealed how the past, framed as heritage persistently features and takes a significant role in dealing with contemporary challenges across the colonial and postcolonial periods in Zimbabwe. The extraordinary investment in memorialisation heritage denotes its persistent value in negotiating issues around identities, belonging and authority across the eras. Embedded within contemporary socio-political contexts, and viewed across long stretches of time, this power of heritage manifests in how it has persistently elicited forms of governmentality, being invoked by both the state and citizens in specific ways particularly in times of challenges. Another major proposition is that when analysed over a long stretch of time, heritage operates and functions in related ways, across time, moving between landscapes, monuments, dead ancestors and institutionalised spaces such as museums. This work also confirms that in practice, the heritage impulse moves between the landscapes and formal institutions in ways that show continuities rather than disruptions across the colonial and postcolonial periods.

Fundamentally, the work also illustrates an extraordinary investment in heritage across the eras, linked to regimes and politics of knowledge and suggests that heritage remains a mode of political organisation and activity, a source terrain for creating authority and for challenging it. The theorisation set out here suggests that in practice, the role of the past, framed as heritage should be understood beyond its manifestation as a hegemonic political construct and also as a malleable, and historically contingent activity, that always gets deployed by diverse groups. Rather than being completely dominated by institutionalised and global discourses on heritage preservation, heritage confers space for specific activities to local communities seeking recognition or eliciting for change.

The concepts of counter-heritage and practice of pastness developed in this thesis are central to understanding the relationship between hegemonic official practices and unofficial heritage practices. They imply existence of a different relationship between experts or institutions and local

knowledge producers. The developments in postcolonial Zimbabwe demonstrate the complexity of the interaction between official and unofficial heritage discourses and practices. Notwithstanding the asymmetrical power relations between the heritage institutions and local communities, the communities draw from practices of pastness, demanding recognition from the state forcing experts to accommodate them. While the relationship between these has always been oppositional, the re-emergence of practices of pastness associated with physical sites and memorial landscapes stimulate new relationships that unsettle the boundaries embedded in the interactions between the official and the unofficial heritage practices. The new relationships have implications on the professional aspects of heritage preservation and on the processes of knowledge production. All this helps us to rethink the nature of the relationships between official agencies, experts and local communities.

The following sections discuss the major issues raised by this thesis in more detail.

### **Governmentality and the Power of Heritage.**

This study confirms the fact that heritage still matters in many parts of Africa (See, Peterson, 2011; Herwitz, 2012). In its contested and ambivalent nature, heritage continues to be central in the negotiation of contemporary social and political realities, especially in postcolonial contexts. This work proposes that the value of heritage across the colonial and postcolonial periods, in Zimbabwe manifested as a set of activities that conferred agency to the state and citizens in negotiating current challenges. The value of heritage is implicit in how the heritage discourse retained a particular place in Zimbabwean history and how it was continually deployed by both the state and communities in making claims. Thus, rather than seeing heritage as purely a form of political organization for state purposes, we may as suggested by Shepherd (2008), understand the huge investment in heritage as a direct result of its social uses for diverse groups. Accordingly, heritage as much as it is about governmentality, rule and state projects characterised by exclusion, it also remains a crucial aspect of the citizens' leash on government in modern times. Developments in postcolonial Zimbabwe indicate that marginalised groups whose practices become structurally written out of the official constructs of heritage, deploy practices of heritage to elicit attention from the state and to articulate their own set of claims. As a result, the value of practices of heritage lie in that they persistently operate as, "principal sites for negotiating issues of culture, identity and citizenship... a way of mediating and nuancing alternative modes of citizenship in the post colony...standing at the point of negotiation of key social rights and entitlements" (Shepherd, 2008:124).

The political uses of heritage manifest in the fact that across the colonial and postcolonial periods, in Zimbabwe, the state and other contenders saw value in legitimating themselves by creating,

controlling or asserting narratives of the past in specific ways. Across the eras, museums, sites and monument-making have constituted part of a wider process of constructing and framing public memory. Governmentality subjected through institutionalisation and legislative control rendered these spaces as ideological tools and as central aspects of a hegemonic official heritage. Recourse to the past, across these eras, manifests in a huge investment in heritage that acquired a particular force in times of economic and political challenges.

As proposed by Mbembe, state “derives its fundamental claim of sovereignty and legitimacy from the authority of its own particular narrative of history and identity”... where “national identity is imagined as an identity against the Other” (Mbembe, 2003: 27). These claims are usually backed by history, geography, cartography, and archaeology, disciplines that “closely bind identity and topography” (Mbembe, 2003: 27). For instance, narratives of origin, pioneer historiography and veneration of the founders as well as archaeology and museums in the colony became useful for Rhodesians. In the same way, archaeological sites, historiography based on leaders of African resistance, spirit mediums and the liberation war offered spaces for creating official heritage for the postcolonial state. From BSAC settlers in the early 1890s, to the “Responsible Government” of the 1920s and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in the 1950s, through to Ian Smith's UDI regime after 1965 and ultimately to the postcolonial state from 1980, the use of the past, officially deployed through governmentality, became key in justifying legitimacy.

Therefore, memorial landscapes, historic sites and monuments took a very important place in dealing with contemporary issues in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. For instance, the significance of the Matopos hills, the prominence and sensitivities associated with Rhodes' projects of memorialisation, the intense appeal to sacred and spiritual aspects, all took a central place in negotiations and claims around identities, citizenship or development. After 1980, emerging claims to and increasing contests over claims to archaeological sites by local communities or the state's control of “liberation heritage” and emerging challenges to the representative nature of this heritage can all be understood as a huge part of the struggle over control of the past that is deeply engrained in Zimbabwean historiography.

Results from this work show that museums, sites and memorialisation, controlled as official heritage, constitute part of a wider process of constructing and framing public memory. This value of heritage manifested in how it persistently invited different forms of control across the colonial and postcolonial eras in Zimbabwean history. Across these eras, particular places remained central in the practices of commemoration and ideas of nation, inviting persistent attention from the state and other players. Across the eras, this governmentality was linked to the regimes and politics of

knowledge and expressed itself through mapping, museumification and preservation activities. The desire for controlling of heritage practices or intellectual activities in colonial and postcolonial contexts, demonstrates a very close relationship between state, public sphere and academic and heritage preservation institutions.

### **Continuity, Entanglement and Change in Heritage Practices**

To unsettle the idea that precolonial, colonial and postcolonial heritage practices were radically different, a key aspect of this work reveals entanglements across the eras. The research highlights the interconnected nature of the practices, proposing that the line between the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial in heritage practices is porous and often illegible. By highlighting interrelationships across time, the results significantly challenge the popular binaries assumed in works on heritage discourses and practices in postcolonial societies. The complex associations between white and black, pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial as well as official and unofficial discourses and practices of heritage, highlight “proximities, coexistences, and continuities” (Fontein, 2011a: 723). Though a counter argument can be made that the power relations in these entanglements are not symmetrical, it is still worthwhile to look at the synergies. I suggest that even though heritage practices may change over time, the political or social aspects of heritage remain fundamentally similar across the time divisions.

A particular manifestation of this interconnectedness lies in that across these temporal demarcations, heritage practices confer space for specific political activities that demonstrate continuities rather than clear or abrupt distinctions. Across the eras, heritage tells about connections with forebears, ancestors and the like, who belong to time pasts but still are relevant for the present. The significance of this past is reflected in an extraordinary investment in heritage practices, based on memorial sites, sacred landscapes, archaeological sites, historical monuments and practices of commemoration. Of particular importance is how the same spaces are persistently appropriated and used for different reasons. White and black, colonial and postcolonial notions of heritage came to be orientated around the same physical features, landscapes, and archaeological sites drawing from and referencing each other.

Across the eras, relationship to the landscape or land became intricately tied to identities as well as notions of home, belonging. Associations with landscapes and sites became crucial aspects of history and heritage, colonialism, and struggle for authority and power. For instance, the Matopos landscape, the Great Zimbabwe and other archaeological sites feature as spaces where ideals of national cohesion become articulated across the eras. These places become constituted as important components of a “national heritage” in both eras. The settler state sacralised these places

by imbuing them with White imaginations entrenched by disciplines such as archaeology or conservation, monumentalisation and forms of visitation, the postcolonial state after 1980 employed similar strategies, re-appropriating the same places for a new narrative.

One aspect of the entanglement lies in how the early settlers and the colonial state mobilised practices inherited from indigenous precolonial traditions. After occupying the land, settlers created formal associations with land and sites that were imbued with symbolic or sacred values by the Shona and Ndebele people. In early Rhodesia, colonial heritage was fashioned around acts of commemorating white heroes and the creation of monuments in places that already held social, historical and spiritual significance for black societies. In the Matopos, at Great Zimbabwe, or in monuments created in the cities, Rhodesian projects of memorialisation drew from archaeological sites, sacred sites and places associated with historic figures, appropriating them and inscribing them with white values, historical events or figures. To further consecrate them as white places, monuments, forms of visitation and performance were deliberately deployed, turning these places into a white public sphere, used to flag white difference, foster a sense of cohesion and undergird colonial authority.

A clear reference to the connected ways in which heritage practices drew from each other manifested itself particularly around the archaeological monuments and the Matopos landscape. Though relying on biased intellectual traditions of the day, Rhodes and the BSAC also made an appeal to the country's prehistoric past, deliberately appropriating archaeological sites and sacred landscapes as "white" monuments. The settlers' attention to the rich archaeology of the colony was linked in part, to how these sites invoked a rich "mystic" African prehistoric past, even that which the early intellectual traditions denied. For instance, it is interesting to note that Cecil Rhodes chose to associate himself with the Great Zimbabwe site, while his decision to have the Alan Wilson Patrol buried right at the centre of Great Zimbabwe and later in the Matopos says a lot about how he regarded these spaces.

Nonetheless, even as the memorial landscapes and sites were being consecrated by bones of white ancestors and validated by forms of visitation, the Shona, Ndebele and Kalanga groups continued to carry out their rituals in these places, albeit on a covert fashion. Thus, the Matopos or Great Zimbabwe were not sites imagined, represented, and appropriated by European artistic or literary imaginings or monumentalisation. Rather, they were for the Ndebele, Kalanga, and the Shona, shrines, living landscapes, ancestral homes or sacrosanct burial grounds intricately tied to power, authority and identities.

The enduring significance of these places for the local communities is shown by how the local communities' associations with these places endured the white appropriations, resulting in increasing calls in the postcolonial era to use these spaces. At Worlds View, Rhodes' "*immense and brooding spirit*" courted the spirits of Mzilikazi, Ndebele chiefs and of the spirit mediums who controlled the Mwari religious activities in the Matopos. The Matopos and Great Zimbabwe continue to hold sway in how various inhabitants of Zimbabwe have imagined themselves across time. While in the colonial era they were appropriated and imbued with white associations, after independence these were reclaimed by contesting local communities and were seen as crucial in national cultural nationalism by the state.

One other site of entanglement between the local sense of history and that of the incoming settler was the urban space despite its racialised segregated planning. Even as the colonial governments imposed a strict racial order, segregating blacks into rural reserves and urban townships and reducing inter-cultural contact to a minimum, they could not totally "segregate history and meanings" (Hughes, 2006a:12). In many areas amid and around white settlement, the memories of African communities "littered the landscape and influenced the white imaginary" (Hughes, 2006a:12). For instance, the nucleus of the Bulawayo through spatial arrangement, architecture, nomenclature, monuments and commemorative rituals, appropriated historic sites associated with the Ndebele king Lobengula. Through reliance on a deliberate strategy of imprinting modernity through an urban palimpsest, the settler reworking of sites associated with Ndebele history for example, became a foundation on which settlers created and superimposed their own cultures. Cities became architectural and visual manifestations of the settling experience, commemorative spaces with various spaces sculpted and named after the colony's past, heroes and history. Through mapping, European architecture, monuments, and practices of commemoration, the urban space was turned into an exclusive white public sphere, whose exclusive nature was entrenched by colonial pieces of legislation that limited and confined the movement of blacks in urban areas.

The continuities in the uses of heritage manifest themselves in that after 1980, the postcolonial state re-appropriated the power of these sites and reframed them to deal with the biases embedded in the colonial official heritage practices. However, the new cultural configuration of the newly independent was built on accommodating practices inherited from both the precolonial and colonial periods. In spite of the state's abandonment of the iconoclasm of colonial monuments and memorials dotted around the country, or colonial objects in museum collections and exhibits, these effigies were not obliterated — except for those considered to be too sensitive. This accommodation partly stemmed from the ideals of reconciliation and nation building that inform the democratic dispensation in post-1980 Zimbabwe as manifesting in the policy of reconciliation.

Consequently, the postcolonial state did not adopt an abrupt detachment from the colonial memorial complex; instead it adopted similar approaches to those of the colonial governments, deploying governmentality and re-appropriating the grandeur and materiality of archaeological sites for sculpting a different narrative. In accommodating the colonial edifices, the postcolonial state as an act of reclaiming the symbolic and political value of these spaces, re-appropriated them to create new narratives. This manifested itself for example, in renaming the country after Great Zimbabwe as well as in attempts to accommodate community-based practices, which had been pushed into the background during the colonial era. In the postcolonial era, the local communities were able to deploy their enduring practices of pastness to reclaim their association with the same site that settler heritage practices had appropriated from them.

A particular aspect of the related nature manifested in how in the new dispensation, the postcolonial state inherited and continued to use heritage policies from the colonial era and preserved parts of the colonial vestiges in museums and memorial sites. For example, while Rhodes' bones in the Matopos are seen as "heritage that hurts" (Uzzell and Ballantyne, 2008; Muringaniza, 2004), for some, certainly for the state, the bones have a place in the country's narrative of nation, if only to show the brutality of the colonial experience. In the postcolonial era, as in the colonial era, human remains and references to ancestors remained a key platform for engaging with contemporary issues, as the postcolonial state framed new heritage practices around black ancestors and the dead heroes from the war of liberation. Thus, while Rhodes created a memorial complex around his BSAC heroes in the Matopos, the postcolonial state fashioned its memorial complex around shrines dedicated to the war dead, – the Heroes Acres centralised in Harare but represented in all provinces and districts.

Thus, in practice, the use of the past framed as heritage, showed substantial continuities across time. This manifested itself quite clearly in the invocation of archaeological sites such as Great Zimbabwe or sacred and symbolic land spaces such as the Matopos. These spaces provided a platform for 'usable pasts' that were a necessary public empowering tool, where those in positions of control often manipulated the public in order to project their own views of the world across colonial and postcolonial periods. It is clear that the monumentality of the Zimbabwe type archaeological sites and the sacredness associated with the Matopos operated as spaces where contemporary societies projected notions of power and identity across the colonial and postcolonial epochs. The places' significance was enduring and they continued to hold a central place in notions of heritage, being controlled and appropriated for stating difference and for validating authority and/or identities across the eras.

## **A Usable Past : Heritage Practices and Emergencies**

One of the contributions of this work is in highlighting how heritage operated during periods characterised by political and/ or social emergencies. The power of heritage as a resource in times of change was revealed by the fact that in times of political and economic uncertainties across the colonial and postcolonial periods, heritage was deployed in specific ways and became subject to increased control by the state. The first section, chapters two and three revealed how early settlers appealed to landscapes, historiography, and monuments in a period of economic and political uncertainty as they settled in a new place. This heritage was important for the incoming settlers in the 1890s to inculcate a sense of belonging in the new country. The practices served as a platform of recognition and expressed the history, heritage and identity of whites as being different from black African identities. This difference was crucial in highlighting the superiority of settler modernity, yet it ironically partly expropriated and drew from local idioms and practices.

For early settlers, landscapes became “structures of feeling, palimpsests of past and present, outcomes of social practice, products of colonial identities that were actively re-worked, interpreted and understood in relation to differing social and political agendas and forms of social memory (Tilley, 2006:8). Purged of African associations, and inscribed with settler myth, history, monuments, the landscapes and urbanscapes became backdrops for European modernity that the settler society sought to imprint on the Rhodesian landscape. Therefore, in reflecting the invisibility of black communities, the heritage practices strengthened the perception of the hegemonic position of white history and heritage. In achieving this, formalised heritage practices became important for the white settlers seeking to create cultural bonds and new identity. For settlers seeking to bind their society together and establish their difference from the Africans and later on from South Africa, heritage practices were crucial in nurturing this uniqueness.

Though the colonial period, aspects of heritage were needed for the settlers to entrench their claims to belonging in the new colony and in creating an identity distinct from that of the black communities who were resisting colonial domination. The implications of the political importance of heritage was manifested in settlers’ recourse to heritage in asserting their desire for maintaining a separate and independent political existence. At the end of the BSAC Company rule, when there was pressure for the colony to integrate with the South African Union, Rhodesia sought to project her independence.

After 1923, settlers sought to consolidate their hold on the political economy of the colony, while at the same time asserting their unique position as an independent, unique self-governing British imperial frontier. Consequently, between the 1930s and the 1950s as Rhodesia entrenched her

control of the economic and political aspects of the colony by passing acts and policies that effectively appropriated African land and labour, she also sought to entrench her distinctiveness within the domain of imperial relations with Britain. This context made the colony's cultural aspects important in negotiating and entrenching its space within the geopolitics of the day. At this time, the state increased its control by putting up institutions that managed and controlled the various aspects of the colony's past. Museums were turned into state institutions, and the control of the practice of archaeology and monuments was institutionalised through the work of the Historical Monuments Commission. In contrast to the early colonial period where practices of heritage were fragmented with little or no state involvement, in this period, the state took centre stage, deploying academic disciplines, legislation and the establishment of centralised technologies of governing heritage.

Thus, if landscapes, urban monuments and practices of memorialisation were used to construct a sense of belonging by the settlers in early Rhodesia, between 1936 and 1979, state control of museums, monuments and archaeological sites became important in validating and entrenching settler hegemony and power. Science located within the museum proved useful in framing a colonial epistemology. In the museum, land, archaeological sites and natural and cultural objects became museumised, studied, displayed and contained as part of the process of knowing the colony, something that was crucial for the colonial state's claims of belonging. Museums were nationalised and the concept of a "monument" was legally constituted in parliamentary acts to define and categorise elements considered to be of historical, archaeological or other scientific value. Heritage became defined, controlled and regulated by institutions established by the state, a process that emphasised the material aspects of heritage and disavowed local communities' practices of pastness based on their long association with the sites.

This relationship between political change and heritage practices was also manifested in the post - 1980 period. Both the colonial and postcolonial state deployed the same materials and approaches in positioning official heritage as a crucial aspect of the country's political development. Starting in the 1980s onwards, there was a largely state sponsored reconfiguration of archaeological sites and projects of new museums amid requests by local communities to re-establish connections with sites. Between 2000 and 2010, the connection between the prevailing political and economic environment and heritage, in a time marked by internal strife and international isolation, was reflected through the state's increase in its control of the past. In this period, as the state passed laws that increased its hold on the political and economic aspects of the country, it also resorted to intensified forms of cultural nationalism that increased its hold on the use of the past. In this period, the state framed its heritage practices, while parallel to state heritage practices, local

communities deployed practices of pastness to deal with contemporary economic and political challenges. For local communities vying for resources such as land, heritage practices became important in validating claims to resources. They mobilised local identities based on claims to ancestral or spiritual landscapes located in specific geographic areas, to attract attention from the state and to validate their claims to resources in a period of acute political and economic challenges.

### **Heritage at the Margins: Practices of Pastness and Counter-Heritage**

This work contributes to theorisations of heritage that see beyond the normative conception of heritage as a hegemonic construct or beyond its focus on material aspects. It points towards the necessity of understanding heritage a flexible cultural process that can no longer be looked at solely from a technical point of view. Rather, heritage should be seen a series of activities that allows interaction between competing views to find a common interest. Discussions on heritage often see heritage as a given, constitutive part of nations that is commonly made through a process embedded in cultural politics dominated by the state, civil society organizations, and international institutions (Smith, 2006). A recurrent theme in literature on the politics of heritage presents heritage as hegemonic product of “western” genealogy informed by approaches that emphasise the material significance of heritage places and objects. Heritage is normally seen as a product of ideology framed by the powerful as “authorised heritage,” a top-down, institutionalised and working against local community-based notions and practices (Smith 2006). While acknowledging that local communities remain largely marginalised by official heritage practice, the concept of counter -heritage cited in this thesis point to “the growing opposition to the humanistic/capitalist conception of heritage —espoused by mainstream archaeology, UNESCO, NGOs and state-run heritage agencies worldwide” (Gnecco, 2014:13; Meskell, 2013).

The common conception of cultural heritage today, particularly the nationalistic and the universal discourses assume an unchanging present and past. However, practices of pastness point to how heritage is neither static nor stable, but that is product of shifting processes of social and political change. While official constructs of heritage seeks to root a single, stable and unified society, practices of pastness denotes an ever-changing, unstable, multiple and elusive past drawn from previously neglected spaces – archaeological sites, sacred places, everyday sites and activities, whose survival has been incidental, rather than an intentional result of heritage policy. Practices of pastness as aspects of the past are however important touchstones for local communities’ memory and identity. They are references to marginalised but still-recalled moments from once-familiar landscapes, places and sites. Previously unnoticed by official heritage legislation and or academic disciplines, they present unique opportunities for the production of contemporary

cultural heritage, particularly for the rural communities, allowing us a deeper understanding of what heritage means and how it is used for negotiating current realities.

Thus, although acknowledging that the state takes a leading role as the guardian of “official” heritage, and that activities preservation, governance, and promotion of official heritage are largely dominated by institutionalised activities, the concept of counter-heritage implies that the making of heritage is equally embedded in the activities of non- state players. Accordingly, this study on one level flags the strategic mobilisation of the official heritage discourse but also points to the importance of the function and role of practices that exist outside the official discourses. The developments in the postcolonial era in Zimbabwe suggests that recourse to heritage practices enabled local communities, outside of the official frameworks, to carry out specific activities that empowered them to make claims and enforce change. Chapters 4 and 5, foregrounded local communities’ involvement in heritage-making and how local communities actively participate in the definition of their heritage-scape. This approach highlights how processes of heritage making should also be seen as part of the everyday cultural practices through which cultural citizenship is asserted and discursively constituted, challenging the dominance of the state in defining and controlling heritage practices.

However, within the new relationship, the counter-heritage practices challenge the presentation of neat, linear, inclusive discourses made by official approaches. They challenge the dominancy and authority of the experts’ voice. Counter-heritage activities foreground practices of pastness and request the inclusion of fractured, even oppositional heritage as part of official heritage or Authorised Heritage Discourse (Smith, 2006). At archaeological sites, while the museum-based experts vie for preserving the material integrity and scientific value of sites, the local communities foreground the abstract, the spiritual, and the sacred. For the local communities, the sites or the objects are part of their life, and they find value in relating to these through everyday rituals, even when it sometimes compromise the preservation values as envisaged by museum experts.

The emergence of practices of pastness based on sacred sites, human remains, and links to ancestors and rituals, chart the next frontier in heritage practices by challenging the way we think about heritage, especially the relationship between the official practices and community-based meanings and understandings. Counter-heritage practices become a platform for previously marginalised practices to engage with and challenge officialised practices, forcing them to accommodate definitions and concepts of heritage articulated by marginalised communities, in a down-to-top movement. They can be seen as a platform through which marginalised community practices are “decentering ... from what are deemed essentialised or foundationalist mystifications

of the operations of those institutionalized codifications of power, knowledge and influence” (Jeyifo, 2011: 52). Counter-heritage practices become a platform through which disavowed communities negotiate their position within the overly state- influenced discourses and practices of heritage.

A central element of the concept of counter-heritage is that it implies new relationships in which forms of governmentality are forced to engage with unofficial community-based notions and practices, even though they do not conform to the rigours and standards set by disciplines or official heritage preservation agencies. Though official heritage and practices of pastness were fundamentally opposed to each other and worked differently, they used the same discourse, forcing the official heritage practices to accommodate the practices of pastness. They unsettle the privileged position of traditional institutionalisation of disciplinary and intellectual activities embedded within museums and other heritage institutions.

The accommodation of practices of pastness particularly manifested itself in the working together of the NMMZ and local religious and traditional leadership. This relationship was based on acknowledging and respecting the role of and the conceptions and practices embedded in local political and religious systems. Thus, these two systems do not necessarily form a dichotomy and they do not operate in a strictly binary opposition, but both systems of knowledge are entangled and they co-exist, unsettling the hierarchical interrelation of power upon which colonial knowledge practices and postcolonial official heritage preservation practices were built and maintained. For instance, the issues around sacred objects in the museums tells us how we have two equally valid areas of expertise; two systems of knowledge, that are all equally significant for shading light on different aspects of a phenomenon or an object. Therefore, even these two knowledge systems exist parallel to each other, they both claim a kind of expertise and they can all contribute to a richer understanding of phenomena.

In a profound way, practices of pastness, based on the traditional and customary values, maintained through memory, challenge the mapping of official governmentality. Practices of pastness are also based on specific sites, but are performative, they rely on happenstance and juxtapositioning and draw from a different archive, if an unstable one and in the process challenge the will of official heritage to construe heritage as collective. While the state-supported institutional practices talk of heritage management, community archaeology, “national”, monuments or relics, the local community “usher in the ontologically different: sacred sites, ancestry, territory” (Gnecco, 2014: 11). At the sacred sites, local communities point to ritual places and ancestral graves while making recourse to oral accounts of origins that link them to specific geographical spaces. Here, unwritten

cultures and traditions, rites and oral recollections show another way of rewriting the historical and cultural past. The reminiscences turn these places into “historyscapes,” where narration and ritual meet nature, and objects, re-inscribing them with new historical, religious and political meanings.

One crucial outcome of the resurgence of the practices of pastness is that they establish new forms of engagement that challenge official practices and definitions of heritage. In accommodating the local custodians, heritage institutions give voice to marginal and subaltern understandings of the past and people’s attachments to places from which they have been historically excluded. The process of accommodating local activities reveals the value of landscapes and local people’s sense of place, encapsulated in everyday ritual activities and contests over custodianship. Previously confined to the background, the counter-heritage practices seek official recognition. In reality, counter-heritage practices normally operate in conflict with the official, materialist constructs of heritage. For instance, some of the sites that local communities have requested to be recognized as official heritage, have no materialistic values as required by the legal heritage preservation framework. Thus, these counter-heritage practices challenge the focus on materiality and they defy confinement to strict physical or temporal demarcations by invoking orality and by appropriating spaces for localised, individual, family or group association.

Central to the invocation of the traditions is that it is not just about identities, or exclusive and romanticised notions of indigenous knowledge. Rather, communities’ recourse to ancestors, ritual and traditions demonstrates a local appropriation of landscapes revealing the complex relationships contemporary societies have to historical representations of the landscape as well as to the land itself. The narratives, rather than being static or fixed, are deliberately reworked to suit contemporary needs, making them useful past that becomes adapted to suit the demands of the moment. Communities call on, alter and reframe their ancestral past and use it to negotiate claims to resources, an element that manifests in the multiple contests over places. Such an approach allows a more embodied understanding of the landscapes whereby walking and talking about historical and ritual attachments to landscape, local communities create a familiar sense of being-in-the-landscape (Bender, 2001).

In the postcolonial context, in another manifestation of counter-heritage, objects and relics collected in the colonial museum have been identified, retrieved, pushed into the public sphere. These have been refigured and re-appropriated, leading to an unsettling of hegemonic museum practices. Through activities around objects the museum, once regarded as a place that represented containment of local cultures, become infused with spiritual importance. Local communities, and

spirit mediums enter the museum, giving back life to some of the sacred or historically important objects. As the various state-sponsored attempts to create platforms for self – representation through culture houses, community museums or interpretive centres became highly contested, a new way of challenging the inherited legacies of colonial heritage emerged. Through rituals associated with objects such as Mukwati’s walking stick, the *Ngoma lungundu* or the Zimbabwe birds, archaeological sites and museums became reconnected with the diverse spiritual traditions of local communities. In this process, the local communities construct meaning differently at archaeological sites or in their relationship with objects in museums. They foreground their enduring spiritual links to archaeological sites, also seen as sacred ancestral abodes and to selected relics in the museum, which were elevated based on their ritual importance.

These activities have foregrounded local community associations and have strived to re-establish connection with archaeological sites and museums, previously steeped in materialistic approaches. The practices allowed local communities to curate their own experiences and associations in relation to heritage places and objects. For the museum experts and heritage professionals, working with local communities has allowed them an opportunity to question their own practices on issues around who has the power to create and represent knowledge, for what purpose and for whom, in the museums and at archaeological sites. Practices of pastness elevates as heritage allow us to “pluralise it (heritage) ; to take it away from the experts and from the possessive embrace of the state; to unveil the fetishist operation, its naturalizing intention.. reified by.. museum officials; archaeologists; historians; legislators and their decrees; tourism and the market; transnational promoters of humanism” ( Gnecco, 2014:2).

### **Bones Speaking: Heritage Practices and Postwars of the Dead**

The connection between dead ancestors and identities, cultural practices, and practices of memorialisation that runs through this thesis testifies to Yvonne Vera’s interesting anecdote that “the dead are not dead, they are always with us” (Vera 1994:27). The persistent central role of ancestors, (black or white), dead heroes and spirit mediums in Rhodesian and Zimbabwe’s memorial complex aptly described by Werbner (1987) as leading to “postwars of the dead,” talks to the interconnected ways in which practices of heritage operated across time and space. Thus, the agency of dead ancestral bones, “the materialities of the dead” (Fontein and Harries, 2013), the “political lives of dead bodies” (Verdery, 1999) or “disciplines of the dead” (Rasool, 2011), feature as central in Zimbabwean politics of identity and authority. Events around human remains and dead ancestors in Zimbabwe prompts one to ask as Mbembe has done in his notion of necropolitics, about “the place given to death, and the human body (in particular the wounded or

slain body)? – particularly how are they inscribed in the order of power?” (Mbembe, 2003:12). For instance, it is clear from this study that recourse to the dead heroes is firmly embedded in age old practices of pastness, where ancestral graves were revered as sacred places where communities could establish spiritual links with their past, and their identities.

The central role of ancestors and sacred places dominates the spectrum of Rhodesian and Zimbabwean history and continues to be a potent currency that cannot be ignored. Dead bodies feature as a central aspects of the aesthetics of power, and of the use of the past in both eras, though a heightened sense has emerged in the last decade tied to the political tensions after 200. In constituting a white heritage, the settlers partly invoked the dead, sacralising spaces through burial of white ancestors and heroes, while in the postcolonial era, both the state and local communities appealed to dead heroes and ancestral bodies in laying claims to authority and to resources respectively. While the settler society appropriated, and shaped its identity around memorial landscapes and archaeological sites consecrated by the bones of white ancestors, the postcolonial state’s reclaiming of these spaces was also based on evoking spiritual and ancestral ties. Whereas the settler state monumentalised and commemorated heroes of the Pioneer Column (1890) and the 1893, 1896/7 wars via state agencies, the postcolonial state’s practices of commemoration were based on venerating the spirit mediums, the heroes of the 1896 wars, and the war of liberation through the national Heroes’ Acres. For instance, the ruling party ZANU (PF), as part of its appeal to the past, repeatedly reference past events within the tradition of respect for ancestors. Brave and heroic ancestors coordinated and fought in the *First Chimurenga*, they motivated and inspired the *Second Chimurenga* and they are presented as continuing to call upon the need for the *Third Chimurenga*.

The last chapter of this study highlighted how colonial history, particularly the anti-colonialism struggle, continues to be used by the state in articulating political legitimacy. The history of the anticolonial activities known as the *Chimurengas* has been given an accentuated existence in the public sphere by various state sponsored monuments and activities. Based on the war dead, embedded in the language of heritage, these monumentalized spaces allow the postcolonial state to confer a public life to its narratives of nationalism, especially in moments of challenges. These spaces, seen as sacred shrines have been given the same value and weight as other grandiose archaeological and historical monuments in the country. This connection is shown by how the Heroes’ Acres, in their architecture and iconography, directly adapted motifs and symbolic details from archaeological sites. For instance, the Zimbabwe bird, the Great Enclosure and the chevron motifs of the Great Zimbabwe archaeological site were elaborately integrated into the iconography of the national Heroes’ Acres. If Great Zimbabwe represented a seat of power from the country’s

prehistoric past, the Heroes' acres establish the role of the war heroes as the origins of power in the postcolonial period. Great Zimbabwe and the Heroes' Acres became intricately connected, their symbolism harnessed by direct reference to ancestry, heroism and political power.

Dead hero ancestors, confined to monumentalised spaces are continually mobilised to create a public sphere that projected the role of the state in the postcolonial era. These human remains actively participated in the narrative of nation, and rituals and commemorative activities allowing active participation by ordinary citizens. Thus, though the ancestral voices of the sacred places such as the Matopos or archaeological sites "no longer speak" (Ranger, 1999), the huge efforts by various sectors to harness the ancestral trope talks to the centrality of ancestral bodies in negotiating present political and economic realities. The dead are invoked and mobilised not only by the state, but also by the marginalised communities, particularly those in Matebeland, who feel that the official histories have marginalised ZAPU's contribution to the war. They thus create counter-practices of memorialisation by similarly mobilising a different set of dead bodies.

### **Undisciplining Heritage: Counter - Heritage Practices and Knowledge**

An important element of the developments in heritage practices in postcolonial Zimbabwe, particularly the encounter between official heritage agencies and local communities points to the importance of reconceptualising the relationship between experts and communities. While some have cautioned the heritagisation of the sacred and spiritual aspects or the granting heritage status to sacred objects and places (Berliner, 2013), in Zimbabwe as Dawson Munjeri (1995:52) stated, indeed "the spirit of the people" is the "nerve of heritage". Thus, suggestions such as Anna Karlström's call for the reconfiguration of "heritage" through involving religious beliefs and practices and treating them as equal to the "institutionalised heritage discourse" is desirable especially in cases where the communities themselves request this recognition as in the Zimbabwean case (Karlström, 2013; Rassool, 2013).

More importantly development in Zimbabwe shows the importance of local traditions and practices such as notions of sacredness and rituals, in fostering alternative modes of encounter between official and non-official discourses and practices of heritage or knowledge. Rather than looking at the relationship between institutionalised practices and unofficial practices as always oppositional or seeing official heritage as deflecting the communities away from the conventional location of power in institutionalised places, results from this work show a level of interdependence between the two. Empirical evidence presented as counter-heritage practices in this thesis demonstrate how the interactions between the two seek compromise and accommodation. A major suggestion from this work is that counter-heritage practices play a key

role in challenging the epistemic privileges of archaeology, and hegemonic heritage practices. This challenge posits possibilities of new relationships that challenge the dominant expressions of science and materiality rooted in institutionalised heritage practices.

In assessing the encounter between experts and local practices, the thesis has shown how communities, in response to the modern hegemonic constructs of heritage and practices of pastness, construct subjectivities differently drawing from different notions of time and archives—archives within the landscape, around dead ancestors and sacred sites. The significance of reference to these places and practices offer space for subaltern versions of history and heritage to be foregrounded. The recognition of ritual, performance, myth, and oral reminiscences associated with the sacred places, objects and relics may be key to a new understanding of the way in which communities engage with modernity. This is crucial given that the practices of pastness continue to be an integral part of how local communities deal with their present realities. The resilience of the practices of pastness even when disciplines and technologies of government chose not to fully recognise them, shows their persistent significance for local communities.

In relation to processes of knowledge production, the prevalence and significance of practices of pastness and suggests that their importance lies in how they foster a new dimensions in local communities' contribution to knowledge production. Practices of pastness disentangle archaeological sites, museum objects, or sacred places from institutional and legal frameworks that frame them in objective, materialistic terms. Thus, practices of pastness present as a site through which local communities engage with and challenge the hegemony of official disciplines through the emergence of new forms of knowledge, what Walter Mignolo's has called "border thinking." (Mignolo, 2000, 2009).

In making claims for recognition and integration of practices of pastness, I also find Haber's idea of "*undisciplining*" archaeology and Gnecco's proposal for a "bottom-up" approach to archaeology appealing. Gnecco (2014)' notion of "alternative archaeologies" point to a very important methodological approach whereby doing away with the reification of archaeological "digging" as the producer of truth, disciplines can depart from their mainstream disciplinary tenets. A new methodology would adopt a bottom-up approach that challenges "hierarchical /colonial arrangements whereby modernity is at the top of a progressive world order and non-modern cosmologies (and peoples, etc.) are at the bottom" (Gnecco, 2014b: 16). According to Gnecco, a bottom-up reading of modernity acknowledges the reality and brutal effect of hierarchies yet seeks to destabilise them. It undermines the hegemony of disciplines – "a set of practices and language

that regurgitates coloniality with its huge focus on materiality, science and linear time” by accepting local based knowledge and practices (Gnecco, 2014b: 16).

In this regard, Haber remarks that:

Time, materiality, and otherness are the three main areas for un-disciplining archaeology. ... In this sense, time is not a lineal dimension that simply elapses while some event is occurring, but a place woven by relationships of care. Materiality is not in opposition to spirituality, neither in ontological nor in epistemological terms, but an existential grounding, a home address. Otherness is not a stable category for classifying peoples, times and territories, but the conditioning of regimes of care (Haber, 2012: 62)

Haber proposes the need for an equal relationship between disciplines and local knowledges and practices when he states that the project of un-disciplining can only be done “in sincere conversations to develop in the borderlands local epistemes, considering conversations with local theories of history, ontologies, and regimes of care; and accepting the instability implied in being-in those conversations” (Haber, 2012:62).

Practices of pastness as shown in this thesis, point to a process where we can start listening to and learning from subaltern relationships to the past and its remains, “moving the home address of writing, and developing positions for un-disciplining archaeology from its disciplinary metaphysics” (Haber, 2012: 62). Accommodating and foregrounding practices of pastness highlighted in this thesis posits one way in which we can achieve Haber’s ideal of “writing outside of the hegemonic structures of disciplinary languages, codes and standards..alternative ways of writing that derive writing and narratives from epistemologies created out of synergies fashioned out of interaction based on equality, between disciplines and those subjectivities that have always existed at the borderlands of knowledge production” (Haber, 2012:62).

My contribution to this methodology has focused on the use of heritage, particularly counter-heritage and practices of pastness as analytical tools for allowing conversations with and acknowledgement of marginalised practices. In doing this we can accept the past not in its material manifestations, but as a lived experience embedded in memories, rituals, landscapes or sacred sites. This thesis suggests that the “counter mapping” (Harrison, 2011) of what Waterton and Smith (2010) have termed “community heritage” heritage can be one site where Mignolo’s (2009) idea of “epistemic justice,” can be effected. Chapters 4 and 5 demonstrate how practices of pastness posit the possibility of new approaches, new languages that challenge the skewed processes of knowledge production. They invite institutions to think about process of knowledge production, particularly through acknowledging a different archive, one that is embedded in the sacred landscapes, and sites and in performances and rituals as well as in the narrations of ordinary people, usually written out of official and institutionalised narratives. The prevalence of practices

of pastness based on sacred sites, ancestors or rituals – the heritage practices that have existed at the margin of official practices, makes it impossible for them to be ignored by official heritage agencies and by the academy. As practices of pastness compel disciplines such as archaeology, ethnography and history within the museums and the academy to engage with traditional or local custodians of knowledge, they chart new dimensions of knowledge production.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: National Monuments List, 1937-2013

Monument No.	Name	Year	Site Category	Province
1	Victoria Falls	1937	Natural	Matebeleland North
2	Great Zimbabwe Ruins	1950	Archaeological	Masvingo
3	Naletale Ruins	1937	Archaeological	Midlands
4	World's View	1967	Historical	Matebeleland South
5	Danamombe Ruins	1937	Archaeological	Midlands
6	Khami Ruins	1986	Archaeological	Matebeleland North
7	Bambata Cave	1973	Archaeological	Matebeleland South
8	Nswatugi Cave	1973	Historical	Matebeleland South
9	Sinoia Caves	1937	Natural	Mashonaland West
10	Rhodes Nyanga Estate	1937	Archaeological	Manicaland
16	Domboshava Cave	1936	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
17	Old Fort Victoria 2	1938	Historical	Masvingo
19	Silozwane Cave	1974	Archaeological	Matebeleland South
20	Gulubahwe Cave	1974	Archaeological	Matebeleland South
21	Makumbe Cave	1949	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
22	Somerby Cave	1938	Archaeological	Mashonaland West
24	Murehwa Cave	1939	Archaeological	Mashonaland East
25	Mutoko Cave/ Ruchero	1939	Archaeological	Mashonaland East
26	Giraffe Petroglyph	1939	Archaeological	Mashonaland East
29	World's View Farm	1939	Archaeological	Matebeleland South
31	Matendera Ruins	1939	Archaeological	Manicaland
32	Dengeni Cave	1959	Archaeological	Masvingo
38	Indaba Tree	1941	Historical	Manicaland
39	Mzilikazi Memorial	1942	Historical	Matebeleland South
40	Muromo Rock Paintings	1942	Archaeological	Manicaland
41	Mzilikazi's Grave	1965	Historical	Matebeleland South
42	Mutowa Ruins	1942	Archaeological	Matebeleland North
43	Hillside Dams	1943	Archaeological	Matebeleland South
45	Jumbo Ancient Workings	1943	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
47	Old Jesuit Mission	1943	Historical	Matebeleland South
48	Lobengula's Grave	1945	Historical	Matebeleland North
49	Memorial Cross	1945	Historical	Manicaland
50	Mangwe Fort	1945	Historical	Matebeleland South
52	Surtic Farm	1945	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
53	Ziwa Ruins	1946	Archaeological	Manicaland
55	Blakiston-Routelge Memorial	1946	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
56	Filabusi Memorial	1946	Historical	Matebeleland South
57	Mambo Memorial	1946	Historical	Matebeleland North
59	Bumboosi Ruins	1947	Archaeological	Matebeleland North
60	Gambarimwe	1949	Archaeological	Mashonaland East
61	Mutoko Ruins	1949	Archaeological	Mashonaland East
62	Chumunungwa Ruins	1949	Archaeological	Masvingo
63	Rhodes Indaba Tree	1949	Historical	Matebeleland South
64	Diana's Vow	1959	Archaeological	Manicaland
65	Mhakwe Cave	1950	Archaeological	Mashonaland East
68	Ntabazikamambo Ruins	1952	Archaeological	Midlands
69	Mahaka Fort	1952	Historical	Mashonaland East
70	Hangwa Forts	1952	Historical	Mashonaland West
71	Fort Umlugulu	1953	Historical	Matebeleland South
72	Harleigh Farm Ruins	1954	Archaeological	Manicaland
73	Harare Toposcope	1954	Historical	Harare
74	Chamavara Cave	1954	Archaeological	Masvingo
76	Bridal Veil Falls	1954	Natural	Manicaland

78	Rhodes Summer House	1956	Historical	Matebeleland South
79	Rhodes Stable	1956	Historical	Matebeleland South
81	Zvongombe Ruins	1957	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
82	Chisvingo Ruins	1957	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
83	John Lee's House	1957	Historical	Matabeleland South
84	Cave of Hands	1957	Archaeological	Matebeleland South
85	Mbagazewa	1957	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
86	Khami Water Works	1958	Archaeological	Matebeleland North
89	Rhodes Hut	1958	Historical	Matebeleland South
90	Lobengula's Indaba Tree	1958	Historical	Matebeleland South
91	Manemba Cave	1958	Archaeological	Mashonaland East
92	Hartley Hill Fort	1958	Historical	Mashonaland West
93	Chiwona ruins	1958	Archaeological	Manicaland
94	Fort Tuli	1959	Historical	Matebeleland South
95	Fort Martin	1959	Historical	Mashonaland West
96	Fort Rixon	1959	Historical	Matebeleland South
97	Inyathi Mission	1959	Historical	Matebeleland North
98	Fort Gibbs	1960	Historical	Midlands
99	Nyahokwe Ruins	1960	Archaeological	Manicaland
100	Tsindi Ruins	1961	Archaeological	Mashonaland East
101	Muchuchu Ruins	1961	Archaeological	Manicaland
102	Kagumbudzi	1961	Archaeological	Manicaland
103	Charewa	1961	Archaeological	Mashonaland East
104	Missionary Tree	1961	Historical	Matebeleland South
105	Umvutcha Village	1961	Historical	Bulawayo
107	Bembesi Lager Site	1961	Historical	Matebeleland South
108	Fossil Dinosaur	1962	Natural	Matebeleland North
109	Battle of Bembesi	1962	Historical	Matebeleland South
110	Kamwahuku Fossil Forest	1964	Natural	Mashonaland West
111	Luanze Earthworks	1967	Historical	Mashonaland East
112	Chikupo Cave	1965	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
114	Regina Ruins	1966	Archaeological	Midlands
115	Chibvumani Ruins	1966	Archaeological	Masvingo
116	Old Bulawayo	1966	Historical	Matebeleland South
117	Luanze Church	1965	Historical	Mashonaland East
118	Selous' House	1967	Historical	Matebeleland South
120	Kongezi Ruins	1968	Archaeological	Matebeleland South
121	Fort Mazowe	1969	Historical	Mashonaland Central
122	Amadzimba Cave	1969	Archaeological	Matebeleland South
123	Old Fort Victoria 1	1969	Historical	Masvingo
124	Mutota's Ruin	1969	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
125	Chiwawa's Ruin	1969	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
126	Matanda aChiwawa	1969	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
127	Mabokisi Fossil Forest	1969	Natural	Mashonaland East
128	Stromatolite	1969	Natural	Matebeleland North
130	Melfort Strip Road	1970	Historical	Mashonaland East
131	Lundi Strip Road	1970	Historical	Masvingo
132	Horse Trough	1970	Historical	Bulawayo
133	Matopos Railway Terminus	1970	Historical	Matebeleland South
136	Orbicular Granite	1970	Natural	Matebeleland South
137	Majiri Ruins	1971	Archaeological	Masvingo
138	Coach House and Stables	1971	Historical	Bulawayo
140	Mother Patrick's Mortuary	1971	Historical	Harare
141	Crocodile Man Paintings	1971	Archaeological	Harare
142	Bridge Paintings	1971	Archaeological	Harare
143	Settler Tree	1971	Historical	Manicaland
144	Mangwe Memorial	1972	Historical	Matebeleland South
146	Kaguvi Stronghold	1972	Historical	Mashonaland West

147	Fort Mhondoro	1972	Historical	Mashonaland West
148	Mashayamombe Village	1972	Historical	Mashonaland West
149	Musimbira Ruins	1973	Archaeological	Masvingo
150	Paper House	1973	Historical	Midlands
151	Dambarare	1973	Historical	Mashonaland Central
152	BSACo Lion	1973	Historical	Bulawayo
153	Bembezana Suspension Bridge	1974	Historical	Midlands
155	Forty Alderson	1974	Historical	Mashonaland Central
156	McDougall House	1975	Historical	Masvingo
157	Cecil House	1976		Harare
158	Geological Unconformity	1976	Natural	Midlands
159	Nanke cave	1976	Archaeological	Matebeleland South
160	Utopia House	1977	Historical	Manicaland
161	Impali	1986	Archaeological	Midlands
162	Old Stock Exchange	1986	Historical	Midlands
163	Old Magistrate's Court	1986	Historical	Midlands
164	Sibizini Grain Bins	1986	Archaeological	Matebeleland South
165	Kopje House	1986	Historical	Manicaland
166	Tohwechipi's Grave	1986	Historical	Manicaland
167	Freedom Arch	1988	Historical	Harare
168	Chiremba Balancing Rocks	1994	Natural	Harare
169	Nharira Hills	2000	Historical	Mashonaland West
80	Kasekete Ruins	1957	Archaeological	Mashonaland Central
154	Telegraph Office Site	1974	Historical	Mashonaland Central
170	Upper Mazowe Valley	2007	Historical	Mashonaland Central
171	Manicaland Prov. Heroes Acre	2007	Historical	Manicaland
12	Pungwe Falls	1937	Natural	Manicaland
13	Shangani Battle Field	1937	Historical	Matebeleland North
14	Macardon Cairns	1937	Archaeological	Manicaland
15	Trias Hill	1938	Archaeological	Manicaland
18	Echo Farm Paintings	1938	Archaeological	Harare
23	Borrowdale Farm	1938	Archaeological	Harare
27	Thomas Moodies Grave	1939	Historical	Manicaland
28	Big Tree	1939	Natural	Manicaland
33	Pongo Memorial	1940	Historical	Matebeleland North
34	Fort Hill Penhalonga	1940	Historical	Manicaland
35	Chirinda Forest	1940	Historical	Manicaland
36	Halfway Half Ruin	1941	Archaeological	Matebeleland North
37	Chitungwiza Fort	1948	Archaeological	Harare
44	Njelele Cave	1942	Archaeological	Matebeleland North
46	Enwarig Aloe Gardens	1943	Natural	Harare
51	Rupisi Hot Spring	1945	Historical	Manicaland
54	Bunga Forest	1946	Natural	Manicaland
58	Rixon Memorial	1947	Historical	Matebeleland North
66	Two Cypress Trees	1953	Historical	Harare
67	Fort Ingwenya	1953	Historical	Matebeleland North
75	Ancient Park	1957	Archaeological	Mashonaland West
77	Empandeni Mission	1958	Historical	Matebeleland North
80	Lobengula's Indaba	1958	Historical	Bulawayo
106	Mutema Sacred Forest	1961	Historical	Manicaland
113	Graniteside Site	1965	Archaeological	Harare
119	Mac Dougal, Weir Canals & Tunnel	1968	Historical	Masvingo
129	Striproad/ Lukosi	1969	Historical	Matebeleland North
134	Trek Memorial	1970	Historical	Manicaland
135	Pandamatenga	1970	Historical	Matebeleland North
139	Flag tree and Watson's store	1971	Historical	Matebeleland North
145	Fossil forest	1972	Geological	Mashonaland West
154	Telegraph Office	1974	Historical	Mash Central

–	National /Provincial Heroes’ acres	2013	Lib. heritage	All 9 provinces
–	Gonakudzingwa Restriction Camp	2013	Lib. heritage	Masvingo
–	Sikombela Restriction camp	2013	Lib. heritage	Midlands