



Prehistory Society of Zimbabwe

Newsletter 143

Editorial

Our country turns 30 years young in 2010 and such an anniversary provokes episodes of retrospection and reflection on achievements, disappointments and opportunities missed. We certainly have much heritage to be proud of in Zimbabwe - socially, culturally, politically, archaeologically and historically. Despite all that life and our politicians have thrown at us in the last few years, I believe there is more opportunity than ever for us to make lasting contributions to our history and culture. To provoke debate, I will write a series of short notes on aspects of the development of archaeology and cultural heritage management in the coming year as well as advancing a few ideas about future directions. I start this issue with a brief review of just how and why we use the name 'Zimbabwe' today. Can't agree or got something to add? Email hubcapzw@gmail.com

Please remember that your **membership fees** to the society are due in early 2010. Contact the Chairperson Adele Hamilton-Ritchie (adele@premier.co.zw or adele@zol.co.zw) for more details.

I am trying to create a **publication fund** for the journal and other publishing projects I have in mind. I want to ensure the long-term future of the journal by removing one of the main challenges to its production - a lack of money to print it. To this end I am selling my duplicate copies of the South African Archaeological Bulletin and will donate any money raised to the Prehistory Society. Interested buyers please contact me for further details. Alternatively if you feel you can donate something towards this - no amount is too small - then please contact me. Another option is to raise the selling price of the journal which, in my opinion will be counter-productive as I believe sales will drop sharply. I am also seeking sponsors.

I would like to remind our readers that **nothing may be extracted** from this newsletter and used elsewhere without the express permission of both the author and editor. Recently, we have had a few too many people and organisations "borrowing" material without due acknowledgement. This is unethical and disappointing behaviour.

Finally, I wish you a happy holiday season and a prosperous and peaceful 2010. It's going to be an exciting year!

The naming of 'Zimbabwe'

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In 1982, a particularly eloquent letter writer in the periodical *Moto* had the following to say about the various name changes to towns and streets then being enacted by the Government:

The changing of names is not done in order to please Independence enthusiasts. It has a deep meaning. Some may think of this as an empty industry, embarked on by the government of the people! It has a purpose. It has to be seen as a return to Zimbabwean authenticity, for in our names are enshrined our philosophy, our way of life, our cultural values.

Zimbabwe stands almost alone in the world for being named after an archaeological site - Great Zimbabwe. Great Zimbabwe lies at the heart of Zimbabwe's history and culture and understanding Great Zimbabwe's rise and decline can help us understand our modern state. The word 'zimbabwe' derives from the Shona *dzimba dza mabwe* (houses of stone) or *dzimba woye* (venerated houses). No one is sure what their original inhabitants called them but they came to be known by the name 'zimbabwe' (Garlake 1973). The name was traditionally applied to the house or grave of a ruler and appears in 16th century Portuguese documents as the name of all royal residences (Huffman 1996; Rasmussen 1979).

Great Zimbabwe is unique among the world's abandoned cities. It is the largest pre-colonial structure south of the pyramids, a monument to the creativity and ingenuity of the ancestors of the Shona people who built it. At its height, it was home to at least 12,000 people and controlled a vast trading empire that stretched over the Zimbabwean plateau and beyond. It stands alone in Africa as a monument to that most elusive of conditions: stability (Garlake 1973; Huffman 1996). The site itself and artefacts recovered from there have been used in a variety of ways as a symbol for both colonial and independent Zimbabwe (cf. Sinamai 2003). Much has been made of the use of the Zimbabwe Bird as a symbol of the nation (e.g. Hubbard 2009; Matenga 1998) and the ruins themselves but relatively little has been written on the adoption and meaning of the name we take for granted today.

Most historians have been content to explain the choice of the name 'Zimbabwe' by nationalists as a reaction against colonial oppression and cultural aggression of the white settlers and foreign origins myths for the culture. The choice has been presented as a deliberate act of defiance by the freedom fighters, who wanted to show that the blacks were not as inept as presented by Rhodesian government propaganda. During the liberation war the ruins were rightly presented as a potent icon of achievement and pride for the inhabitants of the country and were a rallying symbol for unity, and reconstruction. But a rallying symbol was all it was to many nationalist politicians. For example, Fontein (2006: 153) recounts an interview with the late Eddison Zvobgo who said, 'as practical politicians we did not worry whether it was linked to religion or not. We had found a rallying point, a very useful one, and everyone then accepted that'.

Veteran Nationalist Michael Mawema has been credited with the first suggestion of Zimbabwe as the name for the new country when he mentioned it in passing at a political rally in the early 1960s where it took hold in the popular consciousness. It was quickly adopted as the name for the successors of the National Democratic Party, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (Zapu) in 1961 and then the Zimbabwe African National Union (Zanu) in 1963. Not many may know that the Zimbabwe National Party, formed June 1961 was actually the first

party to use the name in a political sense (Rasmussen 1979) although it seems to have been common currency before then (e.g. see Douglas 1984: 219 which shows a publication called *Zimbabwe Labour News* dated April 21, 1961). Other than the use of the name of the site, there seems to have been little interaction with the site on the part of the leading nationalists (cf. Fontein 2006: Chapter 7).

Interestingly in a Letter to the Editor (*The Herald*, Friday September 21, 1979, p10), Rev. Fr. A.R. Lewis, Chairman of the Christian Group, asserted the name 'Zimbabwe' was a Marxist one. He claimed that the name had appeared on 'communist maps' in Eastern Europe in the early 1960s. He said, 'genuine black nationalists may not know it but to the Marxists who put the name forward, it is the symbol of the Marxist takeover of our country'.

Since 1964 the white government of the country called it 'Rhodesia' although no other country recognised that name. The United Nations and Britain officially called the country 'Southern Rhodesia' until Independence in 1980, while the nationalist movements all referred to the country by the name 'Zimbabwe'. In 1978 the Rhodesian Government had reached a compromise with "internal" African leaders resulting in universal suffrage elections in February 1979. This led to the establishment of a black led government under Bishop Abel Muzorewa and the formation of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia on June 1, 1979. As the external guerrilla leaders were not accommodated the new state was not recognised. A new flag to reflect the changing political dispensation was hoisted on September 2, 1979, prominently showing the Zimbabwe Bird for the first time and incorporating the pan-African colours of yellow, black, green and red.

Strangely though, it was on September 7, 1979 that a Bill was first introduced into the country's Parliament to officially change the name of the country from Zimbabwe-Rhodesia to Zimbabwe (*The Herald* Saturday, September 8, 1979, p1). White members of Parliament declared the motion 'a breach of faith' but Bishop Abel Muzorewa, the then Prime Minister, claimed it was a necessary step towards convincing the black population of the country that a meaningful shift to majority rule had occurred. Of course nothing of the sort had taken place but it was a useful exercise in acclimatising the white population of the country to the fact that changes were going to happen -whether they wanted them to or not. At this time the Lancaster House Conference was in full swing and would eventually lead to an independent Zimbabwe.

The name 'Zimbabwe' became official at midnight of April 17/18, 1980 when the British flag was lowered for the last time and our new flag, accepted on March 22, was raised to the acclamation of the vast crowd gathered at the celebrations. It is intriguing to speculate on other possible names for the country though - Monomotapa, Zambezia, Shonaland. Just imagine!

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Richard Nicklin Hall as a Rock Art Researcher

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Today it seems almost obligatory when writing an article on Great Zimbabwe to strongly denounce the work of Richard Nicklin Hall, the first curator of the site. There is little doubt that his diggings at the site caused immense and lasting damage hindering all future work and creating a legacy of misinformation still active today. My interest, however, is not on this early part of his career but to review his important contributions to the study of rock art in Zimbabwe, something often neglected or dismissed by earlier writers. In part this article was provoked by Garlake's (1993: 2) statement that Hall's rock art research was 'dogmatic and unscholarly and filled with grandiose but unsubstantiated claims'. I find this somewhat too harsh.

Hall, born in 1853, was the son of Joseph Hall, Jr., of Dudley, Worcestershire. A solicitor by profession first working at the High Court of Judicature in the United Kingdom, he later acted as political agent to various members of parliament, including Sir Edward Reed (Anon 1915). He immigrated to South Africa in about 1897, and as his obituary (Anon 1915: 85) says, 'he soon identified himself with the activities of the young British colony of Rhodesia' filling a number of posts in civic and commercial organisations. Hall developed his journalistic skills at this time, representing several London newspapers as well as editing the *Matabele Times* and the *Rhodesia Journal*. In 1899 he served as commissioner for Rhodesia at the Greater Britain Exhibition in London, and in 1901 held a similar position at the Glasgow Exhibition.

In 1902 Hall was engaged as Curator of Great Zimbabwe at Cecil John Rhodes' request, possibly due to his effective lobbying via his publications on the ruins with prospector W.G. Neal. As has been bemoaned by several authors (e.g. Garlake 1973), Hall exceeded his remit, clearing massive amounts of deposit in the interest of "preserving" what he viewed as the "ancient structures". Not an archaeologist, Hall's digging was reckless and in May 1904 he was dismissed. However he continued to write prolifically on Great Zimbabwe and related ruins for the next few years in a variety of media from newspapers to academic journals, as well as producing a further two books.



Fig. 1: Richard Hall
Picture courtesy R. Burrett

At present, it is not clear when Hall developed his interest in rock art but his first descriptions are in his Bulawayo Museum guidebook (Hall 1911), referring to rock art at his house (aptly named Bushman's Haunt) near Hillside Dams. For the next three years Hall devoted his life to the location, recording, and study of rock art, quite possibly the first person in the country to take such a sustained and specialist interest in this fascinating aspect of human culture, pre-empting even the great Lionel Cripps (cf. Nhamo 2007).

In 1912 Hall successfully applied to the Royal Society of South Africa for a grant to conduct a systematic examination of rock art in the Matobo Hills (or as he preferred to call them, 'Ma-Dobo') with the aim of finding and recording paintings and 'carvings' (Hall 1914a, b). This he undertook with passion and conviction, claiming to have walked over one third of the Matobo Hills in three months of work, locating close to 100 sites including 25 large caves (Hall 1914a). Hall's extensive fieldwork provided him with insights into the landscape and environment of the area, giving him a better understanding and appreciation of the painters and their work than almost any of his academic contemporaries. He argued that the concentrations of small sites in an area was always indicative of a nearby large site,

something confirmed by later research on possible site hierarchies in the Matobo Hills (Hubbard 2006). He also mentions the strange ability of many researchers who are often able to find paintings with little difficulty after gaining a little practical experience: ‘the enquirer who has seen several series of paintings on the open veld soon learns on what class of boulders he may expect to meet with paintings as also on those on which they will not be found’ (Hall 1914c: Ch 2, 20).

Perhaps hoping to recapture the limelight from his tumultuous days at Great Zimbabwe, Hall would go to great lengths to emphasise the importance and uniqueness of his discoveries as well as often exaggerating the amount of work he had done. In addition he would ignore or downplay previous research, for example claiming that only six caves were known in the Matobo before 1912, ignoring Mennell’s (1908) and White’s (1905) explorations. Referring to his unpublished book on the art (Hall 1914c), Garlake (1993: 2) notes ‘when it numbers the paintings Hall had seen, it is, on its own evidence, simply untrue’. Hall was, however much advanced in some of his theories regarding the Bushmen and their place in the history of Zimbabwe.



Fig. 2: Richard Hall looking for rock art, possibly at or near Hillside Dams, Bulawayo
Picture courtesy R. Burrett

In starting his manuscript with an ethnographical examination of the Bushmen, Hall (1914c: Ch 1, 1-30) foresaw current ethnographic insight as a means to coming to grips with the art. He went to the extent of asserting that no one should attempt to study rock art without first gaining some familiarity with the life and religion of the Bushmen. Hall shows a familiarity with the primary sources then available regarding the ethnography and history of the Bushmen in Africa, referring to the works of Bleek, Orpen, Stow, Theal and Sollas. He was however justifiably cautious about the data then available: ‘we must not... rush to the conclusion that in every respect the Bushman of Rhodesia was altogether identical with the Bushman of the remote south’ (Hall 1914c: Ch1: 1). As Burrett (2002: 30-42) and Garlake (1995) have shown, researchers north of the Limpopo need to be cautious when using ethnography from South Africa given the probable differences in hunter-gatherer ideology and worldview as expressed in the rock art within the different countries.

Hall was not afraid to advance his own ideas, for example amusingly claiming that the degree of culture displayed in the art of Rhodesia was ‘considerably in advance of that in the south,’ and attempting to place this country’s ancient inhabitants in a more favourable light than previously attempted. Hall also strongly disagreed with Stow that the painters and engravers were different races, suggesting that they were the work of the same people.

His writings show a great deal of paternalistic affection for the ancient artists. ‘It is almost inconceivable that a people showing by their works of art, many of which reveal most delicate taste and feeling - and such an ideal truth to nature, could be mere savages’ (Hall 1914c: Ch 2, 35). He continues: ‘the Bushman of Rhodesia must have been a loveable little fellow, and one is fain to regret that his race has vanished’. Such stereotyping of the Bushmen, as primitives closely connected to nature, was common in the early twentieth century (Mguni 2002) and

Hall is merely echoing the racial prejudices of his contemporaries. He did, however, exhibit a sincere appreciation of the artistic skills of the hunter-gatherers claiming they had a high degree of taste and a 'greater ingenuity and fertility of expression,' the paintings 'made with a certain and sure hand' (Hall 1914c: Ch 2, 27-29).

Hall was the first to claim that the paintings were of great age and predated farming, although his reasoning was faulty. For example he claimed that many paintings occurred near old gold mines, and argued that this was proof that the artists must have ceased operations since otherwise they would have surely 'painted the ancients' mining activities' (Hall 1914a). He reinforced this claim by noting the lack of mention of the Bushmen in the pre-colonial Portuguese and Arab records known to him (Hall 1912a). Some of his other reasoning was equally unsatisfactory: for example he claims the 'oxidation' of the paintings, 'the rock having reassumed its original colour and state' must have taken thousands of years thus proving their antiquity (Hall 1912a: 142). Today it has been shown that the appearance of rock and the art is an unreliable method of dating.

There is no escaping the fact that, even by the standards of the time, Hall had some strange ideas about the rock art of Zimbabwe. He claims to have distinguished two main periods of painting, the earlier artists exclusively using yellow pigment while red characterised their "degenerate" successors. Standing at a distance from the painted panel, 'shapeless blurs of yellow... assume the shape of heroic drawing of exceedingly well-proportioned animals' (Hall 1914b). These yellow "animals," Hall claimed had faded away and were used as "backgrounds" by later artists who suddenly appeared and began using red pigment. He argued incorrectly that the hunter-gatherers never lived in the caves and shelters where they painted, discounting the stones tools, ashy remains and other deposit as 'Bantu' remains. Horrifyingly, Hall (1914c: 50) backs up this claim with the revelation of more than 30 "excavations" in caves which he suggests failed to reveal much in the way of physical evidence of Bushman occupation. This revelation of random diggings is hypocritical in light of Hall's (1914c) earlier warning to the reader that all sites are protected from such depredations by law. However he was by this time Curator of Monuments for Rhodesia and may have given himself permission to conduct his "excavations"!

Like many researchers before him, Hall was fascinated with the oval motifs now known as formlings. He confidently proclaimed them to be depictions of Victoria Falls, 'so true to nature are certain of these representations that the actual point of view of the Bushman, the spot at which he received his impressions can be located to within a couple of score yards'; the bank of the river at the foot of the gorge immediately below the Falls (Hall 1914c: Ch 2, 43). The dark ovals represented the basalt rock face and the sometimes-accompanying white paint the spray from the water. Defending the Bushmen again, Hall claimed they could not be "savages" if they studied and painted such a wonder. Today, these formlings have been argued to represent termite nests, encapsulating beliefs about potency and spiritual power (Mguni 2002).

Personally, I find Hall's (1912a, 1914b, c) repeated claims about finding rock engravings in the Matobo Hills and elsewhere in Zimbabwe to be the most puzzling. To my knowledge, no engravings or carvings have been found in the Matobo Hills while their occurrence in Zimbabwe is limited to the border regions of the country (Goodall & Summers 1959). Hall claimed many paintings were first chipped in outline and then filled with paint. These he argued were best seen in wet conditions or with the aid of a light to throw the necessary shadows. I believe he may have confused natural irregularities in the rock surface with engravings.

The sustained use of photography for recording rock art was pioneered by Hall although he was by no means the first to take photographs of the art in Zimbabwe. He repeats a familiar litany of complaints when discussing the drawbacks to the technique: ‘the usual darkness or shadow, cross-lights, the deep colour of the rock, the numerous pits surface [sic], the great age of the paintings and their faintness, all militate against the photographer’ (Hall 1914c: A). Alarming by today’s standards, Hall confidently asserts that throwing water on the paintings will produce acceptable results, an early example of vandalism by rock art researchers in Zimbabwe!

Hall also made several tracings of paintings in the Matobo Hills and elsewhere, using his copies to create exhibitions in the Bulawayo Museum. His aim was to raise public awareness about Zimbabwe’s rock art heritage. Even if they are not entirely accurate by today’s standards they can still serve as a valuable record of the state of the art in the cave when he first visited (compare the figures below). Maybe he saw sure signs of success writing in his book that he had ‘succeeded in breaking through the prevailing indifference to, and even ridicule of these researches,’ (1914c: Intro, 10) creating interest among the white settlers and fostering a lasting pride in their existence, preservation and study. This may, in fact, be the most important contribution Hall made to Zimbabwean rock art studies.



Fig. 3: A photo of a panel from an unnamed site in the Matobo Hills with Hall's (1912b) selective tracing of the same and a contemporary reproduction

Hall’s passion and interest in rock art superseded his initial fascination with the Zimbabwe Culture. His writings on the subject, occasionally misguided and prejudiced, reveal a distinct and abiding concern for the art that is not, in my opinion, reflected in his work on the ruins. Perhaps wearied by the controversy his work on the ruins had engendered he sought comfort in the mostly-solitary joys of rock art research. Hall (1914c: Ch 1, 4) began his last book with a rather plaintive sentence making a plea for recognition - and perhaps - reconciliation with the academic establishment:

The worker on the spot, enthusiastic as he must necessarily be to labour on these vast territories which imply prolonged isolations, constant risks of health and life, heavy expenditure, disappointments, absence of recognition or sympathy, has the evidences at first hand constantly before his eyes and his findings, to use Sir John Lubbock’s words, “based on an impartial observation of ascertained facts to which he applies ordinary common sense” cannot be ignored.

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Dulibadzimu Gorge: Neglected historical site

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Edited from article in The Herald, December 10, 2009

Dulibadzimu Gorge is a 15-minute drive west of Beitbridge border town, but few people seem to care about the significance of this magnificent feature and its relationship with Beitbridge town and the Vha Venda tribe. Dulibadzimu suburb, Dulibadzimu Clinic, and Dulibadzimu Stadium are some of the common names around Beitbridge. There is always significance in how people christen names to children or places. Mostly this is done in relation to past events or the historical background of the ethnic tribe residing within a certain area. Historically, the place serves as an *aide-memoire* for those with existing knowledge of the Venda culture. The aura of mystique enhances the cultural value attached to this natural feature. Legend has it that the gods and ancestral spirits of the tribe used to dwell there.

Beitbridge East Member of the House of Assembly, Kembo Mohadi (who ironically is the co-Home Affairs Minister responsible for National Museums and Monuments) said the gorge is a significant place for the Venda people. He said efforts were being made so that the gorge receives its due recognition as a historical preserve for the Venda people and the country. "Very few people seem to know how the name Dulibadzimu came about. This is a sacred place where in the old days we heard many stories from hearing traditional Venda drums and the sounds of cows mooing, but surprisingly without trace as to where exactly the sounds were coming from. I recall when I was a young boy, I was told that you cannot throw a stone across the gorge and at times would see a white goat which just disappears mysteriously. The only things you could see are the rocks and the pool of water," he said.

Mohadi said the name Dulibadzimu literally meant *Duli labadzimu* (the ancestor's mortar). "The Limpopo River, which we call Vhembe in Venda, meandered a few kilometres from the bridge and the place where it meandered was full of rocks and there was a boulder on a narrow gorge along the way where it rejoined the river. As the water flowed very fast with a lot of pressure, it was pushed hard on the rocks splashing on the other side of the boulder making a heavy sound like a mortar. This sound could be heard as far as 40km away from the gorge. Our elders by then would say it was the ancestors' mortar pounding, and in Venda that meant *Duli labadzimu*. However, around 1929 some of the colonial white men moved from Mtetengwe to where the current town is following the construction of the Old Limpopo Bridge by the Alfred Beit Trust. It was during this time that they felt the sound from the gorge was giving them (the white men) sleepless nights until prompting them to blast the boulder to do away with the sound".

He said in the old days, the rocks around the gorge were used as a bridge by the villagers who lived nearby to cross to the other side of the river before the construction of the bridge. Mohadi added that the river was home to a rare breed of vicious zebra striped crocodiles that were commonly known as Nyelenga in TshiVhenda. The Dulibadzimu Gorge is known among the Venda people as a preserve of the people of Makhakhavhule descendents. This is a shrine they treat with respect. It is understood that the pool in the gorge never ran dry even during the times of famine.

Monument Lifted From Cleopatra's Underwater City

Summarised from Sapa-AP, December 17 2009

Archaeologists hoisted a 9-ton temple pylon from the waters of the Mediterranean that was part of the palace complex of the fabled Cleopatra before it became submerged for centuries in the harbour of Alexandria. The pylon, which once stood at the entrance to a temple of Isis, is to be the centrepiece of an ambitious underwater museum planned by Egypt to showcase the sunken city, believed to have been toppled into the sea by earthquakes in the 4th century.

Divers and underwater archaeologists used a giant crane and ropes to lift the 9-ton, 7.4-foot-tall pylon, covered with muck and seaweed, out of the murky waters. The pylon was part of a sprawling palace from which the Ptolemaic dynasty ruled Egypt and where 1st Century B.C. Queen Cleopatra wooed the Roman general Marc Antony before they both committed suicide after their defeat by Augustus Caesar. The temple dedicated to Isis, a pharaonic goddess of fertility and magic, is at least 2,050 years old, but archaeologists believe it's likely much older. The pylon was cut from a single slab of red granite quarried in Aswan, some 1,100 kilometers to the south, officials said. "The cult of Isis was so powerful, it's no wonder Cleopatra chose to make her living quarters next to the temple," said coastal geoarchaeologist Jean-Daniel Stanley of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History.

Egyptian authorities hope that eventually the pylon will become a part of the underwater museum, an ambitious attempt to draw tourists to the country's northern coast, often overshadowed by the grand pharaonic temples of Luxor in the south, the Giza pyramids outside Cairo and the beaches of the Red Sea. They are hoping the allure of Alexandria, founded in 331 B.C. by Alexander the Great, can also be a draw.

Cleopatra's palace and other buildings and monuments now lie strewn on the seabed in the harbour of Alexandria, the second largest city of Egypt. Since 1994, archaeologists have been exploring the ruins, one of the richest underwater excavations in the Mediterranean, with

some 6,000 artifacts. Another 20,000 objects are scattered off other parts of Alexandria's coast, said Ibrahim Darwish, head of the city's underwater archaeology department. In recent years, excavators have discovered dozens of sphinxes in the harbour, along with pieces of what is believed to be the Alexandria Lighthouse, or Pharos, which was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The pylon is the first major artifact extracted from the harbour since 2002, when authorities banned further removal of major artifacts from the sea for fear it would damage them. "

The pylon was discovered by a Greek expedition in 1998. Retrieving it was a laborious process: For weeks, divers cleaned it of mud and scum, then they dragged it across the sea floor for three days to bring it closer to the harbour's edge for extraction. A truck stood by to ferry the pylon to a freshwater tank, where it will lie for six months until all the salt, which acts as a preservative underwater but damages it once exposed, is dissolved.

New Publications on Zimbabweanist Archaeology

Burrett, R.S. 2008. Karl Gottlieb Mauch (1837-1875). *Heritage of Zimbabwe* 27: 74-88.

A useful article, summarising the life and achievements of this German explorer. Mauch was the first person to publicise the significant gold deposits in north of the Limpopo as well as confirming the existence of Great Zimbabwe. This article also reviews his contributions to the study of natural history in southern Africa. It contains several previously unpublished pictures by Mauch on various aspects of his travels.

Haynes, G. & Klimowicz, J. 2009. Middle Stone Age Evidence from Hwange National Park, Northwestern Zimbabwe. *Nyame Akuma* 71: 63-73.

This paper summarises archaeological findings related to the evolution of hominin behaviour in northwestern Zimbabwe, reporting specifically on the Middle Stone Age (MSA) of Hwange National Park. None of the National Park's sites provide a diachronic view of evolving technology and subsistence, and therefore a division of northwestern Zimbabwe's MSA into separate phases, stages, or industries is not attempted. Nevertheless, even in the absence of stratified sites, the authors argue there were long-term cycles of stability and change in tool forms and technology. Different phases may have lasted for tens of millennia without major changes, as elsewhere. They propose that the MSA hominins in Hwange National Park travelled through the region without staying long anywhere, but their travel was more meandering than that of the ESA hominins who headed exclusively (or so it seems) to toolstone sources at water points.

Kinahan, J. & Kinahan, J. (eds). 2006. *The African Archaeology Network: Research in Progress. (Studies in the African Past, Volume 5)*. Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press.

The African Archaeology Network (AAN) was formally established in 2004, having grown out of a long-standing association of African archaeologists, institutions and projects with related research interests. The activities of the AAN include thematic research projects, training initiatives, the publication *Studies in the African Past*, and an annual meeting of participating scholars. Articles of Zimbabweanist interest from this volume include a chapter by Solange Macamo on gender structuring of a 15th century stone-walled enclosure site in the Choa Mountains. Gilbert Pwiti and Seke Katsamudanga report the results of excavations at Kamukombe in the mid-Zambezi valley, with new evidence for the rise of Late Iron Age farming economies in that region. The paper is accompanied by Robert Soper's examination of the ceramic evidence for a typological transition from Kadzi to Musengezi on the basis of the Kamukombe evidence. In general the production quality of this book is vastly superior to its predecessors and successors, possibly explained by its printing in Namibia.

Munjeri, D. 2009. The reunification of a national symbol. *Museum International* 61 (1-2): 12-21.

The case of the soapstone bird has mobilized many stakeholders in Belgium, Germany and Zimbabwe and illustrates some of the dynamics involved in the repatriation and restitution of cultural property to countries of origin. The author was one of the key players in efforts that culminated in the return of the Great Zimbabwe Soapstone Bird from Germany to Zimbabwe, albeit on permanent loan to National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe. The issues of 'permanency of loan' and 'legal ownership' have yet to be resolved at the global level; this article examines some aspects of these issues.

Pwiti, G., Radimilahy, C. & Chami, F. (eds). 2007. *Settlement, Economies and Technology in the African Past. (Studies in the African Past Volume 6)*. Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press.

The latest volume in the African Archaeology Network series contains a few papers that will be of interest to readers. In the first chapter by Mats Kihlberg, a useful (and long overdue) history of the Swedish programme of archaeological development in Africa is presented. Gerhard Liesegang's chapter discusses the Zimunya tradition, relating this to the development of Nguni empires in Mozambique in the 17th to 19th centuries. Seke Katsamudanga and Gilbert Pwiti continue their analysis of the mid-Zambezi Valley site, Kamukombe this time from a faunal perspective. Their results show a bias towards hunting to fill meat needs. Sarah Mantshadi Motshatshipi contributes an important paper detailing the later archaeology of the Limpopo-Shashi confluence from a Botswana perspective. Finally, Plan Shenjere presents the results of her analysis of the faunal materials from Murahwa's Hill, eastern Zimbabwe. This volume suffers from poor quality printing, binding and editing with several figures indistinct and pages falling out.

Raftopoulos, B. & Mlambo, A. (eds). 2009. *Becoming Zimbabwe: A History from the Pre-Colonial Period to 2008*. Johannesburg: Jacana Press & Harare: Weaver Press.

Claiming to be the first comprehensive history of Zimbabwe from 850 to 2008, this book is, in a way long overdue (David Beach's 1994 *The Shona and their Neighbours* arguably preceded this book in scope). According to the blurb on the back, the book "tracks the idea of national belonging and citizenship and explores the nature of state rule, the changing contours of the political economy and the regional and international dimensions" of Zimbabwe's history. In the Introduction, Brian Raftopoulos and Alois Mlambo discuss these themes. The second chapter, written by Gerald Mazarire admirably sets the pre-colonial background, in a mere 38 pages (of over 260), discussing the rise and fall of states and ethnic groups up to the 1880s; hardly justification for the book to style itself as a history covering such a vast period when the first 1000 years are summarised in such a brief manner. Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni tracks developments to World War II while Mlambo writes about the settler economy and the emergence of nationalism to the 1960s. Consecutive chapters by Joseph Mitsi, Munyaradzi Nyakudya and Teresa Barnes discuss UDI developments to 1980 covering socio-economic factors as well as the war. James Muzondidya's chapter examines the first 17 years of Independence while Raftopoulos ends the book with a review of the last decade of the widespread financial and political crisis in Zimbabwe. The chapters are in general, well-written and extensively referenced and it is encouraging to see the impact and input of local scholarship. This book will likely become a standard reference on Zimbabwe for many years to come.

Thondhlana, T.P. & M. Martínón-Torres, M. 2009. Small size, high value: composition and manufacture of second millennium AD copper-based beads from northern Zimbabwe. *Journal of African Archaeology* 7 (1).

This investigation introduces a new dimension to the previous typological analyses of the metal bead assemblages from Zimbabwean archaeological sites. Here we present the microstructural and chemical characterisation of 50 copper-based metal beads from the collections of the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences (ZMHS) in Harare, most of them from Later Farming Community period sites in northern Zimbabwe (AD 1000 to AD 1900). The analytical study employed optical microscopy, ED-XRF and SEM-EDS. Compositionally, unalloyed copper, arsenical copper and tin bronzes were identified in the earlier sites, with some significant regional variations. From the seventeenth century, brass becomes the preferred alloy. The potential sources of these metals and their spatial and temporal patterning are discussed with reference to both the socio-economic dynamics prevailing in Zimbabwe during the period, and the symbolic value of metal beads in these communities. The metallographic study showed a preponderance of wrought beads, with a small but significant presence of cast forms. These fabrication technologies reflect little outside influence and are in line with indigenous African metal smithing methods.

Thorp, C. 2009. Excavations at Hlamba Mlonga Hill, Malilangwe Trust, South-Eastern Zimbabwe. *Journal of African Archaeology* 7 (2): 191-218.

Hlamba Mlonga hill in the semi-arid south-eastern lowveld of Zimbabwe was occupied between the late tenth and the fifteenth centuries AD by successive communities using Gumanye, Zimbabwe period 3, Zimbabwe period 4 and Hlengwe ceramics. Stylistic evidence from the ceramic assemblages suggests that interaction occurred with K2 and later with Mapungubwe ceramic groups to the south-west during the late tenth and thirteenth century occupations. Evidence from glass beads, faunal remains and remains of metallurgical activities shows that these past communities exploited local resources including wildlife and rich iron deposits in order to build wealth through trade with surrounding regions.

Waters, J. 2008. A Disappointing Outpost of the Portuguese Empire: Sofala Revisited. *Heritage of Zimbabwe* 27: 89-102.

A review and update on the Portuguese fort and trading post of Sofala. The article is well-illustrated and discusses a variety of important concepts including the state of Portuguese knowledge of the interior in the 16th and 17th centuries, centred on the journeys of Antonio Fernandes. Arrestingly the fort today is revealed to be less than a shadow of its former glory, resembling little more than a pile of rubble in the ocean. Equally valuably, the article ends with a discussion of contemporary Sofala, examining current religious practices associated with tombs in the area.

Wood, M. 2009. The glass beads from Hlamba Mlonga, Zimbabwe: classification, context and interpretation. *Journal of African Archaeology* 7 (2): 219-238.

The glass beads excavated at Hlamba Mlonga, a 10th - 15th century AD site in eastern Zimbabwe, are catalogued and separated into bead series based on morphology. They are compared to closely related beads that occur in archaeological contexts of the same period in the Shashe-Limpopo basin and the Zimbabwe culture area. Trade links and political consequences of trade shifts are explored. The chemical composition of selected beads, which arrived at a port (or ports) in southern Mozambique and from there were traded to Hlamba Mlonga and other sites in the interior, suggests they were manufactured in the Indian subcontinent and/or Southeast Asia.

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