

**AFRO-CENTERED HERITAGE MANAGEMENT APPROACHES FOR  
MAPUNGUBWE WORLD HERITAGE SITE ALONG VELE  
COLLIERY COAL MINING AREA IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE IN SOUTH AFRICA.**

By

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## ABSTRACT

This contribution reflects on the role of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in the promotion of African Knowledge Systems. The study is aligned to the notion that Mapungubwe Kingdom is the epitome of civilization built on African Knowledge Systems. The problem that the study is investigating is that the approach to heritage conservation in Limpopo Province is still reflecting European dominance of Africa. This in turn limits the expression of African Knowledge Systems in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The overarching aim of the study was to develop the Afro-centred heritage management tool that places Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the custodian of African Knowledge Systems.

The main questions that guided the study were the following: what is the role of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in the development of African Knowledge Systems? what are the major challenges that Afro-centred heritage management tool should address in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site? what are the interventions required to establish Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the agent for promotion of African Knowledge Systems? what needs to be done to institutionalize African Knowledge Systems within the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation program? Data was collected using in-depth interviews with the purposively sampled participants.

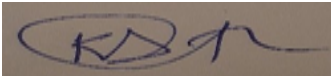
Secondary data sources in the form of recorded audio-visuals, minutes of the meetings, newspaper articles and other cultural activities performed to mention but few were also utilized. Data was analysed using a content qualitative data analysis method. This was the qualitative case study designed research that focused on the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation approach. Theoretically, the study utilized the cradle theory that claims that Africa is the cradle of humankind that birthed all ethnic groups in the world. Heritage theorists particularly palaeontologists attest to this sentiment. Insights were also drawn from the Afrocentric approach debate that advocates for location and promotion of African Knowledge Systems in any dialogue. The findings of the study show that there is underutilisation of African Knowledge Systems in the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site, Mapungubwe could be established into African Knowledge Systems University, and public institutions are not well

supported to manage heritage matters to mention but few. The study recommends that future research should pay attention on the exploitation of the use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the university for African Knowledge Systems.

**Key words: Afrocentric methods, Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and African Knowledge Systems.**

### DECLARATION

I, Khathutshelo Donald Lithole, declare that this research proposal is my original work and that it has not been submitted for any degree at any other university or institution. The proposal does not contain other persons' writing unless specifically acknowledged and referenced accordingly.



.....  
Lithole Khathutshelo Donald

24 March 2021

.....  
Date

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## GLOSSARY

- CoAL:** An acronym for Coal of Africa Limited founder of Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project
- Cultural Resources:** Cultural resources are objects, sites, popular ideas, military collections, and any information source of cultural significance to a group or individuals in a particular community.
- Heritage:** Heritage is anything inherited from the past.
- Heritage Impact Assessment:** A generally accepted tool used to detect the possibility of physical impediments of a heritage site owing to infrastructural development project.
- Heritage Site:** A place of cultural significance to a particular group of people
- Mapungubwe World Heritage Site:** A cultural heritage site of universal value depicting the first African Kingdom that plied commercial trade exchange with other continents ahead of the rest.
- World Heritage Site:** A place of both cultural and natural significance rated according to the standard set by the World Heritage Convention which is the strategic organ of the United Nation Education Science Cultural Organization.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### 1.0. Introduction

The debate on the role of African Knowledge Systems in heritage conservation domain is believed to have a far-reaching end than theorists anticipate. The general sentiment posits African Knowledge Systems as a fundamental tool for de-colonisation of Africa. Heritage management institutions are a focus point towards establishing the impact of African Knowledge Systems in the society. They are also seen as the vehicles that should expedite issues of transformation of the society and redressing colonial dominance of Africa. The study employs Afrocentric approach to explore the role of Afro-centred heritage management tool that places Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the custodian of African Knowledge Systems. This was achieved by making use of exploratory qualitative research. The study focused on the current use of African Knowledge Systems in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This exploration further assisted in the location of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the custodian of African Knowledge Systems. This section presents the background of the study, problem of the study, objectives, rationale, and discusses epochs defining the history of Mapungubwe Kingdom.

The study espouses the notion that Mapungubwe Kingdom is the epitome of African civilisation. As a result, it should serve as the custodian of African Knowledge Systems. According to Jordan (2012) there is very little done to erase the historic features or landmarks used to celebrate colonisation of Africa. African heritage is still overshadowed by monuments that triumphatically claim dominance of one racial group over the other. These include buildings and statues in the cities of South Africa that are found celebrating instrumental leaders that architected either colonialism or apartheid systems in South Africa. It is against this background where heritage practitioners were urged to come up with interventions to address imbalances in public heritage consumption. This debate gained momentum as it later manifested in the Rhodes must fall campaign led by the student for removal of Cecil John Rhodes statue from the University of Cape Town premises (Mayibuye-I-Azania 2015).

There are gaps identified on literature that necessitated the current study. Those gaps include among others; the influence of traditions of people of Mapungubwe Kingdom are less presented. The aspect of world heritage site is not fully exploited to locate the role of the affected communities where such sites are located. There is also concern over decision making processes towards awarding of the world heritage site statuses. Generally, Mapungubwe has been studied, interpreted, and managed as an archaeological site, a world heritage site, and the national park. It is therefore important to locate the role of African Knowledge Systems across all areas included in the site management. Afrocentric approach was employed to place African traditions, norms, and value at the centre of the discussion. According to Asante (2003) Afrocentricity is the fundamental system for social, economic, and political change seeking to harness the views of African people. The use of Afrocentric in research is still contested with theorists perceiving it as a political ideology, while others are pursuing to locate it among significant research methods. The study employed it as the research approach that seeks to establish the views of African people that should influence heritage management decisions.

There were two concepts emerging in the discussions that needed to be melted together for sanity. For example, heritage management and Afrocentric for possible establishment of Afro-centred heritage management approaches. The combination of these concepts assisted the study to establish similarities in the use of each, and areas where each differs from another. It also assisted in the establishment of challenges institutions responsible for heritage management are experiencing. There are several epochs that are discussed to establish problems accumulated and interventions tried to resolve them. The study identified several epochs namely the Mapungubwe Kingdom, Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape, Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and National Park, and Mapungubwe Knowledge Generation. There are academic and tribal contests that are cited in the study to locate the study within the social and physiological behaviour influencing heritage conservation on site. For example, the contest that is seeing archaeologists and mining infrastructure development institutions at loggerhead. The case of Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project in Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape was cited. It injected some robust intuition on the perceptions of law enforcement agencies, and macroeconomic development entrepreneurs on how each represents the view of ordinary people in global heritage management discourse.

## 1.2. Problem statement

The problem that the study is investigating is that the approach to heritage conservation in Limpopo Province is still reflecting European dominance of Africa. This in turn limits the expression of African Knowledge Systems in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Mapungubwe Kingdom earned iconic status first as the epitome of African civilization that culminated into a world heritage site. However, Van Schalkwyk (2010) claims that its contribution towards the development of African Knowledge Systems is not yet fully exploited. The argument that the current study advances is that if its contribution is not justifiable thus renders its global status elusive to the desirable African civilization agenda. It also argues that if heritage management processes are not guided by the need to develop African Knowledge Systems, the contribution of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site becomes less significant to immediate beneficiaries in local communities. This could have serious negative implication should members of local communities are called either to justify or withdraw their support to its conservation course.

The dispute against Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project along Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is employed to substantiate this argument. Basically, the current study is driven by the need to establish the current contribution of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in the development of African Knowledge Systems. The study is conducted against criticism by various authors blaming Africa's state of affair to colonialism and later apartheid in South Africa. According to (Setumu 2005) colonialism was the manifestation of the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 that partitioned Africa among European countries. South Africa became the British Colony until 1910 during the formation of the Union of South Africa. This came too soon after the signing of the Peace Treaty of Vereening in 1902 following the outbreak of South African War 1899-1902. The formation of the Union of South Africa benefited the Afrikaans as well as the English-speaking white communities ahead of indigenous black communities. African leaders organized themselves that saw them embarking on the struggle for the liberation of South African in 1912 under the South African Native National Congress later renamed African National Congress in 1921 (Turok 2008, Welsh 2009 & Thörn 2010). The approach to the liberation struggle took two dimensions namely political and spiritual warfare.

The period in which the African National Congress was formed, the Zion Christian Church was also established in 1918 while the former led the political aspect the later focused on the spiritual warfare of the same course (Lukhaimane 1980, Mafuta 2010, Mufamadi 2009). At the attainment of democracy, South African history was 110 years of impartation of Eurocentric heritage management systems. The promulgation of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 brought hope for rapid transformation of heritage management. However, the legislation could not be articulate on the role of traditional leadership and indigenous communities in heritage management process. Concentration of the entire political leadership became lot more on unsettling the white people that were still in strategic government leadership and economic development roles than heritage matters.

A call was extended to people for voluntary work for the development of South African heritage conservation systems. Participants were predominantly from the white ethnic groups. The result was that the endproduct still protected colonial heritage than African cultural heritage resources. A slogan later adopted was that history no matter how good or bad it became is still my heritage that cannot be altered or destroyed for any reasons. The legislation incriminates anyone that can alter, destroy, or deface heritage objects and properties with the legal penalty of 5 to 10 years imprisonment should anyone be found guilty by the court of law. Ndoro (2008) finds the heritage legislation of most African countries deepening European dominance discourse of the continent despite independence gained in 1950 on average. This literary caused delay in the identification and implementation of the heritage management tool that is articulate of African rather indigenous people position. It suffices to point out that the current legislation and properties that are claimed heritage resources of South Africa are imposed to the local people.

This tacitly amplifies Neluvhalani (2013), Lekgoathi (2013), and MiSTRA (2013) position that the value of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is underrated towards determination of its international status in 2003. Decision was arrived at looking at the material culture such as gold artifacts than emotional incentive of the lost city and Kingdom in the history of sub-Saharan Africa. Different studies explore the rise to collapse of Mapungubwe Kingdom, which, in contrast, one focuses on its accrual value through different epochs that make its historical contribution and qualification as the

heritage site. One further looks at its value and current use in justification of its role in Afrocentricity debate. This helps towards measuring the level of appreciation of this iconic site by people in academia and public administration. One uses this study to further establish the overall commitment of emerging scholars towards reclaiming and repositioning of Afrocentricity in African heritage studies.

It is important to revise factors that propelled the formation of the African National Congress (ANC) and Zion Christian Church (ZCC) respectively. Asante (2009) postulates that Afrocentricity is depended upon emotional investment and effective use of commodities rather material culture such as symbols to promote it. On material culture value and similarities both ANC and ZCC uniform are in the dominant colours are black, green, and yellow. On the emotional incentives the former embrace political ideology while the later settles for Afro-Christian values. The meaning of these three colours can be derived from the overall interpretation of the current national flag. According to the Department of Arts and Culture National Symbol Charts (1994) the colour Green resembles vegetation and the land that black people have been deprived. The yellow represents the mineral resources of the country and the black colour symbolizes the dark years the country endures of all wars of resistance. The common features in heritage terms between Moria City of Zion Christian Church and Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is that both are arguably cultural landscapes. The former is currently used for theological appeasement while the latter is used for eco-tourism and game reserves.

Instead, it gives the political sentiments although the global community is made to celebrate its ideological contribution to trade and investment of Africa in global market before the invasion of Europeans. The Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project ignites the debate to investigate the economic growth incentives towards managing conservation imperatives. According to Chirikure (2013) and Mulaudzi (2013) the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom participated in mining and industrial developments as some metal objects and artifacts suggest. In this study, I am arguing that the way in which heritage conservation theorists are managing the legacy of the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom, one fears to reduce or underscore their actual contribution in economic development. Instead, they are portrayed as the community that only contributed to heritage conservation matters than other social, economic, and political development

in their times. In essence, one should point out that people should be afforded the opportunity to make self-determination of material culture and spiritual areas they cherish in establishing own heritage sites. They ought to indicate how such heritage should be managed although one explores the relevance of Afrocentricity in heritage management.

### **1.3. Rationale of the study**

There is a general need particularly to those involved in heritage management to be articulate on the role of Afrocentricity in conservation of cultural heritage resources matters. There is also a need to establish a common ground that reconciles heritage conservation and mineral exploitation processes. A public dialogue was conducted on public broadcast and print media on the impact of Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project on Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation status. One uses this dialogue to extract Afrocentric sentiments on the management of similar predicaments in future by heritage compliance agencies and mineral exploitation companies. It is important to present a brief background towards the development of this dialogue for proper contextualization in the study. In the wake of a successful bid by government to attract mining investments, cultural heritage theorists envisage massive extinction of significant heritage sites. Limpopo Economic Growth and Development Plan 2009-2014 (2009) celebrates good revenue through investment returns in the mine and the growing interest of potential investors in the sector. The celebration comes after the United Nation Education, Science, and Cultural Organization also known as UNESCO (2005) has just listed some World Heritage Sites lost in favour of mining infrastructure development initiatives. South Africa as an affiliate to the United Nation and its strategic organs is exposed to heritage conservation challenges other countries are experiencing particularly in the management of World Heritage Sites. UNESCO report is interpreted differently by end users, which some begin to place mining as a major threat to heritage conservation. This eventually places mineral exploitation and heritage sectors into conflict sometimes without justifiable cause. Ndlovu (2017) reckons that the conflict is so entrenched that heritage managers consider infrastructure developers as threat, meanwhile the later perceives the form as anti-development agent or a stumbling block. More often such conflicts are resolved by the local communities that have influence on what favours them best between conservation of cultural heritage



resources and mineral exploitations. Ndlovu (2012), Boni, Garibay, and Mc Call (2015), and Lauluma and Koivisto (2017) share the view that unless local communities are empowered it will be difficult for them to defend their heritage usage rights. Criticism leveled against heritage conservation institutions is that they tend to be conservative in their approach to cultural resources management. Silidi (2015) and Van Schalkwyk (2010) warn that the approach to heritage conservation needs to change with time that they incorporate matters that are less significant to heritage conservation during planning.

The Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project versus Mapungubwe World Heritage Site dialogue sets a tone on major challenge facing conservation institutions in Limpopo Province. The orientation of Afro-centred heritage management tool is guided towards leveling the ground for integrated conservation management systems. Another important aspect is that the study intends to safeguard the World Heritage Status as it is guided in terms of heritage management principles. This is simply because both institutions are located within the study area along the Musina Local Municipality. More importantly, Roodt (2009) points out that the two institutions are just 12 kilometers apart such that the operation of one could easily influence the existence of the other. This debate is furthered by looking at the influence of mineral exploitation in heritage conservation.

The study investigates this dialogue to establish the risk involved. It explores the potential areas for collaboration using qualitative research design. Archaeologists advocate for establishment of Heritage Impact Assessment tool for detection of hazardous substance to heritage sites and artefacts during earthmoving activities. These include construction of bulkwater supply systems, powerlines, roads, bridges, mineral exploitation plants, and re-zoning of township. Phaswana (2017) points out, there has been study done as commissioned by Coal of Africa, which preliminary review confirms that the study was done to inform the project Masterplan. The gaps established that propel the proposed study include among others; one dimensional view highly influenced by archaeology without capturing the views of indigenous people.

The report is grounded to the area earmarked for mineral exploitation operation, it is less articulate on mining impact to both tangible and intangible cultural heritage phenomena used to motivate for World Heritage Site status. It is important to point out that there is evidence of commercial interest on the studies conducted, which could have compromised the outcome. Hassan (2017) warns of sectarian prejudices that emerging heritage professionals should take into cognizance that can compromise the quality of the work done. Still, Phaswana (2017) and ENCA (2017) allude that Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project proposal satisfied the requirement set towards attainment of mining license. This decision was further challenged by the aggrieved parties consisting of eco-tourism investors in the bid to force government to rescind the decision to grant Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining license. Some newspapers made the following headlines: "Selling of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site for Australian *Dollar*". This article also finds expression in Esterhysen (2013), "Anglo eyes Mapungubwe" (City Press 2009), while the Mail and Guardian (2009) also captures the same sentiments. These newspaper articles ignited fear for possible extinction of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to mineral exploitation.

Phaswana (2017) asserts that priority has been on the harvest of mineral resource than preservation of indigenous knowledge system and heritage. Ndlovu (2012) holds the view that despite the legal correctness of the decision made, significant heritage sites are subjected to destruction. The licensing of infrastructure development in area earmarked for heritage is not as difficult as the pursuit of alternate site for major projects. Heritage management sector is currently in paradigm shifting phase towards finding a new thought leader after archaeology, which one finds it necessary to locate Afrocentricity as the alternate approach. This study focuses on laying the guiding principles governing heritage using Afrocentricity approach. This is set to be achieved through the development of Afro-centred heritage management instrument for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

According to Soon (2017), Luluma (2017), and Lambadi (2017) archaeology enjoyed the privileges of being thought leader ahead of other disciplines in heritage management in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The approach to archaeology is criticized for its contribution to blockages of infrastructure development initiatives in sensitive archaeological sites. This makes licensing of major projects difficult to obtain even for

projects believed to be wired for economic development for the benefit of rural communities. Meskell (2011) and Esterhysen (2013) attest that the dispute against Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project reached UNESCO for intervention. There was delegation sent to meet with the government of South Africa towards finding mitigation measures favourable to both parties involved in the dispute. It emerges that the dispute was even filed with court of law prior the involvement of UNESCO.

The aggrieved party used both print and electronic media to express dissatisfaction with the licensing of Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project. It necessitated the current study to utilize this case to establish the location of African Knowledge Systems in the dispute. It assisted the study to reflect on main challenges facing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The study benefited out of the dialogues shared in print and electronic devices platforms. The dialogues were found to have deeply entrenched academic perspective while local people loose their voices along the way. This implies that the dialogue was higher to the comprehension of ordinary people. The study investigates the role of African Knowledge Systems in heritage conservation matters and vice versa. The Department of Environmental Affairs (2013) commissioned for the Heritage Impact Assessment to establish how mineral exploitation could impact conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The study focused on possible reasons that can lead to the extinction of the site. It also focused on factors that can influencing UNESCO to withdraw the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape world heritage site status.

According to Chirikure (2013) and City Press (2009) the Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project may not influence the decision for retention or withdrawal of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site status. This is simply because the area earmarked for mineral exploitation is outside the demarcated conservation area. The report confirms that there is collapsing of heritage conservation systems in Limpopo Province. The role of heritage law enforcement authority could not be traced in the dialogues that inspired the dispute against Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project. There is, however, no contest that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site exists within rich mineral and cultural heritage resources terrain. This automatically triggers competition between cultural heritage and mineral resource harvesters that government is expected to manage properly. Criticism against Coal of Africa Limited

needs validation if they are done in the best interest of heritage conservation or it is just because of market competition.

Following, Meskell (2011), Ndlovu (2017) and Esterhysen (2013) it is important to undertake an independent study to establish the implications of these criticisms to social, economic, political, and heritage conservation objectives of the country. It is also important to establish if heritage in this whole contest is not used to satisfy sectarian interests of the aggrieved. There is therefore the need to validate these claims using empirical evidence justifying or condemning the administrative action undertaken that triggered the dispute. Phaswana (2017), ENCA (2017) and Neluvhalani (2013) share concern over poor handling of administrative process of the Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project in citing failure to consult with relevant stakeholders. This is believed to have fueled sudden call for partial withdrawal of Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project, which is still not clear yet if such decision is a win or a loss thinking of other social, and heritage demands.

Boni, Garibay, and McCall (2015) and Cayron (2017) warn that infrastructure development projects apply different approaches that the authors describe them as the vehicle to communicate with local communities. Among others the authors mention sacred sites, rooted African Knowledge Systems, scientific language and jargons utilization, envisaged tools to be used during all project phases from light to heavy machinery, identification of areas of common interests between communities and infrastructure developers, grounding areas of possible conflict such as land usage and ownership rights, people expectations against project deliverables, overall legal framework managing the relationship between serviceproviders and intended beneficiaries and possible recourse, public awareness of their rights and limitations, areas of collaboration between project founders and government, private sectors, and leadership within communities, and other major risk factors. All factors raised could easily be inferred as stumbling blocks or unnecessary punishment than satisfaction of requirements set in relevant legal prescripts.

Archaeologists concede that economic growth demand in developing countries such as South Africa has increased severe consequences in heritage management discipline. Gould (2017) in addition says that inability of heritage sector to influence major corporates and command of political respect contribute to the sudden decline of heritage sector. Ndlovu (2017) postulates that there is high poverty level affecting most African communities. It is resulting from wide income gaps between the rich and the poor. This leaves those communities vulnerable that people easily take advantage of their state of affair to impose projects. There are political influenced decisions that force compliance enforcement authorities to relax policies. They do this out of fear of criticism and intimidation. Heritage resources management matters are generally classified as instruments for social cohesion and nation building. These are the contests that often see archaeologists at loggerheads with infrastructure development agents. This deepens criticism against heritage sector claiming that they are anti-economic development initiatives. This is the behaviour that Hassan (2017) regards as act of ignorance on the side of heritage managers to see and align their practice within changing global economic environment. Ndlovu (2017) in support urges heritage managers to adapt to the business demands of the 21st century in their approach to heritage conservation matters. This is the view that Hassan (2017) further claims that archaeologists should face it that the circumstance that gave rise to it has long changed, while the heritage sector is failing to match up with the pace of the corporate world. This sentiment also finds expression in Neluvhalani in MiSTRA (2013) in claiming that institutions such as Mapungubwe World Heritage Site have long been reduced to archaeological sites in global conservation discourse. The author further postulates that unless other disciplines such as African Knowledge Systems are explored, iconic heritage sites such as this will continue to service one dimension than what it should service.

In view of these sentiments Chirikure (2013) calls for change of focus towards revival of metallurgical industries that shaped the economic pattern of Mapungubwe Kingdom. MiSTRA (2013) further elevates the call for revitalisation of cultural heritage industries. Netshitenzhe in MiSTRA (2013) shares the view that the Kingdom of Mapungubwe offers diverse experiences to inform current public policies. Chirikure (2013), Mulaudzi (2013), and MiSTRA (2013) opine that mining has been the pillar of strength in the economic pattern of Mapungubwe Kingdom. This tacitly claims that the debate over

possible clash between mining and heritage sectors needs revision for proper contextualization. There is a need to further explore the contribution of heritage in Afrocentricity debate and vice versa. This is equally important phenomenon that the current study should address. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape history offers the opportunity to re-examine its significance above what is globally known of it.

According to Neluvhalani (2013), Ntsoane (2013) and Lekgoathi (2013) the history of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape has been limited to the satisfaction of Archaeology over other relevant disciplines such as African Knowledge Systems. The authors have long called for rapid shifting from archaeology to a more inclusive approach that one anticipates that Afro-centered heritage management tool should provide alternate approach. This will be done in view of mining infrastructure development imperatives. Equally important there is also a need to establish Afrocentricity as the thought leader in heritage conservation discourse either as a compliment or counter thought to archaeological views.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

##### **1.4.1. Broader objective**

The overarching aim of the study was to explore the role of Afro-centred heritage management tool that places Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the custodian of African Knowledge Systems.

##### **1.4.2. Specific objectives**

- To establish the current contribution of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in the development of African Knowledge Systems.
- To utilize Afrocentric approach in the establishment of conservation challenges facing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.
- To establish Afro-centred heritage management tool as the intervention measure for promotion of African Knowledge Systems in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.
- To explore institutionalization of African Knowledge Systems through establishment of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the custodian.

## 1.5. Research questions

- What is the role of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in the development of African Knowledge Systems?
- What are the major challenges that Afro-centred heritage management tool should address in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site?
- What are the interventions required to establish Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the agent for promotion of African Knowledge Systems?
- What needs to be done to institutionalize African Knowledge Systems within the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation program?

## 1.6 Contextualization of heritage conservation in the study

### 1.6.1 Definition of heritage

Ndoro (2015) postulates that finding the most appropriate definition of heritage is very challenging. Different people turn biased to issues that best describe their fantasies or social experiences. According to Mumma (2008) heritage in the broadest sense is that which is inherited. Everything which the ancestors bequeath may be called heritage. These may include landscapes, structures, objects, traditions. Humans have understood the concept of heritage ever since they developed artefacts and language. South African History Online (2017) sees heritage as a deceptively simple idea made up of the practices and traditions that are passed on from parents to children, but significantly it includes that which is part of the national consciousness.

According to UNESCO (2009) heritage is anything that is inherited either from the ancestral world or something of God's makings rather natural geological landscapes, languages, spiritual belief systems, sacred sites such as rivers, caves, mountains, and other natural phenomena. Ndlovu (2013) argues that the approach towards selection of what should be viewed heritage of national significance boils down to the question of power enjoyed by the individual that is being celebrated through a particular monument. The author refers to how household contents and the life of Nelson Mandela are perceived as items of national heritage significance, while those with whom fought for the same course of liberation of South Africa are not classified accordingly. However, the author concurs with Tokins (2006) that such determinations are done either to consolidate political power or other forms of propaganda. There are two important variables emerging from these definitions namely, the cultural and

natural history phenomena. Afrocentricity benefits out of the cultural heritage attributes that are also complimentary to natural history phenomenon as further substantiated below. These include natural heritage resources such as fauna, flora, geological formation features, rivers, dams, and lakes. The inspiritual incentives that humans derived from the natural heritage resources manifest into cultural heritage resources. This implies that heritage is all that people value for cultural and spiritual satisfaction.

### **1.6.2 Heritage conservation**

According to Matero (1990) preservation and conservation concepts are used interchangeably by theorists to describe human interventions towards stabilisation of archaeological sites, repairs of damaged objects, and in setting standards for sustainable use of significant heritage sites and objects. It is important to present distinctive views on reasons to conserve using Eurocentric and Afrocentric arguments to elaborate. The Ontario conservation approach seeks to acknowledge the copyright holdings of property designs in that have been in use say for over 100 years that are still intact. It is important to indicate that there are cultural sentiments derived from the same historical properties depending on how on different people relate to them. These may include important political gatherings, weddings, fortifications, and religious motives to mention but few. Conservation in their approach is limited to minimum interference to architectural expressions of properties of historical significance. This tacitly implies that heritage compliance authorities are established and empowered to manage access and other remedial works required to repair or maintain such properties. It is expected of compliance authorities to guard in defence of heritage at large of any new development that may impede the historical sentiments of that particular property. There is commercial interest attached that necessitates stringent control against loss of historic properties.

In the case of Alberta Province in Canada, families club themselves to protect own heritage with the help of government, particularly, the contribution to knowledge, designs, making of local and national history done by their loved ones (Alberata 2000). Access to such properties for reproduction and other use are governed in consultation with the designated structure within their terms of operations. The role of compliance authorities is limited to advisory of government in the implementation of programs



aiming towards infrastructure development. Institutions like museums play significant role to safeguard significant tangible objects making the history of the country, provinces, families, and academic institutions to mention but few. In view of this discussion, it suffices to argue that Eurocentric approach to conservation focuses lot more on built environment or architectural heritage. Property resale value and adaptation of old buildings to new infrastructure development needs and persistent re-adaptive use of existing structures is highly commendable. It emerges in the study that most properties that are celebrated the most are owned by government although families and other individuals equally enjoy the intellectual rights ownership for the designs. This, however, brings together both end users and owners for a common interest in the sustainable use of the historic structure.

Contrary, this was different in South Africa since attainment of democracy that inherited buildings from former homelands namely Transkei and Ciskei now Eastern Cape, Bophothatswana renamed Northwest, and Venda that has since been incorporated to Limpopo Province (Paladi 2008). There has been inferences that such are apartheid legacy that new government must build own infrastructure. In some cases, only buildings for strategic administration of those homelands were adapted and are still in use. The architectural designs though are not so sophisticated to give rare cultural sentiments from phase value to meet heritage conservation criteria. Nonetheless, they enjoy overall covering as part of the collective historic assets within the national liberation heritage phenomenon. It is important to reflect on the Eurocentric view towards heritage conservation given the multicultural establishment of Limpopo Province. It also helps in building the argument on how different ethnic groups relate to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

Towards locating Afrocentricity in heritage management dialogue, it is important to first establish how different authors describe African heritage. One is tempted to establish the unique aspects contrary to its European counterpart in usage and emotional incentives attached to such objects and sites. This will enable the study to establish if Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is currently used towards institutionalization of African view to conservation of heritage. The main point one is driving here is that the interpretation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and global sentiments must equally institutionalize Afrocentricity phenomenon. The University of Cape Town Research

Report 2013-2014 (2015) identifies three driving pillars namely, cultural identity, independence, and power dynamics as instruments to establish African heritage. Negri (2008) derives a common function out of South African, Ghana, Tanzania, and Botswana legal framework, which among others is to use heritage to build the national estate. According to the Australian Burra Charter (2013) and the South African National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999, the national estate in heritage management context is the list of significant cultural and natural sites and objects. However, it is important to point out that these two documents are not explicit on the descriptive features towards determination of either objects or heritage site. Ultimately, the level of significance is limited to the popular ideology that in most cases led by the political institutions in power. In view of this, Christiansen (2007), Saunders (2007), Maaba (2007) and Nkondo (1975; 2007; 2010 & 2017) allude that, institutions of knowledge management such as archives, museums and libraries often become vulnerable to political owing to political pressure to popularise ideology of the day. In the case of Zimbabwe, the authors point out that the National Archives and Museums have been instrumental in winning public sympathy to the political propaganda rooted in past achievements. It is not known of any literature so far that provides a distinctive definition of African heritage from its European counterpart. However, there is a general understanding that African people attach spiritual meaning to sacred sites and emotional attributes to their lost touch to specific sites that define their origin and probably their destiny.

According to Chirikure (2013) heritage in African perspective is priceless and worth of its preservation. Ndoro (2015) and Negri (2008) hold the view that reliance on colonial legal framework compromises African contribution to heritage of the continent. The National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 particularly section 32 classifies symbols, motifs, rituals, education, scripts, proverbs, language, and ceremonies to mention but few, as living heritage objects that form part of the national estate. Asante (2003) identifies the same instruments as the vehicle to promote Afrocentricity if fully utilized. In both Eurocentric and Afrocentric approaches culture play pivotal role in the determination of significant heritage objects and sites. Different communities attach meaning to objects to satisfy their cultural heritage fulfilment, which in turn makes them choosey of what to preserve and discard. This makes heritage relatively dependent upon public sympathy for survival although scholars and theorists are upbeat that one

generation cannot decide on behalf of those that are yet to come. This only means that in the case of emerging circumstance to decide to dispose a particular heritage site for various reason, decision makers should be candid as the future generation could have a different view perhaps to retain that which is not regarded valuable by the current.

### **1.6.3 Immovable heritage property**

According to Demas and Agnew (2014) immovable heritage properties are significant cultural and natural sites from which oral history is derived. A typical example is Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape that became the World Heritage Site in 2003 at United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization conference. The Great Zimbabwean Ruins and many other sites of fortification during different wars of resistance, particularly, anti-colonialism and apartheid forts that some are still intact throughout the country. They also include concentration camps, rivers, caves, and sacred sites also known as Zwitaka, and burial sites also called Zwiendeulu commonly used by Vhavenda ethnic group in South Africa and other parts of Africa.

According to Junod (1912) and Matshidze (2013) Vhavenda value Zwitaka and Zwiendeulu for spiritual mediation between the living and the ancestors called Vhazimu. The author further states that there are rituals performed by Makhadzi in any African homestead. In some instance, Ma--khadzi [singular] or Dzi--khadzi [plural] are sisters to King, chiefs, headmen and the ordinary father in a particular family. Scholars have argued that the eldest sister automatically assumes the role of being Khadzikhulu or senior Makhadzi. Matshidze (2013) avers that Makhadzi is a high esteemed position in the family homestead regardless of age of the title holder. The role played by the candidate affirms that female persons have been holding critical decision making potfolio in the family, particularly in the royal families. They serve as high priestes that render libation also known as Muphaso among Vhavenda. It is done at secluded areas with limited access to strangers for fortification and preservation of the respective family tradition. This also includes areas where male and female initiations are held during and in post school festivities where limited access is granted.

In the case of Bapedi of Ga-Matlala a landmark which is rock popularly known to local people as Leswika-la-Kgoke. It is located on the top of the mountain dividing Phetole and Mmadietane villages in the Capricorn District. The rock is used in commemoration of the joined Bapedi-Ndebele war against Boer invasion in 1854 (LIHRA 2016). Vhavenda also make use of rivers, dams, and lakes as cultural heritage landmarks for spiritual sanitation. A typical example is the use of Lake Fundudzi by Vhatavhatsindi clan of Tshiavha. Quite significantly, the Vhatavhatsindi clan is known for two and Lake Fundudzi heritage commodities that are also attached to the natural environment. These are the indigenous tree called Mutavhatsindi [the Ochnaceae-Brackenridgea zanguibarica Oliv (Tshisikhawe n.d). Mutavhatsindi is classified under endangered species that is significantly used for medicinal and house fortification purposes among Vhavenda. Importantly, lake Fundudzi that was declared a National Heritage Site by the South African Heritage Resources Agency in 2014.

According to the Government Gazette (2014) Lake Fundudzi was declared a National Heritage Site because of its setting, rich living heritage, and history, as a sacred site, and for its scientific value. Water reticulation and African Knowledge Systems for cloud harvests are important contribution that these sacred sites make to local people. Hannaford (2015) and Murimbika (2006) aver that the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom practised rainmaking tradition. The Balobedu tribe of South Africa under Queen Modjadji Dynasty are still practising rainmaking tradition. According to Motshekga (2017) the dynasty was found in 1800 led by her majesty Maselekwane Modjadji I. It was established 400 years after the arrival of Masingo tribe. This is the period that many tribes scattered from Dzata to establish themselves southwards to the present-day Polokwane (Neluvhalani 2013 & Matshidze 2013).

This implies that the decision to establish Mapungubwe Kingdom along the Shashe and Vhembe rivers was influenced by rainmaking tradition. It was again influenced by pastoral reasons. It challenges the notion of drought and other reasons given in disguise of forcibly removed people of this Kingdom from their land. It emerges in Hanford (2013), Murimbika (2006), Semenya (2013), and Huffman (1999) that the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom exercise their cultural heritage rites in different parts of the current demarcated World Heritage Site. For instance, some sites were used

for military fortification, initiation schools, metal industries pottering, and vernacular architectural expressions (Chirikure 2013 & Mulaudzi 2013).

The study establishes that some reasons that are frequently given on the rise and fall of Mapungubwe Kingdom include the following: the drought relief, outbreak of malaria and tsetse fly infections, and poor rainfall in the area. Ralushai (2005), Hanford (2013), and Murimbika (2006) refute the claims in citing that the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom were subjected to forced removal that later see the same catchment used for mineral exploitation. Ralushai (2005) explicitly argues that people were forcedly removed to consolidate colonial bordering separating South Africa from Botswana and Zimbabwe. Murimbika (2006) claims that the rainmaking capacity proves that the drought relief mentioned as reasons for collapse is exaggerated. Hannaford (2015) claims that perhaps the people of this Kingdom were very hospitable to allow strangers in their sacred spaces that in retaliation drought experienced was punitive than naturally justifiable.

#### **1.6.4 Legal framework governing heritage conservation**

This section incorporates the third criteria towards intensification of Afrocentric approach in heritage management. Asante (2009) injects the sense of urgency towards institutionalization of Afrocentricity, particularly to reclaim Africa cultural heritage. According to Hall (2008), Ndor (2008), and Negri (2008), the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of South Africa was promulgated in 1999. This was done to amend the National Monument Act of 1968 as it was viewed not articulate of African version to heritage management. Major changes suggested in the new legislation was the division of labour given that administratively the country was divided into nine provinces namely: Limpopo, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Northwest, Eastern Cape, Kwazulu-Natal, Northern Cape, Western Cape, and Free State. The Act makes provision of the establishment of independent heritage compliance authorities. For example, the South Africa Heritage Resources Agency manages the national estate, Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority is its sister provincial organization. There is also a provision for the establishment of local authorities at municipality level for heritage conservation. It was difficult to classify the location of Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project area in view of all three levels of government.

This is simply because section 7 and 8 of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 provides for grading and declaration of heritage sites and objects. The mineral exploitation area was not submitted as a heritage site that could have required its grading status. It requires the grading tool to locate a heritage site to certain level of governance. Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project was informed by the heritage studies conducted that there are no cultural resources on the surface threatened by the proposed task (Roodt 2009). The legislation sets demarcation lines for each role players that cannot be overridden. It is important to indicate that another piece of legislation is the World Heritage Convention Act of 1972. It governs world heritage properties located all over the world. South Africa is an affiliate to UNESCO and the World heritage convention through the United Nations.

However, there is no graduation criteria set in the National Heritage Act 25 of 1999 on acquisition of the world heritage status. The South African Heritage Resources Agency is obliged to ensure that world heritage properties are managed properly. It ensures that the sites retain their intrinsic and extrinsic value that earned a site the world heritage site in retrospective. According to Hall (2008) South African Heritage Resources Africa is expected to advise the Minister responsible for arts and culture on the state of national heritage conservation. The Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project dispute was one case that could only be resolved by the Minister of the Department of Environmental Affairs. The involvement of the South African Heritage Resources Agency in this dispute was premature given that its provincial sister organization was not yet involved. Generally, it is expected to set the standards for best conservation practice in the country through a series of consultations with provincial and local authorities. This identifies the role of community-based structures and individuals to participate in the process.

However, one needs to be certain if this is the case operationally. The legislation makes provision for management of infrastructure development initiatives inclusive of the construction of mining plants, roads, bulkwater supply and reticulation plants to mention but few. According to South African Heritage Resources Agency (2005) the responsible developing agent is expected to apply for either exemption or permit to put any infrastructure in a particular area. The permitting process is done in an

integrated management system that involve departments responsible for mineral resources, natural resources with South African Heritage Resources Agency managing cultural heritage resources. These institutions collaborate through consultative program the saw each making written comments to approve or object to the set proposal.

According to Sibayi (2009) each institution makes independent decision that may derail the licensing processes. There are penalties set should one party issues permit or license without consulting with one another. However, the decisions that each institution makes can be challenged and overridden by the other as there are no formal agreements reached. South African Heritage Resources Agency is also expected to enforce certain principles set for proper heritage management process. These principles are derived from section 5 of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999, which states that anyone involved in the management of heritage resources is guided by the following principles: *Heritage resources provide evidence of the origin of South African Society and are finite, none renewable, and irreplaceable, every generation has a moral responsibility to act as trustee of the national heritage resources in the interests of all South Africans, heritage has the capacity to promote reconciliation, understanding and respect and contribute to nation building and unification of all South Africans, and heritage practitioners must guard against the use of heritage for sectarian or political gain.* Nonetheless, this section attests that heritage in institutionalized in South Africa with institutions mandated to drive its objectives.

### **1.6.5 Important heritage conservation dialogue**

#### **1.6.5.1 Archaeological perspective**

Archaeologists over the years propagated for equitable share of the ecosystem particularly in areas where cultural heritage and mineral resources co-exist (Ndlovu 2017, Gould 2017, Hassan 2017, & Soon 2007). Archaeologists are arguably in retreat in their call for paradigm shifting from conservative conservation to development-oriented approach. They urge one another to be more industrial to adapt to modern economic development demands. The authors are caught between two decisions either to consider collision or collaboration with infrastructure development institutions. It is not clear though if the heritage sector is ready for the proposed change and on

how it will help to counter rapid extinction of significant heritage sites. The study is set to establish the middle ground through the development of an Afrocentric based cultural heritage resources management program. The debate on the impact of Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project on conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is used to establish areas of conflict and collaboration between heritage and mining sectors. Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project endures criticism in favour of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site business. According to ENCA (2017) the partial withdrawal of Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project comes at a very promising stage for possible collaboration of two sectors sharing different business interests. Nonetheless, there is still the need to level the ground pro-actively in preparation for the changing cultural heritage sector. Stieglitz (1998) encourages for maximum use of both natural and cultural heritage resources for economic development. The author argues that very little was done to explore the utilization of heritage resources for economic development.

The author further encourages developing countries to focus on promotion of untapped potential economic development sector. Van Schalkwyk (2015) echoes this sentiment in claiming that indigenous community's own cultural heritage than the mines. So, identification and promotion of significant sites is still imperative though new management instruments are required. This suggests that the call by emerging archaeologist is still relevant to the current study. However, towards reaching collaboration agreements, it will still be expected of them to produce capital investment assets. It therefore stands to reason that world heritage sites such as Mapungubwe have justifiable social and commercial value. This suggests that archaeology too should be administered as an enabling tool for social-economic and political development. The study argues contrary to Gould (2017) sentiments that heritage sector is unable to influence major corporate decisions. It also shares a contrasting view on claim that heritage sector does not command political respect leading to sudden decline of heritage conservation.

This is simply because government made efforts to promulgate heritage legislation and establish national compliance enforcement authorities. The compliance authorities are fragmented and compete than complimenting one another. Ndlovu (2017) argues that high poverty in most rural communities make people to choose



mining than heritage conservation matters. Contrary, Australian experiences show how aboriginal communities rejecting mineral exploitation in rich cultural heritage land. The reverse of the sentiment captured in Esterhysen would say: “rejecting Australian Dollar to clintch on African heritage” had the people around Mapungubwe World Heritage Site find value in its preservation. Professionals in heritage and natural resources would have found it easier to make favourable decisions if ever there are known adverse risks of their decisions. This aspect attests that the value of heritage is only known to heritage professionals than the communities intended. This can only change if people at the grassroots level make the determination of things they value or define as heritage (Nkondo 2012). It then stands to reason that Afro-centred heritage management tool should maximize people choices by creating alternate decision-making platforms.

#### **1.6.5.2 Heritage versus mining development perspective**

It is important to present the holistic view on the role of Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project in the study. According to Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Environmental Impact Assessment Report (2009) its license covers farms that follow: Overvlakte 125 MS portion 3, 4, 5, 6 &13, the Bergen op Zoom 124 MS, Semple 155 MS, and Voorspoed 836 MS. The overall project space is estimated at 8663 hectares on the northern border of the Republic of South Africa within the Musina municipal area. Roodt (2009) alludes that the proposed project is an open cast mining with the potential to do underground excavations. According to Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project Masterplan (2009) the underground operations would require ventilation shaft. There are issues of visual pollution that both heritage and environmental management institutions seek to reduce. The shaft also has the potential to cause disturbances in the ecosystem, particularly the subsistence area of both fauna and flora.

Another project phase is topsoil and overburden stockpiles with the potential to cause air pollution because of dust and emissions that will be produced during operations. Run-of-Mines (ROM) coal storage area will arguably increase pollution on land, water, and visually to the disadvantage of the world heritage site. The report encourages further research along the Limpopo River basement for water quality assurance throughout the project. There would be an erection of conveyor system to the crusher

point where metallurgical work will be conducted. Given the sensitivity of the area, Roodt (2009) warns that there are possibilities of discovering heritage objects during construction. The author recommends the use of light machinery during construction and excavation works.

Another physical structure to be built is a product stockpile area, which may increase land pollution. All future alignments that the project will require may ignite another impact study. The Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Environmental Impact Assessment Report (2009) sets estimation of social and economic development benefits should the project succeeds. These benefits are set to be enjoyed at different intervals of the project. The project is expected to attract water and electricity supply in the area that communities may access. It would provide business opportunities for the emerging entrepreneurs. It is reported that the project will contribute towards job creation that will boost local economy, and migrant labour in the Musina area. The Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project Masterplan (2009) asserts that it will provide mining services within the stipulated heritage and environmental legal framework. Community Based Organizations are set to benefit through funding opportunities that would be created in the future. It also indicates that 2.5% of total production will be consumed locally, while the balance is set for export. The report further indicates that during the project development phases, 15% would be spent towards complementation of the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment strategic objective. Unemployed people are set to benefit during construction and towards the mining closure. It emerges that 12 925 direct and indirect jobs will be created. It is also estimated that the project will contribute roughly R1.8 billion to the GDP of South Africa, particularly during major infrastructure development phases. Operationally, it is estimated that R7.6 billion would be spent annually. In addition, the plan postulates that 51% of R14.5 billion capital budget is estimated as the revenue set to benefit Limpopo province.

Politically, the benefits should be seen through conformity and support to government's social and economic development initiatives. The mining project is expected to support infrastructure development plan of government. It will also contribute towards skills and capacity building. It is important to indicate that politics is used to reflect the legitimate power vested upon individuals with either direct or indirect

influence on the shareholding decisions and probably the permitting of mining projects in South Africa. In terms of the Millennium Development goals established by UNESCO, countries were expected to produce evidence of efforts towards halving poverty by 2014. The Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project offers South Africa an opportunity to present a promising report to the global communities. At the project planning phase, there are few shareholders that have been indicated in the report. Those are Eyesizwe Coal (PTY) Ltd with 20% shares, Shangoni Management Services with 6%, while Coal of Africa holds 74%, which makes it the majority shareholder.

The report indicates that out of Coal of Africa's 74% shares, there is Mvelaphanda Group holding 17% shares while the African Management Limited (AML) is set to benefit through a private equity initiative between Mvelaphanda Holdings (Pty) Ltd and Och-Ziff Capital Management Group LLC (New York), which holds 71% stake. Nonetheless, it is still a highly contested terrain whether mining threatens heritage, or it is sentiment lacking tangible substance. Yet, the study attests that there was a dispute filed to court of law against Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project. According to Esterhysen (2013) the project was perceived to be threatening the conservation objectives of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The claim was filed despite of studies conducted to validate it. This comes after media and people in academia express fear for possible extinction of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It is envisaged that the mining project as it progresses will produce mineral substance that may tarnish the descriptive and intrinsic value of World Heritage Site.

According to the Department of Environmental Affairs (2013), Chirikure (2013), and City Press (2009) Mapungubwe World Heritage Site exists within rich mineral and cultural heritage resources terrain. This automatically triggers competition between cultural heritage and mineral resource harvesters that government is expected to manage properly. The study argues that there is a need to validate the origin of these claims. It is important to establish if the claim intends to benefit heritage conservation process or to settle market competition scores. Meskell (2011), Ndlovu (2016), and Esterhysen (2013) are of the view that it is important to undertake an independent study to establish the implications of these criticisms to social, economic, political, and heritage conservation objectives of the country. It is also important to establish if

heritage in this whole contest is not used to satisfy sectarian interests of the aggrieved. Phaswana (2017), ENCA (2017) and Neluvhalani (2017) blame it on administrators for poor consultation that attracted the dispute. This is believed to have fueled sudden call for partial withdrawal of Coal of Africa Limited of Vele Colliery Coal Mining Plant, which is still not clear yet if such decision is a win or a loss thinking of other social and heritage conservation demands.

### **1.7 Historical overview of Mapungubwe**

This study posits the value chain making the history of Mapungubwe by looking at the following epochs: African Kingdom, Cultural Landscape, World Heritage Site and National Park, and Knowledge Management.

#### **1.7.1 An African Kingdom Epoch**

Mapungubwe World Heritage Nomination Dossier (2003) suggests that Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape was the centre of the first powerful indigenous kingdom in southern Africa. It was established by the cultural ancestors of the present-day Shona and Venda between AD 900 and 1300. The dossier further suggests that evidence for its history is preserved in over 400 archaeological sites. Its significance is derived from the dynamic interaction role it plays in laying the foundation for current social organization in the region (Schoeman & Lekgoathi, 2013). According to Huffman (1999, 2007, 2008a, 2008b), the kingdom experienced gradual growth because of participation in international trade along the Indian Ocean, which earned it the status of being the trend setter in taking that initiative earlier than others in the southern Africa region. Murimbika (2006) treasures the role of the kingdom in setting of comparable social systems that integrate people of different cultural backgrounds. This is the sentiment that Hannaford (2015) sees as something that compromised existing cultural practices that might have led to its collapse. It emerges in other debates that the rooted tradition such as rainmaking ritual performance is among the kingdom's strongholds that boosted agriculture that later attracted pastoral farming.

There are claims that poor rainfall affected production in farming and the social and economic pattern leading to the decline of the kingdom. More importantly, there is archaeological evidence of the kingdom's participation in mining and manufacturing.

Meyer (1998), Miller (2001) and Chirikure (2013) postulate that metal works contributed to mineral resources extraction and production. There is evidence of participation in architectural innovations and modification that shaped the economic system of the kingdom (Mulaudzi 2013). There are governance and leadership management reference points to enable modern society to acknowledge. Netshitenzhe (2013) urges government to use the experiences derived from this kingdom to influence national policy development framework. Mapungubwe Kingdom offers a broad research framework though it is yet to be established if such a role cannot be fulfilled regardless of the site status. Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA 2013) urges researchers to continue to explore other areas that are not articulate in the existing reports about the African Kingdom thinking of Mapungubwe. The genesis of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape as a focus epoch is also worth discussion.

### **1.7.2 Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape Epoch**

Meskell (2011) reiterates the description in the nomination dossier that Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape is the area along the Shashe-Limpopo confluence separating the modern borders of South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Botswana. This is the name that was used in the bid for world heritage status, which is contested using African Knowledge Systems and other oral history sources. This epoch reflects on how external environment influences decision making processes towards the achievement of the world heritage status. The scope of MCL cuts across several disciplines that define the social, economic, and political patterns of the community. It is already indicated that agriculture and mining are economic cornerstones in the history of Mapungubwe. Mulaudzi (2013), Huffman (2000), and Hannaford (2015) reflect on the political setup that saw the King's palace located in the top of the mountain while subjects reside on the foot of the mountain. The Eurocentric view interprets that as the existence of social classes within African context. Afrocentric counter to that refutes that in saying the political setup was influenced by the need to fortify the King's palace than intensification of social status. Chirikure (2007) echoes in saying that the political setup in place was also influenced by the need to protect the economic treasures of the kingdom. These experiences arguably inform the design of the current state revenue management systems. There are contests on land usage rights given several claims

experienced since the establishment of democratic government. Land ownership and usage rights are acquired through commercial and hardly on donation which affects conservation management. The Department of Environmental Affairs Heritage Impact Assessment Report (2013) attests that the scope of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape covers private and public properties that require monetary redemption in case owners are willing to sell. The argument one raises is that land usage rights influence decision in scaling down of the conservation area that otherwise define the landscape. Meskell (2011) asserts that land usage rights were once contested, which almost cost South Africa the world heritage Site status bid. This happened after the state party in South Africa could not provide evidence of either contract or title deed of the area earmarked for the world heritage site. There were many activities on the adjacent farms that were underway that government was expected to acquire full landusage rights of the entire area. Those activities included agricultural, mineral exploitation, and harvest of water resources. According to ICOMOS (2003) those activities were perceived potential threats to the site should the world heritage status be granted.

Another controversial moment on records is the conflicting roles between South African National Parks Organization and South African Heritage Resources Agency. The former was interested in biodiversity whereas the latter pushes heritage conservation management imperatives. Meskell and Masuku Van Damme (2009) criticise the genesis of the contradiction claiming that government programmes are enabling instruments to ensure that it achieves its mandate within allocated resources. The South African National Parks Organization is the management body of Mapugubwe World Heritage Site. It provides statutoy functions under the Department of Environmental Affairs. The South African Heritage Resources Agency is the watchdog that enforces compliance to the applicable legislation. It performs statutory functions of the Department of Arts and Culture. The South African National Parks Organization felt aggrieved over stringent measures set by the South African Heritage Resources Agency. Its measures were found limiting the animal flow that were viewed to cause destruction of archaeological sites. The reason for bringing this aspect is to argue that using of heritage to solve environmental management problems or vice versa has shortcomings worth exploring. This can be understood through in-depth study using World Heritage Site Epoch which is further discussed.

### 1.7.3 Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and National Park Epoch

The World Heritage Convention Act of 1972 and National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 set heritage conservation systems of South Africa. There is a gap noticed on the requirement that should be fulfilled to elevate the heritage status of the site. The National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 sets criterion on how the area can acquire local, provincial, and national heritage status. The South African World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999 was promulgated to bridge the existing graduation gap. The understanding is that there should be a consultation at all levels whether through Bottom-up or Top-down approaches within the set framework. However, the definition of the world heritage site is provided for in the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization guidelines (UNESCO 2005). The guidelines articulate that the world heritage site is granted on satisfaction that the phenomena articulate outstanding universal value of the natural and cultural heritage traits. This is the view that During (2011) finds the definition ambitious as he claims that heritage cannot hold universal value as it is relative. The World Heritage Convention Act (1972) criteria ii, iii, iv and v asserts that government's role is to ensure that there is viable sites identification, protection, conservation, promotion for posterity wherein there is transparent transmission between generations in succession. It is also expected to provide financial, artistic, scientific, and technical assistance and setting of intergovernmental management committee. Government is again expected to set national and international aiding systems to contribute towards conservation of world heritage properties under threats. Meskell (2011) postulates that there are national and international consultations that largely depend on relationship between states parties collaborated in joined bid. The decision to dispose the site for any reason may have implications on other participants, which requires prior notification to maintain relationships.

Murimbika (2006) and Hannaford (2015) hold the view that South Africa alone cannot solely claim full custodianship of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as it is shared globally. This is the view that Ralushai (2001), Huffman (1999, 2007, 2008a, 2008b) and Schoeman and Lekgoathi (2013) also share, which expresses the network systems that continue to grow many years after the Kingdom declining. Upon achievement of world heritage status, micro-economic development initiatives using

the site to attract investments paid dividends. Tourism and hospitality, research institutions, academic branding, and museums and heritage interpretive infrastructure are visible investments on site currently. This subject is a strategic point of departure in case the status is threatened or withdrawn as disposal and contingent plans would have to be put in place. The study should explore best possible methods to manage the unfavourable conservation predicaments.

Esterhysen (2013) holds a similar view in arguing that the overarching aim of Impact Assessment is to counter loss of natural and cultural resources without compromising conservation or development imperatives. The author though not explicit, concedes that government is gradually losing control over contests to reconcile conservation and infrastructure development clashes. A paradigm shift is viewed a better option to accommodate development control instrument that will enable conservation entities to achieve their objectives at ease. Mumma (2008), Munjeri (2004), Morris (2006), and Hall (2008) share similar sentiments in saying that heritage professionals still have a huge role to ensure that best conservation practices yield benefitting results to current and future generations. Dzimiri (2014) warns that government has the responsibility to protect vulnerable groups and their means of production. This becomes a compelling factor to manage human expectations thinking of current and future needs.

Preservation of heritage might be a good course; however, the general expectation is that it should prove its worth as an enabler of government to achieve its human and economic development objectives. Labada (2007), Ndlovu (2012), Swanepoel and Schoeman (2010) hold similar view in arguing that democratic values assure people of their rights to determine development programs that suit them. Harvests of cultural and natural resources are determining factors used to measure people's interest. It is generally acceptable that mining is highly favourable ahead of other factors of production given the backlog of joblessness in the country. There are reasons to this setback that should be explored to set management framework for mutual benefitiations. Community holds a stake in decision making though their interests vary sometimes.



Nienabar, Keough and Steyn (2005) assert that organized cultural groups of the descendants of the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom established themselves as Vhangona, Vhalemba, Vhatwanamba, Machete, to mention but few. The land and chieftaincy claim process continue to add cultural groups which influence property usage rights (Swanepoel & Schoeman 2010). This broadens the network systems at grassroots levels, academic, politically, and from the international relations perspectives given that clans migrated to Botswana and Zimbabwe after the decline of Mapungubwe Kingdom. The formation of transfrontier conservation trilateral between South Africa, Botswana, and Zimbabwe saw these countries agreeing to relax border control to share access to heritage-tourists in the park. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and National Park is the current conservation property name in use. Mapungubwe Heritage-Tourism Report (2009) urges entrepreneurs to invest in heritage-tourism businesses to enhance the performance of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

#### **1.7.4 Knowledge Management Epoch**

Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (2013) ignites a dialogue to explore the relevance of the world heritage site in governance and policy development matters. It emerges from different discussions that the cultural and natural value of the site is underrepresented, particularly in the current literature. Neluvhalani (2013) and Schoeman et al. (2013) raise concern on one dimensional reporting approach that sees archaeological view dominant ahead of other disciplines such as African Knowledge Systems (AKS). This is the sentiments Lekgoathi (2013) shares in saying that there is still a need to explore the status of knowledge production and dissemination to measure levels of public consumption holistically. Ntsoane (2013), in the same discussion, postulates that there is an inconsistent element in oral history recording since the early archaeological works of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. The author points out that though archaeologists may claim to have done ethnographic works to interpret recovered artifacts, although they are not experts in oral history matters. The credibility of the meaning they attach to artifacts may not necessarily be accurate.

Generally, researchers argue that the site earned world heritage status using one dimensional system that limits its actual value. Hall and Pearce (2013) reconcile the debate saying that an integrated approach is required to bridge knowledge gap through integration of other knowledge production resources. Hall, Lekgoathi, Schoeman, and Pearce (2013) contribute to the study by bringing material evidence of the rock art sites within the declared Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The discussion enables the study to look beyond the borders of the country given that rock art properties are believed to be the Khoisan works that are all over the southern region. Eastwood and Cnoops (1999), Eastwood and Blundell (1999), and Eastwood (2003) attest that there is evidence of the contribution of the Khoisans in the history of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Different studies suggest that the Khoisan were nomadic hunter-gatherers. This sentiment opened the focus of the current study beyond the confines of the demarcated Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

The land ownership scale is found limiting the geographical influence that the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom enjoyed. This implies that the 12-kilometre distance believed to be separating Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Plant and Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is misleading. Roodt (2009) although not explicit shares the light in arguing that there were livestock farmers that utilized the entire cultural landscape. The expansion of pastoral areas technically justifies breaking of frontiers to accommodate other cultural groups that shaped the economic pattern of time. More importantly, there are artefacts discovered through earthworks and those that were unearthed by erosion that make the area a sensitive conservation area.

Hall et al. (2013) postulate that the contribution of different role players in the shaping of the history of this world heritage site should not be viewed in isolation as there are many things that took place as one group arrived and their time of departure. It is important to point out that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is still regarded as a point of reference in the bid to find solutions to moral decline and building of social cohesion. Schoeman and Lekgoathi (2013) draw reference from the hospitality given to other foreign nationals in retrospective comparisons. The authors look at this aspect as the milestone that heritage is set to play to enable government to achieve. Similarly, building of the nation and national cultural identity are arguably not yet achieved. It is for this reason that I am bringing a contradiction to measure value for money using

retention and disposal variances thinking of the world heritage site in the study. Another aspect is the gender equality which one argues that material culture established during excavations ignored the role of the women in the history narration of the site.

Exploring beyond the limited household duties of women, Matshidze (2013) asserts that in the Vhavenda speaking people, there is a critical decision-making role player Makhadzi (King's eldest sister). The author postulates that among other contributory factors limiting the role of Makhadzi is failure of legal framework to recognise her functions. One uses this sentiment to validate secondary information sources with reference to recent findings on CoAL Mining Project status quo. Infrastructure development phenomenon is another aspect that one looks at both as an impediment and opportunity. Mulaudzi (2013) points out that participation in international trade later helped in modern state formations in the region. The author argues that trade is a fundamental tool to build or determine the capacity of the state in economic development commitments.

Stiglitz (2016) and Lithole (2010) share the view that trade and investment are pillars for micro and macro-economic development. The author further maintains that the government needs to explore all resources at its disposal of which heritage is one to ensure that all are contributing adequately. Despite their differences, heritage theorists share the view that the world heritage status was earned as a gesture of appreciation of African Kingdom that built trade networks in the region. Pikirayi (2001) postulates that material culture suggests that though there were good trade network systems, it was not persuasive to lead to the establishment of Mapungubwe as the state. This aspect brings into the study another angle to explore in case there is a relation with factors that led to the declining of the kingdom. It can also assist to understand if micro and macro-economic development politics have a direct trace in the status of celebrated ancient African Kingdom.

It was important for the current study to establish whether there was any commercial influence towards building the world heritage status. Huffman (2000), Mulaudzi (2013), Hannaford (2015), and Chirikure (2013) attest that mineral resources were trade commodities in the economy of Mapungubwe Kingdom. Some gold, copper, iron,

bronze artifacts, to mention but few, discovered are material evidence that is generally known academically and through continuous promotion of the world heritage site. Esterhysen (2013) raises heritage and conservation concerns on the current usage of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. This follows the growing mineral exploitation interests within the entire Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. It is ironic that concerns noted recently were levelled against Coal of Africa: Vele Coliery Coal Mining project than other equal role players. As I have already pointed out, there are established groups of claimants of custodianship of the cultural landscape through residual inheritance and business networks within micro and macro-economic entrepreneurial development scope. The author eschews the notion of possible business competition that if thoroughly explored, the credibility of the claims can be tested.

Conversely, the author further questions the administration of conservation law if it is enabling the retention of important cultural and natural resources, or else there are shortcomings explored to the disadvantage of compliance authorities. Munjeri (2004) echoes a similar sentiment in warning conservation authorities to move from conservative heritage conservation to an integrated approach. The author shares the view that political systems influence cultural and natural resources consumption. Conservation process should be managed to complement government development objectives. Moreover, preliminary studies show that heritage conservation is a shared competence that role players and end-users require guiding systems to measure loss and gains upon usage.

There is inconsistency in the application of conservation laws which enable end-users to explore to their advantage, and sometimes at the expense of important heritage sites. It emerges that the status of Mapungubwe as a world heritage site is in the balance since the mining license is granted to Coal of Africa Limited Company. It emerges that measuring the impact of CoAL Mining Project on Mapungubwe World Heritage Site status requires a holistic based research instrument in view of global citizenship that sees people nationally and internationally sharing Mapungubwe cultural traits. The impact in the micro and macro-economic development sectors need to be measured to articulate the complexity of the problem triggering the study.

### 1.8 Limitations of the study

The study limits heritage to cultural resources ahead of natural aspects involving biodiversity that in most cases cover fauna and flora. This was done to establish the contribution of culture in the understanding of Afrocentricity in heritage management perspective. I have used the aspect of culture to establish the most influential ethnic group in the study area. As a result, Venda tradition is used as a vehicle to explore the contribution of culture in the current use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This is simple because of rooted theological sentiments that are required in the preservation of indigenous heritage as to how they are upheld in the current use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. As secondary data suggest, the envisaged contribution of Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project is well articulated in economic growth as in job creation.

However, it was not clear if there is administrative justice in the harvest of cultural and natural resources at commencement of the study. Still, the study reduces the discussion from comparative analysis on the contribution of both sectors to growth and development debate. Instead, one uses the study to establish a mutual beneficiation platform in case where both heritage and mineral exploitation cannot be carried out simultaneously. Moreover, the research places end-users in individuals affected either negatively or positively by the study outcome to express their views as to guide future infrastructure developments projects in their areas. There has been discerning view in secondary data that the current highly celebrated heritage sites were imposed unto communities. Communities are viewed to have been co-opted into the works of those in academia to embrace a particular site as heritage. The study uses this to establish an Afrocentric approach to cultural heritage management. The argument worth rising in this instance is that if there is lack of the instrument to measure the value of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to local people, its global status is exaggerated. The study serves to clear or justify assumptions on possible impact of Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project on the aesthetic beauty of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The argument one is raising is that if there is lack of Afrocentric measurement tool to determine the value of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site, local people will still be made to protect something less significant to their basic needs. This is simple because of other social factors that invite external environmental factors with the potential to impede conservation of cultural heritage resources. Institutions with other economic

development interests are perhaps harshly judged in favour of a particular notion that is not informed by the views of the collective, particularly the affected communities. I have used the Coal of Africa Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project to establish administrative processes in place as to how they respond to Afrocentric approach for heritage management processes.

**Commented [RN1]:** This section is not clear, some sentences are long and confusing. The limitation of the study should also include what the study could not do, its constraints not just its focus.

### 1.9 Chapters Breakdown

Chapter One: It focuses on the background of the study that entails research problem, objectives of the study and research questions. It also gives generic description of important concepts. These include among others heritage management, Afrocentric approach and introduce Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project as a focus area of the study.

Chapter Two: It is an empirical literature review that gives the theoretical framework of the study. It expands on the description of heritage as to align it in the Afrocentric research. The overall objective of this section was to use secondary data to establish contemporary debates as to establish where both heritage and Afrocentric approach are located presently. It was also used to establish legal framework governing heritage and how other authors reflect of the value of Afrocentric approach in research holistically.

Chapter Three: It focuses on the research design and methodology. I have used it to give in-depth information about the study area, sampling methods applied and their relevance in the study. It covers other research aspects such as the geological and environmental formation that are attractive to heritage conservation and mining. These are main pillars of the study towards establishing an Afrocentric conservation instrument for both natural and cultural heritage resources. I have also used this chapter to establish the ethnographic information about the study area. Chapter Four: It focuses on data analysis that was also used to identify emerging discussion points or major findings of the study. Chapter Five: It is covers in-depth discussion on major findings and interventions to problems established. It is a concluding chapter of the study.

### **1.10 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter captures the holistic overview of heritage conservation dialogue, problem statement triggering the current study and the objectives. One dwells more on the theoretical framework making heritage conservation debates. In the next chapter, the study discusses literature review. It is important to first discuss both Afrocentricity and heritage separately for proper contextualisation in the study. This is also done towards laying the integrated framework that will manifest into an Afro-centred heritage management instrument. The feasibility of this milestone is set to be tested against emerging data from the current study as covered under research methodology.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0. Introduction

This chapter presents literature review to lay the theoretical framework for exploitation of Afro-centred heritage management instrument. It is also used to define Afro-centeredness which is broadly derived from Afrocentric theoretical framework. Currently, it is not known yet of the existence of Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument. The study generally depends on literature on Afrocentric debate and comparisons to Eurocentric views. Asante (2009) concedes that Afrocentric debate is limited to establish African view to humanity in post colonialism era. Dei and Asgharzadeh (2001), Asante (1980) and Mazama (2001) opine that Afrocentric study is set to deepen anti-colonial dialogue. In support, Asante (1980) avers that African people took courage to confront colonial forces that oppressed them for many years.

Afrocentric debate emerges to establish mechanisms to undo psychological damages colonialism caused in the lives of African people. In my view, Afrocentric debate creates platforms for psychological healing through dialogues and sharing of individual experiences. Dei and Asgharzadeh (2001) concurs in claiming that Afrocentric dialogue is an instrument for psychological migration back to African tradition. Mazama (2003) postulates that colonialism eroded African knowledge systems embedding African heritage. It therefore necessitates that emerging African scholar take it upon themselves to reclaim and position ideal African heritage in public knowledge production. Heritage phenomenon is generally used as the vehicle towards recovering such lost cultural traits that distinctively define African heritage. This view finds expression in the National Development Plan of South Africa that Mzanzi Golden Economy explicitly articulates.

According to Mzanzi Golden Economy (2010) and section 5 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999, heritage is set for nation building and social cohesion. However, the relevance of this policy statement is still not tested within heritage conservation dialogue. For similar reason, Nkondo (2012) opines that social cohesion phenomenon is immeasurable. As such, Heritage professionals are found wanting on finding the most appropriate programs to deliver per the set objective. There is



therefore the need to establish Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument to give distinctive definition of African heritage. The instrument should equally be aiming towards setting a holistic theoretical framework for management of African heritage. There are different sets of theories and models that are exploited to give the current study substance. There are also fundamental basic human needs against which the envisaged Afro-centred heritage management instrument is measured. Firstly, definition of Afro-centered approach is presented for groundbreaking and for the alignment of the study.

### **2.1. Definition of Afro-centeredness**

According to Bangura (2012), Thabede (2008) Gray (2001) and Asante (2014), Afro-centeredness is about placing African culture at the centre of analysis of the phenomenon. Bangura (2012) categorically views Afro-centeredness as the ability of a person to posit African thought within a particular phenomenon. The researcher in my view is instrumental towards using the broader scope of Afrocentric approach to fit research. It emerges in most literature that there is lack of consistence in the conceptualization of Afrocentric approach. For instance, Asante (2014), Thabede (2008) and Gray (2001) attest that theorists apply several concepts such as Pan-Africanism, Afrocentricity, Afro-centred view, Africanity, African philosophy and African Knowledge Systems.

The study utilizes African Knowledge Systems in the development of Afro-centred heritage management tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It is important to point out that the study still applies some of these jargons to articulate certain points. Asante (1980), Mazama (2001) and Bangura (2012) opine that Afrocentric approach espouse the ideals of Pan-Africanism to give it political context. Socially, African cultural heritage offers it cohesive meaning to emancipate African people behind the philosophy. Economists are urged to locate African Knowledge Systems in the overall global economic development discourses. It is important to indicate that the concept heritage encompasses both Eurocentric and Afrocentric views. The study limits it to collection and promotion of African Knowledge Systems derived from both tangible and intangible cultural resources. Mapungubwe offers the plethora of grounded African Knowledge Systems that is used in the study for contextualization.

It is imperative to establish the current contribution of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in the development of African Knowledge Systems. According to Ndlovu (2012) there is a need to make full exploits on the role of African Knowledge Systems in heritage conservation matters. Gordon (2008) echoes this sentiment in saying that heritage sites and objects cherish authentic thoughts that define a particular historic epoch. There are signs and symbols that their use should be promoted for posterity. It is generally acceptable that cultural heritage phenomena are dynamic. Althusser (2001) maintains that there are sets of organized epistemological traits that are produced daily that influence change in knowledge production and consumption. Those praxis either complement or deduce something from the phenomenon to give it a new perspective. Ndoro (2008), Kiriama and Webber (2008), Ndoro and Kiriama (2008) and Hall (2008) explicitly echo that sentiment in warning that cultural heritage sites and objects are equally vulnerable to those changes. Consequently, heritage sites and objects may either appreciate or it can be lost due to depreciation of value overtime.

In my view, the envisaged Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument needs to be adaptive to change of operational environment making it. Esterhysen (2013), Meskell (2011) and Ndlovu (2017) are articulate that human interference with the ecosystem compromises both natural and cultural heritage resources. This could either be influenced by the desire to harvest either mineral or other cultural resources. Once more, the social, economic, and political imperatives are equally influential in settings of those priorities. In this regard, Asante (2009) posits that academic contribution should always seek to establish the moral incentives when certain decisions are made. This suggests that Afro-centred heritage conservation should enable practitioners to question the moral, political, and intellectual justification brought forward. Basically, parties affected should be able to argue their cases on whether to remove or retain a heritage object. It emerges in the study that Heritage Impact Assessment Model is in use as it is legally required (Roodt 2009).

However, it is still not clear if the instrument is well understood by end-users in both heritage practitioners and consumers. In my view, it is necessary to mould the envisaged Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument on the experiences of Heritage Impact Assessment Model. This model was criticised for perpetuating

archaeological view more than African knowledge Systems (MiSTRA 2013). However, Gould (2017), Hassan (2017) and Ndlovu (2017) accept that archaeology set a trend towards profiling of heritage that other disciplines can still improve on. In this instance, Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument should aim to improve more on making African people view audible in the sector. This is set to be achieved by grounding heritage conservation within African philosophy. Asante (1998) urges scholars to search for alternate solutions, yet without shifting African value systems off the centre of a discourse.

Althusser (2001) and Mike (2006) concur with Asante (1998 & 2014) that the acceptable position pioneered by Afro-centeredness is that African people should be agents of their own psychological liberation. Basically, Afro-centeredness espouses the notion that knowledge of “being” own agent of change is a liberating factor desirable to Africa. Heritage discourse has been found to contain emotional scenes that can still compromise the desirable social cohesion. Heritage practitioners have a moral obligation to present such stories in the manner that is socially and politically justifiable (Ndoro & Kriama 2008, Hall 2008 & Ndlovu 2017). Ideally, the Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument should be articulate on ethical standards to protect end-users and consumers of public knowledge. The set definitions introduce the aspect of theoretical framework that is further discussed.

## **2.2. Theories for Afrocentric approach**

According to Althusser (2001), theory is a set of organized epistemological traits derived from frequent used praxis. Asante (2014) opines that Afrocentric approach serves in search of epistemological location of African ideals across all phases of humanity. I am applying this sentiment to locate Afrocentric approach in heritage conservation debate. The overarching aim is to establish how African people identify with cultural heritage resources in their midst. Asante (1987), Bangura (2012) and Thabede (2008) see Afrocentric approach as a transcend reorganization of transformative ideals. In this section, different theories are discussed towards the development of Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument. I hold the view that the envisaged instrument should encompass broader view informed by various theories.

Bangura (2012) identifies matriarchy of origin, two-cradle viewpoint, analogy, kawaida and African code theories that I am also applying in the study.

### **2.2.1. Matriarchal theory of origin**

Bangura (2012) draws inspiration from Briffault (1931) and Diop (1974) in claiming that the universe is moulded on the matrilineal view of morals and cultural traits. This is elaborated using the biological and paleontological substance. Biological substance suggests that a child relates more with the mother than the father. Common expression refers to the earth as “the mother earth” in support of this theory. Paleontological evidence still holds universal view that Africa is the oldest space ever occupied by the *hominid* people (Maguire 2003 & Lithole 2010). Generally, Afrocentric approach exists as the theory of knowledge which is also a fundamental tool for social change.

Motshekga (2017) opines that human creation is influenced by the celestial beings and objects. However, conception manifests through sexual intercourse between the female and male persons. The woman spends more time in physical contact with the child during pregnancy, birth, and knowledge impartations. Again, common knowledge suggests that when an African child scream calls for the help from the mother before the father. Asante (1998) postulates that Afrocentric approach contribute to knowledge through narratives, myths, spiritual and cosmology. Those are agencies that embed cultural heritage expressions in every society. Gray (2001), Asante (1987) and Thabede (2008) aver that African people should be understood by placing their culture at the centre of research analysis. In this context, cultural heritage is used as the transformative agent towards repositioning of African people back to their original state. Thabede (2008) postulates that the transformation required should be moulded on the psychological well-being, and awareness of their current location. The aspect of location is ambiguously used to reflect on the psychological space that African people were once placed than geographical.

It is used precisely to suggest that African people need to understand circumstances that placed them in their status. The current study envisages that the Afro-centred

heritage conservation instrument should enable African people to realise that. Instead, African people should make self-determination of their own destiny. Gray (2001), Asante (1987) echo Thabede (2008) that Afrocentric scholars need to interact with people at grassroots level during research. Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument is expected to harness collective thoughts to create space and time for the revival of marginalized African history. It should de-articulate and questions perceptions against African heritage. Mazrui (1986) criticises the notion of Africa as the mother continent citing that African became more hospitable in its approach to accommodate and advance traditions of foreigners in its midst. Mazrui (1980) opines that perhaps African people hospitality attracted social, economic, and political systems that eventually eroded all that they have wilfully given out. Instead, People from other continents continues to benefit out of African wealth more than its native communities. Ironically, the matriarchy analogy in this context allows the eldest continent to continue to nurture the welfare of the emerging ones at her expenses. The two-cradle theory is discussed in the section below to establish Eurocentric positioning in this context.

### **2.2.2. Two cradle theory**

Once more, Bangura (2012), Asante (2014) and Diop (1974) opine that European view of Africa is worldly acceptable and justifiable. Ironically, the view of African people about their own culture and tradition is not seriously considered. Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument is expected to identify and defend African heritage ideals in any discourse. It should level the ground for continuous dialogue that embrace collective views portraying African Knowledge Systems. This should gradually move consumers of public knowledge conceived of Eurocentric expression to how an individual would have experienced African heritage. The two-cradle theory basically looks at the aspect of pigmentation and how it divided human beings.

According to Motshekga (2010) faith-based institutions were used as agencies to deepen the debate that justifies division amongst human beings owing to pigmentation. Mazrui (1986) postulates that Africa experienced triple heritage paradoxes influenced by faith-based institutions. Africa had own religion prior convention of its people to either Islam or Christianity. In my view, it is important to

reflect on the influence of religion in making African heritage. The Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument captures religious view making African culture and tradition.

Masoga (2014) in similar debate refreshes Gabriel Molehe Setoloane sentiment that portrays human being as God expressed in Sesotho as “Motho ke modimo”. It emerges in that debate that human beings make certain decisions for spiritual sanitation to maintain their identification with God. Mazrui (1986) triple heritage phenomenon comes handy in the current study for constant reflection on the impact of both Islam and Christianity on African heritage holistically. The Two-cradle theory also allows me to investigate the aspect of humans as both spiritual and physical beings to understand their orientation. According to Ndoro (2015), Maguire (2003) and Lithole (2010), some heritage sites and objects provide material evidence on human as both spiritual and physical beings. In this instance, heritage practitioners serve as the catalyst to identify and promote sites and objects that end users consider culturally significant. It is however not yet known if Mapungubwe World Heritage Site offers the experiences of being either spiritual or just a physical cultural landscape.

Nonetheless, this section focuses on the spiritual orientation of human beings to understand their approach to heritage conservation. The Two-cradle theory further looks at the aspect of race relations on how pigmentation differences shaped world cultural heritage. Diop (1974), Smith, Allen and Danley (2007) and Bangura (2012) adopt Egyptian case study to debate the influence of race in Afrocentric discourse. Diop (1974) claims that Egyptians are African people. Smith (2004) attest that the partitioning of Africa caused disturbances in human relations as it later triggered racism. Prior to this epoch, human beings were using religion as a common factor joining them together. Mazrui (1986) triple heritage aspect equally finds expression in this discourse where a new paradigm was noted. Pan-Arabism philosophy was birthed to consolidate Islam influence in this context to African heritage. Zionism gradually emerged based on Judaism that levelled the advent of Christianity that was spread across African continent.

Another important point was the birth and rise of Pan-Africanism to counter the loss of African ways of worship and eradication of its heritage systems. According to Maqbool

(2017), Pan-Arabism is an ideology that advocates for the formation of recognizable one Arab nation on earth. Zionism ideology is found on the premise that urges Jews people scattered around the world to return to Jerusalem to prepare for the coming of Messiah. The Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument is built on this foundation. It is important to indicate that the global political view is equally rooted on faith exercised in similar phenomena. The Ottoman Empire which architected imperialism adopted Pan-Arabism as a political and spiritual tool to conquer North, East Africa and Middle East countries (Mackenzie 2005).

Christianity was equally used particular to counter the spread of Pan-Arabism to other parts of Africa. This became visible after the Berlin Conference 1881-1886 that saw Berlin, Swiss, Romans, Dutch and Lutheran churches launching mission stations across Africa (Motshekga 2010). This aspect is brought in the picture to mark a paradigm shifting of time from pigmentation based to faith-oriented discrimination. Pigmentation differences was not so seriously defended compared to its faith-based counterpart. The quest to conquer the world was set to be achieved using religion. In this aspect, religion was used to consolidate soul ties or justify reasons to disassociate one cultural group from the rest in the history of world societies. The Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument enables African people to understand those dynamics. The Two-cradle theory overlaps to complement its matriarchy counterpart towards redressing political view imbalances in the society. Asante (2009) and Mackenzie (2005) opine that colonialism infused foreign cultural traits that later influence morals and values of most African communities.

However, the Egyptian experiences built on the principles of Maat attests that Africa had own sets of values it subscribed to. According to Asante (2009) and Hill (2015), the Maat is the Egyptian female god that advocates for the truth, balance, moral and justice. The Maat god is celebrated through sculpturing, signs and symbols that are heritage objects. In view of this, I argue that Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument reflects on these cultural dynamics in the development of improved heritage management ethics. The Two-cradle theory is also articulate on human anatomy and evolution of their kind. Diop (1974), Smith, Allen and Danley (2007) and Bangura (2012) opine that historical evidence suggests that human life began in Africa. Maguire (2003) and Lithole (2010) make use of fossils in Makapansgat World

Heritage Site that dates to more than 5.6 Million years ago to support that view. The fossils attest that Australopithecus species the acclaimed ancestral lineage of the hominid society lived in Makapansgat World Heritage Site in Limpopo Province.

According to Conard, Soressi, Wurz and Yates (2004), the hominids ancestors left traces of Palaeolithic tools rather archaeological artefacts making inherited cultural objects worth treasured. Currently, research attests that European history is 40 000 (forty thousand) years old making it much younger than Africa. Nonetheless, Europe created cultural space to claim social, economic, and political dominance of the world societies within the short period of its existence in history. It is for similar reason that Asante (2009), Mazama (2001) and Bangura (2012) opine that Afrocentric approach exist to counter subaltern knowledge space created to benefit one continent ahead of the rest. It comes against any notion that perpetuates triumphalist expressions over Africa using any agencies. Asante (1998) challenges African scholars to work towards identification and profiling of African view across all academic disciplines. Asante (2009) maintains that without Afro-centred instrument, their contribution is void to multicultural discourse. The current study is conceptualised to establish alternate instrument for heritage conservation of Mapugubwe World Heritage Site.

### **2.2.3. Analogical symbols approach**

This section places the use of signs and symbols as focal points in the study. This is simply because of cultural traits that are cognitively entrenched in human spiritual experiences. According to Asante (2009) signs and symbols transcend cultural and political barriers creating censorship to express certain thoughts publicly. It is expected of Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument end-users to recognise the significance of symbols and signs in heritage dialogue. Asante (2014) spearheads the use of Afrocentric approach for social change and transformation of psychological space to benefit African people. Mazama (2001) in supports says that symbols are strategic teaching aids used to celebrate or derogatively condemn African culture and traditions. However, symbols are still useful in bridging knowledge gaps between the organic generations that made a particular historic epoch to current end-users.



Eastwood (2003, Eastwood & Blundell 2008 & Eastwood & Cnoops 2009) reflect on several sets of rock art in Limpopo Province. Eastwood (2003) and Tlouamma (2005) portray the Khoi-San ethnic group rock paintings or art and those of the Bahananwa ethnic group. The Bahananwa ethnic group are in the Blouberg Local Municipality in Capricorn District. Their rock paintings are sporadically found along the Makgabeng Village under King Mmalebogo the descendents of King Ratshatsha Mmalebogo (Tlouamma 2005). It has been difficult to identify the period in which the Khoi-San Rock paintings or art were drawn. According to Eastwood (2003), Tlouama (2005) and Setumu (2005) the Bahananwa's could easily be traced as it celebrates the 1894 Mmalebogo-Boer War. There is no contests though that the Bahananwa rock paintings was equally influenced by the Khoi-San's once lived in the area. The renaming of Bochum Township to Senwabarwana attests of the close ties between the Bahananwa and Khoi-San community.

In this context, the Bahananwa rock art captures memories of King Ratshatsha fateful day during his arrest by the Boers and his journey to police cells in Pretoria. In another case study, Junoid (1968), Van Warmelo (1970) and Gray (1970) amongst Vhavenda identified symbolic gestures portrayed in all forms of art. Rock art dialogue offers contrary view to the advent of orthography as Eurocentric approach limits it to the art of writing. There has been claim that African people could not read and write before the impartation of European orthography. The ancient manuscripts housed in Timbuktu in the Republic of Mali helped historians and heritage practitioners to refute the claim. Ralushai (2005) shares other symbolic expressions such as hair cutting to mark the mourning of the deceased person, to shame a person convicted which practitioner in case of dispute set to be decided through divination and also to mark the end of initiation path rite. Gray (1970) and Mbiti (1975) identify different costumes dressed for religious and confirms social statuses amongst the people. Ralushai (2003) and Dima (2005) equally attest that some beads such as the Portuguese glass beads (Vhulungu-ha-madi in Tshivenda) are used for curing dental disorder. Lutomolatsie is the bead set worn on the head mostly by a female person, which can be worn to express loneliness or female person availability for marriage proposals. Lukunda or Makunda are arms and legs bracelets that one worn in the arm could also serve as a gesture of marriage proposal and engagement. A woman dressed in black garments could be understood as mourning the death of a family member. Male

persons could put a piece of black cloth pinned against the arm of their shirts. Spiritually, there are dress codes that are either used as uniforms resembling denominations of the person's choice. Motifs are also symbolic items used to commemorate a particular historic epoch.

Mbiti (1975) attests that in some African tradition sacred sites are marked either by the totem name or symbolic animals for association. Initiates that is being trained into African Doctor equally goes through stages that each is marked by the type of gear they wear. Most importantly, the classification is also done by the type of training and area of specialisation. According to Mbiti (1975) and Dima (2017), rituals are performed that can also be done through the *Malombo* or *Matshomane* dance. Dima (2005) explicitly avers that Malombo dance is used to diagnose the initiate's area of specialisation once the training is accomplished. The trainee could either become a healer specializing with children or women diseases or other household duties. Ironically, the initiate does not have the option to choose the field of practise like the western education provides. Instead, the ancestors make the determination. Common knowledge suggests that ancestors do this to intensify family tradition within healing category.

Mbiti (1975), echoes Gray (1970), Van Warmelo (1970), Dima (2017) and Ralushai (2005) that some initiates require no *Malombo* or *Matshomane* but *Tshele* rituals to diagnose their field of training. Dima (2017) explicitly postulates that *Tshele* is the ceremony done by making use of musical instrument made of calabash shell and sandstone to produce sound. Vhavenda interchangeably use *Tshele* as a noun for musical instrument and to mark the ceremony for ancestral appeasement. *Malombo* are commonly practised by Vhavenda ethnic group while *Matshomane* are done by Vatsonga ethnic group. The dress codes for *Malombo* dancing crew are a hat, under jacket, white costumes, sceptres, and specific bead set (Dima 2017). Both male and female with the ancestral calling are invited to participate even in dancing or playing either *mirumba* or *ngoma*. Ironically, initiate could emerge in the spiritual realm as a male spirit being in a female biological being. This suggests that a male initiate can still be classified as a female spiritual being or vice versa. This aspect opens the plethora of exploring the positioning of African philosophy on issue of homosexuality and its cultural trace in future studies. An Afro-centred heritage conservation

instrument in my view should not be biased to mislead end-users. It should capture fundamental elements making African people social and cultural heritage experiences. The Kawaida theory is also discussed below to reflect on the influence of signs and symbols in the politically inclined environment.

#### **2.2.4. Kawaida theory**

According to Bangura (2012), Kawaida theory was adopted in the 1960s as emancipatory cultural-revolution strategy for radical social change in Africa. Political organizations were looking at culture as the building block towards emancipation of communities behind the liberation struggle phenomenon. Another similar example to Kawaida theory is the Sebatakomo that was adopted by liberation struggle movement in the present-day Greater Sekhukhune District. Linguistically, Sebatakomo is a compound noun made of Sebata-(beast)+ -Kgomo (cow) that could be paraphrased as the beast seeking to devour the cattle. According to Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority (2008), Bapedi ethnic group uses Sebatakomo as a whistle blowing tool to mobilise fellow community members when the neighbour is being attacked.

Liberation fighters used it to alert one another of possible police ambush aiming to eliminate them through unlawful arrests. I find it important to reflect on this aspect towards development of Afro-centered heritage conservation instrument. This is simply done to give the study local content by using multi-stakeholder consultation strategy employed during liberation struggle. In Nengwekhulu (1976), it emerges that youth and student political movements adopted the slogan of "Black power" that was used to mobilise one another behind the liberation struggle. The concept "black" would be consistently used to describe black people that were fighting oppression from their fellow white ethnic groups. So as the liberation struggle was intensifying it attracted colourds, Indians and some white people to join.

The definition of "black" then shifted from pigmentation differences to accommodate multiracial ethnic groups. Nengwekhulu (1976) maintains that Black Consciousness Philosophy used to mark those individuals that took it upon themselves to fight oppressive systems in South African. It is important to revisit the issues of Pan-Arabism, Pan-Africanism, and Zionism still to elaborate on the Kawaida theory.

Politically, Pan-Arabism espoused nationalism philosophy towards building one Arab nation despite of geographical location of members globally (Maqbool 2017 & Research Institute for the intergration of world-thought 2000). Pioneers of Pan-Africanism envisaged institutionalisation of African philosophy as a common ground towards rebuilding of lost African heritage inclusive of rich means of production. Contrary, pioneers of Zionism pursue the aspect of Neo-Liberalism which traces its origin from the capitalism discourse. Nkondo (2012) posits Neo-Liberalism philosophy as market-oriented driven social, economic, and political paradox. It places government as the oversight authority with little interference to the market as it generates revenue on her behalf.

Socialism was then found on the principles of communism to advocate for total control of all factors of production by government. There is no contest that differences between socialism and neo-liberalism philosophers triggered global wars experienced on earth. African liberation struggle heritage was then found in the quest to identify the share of African state parties in global social, economic and political discourse. Ironically, Africa became the centre of attraction as both pioneers of socialism and capitalism sought to lure her to their course. These elements are worth captured in the study to give Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument a global perspective of Africa. According to Bangura (2012), Kwaidia theory reflects on the conceptualization of African liberation heritage discourse and action plans.

Positively, Milan (1992) opines that Afrocentric approach offers a new paradigm in the social sciences research. In this context, Kwaidia theoretical framework paves platform to locate the contribution of Afrocentric approach to Africa's political agenda. Holistically, Asante (2009) urges Afrocentric scholars to question the rhetoric of power as to how Eurocentric view transcends African view to governance of production resources. Bangura (2012) opines that Kwaidia theory offers the opportunity to analyse factors used to intensify all forms of oppressions African people endured to their colonial rulers. In my view, the Afro-centred heritage conservation should be aiming towards transcending psychological barriers affecting African people. It should also investigate issues of gender, class and race differences that make public history and heritage knowledge systems at large.

Mazama (2001) generally opines that Afrocentric perspective may not substitute its Eurocentric counterpart. Instead, scholars can strike the balance to afford all equal opportunities in public knowledge consumption. Politically, remarkable pioneers of Afrocentric approach in the 1960s include Kwame Nkrumah that triggered Africa triple heritage dialogue. Mazrui (1986) arguably amplified the dialogue later by giving it academic perspective in Afrocentric debate. African consciousness gained momentum through performance art. In music, Robert Marley and Peter Tosh are African legends that amongst others pioneered Afrocentric perspective. The African liberation momentum arguably drew inspiration from all media used to reach vast audience. Chukwuokolo (2017) concedes that imperialism bequeathed Africa with unforgettable experiences like denial of African identity and imposition of Eurocentric perspective. Manifestation of these experiences arguably perpetuated marginalisation of African culture. There are criticisms fashioned against Afrocentric approach though that should be taken into cognizance. For instance, Chukwuokolo (2017) rehearses Arthur Schlesinger Junior as claiming that Afrocentric debate is based on superficial, romantic and shallow ideology. It aims towards replacing and underscoring of Eurocentric perspective successes. Asante (1970) dismisses that claim in citing that Africans lived for over 300 years under the terms of Western philosophy. Afrocentric approach advocates for change to enable African view to be equally heard. Mazama (2001), Bangura (2012) and Chukwuokolo (2017) aver that African knowledge system is currently dislocated, alienated, and grossly misrepresented owing to colonial injustices. It is a fact that the current study emerges in the highly contested academic debate to locate the envisaged Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument. There is a principal position driven by section 5 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 on good conservation practice. Heritage practitioners are not expected to use heritage ideally for sectarian gains, which implicitly covers temptations to satisfy one ideological view ahead of the rest.

Nonetheless, the study provides platforms to establish critical ideals that should be addressed while developing Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument. The Kwaida theory posits the influence of politics among other contributory factors that should be explored. The political influence further characterises critical decision-making processes impacting on choices made to grant a site or object a heritage status. During (2011) opines that UNESCO grants world heritage status once it is

satisfied that the proposed site meets the criteria to be of outstanding universal value. This aspect perpetuates the notion of existence of universal ethics, norms and standards that are generally acceptable to all world societies. Chukwuokolo (2017) warns that Afrocentric theorists dispute that notion as they claim that there are no universal ethics. This aspect literary contradicts factors used in the conceptualization of global heritage conservation framework.

It therefore stands to reason that the UNESCO's aspect of outstanding universal value is a compromised position. It has long been used for sectarian gain to give advantage to those that have monopolized leading global cultural and natural means of production. The expectation of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999, section 5 is equally defeated. This confirms Neluvhalani (2013) claim that the whole conceptual framework making Mapungubwe World Heritage Site status underrepresents its cultural significance. The implications to this are traceable using the dispute over Vele Colliery Coal Mining infavour of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site status. I am therefore using Kwaida theory to establish if the current state of heritage conservation is imbuing the notion of African public spiritedness. The envisaged Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument should contribute towards responding to such question. There are chances that African heritage practitioners have been agents to advocate ideals that are irrelevant to the continent's development and growth paths.

The neo-liberalism approach probably limited the participation of government to impart political philosophy desirable to African heritage conservation. Those are some of the fears that the study such as this should mitigate. There could still be serious resistance that one should still expect as part of reluctance to accept changes. Pioneers of Eurocentric perspective are equally expected to up their game to delay or frustrate the rise of Afrocentric views in global knowledge production and consumption. Democratic processes curtailed in the constitution of the country offers target audience the rights to accept or reject any view in public domain. Unlike in the days of colonialism where people had limited freedoms for comparative analysis of phenomena to choose from. Kwaida theory is moulded on the notion to reject rhetoric of power hegemony colonial rulers enjoyed (Bangura 2012). Afrocentric approach is also conceptualized against the same power monopoly intuition (Asante 2003 & Asante 1998). It is important to

indicate that the journey towards African liberation came with lots of criticisms and betrayals. Subscription to different political views to some was done consciously while to others was by virtue of association. Faith-based institutions and schools across all levels of studying were used to infuse political ideologies to members. Most importantly, Afro-centred heritage conservation tool establishes how African people united in diversity in the multicultural environment. African code is further discussed to give the underlying theoretical framework.

### **2.2.5. African code theory**

Once again, Bangura (2012) limits African code theory to political ideological framework that created uniformity amongst African people. There is no contest that founders of liberation struggle movements were grounded on the ethos of Pan-Africanism. Okechukwu (2011), Okeke (2011), and Dawn (2012) opine that Pan-Africanism had a profound impact on the national liberation struggle of African people. Pan-Africanism propels for informed engagements of African people in global social, economic and political debates. Okeke (2011) attests that the success of Pan-Africanism is seen on transnational and transcontinental solidarity networks consolidated during the liberation struggle. This ultimately earned African people freedom at the collapse of racial and oppressive regimes in the continent. Okeke (2011) posits that Pan-Africanism and Pan-Arabism are antithetical to each other. Instead, black people affiliating to Pan-Arabism notably continue to experience difficulties embedded on race relation problem. This leads to imbalances in wealth accumulation and distribution to the disadvantage of the black people. One uses “black people” as the concept inclusive of colourds, whites, Indians and other ethnic groups born and bred in Africa. It is then limiting on expression meant for black people by pigmentation. Pan-African theorists, among other things seek to establish the positioning of African people in global political and economic growth agenda. It also focuses on the strategic direction taken by institution posit to foster global governance.

One places emphasis on the role of the United Nations towards redressing Africa’s partitioning to benefit European countries (Mazrui 1977, Allie 2005, Asobie 2005 & Shivji 2005). According to Okeke (2011), there is still no consensus on the meaning of Pan-Africanism. Instead, Allie (2005) blames it on total reliance on Eurocentric based

reading materials that are hostile to the aspiration of people of African descent. Nkondo (2007) there has been disillusionment of facts on the intension of the liberation movements of South Africa. This was primarily because of the harsh unfavourable conditions that the leaders of different political parties endured. Ironically, the actual expressions of certain terms used, and their intended objectives could not be corrected even in post oppressive regime. For example, Esedebe (1980) and Nengwekhulu (1976) derive the meaning from the context of intellectual understanding and co-operation among all groups of African descent. Ironically, Pan-Africanism unfolded as both the ideology and political movement in South Africa on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 1960 in Soweto. It was adopted at the disintegration phase within the African National Congress on policy matter. According to South African Online History (2017), Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe amongst others claimed that the Freedom Charter was not explicit on the aspect of Africanism. In the section below one establishes a common defining feature of Africanism or Afro-centeredness in heritage management perspective. This is set to be done to locate it properly within the heritage conservation discourse.

### **2.3. Understanding of Afro-centred heritage conservation approach**

This section builds a comprehensive description of Afrocentric approach for alignment within heritage conservation dialogue. The epistemology of Afrocentric heritage conservation model is discussed. This enables me to ground the integrated view to the fundamental basic heritage knowledge of the society. The section also discusses aspects of African cosmology to establish agencies approved of by the society to understand humanity. Axiology shares cultural traits that help the study to understand how commodities accrue and loose value. This is important for the current study since Mapungubwe World Heritage Status is maintained according to the set values. The African perspective in the determination of object or site value is significant for the current study. The aspect of value is measurable using descriptive analogy biased to human excitement on the object or site. The aspect of aesthetics is important in that it gives a holistic view to human imaginative world about the phenomenon.



### 2.3.1. Epistemology of Afro-centred heritage conservation model

Goldman (2009) indicates that an epistemology reflects on the individual's orientation about a particular phenomenon. Dunai (2015) points out that dreams and visions play fundamental role in shaping human experiences about the natural and supernatural worlds. Some of these experiences are shared using sculptures and figurines that ultimately make heritage objects. Asante (2009) submits that Afrocentric approach explores the complexities of the relationship between those phenomena. In my view, the Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument creates platform to integrate issues of science, art, design, music, and other creative work making African heritage. This should do in line with the provisions of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999, particularly, section 32 (1) on the protection of heritage objects. Basically, the law protects objects recovered from the soil or waters of South Africa through archaeological, paleontological, meteorites and geological exploitations. Orton (2016) and Mackay et al. (2014) allude that Palaeolithic tools that archaeologists seek to excavate have both artistic and scientific heritage value. Afrocentric theorists attest that Africa lost the intellectual rights to its significant heritage over the years for many reasons.

In my view, the Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument assists towards protection of heritage knowledge systems and possibly setting mechanisms to reclaim the already lost rights. Bakari (1997) maintains that epistemology theorists seek to establish the relationship between art object to and individual or community at large. The Mapungubwe World Heritage Site human remains reburial case study offers the opportunity to understand African people orientation and relations to burial grounds (Nienabar et al. 2008). The Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument will help end-users to uphold African tradition on issues of burial grounds and graves. Bakari (1997), Netshifhefhe (2008) and Jackson (1975) aver that theorists of epistemology are interested in studying knowledge production, dissemination, and consumption. Ralushai (2005) raises concern over distorted African Knowledge Systems about Mapungubwe Kingdom. This notion challenges academic works that had already been published.

Ralushai (2005) finds most publications about Mapungubwe World Heritage Site distorted for commercial reasons. This then requires emerging scholars interested in African heritage to work towards redressing those challenges going forward. Towards reversal of the distorted history there is temptation worth avoiding of overrating the impact of colonialism on African knowledge production. Netshifhefhe (2008) implicitly establishes that there are rooted African traditions that were never polluted such as folklores that are significant heritage resources. Jackson (1975) opines that epistemology holistically looks at the scope, nature and impact of the knowledge produced about the phenomenon.

This suggests that the scope of the Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument should be broader but not complacent. I am grounding this study purposely to matters of cultural heritage to manage complacency. Archaeological debates assist still towards establishing knowledge gaps that Neluvhalani (2013) is alluding to. This is set to be done to narrow those gaps with no intention to call for de-articulation or underrate the work covered by Archaeology so far. In my view there are overlapping aspects that contribute to the understanding of cultural heritage epistemology. The Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument emerges in the highly contested academic environment giving rise to human cultural heritage epistemology. Bakari (1997) in this discourse claims that the world is independent from human knowledge and perceptions. This is the view that Lithole (2010) supports in citing that human in their inception found the natural environment beautiful. Yet, they converted the natural resources to establish their cultural identity. Archaeologists deepen this dialogue by studying how culture has been influenced by various factors making the heritage of a particular area.

Mackay, Steward and Chase (2014) and Hiscock (2015) for instance opine that it is during the Middle Stone Age that saw the rise of cultural modernity. The evidence is derived from Palaeolithic objects applied in pottery manufacturing, heat-treatment of fine-grained raw material and manufacturing of bone tools. Mackay et al. (2014) explicitly indicate that Palaeolithic evidence reveals different stages of improved technology and manufacturing of stones, bones, and later iron utensils. In my view, heritage is a multi-disciplinary field that History, Palaeontology, African Knowledge Systems are amongst other feeders. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site contents have

been proven in literature as having the potential to contribute across similar fields. For instance, historians are interested in its contribution as material evidence of African Civilization, the rising and decline of its Kingdom.

Orton (2016) brings another dimension to look at the contribution of African Knowledge Systems towards building Mapungubwe Kingdom. Ideally, cultural landscapes are often the manifestation of human interference with the ecosystem. I argue in the study that the Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument should be informed by the debates influencing the direction of relevant disciplines. It is also important to use it against other disciplines that offer contradicting views to heritage conservation. Ndlovu (2017) condemns conservative heritage conservation in favour of a more development-oriented model. This equally suggests that the intended Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument should be development-oriented. It is important to indicate that geographically, Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is located in rural yet potential developing area. Ndlovu (2017), Gould (2017) and Hassan (2017) assertion that heritage is labelled anti-development gives light to issues that Afro-centred heritage conservation tool is addressing.

It is a fact that the conceptualization of this instrument emerges in the sensitive political environment seeking to maximise the state capacity to service the people. The current study is necessitated by the need to further tap into the potential heritage end-user's imaginative community worth living in. Mzanzi Golden Economy (2010) maintains that heritage sector should prove its worth as a role player towards economic development. Conservative heritage conservation approach posits the sector as the beneficiary in good economic spin off seasons than an active contributing player. In short, the approach to heritage conservation perpetuates dependency of the sector upon government for survival. Government priorities are reportedly escalating to maintain heritage sector satisfactorily, which urges heritage practitioners to find alternative solution. This equally places the current study as the opportunity towards making envisaged contribution. Technically, there is a need to also tap into the imaginative positioning of heritage sector as seen by heritage practitioners. Ontology of Afro-centred heritage conservation model is discussed below.

### 2.3.2. Ontology of Afro-centred heritage conservation model

According to Grenon and Smith (2011), Ontology is the body of knowledge that focuses on the conceptualization of data. Theorists of Ontology focus on the management of information flow and consumption by the target audience. The National Archives of South Africa Act, 43 of 1996, makes provision for the conservation of public records of the country. The Department of Arts and Culture declared Museums, Heritage, Libraries and Archive services as strategic entities of government. Their primary goal is to identify, protect and promote artefacts, books, important records and manage access of members of the public to information at their disposals (Yuba 2013 & Bonn, Kendall & McDonough 2017). In view of these sentiments, I argue that Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument end-users focus on factors making and housing public knowledge.

The strategic areas worth looking at are elements making public heritage and their contextualization. I am establishing the institutional framework and decision-making hierarchy involved in information management. Technically, Yuba (2013) and Bonn et al. (2017) identify major responsibilities involved in information management. For example, information goes through conceptualization phase where several data are weaved together to produce a record. There is infrastructure required for storage, retrievals, and access to information. So, Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument end-users are urged to familiarise themselves with all stages of information management. Importantly, end-users and operators should be familiar with different pieces of legislative framework governing information management. For example, Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2 of 2000 which serves to maximise freedom to government information. Common knowledge tells that, human rights and accompanying freedoms are not absolute, but subject to legal scrutiny. The responsible person granting access to certain information often applies own discretion. There can still be biasness that can see the manipulation of due process to the disadvantage of the client. It implies that end-users of Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument should provide reasons supporting their request for a particular information. The client responses on services rendered should be standardised to enable client to assess the operator's performance.

According to Velez (2016) and Smith (2004), theorists of Ontology employ idealism, scepticism or constructionist analysis during decision making process. Uebersax (2013) opines that idealism espouses the notion that human needs are ground on material acquisition and satisfaction of emotional wellness. Xaba (2015) postulates that heritage legislation of South Africa is based on idealism. It was rushed through for compliance which makes it vulnerable to defend the interest of the people. This impacts negatively in decision making processes towards qualification of a site or object as a heritage. The views of target stakeholders could not be expressed in the process during conceptualization of the existing heritage law.

Ndlovu (2012) in addition says that there are currently no clear guidelines for appealing should there be dissatisfaction over declined proposal for site declaration. Xaba (2015) and Ndlovu (2012) express discontentment on the administration of section 34 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999. In their view respectively claim that it offers a blanket statement that a building older than sixty years is a heritage site. It further recommends that no alterations should be done on such property without the permission of heritage institution. Ndlovu (2012) expands to express how heritage professionals are made to succumb to political pressure grant declaration status of a site.

Reference made with Nelson Mandela house in Soweto that have since been granted the national heritage declaration status by the South African Heritage Resources Agency. The house is located at the Vilakazi Street as that of Arch-Bishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and many other fellow politicians of the same peer group. Ndlovu (2012) criticises heritage professionals on the rhetoric of power and influence of politics in heritage management processes. These are cultural heritage dynamics that each political leader as regime changes could contribute towards distortion, disillusionment of the process or improve. Another dimension employed in the study is the constructionist view. According to Antila (2013) constructionist view embeds the notion that knowledge is the by-product of social construction informed by past and current experiences. This aspect brings another dimension that operators of Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument should take into cognizance.

In view of Antila (2013) heritage practitioners claim that conservation is done for posterity reason. The argument maintained is that one generation may not defend the interest of the other on what should or could have been disposed of heritage institutions. This suggests that the future generation may choose to abandon resources they have inherited as to decide the new heritage theme worth celebrating going forward. Retrospectively, the future generation could still pick any epoch that they have reasons to believe represent them best. Vibrancy around Mapungubwe Kingdom found expression after several years of celebrating the history of Dzata Provincial Heritage Site in the Vhembe District. In my view, heritage institution's role is to create platforms by ensuring the required information is made available to end-users all the time. Afro-centric heritage conservation instrument operators are then urged to ensure that material evidence is maintained for quality assurance. This places the study towards discussing issues pertaining to quality and value accruals in keeping heritage sites and objects under axiology.

### **2.3.3. Axiology in Afro-centred heritage conservation model**

Hart (1971) opines that axiology stems from two Greek concepts namely *axios* (worthiness or valuable) and *logos* (reasons). Its conceptualization as research methodology arguably gained momentum in the 1970s. This section places axiology as the catalyst towards integration of heritage analogy in the Afrocentric approach debate. One reflects on the generic elements applied in the determination on the derivation of value out of a phenomenon. Mostra (2014) asserts that theorists of axiology are interested in the analysis of material and spiritual at the generally acceptable value of a particular phenomenon. However, this section is limited to discuss the intangible aspect of axiology as it is understood by theorists of both heritage and Afrocentric approach.

According to Asante (2003), African people have been dislocated from own ideals that holistically define their values. In my view, the Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument anticipates risks emanating from land ownership and claiming processes. It needs to be articulate of what heritage benefits should be regardless of the outcome of either processes. Jordan (2012) and Ndoro (2008) bring into the study the aspect of public space management in line with monument erection. There is a thin line

separating a monument and a heritage site although both can still be used as heritage landmark. The National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 section 37 protects monuments in the public space. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape cum world heritage site and National Park is a site. There are also heritage buildings protected in terms of section 34 of heritage legislation of South Africa. It is important to indicate that it takes a narrative to give reasons as to why that building, monument or site is culturally significant. This becomes a highly contested space to endorse a place as such.

For instance, public space was contested for the display of monuments in honour of liberation struggle icons across South Africa. According to Claasen (2015) the reasons for the contest are as follow: to ventilate the deeply entrenched political anger rooted amongst black people against their white counterpart. It was also done to pave a way for the erection of monuments in honor of black political leaders. Political parties exploited that opportunity in pursuit of own propaganda to steal the limelight. A typical example is the campaign led by the Economic Freedom Fighters led student movements at the University of Cape Town. This campaign was popularly known as the *#the Rhodes must fall!* According to Claasen (2015), the University of Cape Town students led the campaign to have the stature of Cecil John Rhodes removed off the university premises. There were claims that the stature rather monument is the symbol of colonial construct and product of its time. Ironically, students also shared expression that majority of African leaders are not well represented in public monuments. It could be inferred that the *#the Rhodes must fall campaign* was the manifestation of the speech by the Minister of Arts and Culture Mr Paulo Jordan (Jordan 2012). The minister avers that monuments and public landmarks attest that South Africa was a colony. He further says that the country needs no apology in its quest to redress those past imbalances in public space. The general sentiment to this aspect was that public monuments continue to celebrate European dominance of Africa.

It tacitly downsized the efforts that were put in place by anti-colonialism and apartheid African leaders. In essence this sentiment suggests that heritage compliance authorities are expected to develop a heritage sites and objects disposal strategy to guide the due processes. The failure to develop such guidelines perpetuated the conservatism in heritage management processes. UNESCO (2005) attests that there is evidence of world heritage sites that were delisted from the world heritage sites list.

The effects of loosing the world heritage site is yet to be fully exploited. The grown mining interest along Mapungubwe World Heritage Site prompts the study to raise alarm on the need for disposal plan.

Surprisingly, there is no sign of remedial actions undertaken by the heritage conservation institutions of the removed monument. The removal of Cecil John Rhodes was done against the law, which no matter the political reasoning it became act of vandalism. Hart (1971) warns operators of Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument to focus more on interrelationship between humans and their living environment. Axiology is generally limited to the value as perceived and liked by end users of different products. According to Mostra (2014) value is a complex interaction between the phenomena making human experience either exciting or bad. Heritage value has been limited to the site or objects identified, assessed, and promoted to vast majority of people in the community.

Mason (2002) warns that value is dynamic as it is often limited to the needs of the affected people. In view of this sentiment, I am establishing that Afro-centred heritage instrument still needs to be promoted and aligned to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site other programs. Strategy should be developed towards realization of this objective. There are external factors such as politics, money and poverty influencing the value chain of a particular phenomenon. It is generally acceptable that African heritage resources industry requires revitalisation to reclaim its value. Mostra (2014), Asante (2009) and De la Torre (2002) maintain that Africa should first recover its lost heritage commodities to their European counterpart. This should be achieved by linking modern people and their lost tradition.

Asante (2009), Hart (1971), Hyman (2004) and De La Torre and Mason (2002) maintain that people should be encouraged to celebrate myths and legends making their heritage. It emerges in most literature that death is valued more than life in Africa tradition. In this regard, Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument espouses various African burial rituals as heritage commodities worth preserved. Daneel (1970) and Mhaka (2014) opine that African people treasure burial grounds and graves for spiritual sanitation. Rituals are performed to inform the ancestors of the passing on of a person and appeasements.



Mhaka (2014) explicitly uses karanga expression in saying that; *munhu afa, hama dzinofanira kuti dziziviswe kuitira kuti dzisasangana namashura*, translates as when a person dies, relatives should take honour to inform one another that there should not be bad omen affecting any family member. Mhaka (2014) further says that death can bring mystical danger to the consanguine of the deceased. Vele Colliery Coal Mining Heritage Impact Assessment (2009) anticipates accidental recovery of unmarked graves in the project area. Roodt (2009) categorically states that accidental recovering of human remains is possible whenever there is earth removal in major construction and excavations.

Therefore, the Afrocentric heritage conservation instrument cater for accidental discovery of human remains and other significant heritage objects. Bakari (1997) opines that theorist of axiology focus on establishing the value chain of a phenomenon. The National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 limits value to the historical, aesthetics, artistic, architectural, and vernacular expressions of an object or site. This is difficult to measure the impact of each guiding items because they are determined by human affection to them. It is for similar reason that Smith (2004) and Grenon and Smith (2011) are of the view that there is neither right nor wrong on earth. It takes a judgement of a person on the phenomenon to get most people attracted to the same. It stands to reason that cultural heritage theorists derive value from adherence to the acceptable behaviour in a particular community.

Politically, value is established against conformity to acceptable ideology espoused by prominent leader of time. This ironically could still be said on decision making processes to choose strategic economic growth-oriented policies. Operators of Afrocentric heritage conservation instrument are alerted that value is an institutionalised phenomenon. Department of Arts and Culture has since the establishment of democracy attached value to certain dates in the national calendar (DAC 2018). However, operators of Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument are urged to focus on the meaning attached that which is being celebrated. The loss of human lives is often used to invite emotional attachment to the phenomenon that is being celebrated. For example, annual Freedom Day celebration is set for the 27<sup>th</sup> April, Human rights day, Good Friday, Workers day, Youth day, National women's day,

Heritage day, Reconciliation day, Christmas day and Day of Goodwill. An African Knowledge Systems contributes to make some of these holidays culturally significant. For instance, the day of the goodwill is used for spiritual sanitations. According to Dima (2017), to the Vhavenda it is the period of libation through giving of Thevhula (Praise uttering to the ancestors). They also celebrate the beginning of a year that comes in the month of Khubvumedzi (September), which sees threes budding. Rituals that are frequently served during this stage are also meant for asking for the rain. In good raining season, Dzima in Venda tradition while in Xitsonga tradition is called Kudzima Xikomu begins to introduce ploughing season (Junoid 1968).

Reconciliation day is celebrated on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December annually precisely by the Zulu ethnic group and the Boers in commemoration of Zulu-Boer War killings (DAC 2018). Heritage Day is also celebrated on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September annually that is also associated with the death of King Shaka Zulu. Ironically, at the establishment of democratic government of South Africa, Dr Ben Ngubane became the first Minister of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation (South African Online History 2017). He was co-opted from the Inkata Freedom Party that at the time was at rivalry with the African National Congress the ruling party. The decision was not so popular to most members of the ruling party that some informants claim that the configuration of the national calendar was not done in good faith. Instead, it was derogatively meant to crown the Inkata Freedom Party blind victory as to claim short sightedness on the ruling party. Nonetheless, these days are valued as they are also marked as public holidays.

Still, the Heritage Day is generally perceived as the day to dress traditional clothing inspired by local cultural fabrics known as Mwenda/Nwenda in Venda or Mitsheka in Xitsonga and decorating beadworks and eating traditional foods (DAC 2018). Contrary, the Boers make use of the same as *Braai dag* meaning meat roasting usually at picnic sites with families and friends. There are spiritual sentiments attached to the day is gradually lost although it becomes a win to heritage conservation. This is simply because the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999, particularly, section 5 provides that heritage is served to foster social cohesion, reconciliation, and nation building. These are intangible benefits intended for heritage conservation, which still makes other informants wonder if it should discontinue its business. Motshekga (2006) and Michalopoulos and Papaioannou (2015) express discontentment over the

abandoned ancestral worshipping by most African leaders. Motshekga (2006) claims that African leaders have since been assimilated to Christianity value systems. There is gradual eradication of African values and morals that as leaders they are expected to protect. Mostra (2014) in support opines that there is indeed a collapse of ancestral ways of worshipping in most *Misanda* (royal courtyards). Raphalalani (2015) and Motshekga (2006) generally affirm that Musanda is the place of constant worshipping led by *Maine* (African doctor or priest).

On the role of elite leader like the King, Raphalalani avers that *Maine wa Musanda* in consultation with *Makhadzi* of the need to conduct libation. More often certain rituals are performed precisely to renew the fortresses of Musanda against the invasion of foreign spirits to cause divides and instability in the society. Motshekga (2006) maintains that acceptance of Christianity by most African leaders left their subordinates vulnerable. This implies that the traditional role that they are expected to play is compromised. Motshekga (2010) opines that abandonment of traditional ways of worship is also influenced by an act of selfishness. Mbiti (1975) warns that the king is appointed specifically as the priest and mediator between the subordinates and ancestral world. Christianity is built on the value systems that posit contradiction to African spirituality. Affiliation to Christianity marks the broken communication links between the community and ancestral world. It places ancestral belief systems as inferior to the newly acquired means of worshipping.

Biblically, God that Christians arguably serves is depicted as the jealous being that cannot accept other masters amongst own affiliates. Idahosa (1998) Michalopoulos and Papaioannou (2015) and Olukoya (2010) opine that there is a scramble to win support either to African ways of worshipping or Christianity on earth. The competition is so entrenched that children are claimed at conception, birth and other stages of physical development and growth. A child legible to become the King are chosen and set apart yet monitored and mentored by elders. There are punitive measures that disobedient leaders face whenever they act contrary to their ancestral code of conduct in the society. According to Motshekga (2010), Dima (2005) and Ralushai (2005), the punitive measure may include the following: collapse of morals and values, vulnerability to abuse of substances such as alcohol, and ungovernable situation in the community to the King's humiliation. Asante (2003) equally share this sentiment

in saying Afrocentricity approach serves to promote the African values and acceptable cultural behaviour for sanity.

In view of this Afro-centred heritage management tool urges operators to take into cognizance the acceptable cultural behaviour to make proper decisions. It is equally encouraged that operators familiarise themselves with the people attitude, the direction that the political leadership of time is pursuing, and the respect they command from the public to align heritage management programmes properly. Basically, the Afro-centred heritage conservation tool should explore how people attach value to leadership and various cultural heritage resources. It urges operators to analyze decision making processes as to what influences people to undertake such actions. This is simply because heritage like any other sectors competes for the same members of the public for support.

Both internal and external environmental factors influencing change in cultural behaviour need to be understood properly. Asante (2009) and Nkondo (2012) warn that the market competition increases pressure to underdeveloped social and cultural heritage institutions. Basically, Nkondo (2017) suggests that Afro-centred instrument should be wired to unmask the rhetoric of invisible yet highly influential forces in public services decision-making processes. Nkondo (2012) warns that market dictates capital flow of government to its maximum benefits. So, the whole aspect of political hegemony has taken a turn into heritage economics. Generally, public institutions are automatically trustees of public heritage goods. Yet, public servants are expected to service the interests of employers precisely decision makers. Instable political environment is characterised by established gross negligence and corruption elements of public office bearers. Placement of political leaders is arguably done either to dislocate one from well-resourced department to less funded, or vice versa.

The vision one carries into one department and the timing of reshuffling often raise ethical concerns that the study establishes. These in turn compromises the value chain that should otherwise be used to support less funded government mandates. Mason (2002) warns that theorists of heritage conservation are expected to introduce new models to permeate industrialised public administrative systems. The ministry of treasury is investing in public programs that are wired to generate economic

development spin-offs. Heritage sector is yet to prove itself as the active role player than dependent beneficiary out of the rest. This is simply because of high concentration on money economy than social investment that heritage services. According to Stieglitz (1998) the whole approach towards determination of a heritage status is highly criticised by theorist of economic development. There is a general statement labelling heritage as a “nice thing to have than pressing need”. Theorists are urged to break this perception as it affects the value chain that gave rise to heritage conservation to win back sectorial trust. The Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument emerges to offer alternatives towards meeting such expectations.

#### **2.3.4. Rhetorics of aesthetics as heritage conservation model**

According to Bakari (1997), Asante (2003) and De la Torre and Mason (2002), aesthetics is limited to human perception of the phenomenon as either beautiful or ugly. Heritage resources offer different experiences to end-users to make individual determination based on aesthetics. I argue that the Afro-centre heritage conservation instrument should level the ground for research for more substantive way in making such determinations. The Vele Colliery Coal Mining Environmental Impact Assessment (2009) indicates that conservation managers fear all forms of pollution in the ecosystem. The Vele Colliery Coal Mining Heritage Impact Assessment (2009) expresses fear of heritage end-users of unsympathetic destruction of heritage resources. Those studies were done to identify and mitigate physical and intangible substance that can possibly compromised the intrinsic and descriptive expression of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Roodt (2009), Junod (1912) and Hyman (2004) limit the intrinsic expression of the site to intangible incentives that end-users derive from stories, myth, legends, and scenic beauty. Contrary, descriptive expression focuses on the tangible features defining a particular landscape, monument, object, or site. There is an English proverb that claims that beauty lies on the eyes of the beholder, which comes handy in this discussion. In the determination of scenic beauty, it stands to reason that the person assesses all descriptive features to satisfy own expectations.

According to Meskell (2011), conservation managers for both environment and heritage are interested in the elimination of factors that can cause visual pollution to

the site. So, end-users of Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument are urged to take into cognizance these sceptics. Ndlovu (2012) portrays infrastructure developers and heritage professionals at loggerheads. The contest being over land usage rights where both parties enjoy equal privileges. Nonetheless, the clash is seen whenever there is project anticipated to cause visual pollution or permanent destruction of either natural or cultural heritage resources. Conservation authorities are invited to mitigate tension, which in the case of Vele Colliery Coal Mining the contest invited international mediators (Meskell 2011 & Esterhysen 2013). UNESCO was invited to allay fear on the status of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project is permitted. Basically, the epistemology of heritage aesthetics theory is shaped by individual countries experiences. According to De la Torre and Mason (2002), heritage aesthetics theory emerged in 1984. It was inspired by the literature of Lipe that develops the theoretical framework that is still in use.

The Australian Burra Charter (1998) incorporated this aspect into broader heritage conservation policy framework of the country. There is evidence that many countries today that have revised their legislations from 1999 referred to the Australian Burra Charter. The National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 of South Africa inclusive. De la Torre and Mason (2002) articulate that there is no generally acceptable methodology to measure the value of heritage object or site. Instead, theorists of heritage conservation are content in the use of either descriptive or intrinsic assessment criteria or both simultaneously. It is important to say that Coal of Africa that established Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project is reportedly an Australian company. Esterhysen (2013) records derogative expression claiming that Mapungubwe is set to be traded for Australian Dollar. It therefore stands to reason that the legal framework of South Africa is driven by African heritage ideals. It becomes evident too that Coal of Africa was better experienced on heritage conservation versus mining contests. The Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument should anticipate high profiled contests informed by several experiences. It is important to also look at the advent of heritage conservation perhaps as the theory. According to De La Torre (2013), the aspect of conservation of heritage traces background from the 1964 Charter of Venice. The Charter limits conservation to the safeguarding of monuments that many are in the public spaces. It propagates for retention of aesthetical value of the monument by keeping it to its original state at first exhibition. Still, Afrocentric view is not audible from

the conception of conservation theory. In view of De la Torre (2013) sentiment, I find the purpose of heritage conservation and exhibition theory was to test products durability at different weather conditions. However, the beginning could be suspicious, but heritage conservation has been growing well within the social sciences lately.

According to Netshifhefhe (2008), fabric durability is equally debated in heritage complimentary fields such as indigenous knowledge systems. For instance, products used to maintain artwork, paintings, architecture, and all fine art come in different contents. Netshifhefhe (2008) opines that theorists of indigenous knowledge system pride themselves by using mineral harvesting mechanism at low risk to heritage and environmental conservation. This is arguably not the case with mining that require huge infrastructure sometimes on the site that might not see the anticipated lifespan through. For example, the Vele Colliery Coal Mining Environmental Impact Assessment (2009) projected lifespan of 30 years. It is worth mentioning that this is subject to availability of resources financially, human resources, and capacity of the mining plant to carry extra tasks. It emerges in the assessment done that the first phase will be open casting mining before underground operations.

Vele Colliery Coal Mining Heritage Impact Assessment (2009) anticipates possible destruction of vulnerable cultural heritage objects. The study limits vulnerable cultural heritage objects to those that are not properly profiled or used as part of entire collection found in the project area. Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument is set to guide harvests of mineral resources in sensitive heritage area. This should be by establishing expectations of both micro and macro-economic development sectors. I am reflecting on these aspects to level the ground to understand the predicaments facing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It emerges in the study that there are other people that appreciate it as cultural landscape, particularly built environment researchers. The point I am driving is that heritage aesthetic at some stage moved from handcrafted monuments to the cultural landscape analogy. According to Selman and Swanwick (2010) and De La Torre (2013) theorists of cultural landscaping commend limited use of machinery for excavation. This is the same view that heritage conservation theorists are found pursuing. It is on similar stance that the contestation against Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site

conservation area was found. The generic stance all together is that heritage theorists aim to reduce or avoid destruction of desired scenic beauty.

Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument is expected to level the ground for such technical debates towards finding alternate solution as it is required. Contrary, Othman (2015) says that cultural landscape professionals are interested in studying the significant relationship between humans and the environment. There should be mutual symbiosis noticeable between humans and the ecosystem at large. Ideally, nature is set to benefit out of human sympathetic harvests of its commodities, meanwhile, humans can meet their physiological and spiritual needs out of natural provisions. The beauty is looked through the lenses of fair trade that should see both beneficiaries gaining and opening future growth potentials. The study urges operators of Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument to opt to negotiate for mutual benefits out of vulnerable sites.

De La Torre and Mason (2002), De La Torre (2013) and Mostra (2014) aver that negotiations should be done by knowledgeable persons. The negotiation process could still pose few risks due to vulnerability to monetary, political, and human geographical interference and exploitation. Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument should anticipate the need emanating from other sectors for mitigation purposes. It should also anticipate resistance to its course that could invite legal litigations. Positively, legal intervention anticipated should also aim towards empowering strategic end-users. Nonetheless, there are important elements emanating from this section that propels the current study. For instance, it emerges in the literature that the foundation of heritage conservation is not aiming towards community development. It is currently not placing heritage sector towards helping communities solve poverty and underdevelopment challenges. Yet, there are emotional incentives though attached to heritage conservation to satisfy individual person's curiosity. The benefits out of heritage conservation so far are for psychological satisfaction as to help end-users for stress relief and spiritual sanitation. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is found in the location characterised by unemployment and poverty problems. Aesthetics elements that heritage conservation protects becomes secondary needs. End-users of Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument need to take cognizance of these aspects.



### **2.3.5. African cosmology as Afro-centred heritage conservation model**

Asante (2009) postulates that Afrocentric approach can succeed if end-users see value of its use. Mazama (2001), value encompasses utilitarian, naturalistic, aesthetics, symbolic gestures, humanitarianism, moralistic and dominion views in the society. In previous sections, emphasis was placed on aesthetics, determination of cultural heritage status and its utility. The discussions also touched basis on the overall relationship between the universe and humanity necessitating heritage conservation. However, the benefits of all towards the determination of moral behaviour acceptable in the community are not yet established. African cosmology model is adopted to establish its viability in heritage conservation matters. It is, however, important to first define cosmology for proper contextualization in the study. According to Campion (2017), cosmology is the study of the universe as orderly system with laws governing it. It is a branch of Astrology dealing with the structure and evolution of the universe. Motshekga (2010) opines that ideas about the cosmos are imbedded in human cultural and social systems. Cosmology focuses on the “being” element that espouses the notion of human as either spiritual or physical substance. McMichael, Hollander, and Simon (2015) and Campion (2017) claim that theorists of natural sciences biggest mistake in the past was their attempt to separate culture in studying cosmology.

Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument emerges in the highly contested terrain that Eurocentric view of Africa is more dominant than African knowledge systems. There is also an assumption on the similarities between different cultures based on the aspect of Africa being the mother continent of all (Mazrui 1986). African cosmology is adopted to establish African Knowledge System approach to morality and cultural heritage behaviour. According to Motshekga (2010), African people build strong ties with the universe particularly the celestial world without physical interference with them. Eurocentric influenced approach sees scientists frequently interfering with some celestial objects like the moon, stars, and other planets. Basically, African cosmology espouses the notion that the universe is not so independent of human influence. Instead, there are other intervention measures that are done to influence the performance of the celestial objects without being physically involved in their location.

Motshekga (2006 & 2017) and Mathenjwa (1999) opine that African cosmology focuses on the influence of the stars, moon and sun in human growth and development. For instance, Mercury influences human intellect and strategic calculation of the brain. Yet, the Moon influences body fluids secretion and flow meanwhile Venus influences the discernments of the sensory organs. The Mars influences the functioning of the red blood copper cells and natural oxidation of the body, while the Jupiter accelerates physical growth of living organisms. It is also expressed that Saturn influences bones growth and development in animal anatomy while Uranus stimulates animal central nervous system to perform at best. Neptune on the other hand is used to stimulate the performance of animal glands that are responsible for secretion of hormones. The Sun energises the body, Pluto is looked at for body rejuvenation, healing and continuous uses of the area once affected by sickness or temporary deformity. According to Mathenjwa (1999), human beings are positioned as central to the performance of the universe to its current state. The celestial world is broken to give life support systems to the living organisms at large. Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument embeds the notion that there is correlation between the sky, earth, and underworld. Biblically, God is portrayed as the trinity omnipresent being on the sky, earth, and underworld.

According to Emaka and Ekeopara (2010), African theologians limit divinity as “being” that can either manifests in human or spiritual objects. In this context, the spirit manifests using human agent either to infuse natural or supernatural wisdom on a particular being. For instance, human as a being has the capacity to visit any of the three spaces be it the sky, earth, and underworld. However, the physiological orientation of a human being only limits them to the planet earth with manageable atmospheric gasses for their unaided survival. However, the spiritual being becomes an enabling tool for a human being to override biological barriers limiting their participation in this regard.

Motshekga (2010) identifies another category of “a being” to suggest on the existence of divine being. The divine being emerges out of the combination of human and spiritual elements making a particular person an elite charismatic being. The biological orientation of such person is usually contested, particularly at conception phase.

Biologically, a child is conceived out of the sexual intercourse between the male and female persons for fertilization to take place. Contrary divine beings are arguably conceived out of supernatural means for reasons such as community leaders, healers, and prophets to mention but few. Motshekga (2010) opines that individuals such as Makhadzi, Kings, Queens and divine healers of all statuses fall within the category of divine beings. Daneel (1970) in similar discourse claims that Dlembewu or Dyambeu the King of the Rozvi people was birthed out of supernatural means.

It is believed that his mother conceived him out of the supernatural union with Mwarimudenga (God the creator of the universe). The mother was the daughter of King Nembire that had established the Rozvi monarch. They are known for preservation of sacred sites that are temples of worship. Matopo hill is believed to have been their stronghold where they host their annual conference attended by local chiefs under this monarch. This places the king as both the political and spiritual head on behalf of his people. The criteria set in National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 qualifies Matopo hill as the cultural heritage site. However, the degree of sensitiveness of the site and its significance could only be determined in terms of heritage law in the Republic of Zimbabwe as the host country. The rationale of bringing this aspect is built on the notion of cultural interfacing where African and Eurocentric views are testable. The burial rites each view seeks to promote or protect are strategic focus elements Afro-centred heritage conservation theory should embrace. Dima (2005) claims that African leaders birthed out of divine interventions are given secluded burial treatments at Tshiendeulu amongst Vhavenda ethnic group. The burial of Cecil John Rhodes in the Matopo hill probably have serious cultural heritage implications. The grave is a living testimony or a landmark visible in the sensitive Afro-centred spiritual heritage site. Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument then serves to mitigate intercultural elements obscuring African heritage knowledge systems.

African cosmology plays significant role towards measuring the impact culture changes had in the enjoyment of African heritage knowledge systems. The people of both Matopo hill and Mapungubwe Kingdom are known for practising rainmaking tradition. The two kingdoms had accommodated people that brought in Eurocentric cultural influences on local cultural heritage conservation (Daneel 1970). It is however not known if the burial of Cecil John Rhodes in places such as Matopo hill and trading

with other European and Middle East countries compromised African heritage knowledge systems. African cosmology enables me to establish descriptive features defining African heritage conservation. It also helps in the identification of dominant culture in a particular location, which is instrumental in understanding of local heritage resources. It emerges in the study that African cosmology offers material evidence to understand the origin of living beings. Ironically, Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation authorities were called to deal with land ownership matters.

According to Pikirai and Chirikure (2013), South Africa at the declaration of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was expected to make land available for conservation. It required extended portion of land to cater for demarcating area commonly known as bufferzone. Ironically, there were several land claims filed inclusive of space earmarked for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation with Vhangona tribe as main claimant. Vhangona tribe pride themselves on their statuses of “being” that is expressed as *Ngwaniwapo*, *Matangakugara* or *Mawanikwa*. The status justifies them as the natives to have established themselves earlier than most ethnic groups in the area. They claim to be the sons and daughters of God of light that control procreation of the living beings. Motshekga (2010), Hoppers (2004) and Patz, Corvalan, Horwitz and Campbell-Lendrum (2012) worshiping of celestial objects is common practice that African cosmology discusses. Central to the discussion is the traditional use of agencies such as the moon, stars, and the sun for spiritual sanitation. Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument is required to embrace the use of those agencies in building justifiable ground for determination of a heritage status.

Mathenjwa (1999) correlation theory linking the sky, earth and underground phenomena significantly makes each a heritage object. Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument looks at human spiritual relations to the sky, earth and underground worlds. A lot has been done to protect physical cultural heritage landscape than their spiritual sentiments. Mathenjwa (1999) opines that there are celestial beings and objects than human beings relate to. Motshekga (2010) in support opines that there are twelve stars making the Zodiac circle that is central in the understanding of human spiritual being. Biblically, they are known as the resemblance of the children of Jacob also known as Israel. Jacob is further portrayed as the sun which ultimately is the source of life, fertility, and abundance. Rachel his wife is

depicted as the moon which is understood to be the source of procreation towards filling the earth (Idahosa 1998 & Olukaya 2010). African cosmology places diviners, healers, and prophets as agents with wisdom to interpret and relates the movements of stars, moon, and sun to human life. Motshekga (2010), acknowledges linguistic barriers to distinguish medical practitioners trained through Eurocentric inclined methods from their Afrocentric counterparts. I am adopting African doctors specifically to draw the distinctive line between them. African doctors make use of divining sets called *Thangu* or *Thevhele* (venda). According to Dima (2005), and Mbiti (1975), the contents of *Thangu* generally differ as some are inheritable from family tradition. For instance, some families make use of palm of the hands, beads, animal bristles, bible, crafted wooden plates or related objects for diagnoses. There are also some that make use of physical sensory organs particularly the nose for diagnosing the cause of sicknesses in the person.

In Venda tradition the process is called *u femba* meaning to sniff. Specialist does that holding the bristles cut from the tail of Wildebeest (*Connochaetes Taurinus*). The specialist sniffs both the bristles and the body of the patient until the diagnoses is completed. Generally, it is out of those stars making the Zodiac network to support the diagnoses or reflect on the person's social, political, and financial being in that moment. Campion (2017) avers that cosmology is established out of the combination of astrology and physics. Generally, the combination of the two plays significant role in the understanding of geophysics and human anatomy. In short, quantum cosmology theory emanates from this combination which is equally instrumental in the current study. Steigl and Hinterleither (2006) opine that theorist make use of Quantum cosmology to study the beginning of the universe. It is important to maintain that the current study is equally grounded on rhetoric of power acclaimed by one ethnic group over the rest. Asante (2009) and Mazrui (2014) are equally interested in establishing the ethos giving Eurocentric view dominion of its Afrocentric view counterpart.

Afrocentric approach posits the African Knowledge Systems in astrology, physics and mathematics that are integral part of Quantum cosmology. A typical example worth citing is the ability of African people to calculate and measure the speed of the lighting. This is common in the harvest of stars, clouds, and their convention into *Ndadzi* (Venda), *Ndlazi* (Xitsonga) or *Legadima/Ledimo* (Sesotho). Quantum cosmologists

are interested also in the measurement of gravitational forces as it fluctuates (Motshekga 2017). African knowledge systems suggest that a human being can project as both physical and spirit beings occupying different spaces at a time. The physical can remain in one station while the spirit being travail elsewhere. It is argued that the spirit has the capacity to move back and forth across thousand mileages at a speed equal to the blinking of the eye. There is a Venda idiom that says, *mulomo a u dalelwi nga mulambo* (mouth can cross any river no matter the depth).

In this context, one uses this idiom literary to indicate that it is possible with humans to transcend physical barriers using oral, vision and dreams transmissions. The natural justice system attests that one can be charged in any court of law by words they have uttered that are condemned by the judicial and cultural systems. Those words may include, *ni do zwivhona or a thi tambelwi!* It is then up to the recipient to analyse and grasp with the content of such utterances either to retreat or intensify the war of words with the potential to turn physical. Usually, this can come during quarrelling that if anything bad occurs to the intended recipient, it is justifiable in the court that the expresser is probably responsible for any damaged caused. Quantum cosmology deals with the aspect of time management in the collection of evidence building the phenomenon. Emeka and Ekeopara (2010) postulate that aspect of religion plays significant role in human faith and superstitions. It is arguably out of fear for worse case scenarios that see people affiliate to different religious practices.

African cosmology suggests that fortresses are built in houses, cars, and personal belongings as administered by different priests. In the case of the Ngas ethnic group, the remedy is to arrest and control the celestial beings that bring either fortune or calamities to the people. La Pin and Speed (1984) in the film documentary posit the Ngas ethnic group of central Nigeria also known as the sons of the moon. The Ngas people observe the movement of the moon in the sky to mark calendar seasons and understand human behaviour. It is through this practice where the Ngas people determine cultivating, social events, and ritual performances. One common ritual that they perform is the harvest of the moon throughout different circles from crescent, half, and full moon stages. The high priest leads the ritual that includes libation to serve the new beer to the new moon while destroying the older one by symbolically piecing the old moon with the spear.

Mabogo (1990) claims that Ba-lunda tribe found in other parts of Democratic Republic of Congo, Northern Angola and Zambia is known to have built a tower for moon harvesting in the past. It is important to reflect on the use of the sun as mode of spiritual sanitation in cosmology and heritage. According to Eduljee (2015) sun worshiping is also common in the Middle East countries. The Hurries and Sabians called themselves the people of the sun or sun worshipers. The trademark of most countries in the continent is the use of the sun in their national flags citing Korea Republic, Japan, India, and Bangladesh to mention but few. Eduljee (2015) retorts that sun worshipers are known for praying facing the east direction calling for the brand-new sun. At the sun rise, worshipers kiss the spots where the sun rays first point in deep meditation. Sheikh Shams is honoured as the mightiest mediator between Sun and the people. In Makonde Mountain in the Vhembe District as in Matopo hill rituals performers and mediators with the Mwari are honoured (Dima 2005).

These are sacred sites that are known for frequently hosting of Mwarimudenga (Shona] also known as Mwali Raluvhimba (Venda) during his visits to the people. In Makonde, Makwapeni is known for his mediation role as the only person to have had the wisdom to hear and understand the language Mwari uses during his visits. This is also in the public knowledge shared through oral sources through many generations gone by. Another African ethnic group practising sun worshiping is the Sara of the Chad Republic. Britannica (2017) traces the origin of the Sara from the Valleys of Nile River before migrating to central Africa. They are known for their trade of using mouth decorating by placing disks in their pierced either or both of their upper and lower lips. The size of the disk resembles the might of the sun god that brings fertility, good harvests, and rainfalls. African cosmology claims that African people are the sons of the soil that helps them hash unfavourable sunny conditions.

OvaHimba people located in Kunene Region in Namibia towards the border of Angola are known for their tradition of applying red ochre and the use of fire for subsistence. Ndimwedi (2016) opines that red ochre is used skin protection against the scotch heat and insect bites. Smoke of a fire is often used for body freshening than water as the area experiences water scarcity due to low rainfall. Instead of taking a shower it is recommended that body exposure to the smoke relief them of old ochre before applying fresh one. However, one brings in the aspect of eclipse celebration that is

upheld in African cosmology. Oxford dictionary (2016) defines eclipse as an astronomical event where astrological object is obscured by another. In most cases, this could happen when the moon and the sun obscure each other, which results in temporary darkness for a little while. Makonde Mountain became the hotspot for people to make good observation of the eclipse lately, which is commonly known to local people as *Mutshakavhili* as it was unfolding.

Another common eclipse in the celestial is caused by the stars or planets that lately saw the mars and mercury in communion (American eclipse 2017). Astrologers few for possible collapse of either of the two stars in direct contacts as history shows of these possibilities. South African Geoscience (2017) portrays four major meteorite spots that are also heritage sites. Those sites are Kalkkop in Graaf Reinent in the Western Cape, Morokweng in Northwest, Tswaing Crater in Gauteng, and Vredefort Dome in the Free state Provinces. Stephen (2017) opines that there is no certainty on the actual cause of the Meteorite manifestation. Still, there are those astrologers that claim that it results from the friction of gasses in the atmosphere. Celestial objects that do not survive the friction falls on the ground. It is estimated that it travels at approximately 30-70 kilometres per second until it hits and open the ground like a rocket that makes serious groundbreaking impact. Astrologers measure the depth and the space affected afterwards to determine the speed level at which it was travelling. According to Luonde (2017), there are natural hot springs such as Tshipise- tsha-Sagole, Tshipise-tsha-Vhalovhedzi and Tshipise-tsha-Dondwe in Vhembe District. It is generally acceptable these springs are the result of meteorite that hit the area although the date is not known. Neluvhalani (2017) refutes in saying that there are many heritage objects like the footprint stone that justifies that rocks started in mercury form before they were crystalized. There were Ngwaniwapo people that natural resources attest to it. They welcomed all ethnic groups that came at different intervals in the history of South Africa.

#### **2.4. Conclusion**

Significantly, empirical literature review was done where a generic definition of Afro-centeredness was set. Several theories and models were reviewed to give a holistic scope of factors making Afro-centred heritage phenomenon. Matriarchal theory



focuses on the conception of human beings and their relationship with creation. African cosmology categorically focused on human relationship with both celestial beings and objects as the inherited knowledge system. Again, the Two-cradle theory discussed the universal view aspect on the origin of ethnic groups making the world society. Africa is still perceived as the mother continent that birthed all ethnic groups and cultural philosophy. This is a disputed view still that the current captures which however reflects on inter-connection with the already mentioned theories.

Ironically, the study raises concern over knowledge gap created between Africa and its European counterpart. The reasoning behind this concern is based on the historical evidence portraying African continent as the oldest of them all. Yet, there is consensus that conceptualisation of Eurocentric philosophy interjected the flow and consumption of African philosophy. Afrocentric approach is then established to enable African people towards rediscovery of their lost heritage. It focuses on the psychological impediments created to downgrade African people into spectators in major global social, economic and political decisions. The chapter identifies potential agents to build Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument, which are cosmology, aesthetics, ontology/axiology that reflect on the epistemological foundation of African heritage.

Empirical literature urges emerging African scholars to identify and locate Afro-centred view possibly in all their academic contributions. I am drawing reference to Asante's sentiment that "other than building on Afrocentric view African scholar risks not to contribute anything towards helping Africa in her time of needs". The statement is probably too ambitious, yet I limit the discussion towards satisfying the notion of African Knowledge Systems. Generally, for the envisaged Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument, I made aware that the instrument should touch base on social, economic, and political framework rooted in African philosophy.

In conclusion, the literature review conducted presents a broader scope towards understanding of Afrocentric thought and heritage conservation. However, there is still a need to curtail the scope to fit within the study main objective in view of all models and theories set. This is set to be done through establishing cultural heritage traits establishing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Nonetheless, literature suggests that African Knowledge Systems are rooted in cosmology that is generally valued by most

people. Contrary, Eurocentric heritage conservation approach upheld issues of aesthetics and develops value chain that left African heritage marginalised. As a point of departure, the envisaged Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument is set to embrace African Knowledge Systems holistically. It is therefore important to present the research methodology towards identification and understanding of the study area.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

The empirical literature review as demonstrated in the previous chapter assisted in laying down fundamental principles defining Afro-centric approach. It emerged that Afrocentric approach focuses lot more on the overall contribution of celestial and biodiversity in making of African cultural heritage management tool. This chapter discusses research methodology and the methods utilised in the collection of data and analysis. Van Maaneen (2011) argues that research methodology encapsulates design, methods of data collection and analysis. According to SAGE (2013) and Mouton and Marais (1990) research methodology is a mechanism employed by the researcher to collect, analyse, and validate data. In my view, Mouton and Marais (1990) definition invites multi-disciplinary approach in the conceptualisation of the research. SAGE (2013) definition offers the researcher some freedom to choose the approach that can help the study to achieve its objectives. This then urges the researcher to decide on flexible data collection methods to widen the search.

I used qualitative research methodology to widen the search parameters of the study. I utilised case study design to acquire primary data about Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It assisted the study in the establishment of conservation challenges in place. It is important to indicate that the growing mining interest along the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape is viewed a major challenge. The experiences of heritage professionals gathered during the dispute resolution processes over the Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project also assisted the study. Those experiences augmented the primary data acquired through observation. I created an interfacing platform where informants are set to reconcile the dispute using African Knowledge Systems to build Afro-centred heritage management tool.

UNESCO (2005) points out that most world heritage sites are in rich mineral resources terrain. It is up to the host countries to develop systems that will harness the growing mineral exploitation interest to enhance conservation management in place. It further warns about the possible loss global status should the host countries fail to manage the conflicting interest. Once again UNESCO warns about possible vandalization of

world heritage properties should the control mechanisms in place are found conservative. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape was looked at as the abandoned city under reconstruction. The bid towards making it a heritage tourism attraction point attracted construction of support infrastructure like roads, bulkwater supply, electricity supply, museums, and offices. These are important areas that heritage conservation processes focus on to mitigate potential threats to sites. Qualitative research assisted the study to acquire a holistic view on challenges facing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It also informed my decision to utilize qualitative data collection methods such as Interview, Focus Group Discussions, and Participatory observation. Prior giving insight on how these methods were applied in the study, it is important to point out that research methods also entail sample identification and sizing (Henning 2003, Watt 2007, SAGE 2013 & Holloway 2005). In short, this chapter gives an overview on how sampling, population identification, matters of ethical considerations and quality assurance were done. Significantly, the chapter gives the geographical location of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the focus area of the current study.

### **3.1. Qualitative research methodology**

This section gives a holistic overview of qualitative research as the overarching methodology utilised in the study. It gives a distinctive element separating research design from methodology. Watt (2007) and Weman et al. (2012) define research methodology as a devised strategy that the research employs to obtain, organize, and analyse data. Burns and Groove (2003) assert that research methodology covers design, identification of the study area, sampling, population identification and data collection and analysis mechanisms equally used in the study. Both definitions are still not articulate on the approach that should guide the implementation of the set methodology. However, Watt (2007) asserts that it is the researcher's prerogatives to either choose the umbrella methodology. As a point of departure, I am making use of qualitative research methodology to acquire raw data.

According to De Vos (2005) qualitative research methodology is dialectic and interpretive. It creates an inviting environment where both the researcher and informants interact. The study dimension is derived from the interpretation of acquired and analysed data. This sentiment inspired my choice of this methodology as I wanted

to be immersed in the study. It is important to indicate that qualitative data collection methods such as participatory observation, interview and Focus Group Discussions have enabled me to interact with informants. Basically, the use of these methods afforded me the opportunity to make use of all sensory organs of body to understand informant perceptions and fears. It is important to give insight on how various qualitative research methods employed were conducted. However, prior to that it is important to indicate that a case study was used as the appropriate research design. As a result, Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was placed as the focus area of the study. I also reflected on the mineral exploitation cases within the Mpungubwe Cultural Landscape.

I purposively chose Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project as its licensing was being challenged by heritage professionals. I utilized the participatory observation data collection method during public consultation meetings on the same subject to collect data. According to Reading (2018) and Maxwell (2012) and Van Dyk (2012) the case study is the research design that both Van Maanen (2011) and De Vos (2005) concede are integral elements of research methodology. Watt (2007) argues that research design in qualitative research can either use exploratory or case study approaches to mention but few. In practice, I found that there is a thin line separating the two concepts as during data collection processes I learnt that elements of exploratory factored as well.

Van Dyk (2012) argues that exploratory approach is applicable when the research subject comprises of uncertainty and ignorance. Yet, it emerges in this regard that exploratory approach is so flexible that it can easily adapt to any methodology. Contrary, Yin (2013) postulates that case study research is the strategy for methodological exploitation. In view of this, I argue that research is about exploitation of available primary and secondary sources to build a new perspective about the phenomenon that is being studied. The case study research design in this context is in qualitative research methodology. This is being done to explore the feasibility of integrating Afrocentric perspective in the current use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It is important to give insight on how various qualitative research methods were utilised in the study.

### 3.2. Qualitative research methods

The previous section portrays research design as the action plan devised to enable the researcher to source new knowledge about the study overarching objective. This sentiment finds expression in Reading (2018) and Maxwell (2012) that indeed research design is the program of action the researcher sets ahead of field work. Basically, this section is giving an insight about the study area by looking at its geographical positioning. It also portrays sampling processes employed to identify the informants of the study. Once more, the section discusses ethical considerations and quality assurance matters equally employed in the study. Significantly, the section reflects on the qualitative data collection tools used.

#### 3.2.1. The study area

This section points out area where the research was conducted by giving geographical description of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. I am making use of a map system to point various cultural and natural features giving substantive view about the study area. Significantly, I need to share the difficulty I experienced choosing what became known as the “Mapungubwe versus Vele” case study. There were lot of allegations and claims over possible extinction of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in favour of Vele Colliery Coal Mining exploitation. Surprisingly, several meetings that I participated that fuelled the contest appeared to have pointed the blame to one side against coal mineral harvesting near Mapungubwe World Site. Ironically, there has been diamond mineral exploitation on the same vicinity that predates the proposed Vele Colliery Coal Mining project that aggrieved parties sound very content with. The gap identifiable was what could be the principal approach to help in mitigating the contest. It was imperative to establish the voices of local communities in the discourse from Afrocentric perspective. I needed to find out as to what informs the decisions of ordinary people in this debate.

There are two institutions frequently mentioned throughout the study namely, Mapungubwe National Park and World Heritage Site located west of Coal of Africa-Vele Colliery Coal Mining Plant. The two institutions are located 12 kilometres apart although the operations by either of them yields the potential to disturb the other. This then means that mineral exploitation technocrats and their heritage management

counterpart are contesting for total control of the space separating them. Ironically, I have chosen Mapungubwe National Park and World Heritage Site as the place to conduct the research. The rationale in choosing the site was that at the conceptual stage of this study, Coal of Africa had not yet put infrastructure as it was still public consultation stage. The dispute that I am zooming into claimed that should Coal of Africa-Vele Colliery Mining continues the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site status might be lost in the process. It was then necessary for me to validate claim with the intention to establish mitigation measures thereafter.

I made use of Afro-centric approach that ultimately positioned the study within cultural heritage conservation debate. The assumption before the commencement of the study was that perhaps Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is underutilised by local communities. It was again assumed that management approach of the site is not offering substantive reasons for local communities to associate with their cultural heritage behaviour. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was looked at as the cultural institution pioneering promotion of local people tradition. Ironically, the proposed Coal of Africa-Vele Colliery Coal Mining program invited physical visit to the area earmarked for the project. The field trip was done by making use of game view tracks furring stakeholders that attended the site visit. Prior to undertaking of the field trip Heritage and Environmental Impact Assessment reports were perused to prepare for it. The reports could not explicitly rule out the possibilities of having more coal deposits inside the demarcated space for cultural heritage management. This then triggered me to ask a tour guiding person if there has been a separate study to clear the gap that I have noticed.

All I could gather from his response was “I cannot rule out that possibilities sir. It is just that for what we know or can say now, it is what these reports are saying. Sorry, for not doing enough spade work on that aspect. Actually, I did not see it coming honestly.” The demarcation line was done by erection of a fence line that in some areas was already broken. During perusal of the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site Nomination Dossier (2003) I had already noted that heritage technocrats had high hopes that the entire landscape could be surrendered for conservation by government. It is important to indicate that the decision that informed the licensing of Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining was not thoroughly exploited by government. The management authority

of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site also did not do thorough work towards self-orientation about the site. The scope of heritage impact assessment that informed South African Heritage Resources Agency on its permitting process was eschewed.

This in turn justifies the fear of possible extinction of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape that will automatically affect its world heritage status. So, the fading demarcation lines open the whole landscape that whoever comes through Coal of Africa-Vele Colliery Coal Mining route may invade Mapungubwe World Heritage Site terrain. The same with someone coming through the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site gates going eastwards may not know the boundaries separating the two. The use of qualitative research helped me to easily go back and forth to establish the contribution of mineral exploitation to heritage management matters. I also deepen the search to establish heritage elements that inspire mineral exploitation in return. In all these exercises I had hoped to hear lot more on the actual contribution of the set contest to Afro-centric discourse. It is important to give an overview of the study area by making use of a map illustration as shown below.





Figure 1: Figure 1: Mapungubwe National Park and World Heritage Site Map (South African National Parks 2015)

Demographically, Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is in the Vhembe District Municipality in Limpopo Province in the Republic of South Africa. The site is under the custodianship of South African National Parks Organization. The study embraces Vhavenda tradition in the development Afro-centred heritage management tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The reason behind this approach is influenced by high dominance of Vhavenda people in the study area. However, the study only gives a holistic framework that other ethnic groups can equally implement. It provides a map used to indicate the area earmarked for world heritage conservation at conceptual stage. The map gives a holistic overview of Mapungubwe National Park and World Heritage Site. It also portrays Archaeological sites in the demarcated space defining the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape.

The artefacts excavated from these sites provided material evidence that gave context to the history of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. As a result, those artefacts were also used as motivation in the bid for world heritage status attainment (DEA 2003). The map indicates similar sites found beyond the borders of South Africa to Botswana and Zimbabwe. It also shows other role players rather land users in Venetia mining plant site sharing the area. At the inception of the world heritage site status bid, Coal of Africa-Vele Colliery Coal Mining Plant was not in the picture. It is safe to aver that it is a manifestation of the growing mining interest in the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape after the acquisition of world heritage site. The map justifies potential availability of unnoticed heritage sites across the entire cultural landscape. This equally suggest that the study population of the current study is set to be made of institutions and people coming outside the demarcated area. Basically, this section eschews elaboration of cultural history about the study area because some significant elements were covered in some cited secondary sources.

### **3.2.2. Population of the study**

This section introduces the population of the study from which the sample was drawn. It is however important to define population in the study context for proper alignment. According to Reiter (2017), Creswell (2018) and Reading (2018) population of the study may include objects or individuals from which data will be collected or derived. The population of the study was established through the identification and

classification of individual role players in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site matters. The key role players identified include South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), South African National Parks Organization (SanParks) and National and Provincial Department of Environmental Affairs. They each have legal responsibilities on the affairs of the site that Afro-centred heritage management tool should reflect on or incorporate.

Internally, I targeted staff members that are involved with cultural heritage and biodiversity management matters. During desktop self-orientation about the study area, I checked representation per specific unit to balance issues of gender and diversity. Organizational structure accessible through public reports assisted the study to identify internal relevant role players. Basically, the main targets were employees involved in either heritage or biodiversity management matters. I was also interested in decision making processes rather chains of command and implementation turn-around in case new decisions are taken. In this context, Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was looked at as public institution under certain authorities.

Externally, I targeted professionals in heritage management and biodiversity conservation matters. In this instance, I identified former staff members even those that have since became heritage entrepreneurs. I also targeted decision makers perhaps that often include board or council members of various heritage conservation and compliance institutions. Again, I also extended the search to include members from the community-based institutions. I needed an informant from the relevant tribal authority. However, desktop study suggested that the farms inclusive of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is currently under claim.

Nonetheless, there are tribes made of the descendants of Mapungubwe Kingdom namely, Vhangona, Vhatwanamba, Vhalemba and Machete clan that made the study population. It also suggested that there is a compromise position that until such time the claim is resolved all tribes would be consulted equally on matters pertaining to the site. Ideally, this increased the number of informants I had hoped to interview. The study population extensively covered people in mineral exploitation and agricultural farming on the adjacent farms to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. In short, the

population consists of professional, institutions with legal responsibility on the study area, tribal authorities, independent researchers, and ordinary people.

### 3.2.3. Sampling technique

This section presents sampling technique employed in the development of Afro-centred heritage management tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. According to Fazeldehkordi, Amiri and Akanbi (2015), and Polit and Beck (2010), sampling is the technique used to extrapolate part of the whole population. Palys (2008) avers that the sample should come from the main shareholders and experts in a field. It is used to establish units for data analysis. In this context, purposive sampling method was applied to maximise freedoms or broaden the search for suitable informants. Palys (2008), Polit and Beck (2010) assert that purposive sampling signifies choices bestowed to the researcher to locate the place of research and systematic identification of informants.

The study applied snowball or referral sampling technique for flexibility to either narrow or increase the sample size. This was made possible by making use of the existing list of stakeholders provided for by the colleagues from the South African National Parks. The list specifically captured Mapungubwe World Heritage Site stakeholders. It was acquired on request having indicated that it is set to be used for academic reasons only. It was augmented by names acquired in the minutes and attendance registers of meetings held on site on conservation related matters.

I have gone through the minutes of various meetings as secondary data sources. It helped me in the classification of informants. I did that exercise once more to identify informants asserting viewpoints. It assisted the study to explore different dimensions to solve the research problem. There are studies done on specialised topic about Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This also helped to limit the search for informants per theme. In some of these people publications there are contact details for ease of reference that assisted in cost containment measures. These are the freedoms that Fazeldehkordi et al. (2015) argues that referral sampling caters for. As per the set sample size, I targeted 15 informants spread across all identified data collection instruments in interview, focus group and participant observation.

Ironically, only 10 informants of which 6 male and 4 female persons were interviewed during one-on-one interview sessions. A Focus Group Discussions made of 8 persons was conducted where 5 female persons as compared to their three males counterparts participated. There were 5 sessions that I have used for participatory observation that 3 came through referrals processes. There was 50% gender representation across the board looking at the combined number of participants in both interview and Focus Group Discussions. This suggests that a total of 18 informants made up the sample size of the study. I have kept a small sized sample because of financial constraints. Secondary data that I was referred to in most instances were recorded tapes on subject matters relevant to the study. I used such data to augment those acquired through interview, participatory observation, and group discussions.

### **3.3. Qualitative data collection**

This section presents data collection mechanisms employed in the development of Afro-centred heritage management tool. According to Elmusharaf (2012), Van Maanen (2011), and Welman et al. (2012), data collection is the systematic way to collect data by making use of primary and secondary sources. Data collection methods employed were Participant Observation, Focus Group Discussions, In-depth interview, and review of relevant secondary sources. All these mechanisms were set to broader data analysis done later in the study. Primary and secondary data collection processes are further explained.

#### **3.3.1. Participant Observation**

I employed participant observation in the development of Afro-centred heritage management tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. According to Reiter (2017) and Creswell (2018) participant observation involves extended immersion of a researcher in the culture or routine duties of a particular institution. In view of this assertion, it was important for me to play a participant observer role to collect data. I used the Vele Heritage & Biodiversity Committee meetings, workshops organized to enhance conservation of world heritage properties in South Africa, and Heritage Impacts Assessment review meetings frequently organized by the Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority.

I participated in the Vele Heritage and Biodiversity Committee which is a body established to mitigate any potential threats to heritage resources of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The participation was done to build rapport with people from institutions sharing land usage rights with Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. In building Afro-centred heritage conservation instrument, I needed a balance view in heritage, natural and mineral resources harvesting processes. The benefits of participating in the committee meetings have a far-reaching sentiment in the study. For example, it enabled me to expand the scope of focus area and in building themes that are not biased to cultural heritage view over its natural resource's counterpart. I benefited from constant minutes that due to financial constraints I could not afford to take part of all meetings.

Creswell (2018) assertion suggests that the participant observer is often assimilated or absorbed in the study. I had to apply reflexive reporting mechanism to manage personal interests and affection in the study phenomenon. My focus in each meeting that I attended was to collect data though the flow of the discussions shaped the type of data I should pay more attention to. For example, the Vele Biodiversity Committee worked towards finding the middle ground to benefit heritage conservation without compromising the intended mining activities. As the participant observer it was imperative to seek permission to be part of the meetings that was granted. I gained insight of remedial things that various role players would suggest, and any counters shared. It assisted me also to establish consistence on the recording of individual role players to what was expressed. The workshop that attended discussed the best conservation practices to benefit world heritage properties in South Africa in the light of the growing mining interests. The aspect of the impact of Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project was also discussed.

As a participant observer, I paid attention on criteria employed towards issuing of mining licenses. This was simply because the core discussion points were centred on the shortcomings of government heritage conservation agencies. It tacitly criticised the mineral exploration licensing process of the country on the account of public institution consultations. However, I could not establish a balanced discussion as the attendees were coming from the heritage sector. Nonetheless, I gained insight on suggested possible intervention that could have been employed that still to the benefit of heritage



than others. I also participated in the Heritage Impact Assessment Review meeting organized by the Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority. It was convened to review heritage impact assessment reports. It also analyzed the Vele Colliery Coal Mining Masterplan. I participated with focus on decision making processes applied in the review processes. I did that to establish how decisions are arrived at and communicated back to the clients.

In preparations for each participant observation meeting, I revised the minutes of various meetings held to establish the existing gaps that needs to be filled in my data. Comparatively, during the workshop on best conservation practices that I attended; government officials were criticised for having done very little to raise awareness on the significance of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It also emerged that the processes involved prior licensing of major infrastructure development in sensitive heritage site were not consistently adhered to. In view of these critics, I continued to play participant observer role with focus on decision making criteria often employed prior licensing in this case of mining project.

The debate during the workshop brought to my attention that there are many similar cases that the World Heritage Convention failed to resolve. The state parties often neglect the world heritage sites once the global status excitement has lapsed. The debate also indicated fear of political interference to influence how conservation authorities should handle certain cases. Ndlovu (2012) avers that decisions in the mineral exploitation versus heritage conservation often favour the mining proposals. Heritage conservation authorities although the law empowers them to make certain decisions they fail to act accordingly. I utilized the minutes to trackdown the position of various stakeholders particularly the descendents of Mapungubwe Kingdom. All that I have established was that people were not articulate of their thoughts in the meetings. I learned that there were special visits paid to the immediate stakeholders of which deliberations reached were not integrated in the main minutes. It then stands to reason that once the immediate stakeholders are not articulate of their thoughts. Therefore, compliance authorities are bound to accept that communities are happy with the deliberation of those meetings.

It is important to point out that objection to Coal of Africa: Vele Coliery Coal Mining Project came from the professionals coming from private sector than immediate stakeholders. Participant observation held during Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority-Heritage Impact Assessment Review meetings also assisted the study. For example, I used it to establish as to how the views of ordinary people influence the final decision-making processes. I also used it to identify potential informants for further interview on technical aspects applicable in heritage conservation matters. I learned that the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) is the highest decision-making body on matters influencing the existence or extinction of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This assertion emerged in one set of the minutes of Vele Heritage & Biodiversity assertions supported implicitly by the World Heritage Convention Act of 1972 and National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999.

Again, I participated in the SAHRA Council Committee meeting that is responsible for heritage resources management matters. This was done through the permission of the chairperson under stringent condition. Another significant focus area was the discussion around the impact assessment review and appeal processes as to how the council resolves them. Permission was given for a particular discussion point on the area of my research topic. I signed all ethical documents provided to guided information management outside the meeting. Nonetheless, participation assisted a lot in the identification of potential members for future interview. I participated during Mapungubwe Heritage Arts Festival organized by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture. A seminar was held precisely to investigate the aspect of exploring Mapungubwe Kingdom beyond its rising and falling. Panel members invited were experts in Indigenous Knowledge System on matters related to Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. The study benefited out of the shared stories and individual experiences locally and in the neighbouring countries. It assisted the study as to position Afro-centred heritage management tool to the direction that is responsive to the needs of African communities out of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

Participant observation involves active looking, improvement of memory, informal interviewing of informants, and recording of proceedings (Elmusharaf 2012, Van Maanen 2011, Welman et al. 2012, & Ping-Chun 2013). It is important to say that the use of reflexivity assisted in managing own interest and biasness, but to stay focused



to the study objective. Giordano, O'Reilly, Taylor, and Dogra (2007), Welman et al. (2012), and Kawulich (2005) urge researchers to seek permission of the host to participate for data collection purposes. Van Maanen (2011) explicitly postulates that, the researcher should introduce themselves either formally or tacitly as an outsider interested in the subject matter. This was done where permission was asked in every participatory meeting attended. It was made known in all meetings that the participation was only meant for academic reasons. It was further requested that the use of tape-recording systems be used to capture the discussions. However, the request was turned down with a compromise instead I must request access to the audio-recording that the secretariats were making use of. Yet, I found Van Maanen (2011) assertion in citing that giving too much detail about your research objective could see you limited to certain information than in the case you have not even declared your interest. There were instances where informants would request that they should not be recorded in their assertions. That request made me curious to note for one-on-one interview sessions afterwards. During observation it emerged that interruption occurred in the middle of interview whenever informants wanted to be objective or express own opinion outside their work mandate. Informants would express how dissatisfied they are with own job as to how it limits them from helping clients prudently.

Basically, decision making processes towards granting licenses be it for mining and other processes are found not free from corruption and interference by the powers that be. There are decisions made by junior officials that are overridden without being given fair chance to represent their views by their seniors. This shows element of inconsistency in decision making processes whenever licensing process is administered. More often, I would make follow up questions although the answers became predictably; "it is nothing but office politics". Participant observation assisted as at some point, I found minutes of the same meeting contradicting field notes that I have gathered. This suggests that although minutes are good source of information, they can still be affected by other human errors and deliberate disillusionment by the scribe.

Basically, the workshop I attended reflects the view of professionals classified in this study as public servants. It however affirms that public sector in its plenary sessions

pre-empt things that they think ordinary people would consider benefiting to their course. This is done without the involvement of the affected parties. It also emerged that the aspect of benefits from the public sector perspective is limiting. For example, benefit in public sector official would be that service has rendered to a particular community with or without financial incentives disbursed. Contrary, community members would measure service by job earned and other monetary acquisitions yet acknowledging provisions of non-monetary services. It emerges in the study that the suggested modus-of-operandi in Afro-centred heritage management instrument should be articulate on benefit acquisitions matters. Participant observation gave me a holistic view of arguments raised by individual informants that also helped me to classify data per set themes.

### **3.3.2. Focus Group Discussions**

This section introduces Focus Group Discussions equally employed in qualitative data collection. It was used for ice breaking session and in the assessment of set questions if they were moderate for use by all informants. This was done by affording informants the opportunity to evaluate the session and make suggestions. The session assisted in the rephrasing of certain terms and to establish acceptable approach to the study. Basically, this section looks at how I went about to organize Focus Group Discussions sessions. However, it is important to define Focus Group Discussions for proper contextualization in the current study.

According to Reading (2018), Creswell (2018) and Reiter (2017) Focus Group Discussions are a qualitative research data collection tool where the researcher selects participants purposely. The selection criteria employable is determined based on knowledge of the subject that is being investigated. In the establishment of Focus Group Discussions, I revised the approved proposal for the study to keep track. I used the study objective which is to develop an Afro-centred heritage management tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. I needed a heritage professional, delegate from any tribal authority who is clued on policy development matters. The delegate from tribal authority required had to have knowledge of heritage conservation predicaments facing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. I also needed an expert on mining environmental and heritage impact assessment matters. I needed an independent

researcher that have been following the discussion around Mapungubwe and Vele Colliery Coal Mining Case. Lastly, I needed an ordinary person to balance the discussion flow.

Basically, I treated the Focus Group Discussions as the ice breaking tool to test even the need to continue with the study. It was important to secure the venue for the meeting, which ended up being held in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It assisted on two reasons namely, field work to physically see the alleged impact in this case of Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project on Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It also assisted to take informants out of their respective office environment, which also increased concentration and participation. Ironically, the venue could not be secured freely; hence I paid the entrance fee, refreshments, and lunch as to appreciate the support I got. This was simply because the group was consisting of members coming from institutions outside the study area. Transport was arranged for four informants that do not work in the park. It is important to point out that at the inception of the study there was consultation done with colleagues based at the South African National Park Organization. I shared the research topic while asking assistance on suggested names for possible interview on the subject.

Telephone conversation was held to some suggested names to invite them for Focus Group Discussions sessions. Some were reluctant to participate citing sunny weather condition and transport issues. Finally, the Focus Group Discussions was held successfully followed by a mini guided tour to the Mapungubwe Hill. I extracted the research questions from the approved proposal according to the specific objectives of the study. A template was developed to manage data collection whereby the study objectives and research questions were clearly articulated. The research questions were set and paraphrased to suit all potential candidates. The questions were treated as ice breaking tools as the discussions assisted to uncover more than anticipated. The template simplified field noting and data analysis processes. The total number of participants were eight. I had a research assistant to make the overall number of people present to ten with me included. It is important to allude that the role that I played was to ask questions while the assistant was recording on audio- tape and notepad. I assumed the role of interview facilitation and guide program of the day. The main questions were four that made me consult with the team on the approach they

were comfortable to run the show. Firstly, as the ground rules were tabled together with ethical considerations that included signing of consent forms. Logistically, it was agreed to deal with one objective based question for 45 minutes followed by a comfort break of 15 minutes until the end. So, two questions were asked and discussed for two hours before tea break at 9H00am-11H00am. The remainder were carried out until lunch time at 13H30pm-14H00pm. A mini guided tour was done before departure to end the Focus Group Discussions.

### **3.3.3. In-depth interview**

This section shows how I went about conducting qualitative research interview to develop Afro-centred heritage management tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The reason for making use of interview technique was to create a platform for interaction with the informants. I wanted to draw them closer that I can acquire data by looking at various means of communication like facial expressions. I used it to establish the desirable position that Afro-centred heritage management tool should address. To achieve this, I afforded the informants ample time and convenient space to participate freely. Perhaps it is important to first define qualitative research interview technique. According to Denscombe (2008), and Dilshad and Latif (2013) qualitative interview is the art of hearing data or how participants view or feel about a particular phenomenon. I employed In-depth qualitative research interview technique. I developed the interview plan by populating questions extracted from the research proposal approved by the university. The plan had a clear time framework for all data collection processes. It is important to point out that the work plan was revised after formal ethical clearance was granted by the university. No work was done prior approval was granted for quality assurance.

Another challenge was influenced by non-availability of key informants at the agreed time due to pardonable unforeseen circumstances. Quite significantly, I would be made to secure a meeting venue preferably outside the informant workplace or home. Nonetheless, I succeeded on some occasion but failed to get other out of their workplace. On one occasion I was accommodated in one informant house for a day at his treat. Ironically, it was a deliberate invitation to get me observe certain ceremony

called *Matshomane* that he hosted at his house. *Matshomane* is an ancestral way of worshiping filled with dancing, libation, and divination by a particular priest.

On arrival I found the informant amongst the panel of priests where he asked me to ascend their stage. However, I was warned to take off the shoes before walking on the mat known as *thovho* in Tshivenda. In greeting me, he regrettably did not shake hands with me citing it is not allowed of him to touch anyone until he is cleansed at the end of ceremony. Yet, he indicated that he did not want me to know why he wanted me to come over to his house because I could have refused like some people do. *I wanted you to observe what is happening that you orientate yourself to African ways of worship. My son is a PhD candidate at the University of Limpopo. He also honored the ancestral call. look at him down there wearing maroon hurt dancing Matshomane. We are welcoming him back home from the initiation school where he was training as a traditional medical doctor or Bongaka. Now he can treat you academically and traditionally.*

He further said: "Today we are not going to do formal interview, I just want you to see on what makes us Africans. I will actually call you in few days' time when I am back in the office". Please feel free to leave whenever your time is up even if you do not see me as I will be moving up and down". I nodded the head in agreement as it was a bit noisy in the place. In areas where I succeeded to interview informants, I would try to ask relevant and appropriate question to a particular informant. I would ensure that I read the question and if not clearly heard, I would paraphrase them. In the process I would guard against losing the meaning and content of the main question. This is simply because failure to maintain the interview question and standard had the potential to compromise the study outcome.

Reiter (2017) warns that to avoid losing interview track, the researcher must constantly study the research question on numerous occasions before the day of the interview. This can be done by running pilot interview with a friend to establish their relevance and accuracy. I applied the same technique that the regular consultation with the promoters assisted in the moderation of the set interview questions. The research assistant and the reports editor also assisted in editing the questions. During interviews, there were instances where I was not allowed to record the discussion.

This happened sometimes in the middle of conversation when the informant would say, “I want to speak this off record. I do not want to be heard having said this man”. As the discussion flows, I would ask if I could switch on the tape recording then I would do so by permission. It is hard lesson though that one listening skill was put a test. Creswell (2018) warns though that during qualitative research interview the researcher must apply active listening skills. The author further encourages the researcher to avoid interfering the informants while they are speaking. In other words, the researcher is warned to respect the informants throughout the interview session. I tried to maintain this principle by listening attentively with more interest on consistent flow of information. I studied the informant’s body expressions on the phenomenon. I maintained control of the interview flow although there was one occasion where the informant would turn me into the interviewee. However, I recovered as to remind the informants that I am there to learn from him than vice versa.

#### **3.3.4. Application of secondary data**

This section presents the approach employed in the collection of qualitative secondary data. Quite significantly, I needed secondary data to establish underlying guiding principles of cultural heritage resources management. I used it to familiarise myself on the actual mandate of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as postulated in relevant pieces of legislation and institutional planning framework. Secondary data assisted me to understand the overall scope of Vele Colliery Coal Mining exploitation program sold through public participatory processes.

It was also required to establish possible availability of other supporting policy for both cultural heritage management and mineral exploitation worthy of consideration to assist the study. More so, it was done to establish compelling that should be studied to deepen the understanding of the study phenomenon. This also helped in the establishment of existing gaps the current study should bridge. It was also done for comparison on how consistent individual role players have been in the implementation of supporting policies. Some secondary sources such as minutes of various meetings offer one the opportunity to hear the positioning of individual institution on the said matter. It is important to first define qualitative secondary data for contextualization in the current study.

According to Kawulich (2005), Boyce and Neale (2006) and Welman et al. (2012) qualitative secondary data may include census data, policies, legislation, minutes of the meetings, public reports, and work plans. There were several documents emanating from interview recommendations that assisted during collection of secondary data. I viewed audio-visual tape that captured the views of ordinary people on the impact of mining on Mapungubwe World Heritage Site (South African Broadcast Corporation 2017). I viewed another audio-visual tape on the reburial of human remains repatriated from the University of Pretoria back to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site (LIHRA 2005).

There were significant lessons acquired out of discussions overheard on the tapes that deepen the researcher's understanding about the site and challenges it is facing. It equally provided in-depth orientation about the tradition of local people. I was also referred to audio-visuals capturing renowned scholars and commentators of Africanity, Afrocentricity or African Philosophy's historiography. The two sets of audiotapes provided platforms to choose theoretical framework to establish the Afro-centred heritage management tool. Another important secondary source employed were the Coal of Africa-Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project Masterplan, Court interdict application against Vele Coal Mining Project, Vele Colliery Coal Mining Heritage Impact Assessment Report (Roodt 2009), Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project Environmental Impact Assessment Report (2009) and the minutes of Vele-Heritage and Biodiversity Committee meetings. On one hand, the Limpopo Economic Development and Growth Plan 2009-2014 (LEGDP 2009) appraises the growing mining interest in Limpopo Province.

This is the stance that Esterhysen (2013), Miskell (2009) and Ndlovu (2017) note mixed reaction from heritage practitioners about it. Instead, heritage practitioners are portrayed being aggrieved as they anticipate the growing threats to heritage conservation business. The authors were moving from the dispute against Coal of Africa-Vele Colliery Coal Mining Plant on the adjacent forms to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. I studied this case with interest on the arguments around it and how different role players suggest as mitigation measures. I used the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site Nomination and Declaration Dossier (2003), the World Heritage Convention Act of 1972, the South African National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of

1999, and the Proclamation report on Mapungubwe World Heritage Status. The idea in this instance was to familiarise oneself with the debates, expectations and commitment and conditions set at the acceptance of the world heritage status. This exercise assisted the study in the establishment of significant risks anticipated at the conceptualisation of the site cultural content.

I counted on such experiences towards building the Afro-centred heritage management tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. I frequently consulted the legal framework on how it responds to conflicting views against the provisions for heritage management processes. I wanted to establish potential areas for shared responsibilities and beneficinations between heritage and other sectors. The Department of Environmental Affairs (2013) commissioned for second Heritage Impact Assessment Report in view of disputes around Coal of Africa Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project. The overarching aim was to establish the possible mining impact on the world heritage status of Mapungubwe. Comparatively, I investigated the methodological approach between the first HIA report conducted in 2009 and the 2013 version. According to Welman et al. (2012) there is an idiomatic expression that claims that if you plan the same way all the time the results are likely to become similar. I found that both studies employed Archaeological methods using similar terms of reference. So, this perhaps necessitates the establishment of Afro-centred heritage management tool to offer alternate approach. I perused Asante's approach to Afrocentricity debate to give the current study context. I also tapped into Mazrui's triple heritage approach arguably found its genesis on Nkwame Nkrumah's assertions. In this context, issues of spirituality as to how issues of inter-faith shaped African cultural heritage. Mazrui (2014) portrays Islam and Christianity as the main religions that contested African ways of spiritual appeasements. I found these sources relevant to the study objective as they reflect on factors that gave rise to Eurocentric view ahead of its Afrocentric counterpart. Lastly, Dr Neluvhalani thesis contributes immensely on the understanding of Mapungubwe Kingdom dynamics. For example, the challenges the idea of barren South African land claiming that all tribes found the area empty at some point. Literature would claim that most tribes invaded the current South Africa in the 1400s. The significance of his assertion is that the history of Mapungubwe Kingdom is misrepresented in most literature. Afro-centred heritage management tool should seek to identify the indigenous people that established Mapungubwe Kingdom.



### 3.4. Qualitative data analysis

This section introduces content qualitative data analysis instrument used in the exploits of Afro-centred heritage management approaches for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. I am implementing content data analysis because of its flexibility to contribute across various research designs. According to Reiter (2017) content data analysis is employable to any research design be it qualitative, quantitative, or exploratory. It focuses on studying patterns between narratives and on locating data within its proper context. According to Carruthers (2006), Traskin and Small (2013) and SAGE (2013) qualitative data analysis is a process of examining data to derive the meaning of a particular phenomenon.

Reiter (2017) asserts that the basic steps the researcher applies in qualitative data analysis include the following: data organization, interpretation, tying data together and quality assurance. Traskin and Small (2013) and Creswell (2018) further say the role of the researcher in qualitative data analysis entail induction and deduction of data. Administratively, I had a small sample size that enabled me to develop a template to guide data collection process and for ease of reference during analysis. The template was itemised with separate columns on main research question, paraphrased question, study objectives, names of informants and another one with the individual responses. During field work I printed eight pages long at least two pages per specific objective and question. I provided a space to record responses per the set question.

In this instance, the research assistant continued capturing the responses electronically using the same template. The cellular phones were used to record the interview as an added advantage. So, the themes were developed based on the research question and specific study objective. This assisted in the organization of collected data. There was a session after each interview with the research assistant to compare notes and for transcription development. In the instances where we could not agree on certain aspects, we would listen on the audiotape on several times until we are satisfied. There were instances where the informant would be called to clear disagreement between us. During interview, we would ask if the informant were available or should be contacted in the future about the interview session they

attended. We only contacted those that showed their availability whenever they are required to do so.

Importantly, collected data were interpreted to derive meaning towards responding to the research questions. During data organization a situation arose where the informant had spoken too many points that some overlapped to cover two more questions. This assisted the process as it made me quickly break such responses to fit within appropriate section. During interview sessions one could deepen the search rather ground the informant to be more articulate on a particular subject. During interpretation of such data, we would look at the area that fits best to locate it properly. Another significant step applied during qualitative data analysis was to tie data together. I integrate responses of all informants into one main transcript. I cut and paste individual informant's responses per the study objective and question. I compare their assertions at ease afterwards.

Basically, data transcription was done manually using Microsoft Word Computer program. It helped still to reduce unnecessary repetition of statements and over usage of similar phrases in the text. In the main transcript, I developed code for individual informants using their initials. In the instances where there were identical initials, I added a number to distinguish them. For example, I had MM1 and MM2 to distinguish two with identical initials. I also paid attention to pattern analysis as another significant area for qualitative data analysis. I focus on establishing consistency between data patterns by ensuring that all informants were asked similar questions. The template used had an option to paraphrase all questions for consistency. The issue of time management was equally important focus point during qualitative data analysis approach. All informants had to be given maximum one (1) hour interview view session unless they opt out earlier than that. Secondary qualitative data analysis played a pivotal role during pattern analysis. Amongst other sources used was the UNESCO (2005) that lists world heritage sites that are under threats owing to both natural and human influenced activities like mineral exploitations. The contest to counter mineral exploitations infavour of heritage conservation is a global concern as demonstrated in the UNESCO (2005) list. The list points out mining as the major cause that saw some iconic world heritage site losing their statuses. Importantly, I paid attention lots more on aspects of consistency in the application of policies and relevant legislation as secondary sources suggest. Another significant area of qualitative data analysis

employed was content analysis. In this instance, I paid attention on how individual informants apply or use various concepts that some sounds ambiguous. The interpretation of data invited a minor challenge of meaning given that both heritage and Afrocentric concepts are not clearly defined in most literature perused. This necessitated qualitative designed research to explore the influence of Afrocentric perspective in the current use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. However, this was mitigated by allowing informants as part of induction in the study to demonstrate their understanding of each concept. We established that language diversity has a bearing on how individual informant defines both heritage and Africanity. There were those that will regard Africanity as “Tshirema” as saying “Nga maitele a Tshirema” [in African context], “Tshithu” [culture] or “Tshivenda”. As for heritage some would use the term “Vhufa” [heritage] or “Sialala” [tradition]. I took comfort on the definition of heritage and its description that cover one or all these terms to categorize data per research question.

### **3.5. Ethical Considerations**

This section gives insight on how matters of ethical considerations were adhered to in the study. Ethical considerations were done to maintain good rapport all the informants. According to Reiter (2017), Creswell (2018) and Reading (2018) ethics are norms and standards guiding the researcher’s code of conduct during research. Henderson (2005) research ethics are the moral abilities enabling the researcher to build rapport with informants during data collection process. Jentsch (2000) holds the view that once informants need not to feel humiliated, disrespected or harassed during data collection process. In view of these definitions, I developed a consent form to protect the informants and myself. The consent forms stipulated terms or conditions that will be adhered to during research. It is basically the primary duties of the researcher to protect their informants throughout the research. To adhere to this principle, I stipulated ethical elements in the consent form that happened to be ground rules. I warned that the informant had the right to participate or withdraw from the interview at any given time. I urged informants to exercise these freedoms whenever they have a reason to do so freely. Practically, I did not have a case of withdrawal during the interview. However, there were instances that some informants would refer me to their written work sometimes without listening to the second question. Some will

refer me to the audio-visual recordings of people from which they claim to have drawn inspiration on matters related to the current study topic. Positively, I took referrals seriously as they gave me broader perspective to approach Afrocentric discourse. However, follow up meetings with the same informants helped the interview process as we have then all moved from common understanding.

The set interview questions had to centre on heritage management matters yet moving from common ground derived from the same audio-visual assertions. I had to subscribe to access those audio-visual sites where I accepted terms and conditions set beforehand. Similarly, I requested informants read with me contents of the informed consent form before they appended their signatures. McCormick (2013) avers that informed consent form needs to be comprehensive and easy for the informants to understand what they are consenting for. I made sure that before the agreed date of the interview I sent electronic copy of consent form to those I could reach by emails. I made sure I carry hard copy that will be signed before the commencement of the interviews. Administratively, ethical clearance was acquired after I had satisfied the set criteria of the University of Venda. During field work I would first enquire particularly before meeting a person in the position of a chief of what is required of me at hand. I enquired about acceptable dressing code to ensure that the assistant and I are presentable. There is a common Venda idiom that says, *phanda ha ndau a hu iwi hu u sina a tshikuni* [a person cannot confront a lion barehanded; instead, you need to carry a defensive staff with you]. I must confess that tribal courts office bearers are becoming aware that there are research incentives or allowances payable to researchers by universities. I had no reason not to comply with minimum entry fee for office administration that they required. This should not be mistaken to either bribe or unethical conduct that influenced the study outcome.

Instead, it was an acceptable practice in Venda tradition that commoners introduced themselves with to the royal court they visit. I practised patients with all the informants as some I could not draw them out of their workplace. As a result, they could still help their clients and colleagues during the interview. The interruptions were advantageous as they created an opportunity for me to write and align field notes well. It also helped to ease pressure off the informants. The disadvantaging part was that the agreed time set before the start of the interview could either be shorter or prolonged depending on

the availability of informant beyond that. There was one interview though was cut short because of urgent call that wanted the informant out of work for personal reasons. The compromise reached then was that I must send through the questionnaire or we chat through social media later. I made attempt to reconnect but could not yield positive results. I took it that the informant exercised one of the freedoms agreed to at the beginning of the study. There were instances where informants would give quite a loaded response to question set. There were informants that would maintain one viewpoint using it across all question, yet differently. Nonetheless, what was important for me was to collect data without interrupting the informants unnecessarily. I made a mistake of inferring that one informant read the email that I invited them for interview. The email however was articulate on several aspects such as the purpose of the study, how the study outcome is going to be used and confidentiality which the information given by her would be treated.

This was the first interview that nearly spoiled the good work that was already put together in preparation of the same meeting. I had to apologise at a call to the informant that I must take her through the basic induction into the study. I had to explain though how I trusted that she read the email fully before coming to the meeting. It became an eye-opening experience that made me avoid its recurrence until I concluded data collection processes. Ironically, I would not trust so easily even those that read the email invitation properly. I would still made them feel comfortable as I literally read consent form and perform all salutation formalities consistently. I ascertained that informants consented to the set ethical standards. It is important to indicate that the use of secondary data reduced assisted the study on time management matters. Instead, it improved quality of research question and help eliminate redundant aspects. I kept the number of informants at 10 with 5 participant observation platforms created. Secondary data extracted from audio-visual tapes that some were recorded interview on matters relevant to the current study. It is worth mentioning that there is South African Heritage Resources Information System also known as SAHRIS that serves as heritage databank that was consulted.

Once again there is also the Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority-E-Heritage databank consulted to source secondary data. The ethical consideration I was subjected to was to subscribe and accept terms and conditions set. The University of

Venda hosted a workshop on Data management and ethics 27 October 2017 that I attended. The workshop recommended that it is ethical to consider using existing data relevant to your research topic. It was also recommended that sources the provided such data must be dully acknowledged. This should be done as a gesture of respecting the rightful owners that developed a particular databank. According to Van Maanen (2011) ethics is an awareness tip to the researcher to avoid human harm and violation of individual rights during and in post-research phase. It is worth mentioning that the researcher may not entirely protect the informant from emotional harm during interview. However, I agree that the researcher can do all in his power to reduce chances of emotional and perhaps physical harm against the informants. I had a case of a potential informant that declined the invitation.

Later when I met the person, I only find out that she was just lazy to honour the invitation by opt not to participate. So, it is advisable still to negotiate for the most convenient time to the comfort of one's ideal informant. I did not deal with human remains matter in the current studies. However, I came during FGD, One-on-one interview, and workshops on world heritage site management risks that human remains discoveries are common cases that they often deal with. The case studies cited included possible removal of the grave from one village to another. There are cases that are managed in terms of Human Tissue Act and those that require National Heritage Resources Act. Afro-centred heritage management instrument should seek for a common ethical ground in the management of burial grounds and graves. African ethics approach the grave as a spiritual site like most European do. However, graves like any heritage sites are relative that they may not carry equal significance to everybody but only to the biological next of kin. There are cases of rapid destruction of graves and burial sites notable precisely to settle land ownership or chieftaincy claim disputes. Academically, ethical considerations are apparently done for collective ownership or other disclaimer purposes. Afro-centred heritage management espouse the notion that heritage should not be used for sectarian gains.

### **3.6. Quality assurance**

This section introduces quality assurance mechanism put in place to produce credible work. For example, there are several tools against which the quality of Afro-centred

heritage management instrument can be measured. Welman et al. (2012) suggests the use of truth-value based, applicability of facts, consistency, and neutrality or partial reporting by the researcher. Quality assurance is necessitated by the desire to produce work that meets the expected objectives. It can also be obtained by means of sourcing data from the desired target audience or informants.

To this effect, I put together a credible team of experts that made the informants list from various field that either direct or indirect making contribution to heritage management processes. Afro-centred heritage management instrument is made from a compound name in Afrocentric and heritage management theoretical framework. However, there are areas that I exploited where theories of both concepts share common traits. I developed the theoretical framework of Afro-centred heritage management instrument out of combined common elements. According to Streubert and Carpenter (2003) and Holloway (2005) truth -value based approach focuses on the credibility of acquired data. Afro-centred heritage management instrument is manifesting out of secondary data analysis that some I had access to audio-visual tapes.

I ensured that I work with an assistant that capture data while I was interviewing or conducting Focus Group Discussions. I am using data collected from informants that read and heard me reading of their rights governing our engagements. They consented by signing in of forms that were articulate of their participation freedoms. There were also databanks that I consulted through a consented agreement set by system administrators. I tried to balance the team of informants that I built using gender, field of participation than training qualification. The referral cases considered for this study offered qualified informants with valuable insight about challenges facing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

Participant observation process helped me to gain appropriate experience that helped me to apply the collected data properly. I systematically collected data by using separate field notes pad each with a set research question on top and blank space underneath. Data extracted from pre-recorded interview augmented those acquired through other set collection tools. I made sure that sources of the work that I used are duly acknowledged. I reported only on data that was sought through mutual consent.

During interview sessions I made sure that I allowed informants to speak their views while I was only raising follow up questions where I was not clear. Only data that helped me respond to the main research questions were seriously considered.

Quin (2003) maintains that one must ensure that there is consistency in the use of data from collection, analysis, and application. In view of this sentiment, I asked similar questions across all informants to maintain consistency in the study. However, informants could not understand the questions the same that urged me to rephrase them in simple terms without losing their context. I had ensured that made sure that packaged data properly and ensure data sources are safely stored. I developed patterns that I used to place data within the appropriate theme. Basically, consistency was maintained by way of ensuring that all questions asked are aligned to the study objectives. I ensured that the collected data are equally aligned to the overarching objective of the study.

Burns and Groove (2003) echo Quin (2003) aver that quality assurance is successfully reached when collected data is both applicable and transferable. Applicability of data in this instance covers the probability of finding data variables that can be used in more than one category. The current study benefited out of audio recordings that I only consulted without having worked on the collection of such data. There were variables that I could easily locate in the current study successfully. However, there were variables that I used to respond to other research questions. There were variables used to emerge as sub-themes under main themes derived from the pre-set research questions. In other words, all main themes were automatic convention of research questions I used during interviews. The sub-themes were derived from the responses acquired from the informants. I set sub-theme on responses that offered me the plethora to explore other complimentary areas to the study. Lastly, Burns and Groove (2003) echo Quin (2003) Streubert and Carpenter (2003) and Holloway (2005) assert that quality assurance can be maintained when the researcher remains neutral. These aspects are broadly discussed under reflexive reporting methods used to maintain neutrality throughout the study.



### 3.7. Reflexivity

Afro-centred heritage management instrument is emerging during disputed position on the necessity of quality assurance on qualitative research design. Burns and Groove (2003), Quin (2003), Streubert and Carpenter (2003) and Holloway (2005) opine that this debate emerged in the 1980s questioning the neutrality of the researcher in the study they are involved. Retrospectively, qualitative research design is portrayed as the culmination of ethnography that Anthropologist apply the most. It allows the researcher to interact with the subject. The researcher even goes to an extent of living or participate on the daily routine of the subject they are studying. Theorists subscribing to quantitative research design find qualitative data to lack credibility. The blame their qualitative counterpart for interfering with the subject that ultimately influenced the outcome of their studies.

McCormick (2013) Jensick (2000) Van Maanen (2011) and Welman et al. (2012) refute that claim in saying that quality assurance is done through reflexive reporting methods. Reflexivity was used to manage self-temptation to interfere in the study results. According to Watt (2007) and Ping-Chun (2013) reflexivity gained momentum in the qualitative research design that since made it a scientific foundation of social science credible knowledge production. It was introduced to reconcile tension that emanated from criticism levelled against qualitative research credibility by those subscribed to quantitative. It is intended to mitigate issues of subjectivity by enhancing objective reporting process in qualitative research design.

Generic definition of reflexivity claims that it is the awareness of the researcher's role in the practice of research and due processes that can easily influenced the study outcome (Haynes 2014, Alvesson, Hardy & Harley 2008, & Hibert, Coupland & MacIntosh 2010). Significantly, reflexivity was employed simply because I am employed in the heritage sector. Basically, I am responsible for museum management in the Limpopo Province Department of Sport, Arts and Culture. Moreover, the injection of Afrocentric perspective in the study also changed the complexity of the study and makes it more interesting. I limited direct involvement in the study by appointing an assistant to help with data collection processes. In other words, I maintained the role of interviewing and collecting data collection the most. I also

ensure that I use secondary data that I did not inform its collection terms of reference. The use of Afrocentric perspective injected a new perspective that I curiously attempting to align in the development of Afro-centred heritage management instrument. Once again, the use of Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project case study also brings another dimension independent from heritage management processes. Instead, it focuses on the harvesting processes of mineral resources that heritage is attempting to reach for it without success.

Afro-centred heritage management instrument is benefiting out of retrospective look into how Coal of Africa worked its way past heritage management processes in place. The study outcome may not necessitate reversal of any unfavourable position heritage sector is experiencing but to help counter future recurrence of the same predicament. The current study is testing the viability of using Afrocentric perspective in heritage conservation. This is done in view of generally acceptable position out of current debates that placed Afrocentricity as an ideology than research methods. So, I created a comparable environment that stands to benefit mining, heritage and ideals of Afrocentricity should Afro-centred heritage management fully reach its intended objective. I am using reflexivity in the study for partial reporting in the interpretation of gathered data. It was important to take into cognizance that the document one is producing will further be subjected to public scrutiny that can opt to use or reject it. I maintained ethical grounds as stipulated to manage temptation of self-involvement that could have had negative influence on the outcome of the study. I became the co-signatory of the consent form that happened before interview were conducted as required by the university of Venda ethical clearance processes. I made the assistant aware as to call me to order should she found me intimidating or misrepresenting informant views. This approach became effective during clearance seeking discussion on certain aspects that I found not well captured.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) warn that reflexivity in its application urges the researcher to determine own role and stick to it to the completion of the study. The researcher is also urged to note all their assumptions so that they acknowledge them as own weaknesses that can compromise the study objectives if ignored. Ping-Chun (2013) in addition says that the researcher should be able to locate the study within a particular subject matter. In this context, heritage management processes are located

within the Afrocentric debate to develop the Afro-centred heritage management instrument. I achieved this by integrating guiding or generally acceptable principles for both phenomena. It is important to point out that the use of Afrocentric perspective assisted in the mitigation of personal familiarity to heritage phenomenon. I did that to develop a new theoretical framework that manifested into Afro-centric heritage management instrument. Denzin and Lincoln (2003), Knodel 2004, Dilshad and Latif (2013) warn that researcher must guard against subjectivity owing to own belief systems. This suggests that reflexivity is also used to manage individual interest in the study phenomenon based on own belief systems. There is generally a blanket already claiming that Eurocentric view is widely dominant as opposed to its Afrocentric counterpart. There is no element of spirituality on the research theme that I am bound to jealously protect. Afro-centred heritage management instrument underpinning the current study gradually taken a principal policy position.

The study is emerging once the legal contests have long been settled with people emotions gradually calming. This is a retrospective look into what could have the heritage sector done to remain in control of the fate of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Van Maanen (1996), Casey and Krueger (2000) and Denscombe (2008) assert that the researcher must be always neutral. Knodel (2004) and Dilshad and Latif (2013) aver that researchers can easily become emotionally involved into the study that they eventually lose their neutral position. In view of this assertion, I dealt with all elements in me that could have made be develop biasness in the reporting process. I made sure that I work closely with the assistance in data management. I identified a team of fellow researchers that had no interest in the study topic or field of study to reflect and criticise selection methods employed of collected data. I was opened to criticism even those coming from fellow researchers that made it to group discussions. The use of multiple coding system also helped in managing personal involvement or biasness to the detriment of the study objectives. Afro-centred heritage management instrument can be of good use when heritage professionals move from conservative conservation to development-oriented approach.

As a result, I found that confining the study to heritage methods would be limiting. I hold the view that Afro-centred heritage management tool should fit within the broader mandate of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This urges me to utilize exploratory

methods in certain areas where African Knowledge Systems was not so articulate. The Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project experiences attest that there has been parallel planning that heritage and mining worked against one another. The awarding of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site status triggered unhealthy land usage right competition. This was always the competition that heritage sector was not going to win given the high demand for rapid economic growth that mining sector often provide than heritage. As it stands mining sector is in full control of their fate while its heritage counterpart remains uncertain. Afro-centred heritage management instrument is then propelled to offer alternate conservation practices that can help heritage survive future operational impediments.

Nonetheless, I check if there is a reason to influence people to support the development of Afro-centred heritage management instrument. I drew comfort on the fact that all known systems could not helped heritage sector survive its current state of affair. There is already a call for a paradigm shifting notable although there is no known comparable model yet. Afro-centred heritage management instrument is conceptualized as a pro-active intervention measure. It moves from the premise that Eurocentric inspired systems could only help heritage sector to its current position. However, the need to inject an Afrocentric perspective is highly appreciated by most informants. Yet, there is a rooted political connotation in Afrocentric perspective that obscures its role in academic writings and related debates. Yet, the political sentiments of this aspect are less considered in the current study to advance its research methodological context. Reflexive reporting mechanism comes handy as to help mitigate matters of race and ethnic limitations. It was not easy to perceive white South Africans that contributed to the study as Africans. Pre-recorded tapes cleared this doubt by setting sound definition alluded to in the previous during literature review done. It has been a very tempting subject that if not for self-management it could have misconstrued the study to be more political.

Referrals assisted to bridge race and gender imbalances in the study. I did this for partial reporting by ensuring that Afro-centred heritage management instrument encompasses multiracial views. I also did that to ensure that there should not be dominant view of one racial group over the rest. Knodel (2004), Dilshad and Latif (2013) suggest that the researcher can maintain neutrality by making use of multiple

methods to data collection, analysis, and reporting. In this instance, interview, FGD and participant observer were applied as multiple approach to data collection process. The intension was to seek responses that offer alternative view on similar question. In cases where the questions were not comprehended properly, during follow up I would identify practical case on which to frame they question. I asked informants as to what needs to be done to ensure that people regardless of race are fully utilizing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

In response Van Schalkwyk had this to say; "I suggest that let there be multiracial activities that are planned per each ethnic group's cultural celebration calendar." The assertion necessitated me to further establish if there are cultural activities that are performed as part of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site routine programs. The Focus Group Discussions assisted in the collection of various cultural activities practised by most ethnic groups in the Vhembe District. Some of the suggested activities include domba dance, vhusha, muchongolo, maxaxasi, tshigombela, miphaso, hunting and unisa mvula ritual performances (Junod 2012). Reflexive reporting was equally required of me that I may not overlook the contribution of any ethnic group to advance my own. It was used to eliminate any possible bias to allow the collected data to inform the outcome of the study. I tried to keep informants that are not working there to establish neutral view on the phenomenon. I was tipped though to avoid people that I am socially close to as they may not take me work serious. I was also tipped that with such people the interview can be interrupted by other issues of common interest to the disturbances of business of the day.

### **3.8. Role of the researcher, challenges, and interventions**

It is important to point out that, I assumed the role of facilitating interview processes during data collection. Prior to that it was imported to get all required approvals to formalize the study approach. Those among others included acquisition of ethical clearance from the university. The approved research proposal had a work plan or schedule that was consistently applied. Fieldwork was organized where purposive sampling mechanism came handy in the establishment of the study sample. Logistically, informants had to be secured, invited formally, and transported particularly those that needed help. Interview venue had to be secured where in some instance

refreshments were provided as a form of appreciation and humaneness. In some instances, informants would request that they be supplied with detailed interview questions before the day of the interview.

So, those were activities done to administer the current study. Preparation for interview proved to be labour intensive in managing them from collection, analysis, and interpretation. There are basic steps adhered to that required me to act effectively. For example, honouring scheduled time before and during data collection processes. It was important to ensure that informants find me waiting at the interview venue than vice versa. I would also remind informants of the appointment a day before the meeting. Ideally, at planning phase it was imperative to try to get informants out of their respective offices. This was done to manage potential interference and unplanned interruptions during interview sessions. The mechanism employed invited mixed approach to responding to the set questions.

There were informants who would not want to leave their office space due to tight schedule that required them to remain in the office more often. This paid dividend on one occasion as it allowed informants to easily tap into other files to substantiate her point. It assisted the research as it enabled the informant to also provide unpublished secondary sources. On the twist of event, I was invited by the informant to attend the closing ceremony for traditional health training school. This provided a non-participant observation experience that complimented the study. There were unforeseen inconveniences occurred during the interview that would require me to offer physical assistance to the informant. This was done through the permission of the informants. This helped in deepening interview session on two occasions approved by relevant informants. In another case, the informant was called for a short meeting with her supervisor at work. Instead, she offered me audio-visuals tapes to view them making use of her office equipment. Those audio-visuals discussed theoretical matters on the use of Afrocentric perspective in academic debates. In reverse I made use of those visual materials to locate heritage back in the on-going debate about Afrocentric perspective.

They also helped me understand African scholar's orientation to heritage management processes. Empirical literature review done brought a new perspective that helped to

locate the concept “African’s” before human skin pigmentation to an inclusive view of all descendants of African origin. I ensured that Afro-centred heritage management instrument embrace the same philosophical approach. In essence, I learnt that no matter the skin colour or place of origin, one can still have deeply rooted African values distinguishing them from those that have embraced either Asiatic or European value systems. I embarked on participant observation data collection through identification of meetings and workshops that were relevant to the study.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) and Marilyn (2011) limit the role of the researcher in qualitative research to data collection. Marilyn (2011) explicitly adds that human is an instrument for data collection that also integrates and synthesise data. It is worth mentioning that development of Afro-centred heritage management instrument came with challenges that I attempted to resolve. Firstly, there is no consensual position carrying common definition of either heritage or Afrocentricity. There are no specific areas that either heritage or its Afrocentric counterpart enjoy liberty to be a distinctive thought leader in knowledge generation fraternity. The successes of either of them is often shared with natural sciences disciplines like palaeontology and in meteorite fields. Afrocentricity is still a social sciences phenomenon although it can easily be understood or perceived to be politically influenced.

Initially, I could not help distinguishing Afrocentricity from Pan-Africanism as both equal political sentiments that posits them as ideologies than research methods. It is worth mentioning as Lumuba (2018) advocates that since the partitioning of Africa in 1881 in Berlin, any initiative towards unification of Africa invites the wreath of former colonizers. Lumumba re-iterates Kwame Nkrumah assertion in warning that “the colonizer did not leave Africa wilfully but forced out through the united effort of the people across the continent”. This implies that though the current study suppressed political view, it can still be misunderstood. Nonetheless, data collection process was also affected by the fact that other informants wanted to dominate the discussion.

I adopted a systematic way to interrupt them by warning them that over-elaboration will affect recording process. I had weak point of being talkative that if it were not for the research assistant could have affected time set for each session. I had to declare that to the assistant that he must also play a timekeeper role and that he should be

strict. I allowed him to call me to order when the discussion was no longer responding to the interview question or towards solving the research problem. Another role that he would play was to discard data that was tempered with to fit where it does not belong. During analysis he would play a monitoring role over how I made choices on data coding and categorization. Despite mistrusting his judgement at some point, I revised the synthesized data for several times to ensure that they are articulate and respond to the objectives of the study. This required open minded approach to ensure that there is no personal influence on the flow or overall management of data. It was difficult to avoid reality of getting more interested in the discussions due to professional attachment to the site. This required constant intervention of the research assistant to ground the discussion on issues that the informants had asserted. Another role performed by the research assistant was to guard against misuse of data by forcing it where it was not so articulate. He would also warn me not to pre-empt the outcome of each interview session as informants are unique.

More importantly, he expressed fear that if we do so we will run the risk of forcing the informant to deliver data to our expectations. There was improvement noticed resulting from frequent assessment of individual role players performance in the interviewer and the informant. The assistant researcher was experienced to command respect of both role players in the interview. It was required of her to criticise and appraise all interview sessions to ensure that only informant's assertions are collected and interpreted properly. A scoring chart was developed as part of performance agreement with the research assistant to evaluate the interviewer. It is important to indicate that it was expected of the interviewer to score at least over 90% on non- involvement in the discussion as per the set criteria.

There would be deductions of data the research assistant finds to have been imposed to the informants. I did not read a lot out of maintenance of eye contacts particularly with Venda female informants. It is a common practice that women not to look into a person in the eyes. A journal was also developed to capture experiences gathered during data collection processes. For example, there were external environmental factors that gave the study a new experience. Some informants tried to ruin the flow of the interview in pursuit of their own agenda items. I established out of a tip by one researcher that once worked in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site of cultural group



dynamics. It erupted during her study that she advised me not to have people of the descendants of Mapungubwe Kingdom together as there is existing rivalries between them. I heeded the advice by sampling only three out of different tribes. I placed them separately one in the Focus Group Discussions and other two formed part of One-on-one interview. I ensured that all sessions are not changed into grieving sessions. I avoided entertaining matters possibly raised for political or religious reasons that would not help the study. Theoretically, Denzin and Lincoln (2003), Marilyn (2011) and Greenbank (2003) aver that the role of the researcher is to collect data. It is also expected of the researcher to guide the discussions to respond to the research questions. I allowed the informants to talk freely and make suggestions that could assist the study going forward. In short, I fulfilled the role of a facilitator during data collection and report development.

### **3.1. Conclusion**

In conclusion, this is qualitative research towards establishment of Afro-centred heritage management tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It is a qualitative case study that employed exploratory designed to locate Afrocentric approach in heritage conservation debate. The case study focuses on the debate that is claiming that the Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Mining Project is threatening the conservation status of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This case study was utilized to give content on how infrastructure development in mining influences heritage conservation decisions. This was also done to locate Afro-centred heritage management tool within conservation challenges facing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. African Knowledge Systems is also utilized to measure the contribution of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in the development of Afrocentric approach.

It is important to point out the complexity of the study invited the utilization of combined research methods. For example, I utilized focus group discussions, interview, and participatory methods during data collection process. I also utilized qualitative content data analysis method. I utilised purposive sampling method that assisted me to open to referral cases during data collection. There was a challenge to locate the barriers of the study area. The use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was found limiting the study within the demarcated conservation space. Contrary, the use of Mapungubwe

Cultural Landscape was more inclusive of various activities that are taking place in the area. These activities include mineral exploitation, agricultural, research, education, and heritage tourism. All these activities are found to be influential on the conservation programmes of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Exploratory qualitative case study design widens the diagnostic tool that heritage professionals are using to measure the impact of infrastructure development on heritage. There are geological features under the ground that influences heritage conservation decisions. These features are overlooked during Heritage Impact Analysis processes. This in turn compromises the permitting processes done by heritage enforcement authorities. I have revisited the historical epochs that define Mapungubwe as a kingdom, cultural landscape, a world heritage site, and institution of knowledge management. These epochs gave me a holistic description of the study area to understand its geographical location.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCEPTUALIZATION OF AFRO-CENTRED HERITAGE MANAGEMENT TOOL

#### 4.0. Introduction

The previous chapter indicates that qualitative content data analysis method was employed in the conceptualization of Afro-centred heritage management tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This chapter indicates the demographic information of the informants participated in the study. It presents their profile with focus on aspects of gender, educational background, and knowledge of heritage conservation debate in the study area. More so, it captures and integrates significant discussions making the study. The summative position established in the previous chapter is that there is mineral exploitation interest along the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It then stands to reason that there is conflicting interest between heritage conservation practitioners and their mineral exploitation counterpart. The purposive sampled population is essential in finding mitigation measures.

It is important to point out that discussions advanced upholds the notion that the value of benefits out of mineral exploitation is treasured by people than its heritage counterpart. This necessitates that the study to revise value chain dialogue of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This was achieved by making use of African Knowledge Systems to establish the role of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in the development of Afrocentric debate. It builds on the notion that the site serviced the archaeological view way longer than anticipated. So, the decision either to uphold or counter mineral exploitation could be satisfied once the value of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is established. This aspect guides the study towards finding African Knowledge Systems position on challenges facing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. There is a need to apply a well-argued case on whether mineral exploitation threatens heritage or its problematisation is exaggerated in heritage conservation dialogue.

It also assists the study towards finding as to how Mapungubwe World Heritage Site utilizes African Knowledge Systems to solve conservation challenges. It further benefits the study in the understanding of the value chain of the site to local people. The section also revisits the aspect of Eurocentric dominance of its Afrocentric counterpart. This was done comparatively through stock taking of activities embedding

African tradition to establish as to how they are promoted in the current use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Empirical literature indicates that African tradition was suppressed to give rise of its European counterpart during colonial rule. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is celebrated for being thought leader to civilization in the Southern Africa. It was important for the study to make exploits to establish its overall contribution in repositioning and promotion of African Knowledge Systems. The study revises the Mapungubwe Kingdom Epoch to establish cultural heritage activities practised in the African Kingdom. This aspect seeks to develop a profile of cultural heritage activities that justify the royal status of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It also assisted the study to establish as to how the Mapungubwe Royal Prestige is currently portrayed. This aspect builds on argument that the experiences of this kingdom can contribute positively to the development of public service policies of South Africa if fully utilised. Ideally, the royal house serves as the repertoire of valued heritage assets defining a particular ethnic group or clan. I am using this aspect to establish the viability of using Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the custodian of African Knowledge Systems. This could not be done before the role of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was fully established. The study invokes that a comparative analysis be done using courtesy of a royal house among the Vhavenda Tribe.

It emerges that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should portray qualities and characters expected of *Musanda wa Vhavenda* [Royal court of Vhavenda Ethnic Group]. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape Epoch was also revised with focus on existing material culture sporadically located in the study area and adjacent farms. This section covers the archaeological, geological features and other significant cultural resources in the area. They assisted the study to tap into areas such urban and rural spartial planning common to built environment field. It was equally significant for this study to locate the position of African Knowledge Systems in the conservation of built environment material culture on site. Moreso, the Mapungubwe Knowledge Management Epoch also assisted in guiding the study to establish the impact of African Knowledge Systems in knowledge production and consumption. The aspect of African cosmology that the study reflected on indicates how fauna, flora, and celestial world influence human behaviour. It further argues that these natural phenomena are the foundation of African tradition. Mapungubwe as the National Park conserves these natural resources for public good.

Conversely, it was important for the study to look at how African Knowledge Systems influence natural resources conservation management decisions. It is evident that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site renders cultural and natural heritage resources conservation. This assisted the study during sampling to purposively opt for specific role players in natural and heritage resources management institutions. The Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project attests of the existence of external environmental factors influencing conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. There is also human interference factor to conservation that invites porching and illegal immigration due to extended conservation barriers to neighbouring states. These epochs were utilized to develop themes that aligned to the study objectives. It is important to reflect on the demographic information and the contribution made by the participants.

#### **4.1. Demographic data making profile of participants**

##### **Thifuniwi**

Thifuniwi is 49-year-old from Tshiavha Village in the Vhembe District. He is holding an honours degree in Museum and Heritage Services and a Master in Built Environment Heritage Conservation. He brings into the study personal experience in heritage conservation matters. He is also bringing African Knowledge Systems experiences informed by family tradition that posit them as custodian of Lake Fundudzi cultural heritage rites. He commands vast exposure on Afro-centred heritage conservation dialogue that he is co-ordinating through the Freedom Park Heritage Trust. He comes from the Tshiavha Royal Family which views Lake Fundudzi as its source of life and eternal destiny. He worked in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as a monitoring agent through the South African Heritage Resources Agency. He holds the view that traditional leaders are gate keepers or point of reference in the tribal land, which posits them as custodians of community cultural heritage resources. He also says: “Afro-centred heritage conservation tool needs to capture the expression of gatekeepers in traditional leaders on how they envisage their contribution to the proposed model”.

##### **Mthobeli**

Mthobeli is 74 -year- old from Khayelitsha in the Western Cape Province. He holds an Honorary Doctoral Degree conferred by the University of Kwazulu-Natal. He is an

expert in African Knowledge Systems. He is also trained as an African Medical Doctor acquired through African spiritual training processes called *ukuThwasa*. He served in the Freedom Park Trust Board, South African Heritage Resources Agency Council, and worked for the National Heritage Council of South Africa. He brings into the study personal experiences on matters of heritage governance and expertise in Afrocentricity. On the establishment of Afro-centred heritage conservation tool he had this to say: “The proposed Afro-centred heritage conservation tool should be articulate on the influence of animal behaviour to humanity”. It should articulate how animals value issues pertaining to gender equality”.

### **Mashudu**

Mashudu is an 81-year-old African Medical Doctor and expert in African Knowledge Systems based in Vhembe District. He brings in the study experience in traditional uses of fauna and flora for medical reasons. More importantly the audiotapes about Mapungubwe World Heritage Site mostly portrayed him as one of the priests consulted to conduct ancestral appeasements during major public events. His interest is in the balancing of harvest of fauna and flora making the ecosystem. He says: *African tradition sets time and approach towards harvesting of plant species that as doctors it is our duties to impart such skills to our mentees. As a doctor my duties does not start and end with random cutting of trees or collect a portion of it without applying remedial processes to enable it to heal faster*. In this instance he avers that once a person cuts or remove a bark of a tree they must immediately apply soil to treat the affected portion. Afro-centred heritage conservation is set to meet Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation demands. For example, it needs to manage poaching and animal destruction of vegetation within the confines of its conservation space. Basically, Mashudu aligns to the notion of sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage resources.

### **Matshikiri**

Matshikiri is 69- year-old from the Vhangona Tribe in the Vhembe District in Limpopo Province. He holds a Doctoral Degree conferred by the University of Venda where he is working as a lecturer. He brings into the study vast experience in the use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. He participated among key stakeholders during the repatriation and reburial of human remains of the descendants of Mapungubwe

Kingdom. On the development of Afro-centred heritage conservation tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site he had this to say: *Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is a living testimony that life in the Southern Africa did not start in the 1400 [fourteen hundred] as some literature suggest. Yet, there are tribes that invaded the region in the 1400s that found Vhangona of Mapungubwe Kingdom in place. Afro-centred heritage conservation tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should articulate the views of rightful owners of the land in Vhangona Tribe.* He aligns to the notion that the history of Mapungubwe Kingdom is distorted to intensify subjugation of Vhangona tribe by those that invaded the are in 1400. This is the period which Masingo tribe invaded the southern part of Limpopo River.

#### **Mohlomi**

Mohlomi is 46-year-old from the Free State Province. He holds a Master of Arts Degree in History (Cum Laude) from the University of Free State. He is employed in the Department of Education as the history subject curriculum adviser in his home province. He served in the South African Heritage Resources Agency Council, and Free State Provincial Heritage Resources Authority Council. He brings into the study experience in heritage awareness and advocacy towards development of history and heritage matters. On the establishment of Afro-centred heritage conservation tool he had this to say: *Afro-centred heritage conservation tool is necessary to balance knowledge production and consumption of historical resources in the public space. It is a fact though that there is still high dominance of Eurocentric theme in monuments displayed in public space such as parks and streets. However, the tool should not be used to re-write history or force certain expressions that do not fit in a particular context. Instead, let the less presented version of our history be promoted for sanity.* He aligns to the notion that the instrument that is being developed should not be used to promote one portion of history by suppressing the rest.

#### **Makhweyane**

Makhweyane is 51- year-old from Mpumalanga Province. He holds a bachelor's degree in law from the University of Limpopo. He is currently a consultant and member of National Heritage Council, South African Heritage Resources Agency Council, and Mpumalanga Provincial Heritage Resources Authority Council. The institutions he serves are law enforcement agencies of government on heritage conservation

matters. His contribution in the study is based on his experience on application of heritage legislation. However, the subject of Afrocentricity emerges strong in his assertions. He had this to say: “I worked in various projects. I heard someone speaking on lack of Afrocentric focused recorded systems guiding the use of African Knowledge Systems”. Still, he aligns to the notion that there is dominant Eurocentric view in heritage conservation legal instruments in South Africa. There is very little that was done to promote African Knowledge Systems in heritage conservation systems.

### **Sam**

Sam is 59-year-old Tour guide in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area and World Heritage Site in Tanzania. He is from the Masai Tribe that brings into the study experience in conservation and world heritage site matters. The Masai Tribe are the main shareholder in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area and World Heritage Site as landowners and earliest inhabitants in the area. I coincidentally met Sam during the UNESCO conference in Johannesburg that I was also in attendance. In the study he brings in the aspect of open conservation approach than having games fenced in a particular space. He says: “I grew up in the community where both wild and domestic animals graze together in an open land with all the risks you can think of. It has always been my duty since childhood to protect my domestic against wild animals”. On the aspect of African Knowledge Systems to conserve heritage he says: “Both natural and cultural heritage resources complement one another to give us a balance interpretation of a particular site. African Knowledge Systems have always helped us maintain the balance in the harvests of fauna and flora”. My interest in his asserts is on the notion of maintaining the balance in the harvest of natural resources using African Knowledge Systems. This tacitly gives Afro-centred heritage conservation tool a purpose that should be realised in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

### **Van Schalkwyk**

Van Schalwyk is 82-year-old heritage consultant specializing in Heritage Impact Assessment research. His participation in the study was influenced by the need to establish the views of white South Africans in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. He has spent over 60 years working as the Museum Scientist and participated in the establishment of heritage institutions of South Africa. Heritage Impact Assessment processes are found on the notion that there should be a balance



in the harvest of natural and cultural resources for sustainability. His participation though brings in the element of contrasting views about how white perceive black people's heritage and vice versa. He says: *I have heard my fellow Afrikaners treating black people's heritage as kaffirgoed meanwhile their black professionals treating Afrikaner heritage as apartheid properties. He asserted that such actions defeat the social cohesion heritage intends to build". This expression also gives Afro-centred heritage conservation tool another milestone to help end users achieve in building social cohesion.* He aligns to the notion that there should be a balance in interpretation of history no matter the bad or good experiences that favour either side. He discourages the idea of removal of monuments in the public space to ventilate anger propelled by previous political injustices.

#### **4.2. Validation of Eurocentric dominance in heritage conservation.**

This section seeks to validate claim of Eurocentric dominance over Afrocentric expressions on Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation system. In my introduction of the study to the first participant, I indicated that I am conducting research on Afrocentric subject using heritage conservation perspective. I have identified you through the list of stakeholders compiled by the South African National Parks for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. I am working on the development of an Afro-centred heritage conservation tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The study is triggered by the claim that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation approach is Eurocentric in nature. Afrocentric view is generally marginalized making its contribution void. So, what do you make of this claim or how correct is this claim, and what can be done to induce Afrocentric view going forward? Thifuniwi (49) was the first participant who in response says: "Firstly, I have a problem here, I do not know what you mean by Afrocentric view, and what is it that you want to exploit?" I did not want to help explain the meaning of Afrocentric concept as I wanted the participant to help me define it. I responded to the second part of his question in saying the study intends to validate the claim of Eurocentric dominance while developing an Afro-centred heritage conservation tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. In other words, Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is used to mirror either Eurocentric or Afrocentric expressions in the programs that it is currently running.

In response Thifuniwi says: “In my view, Afrocentricity concept embeds African values, norms, tradition and customs as to how they influence our understanding of any phenomenon. So, you want to establish if the contextualisation of that which is celebrated in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site really promote or captures the expression of African values or staff like that?” I gave the participant comfort to use African values, norms, tradition, and customs to argue his points further. I established that the participant was weary of academic correctness of his understanding of Afrocentric concept. It was equally difficult for me not to accept the description that the participant gave. This was simply because there is no generally acceptable definition for Afrocentric approach known so far. However, at least 80% of the participants describe it as the manifestation of cultural value systems that help distinguish an African from the European values.

Makweyane asserts: “Basically, Eurocentric values are perceived to have been established on principles that de-valued African Knowledge *Systems and its contribution to humanity*”. *Interview with Van Schalkwyk (82) concurs in saying: I have been involved in heritage management for the past 60 years of my life. I have been exposed to two concept that derogatively misrepresent heritage conservation goal. These are the use of Kaffirgoed [Kaffer’s goods] and apartheid heritage properties. Basically, Kaffer is the derogative concept used to label black persons during apartheid era in South Africa.*

Apartheid heritage properties in this context as Van Schalkwyk reckons are monuments honouring leaders that perceived to have propelled apartheid system in the country. The participant recalls that both black and white South Africans would find it at ease to unsympathetically destroy one another’s heritage properties. Afrikaners are white people of European origin in South Africa who set the foundations of public administration processes from 1910-1994. So, Afrocentricity could equally be understood within the parameters of what the white people say about black people heritage. In reverse, it is also about what black people regard as own heritage. Afro-centred heritage conservation tool is the conceptualisation of what black people say are their heritage. It is also the mechanism that black people find it useful to conserve and promote own heritage. Van Schalkwyk assertions point out that white people had an influence and opportunity to posit their own philosophy as to define own heritage

and determine how it should be conserved. Afro-centred heritage conservation tool now uses Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as its launch pad for induction in public administrative systems. This is simply because Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is a public institution governed in terms of applicable systems. The induction of Afro-centred heritage conservation tool could draw comparative references with its Eurocentric counterpart.

Thifuniwi also wanted to establish the focus area of the study within the context of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. He asks: *Though I do not want to assume that my understanding of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is in the same context as your study anticipates, I think you must help me here. Are you talking Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as just a site, or management authority, or what?* Before I could respond he further says: *I am raising this because in my view Mapungubwe is just a site that cannot manage itself. The same could be said even if you are looking at it as the management authority, I do not see the relevance of Afrocentric dialogue.* In view of this I asked him as to what the descriptive elements are best define Mapungubwe World Heritage Site, which he said: "Mapungubwe of course is a cultural heritage institution with strong royal traditional content". I then asked him to elaborate on the royal traditional content on how it is being portrayed in the daily activities done on site.

As the discussion was unfolding I could then development themes that also helped the study to reflect on aspect of management authority and other activities done daily to conserve the site. For example, it is in the public knowledge that South African National Parks Organization also known as South African National Parks Organization is the management authority over Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. As the site it is then subject to many interpretations as people may relate with it differently. The current study is found between two contesting approaches in Afrocentric and Eurocentric use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site by the people. There is a claim over Eurocentric dominance that needs validation as shown below. The study is driven by the claim made at highest political platform criticising Eurocentric dominance over heritage conservation processes ahead of its Afrocentric view counterpart. It is important still to validate or establish the perspective of participants on this claim.

As a result, Thifuniwi had this to say: “The methodology in use in conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is premised in Eurocentric view”. Makweyane reckons presentation he heard that in its assertions had this to say: “There is lack of Afrocentric focus to heritage conservation as there are no papers written to set the guidelines”. Matshikiri in perspective had this to say: “Thaidzo ndi ya uri vathu ro itwa uri ri sedze Mapungubwe World Heritage Site nga ito la vhukoloni ra hangwiswa ndeme ya vhufa ha vharema” [The problem is that people were made to look at Mapungubwe World Heritage Site from the colonial perspective that we turned to forget the significance of African heritage]. In view of these assertions, there is still agreement that the heritage conservation approach in use in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site upholds Eurocentric view than its Afrocentric counterpart. There is also an agreement that African Knowledge Systems is underutilised in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. However, Makweyane does not participate in expressing his own view in the dialogue but reflects on someone’s view.

As for Thifuniwi’s assertion, it lies in the approach employed by the manager in place. Some managers are subjective to the methods they acquired from academic training institutions. There are also those that depend upon the political ideologies of time to determine the management approach. It is important to point out that certain managers are objective to combine various approaches to quickly resolve heritage conservation problem they are facing. Matshikiri’s assertions injects global perspective towards looking at the root causes of the problem that the study is investigating. In my view, these assertions position Afrocentric and Eurocentric approaches in a competing environment. Heritage through conservation program serves as a tool that is being used for benchmarking on milestones Eurocentric led approach has outpaced its Afrocentric based counterpart.

Tacitly, the discussion flows in the bid to establish Afro-centred heritage conservation tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. I am building my case on establishment of descriptive elements that should inform Afro-centred heritage conservation tool. I held the view that this requires guiding principles that should be employed that participants should suggest. To achieve this milestone, I asked the question, where should one start to redress Eurocentric dominance of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation systems? In response, Thifuniwi had this to say: *Look, Mapungubwe is*

*a site is not like a community belonging to a particular chief. African based management systems or approach has mainly been placed at the doorsteps of the chiefs that must give guidance through available participatory platforms. Matshikiri in submission had this to say: Ri tea u ya kha ngwaniwapo ane ri tshi sedza Mapungubwe World Heritage Site ri nga amba nga Vhangona uri ri nga thoma ngafhi u fhatulula he ha kwashea. [We need to consult the native communities that in the context of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site we can look at Vhangona Tribe to guide the rebuilding of broken foundation].*

Makweyane had this to say: "Africans need to develop own management systems grounded in the philosophy that define their heritage". In view of these assertions, Thifuniwi sees value in the use of traditional leaderships guidance on what constitutes heritage of the people and on how it should be managed. In his assertion it emerges that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is located outside the periphery governed by traditional leaders. This implies that no local headman could easily influence and enforce rules in the use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Matshikiri assertion captures discontentment to Thifuniwi viewpoint. It emerges in his assertions that there were tribes among them Vhangona that established Mapungubwe Kingdom. It therefore stands to reason that there could not have been the Kingdom without the leader. There could also not have been the leader that lacked genealogical traces linking various generation to the current. Makweyane still urges in this context for the establishment of systems populated by African Knowledge Systems that will serve as the blueprint for African heritage conservation. It is within these discussions that I introduced Afro-centred heritage conservation tool as alternate model. However, the challenge was on the conceptualization of Afro-centred heritage conservation tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It is important to establish factors that gave rise to Eurocentric view in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. These factors are fundamental tools that should assist in the promotion of Afro-centred heritage conservation tool in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

#### **4.3. Factors that gave rise to Eurocentric heritage conservation**

Afro-centred heritage conservation tool emerges in a competitive environment in the bid to match its Eurocentric inspired approach. It is necessary to establish factors that

gave rise to Eurocentric view to the detriment of its Afrocentric counterpart. It is important to point out that this aspect emerges from the narratives given by participants in answering some questions. For instance, Thifuniwi on methodological approach to conserve Mapungubwe World Heritage Site had this to say: “The laws governing both natural and cultural heritage conservation approach have assisted the rise of Eurocentric approach”.

Mohlomi (46) in addition had this to say: *African countries are still largely using heritage laws passed during the colonial rule. This makes it difficult for African viewpoints to influence cultural and natural heritage conservation management process. Mthobeli had this to say: The mistake that we did as Africans when we won independence was that we allowed volunteers to assist in the development and revision of certain strategic policies of government. The leaders of that time were still in jubilee that they have forgotten to align the ideals that propelled the liberation struggle of South Africa. Remember the liberation struggle was intended to liberate and empower blacks or Africans, yet the whites volunteered to develop your blueprint in national legislation. I cannot blame it on them either because they were not there with those that fought the national liberation struggle to know the approach taken to liberate the country.*

Contrary, Dumisani (57) had this to say: *well, I agree with Mthobeli sentiments that reliance upon white volunteers defeated the objectives of the liberation struggle of the country. In my view, there was also the aspect of lack of experience amongst black people. For example, I joined SAHRA when it was still the National Monument Council of South Africa. It was dominated by the whites at senior strategic positions. Basically, the institution was established in 1968 where most African graduates ascended senior positions from 2004. This was in the second national administration since the achievement of democracy. Still, the institution recruited many young graduates that lacked relevant experience. The former employees would still be consulted at a fee to train and impart the required experience. So, this delay made it difficult to mobilise new recruits to live up to the national liberation struggle ideals.*

In view of these assertions, it is generally acceptable that the current national heritage and environmental conservation laws needs revision to accommodate African view.

Dumisani (57) avers that the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 makes provision for amendments. He said that the South African Heritage Resources Agency is the enforcement agent of the same Act. It is expected of it to initiate the legislative review that could lead to its amendment. Makhweyane (51) postulates that the South African Heritage Resources Agency have already made amendments of certain sections of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999. Moreso, the institution is an active member on the revision of the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage led by the National Department of Sport, Arts and Culture. He further warned though that it is a highly contested process that has shifted from contextualisation of the law towards possible merging of functions. It is argued that there are many national statutory bodies of government responsible for heritage management. The proposed position is that they should be merged into one particularly those that share similar functions.

The contest indicates that there is a paradigm shifting that is affecting the quest to promote African Knowledge Systems as equal to its Eurocentric counterpart. Government is the majority stakeholders that makes the determination on programmes that should be done. This implies that systems that aided the rise of Eurocentric approach continues to protect it. Ironically, Mapungubwe World Heritage Site alone may find it difficult to pursue the aspect of changing conservation approach to accommodate African Knowledge Systems. The study is still necessary because political debates are dynamic that can change within short space of time. It is important to develop alternate programmes that should they be required can be found quickly. The discerning view of Mthobeli is that institutions such as Mapungubwe World Heritage Site are limited by the professionals biasness to a single methodological approach.

Dumisani (59) further warns that although the amendment of the law is underway there is a need for support of end-users. This include professionals responsible as the successes and failures could be because of reluctance by end-users to adapt to new heritage conservation approach. Thifuniwi (49) avers that institutions offering heritage conservation training also contributed to the current use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. According to Van Schalkwyk (82) academic debates assisted in the contextualisation of the theme that should be presented about Mapungubwe World

Heritage Site to tourists. The shortcoming in this instance was the institutional monopoly that placed the University of Pretoria as the thought leader on literature about Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The intensification of national liberation struggle of South Africa in 1990 saw communities mobilised against everything that the white people were doing in their communities.

The University of Pretoria at the time was classified as the university for the white people that was adamant to admit black students during apartheid government. The racial influenced tension saw major stakeholders of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site opposing the university research approach. There were research ethical questions posed to the university approach to human remains management. A case in hand was the graves of the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom that were exhumed without consultation with the affected communities. It is reported that the university has been using the site since 1932 for research that saw some exhumed human remains take out by the university. According to Mashudu (81) this case was resolved in 2005 that saw the claimed human remains reburied on top of Mapungubwe Hill.

Administratively, heritage management academic program was only offered by the former white universities. According to Van Schalkwyk (81) it is safe to claim that the white people in academia were still influential in research, education, and training institutions. They would monopolise a heritage site, mold academic program around it, and promote it for education, research, and tourism purpose. In return, the university would attract investments that often manifested in research funding, commission out of video and filming in the area, and exchanged cultural heritage programs with international universities. The benefits to local people included creation of temporary job opportunities as research assistants. There were graduates among them that were repaid through scholarships to further their studies in heritage management field. This implies that it required skills to enable African Knowledge Systems to be properly aligned to conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site programmes.

Another academic shortcoming was reluctance to enrol black students to a Master of Archaeology degree. According to Lithole (2010) the former white people universities were the only accredited institutions to offer a Master of Archaeology degree. The admission criterion was that a person should have scored 60% final honours degree



examination to be enrolled for that degree. The predicament facing black students in this regard was that the former black universities had lecturers that were upholding the notion of limited access to this degree. Those were white people working in the former black universities that perpetuated the aspect of monopolisation of Archaeology. As a result, black students would be allocated lower marks in their final junior and honours degree examinations to disqualify them from furthering their studies. Van Schalkwyk (81) reckons that this frustrated most black students given that there was market in archaeology. This was a legislated requirement that a consultant without a Master of Archaeology degree could not do certain consulting work in the heritage fields. Basically, a person with a Master of Archaeology degree becomes a principal investigator during Heritage Impact Assessment consultancy work. It becomes a business barrier whenever a consultant fails to meet minimum requirements for the job.

This aspect triggered tension that other heritage professionals criticised archaeology for monopolisation of heritage consultancy work. According to Dumisani (59) the South African Heritage Resources Agency was alerted about the predicament facing black students and heritage consultants. It established policies that tacitly relaxed the criterion that benefited archaeology. It allowed a person with an honours degree to be considered in consulting work provided they sub-contract a master's holding person. The intervention is found to provide temporary protection of vulnerable end-users. Afro-centred heritage management tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site offers alternate approach to position African Knowledge Systems. It is important to point out that resistance and changes in the political environment affected the rise of Afrocentric approach in heritage conservation. The heritage law was tempered with to promote monopolisation of heritage conservation process. In similar discussions Thifuniwi points out that the law divided functions of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site between South African National Parks Organization and South African Heritage Resources Agency.

The Minister of the Department of Environmental Affairs to whom SANPARKS report to is the main investor. The Department of Arts and Culture Minister through SAHRA plays an oversight role to ensure that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is conserved properly. The National Environmental Management Act of 1998, National Heritage

Resources Act, 25 of 1999 and the World Heritage Convention Act, of 1972 are founding laws propelling Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation systems. It then stands to reason that Afro-centred heritage conservation tool is set to harness the interests of all these pieces of legislation to succeed.

Mthobeli (74) says: *One thing that Afro-centric heritage conservation tool should explore is the relationship between animals and human behaviour. In other words, it should articulate how animal's behaviour contributes to the concept of humanity. This aspect is key towards understanding how African people view and appreciate their heritage.* Makweyane concurs as he says: *Natural environment looking at the biodiversity at large both fauna and flora are also cultural commodities that very few can relate their relevance to African heritage conservation systems.* Thifuniwi conversely raises a challenge in saying that: *Mapungubwe World Heritage Site since attainment of globally renowned status over promotes environmental conservation over cultural heritage. One can blame it on administrator's ways of interpreting and application of the guiding laws.* In view of Mthobeli's assertion, I am establishing that neither cultural elements nor environmental conservation can exist solo. Instead, there is synergy that should be maintained as both form part of heritage commodities that should be nurtured properly. Makweyane's sentiment pursues the notion of lost African voice in the enjoyable use of biodiversity.

The African voice to biodiversity according to Mthobeli (74) is that human beings are often named after certain animals. Many of those individuals or clans named after certain animals are forbidden to eat or have animals representing their totem name killed even if it is for consumption reason. According to Mthobeli (74) conservation in African perspective takes place through emotional incentives accrued in human conscious as they grow older. It therefore stands to reason that in African conservation approach, there is no need to set stringent measures to control harvest of certain commodities. This assertion posits the study on the debate involving Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project and Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It also necessitates the establishment of Afro-centred heritage management tool for mitigation of tension arising from infrastructure development and heritage conservation.

In furthering this discussion, Thifuniwi (49) had this to say: there is a need to establish an integrated management system that will promote equitable harvests of natural, cultural, and mineral resources. This should start with promotion of areas of collaboration between heritage, mineral, and natural resources management law. Professionals should learn to apply the law as a diverse management instrument that one sector should compliment than compete with one another. Afro-centred heritage management approach levels the ground for integration of community by-laws as determined by local authorities. This is done to level the ground for collaboration that will in turn benefit social cohesion process. Heritage management institutions are bound by regulations that promote the role of traditional leaders and tribal authorities. It was noted during discussions group that the National Heritage Act, 25 of 1999 is not articulate on the role of traditional leaders in heritage management process. This is a serious gap that needs to be bridged by future research as to develop the scope of traditional leadership involvement in heritage resources management.

#### **4.4. Impact of Eurocentric view on conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site**

It is generally acceptable that the plan for colonial rulers to Africa plan to cause disillusionment of existing processes used to manage the welfare of the colonized countries. In view of this aspect, Thifuniwi says: *the land ownership of the entire Mapungubwe Cultural Lanscape is still under claim by various constituencies. This is the claim that Vhangona tribe is blaming on colonial rules that despite the attainment of independence and democracy, they are still deprived of their land.*

Matshikiri maintains this stance by portraying Vhangona tribe as the native people in the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. I am applying the term “native” as presented by the informants for proper reporting of exact expressions captured during data collection. He had this to say: *Colonial rulers employed the theory of a barren land that was later invaded by tribes such as Vhashona, Basotho and Vhavenda in the 1400s. The theory continues to isolate the rightful owners found when colonial borders were established in the region.* This is the view that also finds expression in Ralushai (2005) that Vhangona are the indigenous community that most tribes that migrated from the north of Vhembe River found. He had this to say: *the native community or Vhangona tribe that have long established themselves in the present-day South Africa had their*

*social and political living patterns destroyed in 1400. This was at the invasion of Masingo tribe of the present Mphephu Ramabulana clan. The Vhangona tribe are sporadically scattered in the Vhembe District where some are crowned head men to certain villages. Attempts were done to reclaim the autonomy of Vhangona tribe that could lead to re-establishment of their kingdom. the attempts are not yet yielding positive results.*

In view of this discourse, Makweyane says: “Paralysis of social organization of indigenous communities was a strategic weapon that worked best for colonial ruler. It destroyed many kingdoms including Mapungubwe”. There is a point of reference to establish cultural heritage elements that should be used to contextualise Afro-centred heritage conservation tool. The Vhangona tribe tradition are further employed to build a theoretical framework of Afro-centred heritage conservation tool. Thifuniwi assertions reflects on the need to make further exploits on the land usage rights that is contested within Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation space. It therefore stands to reason that conservation debate should not be entered into without looking at other external environmental factors affecting it.

Matshikiri’s barren land theory equally finds expression in Makweyane’s assertions. In this context, I am establishing that once colonial rulers succeeded in breaking existing social pattern, Mapungubwe Kingdom’s administrative systems became permeable and vulnerable to exploitation. Mapungubwe Kingdom at this stage appears to have been experiencing cultural interfacing challenge. The colonial ruler’s culture that imbues Eurocentric philosophy and the native culture espousing Afrocentric thoughts. The South African Broadcasting Corporation (2017) captures the depth of contestation continuing among key stakeholders of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The descendants of tribes that established Mapungubwe Kingdom continues to claim the superior status over one another. The current study looks beyond justification of who could be the legitimate native community, but to establish common cultural practices that they all share. This was done through analysis of the Archival records of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC 2017) on the repatriation and reburial of Mapungubwe World Site human remains. In this instance, my focus was on how African people value burial grounds and graves. Despite of the differences

experienced between various tribes, the common practice performed included libation, fortification of the coffins as part of rituals performed.

According to Mashudu (81) the reburial was a success a result of extensive consultation government conducted with the tribes associating with Mapungubwe Kingdom. Initially, the Vhangona tribe was disputing the involvement of the tribes that invaded the area after the year 1400. Those tribes were labelled illegitimate claimants on the basis that the remains were believed to predate the year of their arrival. Government succeeded in managing the dispute to the success of the project. The debate benefits the current study as to establish that prior to that there was no cohesive structure representing the view of local communities. This implies that institutions that are holding mineral exploitation licenses might not have consulted the relevant tribes. This justifies the claim as Matshikiri (74) avers that consultation was never done with the native people that he refers to as *Vhongwaniwapo*. Thifuniwi (49) in addition had this to say: *this debate has a far-reaching ending that equally questions the value chain of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape world heritage site status. In case where some claimants because of landownership are arguing they were not consulted on the land re-use for heritage conservation and mineral exploitation.*

According to Matshikiri (74) government opted to support the bid to secure the world heritage site status than prioritisation of land ownership entitlement that Vhangona tribe was deprived of by colonial rulers. The delays to resolve land claim disputes and chieftaincy claims supports this assertion. Significantly, there is a broken chain of command visible on the side of government decision making hierarchy. Political heads in departments make final decisions on cases that many could have been resolved administratively. They can override decisions of administrators sometimes without advancing a contesting view. It then stands to reason that the respond time to challenges influencing conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site lies with the agility of political heads. Priorities are not set to satisfy the due democratic process but to level the ground for political exploitation. It is worth mentioning that tribalism and ethnicism are tools that are continuing to work against building a cohesive cultural heritage system. The study finds that there is no synergy between what Mapungubwe Kingdom represents and all that it is portrayed to celebrate globally.

This makes its world heritage status less significant to local people from material acquisition, spiritual sanitation, and promotion of African Knowledge Systems. It continues to deepen the ethnic divides and tribalism that benefited the rise of colonialism and Eurocentric approach. According to Makhweyane (51) Eurocentric approach was well sponsored through public and private partnerships that assisted to recruit volunteers like missionaries. Contrary, Afro-centred heritage conservation tool exists when this assistance has been reprioritised towards poverty alleviation-based programmes. The approach in use places heritage conservation process as the liability to government than significant priority. This affects resources allocation for conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

There is a gap that is inviting a close check if ever resources allocation is done for public good or there are ulterior motives attached. The study establishes that heritage conservation institutions enjoyed good harvest season when the global economy was still stable. Some institutions supported it as part of their social responsibilities and tax rebates purposes. The global economic meltdown experienced recently saw reprioritisation in resources allocation. Another contributing factor is uncertainties over political stabilities in most countries given the growth of democracy. The contests by tribes associated with Mapungubwe World Heritage Site attests to this sentiment.

Ironically, the study posits that the contest by these tribes was triggered by the violated cultural values of one tribe by another. The contest was influenced by the quest for gaining on material richness found in the entire cultural landscape. This contests still favour the already established Eurocentric perspective in global social, economic, and political dominance over its Afrocentric counterpart. Once again, the value chain of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape favours riches out of mineral exploitation and other essential commodities sales. Preservation of cultural heritage resources becomes secondary to material gains earmarked should the land entitlement favours a particular tribe. There are several gaps emerging out of this sentiment that are useful to the study. For instance, it is in public experiences that tribal authorities are political institutions servicing a particular tribe. So, the study made exploits to establish if tribal contests were sponsored to compromise the legitimate claims of the land ownership by appropriate tribe.

The exploits further looked on possible influence of external environmental forces to guide the outcome of decisions intended to manage heritage conservation for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. These exploits assisted in the understanding of Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project dispute case in favour of conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The study was driven by the notion that perhaps the value chain of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site could be seen once an alternate conservation approach is established. This is simply because of the democratic processes in South Africa where one cannot impose or force end-users to implement it. Instead, it creates an alternate solution for possible consideration going forward. Again, the repatriation of Mapungubwe Human Remains project equally offers the plethora of understanding African view on matters pertaining to burial and graves management. According to Thifuniwi (49) graves in African tradition are source of spiritual meditation which make them an important component of heritage conservation. Matshikiri (74) on archaeological approach towards burial processes had this to say: *Scholars in archaeology are interested in understanding human behaviour by studying artefacts exhumed from the ground. In their research, it is very likely of them to exhume human remains as it was the case in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This behaviour is against African cultural heritage, and it must be condemned at all costs.*

South African Broadcast Corporation (2017) records that there was a compromised reached approved by all tribes to allow reburial process to continue. It was agreed that each tribe would be given five small coffins with human remains to rebury in Mapungubwe Hill. However, the remains could not be scientifically proven that it was given to the intended biological claimant. It emerged through audio-visual analysis that there were no comprehensive records as the human remains were not properly documented. According to Sibayi (59) and Thifuniwi (49) archaeologists worked under pressure of government and the aggrieved parties to complete the task. The political environment was also hostile to the University of Pretoria because of other due transformation process in the country. This resulted in random packaging of the remains inside of the provided small coffins. This implies that one clan could have reburied wrong human remains. Moreover, I have established that due to lack of space on the hill of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site, two or three tribes would use one grave to bury more than five coffins. Positively, I have gathered that there are rituals

performed before and after burial takes place in African cultural heritage systems. Priests were invited to conduct reburial sermon that included malombo dance festival during the night vigil for ancestral appeasement. There was criticism established over the use of one grave to bury more than one coffins that was not considered. It is worth mentioning that the approach to reburial process did not help deepening African value and tradition in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

#### **4.5. Building Afrocentric conservation system for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site**

According to Makhweayne (51) the mandatory function of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is to conserve cultural materials justifying its global status. It is also expected to conserve biodiversity at large which includes both fauna and flora. However, the World Heritage Conservation Act 49 of 1999 provides for establishment of an integrated conservation framework for world heritage sites management. Afrocentred heritage conservation tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site therefore needs to be grounded on the integrated view. It was important to establish on the best approach towards amplifying African viewpoint in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This is set to be achieved without downgrading the successes Eurocentric view achieved over the years. This is simply because Eurocentric systems have laid the framework that can still be improved once the views of African people are well sought and integrated.

##### **4.5.1. Mapungubwe cultural landscape: African kingdom perspective**

This section builds on the African Kingdom epoch to establish the contribution of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to this perspective. According to Thifuniwi (49) Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should be understood as the epitome of civilization found on African Knowledge Systems. The theme that should be promoted through all conservation programmes should demonstrate the social-economic and political establishment of Musanda wa Vhavenda [royal status as portrayed in Vhavenda royal courts]. Surprisingly, Thifuniwi (49) had this to say: *the current use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is not articulate of African values that gave rise to its world heritage site status. Its globally renowned status does not articulate patterns one would hope to see from the royal family/clan perspective.* He further asks: "What is it that you would



consider of royal status looking at how Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is administered today?"

Basically, Huffman (2000), Roodt (2009), Meskell (2011) and Esterhysen (2013) posit Mapungubwe Kingdom as the early pace setter of African civilization in the Southern Africa. This warrants its recognition from royal prestige point of view. Mashudu (81) echoes Thifuniwi (49) sentiment in saying: *Mapungubwe ndi musanda u tewa u langiwa nga maitela a musanda* [Mapungubwe is a royal court that should be governed in terms of royal family tradition]. This suggests that it should be accorded the due respect that is generally paid to every *Misanda*. The approach towards its re-establishment should have focused on the rehabilitation of its infrastructure destroyed at its destruction.

Mohlomi (46) the are missed opportunities that one discerns in the whole approach towards contextualisation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Sometimes it feels as if the whole approach intended to build a nature reserve than conservation of Mapungubwe Kingdom's heritage. I am raising this in view of how the site royal status is underrepresented in all media platforms as in the current view to the site.

Makhweyane (51) avers: I agree with Mohlomi (46) sentiment. Maybe we need to check the aspect of role players between the responsible departments. At some point we need to conduct a stock taking by comparing the contribution different role players made to shape the current status quo of the Mapungubwe World heritage site. Wena Mr Lithole its your study. You must go and check as to who brought how much money and for what. This will help you to establish the influence of various role players in the development of Mapungubwe re-establishment.

In view of Thifuniwi (49) assertion there is underrepresentation of the royal status that depicts Mapungubwe Kingdom. Mashudu (81) echoes this sentiment in bringing the aspect of traditions practised in the royal courts that the current use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is not so articulate about. Mohlomi (46) maintains that the site promotes natural heritage resources than its cultural counterpart. This ultimately obscure the site's cultural significance that promotes the traditions that an African royal

family practices. Makhweyane brings in the study the aspect of power and influence on heritage conservation decision making process.

On the strategic intervention required Thifuniwi had this to say: *Traditional leaders and healers need to be consulted on how to rebuild and rebrand Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to the satisfaction of African cultural heritage.* Matshikiri concurs in saying: *Vhane vha vhupo ha Mapungubwe World Heritage Site ndi vhone vhane vha tea u vhudziswa uri zwo rali ri isa hani phanda na u fhatulula vhupo uvhu.* [Owners of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site are the one that should advise on the way forward towards rebuilding and development of the area].

In view of these assertions, I am establishing that there is a need to revise processes leading to the attainment of world heritage site status. There is a contesting view as to what informs the contents of globally renowned status of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Promotion of world heritage site status appears to obscure the content portraying it as one of African Kingdoms. The current branding as I have observed further portrays it as Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and National Park. The continuous contests between tribes that are strategic role players further pose unfavourable challenge towards expedition of impartation of African view.

Thifuniwi's assertion intends to ground the voices of traditional leaders as lead agents to the impartation of African philosophy in current conservation systems. This prompted me to ask as to how to locate the voices of traditional leaders in the current conservation plans of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This was asked in view of his earlier assertion that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site does not fall within the tribal land placed under a particular chief. In response he had this to say: "Yet, though Mapungubwe is just a site under no specific chief at the moment, there are recognized structures such as House of Traditional Leaders located in the Department of Corporate Governance that can inform the process". Matshikiri's assertion rather approach to rightful ownership of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site brings two paradoxes. The first paradox pursues readers towards looking at Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape beyond the confines of demarcated area defining its world heritage status. Secondly, it pursues scholars to assist role players in proper

identification of lead agent whose cultural heritage traits established the contents of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

As it stands, there is no contesting view established in the study that Vhangona could be the heirs of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. There are however discerning views acquired in the use of secondary data sources acknowledging other tribes that made Mapungubwe Kingdom periodically. I have identified Vhalemba tribe among other key stakeholders of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. In the analysis of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site repatriation and reburial audio-visuals, I established a different burial practice in their part against the rest (SABC 2017). I used that for comparative analysis of cultural elements that can be used to establish common unifying factors. According to Mabogo (1990) Vhalemba tribe is among those that established themselves east of Southern Africa region, particularly, in Mberengwa in the Republic of Zimbabwe. They migrated southwards in the company of Masingo Tribe together with Vhakalanga or Vhanyai Tribe to mention but few.

My choice of using Vhalemba tribe was inspired by their self-proclaimed identity as merchants that were attracted by the Mapungubwe Kingdom trade networks in the area. Oral history portrays that Vhalemba under Masingo of Mphephu Ramabulana Royal clan came in the 1400. According to Labadi (2007) the issue of cultural diversity is an important aspect defining the role of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to African Knowledge Systems development. Afro-centred heritage conservation tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site needs to take that into cognizance. The contradiction is still seen in the legislation, particularly, National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 of South Africa. Thifuniwi (49) refers to it in saying: "The guiding principle of heritage management is that heritage should contribute towards nation building and social cohesion".

Matshikiri's sentiments could be viewed a threat to social cohesion processes should the aspect of isolating one role player from the collective succeeds. Nonetheless, ignoring Matshikiri's assertions could equally create problem should Vhangona that constitutes the majority in Southern African region opt out. This can still hit hard the envisaged social cohesion process South Africa is in pursuit of using heritage conservation systems. According to Nkondo (2012) social cohesion is a two-way

process aiming towards satisfaction of mutual beneficiation between lead role players. There is a contradiction one establishes in Matshikiri's assertions pertaining to the aspect of earlier inhabitants of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. The contradiction comes when the participants asserts that Mapungubwe Kingdom covered the radius currently making Southern Africa region. There were other tribes apart from the Vhangona living in the region although the core demarcated area for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site could be associated with them. This implies that modern research that makes this world heritage site a shared competence with global communities is justifiable. Thifuniwi's sentiments on the need to view it as a public institution breaks the momentum to monopolise the site historical context.

There is a shortcoming noticeable on the determination of heritage or historical significance of object or site looking at time factor. Vhangona might have been earlier inhabitants of the area, yet other tribes came in later with different sets of cultural traits to theirs that they have practiced. Heritage concept offers a blanket description without necessarily looking at time factor making different historical epochs. Matshikiri (74) often posits Vhangona tribe royal status and living pattern in the discussion. This helps the study to reconcile Thifuniwi (49) assertion that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation approach should uphold its royal status. In summary, in building Afro-centred heritage tool it is important to aim towards helping Mapungubwe reclaim its status as a royal ground that must be managed accordingly. The legal framework establishing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is flexible to use to promote African heritage conservation systems. The values that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should promote is that African people are able to manage own heritage systems. As a result, they should play a lead role to reposition of own heritage conservation systems to achieve same goals. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape is still viewed as the barren space that no traditional leadership could claim control over its use. It is important to revise Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape by utilizing the world heritage site perspective.

#### **4.5.2. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape: Mapungubwe World Heritage Site**

It is generally acceptable that the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site status is less significant to local people. The current use of the site is not helping the development

objectives of the country, which is to build a social cohesive system using sport, arts, culture, and heritage (LEGDP 2009). Contrary, this section presents possible intervention measures towards repositioning of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the custodian of African Knowledge Systems. This was achieved through the identification of significant cultural elements to give Mapungubwe World Heritage Site African cultural context. This will assist in the profiling exercise of its royal status.

I am utilizing the tradition and cultural elements depicting Vhangona tribe of Mapungubwe Kingdom. The focus is on the establishment and maintenance of the royal court in African perspective. According to Thifuniwi (49) this section should pay attention to myth, legends, riddles, norms, and values that make the ideal *Musanda wa Vhangona*. Mashudu (81) and Matshikiri (74) raise significant cultural elements such as Tshiendeulu [royal burial ground], Zwitaka [sacred sites], Zwifho [sacred or holy tempels], Tshivhambo tsha vhusa [House for female initiation schooling], Pfamo [King's Palace], Khoro [Tribal Authority Council Court], Cattle/Goats Kraal, and set-up of houses used by various members of the family to mention but few. There is evidence of built environment material culture such as houses located across the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. Some are on top of Mapungubwe Hill, it would be proper to rebuild them for the site interpretation. Matshikiri in addition says: *Western philosophy has captured the tradition of building royal houses in mountainous terrain very wrong. Instead, they often reduced it to an issue of division of living patterns by class with kings living more luxurious life than own subjects.* Raphalalani (2015) and Madzivhandila (2016) ridiculed the class debate in citing that *Misanda* appear on top of the mountain because they serve as watchtowers. They are strategically placed to easily identify enemies or suspects from the distance to warn members of the community to be on guard. Mashudu (81) in addition had this to say: once a suspect or just a stranger arriving in the village would be introduced to the King. He will be subjected to play frog jump towards the various security check points. There would be song that will be sang that say:

*Tshidula tsha Musingadi*

[Frog of Musingadi]

*Vhakoma vha tshi ya thavhani*

[When the chief goes to Musanda] Thavhani literary means to the mountain. It is used in the study to depict *Musanda* to give it a proper context.

*Vha fhirisa Mudinda Phanda*  
[He sends a messenger ahead of him]  
Mudinda wa u fhunga nwando  
[The messenger to clear the dew on the road]  
Hiiiiii! Hiii! Hiii!  
[Jump! Jump! Jump!]

According to Dima (81) frog riddle would be played as part of searching the person before he approaches the king. It is believed that as a person is busy bumping up and down any weapon that he might have hidden in his body would fall. The strategy was used mainly to search through the anus as some people would hide harmful objects or food poisoning substance called *mulimo*. Thifuniwi assertion focuses on the architectural designs of the ruins, houses, pathways, amphitheatres, girl initiation houses, and design of royal courts, language and any tradition that is easily depicted in this context. Mohlomi opines: *Experts in built environment and indigenous architectural design can identify the tribe that constructed the ruins and tell if at the design was peaceful in the community or not*. The National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 section 34 provides for the protection of structure that mostly are buildings that are older than sixty years.

Thifuniwi (49) and Makweyane (51) assert that the heritage law is biased to Eurocentric view, which the interpretation of the cited section justifies that. Mashudu (81) precisely says: *sixty years old benchmark to make a building a heritage site leaves so much to desire. Mathematically, the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 was promulgated sixty years after the outbreak of the World War II. The Act then seems to limit heritage within the military confines that gave triumphal rise to Eurocentric philosophy. African tradition views building such as Zwivhambo and Thondo as significant heritage buildings within the Musanda*. According to Thifuniwi (49) Zwivhambo [plural] or Tshivhambo [singular] are houses used for female initiation school. The school is held annually in the royal courts under the guardianship of Nyamatei as the school principal. Another significant site associated with female initiation school is *Tshitambakhomba*. This is often a designated river where female initiates use for recreation and cleansing during and at the closing stage of the school.

In essence, Mashudu (81) argues that the sixty years benchmark limits African Knowledge Systems expression to built environment heritage conservation.

During the analysis of objects excavated in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site, there is evidence that male initiation school was conducted frequently. This is the tradition that most African ethnic groups are still practicing. There was discontinuation of the use of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape for male initiation school since the site was repurposed for conservation. Matshikiri maintains that in saying: *The current use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the national park forced the native communities out of their land. The site is no longer used to render services making cultural heritage system of the native communities.* Basically, Afro-centred heritage conservation tool needs to promote or resuscitate the abandoned tradition of the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom.

Makhweyane (51) concurs in saying: "Institution such as Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should be looked at as a place for research on lost cultural heritage practices". It emerges in the follow up questioning on what he meant on lost cultural heritage practices that had him saying: *uKuluba or male initiation school is currently under threats as there are many emerging practitioners. Traditionally, there were families that we all knew that they are specialists in hosting male initiation schools. We hardly had death cases happening like it is becoming a habit these days due to unqualified practitioners.* Makhweyane (51) further suggests that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should serve as the centre for formal initiation schooling. African scholars should research more to establish a working tool to regulate access and promotion of these traditions for posterity. The need arises to establish if wild animals are threats to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation practices. Once more, I pushed the discussion to also look at wild animals as a potential threat to the site royal stature. Mthobeli (74) had led the discussion in saying: "researchers in cultural heritage fields should try to establish how animal behaviour contributes to humanity within family institutional framework". Tacitly, Mthobeli assertions seeks for encourage research in the use of wild animals in African tradition. Afro-centred heritage conservation tool benefits out these exploits as to establish the ground for co-habitation between humans and wild animals in the conservation area. This was done to explore

possibilities to return tribes that were forcefully removed to Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape

Mthobeli (74) elaborates that in animal kingdom citing the life of a pride of lions. The lioness hunts and provide while the lion takes care of the family and young ones, which brings in the aspect of gender equality. African royal courts might be conducted by male persons, however, *Makhadzi* plays a significant role in critical decision-making process. Mthobeli (74) further says that there is a symbiotic relationship justifying the need for co-habitation between humans and animal. In this regard, both human and animal kingdoms apply identical patterns or approach to power and hierarchy. Ironically, a lot is known about King Shiryadenga than his wives when Mapungubwe Kingdom is discussed. Co-habitation exists though that sees humans applying African Knowledge Systems to control the jungle and harvests of animals. African Knowledge Systems come handy to raise consciousness on the need to foster co-habitation to conserve vulnerable animals. Afro-centred heritage conservation tool offers the platform to establish the role of royal courts in dealing with human harvesting of natural and cultural resources in the area. However, it is important to first discuss the significance of language usage within the royal courts in African tradition. Vhangona tribe prides themselves as Vhakololo meaning princes and queens of a particular kingdom. There is a specific language patterns as Thifuniwi alludes spoken in *Misanda* called *Luambo Iwa musanda*. Thifuniwi hopes to see more of *luambo Iwa musanda* being used as the mode of communication in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. For example, the king does not eat food but *Khosi I ambara malinga*, his *panga* is called *Tshili*, water is called *lushika*, and his mother is called *vhakoma* to mention but few. It is important to further the debate on the influence of plants in human behaviour. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape: the national park perspective.

#### 4.5.3. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape: A national park perspective

This section focuses on other essential services that are catered for in Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. According to Sibayi (59) Mapungubwe World Heritage Site provides biodiversity and fauna conservation services. The previous section paid attention on the aspect of human and animal relations in building of human cultural identity. It is equally important for the study to focus on how humans utilize plants to



establish their cultural identity. Afro-centred heritage conservation tool is set to benefit by establishing African viewpoint to biodiversity conservation. This section deepens Mthobeli assertions on the need to explore human relations to nature and its inhabitants. In view of that I have identified several items to investigate Afrocentric approach to conservation by focusing on fauna, flora, Archaeo-hydrology, harvests of minerals and overall ecosystem management. Secondary sources assisted me to identify key roles that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is playing to conserve biodiversity matters. In all expressions my focus was on establishing the contribution of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in the promotion of African Knowledge Systems. It was also on how the conservation approach on site integrates basic knowledge systems of local people. It is important to further this discussion by focusing on the contribution of African Knowledge Systems in the conservation of fauna in Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape.

#### **4.5.3.1. Afrocentric approach to Fauna conservation**

Thifuniwi (49) brings in two approaches to conservation that are commonly practised in most communities. The fencing in of wild animals within a demarcated space of land and an open approach where all wild and domestic animals form part of the jungle. He says: *Eurocentric approach to conservation has always been reduced to the fencing of game within a particular location. The rationale behind that being fear for extinction of wild animals through hunting. Hunting of wild games became a common spotting code that propelled trading of animal tissues during the voyage of discovery era led by European foreigners in Africa. So, the whole aspect of fencing of wild animals was never intended for their protection but claiming dominion of the hunting ground.*

So, Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is established on the similar ground where in this context wild games are used to defend the mineral land. In furthering this debate, I asked of Afrocentric approach to fauna conservation that had Thifuniwi says: *Shepherding has been the best conservation mechanism rooted in African tradition. It even transcended gender barriers as both boys and girls could participate.* He further says: *The role of a shepherd would be to guard against possible devouring of domestic animals by their wild counterparts. Traditional healers often play significant role to*

*apply medicinal interventions to help domestic animal harsh unfavourable conditions that could see them devoured by their counterparts.*

Sam (59) is a Masai male participant from Tanzania working as a tour guide in Ngorongoro Conservation Area and World Heritage Site. He brings into the study experience of the Masai people life before the demarcation of Ngorongoro Conservation Area into a World Heritage Site. He had this to say: *I have been the son of the jungle my whole life taking care of my father's livestock. My role has always been ensuring that I protect the livestock against wild beast that would seek to devour them.* I further asked as to how his community protected wild animals from extinction and if hunting of wild animals has ever been a problem in the area. In response he says: *Well, my experience is that Masai people are livestock farmers where one family could own more than 200 cattle that if they want meat, they can easily get it. So, hunting of wild animals has never been a problem necessitating fencing in of wild games.* He also says: *I do not recall our community ever gathered to solve hunting of wild games problem. However, we are warned of the porchers travelling throughout the world to kill certain animals for ivory and other tissues trade.*

As to what needs to be done to control such hunting behaviour, he had this to say: *Obviously, our Chiefs are the first point of reference that they can stop that from happening by mobilizing communities to be watchdogs against it.* On the significance of wild animals to humanity he had this to say: *There is a need to preserve wild animals as they provide health support systems in the community. Traditional healers often use animal tissues to cure certain diseases or prevent their occurrences timeously. More often their waste products and dead tissues are used for medicinal purposes.* Mthobeli (74) in addition says: *African people studied animal behaviour for health reasons for many years. They would study the bahaviour of the newborn babies to detect common sickness like Misho which is convulsion seizure.* Mahwasane (2012) had this to say: *Misho ndi vhulwadze vhu delaho nwana vhu vhonealaho nga musi nwana a tshi handa mato, u oma lurumbu na u fhelelwa nga muya. U do lila a tshi khauwa muya u tshi vhuya* [Convulsion seizure attack newborn babies. The signs or symptoms may include fit or epilepsy and minor stroke on one side of the body. The baby would be crying and experiences asthmatic attacks too].

Mashudu (81) and Mthobeli (74) postulate that convulsion seizure is common children disease. As African Medical Doctors, we make use of the dung of a baboon that we burn it in the claypotsherd for a child to snife the smoke. This attests that animal behaviour is believed to have a significant influence in human growth and development. This could even influence naming processes of the child. Mohlomi (46) concurs in saying: “Most sotho totem names are derived from certain animals that you often hear names such as Kgabo [monkey], Chuene [baboon], Phuti [Springbok], Tlou [elephant] to mention but few”. In the bid to generalise Mohlomi’s assertions I asked if this is only common to Basotho tribe to name children of clan names after certain animals, he had this to say: “Ooh, Mosotho not in ethnic sense but to say black people as a whole or in African tradition as the same happens to Vatsonga, Vhavenda, etc”. Thifuniwi in addition says: “My totem praise song is Khovhe ya vhimbi [shark] or Tshigugumela namana I bvaho dzivhani [Tshigugumela the calf emerging from the lake]. So, marine animals have always been part of my family tradition that made us claim custodianship of Lake Fundudzi for that matter”.

In view of these assertions, African approach to conservation of fauna does not put stringent control measures limiting the parameters where animals live. It is an integrated based approach that urges human being to protect that which they view vulnerable in the jungle without endangering them. It uses human beings once against as agents to safeguard even those animal species living in the jungle. There are areas of mutual beneficiation in the use of animals either for naming or health reasons that necessitate humans to take preservation business seriously. The Masai people case study shows that those that the affluent do not have reasons to hunt games for consumption purpose, but for medical reasons. Thifuniwi assertions bring another dimension of looking at advanced reasons for conservation. In this case, the use of wild animals to protect mineral land. This arguably defeats the preservation objective often known to propel sustainable use of rare species in the jungle. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as literature suggests is in rich minerals terrain and it has also been along the border lines of both the republic of Botswana and Zimbabwe. There are reported cases of illegal immigration to South Africa by residents of Zimbabwe using Mapungubwe World Heritage Site route. So, the external environmental forces influencing conservation of fauna using both Eurocentric and Afrocentric lenses still require in-depth study. However, it is equally important to establish Afrocentric view

towards conservation of flora as a complimentary function of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and National Park.

#### **4.5.3.2. Afrocentric approach to Flora conservation**

Interview with Sam (59) and Dumisani (59) share light on challenges facing world heritage sites. Among others is poaching that shows human interference with the ecosystem. Sam (59) explicitly says: "There are cases of poaching into the conservation area for firewood collection and illegal hunting of wild beast that we deal with daily". It was still important for the study to establish the meaning of poaching for proper contextualisation in the study. Dumisani (59) describes it as follows: "Poaching involves illegal access into the conservation area to harvest either plant or animal species". Sam (59) on the other hand describes poaching as follows: "Unsympathetic harvest of plant and animals in the protected areas using illegal means to gain access". Makweyane (51) says: "Poaching is an act of gate crushing into the nature reserves to steal either wood or hunt in the area illegally".

In all assertions, access control is what determines the legalities of harvesting either plant or animal species in the conservation areas. It is still not clear as to what implication does poaching have on conservation management systems of institution like Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This is simply because as it stands one can still harvest those species provided there is legally granted access. It therefore stands to reason that legal access and not alone does not help conservation course if indeed is intended to prevent animal and plant extinction. I asked during observation data collection process if there are guided processes informing the licensing or permitting of harvesters of plant and animal species in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Basically, hunting is done internally arguably to control population growth of certain species arguably to maintain the balance in the ecosystem. This is also done to ensure that there are sufficient food reserves in natural vegetation resources to supply a desirable number of animals kept. Harvesting of firewood is strictly forbidden to maximize enjoyment of animals to different conditions of resources at their disposal. The open conservation approach that African Knowledge Systems encourage does not limit harvests of firewood in the jungle. According to Thifuniwi firewood harvests is often done by female persons than their male counterpart in African communities.

Generally, it becomes the duties of the male persons to guard against cutting down of trees and shrubs that are still lively. Instead, only dry trees can be cut down for household uses.

There are forbidden trees that African Knowledge Systems condemns for uses for household purposes. A typical example is the Mutavhatsindi [the Ochnaceae-Brackenridgea zanguebarica Oliv] which the Tshiavha and Nethengwe clan among others derived their totem name cannot be harvested for firewood purpose. It has medicinal significance and there is fear that disobedient to the caution made in its wrongful use can bring bad omen to the family of the perpetrator. Among shrubs Lufhaladzamakole [Sicklethorn: Asparagaceae/Asparagus Falcutus L] is another plant species that cannot be harvested for firewood (Luseba & Tshisikhawe 2012). According to Luseba & Tshisikhawe (2012) Lufhaladzamakole is used to cure livestock diseases. There is myth that if burnt during the cloudy day the smoke has the capacity to prevent the rainfall. It is a compound noun made of a prefix lu- [class 5] + a verb - fhaladza [to clear or spill]-+ Makole [clouds]. Thifuniwi the name Lufhaladzamakole means something that causes clear outcasts in the sky to the disturbance of rain clouds gathering. It is believed that once it is burnt up its smoke has the capacity to clear rain clouds which could affect raining and agricultural seasons.

Interview was held with Mashudu (81) the African Doctor offering general medical services. He says: there are permissible ways to harvest plant species that African Doctors can share with individuals that have obtained formal education from the Eurocentric perspective. African Doctors are trained to take care of the plants that we would want to use sustainably for medical reasons. In pursuit of this discussion, he says: *firstly, one needs to know what portion of the plant species you are looking for and how to access it without damaging other areas that are not wanted on the day. One should be able to cure the plant after harvests by using the soil to cover the area affected either by scaling out of barks or cutting it out.* He further warns *there is specific time to cut a tree as it also goes through stages of multiplication and growth like animals procreate.* It is for this reason that African tradition encourages for the harvest of dry wood in order not to interfere with plant lifecycle.

Oral historian on Vhavenda tradition, Phophi (1989) postulates that there is this version on the harvest and naming of *Mutavhatsindi* tree species [the Ochnaceae-*Brackenridgea zanguebarica* Oliv]. He reckons that people claim that before cutting down either a branch or the whole tree one needs to take off the pants known as *Tsindi* and hang it on it as tradition dictates. There are taboos or invitation of curse upon oneself, or family should there be disobedience. In pursuit of this discourse, I asked if there is a best model possible that is uniquely African that can be used as point of reference. African Knowledge Systems shows that the Khoi-San community had a systematic way to record animals harvested in a particular area. They will paint picture of animal that they have harvested on the rock.

According to Mashudu (81) and Eastwood (2000;2003 & 2005) the Khoisan would paint on the rocks to alert fellow hunters of the animals that they have harvested. African tradition condemns overharvesting of one species in a particular area. The Khoisan experience assisted in the alert of fellow hunters to reconsider harvest of animals portrayed on the rock. In 1854 the Bahananwa of Kgoshi Ratshatsha Mmalebogo employed similar art to document stories of their tribulation at the hands of colonial rulers. The paintings portray how King Ratshatsha Mmalebogo was arrested by the Boers to prison cells in Pretoria during the Mmalebogo-Boer War-1854. The experiences of both the Khoisan and Bahananwa guide Afro-centred heritage management tool to develop a comprehensive objects and sites documentation.

It therefore stands to reason that harvests desirable should enable natural resources to survive human interference afterwards. It emerges that there is non-communicable intention towards measures set to limit access to resources in conservation area. The preservative measures intended to control potential majority harvesters that history portrays them as Africans in favour of the minority in the white people. The study establishes that both races participate in the harvest of both plant and animal species even those kept in the conservation areas. Matshikiri 74 and Mashudu 81 aver that there can still be sympathetic harvest of both plant and animal species if human beings can control their own curiosity and demands.

Matshikiri (74) reckons that *Vhangona ndi vhathu vha zwifho, zwitaka na zwiendeulu zwo tsireledzwaho nga madaka na mademe. Zwezwo vhufa havho ha Mapungubwe*

*World Heritage Site vhu tea u thusa kha u vhulunga sialala ilo* [Vhangona tribe are people that make use of sacred sites (zwifho), shrines (zwitaka) and royal burial grounds (zwiendeulu) located in dense forests. Those are their cultural heritage that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should serve to protect.

Ralushai (2005) criticised the archaeological approach that saw its researchers removing sacred objects from sensitive heritage sites. He refers to objects that are illicitly removed on graves and burial grounds. Matshikiri in the South African Broadcast Corporation (2017) avers: *There were several heritage objects taken from Mapungubwe World Heritage Site that many are now privately owned. Lack of capacity in heritage compliance authorities is contributing towards neglected heritage conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. For example, there was a human skull found in the clay pot removed from its location, which were removed without exploration of possible reasons that led to it.* In view of these assertions, it emerges that forests in African tradition are very significant although Eurocentric view reduced it to firewood collection reserves. Archaeological methods or approach to research are found insensitive to African tradition and cultural heritage systems. Once again, criticism on the notion of Demarcation of land in the name of conservation continues to gain the ground in the study. The archaeological works done in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is found to have stripped off its spiritual contents. The cultural heritage element has been eroded which automatically favours the rise to Eurocentric view. Another important area of concern in on the use of other shared resources like water.

#### **4.5.3.3. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape: Archaeo-hydrology and conservation perspective**

This section is informed by observatory data collected acquired in a guided tour in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It is usually offered for a fee. I attended Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project stakeholder's consultation meeting where a guided tour was conducted after the meeting. The guided tour helped me familiarise myself with the site much quicker than certain aspects I could see them better. Mapungubwe World According to Roodt (2009) and Murimbika (2006) Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape is located along the confluence of Shashe along the Limpopo River. This aspect is discussed to establish the role of the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom in water resources management. and sustainability. There is generally water

shortage in most part of the world currently that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site status gives one the platform to sought solution. Nonetheless, it is important to tap into this aspect to explore the provisions within African Knowledge Systems towards management of water resources. Afro-centred heritage conservation tool needs to inform Mapungubwe World Heritage Site of its capacity to provide solution to problems affecting its end-users holistically. Interview with Sarah (48) who is an Archaeologist specialising in hydraulics with special interest in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. She is currently a senior lecturer at the University of Botswana who worked with communities originally from Mapungubwe Kingdom.

She says: there are people originated from Mapungubwe World Heritage Site living along the Kalahari Desert in Botswana. Those people are surviving by making use of African Knowledge Systems to dig wells and fountains and to draw water for household use. She was a guest lecturer during the annual Mapungubwe Jazz Festival held in Polokwane. DSAC (2015) audio-visuals suggest that animals such as camels travelling along the desert areas were used to store water in their bellies as indigenous preservation mechanism. However, the approach was not good as it led to extinction of camels to enable humans to draw water from its belly reserves.

In the same audio-recordings, Mathole (69) is a politician and experts in African Knowledge Systems had this to say: *Mapungubwe Kingdom, particularly its cultural history should also be looked at using African cosmology approach. This will help us to understand the water harvest systems that saw the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom surviving different climatological challenges.* Mathole (2017) assertion tacitly dispute the reason that the people of this kingdom abandoned this area because of drought and unfavourable climatic condition. Murimbika (2006) portrays the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom as rainmakers. Despite the dryness of Limpopo and Shashe rivers, there is a dam servicing Venetia de Beers Diamond Mining Exploitation Plant inside of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. More so, along the Beitbridge there are water reserves in Limpopo River seperating the Republic of South Africa and Republic of Zimbabwe. In this context, water isused to intensify boarders that contributed to the redistribution of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape.



According to Mathole (2017) the water reserves along the Limpopo River is used to perpetuate the politics along the boarder posts of these neighbouring countries. The area was declared a high cholera hazardous meanwhile the eastern boarder posts to the Republic of Mozambique is declared high Malaria hazardous area. I brought in the study these debates to present some of the reasons that might have prompted the decline of Mapungubwe Kingdom. These debates assist in the understanding of biodiversity conservation approach that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is equally using. It emerges that the intention was never aiming to preserve for posterity, but to use wild animals kept in the national parks to intensify political divides along the borders of South Africa. The implication of the current conservation approach is that significant national policies such as uBuntu, nation building, and social cohesion are becoming redundant. These debates widen the study focus area towards understanding of water scarcity challenges in Limpopo Province. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape experiences share light on the politics of monopolisation of water reticulation along both Shashe and Limpopo rivers. It also shares light towards understanding of the contest against Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project and how Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was fronted.

Nevertheless, it is emerging quite significantly that Afro-centred heritage conservation tool should establish the cultural heritage value of water resource. In fact, it should also serve to establish the cultural uses of water as practised by African communities. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in my view cannot benefit its target audience or shareholders if it misrepresents their viewpoints. In view of Sarah in DSAC (2015) assertions, I asked my participants to help in the identification of indigenous ways to generate and save water. Mashudu (81) during one-on-one interview had this to say: “We need to take care of all commodities that invite rain such as frogs, fish, crocodiles and all those that need water as their habitual space. Ndi vhone vhana vha mvula vhenevho [Those are the children of the rain]”.

Thifuniwi (49) in addition says: “Mvula I a rabelwa na u rabelwa uri ine nga tshithu” [Rain can be prayed and even prayed for in African tradition]. Mathole says: “We need to service by paying homage to custodians *tsa pheku tsa Pula ke ra Mmarena Vho-Queen Modjadji* [of rain making skill or equipment precisely the mother of our nation her majesty Queen Modjadji]. Mashudu (81) focuses on preservation of amphibian

animals that live in land as in the water to please rain goddess. Thifuniwi equally, portrays rain god as the source that if pleased with libation served to it releases the rain wilfully. Mathole (2017) urges for recognition of those clans that are known to be custodians of rain making cultural properties. My experience informed by my cultural background concurs with Mashudu's assertions that we were forbidden to kill frogs by elders citing that if we do that, we are chasing the rain away. I have also observed religious institutions calling for prayer session to request the rain from god they serve.

Mathole (2017) prides himself as the subject of Queen Modjadji's Dynasty which stands to reason that his assertions are based on personal experience. There has been attempts made in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to resuscitate the rain making practice lately. This comes out of audio-visuals recordings that follow up interviews equally confirms (DSAC 2015). Group discussions touched base on this aspect. It emerged in the discussions that the Modjadji Dynasty is yet to crown the new leader since the death of her Majesty Rain Queen Makobo Constance Modjadji in 2005. This is often of highly contested position that invites claims that are resolved through a designated commission appointed by government.

Thifuniwi (49) opines: *Dispute either over land or chieftaincy is negatively affecting our cultural heritage systems; hence we are in the lack of basic resources like the rain. Some settlements reached to crown certain people as chiefs of a particular clan seems to lack ancestral blessings; hence lack of rain in recent years can be used to justify that. Mathole (2017) also opines: Another reason why we lack god's blessing of rainfall is that our traditional leaders are becoming more Christians than the Jews. They are abandoning their own cultural traits that gave rise to their family tradition that built their kingdom. He further says: Traditional leaders are chosen by the gods of the land that posit them as high priests in the community. Their duty is to lead meditation to communicate people grievances to the ancestral world.*

In view of these assertions, I am establishing that Archaeo-hydrolics debate centres on the role of ancestral world towards sustaining the rain life cycle for the benefit of the people. The rain life cycle starts with gatekeepers in traditional leaders, the relationship between humans and animal species, particularly, those that lead cosmo life in water as in the land. These animals are protected to sustain the circle. So, Afro-

centred heritage conservation tool should always maintain the symbiotic relationship between humans and other living organisms sharing the ecosystem. The study reveals that even resources such as water are bone of contention towards consolidation of political borders disputes. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site using Afro-centred heritage conservation tool should be able to manage any action that is not intended to promote heritage in its name. A case study of Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project led by Coal of Africa Limited is used against the proposed Afro-centred heritage conservation tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This is also done by way of establishing Afrocentric approach to mineralogy and conservation

#### **4.5.3.4. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape: Mineral exploitation perspective**

The previous section attests that the legislated conservation approach of natural and cultural heritage was never intended for public good, but for consolidation of colonial divides. It was also done to manage limited access of local entrepreneurs to mineral exploitation sector. Meskell (2011) and Esterhysen (2013) debated the impact Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining would have on Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This section expands the debate by zooming into the implication of the same debate within mineral exploitation sector. I argue that the battle was never between heritage conservation against mineral exploitation in rich cultural heritage sites. Instead, heritage institutions were dragged to fight the battle between two or more mineral exploitation companies at loggerheads. These are the battles intended to consolidate landownership and monopolisation of factors of production within the contested area.

The guided tour inside of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site attests that there is water shortage in the entire cultural landscape. The Venetia de Beers Diamond mining company have built a water reticulation dam inside the conservation area. Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining would also require bulkwater supply that will sustain it for thirty years from the date of inception (Roodt 2009). On the other hand, there is general crisis over lack of water resources to villages where the descendants of Mapungubwe Kingdom were moved. Participatory observation established that mineral resources lying underground could be stretching into Mapungubwe conservation area. The department responsible for licensing of mineral exploitation would argue that they have servitude rights over resources under the ground.

Paleontologists and Archaeologists would claim the rights over cultural resources lying under the ground. It also emerged that the information provided to heritage and natural heritage resources compliance enforcement agencies was not sufficient. Analysis of the Heritage Impact Assessment reports (Roodt 2009 & DEA 2013) established that the Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project falls outside the demarcated conservation area for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The studies could not confirm the quantity of available coal resources and the parameters of the mining belt, its depth, radius to all cardinal points, and applicable sketches. Dumisani (59) maintains that there is still lack of skills to manage heritage permitting and licensing process in South Africa. Compliance enforcement agencies lost capacity because of resignation and retirements lately. It would take experience to dig as deep as searching for architectural drawings and even to have a comprehensive view of such drawings.

The Masterplan for Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project (2009) points out main shareholding scale per investor. According to LEGDP (2009) government introduced the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act 53 of 2003. The Act makes provision for protected procurement process to benefit companies owned by the black people. The shareholding list in Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project is dominated by black people owned companies. There are companies that are owned by people that command respect in public administration either as former ministers or members of parliament. I brought this aspect to indicate that administrators might have satisfied themselves with decisions they can make, but it would still be subjected to political scrutiny. Holistically, the heritage legislation limits the role of institution like South African Heritage Resources Agency to advisory to the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture. This implies that once the advisory role is fulfilled all decisions lie with the responsible minister.

The same can be said with the Department of Mineral Resources that licences mineral exploitation application. This is the department that is still centralised as oppose to many that were decentralised to the provinces. It has satellite offices across the country although major decisions are taken by the responsible minister. This reduces the satellite offices to advisory that can manage the initial prospecting applications in the province. It stands to reason that there is limited access to the mineral exploitation entrepreneurship in the country. So, limited access ignites competition that leaves

other factors of production vulnerable to exploitation and poor resourcing. Ndlovu (2012) avers that power vested in the political heads of departments is subjective to the systems that assisted one's ascension to high position. Institutions like Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is under South African National Park Organization. It is governed by the council that oversees its administrative processes.

The council is appointed by the Minister of the Department of Environmental Affairs. The appointment process is equally vulnerable to political influence and abuse. Participatory observation assisted me to establish that political heads are comfortable to work with the council that they have appointed. However, change of political administration and leadership have a bearing on how the newly appointed minister relate to the board or council they have inherited. According to Mthobeli (74) some of the reasons why minister opts to ignore council or boards that they have inherited are as follow: everyone would want to work with people that they can trust, fear to be dragged into endorsement of programmes that will continue to benefit their predecessors at their expenses, and they might not have been mandated to do so by the systems that assisted their promotion. The implication of their action is that there can be discontinuity of certain programmes, reluctance to approve or adhere to advise given to his/her office. The board or council is appointed for a period of three years subject to the minister discretion to extend for not more than two terms (Dumisani 59).

Group discussions establish that Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project is currently suspended for unknown reasons. It stands to reason that their interest was on acquisition of license that they have succeeded. There is evidence that they have satisfied all due processes at acquisition of mining exploitation license. They have established public-private institutions consultation network for continuous mitigation of outstanding issues. The general sentiments gathered in Meskell (2011) and Esterhysen (2013) is that the fate of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is no longer in hands of heritage conservation authorities.

During interview, I asked if heritage has a case against Vele Colliery Coal Mining project where Thifuniwi had this to say: *I can only give a technical input from the heritage practitioner's point of view. Heritage had a case since mining pose serious threats to conservation looking at pollution and future expansion demands.* Matshikiri

says: *The challenge with the approach to license Vele Colliery Coal Mining was that the natives of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape's views were not heard. Consultations done was very general without clear distinction of whose view should be considered paramount compared to other participants. Mohlomi (46) opines: Obviously, mining is set to cause pollution that could be hazardous to heritage conservation. However, heritage sector could not argue comprehensively as to advance reasons not to allow Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project regardless of its envisaged damage to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. I guess this happened because of dysfunctional structure in Limpopo Province to defend heritage course properly.* Thifuniwi and Mohlomi agree that the future of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site remains elusive given the licensed coal mining in the adjacent farms. There is basically fear for extinction of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site quite sooner to give mining advantage. However, Matshikiri raises concern over poor consultation processes done that compromises the views of communities with historical attachment to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Mohlomi's explicitly blames it to heritage conservation institution, particularly, their capacity to manage macro-economic generating sector demand with the potential to impede their business mandate. My observation guided by literature review done shows that Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project implementing agent satisfied all the requirements set in different pieces of legislation guiding licensing processes.

I asked a question on what needs to be done going forward in view of the lost control of compliance agencies to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Mohlomi (46) had this to say: *all is not lost because there are certain areas where some historical items can be protected from possible destruction.* Thifuniwi had this to say: *I think the ball is on SANPARKS to work out a disposal plan for contingency. I mean all that they are having is the opportunity to identify movable artefacts that can be saved should the mining operations happen sooner than anticipated.* Matshikiri (74) had this to say: *well, all is not lost as there is still the land claim that the successful claimants might challenge government decision taken already. I would not be surprised if this is the reason for the current suspension of Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project. I know it can still be causing discomfort to potential investors.*

In view of these assertions, I establish that the fate of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site remains hanging in the balance. Thifuniwi (49) suggestion on the development of disposable plan should be further exploited or researched to give it content. Matshikiri (74) shows that there is still hope for the retention of the status quo. However, his assertion is dependent upon land claim process finalisation. It is not known yet as to what the reasons are the land claim process is stalled. It could still be deliberate delays to manage some external and internal environmental influencing shareholding matters. This is simply because some shareholders gained access using political influence at different intervals. It emerged in the study that government measures or experiences growth out of good performance of mineral sales. So, government plans economic growth with the mineral exploitation sector than their heritage counterpart.

#### **4.5.3.5. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape: Knowledge management perspective.**

According to Thifuniwi South African National Parks around 2008 adopted an integrated management framework merging cultural and natural heritage commodities. He defines this a period of serious transition where skilled white professionals were leaving public service institutions in place of black university graduates. However, he maintains that most white professionals tendered resignation voluntarily that many became consultants to museums and other heritage institutions. The dilemma faced Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as Thifuniwi reckons was the need to establish cultural heritage unit. The focus was on the establishment of nature conservation unit that saw most qualified environmental scientists employed. So, Nature conservation component had already long found expressions in human and financial resources allocations. Interviews conducted with Nemaheni in Uche-Okeke (2008) points out that Cultural Heritage Manager was appointed five years after the attainment of the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site status. On that stage Nemaheni Tshimangadzo have just assumed the role of a park manager with Paballo Mohafa as the Cultural Heritage Manager. The challenge then was that the Cultural Heritage Manager was still fresh from the university lacking relevant experience to establish the unit. The establishment of a cultural heritage unit under people and conservation directorate created competing environment with already long-established nature conservation component.

Most white professionals could still value nature conservation more than cultural heritage resources that the park was set to conserve. Van Schaalkwyk (81) “Kaffirgoed” and apartheid heritage theory was put to a test. Human resources process still favoured recruitment of game rangers than cultural heritage officers. The South African Heritage Resources Agency had an oversight role over Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation programmes. Thifuniwi (49) was its Limpopo Provincial Manager between 2006-2008. The role of South African Heritage Resources Agency was to enforce the implementation of the heritage law and heritage agreements signed at the declaration of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It was expected of the South African Heritage Resources Agency to report to the minister on the progress made quarterly. It is safe to say this institution served to ensure that there are best conservation management systems for sustainable use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

The challenge was that both Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and South African Heritage Resources Agency had just appointed cultural heritage managers. The new recruits were lacking work experience on what was expected of them. Thifuniwi (49) was given the mandate to build working relationship with the Provincial Department of Sport, Arts and Culture. The department was not supportive to the work of both heritage management institutions. Instead, it was running a parallel heritage management process to what South African Heritage Resources Agency and Mapungubwe World Heritage Site were doing. Instead, it was erecting statues in honour of Kings that fought against colonialism. The department exhausted all its resources to monuments erection and public gathering. It neglected other significant roles such as the establishment and resource provision for Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority. There was a demand for the establishment of tourism facilities such as interpretive centres, museum, and offices to assist the heritage conservation process. The South African National Parks concentrated on biodiversity conservation that the South African Heritage Resources Agency would focus on cultural heritage resources management.

Thifuniwi (49) joined the South African Heritage Resources Agency from the Provincial Department of Sport, Arts, and Culture. He knew of the broken inter-organisational relations between the department and his new employer. He had this to say: *well, I*



*took a risk to join the South African Heritage Resources Agency because plans were well advanced to dissolve it by the department. The bone of contention was the establishment of Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority that was not wanted by the department. There was a campaign across all provincial departments to fight the establishment of Provincial Heritage Resources Authorities. According to LIHRA (2005) the department blames the South African Heritage Resources Agency for not being candid in its approach to develop Limpopo Provincial Heritage Resources Authority. It did not give the department sufficient time to guide the process. It then emerges in these assertions that the department withdrew its support from those initiatives.*

Moreover, the South African Heritage Resources Agency lost capacity and control over monitoring and compliance enforcement in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The department could not advocate for the development of Limpopo Provincial Heritage Resources Authority. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site along the way lost the services of Mr Nemaheni and later Ms Mohafa because of resignations. The same happened to the South African Heritage Resources Agency that lost both the Provincial Manager and his assistant in 2008 (Thifuniwi 49). Its offices were later closed with all its functions dissolved to mark the win to the forces that spearheaded its destruction. In 2009 the Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project Masterplan was developed. The basic scoping report that invited a full Heritage Impact Assessment was served to the Provincial Department of Sport, Arts, and Culture. This was simply because both South African Heritage Resources Agency and its provincial sister organization were already not functional.

The collapse of heritage support systems favoured the emergence of Coal of Africa: Vele Coal Colliery Mining Project. Heritage institutions were already fragmented with no lead agent to review the project proposal for proper management of the due processes. According to Esterhysen (2013) there were media publicities against its bid that also inspired the current study. It is safe to say that the bid to acquisition of mineral exploitation license was won fairly. The implications of all these aspects include the following: transformation of heritage management process was compromised, respect of the strategic stakeholders was lost, and clients were left vulnerable as no one consulted with them on the devolution of heritage functions back

to South African Heritage Resources Agency. It led to the abandonment of African heritage consultancy market that was gradually attracting black entrepreneur for heritage consultancy work. The Department of Sport, Arts, and Culture could not help protecting emerging African heritage entrepreneurs.

It then stands to reason that there is currently no equitable redistribution of financial resources to empower emerging black heritage entrepreneur. Instead, big business such as monuments erection continues to favour their white persons counterpart. It is important to indicate that at the time of devolution of South African Heritage Resources Agency, black people in academia were still denied research access to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. According to Dumisani (59) and Ralushai (2005) researchers were expected to apply for permission to South African Heritage Resources Agency. It established the independent committee that was responsible for application review and appraisal. The committee had volunteers from institutions of higher learning. The challenge was that some volunteers had ulterior motives. Instead, it was established that some were participating to consolidate monopolisation of significant heritage sites. The research permit committee was consisting of staff members coming from academic institutions that have already shared significant sites amongst themselves.

Dumisani (59) maintains that persons like Professor Nemakhavhani Victor Ralushai was among black professionals that broke the silence over monopolisation of literature on Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. He also challenged the issue of Eurocentric dominance on literature pertaining to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Resistance to grant him access to research on Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was because of site monopoly by the University of Pretoria on that period. The university started research in 1932 that made it a thought leader and the site custodian. The challenge with the monopolisation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was that other research institutions were denied research access. There was branding challenge should one institution work through its competitor's brand. The South African Heritage Resources Agency was expected to reconcile those differences.

Uche-Ikeke (2008) records that even the University of Witwatersrand suffered similar fate as Professor Ralushai did at the hands of their University of Pretoria counterpart. It justifies that denial of Ralushai was not an act of racial discrimination. This is simply

because the two contesting universities were classified as white institutions during the apartheid government. Moreover, Dumisani (59) had this to say: *the greatest achievement in my career was to see the collapse of heritage site monopoly by universities. It has been perpetuating one dimensional heritage site interpretation. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site lost African cultural value as everything done by researchers was made to align to pre-determined UNESCO principles that were not favourable to African tradition.* Thifuniwi (49) had this to say: *emerging black professionals did not find it easier to break white academia research monopoly of significant world heritage site. Lack of experienced black academia further assisted the rise Eurocentric view to enjoy more benefits ahead of its Afrocentric counterpart.*

The appointment of Paballo was a success towards establishing cultural heritage unit. The unit spearheaded the development of integrated conservation systems. The institution went through staff turn over that delayed transformation process. This was also influenced by her ethnic orientation given that her Sesotho background. The incumbent had to deal with ethnic divides that saw strategic stakeholders contesting for special recognition. Researchers were still claiming that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site does not belong to a particular ethnic group but a culturally diverse community. This is the view that Matshikiri (74) refutes citing that it was done to undermine the Vhangona tribe. Dumisani (59) further avers that there was formidable interim structure known as Archaeological Task Group (ACTAG) attached to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The ACTAG played a significant role in the development of the world heritage site bid dossier to its achievement of the world heritage site status. Some research work was required to augment the information on the world heritage site nomination dossier. The ACTAG enjoyed support of essential stakeholders including tribes associated with Mapungubwe Kingdom. It had researchers from other universities that were also members of Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists.

According to Thifuniwi (49) those tribes curiously awaited researchers to confirm the rightful heirs of Mapungubwe Kingdom. They first wanted confirmation whether the site belonged to Batswana of the Republic of Botswana, Vhavenda of the Republic of South Africa, or Vhashona of the Republic of Zimbabwe. Furthermore, they wanted the research to be specific to which tribe amongst these ethnic groups. Researchers

could not report on the expected outcome to the disappointment of the aggrieved tribes. They felt sold out in the process leading to their ultimate withdrawals from the ACTAG. This aspect is discussed to demonstrate on how heritage professionals violated research ethical grounds. They opted not to present research findings that in turn tarnished the integrity of their works.

Dumisani (59) reckons that ACTAG was disbanded although the damage caused has a long-lasting impact on the current use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. There were no attempts to establish African value chain in the use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. I am arguing that inexperience among black professionals led both South African Heritage Resources Agency and South African National Parks officials down. Instead of being innovative in heritage conservation approach they enforced UNESCO's guidelines. I have done a comparative analysis looking at the roles of South African Heritage Resources Authority Cultural Heritage Officer and his South African National Parks counterpart. I found that there was duplication of functions, both were set to document newly found sites and objects using geographical profiling systems or manually, and policy enforcement.

Lack of adequate staff and financial resources later helped exposed that there was duplication of activities between them. The South African National Parks Organization will pick cases they would want to perform. In case they failed they would blame it on the South African Heritage Resources Agency. There were opportunities for the newly recruits to develop Afrocentred heritage conservation tool for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It is acceptable that they lack experience to make a meaningful contribution in this regard. It is important to indicate that government established the National Heritage Council of South Africa in 1999. The South African Heritage Resources Agency predates it as it started in 1968. The National Heritage Council was established to develop policies that will promote rapid transformation of heritage management process. It established policies such as uBuntu which embeds African Knowledge Systems (NHC 2008). The policy sets guidelines on the African inspiration applicable across all sectors of humanity. It assisted stakeholders of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to reconsider their early withdrawals in view of dissolved ACTAG Team story.

According to Dumisani (59) the ACTAG served as the interim management body that also assisted in the development of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site Nomination Dossier. It promoted the protection of archaeological sites that all activities in the park were conducted with caution. This gave rise to archaeology as the thought leader in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Academia in other disciplines such as Anthropology, African Knowledge Systems felt marginalised in the process. Dumisani (59) had this to say: *on that stage white people in academia grouped themselves to the exclusion of their African or black people counterpart. Professor Ralushai found himself lonely as he was probably the only highest qualified researcher. Alone he could not have helped break the knowledge production monopoly that ACTAG Team members were pursuing.*

The research funding institutions at the time were investing on formidable research teams with credible administrative structures for accountability. Independent researchers were less favoured, which deepened the isolation of black people in academia. This necessitated the establishment of the National Research Fund institution, which was already established by government in 1998. It was established in terms of the National Research Foundation Act 23 of 1998. Its primary role was to promote equal access to research funds. Research institutions including universities and various councils are main beneficiaries. However, the approach to conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site limits its participation of its members in research. The same can be said to officials from institutions such as the South African Heritage Resources Agency. They posited themselves as compliance enforcement institutions that monitor and control access to the site.

This was exacerbated by the change of administration process. Institutions that are directly funded by government are no longer qualifying to apply for the National Research Fund. Instead, they were expected to make their own contribution from their annual equitable share. According to Matshikiri (74), Mthobeli (74) and Dumisani (59) heritage institutions like museums benefited directly from the National Research Fund. It is important to indicate that at the inception of the National Research Fund most public institutions were still led by the well-educated white people. There was limited access for black people, particularly inexperienced university graduates. The public administration staff recruitment policies were prioritising black people. Ironically, many

senior officials were at their retirement phase. Museums were still perceived as the white people recreation space.

Significantly, high positions in the museums were occupied by well educated officials holding doctoral degrees. This aspect should be understood in the context of deliberate action that universities played to limit black student enrolment to Honours, Master's, and Doctoral degrees. It emerges out of these sentiments that the aim was to limit access to senior positions in public institutions. Positively, people in academia were encouraged to adopt black students for mentorship. The mentors were expected to provide proof of students they have recruited to access National Research Funding. Mentors were expected to be well-educated with good training program that will benefit the mentees. This assisted in skills impartation and improvement of interpersonal relations. Some mentors even recommended their mentees as their immediate replacements at retirement. This marked the success of inducing graduate students in public heritage conservation management. Mohlomi (46) as the beneficiary out of this initiative had this to say: *the reception was not so smooth on my first year in the office. We were very young and vibrant willing to work. The challenge was with the experienced colleagues that were not ready to learn from young graduates. They were also not willing to teach us what they know. However, we finally got together, and we exchanged experiences. I guess it was the issue of group dynamics.*

It emerges in this section that there was limited access to knowledge exchange because of group dynamics challenge. It also emerges that all means of knowledge production were not available to young graduates in heritage conservation institutions. So, young graduates could not express themselves until such time they allowed the experienced officials to open for learning and sharing of knowledge. Positively, teaching and learning can occur once two or more are willing to learn from one another. It emerged in the study that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site has just been given an opportunity to revise its conservation approach. Afro-centred heritage management tool levels the ground for utilisation of African Knowledge Systems. It should be used as an enabling migration tool from archaeological to African Knowledge Systems approach. A strategy is required to institutionalize this approach.

#### 4.5.4. Institutionalisation of African Knowledge Systems

The previous section reflects on factors influencing knowledge production and consumption in public institutions. It attests that there should be mutual respect between the mentor and mentee for knowledge impartation to take place. It shows that support systems should be provided to enable voluntary skills impartation. This section focuses on the aspect of institutionalisation of African Knowledge Systems in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It aligns to the study objectives that seeks to explore possible use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the custodian of African Knowledge Systems. It emerged in the study that academic institutions had the tendency of monopolisation of heritage sites. Positively, they provided resources for research and maintenance of those heritage sites. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape was under the University of Pretoria before the establishment of heritage law enforcement institutions.

This section discusses the aspect of role transfers as part of disposal strategy. It also discusses the responsibilities of the recipient or beneficiary of the heritage resources transferred. Asante (2003) avers that Afrocentric approach is a psychological migration from apathy to a self-determination state of human mind. It is worth mentioning that before African Knowledge Systems are imparted, the working environment should be prepared. To elaborate on this aspect, I am revising the case of restitution and repatriation of human remains back to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. According to Thifuniwi (49) the reburial case was just a quick win out of the demands by the aggrieved stakeholders of Mapungubwe Kingdom. They also claimed back all artefacts including golden utensils excavated from the site. The University of Pretoria raised security concern given that there was no infrastructure to house the artefact collected on site. The compromise reached was that they will be returned in phases provided there is adequate infrastructure in place.

Matshikiri (74) had this to say: *although the claim was a success, institutions such as South African Heritage Resources Agency did not advice the claimants properly. It should have taken a central position to guide the process until the case is concluded. I can tell you that after the reburial ceremony there were no longer engagements to verify that all records are still up to date. A lot might have happened to the loss of some*

*authentic objects or artefacts of Mapungubwe Kingdom. Thifuniwi (49) on this point had this to say: I cannot dispute that. Well, it was one big case in one's career that everything happened very fast. I was not yet exposed to similar case. Look my man! it was a high political profiled case that in my view was the assurance that black people were in leadership. The Member of Executive Council Mr Collins Chabane and Khosi Vho-Ramovha Tshililo Jeffrey handled it well. Yes, we rushed everything. We probably burnt our bidges with the University of Pretoria or misrepresent the community on the day. Its life.*

It is emerging in these discussions that there was no disposal plan and smooth transfer of artefacts between the University of Pretoria and government. Heritage professionals were not so skilled to influence the process because of inferiority complex before political principals. There was collaboration between traditional leaders and political principals in the Department of Limpopo Economic Development, Environment, and Tourism. There is evidence that the University of Pretoria benefited through heritage-tourism, education, and research as the custodian of artefacts of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. There was media copy rights issue that the university was enjoying that invited criticism and jealousy from other neighbouring research institutions.

According to Makhweyane (51), Thifuniwi (49) and Sibayi (59) the University of Pretoria was already under the political spotlight for its reluctance to expedite issues of transformation. It was expected of it to relax administrative policies that were not favourable to black students. There is no evidence gathered in the study to conclude if the dispute over Mapungubwe Kingdom's human remains was politically motivated. There is no evidence either gathered of the influence of neighbouring universities that were denied access to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. I am bringing these aspects to reflect on political hostility that confronted the host university. The guided tour to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site during data collection established that there is newly built infrastructure after the reburial case. There is collection of artefacts that are gradually returned to Mapungubwe World Site at least fifteen years after the claim was filed.

The challenge is that the lead institutions in South African Heritage Resources Agency and South African National Parks Organization have lost capacity and institutional



memory of the debate. The political environment has since changed with the ascension of black persons in strategic leadership role in both institutions. The university involved also lost capacity due to resignations and retirements of lead former senior researchers. Dumisani (59) had this to say: *the long battle over Mapungubwe World Heritage Site artefacts is reaching its ending. It is late though, but at least as heritage professionals we have finally delivered. Its sad that we are ending without all supporting documentation to give proper content to each artefact. The focus of government has since shifted to other priorities to bid for funding. It feels like the artefacts that are being returned are for decoration than aiding research tools.*

The South African National Parks Organization can claim the full custodianship of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This should cover the copy rights acquisition of story line about the site, artefacts, media and publicity rights, research-education-tourism benefits derived from site visits. This will also entail assumption of liabilities involved to maintain the collection at its disposal. There is a need to invest in research which may require fundraising to attract researchers towards rebuilding and contextualisation of Mapungubwe Kingdom's artefacts. It is safe to say South African National Parks is given the platform to undo or explore possible utilisation of a different heritage conservation approach. The study posits that African Knowledge Systems should be employed going forward.

#### **4.6. Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is safe to say factors that gave rise to Eurocentric dominance of Africa have been reprioritised to the disadvantage of its Afrocentric counterpart. Archaeology is well profiled in heritage conservation that alternate approaches should be promoted. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site lost its value to tribes that established Mapungubwe Kingdom. There is underutilisation of African Knowledge Systems in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The value chain of the site is not meeting the expectations of the lead tribe traditions. The site's African royal status is not promoted in the current use of the site. The world heritage status is a mockery given that its major stakeholders do not derive the site value from cultural elements used to motivate for it. The approach to heritage conservation was not intended for public good, but to consolidate political divides. There is evidence that government has developed

enabling systems for research from which Mapungubwe World Heritage Site can benefit. There is a need for institutionalisation of African Knowledge Systems in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. To achieve this objective there should be a strategic intervention required to align African Knowledge Systems properly. This aspect is further discussed in the presentation of the study findings and interventions.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY, SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.0. Introduction**

This chapter reflects on major discussion points of the study. It shares the research findings, recommended interventions, summary, and conclusion. It builds from the themes developed out of the study objectives and research questions utilised during analysis of data.

#### **5.1. The Findings**

This section discusses the study findings emanating from the set of objectives that were converted into research questions. Those set of questions were further converted into sub-headings to maintain consistency in presenting the research findings. The first objective of the study intended to establish the role of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in the promotion of African Knowledge Systems. The second theme focuses on challenges facing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in the promotion of African Knowledge Systems. The third theme explores the use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the custodian of African Knowledge Systems. The fourth theme focuses on institutionalisation of African Knowledge Systems in conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

##### **5.1.1. Role of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to African Knowledge Systems.**

###### **5.1.1.1. Underutilisation of African Knowledge Systems.**

The study established that there is underutilisation of African Knowledge Systems in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. There is total dependence on archaeological heritage conservation approach that marginalises other role players. According to Ndoro (2008) archaeology enjoys the lead role in the conceptualisation of most world heritage sites. This view is echoed during interview, group discussions, and participatory observation conducted in the study. The development of the world heritage site nomination dossier presented to UNESCO was initiated by group of Archaeologists. According to Dumisani (59) bianess to this approach was done to comply with the criteria that UNESCO was utilising. Heritage compliance authorities

were made to protect archaeological sites than other areas such as African Knowledge Systems promotion where some artefacts were excavated. Conservation management plans were developed to protect artefacts and potential sites for possible future research. The implication to this approach was that the tribes of Mapungubwe Kingdom gradually withdrew their support for several reasons. For example, the conservation approach that was in use could not respond to their physiological and biological needs.

Those in academia benefited out of research funding earned that could not be shared with local people. The site could not respond to job creation objective set by the government. The introduction of national park aspect obscured the development idea of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as a cultural institution (Dumisani 59). This equally defeated the objective of the bid tendered to UNESCO that categorised Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape as cultural heritage site. According to Mthobeli (74) the conceptualisation of the bid coincided with the crisis of overpopulation of elephants along the Table Mountain National Park in Cape Town. There was also a crisis over illegal immigration by the borders in Pointdrift as in Beitbridge. The interest to convert Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape into National Park gained momentum because of these crises.

The study established that the attainment of world heritage site status was used to sell the concept of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and National Park. It was presented as a complimentary function to give the site a balance conservation of both cultural and natural heritage resources. The South African National Parks Organisation was appointed the management authority of the site. The study also established that there was a delay in the development of cultural heritage management directorate. It only happened five years after the attainment of world heritage site status. This deepened the rise of biodiversity conservation ahead of cultural heritage resources directorate. The overall implication to this aspect was that a cultural heritage institution was tacitly taken from the Department of Arts and Culture to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. Mthobeli (74) had this to say: *Mapungubwe gained world heritage status in 2003. Check who was the minister for Arts and Culture then. It was Dr Ben Ngubane of Inkata Freedom Party. On the otherside, I mean Department of*

*Environmental Affairs & Tourism was Mr Valli Moosa of the African National Congress. I am telling you my friend that is how the fate of Mapungubwe was decided.*

In view of this discussion, Matshikiri (74) had this to say: *I remember these discussions very well. In my former capacity as government employee, I was part to the task team that conceptualised the Mapungubwe Conservation strategy that informed the establishment of Vhembe-Dongola Transfrontier National Park in 1998. It is just that when you are government employee you become very subjective to express your thoughts. I agree that the whole idea was never intended to promote cultural value of the site, but to solve boarder crisis and manage population growth of wild animals from other regions.* The Vhembe-Dongola Trasfrontier Park stretched to connect to Reuplic of Botswana and Zimbabwe. Conservation agreements reached allowed wild animals to cut across all these countries freely. Still, these negotiations were not conducted for public good, but to manage land space usage due to limited water resources.

#### **5.1.2. Main challenges facing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site**

It is important to indicate that theme two of the study sets to reflect on challenges facing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. These challenges are discussed for the identification of factors that can negatively influence the rise of Afro-centred heritage management tool in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

##### **5.1.2.1. Poor conceptualisation of world heritage site status**

Thifuniwi (49) had this to say: *conceptualisation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site alone leaves so much desired. The intention was meant to satisfy the pre-determined principles of the United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) than promoting African values and tradition. This tacitly compromises its contribution to the African heritage conservation philosophy.* Matshikiri (74) said: *the process towards attainment of world heritage site status was compromised as the position of the native communities was not sought. As a result, their cultural expression is still not heard by the current end-users of Mapungubwe world Heritage Site. The site is currently making good contribution in the academic sense which limits the participation of ordinary people. Ironically, those are the immediate beneficiaries of services the site should be rendering to improve their livelihood.*

Dumisani (59) also had this to say: *positively, the national park phenomenon posits the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as an institution for biodiversity conservation. Heritage plays a complimentary role although it has been a drawing card used to popularise the site. So, one could say the contribution of the site to cultural heritage conservation is by large marginalised. However, it is important to say the root cause to this problem is that African cultural heritage conservation phenomenon always lacks pioneers to lead and defend its interests. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was equally affected by that conservation approach.*

It then emerges in Thifuniwi as in Matshikiri that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was not found on principles embedding African Knowledge Systems approach. This in turn minimises its contribution in the development of Afrocentric debate. Decisions were made and imposed to the native people by professionals to accept prioritisation of biodiversity ahead of its cultural heritage conservation counterpart. International organization like UNESCO arguably had an influence in the conceptualisation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and National Park phenomenon. Dumisani's assertions shows that in the bid to acquire world heritage status, bidders have done all in their powers to meet UNESCOs expectations to succeed. Ndoro (2008) expresses dissatisfaction towards similar approach in citing that most panel members deciding on the bids are predominantly based their findings on Eurocentric views. As a result, many sites that African bidders would find spiritually significant are found not appealing to warrant world heritage status. In contrasts, bids of sites themed around human evolution and anatomy usually succeed because of deeply entrenched interests in archaeology and palaeontology globally. In the case of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site it is still debatable if its status acquisition was intended for African cultural heritage conservation good. Analysis of secondary sources suggests that bidders flew with the global political interest of time to decide on the theme.

#### **5.1.2.2. Lack of political orientation amongst heritage professionals**

The previous section demonstrates the influence of political environment in conservation of both natural and cultural resources. The National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999, section 5 places heritage professionals as watchdogs. Their role is guard against the use of heritage for sectarian gains. Ironically, decisions affecting

heritage conservation are politically driven leaving professionals vulnerable. These are the decisions taken at various levels of governance where professionals do not have control over. So, heritage professionals need to familiarise themselves with the debates influencing global politics. These are high profiled decision-making platforms that are not driven by the desire to conserve local heritage. It emerged in the study that political affiliations have a bearing on resource allocation. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is over praised as the epitome of civilisation imbuing African Knowledge Systems. Nomination and Declaration Dossier (2003) portrays it as the kingdom that embarked on international trade ahead of the rest. However, it has since collapsed compare to other dynasties of its time. The remains of its riches are no longer controlled by its descendants. Heritage professionals needs to develop knowledge on the role of politics in heritage conservation management. MiSTRA (2013) alludes that researchers are still debating factors that led to the rising and falling of Mapungubwe Kingdom. Some are questioning the significance of celebrating what appears to be the conquered African Kingdom in global history. Positively, Mapungubwe Kingdom is celebrated for its effort to set political administrative system that accommodated multiracial communities.

#### **5.1.2.3. Fragmentation within heritage conservation institutions**

Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project Masterplan (2009) indicates that there would be a need for supply of bulkwater, roads infrastructure, electricity, and human capital during mineral resources exploitation. These services are placed under different ministers and departments. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape have been re-zoned from residential to mineral exploitation. It is a cultural heritage conservation institution reporting to the Minister of Environmental Affairs on biodiversity conservation matters. The water resources management is managed by the Department of Water and forestry, while Department of Mineral Resources caters for mineral exploitation licensing. Cultural Heritage Resources are under the Depart of Sport, Arts, and Culture. The South African National Parks Organization is the implementing authority over Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and National Park. It is a statutory body of the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA 2013). This defeated the autonomy that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site would have enjoyed of being a government public entity. The South African Heritage Resources Agency is a public

entity under the Department of Sport, Arts, and Culture. The benefit that public entity enjoys is that they are empowered by the establishing law to develop an administrative system placed under the watchful eyes of the council or board appointed by the minister. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site has been deprived of this benefit by virtue of being also a national park. Nonetheless, these role players can make independent decision even those that can have a negative implication on the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

The study establishes that heritage conservation institutions are dysfunctional due to lack of capacity. They are unable to manage both internal and external environmental factors influencing conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It emerges in the study that there are many independent role players in cultural and natural heritage resources management. Public participation reports used in the bid to secure world heritage status attest that Mapungubwe Kingdom participated in the global debates on the best economic development model. The period that marked the rise of Mapungubwe Kingdom was also characterised by the growth of imperialism. It was the period where most kingdoms in Europe and north of Africa were being annexed or voluntarily collaborated with imperialists. There is also the issue of land ownership that the adjacent farms to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site are privately owned. Fragmentation in this context is limited to the powers vested on individuals with legislated authority in Mapungubwe Cultural landscape.

#### **5.1.2.4. Diversity and adversity facing tribes of Mapungubwe Kingdom**

The study established that there are several tribes sharing different interests in the current use of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. Matshikiri (74) opines that the approach to conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is not pro-poor oriented. It is attracting a scrambling within the already overharvested space of cultural, natural, and mineral resources. Interview with Matshikiri attests that Mapungubwe cultural landscape have several sources of production that can benefit local people. Instead, there is a growing demand of the resources in the area. Government is equally failing the local people by delaying decision on land claims. Important decisions are taken on land usage rights despite the claims that are yet to be resolved. There are individuals selling misleading and provocative information that



Mapungubwe Kingdom does not belong to a specific ethnic group and tribe. Basically, it is worth mentioning that tribes associated with Mapungubwe Kingdom are not united. People in academia contributed to the division of local people by fueling tribal differences. The study pointed out that African heritage professionals came little late in the debate over Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation matters. This was at an alert by Professor Nemakhavhani Victor Ralushai to government that attracted political interest on the matter. Quick wins were to pursue the South African National Parks Organization to employ qualified African graduate students in senior leadership role. This approach coincided with the transfer of the Park Manager Mr Bernard van Lente that saw the recruitment of Mr Tshimangadzo Nemaheni in his place (Uche-Okeke 2008).

This happened five years after the achievement of the world heritage status. It is the same period that the South African Heritage Resources Agency replaced Mr Ron Viney with Mr Thifuniwi Victor Netshavha. The two incumbents inherited the tension existing between the descendants of Mapungubwe Kingdom, and transfrontier conservation plans that were at implementation phase. Mr Johan Verhoef was the Transfrontier-Project-Development Manager in the South African National Parks Organization. It is safe to say that this was period characterised by development of institutional framework than contextualisation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation theme. It was up to the new recruits of African graduates to redesign the heritage conservation approach. I am bringing this narration to acknowledge the role played by the White people in academia to profile heritage resources management systems. It is equally significant to reflect on the shortcomings that the study established in the conceptualisation of conservation approach of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It is emerging in the study that the approach in use currently lacks African Knowledge Systems focus. Inexperience among new recruits could not help them to break the deeply entrenched Eurocentric view in the management of both cultural and natural heritage resources. The exodus of white officials deepened inexperience woes as further group of qualified African student graduates were recruited. The implication of skills gap existed at the sudden resignation of white professionals was that the status quo remained out of negligence and lack of knowledge amongst new recruits.

#### **5.1.2.5. Conservatism amongst heritage professionals**

The study reflected on the aspect of conservatism among heritage professionals to satisfy the requirements imposed by archaeologists. Interview with Nkondo (70) establishes that decisions to choose what should be preserved as significant heritage site should be made by the local people. Heritage professionals are found to be leading people into accepting the narratives that they have developed to promote heritage sites. In essence, it is expected of heritage professionals to educate local people about the declaration process. People should be encouraged to develop and present proposals for nomination and declaration of heritage sites they treasured the most. Conservatism in this regard also seen on the side of heritage professionals that are failing to adapt to changes required to achieve economic development (Ndlovu 2017). There is poor skill for negotiating for a fair trade whenever major infrastructure development projects are threatening the future use of a particular heritage site. Dependence on one conservation approach is also seen as a form of conservative heritage conservation (Davids 2016).

#### **5.1.2.6. Performance declining amongst cultural heritage resources institutions.**

This section elaborates on matters of conservatism that led to the grounding of heritage knowledge development under one conservation approach. According to Matshikiri (74) Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project satisfied archaeological requirements towards acquisition of mineral exploitation license. Heritage conservation institutions such as South African Heritage Resources Agency and its Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority were caught in their most vulnerable position to advise government properly. They were found to be in decline and incompetent to manage the process to the satisfaction of local people. The study points out that Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Project is located outside Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. This is the area falling under the jurisdiction of Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority to advise South African Heritage Resources Agency properly. The National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999, section 7 and 8 have separated roles between these public entities. The South African Heritage Resources Agency could only act at an invite by Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority of potential threats towards Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. According to Mohlomi (46) the grievance over Coal

of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project exposed the shortcomings in heritage institutions. They did not take active role to guide the development of this case but reacted when they saw it on both print and electronic media.

#### **5.1.2.7. Overglorification of Mapungubwe Kingdom past achievements.**

The study argues that the world heritage status acquisition was a mockery to the actual value of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Historians overglorify the aspect of Mapungubwe as the epitome of African civilisation. The win was on using Mapungubwe Kingdom history to demonstrate the impact that global communities endured on their decisions in favour of either socialism or capitalism in history. It then stands to reason that in the case where African value systems were less regarded, there is a need for extensive research to bridge the existing gaps. Dumisani (59) had this to say: *there is a need for further education and training of heritage professionals on utilisation of African Knowledge Systems for heritage conservation. This should be done to assist the transition from Eurocentric based to Afrocentric approach.*

Overglorification is equally seen when different scholars are reflecting lots of positive contribution that Mapungubwe Kingdom made during its glorias days. However, there is no evidence of how its experiences are integrated in the current social, economic, and political development of the country. The availability of natural and cultural resources in the cultural landscape now gives a different perspective on the understanding of Mapungubwe Kingdom. It reflects on how the concept civilisation was used in the land dispossession plot that saw the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom lacking control of its resources. According to Nkondo (2012) another concept commonly applied was “barbaric” and “backwardness” that saw indigenous communities persuaded to abandon own tradition.

Mbiti (1975) raises the concept “heathen” that was also used to discourage African communities from practicing their spiritual tradition. The study argues that the loss to the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom exceeds the benefits attracted by the world heritage site status. It also argues that its participation in the globally celebrated trading with foreign countries attracted systems that destroyed them. They participated on trade with individuals that could not reciprocate to match what the kingdom offered.

For example, it brought issues of cultural and ethnic divides that broke social cohesion in the kingdom. This is further seen at the conceptualisation of national park that had intensified division of indigenous communities living north, west and those in the south of Limpopo River. Huffman (2000) postulates that the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom treasured ornaments such as the portuguse glass beads [*vhulunguhamadi*] bartered for gold. These beads are significant cultural heritage objects used for medicinal reason amongst Vhavenda people. This gesture was mistakenly perceived barbaric to those that bartered gold for beads. The discovery of gold utensils, bracelets, and rhinoceros stimulated interests to historians studying royal burial grounds of African leaders. For instance, there are archaeologists studying Egyptian Mummies by excavating tombs where African leaders were buried. They study the subject of life after death and how leaders were prepared to leave affluent life during repture. According to Davids (2016) many countries have lost valuable artefacts taken from royal burial groudns and graves.

#### **5.1.2.8. Outdated legislation**

It emered in the study that most countries are still using heritage law promulgated during colonialism despite of independence gained by most African countries. Ndoro (2008) and Hall (2008) aver that even countries that amended legislation at the attainment of independence made minor changes. This in turn compromised the transformation initiatives that could have assisted the promotion of African Knowledge Systems. Hall (2008) avers that South African Heritage Resources Agency is empowered to spearhead transformation of heritage conservation. It was expected of it to advise on the need to revise the legislation just by the end of the first electoral circle that run between 1994-1998. There was no revision done as expected, which might have been perceived as a comprehensive document to use. Group discussions established that the legislation is outdated. The applicable penalties should there be conviction on account of contravention have never been updated since its promulgation. The National Heritage Council developed policies to pave way for the utilisation of African Knowledge Systems. It emerged in the study that the policy is not so helpful in dealing with specific issues of cultural heritage resources management. The policy was promoted yet there is no impact assessment conducted to proof its worth. There were several amendments done on the National Environmental

Management Act 58 of 1998 as opposed to its heritage counterpart. This opened the gap as amendments assist the institution to adapt to new developments in the social, economic, and political environment.

#### **5.1.2.9. Falsification of conservation process**

One-on-one interview established that there are many instances where role players in the conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site were not honest with one another. This was demonstrated on how the relationship between tribes of Mapungubwe Kingdom and ACTAG team brokeup. It was also demonstrated on how issues of research funding were administered without the involvement of local people. The delay to establish Mapungubwe World Heritage Site-cultural heritage directorate by South African National Parks Organization is another contributing factor. It levelled the ground for inequality between two significant conservation units in the conservation area (Dumisani 59 & Mthobeli 74). It emerges in the study that attempt to separate biodiversity from cultural heritage conservation negatively impacted the use and enjoyment of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Positively, the development of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site Integrated Conservation Management Strategy was well received by stakeholders.

However, the implementation approach still overlooks issues of African Knowledge Systems. It has been vulnerable to multi-disciplinary interpretations leaving end-users opting to focus on aspects they treasure the most in this case nature conservation using Eurocentric approach. Nonetheless, the integrated framework still suggests that native communities are significant stakeholder for the success of conservation matters. However, the role of native communities and their representation in decision making structures are not clearly stated.

#### **5.1.3. Custodianship of African Knowledge Systems.**

Significantly, the study also intended to explore possible utilisation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the custodian of African Knowledge Systems. This objective was set to establish the feasibility of the host to management the site through utilisation of African Knowledge Systems. It levelled the ground for collection of African tradition, myth, legends, and essential cultural behaviour of Vhavenda people. This was an

inclusive approach to give all tribes equal opportunity to share cultural elements defining their cultural behaviour. It was also done for comparative analysis of areas they share different behaviours. It emerged in the study that the burial rites of Vhalemba or Vhashavhi differs with other tribes. However, they share similar myth, legends and folktales practised in Musanda as amongst the commoners. It is important though that there was a challenge of lack of a definition of Afrocentricity, particularly within Tshivenda language.

There were informants that were comfortable in defining Afrocentric as follows: “tshithu” (Tshivenda) or xintu (Xitsonga) or Setho (Sotho) simplified the discussions held during data gathering processes. I had the benefit of proficiency in the already mentioned languages that helped me work efficiently with people from diverse background. A question such as *Ndi ifhio mitambo kana maitele a tshithu ane ra nga ri Mapungubwe World Heritage Site I khou a shumisa u tutuwedza u pembelela vhufa ha Afurika?* [What are the African indigenous games or traditions that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should preserve and promote?]

### **Mungona**

Mungona is a 70- year- old female participant. She lacks university or post-matric qualification from Folovhodwe Village. Despite lack of sound academic knowledge, she proved to be knowledgeable on matters of African Knowledge Systems that she even demonstrated as to how certain cultural activities are performed. She has been drawn into the Focus Group Discussions by referral that also led to one-on-one interview. Basically, my intention was to make follow-up on her assertions that came during group discussions. This was after attempt to get her clarify her assertions where she requested to further the discussions outside the hall where other members were gathering.

In reply she said: *when you asked me to clear myself, I was not sure whether I am wrong or right and sorry if, I just did not want to make irrelevant comment you know. Well, all I wanted to say was, I would like to see how matters of African royalties are portrayed to compliment Mapungubwe Kingdom status it is affectionately known for. I would also like to see the architectural designs from the foot up to the Mapungubwe Hill been constructed by the native communities. If you can take a journey to places*

*such as Mukumbani particularly at the Tshivhase Royal Court, Tshiavha, etc you will learn that there are different festivals and initiation schools held periodically. These are activities one would hope to see Mapungubwe World Heritage site promoting.*

### **Mulemba**

Mulemba is also a female participant aged 58 holding Teachers Education Diploma. She is a schoolteacher by profession. However, she has been identified through referrals like Mungona. This was after I have established that the list given to me of stakeholders of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site was predominantly male persons. I wanted female participants from select tribes in Vhangona and Vhalemba to establish the views of the native groups. Still the point was to establish as to what should be done to enable Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to promote African cultural heritage conservation. In response she said:

*Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should be a hub for African Knowledge Systems. In other words, it should be a place of teaching and learning more about African values and tradition. I would also like to see regional representativeness perhaps using the heritage values of indigenous people. For example, you will realise that the Vhangona tribe are all over the continent of Africa in particular. So, there should be a way to use institution such as Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to reflect on those shared cultural traits.*

### **Nwatshipungu**

Nwatshipungu is 77- year- old female participant who served in several structures dealing with African Knowledge Systems. She holds a Master of Arts degree and vast experience in arts, culture, and heritage matters. Still, I wanted her to reflect on her expectations on the use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to benefit African heritage conservation process. In response she had this to say:

*Well, I would like revival of all initiation schools and their formalities finding expression in the use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. In other words, it should be our own African Knowledge Systems university that whenever one wants to know about African people we should know where to refer them.*

In view of Mungona (70) assertion, Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should be aligned to periodic celebrations marking African cultural seasons. According to Motshekga (2006) and Ralushai (2005) it is in public knowledge that winter seasons is associated with boys and girl's initiation schools, spring is associated with family gatherings for ancestral worshipping, autumn is used for another round of libation to pray for good raining season, and summer is set for thanksgiving ceremonies. Re-establishment of Mapungubwe Kingdom infrastructure emerges strong in Nwatshipungu (77) assertions. She points out that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should serve as African university that guides and host certain rights of knowledge production on behalf of the people. In the same discussion she expresses disappointment over illegal operations of initiation schools and death reports she believes are tarnishing the integrity of African value systems. She sees Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as an ideal institution that once fully established can help with accreditation and monitoring of the performance of initiation schools.

Another important point emerging in Nwatshipungu (77) is the use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the University for African Knowledge Systems. This sets to intensify its role as the centre for African Knowledge Systems production. It is a demarcated space that preserves biodiversity with the capacity to accommodate few households. Uche-Okeke (2008) avers that the role of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and National Park is to conserve and promote natural and cultural heritage resources. Nwatshipungu (77) and Mthobeli (74) maintain that there should be a balance usage of both nature and culture than it is the case where the park is more articulate on one role over the other. Instead, there should be coherent systems promoting co-existence of humans, fauna, and flora in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Scholars or people in academia should further explore various programmes that should assist the development of this aspect.

Nwatshipungu (77), Mthobeli (74) and Uche-Okeke (2008) attest that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site Conservation approach in use is compromising the development objectives of the country. Eurocentric approach advocates for removal of tribes from their land to newly provided location. There were little considerations on the cultural heritage resources management implications in the process. Institutions such as the South African Heritage Resources Agency was required to discourage forced



removals as it destroys fortified foundations of the society. The isolation seen between human beings and the entire biodiversity destroyed symbiotic relationship that existed since human inception on earth. Lithole (2010) maintains that humans in their inception on earth found the ecosystem insitu and beautiful. They then converted natural resources to build their cultural identity. African Knowledge Systems approach urges Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to protect African identity. Its approach to conservation should safeguard African identity with biodiversity. One deduces that the whole approach to nature conservation was divorced from African heritage conservation paradigm. Animal lives were valued perhaps more than humans out of ignorance or lack of knowledge. Mthobeli (74) maintains that there should be a balance usage of both fauna and flora in African Knowledge Systems production and consumption. In the bid to put his assertion into perspective, I reflected on the mandate of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and National Park. There is a cultural as well as nature conservation roles it is playing concurrently.

#### **5.1.4. Strategy for institutionalisation of African Knowledge Systems.**

This section is derived from the fourth objective that intended to develop the strategy to institutionalise African Knowledge Systems. It builds from the notion that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should be the custodian of African Knowledge Systems. A question was asked during interview as to what needs to be done to institutionalise African Knowledge Systems in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site? According to Thifuniwi (49) institutionalisation should be located on Mapungubwe as an administrative body, as a public institution, and as the world heritage site.

##### **5.1.4.1. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the administrative body**

According to Dumisani (59) Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is an administrative body governed in terms of best public management process. The constitution of the country upholds the notion public administration should be development oriented. Ideally, it should be responsive to people demands, it should level the ground for training and skills development, and contribute in the social, economic, and political development initiatives.

Matshikiri (74) avers that the voices of native people are not finding expression on the current use of the site. This indicates that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is not responding to the needs of its target audience. Mungona (70) raises concern over underutilisation of African Knowledge Systems. Mthobeli (74) and Nwatshipungu (77) raise concern over lack of cohesive conservation approach that place humans and biodiversity as equals in the ecosystem. Matshikiri (74) further raises concern over failures by people in academia to articulate on issue of land ownership and unresolved dispute over Mapungubwe Kingdom.

In view of these discussions, the views of local communities, particularly the descendants of Mapungubwe Kingdom should be established. Once they are established an action plan should be developed to integrate them into the administrative systems of the site. The main concern is on the attendance to the disputes filed over land claims and confirmation of the actual tribe owning Mapungubwe Kingdom's assets (Matshikiri 74). On the other hand, Nwatshipungu (77) postulates that humans value biodiversity for there is mutual symbiosis that builds shared cultural identities. This assertion finds expression in Motshekga (2017) that humans need the entire biodiversity and vice versa to complete the cosmology circle. Land dispossession of the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom had a cultural heritage implication that is negatively influencing decisions about the site. The study records Matshikiri (74) lamentations on the need to rebuild Mapungubwe Kingdom's administrative systems.

This compliments Nwatshipungu (77) assertion that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should be a University of African Knowledge Systems. Dumisani (59) raises the need of training and skilling of heritage professionals on the use of African Knowledge Systems. Research should focus on collection of African Knowledge Systems. There should be learning, and teaching platforms created that aligns to different seasons making African cosmology circle. All the rights pertaining access to information reproduction about African tradition should be centralised within the conservation process of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. There should be qualification obtained that enables a person to secure a job within broader public administration programmes. There should supporting infrastructure to preserve and promote the use of African Knowledge Systems.

Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in its administrative role is expected to contribute to social development matters. LEGDP (2009) articulates that the role of sport, arts, culture, and heritage is to contribute to building of social cohesion. Makhweyane (51) postulates that social cohesion should not be limited to sport, arts, and culture. It should cover broader aspects such as microeconomic stabilisation, poverty alleviation initiatives, and social reforms. These elements should be used to establish how Mapungubwe World Heritage Site respond to them. Nkondo (2012) raises concern that heritage institutions are set to respond to immesurable aspect of the national and provincial development plans.

Makhweyane (51) gives a different perspective to understand the freedoms in the conservation approach to enable Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to succeed. Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project Masterplan (2009) ideally responded to these milestones as quick wins. This assertion earned it favour and support of the local people. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site could argue that it contributes to eco-tourism as an integral component of microeconomic sector. Dumisani (59) had this to say: on heritage contribution to poverty alleviation there is very little that institutions like Mapungubwe World Heritage Site could do. Its conceptualisation intended for research, education, and tourism. It is in public knowledge that the South African National Parks Organization is receiving many tourists to Kruger National Park Sekhukhuza gate. The South African Airways have developed a route that connects tourists from international airports to Mbombela City. Matshikiri (74) raises concern of broken relationship between the native communities and Mapungubwe World Heritage Site administrators. It then stands to reason that the site is not doing enough towards social reforms. It is not assisting in bringing the communities in the mainstream of the site administration. People in academia utilised Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the drawing card to attract research funding. Moreso, applicants were attached to different universities that most members of the communities could not get access. Researchers would only convene members of the community to share their study findings while others publish or sell information and artefacts privately. So, people gradually lost confidence on the administration of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Universities played significant role to negotiate access to the site for research. They made resources available to researchers yet some of them opted to sell the information privately perhaps because of poor control mechanism. In essence, this

implies that information intended for public good was disseminated for commercial reasons than academic (Mohlomi 46). Institutionalisation of African Knowledge Systems would be realised once there are copyrighting powers informing Mapungubwe World Heritage Site administrative process. This implies that data collected about the site remains its property in every stage of its usage. The study established that a lot of literature have been published about the site. This will require that future studies need to be controlled that portion of production is invested back to site conservation process.

It has emerged in the study that the administration of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is influenced by external environmental factors. Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project is cited in the study for proper contextualisation of this argument. Administratively, it calls professionals of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to be vigilant of any hazardous risks to the site. Esterhysen (2013) reckons the contest filed against mineral exploitation initiatives in the adjacent farms to this world heritage site. The highest grieving point that its management authority could reach was through to South African Heritage Resources Agency. This is simply because it is expected to guard against potential threats to world heritage sites. The study records that the case of Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project proposal aligns to the due administrative process of the compliance authorities. It emerged in the discussions group that despite of satisfaction of the due administrative process, the proposed project was not wanted although there were no sufficient reasons to base the objection. This implies that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site contributes indirectly to macroeconomic development matters.

Another setback was the growing political interests on mineral exploitation along the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. The study discussed issues of hierarchy in public administration of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. There is Minister of Environmental Affairs, the South African National Parks Organisation Board or Council appointed by the minister led by the chairperson, Chief Executive Officer reporting to the chairperson of council, and park managers as members of executive management. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site and National Park is an auxiliary function of the organization. Significant decisions about the site could still be taken at the ministerial level which is a political environment. This may imply that the Chairperson of council

at his discretion may present reports to the responsible sometimes in the absence of the Chief Executive Officer. Discussions group cracked a joke that the Park Managers are gatekeepers without political influence on decisions impacting the site administration. I brought this hierarchy to demonstrate the possible impediments derailing significant decision-making affecting conservation of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. The call to establish it as the University of African Knowledge Systems needs to be studied further to unlock existing possible barriers.

#### **5.1.4.2. Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as a public institution**

According to Thifuniwi (49) Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is a public institution managed in terms of the due government policies. People require access for reasons such as research, education, tourism, and recreation. Nwatshipungu (77) concurs in saying that it is required of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site to be of good service to the people. Mungona (70) avers that it should be hospitable to offer attractive services to the people. Mohlomi (46) says that heritage professionals should create a working environment attractive to investment for infrastructure development. They should open up for business proposals to enhance its performance. Makhweyane (51) asserts that there should policy developed to enhance access to the site and management of its assets. Mashudu (81) postulates that there should be systems in place to attract emotional incentives by members of the public. More importantly, conservation management approach for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should be adaptive to factors influencing change in the working environment.

Secondary data analysis suggests that government has done well to put legal frameworks that protects heritage resources of the country. These include the promulgation of National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999, South African World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999, and National Environmental Management Act 58 of 1998. The three pieces of legislation cover broadly the cultural and natural heritage resources conservation duties of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It is important still to cite Mapungubwe Human Remains Repatriation and Exhumation case study to demonstrate the role of government. In the interview Matshikiri (74) had this to say: *Vhalemba played a significant role to raise concern over Mapungubwe human remains that were kept longer at the University of Pretoria outside their habitual Mapungubwe*

*Cultural Landscape. Mr Mushavhi Koka of Vhalemba tribe approached President Thabo Mbeki to request his intervention for the release of the human remains for reburial in Mapungubwe Hill. Tension erupted after the presidency issued the directive to get the human remains repatriated back to the site. Public consultation was done where several claimants emerged. There was contest on which tribe should be treated as the heirs of Mapungubwe Kingdom.*

At the time of the claim, Matshikiri (74) was still a government employee in the Department of Foreign Affairs. He was involved in the debate as this case was involving the neighbouring countries along the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape. He belongs to the Vhangona tribe that his interest in this debate was seen after retirement. I am bringing this aspect in the study to demonstrate as to how professional ethics compromises research.

It is safe to indicate that the participant had a strong view that does not approve the action taken by Vhalemba tribe in the process. The participant feels the Vhalemba were claiming Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape as the heir. This is where it emerged that they migrated in the southern part of Limpopo River in the year 1400 together with Masingo tribe. Mapungubwe Kingdom belongs to the native communities that are arguably Vhangona tribe. The Vhangona tribe were more vocal on the issues of how the reburial should be conducted. According to Mulemba (58) Vhangona tribe demonstrated that they lack political orientation to influence decisions to their advantage. Vhalemba tribe felt harassed during the ceremony which led to their withdrawal from future activities requiring collective approach. Lack of political orientation of the vhangona tribe is manifesting in their failure to have most of their demands met. These include their plead to have the restoration of Mapungubwe Kingdom and land claims. Generally, all tribes were still aggrieved that the human remains case invited bad omen in these tribes.

South African Broadcast Corporation (2017) records assertions that follow: *Hone zwo vha zwi zwa mini marambo a vhomakhulukuku washu a tshi itwa tano na zwishumiswa zwa tsenguluso. Vhonani uri zwo ri vhangela mafhanza hani sa lushaka lwa Vhangona* [For what good reason were the bones of our ancestors exhibited and used as objects

of research. Look, how this behaviour has brought bad omen into our tribe as Vhangona].

The archaeological approach was criticised for violation of African tradition on burial grounds and graves. Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority (2008) records that Mashudu (81) graced the occasion as the high priest that led the ancestral worshipping. Prior to that he threw his divine sets on the ground to determine the remedial work that will be required. He was surrounded by other Traditional Doctors representing each tribe involved in the claim. He asked each of them to diagnose what the divine set was saying, but no one could tell. In the diagnoses he had this to say: “Thangu dzi ri tshikati a tshi na tshikatuli” [Devine set is saying curse is severe and irreversible].

They all agreed with the diagnoses then staged Malombo ceremony as part of libation throughout the night seeking for second opinion from the ancestral world. Rituals performed the following day were done to arrest possible occurrence of similar ordeal and determination of how reburial processes will unfold. In view of this, it is safe to say that conservation approach employed for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site costs African tradition, norms, and values. Matshikiri (74) concurs in saying that archaeological methods applied have stripped off the native community's pride and dignity.

In the same interview there were objects found sporadically across the park. There was one case of human skeleton found inside the clay pot that made people curious of possible reasons leading to that ritual. South African Broadcasting Corporation (2017) as the public institution was perhaps sensitive to articulate certain information. I purposively chose Matshikiri (74) for the interview after a review of the audio-visuals for the reburial case. There were cosmological assertions that I wanted to build the study on. It emerges that usually in African tradition whenever a comet (shooting star) is seen shooting from one direction to another, it is inferring that the kingdom is under threat.

According to Motshekga (2006) a ritual would be made to arrest the bad spell anticipated, which could be done through human sacrifice. It is important to explore

this subject further, particularly, if there are options for volunteers that accepted ending their lives to save the multitude. This then locates the study to African cosmology and its influence on heritage conservation matters. Prior to this I find it imperative to indicate that there are accidental discovery of human remains where there are earth moving activities. Once again using the example of Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project earthmoving is anticipated throughout all project stages. This can happen despite of prior diagnoses done through survey and other studies beforehand. Experiences of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site human remains cases contribute to the contextualisation of Afro-centred heritage conservation tool.

This suggests that whenever there is a discovery of human remains on the construction sites, it is important to establish possible reasons that triggered the burial and the manner it was conducted. It emerges still in Mashudu (81) and Mthobeli (74) assertions that some death cases in the traditional societies are triggered by ritual practices. The Mapungubwe Kingdom case study could prove that human sacrificing is commonly acceptable in the case where the intended outcome will be of benefit to the entire community. The informant attested that usually human sacrificing could be done to arrest or suppress an ill-behaviour that could bring a curse to the community. In the case where they are intended to save the nation or tribe people seemed sympathetic to the cause than the life lost. Yet, there individual cases of rituals murder for self-enrichment that are perceived and treated as exceptional cases. Holistically, the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 condemns both cases in citing that heritage should not be used sectarian gains. Ritual performance is generally classified in the act as an integral component of the living heritage phenomenon. Contrary, Eurocentric view made heritage professionals to limit the significance of a grave to a particular historic epoch. It would be seen punishable and unfound to relocate graves associated with any of the major wars such as World War I and II or South African War of 1899. However, exhumation and repatriation of remains associated with the liberation struggle of South Africa is very common currently. Ironically, black people oversee public administration institutions that establish policies and legal framework to manage these processes. This aspect is further discussed as to establish how Afrocentric focused systems could enhance Mapungubwe World Heritage Site public image.



#### 5.1.4.3. Mapungubwe as the world heritage site: Ethics

This section discusses ethics found on African Knowledge Systems that should be taken into cognizance in the administration of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Thifuniwi (49), Mohlomi (46), and Makhweyane (51) on legal framework had this to say: “it is acceptable that the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 is still relevant in the management of cultural heritage resources of South Africa”. Ndoro (2008), Hall (2008), Ndlovu (2017) and Esterhysen (2013) are of the view that heritage law in South Africa is comprehensive. However, there is lack of enforcement. Nonetheless, I have extrapolated sections of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 to demonstrate its application to Afro-centred heritage conservation tool uses. I also used management plan of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site for comparative analysis. For example, section 34 protects historic buildings which includes ruins, houses, and other fortresses. I build my interview questions around a homestead trying to establish their cultural significance using Afrocentric analogy. During interview with Mashudu I asked, now that Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape was once a settlement area, how African tradition approaches homestead establishments and their re-use.

This is what **Mashudu** had to say:

*Ndo hula ndi tshi divha uri shubi la mungona a li dzuliwi nga muthu. Vho di vha vhathu vha tsemo dza u tika midi yavho u tou fana na mavhida khavho a di dzhiwa e midi sa zwenezwi zwe vhathu vha fhatiana na vhahura. Kale ha zwo ri tshi hula wo vha u sa tambeli kana u sumba vhida tsho vha tshi tshiila nga sialala la Afurika.* [I have grown to know that it is not safe to inherit or re-use the abandoned homestead of Vhangona Tribe. They have been people with strong household fortification herbs or techniques. The same with their graves or burial grounds, one could not just walk pass-through or play anywhere nearer them. Graves in their African rooted tradition is fortified just like family homestead we share with our neighbours].

South African Broadcast Corporation (2017) holds the view: *Shango, vuhosi na midi I a tikwa nga vho maine uri hu vhe na mulalo, vhudziki na mbuelano nga sialala lone vhufa hashu sa vharema. Ndi zwine maine na mahosi vha tea u shumisana nga thompho vha tshi itela lushaka.* [The country/village/homestead, Chieftancy and

Kingship and households are fortified in African tradition to keep and maintain peace, stability, and conciliation. This is our tradition and heritage as Africans. It is for this reason that Kings/Chiefs and Traditional Doctors should always work together respectfully for the people in the village]. In a personal discussion with **Hlati** (66) following tribute he made in honour of King Nghunghunyani of Vatsonga Ethnic Group, he also touched base on matters concerning fortification of Kings. Hlati is a Traditional Doctor and a businessman based in Polokwane. The discussion was taken during University of South Africa Heritage Day celebration occasion organized by student support unit (UNISA 2014).

He said:

*Matimu ya Afurika a komba kuri vaholobye vo fana na Hosi Nghunghunyane va va va tira kuloni na mananga. Vatolo va hi byerini kuri Hosi Nghunghunyane loko I hlamba I va I hlamba hi miri ku tiyisa miri na vuhosi. Na kambe loko I hlamba I va I nga yimi hasi kumbe henhla ka ribyi, I va I ima henla ka masotsha ya yona. Hi ko kwalao na hambu a fini masotsha ya yena va sale va ri na matimba ngopfu.*

[African history suggests that his majesty King Nghunghunyane worked closely with traditional Doctors. Oral history avers that King Nghunghunyane whenever he was bathing, he will apply strong herbs for fortification. Interestingly, he would not stand either on the rock or inside the water but on the backs of his guards until he finishes. For this reason, his guards remained powerful even after his death]. There is a general acceptance that indeed households, village and Kingship are fortified in African tradition. Mashudu (81) assertion also reveals there are interventions done on the graves during burial. Nwatshipungu (77), Mthobeli (74) and Mungona (70) on similar subject says: *In Tshivenda burial occasion is called u vhulunga which carries different connotation to the English version. Basically, Vhavenda uses u vhulunga meaning to preserve or maintain or contain the body by placing in in the secluded place or grave.*

Contrary, Vatsonga uses Kulahla meaning to discard or throw away while Bapedi says go Fihla (hide) or Go boloka which carries same meaning as Venda tradition. Thufuniwi says some tribe among Vhavenda preserves the body by burial for a while then exhume it for cremation of the bones. Unlike other ethnic group that cremate the body immediately after death. Mashudu also talks to preservative measures done on the

burial grounds by means of awareness done in the elders in the family warning children to refrain from playing near graves. This was often meant even to the graves of commoners that could be buried sporadically where there are no designated cemeteries. Royal graves are often kept inside Musanda courtyard or designated Tshiendelulu area. Access to the burial grounds would not be granted to children even in a case of a close family relative for reasons known to a particular family. In Masindi assertion, I established that fortification of king is done to intensify peace and stability in the village. It therefore stands to reason that social cohesion is a process starting with how the community values and respect own heritage.

Hlali on the other hand brings in the aspect of human shield as part of cultural heritage practice. This implies that reasons for fortification of the grave is mainly for spirituality and to conserve family tradition. Another interesting aspect is homestead fortification. Interview with Dumisani (59), Mohlomi (46) and Mulemba (58) reveals that African tradition allows for the erection of alters for worship. Children died as young as two years are buried at home following prescribed family patterns led by the priest conducting the occasion. There are alters established in honour of the death of family member erected immediately after the burial. There are also alters erected that mark every person in the house where family libation is held periodically. This implies that Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape is sporadically marked by these alters according to individual families.

Ironically, consultation as Matshikiri (74) alludes was limited to those that could be reached throughout the declaration processes. This equally affects consultation done for new developments on site as in the adjacent farms including Coal Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project area. I have also revised section 35 and 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 which provides for consultation process with responsible conservation institution. According to SAHRA (2005) it is expected of anyone intends to embark on earthmoving activities such as in construction or demolishing or disturbances of sensitive heritage site to apply for permit. It was important for the current study to establish Afrocentric focus within the provision of these sections. African heritage conservation systems have always been based on awareness and site fortification by end-users.

However, the survival of a particular site depended on the responsible family bid to stop interference by developers. So, developers in this instance are individuals set to conduct earthremoving for construction, it could also mean the company licensed to construct a road, powerline, bulkwater supply and reticulation. There are cases where developers voluntarily opt to divert their intended projects to another flexible route. A typical example is the Tshitaka-tsha-Vhutanda (Shrine for the Vhutanda clan) located in the middle of Phiphidi Tea Plantation under the Department of Agriculture. The tea plantation was designed to incorporate the shrine for mutual benefits between the parties involved. Contrary, the mining around Mapungubwe World Heritage Site came when there is no formidable community-based structure to act in its defence. It emerges in Thifuniwi (49) and Dumisani (59) interview that institutions like the South African Heritage Resources Agency had long lost capacity to raise awareness and stamp authority as to advice government properly. The same is said of its Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority that is found not competent to act in the best interest of the province. Ideally, their lack of competence leaving heritage vulnerable to exploitation under its guard. However, Afro-centred heritage conservation emerges with possibilities to explore alternate plans to achieve conservation objective in a shared environment.

According to Mulemba (58), Nwatshipungu (77) and Mashudu (81) oral tradition offers heritage alternate route to achieve conservation business goal. Instead, Afro-centred heritage conservation tool stands to benefit out of the use of oral tradition because of it is the work generally acceptable in the community. Makhweyane (59) agrees to this sentiment although warning of its threat to heritage-tourism. Mohlomi (46) also expresses discontentment over oral tradition limitations to other areas of heritage conservation. This includes maintenance and rehabilitation of heritage sites. Ideally, the site can still be preserved through oral means but having its cultural contents eroded on the ground for various reasons. Thifuniwi (49) cites among other reasons infrastructure development initiatives, political reasons during chieftaincy and land claim contests. There is however agreement between Thifuniwi (49), Makhweyane (51), and Mohlomi (46) that at times heritage professionals are doing a lot to provide sites for tourism than satisfying own mandate. Mohlomi (46) had this to say; *almost everybody if asked why heritage should be protected will say it is done for heritage-*

*tourism purposes. This perpetuate the notion of dependability of heritage to tourism for survival which should not be the case.*

Contrary, Makhweyane (51) says: *we should also not forget that research is another reason why heritage site should be conserved. However, it is difficult to keep the site for this reason unless there is an interest at hand known. Currently, there are funding challenges affecting research institutions which if heritage practitioners are not alerted could hold onto the fort for no reason.* Basically, Mohlomi warns heritage practitioners to refrain from employing a blanket approach to conservation but deal with cases on their merits.

More so, the participant is of the view that conservation reasons should not be raised based on idealism, but on the canvassed objective. This point frequently found the ground during observation processes. I established that some licenses to destroy heritage sites are withheld or denied citing that the site offers heritage-tourism potential. Afro-centred heritage management tool upholds the notion that a site that should be preserved provided there is interest by any institution to develop it in future. Afro-centred heritage conservation tool embraces the notion of keeping that which is wanted. Instead, sell the significance of the site well in advanced that you identify and mitigate applicable risks. Makhweyane (51) brings the element of research as the reason to conserve site provided there is interest shown and resources availability to do so. Matshikiri (74) concern though has been Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is currently utilised for academic reason. In his assertions it is the carbon of what people in the academy wanted us to see it through. Yet, Afro-centred heritage conservation tool should seek to establish the views of native communities. This is simply because of certain parameters that heritage professionals have allowed those in academia to cross without the blessings of the affected communities.

Yet, the boundaries might have been crossed over, there was another platform to manage the reporting of information acquired illicitly from the site. Oral tradition out of early television documentaries about Mapungubwe World Heritage Site shows how difficult participants found it to point a finger to the Mountain where King Shiriyadenga used to stay. Traditional praise song of the paramount King is Mailausumbwa commonly used by Vhavenda justifying earlier assertion. It is important to further

establish the viability of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the promotional agent of Afro-centred heritage conservation tool.

## **5.2. Summary of major discussions**

### **5.2.1. The contribution to the study**

There were few gaps that the study attempted to bridge namely:

- Lack of a sound theoretical framework depicting Afro-centred heritage management tool. Interview and group discussions exploited that gap while concentrating on the use of various descriptive measures such as African Knowledge Systems, African norms, tradition, and values systems. However, the study contribution to this extent was to identify and integrate guiding principles of both heritage and African Knowledge Systems.
- It is still not clear as to whose cultural traditions, norms and values Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should profile given that the area is under land claim processes. The contribution of the study in this instance was to use Vhavenda cultural behaviour to locate African Knowledge Systems in the discussions.
- Lack of comprehensive public consultation strategy given the fragmentation challenge of various stakeholders of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Ironically, the study advocates for calling of public institutions responsible for cultural and biodiversity conservation to account for failure to build a cohesive system by far.
- Dependence on archaeological view before significant decisions are made on heritage conservation is another gap identified. The study offers Afro-centred heritage management tool as an alternative approach to enhance heritage management decisions.
- Delayed transformation of cultural and biodiversity resources management to treat African Knowledge Systems as equal to other conservation approaches. The study response to this aspect was to call for paradigm shifting to locate African Knowledge Systems in the routine management of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.
- Lack of comprehensive cultural heritage program to preserve and promote cultural behaviour of communities making Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

The study contributes by identification of cultural activities that can inform annual programs of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

- Neglected cultural heritage resources management processes leaving Mapungubwe World Heritage Site vulnerable to possible extinction. The study contributes to this debate by calling for rapid change from archaeological to African Knowledge Systems oriented approach.

### **5.2.2. Locating Afrocentric approach to heritage management processes**

Once more, there were several gaps that the current study has identified and attempted to bridge namely:

- The contribution of Afrocentric approach as the academic theory is still under debate with some limiting it to an approach than research method. Contrary, there is suggestion that African Knowledge Systems are embedded in ethnography methods made popular by anthropologists (Schultz & Lavenda 2017). So, the study adopted Afrocentric as an approach to justify its point of departure.
- There is a human capital factor that needs to be mobilise for Afro-centred heritage management tool promotion and rapid implementation. Asante (2009) holds the view that human capital are agents with an influence in choosing and applying working methods. The study suggests that there should be a process embarked on to identify and train advocates for Afro-centred heritage management tool.
- Geographical positioning of communities attached to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is found not favourable to the location of Afro-centred heritage management tool in their routine duties. Asante (2009) suggests that for Afrocentric approach to succeed, it should be located within a particular community social and spiritual system for sanity. Nonetheless, the study submits the view that there should be considerations by government to re-establish Mapungubwe Kingdom by redistribution the land to its rightful heirs.
- African Knowledge Systems is a wing within broader heritage resources management process that is generally underutilised (Ndlovu 2017). This aspect assisted the study to locate African Knowledge Systems towards building Afro-centred heritage management tool.

- Despite similarities in the approach, heritage have several focus areas that may also contradicts African Knowledge Systems expression. This implies that African Knowledge Systems may not solely enjoy the benefit of being a thought leader without being challenged. Instead, the study asserts that there should be a balance to afford specialists in various fields to contribute equally to critical heritage management decision making processes.
- African Knowledge Systems are found to be reliant on memory transfers from one generation to another for posterity. Asante (2009) contrary says that the most important attribute of African Knowledge Systems is that they easily find location in human soul if sold properly. This makes people sympathetic towards their course.

### 5.2.3. Promotion of African Knowledge Systems

There are also gaps that the study attempted to bridge towards establishment of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as the agent for promotion of African Knowledge Systems. Those gaps are as follow:

- Fragmentation between agencies of cultural and biodiversity conservation which compromise decision making processes. These agencies enjoy freedoms to invest on programs that best suits their mandate (Mzanzi Golden Economy 2010 & Sibayi 2009). In the case of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site, South African Heritage Resources Agency is a major stakeholder to advocate for use of African Knowledge Systems. This becomes a shared competence as there is a designated government department that deals with African Knowledge Systems. South African Heritage Resources Agency should focus on its role for conservation of the site. It can still serve as the convener to enable various role players on African Knowledge Systems matters to assist Mapungubwe World Heritage Site in this regard.
- Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape the barren land on-going discourse that is yet to be reconciled. Concentration of local communities appears to be on the legitimization of individual tribe land ownership rights. It stands to reason that once that milestone is achieved, people will decide on what to do with their land.
- Heritage conservation process are subject to future decisions that individual landowners would make. Interview with Matshikiri (74) implicitly contests the



heritage value as it is portrayed to justify world heritage status for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Thus, suggests that individual tribe may decide sometimes against the use of their land as a heritage site.

- Mapungubwe World Heritage Site institutional priorities against promotion of African Knowledge Systems. The observation that I made supported by the organisational structure suggested that there is a filled position of individuals responsible for cultural heritage programs, yet there are budgetary constraints to deliver on the promotion of African Knowledge Systems.
- The performance of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is measured against several tourists visited it annually. To satisfy these objectives, professionals conduct themselves in the manner that meets tourist's expectations. It is important to point out that culture used to promote tourism compromises heritage conservation purpose. According to Van Schalkwyk (2013) most traditions on earth upholds the notion that not all information about one's tribe should be given to strangers. Tourism business is driven by the curiosity to given all to stimulate tourist interests that they may consider revisiting the area. The study submits that the measurement instrument that is being used against Mapungubwe World Heritage Site needs revision.

#### **5.2.4. Approach to institutionalisation of African Knowledge Systems.**

Interview with Thifuniwi (49) touched base on ordinary people expectations at the declaration of Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape as a world heritage site. The interview established gaps that follow:

- Conceptualisation of Mapungubwe bidding documents for world heritage status were not intended for promotion of African Knowledge Systems, but satisfaction of the criteria UNESCO set. The study submits that this gap could have been bridged once the iconic status bid was resolved as it was then up to the state party in South Africa to profile its diverse culture on that platform.
- The study suggests that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should become the repository of African Knowledge Systems. Interview with Makhweyane alludes that there is lack of designated institution to house African Knowledge Systems.
- Contrary, interview with Mulemba established that there is a department responsible for Science and Technology which African Knowledge Systems are

housed. Yet, the informant acknowledges Makhweyane's claim that the focus of that department is on natural than cultural sciences.

- Generally, there is very little that the department is doing to promote cultural activities that are commonly practised in the local communities.
- On the other hand, Mthobeli (74) avers that he holds boy's initiation school license that permits him to establish the school which is usually held in winter season. The informant further says: *Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is strategically placed for hosting of initiation schools for both boys and girls. It is far from villages with controlled access points which is very important for the school administration.*
- Nwatshipungu (77) on the other hands claims: *Nne ndi maine wa vhana. A thongo zwi gudela. I di tou vha vho mpho ye nda newa nga mudzimu. Hone Mapungubwe hu a tenda u vha ngade ya mishonga ya tshirema.* [I am a Paediatrician. However, I never went for academic training for it. It is just a gift from god that I am knowledgeable about children diseases and treatments. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape offers great potential for medicinal plants botany]. The study also established other cultural heritage activities such as *Dinaka* (Sesotho), *Tshikona* (Tshivenda), *Vhusha* (Tshivenda) which is the girl's initiation schools, *Murundu* (Tshivenda) which is the boy's initiation school, *Thevhula* (Tshivenda) meaning spiritual appeasement through libation ritual performance, to mention but few commonly practised presumably by the people of Mapungubwe Kingdom.
- The argument raised in group discussions as in interview is that there are intangible benefits whenever these activities are performed in African traditional societies. Those benefits range from ancestral appeasements that manifests into a peaceful and stable community systems. Matshikiri (74) on the other hand had this to say: *there will not be any contribution to the satisfaction of local community in instances where the ancestors of the land are unhappy. How can they be happy when those that must communicate with them on behalf of all members are largely marginalised and reduced to equal status to those that are supposed to be their subjects?* He further says; *lack of vibrant cultural program in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site, I would assume is because of*

*marginalised voices of the rightful heirs of the traditions and assets of Mapungubwe Kingdom.*

### **5.3. Recommendation for further studies**

The study makes recommendations that follow:

- The aspect of convention of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site into African Knowledge Systems University should be further exploited for proper contextualisation.
- The feasibility study should be done to establish market base for the proposed African Knowledge Systems University in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.
- Heritage awareness and advocacy programs of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site should lead to the identification and training of African Knowledge Systems advocates.
- The issue of land and chieftaincy claims should be resolved quickly as the descendants of Mapungubwe Kingdom affected by forced removals are feeling disconnected from the site.
- Further studies should explore possible model towards re-establishment of the tribes affected by forced removals back to Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.
- Government needs to revise the mandate of statutory institutions responsible for cultural and biodiversity heritage resources for possible integration.
- There is a need to develop possible disposal plan for Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as its heritage-tourism future remains uncertain, particularly if the claims that it is facing extinction could be justified.

### **5.4. Conclusion**

The study concludes that Mapungubwe World Heritage Site is underutilising African Knowledge Systems in conservation of both cultural and biodiversity resources. Thus, renders its iconic African civilization status that earned it the world heritage site status less significant to local communities. Its current use has failed to profile, preserve, and promote local cultural heritage resources. There are foundational reasons that triggered its status quo ranging from falsification of legal processes and lack of African Knowledge Systems advocates in Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. It emerged in

the study that fragmentation within public institutions with shared cultural and biodiversity conservation responsibilities exacerbated the problem.

Consequently, public institutions have rapidly lost control and influence to counter any motives that could see Mapungubwe World Heritage Site extinguished. The study learnt of the growing major infrastructure development demand for mineral exploitation within Mapungubwe World Heritage Site conservation area. This justifies fears that propelled dispute against Coal of Africa: Vele Colliery Coal Mining Project planned within 12 kilometres east of the demarcated Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. In view of that the current study suggests that public institutions responsible for heritage conservation should have a disposal plan of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site as contingency intervention.

The overarching proposal out of the current study is for the establishment of what could be named: Mapungubwe African Knowledge Systems University. The study establishes that this approach may add value in the current use of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Afro-centred heritage management tool levels the ground towards realisation of this transition from conservative conservation to development-oriented approach. It also encourages for high production of African Knowledge Systems for public consumption. Group discussions held enabled the study to identify several sources of African Knowledge Systems that are arguably not fully utilised by members of communities. It is justifiable to indicate that a lot was inherited from the ancestral world, yet very little of that heritage is consumed by members of the community around Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.

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**Commented [RN2]:** You need to include the interview guide and informed consent sheet as appendix to help the reader understand the question asked and the evidence that ethical ... was followed.