

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ROZVI: TOWARD A HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF SOUTH-WESTERN ZIMBABWE

By

Lesley Hatipone Machiridza

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SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR INNOCENT PIKIRAYI

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Dedication

To Mbuya Machiridza ‘*Basvi B. Murungu*’

ABSTRACT

The archaeological identity of several Khami-phase sites (AD 1400-1830), especially those situated to the east of the Khami capital in the Insiza district, has always been a subject of great speculation. In particular, questions about their development, the identity of dynastic groups that inspired their general rise and spread, as well as the possible existence of evidence of changeover between the Torwa and Rozvi phases have always featured at the core of archaeological enquiry. This study, therefore, sought to define the archaeological identity of the Rozvi in south-western Zimbabwe by comparatively analysing material culture from Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja sites. In order to gather data, surveys, excavations and a rigorous review of Torwa and Rozvi oral and documentary sources was undertaken. It turned out that a combination of both physiographic and sociological factors gradually shaped the evolution of cultural complexity in south-western Zimbabwe. In addition, the sample of Khami-phase sites targeted for study shared a lot in common; they were all contemporary and their stratigraphic profiles revealed an unbroken cultural sequence. Since the bulk of material culture recovered from the three research sites remained stylistically unchanged through time, it was only the associated radiocarbon dates that provided clear-cut avenues to demarcate Torwa from Rozvi occupational phases. This general continuity in stylistic patterns either implies that Rozvi agents simply chose to promote group solidarity by maintaining old Torwa traditions or material culture typologies by themselves are too rigid to reflect dynamic social processes. Although numerous ethnohistoric sources emphasised that Rozvi identities were situationally expressed through the objectification of multiple tangible and intangible “things” scattered across the Zimbabwean landscape, the diagnosis of these ethnic symbols from Khami-phase sites nominated for study was never really straightforward.

Key words:

Cultural complexity, Torwa, Rozvi, ethnicity, material culture, Khami-phase

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of DPhil Archaeology at the University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Lesley Hatipone Machiridza

27th day of August 2018

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Chapter One

Background and Conceptual Approaches

“...if we are to avoid simply slapping agency onto the past like a fresh coat of paint- we must integrate theoretical discourse, archaeological practice, analytical methodologies, and concrete case studies” (Dobres and Robb 2000:4).

1.1 Introduction

The Rozvi who ruled from their core territories in south-western Zimbabwe from around AD 1685 to the 1830s, undoubtedly deserve special academic attention because they have been severely concealed by several layers of myths and speculation propagated by both pseudo and professional scholars over the years (see Beach n.d.). Despite several attempts made in the past to redress this research imbalance, most accounts on this intriguing past are somehow limited or weak when it comes to illuminating finer details about their archaeological identity (see Beach n.d., 1980, 1983a, 1983b, 1994a, 1994b, 1995; Bhila 1972; Huffman 1996, 2007; Machiridza 2012, 2014; Mazarire 2009; Mudenge 1974a, 1974b; 1988, 2011; Pikirayi 2001, 2007; van Waarden 1998, 2012). More so, the lack of data on the chronology of the Insiza cluster sites has made it difficult to place these sites in their proper position in relation to similar Zimbabwe Culture sites across southern Zambezia (Chirikure *et al.* 2013; 2017; Mukwende 2016; Robinson 1959). This scenario has perpetuated serious speculation and debate, centred on defining material culture typical of the Rozvi era of dominance and whether evidence of changeover before and after their take-over of the Torwa dynasties and their subjects can be identified or recognised archaeologically (Beach 1980; Machiridza 2012; Robinson 1966; van Waarden 2012). A number of scholars like Beach (1980), Huffman (2007), Pikirayi (1997), Pwiti (1996a), Robinson (1966) and van Waarden (2012) among others have raised serious concerns about the general research neglect of Khami-phase sites and the Rozvi period.

Despite this general academic concern and the wide consensus that a concerted research agenda on the Rozvi is overdue to resolve these long standing critical questions, to date fieldwork inspired by these particular posers has been very spasmodic. Thus this study thrives to revisit and interrogate the Rozvi archaeology by paying a much closer attention to volumes of archival, oral and documentary evidence as well as contextualised material culture from selected Khami-phase sites that have for long been taken for granted in past attempts to understand the Rozvi archaeological signatures. This approach follows the realization that the

unnecessary recycling of limited unsystematically amassed primary evidence in attempts to explain state formation and the emergence of historic group identities such as that of the Rozvi is problematic (see Caton-Thompson 1931; Randall-McIver 1906; Robinson 1959, 1966; Summers 1959). The Rozvi have generally been ignored archaeologically, despite the existence of numerous archaeological sites associated with their traditions, wide historical accounts and ethnographic data that can be exploited to understand their past. Currently, the Rozvi are broadly understood as a dynamic ethnic group that originated in north-eastern Zimbabwe and usurped power from the politically fragmented Torwa dynasties that occupied Khami-phase sites situated east of the Bembesi River from around AD 1400 to 1685 (Beach 1980; Machiridza 2012). While the spatial and chronological character of this cluster of Khami sites remains poorly documented and understood, at least we know that by AD 1685 the Rozvi had links with a territory referred to as Butua in Portuguese documents and around AD 1696 they had politically taken over that entire south-western region of Zimbabwe (see Beach 1980; van Waarden 2012).

Historical narratives have suggested that the Rozvi first rose to fame during the second-half of the 17th century AD under the feisty leadership of a certain Changamire, hereafter referred to as 2nd Changamire (Beach n.d.; 1983a; Mudenge 1988, 2011). Changamire was not a personal name but an honorific title that was solely used in references to supreme Rozvi rulers between the 1680s and 1850s (Mudenge 2011:47; van Waarden 2012). The name Changamire was first documented in AD 1490 in references to a certain powerful governor of the Mutapa state who rebelled and took away a large herd of cattle entrusted to him by King Mutapa Mukombero (Mudenge 1988). After rebelling from the Mutapa state, it is said this Changamire briefly established himself in the Mbire/Guruuswa area, though we do not know as yet the actual geographical localities referred to, as the term Guruuswa was subjectively used among the Shona (see Machiridza 2012:9). Unfortunately, in AD 1494 this Changamire rebel was captured and killed by Chikuyo Chisamarengu, one of Mutapa Mukombero's sons. His legacy briefly continued before finally sinking into oblivion (Mudenge 2011). We never know whether this Changamire established himself in Butua or otherwise; nonetheless, very little is known after his death apart from claims that his followers continued to fight the Mutapa with minor support from Torwa relatives until around AD 1547-8 (Beach 1980; Mudenge 1974a; Randles 1979). van Waarden (2012) also stipulates that Torwa dynasties used the title *Mambo* instead of Changamire as the honorific title for their leaders. As such, the 1st Changamire did not found the Rozvi dynasty. Rather, it was the 2nd Changamire whose

actual name was Chikurawadyembewu or Chikura (for short) who did (Beach 1980). This 2nd Changamire is also sometimes simply cited as ‘Dyembewu’, while other traditions mention Nichasike, Dombolakonachingwango or Dombo as the shortened version for this great leader (Beach 1980, 1994a; van Waarden 1998, 2012).

Changamire Dombo was already building his political career by the 1670s around lands dominated by his kinsman bearing the *moyo* (heart) totem. Beach (1994a), however, refers to these localities as *moyo* nuclear zones in north-eastern Zimbabwe. As from the 1680s and 1690s, he was fairly advanced in power as evidenced by a series of successful wars that he waged against the Portuguese traders, Mutapa and Torwa rulers. It is widely believed that these were the actual events that earned both him and his followers the name ‘Rozvi’, which was probably a corruption of the Shona verb *kurozva* meaning to destroy. Thus Changamire and his immediate followers earned themselves the nickname ‘Rozvi’ following a successful spate of vicious attacks and victories over all their enemies. The word Rozvi was first cited in mid-18th century Portuguese sources in references to Changamire and his immediate followers who were by then ruling from the south-western parts of Zimbabwe in a state variously called *Rozvi*, *Vurozvi*, *Ukalanga*, *Gore* or *Goremukuru* (Beach 1980: 227; Randles 1979). Thus the Rozvi gradually grew in social and political stature from a formidable military formation into a civil political system that was based in Butua, a broad region in southern Africa stretching across western Zimbabwe, northeastern Botswana and northern South Africa (see Machiridza 2012:10). These territories generally coincide with a dense cluster of Khami-phase sites and the core of the Rozvi state hereby referred to as south-western Zimbabwe.

It is however important to note that Rozvi ethnic membership in this broad landscape extensively fluctuated through space and time to encompass other diverse but related sub-ethnic groups like the Nambya, Ndau, Hera, Kalanga, Karanga, Shangwe/Korekore and Singo/Venda communities that were also part of this region (Ncube 2004; Mazarire 2009; Pikirayi 2001). Therefore, Rozvi political influence could also have variably extended to different territories now referred to as the Zimbabwean plateau, north-eastern Botswana and northern South Africa (Mudenge 1988; Pikirayi 2001; van Waarden 1998, 2012). Although both Torwa and Rozvi dynasties are historically linked with Khami-phase sites in the south-western parts of Zimbabwe, little is known about the role of each dynasty in the actual development of these sites (Machiridza 2012; Pikirayi 2001; van Waarden 1998, 2012). To start with, historians have glossed over the origins of these settlements because of their

inability to go beyond oral and documentary evidence. To make matters worse, the identity of Khami-phase sites located beyond the core Torwa/Rozvi settlements in south-western Zimbabwe also remains problematic due to historical claims that some Rozvi dynasties migrated from their capital Danamombe/Dhlodhlo during the mid-18th century and further built other Khami-type monuments in north-western Zimbabwe near Hwange town (Ncube 2004). Thus, the archaeological identity of many Khami-phase sites in Zimbabwe and southern Africa remains debatable despite the existence of contributions by Chirikure *et al.* (2017), Huffman and Hanisch (1987), Huffman (1996, 2007), Huffman and Piesanie (2011), Mukwende (2016), Robinson (1959, 1966) and van Waarden (2012). In particular, the factors that led to their development, size, spatial layout, chronological variation and material culture variation remains hazy.

Therefore this thesis is a historical archaeology of the Rozvi conceptualized within the context of agency landscape concepts, identities and the archaeology of complex societies. In a way, this study exploits new insights into the comparative study of state formation in the past. In particular, both synchronic and diachronic comparative approaches to material culture enable us to understand regularities in human behavior, unique features of human societies as well as variation over space and time (Smith and Peregrine 2012). Already strong calls have been made to shift our focus from popular and entrenched linear trajectories of states rising and falling owing to environmental factors and shifting trade routes; to a focus on human traditions and agency (Chirikure *et al.* 2012; Chirikure *et al.* 2014; McIntosh 1999; Mazarire 2009:3; Monroe 2013; Stein 1998). By extension, this research examines such historical processes focusing on the dialectical relationship between individuals/group action and structure(s) in order to account for the development of complexity in the past. The Rozvi subject actually shows great continuity between archaeology and history, the past and present; hence there are amazing opportunities to exploit multiple sources of data in defining their complex past. It is against this background that agency, landscape and ethnicity concepts are exploited in order to explain the Rozvi archaeology. Thus this study attempts to build upon the new trajectories of historical multi-linear models towards complexity in southern Africa by developing a detailed synthesis of the Rozvi archaeology in south-western Zimbabwe.

1.2 Problem formulation

Khami-phase sites are important elite settlements of the Zimbabwe Culture¹ but their archaeological and historical status largely remains fuzzy. This state of affairs may be attributed to several factors, with the major one being the methodological error perpetuated by previous scholars who constantly tried to define Rozvi material culture through these sites before fully appreciating who the Rozvi were historically (Caton-Thompson 1931; Randall-McIver 1906; Robinson 1959, 1966; Summers 1959). Throughout Africa, colonialists were notorious for using historical and archaeological information as propaganda to justify colonialism (Bent 1896; Burrett 1998; Hall and Neal 1904; Hall 1905, 1909). It was through these activities that the Rozvi became mystified as their origins were externalized from the Zimbabwean plateau in concerted efforts to legitimize white supremacy (see Hall 1909; Machiridza 2005). Perhaps, Khami-phase sites associated with the Rozvi were also shunned because oral and documentary evidence is scanty for that region. Beach (1980) actually observed that oral traditions for the south-western plateau of Zimbabwe are distorted as they were extensively affected by a succession of five states, namely Great Zimbabwe, Torwa/Khami, Rozvi/Changamire, the Ndebele and finally Rhodesians. Furthermore the Muslim traders who had earlier on frequented that region did not leave any useful writings, while the Portuguese penetrated that region rather late. Actually, the Portuguese were barred from traversing Rozvi territories by the rulers who feared they would interfere in their internal affairs (Beach 1980). In this case, archaeology would have been better positioned to close these research gaps but unfortunately that record also remained incomplete owing to limited research coverage. Additionally, there has been a tendency to ignore material culture variation by reasoning in terms of linear models of shifting capitals for complexity, focusing upon the major sites or centres as well as their overall cultural uniformity. This scenario probably led to the trend where many scholars used Mapungubwe, Great Zimbabwe and Khami as the general templates or useful guides to understand and explain the rest of the smaller Zimbabwe Culture sites such as Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja through the popular structuralist and neo-evolutionary models (see Burrett 1998; Huffman 1984, 1986, 1996; Pikirayi 2001).

¹ The term Zimbabwe Culture is an archaeological term that refers to prestigious stone walling, *dhaka* (adobe) floors, exotic goods, indigenous ceramics and myriad material culture generally depicting class distinction and sacred leadership (Chirikure *et al.* 2014; Huffman 2005; Pikirayi 2001).

The actual origins of the Khami facies remains uncertain and this scenario is further compounded by the fact that its relations to Great Zimbabwe, the Mutapa state, Torwa and Rozvi dynasties remains quite hazy. Thus it is difficult to ascertain whether the Khami facies developed directly from Leopard's Kopje cultures or it was a result of dynastic influences from Great Zimbabwe (see Chirikure *et al.* 2017; Robinson 1985). Huffman (2014:72) however argues that the Leopard's Kopje ceramic sequence in Zimbabwe is separate from that of the Khami tradition. The latter wares are actually more closely related to Great Zimbabwe Period IVb ceramics than Leopard's Kopje (Huffman 2014). Other historical references seem to portray a picture that the founders of Khami-phase sites (the Torwa) were break-away rebels from the Mutapa state (see Mazarire 2009; Mudenge 1988). Other traditions from the Mutapa state even claim the Torwa state was tributary to the Mutapa state (Beach 1980). Mudenge (2011:47) however observed that relations between the Torwa, Mutapa and Great Zimbabwe have always been problematic. Thus the late arrival of the Rozvi and their occupation of Khami-sites east of Bembesi River further complicate the archaeological problem. It still remains unclear what the cluster of Khami-phase sites in these parts of south-western Zimbabwe really represent in terms of socio-political developments. Therefore this shows that very little is known about the origins of Khami-phase sites especially those in the eastern parts of Khami. Many of these sites have never been systematically studied archaeologically despite the fact that they have always been linked with well-known historical dynastic formations. Numerous Rozvi oral traditions have been reconstructed as part of their political narratives but these have not yet received adequate external criticism.

While the Rozvi past has been fairly documented historically (Beach 1980; Bhila 1982a; Mudenge 1974a; Mazarire 2009), their association with Khami-phase sites that are also ascribed to Torwa dynasties has never received adequate archaeological attention (Pikirayi 2007; van Waarden 2012). Several such sites indicate great potential to yield well stratified cultural material and chronometric dates that can be analyzed to help explain variation and change in the past. In view of these critical research concerns and the historical background of Khami-phase sites, there was need to re-analyze the archaeology of these sites in order to explain their origins, development and socio-political relationships. Basic archaeological details relating to chronology, occupational sequence, economic and political status of

Khami-phase elite sites² remain ambiguous if not controversial. Archaeologists still lack basic or primary information about processes that led to the rise of complexity in south-western Zimbabwe, particularly the Insiza cluster sites. Therefore through conducting systematic surveys, excavations and detailed analysis of material finds, the interpretation of the rise and development of complexity for these Khami-phase sites may be greatly enhanced. Additional context based on archaeological data is now required to develop a model that can be used to understand the spatial and temporal distribution of Khami-phase sites in south-western Zimbabwe.

1.3 Research aims and objectives

The major thrust of this thesis is to define the Rozvi through a systematic study of oral traditions, documentary evidence and material culture directly related to the core of their state. Rozvi oral traditions and documentary sources present unique opportunities to reconstruct their past historical processes and identity construction parameters (Machiridza 2012; van Waarden 2012). In addition, associated archaeological data is critical for a rigorous comparative analysis of their day-to-day activities, chronometric dates and related material culture symbolism. Certainly, an approach that pays close attention to historical processes strengthens our examination and interpretation of the possible factors behind the development of complexity in that region. Historical sources give us better insights of short-term processes and events that aid our archaeological understanding of local politics, power and leadership dynamics. The archaeological record was thus principally interrogated in terms of the dynamics of power, elite political strategies, salient social identities and agency. Instead of just looking at the past as dominated by a few powerful individuals who presided over a wide passive populace, the past is examined as constituting strategizing individuals who consciously acted in various contexts of competition. This approach followed the realization that pre-colonial leaders also sought to establish, maintain and enhance their power or territorial control through engaging various strategies that were conditioned by dynamic historical contexts thereby creating different political economies (see Blanton *et al.* 1996; Monroe 2013; Stein 1998).

²Elite sites are the capitals, provincial, district and ward administrative centres that were inhabited by the local ruling dynasties.

The first objective of this study is to investigate the chronological and material culture relationships of the known settlements such as Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja, which are all located in the core area of the Rozvi state. This objective was crafted in view of the fact that works by Gutu (2007), Huffman (1996), Machiridza (2005, 2012), Muringaniza and Ruwita (1996) and Tapfuma (2010) did not adequately examine the archaeology of these settlements. Several oral traditions have identified a number of Khami-phase sites in the Insiza district as Rozvi settlements without shedding more light on the actual Rozvi archaeological signatures (see Fig. 1.1 below). Basal level occupational dates for Khami-phase sites are however generally believed to cluster around the beginning of the 15th century (Huffman 2007:419). The same trend also applies for the site of Khami although this site also yielded quite an early date of AD 1323-1410 (see Chirikure *et al.* 2017; Mukwende 2016). Since traditions seem to claim that the earliest occupants of the same Khami-phase sites were Torwa, it was interesting to investigate whether this distinction between Torwa and Rozvi actually exists through a detailed stratigraphic study of material culture. While claims have been made that there may be no distinction in occupational sequences (see Beach 1980; Pikirayi 2001), such assumptions had never been backed by empirical field data. While a general cultural continuity between Torwa and Rozvi periods is expected, we cannot rule out that other changes could have also occurred through time though several reasons may be proffered to account for that (see Machiridza 2005, 2008, 2012; van Waarden 2012).

The second objective is to establish the actual range of archaeological sites in the study area within the context of the development of the Khami/Butua state in southern Africa. Although a number of Khami-phase elite sites are known from the Rozvi core area, very little or nothing has been recorded in terms of neighbouring smaller sites. This objective was specifically crafted in line with the academic concern that very little archaeological research has been conducted in the Rozvi core area (van Waarden 2012:104). It was also vital to establish the possible function of each Rozvi elite site under study because of the on-going speculation that some of these sites were capitals while others were simply retreat, religious, trading posts, cattle posts or sub-chief administrative centres (see Beach 1980; Burrett 1998; van Waarden 2012). Questions such as these have been taken for granted over the years, yet they are fundamental to our general understanding of the development of all Khami-phase sites and the Rozvi. More so, through building on the existing database of archaeological sites in the study area, comparisons of different site type ratios can effectively reflect settlement

hierarchies for the Rozvi state. An increase in the size and number of sites attributable to a particular period is indicative of population growth and increasing cultural complexity. In a broader sense, by estimating the territorial extent and function of each site, political, kinship and economic ties could be inferred on the whole study area.

The third objective of this research is to establish the factors that led to the development of social and political complexity in south-western Zimbabwe exemplified by the stone buildings historically associated with the Rozvi. The sites under study are generally defined as having been on the eastern side of Bembesi and Khami ruins. Secondly these sites are believed to be younger or later developments than Khami, the early 15th to mid-17th century capital of the Torwa state. All of the Rozvi elite sites under study are generally described as much smaller, numerous and in close proximity to one another (Huffman 2007; van Waarden 2012). Against this background, it was critical to establish the various socio-economic and political factors that led to the rise and spread of these respective Khami-phase sites.

The fourth and final objective of this study is to develop a model for the interpretation of the Zimbabwe Culture sites in south-western Zimbabwe, an area primarily associated with Khami tradition sites and linked in history with Torwa and Rozvi dynasties. This objective stemmed from the fact that these Khami-phase sites have generally been treated as a single uniform cultural entity with little or no material culture variation (Pikirayi 2001). While historical accounts have been consulted to account for the origins and distribution of these sites (Caton-Thompson 1931; Randall-McIver 1906; Robinson 1959; Summers 1959), this was always done as an afterthought or second interest since the Rozvi subject was not of primary concern. While models on the origins of Khami-phase sites are based on assumptions that these sites developed after the demise of Great Zimbabwe, there is need to test how Leopard's Kopje communities responded to the rise and expansion of Great Zimbabwe (see Caton-Thompson 1931; Chirikure *et al.* 2014; 2017; Garlake 1973; Robinson 1959; van Waarden 1998, 2011, 2012). Henceforth, a model that integrates historical processes peculiar to that region with archaeology certainly opens refreshing insights for understanding complexity processes in Zimbabwe.

there are several prominent Rozvi chieftainships that have been traced back to these sites and their historical accounts and ethnographic insights can be exploited for interpretive purposes. Above all, this study approaches the development of complexity differently in Zimbabwe by examining the archaeological record from an agency oriented perspective. The progressive developmental approach inspired by neo-evolutionary thinking that has been widely used to explain complexity overlooks the implications of both short and long-term human action in dynamic historical processes thereby over-simplifying the past. Such has been the concern of historians like Mazarire (2009); hence this research was undertaken to make an original contribution to these longstanding academic concerns.

1.5 Definition of terms

This study encountered several key terms such as complexity, state, chiefdom, identity and dynasty, which have extensively shifted both in theory and associated vocabulary. Apart from the term identity, which is later on extensively explored in Chapter 3 of this study, the rest of the terms above are briefly reviewed below for purposes of projecting their meaning as applied in this thesis.

1.5.1 Complexity

Like many other archaeological concepts, the term complexity was borrowed from sociology by neo-evolutionary anthropologists around the 1950s before becoming an archaeological term in the 1970s. Ever since this development, many archaeologists have been grappling with re-defining it and explaining why and how complexity emerged in past societies. Until today there is no consensus about what complexity, social complexity, socio-political complexity, political complexity or cultural complexity exactly is (see Arnold *et al.* 2015; Chapman 2003; Honeychurch 2014; Monroe 2013; Morris 2009; Stein 1998). For instance, Tainter (1988) defines complexity as the size of society, number of its distinctive parts, social personalities and specialized roles as well as mechanisms of organizing these constituent parts into a coherent whole. While this definition is valid, it is somehow difficult to apply or make use of archaeologically. Morris (2009:520) also defined complexity as an analytical framework that describes the increasing scale of sophistication and organization of societies as they seek to get things done. Defining complexity as the increasing scale of practices associated with societies seeking to get things done is however more archaeologically sensitive. Such practices can be identified and sometimes measured archaeologically and

these may include settlement, energy capture, monument building, inequality and heterogeneity, as well as communication (Morris 2009; Tainter 1988).

While archaeologists subscribing to theories of neo-evolutionism, processualism, and post-processualism generally agree on the basic forms/traits relating to cultural complexity, they significantly differ in terms of the causal factors, social typologies and processes of social change (Chapman 2003; Hodder 1982; Morris 2009; Renfrew and Cherry 1986; Schortman 1989). Neo-evolutionists favor multi-stage models arguing that societies increase in complexity through leaps from one structurally stable level to another (Chapman 2003). This dimension to complexity follows a linear series of bands, tribes, chiefdoms and states or egalitarian, ranked, stratified and state societies (Fried 1967; Service 1962). This study is however premised on the alternative view that complexity occurs on a continuous scale without necessarily following these discrete social stages. Under this approach, complexity does not stem from clearly defined social types/stages but from differential and constantly shifting patterns of social interactions and negotiations, subduing cooperation and competition, among individuals and groups (Chapman 2003; Honeychurch 2014; Renfrew and Cherry 1986; Schortman 1989). These theoretical issues are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

1.5.2 The State *Nyika*

Pauketat (2007) defines a state as a more complex regional formation where governance transcends kinship and chiefly cults. He further elaborates that a state refers to the on-going processes characterizing a society following its qualitative break from the so-called pre-state societies. While valid, this definition does not quite clarify the distinction between a chiefdom and state since both are qualitatively different from un-stratified societies or simple villages. In attempts to elaborate, Pauketat (2007) argues that chiefdoms are qualitatively different from un-centralized societies but states are quantitatively different from chiefdoms. Wright (1977) also argued that chiefdoms only have one decision making level lacking internal administrative control while states had three or more rank-levels that were supported by coercive control. This clarification however does not settle the debate because this quantitative measure even in numerical terms is very subjective. Extensive studies on chiefdoms globally (e.g., Melanesian, Polynesian and Hawaiian societies) have revealed that there is so much variability among societies widely classified as chiefdoms; hence these have

been further categorized into simple and complex forms of chiefdoms (Chapman 2003; Tainter 1988).

Under simple chiefdoms the political grip of the chief over subjects is generally weak, the chief is a part-timer and surplus wealth is often used or redistributed for public gain but complex chiefdoms are defined as functioning more like state systems. They have a permanent chief who enjoys authority over a large populace, territory, warrior class, labour force of expert craftsman, knowledge, surplus production and ‘funds’ of power (see Pauketat 2007:23). As such the distinction between chiefdoms and states is very fluid. This is made worse by the fact that even smaller social units like villages and chiefdoms form the building blocks of states, which situationally centralize and decentralize into independent and semi-independent units. Tainter (1988:30) reinforces this view by stipulating that many characteristics of non-state societies seem to continue into states making it hard to find the so-called “Great Divide”. Others have attempted to define a state through checklists referring to it as a highly centralized society with buildings, warrior class, expert crafts people, ‘funds’ of power, tombs, elite freedom and hierarchical arrays of settlement reflecting socio-political and religious institutions (Pauketat 2007; Wright and Johnson 1975; Yoffee 2005).

Since it has always been difficult to define the state because it is diffuse, heterarchical and hidden in the practices of people who are often widely scattered, this approach is also problematic. In view of the above conceptual problems, a state is hereby conceptualized as a very high degree of socio-political complexity that gradually develops through the activities of a dynamic political leadership and ordinary people’s daily communal practices. These leaders become prominent by capitalizing on ideologies of shared values and ideas among other strategies to gain authority and power over numerous formerly independent villages and chiefdoms. Such a state is characterised by shared residence, life experiences, goals and sentiments constituting functional and predictable human behaviour and “imagined” cultural sphere made up of a fleeting, politicized or fluid community (Isbell 2000; Yaeger 2000). In fact, Honeychurch (2014) notes that those terms like state and chiefdom are being replaced by flexible concepts like polity and political community. These notions are appealing for this study because they are sensitive to historical processes and are free from unnecessary neo-evolutionary structures and categories that are not realistic and difficult to prove archaeologically.

1.5.3 Chieftdom

This concept is one of the most widely used and abused concepts in the archaeology of complex societies. Chieftdoms were first generally defined as polities united under permanent control of a chief (Oberg 1955). They were further characterized as types or classes of society with specific sets of attributes like chiefly power as well as centralized control of economic and religious activities (Fried 1967; Service 1962). This approach to chieftdoms was however criticized because it overstated the role of ecological diversity, adaptation and social systems at the expense of individual interests in the development of complexity (Arnold *et al.* 2015). In the 1970s chieftdoms were still perceived as types of societies, the only major shift then was they were thought to have developed in response to the need to regulate information communication rather than to merely redistribute subsistence resources in ecologically diverse regions (Chapman 2003:46). Political control was equated with administration rather than exploitation and repression (Chapman 2003). Researchers however still found it very difficult to discern these social types both ethnographically and archaeologically as there was so much variation in social reality (see Chapman 2003; Pauketat 2007; Peebles and Kus 1977). They attempted to counter this challenge by broadening chieftdom classification categories but this still failed to end the raging debate about these societies (see Chapman 2003; Pauketat 2007). In the 1980s, though the chieftdom concept was retained, it was no longer a mere type/class of society, but a critical step in political development from non-centralized, kin-based egalitarian societies to regional political and governmental units (Pauketat 2007). Their rise was now being attributed to leaders who strategized in order to mobilize goods and labour in varying historical contexts of competition.

From the 1990s to present, chieftdoms began to be conceptualized as unstable and cyclical societies that centralize and fragment while not necessarily developing into states (Chapman 2003:53). In this case, chieftdoms were being perceived as more than just precursors of states, while the collapse of states was understood as not necessarily resulting in the proliferation of chieftdoms. In southern Africa the emergence of chieftdoms is widely associated with the appearance or distribution of several Leopard's Kopje sites in south-western Zimbabwe, the middle-Limpopo valley and later the rise of Zhizo sites such as Toutswemogala, Taukome and Bosutswe in eastern Botswana (Chirikure *et al.* 2014; Huffman 2007; Pikirayi 2001; Sinclair 1987). These polities comprised indigenous political entrepreneurs presiding over sizable settlements displaying a hierarchical spatial pattern of numerous villages involved in crafts, stock and crop production, local and foreign trade, dry stonewall construction,

occupation of hilltops and rainmaking rituals among other things. Most of these chiefdoms were related through a common ancestry, which enhanced close interaction in political and economic terms though competition was quite common among these peers. The most successful actors became bigger politically and constructed more elaborate elite settlements that fluctuated as capitals, provincial or district centres through time. Under this historical approach which is hereby adopted for purposes of this study, chiefdoms stem from either network-based or group oriented strategies of gaining and maintaining economic and political power.

1.5.4 Dynasty

Historians interested in the pre-colonial history of Zimbabwe always cite dynasties instead of states in their reconstructions of the past simply because the analytical units are different (e.g., Beach n.d., 1980, 1994a, 1994b, 1995; Bhila 1972, 1982a; Mudenge 1974a, 1974b). This suggests there is no conceptual consensus between archaeologists and historians dealing with the same pre-colonial past. As indicated above, ruling families of pre-colonial states like Torwa, Rozvi and Manyika are generally treated as synonymous entities with dynasties. In fact, Pauketat (2007) points out that historians such as Vansina who do not like the concept of chiefdom use terms like despotic, regal, incorporative and aristocratic polities, “kingdoms” and federations. This conceptualisation of chiefdoms does not necessarily follow for southern Africa because dynasties cannot be merely equated with chiefdoms as suggested above. This calls for a special focus on the meaning of dynasties, which are defined by Beach (1980) as groups of people controlled by lines of defined rulers governing specific territories. This explanation however does not quite inform us about their origins, maintenance and collapse.

Pauketat (2007) however adds that dynasties are usually based on notions of divine kinship which are in turn premised on social memories. Dynasties are generally unified through coercion and common agreement but legitimized through genealogies of imagined identities (Pauketat 2007). Among the Shona people of Zimbabwe, dynasties were commonly unified through principal lineages sharing a common ancestry. In view of the above, the conceptual and vocabulary discord prevailing among historians and archaeologists dealing with conceptual terms like chiefdoms, states and dynasties needs careful handling. In this study dynasties are therefore conceptualized as ruling families that exercised control over large territories comprising a heterogeneous populace, which was synonymous with a territorial state. Therefore dynasties as equivalents of complex societies at the level of chiefdoms and

state systems, should archaeologically manifest in the form of arrays of hierarchical settlements, evidence of local and long distance trade, elaborate dry stonewalled palaces as well as several other cultural attributes associated with socio-economic and political differentiation.

1.6 A chronological summary of previous research in the study area

Khumi-phase sites are the least investigated components of the Zimbabwe Culture, especially in the Insiza district of Zimbabwe. In fact, during the early colonial era, many Zimbabwe tradition sites were simply perceived as economic assets and they were mined for treasure by companies like the notorious Rhodesia Ancient Ruins Limited of 1895 (Burrett 1998). Burrett further observed that just like other Zimbabwe Culture sites, Khumi-phase sites were badly affected and they were also considered too advanced to be of indigenous origin. In fact, the British South Africa Company (BSAC) found comfort in crediting some lost Caucasian tribes for the construction of these sites (Burrett 1998). For instance, amateurs like Hall and Neal speculated that Naletale, a Khumi-phase site, had a three phase occupational sequence namely a lost Caucasian tribe, Shona-Monomotapa, and a Mambo period implying it was not indigenous in origin (Hall and Neal 1902). Furthermore Hall (1909) used speculative migration models to account for Khumi, Danamombe and Nalatale origins as dating back to AD 915 when the Rozvi arrived from northern Lake Tanganyika to construct the sites. The earliest professional researchers to work on Khumi-phase sites were Randall-McIver (1906), Caton-Thompson (1931) and Schofield (1948) who all excavated the site of Dhlodhlo/Danamombe. It was Caton-Thompson (1931) who first suggested that polychrome band and panel ware, the material culture often associated with Khumi-phase sites, could have first developed at Great Zimbabwe before it spread to Khumi. This view implied that the Khumi tradition directly developed from Great Zimbabwe, a view that is widely disputed today because the few Khumi-phase sherds that were used to make this claim are now disregarded as circumstantial evidence (see Huffman 2007; van Waarden 1998).

Around the 1950s to 60s a number of archaeological works were undertaken focusing on different aspects of Khumi-phase sites. The most outstanding contribution was made by Robinson (1959) who spent several years excavating Khumi. His work covers the development of Khumi as a site and attempts to explain its relationship with other contemporary cultures. Robinson, like Caton-Thompson (1931) and Schofield (1948) ascribed Khumi to pre-colonial Rozvi rulers. Of course, now we know a certain sub-Torwa

ruler called Ndumba or Tumbare who lived somewhere near Khami was mistaken as inhabiting Khami yet the site had long been abandoned in 1644 when the Rozvi arrived to settle in south-western Zimbabwe (see Beach 1980; van Waarden 2012). Khami was predominantly Torwa; the Rozvi never occupied it as they only arrived in the region several years after it had been abandoned in 1644 (Beach n.d.; 1980; van Waarden 2012). Besides, Robinson (1959:23) also observed that certain sections of Khami were associated with the elite while peripheral areas were for commoners. Before his death in 1988, he dedicated all his efforts towards defining an archaeological identity for the Rozvi people, which he largely left unresolved. Thus Robinson (1966) described the Rozvi sites in Zimbabwe and ascribed the development of almost all forms of material culture at Khami-phase sites to the Rozvi.

In 1959 Summers and a group of students undertook extensive excavations at Dhlodhlo/Danamombe, a prominent Khami-type site (Summers 1959; Sutherns 1959). Their purpose of excavating the site was to train students, determine architectural problems connected with the ruins and establishing the site's chronology through architecture and ceramic analysis. Summers (1959) described his findings and ascribed some of the walls to the Ngoni or Ndebele and Rozvi groups. Summers (1961) only stated that very little was known about trade in Butua³ although Swahili traders based in the north and north-eastern parts of Zimbabwe could have been in contact with that region for quite some time. Later on, Summers (1969) observed that Zhizo, Mambo and Woolandale constituting both the Early and Later Farming Communities in south-western Zimbabwe were exploiting gold reefs around the Gwanda area between the 13-14th centuries. He thus ignored the Khami period currently assumed to have evolved from the Leopard's Kopje sites entirely (see Chirikure *et al.* 2017). This study therefore makes some contributions to this generally neglected era.

The 1970s however marked a turning point in the research agenda for Zimbabwean prehistory, possibly due to the coming in of new researchers like Thomas N. Huffman who replaced Peter Garlake, another prominent scholar who went into exile in 1970. Garlake was exiled because his cutting edge archaeological research findings since 1965 were deemed offensive by the Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith, and his colonial government. In particular, this era witnessed the broadening of research questions, although research work was made almost impossible by the intensification of the liberation war in the then southern

³The term Butua was commonly used by Portuguese traders to refer to a very wide area in southern Africa covering parts of what is now south-western Zimbabwe, north-eastern Botswana and northern South Africa. This region also sometimes termed *Guruuswa* and it was under the Torwa/Togwa state, which was later conquered and assimilated by the Rozvi rulers.

Rhodesia. Issues of chronology and cultural identity however continued as Garlake (1970) used dry-stone architectural styles to compare Khami-phase sites to Zimbabwe tradition sites. Garlake (1973) also argued that after the 15th century Matabeleland comprising many Leopard's Kopje sites became the centre of power that replaced Great Zimbabwe. He further noted that trade was not the major force behind the development of complexity on this part of Zimbabwe. Huffman (1974) also excavated Ntabazingwe site in south-western Zimbabwe, and ascribed it to the Leopard's Kopje tradition. However Huffman (1974) did not explain the origins of Khami or its relations to Torwa and Rozvi dynasties. Mudenge (1974a) extensively consulted Portuguese sources, which made him to question the role of trade in the rise of historical states like Rozvi. In addition there was a renewed interest in the analysis of Portuguese sources for purposes of establishing factors behind the rise of the Mutapa, Torwa and Rozvi states (see Mudenge 1974a, 1974b, 1977; Randles 1979). These researchers were arguing for the consideration of local factors like accumulating cattle herds, military power, and administrative organization among others, to explain the development of complexity on the Zimbabwean plateau. The debate regarding the causes and processes of complexity in Zimbabwe was only beginning to unfold; it became more and more intense during the years that followed.

While Khami-phase sites received partial research attention from the late 1980s to the present, issues to do with complexity were not the primary concern. For instance, Thorp (1984) excavated a midden at Khami and compared the faunal assemblage with that from Great Zimbabwe. Huffman (1984, 1996) interpreted settlement organization and functions of specific site localities at several Khami-phase sites using a structuralist model based on Shona and Venda cosmology. Pwiti (1996a) explored the development of complexity in northern Zimbabwe and lamented the lack of similar attention towards Khami-phase sites in south-western Zimbabwe. Hughes (1997) also excavated areas to the north-west of the Hill Complex at Khami in order to determine the chronology of the site and to establish the nature of settlement layout in peripheral areas. van Waarden (1998) paid attention to the development of Khami-phase sites arguing that urbanism occurred rather rapidly in Butua. van Waarden (1998) also argued that Butua weaned itself from Great Zimbabwe by taking full control of its natural resources and this resulted in the demise of the latter. However, these assumptions were not systematically supported by appropriate archaeological evidence, which is the task of this study. Pikirayi (2001) made a general assessment of Khami-phase sites in his treatise of the Zimbabwe Culture arguing that Khami architecture is a combination

of Great Zimbabwe and Leopard's Kopje building modes. He further pointed out that the full geographical extent of the Torwa was not clear but there was general continuity between the Torwa and Rozvi periods because the Rozvi continued to build in the same style. Machiridza's most recent work (2012) on Khami-phase sites was based on the mere analysis of museum collections; hence the study indicated the need for further field-based research in order to adequately address the Rozvi subject.

A literature study on Khami and associated sites suggests that the factors behind the development of complexity in that region have not yet been adequately examined. Archaeologists like Caton-Thompson (1931), Robinson (1959) and Garlake (1973) trace the origins of Khami-phase sites from Great Zimbabwe. On the other hand historians like Beach (1994a), Mazarire (2009), Mudenge (1974b, 1988) and Randles (1979) associate Khami origins with the Torwa dynasty that ruled from Khami-phase sites after initially breaking-away from the Mutapa state around AD 1490-4. These rebels continued fighting the Mutapa state from their south-western territories until around 1547-8 (Beach 1994a). While these two sets of contradicting evidence cannot be directly compared because one is archaeological while the other is historical, they certainly need to be reconciled in this study. Huffman (2007) adds that sometime around 1400, 1410, 1415 or 1440 AD Khami was already developing and its rise to power led to the eventual demise of Great Zimbabwe. This view needs to be verified thorough a rigorous analysis/assessment of reliable radiocarbon dates and other chronological indicators. Analysing existing evidence, van Waarden (1998, 2011, 2012) tentatively proposed that Leopard's Kopje sites could have gradually evolved into Khami type due to the influence of local and external trade as well as cattle wealth accumulation.

Huffman (2007:412) has already questioned whether the 15th century movement of Kalanga chiefdoms from Zimbabwe into Letsibogo district of Botswana and southwards into the Shashe-Limpopo was a reflection of growth or decline in the power of these groups. Of late, Chirikure *et al.* (2013; 2014; 2017) and van Waarden (2011, 2012) have been suggesting that Leopard's Kopje cultures were the progenitors of both Khami and Zimbabwe tradition sites. Arguing on the basis of material culture discontinuities, in particular ceramic differences between the two traditions, Huffman (2014) disputed the direct evolution of the Khami-phase from Leopard's Kopje cultures. Recently, Mukwende (2016) used the site of Khami as a key reference point to understand the elite/commoner dichotomy through the aid of associated material culture. The study clearly revealed that the site of Khami does not archaeological show distinctions between the elite and commoner zones. However, Mukwende (2016) did

not pay much attention to the Torwa/Rozvi dichotomy, which remains a subject of great speculation today. Hence, this brief archaeological background simply demonstrates that there is a plethora of unresolved research questions relating to the rise and spread of Khami-phase sites. This study was therefore undertaken to redress this current academic anomaly through extensive fieldwork on selected elite sites in south-western Zimbabwe.

1.7 Organisation of this work

This work is organized into eight chapters.

Chapter 2 presents the physiographical settings of south-western Zimbabwe. The chapter explores the dynamic relationship between the natural environment and past human settlement systems. The description and analysis of environmental attributes also enables us to appreciate the various prehistoric, historic and current economic activities in terms of how they impacted on cultural processes and settlement patterning in the region. This follows the premise that human behaviour is not random; rather it is conditioned by various internal and external forces like culture, history and environmental attributes.

Chapter 3 sets out the theoretical guidelines of this thesis by exploring key conceptual approaches for the origins and evolution of cultural complexity in archaeological studies. The discussion then narrows down to an agency approach in archaeological studies of cultural complexity. This agency oriented conceptual discussion specifically defines the variables of significance to this study, which include reflexive social actors, structure, social identities (class and ethnicity) and ideology. These theoretical notions are further discussed as part of a post-processual agency landscape approach (Amundsen-Meyer 2011; Anschuetz *et al.* 2001; Arnold *et al.* 2015; Falzarano 2014; Honeychurch 2014; Kintigh *et al.* 2014; Kolb 2012; Pauketat 2007; Tilley 2006). The broad aim of this chapter is to outline the general standards by which the acquired primary data is to be organised and results of this investigation are to be explained and evaluated.

Chapter 4 provides a broad historical coverage of Torwa and Rozvi origins as well as their connections with Great Zimbabwe, Mutapa and Butua state systems. This information is extracted and synthesised from Portuguese sources, secondary historical sources and oral

traditions. The general aim of this chapter is to exploit traditions/structure(s) and documentary sources in a manner that reveals the materialisation of Rozvi identities through space and time. Most importantly, the chapter provides a detailed coverage of Rozvi sources of power and it attempts to highlight how that power was expressed through material remains and the landscape. This historic review however only provides an idealised background of the Rozvi past, which will in turn guide a robust investigation of their archaeological status.

Chapter 5 is a concise and detailed presentation of the survey design utilised in the study. Thus the chapter systematically spells out the survey objectives, survey research procedures and techniques that were followed in order to locate and document the general range of archaeological sites found in the delineated area of study. Survey results are also presented in the same chapter in a manner that highlights the general range of archaeological sites and major economic activities around each of the three focal points chosen for intensive surveys.

Chapter 6 focuses on the general daily practices at three Khami-phase sites that were selected for detailed archaeological study. This chapter specifically deals with excavation aims and procedures as well as the presentation of excavation results from the three Khami-phase sites of Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja. The excavations sought to recover contextual data useful in tracing and explaining the development of complexity at each of the above cited sites. In this chapter, results of excavations are discussed by focusing on each site as well as the number and location of trenches and test pits that were set-up. The recovered finds/cultural material and chronometric dates from each research site are also dealt with accordingly.

Chapter 7 specifically deals with data analysis procedures and presentation of results in order to detect cultural change through space and time. Different forms of material culture are classified and analysed according to type and associated sub-type categories. As and when necessary, the same data is further analysed according to stratigraphic context, i.e., by site, trench and test pit. This analytical approach is also used to assess the recovered chronometric datable samples, and at the final stage all these archaeological datasets are comparatively

analysed in order to make inferences on material culture variation and change attributable to Rozvi ethnic and political economic influences.

Chapter 8 begins with a focus on the chronological development of the selected Khami-phase sites and their relations to each other. This discussion gradually develops into the complex issues of Torwa and Rozvi dynastic associations with Khami-phase sites. In addition, material culture patterns observed from a comparative analysis of the three Khami-phase sites are explained in terms of political economy and ethnic identity premises. The chapter then delves into the broader issues behind the evolution of cultural complexity or origins of Khami-phase sites in south-western Zimbabwe. At this point, the validity of earlier models on the origins and spread of the Zimbabwe Culture, most especially Khami-phase sites in south-western Zimbabwe is evaluated on the basis of amassed contextual field-based facts. On the whole, this chapter systematically builds an interpretive model for the origins and distribution of Khami-phase sites in Rozvi core territory in a manner that addresses longstanding speculations about their proper archaeological identity.

Chapter two

Physiographical settings of south-western Zimbabwe

“When we think about social or cultural identity we inevitably tend to place it, put it in a setting, and imagine it in a place.” (Tilley 2006:14).

2.1 Introduction

South-western Zimbabwe has generally witnessed prolonged and continuous occupation spanning from the Middle Stone Age to the present because of its unique physical and cultural attributes (Walker 1995:13). This chapter explores how cultural behaviour such as the construction of many Khami-phase sites was influenced by these physiographic settings. The natural boundaries of the delineated study area are the Gweru-Shangani and Gwai River systems flowing northwest-wards towards the Zambezi, and the Runde-Thuli Rivers, draining the southern parts through south-south-eastern courses (see Fig. 2.1). The central part of this study area is dominated by a massive watershed, which is a broad plateau region reaching a height of 1500 m above sea level at some places, dividing all rivers into either the Zambezi or Limpopo basins (see Fig. 2.2). The Gweru River, rising immediately north of the city of Gweru, marks the eastern limits of the research area, while the western margins are demarcated by the city of Bulawayo, which straddles the main watershed. South of the watershed, the Runde River rising south of the city of Gweru marks the south-eastern research boundary while the Thuli River delineates the south-western margins respectively. The 21° latitude arbitrarily delimits the southern boundary, which is generally low-lying undulating country.

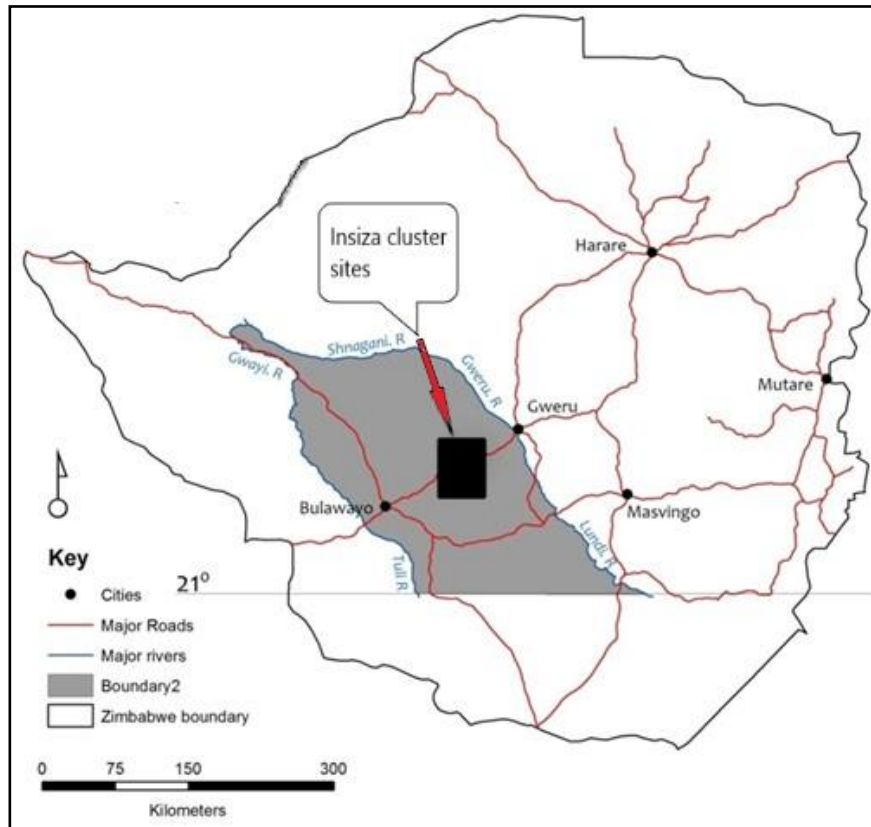


Figure 2.1: Location of the broad and specific research area

2.2 Geology and topography

The geological history of the study area stretches as far back as 3.8 billion years ago and it is generally structured as follows; Sebakwian system, Bulawayan system, Archaean Basement Complex (Younger gneisses, Shamvaian group, Younger granites, Metagabbros, Felsites and Porphyries), Precambrian (quartz veins, dolerite dykes and sheets), Karoo (fine-grained sand and mudstones with thin arkose beds), Tertiary (Kalahari system: ferricrete and sand) and Quaternary (soils, alluvium, river-terrace sands and gravels) (Harrison 1969; Schuter 2006). Hence, the study area was first underlain by ancient rocks of the Basement Complex or schist belt colloquially known as the “Greenstone/Gold Belt” because of the inherent gold reefs. These old rocks form an ‘island’ of early Precambrian sediments, mafic and ultramaphic rocks that are broadly grouped under the Sebakwian and Bulawayan systems (Harrison 1969). Harrison (1969) further explains that the Sebakwian system comprising serpentine, greenstones, quartzite, silicate and banded ironstone was followed by the Bulawayan group with greenstones, basaltic pillow lavas and associated sedimentary series (calc-silicate rocks, polytic schists, quartz and agglomerates). These hard and massive rocks later underwent extensive folding and metamorphism as they were thrust deep into the earth’s mantle by

mountain building movements. Such geological processes created several faults that were invaded by granites, mineral bearing solutions and several other eruptive rocks (Macgregor *et al.* 1972). To date these schist belts are very favourable for mining and farming activities (Moyo *et al.* 1998; Nobanda *et al.* 1998).

When granitic lavas solidified, they became the most prevalent rocks on the entire Zimbabwean landscape. Intrusive granite and gneisses cover approximately 53% of Zimbabwe, while the greenstone belt rich in gold, silver, copper, iron and many other precious minerals constitute only 7% (Schuter 2006). It follows from the above that greenstones and granites broadly characterise the ‘Great Dyke’ a high plateau region running diagonally across the research area in an east-north-east to west-south-west general direction. The administrative districts of Midlands/Gweru, Shangani-Fort Rixon, Filabusi, Bembesi and Bulawayo are therefore geologically defined by these rocks. Since the topography of Zimbabwe was divided into the Highveld (1,200 m and above) extending from the south-west to north-east, the Middleveld (600-1,200 m) and Lowveld (600 m and below), the central watershed and its adjacent areas generally represent the Highveld and Middle-veld regions (Kay 1970; Ngara *et al.* 1998). Though the percentage area of the Lowveld in the selected area of study is small, there are several isolated low-lying areas that can be classified as such (see Fig. 2.2).

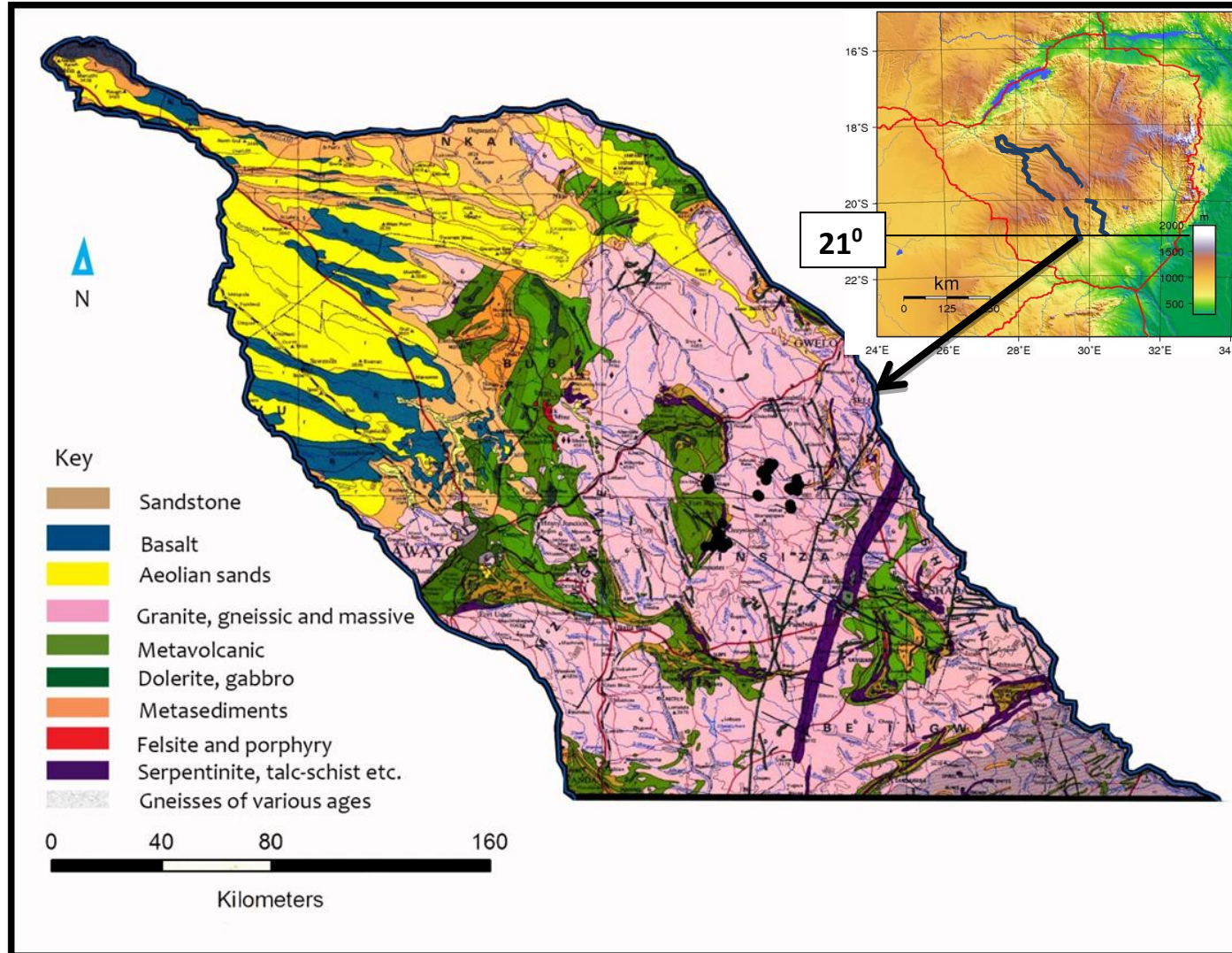


Figure 2.2: A geological and topographical map of the study area

The physical geography of the study area is hereby described following an east to west general direction, whereby the respective administrative districts cited above are systematically zoomed in for purposes of showing localised variations. Gweru and its vicinities with isolated hills, kopjes and northerly trending steep ridges rising roughly around 70 m above the surrounding country represent the extreme eastern margins of the study area (Cheshire *et al.* 1980; Tyndale-Biscoe 1949). The eruptive rocks that later appeared on this part of the country brought forth granitic intrusions, which extensively surrounded, encroached and severed the older Basement complex. The Gweru greenstone belt is flanked by rocks of the Rhodesdale and Shangani granitic terrain, which are at a slightly lower altitude falling into the Middleveld both in northern and southern sections of the watershed. However, it is difficult to easily distinguish the Highveld from Middleveld regions in the study area because the topography is almost similar in many respects (Machiridza 2012). Generally the granitic rocks in this eastern area of study form gently rolling plains with isolated hills that resulted from deep weathering processes. Perhaps the previous existence of a veneer of soft Kalahari and Karoo deposits contributed to the extensive dissection of this wide granitic landscape (Cheshire *et al.* 1980).

Towards the Shangani-Fort Rixon gold belt, this granitic terrain is cut by Proterozoic plugs and dykes of gabbro and dolerite (Harrison 1969). In this area, the central watershed once again continues as fairly flat country characterised by rocks of the Shangani-Fort Rixon gold belt and other intrusive granites. Granitic rocks in this area include migmatites, banded or foliated gneissic granite, massive and porphyroblastic types. Though granites surrounding the isolated Shangani-Fort Rixon gold belt are widespread, they are considerably lower than associated greenstones in elevation. The only exceptions being the eastern Naletale Granite massif and the long ridge of Umvimeela Dyke found around Shangani, which form part of the principal watershed in this area. This terrain, however, drops rapidly in height south of this watershed where variable landforms outcrop as knife-edged ridges and low-range rounded granite hills in both eastern and western directions. These rocks and landforms inspired the construction of numerous Khami-phase ruins found in the area today because their weathered blocks could be easily worked as construction material. Further south of this watershed, the plains are relieved by granite whale-back ridges, balancing boulder kopjes' and the very high domes of granite such as the Wabai hills on Shangagwe sections of De Beers Block (Harrison 1969). There are also numerous narrow feldspar and quartz porphyry rocks in these southern regions. In instances where granite was intruded by large quartz veins, high ridges were

formed. Around a 100 km distance going south-westwards from Insiza, the granite outcrops increasingly dominate the entire landscape through a series of repeated hill and valley portions that are commonly known as the Matobo Hills (Danamombe Management Plan 2004; Kay 1970; Machiridza 2012).

In contrast, the monotony of plains north and west of the central watershed is only partly intercepted by a few small granite boulder Kopjes like Mamba Hills and a long range of hills extending both east and north-west of Shangani area. These north-western margins of the watershed continue into Bembesi, Nyamandhlovu and Bulawayo districts. The greater parts of these districts lie along undulating plains that gently slope towards the Zambezi basin. Apart from the watershed, this broad region is fairly subdued in terms of relief (Amm 1949). Rocks in this area belong to the Bulawayo and Bembesi gold belts, which are surrounded by the granite intrusive rocks that also gave way to the Karoo sandstone and younger rocks in the far western margins of the study area. Thus the Basement Schist and intrusive granites are mainly confined to the eastern side while the latter rocks are predominant in the distant west. The north-eastern resistant metagabbroic intrusions form small granitic ‘castle’ kopjes, low ridges and elliptical/whale-back ridges commonly termed *dwalas* rising above the wide plains (Garson and Mtsvanga 1995). The Karoo rocks commonly found north of Bulawayo with alternating beds of hard basalt and soft-Forest sandstone weathered rapidly and gave rise to flat table-topped hills with steep slopes. Starting from Ndumba hills near Inyati going westwards, the Kalahari beds form a thin capping on some of the high basalt hills (Macgregor *et al.* 1972).

The adjacent southern side of the watershed constituting Umzingwane, Matopos and Bulilimangwe districts offer a greater variety of topographical features owing to the unique underlying geology. The porphyroblastic tonalitic to granodioritic gneisses, penetrated by later bodies of granites, including the Ncema Complex located east of Matopos have given rise to low-lying, undulating country dotted by small kopjes, while adjacent greenstones rise on the north-western margins of these granite rocks as prominent hills and ridges (Amm 1939; Macgregor *et al.* 1972). Garson and Mtsvanga (1995) also suggested that the southern sections of the watershed can further be split into two distinct physiographic areas closely governed by the underlying fault lines. These include the granitic terrains south of Umzingwane River characterised by low-lying undulating country with occasional steep sided slopes constituting fine-grained granite or porphyritic granite. These steep

slopes/gradients in the Limpopo catchment have enabled rivers flowing in that region to easily cut through the Kalahari sands and reach the hard Basement Complex and granites thereby giving rise to several hills and ridges. The other physiographic unit in this region is typified by the Matopos massif which bounds the southern contact of gneissic terrain. This massif is characterised by two types of topography namely; ‘castle’ kopjes with battlemented and balancing rock features as well as the smooth sided exfoliated domes or bornhardts of porphyritic granite that form high peaks like Gwangwazila and Gulati. This landscape provided an excellent habitat for many pre-colonial communities as evidenced by the continuous cultural sequence from the Middle Stone Age right up to the Later Farming Communities.

The geology of the study area promoted the development of several pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial mines whose remnants still remain scattered across the different gold belts. It is important to note that the mineral content of each gold belt varied extensively and that the number of gold mines across the respective gold belts has been declining ever since colonial times due to the declining mineral content (see Harrison 1969; Macgregor *et al.* 1972). Today most of the mines are closed, only a few remain open while some were re-opened either by small scale indigenous miners or several illegal miners commonly known as ‘*makorokoza*’. Ancient cultural developments in the form of Khami-type sites, can be attributed to past mineral exploitation activities and exploitation of associated landforms for stonewall building materials. In this respect, one may hypothesise that settlement patterns in the study area were widely influenced by the distribution of associated strategic minerals and granitic rocks, which provided suitable construction platforms and raw building materials for dry stonewalling.

2.3 Climate and Drainage

The entire Zimbabwean landscape lies within the arid to semi-arid region because of its distance from the equator and general topographical make-up (Ngara *et al.* 1998). Zimbabwe commonly experiences dry and wet seasons that can precisely be described as, a mid-November to mid-March rainy season, mid-March to mid-May post-rainy season, mid-May to August cool-dry season and finally September to mid-November hot-dry season (Ngara *et al.* 1998). It is also important to note that rainfall and temperature variations in the research area are largely influenced by prevailing physical attributes like relief and altitude, hence these annual seasons are not synonymous with climatic conditions experienced in various

parts of the research area. At a macro Zimbabwean scale, the common trend is high areas like the Eastern Highlands receive the coolest temperatures and highest precipitation while low-to-deep areas like the Zambezi and Limpopo Valleys receive very hot and dry conditions. However, at a micro-scale the climatic conditions experienced across the entire Zimbabwean landscape and the selected study area are very variable. These climatic variations are likewise influenced by changing topography and elevation, which in turn determine the general temperatures and precipitation. In view of this physiographic background, Vincent and Thomas (1961) classified Zimbabwe into five different agro-ecological zones basing on mean annual precipitation; temperature and relief (refer to Figs. 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 below).

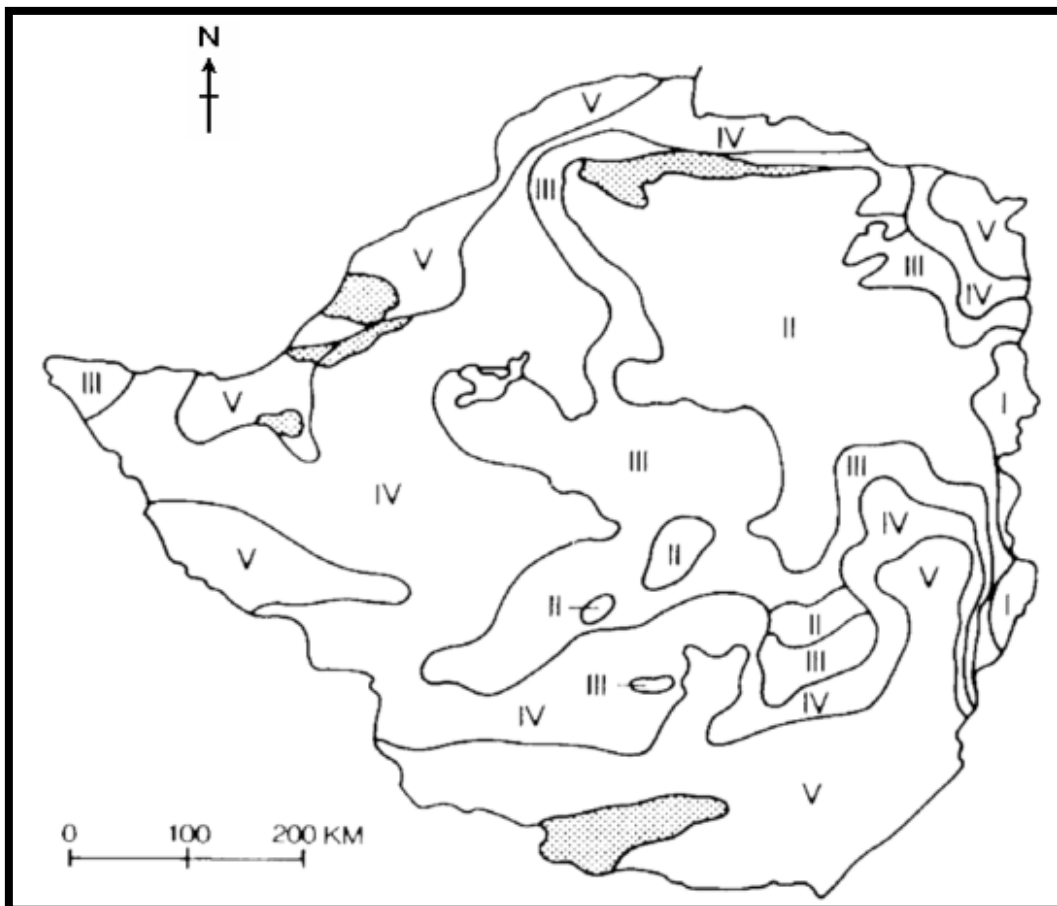


Figure 2.3: *Agro-ecological regions of Zimbabwe (After Vincent and Thomas 1961).*

Although this climatic classification system was reliable for its intended purposes at that time, it has challenges when borrowed wholesome for archaeological purposes. Precisely, this framework was widely accepted and used in Zimbabwe as a general guideline for land-use and planning but it is rather static because it does not consider climate change as a crucial factor (Machiridza 2012). Worse still, since the agro-ecological zones are broadly

categorised, they obscure local variations that occur within particular geographical regions. More so, the agro-ecological zones generally project the impression that regions I-IV are prime and semi-prime agricultural zones while region V is uninhabitable, harsh and unproductive for crops and domestic animals. However, good yields can be harvested under irrigation and past evidence of prehistoric settlements and civilisation proves that these so-called harsh environments were not as harsh after all (see Huffman 2007; Katsamudanga 2007; Manyanga 2007; Pwiti 1996a; van Waarden 2012). In fact, while region V in southern Zimbabwe is treated as unsuitable for agro-pastoral activities in this classificatory system, it was actually the host for numerous southern African early civilisations like Mapela, Mapungubwe, Machemma and Dzata among others (see Chirikure *et al.* 2014; Huffman 2007; Huffman and Piesanie 2011). Furthermore, agro-ecological zoning ignores variation that occurs along topographic catenas (variations of soil structure/texture along transects especially from a river bank to a hilltop) (Machiridza 2012). In this case, Vincent and Thomas (1961) over generalised because we know that some areas flanking rivers provide the most fertile soils, pastures and reliable water sources. For instance, the valleys of the Bembesi River have yielded Palaeolithic implements of Acheulian type while alluvial valleys of Khami and Umguza rivers constitute some of the best pastures in Matabeleland (Macgregor *et al.* 1972). While these agro-ecological regions provide a generally correct climatic picture of Zimbabwe, one needs to be aware that they are heavily compromised when it comes to illuminating finer regional variations. People are not mere dupes who simply conform to environmental constraints, rather they actively strategise in order to overcome environmental limitations. In this respect, one cannot simply rely on modern environmental classification systems to model or predict human behaviour for precolonial societies.

of drainage, the central watershed separates the northern Zambezi basin from the southern Limpopo catchment. Thus in the north, the Gweru River rising immediately north of the city flows north-westwards to join the Gwai drainage system. Immediately south of this watershed, several streams originate in the drainage depressions and vleis to feed into the Runde River flowing south-east wards towards the Limpopo River (see Fig. 2.5 below).

Table 2.1: Summary of temperature variations within the broad research area for the year 2010 (Harare Meteorological office).

Station	January		February		March		April		May		June		July		August		September		October		November		December	
	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min
Byo.	28.9	17	28.4	17.5	27.1	15.5	25.9	14.8	24.8	11.8	21.6	7.3	21.7	8.2	24	8.5	30	12.5	32.7	16	30.1	17.3	28	16.8
Gweru	28.7	15.2	28.3	15.5	26.4	17.3	26.3	13.1	23.5	8.9	20.6	4.6	21	5.4	23.3	3.9	29	7.5	31.4	12	29.5	14.6	27	15.2
Kwek.	30.6	18	30.3	18	29.1	16.4	28.6	15.8	27.1	11.2	23.6	7.1	23.8	8.6	26.7	8	31	12.2	34.3	16	31.6	18.2	29	17.8
Zvish	33.4	19.7	32.4	20	29.9	17.9	28.9	16.6	32.9	12.8	24.1	8.1	23.4	8.8	25.2	8.7	31	12.8	33.4	17	32.9	18.8	31	18.7
W Nic.	34	18.6	32.6	19	31	17.2	28.6	15.8	28	11.4	24.4	4.9	23.8	6.8	25.6	7.5	42	12.5	34.4	17	32.1	18.6	32	18.2
Plmtr.	29.4	18.5	28.5	18.1	28	16.4	26.7	15	25.5	12.2	22.1	8.1	22.3	9	24.9	9.2	30	14.7	33.5	18	30.4	17.3	28	16.9
Lupn.	32.4	24.9	31.7	18.8	31	17	30.7	15.9	29.2	10.3	25.8	4.8	26.3	6.7	29.6	5.1	34	11.2	51.5	16	34.7	18.2	32	18.5

Key: **Max**= Maximum monthly average temperature **Min**= Minimum monthly average temperature

Byo= Bulawayo **Kwek**= Kwekwe **Zvish**= Zvishavane **W Nic**= West Nicholson **Plmtr**= Plumtree
Lupn=Lupane

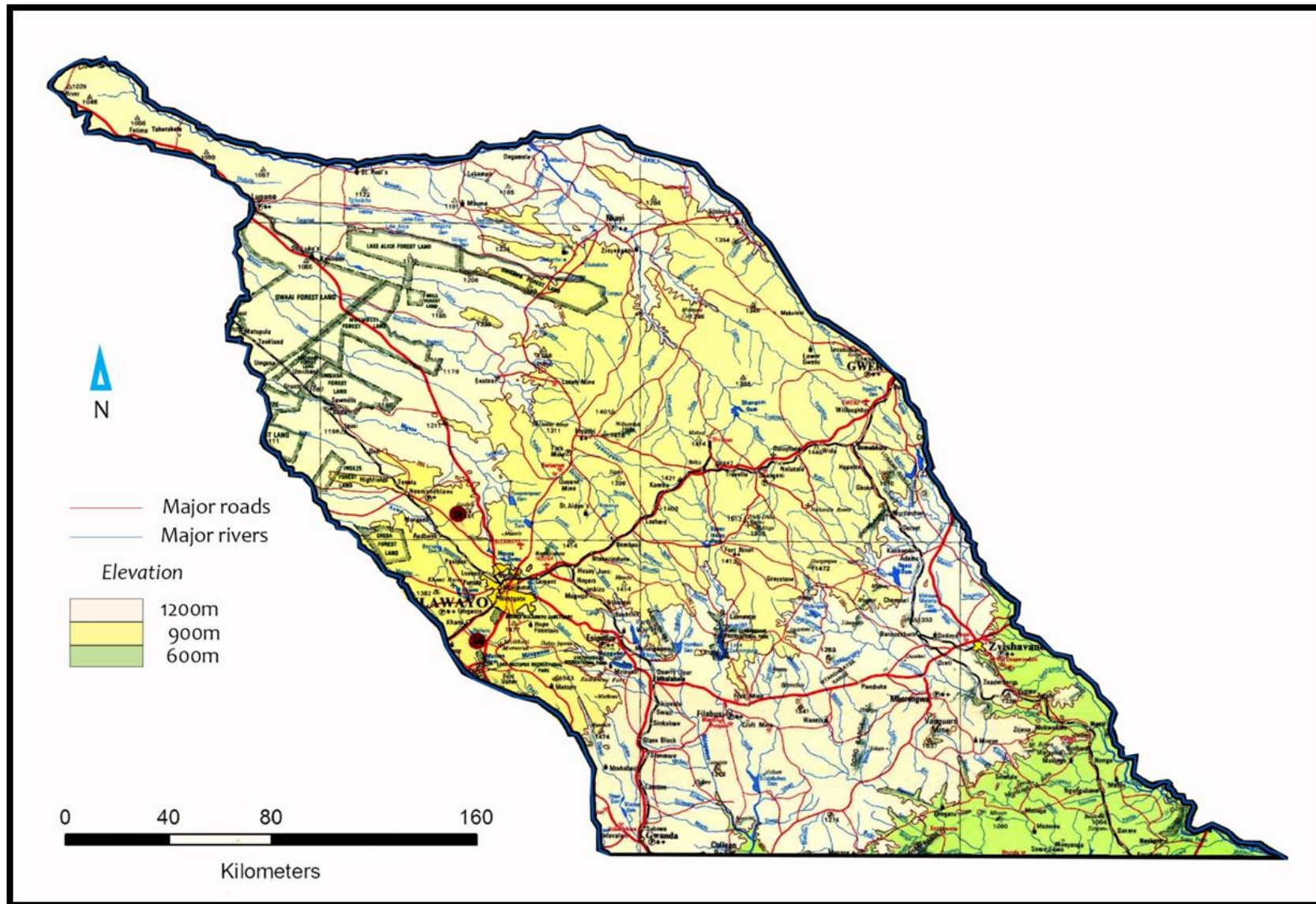


Figure 2.5: Broad study area showing drainage patterns

The extreme western sections of the Gweru region give way to Shangani, Insiza and Fort-Rixon districts, which are defined by two watersheds, the main one being the Naletale Granite that separates the Zambezi and Limpopo catchments. The secondary watershed only affects the north-western parts of the plateau. However, it is important to note that the central watershed/Great Dyke also influences drainage flowing into the major rivers (Harrison 1969). While the central watershed continues as the broad Highveld from Gweru regions, it drops in the extreme northern and southern sections into the Middle-veld. Rainfall in these lower areas is rather sporadic (Harrison 1969). The rains are usually far below average mainly falling in a space of just three months between December and February. Hence, the central plateau region is usually devoid of water between May and November thereby leaving granite areas south of the watershed with just isolated pools of water along rivers. There are three major river systems in this region namely; Shangani, Insiza and Mtshingwe, of which only Mtshingwe flows during the dry-winter season. The Shangani River rising just north of the Shangani Heights Farm in the Naletale Granite is also the only major river that drains the granite plains north of the central watershed. This river has Umsangwa and Vischy rising on the western secondary watershed as its tributaries. The Shangani River flows in a north-westerly direction running almost parallel to the eastern Gweru River into the Gwai drainage system. There are no rivers on the principal watershed but numerous streams that hardly flow a week after the end of rains feed both the eastern Mtshingwe and western Insiza Rivers in the Limpopo basin (Harrison 1969). In particular, both rivers flow in south-eastern courses, Mtshingwe River originates south of the Naletale Granite/watershed to drain the eastern sections, while Insiza River drains the whole south-western granite plateau in these districts.

The Highveld region further extends into Bembesi, Nyamandhlovu and Bulawayo from the central Shangani-Insiza districts. Except for Bulawayo, which straddles the central watershed, the rest of the administrative districts cited above are located north of the watershed. On the southern side of the same watershed are the districts of Insiza, Bubi, Umzingwane and Matopos. On these western margins of the study area, rainfall is received between November and April in the form of thunderstorms that often cause rapid river flooding (Macgregor *et al.* 1972). The moisture-laden atmosphere responsible for these heavy rains and thunderstorms usually arrives through the north-westerly winds (Amm 1939). Garson and Mtsvanga (1995) however pointed out that the rainy season in these regions is from mid-November to mid-March with an annual average that is usually below 700 mm. Macgregor *et al.* (1972) further

argues that this part of the country experienced a plain uplift north of the central watershed; a development that caused an increase in rainfall on the most elevated areas. The winter and summer months for this part of the country are generally similar to that of the whole country. During the dry-winter season, prevailing winds vary from the south-east to the south-south-east and precipitation is often received in the form of drizzle (Amm 1939). However, there are notable variations in temperature. The annual maximum temperature for the month of October is usually 28.7° C while its minimum ranges around 15.2° C. For the June and July winter months the annual average maximum temperature was 21.2° C while the minimum was just 7.2° C. It is important to note that low-lying areas like river valleys frequently experience frost during the winter seasons.

North of the watershed the drainage system comprises, from east to west, Bembesi and its Umkwasese tributary, Umguza and its Koce tributary and finally the Khami River which all constitute the Gwai River tributaries. In contrast, most rivers draining south-east from the watershed reach the Limpopo via Umzingwane and its tributary Insiza, while streams in the extreme south-western margins join the Thuli River (Amm 1939). All rivers north of the watershed flow north-west to north-north westwards towards the Zambezi River in parallel courses. Apart from minor deviations and meanders, these northern rivers are remarkably parallel and this parallelism also applies for the Gwai, Shangani and Gweru Rivers respectively. This youthful drainage pattern traces back to recent geological times where Kalahari sands were blown into the area forming plains that were later covered with unconsolidated Aeolian sand. All these deposits gradually obliterated the old drainage system (Garson and Mtsvanga 1995; Macgregor *et al.* 1972). More so, there was a land uplift which tilted the land in a north-westerly direction causing rivers to flow in that general north-westerly direction. Consequently, these rivers have eroded this landscape to form wide valleys and in areas where they cut deep into underlying granitic rocks, some rocky gorges were formed. In the past before extensive denudation of vegetation cover, these rivers could have flowed much longer. Macgregor *et al.* (1972) further points out that all these rivers are not perennial, they dry-up around winter leaving people to source water from dams and shallow wells sunk along river beds. In a way, this indicates that while these rivers appear dry during the greater part of the year, there will be a certain amount of flow immediately above the rocky bottom.

On the Limpopo side south of the watershed, rivers in the south-eastern sector drain either southwards or south-south-east to reach the Limpopo via Umzingwane and its principal tributary Insiza. Westwards from here, several rivers like Maleme, Thuli and Chavezi emerge from the steep slopes of Matopos massif. Garson and Mtsvanga (1995) points out that the south-south-east trending faults, joints and steep gradients of about 6 m/km have enabled rivers in this area to deeply incise the Kalahari sand, Basement Complex and hard granites into a variety of topographical forms. As such this drainage system and geological setup has immensely contributed to the development of some of the most prominent ridges and hills in the Limpopo catchment. The extreme south-western margins are drained by several streams which flow into the Thuli River. This river has its headwaters in the Gulati communal lands and it represents one of the major tributaries of the Limpopo River. According to Garson and Mtsvanga (1995), unlike the rivers found north of the watershed, rivers in the Limpopo basin flow during much of the year except in years of drought because of the underlying geology. This drainage pattern probably explains why we have several Khami-type sites located south of the watershed than in the north where the plateau is usually devoid of water for the greater part of the year.

Be that as it may, the average rainfall and warm to hot temperatures common to these regions are suitable for wildlife conservation, dairy farming, cattle ranching and small scale crop production. However, if large scale/commercial crop cultivation is to be conducted in the area it has to be under irrigation. Macgregor *et al.* (1972) pointed out that along the Zambezi catchment area coinciding with the northern study area, maize and various grains are grown extensively while tobacco and cotton are cultivated in smaller amounts due to a limited market. They also highlighted that the broad alluvial valleys of Khami and Umguza rivers provide some of the most fertile pastures for herds of cattle, sheep and goats in Matabeleland (Macgregor *et al.* 1972). It is also important to note that rivers in the Limpopo basin with courses that cut through the gold belts have contributed to alluvial gold deposits that created economic opportunities in both past and present times through gold panning activities.

2.4 Soils and Vegetation

Soil and vegetation types in the study area are closely tied to the underlying geology comprising greenstones, dolerites, granites, Karoo sandstones, Kalahari sand recent Quaternary deposits. Zimbabwean soils have been scientifically categorised into Ferrisiallitic (Ferralic Cambisol/Ferralic Arenosol), Siallitic (Cambisols, Luvisols and Gleysols), Lithosol

(Eutric Leptosol), Regosol (Ferri-Luvic Arenosol) and Sodic (Gleyic Solonetz and Sodic Solonchak) (Machiridza 2012; Nyamapfene 1991). Ferisiallitic soils are widely distributed along the high plateau defined by the principal watershed and Great Dyke; hence these soils have high agricultural potential because they are fertile and rainfall is relatively high in these regions. Dry stonewalled structures like Naletale and Danamombe, as well as several commercial farms were established around these soils, most probably to enhance chances of exploiting them for cultivating crops, building mud huts, and acquiring raw materials for ceramics manufacture (Machiridza 2012). Thus Nyamapfene (1991) noted that maize and other crops are widely grown in these regions. While siallitic soils also have a very high agricultural potential. They are usually affected by the aridity of the environments in which they occur. In the research area, these soils are variably distributed around Gweru, Bulawayo, Insiza and Matopos (Nyamapfene 1991:58). The last four soil groups cited above generally have low fertility; hence they only support cattle ranching and wildlife activities (Machiridza 2012; Matowanyika *et al.* 1998:144-5).

According to Nobanda *et al.* (1998), the fertile deep-red clay soils commonly found along the central watershed were derived from the harder and more resistant mafic rocks like dolerite. In fact, soils derived from basic igneous intrusions (Basement Schist rocks) have heavier clay content and excellent fertility values than granite derived soils. As such, the Highveld plateau regions associated with Kalahari sands and ferricrete overlying mafic and calcalkaline greenstones have given rise to a heavy growth of *Brachystegia* varieties like *Spiciformis*/Msasa/Igonde and *Boehmii*/Mupfuti/Itshabela while those with felsic greenstones carry more open acacia and Mopani shrubs (Cheshire *et al.* 1980; Garson and Mtsvanga 1995). Bradley and Dewees (1993) also highlighted that in such high plateau localities Miombo woodlands in the form of *Brachystegia Spiciformis*, *Boehmii* and *Julbernadia globiflora*/Munondo are predominant (see Fig. 2.6). In most cases these trees are commonly used for mine shafting, construction of huts and wagons as well as wood fuel.

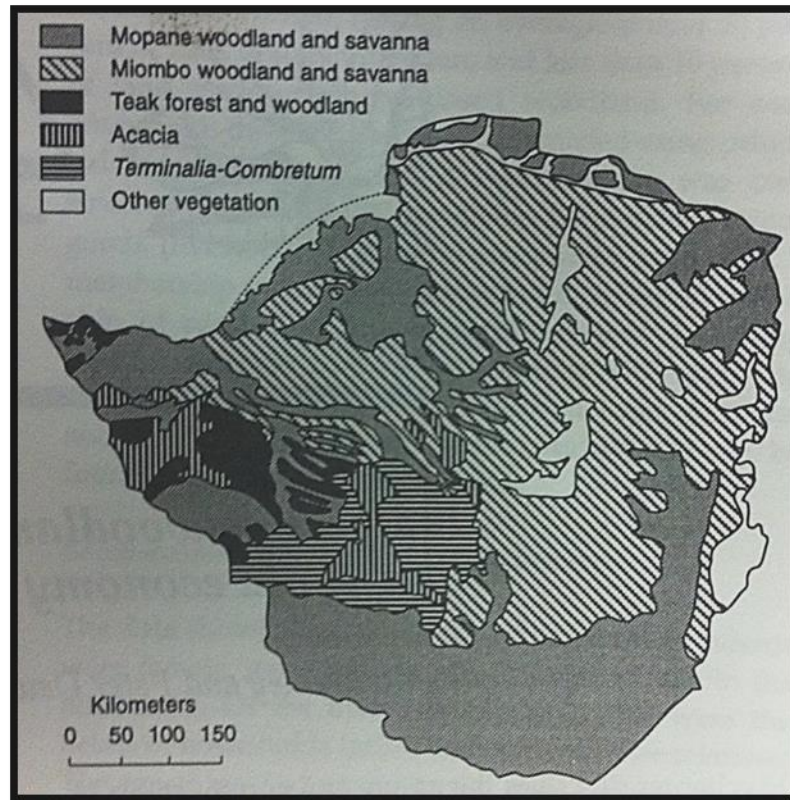


Figure 2.6: Woodland distribution map (After Bradley and Dewees 1993)

Miombo woodlands are often associated with *Acacia* (*Mlotica*, *Galpinii*/Umdwadwa, *Gerrardi* and *Karoo*/Muunga), *Sclerocarya*, *Combretum* and *Kirkia* species which also favour rich clay sub-stratus (Bradley and Dewees 1993; Pardy 1951). Pardy (1951) noted that young foliage from these trees is loved by both cattle and goats while the wood is commonly used for mine shaft construction and general fencing purposes. According to Poilecot (2007), Miombo woodlands are also characterised by tall *Andropogoneae* grasses such as *Hyparrhenia filipendula*, *H. Cymbraria*, *Hyperthelia dissolute*, *Andropogon gayanus*, *Schizachyrium* and many other species. These grasses provide nutritious browse for cattle when green but a certain amount of their feeding value is lost during the dry season. Apart from providing pastures for diverse faunal species and thatching material for houses, some of the associated plants yield wild fruits that often augment indigenous food supplies (Machiridza 2012). In contrast to the greenstone rocks, granite derived soils are usually sandy, light-textured and low in fertility content (Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism 1987). Matowanyika *et al.* (1998) however pointed out that those granitic areas that receive rainfall above 800 mm produce deep, clayey and acidic soils, while those receiving between 750-400 mm annually generate poor sandy soils.

In terms of vegetation, granitic terrains surrounding Basement Schist rocks offer a sharp contrast through sparse low-tree and bushes interspaced with wide expanses of rolling grassland (see Plates 2.1 and 2.2 below). The tree species include *Colophospermum* Mopane commonly found in association with a number of shrub species like *Grewia* spp. north of the main watershed (Bradley and Dewees 1993). These species provide good cattle browse throughout the year because of their palatability and accessibility. The new leaves and thin stalks of *Mopane* trees provide good protein and fibre for browsers throughout the year, even their fallen dry leaves retain high feed value (Hunt 1951). Cattle also love the edible parts of *Grewia* spp. shrub during June and July months because of their high protein content (Hunt 1951). Other granitic associated tree species include *Acacia Robusta* (Umshabunga), *Cussonianatalensis* (cabbage tree) Mufenje/Umkwazakwaza, *Entandrophragma* (Umpapama), *Euphorbia ingens* (Candelabra tree) Mkonde/Umhlonhlo, *Faureaspeciosa* Mujungwe, *Ficussonderi* (Sonder's fig) Umkiwani, *Pterocarpus angolensis* Mukwa/Mubvamaropa, *Rhuslancea* (Kareeboom) Musokosiana/Umhlogotshiana, *Sclerocarya caffra* (Marula) Mufura/Unganu, *Terminalia serecea* (Yellow wood) Mususu/Umgangwe, *Thespeciagarckeana* (Snot apple) Mtohwé/ixagixagu and *Uapaca kirkiana* (wild loquat) Muzhanje/Lihobohobo (Pardy 1951). Contemporary uses associated with these trees include furniture making, ornaments, construction, firewood and some trees even yield tasty indigenous fruits that are sometimes sold for extra-family income. In particular, the fruit bearing trees are *Thespeciagarckeana* (Snot apple) Mtohwé/ixagixagu, *Uapaca kirkiana* (wild loquat) Muzhanje/Lihobohobo, *Sclerocarya caffra* (Marula) Mufura/Unganu and *Rhuslancea* (Kareeboom) Musokosiana/Umhlogotshiana.



Plate 2.1: A landscape view of the vegetation in the study area (Field data 2014)

Grass cover in *Acacia* woodlands is usually very poor as it comprises annuals like bristle grass/stick grass (*Aristida adscensionis*), *A. scabrivalvis*, *A. rhiniochlora*, *Erogrostis rogersii*, *Enneapogon cenchroides* and *Heteropogon melanocarpus* (see Machiridza 2012; Poilecot 2007; Timberlake & Mapaure 1999; Wild 1952). However, other associated grasses found in granite derived soils include *Digitaria* (*Monodactyla*/One finger grass, *Brazzae*/Purple-topped finger grass, *Ternata*/Black seed finger grass, *Gazensis*/Gazaland finger grass), *B. Viridula*/Green false paspalum, *B. Brizantha*/Upright false paspalum, *B. Nigropedata*/Spotted false paspalum, *B. Serata*/Red-topped false paspalum, *B. Eruciformis*/Sweet false paspalum, *B. Glabra*/Purple Tassel grass, *P. Commersonii*/Common Native paspalum, *P. Polystachyum*/Large Native paspalum, *U. Mosambicensis*/Gonya grass and *S. SemiberbeNees*/Autumn grass (Sturgeon 1953). While these grass species provide excellent sweet browse for cattle, goats and wildlife, when dry they are usually exploited as thatching material by indigenous communities. In addition to the above functions, these grasses also provide good wildlife habitats in addition to reducing erosion and silting of rivers. Apart from granite derived soils, the central and western sections of the research area are characterised by small patches of sandy soil formed on Aeolian deposits. In particular, the erosion of both

Karoo and Forest-sandstones in the extreme western regions gradually extended the Kalahari sand-veld to the north-western sections of the study area.



Plate 2.2: A view of grass plains typical of the study area (Field data 2014)

These Kalahari sands have continuously been blown from the western margins and deposited on the eastern and central sections of the study area, thereby forming a thin veneer capping on both granite and greenstone rocks. In particular, the extreme north-western margins of the study area are widely covered by sandy soils derived from weathering Karoo sandstones. This Kalahari sand-veld is generally well drained although it has a poor moisture retention capacity. Throughout the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras, a number of farmers have taken advantage of these soils to grow several tobacco varieties (Amm 1939; Harrison 1969; Ncube 2004). In addition, these extensive Kalahari sand-beds have given rise to a characteristic bush-flora known locally as *gusu*. At a broader scale, Kalahari sands are dominated by woodland varieties of *Teak*, *Acacia*, *Mopane* and *Terminalia-Combretum* (Bradley and Dewees 1993). These woodland groups can further be broken-down into *Teak* (*Baikiaea plurijuga*/Rhodesian teak/Umgusu, *Ricinodendron rautanenii*/Mugongo/Umgoma, *Pterocarpus anglolensis*/Mukwa/Mubvamaropa and *Gubourtia coleosperma*/Rhodesian Mahogany/Umtshibi), *Acacia* (*Giraffae*/Giraffe-thorn/Umhohlo, *Heteracantha*/Umbrella-

thorn/Umsanesane), *Mopane* (*Colophospermum*/Mupani, *Spirostachys Africana*/African sandalwood/Mutivoti), *Terminalia-Combretum* (*Terminalia serecea*, *C. Imberbe*, *C. Gueinzii*, *C. Apiculatum*, *C. Ternifolium* and *Barkea Africana*) among many others (Bradley and Dewees 1993; Hunt 1951; Pardy 1951).

Teak varieties are exploited for timber, furniture and mine shafting while *Acacia* species produce very nutritious pods that are highly favoured as food by wild and domestic animals (Pardy 1951). *Mopane* species likewise provide valuable browse for both cattle and wild animals through their high protein and fibre rich leaves. In addition their leaves are highly valued by *Gonimbrasiabelina*/Mopane worms, which are a popular indigenous dish that sometimes fetch prices equivalent to fresh beef on the market. Although *Terminalia-Combretum* tree species are rich in protein content like *Mopane*, they are not as resistant to droughts like *Mopane* and their leaves have relatively lower protein values (Hunt 1951). Grass cover for *Terminalia-Combretum* woodlands is generally poor, it often comprises of *Eragrostisviscova*, *E. Rogersii*, *Aristidacongesta*, *A. Scabrivalvis*, *A. Stipitata* and *Pogonarthriasquarrosa* (Chapano 2002; Poilecot 2007). Wood derived from these tree species is commonly used for firewood, construction, fencing and mine shafting. At a much broader scale all the above cited woodlands are commonly associated with grass species like *Milanjiana*/Milanje, *Nemoralis/Seriata*, *Velutina*/Flaccid finger grass, *B. humidicola*/Creeping false paspalum, *U. Trichopus*/Herringbone grass, *P. Polystachyum*/Large Native paspalum and *P. Commersonii*/Common Native paspalum among others (Sturgeon 1953). These grasses significantly compliment the browse feed through sweet grazing during the rainy seasons. In view of this environmental background, it is therefore not surprising that south-western Zimbabwe is widely known for livestock production and wildlife exploitation since prehistoric times. In fact, the large quantities of cattle and wildlife bones recovered from archaeological sites like Khami and Danamombe actually signal the prolonged human interaction with the south-western Zimbabwean environment.

2.5 Historical and current land-use patterns

The south-western landscape of Zimbabwe has witnessed extensive shifts in both land use and economic activities since pre-colonial times; hence there cannot be a single description for land use patterns in that broad region. This section therefore takes a snap-shot of just the current and historical land use patterns typical of the study area. Before the advent of

colonialism in Zimbabwe, land was managed through African tenure systems operating under the authority of chiefs, village, and lineage heads (Mabhena 2010). Under this traditional governance system, there was communal right to free access and use of resources like grazing, water, grass, trees and soils. Following the establishment of colonial rule in 1890, communally owned land was systematically demarcated in favour of white minority rule thereby impoverishing many Africans. These developments resulted in the 1st Chimurenga wars (1893-4 and 1896-7) as Africans attempted to resist colonial injustice and oppression. Thus, various historical Forts scattered in the study area like Fort Ingwenya in Lower Gweru and Fort Rixon near Regina ruins as well as Allan Wilson's memorial in Matopos among others in Matabeleland commemorate just some of the white war-victims (Cheshire *et al.* 1980; Harrison 1969). Following the successful suppression of these initial African rebellions, various colonial legislations such as the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, Forestry Acts of 1936, 1941 and 1954 as well as the Land Tenure Act of 1969, among other draconic legislations, were enacted to completely destroy African rights to land access. Consequently, before the Fast Track Land Reform and Resettlement Programme (FTLRRP) initiated in the year 2000, white owned commercial farms covered a greater part of the study area as they were mainly concentrated along the central watershed and its immediate vicinities, while indigenous communities were scattered in barren Tribal Trust lands located either north or south of the central watershed.

It is also interesting to note that even at a broader scale land use patterns in Zimbabwe were quite clear before the onset of the FTLRRP in 2000. In particular the distribution was as follows; commercial farmland (16%), national parks (27%), sanctuaries and state forests (11%), communal lands (39%), resettlement (3%) and urban areas/others (4%). In Matabeleland north, the area coinciding with the Gwai-Shangani catchment area, colonial land allocation significantly alienated the indigenous African populations. Hill and Katarere (2002) note that 90% of the land was under the Gwai-Bembesi forests as Africans were prohibited from occupying such areas. Despite this, some annual renewable permits were occasionally granted to just a few Africans for purposes of exploiting their cheap labour in forest management activities. Even so, these indigenous people were not allowed to keep livestock including small ones like goats (Hill and Katarere 2002). Kwashirai (n.d.) however, argues that the abundance of Mopane trees and sweet grasses around Gwai and Shangani favoured cattle ranching instead of goats. Consequently since colonial times, Africans living in the Gwai-Shangani catchment area generally preferred cattle keeping to goat rearing. Be

that as it may, livestock husbandry was their main source of livelihood because crop production was constantly affected by unpredictable rains and poor soils. As such, since historical times, the shortage of grazing lands has been a major concern for these communities. This general trend of colonial land allocation also applies for the adjacent Matabeleland South Province, which coincides with the Limpopo catchment zone. Perhaps the only exception for land use patterns south of the watershed was that goats thrived very well in those regions.

Since white commercial farms were mainly concentrated along the central watershed with Fersiallitic soils, average rainfall and extensive pasture, many farmers operating therein specialised in crop production (maize, cotton, Turkish tobacco and other cereals), small-scale irrigated horticulture (vegetables), cattle ranching (beef and dairy), wildlife management (meat, trophies and tourism) and mining activities (gold, iron, copper and cement). This explains why the cities of Gweru and Bulawayo developed as the eastern and western commercial hubs of associated mining and farming activities. While colonial economic activities were diverse, livestock production became the most successful source of income in the selected area of study. Although the same broad region boasts of several gold belts, it is important to note that commercial gold production has been declining over the years. In fact, the number of active gold mines declined sharply since the 1890s, only a handful are still operating at very limited scales (see Cheshire *et al.* 1980; Garson and Mtsvanga 1995; Harrison 1969). The realisation by the colonial government that south-western regions were better suited for livestock rearing than mining and crop production led to the establishment of the Matopos Research Station, which sought to improve livestock breeds and pastures (Mabhena 2010). Twenty years after independence, there were minor changes in terms of land use and economic patterns because the whites retained most of their farms while Tribal Trust lands simply became communal lands under District Councils. However, land reforms that occurred during and after the year 2000 radically reconfigured the picture of this entire landscape.

Many white commercial farmers were displaced by indigenous community members who forcibly moved back onto their ‘ancestral lands’. These indigenous farmers moved in either as A1-small scale farmers or A2-large scale farmers; however some of the farms were turned into cooperatives that are still running under the Agriculture and Rural Development Authority (ARDA). While some of the “new farmers” took advantage of access to new

grazing lands to increase their cattle herds (see Plate 2.3), others simply decided to loot the former white owned commercial farms and abandon them (see Cobo *et al.* 2009; Mabhena 2010). Mabhena (2010) actually notes that following the FTLRRP over 90% of livestock once owned by white commercial farmers was slaughtered, stolen, poisoned and sold thereby undermining livestock production in the Matabeleland region. Likewise, horticultural activities declined significantly as most of the new farmers failed to maintain the infrastructure, which they turned into several uses for short-term income ventures (Mabhena 2010). Moyo (2010) also argues that the FTLRRP created “semi-absentee landlords” who now double as urban dwellers and mixed subsistence farmers. These mixed subsistence farmers grow maize, wheat, finger millet, groundnuts, round-nuts, pumpkins, sweet-reeds and watermelons, while simultaneously rearing few cattle, goats, sheep and donkeys (Moyo 2010). Although livestock husbandry and crop production remain the major sources of income in these newly settled areas, multiple livelihoods are more common. In most cases income generated from off-farm activities like gold panning, hunting, urban employment and trading is channelled towards livestock farming because it is the best investment and survival option.



Plate 2.3: Cattle thrive very well in the study area (Field data 2014)

The farmers/peasants who did not move from their communal areas to the commercial farms still continue with their semi-extensive to extensive livestock ranching projects widely

supported by cultivation of short-season maize varieties and other drought tolerant crops like sorghum, rapoko, cow peas and pearl millet. Among these rural communities', cattle still constitute the most reliable source of subsistence, income, capital and type of savings (Mabhena 2010). Despite experiencing incessant poor harvests of maize due to prevailing harsh environmental and climatic conditions, these communities never give up on their maize crop. Mabhena (2010) states that many farmers in the region still continue to grow maize because modern grinding mills for small grain crops are hard to find in communal areas. Usually during the late summer season or in years of drought when food is scarce, people in these communal areas sometimes exploit forest resources for survival. In particular forests provide a variety of wild fruits, mushrooms, insects as well as good habitats for bees that produce honey and wild animals that can be hunted as food supplements' (Hill and Katarere 2000; Nyamapfene 1991). Apart from the above, people in communal areas near Gwai and Bembesi forests also take advantage of forest resources to get; livestock feed, dry leaf-litter as cheap manure, wood for ornaments and furniture as well as employment opportunities that sometimes arise from nearby sawmills (Hill and Katarere 2000). More so, some communal members pan rivers near greenstones for alluvial gold while others mine gold or chrome to earn some extra-income. Furthermore, people in communal areas near Matopos cultural landscape make wooden crafts targeting tourists and other interested buyers who frequent the area. Although the research area does not provide the best environment for human survival and wealth accumulation, it has certainly sustained diverse economic activities and generations of people since pre-colonial times.

2.6 The south-western environment and pre-colonial cultural succession

As already indicated above, south-western Zimbabwe was a generally dry region that required the exploitation of natural resources from wider areas. This region has received reasonable research attention to-date (see Chirikure *et al.* 2012; 2013; 2016; 2018; House 2016; Manyanga; Mukwende 2016; Mukwende *et al.* 2018; Nyamushosho 2017; Nyamushosho *et al.* 2018; van Waarden 2008, 2012); however more can still be done. This region possessed strategic resources that sustained powerful centres like Schroda, Bosutswe, Mapungubwe, Great Zimbabwe, Mutapa and Torwa/Rozvi states among others. Interactions between foragers/hunter-gatherers, Early Farming Communities (EFC) and Later Farming Communities (LFC) with the environment have resulted in a vivid cultural impression on this landscape. Areas that have received extensive archaeological attention like the Matopos

cultural landscape indicate that Middle and Later Stone Age sites stretch as far back as 125 000 to 2000 years ago (Walker 1995). Of course, the respective hunter-gatherers were not confined to one place because food was seasonally available and widely scattered throughout the landscape. In order to survive, the respective foraging communities constantly shifted around south-western Zimbabwe, eastern Botswana and northern South Africa in search of wild fruits, insects as well as small and large game. The rock art and stone tool industries now widely scattered in these regions testify to their cultural perceptions, technological innovation and shifts in behaviour as they strategically responded to their environment. However around the first millennium AD a group of Bantu speaking people arrived from West and East Africa and introduced a new culture system of cultivating sorghums and millets, herding livestock (goats, sheep, cattle), settled villages, ceramic manufacture, mining and processing of iron (Pwiti 1996a).

These Early Iron Age villagers are generally believed to have come through the western Kalundu and eastern Urewe streams of migration (Huffman 2007). Their arrival consequently put pressure on the land and limited natural resources that were already supporting hunter-gatherers. Cultural contact between foragers and these early farmers was quite complex though it resulted in either direct conflict or integration (Manyanga *et al.* 2013). Current views however favour the integration theory, which stipulates that hunter-gatherers gradually adapted to the more advanced agricultural/settled lifestyle by establishing exchange ties with their new farming counterparts. They interacted through marriages, rainmaking rituals and labour, milk, meat, hides, honey and metal products among other things acquired from the environment (Manyanga *et al.* 2013; Phillipson 2005). Culturally, Zhizo and Leopard's Kopje ceramics characterise most areas once inhabited by hunter-gatherers in south-western Zimbabwe. Zhizo societies in south-western Zimbabwe also closely interacted with their counterparts in eastern Botswana and the Shashi-Limpopo basin. These societies were brought together by the desire to survive through exploiting natural resources that were distributed across the entire landscape (van Waarden 1998; Whitelaw 1997). According to Denbow *et al.* (2008) these Zhizo communities derived 60% of their protein from game meat. Zhizo communities at Schroda were also exploiting the interior environment including south-western Zimbabwe for ivory, gold, rhino horns, leopard skins and iron. These local goods were in-turn taken to coastal stations like Sofala in Mozambique where they were exchanged for glass beads, cotton and silk cloth, and glazed ceramics (Huffman 2005).

It is interesting to note that by the 10th century AD socio-political transformations from social ranking to class structures were shaping up because of the intensification of agriculture, elite strategies and trade activities (Calabrese 2000; Huffman 2005; Reid *et al.* 1998). External trade augmented traditional forms of power and wealth by providing exotic goods that could be strategically controlled, distributed and manipulated as a new form of wealth, status, power and identity symbol by the few Leopard's Kopje elite families. At Mapungubwe floodplain agriculture played a crucial role through sustaining large populations that helped intensify social differences or formal class structures (Huffman 2005). In eastern Botswana, elite strategies of managing cattle and metallurgical products were at the centre of social transformations that occurred between 1000 and 1200 AD. Actually, Denbow *et al.* (2008) noted that this period was characterised by a change from central to dispersed herd management where cattle and small stock were shifted to wider far villages with better pasture. In a way this strategy of coping with the environment enabled elites to broaden their power base by encouraging their subordinates to surrender their labour and loyalty in exchange for cattle, controlled quantities of imported goods and promises of fertility and rain (Denbow *et al.* 2008:478). Ceramics similar to those from Great Zimbabwe and Khami were found at the site of Bosutswe in eastern Botswana suggesting that local exchange ties in agricultural produce and other objects were quite active at a regional scale (Denbow *et al.* 2008). In this case the gradual development of complexity in the Shashe-Limpopo basin, eastern Botswana and south-western Zimbabwe was closely tied to each other and the environment at large. In view of this background, one may thus argue that the environment has always shaped cultural processes among the respective prehistoric communities highlighted above.

2.7 Conclusions

The physiography of south-western Zimbabwe has had a remarkable influence on both past and present socio-economic and political processes. Although south-western Zimbabwe generally had less favourable environmental conditions for human habitation, it was endowed with diverse mineral, faunal and floral resources that were strategically exploited by the different cultural groups that successively occupied the region. In fact, it is impossible to fully appreciate both past and present cultural processes therein without paying close attention to the respective environmental attributes and strategies that were employed by different elites/agents that inhabited the region. More so, one cannot isolate the pre-colonial

cultural processes in south-western Zimbabwe from the broader regions of eastern Botswana and the Shashe-Limpopo basin because there were always strong economic and political ties. A careful analysis of archaeological literature reveals that interactions between these three regions eventually culminated in the development of several complex societies like Bosutswe, Shoshong, Toutswe, Mapela, Mapungubwe, Great Zimbabwe and Khami. In fact, ever since the early part of the 1st millennium AD, south-western Zimbabwe was a major source of strategic natural resources. Apart from Mapela, although no major state capital emerged in that region until the 13th century, when the local elites eventually started to strategically manipulate their own resources for state ideology and power, a very powerful Torwa/Butua state epitomised by Khami-phase sites finally emerged. The next chapter outlines the conceptual approaches for this study.

Chapter Three

Agency, Landscape and Power

“In a way, each landscape tells a story about the culture by which it has been shaped. When the historical layers of a landscape are analysed, a temporal sequence of cultures can be traced.” (Jordan 2012:120).

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis, which are broadly situated within the framework of historical archaeology. The development of complexity in south-western Zimbabwe is conceptualised as having been gradual, continuous and multi-dimensional as human agents strategically pursued wealth, prestige and power. It is presumed that the strategic employment of both corporate/creative and exclusionary/instrumental modes of power gradually shaped the evolution of cultural complexity in that region. The discussion then narrows down to an agency landscape approach, which is considered to be directly relevant to the understanding of Rozvi identities in south-western Zimbabwe. In order to diagnose the archaeology of the Rozvi in south-western Zimbabwe, more information should be elicited from related historical sources. Rozvi identities were reflexively constructed from both Karanga and Kalanga cultural traditions and ultimately distinctive material culture was strategically appropriated to symbolise some of those ethnic traditions. In order to set out a complete theoretical scene for this study, an overview on cultural complexity processes in southern Africa is presented as the chapter draws to an end.

3.2 Historical Archaeology

Ever since its creation in the 1920s in the United States of America (USA) and expansion into Europe in the 1930s, historical archaeology has undergone massive transformations in attempts to address a variety of research problems (see Hall 2006; Orser 2009, 2010; Paynter 2000; Pikirayi 1993; Pikirayi and Pwiti 1999; Robertshaw 2004; Schmidt 1977, 1983, 2006). Initially, historical archaeology was entangled in nationalist ideologies. However, by the 1960s it had become a fully fledged academic sub-discipline albeit with certain unclear theoretical foundations (Orser 2008). Connah (2007:37) adds that by the 1970s it had been adopted in several parts of the world as the ‘archaeology of the colonial period’ or the study of material culture manifestation of European culture into non-European territories starting

from the 15th century onwards. This definition, which had been adopted from Schuyler (1978), had a problem of limiting historical archaeology to literate people or only those areas with European influence.

This scenario was problematic for most parts of the world, particularly Africa where documentary evidence was restricted to small geographical localities (Hall 2006; Jones and Russell 2012). Schmidt (1977, 1983, 2006) has thus consistently advocated for the use of oral traditions when conducting historical archaeology in Africa, and of course he has cautioned others about the weaknesses of oral accounts for periods as early as the 15th century. Jones and Russell (2012:272) also noted that the use of oral history in historical archaeology has become more widespread recently following the realisation that the problems bedevilling oral traditions are also common to the discipline of archaeology in general. Precisely, there are numerous subjectivities, personal interests, and power relation challenges in the general practice of archaeology as indigenous views are often marginalised. Following this realisation and the immense potential of oral history in opening-up the past in refreshing ways, Jones and Russell (2012:274) postulated that:

Above all, the use of oral memory in archaeological research offers us rich potential. It provides a means to understand how people of the past and the present experienced historical landscapes, and to see how meaning is created and negotiated.

Since the 1980s, there was a drive towards social interpretations of the past, a development that brought about even more radical changes in the general practice of historical archaeology. Such advances in the practice of historical archaeology have exploded into multiple but overlapping thematic dimensions such as heritage and memory, identities and material culture, place and belonging, agency/meaning and action, capitalism/contact period, power relations in state level organisations and issues of analytical scale among others (see Hall 2006; Jones and Russell 2012; Orser 2009, 2010; Paynter 2000). Researchers operating in different parts of the world have therefore developed diverse frameworks of exploring these themes under historical archaeology. These recent advances have also been coupled with exponential epistemological and methodological growth of historical archaeology. It is therefore not surprising that a bit of conceptual confusion about what historical archaeology really is has been created by this rapid growth and there are far too many themes currently under investigation. In line with this rapid expansion, Orser (2009:115) commented that:

... theoretical breath is what gives the contemporary practice of historical archaeology its interpretive power, historical insight, and relevance.

In Zimbabwe, the archaeology of complex societies that preceded colonisation has been identified as potentially interesting from a historical archaeology perspective (see Pikirayi 1993, 1997; Pikirayi and Pwiti 1999). Actually, Pikirayi (1993:35) observed that most of the post-1500 state formation and developmental processes are effectively interrogated within the context of historical archaeology. Since the Rozvi rose to prominence during the historical period, where numerous oral traditions remain relevant to their past, historical archaeology automatically becomes the most promising framework to investigate their complex archaeology (see Pikirayi 1997). In this case, historical archaeology is defined as the study of the last 500 years, where material remains are analysed with the aid of oral, textual and anthropological sources for purposes of reconstructing a coherent account of the past. The respective historical narrative should pay close attention to the situational effects of identities, power relations and belief systems in the evolution of landscapes and cultural complexity as outlined below.

3.3 Cultural complexity: a brief

Processes associated with the development of social stratification, transformation of small independent groups into large polities or the emergence of cultural complexity have always been archaeologically contested (Tainter 1988:22). There is no overall consensus about such things as definitions, forms and traits of cultural complexity. Archaeologists therefore subscribe to different schools of thought regarding this subject and such paradigms include; neo-evolutionism, historical particularism, processualism, and post-processualism encompassing historical materialism and the practice/agency theory. These theoretical frameworks significantly differ in terms of their evaluation of causal factors, social typologies and processes of social change (Carneiro 1981; Chapman 2003; Hodder 1982; Morris 2009; Renfrew and Cherry 1986; Schortman 1989). Owing to the numerous challenges associated with most frameworks cited above, researchers are slowly shifting the pendulum towards agency oriented models (e.g. Anschuetz *et al.* 2001; Arnold *et al.* 2015; Blanton *et al.* 1996; Chirikure *et al.* 2014; Chirikure *et al.* 2017; Falzarano 2014; McIntosh 1999; Morris 2009).

Instead of addressing cultural complexity development through monolithic models, agency theory focuses on interactions and contradictions of individual/exclusionary and group

oriented political action (see Anschuetz *et al.* 2001; Blanton *et al.* 1996; Dobres and Robb 2000). Material culture associated with these political strategies is considered to have been actively used in building power by communicating membership through exchange patterns in certain goods and projecting artistic symbolic conventions through architecture. While those already holding power or wealth were better positioned to influence socio-political transformations, ordinary citizens also had their fair share of influence in such political and economic processes (Blanton *et al.* 1996). Agency theory prioritises power and power relations in describing the origins and working of complex societies (Miller and Tilley 1984; Stein 1998). Mann (1986) defined power as the ability of either individuals or collective groups to pursue and attain goals through mastery of their environments. Although power is an abstract concept, it can also be expressed through the social, ideological, economic, military and political relationships that constitute its media (Stein 1998). Blanton *et al.* (1996) further states that there are two types of power; namely exclusionary power, where actors want monopoly over sources of power and corporate/symbolic power, where power is shared across different groups and sectors of society.

Exclusionary power normally stems from control of objective sources (e.g. wealth, ideology, factors of production, military and natural resources), while symbolic power evolves from shared elements of cognitive codes like religion and ritual (Blanton *et al.* 1996). When individuals compete for these sources of power, socio-political structures emerge and change gradually occurs within such societies (Renfrew and Cherry 1986; Pauketat 2007; Stein 1998). Shifts from exclusionary to corporate strategies results in either wealth-based or knowledge-based political economies (Blanton *et al.* 1996). When leaders compete for objective sources of power, they employ network-based strategies that emphasise external ties to gain exotic goods thereby creating hierarchical power structures (Peregrine 2012; Schortman 1989; Stein 1998). In this sense, particular individuals are considered key to the development of hierarchical power structures that often characterize prestige-goods in political economies. In contrast, corporate/group oriented strategies of gaining and maintaining economic and political power results in the formation of heterarchical power structures that are less concerned with individual wealth accumulation but group solidarity (Blanton *et al.* 1996; Renfrew and Cherry 1986; Stein 1998). Under this approach, complexity does not stem from clearly defined social types/stages but from differential and constantly shifting patterns of political economies deriving from wealth and knowledge based strategies (Chapman 2003; Renfrew and Cherry 1986; Schortman 1989).

In order to denote these two kinds of strategies in the archaeological record, we need to have very strong control over inferences on production processes, the distribution of prestige goods and time. Nonetheless, if the contemporaneity of several sites with almost similar material culture patterning is established within a particular locality, then one may be dealing with a heterarchical power structure. Heterarchy is a concept, principle or perspective of social organisation that enables us to define the origins of social change and to develop models of internally generated social evolutionary change (Pauketat 2007; Stein 1998). It permits us to explore the role of internal factors like identities, class and control of land, pastoral capital, labour, kinship ties, ritual and local philosophies about leadership in the development of complexity. Crumely (1995) defined heterarchy as the relationship of elements to one another when unranked or when having potential for ranking in several ways. Thus coalitions or federations that have decentralized both power and control over productive resources would fall into the category of heterarchical power relationships. Heterarchical social organizations are not exclusively hierarchical because of the flexible, contingent and constantly fluctuating power relationships. Unlike the hierarchical power structures, heterarchical forms of organization develop when leaders use salient social identity as part of corporate-based strategies and their power derives from the size of their corporate faction rather than plain access to prestige-goods (see Renfrew 1986; Renfrew and Cherry 1986; Schortman 1989; Stein 1998). All these socio-political processes are usually embedded within space, which is hereby examined in terms of agency landscape approaches.

3.4 An agency landscape approach: identities, ethnicity and style

People are not mere dupes who simply occupy space and conform to structural limitations inherent therein. Instead, they actively define themselves through reflecting on their daily experiences and immediate surroundings, which they manipulate to construct numerous meanings that sustain ‘a sense of place’ or social comfort. Such acting beings strategically construct ‘places’ within ‘spaces’ through selectively utilising the landscape to objectify certain ideas or feelings and such actions result in ‘cultural landscapes’. Cultural landscapes are therefore outcomes of the way people define, use and modify their physical, cultural and social spaces into meaningful places over time (see Amundsen-Meyer 2011; Anschuetz *et al.* 2001; Arnold *et al.* 2015; Falzarano 2014; Honeychurch 2014; Kitigh *et al.* 2014; Kolb 2012; Pauketat 2007; Tilley 2006). It is therefore important to note that qualitatively different economic tactics and strategies of contrasting core-resident socio-political groups can now be

archaeologically investigated through landscape approaches if appropriate research strategies are devised (see Anschuetz *et al.* 2001; Blanton *et al.* 2006; Falzarano 2014).

In this study the agency landscape approach is deemed the most suitable framework to understand the multiple meanings attached to spaces, places and things by ethnic groups. The social meanings embedded in spaces, places, architectural features and artefacts however only become apparent when one goes beyond archaeological concepts that simply emphasise on material culture 'sameness' through generic/teleological terms like cultures, phases and typologies (Anschuetz *et al.* 2001; Johnson 2006). Through exploring strategies used to interact with and survive within a particular territory by a social group, multiple landscape meanings ultimately come to the fore. This follows the premise that spatial patterns and material culture actively represent diverse socio-political ideologies rather than mere ecological and economic pursuits (Anschuetz *et al.* 2001). Studies analysing the origins of cultural complexity in the context of agency theory are therefore paying more attention to the influence of competition among social groups in processes of cultural change. This is because in life, people create and articulate identities consciously in order to have an advantage when pursuing socio-political and economic goals.

Identity formation is therefore a conscious cultural process that happens simultaneously at personal, community, regional and trans-regional scales within frameworks of power relations and early state development (Tilley 2006; Shennan 1989; Stone 2003). Identities emerge with respect to emotional and biological bonds formed in historical interacting contexts of feasting, migrations, rituals and pilgrimages. Hence identities are produced in different spaces and they often engage material things as symbolic cues. In fact, Wells (1998:242) notes that every object that a person makes or uses has a meaning that corresponds in some way to the individual's self-identity. More so, identities are a means of interaction for community members largely seeking to attain individual and group related goals (Kolb 2012:138; Peregrine 2012:169). According to Schortman (1989) a focus on identity construction and maintenance processes reveals critical aspects like who is interacting with whom, under what conditions and what are the effects of such interactions in the short and long term? A point of interest to note is that under different circumstances of interaction, individuals are bound to employ different identities in order to maximise their advantages vis-à-vis other competing social actors.

In efforts to do so, they also realise that their interests are served best by forming alliances with holders of the same identity, a situation that ultimately culminates in the formation of ethnic power blocks. Tilley (2006) further notes that identities are produced and sustained in frameworks of power relations; hence ethnic groups represent hybrid identities with power to pursue economic and political goals. Ethnicity refers to self-conscious identification that is constructed through processes of social and cultural comparison. These processes ultimately result in the use of specific stylistic features such as ethnic symbols through identification by comparison (Jones 1997; Shennan 1989). Thus ethnicity was played out in the ideological and material realms, which required the continuous use of specific elements as diacritical markers. This makes ethnicity one of the most dynamic, situational and fluid identity category that continues to attract intense academic interest globally (see Barker 2012; Cohen 1978; Emberling 1997; Fought 2006; Lucas 2004; Machiridza 2012, 2013, 2014; Stone 2003). Jordan (2012:124) observed that usually personal and group identities are composed of multiple layers of elements like language, bodily features and objects that are at least shaped or supported by the landscape.

Saparov (2003:179) also adds that landscapes are part of the iconography of a social group's shared set of ideas, memories and feelings. Hence ethnic groups are very sensitive about identity construction through landscapes. In fact, most common definitions of ethnic communities emphasise the primacy of the living space in order to keep the so-called 'others' out for economic reasons (Saparov 2003). This is because landscapes are social constructs that foster strong feelings of 'sense of place' or belonging among community members. Such natural spaces become meaningful through daily resource exploitation and attachment of myths, legends, folklores, languages, names and stories that preserve memories of ethnic groups (Chabata 2012; Krogseth 2012; Sinamai 2015). It is a fact that the history of indigenous communities or ethnic groups is always networked with the complex web of tangible and intangible components of landscapes (see Anschuetz *et al.* 2001; Hand n.d.; Johnson 2006; Sinamai 2015; Tilley 2006). Current ethnic landscape approaches therefore stress that landscapes variably symbolise the identities of people who shared common origins, interests and goals. In this regard, ethnic landscapes are hereby conceptualised as complicated arenas of cultural process and change. However, proponents of this approach acknowledge that ethnicity poses formidable recognition challenges in the archaeological record because it either may or may not manifest in particular geographic spaces (Anschuetz *et al.* 2001; Falzarano 2014).

When ethnicity is imbued on the landscape it either directly or indirectly alters the natural setting of that landscape. When it does, such places archaeologically manifest in the form of large scale non-random distributions of stylistic patterns (Emberling 1997; Stone 2003; Wells 1998). However ethnicity should never be equated to the sum total of these stylistic patterns. Rather, only a few specific elements constructed from the broader cultural system were imbued with ethnic meanings. Though the archaeological challenge is to identify those specific symbols, often highly visible elements or objects with a greater degree of decorative elaboration were employed as ethnic markers (Wells 1998:244). Emberling (1997:325) also notes that ethnicity can be symbolised by any aspect of material culture though permanent objects in public view were more preferred than portable objects in private contexts. On the whole, object specific features that structure personal, cultural, gender and ethnic identity vary but the principles behind identity expression remain the same (Wells 1998). Basic level features like substance, texture, technique of production, shape, size, colour and decoration were constantly combined and manipulated into unique forms as style (Washburn 1989; Wells 1998; Stone 2003). In this respect, almost everything in material culture is stylistic.

Style refers to everything that is specifically and consistently produced among several options in order to achieve a desired outcome (Franklin 1989:280). Style varies from isochrestic (passive, sub-consciously generated or automatically produced along enculturation patterns), assertive (active, personally biased, conscious or unconscious) to emblematic (active, consciously generated, symbolic) forms (see Jones 1997; McGuire 1981; Sackett 1982, 1985; Shennan 1989; Wiessner 1983, 1989; Wobst 1977). These distinct but related forms of stylistic variation are determined by context and conditions. This implies that the same decoration can shift from being isochrestic to assertive to emblematic and back again to isochrestic in different contexts (Shennan 1989:21). It is however important to note that symbolic meanings of material culture are not only premised on intrinsic physical properties but value is sometimes socially bestowed upon simple objects by people (see Caple 2006:10). Therefore stylistic meanings or symbolic values in material culture and space should be elicited from oral traditions, documentary sources and the cultural context of production and use. In this study, the Rozvi are perceived as an ethnic group that constantly defined and re-defined itself by drawing upon culture and numerous features of the landscape.

3.5 Materialisation of Rozvi identities in south-western Zimbabwe

Conceptually, Rozvi ethnicity is expected to be variably signified within a very broad landscape through numerous elite invented traditions. However, south-western Zimbabwe is the most promising area to study their archaeological past because the most prominent Rozvi dynasties coalesced around those territories, which already had a number of Khami-phase sites under Torwa dynasties. In line with this background, Krogseth's (2012:65) observation is worth noting:

The named ancestral home gives 'space' for shared identity-making memory on material as well as symbolic-mental terms. The place or space emerges as something more stable and safely accessible than the floating changeability of time. The places of memory evoke the remains of earlier experiences, making tradition and past visible and present. They also tend to become the sites of ritual feasts, celebrations and anniversaries, or of mystifying stories of origin, filling them with mnemonic energy and sacralisation.

This quotation succinctly captures how Rozvi identities were and continue to be connected to different places on the landscape such as the site of Manyanga by their surviving descendants. However, at times identification with place is just general; it may never specify the things that archaeologists focus on like monuments, pottery or particular features but just a natural landscape. Therefore once places are named as part of an ethnic group's identity, they become the most durable symbols of remembrance because associated material components are automatically perceived as part of the group identity symbols. On the other hand, when ethnic communities are closely associated with a particular territory, common cultural practices therein generate widespread similarities in material culture. Hence, networks of interacting members usually generate a constellation of similar styles from the universally understood symbols or signs in order to signify common social meanings (Emberling 1997; Shennan 1989; Wells 1998). Ultimately such places often exhibit large scale non-random similar stylistic patterns that communicated information about *habitus* (structural conditions that govern human action) and ethnicity (Bentley 1987; Jones 1997; Shennan 1989; Stone 2003). Although *habitus* is not necessarily synonymous with ethnicity, it always provides the resources for ethnic identification (Jones 1997; Stone 2003).

Usually, it is impossible to archaeologically recover all the symbolic cues employed by ethnic groups because some of the ethnic elements were simply verbally communicated thereby remaining archaeologically 'invisible'. Shennan (1989:16) therefore states that a

historical approach is crucial when studying ethnicity because it enables us to see how ethnicity developed, the resources it used and its role in social reproduction. In this respect, the numerous Rozvi myths, metaphors, folklores, emotions and narratives therefore become part and parcel of rigorous material culture interpretations. Loubser (1988:3) however raised the concern that the Rozvi have largely been defined through names but names cannot be accessed archaeologically. Since names were always part of indigenous communication systems, they were actively used to describe, possess and interpret people, landscapes and material things. A careful study of names relating to particular people and places therefore provides clues to their inherent social meanings. In this respect, the archaeological record of south-western Zimbabwe should be carefully approached in conjunction with a sound understanding of Rozvi oral traditions and their documented past.

This multi-dimensional approach arms us with the ability to infer social or symbolic meanings that were strategically embedded in spatial and stylistic variation by ethnic agents. To start with, it is crucial to note that people have always used material culture to construct meanings and communicate particular ideas to others about themselves (Wells 1998). As people acquire, make and use material things, they imbue them with particular messages that also change in line with shifting socio-political contexts. Thus while cultural materials like architecture, personal ornaments, weapons, pottery, metal objects and clothing materials had functional roles, they were also situationally used to communicate information about Rozvi identities. Rozvi ethnicity was constantly renewed through the manipulation of the above listed forms of material culture. Rozvi ethnicity in south-western Zimbabwe is therefore investigated along lines of historical, spatial, stratigraphic and stylistic variation in material culture at the selected Khami-phase sites. This is because identifying with place does not just happen; it involved transforming abstract ideas into something more concrete or something that physically exists in space by objectifying certain forms of material remains.

In short, Rozvi ethnicity is expected to archaeologically manifest through a range of standardised stylistic attributes that were drawn from the universal roster and actively maintained as group symbols. In view of the above premises, the definition of Rozvi archaeology can never be straightforward because there is never a one-to-one relationship between ethnic identities and spatial variation. Nonetheless, a contextual analysis of the archaeological record, historical and mythological traditions specific to Rozvi traditions is the best way to address this complicated but intriguing past. Since the actual origins and

development of Khami-phase sites that are historically associated with Rozvi traditions in south-western Zimbabwe are poorly known, there is need to ascertain their archaeological background first. In this respect, the next section addresses the general trajectories towards complexity studies in southern Africa. This discussion outlines the broader cultural complexity theoretical context in which Khami-phase/Rozvi related sites belong and developed.

3.6 Old and new pathways to complexity in southern Africa

A number of socio-political changes were noted in the archaeological record of southern Africa starting from around AD 800. Detailed syntheses have been done in a number of works to establish causes behind these developments, e.g., Huffman (1974, 2005, 2007, 2008a, 2008b), Manyanga (2006), Phillipson (1977), Pikirayi (1993), Pwiti (1996a), Sinclair (1987), Swan (2008). As such, this section only provides a summary of the broad theoretical frameworks on the transformation of non-stratified villages into ranked or hierarchical administrative organizations. Although debatable, chiefdoms are generally treated as the earliest forms of stratified societies in southern Africa (see Pikirayi 1993; Pwiti 1996a, 1996b; Huffman 2005). The earliest views suggested that the southward migration of people with large cattle herds, related Bantu languages and broadly similar ceramic traditions were the cause for socio-political change in southern Africa (Phillipson 1977). The Chifumbaze Complex and the cultural package it brought is seen as having provided the groundwork for socio-political transformation in southern Africa. Huffman's (1974) *Kutama/defeqane* model for the 11th century Leopards Kopje cultures' northward shift from the middle Limpopo valley has also been suggested but its validity has been questioned (see Hall 1983). Garlake (1982) also doubts the model of migration by Huffman (1974, 1978) stating that internal economic growth and culture change from matrilineal to patrilineal organisations among the Early Farming Communities (EFC) were the major stimulus. While accepting economic growth, Pwiti (1996a) has objected the change from matrilineal to patrilineal social organization on grounds that it lacks ethnographic parallels. Instead, he argues in favour of a multi-causal framework when attempting to explain the development of complexity in southern Africa (Pwiti 1996a, 1996b).

Recent research has however aspired for more detailed exploration of autochthonous changes. Several researchers have thus examined a wide range of internal causes of complexity, for example (see Chirikure and Pikirayi 2008; Chirikure *et al.* 2012; Chirikure *et*

al. 2014; Manyanga *et al.* 2010; Huffman 2007; Manyanga 2007; Pikirayi 1993; Pwiti 1996a, 1996b). These researchers have examined the role of internal and external trade, intensive cereal agricultural production; cattle herd accumulation, population growth and specialization activities, taxation, tributary systems, patronage systems, sacred leadership and mineral exploitation in the development of complexity. On a general note, exchange patterns established through the Indian Ocean trade have been widely cited as pivotal to the development of complexity because they enabled the elites to build strong power-bases through strategically redistributing exotic goods (Huffman 2000, 2005; Kipp and Schortman 1989; Pwiti 1996b; Stein 1998). In order to mask the inequalities resulting from such wealth accumulation there were shifts in ideology meant to control and restrict access to this wealth. Additionally, favourable climatic conditions and floodplain agriculture especially in the Shashe-Limpopo basin led to intensive cereal production. In turn this stimulated population increases, which promoted wealth accumulation through participating in several socio-political and economic activities.

Owners of large herds of cattle could also have used these as assets to build economic power, prestige, social dominance and ultimately political power. The role of taxation and tribute systems cannot be overlooked as rightly pointed out by Beach (1980) and Mudenge (1988, 2011). The ideology of sacred leadership and rain control rituals in shaping complexity processes has been addressed by Huffman (1996, 2005, and 2007); Murimbika (2006) and Schoeman (2006) though the issue remains debatable owing to emerging evidence from some of the sites that suggest different processes (see Pikirayi and Chirikure 2011). The role of minerals like iron, gold, copper and tin in the development of complexity in Zimbabwe has also been examined by Chirikure (2006, 2007), Chirikure *et al.* (2010) and Swan (1994, 2008). Most recently, smaller sites that were once assumed to be mere provincial and district centres of major settlements like Mapungubwe, Great Zimbabwe and Khami are attracting renewed academic interest in terms of ethnographic inferences drawn from indigenous African philosophies and knowledge systems (see Pikirayi and Chirikure 2011; Chirikure *et al.* 2012; Chirikure *et al.* 2014). Chirikure *et al.* (2012) argues that historical reality emanating from ethnographic and anthropological records should be exploited as major sources of analogy when examining the evolution of political complexity on the Zimbabwean plateau. Historians like Beach (1980) and Mudenge (2011) highlight that indigenous succession systems (collateral and primogeniture), conflict and competition among

indigenous leaders cumulatively shaped the creation of numerous centres with different occupational durations (Chirikure *et al.* 2012:357).

Historically, power shifted throughout the large and small elite centres; as such any uncritical use of radiocarbon dates conflates these sites into broad time brackets, a development that unfortunately overlooks historical reality and promotes linear models of evolutionary change (Chirikure *et al.* 2014). Furthermore, several Leopard's Kopje sites scattered in wider parts of Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa are once again assuming centre stage in explanations of the origins and spread of complexity in southern Africa. Recent research by van Waarden (2011) in eastern Botswana and Chirikure *et al.* (2014) at Mapela, a site located in south-western Zimbabwe, has cast doubt on old entrenched notions that Mapungubwe was the first Zimbabwe Culture settlement. Despite having these diverse and fruitful assumptions, our appreciation of Khami-phase sites remains somewhat poor. It is against this background that the study was undertaken to trace the development of cultural complexity, particularly within core Rozvi territories. A renewed focus on both the archaeological record and the associated historical dimensions is critical in tracing the evolution of cultural complexity in south-western Zimbabwe.

3.7 Conclusions

Explanatory frameworks on the origins and development of cultural complexity will always be multiple, overlapping and valid in unique ways. This is largely because past communities inhabited different regional environments, which they strategically exploited differently through space and time. In this regard, south-western Zimbabwe deserves its own interpretive approach, which examines the relations between agents and the local physiographic structure in a contextual manner. Numerous cultural groups were continuously drawn to that region owing to its natural resources thereby creating different political economies and cultural landscapes. The dialectics between agents and these structural conditions gradually culminated in a complex cultural landscape epitomised by several Khami-phase sites. An analysis of the spatial and temporal aspects of these sites in the context of relevant historical evidence will not only inform us about the shifting political economies, but the dynamic historical identities and other associated meanings. Rozvi political power was not just projected through the material realm rather it was extensively expressed ideologically and spiritually through the landscape. The next chapter examines the Rozvi past as projected by oral history and documentary sources.

Chapter Four

Historical accounts on Butua, Torwa and the Rozvi

“...the Rozvi even more than the rest of the Shona have acquired a historiography without a history ...” (Beach 1980:226).

4.1 Introduction

This chapter defines the broad historical context for a detailed archaeological enquiry of the Rozvi in south-western Zimbabwe. The literature generated since the early 16th century is revisited and critiqued in order to trace the general development of Torwa and Rozvi identities on the Zimbabwean plateau. While the Rozvi question has remained on the academic research agenda since the 1960s, their past remains hazy. The greatest challenge with the Rozvi subject is that previous interpretive inaccuracies perpetuated by early writers continued to be recycled until their history became concealed in several layers of myth (Beach n.d.). In attempts to demystify the Rozvi past, this chapter re-evaluates Rozvi origins, their development and it also disentangles Rozvi history from that of related state systems like Zimbabwe/Great Zimbabwe, Mutapa and Torwa. In the ensuing discussion, numerous written Portuguese sources and oral traditions are evaluated in order to explore the way monumentality, ideology, economy and power was exercised and expressed by the Rozvi. A review of these various aspects has potential to provide refreshing insights on the overall evaluation of material culture in south-western Zimbabwe.

4.2 Portuguese writings on Mutapa, Butua and the Torwa

While Muslim traders were the first to arrive and interact with Africans on a wider scale from as early as the 10th century onwards, they produced very little historical writings. The most significant account to this study came from the pilot, Ahmad Ibn-Madjid whose 1502 document highlighted that ‘Muna-batur’ the great King of Butua owned a mine and traded via the Zambezi (Beach 1980:49; van Waarden 2012:49). Although this source provides scanty detail about Butua, it at least constitutes the earliest documentary evidence for that region. Nonetheless, following the Portuguese arrival on the East African coast at the start of the 15th century, considerable literature about the African interior was generated through notes, official directives and letters. The information contained in these sources was obviously biased towards Portuguese economic interests in Africa. In this respect, their

writings generally focused on the location of gold mines, gold production, rates of exchange, African rulers and their associated political structures (Pikirayi 1993:108). The Portuguese initially settled along the Indian Ocean coast, using Swahili traders as middleman before deciding to venture much closer to sources of ivory and gold from around 1512. Thus the period between 1512 and 1570 witnessed a lot of Portuguese infiltration of the Zimbabwean plateau though only a few of them actually settled in the interior (Beach 1980:260).

The south-western regions largely remained unexplored by Portuguese traders. In fact, many of them were confined to the north along the Zambezi valley or regions close to the Mutapa state. As such, when we refer to Portuguese writings relating to Butua or south-western Zimbabwe, we need to appreciate the contexts in which these documents were generated. In line with this, Wills (1985:19) noted that Portuguese sources are often misleading, not only because of inherent biases but also because of their own misunderstanding of the local situation. Pikirayi (1993) also observed that some of these documents are vague, repetitive and confusing. Despite these limitations, Portuguese documents have also extremely aided our understanding of the Zimbabwean plateau and south-western Zimbabwe in general. This follows their extensive use by historians such as Beach (1980), Bhila (1982a, 1982b), Mudenge (1974a, 1974b, 1988, 2011) and Randles (1975, 1979). Vansina (1965) informs us that if a tradition has internal contradictions or goes against facts established in other sources, then it should be considered unreliable but if it tallies with other narratives then the reverse holds true. The same can also be said about Portuguese sources; hence a few of such sources have been selected for purposes of tracing the historical period in south-western Zimbabwe.

On the 20th of November 1506 Diogo de Alcáçova wrote a letter to the King of Portugal stating the following:

Mocomba, father of Quesarymgo, had a favourite who was a great lord in his kingdom and who ruled the whole kingdom exiling, beheading and acting in all things as king, and was called Changamire and was the king's chief justice and the word for justice is amyr or as we [the Portuguese] say it 'governor'. And this amyr owned many towns and villages in the kingdom given him by the king. And within his lands the amyr became great through the power he held in the kingdom and in this way acquired many people. As he was eager to remove the threat of this over-mighty governor, the king sent him a cup of poison with orders to drink it. Changamire refused, assassinated Mocomba and ruled for four years as usurper. He was in turn killed by Quesarymgo, the only survivor of Mocomba's twenty-two sons whom Changamire had massacred. But Quesarymgo was not able to command the

allegiance of Changamire's vassals, who grouped under the leadership of one of Changamire's relations, Toloa; and so there was war between the two factions (Randles 1979:6).

Yet again in 1512 Gaspar Veloso wrote another letter to the King of Portugal stating that:

... between the land of the Monomotapa and Sofala all kings bore allegiance to the Monomotapa, but further inland (still on the plateau, of course) there was another king who had risen in revolt and with whom he was at war: the king of Butua. The latter was as powerful as the Monomotapa and his country held great reserves of gold (Randles 1979:7).

Randles (1979:8) further highlights another account written by João de Barros in 1552 stating that:

They have other mines in a region named Toroa, also called the Kingdom of Butua, ruled by a prince [chief] named Burrom, a vassal of Benomotapa.

For quite some time, these are the accounts that have widely shaped the way we understand the region called Butua and the historical dynasties that ruled thereof (see Fig. 4.1 below). In fact, historians such as Beach (1980), Mazarire (2009), Mudenge (1974b, 1988, 2011) and Randles (1979) have elaborated that between 1480 and 1494 a certain Changamire (widely called Changamire I) broke away from the Mutapa state and founded an independent but competing state in the south-west. This breakaway from the Mutapa state during the early 15th century is widely believed to have marked the beginning of the south-western Torwa state. In support of the general wealth found in Butua, Father Francisco de Monclaro (da Silva Rigo and Baxter 1497-1840 (Vol. VIII): 283-529) pointed out that these regions were extremely rich in gold, silver, ivory, and cattle. He further recorded that the locals in Butua pan for gold dust in the beds of streams. This affirms that this region constituted an autonomous state system that governed its own resources. As the Mutapa state dominated the north, another separate state was flourishing in the south-west through direct control of strategic resources by elites based at Khami and other related sites (see Pikirayi 2001; van Waarden 1998, 2011, 2012).



Figure 4.1: The geographical location of Butua/Guruuswa region.

Mazarire (2009) and Mudenge (1974a, 1988, 2011), have consistently projected the view that it was Changamire I who founded the Torwa dynasty because when he broke away from the Mutapa state, his Butua/Guruuswa territories remained independent under Torwa rulers. In a way, historians have widely perpetuated the general idea that the Mutapa state was older than the Butua/Torwa state, which may never have been the case. If indeed the Torwa state was founded by rebels from the Mutapa state, then the Mutapa state was older but this was probably never the case as shall be shown below. This Changamire I rebellion from the Mutapa state did not mark the beginning of Khami-phase sites in the south-west, rather these settlements were already established and successful. However, some chronometric dates from some of these Khami-phase sites clearly coincide with the above cited historical event of AD 1480 or 1490. Hence, both historians and archaeologists are guilty of not giving due attention to the finer details on the general development of Khami-phase sites in south-

western Zimbabwe. If the northern plateau Karanga inhabitants' loosely used the name Torwa in references to their southern plateau neighbors whom they generally perceived as strangers or foreigners (see Machiridza 2013), it also remains very difficult to determine when exactly that name started featuring in Butua. In this regard, it is hereby proposed that the Torwa are better conceptualized as a separate/independent polity or better still competitors of the Mutapa state rather than mere vassals.

At least we now know that from 1000 AD, south-western Zimbabwe and its immediate adjacent regions were dominated by people sharing broadly similar languages, beliefs and institutions (Huffman 1974, 2007). Archaeologically, the Leopard's Kopje tradition is associated with people who spoke an ancient Kalanga dialect, which probably evolved into other linguistic dialects like Lilima, Talaunda, Rozvi, Nambya, Karanga and Venda (see Ehret and Kinsman 1981; Huffman 2009; Machiridza 2012; Mazarire 2009; van Waarden 2012). It was once thought that Leopard's Kopje tradition historically transformed into Torwa dynasties following 15th century dynastic migrations from Great Zimbabwe (see Beach 1974, 1980, 1994a). However, these claims have never been backed by sound archaeological evidence, save for the general architectural similarities noted between Great Zimbabwe architecture and some Khami-phase sites. Until more convincing archaeological evidence is provided, the Torwa should be regarded as an independent political entity from Great Zimbabwe, though cultural connections cannot be ruled out. Although Changamire I eventually settled in Butua/south-western Zimbabwe, he was not the actual founder of Khami-phase sites because he arrived there rather late, just like Changamire II. Earlier on von Sicard (1948:13) made an interesting observation with regards to this issue in his treatise of the Twamamba, he hinted that:

They must have been connected in one way or another not only with the first known Shangamire of the 15th century, but also with the south-western Butwa Kingdom under Boroma, heard of by Fernandes in 1513 and mentioned again by de Barros, in 1552. They were firmly established in Butwa Torwa long before Mutapa conquered the Dema or Limi tribes in the north-east... When at the beginning of the 18th century the great Shangamire conquered Butwa Torwa, most of the Twamamba still moved further south, and about half a century later they were more disintegrated by the advancing "Venda".

von Sicard was basically arguing that the Twamamba formerly inhabited Butua region but they were gradually forced to migrate further southwards by the two Changamires. In this

regard, he was crediting the Twamamba not the Torwa for the initial building of most of the dry stonewalled sites found in Butua. His argument continued as follows:

There remains a last consideration with regards to the stone structures in the Twamamba country, including Great Zimbabwe. It must be remembered that Butwa Torwa is older than Monomotapa Kingdom in the north. Consequently it existed before 1460... There is no reason why we should combine the Mutapa overthrow with the settlement of the Twamamba and kindred tribes in the southern parts of Butwa Torwa. On the other side there are indications that the Twamamba had occupied at least parts of it a long time before Mutapa established his rule north of the Zambezi. It seems, therefore, advisable to re-examine the whole question of the origin of our Rhodesian ruins... The material at my disposal is not sufficient to arrive at any definite conclusions as to the Twamamba building activities. But I should like to point out one special feature at several ruins, where it is most probable that the Twamamba have been at work... probably a great number of our ruins are of Twamamba origin, since they are not built by the 18th century Rozvi... (von Sicard 1948:13).

The accounts just cited above from von Sicard indicate that Butua did not develop from the Mutapa state and the people who initially inhabited these southern regions did not necessarily come from there either. Following his ethnographic studies in the south-western district of Belingwe/Mberengwa in Zimbabwe, von Sicard (1948) argued that before Rozvi arrival and their political takeover, the historical groups that actually occupied Butua were the Humbe, Lilima, Leya, Gambe, Twamamba and Mbedzi. Although this version is problematic because it totally ignores the Torwa and credits just the Twamamba for the construction of Great Zimbabwe and all dry stonewalled sites in Butua, it at least sheds more light on other tribes that inhabited Butua. While Robinson (1959) recorded oral traditions claiming that pottery found at Khami was manufactured by the Humbe and Lilima women, he chose to ignore these names and credited the Rozvi for everything found at Khami ruins. Since historians have now proven that the Rozvi never re-inhabited the Khami capital after their political takeover, the Torwa are widely credited by archaeologists for the initial development of all Khami-phase sites. However, archaeological cultures are never equivalent to political units; hence historians have generally turned on to oral traditions in order to overcome the relative lack of clarity surrounding the Torwa. Perhaps before switching on to a review of oral accounts, it is crucial to first explore how Portuguese writers perceived the Rozvi.

4.3 Portuguese writings on Butua and the Rozvi

The Portuguese also generated the earliest documentary evidence on the Rozvi past. However their narratives need to be treated with extreme caution because they were produced by individuals with personal biases, who extensively relied on oral accounts that were also sometimes biased or too complex to comprehend. To make matters worse, no known literate Portuguese ever visited the Rozvi state; hence this fact reinforces the unreliability of their accounts. According to Bhila (1982a), from the 1680s onwards, the Rozvi were extremely hostile to Portuguese traders, hence their movement into core Rozvi territories were constrained. Consequently, the bulk of information contained in Portuguese accounts about the Rozvi was largely based on hearsay. Despite these limitations, historians have still managed to piece together certain facts from these sources thereby allowing us to glean some insights on the early rise of Changamire and his Rozvi followers. In 1683 an anonymous Portuguese source claimed that all Butua Kings bore the Toloa title (Beach 1980). This source has been widely used to conclude that the Torwa were the principal dynasties in Butua/Guruuswa around 1683 even though the 1644 civil war had severely undermined their power. Portuguese descriptions of Rozvi origins resemble those of the Torwa in the sense that their accounts also mention yet another Changamire who rebelled from the Mutapa state.

We are told that, as from the 1650s onwards, the Portuguese sought to conquer the Mutapa state (Beach 1995; Mazarire 2009; Pikirayi 1993). They forced Mutapa rulers to pay *курува* tax (a form of hut tax) to them, they even expanded their *prazos* (estates) into Mutapa core territories, interfered with internal politics and treated locals as slave labour by forcing them to mine gold (Mazarire 2009:19). Many locals therefore fled to the mountains in attempts to avoid this abuse. Kamharapasu Mukombwe partly reversed this in 1663 when he drove away the Portuguese and revived the traditional *Nyai* clientele system, which was a form of warrior class system (Beach 1995; Mazarire 2009). Changamire, one of Mutapa's provincial barons, therefore built his army through this system of economic rewards from the 1670s using Mukombwe's cattle. Mudenge (1988) noted that during those times, provincial barons could be located approximately 150 km from the Mutapa capital. Beach (1980:228) also informs us that the mid-17th century political confusion in the Mutapa permitted anyone who could provide some form of security to the locals to easily get a large following. Changamire managed to do just that by organizing an efficient *Nyai* group, hence by the 1680s, he was

well advanced in power (Beach n.d.:11). When he was certain of his military strength, he rebelled with Mukombwe's cattle and land in the year 1684 (Beach 1980; Mazarire 2009; Mudenge 1988). Thus, Dionizio de Mello e Castro and Antonio Pinto de Miranda described this event as follows:

While in charge of King Mucombue's herds, Changamire was instructed to drive them into the land of Orobze [Mello e Castro; Orobu in Pinto de Miranda]; there he rose in rebellion against the king having gathered together a great army; in consequence he is today the most powerful, the most dreaded and the most respected of all the chiefs who refuse to obey the emperors of Monomotapa, whom he has on several occasions defeated and routed in pitched battle. He is the absolute ruler over Abutua... (Randles 1979:16).

This document however confused facts because when Changamire rebelled, his group was not yet known by the name "Rozvi" but they were simply referred to as terrible Karanga warriors, so he could not have taken cattle to the so-called Orobze or Urobu/Rozvi land (see Mudenge 1974a). Following Changamire Dombo's rebellion from the Mutapa state, Mukombwe attacked him but he quickly retaliated by killing 5000 of the Mutapa soldiers (Mudenge 1988). In June 1684 Changamire Dombo once again clashed with the Portuguese at the battle of Maungwe where he also emerged victorious (Mudenge 1988:286). Mudenge (1988:287) further cites Caetano de Mello de Castro's 1685 report, which described events of 1684 as follows:

Dombo had 'many kings and chiefs' still under his command and as such continued to pose problems for the Portuguese.

This account simply corroborates the strong military and political power held by Changamire Dombo and his immediate followers during the late 17th century. Another anonymous Portuguese source quoted in Randles (1979:16-17) highlights the actual territories that this Changamire was based:

... Urobze lies a long way from Manica, it would take a month to reach it, it is said to be nearer the Cape of Correntes. The Africans call it Goromucuro; it lies to the west of Manica. The Kingdom abounds in the rolling veld plains [campinas vistozas planices]. There are huge herds... There are many birds called 'emas' [ostriches]. There are also very few trees, if at all, and firewood is replaced by cow-dung dried in the sun...

The territories referred to as Urobze/Rozvi above clearly corresponds with the physiographic nature of Butua, where Changamire eventually settled after migrating from north-eastern

Zimbabwe. It has been well documented that following Changamire Dombo's rebellion from the Mutapa state, he went to Butua, which was far from Portuguese and Mutapa political threats, easy to overcome because of succession troubles among Torwa elites and rich in mineral and cattle wealth (see Beach 1994a, 1995; Mudenge 1988). Mudenge (1988:287) further notes that:

But a letter of April 1694 shows that after the 1684 campaign against the Portuguese, Dombo did not attack the Portuguese positions again until 1693. It would appear that between 1685 and 1692 Dombo was consolidating his position in Butua.

Between 1685 and 1692, Changamire Dombo was silent, but when Mukombwe died in 1692, the Portuguese did not want his brother Nyakunembire to take over the throne. Rather they preferred his son Nyamaende Mhande (Prince Dom Pedro) to takeover, something that did not go down well with Nyakunembire (Mudenge 1988:287). Nyakunembire therefore appealed to Changamire Dombo for help and he responded to the call with so much vigor and terror. Changamire attacked the Portuguese fort of Dambarare in 1693 before expanding to Mukaranga, Ruhanje and Manyika in just a short period of two years. His army fought with so much tenacity such that it caused total destruction on all enemy camps. Axelson (1960:182) highlights that after killing all Portuguese traders at Dambarare in 1693, his army disinterred the bones of the dead, produced a powerful medicine from their remains and displayed their skins to further terrorize the Portuguese. It was only after these events that the name Rozvi emerged in references to Changamire Dombo and his followers. Mudenge (1974b:27) succinctly highlights the common analytical error often associated with interpreting Portuguese references to the Rozvi name:

In short there is no evidence from Portuguese sources that the Rozvi as a nation bearing the name 'Rozvi' existed before the advent of Dombo. Previous writers have at times unfortunately used eighteenth-century Portuguese documents clearly referring to Dombo (1684-95) as if they refer to the Changamire of c.1480-c.1492. It is partly this error which has given the impression that there are Portuguese documents which show the existence of the designation Rozvi prior to Dombo's advent. At present, however, we simply do not know of the existence of such sources.

Several Portuguese documents covering the late 17th to 18th centuries therefore corroborated the image of the Rozvi as fierce, powerful and warlike. Another archival source, Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino of Mozambique (A.H.U.AV. de Moç) also highlights that the Rozvi army had many weapons such as bows and arrows, daggers, assegais, shields, battle axes, guns, and about four early 19th century cannons that were kept at *Mambo*'s palace (Mudenge

1974b:378). It was through a series of military victories that Changamire and his followers gained respect from the Portuguese, Mutapa and several other local chiefs who chose to adhere to his command and power (Axelson 1960). Prior to these historical events, no Portuguese document had ever mentioned the name Rozvi, meaning it never existed before these wars. In fact, the name Rozvi was directly derived from the Shona phrase *varozvi*, meaning the destroyers (Bullock 1927; Machiridza 2013; Posselt 1935). Literary, this was a nickname historically meant for Changamire Dombo of the *moyo* totem and his immediate warriors. Of course, through the passage of time, its meaning became broader as part of attempts to accommodate new members to the Rozvi community. Therefore, the name Rozvi presents a number of challenges to researchers' because the people in question also identified themselves with several other names (see Beach 1980; Machiridza 2012, 2013; Mazarire 2009).

4.4 Oral traditions relating to the Torwa past

It now suffices to turn on to oral traditions in order to draw more insights relevant on the Torwa and Rozvi. Just like documentary sources, oral traditions also have numerous challenges, which need to be highlighted before tracing their insights on the above cited grey areas. Oral traditions constitute narratives, legends, anecdotes, proverbs and historical lays that are informally transmitted from generation to generation by word of mouth (Vansina 1965). They are almost always devoted to the reconstruction of ruling dynastic histories rather than general masses for political functions and dramatic values. At a general scale, they sought to explain and regulate marriages and other connections such as taboos (Beach 1976; Curtin 1969; Kahari 1990). Oral traditions often contain relatively accurate facts, mythology, contradictions and individual biases that are either perpetuated by informants or those who documented the narratives. For Zimbabwe, perhaps their greatest weakness is that they often mix-up chronology and hardly go back beyond 1750 AD (Beach 1994b; Spear 2006). Despite these shortfalls, oral traditions still command broad relevance to African history because they often allow for an understanding of local knowledge and epistemology (Spear 2006; Vansina 1985). It is against this background that pre-colonial African historians have constantly resorted to oral traditions in order to close any gaps inherent in documentary sources.

Kalanga oral traditions are so ambiguous for historians to the extent that practically nothing is known about Kalanga history (Beach 1980:218). Beach (1980:201) also comments that

some traditions do not recall the Torwa as inhabitants of regions associated with Khami-phase sites. They only mention people like Ngelengele, a man and his sister Nenumbata and Nemushodzi, the Nyubi under Sibuntuli and a Kalanga Ndumba (Beach 1980). According to Mazarire (2009:18) the Kalanga trace their origins from the Zambezi leader Madhabhale or Chibundule who broke away from Gatsi Rusere with a number of followers. Such followers included Nimale, Hungwe, Zwikono, Vunamakuni, Nkami, Nigwande and Ninhembwe who settled in the south-west before extending to Great Zimbabwe, the Venda and Kalahari regions (Mazarire 2009). van Waarden (2012) used the same oral traditions recorded from Kumile by Wentzel (1983); hence her remarks are not different from Mazarire (2009). Instead of mentioning Changamire as the founder of Torwa dynasties, Kalanga oral accounts widely cite Chibundule. According to van Waarden (2012:51) Chibundule was only a praise name given to the first Togwa Mambo whose actual name was Madabhale. Fortune (1975) also highlighted a Kalanga praise poem for Chibundule recorded by S. Masola Kumile, which goes as follows:

<i>Inyika yaChivundule wali!</i>	It is the land of Chivundule, indeed!
<i>Chipwihe lakapwiha hou nenhema,</i>	A refuge who gave shelter against the elephant and the rhinoceros,
<i>Nazhikono ungapa mbotana.</i>	With Zvikono like a calf in comparison.
<i>Vhumamakuni unolova nhema ngeganu,</i>	Vhunamakuni strikes the rhinoceros with an axe,
<i>Nyati kakuma ngelupa.</i>	The buffalo he quells with the shaft of his spear.
<i>NaNkami, Nkami wedzisina Mhulu,</i>	And Nkami, the Milker of cows without calves,
<i>Nkami wamapfumba.</i>	Milker before the calves have sucked.
<i>Ndezva Chivundule wali!</i>	These are Chivundule's praises indeed!
<i>Chipwihe lakapwiha hou nenhema.</i>	The refuge who gave shelter against the elephant and the rhinoceros,
<i>Iye Mangulangonkaka,</i>	He is the one who washes in milk,
<i>Vhula ina nyungula,</i>	Water has tadpoles in it,
<i>Mailahou, mhuka yezeve hulu,</i>	He is the one who reveres the elephant, the beast with big ears.
<i>Mbati wamakomo asnganginwi ngechita,</i>	Defender of fortified hills impregnable to an enemy.
<i>Iye Chivundule wali!</i>	It is the land of Chivundule, indeed!
<i>Chipwihe lakapwiha hou nenhema.</i>	A refuge which gave shelter against the elephant and the rhinoceros.

Since poems are always full of irony and metaphors, it is crucial to try and interpret their meaning from an informed historical position. In this case, references made to the elephant and rhinoceros should be understood in terms of political rivalry between Chivundule and his neighbours as well as totemic identities as assumed by van Waarden (2012:53). Since Chibundule was of the *soko* (monkey) totem, his political rivals could have been of the elephant and rhino totems thereby signalling totemic identities. This interpretation should however be treated with caution because the rhinoceros is not widely used as a totemic identity among the Shona. In addition, references made to calves, milking and abundant milk

suggests there was plenty of stock wealth for Chibundule. If Chibundule could afford to metaphorically bath with milk, then he literally had a lot of cattle and food for himself and his subjects. We also learn that Chibundule preferred hilly locations. Of course, this does not only imply that these hills were defensive forts, but they also symbolized elite status often associated with dry stonewalled architecture. This poem therefore broadly highlights Chibundule's political status, his senior political allies like Zvikono, Vhunamakuni and Nkami as well as his wealth and connections with Khami-phase monumental architecture. Furthermore, while relying on oral narratives to reconstruct Rozvi history in 1924, a native teacher Marodzi/Marwodzi also made the following references to Chibundule:

They came into the country of Chiunduro; he was the father of Nenhumbane, and his totem was *soko* (monkey); and they fought with him, and they called that country "Zimbabgwe." After they had stayed a few years they divided with the Ba Wumbe and Ba Ririma... After they settled in Zimbabgbwe, they made Chirisamhuru (calf-heard) king because he reared a buffalo's calf; and if the buffalo's calf sucks the cow of anyone, the cow is taken by the king.

Interestingly Marodzi's account does not mention the name Torwa but just Chibundule/Chiunduro who probably presided over the Wumbe/Humbe and Lilima/Ririma people. In fact, most oral traditions are silent about the Torwa/Togwa identity; this observation was also noted by Beach (1980) who informs us that to date, only two accounts, one by a spirit medium of Mutota in 1958 and another by a Rozvi Chief Mbava in 1925 mentioned the name Torwa. Around 1925 Elaine Lloyd was assisted by Rev. Samuel Muhlenga to gather oral traditions from Chief Mbava, a Rozvi descendent from the Wedza district and this old man was over 100 years old by then. Following the first interview with Chief Mbava Lloyd reported:

Chief Mbava thinks the great chief of the Warozwi, called Togwa, was the one who built Zimbabgwe. He said the word means Palace of the Kings (Dzimbahwe)... Togwa was a very great chief indeed, and all the chiefs went to him in Zimbabgwe to pay homage. It was from this place that his messengers were sent to choose the lesser chiefs-Makoni, Umtasa, Makombi, Zimunya, Marange, Mutema, Nyashanu, Sweswe, Nyandoro, Mashayamombe, and all the chiefs of the country... King Togwa did not built Zimbabgwe only; there are many other places like Zimbabgwe which have never yet been seen by the white men... Besides all these places built by the Warozwi, King Togwa sent a great army of people to bring him the great hill Mutikwiri. This hill is in the country of Mawungwe (near Rusape), and he sent his people to bring it and place it near the Palace of the King (Zimbabgwe). Now, therefore, this great army of King Togwa surrounded the hill and dug around it, but failed to move it... (Lloyd 1925:63).

The account above clearly mixed-up Torwa and Rozvi narratives, firstly there was never a King called Torwa since this was just a dynastic title (see Mudenge 2011). Although it is acceptable that the Torwa built many dry stonewalled sites and appointed other lesser chiefs across the country, their political influence might not have been widespread as suggested above. As shall be noted in the foregoing discussion, most of what Chief Mbava said applies to the Rozvi rather than the Torwa past. Nonetheless, given Chief Mbava's age and memories about the Torwa, yet he resided in the Wedza district, which is quite far from Butua, we should commend him for having mentioned such a name. The most interesting part is that he emphasised the aspect of monumental architecture, yet the Wedza district does not have these kinds of structures. This on its own indicates that his memory was quite sharp as he still remembered certain key facts about the Torwa past.

Be that as it may, the finer details on Torwa historical origins may never be known with certainty. Perhaps we just need to take solace in the fact that there is general consensus that the Leopard's Kopje/Kalanga communities later transformed into Torwa dynasties following a series of ideological and economic processes in the south-western region. It is against this background that the Torwa are credited for the construction of numerous Khami-phase sites scattered in the south-western regions (see Beach n.d., 1974, 1976, 1980, 1994a, 1994b; Huffman 2007; Mazarire 2009; Ncube 2004; Pikirayi 2001; van Waarden 1998, 2012). Thus, the Kalanga identity was not frozen in time, because in south-western Zimbabwe it variably encompassed the Torwa/Togwa (1400/1420-1683), Humbe (1400s-?), Mwenye/Lemba (1400s-present), Rozvi (1685-1866), Nambya (1750s-present) and Kalanga/Ndebele (1830s-present). In Nzhelele valley of Zoutpansburg it became Twamamba (1400/1420-1683), Singo/Venda (1727-1800), Ramabulang and Tshivhase (18th century-present), in eastern Botswana Chibundule/Togwa (1400, 1420-1683), Nichasike/Rozvi (1685-1866) and Kalanga/Lilima/Nyayi (1830-present). Beach (1980:202) informs us that the Torwa state was very pacific or probably too religious in nature because it never interfered in the affairs of the north or east during its entire existence. Its peace eventually came to an end during the early 17th century when power struggles between two brothers eventually erupted.

According to Beach (1980:200), the young Torwa brother who was allied to a powerful Muslim Xerife through marriage ousted his senior brother from power. The senior brother fled to Manyika where he solicited military support from a great Portuguese *prazo*-holder 'Mossuampaca' Sisnando Dias Bayão. He returned in 1644 to fight his young brother with

the backing of a Portuguese armed force led by Sisnando Dias Bayão. A civil war ensued leading to the reinstatement of the senior brother to the Torwa throne but when Sisnando Dias Bayão returned to the north and later died from poisoning in 1648, his soldiers withdrew from the Torwa state (Beach 1980; Randles 1979). These events probably further weakened the already fragmented Torwa state, as it is reported that power had already shifted from the Khami capital to Danamombe and other elite sites located east of Bembesi (Beach 1980). This suggests that by the mid-to-late 17th century, there was no unitary rule among the Torwa. Oral traditions actually highlight that a few dispersed Torwa houses were in existence when the Rozvi arrived to usurp power. Such dynastic houses were Ndumba/Madhladhla who ruled from somewhere near Khami, Chibundule/Chihunduru or Chiwundura and Tumbali/Tumbare who were probably located east of Bembesi (Beach 1980; Mazarire 2009). These houses gave little to no resistance to Rozvi invasions; hence they were easily assimilated.

4.5 Oral traditions and Rozvi origins

While Portuguese writings largely portray the Rozvi as a formidable military force that governed its subjects through coercion, oral traditions emphasise their political and economic power through mythology, the *Mwari* religion, military strength, investiture ceremonies and land allocation. In terms of origins, some oral traditions made wild claims that the Rozvi came from Lake Tanganyika via the Zambezi while others made vague references to places in South Africa. For instance, Misi Gumunyu, a Rozvi descendant aged in his eighties was recorded in Bikita on the 25th of August 1965 saying:

We start with Samangai that is where we came from, down below Ninivah. That is where the Varozvi were. Now they left and crossed the sea, sailing across the ocean to the south. When they reached Dabini* they settled there... They travelled on and reached Rukomororukungubwe.* At the Rukomororukungubwe hill they stayed, then, and built a stone wall (*rusvingo*)... So he, Sorerezhou, went on leaving the Bavenda in that area. There is a relationship between the Venda and the Rozvi... (Latham 1970:27).

Unfortunately, this account mentions several strange place names like Samangai, Ninivah and Dabini that hardly make historical sense when it comes to contextually analysing Shona oral traditions. Nonetheless, occasional references to Dabini/Durban and Venda suggest the Rozvi had migrated from South Africa to Zimbabwe, which is very misleading. Perhaps the only valid point that emerges from this account is the idea of stone buildings *rusvingo*. The

association of the Rozvi with monumental architecture is so pronounced in most oral accounts; and this proves that stone buildings were a major part of their expressions of power. Yet again, in 1924 Marodzi, a native teacher compiled the following account, which widely influenced several early writings on the Rozvi:

The original history of the Barozwi people and chiefs who came from Tanganyika Lake and crossed the Zambezi River. They were together with the Makorekore and Basuto people... Then they came into the country where the Basutu are living now. Here they fought for the kingdom, and said to the others, “You are Marutsi,” and drove them away... (F. P. 1924:88).

This oral account is also misleading because it externalises Rozvi origins. However, Hodza and Fortune (1979:217) present a relatively factual version, which reads as follows:

When the Rozvi reached this country they found Munhumutapa ruling it. They attacked him and drove him away. This was the first fight in which they had ever engaged. After Munhumutapa’s flight, they subdued all the chiefs who had been subject to him. They are said first to have gone north, to Pfura, then east, to Nyanga, then south to Manyika and Bikita, and finally west to Mberengwa (Belingwe). Tradition explains that the name Rozvi was given to them because they disturbed the lives of everyone, man and beast alike. All this is said to have happened under the rule of the first chief whom they remember, called Changamire...

To date, historians have done a comprehensive assessment of several oral traditions dealing with Rozvi origins and their observations are briefly outlined below. Mudenge (1988:162) suggests that when Changamire Dombo rebelled with Mutapa Mukombwe’s cattle, he took them to the Mbire-Njanja area of central Zimbabwe. Historians believe this area was generally close to Butua or it actually lay in Butua (Mazarire 2009; Mudenge 2011; Randles 1979). Beach (1980:229) however points out that oral traditions point to the area between Mukaranga and Manyika. Hence, they trace Changamire’s rise to power from localities between the east and north-east of the Zimbabwean plateau, precisely between the Sabi, Zhombe and Hurungwe mountains. Other traditions locate the *moyo* nuclear zone between Mazoe and Nyadiri rivers (Beach n.d.:7). Some Rozvi traditions cite Murewa as the actual area from which Changamire rose to power (Beach 1976, 1994b). Around 1685, we are informed Changamire had links with Butua though he was still based in north-eastern Zimbabwe. By 1696 Changamire Dombo had moved to rule from Danamombe, which he usurped from the vanquished Torwa dynasties (Beach 1980). By simply inhabiting former Torwa settlements and renaming the associated landscape as Rozvi, new identities were simultaneously inscribed on old Torwa settlements. While we may not know the total number

of archaeological sites that were adopted by the Rozvi, Danamombe, Manyanga and Naletale were certainly part of that list (Beach 1994a). For an idea of the location of these archaeological sites and Rozvi spheres of influence refer to Figs. 4.2 and 4.3 below.

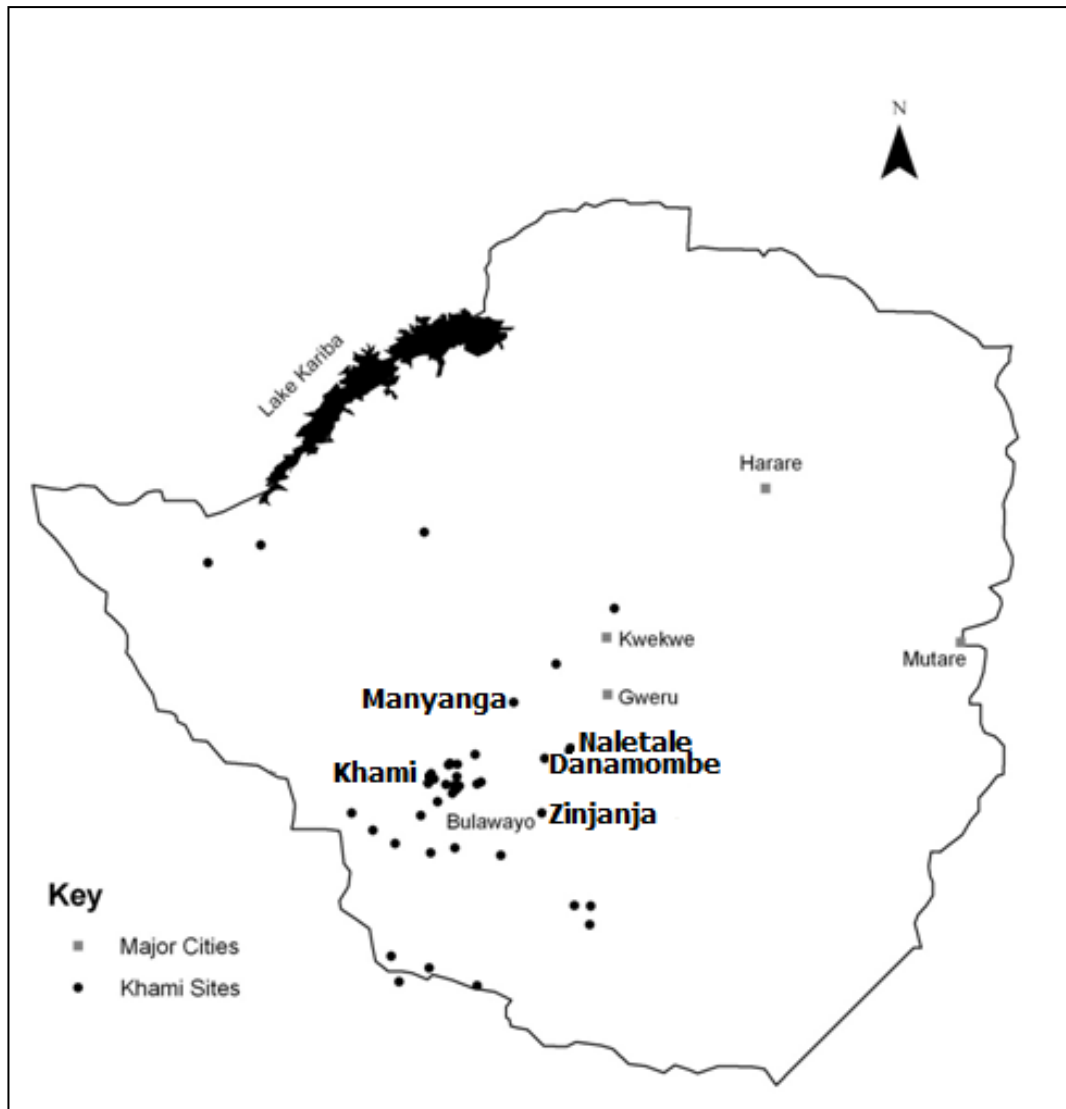


Figure 4.2: Map of Zimbabwe showing some of the major Khami-phase sites widely associated with Rozvi traditions.

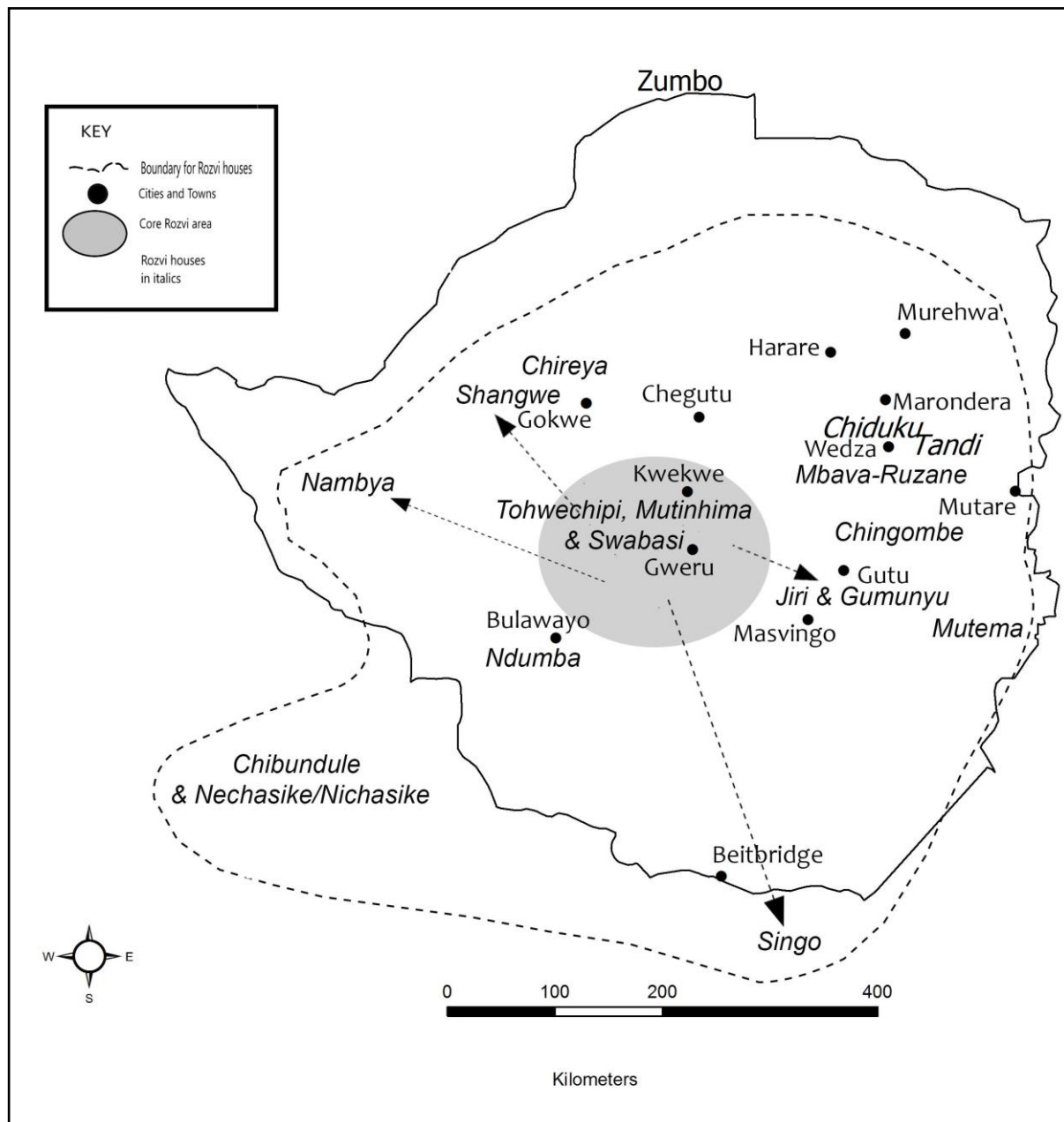


Figure 4.3: Map of Zimbabwe showing the general distribution of Rozvi houses.

4.6 Oral traditions and Rozvi systems of power

After settling in south-western Zimbabwe, the Rozvi gradually shed-off their military identity and became an ideologically organized governing system. This was easily attained by chaining out numerous mythical traditions that projected a common history, wide political influence that extended way back in time and political power endorsed by God (*Mwari*) himself. Loubser (1988:302) notes that myths are stylized representations of selective memory that has been streamlined into certain themes meant to project a certain order of reality that may not necessarily be true or chronologically arranged. Hence,

although Rozvi myths lack historical truth, they basically highlight their sources of power. Chief Mbava narrated some of the common Rozvi myths as follows:

He said the first king was Tumbare. He built his royal town near 'The Nameless Tree', near Marandellas. When he died, his son Munyepere was made king... King Munyepere had a very large army. It was he who told his men of war that he desired them to prepare ladders which should reach up to heaven, so that they could catch the moon in order that the king might make it his '*Ndoro*' (a round white shell ornament) with which to adorn himself. So the whole army began to cut trees and to make ladders, and they built and they built, going towards heaven, for two to three years. By and by the ladders began to rot. There were many people building and climbing up the ladders with trees and bark rope, and the ladders broke, and a great multitude fell down and were killed... By and by king Munyepere died and his son Togwa was chosen to be king. It is King Togwa who, people think built Zimbabwe and tried to dig up Mt. Mutikwiri and Mawhesimike. On the death of Togwa, Chiduku was made king... (Lloyd 1925:91-92).

Fortune (1956:82) also highlights a related tale which reads as follows:

...while living at the court they tried to pile up poles saying: "We will take the moon to make a platter for the Mambo." They were killing oxen for making thongs to bind the ladder-steps. They spent a year doing these things but afterwards the logs unexpectedly rotted and fell down, and all the people in the sky died... Now it was that after they were wasted in that way, they said: "We go and take the big rock called Makono so that it may be sat on by Mambo." And they dug it putting logs underneath to prise up that huge rock and so it fell and crushed them; and they all died. They left the place saying: "The rock worsted us; let us go to Ndarikure." Having gone to dig again so that they might take it to the court so that it might go and be sat on by Mambo, it thereupon fell again and crushed them and all died.

What emerges from these tales is not necessarily Rozvi past failures, but rather their high ambitions and unity of purpose. The place names cited above as well as names of Kings/*Mambos* who had such great visions are contradictory. However, the key idea behind these myths is that they project a certain level of group solidarity and abundant wealth. If they could afford investing so much cattle wealth and energy towards catching the moon and digging-up rocks/mountains, then their ability to build several Zimbabwe ruins was unquestionable. As such, these myths somehow reinforce the idea that the Rozvi were the builders of so many Zimbabwe ruins and they easily achieved that through their great wealth, strong army and unity of purpose. However, we now know that most of the ruins claimed by the Rozvi through oral traditions were built prior to their rise to power, even those ruins that coincide with their political governance in the south-western parts of Zimbabwe cannot be merely credited to them in the absence of reliable chronometric dates. The Rozvi also

exercised their power through religious discourse centred on the *Mwari* religion. They claimed to be the children of *Mwari*, a quality that they extensively exploited to control land rights, appoint other chiefs and acquire several economic benefits.

Bullock (1927:41) clearly stipulates that Rozvi power/influence was not premised on the military or otherwise but on their well organized *Mwari* religion. The word *Mwari* has complex origins and meanings among Bantu cultures; however the Shona, in particular the Karanga and Kalanga people associate the name with a sky-God of active and powerful character (Ranger 1974:6). This *Mwari* was seen as the ultimate being beyond ancestors, whose commands could entail both moral and political obligations. Zachrisson (1978:45) thus observed that the Shona religion was in many ways inseparable from Shona politics. Rozvi rulers therefore systematically universalized their own appropriated *Mwari* religious customs as a strategy to legitimize their political and religious standing among Shona communities. Daneel (1970:16) postulates that *Mwari* was primarily concerned with fertility of women and the land, the ruling Rozvi appropriated the cult to suit tribal politics, where the *Mwari* religion was used as a centralized ‘intelligence service’. Mazarire (2009) stated that Rozvi rulers strategically appropriated and exploited the *Mwari* cult to monitor and regulate all political affairs in their tributary states.

At Matonjeni/Mabweadziva, Mbire priests acted as the eyes, ears and mouth-pieces of various reports that were coming with messengers seeking rain for Rozvi tributary states (Daneel 1970). In order to foster strong memories of Rozvi relations with *Mwari*, numerous myths were constructed whereby the Rozvi founder was said to be birthed by *Mwari* and all Rozvi members were projected as the children of *Mwari* (see Beach 1976; Bullock 1927; Posselt 1935). Bhila (1982a:108) highlights that subjects from Manyika gladly adopted the Rozvi religion because they believed *Mwari* always listened and spoke with their Rozvi political masters. Beach (n.d.:32) however disputes the fact that *Mwari* was worshipped at Matonjeni through cave cults and that the Rozvi used *Mwari* to dominate the rest of the Shona. Instead he argues that the Rozvi *Mwari* was associated with people, objects and trees, while his worship was just meant for the Rozvi alone. While Beach’s argument has some grain of truth, it becomes problematic when it denies the fact that religion gave the Rozvi supremacy over all the strategic sectors of Shona society. A few examples of oral traditions emphasising these aspects are presented below:

One of the remarkable features of the Rozi story lies in the personal nature of their relationship with *Mwari*. How insistent he was on their acknowledging that they lived, ruled and conquered only by his favour and help! Even the magic horns lost their power when this was withdrawn. Any *hubris* or trust in their own unaided strength led to the immediate withdrawal of his favour and consequent disaster... (Fortune 1956:69).

In line with this view Hodza and Fortune (1979:217) made the following remarks:

Their traditions tell us that they were accompanied on their travels by a voice which they called Tovela which led them on their way, keeping them safe from dangerous places. The voice could speak from any object it chose and we are told that it spoke through grass or trees or through a little child, unable as yet to speak for itself. The voice of a presence whom some say was that of the first Rozvi ever created, the founding father of the clan. Others say he was the first person ever to be created and that after his death his spirit accompanied the different groups from Guruuswa to the countries they chose. Tovela not only protected his people on their travels but gave them food as well. When they clapped in homage and supplication to him at a tree, portions of porridge, pots of milk, and combs of honey would come out of the ground. He also gave them medicines to become invincible but not inaudible to their foes and to be long-lived. Tovela came to be called by other names by different groups such as *Mwari*...

The Rozvi therefore initiated customs of sacrificing to *Mwari* especially from stonewalled sites, and this strengthened their claims that they were the original builders of several such sites. Masola Kumile's account captures this as follows:

Nichisike built his town on the site vacated by Chivundule. It was on top of a hill and he defended himself by throwing rocks down its sides. His councillors also settled by large hills and were called after their names. Tumbali's office was that of Defender of the Realm... When the god Mwali demanded the cattle captured from Kgari by Tumbali... Tumbali also refused to give up any cattle in tribute since he had been given his share by the king. So the god who was the ultimate cause of the victory, was refused his share of the booty... Mwali foretold the destruction of Nichasike's kingdom and the death of Tumbali... (Fortune 1975:188).

Kalanga oral traditions recall Nichasike as the first Rozvi Changamire who ruled after usurping power from Chivundule/Togwa rulers. Thus Rozvi political power was always expressed through a strong religious influence by *Mwari*. Chief Mbava also emphasised this religious component in Rozvi governance systems:

The Warozwi came with a great army and conquered all the country. King Chiduku of the Warozwi ruled over the country of the Mawungwe, the Manyika, the Mabocha, the Wanyashanu, the Makombe and the Mazezuru. After this the Warozwi were the over-loads of the whole country, and chose all the new chiefs. If any chief died, his successor had to be confirmed by the Warozwi. If the people chose a

new chief without consulting their over-lord, it was said in common parlance that they had no chief, but the one selected or approved by the Warozwi was considered to be a true chief... When a chief died the people went and announced it to the Warozwi, and the Warozwi send heralds with black and white calico and the skin of a sheep. When the heralds arrived they anointed the new chief, probably the one chosen by the people. They anointed him with oil and clothed him with the black and white calico... I remembered that when Mbava was born the Portuguese had been in the country for a long time, and so the king of the Warozwi used to send his servants with elephants' tusks to buy calico for the robing of new chiefs... The place called Zimbabwe is a holy place. Mbava says that in the old days only chosen people were allowed to enter it and they only entered once to offer sacrifice. All the common people stayed at the foot of the mount... sacrifice of three or four black hornless cattle and elephants' tusks and gold and black and white calico (Lloyd 1925:62-3).

This account highlights the materialisation of Rozvi customs associated with the worship of *Mwari* and investiture ceremonies associated with the appointment of lesser chiefs by Rozvi elites. According to Hodza and Fortune (1979:7) Rozvi officials would recite the following poem during the ceremony of appointing a new chief as a Rozvi representative:

<i>Ndini MuRozvi ndimire pano.</i>	I am the Rozvi who stand here.
<i>Uri pamberi pavanhu, ndinoti, Wave'she nhasi.</i>	As you stand before the people, I call you Chief today.
<i>Ndakaturika chiremba chechiremekedzo pamberi pavanhu</i>	I place on you before the people the symbol of honour.
<i>Takuturura chidawo chako nhasi.</i>	I take off from you your own praise name
<i>today.</i>	
<i>Ndinopedzisa ndichiti, Heyi tsiva yevhu, ipfumbate maoko ako ose</i>	Finally I say, Here is a handful of soil, hold it in both hands.
<i>Izvi zvinoratidza nokuonesa kuti uchatonga nokudya pasi.</i>	That shows you will rule the land and eat its fruit.

In August 2011, I had the privilege to record a similar poem from one of the Rozvi descendants by then living in the Bikita district (see Machiridza 2012:110-111). His name was Fani Rumbabwa Chisi, he recited the poem as follows:

<i>Nhasi takugadze Ushe;</i>	Today we install you as Chief;
<i>Wekubata ivhu raBambo vako!</i>	To guard the soil of your Fathers!
<i>Muvhu mune zvakanwanda,</i>	The soil has a lot of things,
<i>Zvirema, mapofu, mhuka, nyoka, zvese nemakudo;</i>	The crippled, the blind, animals, snakes, and even unruly elements;
<i>Zvese zviri muvhu nhasi ndezvako!</i>	All that is in the soil today belongs to you!
<i>Unobata vanhu nezviri muvhu zvakasikwa naMwari;</i>	You rule your people and all in the soil, which was created by God;
<i>Saka tinokubatisa iri ivhu,</i>	We give you this handful of soil,
<i>Tichipendera nezvinobva muvhu!</i>	We pour on you this traditional beer which comes from the soil as we thank the soil!

Bhila (1982a:16) further notes that ever since 1693, the Rozvi always capitalized on investiture rituals in Manyika to assert their authority. In 1796 Nyarumwe begged the Rozvi

to confirm him as Manyika ruler after the death of a Chikanga in 1795 (Bhila 1982a). Kuper (1954:29) also highlights that the Rozvi managed to create a political network through presiding over succession systems, many chiefs wanted Rozvi representatives to recognise their installation ceremonies. At such ceremonies, large crowds were invited to witness the event where the chief was given numerous emblems of *Mamboship* (Chieftainship). For more specific examples of such symbols refer to Machiridza (2012:96), and for a detailed appreciation of Rozvi totemism and several other Rozvi laws relating to tribute payment (see Bhila 1982a; Bullock 1927; Machiridza 2012). The Rozvi *moyo* totem therefore became a fashion for most tributary chiefs and locals willing to hide their former identity or enhance self-protection from the Portuguese as well as all those who simply wanted to identify with the rulers (see Bhila 1982a; Machiridza 2012, 2014; Zachrisson 1978). In principle, the association between socio-economic and political advantages with ethnic affiliation meant that more people were willing to join the dominant ruling group.

Furthermore, the instruction to hold a handful of soil during Rozvi investiture ceremonies as highlighted in poems above, symbolized Rozvi control over land. Mazarire (2009:24) notes that Tohwechipi won a lot of clients through the tradition of parceling out land. Zachrisson (1978) also states that one major source of Rozvi power was the granting of land rights to incoming groups especially along the outskirts of their core territories. Among the Shona, all people who come to join the ruling lineage in search of suitable land, political safety or who simply desired to settle near their relatives were called *vatorwa* meaning strangers or outsiders. The increase of these *vatorwa*/strangers was one effective mechanism through which the authority of the senior unit/ruling lineage could expand territorially and politically (Zachrisson 1978:39). Bourdillon (1976) also offers a detailed interpretation of the relationship between land, chieftainship, religion and power among the Shona. He notes that land is not just property; it is intimately associated with the history of a chiefdom, the ruling chief and ancestral spirits. New comers are therefore expected to respect the chief who allocates them land because it is his ancestors who control rain and ensure land fertility (Bourdillon 1976:85). As such the Rozvi custom of instructing chiefs to have a handful of soil during installation ceremonies symbolized the appointed chief's loyalty to Rozvi sovereignty over land rights (Ncube 2004:12). As already shown in some accounts highlighted above, oral traditions also consistently emphasised the military might of the Rozvi. Makuvise from Makuvise village of Bikita district made references to the power of the Rozvi army as follows:

Mushure maizozo kwakavuya Dziti laiyi Mcecenyani ndo kubva tabaya nalo ndo kulitata. Mushure malo kwakavuya limwe Dziti laiyi Zhishiri ndo kubayana nalo tikalitata... mailolo Dziti kwakavuya limwe laiyi...

After those same events there came a Nguni called Mcecenyani and forthwith we fought him and chased him off. There came again another Nguni called Zishiri (Huge Bird?) and we fought with him and drove him off...there came another called...(Fortune 1956:71-2).

Fortune (1956:83-4) also highlights other traditions projecting the strength of the Rozvi army:

It is the drum of Tumbale. Another name for it was Dulitsire. This is the drum of Tumbale which, when it has sounded, it appears that the army has come out to go and kill... This drum used to be played by Tumbale himself. He was a servant of the *Mambo*. He was a person who had come out with the Rozi venerating Bepe... This drum was such, that when it was beaten, there used first (to sound) the gun of *Mambo* which was called *Cidzimbenhema*. It used to be such that when it was sounded the whole land heard, and all knew that there was a force at the court... And the Rozi sees that the force has come, and it is announced: "Tumbale and Basi go and see the force which has come." And they go to see and stand... "It has come to fight." Go now Basi and Tumbale instruct your children as you go and fight." Today you let the bees and they go and fight today with the army that has come." Then they go then it is then to go and let out the bees from the magic horns... (When enemies had come to attack the Rozvi Tumbale and Basi were instructed to find out and report their findings. After the report they were then asked to instruct others to fight the enemy by letting out bees from magic horns) own emphasis.

This Rozvi army effectively enforced the regular payment of tribute both by its subjects in the metropolis and peripheral areas. The army was recruited from their subjects as tribute in the form of young unmarried man who left upon marriage (Gann 1965; Mazarire 2009). Much of the state grain, gold and wealth went towards the military monarchy, in this respect, the army was very active and well disciplined (Beach 1980; Gann 1965). The soldiers were armed with battle axes, assegais, bows and arrows and only the Rozvi *Mambo* possessed guns (Bhila 1982a; Mudenge 1974b). In 1743 a force of about 2000 soldiers reached Zumbo, in 1772 the Rozvi army saved Zumbo from Mutapa attack and in 1780, 3000 Rozvi warriors appeared at Zumbo in support of the Portuguese and around the 1780s a large force camped at Murahwa's hill (Beach 1980). The army was expected to enforce the collection of tribute/bingo which often came in the form of cloth, glass, ornaments, ivory, hoes, axes, skins, tobacco, livestock, precious metals, wives and labour among other things (Beach 1980; Bhila 1982a; Loubser 1988; Zachrisson 1978). Bhila (1982a:101-105) details the rigor with which the Rozvi meted out punishment on tribute defaulters and rebellious subjects. Of

course, the Rozvi economy was well balanced; apart from tribute collection, they also grew crops, kept livestock, practiced mining, participated in trade and hunted (see Beach 1980; Zachrisson 1978). Some of these economic aspects are highlighted in the following Rozvi narratives, as highlighted by Fortune and Hodza (1974:69):

<i>Bvumavaranda,</i>	‘You who receive the homage of your subjects,
<i>Vakadzi vachiza vomene;</i>	women coming of their own accord;
<i>Jengetanyika;</i>	Keeper and master of the land;
<i>Mwene wavanhu;</i>	Lord of the people;
<i>VaChuru-chamipfunde-manji;</i>	Mound surrounded by abundant sorghum;
<i>VaNyoka haisvosvwi.</i>	Those who are known as “A snake is not to be provoked.
<i>Kuisvosva inoruma munhu.</i>	If you provoke it, it will bite someone”.’

Shoko (2001:19-20) also presents another interesting example:

<i>Bhepe</i>	Resident of the Royal capital
<i>Nzinda</i>	He who drapes in white apparel
<i>Tumbare</i>	Of the mountain
<i>Wejila Jena</i>	Possessor of red soils
<i>VaChulu ChaNhave</i>	He who carries his knife around
<i>VaChisavase</i>	Keeper of an impala
<i>VaChigala nakabhanga</i>	Whose home supper is marula nut
<i>VaChichengeta munongolo</i>	Who dresses his wives in black
<i>Chilailo chakanye ishomwe</i>	Grower of plenty of sorghum
<i>VaChilima mapfunde manji</i>	But for Tumbare
<i>Aisava Tumbare</i>	The Rozvi offspring would have perished in fire (war)
<i>Bwana bwomuRozvi</i>	Yea Tumbare
<i>Bwaisapera kutsva mumoto</i>	He who dresses in white
<i>Aiwa kani Tumbare</i>	Thank you
<i>Wejila Jena</i>	
<i>Maita zvenyu</i>	
<i>Bhepe</i>	

Although the two poems cited above were directed at praising specific Rozvi elites, they are also emphatic about the way land was effectively exploited to produce bumper harvests. These poems indicate that through agricultural production, Rozvi elites were able to provide for their subjects. References to ‘keeper of an impala’ also signal the importance of hunting in the Rozvi economy as explicitly stated by Chief Mbava:

In those days there was much game of all kinds. The Warozwi used to catch it by digging a hole called a *datira*... then they drove all the game with a great noise and swishing the grass of the *datira*, and all the people shrilled their triumph cry. Then 200 or perhaps 300 animals would fall into the pit, and all were killed with spears... (Lloyd 1925:64).

4.7 Conclusions

The Rozvi past was intricately connected with the Mutapa, Manyika and Torwa state systems. Consequently, a standard definition of the Rozvi will always present numerous

challenges because of their dynamic past. Rozvi identities were certainly related to numerous material things as outlined in documentary and oral traditions reviewed above. The only challenge is to infer their reproduction through the archaeological record of their former settlements. This is no easy task because Rozvi identities were constantly invented, imagined and re-imagined from the general Shona customs and traditions. However, the materialization of their identities should not be expected to be radically different from the rest of the Shona people who occupied the Zimbabwean plateau. While some of their former archaeological settlements are known historically, their true historical identity can only be confirmed by a systematic archaeological inquiry. Such an inquiry should closely examine the distribution of chronometric dates in sealed contexts as well as their association with material culture like ceramics, glass beads and other cultural objects with potential to be charged as ethnic symbols. Since we already know the dates associated with Rozvi origins and their political takeover of the entire south-western region from the Torwa, we can therefore correlate archaeological data with relevant historical and ethnographic data to diagnose the Rozvi. Therefore the next chapter examines the archaeological record of their former core territories through survey oriented data.

Chapter Five

Extracting the Data: Archaeological Surveys

“As well as spatial organisation, material culture can be used to access aspects of identity.” (Hand n.d.:25).

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the survey design and presents the archaeological evidence that was recorded between July 2014 and August 2015 survey expeditions. The surveys were mainly conducted to establish a correct record of site diversity according to cultural period in the study area. This identification of the general range of sites in the study area was particularly significant in contributing towards the ongoing debate about the role of Great Zimbabwe tradition and Leopard’s Kopje cultures in the development of the Khami-phase (see Chirikure *et al.* 2017; Garlake 1973; Huffman 2007; Pikirayi 2001; Sinclair 1987; van Waarden 2011, 2012). Furthermore, the surveys also sought to guide the selection of a sample of three Rozvi elite settlements with potential for excavation. On the whole, survey data was used to comparatively analyse the spatial, architectural and surface material evidence of the concerned sites. Inferences on the major economic activities characterising each site cluster were then made as part of attempts to understand the broader relationships among sites and their environment(s). Since environmental factors in the recent past have remained relatively constant as compared to cultural traditions; economic and socio-political issues were largely inferred through the settlement system approach.

5.2 Previous work in the study area: a brief

Just like the rest of major archaeological sites on the Zimbabwean plateau, Khami-phase sites were not spared from early antiquarian activities. As early as the 1890s, sites like Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja were already being plundered for treasure. It was only after these early destructive activities, that professional work began around the area through Randall-McIver (1906) who excavated Danamombe and Naletale, and later on Caton-Thompson (1931) who made a follow-up on Randall-McIver’s work at Danamombe. Unfortunately, archaeological research coverage around these regions largely remained centred on the major well documented dry stonewalled structures as evidenced by a number of works like Garlake (1970), Huffman (1996), Machiridza (2012), Pikirayi (2001), Robinson

(1959, 1966), Summers (1959, 1971) and van Waarden (2012). The greater part of territories surrounding these stonewalled structures basically remained unexplored, except by a few enthusiastic white commercial farmers who occasionally reported their accidental discoveries to museum officials. Until today, most of these site reports remain unconfirmed by professional archaeologists and such a scenario makes most of these early site reports invalid. Nonetheless, during the 1990s a few site delimitation surveys were conducted by staff from the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ), around sites like Manyanga, Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja. Apparently, most of their survey reports are no longer available in museum site files except for the 1998 report for Manyanga cluster sites. Even this report lacks detailed archaeological information because the main survey goal was to delineate site boundaries. Since previous surveys failed to generate enough information for purposes of this study, it was necessary to embark on intensive foot surveys as outlined in the following sections.

5.3 Survey design

Survey design relates to the informed application of strategies and techniques that will provide an unbiased or representative sample of sites in a region (Schiffer *et al.* 1979). It may also be defined as the plan for effectively acquiring information needed to make valid archaeological conclusions about particular distribution patterns. According to Banning (2002) survey design should be formulated well in advance and evaluated by experienced practitioners in order to maximise on research output. In this respect, there is always a tight fit between the research design and anticipated survey results. Thus surveys should be designed to enable the effective detection of sites and identification of spatial structure in a region. Burke and Smith (2004:78) rightly pointed out that the effectiveness of survey coverage is never assessed on the basis of the size of the survey area but the favourability of the field conditions during the period of surveys. Generally it should be appreciated that the outcomes of any archaeological surface survey are only representative of the visible, rather than the actual archaeological record (Burke and Smith 2004). Thus the most comprehensive surveys usually integrate foot surveys with geophysical techniques and aerial photography.

Nowadays, there is a quest to fully understand the relationships among sites and their environments (see Katsamudanga 2007; Manyanga 2007; Marufu 2012). Surveys have therefore been redefined to shift from a descriptive focus on sites and non-sites in general to interpreting landscapes in a manner that broadens our understanding of broad environmental

regions and archaeological sites (Katsamudanga 2007; King 1978). Banning (2002) stipulates that a well designed prospection takes advantage of available information to improve on site discovery. In this respect, a multiple-survey strategy instead of multi-purpose survey strategies was preferable because knowledge gathered from the previous stage was used in making decisions on the subsequent stage. Consequently, archaeological surveys followed three main phases namely; desktop research, reconnaissance and pedestrian tactic surveys. The initial desktop research focused on Portuguese ethno-historic sources, historical and archaeological sources that attempted to geographically map the Rozvi state core territories (see Beach 1980; Ncube 2004; Pikirayi 2001; van Waarden 2012).

Although numerous Khami-phase sites attributable to Rozvi elites like Danamombe, Naletale, Manyanga and Zinjanja were already known prior to the commencement of field surveys, there was need to properly define the archaeological character of the zones immediately surrounding these elite settlements. Another major survey goal was to establish the existence and nature of interactions that shaped the evolution of Leopard's Kopje, Great Zimbabwe tradition and Khami type sites. It was also crucial to investigate how local recourses found in the study area influenced the development of cultural complexity. A full appreciation of the general site distribution, culture sequence and distribution of natural resources in the study area was crucial in addressing questions relating to cultural complexity processes in south-western Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean archaeological survey database benefited extensively from awareness campaigns done by the monuments Commission of Southern Rhodesia in the 1950s (Ndoro 2001). Several settler farmers reported sites on their farms following this development. In this respect, the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ)'s Archaeological Survey Unit database in the Museum of Human Sciences (MHS) in Harare as well as the Gweru Military Museum Khami-phase site files provided a starting point for the broader understanding of the range of archaeological sites in the study area. Ntaba Zika Mambo/Manyanga sites, located in the Bubi district of south-western Zimbabwe were also targeted for study. The Manyanga delimitation report of 1998 is of particular interest, because the survey team managed to cover 25 km² around the monument. In order to minimise survey costs, this report was used as a general guide for the distribution of sites around Manyanga national monument.

Most archaeological site records in the MHS are incomplete especially in terms of site description. The majority of sites in the archaeological database remain unconfirmed by professional archaeologists and they appear over generalised in terms of cultural

periodisation. As such, they were treated with extreme caution. All sites that were reported by armatures like former colonial farmers and other locals but never confirmed by professional archaeologists were ignored from the overall site count in the study area. Other published and unpublished files with databases of archaeological sites were also exploited to broaden the author's appreciation of the distribution of archaeological sites in the research area and beyond (e.g. Sinclair and Lundmark 1984; Swan 1994; van Waarden 2012). In particular, it was important to examine the wider local context for the Khami type sites and their relationship to one another. The desktop research indicated that the occupational history of the study area stretches from the Early Stone Age (ESA) right up to the Refuge period. Since the Stone Age and Early Iron Age periods were of limited value to this study, priority was given to the Middle and Late Iron Age/Later Farming Community (LFC) periods. These periods encompass Leopard's Kopje, Great Zimbabwe and the Khami-phase cultures with a much closer bearing on our understanding of the Rozvi archaeology. While the occupational history in the study area stretches as far back as the Early Stone Age, much attention was given to the LFC sites, which are according to the MHS Survey Unit site database are distributed as follows in the study area; Leopard's Kopje 27, Great Zimbabwe period sites 4, Khami-phase sites 32, Refuge tradition sites 3 and Early Iron Age/Later Iron Age Iron working sites 6 (see Table 5.1 and Fig 5.1 below).

Table 5.1: Summary of the sites recorded from the MHS site database

Site name	symbol	Tradition	x	y
Waterfall farm	PJ	LK	607800	7801100
Ventnor farm	PJ	LK	657900	7847400
Matetsi hill	PJ	LK	658400	7800400
Umgusa irrigation lots	PH	LK	658800	7790300
Nali Hill	PH	LK	659600	7797600
Renny Dene farm	PH	LK	660800	7790700
Renny dene Farm	PH	LK	661100	7790700
Mawala Hill	PH	LK	661400	7790800
Renny dene Farm2	PH	LK	661900	7790900
Silver spring Mamba hill	PH	LK	662100	7796100
Shiloh2	PJ	LK	664800	7811200
Shiloh	PJ	LK	665300	7811800
Renny dene Vlei	PH	LK	665700	7799900
Norval's farm	PH	LK	666600	7799700
Mambo umboza hill	PH	LK	667000	7799700
Umfasimeti hill	PH	LK	668300	7795700

Zoo	PH	LK	673400	7789800
Maldon farm	PH	LK	686900	7791600
Bembesi-fort Rixon Rd	QH	LK	700800	7708900
Kabay hill	QH	LK	702500	7703500
Longila farm	QH	LK	708500	7793800
York farm	QH	LK	737500	7766700
Mapaputsha hill	QH	LK	739000	7793800
Greater Kyalami	QH	LK	746200	7772800
Naletale 3	QH	LK	765600	7799200
Mohem mine	PH	LK	609900	7709000
Renny dene farm	PH	KH	662500	7788300
Ntabakai konjwa	PJ	KH	675300	7828200
Ruin Powola portwe	PJ	KH	675000	7826900
Bila ruin/ hill	QH	KH	760200	7799600
Nsalansala	QH	KH	775200	7792400
Gwenaguru Kopje ruin	QH	KH	772400	7791400
Regina/Zinjanja	QH	KH	744600	7772800
Altyre farm	QH	KH	748900	7770100
Lavinia farm	QH	KH	754900	7779600
Pioneer block	QH	KH	748500	7778800
Kongesi ruins	QH	KH	751750	7733500
Anglesey	QH	kH	741500	7746300
Wabai Camp40 Ruin	QH	KH	772300	7783900
Wabai National Monument	QH	KH	749600	7738700
Batsitswa lower Gweru Ruin	QJ	KH	753500	7874100
Matelegwa Ruins	QJ	KH	718800	7863900
Mohana farm	QJ	KH	751900	7805300
Lawndale farm	QJ	KH	706600	7800200
Arupanga	QJ	KH	764100	7894800
Naletale cattle kraal	QJ	KH	765600	7800100
Khami ruins		KH	655700	7753800
Dhlodhlo		KH	744000	7793000
Dwalalamambo		KH	744081	7794400
Pioneer Estate Enclo		KH	748454	7778520
Shangangwe N/E		KH	761303	778844
Arupanga ruins		KH	763907	7793823
Manyanga		KH	716300	7841600
Manyanga1		KH	741800	7839300
Manyanga2		KH	716700	7839600
Manyanga3		KH	717200	7839600
Manyanga4		KH	717400	7839500
Manyanga5		KH	716300	7838300
Glenavon farm ruin	QH	GZ	738500	7792700
Ballaballa ruins	QH	GZ	701500	7704800
South Shangani block	QJ	GZ	703800	7804100
The Glade farm	QJ	GZ	758100	7896600

Mohana farm2	QJ	IW	753300	7806200
Hlolo	QH	RF	703800	7708800
Naletale3		RF	765905	779975
Dhlodhlo1		IW	743808	7791056
Dhlodhlo2		IW	743142	7792928
Manakolo farm	RJ	RF	800000	7800000
Muzungurume		IW	762171	7796525
Arupanga5		IW	764089	7794784
Regina/Zinjanja Hill7		IW	745540	7770717
Key: LK= Leopard's Kopje, KH= Khami, GZ= Great Zimbabwe, RF= Refuge, IW= Iron Working sites				

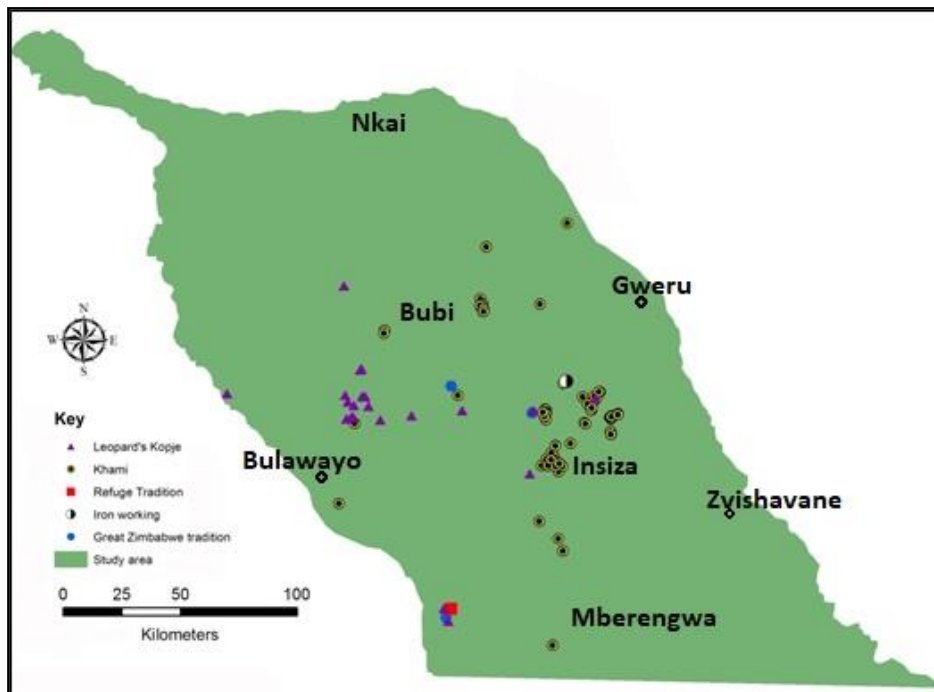


Figure 5.1: Map showing the spatial distribution of the sites highlighted in Table 5.1

The characterisation of Great Zimbabwe period sites on the basis of mere freestanding walls alone was problematic because some sites like Nsalansala, which has many freestanding walls was classified under the Great Zimbabwe period sites yet it largely resembles Khami-phase sites. In fact, most Khami-phase sites in the study area have a significant number of freestanding walls that can be easily mistaken for Great Zimbabwe period architecture if due care is not taken. While most Khami-phase sites in the study area had freestanding walls and other decorations typical of Great Zimbabwe period sites, ceramic evidence and other cultural material noted on these sites proved otherwise. In other delimitation reports of Khami-phase

sites like the one for Ntaba Zika Mambo/Manyanga national monument, the categorisation of sites as belonging to the Great Zimbabwe period was mistaken because no sufficient evidence was provided in the report to justify that kind of site classification. Neither architectural attributes nor ceramic evidence was used to support this characterization. In other instances some sites were simply recorded as ruins with no other information provided on the site index cards. Owing to the above cited loopholes in the archaeological survey database, other field based sampling and survey techniques were engaged. Initially, preliminary surveys were done in order to familiarise with the environment and nature of archaeological material in the study area. This initial exercise also sought to identify and document sites in the study area as well as to refine some of the proposed research questions.

The pilot surveys were quite useful in assessing the amount of work required in order to objectively estimate the financial costs needed to conduct intensive surveys. Moreover these field surveys were done to understand the basic culture sequence in south-western Zimbabwe. These surveys were quite useful in understanding settlement patterning and the associated site hierarchies. According to Banning (2002) large settlements allow us to record almost all surviving examples of such settlements in a region; hence these may be used as a guide to document lower levels of settlement hierarchy. Banning (2002:36) further notes that the distribution of large sites allows us to infer on spatial structure and they can be used as the basis for stratifying the statistical sample. In this respect, it was deemed necessary to use some of the major Khami-phase stonewalled sites as focal points. Adaptive cluster sampling based on quadrats as survey units was considered as the most appropriate sampling and survey technique. This survey strategy promoted quick field mobility around the core settlements of major interest to this investigation. In a way, this survey approach also minimised travelling costs and it enhanced site recovery because all types of landforms near the selected points of focus were thoroughly explored.

5.3.1 Target population

Orton (2000) defines target population as the actual sampling population from which information is wanted. Variables like mineral resources are critical for Iron Age communities in terms of tool manufacturing and trade relations (Katsamudanga 2007). Other geographical variables like rainfall, water, soil, geology, topography and vegetation affected Stone Age and Iron Age communities differently. As such, documentation procedures during surveys were as extensive as possible in order to capture such field details accurately. Site recording

forms with separate fields like site name, location, elevation, cultural period, site type and ranking were consistently used in the field. This was aided by a digital camera for taking photographs; a hand held e-trex Global Positioning system (GPS) for recording the UTM coordinates of sites and their elevation, a field notebook for making notes, sketches of archaeological observations and recording environmental details. In addition, a 1:50 000 scale topographic map sheet was used for marking observed sites and navigating through relevant quadrates. One of the seemingly easy but difficult targets to define was a site, which is briefly explored below for the sake of clarity.

5.3.2 A site

The conceptualisation of a site in archaeology has significantly shifted over the years owing to the realisation that a site is a methodologically and theoretically flawed unit of analysis. Prior to 1980 there was no consistency in defining sites as they were regarded as mere concentrations of material culture sometimes involving architectural remains (Banning 2002). Scholars like Plog *et al.* (1978) conceptualized sites as those cultural spaces with a density of at least 5 artifacts per m². According to Pikirayi (1993:48), such an approach to a site would be problematic because archaeological sites constitute a lot more than just numerical artifact scatters. In most cases, archaeologists encounter places with very sparse concentrations of cultural material yet they still qualify to be defined as sites. This explains why, King (1978:3) broadly defined a site as any location on or in the ground with or without buildings, structures or other protuberances that may contain important historic or prehistoric information. As such, during the late 1980s and early 1990s, site definitions became much simplified and more encompassing as those discrete and potentially interpretable places with evidence of past human activities (Pikirayi 1993; Pwiti 1996a).

Following the realisation that human activities did not necessarily occur in settlements, and that hunter-gatherers consider entire landscapes as activity areas not a site, the conceptualisation of a site was broadened. Banning (2002) argues that the definition of a site should always be broad because it depends on archaeological goals and objectives. In this regard, he broadly defined it as any locus of past human behaviour or clusters of formal human habitation and activity (Banning 2002:75). Burke and Smith (2004) also offered a sufficiently broad definition of an archaeological site as any basic survey operating unit or place that contains physical evidence of past human activity. In this study a site was simply defined as a zone of dense archaeological interest that can be described using x;y;z

coordinates, which is usually surrounded by a swathe of ‘non-site’ space. Sites were further categorised as settlement (elite and commoner sites) and non-settlements sites (activity areas) as proposed by Pwiti (1996) and Katsamudanga (2007).

Pwiti (1996) and Katsamudanga (2007) further subdivided sites into settlement and non-settlement categories, which they classified into several other finer cultural periods and site types. According to Katsamudanga (2007) a settlement site is any point with manifestations of archaeological material, which reflects human habitation on a permanent or semi-permanent basis, while a non-settlement site refers to mere archaeological occurrences or isolated cultural material typical of economic or ritual activity. Therefore archaeological sites range from family homesteads often referred to as open air sites to monumental structures widely associated with the elite settlements. This is quite a valid approach to sites, which was considered appropriate during pedestrian surveys. The other major challenge in dealing with archaeological sites is that of estimating site size because in most instances the overall extent of sites is often obscured by natural processes that leave only small segments visible to the human eye (see Burke and Smith 2004; Orton 2000; Pwiti 1996a). Of course, this challenge was never encountered during surveys because most Khami-phase sites are relatively recent dating to the 15th century and after, of which they were built on elevated artificial platforms whose measurements were fairly easy to record.

5.3.3 Survey boundaries

The sampling universe can be defined by a range of natural, cultural, historical, political, catchment and abstract boundaries (Banning 2002; Pikirayi 1993). Abstract boundaries are those imposed by agents issuing research permits, established when one finds a target of interest or after radiating outwards from a certain focal point. Others are simply based on the longitudinal and latitudinal lines on a map sheet. At times there is no need to define boundaries in advance because these will eventually become apparent during fieldwork as the case with this particular study when adaptive cluster sampling was employed. Banning (2002) notes that under catchment boundaries, settlement locations can act as centres of a survey universe that radiate outwards in all directions. The former Torwa/Rozvi centres of Danamombe, Zinjanja, Naletale and Manyanga were chosen as the focal points within this broad swath of land.

5.3.4 Sampling scheme

While total survey provides the best field coverage, archaeologists hardly have enough time and resources to explore entire landscapes; hence they rely on sampling schemes. In most instances, spatial phenomena is ill-served by most kinds of statistical survey because randomly selected samples usually omit large areas of the landscape, while selected survey units are often too dispersed to establish meaningful spatial patterns. Schiffer *et al.* (1979) observed that purposive sampling is good for clustered materials while probabilistic sampling is preferable for scattered materials. Since Khami-phase sites in the study area are relatively clustered, purposive sampling, which relates to the informed search of cultural material basing on particular clues of the most likely areas to detect evidence of interest, was considered as the most appropriate method. Purposive sampling reduces the search area and increases the probability of survey success by maximising on background knowledge, experience, time and costs reduction, convenience or a combination of these (Orton 2000). In order to provide balanced survey coverage and minimise bias within the study area, purposive sampling was combined with several other strategies highlighted below.

Sampling strategies made use of 1:250 000 scale topographical map of Zimbabwe from the MHS Archaeological Survey Unit to retrieve index cards of previously reported sites in the study area and 1:50 000 scale topographical maps that coincided with the survey focal points of Danamombe, Naletale, Zinjanja and Manyanga sites. A relatively new sampling approach, which targets clustered populations called adaptive cluster sampling, was used to guide the systematic selection of 1 km² survey units on 1:50 000 scale map sheets in the field (see Figs. 5.2-5.5 below). Basically an adaptive sample is a multi-phase design where a 'phase' of a survey is defined as a point at which a selection of units is made based on what has already been observed. First a neighbourhood of 1 km² units was defined through geographical proximity to the focal point then every adjacent unit to the focal point was systematically inspected for sites. If the neighbouring 1 km² grids met the survey condition (having cultural finds), sampling continued but if it failed, then further sampling of adjacent grids stopped.

Thus adaptive cluster sampling is defined by a series of nodes and edges where an initial sample of nodes and edges is first defined. After defining the initial grid with the site chosen as focal point, then the other adjacent eight grids automatically became part of the survey sample. This sampling goes on until nothing in terms of cultural material is found in the surrounding adjacent grids (see Figs. 5.2-5.5 below). At the end, the final sample should be bounded by a series of edges that do not satisfy the condition defined above. This sampling scheme allows for increased survey intensity because it is open ended. Actually the final sample size cannot be predicted before one completes fieldwork because the sampling strategy is adaptive (Thompson 1990). In other instances the adaptive cluster sampling strategy was aided by local knowledge in order to maximise on detecting sites around each focal point. Some of the locals used to go on hunting expeditions with former white commercial farmers and came across many archaeological sites, which they easily directed the researcher to. Some of these locals are now employed as site custodians by the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ); hence they were willing to assist and had a very good understanding of archaeological material culture. Several sites were identified through support from such locals.

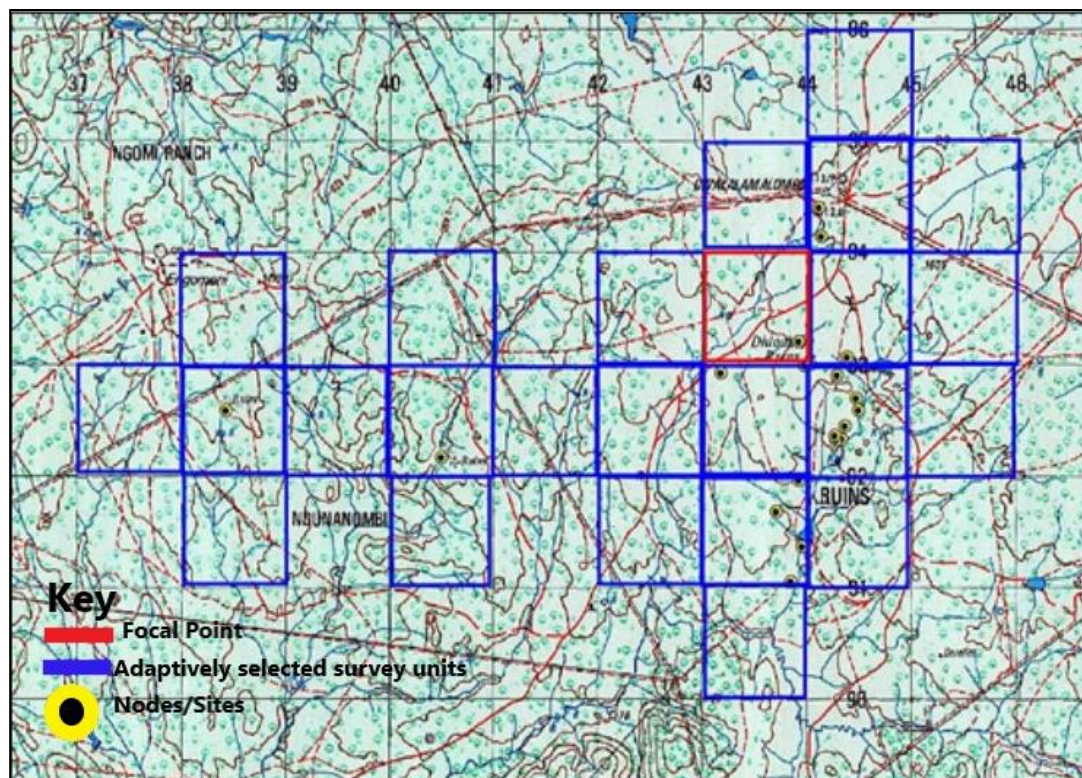


Figure 5.2: Map showing Danamombe/Dhlohdhlo focal point in red, nodes/sites in yellow and black circles as well as the adaptively selected 1 km² survey units in blue

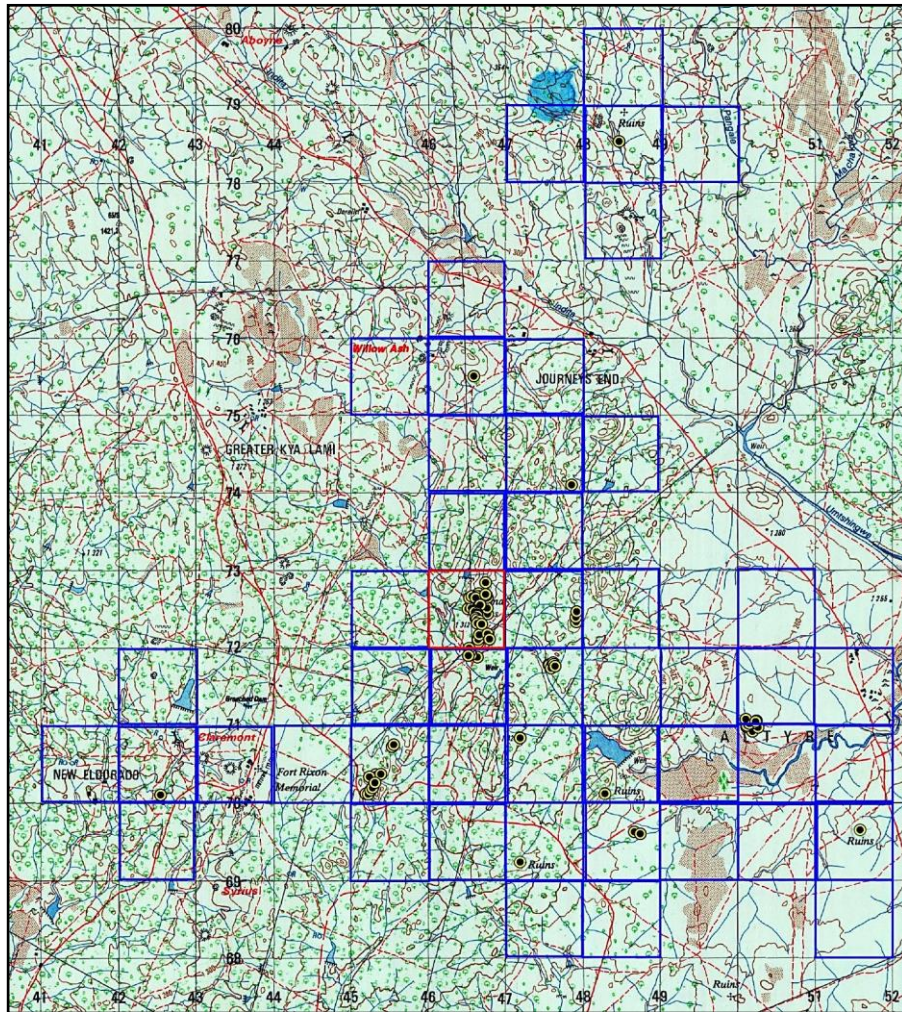


Figure 5.3: Map showing Zinjanga/Regina focal point in red, nodes/sites in yellow and black circles as well as the adaptively selected 1 km² survey units in blue

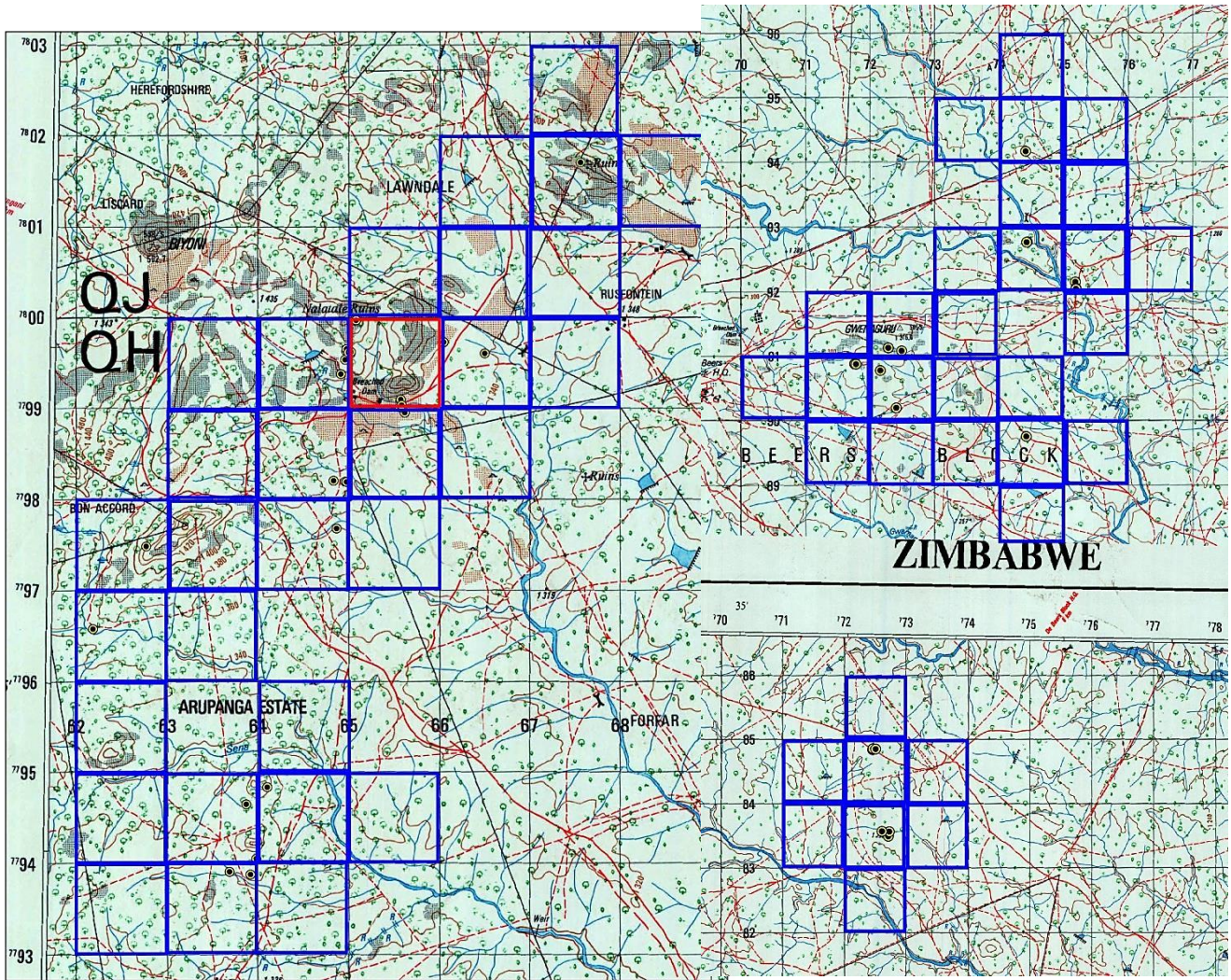


Figure 5.4: Maps showing Naletale focal point in red, nodes/sites in yellow and black circles as well as the adaptively selected 1 km² survey units in blue

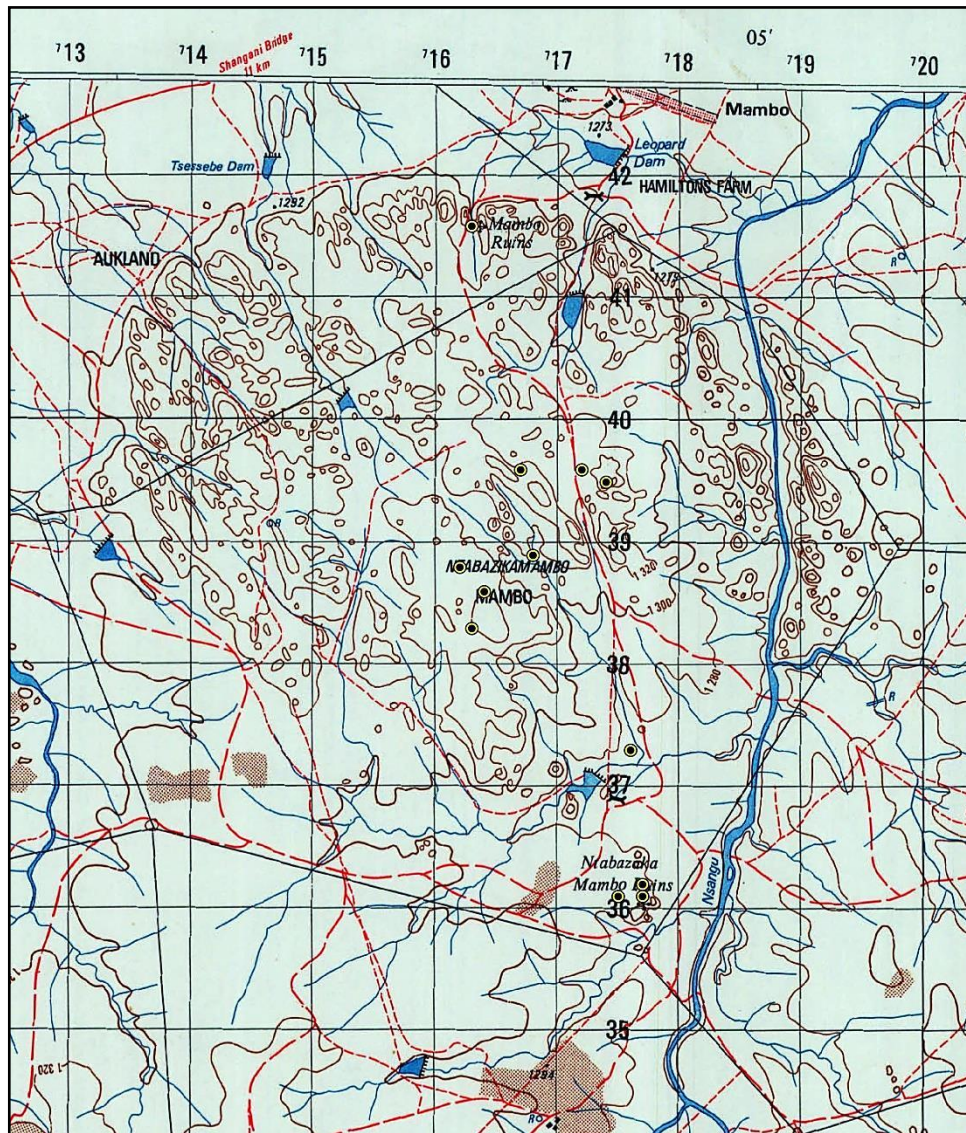


Figure 5.5: Map showing Manyanga cluster sites in yellow and black circles, these were plotted from a delimitation survey report that covered an area of 25km².

5.3.5 Sampling unit

This relates to parcel(s) of land chosen for inspection along unit size and shape for instance quadrats or transect. Their purpose is to provide a framework for survey hence they can take any shape ranging from rectangles, sets of circles, triangles, or hexagons, among others (Banning 2002). The most common shapes are transects and quadrats which vary from large, medium and small owing to considerations of logistics, finances, target parameters and archaeological material distributions (see Schiffer *et al.* 1979). Nonetheless, a large number of small units are better than a few large ones from a statistical point of view, although small units also make it difficult to detect site relationships. Furthermore things that are close together are likely to be similar based on soci-political interactions; therefore it is always

important to strike a balance when deciding on this procedure (Banning 2002). Schiffer *et al.* (1979) however argues that quadrats are preferable for stratified schemes and detection of site distribution patterns, hence 1 km² grids were considered as the most appropriate units for purposes of this study.

5.3.6 Cultural period

This variable is widely used to group contemporary sites together on the basis of similarities and differences in surface material culture attributes. Material culture similarities and differences are exploited in different classification schemes aimed at cultural categorisation of sites. Chronometric dates usually offer the best resolution for cultural periodisation but owing to challenges of getting radiocarbon dates for each site, many researchers simply resort to the use of surface material typologies to classify sites. In this respect, key attributes from stone tools, ceramics, beads and dry-stone walls are widely used to categorise sites into known or well established regional and local sequences. Cultural periods like Early Stone Age (ESA) 2.6 million - 115 000 years ago, Middle Stone Age (MSA) 250 000 - 30 000 years ago, Later Stone Age (LSA) 30 000 - 2 000 years ago, Early Iron Age (EIA) AD 200 - 900, Middle Iron Age (MIA) AD 900 - 1300, Later Iron Age (LIA) AD 1300 - 1840, Historical (HIS) AD 1500 - 1900 and Refuge (REF) late 17th – 19th century often form the initial basis of classifications, which can be fine-tuned to traditions and facies. The MHS archaeological survey database and published works like Sinclair and Lundmark (1984), Swan (1994), and van Waarden (2012) provided a guideline for reconstructing the local sequence for LFC in the study area.

5.3.7 Site type

Only two categories namely settlement site and non-settlement site type were used in the classification of sites. As already highlighted, this study was particularly interested in the LIA and historical periods, which led to further classification of site types into Leopard's Kopje (LK), Great Zimbabwe tradition (GZ), Khami-phase (KH), Refuge (REF) and iron working (IW) sites. Pikirayi (1993:180-2) concisely argued that the term 'Refuge' lacks proper archaeological focus as it tries to capture everything that happened on the Zimbabwean plateau between the 16th century and the present. In particular, this term conflates several unrelated stonewalled structures and historical events that occurred on the Zimbabwean plateau into one broad economic and cultural entity, which is problematic. Precisely, this term has been abused to describe all the temporary inaccessible defensive or hiding places

assumed to have been occupied by women and children, loopholed stone structures in northern Zimbabwe, sites associated with Nguni raids, walled and non-walled sites covered by oral traditions and even several hunters camps, pioneer settlements and British South Africa Police forts. Therefore the term Refuge was only retained for lack of a better alternative term in describing the already recorded sites.

5.3.8 Survey intensity

Survey intensity basically relates to systematic foot surface surveys where a survey team for instance 4-7 people, spaced between 2-100 m systematically traverse a grid or transect. A crew of 10 members uniformly spread out in 2-10 m distances to traverse the 1 km² grids during surveys. In certain instances, the group split even further or bunched occasionally to check any spots of interest, it also moved in single files where the terrain was either too steep or densely covered by vegetation.

5.4 Redefining the problem: Khami-phase origins and associated histories

As already highlighted in chapter 1 of this thesis, there is general agreement that south-western Zimbabwe was historically associated with both Torwa and Rozvi state systems (Beach 1980; Mudenge 1988; Pikirayi 2001; van Waarden 2012). However there is a lot of scholarly discord when it comes to explaining the actual development and spread of Khami-phase settlements that were eventually entangled in Torwa/Rozvi dynastic histories. Some perceive these Khami-phase sites as related to the declining Zimbabwe state and the late 15th century Torwa rebellions against the Mutapa state (see Beach 1980; Garlake 1973; Mazarire 2009; Mudenge 1974b; Pikirayi 2001). These assumptions crystallized into Sinclair's (1987) three cluster model characterised by Great Zimbabwe in the south, Mutapa state in the north and the Torwa/Rozvi state in the south-west. As such, other smaller Zimbabwe tradition sites scattered across the Zimbabwean plateau and beyond have been perceived as autonomous or semi-autonomous out-growths of the Zimbabwe state capital (see Garlake 1973; Pikirayi 1993, 2001; Pwiti 1996a; Sinclair and Lundmark 1984; Swan 2008; van Waarden 2011). Others also strongly feel that the Khami-phase gradually evolved out of Leopard's Kopje cultures (Chirikure *et al.* 2017; van Waarden 1998, 2011, 2012).

In view of these conflicting perspectives, it was important to determine through systematic intensive foot surveys whether Leopard's Kopje or Great Zimbabwe tradition settlements actually exist in the selected study area. Given what has already been done by Pikirayi (1993)

in northern Zimbabwe, it was also important to assess the status of Zimbabwe tradition sites from another regional perspective. In fact, apart from the major Khami-phase stonewalled sites falling in the selected study area, very little was known about other sites widely assumed to have preceded these Khami-phase settlements. Against this background, it was only proper to assess the historical connections of the Torwa and Rozvi dynasties to Khami-phase sites after a detailed survey of their former core territories. Surveys therefore sought to establish the nature and full extent of all archaeological sites found in core Rozvi territories so as to informatively account for the development of cultural complexity in south-western Zimbabwe.

5.5 Survey results

All sites that were recorded during surveys were classified and quantified according to cultural period and site type. Table 5.2 below summarises the distribution of sites that were recorded around each focal point. A detailed discussion of the distribution of some of the sites presented in Tables 5.2 and 5.3 below in relation to the research questions outlined above is presented in chapter 7 of this thesis. The following sections basically describe the general nature of all archaeological sites recorded during surveys and their relationship to each other and the local environment.

Table 5.2: Summarised frequencies of recorded site types and their cultural period									
Survey cluster centres	Cultural period for SS					Non/SS			Total
	L.S/Age	LK	GZ	KH	KH/LK	D/H	S/G	IW	
<i>Danamombe</i>	2	-	-	20	-	4	-	2	28
<i>Zinjanja</i>	5	-	-	53	-	13	216	1	288
<i>Naletale</i>	-	-	-	42	2	9	5	2	60
Total	7	-	-	115	2	26	221	5	378
Key: SS- settlement site, Non/SS- non settlement site, S/Age- Stone Age, LK- Leopard's Kopje, GZ- Zimbabwe period, RF- Refuge period, D/H- Dolly holes, S/G- Smooth grooves, IW- Iron Working									

Table 5.3: A detailed description of sites recorded during surveys

Site Name	x	y	Elevation	Cultural period	Tradition	Settlement site	Non-Settlement site
Dhlokhlo	744000	7793000		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 1	743941	7792990	1495	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 2	743938	7930500	1485	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 3	774437	7792715	1484	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 4	744296	7792334		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 5	744250	7792316		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 6	744239	7792359	1476	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 7	743887	7791958	1470	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo IW1	743808	7791056	1438	LIA			Iron Working
Dhlokhlo SA	743923	7791370	1449	LSA	LSA		Stone tool scatter
Dhlokhlo Hill	743671	7791680	1471	LIA	Khami	Yes	Dolly hole
Dhlokhlo 8	743885	7793200	1489	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dwalalamambo	744081	7794400	1514	LIA	Khami	Yes	
DwalalamamboDH	744104	7794140	1515	LIA			Dolly holes
Dwalalamambo 1	774412	7794123	1516	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 9	744354	7793058	1502	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 10	774425	7789692	1493	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 11	774431	7792712	1484	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 12	744442	7792694	1485	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 13	744465	7792586	1478	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo 14	744333	7792444	1477	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Dhlokhlo IW2	743142	7792928	1470	LIA			Iron Working
Dhlokhlo 15	744259	7792896	1493	LIA	Khami	Yes	Dhaka structures
Dhlokhlo 16	744348	779253		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Journey's End	747836	7774078	1362	LIA	Khami	Yes	Enclosure
Zinjanja/RP1	747898	7772303	1338	MCS	Mixed	Yes	Rock Painting 1
Zinjanja/RP2	747892	7772366	1336	MCS	Mixed	Yes	Rock Painting 2
Zinjanja/feature	747904	7772438	1313				Stone carn
Zinjanja	746631	7772039		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja Activity area	746631	7772073	1316				Dolly Holes & Smooth Grooves
Zinjanja North/plat.	746645	7772135	1329	LIA	Khami	Yes	Platform
Zinjanja 1	746512	7772488	1304	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja 2	746500	7772473	1312	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja 3	746575	7775481	1311	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja 4	746542	7772484	1313	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja ST1	746517	7772612	1312	LSA			Stone scatter

Zinjanja SG	746550	7772632	1314				Smooth grooves
Zinjanja Platform 3	746635	7772668		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja Platform 4	746613	7772636	1323	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja 5	746599	7772616	1317	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja 6	746635	7772509	1318	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja Southern Enclosure1	746727	777218		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.S.Enclosure 2	746749	7772403	1338	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.S.Enclosure 3	746748	7772482	1338	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.S.Enclosure 4	746745	7772619		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.S.Enclosure 5	746733	7772636	1346	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.S.Enclosure 6	746746	7772621	1350	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.S.Enclosure 7	746731	7772644	1347	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinja.S.Enclosure 8	746725	7772659	1348	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja 7	746726	7772813	1329	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja Platform 5	746654	7772521	1325	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj. S.Enclosure 9	746585	7772444	1319	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.S.Enclosure10	746583	7772431	1319	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.Platform 6	746616	7772418	1322	LIA	Khami	Yes	R-Style RW
Zinjanja 8	746613	7772395	1321	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja 10	746613	7772382	1322	LIA	Khami	Yes	Foot of hill
Zinj.Platform 7	746600	7772357	1321	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja 11	746614	7772333	1318	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj. Platform 8	746646	7772315	1325	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.S.Enclosure11	746622	7772285	1321	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.Platform 9	746674	7772275	1327	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinja.S.Enclosure11	746749	7772146	1325	LIA	Khami	Yes	5m free standing/W
Zinjanja 12	746777	7772083	1305	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinja.Sothern Section 1	746620	7771847	1308	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinja.Western Platform 10	746538	7771875	1308	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinja.Platform11	746523	7771912	1311	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinja.Platform12	746515	7771966	1315	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinjanja 13	746503	7771866	1309	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.S.Enclosure	745520	7770689	1337	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Zinj.SW Dwala1	747174	7770801	1298				3 D/H &10 Grooves
Zinj.SE Dwala2	747542	7771753	1304				3D/H &14 Grooves
Zinj.SE Dwala3	747552	7771746	1305				2D/H &29 Grooves
Zinj.SE Dwala4	747593	7771722	1308				2D/H &78 Grooves
Zinj.SE Dwala5	747573	7771706	1306				4D/H &43 Grooves
Zinj.SE Dwala	747597	7771776	1310	LIA	Khami	Yes	Stone carn,

							pot sherds
Zinj.SE Dwala	747607	7771758	1311				Stone carn/Grave like
Zinj.SE Dwala	747627	7771732	1310				Stone carn
Zinj.SE Dwala6	744762 7	7717321 3		LIA	Khami	Yes	Walling & MC
Zinj.Eastern/Hill1	745177	7770079	1358	LIA	Khami	Yes	potsherd, dhaka &slag
Zinj.E/Hill.S.Enc1	745206	7770076	1363	LIA	Khami	Yes	6x12m
Zinj.E/Hill.S.Enc2	742521 8	7770064		LIA	Khami	Yes	Extension
Zinj.E/Hill2	745238	7770126		LIA	Khami	Yes	Extension
Zinj.E/Hill4	745264	7770155	1360				6 Grooves
Zinj.E/Hill5	745303	7770330	1346	LIA	Khami	Yes	low linear walling
Zinj.E/Hill6	745370	7770332		LIA	Khami	Yes	Stone wall
Zinj.E/Hill7	745540	7770717	1328				IW/ 2 furnaces
Zinj.E/Hill8	745225	7770301					
Zinj.E/Hill9	745295	7770222	1357				3 D/H
Pioneer Estate Enclosure	748454	7778520	1312	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Altyre Farm1	748648	7769589	1288	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Altyre N/E plat2	748728	7769563	1274		Khami	Yes	4 grooves
Altyre N/E plat3	750102	7770948	1269		Khami	Yes	23 grooves
Altyre N/E plat4	750176	7770888	1268		Khami	Yes	3 grooves
Altyre N/E plat5	750249	7770940	1254		Khami	Yes	5 grooves
Altyre N/E plat6	750227	7771024	1255		Khami	Yes	15 grooves
Altyre N/E plat7	750220	7771014	1256	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Altyre N/E plat8	750198	7770994	1260	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Altyre N/E plat9	750109	7770966	1271	LIA	Khami	Yes	3 enclo. stone carns
Altyre N/E plat10	750140	7770989	1270	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Altyre N/Enclo11	750094	7771044	1263	LIA	Khami	Yes	semi-cir wall
Altyre N/E plat12	750220	7771014	1256		Khami	Yes	6 grooves
Shangangwe	761342	7787984	1321	LIA	Khami	Yes	1D/H
Shangangwe	761360	778797	1322				3 grinding stones
Shangangwe	761348	7788011	1320	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Shangangwe N/E	761303	778844	1325	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Shangangwe N/Enclo	760798	7788588	1345	LIA	Khami	Yes	12m diameter
Nsalansala	775147	779897	1269	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Nsalansala 1	775185	7792095	1267	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Nsalansala 2	77185	7792110	1266	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Nsalansala 3	775194	7791997	1265	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Nsalansala 4	775196	7791988	1262	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Gwenaguru	772489 0	7791024	1315	LIA	Khami	Yes	

	772403	7790137	1316	LIA	Khami	Yes	enclosure
Gwenaguru S/S.Enclosure	772156	7790720	1286	LIA	Khami	Yes	Stone monolith
Gwenaguru S/S.Enclo. SW	771758	7790821	1307	LIA	Khami	Yes	3 small enclosures 60m
Gwenaguru 1	771781	7790817	1308	LIA	Khami	Yes	hut
	772283	7791070	1286	LIA	Khami		Extension
Debshan1	772037	7784830	1269	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Debshan1.Enclosure 2	772043	7784842	1265	LIA	Khami		60cm high
Debshan 3	772083	7784839	1266		Khami		Hut Extension, midden
							F/S enclosure
Debshan 2 Enclosure	772282	7783484	1263	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Debshan 2 Enclosure	772294	7783552	1255		Khami	Yes	
Debshan 2	772183	7783558	1255		Khami	Yes	21 grooves
Arupanga Cattle.Enclosure	763675	7793853	1351		Khami		
Arupanga ruins	763907	7793823	1399	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Arupanga 3	763971	7793995	1356				5 D/H
Arupanga 4	763859	7794595	1337	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Arupanga 5	764089	7794784	1328				IW
Gomoremhiko	765605	7798914	1428	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Gomoremhiko 1	765578	7798979	1409	LIA	Khami	Yes	grinding stones
Gomoremhiko 2	765553	7798971	1409	LIA	Khami	Yes	1 D/H
Gomoremhiko 3	765563 5	7799056	1406	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 2	766034	7799691	1372	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 3	765905	779975	1376	LIA	Refuge		11 grain bins
Naletale 4	765737	800030	1371	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale5/SW.st.wa	764950	7798152	1387	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Nharire Hill	764964	7798149	1387	LIA	Khami	Yes	hilltop hut
Nharire 1	764820	7798163	1359		Khami		1D/H & 2grooves
Naletale6/SW	764855	7797635	1348	LIA	Khami	Yes	stone enclosure
Naletale7/SW	762756	7797438	1389	LIA	Khami	Yes	
Muzungurume	762171	7796525	1354				4 furnaces
Naletale 8	764949	7799495		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 9	766488 9	7799566		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 10	764962	7799589		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 11	764987	7799592		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 12	765009	7799581		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 13	765010	7799562		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 14	765004	7799581		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 15	764903	7799338		LIA	Khami	Yes	

Naletale 16	764964	7799614		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 17	764984	7799577		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 18	765012	7799582		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 19	765069	7799933		LIA	Khami	Yes	
Naletale 20	765572	7798997					1D/H
*NB- All the smaller sites or open air sites that were located close to the main platforms were simply given the name of the main site and numbered numerically e.g. Dhlodhlo 1, Dhlodhlo 2 etc., If they were enclosures they were coded as Zinj.S.Enclosure meaning Zinjanja southern enclosure, Platforms were abbreviated as plat., D/H= Dolly holes, st.wa= Stone wall, MCS= Multi Component Site							

5.6 Later Stone Age sites

Sites belonging to this period were broadly defined on the basis of surface stone tools and rock paintings that appeared on single boulders. While many Stone Age sites have been reported from the Bembesi and Matobo areas on the museum database (e.g. Cooke 1963; Marufu 2012; Walker 1995), only seven such sites were discovered during surveys. At two sites, rock paintings, flake tools and ceramic fragments were mixed together suggesting these were multi-component sites. Though this evidence suggests prolonged use of these sites by different cultural groups, it was well appreciated that this material culture could be contemporaneous since some LSA sites were contemporary with EIA sites, and some painting traditions of the region continued up to 1500 AD. However, rock paintings were only identified at Danamombe and at a small hill near Zinjanja. Only a single gangly human figure and an unidentifiable animal species were recorded at Danamombe. Greystone paintings near Zinjanja had several human figures with outstretched hands that appear like they are joined together, kudu (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*), a few eland (*Taurotragus oryx*) and a single therianthrop figure (see Plate 5.1). LSA microliths ranging from scrapers, flakes, points and blades were discovered mostly near river banks south-east of Danamombe and north-west of Zinjanja (see Plate 5.2 below). The small painted shelters of Greystone site had a relatively dense mixture of these LSA microliths and a few Khami-phase ceramics. These paintings, stone tools and ceramic fragments indicate that the study area was occupied from as early as the LSA right up to the LFC era.

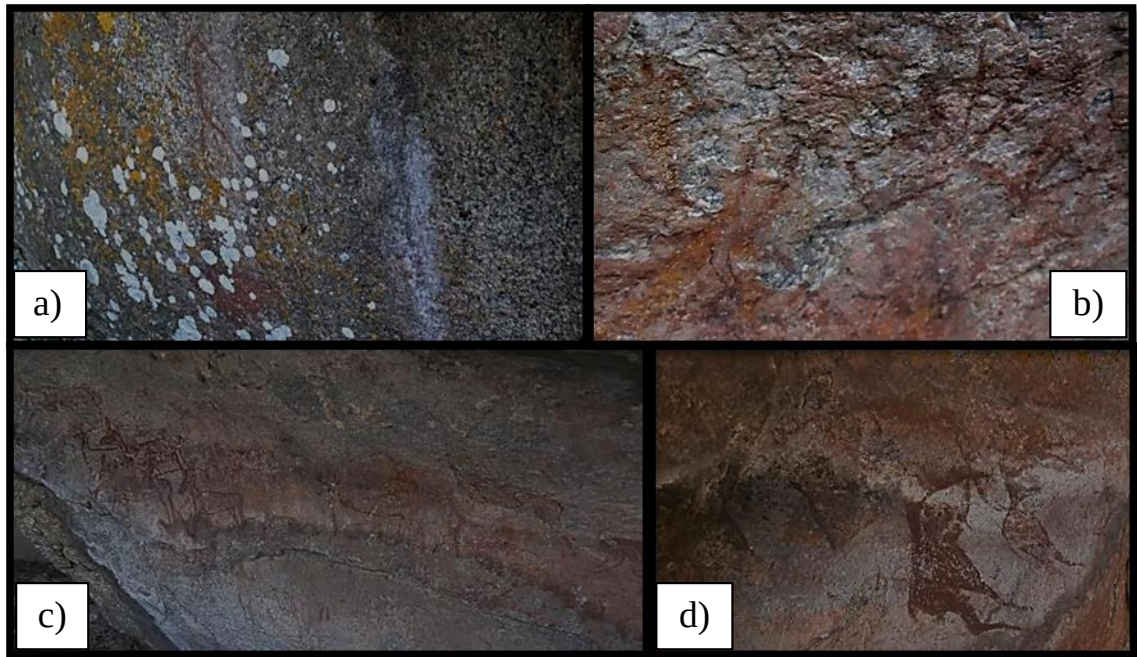


Plate 5.1: *a).* Human and animal figures at Danamombe, *b).* Group of joined human figures and a therianthrope figure at Greystone paintings, *c).* Kudu and human figures at Greystone paintings, *d).* Eland figures at Greystone

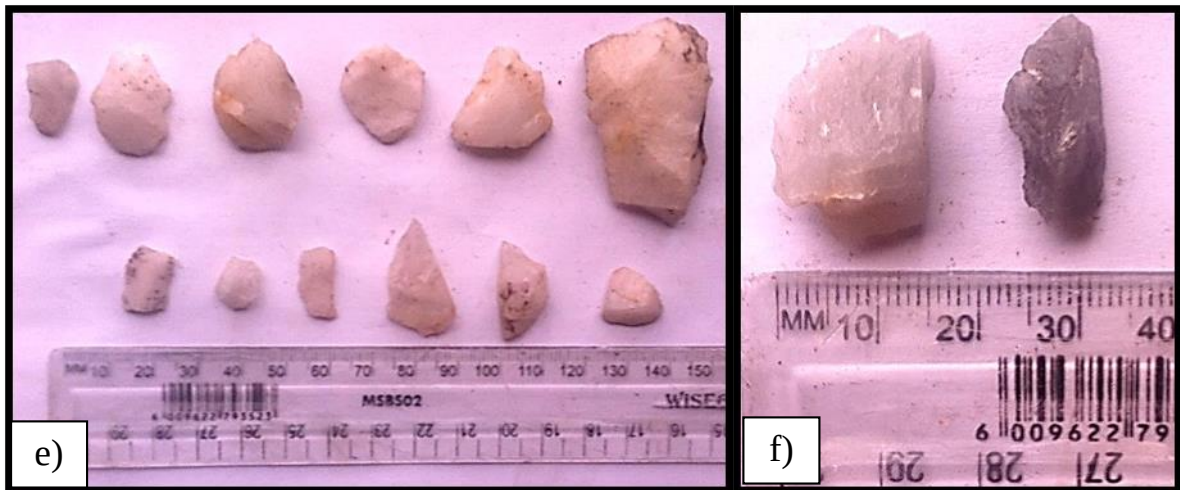


Plate 5.2: *e).* Scrapers, flakes, blades and points from Greystone paintings and river bank north-west of Zinjanja ruins, *f).* Flake and blade from Danamombe south-eastern river bank

5.7 Early Farming Communities

Although a total of 6 EFC sites (1 Gokomere and 5 Zhizo), corresponding with the broad study area were recorded from the museum site database, none were discovered during surveys. This could partly be attributed to the survey design bias, visibility issues stemming

from erosion and deposition processes, dense vegetation cover or the general low occurrence of such sites in the selected study area. Nonetheless, this range of reported sites indicates that Farming communities once inhabited south-western Zimbabwe between the 5th and 10th century AD (Garlake 1967).

5.8 Later Farming Communities

The Zimbabwe Culture sequence in the study area is characterised by Leopard's Kopje/Mambo and Woolandale (1000-1400), Great Zimbabwe-phase (1290-1635), Khami/Torwa (1400-1650), Khami/Rozvi (1685-1866) and Refuge (17-19th century) phases. The Great Zimbabwe and Refuge phases are however sparsely represented both on the NMMZ archaeological survey database and site records from recent surveys. It is likely that previous reports made about the existence of these sites in the study area were mistaken because sometimes cultural periodisation based on architectural styles and surface material alone is problematic. Differentiating Leopard's Kopje, Great Zimbabwe and Khami-phase sites presented some challenges during surveys. In particular, architectural styles and ceramic fragments retrieved in the study area did not quite tally with the basic classification schemes widely used in separating these cultural phases. For instance, assumptions that Great Zimbabwe-phase walls are freestanding while Khami-phase walls are retaining now deserve serious reconsideration in the light of recent surveys. In order to minimise this kind of confusion, surface ceramic evidence was prioritised over associated dry stone-walling in classifying sites. In instances where surface pot sherds were absent, the nature of enclosure entrances, style of stone coursing and decorative designs were used as guides in site classification.

For instance, the NMMZ site database characterises Shangangwe ruins as a Great Zimbabwe-phase site possibly because of its numerous freestanding walls, however, associated ceramic and architectural evidence gathered during surveys indicates it is clearly a Khami-phase site. Furthermore, data gathered through surveys clearly show that most of the dry stonewalled sites in the study area had freestanding walls rather than retaining ones. Associated evidence collected around most of the enclosures with freestanding walls indicates that they were purely Khami-phase. In this regard, for a full characterization of the Khami-phase one should not just rely on the presence of retaining walls but a combination of factors like nature of the architecture, diagnostic ceramic evidence and the geographical location of the site, which of course should be carefully considered in relation to the associated cultural evidence.

5.9 Leopard's Kopje/Khami-phase sites

The majority of walled Khami-phase sites recorded in the study area have a prevalence of freestanding walls than retaining walls. It also turned out that other sites that had been reported as Leopard's Kopje in the NMMZ database may need to be reclassified as Khami-phase because the identified surface finds on some of the so-called Leopard's Kopje sites like Gomoremhiko proved otherwise. In view of this challenge, hilltop sites that had been previously recorded as Leopard's Kopje in the NMMZ database with evidence of low terraced walling and Khami ceramic sherds were recorded as Leopard's Kopje/Khami. This precautionary measure was adopted because there were chances that the respective Leopard's Kopje sherds could possibly have been collected from such sites, covered through natural deposition processes or simply missed during surveys. Only two sites were recorded as such from the Naletale site cluster, and these include Gomoremhiko situated approximately 1 km to the south-east and Lawndale located about 3 km to the north-east. Both sites are located on very steep hills with relatively flat tops that provided little habitation space at the top. Cultural material is however scattered around the top edges of the hill in the form of short length, low R-style retaining walls, plain fragmented sherds and lower grinding stones (see Plates 5.3 and 5.4). Lawndale habitation space was approximately 20-60 m (north-south) and 50-80 m (east-west). However this site could not be properly traversed because of dense grass cover at the hilltop. In order to create more living space, undressed stones with no evidence of coursing were often piled together in a manner that incorporated boulders in the construction process (see Plate 5.5 below). The pottery that was recovered from the surfaces of both hilltops was plain belonging to the constricted globular pots of the Khami-phase.



Plate 5.3: Summit view of the Gomoremhiko hill site



Plate 5.4: Low terraced walling on the western end of Gomoremhiko hill summit



Plate 5.5: One of Lawndale site R-style terraced walling on the south-western end of hill summit

5.10 Khami-phase sites

The highest numbers of sites recorded during surveys are Khami-phase with a total of 117, comprising both elite and commoner settlements. Khami-phase elite sites are commonly situated on low granite outcrops but some were located on steep hills, typical examples include Naletale, Arupanga, Gwenaguru, Gomoremhiko, Lawndale and Journey's End among others, where walling types ranging from R-style, PQ to Q with or without elaborate decoration were carefully constructed either as freestanding or retaining platforms. Whitty (1961) was the first to attempt to develop a dry stonewall architectural sequence, where P (poor coursing) was the earliest, followed by PQ (mixture of poor and quality coursing), Q (neat coursing) and then R-style (rough/irregular coursing). This sequence was later refuted by archaeologists following the realisation that most of these stonewall types never really followed any particular chronological order. However, for purposes of this study, the terms P, PQ, Q and R were simply retained in order to describe the different walling types recorded during surveys.

5.10.1 Danamombe/Dhlodhlo and related sites

A total of 25 one square kilometer blocks were selected for intensive surveys around Danamombe (see Fig. 5.2 above). The total number of sites recorded around this cluster is provided in Table 5.2 above. Danamombe is a Khami-phase settlement because of its extensive artificial platforms which accommodated massive *dhaka* huts on top. According to

Beach (1980:237) this was the major settlement or historical capital of the Rozvi state, built on a low granite outcrop in the form of numerous massive to oval-shaped platforms and enclosures. This main settlement is screened by a courtyard wall to the west, an arced complex of R-style enclosures to the south and an arc of alternating retaining and freestanding walls to the east (Huffman 1996). The north is defined by the passage entrance with multiple terraces on the west, an enclosure (see Plate 5.7c) and several individual circular platforms. Architecturally, Q, PQ and R-style freestanding and retaining walls characterise the different stonewalls of this main settlement. Wall decorations are typically found on the external side of Q-style walling, which permitted the execution of several patterns like chevron, herringbone, small rectangular panels with herringbone infill, cord, alternating blocks of granite and non-granite blocks forming herringbone or cord patterns, multiple lines of check and isolated courses of non-granite bands (see Plates 5.7a and 5.8 below). It is only the freestanding court yard wall, that has decorations both on the inside and outside in some sections.

Beyond this core settlement area, numerous mostly unwallled/family homesteads spread out approximately 2 km north and southwards. Their density is however more pronounced on the southern side of Danamombe monument. In this zone, open sites appear in low lying areas, either on top or just adjacent to granite outcrops. They are characterised by pottery fragments, *dhaka* lumps, upper and lower grinding stones. These commoner sites go as far as Danamombe/Dhlodhlo hill (X 743671; Y 779168). Unlike other commoner sites in this area, Dhlodhlo hill has several pieces of slag and a single distinct dolly hole (measuring 8 cm deep and 20 cm wide) possibly marking gold reduction activities at the site. Considering concentration variations in pole-impressed *dhaka* lumps, pottery scatters, grinding stones and ashy midden sizes among these commoner sites, family sizes could have ranged from one to more per site. Further south of Dhlodhlo hill, cultural material becomes very sparse. Just one iron working site with fragments of tuyere pipes and iron slag spreading for about 15 m or more was recorded on the extreme southern limits of Danamombe main settlement. Some four to five kilometers west of Danamombe, are Ndunanombi 1 and Ndunanombi 2 enclosures built in similar style to the enclosure immediately north of Danamombe passage entrance.

Perhaps the biggest open settlement is situated north of Danamombe at (X 743920; Y 779299). This site is associated with a huge midden measuring approximately 50 m by 40 m in size. It had thirteen lower and two upper grinding stones, two circular *dhaka* features

possibly grain bins with internal diameters measuring approximately 60 cm and 70 cm respectively (see Plate 5.6c below). This evidence attests to agricultural activities and grain processing. Pole-impressed *dhaka* lumps and a low two coursed walling measuring 2 m in length were also recorded from the site. Cultural material abruptly becomes sparse immediately north of this site. However a few hundred meters north-west after crossing the gravel road just north of the commoner site is another scatter of tuyere fragments and iron slag pieces covering a radius of approximately 8 m. According to an excavation report in the museum site file for Danamombe compiled by Manyanga (n.d.), no iron smelting furnaces were ever identified when this site was excavated perhaps because they had already been destroyed. It is important to note that the two iron working sites recorded at Danamombe are isolated in woodland areas that are close to seasonal streams. These iron working sites indicate the former existence of specialist craft production industries, which probably supported subsistence activities like cereal cultivation.

Further north-east of this iron working site, is Dwalalamambo site (X 744081; Y 779440) located on a granite outcrop that is 1514 m above sea level. This is the highest point in the entire surveyed Insiza district. Perhaps this explains why the site is considered sacred as a rainmaking shrine by the locals. Communities staying around this site claim they often hear strange sounds associated with music and dance coming from the site or nearby during certain times of the year (Nyoni 2014 *pers comm.*). This site had three dolly holes, one small circular shaped *dhaka* structure (Plate 5.6d), perhaps a grain bin, a few low R-style walls, ceramic fragments, lower and upper grinding stones, pieces of slag and pole-impressed *dhaka* lumps. Sadly this site was heavily disturbed when a trigonometry beacon and telephone booster were constructed right on top of the granite *dwala*. No other sites were found beyond this site because a communal village dominates the northern margins of this site. Perhaps cultural material was destroyed by the locals through farming activities or maybe prehistoric settlements were never established beyond Dwalalamambo site.

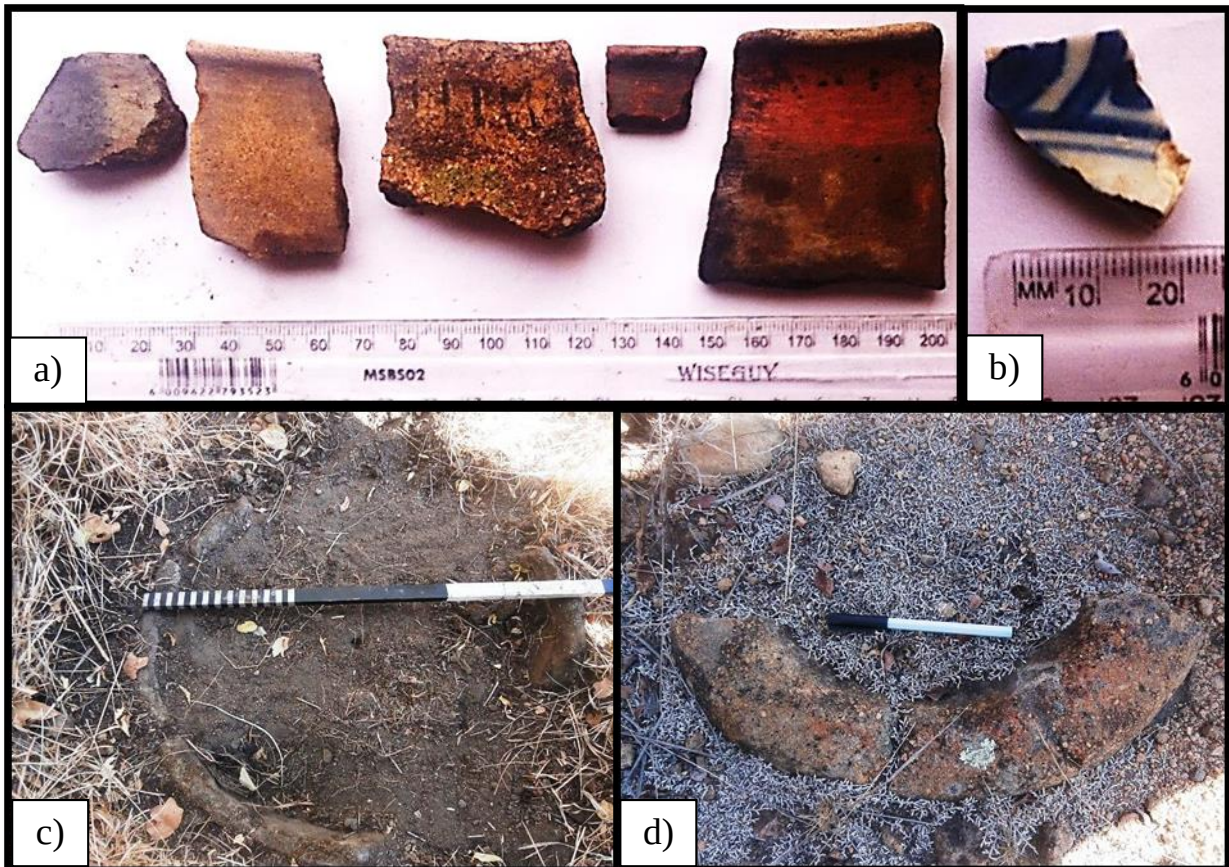


Plate 5.6: *a)* Plain, incised and polychrome band and panel ware sherds from Danamombe and related commoner sites, *b).* Imported porcelain sherd from Dhlodhlo, *c).* Circular dhaka grain bin from Dhlodhlo, *d).* Circular dhaka grain bin Dwalalamambo

5.10.2 Major observations for Danamombe and related sites

Settlement patterning around Danamombe is consistent with a capital site status, although the main platform is surrounded by several open sites. The pottery at Danamombe and nearby sites comprises of Khami-phase, plain globular constricted vessels with simple rims and no necks. Only one surface sherd from Danamombe had alternate bands of red ochre and graphite slip. The other one was simply graphite burnished (refer to Plate 5.6a). Another peculiar sherd recovered from Dwalalamambo, had short evenly spaced parallel vertical lines of incisions below the rim (Plate 5.6a). This evidence indicates that precolonial communities that once inhabited this area were involved in the manufacture of pottery to meet their daily needs. A small piece of blue on white porcelain possibly dating between the 16th and early 17th century was also recovered on the surface of Danamombe main settlement (Plate 5.6b). Several other imported goods have been found at the site, proving that trade was an important

part of the economy. The soils are grey and sandy, derived from granite around the core area. These become rocky gravel to sandy in texture towards the northern and southern extremes of the core area. Local vegetation is Miombo woodland comprising a mixture of *accacia*, *julbernardia globifora* and *brachystegia spiciformis* species. Numerous seasonal streams in marshy areas attracted these prehistoric and historic settlements as people sought to maximise on soil fertility for agro-pastoral activities. Evidence of upper and lower grinding stones, grain bins, iron working sites and proximity of sites to sources of water and fertile soils all attest to the general practice of agriculture around these regions. It is therefore tempting to presume that the selection of Danamombe area was at least based on the desire to exploit external trade routes and other local natural resources. Since the single porcelain fragment is not enough to attest to the importance of external trade at the site, reference is hereby made to previous work conducted at the site that yielded large quantities of exotic goods (see Caton-Thompson 1931; Randall-McIver 1906). In this regard, it is crucial to note that sometimes trade follows people or people may choose to follow trade routes by establishing settlements along commercially viable routes.

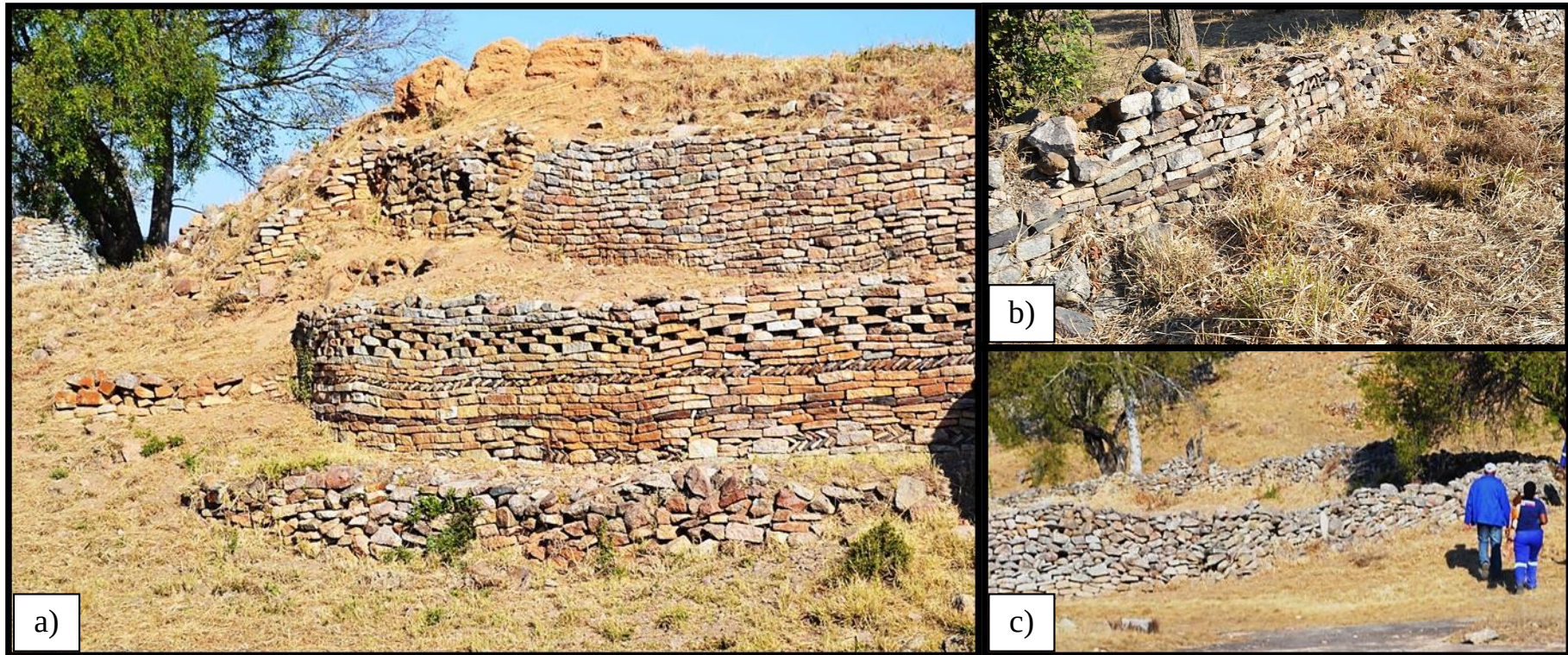


Plate 5.7: *a). A view of the north-western section of Danamombe/Dhlodhlo monument, b). Internal decorations of court yard perimeter wall at Danamombe, c). R-style enclosure wall at Danamombe, similar to Ndunanombi 1 and 2 enclosures located a few kilometres to the west*

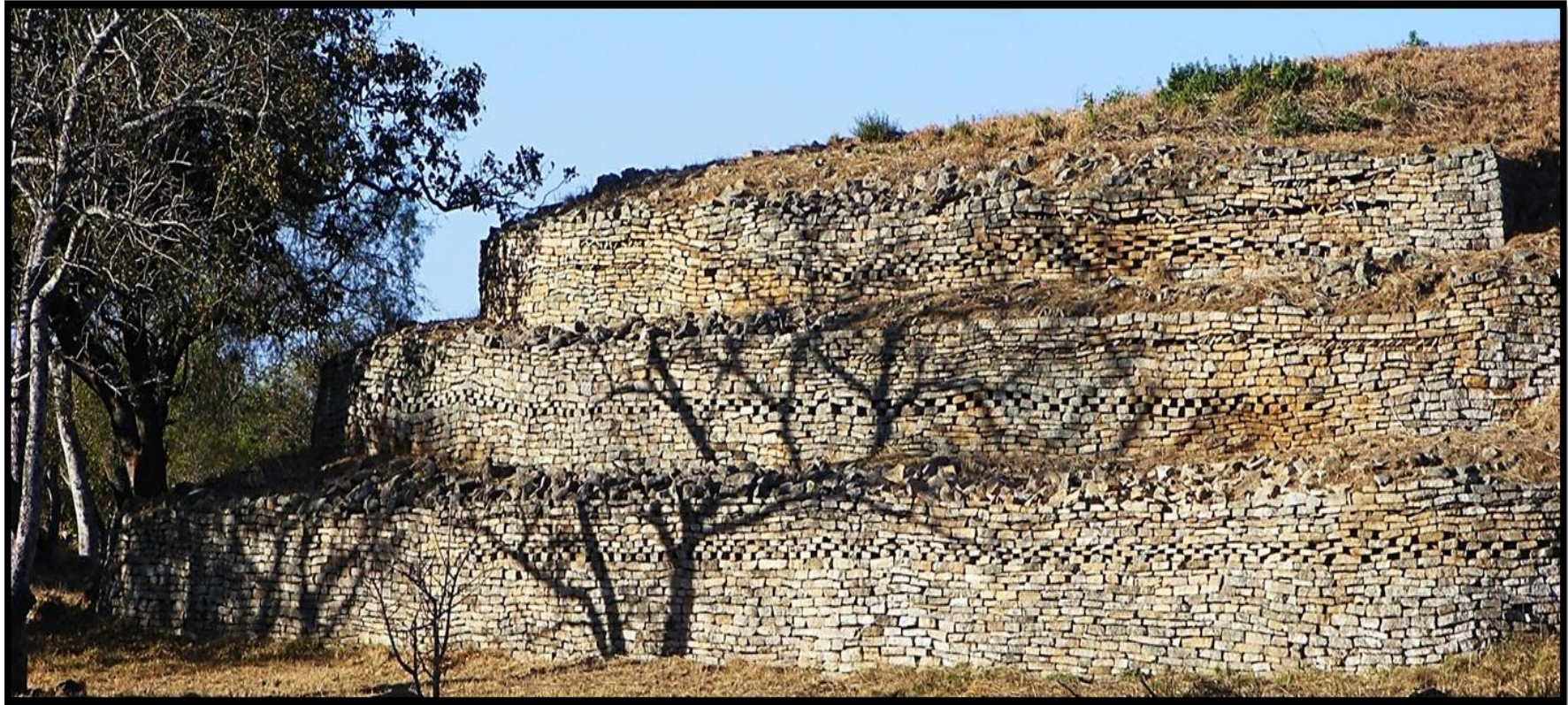


***Plate 5.8:** The decorated west facing section of Danamombe/Dhlodhlo monument*

5.10.3 Zinjanja/Regina and related sites

A number of sites were already known in the Fort Rixon district of the research area prior to the commencement of this study. Therefore a rough idea of the existence of these sites made it easier for the survey team to cover a much wider area over a short space of time. Apart from reports made about the mere existence of these sites, no serious work had been done about their cultural identity and spatial distribution across the landscape. As shown on Table 5.1, this area yielded the highest number of sites. The Fort Rixon area is predominantly hilly interspaced by rolling grass plains in low lying areas. Sites in this area occur on very steep-sided hilltops, low granite outcrops and grass plains. Zinjanja was used as a point of focus; this site has a series of terraced platforms that are quite visible from a south-eastern direction (see Plate. 5.12a). According to Huffman (1996) the northern and western sections of this palace are demarcated by much lower platforms that become freestanding Q and R-style walls reaching up to 1.6 m in height (see Plate 5.12b). A large courtyard defines the western end of this main platform. Just like Danamombe, the site has a fair mixture of retaining and freestanding walls, while check and panelled herringbone, cord, alternating blocks of granite and non-granite blocks forming herringbone or cord patterns, multiple lines of check and isolated courses of non-granite bands characterise the lower sections of the Q-style retaining walls.

Unlike Danamombe, a peculiar R-style walling (see Plate 5.12b), and five small holes internally built in small Q-style dressed blocks define the higher tiers of the main artificial platform. The undressed blocks for the special R-style walls are neatly packed in a manner that their ends evenly protrude on either side of the freestanding walls. Elongated blocks were preferred and carefully laid-out parallel to the cross section of the wall, thereby giving a special rough wall facing. Apart from two circular *dhaka* features (possibly grain bin foundations), two stone cairns (see Plates 5.9b and 5.12c), a small midden with a few pot sherds; the core settlement area had very little cultural material on the surface. However as the settlement extends northwards onto the adjacent mountain and westwards along its foot, cultural material becomes more visible. Immediately north of the main platform is a huge granite boulder which extends into the hill. On this rock, a total of three dolly holes, twenty four smooth grooves, upper and lower grinding stones (see Plate 5.11c) and fragmented Khami potsherds were recorded. Further east of this granite boulder, is a small midden that spreads down the hill slopes adjacent a recently built homestead. At the base of the slope, the

midden becomes a shallow scatter of Khami-phase potsherds, some of which are shown on Plate 5.9a below.



Plate 5.9: *a). Plain, incised and graphite burnished sherds from Zinjanja, Altyre and Altyre b). Circular grain bin Zinjanja c). Lower grinding stone from Zinjanja*

A series of isolated R-style small circular to oval platforms and enclosures were recorded on the southern tip of this mountain range, particularly the western margins (see Plate 5.13c). At least ten small individual platforms and nine *dhaka* hut remains were located on the western foot of the hill as the ground gently slopes towards a river. Owing to their size, some of these artificial platforms possibly accommodated at least a single family or more. A few potsherds and very shallow middens were identified on the western foot of the hill, the only large midden was discovered at (X 746465; Y 7771852). Eight small stone enclosures were also discovered within a short distance above the western foot of this mountain. The functions of these small enclosures can only be known through excavations because nothing diagnostic was identified on their surfaces. Nonetheless one may posit that if they were not used to keep small stock, then they were temporarily inhabited by people manning livestock herds on the

lower grass plains. All finds discovered north of Zinjanja therefore attest to a Khami-phase identity.

Approximately one and half kilometres south-west of Zinjanja is a steep sided mountain overlooking Claremont gold mine. Two iron smelting furnaces enclosed by an arc of wall 1.2 m high were discovered adjacent to each other on the northern mountain base at (X 745225; Y 7770301). These furnaces were 1 m apart with diameters of 21 cm and 26 cm respectively; they were situated about 15 m from a seasonal stream (see Plate 5.10 below). These furnaces were associated with a scatter of iron slag spreading for about 6 m wide. Just nearby is an iron ore belt, which spreads towards the west along the northern base of this mountain range. Further west of these furnaces, at (X 745264; Y 7770155) on a low granite boulder are three distinct dolly holes and six smooth grooves (Plate 5.11a and b). Beyond this point towards the extreme western limits of this mountain are several low, short length R-style freestanding walls and one R-style enclosure with an internal diameter of 12 m. Several undiagnostic pot sherds and pole-impressed *dhaka* lumps were located in the vicinity of this small enclosure and at the foot of the mountain suggesting the former existence of a commoner settlement. This entire area is characterised by red clayey soils, which are widely known for their good agricultural potential. Just south-east of this mountain at the eastern foot of another mountain at (X 745295; Y 7770222), are three distinct dolly holes, the largest one being 30 cm wide and 13 cm deep. Evidence of their recent use by local gold miners was recorded at this site. In fact, the prevalence of dolly holes and smooth grooves around Zinjanja suggests the significance of ancient gold mining in the area, if it is accepted that the holes were used in gold processing (see Swan 2008).



Plate 5.10: Two adjacent iron smelting furnaces from Zinjanja

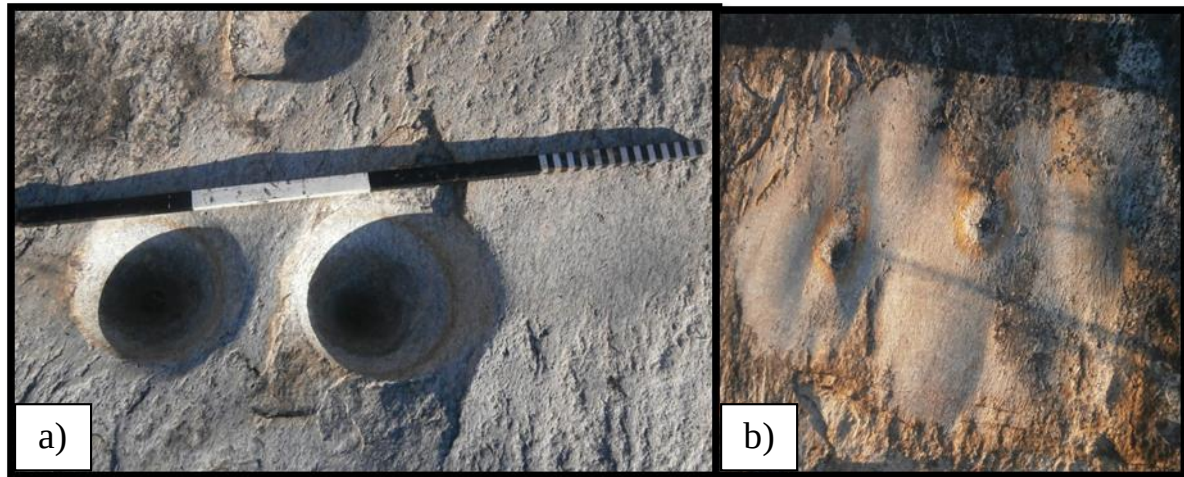


Plate 5.11: a). Dolly holes with smooth grooves, b). Smooth grooves

Another site (X 747607; Y 7771758) was located south-east of Zinjanja on a flat massive granite rock (*dwala*), which had a total of seven dolly holes and one hundred and fifty smooth grooves. The top of this *dwala* was characterised by a few short length R-style walls less than 70 cm high, slag fragments, two upper grinding stones, a stone monolith, stone cairns, plain Khami fragmented pottery and several *dhaka* fragments. A further one and half kilometres north-east of this site and Zinjanja monument is Journey's End enclosure located on top of a steep mountain range. The site comprises of numerous R-style freestanding walls that are similar to Zinjanja walls in style. Other interesting finds recorded at the site were remains of a single hut, a stone cairn and a lintelled wall opening (see Plate 5.13a). The cultural period of this site was difficult to define because of the scarcity of surface finds and nature of stone walls. Nonetheless, considering the proximity of this site to Zinjanja, remains of the massive *dhaka* hut and the associated R-style walling, the site was classified as Khami-phase. Locally, this and related stone enclosures around Zinjanja area are perceived as *matanga* (a word for cattle kraals in the local Shona language). A further one and half kilometres northwest of Journey's End is Pioneer estate enclosure, which is located on extensive grass plains. This is yet another R-style enclosure built of granite and basalt rock, owing to dense vegetation cover in and around the site, nothing else was found. However judging by the architecture, this site and the other one about 4 km north-west were categorised as Khami-phase sites.

The last cluster of sites recorded in the Fort Rixon area were stone enclosures scattered around Altyre farm situated at least 2 km southeast of the Zinjanja site. Around this area, the largest site is Altyre ruins, which measures approximately 1400 m². It is defined by a single massive R-style enclosure measuring 30 m in diameter and a linear R-style wall that averages

1.5 m in height (see Plates 5.13b and d). This enclosure on the south-western end of the site is abutted by a PQ-style wall that extends northwards along the western end of the granite boulder (see Plate 5.13d). Nine *dhaka* hut remains were recorded on the western slopes below this linear wall. Just east of the same wall are four circular stone features, which probably constituted massive *dhaka* grain bin foundations. Further east of these massive platforms, towards the lower end of the granite outcrop are a number of smooth grooves. The other site, Altyre 2, is situated on a low granite outcrop that is north-east of Altyre ruins. It is characterised by three small R-style enclosures, a shallow midden, plain Khami type potsherds, pole-impressed *dhaka* fragments, stone cairns, upper and lower grinding stones as well as smooth grooves.

5.10.4 Major observations for Zinjanja and related sites

Generally settlement patterning around Zinjanja is clustered. This may be attributed to the need to exploit local drainage patterns with fertile soils and moisture for agro-pastoral production. Most granitic rocks in the area occur just below the surface; hence their level enhanced high moisture retention and lush growth of grass for grazing animals. The granitic terrains flanking the gold belt also provided abundant building material for the numerous elite sites that were commonly situated on granitic outcrops and steep hills. Ironstone was also extensively used for the decoration of dry stonewalled architecture; it often created beautiful colour contrasts with granite blocks. Sites around Zinjanja are very close to, if not directly located on top of the western confined Shangani-Fort Rixon gold belt, which was clearly exploited for its rich iron ore and gold deposits. Dolly holes and grooves have been recorded across Zimbabwe and southern Africa as proxy evidence for food processing and gold mining (see Katsamudanga 2007; Marufu 2012; Popiel 2006; Swan 1994, 1996, 2008). Although no tests were conducted during fieldwork to prove this hypothesis, dolly holes around Zinjanja must have developed as part of extensive gold processing activities owing to the prevalence of gold mining activities in the area from pre-colonial times to the present day. Some rivers in the area pass through steep gradients of the Basement Schist rocks; thus they eroded and deposited traces of gold along their courses. This explains why gold panning was and still remains an important economic activity in the area (Ndlovu 2015 *pers comm.*). Ceramic evidence, dry stonewalled architecture and related surface material evidence suggests that Zinjanja cluster sites were contemporaneous with Danamombe cluster sites.



Plate 5.12: *a). A southern view of Zinjanja/Regina main platform, b). A peculiar R-style free-standing wall at Zinjanja, c). Stone cairns on the eastern section of Zinjanja, numerous smaller ones were identified at other Khami sites during recent surveys*

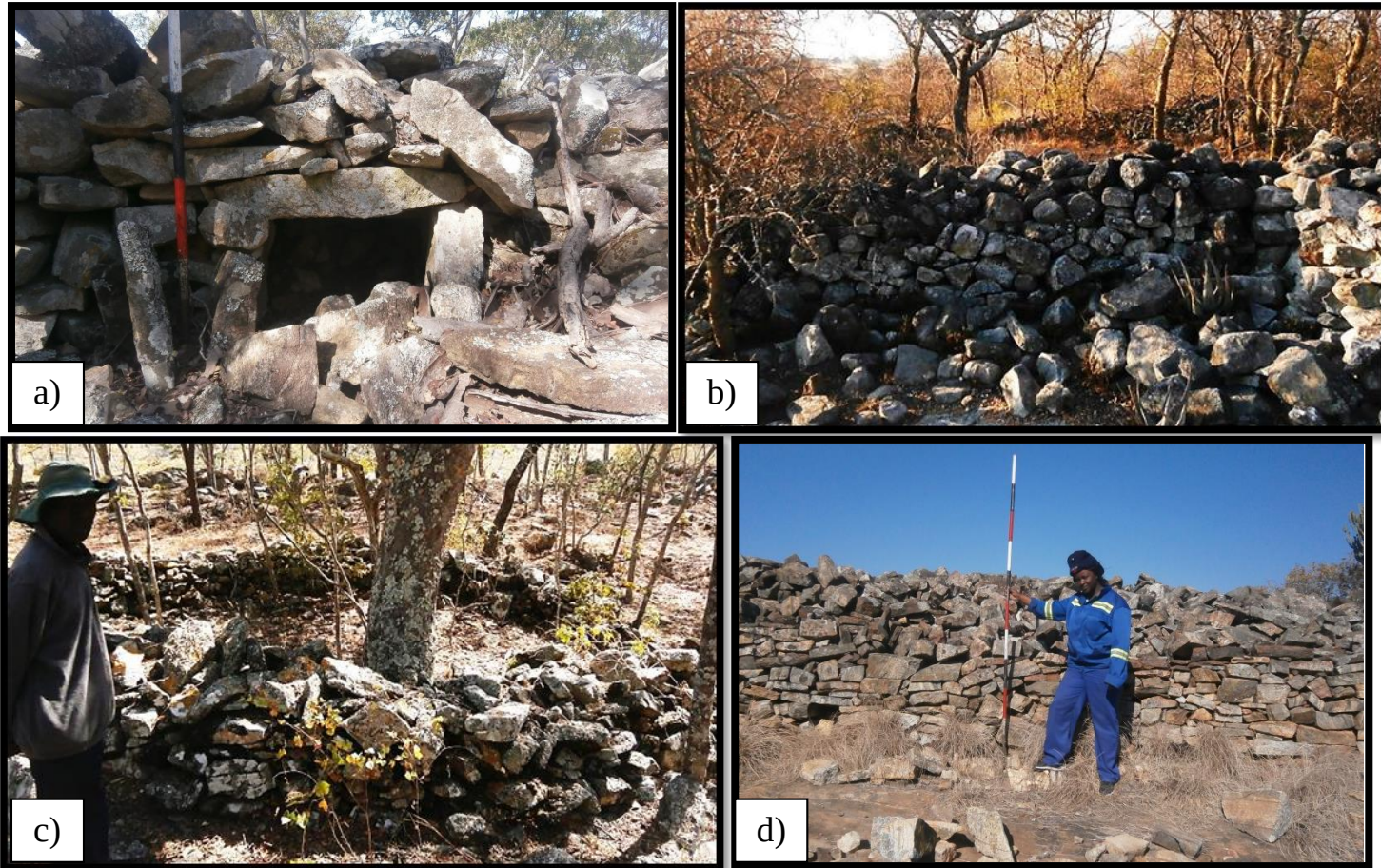


Plate 5.13: **a).** A lintelled opening at Journey's end enclosure, **b).** R-style enclosure at Altyre 2, **c).** One of the numerous small enclosures around Zinjanja monument, **d).** PQ free-standing walling at Altyre ruins, other sections of this site have R-style free-standing walling

5.10.5 Naletale and related sites

Surveys started-off at Naletale site located on grid reference (X 765069; Y 7799933). This is an elaborately decorated elliptical enclosure built on granite bedrock that is 1400 m above sea level. A series of 1 km² grids were then adaptively sampled from this focal point where a total of 42 Khami-phase sites and two Leopard's Kopje/Khami sites were recorded. The full summary is in Tables 5.2- 5.3 above. The Naletale perimeter wall forms a massive platform on the west and an enclosure on the south-eastern side. This site has two entrances, one facing east and the other facing north-west. Internally, space is divided into seven sections by Q-style freestanding radiating walls that stretch from a central western platform with massive *dhaka* huts on top (Plate 5.15b). These western retaining walls consist of chevron, herringbone, small rectangular panels with herringbone infill, cord, alternating blocks of granite and non-granite blocks forming herringbone or cord patterns, multiple lines of check and isolated courses of iron stone on their external faces (see Plate 5.15a). There are two small artificial platforms possibly meant to accommodate single huts and another small enclosure just north-west of the main enclosure (Plate 5.15c). Because the site is built on granite bedrock, cultural material is sparse on the surface except for the eastern and south-eastern areas. A narrow and shallow soil layer defines this cultural deposit with several fragmented potsherds. Beyond this narrow cultural deposit belt, granite rock resurfaces before submerging again in the lower gentle slopes.

Approximately 100 m south of the Naletale where the slope becomes gentle, a dense scatter of *dhaka* fragments, two dolly holes, one *mbira* key (thumb piano), plain potsherds of Khami period and a few upper and lower grinding stones was discovered. This cultural material constitutes the remains of a small commoner settlement on the gentle slopes. Nothing of interest was identified beyond this zone right up to the bottom of the kopje. However on the south-eastern section at (X 766034; Y 7799691) is a low R-style enclosure with stone cairns and an internal diameter of 10 m, wall height is less than 50 cm. A short distance north of this isolated eastern enclosure at (X 765905; Y 7799975) is a *dhaka* structure representing eleven possibly late 19th century grain bins (see Plate 5.18 below). Further north-east at (X 762756; Y 7797438) is another small commoner settlement marked by a sparse scatter of pole-impressed *dhaka* lumps, plain potsherds and lower grinding stones. Other related sites like Gomoremhiko and Lawndale are not discussed here because they were covered under Leopard's Kopje/Khami sites.

The open plains immediately south of Naletale hills were once cultivated extensively, hence they were not surveyed. However a small hill on the western sections of these fields with (X 764964; Y 7798149) has remains of a small hut and pottery fragments at the top, its northern base has a midden about 8 m wide associated with pot sherds and lower grinding stones. A single dolly hole and two smooth grooves were also discovered just south-west of this hill on a low granite outcrop. A few kilometers south-west, on the western foot of Muzungurume Mountain are four iron smelting furnaces with 1m internal diameters and 1 m spatial distance from each other (Plate 5.14a). Several fragments of tuyeres and slag suggest this was an extensive iron working site. A further 2 km south-east of this iron working site along the edge of the same river is another isolated iron working site. No furnaces are visible at this site; it is just a 20 m wide massive mound of tuyeres and slag (Plate 5.14b). Another few hundred meters south-east of this iron working site is Arupanga site situated on a steep granite kopje. At its northern base are five well pronounced dolly holes. The adjacent western base of the same kopje has a massive R-style enclosure with a diameter of over 60 m and a small lintelled opening (Plate 5.17a and b). Wall height is about 1.1 m, while its thickness is almost 2 m wide.

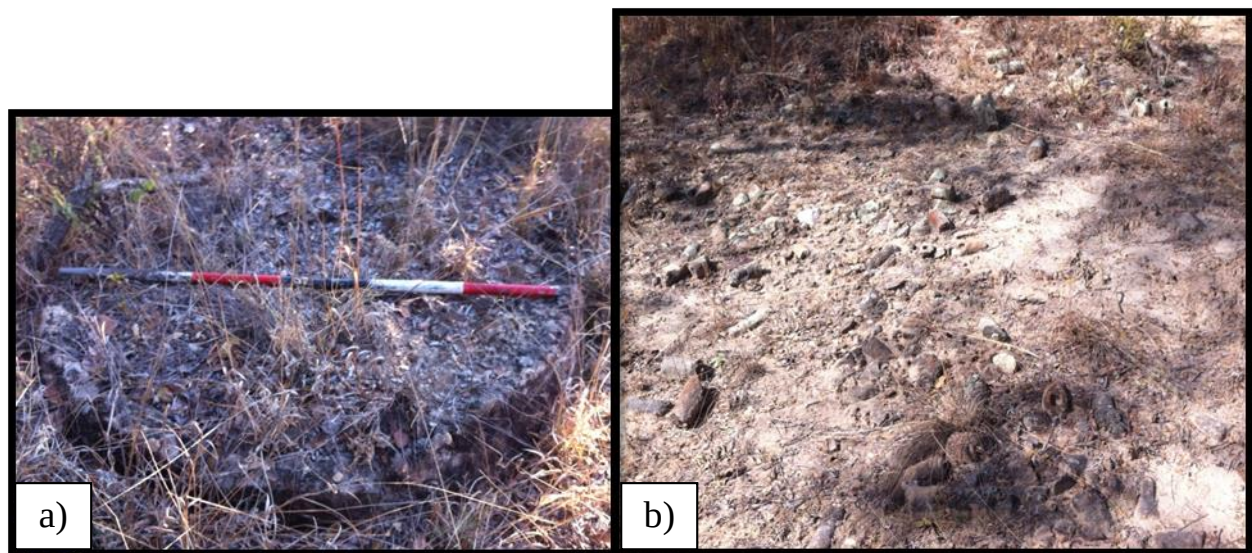


Plate 5.14: **a).** One of the four iron furnaces at Muzungurume, **b).** Slag and tuyere mound at Naletale 2 iron working site

The absence of house remains and presence of sweet grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*) could be indicative of a cattle enclosure although the discovery of more evidence like a dung deposit in future will be more helpful in consolidating this supposition. However several lower

grinding stones were located near this enclosure and some years back a complete clay pot was recovered from the site (Nyoni 2015 *pers comm.*). This implies more research is required to determine the proper function of this through systematic excavations. On the hilltop is a massive west facing R-style retaining wall reaching over 2 m in height. This special wall is similar in style to the one at Gwenaguru and several others at Zinjanja. Remains of a hut floor, *dhaka* lumps, plain Khami pot sherds, a massive piece of slag and several lower grinding stones were identified. About 12 km southwest of Arupanga as the crow flies is Shangangwe, which is located on low granite bedrock surrounded by vleis and sandy soils.

The site plan is semi-circular and it is divided into four enclosures and entrances (see Figure 5.6 below). Shangangwe ruins has a varied mixture of check, cord, isolated bands of ironstone and herringbone designs both on the internal and external wall faces (see Plate 5.16b). On the north-eastern edge of the main enclosure are two small R-style enclosures with low walling. A single dolly hole and two smooth grooves are situated on the northern side of the granite outcrop. Pole-impressed *dhaka* lumps, three lower grinding stones and house remains were also recorded at this site. Further northwest about 300 m of this site, one small circular R-style enclosure with wall height less than 70 cm was also discovered. This enclosure was located near a shallow scatter of Khami ware sherds. Another 15 km south-east of Shangangwe as the crow flies are two other Khami-phase sites that were named Debshan 1 and Debshan 2 respectively. These sites are also located on low granite outcrops surrounded by extensive grass plains.

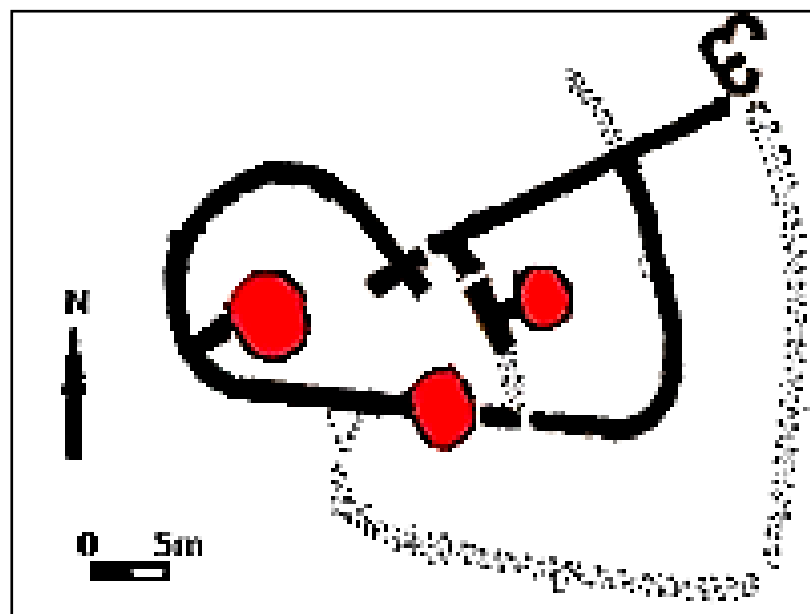


Figure 5.6: Shangangwe site plan (Modified from Huffman 1996)

Debshan 1 has a series of short length R-style walls that are less than 40 cm high and a distinct midden, where a shell bead and several Khami ware sherds were recovered. Debshan site 2 is located on a relatively wide low granite outcrop situated about one and half kilometers south-west of Debshan 1. The north-western margins of this site are associated with two small separate circular R-style enclosures that are about 1 m high. Their internal diameters are less than 10 m. A single short length freestanding PQ-style walling runs in a north to south direction thereby bisecting the granite outcrop into two sections (see Plate 5.16d below). The eastern side has dense vegetation and is generally devoid of cultural material while the south-western side of the wall is characterised by a huge midden on the extreme southern slopes. Four lower grinding stones and several pot sherds of the Khami period were found close to this midden. The wide granite rock covering the western slopes is characterised by a scatter of 21 smooth grooves. Approximately 6 km northeast of these sites as the crow flies is yet another Khami-phase site called Gwenaguru.

This site is located on a granite kopje that is densely surrounded by thorny sickle bush/*mupangara* (*dychrostachys cinerea*) species, which made site traversing very difficult. A peculiar R-style retaining wall similar to those at Zinjanja defines the western hilltop margins. These walls rise above 2 m in height (see Plate 5.16c). The entire site is characterised by a series of Q and R-style retaining and freestanding walls that dominate the central and eastern zones of the kopje. A few stone cairns, plain sherds and lower grinding stones were discovered around the hilltop. About 200 m southwest of this kopje at (X 771758; Y 7790821) is a 20 cm high R-style enclosure with a 12 m internal diameter. Further southwest of this site on yet another granite outcrop are hut remains associated with a very shallow midden. The plains surrounding this kopje are generally wet due to a high water table, a variety of grasses like tall *Andropogoneae* grasses provide good pasture for all grazing animals.

Located a further 2 km northeast of Gwenaguru is Nsalansala stone enclosure with approximately 2400 m² of walled space (Huffman 1996). Although its architectural plan is almost similar to Naletale, only herringbone and cord designs define the internal walls (see Plate 5.16a). Owing to extensive wall collapses on the external sides, it was not clear whether there were any decorations outside but the freestanding stonewalls are generally restricted in height ranging between 60 and 70 cm. Wall decorative motifs at this site were not done by using contrasting designs as a band of herringbone on top is preceded by another herringbone below. The same holds true for the cord designs. The remains of two massive *dhaka* are still

visible within the enclosure but other forms of cultural material like ceramics are scanty within the enclosure. However, just outside the enclosure on the northern sections are several small stone cairns, pole-impressed *dhaka* lumps and fragments of pottery. There is a river just south of the site. The soils are deep-red clayey and tree varieties include acacia (*Mlotica*, *Galpinii*/Umdwadwa and *Karoo*/Muunga), thorny sickle bush/*mupangara* (*dychrostachys cinerea*) and *Kirkia* species. Wide expanses of rolling grasslands dominate the landscape around this site.

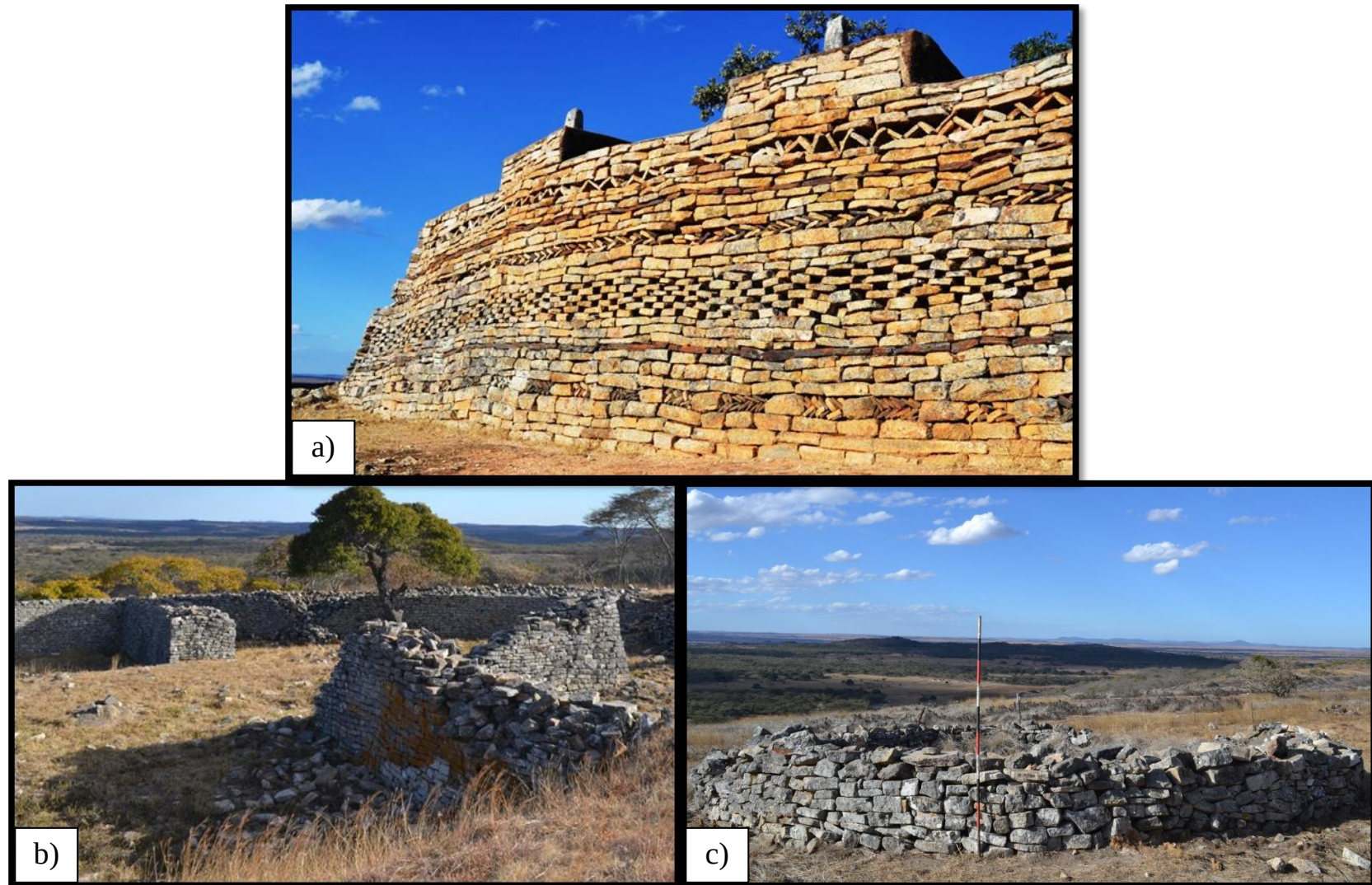


Plate 5.15: *a). West facing section of Naletale monument, b). Free-standing and retaining walls inside Naletale, c). Free-standing small enclosure just a few meters north-east of Naletale main platform.*

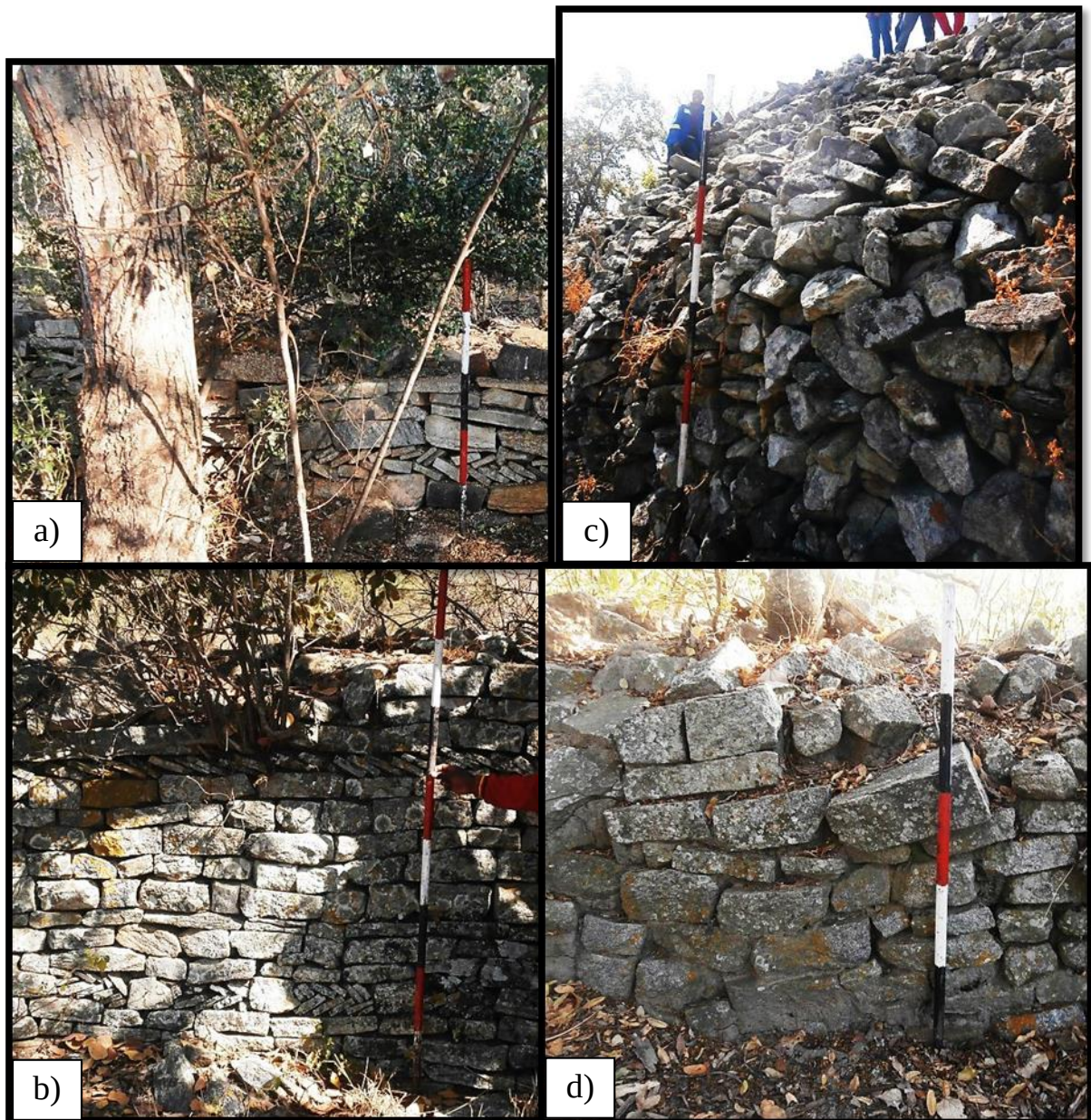


Plate 5.16: *a). Internally decorated free-standing walls at Nsalansala, b). Internally decorated free-standing walls at Shangangwe, c). PQ free-standing walling at Debshan 2 site*



Plate 5.17: a). A section with PQ walling on Arupanga enclosure located at the western foot of the hill, **b).** Lintelled opening of Arupanga enclosure showing R-style walling technique



Plate 5.18: One of the grain bin foundations on the eastern foot of Naletale hill

5.10.6 Major observations for Naletale and related sites

The sites found/recorded around Naletale share the same cultural attributes with those recorded around Danamombe and Zinjanja. In particular, dry stonewall architectural attributes, *dhaka* remains and ceramic evidence (Plate 5.1.5a) suggest that these sites were contemporary. However the sites recorded around Naletale were more profusely decorated compared to those around Danamombe and Zinjanja. While settlement patterning was still clustered, these sites were fairly dispersed when compared to clustering noted around Danamombe and Zinjanja. The basic rock in this area is predominantly granite, which provided suitable landforms and building material for the numerous elite settlements. Commoner settlements in this area were rather limited when compared to observations made around Danamombe and Zinjanja. Although dolly holes and smooth grooves were identified in this area suggesting gold processing, the common occurrence of sites near streams and rivers with fertile soils, extensive grass plains and numerous iron working sites recorded in the area during surveys clearly indicates that agro-pastoralism, iron processing and trade were the major economic activities.

5.11 Conclusions

The physiographic settings of south-western Zimbabwe certainly played a major role in the evolution of cultural complexity. A combination of rich mineral deposits, fertile soils, appropriate topographical landforms, good climatic conditions, numerous water sources and related vegetation zones constantly attracted game and people to these regions. The intensification of economic production, population increase and ideological shifts related to the different cultural and historical groups in the study area marked the general evolution of complexity. The development of Khami-phase sites later in the 15th century should be understood as a culmination of such economic and cultural processes. Basing on recent survey data and observed settlement patterns in the selected study area, it is tempting to assume that Khami-phase sites evolved out of cultural influences from sorely Leopard's Kopje communities since Great Zimbabwe tradition sites were rather exiguous. The Torwa and Rozvi historical phases are however difficult to determine without proper chrono-stratigraphic evidence derived from the relevant sites. Survey data has however indicated that Khami-phase sites in the Rozvi core area were contemporaneous and closely clustered than others in broader regions. The next chapter assesses Danamombe, Zinjanja and Naletale sites in the light of systematic excavations.

Chapter Six

Rozvi capitals: Excavations and Chronological data

“... the crucial area in which archaeological evidence for the change over from Torwa to Changamire dynasty must be sought is not around Khami but east of Bembesi at Danangombe, Naletale and Manyanga, where traditions of the Changamire Rozvi locate the Changamire capital” (Beach 1980:194).

6.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the excavation methods and discusses the results that emerged from the sites of Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja respectively. The origins of these sites as well as numerous claims made about their contemporaneity and connections with Great Zimbabwe and other historical states like Mutapa, Torwa and Rozvi have never received systematic archaeological attention. Therefore these sites were investigated through excavations in order to understand their actual development and possible links with the Rozvi past. Stratigraphic analysis and associated finds like local pottery, exotic goods, faunal remains, charcoal and other miscellaneous objects were given special attention in order to enhance inferences on chronological, cultural and economic aspects. Excavations also sought to confirm survey findings regarding the status of Leopard’s Kopje and Great Zimbabwe tradition sites in the study area. Excavation findings are presented in a manner that permits a comparative analysis of the three sites under study.

6.2 Description of sites

6.2.1 Danamombe/Dhlodhlo (19°56'48"S; 29°19'54"E)

Danamombe is the former Rozvi capital situated about 86 km south-west of Gweru and 92 km north-east of Bulawayo. A gravel road that branches-off the Gweru-Bulawayo highway at the Shangani business centre directly heads towards the site located about 19 km south-west. The name Dhlodhlo derives from one of king Mzilikazi’s headman (Summers 1971:21). Other traditions suggest that Dhlodhlo was the name of Lobengula’s Queen who later stayed north of these ruins until 1893 (Ndlovu 2012). This site is also associated with names like *amaTangala kaMambo* meaning Mambo’s stone walls, Matangoni, Mambo Hills and Danamombe/Danang’ombe. Despite these multiple views, Danamombe literally translates to “call or bring the cattle” a phrase that connotes the significance of cattle in the area. It is

therefore no surprise that the site lies on one of the former Meikles Range paddocks located in the Insiza district of Matabeleland south province, a region historically known for extensive cattle breeding (see Pikirayi 2001; Randles 1979).

Topographically, the site is situated approximately 1478 m above sea level on the Ngoma geological fault. This fault cuts across a gold belt that transcends from Shangani towards Fort Rixon area, meaning Danamombe was well placed for gold exploitation. The Danamombe area is however dominated by several granite outcrops, some of which were exploited to erect artificial rubble mounds and to produce building material. Owing to the predominance of granite rock, the soils are well drained light to dark greyish sandy. This implies that they were well suited for cereal cultivation since the site area is well watered (see Chapters 2 and 5 of this thesis). Danamombe actually lies on the watershed of the Insiza-Shangani drainage system. This region provides the source of several streams draining into the northern and southern drainage systems. The vegetation around the site comprises of *colophospermum* mopane and Acacia Karoo trees, while the grasses include *heteropogon contortus* and *cynodon dactylon* (Pikirayi 2001:200). All these natural resources provided a favourable environmental setting for the development of a complex society.

The entire site covers an area of 1.2 km² constituting about 700 hectares of settlement debris. The main building complexes however occupy just 200 m or 1.21 hectares of cultural material. The main settlement at Danamombe consists of two large (western and eastern) sub-rectangular platforms separated by a parallel passage. The western platform comprises three artificial platforms oriented in a north-south direction. These include an extreme north-western platform reaching over 6 m in height, which is abutted to a middle platform rising slightly above 3 m, and the southern platform with a huge kitchen midden that elevates this platform to over 6 m above the ground. Several hut floors are still visible on all these platforms and sherds of local pottery are widely scattered across the 900 m² area. A series of retaining walls make up multiple tiers of terraces on these platforms; the north-western platform has three terraces that are profusely decorated with checker, cord, herringbone and chevron patterns.

The associated eastern platform of the main building complex is much larger covering approximately 2,800 m² although its height hardly exceeds 3 m. About six enclosures of inferior quality define the south and south-eastern sections of central building complex; a few others are located on the northern limits. The western side of this main platform is marked by

a massive freestanding low-walling with isolated bands of ironstone decorations in some sections. Huffman (1996:20) interpreted this enclosed western space as a men's court, while van Waarden (2012:98) argues it was either a cattle kraal or parade ground for the Rozvi army. These interpretations are valid; however assigning a single function to space is problematic because through time, space usually serves many purposes. Settlement debris is concentrated around the main built complex although it extends much further towards the north and south for more than a kilometre.

Apart from vandalism activities perpetuated by treasure hunters during the early 1890s, this site has received a fair share of scholarly archaeological attention. Previous research at the site conducted by Randall-McIver (1906) who pioneered scientific research in the country. Since he was only keen on establishing the local or foreign identity of the site through the construction sequence and associated cultural finds, his overall evaluation of the Rozvi was very superficial. Following the scepticism levelled on the conclusions reached by Randall-McIver (1906), Caton-Thompson was later invited by the Rhodesian regime to verify his work in 1929. While she confirmed the indigenous identity of the site and identified two occupation periods at the site on the basis of retrieved cultural material, she did not agree with Randall-McIver that this was a fortified town. She also gave piecemeal attention to the Rozvi subject and site chronology. Perhaps she may be forgiven because Rozvi history was poorly understood and radiocarbon dating was unknown back then.

In 1959 another major excavation was conducted by R. Summers with his students. His aim was simply to extend Caton-Thompson's trenches, train his students and to trace the architectural sequence of the site. Although his assessment of the architecture and associated local potsherds was sound, his attempt to correlate the site to local tribal groups was problematic. Several other minor excavations were conducted by T. N. Huffman and J. Muringaniza in the 1970s and 1990s. Muringaniza and Manyanga (n.d.) excavated an area north-west of the main site in attempts to determine the identity of a massive dump of iron slag and tuyere fragments. Their excavations revealed nothing more than what was already visible on the surface. In 1997, some rescue excavations were conducted just before the setting-up of a borehole and water pipeline south-west of the main site. In 2006, National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) conducted a field school that also carried out excavations aimed at verifying Huffman's model on the use of space at the site. Finds recovered from all these excavations provide a very good comparative base for data collected during recent excavations for this particular study.

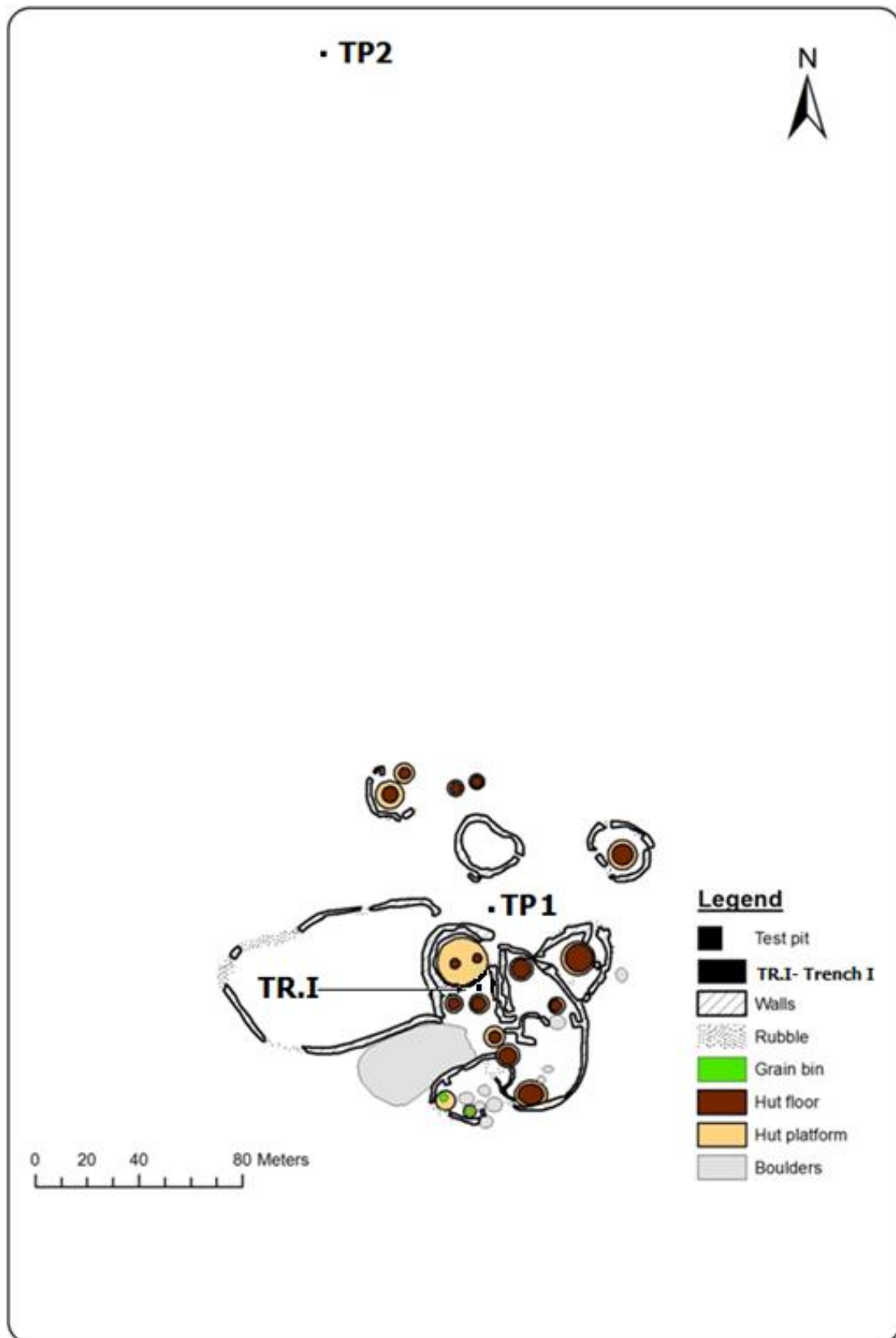


Figure 6.1: Danamombe site plan showing positions of excavated units

6.3 Sampling and excavations

A huge kitchen midden located on the extreme southern adjacent platform was avoided because it was already disturbed by Randall-McIver (1906). The other adjacent higher platform on the northern end was too deep to be excavated to bedrock within the budgeted field days. Thus the middle lower platform overlooking the huge western courtyard abutting the main artificial platform was chosen as an extension of previous excavations (see Plate 6.2). This part of the main platform was excavated to penetrate the sterile layer or reach bedrock. It was anticipated that the architectural details of the middle platform as well as securely stratified cultural material and datable samples could be recovered this way. This material was expected to address issues relating to settlement chronology, human economic activities as well as the associated group identities. This area also indicated prospects of a deep cultural deposit that could be excavated to bedrock within the budgeted timeframe. The surface had several *dhaka* fragments, potsherds and remains of hut floors. The central part of this platform was gridded into sixty four 1x1 m² grids. These were then numbered A to H on the x-axis and 1 to 8 on the y-axis for purposes of accurately locating and documenting the selected excavation units (see Plates 6.2 and 6.3 below). Soil from all site excavation units was dry sieved using a 2.5 mm and 2 mm wire mesh to recover potsherds, beads, bones and any other observable cultural material. These finds were put in separate bags that were labelled according to material and context. Documentation involved the systematic use of a digital camera, hand held e-trex Global Positioning system (GPS) for recording the UTM grid units of sites and their elevation, campus, ranging rods, tape measures, soil colour chart, field note books and graph books.



Plate 6.2: *North-western platform and the lower middle platform with Trench I*

Squares C4 and D4 were intuitively selected to define the 2x1 m (Trench I), which was set-up on the middle platform. These squares were also selected with the view that if something interesting was found below the surface, it would be easy to extend the trench in any direction. Random sampling of the gridded area was avoided because there were chances of landing on the edges of the platform with retaining walls beneath. Such features are difficult to penetrate and usually devoid of cultural material. Excavations proceeded by arbitrary 10 cm spits for reasons of stratigraphic control since natural layers were difficult to properly discern before the whole profile was exposed. The excavated soil was dry sieved using both a 2.5 mm and 2 mm wire mesh in order to trap both large and small cultural finds. Finds were either recovered from the trench while excavating or handpicked from the sieves. These finds were bagged and recorded separately according to material and context. Field notes relating to associations of finds and stratigraphy were also made in the course of excavations. A digital camera was used to capture associated features like floors and stratigraphic layers. Stratigraphic profiles were finally recorded through the use of graph books and such documentation was necessary for record keeping and data analysis.



Plate 6.3: Gridded area showing Trench I, C4 and D4 squares (marked by yellow arrows) and the adjacent Kitchen midden

6.3.1 Trench I

Level 1 (0-10 cm): The surface layer was defined by dark grey soil intruded and bounded by roots. This layer was removed through use of small handpicks and a trowel since it was relatively compacted. This layer was associated with several *dhaka* fragments, plain and graphite burnished potsherds and a fragment of an imported greyish-brown fine flat-based bowl with evenly spaced incised motifs.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): The soil maintained the same colour although its texture slightly became loose owing to the decrease in grass root density. Cultural material recovered in this soil matrix included another fragment of the imported ware noted above, faunal remains, plain and graphite burnished potsherds as well as a solid hut floor at 14 cm below the surface. The greyish brown hut floor was well preserved and compact extending downwards into level 3.

Level 3 (20-30 cm): A single reddish brown undiagnostic potsherd was found within the first hut floor. About 24 cm below the surface another hut floor emerged right below the first floor. This second hut floor was light brown in colour and less smoothened, a single bone and glass bead was recovered from its top. Several small stones of almost the same size were evenly distributed below this floor probably to strengthen it or to reduce the amount of soil

needed to level it up. Plain and graphite burnished potsherds as well as one charcoal sample was collected in this layer at approximately 30 cm below the surface. Immediately below this floor at 27 cm was another reddish brown hut floor 3. This floor was associated with a glass bead, potsherd with soot and a small bone fragment.

Level 4 (30-40 cm): Reddish brown clayey soil extending from the floor above continued into this level. Another hut floor number 4 appeared 35 cm below the surface on the south-western corner of C4 only. Well placed large and small granite blocks emerged at this level, which also yielded several reddish brown and a single graphite burnished potsherd. A single burnt glass bead, shell bead, small bone fragment, plain and graphite burnished potsherds were found in this layer.

Level 5 (40-50 cm): Comprised patches of fine textured charred thatch and ashy grey soil appearing approximately 43 cm below the surface, just below hut floor 4. A burnt wooden stump, similar to the ones recorded by Randall-McIver (1906) and Caton-Thompson (1931) also appeared in this layer. Several charcoal samples were collected for radiocarbon dating from this level. This greyish ashy layer lies above a reddish brown sandy loam layer that also extended into large well packed granite blocks. Finds recovered in this layer included a shell and copper beads, wound copper wire, faunal remains, plain and graphite burnished potsherds.

Level 6 (50-60 cm): The reddish brown sandy loam soil occupied gaps within well layered large and small granite blocks. Associated finds include a glass bead, charred shell beads, wound copper wire and a graphite burnished potsherd.

Level 7 (60-70 cm): Greyish brown soil gritty in areas, mixed with irregular granite blocks. Observable finds included glass and shell beads, plain and graphite burnished potsherds, a lower grinding stone, iron fragment and charcoal sample recovered at 69 cm.

Levels 8 and 9 (70-90 cm): Constituted large well packed granite blocks that started appearing at level 8 and these continued further downwards. It thus became extremely difficult to maintain the 10 cm spits because some blocks were too large and there were a lot of collapses encountered during the course of excavation. Glass, shell and copper beads, faunal remains, an iron fragment and a charcoal sample were collected from these layers.

Level 10 (90-100 cm): The same soil colour, texture and granite blocks continue to this level. Recovered finds include plain and graphite burnished potsherds, faunal remains, glass and copper beads, burnt shell beads and charcoal samples.

Level 11 and 12 (100-120 cm): Several granite blocks were covered by gritty ashy grey and reddish brown soil. Large charcoal samples and ash suggests there was a lot of firing just above another reddish brown *dhaka* floor 5. The shy grey layer had large charcoal samples scattered across the entire trench suggesting extensive burning took place below floor 5. Granite stones were limited in this layer. Several faunal remains, glass, shell and copper beads, wound copper wire, plain and graphite burnished potsherds and a prefabricated spindle whorl were retrieved from these layers.

Level 13 (120-130 cm): Ashy dark layer. The only finds in the dark fine textured ashy layer were faunal remains, shell beads, plain and graphite burnished potsherds.

Level 14 and 15 (130-150 cm): Ashy dark layer continues before giving way to another compacted reddish brown floor 6. A few shell beads, a copper bead, faunal remains, plain and graphite burnished potsherds were recovered from these layers.

Level 16 (150-160 cm): Large well packed granite blocks mixed with little light brown gritty soil. Only a few samples of charcoal were recovered as finds. Since the platform was made up of several floors and neatly packed stones, the 1x2 m trench continued shrinking downwards. At this level, Trench I was extended to squares C5 and D5 just to create more working space. Excavations proceeded without dry sieving but where cultural material was identified, it was collected and recorded according to level. Finds from this level include faunal remains and a charcoal sample.

Levels 17 to 20 (160-200 cm): These horizons were characterised by large and small granite stones mixed with gritty light brown loose soil. These levels had a single shell and two copper beads.

Level 21 (200-210 cm): The same profile noted above continued to this level where plain and graphite burnished potsherds were found. Charcoal samples were last retrieved from this context.

Levels 22-33 (210-340 cm): Small stones became more frequent and tightly packed with very little soil around them. These levels were moist and almost devoid of cultural material, the two shell beads recovered at 277 cm probably trickled down from above. At around 325 cm, the trench was extremely dangerous to work owing to the loose protruding blocks on all the trench edges above (see Plate 6.4 below). The trench was also abandoned because no distinctions could be made in the character of the deposits and it was very likely that we were just a few centimetres above bedrock.



Plate 6.4: *Eastern side view of Trench I when abandoned*

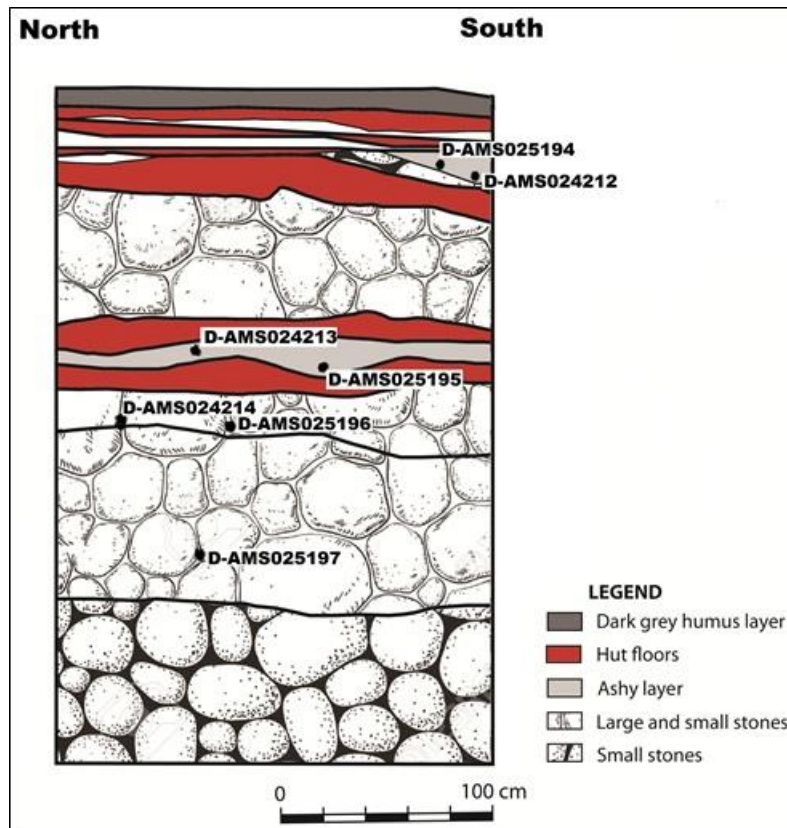


Figure 6.5: *Stratigraphic profile of eastern side Trench I*

6.3.2 Test Pit I

This was sunk 7.5 m immediately north of the massive western courtyard wall on a midden roughly trending east-west and approximately measuring 13 m wide by 22 m long (for clarity refer to Fig. 6.1 above). The aim was to further investigate the outer elite zones and complement Trench I cultural material, which was relatively very little. The midden area was generally sloping with no animal burrows.

Level 1 (0-10 cm): Partially compact grey loamy soil. Finds include faunal remains and charcoal samples.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): Compact grey loamy soil. Finds include faunal remains, potsherds, an imported glass fragment and iron fragments.

Level 3 (20-30 cm): Soft greyish brown sandy loam soil. The finds were faunal remains, potsherds and glassware.

Level 4 (30-40 cm): Soft greyish brown soil deposited on compacted grey soil. Finds include faunal remains, diagnostic and undiagnostic potsherds.

Level 5 (40-50 cm): Grey compacted soil deposited on bedrock. Potsherds and faunal remains were the most common finds though bedrock was reached at just 48 cm below the surface.

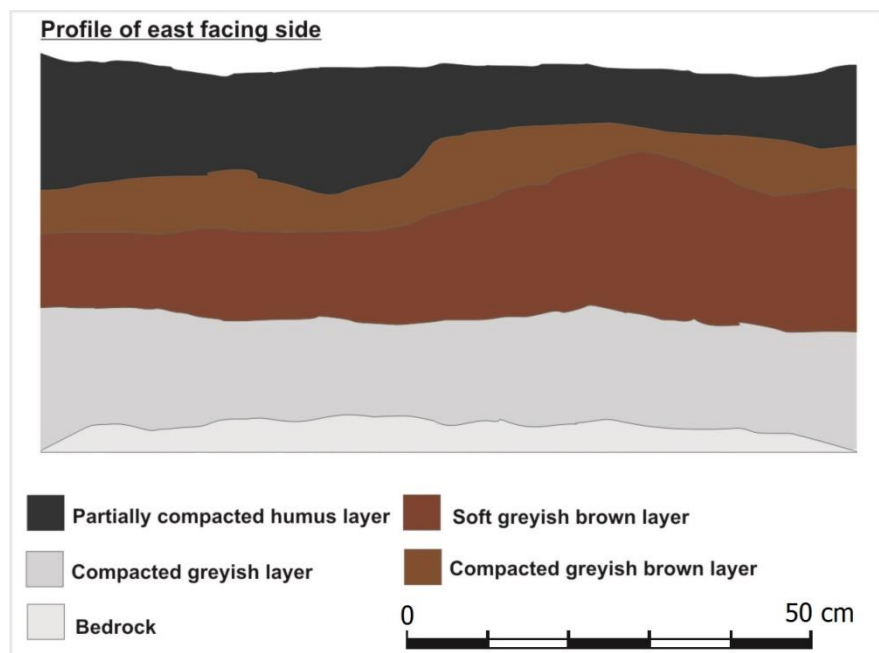


Figure 6.6: *Stratigraphic profile of Test Pit I*

6.3.3 Test Pit II

This Test Pit was set-up on another midden about 300 m north-west of the main platform (see Fig. 6.1 above). The main aim was to investigate the internal dynamics of a midden in open field sites. The other objective was to recover cultural material that could be spatially and stratigraphically compared with Trench I and Test Pit I in order to ascertain the main activities and cultural sequences at Danamombe. A lot of animal burrows are noticeable on the surface but these were avoided in favour of sealed contexts. This Test Pit was by far the most productive of them all in terms of recovered cultural material.

Level 1 (0-10 cm): Dark grey humus layer. Finds include plain and graphite burnished potsherds, faunal remains and charcoal samples.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): Compacted greyish layer. Finds include faunal remains, plain, incised and graphite burnished potsherds and iron fragments.

Level 3 (20-30 cm): Greyish brown soil. The finds were faunal remains, shell beads, iron bangle, plain and graphite burnished potsherds.

Level 4 (30-40 cm): Greyish brown soil. Finds include faunal remains, plain and graphite burnished potsherds, charcoal, shell and copper beads.

Level 5 (40-50 cm): Greyish brown soil deposited on soft grey ashy layer. Finds recovered include plain and graphite burnished potsherds, faunal remains, shell and copper beads as well as charcoal samples.

Level 6 (50-60 cm): Fine textured light grey ashy layer gradually changes to greyish brown ash. Finds include faunal remains, shell beads, copper wire, plain and graphite burnished potsherds.

Level 7 (60-70 cm): Fine textured greyish brown ashy layer. Finds include faunal remains, charcoal, graphite burnished potsherds and a *mbira* (thumb nail) key.

Level 8 (70-80 cm): Fine textured greyish brown soil. Finds include potsherds, charcoal, shell beads and copper wire.

Level 9 (80-90 cm): Fine textured, greyish brown soil. Finds include faunal remains, one copper and three shell beads, charcoal, plain and graphite burnished potsherds.

Level 10 (90-100 cm): Fine textured, dusty, light brown ashy soil. Finds include faunal remains, metal bangle, plain and graphite burnished potsherds.

Level 11 (100-110 cm): Soft greyish brown soil. The only find was a single charcoal sample located just above the sterile layer.

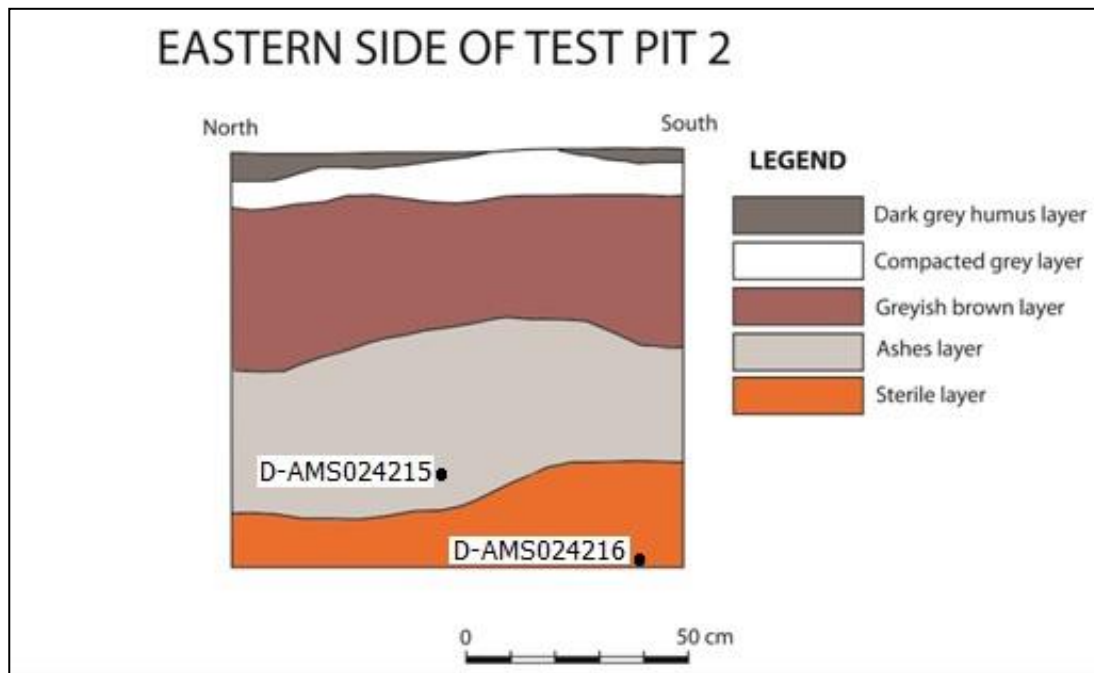


Figure 6.7: Stratigraphic profile of Test Pit II

6.4 Danamombe: an overview

This site was intensively occupied from AD 1420 to the early 19th century as indicated by the deep cultural horizons and results of charcoal samples collected from the lower, middle and upper levels of excavation units (see Table 6.2). The burnt layer of Trench I marks the base of the second occupation with a prevalence of cultural material while the first occupation is characterised by very little cultural finds. Danamombe was however inhabited from beginning to end by people of the Khami culture because stratified material culture does not show any other culture. The same class of constricted globular pots noted by Caton-Thompson (1931) and Schofield (1948) dominated most excavated contexts. Polychrome band and panel ware sherds were quite rare at the site; this possibly signals the ideological significance of this ware as an identity symbol. This indicates evidence of iron smithing and weaving of cotton at the site. Glass, brass, bronze, copper and shell bead varieties found at the site also attest to the significance of both local and external trade relations. Furthermore the sizable number of faunal remains implies the importance of both hunting and herding to the local economy; these issues are dealt with at length in Chapters 7 and 8.

In comparison to earlier excavations conducted at the site, the same cultural finds were recorded, although they were relatively limited both in variety and quantities. This occurred because the contexts selected for excavation in this study were mainly dwelling-places while excavation units largely constituted simple test pits. When compared to earlier excavations,

recent excavations were much smaller in scale; hence the cultural finds were very limited. Recent excavations mainly sought to recover material culture and radiocarbon samples from well sealed contexts so as to adequately interpret the occupational sequences at the site. Nonetheless, comparisons with what was observed earlier on during excavations are worth undertaking. Randall-McIver (1906) observed that large granite stones, soil, hut floors and wooden posts occurred at various intervals within the artificial platforms. Some of the finds recovered through these excavations included gold wire, iron weapons, bangles of solid copper, wound copper wire studded with beads, a silver pin, spindle whorls, a circular piece of copper and crucible, a bowl of an iron spoon, fragments of green glass, Nankin china, pot sherds (both diagnostic and non-diagnostic), fused glass, tin, ivory and numerous glass beads (Randall-McIver 1906:43-50). The huge kitchen midden was by far the most productive unit yielding fragments of rare exotic and local goods among other things associated with middens (see Randall-McIver 1906).

The excavations by Caton-Thompson in 1929 were simply extensions of Randall-McIver's eastern platform section. She encountered a floor resting on undressed granite blocks, which were also piled on top of charred thatch and earthy rubbish. She defined this as the second occupation layer. The first occupation layer had seven complete pots that were mixed with human remains placed on top of another intact hut floor with a solid *dhaka* bench (Caton-Thompson 1931:170-171). Below this floor were stone fillings associated with a few Stone Age materials, black graphite polished and rough red potsherds situated on fine granite sand. Since the recently excavated area was much deeper, a lot more hut floors were encountered. Evidence of burning was noted twice on the excavated platform but this is difficult to interpret with certainty. Caton-Thompson (1931:171) also observed this during her excavations at the site and attributed the fire to either natural veld fires or tribal warfare.

While these views are acceptable, burning could also have been done to strengthen the *dhaka* floors since they remained a significant part of the artificial platforms. Apart from minor differences noted in the material culture encountered during different excavations, the construction sequences basically remained the same. The only change worth highlighting is that while the lower levels lacked wooden posts, the upper occupation phases were characterised by very thick posts for massive huts. Summers (1959) also dug at Danamombe and observed that the site projected the same culture through and through, globular pots with or without necks remained common throughout the deposits. Decorated sherds were rare

while black graphite burnished wares were confined to the lower levels. Red or reddish-brown burnished and un-burnished sherds however occurred throughout the levels.

6.5.1 Naletale (19°53'18.38"S; 29°31'55.49"E)

This site is also found in the Insiza district of Matabeleland south, it is situated 25 km south-east of Danamombe, 67 km south-west of Gweru and at least 26 km south-east of the Shangani business centre on a very high granite kopje. Naletale ruins actually lie at the end of a granite bluff that overlooks the Valley of Ingesi River. Just like Danamombe, Naletale is not the original name of the site; probably this was a corruption of the name Nhandare or Nharetari by colonial officials (Nyoni 1997). According to Burrett (1998) Nharetari probably meant straight lines or courses of the site stonewalling. Its southern extremes are dotted by numerous isolated sites of the Khami-phase, which were described in Chapter 5. Naletale is associated with oral traditions claiming that Rozvi rulers were the sole inhabitants who used it as a defensive fort, royal residence, royal retreat, sub-administrative centre, court and prison. Although these views are hereby regarded as speculative, they justify the selection of this site for verification through excavations. Ever since early colonial times, the site has attracted immense attention. For instance, settlers plundered it for treasure; while others considered it too advanced to be indigenous (see Burrett 1998; Hall and Neal 1904; Randall-McIver 1906; Summers 1971). To date, only a few systematic excavations have been conducted at the site.

The granite *dwala* on which Naletale is located rises 1465 m above sea level; this height permits one to have an expansive view of the surrounding landscape. The immediate northern and western sections of the kopje are much lower in elevation and they are characterised by seasonal streams. The boundaries of the site can be defined on the basis of topography; where at least six kopjes form natural frontiers. In the north-east and north-west, the kopjes are almost linear though situated about two kilometres from Naletale main settlement. In the south-west and south-east, the hills are dispersed from each other but located less than 2 kilometres from Naletale. Of major interest to this chapter are Gomoremhiko and Nharire hills that had excavation potential (see Fig. 6.9 and Plate 6.10 below).

The main settlement at Naletale comprises of an elliptical enclosure with two entrances, the main one facing north-west while the other one at the back faces east (see Fig. 6.8 below). Two retaining walls form two terraces on the outer western front. Of these two, the upper one is more profusely decorated with chevron, herringbone, check and isolated bands of

ironstone. This west facing upper girdle wall is also crowned by four turrets with monoliths. Internally the enclosure has a maximum diameter of 53 m, which is divided into seven sections by freestanding radiating walls emanating from a northern central platform. Remnants of massive *dhaka* hut walls reaching 1.70 m in height are still standing on this platform though the area was severely vandalised by early treasure hunters. Another circular massive *dhaka* hut is situated on the south-western end of the enclosure on a platform that extends from the front western wall. Its northern and north-western sections are characterised by a small enclosure and a few low platforms that probably accommodated single huts. All these small structures were built in R style walling or undressed granite blocks. Apart from these *dhaka* remains, there is nothing much on the surface in terms of cultural material. Local potsherds are extremely rare on the surface, both inside the enclosure and on the open western granite slopes.

Since the site was entirely built on granite bedrock, deep cultural deposits can only be found on the artificial platforms inside the enclosure. Surface cultural material is sparsely scattered on the external edges of the eastern perimeter wall. Unfortunately, the most potentially interesting sections of the platform were either damaged by treasure hunters or disturbed by excavations done in the past. This site initially caught the attention of the Ancient Ruins Company, which plundered it in search of treasure. Later on meaningful excavations at the site were conducted by Randall-McIver (1906), whose research aims were quite similar to those he had for Danamombe. In 1963 Roger Summers also conducted comprehensive excavations at the site and recovered ceramics and a few foreign imports including glass beads and iron nails. Ever since then, no further excavations were conducted at the site.

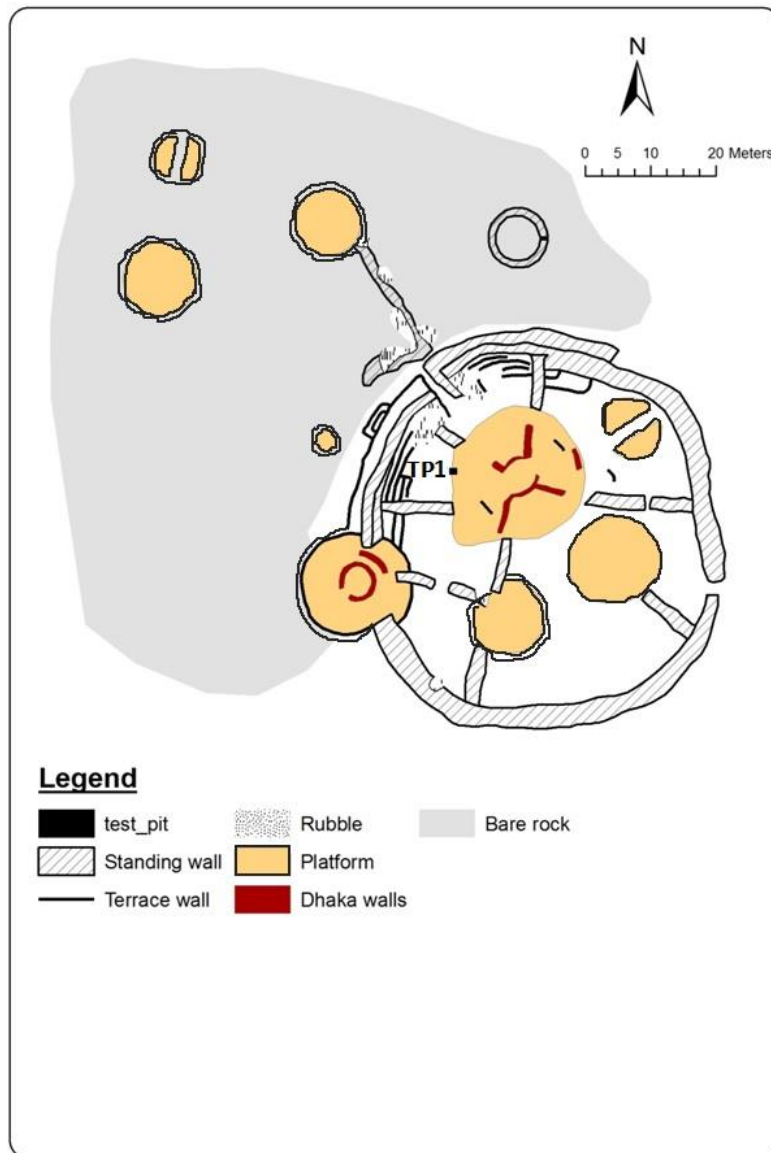


Figure 6.8: Naletale site plan showing location of Test Pit I

6.6 Sampling and excavations

It was not possible to conduct the extensive excavations at Naletale monument because a greater part of the site was already disturbed. More so, the location of the site on a granite boulder resulted in a lot of cultural material being washed down the slopes over the years. Since the main settlement lies on a granite boulder, very little cultural material is found therein. Thus a midden situated on the north-western slopes of Gomoremhiko hill, an open site situated about 1 km south-east of Naletale site provided the most promising area for comprehensive excavations. This part of the hill has large accumulations of cultural material on the surface and it is heavily burrowed. The burrowing animals have exposed a few potsherds and faunal remains from the subsurface. The archaeological scatter of local potsherds, *dhaka* lumps, bone fragments, ashy grey patches, lower and upper grinding stones

cover a radius of almost 20 m along the hill slopes. Following intensive surface surveys around this zone, a relatively open area without protruding tree roots, animal burrows and granite boulders was selected for excavation. The upper sections of the slopes that showed small mounds and surface cultural material nearby were thus intuitively selected.

The major aim behind excavating this open site was to trace the development of Naletale through associated material culture and chronometric dates. Already, a few Khami-phase potsherds had been retrieved from the hilltop during surveys, so it was anticipated that more similar finds would come through excavations. By extension, it was anticipated that since the site was quite close to Naletale cultural material retrieved from this site would further broaden an understanding of Naletale cultural and economic activities.



Figure 6.9: Distribution of Naletale and its excavated satellite sites showing excavation units



Plate 6.10: View of Gomoremhiko Trench I when abandoned

Approximately 1 km south-east of Naletale monument, a 2x1 m trench trending NE-SW was set up at right angles to the north-south baseline on one of the small mounds on the upper slopes of Gomoremhiko kopje. This trench was also excavated using 10 cm arbitrary spits; apparently it was so shallow in depth going down just as far as 20 cm. Fallen tree leaves covering the surface of the trench were removed and the humus layer was devoid of any cultural material.

Level 1 (0-10 cm): Dark grey/green loamy soil. This level yielded several *dhaka* fragments, plain local potsherds and a tiny green opaque glass bead, bone fragment, shell bead, iron bangle and charcoal samples.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): The soil changed to dark brown loamy soil but towards the sterile layer it changed to dark yellow/grey loam. Only poorly fired plain local potsherds were retrieved up to end of level 2, level 3 became sterile.

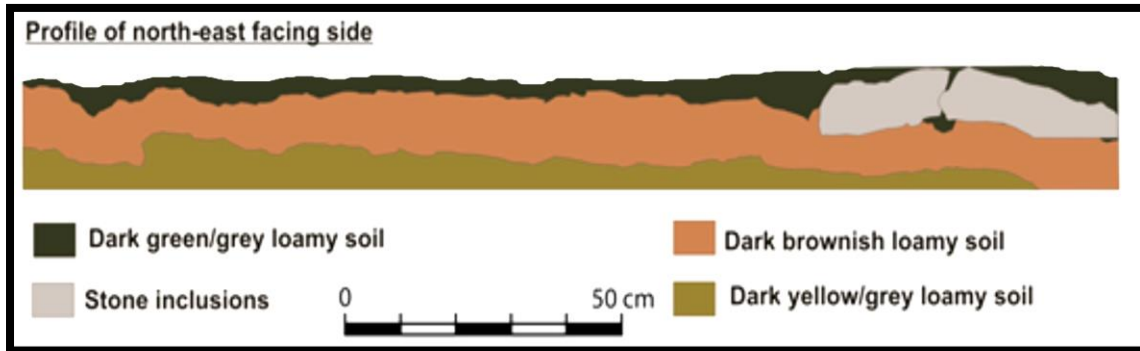


Figure 6.11: Stratigraphic profile of Gomoremhiko Trench I

6.6.1 Gomoremhiko Test Pit I

Just some 20.1 m north-west of Trench I was a complete pot concealed by two lower grinding stones. When the grinding stones were removed, it was just the orifice of the pot that was exposed; the rest of its body was buried. A Test Pit was sunk in order to recover the pot in situ and to carefully investigate its context. This pot was also important in terms of establishing the typology of associated fragmented local sherds since it was the only complete example. The fact that roots from the adjacent tree were growing over and around it causing damage was proof that it had been there for a very long time. The other objective of setting up this Test Pit was to provide comparative material for cultural sequence and stratification. This Test Pit was likewise excavated using arbitrary 10 cm spits for better stratigraphic control.



Plate 6.12: View of Gomoremhiko Test Pit I

Level 1 (0-10 cm): Leaf litter with no cultural material deposited on dark grey loamy soil. Finds include local potsherds (a few being diagnostic with graphite burnishing and incised cross hatched motifs), a lower grinding stone and broken upper grinding stone, arrow head, *dhaka* lumps and fragile smooth floor with at least three visible layers.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): Light brown sandy loam soil. Finds from this layer were poorly fired plain potsherds; a charcoal sample recovered 12 cm below the surface, *dhaka* lumps (some burnt with pole impressions) and a corroded iron piece.

Level 3 (30-40 cm): Light brown sandy loam with a few small stones. The only finds were the complete pot and a few plain body sherds. Although the pot was recovered complete, it was so fragile because of the damage caused by tree roots. Test Pit 1 became sterile just above the base of the pot.

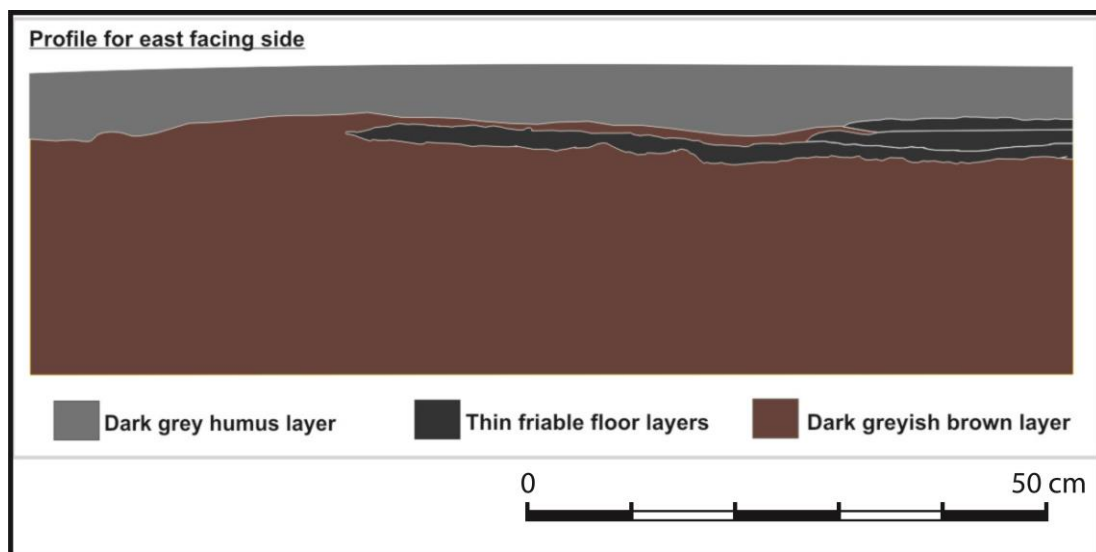


Figure 6.13: Stratigraphic profile Gomoremhiko Test Pit I

6.6.2 Naletale Platform Test Pit I

After conducting intensive foot surveys around and within the main Naletale platform, it was established that the only area with excavation potential was to be found within the main enclosure. All the disturbed areas were avoided; hence a Test Pit was sunk right at the top of the north-western platform (see Figs. 6.8, 6.15 and Plate 6.14). The actual position being along the western slopes, just a few meters west of the vandalized house. The major aim of excavating the platform to bedrock was to determine its chronological and occupational

sequences. Associated contextualised cultural material was also targeted for comparative purposes with Danamombe and Zinjanja sites.



Plate 6.14: Cross section view of Naletale Test Pit I

Level 1 (0-10 cm): Compacted light yellow brown soil. Finds included *dhaka* fragments from the vandalised hut above, a few polychrome and graphite burnished sherds, a glass and copper bead.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): Compacted gritty reddish brown soil. Apart from a charcoal sample, no cultural material was recovered in this layer.

Level 3 (20-30 cm): Compacted gritty reddish brown soil. Dhaka lumps were the only finds.

Level 4 (30-40 cm): Compacted gritty reddish brown soil deposited on a reddish brown solid hut floor, 40 cm below the surface.

Level 5 (40-50 cm): Reddish brown floor. No associated cultural finds.

Levels 6-7 (50-70 cm): Reddish brown floor continues into a layer of numerous small stones. Finds include one graphite burnished sherd, the rest were plain and a charcoal sample.

Levels 8-10 (70-100 cm): Neatly packed small stones just below the floor giving way to large tightly packed blocks with gritty core material. No finds present.

Level 11 (100-110 cm): Reddish brown floor 2. Apart from the hut floor, there were no other finds.

Levels 12-13 (120-130 cm): Neatly packed stones and bedrock. These layers were also devoid of cultural finds.

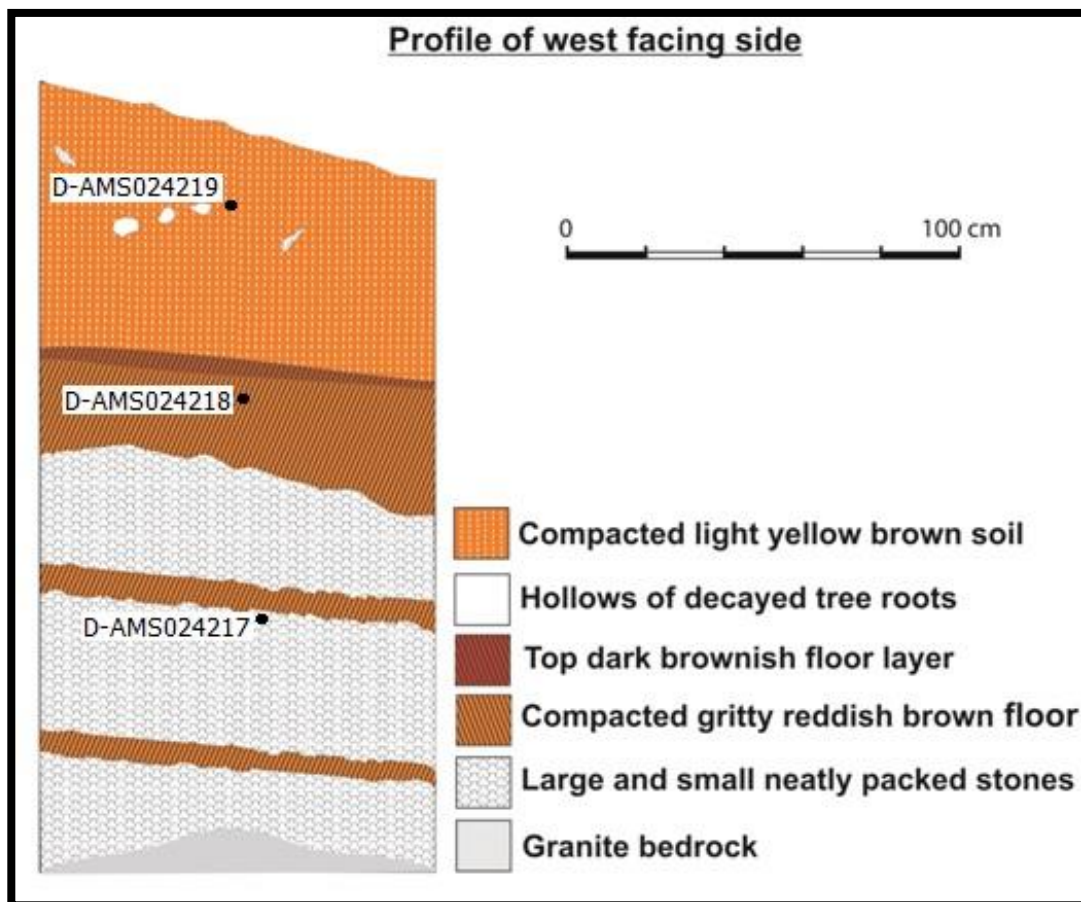


Figure 6.15: Stratigraphic Profile of Naletale Test Pit I

6.6.3 Nharire Hill Test Pit I

Approximately 1.4 km south-west of Naletale monument (see Fig. 6.9 above) is a low hill with remains of a *dhaka* hut floor situated on top. A few local potsherds are scattered on the top eastern slopes as well. Since the hut had an expansive view of the surrounding landscape, it was probably built for defence; hence the name Nharire hill was coined for this site.

Nharire hill was excavated to further test the temporal and spatial dimensions of Naletale. Scatters of cultural material define the lower north-eastern and south-western base of the hill. The north-western base was avoided because of heavy animal burrowing. Purposive shovel testing was therefore confined to the open well preserved south-western base, where a large tooth of a bovid class three was recovered. Test Pit II was sunk where the bovid tooth was recovered. The stratigraphy of this Test Pit was as follows:

Level 1 (0-10 cm): Humus layer with loose dark brownish grey loamy soil. Finds included bone fragments, plain body sherds and *dhaka* fragments.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): Compacted dark reddish brown soil. Finds included a few plain body sherds and faunal remains.

Level 3 (20-30 cm): Compacted reddish brown loam soil, sterile layer.

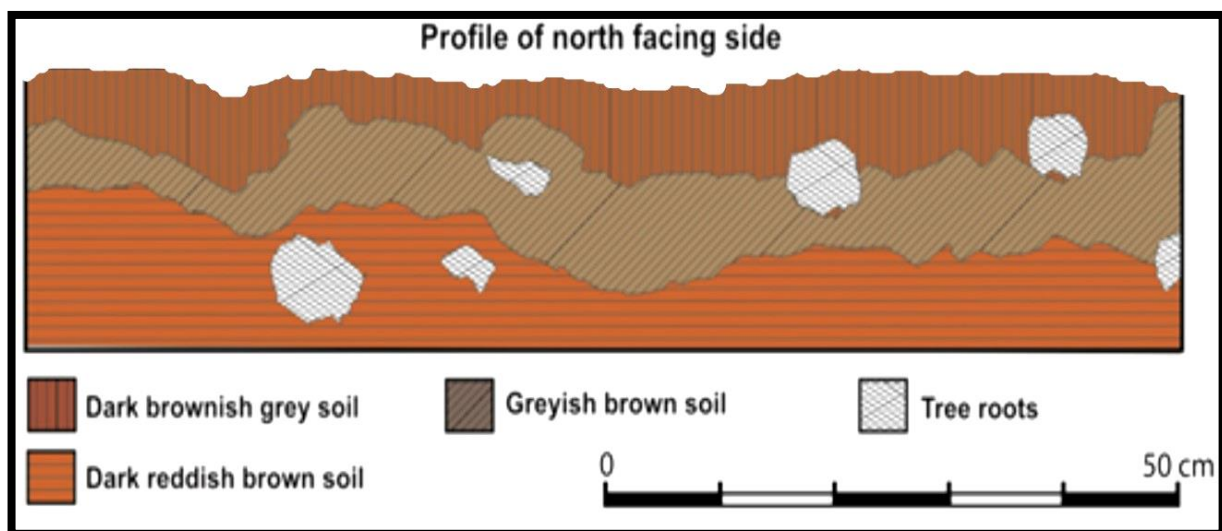


Figure 6.16: Stratigraphic Profile of Nharire Hill Test Pit I

6.6.4 Nharire Hill Test Pit II

Following the realisation that Test Pit I might have been sunk at the periphery of a midden, Test Pit II was opened up about 8 m north-eastwards. This area was slightly elevated and marked by a few potsherds on the surface. The stratigraphy of this Test Pit was as follows:

Level 1 (0-10 cm): Humus layer with loose dark brownish grey loamy soil. Finds included a few faunal remains, *dhaka* fragments, plain, incised and graphite burnished potsherds.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): Compacted dark reddish brown soil. Finds included a few plain potsherds, a glass bead and charcoal sample.

Level 3 (20-30 cm): Compacted reddish brown loam soil, sterile layer.

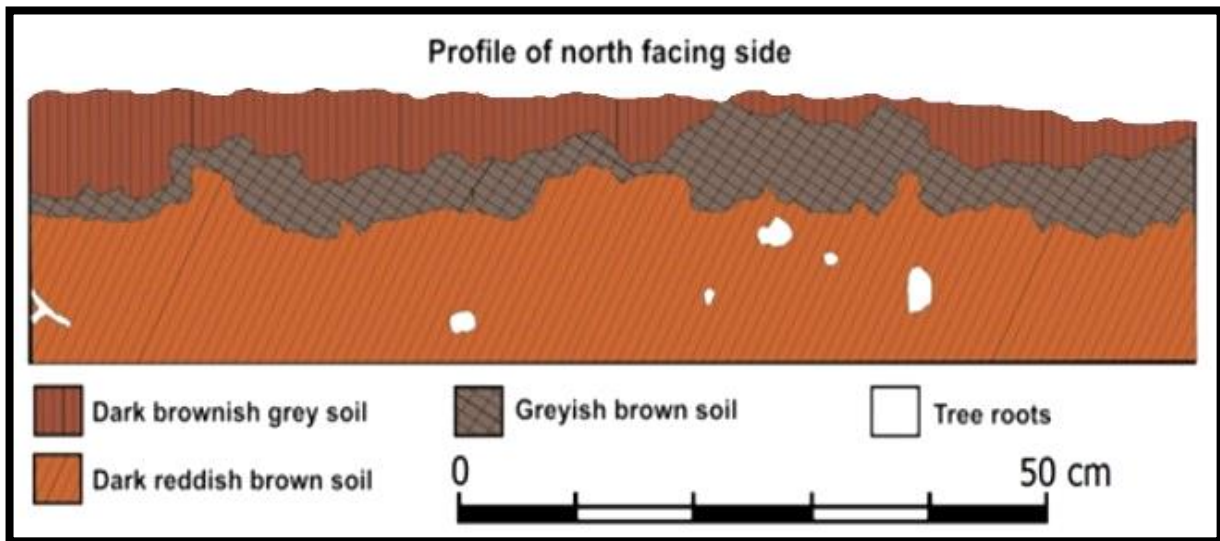


Figure 6.17: Stratigraphic Profile of Nharire Hill Test Pit II

6.7 Naletale: an overview

Excavations at Naletale were very interesting in the sense that while the main settlement stands out as an outstanding example of architectural ingenuity of Khami-phase sites, it yielded very little cultural material. Recent excavations on the main platform therefore confirmed the construction patterns and distribution of cultural material as observed by previous researchers (see MacIver 1906; Summers 1971). Of special interest is the work of Randall-McIver (1906) who dug the main platform, precisely the northern and southern sections of the chief's hut in order to understand how the hut and platforms were constructed. His excavations did not recover any finds in this area, so he turned to the other hut (presumed to belong to a witch-doctor) located a few meters south-west of the central platform. This hut had holes with fragments of charred wood; two holes adjacent to the doorway had fragments of large elephant tusks. Very few finds were recovered from the hut rubble and these included a large iron nail about 30 cm long, three bindings of twisted copper wire, two iron spear-heads, five iron implements, a copper implement, iron band, two *dhaka* pipes of soapstone and four fragments of wheel made pottery (Randall-McIver 1906:54-55). Even though finds were scarce at this site, it is interesting to note that their distribution was rather confined to the upper or last occupation phases. In terms of occupation phases, the three hut floors mark three different occupation periods.

Even the nearby sites of Gomoremhiko and Nharire hill, which indicated prospects of deep cultural horizons on the surface, also yielded very shallow deposits and few cultural finds.

The stratigraphic profiles and finds from Gomoremhiko and Nharire hills all attest to a short settlement phase that probably spills into the recent historical period. Although it was anticipated that sherds of the Leopard's Kopje culture would be found, nothing of that sort was encountered in the research area. Instead, only a few sherds of the Khami ruins were recovered, the rest were poorly fired sherds that probably belong to the very recent past. This assumption is premised on the occurrence of stab and drag motif on a complete pot that was recovered in situ from Gomoremhiko. Generally stab and drag motifs are common on Refuge tradition ceramic wares (Katsamudanga 2007). Nonetheless, the few glass, copper and shell beads as well as iron fragments recovered from the respective excavation units prove that the associated communities participated in both local and external trade networks. Faunal remains, an arrow head, iron bangle as well as numerous upper and lower grinding stones provide direct evidence for craft specialisation, agriculture and an animal economy that is yet to be fully explored in Chapter 7. On the whole, excavations in this area confirmed what had been observed during surveys and noted by previous scholars who excavated the same site.

6.8.1 Zinjanja/Regina (20°08'00.02"S; 29°21'34.98"E)

This site is located within the Fort Rixon area of Matabeleland south, about 35 km south-west of Danamombe and 1315 m above sea level. On the 24th of May 1894, European settlers in the country saw this site for the first time and named it Fort Regina in honour of Queen Victoria's golden Jubilee. Numerous smaller Khami ruins are scattered around it, and these were fully described in Chapter 5. Oral traditions claim that this site was the residence of a former Rozvi spirit medium called Zinjanja. This account should however be treated with suspicion because matters of religion during the Rozvi era of dominance and even after were dealt with at Manyanga, another Khami-phase site situated in the Inyati district of Matabeleland north. Furthermore, cultural material found at the site suggests the site comprised a lot more functions than just religious ones. Other traditions state that Zinjanja was named after an indigenous breed of cattle called Njanja, which was diminutive and resistant to drought (Nyoni 2015 *pers. comm.*). While this view stands because several cattle-like enclosures are found in the area, the archaeological identity of these structures was yet to be fully determined. As the case with Danamombe and Naletale, we may have to contend with the fact that this was just one of the prominent Rozvi settlements. Be that as it may, Zinjanja main site is situated on gentle slopes and unlike Danamombe or Naletale, this main artificial platform does not indicate that a granite boulder was used as foundation. The site

however extends northwards into the nearby mountain for almost a kilometre. The topography and ecology of the area was described in detail in Chapter 2.

Architecturally, the main platform at Zinjanja is semi-oval in shape, constituting limited Q style walling (see Fig. 6.18 below). In fact only a few walls defining the second tier are built in Q style with chevron, separated herringbone, check and cord patterns defining exterior side. The lower walls in the south-east and south-western sections were probably built in Q style but numerous collapses suffered over the years have concealed their real identity. The first two lower platforms are wider at the base, so the platform gradually narrows down towards the top where two or more oval tiers built in R style rise above 6 m. Remnants of two massive *dhaka* hut floors are clearly visible on the extreme upper tier and the north-western end of the second platform. The greater part of the site has peculiar R style retaining walls, which are quite distinct on the eastern, north-eastern and north-western sides. The main entrance faces the north-east and it is adjacent a vandalised small hole with internal Q style blocks. In total these neat holes number up to five but they are scattered on the south-western part of this platform. As the ground slopes down towards the west and north-west, lower retaining walls of the main platform became R style freestanding walls that form an enclosure of some sort. The western end of the main platform is also abutted by a wide low enclosure wall similar to the one at Danamombe, although it is much smaller and inferior in quality. Local potsherds are extremely rare on most platform surfaces; perhaps the only exception to this is the eastern platform forming the second tier.

The immediate north-eastern area of the main platform is characterised by several inferior platforms with PQ and R style walls that accommodated *dhaka* huts as evidenced by numerous *dhaka* fragments and hut floors found therein. Of particular interest is a small platform immediately adjacent the main platform on the north-eastern side with a series of stone cairns overlain by evenly placed granite slabs. This feature probably served as a foundation for a massive granary. A nearby small mound on this platform comprising several pole impressed *dhaka* fragments that probably came from this granary. Two other distinct platforms around the main site are located further south-west and north-west respectively. The one to the south-west is not well defined; only a few *dhaka* lumps, dressed stones and local potsherds are visible on the surface. These surface finds extend for a distance of about 50 m towards the western slopes. The other artificial platform is located between 60 and 70 m north-west of the main platform. This huge circular mound was solely built out of undressed

granite blocks and it rises to a height of over 1.40 m. The function of this structure is not clear because no other cultural material has been found nearby.

Finally a single PQ linear wall defines the north-eastern limits of the site, where it gives way to numerous stone platforms that probably accommodated single huts on its north-western zones. This site was vandalised in 1894 by Dr. H. Sauer, Captain. W. Sampson, B. Bradley and a group of local hired labourers. This followed their discovery of the small holes with neatly coursed granite blocks on the inside. The group's curiosity to find out what lay below the numerous neatly coursed holes distributed at the top of the platform made them vandalise one of the holes. Fortunately when they dug the hole close to the entrance and found nothing beneath it, they ceased their unscientific digs. Several ancient relics are however reported to have been looted from this site by these early treasure hunters. At least we only find solace in the fact that they had the courtesy to record what they looted from the site. The other excavations done at this site were minor, dating to the 1990s when J. Muringaniza sought to investigate the function of a few circular *dhaka* features, located a few meters north-west of the main platform (Nyoni 2015 *pers. comm.*).

6.9 Sampling and excavations

Intensive foot surveys combined with a series of shovel pit testing were first conducted on the main platform in attempts to locate a rich cultural deposit that could be excavated. It turned out that just the first tier on the north-eastern side had a surface scatter of potsherds; the rest of the platforms either had bare hut floor remains or nothing at all. For ease of sampling and recording, a network of 1x1 m² grids was set-up right across the length and breadth of this extreme eastern platform using the N-S cardinal line as baseline. The grid length measured 14 m while the width was 4 m thereby giving a total of 56 squares. The x-axis was labelled from A to D while the y-axis was numbered 1 to 14. Squares B3 and C3 were then purposively chosen to constitute the 1x2 m (Trench I) on the basis of surface potsherd density and distance from platform edges (see Fig. 6.19 below). The areas outside the main platform were also intensively foot surveyed for midden deposits by assessing the density of surface cultural material and shovel pit testing any unusual mounds. Most areas turned out to be barren though a few isolated potsherds could be noticed on the surveyed area.

Immediately adjacent the main platform on the north-eastern side was another low platform with several stone cairns forming a circular structure (possibly the foundation of a granary). The southern edge of this platform was characterized by numerous *dhaka* lumps forming a

small mound. After shovel testing the mound, more lumps were coming out. It was decided to set-up Test Pit I in order to systematically examine this mound and the respective platform. Another small mound was also identified approximately 50 m north of the main platform still within the fenced area. This mound had a few potsherds protruding from the ground hence it was also targeted for excavation (see Fig. 6.18 and Plate 6.19 below). Test Pits II and III were therefore sunk adjacent to each other on this midden in order to fully investigate its internal dynamics.

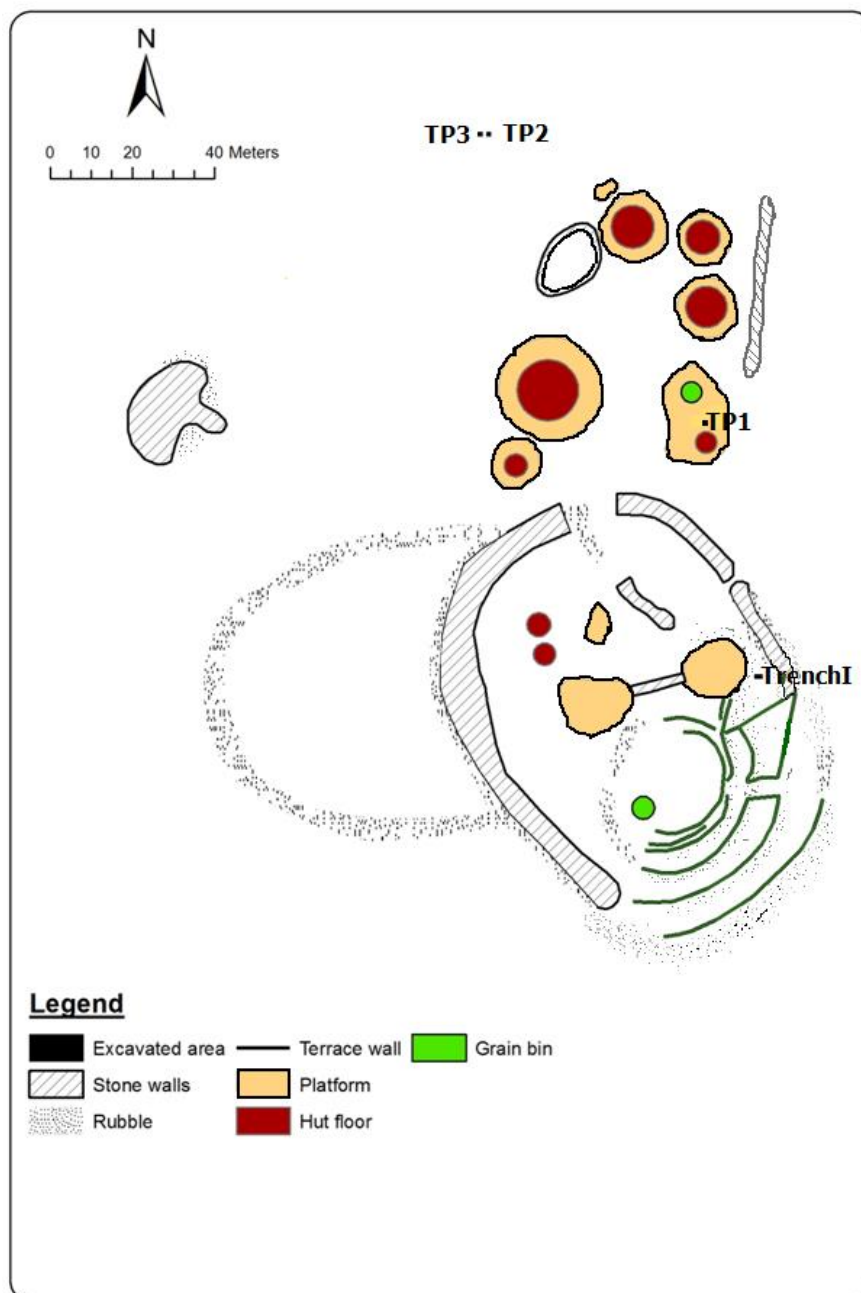


Figure 6.18: Zinjanja site plan showing location of excavation units.

6.9.1 Trench I

This trench was set-up on the main platform gridded area to investigate the historical development of the site through associated cultural material. Although pottery scatter on the surface indicated prospects of a rich deposit, cultural finds were only confined to the humus layer. The stratigraphy was recorded as follows:



Plate 6.19: Trench I on north-eastern side of Zinjanja main platform

Level 1 (0-10 cm): Humus layer defined by dark grey loamy soil. This layer yielded plain and graphite burnished local potsherds.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): Light grey sandy soil with numerous small stones below. No finds included.

Levels 3-12 (20-120 cm): Large and small neatly arranged granite stones mixed with gritty soil. There were no finds in all these levels so it was abandoned at 113 cm before reaching bedrock.

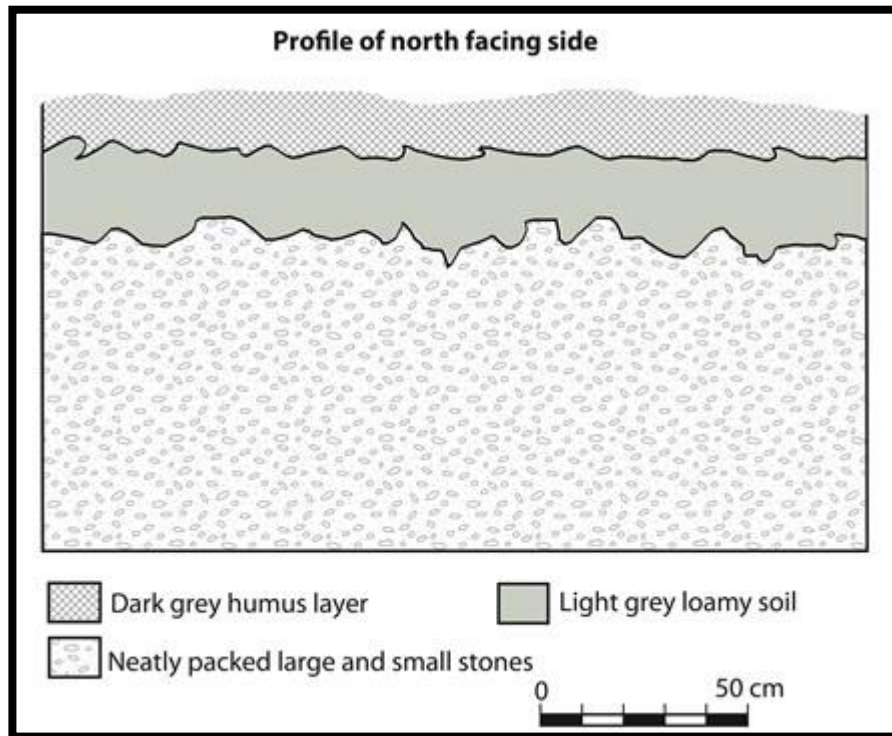


Figure 6.20: Stratigraphic Profile of Zinjanja Trench I

6.9.2 Test Pit I

This was set-up on the north-eastern platform immediately adjacent Zinjanja main complex (refer to Fig. 6.18 above). The objective was to further investigate the small *dhaka* mound and to recover cultural material useful in addressing chronological and cultural questions since Trench I was less productive.

Level 1 (0-10 cm): Dark grey loamy soil mixed with a few stones. Finds include large pole impressed *dhaka* lumps.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): Light grey sandy loam soil mixed with small stones. This layer had a potsherd, charcoal sample at 28 cm and *dhaka* lumps.

Level 3 (30-40 cm): Compact dark brown clayey soil. No cultural finds.

Level 4 (40-50 cm): Compact reddish brown floor with numerous small stones used for ramification purposes. No cultural finds.

Levels 5 (50-60 cm): Light brownish-grey gritty soil with small and large granite blocks. No cultural finds.

Levels 6 (60-70 cm): Light grey compact soil resting on bedrock with no cultural material.

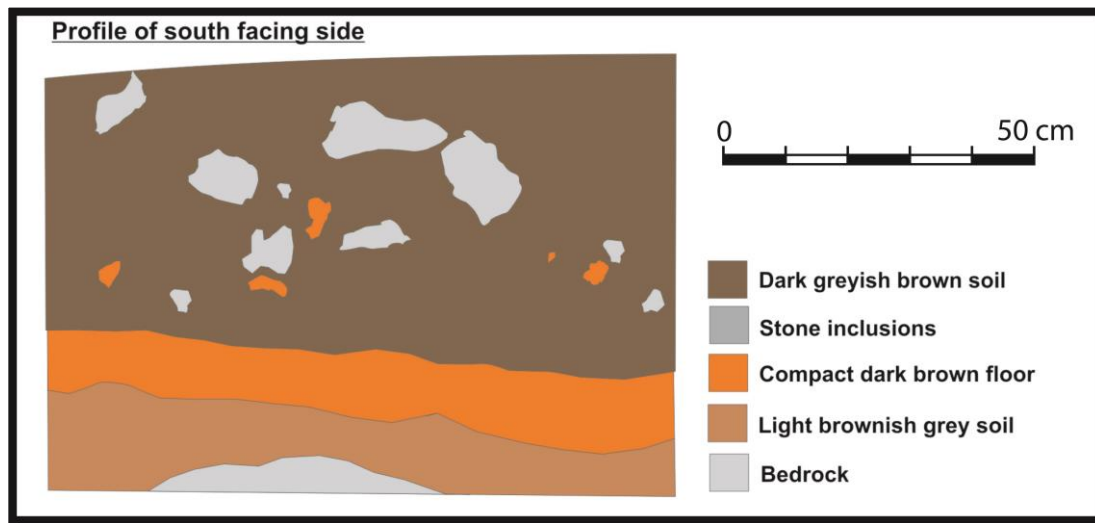


Figure 6.21: Stratigraphic Profile of Zinjanja Test Pit I

6.9.3 Test Pit II

Two more Test Pits III and IV presented below were sunk adjacent to each other on the only midden for the main settlement in order to chronologically assess the full range of human activities at the site. It later turned out that this was the highest point of a wide midden and the most productive area at the site. The stratigraphy and finds are summarised as follows:

Level 1 (0-10 cm): Light grey compacted layer. The only finds were plain local potsherds.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): Light grey compacted soil changing to a dark grey tone. Finds include faunal remains, several undiagnostic potsherds and a charcoal sample.

Level 3 (20-30 cm): Compact dark grey clayey layer. The finds were faunal remains, plain body sherds, glass beads and charcoal.

Level 4 (30-40 cm): Compact dark grey clayey soil deposited on light grey fine textured ash. Finds include faunal remains, plain body sherds and a flake stone tool.

Level 5 (40-50 cm): Light grey fine textured ash. Finds recovered include plain body sherds and faunal remains.

Level 6 (50-60 cm): Fine textured light grey ash resting on grey clayey soil. Finds include faunal remains, plain potsherds and a copper bead?

Level 7 (60-70 cm): Grey compacted soil extending into a sterile layer. Finds include charcoal, graphite burnished potsherds and shell beads.

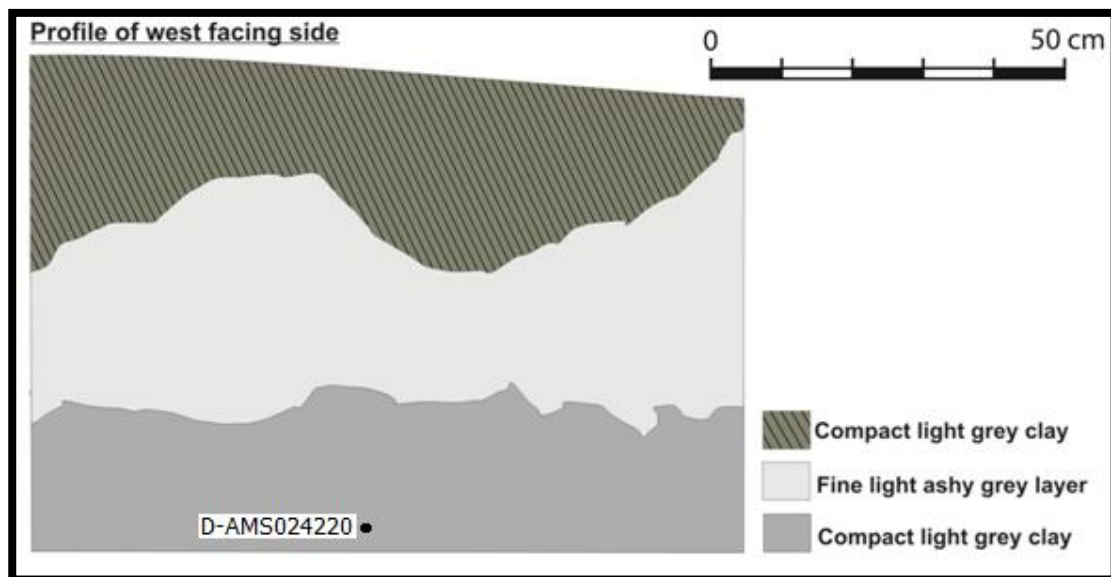


Figure 6.22: Stratigraphic Profile of Zinjanja Test Pit II

6.9.4 Test Pit III

Level 1 (0-10 cm): Light grey compacted layer. Finds include plain potsherds and others with red ochre and graphite slip, faunal remains, charcoal, a folded copper bead and bovid tooth.

Level 2 (10-20 cm): Ashy grey soil deposited on dark grey clayey soil. Finds include a shell bead, charcoal, faunal remains, plain and graphite burnished potsherds.

Level 3 (20-30 cm): Compact dark grey clayey layer. The finds were faunal remains, plain, graphite burnished and polychrome band and panel potsherds, wound copper wire and charcoal samples.

Level 4 (30-40 cm): Compact dark grey clayey soil. Finds include charcoal, faunal remains and polychrome potsherds and plain ones.

Level 5 (40-50 cm): Compact dark grey clayey soil deposited on light grey fine textured ash. Light grey fine textured ash. Finds recovered include plain and polychrome potsherds, shell beads, copper wire and faunal remains.

Level 6 (50-60 cm): Fine textured light grey ash layer. Finds include faunal remains, a shell bead, plain red ochre and graphite burnished potsherds.

Level 7 (60-70 cm): Light grey fine textured ash deposited on a grey compact layer that ultimately becomes sterile. Finds include faunal remains and a few local potsherds.

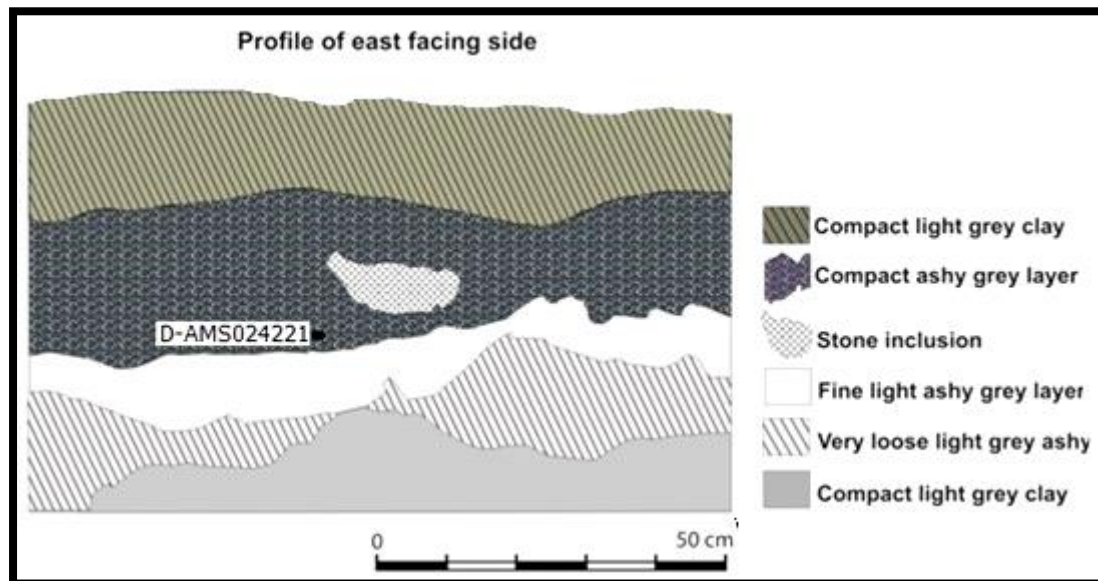


Figure 6.23: Stratigraphic Profile of Zinjanja Test Pit III

6.10 Zinjanja: an overview

The proximity of the site to an ancient gold mine and the numerous dolly holes discovered during surveys had raised hopes that some gold artefacts could be found through excavations. When the site was initially excavated by treasure hunters in 1894, gold beads, gold chain-work and smelted gold, 15 ozs. of alluvial reef-gold weighing from half a quarter to half an ounce each were discovered at the site (see Hall and Neal 1904). Apparently no other gold objects were found during our excavations, perhaps we just missed the right spots or there were no accidental losses to the archaeological record. Nonetheless, the midden excavations at Zinjanja revealed interesting results with potential to shed more light on different aspects of the site's past economic and ideological aspects. The inhabitants of the site were clearly part of the Khami culture as evidenced by the architecture around dwelling-places, polychrome and graphite burnished sherds recovered from the midden stratigraphic layers. Although the material recovered from this site compares very well with what was recovered at Danamombe and Naletale, the quantity of exotic goods and local ornaments was much lower. This evidence implies that Zinjanja was also an important player in both local and international trade networks that inspired the rise of both Danamombe and Naletale capitals. Interestingly most of the precious finds were confined to the upper or last occupation phases suggesting shifts in socio-political and economic realms.

6.11 Chronology and cultural affinities among the research sites

In order to get a comprehensive understanding of each site's development and how the three centres related to each other, radiocarbon samples were carefully collected during the course of excavations. Owing to budgetary constraints, it was not possible to send all the field collected samples for laboratory testing. Hence only ten samples cutting across the three main sites under study were selected and posted to DirectAMS Radiocarbon dating service in the United States of America (USA) for analysis (please refer to Tables 6.1 to 6.4 below for a detailed summary of the respective laboratory results).

Table 6.1: List of samples submitted for radiocarbon dating and results obtained from each sample

Direct AMS code	Submitter ID	Sample type	Fraction of modern		Radiocarbon age	
			pMC	1 σ error	BP	1 σ error
D-AMS024212	DANAMOMBE Sample 1	charcoal	98.96	0.38	84	31
D-AMS024213	DANAMOMBE Sample 2	charcoal	98.66	0.29	108	24
D-AMS024214	DANAMOMBE Sample 3	charcoal	94.68	0.33	439	28
D-AMS024215	DANAMOMBE Sample 4	charcoal	97.72	0.4	185	33
D-AMS024216	DANAMOMBE Sample 5	charcoal	Failed in analysis			
D-AMS024217	NALETALE Sample 1	charcoal	97.67	0.37	189	30
D-AMS024218	NALETALE Sample 2	charcoal	97.90	0.27	170	22
D-AMS024219	NALETALE Sample 3	charcoal	98.13	0.36	152	29
D-AMS024220	ZINJANJA Sample 1	charcoal	98.54	0.36	118	29
D-AMS024221	ZINJANJA Sample 2	charcoal	98.83	0.32	95	26

Results are presented in units of percent modern carbon (pMC) and the uncalibrated radiocarbon age before present (BP). All results have been corrected for isotopic fractionation with an unreported $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ value measured on the prepared carbon by the accelerator. The pMC reported requires no further correction for fractionation.

Table 6.2: A detailed summary of calibrated dates from the three research sites

Dates from Danamombe Trench I, Main Platform and Test Pit II, Midden						
Context/matrix description	Level	BP	2 Sigma Age ranges	Relative error Under Probability	1 Sigma Age ranges	Relative error Under Probability
Trench I Main platform: Burnt ashy layer lying just below the first four hut floors but resting on closely packed granite blocks	5 (40-50 cm)	84	1686-1731	0.269	1696-1725	0.303
		+/-	1808-1927	0.731	1814-1836	0.216
		31			1845-1848	0.024
					1877-1917	0.457

Trench I Main platform: Heavily burnt ashy layer extending from well packed blocks but situated above hut floor 5	11-12	108	1683-1734	0.287	1694-1713	0.181
	(110-120	+/-	1806-1929	0.713	1716-1727	0.105
	cm)	24			1813-1854	0.304
					1857-1863	0.044
					1866-1891	0.236
					1909-1918	0.094
Trench I Main platform: Large packed blocks lying just under hut floor 6 with signs of heavy burning on its floor surface	16 (150-160cm)	439 +/- 28	1420-1486	1.000	1433-1457	1.000
Test Pit II/ Midden 300m away from platform: Fine textured ashy layer	7 (60-70cm)	185	1649-1696	0.222	1665-1682	0.197
		+/-	1725-1814	0.557	1736-1786	0.516
		33	1836-1845	0.011	1792-1805	0.121
		1850-1876	0.030	1935-1950	0.166	
		1917-1950	0.180			
Dates from Naletale Test Pit I, Main Platform						
Test Pit I Naletale Main platform: Compacted gritty reddish brown soil just above hut floor 1	2	152	1667-1708	0.172	1670-1694	0.191
	(10-20	+/-	1718-1783	0.348	1727-1779	0.444
	cm)	29	1796-1827	0.120	1798-1813	0.115
			1831-1887	0.177	1839-1841	0.005
			1911-1950	0.182	1854-1857	0.017
					1862-1866	0.023
				1918-1950	0.205	
Test Pit I Naletale Main platform: Reddish brown layer just below hut floor 1 but extending into packed granite blocks	6-7	170	1664-1694	0.186	1669-1683	0.172
	(50-70cm)	+/-	1727-1813	0.610	1736-1780	0.598
		22	1839-1841	0.001	1798-1805	0.091
			1854-1857	0.003	1934-1945	0.139
			1863-1866	0.002		
			1918-1950	0.197		
Test Pit I Naletale Main platform: Neatly packed stones just below hut floor 3, these blocks were laid	12-13	189	1649-1694	0.234	1664-1681	0.212
	(110-	+/-	1727-1813	0.580	1738-1755	0.172
	130cm)	30	1839-1841	0.001	1762-1787	0.314
			1854-1857	0.002	1791-1803	0.127
			1863-1866	0.002	1937-1950	0.176
			1918-1950	0.181		

on bedrock						
Dates from Zinjanja Test Pit II and Test Pit III Midden area						
Zinjanja	7	118	1680-1739	0.285	1687-1709	0.164
Test Pit II/ Midden	(60-70cm)	+/-	1742-1763	0.042	1717-1730	0.095
200m away from		29	1802-1938	0.672	1809-1828	0.145
Main platform:					1831-1889	0.466
Grey compacted soil					1910-1926	0.130
extending into a sterile layer						
Zinjanja	4	95	1688-1730	0.272	1696-1726	0.312
Test Pit III/ Midden	(30-40cm)	+/-	1809-1926	0.728	1814-1836	0.234
200m away from		26			1844-1851	0.051
Main platform:					1869-1872	0.025
Compact dark grey					1876-1898	0.215
clayey soil					1901-1917	0.163

The results obtained from Danamombe Trench I samples were quite interesting especially considering that the site has always been dated to the 17th century AD. In order to validate an early 15th century AD date for the site, an additional four samples collected during the same fieldwork were submitted to the same lab and the results came out as shown on Tables 6.3 and 6.4 below.

Table 6.3: Additional samples submitted for radiocarbon dating and results obtained from each						
Direct AMS code	Submitter ID	Sample type	Fraction of modern		Radiocarbon age	
			pMC	1 σ error	BP	1 σ error
D-AMS025194	DANAMOMBE Sample 1	charcoal	98.98	0.41	82	33
D-AMS025195	DANAMOMBE Sample 2	charcoal	98.33	0.34	135	28
D-AMS025196	DANAMOMBE Sample 3	charcoal	95.13	0.38	401	32
D-AMS025197	DANAMOMBE Sample 4	charcoal	99.09	0.22	74	18

Table 6.4: A detailed summary of calibrated dates for Danamombe additional samples						
Dates from Danamombe Trench I, Main Platform and Test Pit II, Midden						
Context/matrix description	Level	BP	2 Sigma Age ranges	Relative error Under Probability	1 Sigma Age ranges	Relative error Under Probability
Trench I Main platform:	40-50	82	1685-1732	0.270	1696-1725	0.297
Burnt ashy layer lying just below the first four hut floors but	(4-5 cm)	+/-	1808-1928	0.730	1814-1836	0.212
		33			1845-1850	0.039
					1877-1917	0.452

resting on closely packed granite blocks						
Trench I Main platform: Heavily burnt ashy layer extending from well packed blocks but situated above hut floor 5	11-12 (110-120 cm)	135 +/- 28	1673-1778 1799-1892	0.424 0.418	1681-1699 1721-1739 1744-1763 1802-1818 1833-1879 1915-1938	0.141 0.131 0.107 0.116 0.335 0.171
Trench I Main platform: Large packed blocks lying just under hut floor 6 with signs of heavy burning on its floor surface	16 (150-160cm)	401 +/- 32	1435-1522 1573-1628	0.785 0.215	1443-1493 1602-1613	0.872 0.128
Trench I Main platform: artificial platform of large and small packed blocks mixed with loose gritty soil	21 (200-210cm)	74 +/- 18	1696-1726 1813-1838 1842-1853 1868-1918	0.237 0.168 0.027 0.568	1707-1719 1820-1821 1825-1832 1884-1913	0.194 0.010 0.102 0.694

References for calibration datasets:

Reimer PJ, Bard E, Bayliss A, Beck JW, Blackwell PG, Bronk Ramsey C, Buck CE, Cheng H, Edwards RL, Friedrich M, Grootes PM, Guilderson TP, Haflidason H, Hajdas I, Hatté C, Heaton TJ, Hogg AG, Hughen KA, Kaiser KF, Kromer B, Manning SW, Niu M, Reimer RW, Richards DA, Scott EM, Southon JR, Turney CSM, van der Plicht J.
IntCal13 and MARINE13 radiocarbon age calibration curves 0-50000 years cal BP Radiocarbon 55(4). DOI: 10.2458/azu_js_rc.55.16947

Comments:

* This standard deviation (error) includes a lab error multiplier.

** 1 sigma = square root of (sample std. dev.^2 + curve std. dev.^2)

** 2 sigma = 2 x square root of (sample std. dev.^2 + curve std. dev.^2)

where ^2 = quantity squared.

[] = calibrated range impinges on end of calibration data set

0* represents a "negative" age BP

1955* or 1960* denote influence of nuclear testing C-14

NOTE: Cal ages and ranges are rounded to the nearest year which may be too precise in many instances. Users are advised to round results to the nearest 10 yr for samples with standard deviation in the radiocarbon age greater than 50 yr.

The dates acquired from Danamombe Trench I (level 16) suggest that by AD 1420 or AD 1435 this site was already under occupation especially considering the levels from which these samples were collected. At least now we know that by AD 1420, Danamombe was

already flourishing under Torwa dynasties and it continued to exist even after AD 1836. These dates clearly corroborate historical sources stating that between AD 1683 and AD 1696, the Changamire Rozvi had usurped power from Torwa dynasties in the south-west (see Beach 1980; Mudenge 1988; Pikirayi 2001). Interestingly, some of the dates in Trench I (Levels 11-12) coincide with a context of heavy burning, which could be the remnants of brief conflict associated with Rozvi political take-over of the site as recorded in documentary sources (see Beach 1980, 1994a, 1995). Evidence of burning at dry stonewalled monuments has previously been interpreted in terms of natural veld fires and rain making rituals but in this particular context, Torwa/Rozvi political conflict is prioritised (see Caton-Thompson 1931; Huffman 2009). The other younger date of AD 1696-1726 shown in Table 6.2 from Danamombe Trench I (level 21), may be disregarded because it probably collapsed from somewhere above during the course of excavation. This view is supported by the fact that this particular sample was found within a stone rubble matrix and its date tallies with samples from levels 5 and 7 above. The dates collected from a nearby midden Danamombe Test Pit II also strongly correspond with those acquired from the main platform giving a range between AD 1649 and AD 1845. Since this midden was about 300 m north of the main platform, there is a possibility that it marks a later expansion of the Danamombe community in that direction.

In view of these dates, we can now confidently say that Danamombe developed from the first half of the 15th century right-up to the 1830s and even beyond. Whether it was under Khami control or independent, it remains to be ascertained, but we can no longer propagate the view that this site was built during the late 17th century. The dates also inform us that the Rozvi arrived at the site long after its establishment possibly by the Torwa. As such everything that dates from AD 1683 onwards was clearly part of the Rozvi phase. Although Naletale was much younger than Danamombe, it is quite clear that this site was contemporaneous with the latter. Charcoal samples collected from bedrock right-up to the last occupation phase show that Naletale was built around AD 1649 and continued to exist into the 20th century. However, several sources mention that most Khami-phase sites under Rozvi governance were occupied until that state system eventually collapsed around the 1830s (see Beach 1980; Burrett 1998; Pikirayi 2001; van Waarden 1998, 2012). Hence these dates entail that the Torwa dynasty was in charge of the initial construction phase but shortly after, the Rozvi took-over this site. It is also important to note that the three radiocarbon dates collected from Naletale prove that the site was constructed over a very short period of time. This view is further supported by intact hut floors, sparse cultural finds both on the surface and

stratigraphic contexts and elaborate dry stonewall decorations. On the whole, it is clear that radiocarbon dates, material culture, oral and documentary sources all corroborate each other in as far as the site of Naletale is concerned.

Finally dates acquired from the site of Zinjanja indicate that this settlement was established between AD 1680 and AD 1926. Since this date was collected from the lowest level of a midden it could be much younger than the main platform. This assumption is premised on reports of a much earlier date in the range of AD 1649 to AD 1673, which was acquired from a structural hardwood post at Zinjanja main platform (see van Waarden 2012: 100). Earlier on van Waarden (2012:105) had postulated that this site was probably older than Danamombe; clearly this view is not supported by recent data from the site. Considering these recent radiocarbon dates, we can now boldly say that Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja generally co-existed, although the latter two sites were a bit younger. Intensive surveys conducted around Zinjanja also indicated that there was very little material culture build-up around the site. This observation somehow tallies with radiocarbon dates, which suggest that Zinjanja was relatively recently built. Therefore Zinjanja was initially constructed under the Torwa but shortly after this development, the Rozvi arrived from north-eastern Zimbabwe to take-over. Since the Rozvi usurped power from the Torwa between AD 1683 and AD 1696, one may as well speculate that the greater part of this site was constructed under Rozvi influence.

6.12 Conclusions

There is no doubt that Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja were contemporaneous sites. While this view has always been shared by many scholars, no one ever suspected that Danamombe would date as early as the 15th century just like Khami. This on its own raises eyebrows regarding the predominance of Khami in this broad south-western region. Considering the amount of walling around Danamombe and the huge quantities of both local and imported finds so far recovered around the site, one can as well argue that this was a competitor to Khami. Of course, this view demands a lot more radiocarbon samples from the site of Danamombe that chronologically overlap with the site of Khami to be archaeologically verified. Contrary to popular opinion, Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja possess pure Khami-phase cultural attributes; their stratigraphic profiles neither indicated a Leopard's Kopje nor a Great Zimbabwe cultural component. In addition, the Torwa/Rozvi dichotomy, which has always been a subject of speculation, has also been partly addressed by

radiocarbon dates. The next chapter therefore comparatively analyses material culture retrieved from all the three sites in order to make inferences on possible Rozvi symbols and to establish other factors that led to the evolution of cultural complexity in this broad region.

Chapter Seven

Material Culture Analysis

“The context in which an object appears invariably helps define its meaning.” (Caple 2006:9).

7.1 Introduction

Given that two different ruling dynasties, namely the Torwa and Rozvi are said to have ruled from the same settlements at separate historical times as outlined in previous chapters, it was crucial to establish whether material culture excavated from Danamombe, Zinjanja and Naletale had also undergone significant stylistic changes. This chapter therefore comparatively explores material culture retrieved from the above listed sites in order to account for their origins in relation to Torwa and Rozvi dynastic histories. Since material culture variation is a product of numerous environmental, technological and socio-economic processes that took place through space and time, any notable stylistic similarities or differences were given careful contextual analyses and interpretation. In particular, it was crucial to establish whether there were notable material culture changes attributable to historical claims of a political shift from Torwa to Rozvi. Furthermore, material culture analysis was inspired by the need to establish those specific attributes that were imbued with meaning as Rozvi identity symbols. The chapter also examines the general organization and distribution of craft production before interrogating the associated animal economy in order to account for complexity development in south-western Zimbabwe. In this regard, different categories of material culture that were excavated from the sites of Danamombe, Zinjanja and Naletale are systematically classified and comparatively analyzed in attempts to address the above cited objectives.

7.2 Ceramic analysis and results

Potters operating at particular times and places are always constrained by value-sanctioned systems that regulate their manipulation of universal ceramic features into consistent design combinations (Gifford 1960; Gosselain 2000; Huffman 2007; Plog 1983). As such, recurring combinations of basic level features in ceramics form a single style in space that is easily recognised by outsiders as a signifier of group identity. Consequently, ceramic styles are not necessarily random or subject to the personal taste of potters but rather, they are largely conditioned by laws/structures operating in a particular community at a given time. In this

respect, ceramic stylistic patterns are widely perceived as markers of large scale identities, which may also be actively manipulated to symbolically communicate situational identities like ethnicity (Huffman 2007:108). Though the link between ceramic style and ethnicity is complex, the fact that style is widely created and learned through close social networks and verbal communication makes ethnicity a critical component that should never be ruled out when interpreting stylistic variation (Gosselain 2000; Huffman 1978, 2007; Plog 1983). Henceforth, ceramic evidence and stone structures were used to trace the origins and development of Khami-phase sites through tracing changes in style. Furthermore ceramic stylistic similarities and differences in space and time were examined in relation to Torwa and Rozvi historical narratives.

Huffman (2007) systematically demonstrated that ceramic stylistic types are positively defined by examining the combination of vessel profile, design layout and motif categories under the Multi-Dimensional System (MDS). This classification scheme was further tested and confirmed as valid against ethnographic samples from the Tonga, Korekore, Ndau, Pedi and Venda (Huffman 2007). Thus in order to establish the ceramic stylistic types from the three assemblages, a data capture sheet designed to examine combinations of vessel profile, decoration technique, decoration placement and decoration motif was used. Owing to the very fragmentary nature of the retrieved assemblages, it was sometimes difficult to establish design layout, so vessel profile and motif combinations were prioritized in defining pottery typologies. The analyses also targeted other stylistic variables like lip form, fabric and exterior colour because at times ethnic signatures are embedded therein, hence both decorated and undecorated sherds were considered in the overall analyses.

Although the total ceramic sample was relatively small, there were strong similarities noted between the assemblages of the three sites in terms of vessel shape. The assemblages from Danamombe, Zinjanja and Naletale cluster sites comprised of three vessel forms namely; **Form A** shouldered pots with vertical/convex necks, **Form A** (1) globular constricted pots with in-sloping, concave necks, **Form B** constricted neckless spherical pots with simple rims, **Form B** (1) constricted spherical pots with rolled rims, **Form C** constricted bowls with squared or rounded lips and **Form C** (1) hemispherical or open bowls (see Figure 7.1 below). Vessel **Forms A** and **A** (1) correspond with **Form A** (Robinson 1959), **Form I** (Hughes 1997), **Category E** (Machiridza 2012), while **Forms B** and **B** (1) tally with **Forms B** and **C** (Robinson 1959), **Form III** (Hughes 1997) and **Category E** (Machiridza 2012). In order to fully describe and compare the ceramic typologies at the three research sites (see Figures 7.2-

7.4 below), diagnostic sherds were further classified according to combinations of vessel form, decoration motif and surface treatment. After adopting such a classification system, the following ceramic types and sub-types were recognised:

- Class 1: Shouldered pots with vertical/convex necks; plain
- Class 1b: Variant with red ochre/graphite slip inside rim or entire external surface, and complex motif on the shoulder
- Class 2: Spherical constricted pot with in-sloping, concave necks and out-turned rims; plain
- Class 2a: Variant with graphite burnishing on external surface and/or complex motifs on upper shoulder
- Class 3: Constricted spherical pots with no necks and simple rims; plain
- Class 3a: Variant with graphite/red ochre inside rim, entire body or complex motifs on upper body
- Class 4: Constricted spherical pots with rolled rims; plain
- Class 4a: Variant with band of graphite inside rim, entire external surface and/or complex motifs on upper shoulder
- Class 5: Constricted bowls with squared/rounded lips plain
- Class 5a: Variant with red ochre/graphite slip inside rim/entire external surface
- Class 6: Hemispherical/open bowls plain
- Class 6a: Variant with red ochre/graphite inside rim/entire external surface

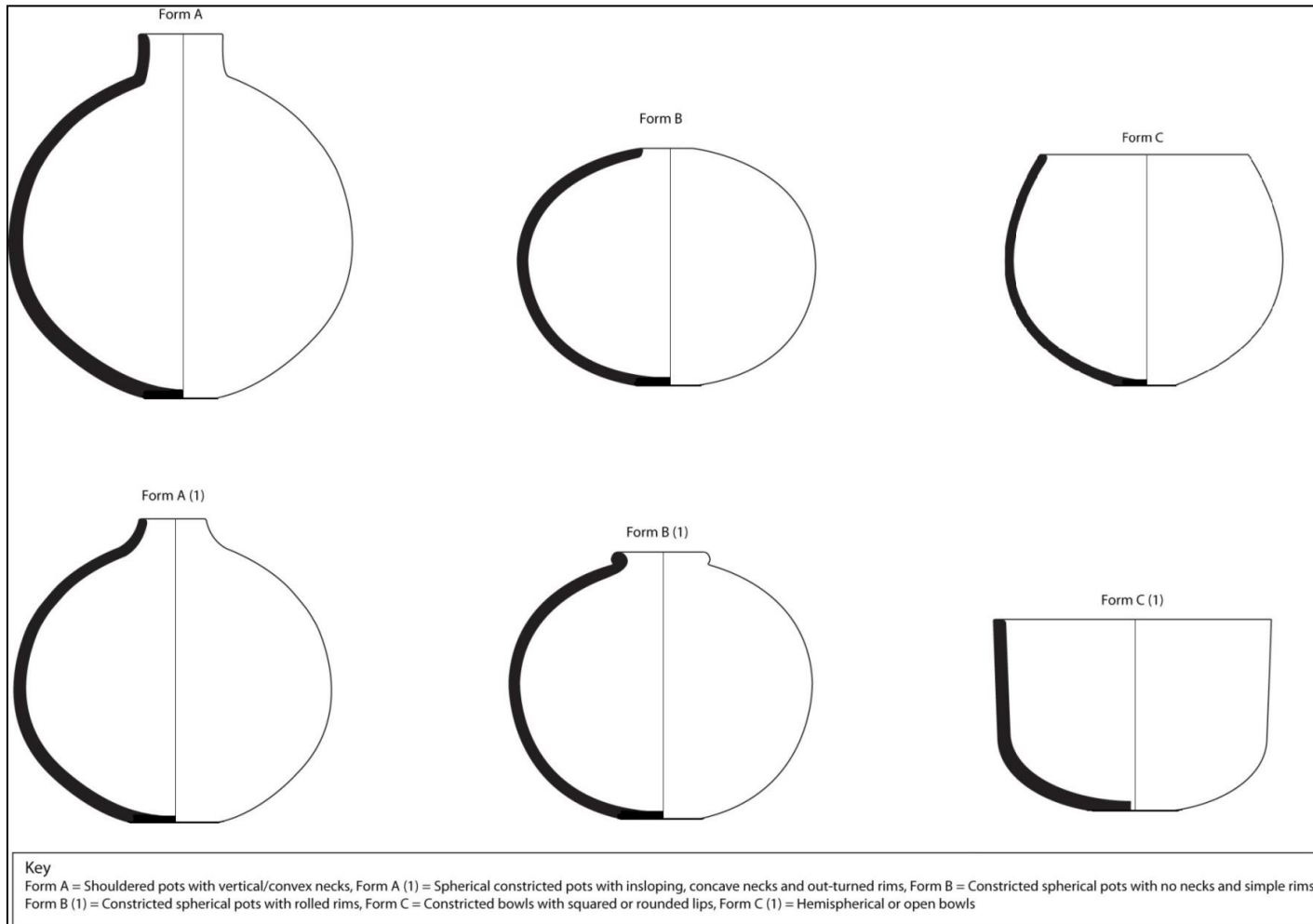


Figure 7.1: Pottery typology for Danamombe, Zinjanja and Naletale cluster sites

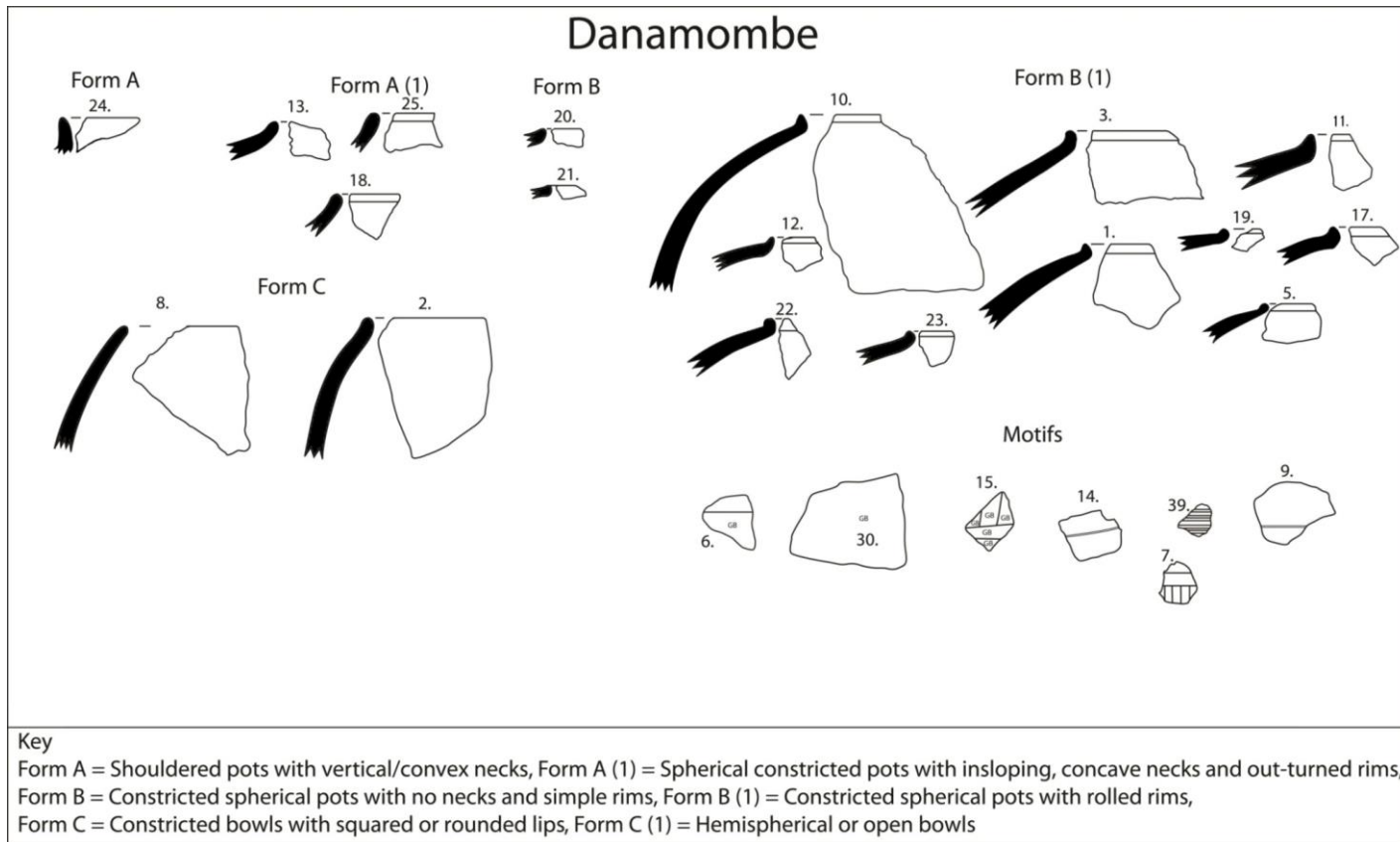


Figure 7.2: Vessel shapes and motifs from Danamombe

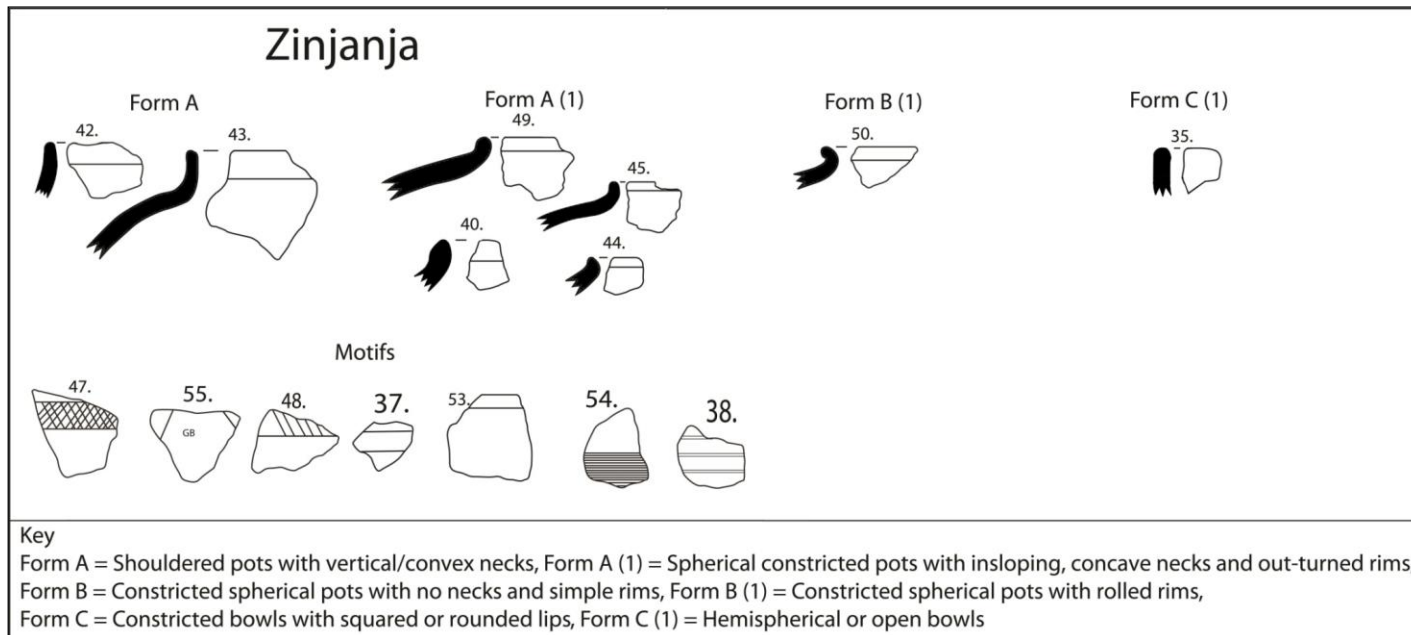


Figure 7.3: Vessel shape profiles and motifs from Zinjanja

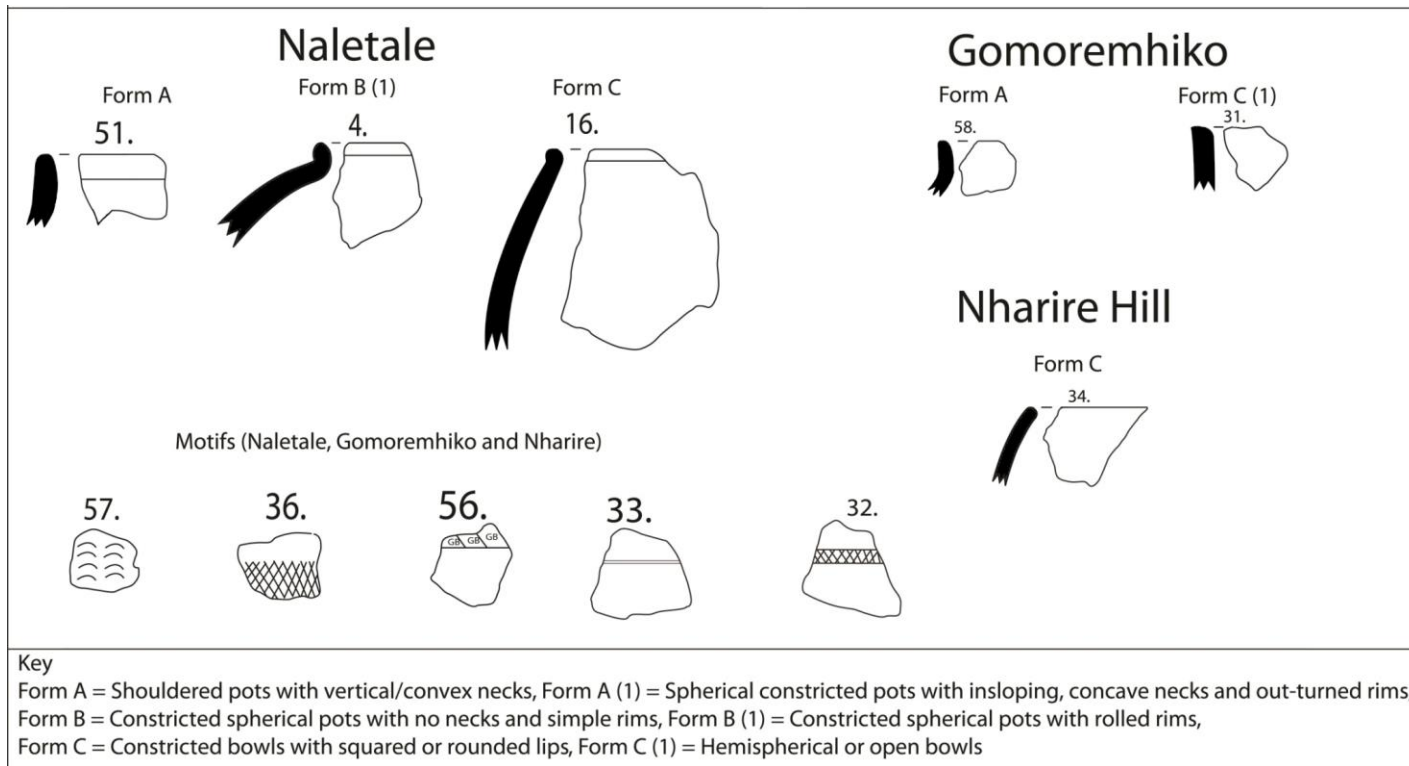


Figure 7.4: Vessel shape profiles and motifs from Naletale cluster sites

A comparative analysis of the assemblages (see Table 7.1 below) shows a total of 120 vessels were analysed with the bulk of them coming from Danamombe, which recorded 55.2%, followed by Zinjanja with 31.1%, while Naletale cluster sites just had 11.4%. The most common vessel forms were globular constricted pots with rolled rims belonging to classes 4 and 4a. Again Danamombe had the highest frequency of 21.7% for both class 4 types, Zinjanja followed with only 5.8% and 4.2% of class 4 while Naletale cluster sites just had a meagre 1.2% of class 4a. Class 2 type comprising of plain spherical constricted pots with in-sloping rims was the second most common ware constituting 15% of the entire assemblage; however this ware was slightly higher in frequency at Zinjanja recording 9.2% higher than Danamombe with only 4.2%. Plain constricted bowls with squared/rounded lips of class 5 comprised just 12% of the entire assemblage and most of these came from Zinjanja with 5.8%, leaving Danamombe and Naletale cluster sites to share the remaining 3.7%. The rest of the classes are not worthy much comment because they had very low frequencies at all the three sites. Tables 7.2-7.7 present the detailed distribution of all the ceramic classes according to each site, excavation unit and stratigraphic context.

Table 7.1: Summary of ceramic class distribution from the three research sites													
Site Name	C1	C1a	C2	C2a	C3	C3a	C4	C4a	C5	C5a	C6	C6a	Total
Danamombe			5	2		1	26	26	3	3			66
% Freq.			4.2	1.2		0.8	21.7	21.7	2.5	2.5			55.2
Zinjanja	3	1	11	2			7	5	7	1	1		38
% Freq.	2.5	0.8	9.2	1.2			5.8	4.2	5.8	0.8	0.8		31.1
Na/Cl. Sites		2	2		1			2	2	3	3	1	16
% Freq.		1.2	1.2		0.8			1.2	1.2	2.5	2.5	0.8	11.4
Total	3	3	18	4	1	1	33	33	12	7	4	1	120
% Freq.	2.5	2.5	15	3.3	0.8	0.8	27.5	27.5	10	5.8	3.3	0.8	100
Key:	C=				Class								
	Freq.=				Frequency								
	Na/Cl. Sites=				Naletale cluster sites (Naletale, Gomoremhiko & Nharire)								

Table 7.2: Ceramic classes from Danamombe Main Platform Trench I

Cont.	C1	C1a	C2	C2a	C3	C3a	C4	C4a	C5	C5a	C6	C6a	Total
Lv. 1							2						2
Lv. 2													
Lv. 3													
Lv. 4									1				1
Lv. 5													
Lv. 6													
Lv. 7							1	4					5
Lv. 8													
Lv. 9													
Lv. 10													
Lv. 11													
Lv.12									1	1			2
Lv.13								1	1				2
Lv.14													
Lv.15													
Lv.16													
Lv.17													
Lv.18													
Lv.19													
Lv.20													
Lv.21							1						1
Total							4	5	3	1			13

Key: C = Class Cont.= Context Lv.= Level

Table 7.3: Ceramic classes from Danamombe Test Pit 1

Cont.	C1	C1a	C2	C2a	C3	C3a	C4	C4a	C5	C5a	C6	C6a	Total
Lv. 1													
Lv. 2							1						1
Lv. 3								1					1
Lv. 4							2	1		1			4
Lv. 5								1					1
Lv. 6													
Lv. 7							1	4					5
Total							4	7		1			12

Key: C = Class Cont.= Context Lv.= Level

Table 7.4: Ceramic classes from Danamombe Test Pit 2

Cont.	C1	C1a	C2	C2a	C3	C3a	C4	C4a	C5	C5a	C6	C6a	Total
Lv. 1								4					4
Lv. 2			1				2	1					4
Lv. 3				1			2			1			4
Lv. 4							1	6	6				13
Lv. 5							2	1					3
Lv. 6							1	1					2
Lv. 7			1				3						4
Lv. 8			1				1						2
Lv. 9			2					1					3
Lv. 10				1			1						2
Lv. 11													
Total			5	2		1	18	14		1			41

Key: C = Class Cont.= Context Lv.= Level

Table 7.5: Ceramic classes from Zinjanja Test Pit 2

Cont.	C1	C1a	C2	C2a	C3	C3a	C4	C4a	C5	C5a	C6	C6a	Total
Lv. 1													
Lv. 2			2										2
Lv. 3				2			1	1					4
Lv. 4			1					1	1				3
Lv. 5													
Lv. 6			1				1						2
Lv. 7													
Total			4	2			2	2	1				11
Key: C = Class Cont.= Context Lv.= Level													

Table 7.6: Ceramic classes from Zinjanja Test Pit 3

Cont.	C1	C1a	C2	C2a	C3	C3a	C4	C4a	C5	C5a	C6	C6a	Total
Lv. 1									1				1
Lv. 2											1		1
Lv. 3	2		5				3						10
Lv. 4									3				3
Lv. 5		1	2				1	3					7
Lv. 6	1						1		2	1			5
Lv. 7													0
Total	3	1	7				5	3	6	1	1		27
Key: C = Class Cont.= Context Lv.= Level													

Table 7.7: Naletale cluster sites ceramic class distribution

Naletale TP 1													
Cont.	C1	C1a	C2	C2a	C3	C3a	C4	C4a	C5	C5a	C6	C6a	Total
Surf.		1	1		1			1	1	1			6
Lv.1													
Lv.2													
Lv.3													
Lv.4													
Lv.5													
Lv.6													
Gomoremhiko Trench 1													
Lv. 1			1								1		2
Lv. 2											2		2
Gomoremhiko TP 1													
Lv. 1									1				1
Lv.2													
Lv. 3			1										1
Nharire Test Pit 2													
Lv.1								1		2		1	4
Lv.2													0
Gtotal		2	2		1			2	2	3	3	1	16
Key: C = Class Cont.= Context Lv.= Level													

A comparative analysis of the whole assemblage also indicates that of the 181 analysed lipforms, 38.7% were externally thickened and they were the most dominant. Again most of the lipforms were rounded constituting 32.6% while tapered ones had a frequency of 25.4%. At all the three sites, squared lipforms were quite rare as these constitute a meagre 3.3%. Table 7.8, below shows the statistical distribution of lipforms at the three research sites.

Table 7.8 Summary of lipforms from Danamombe, Zinjanja and Naletale Cluster Sites						
Site Name	Ro.	Ta.	Sq.	Ex. Th.	Total	
Danamombe	27	32	0	52	111	
%Freq.	24.32%	28.83%		46.85%	100%	
Zinjanja	23	10	3	15	51	
%Freq.	45.10%	19.61%	5.88%	29.41%	100%	
Naletale	5	1	0	2	8	
Gomoremhiko	1	2	2		5	
Nharire Hill	3	1	1	1	6	
Total	9	4	3	3	19	
%Freq.	47.37%	21.05%	15.79%	15.79%	100%	
Ro.= Rounded Ta.= Tapered Sq.= Squared Ex. Th.= Externally thickened						

A greater part of the ceramic assemblage was essentially plain in terms of surface finish; most pots were simply polished, some were graphite burnished and only a few were painted with red ochre. Table 7.9 summarises the vessel exterior colours at each site. The whole assemblage of 1, 562 fragments of both diagnostic and undiagnostic sherds had the following frequencies, 62% greyish-brown, 10.5% grey, 10.4% reddish-brown and black 6.7% while 10.4% were tainted with soot. Textured designs combining incisions, engravings, punctuates, the use of graphite and red ochre were also recorded but these were very few (see Fig. 7.5 and Tables 7.10-7.12). At Danamombe, 49.4% of the pots were simply burnished or polished, while 43.1% had graphite and 5.8% had red ochre burnishing. Only 1.7% of the analysed fragments had engravings and polychrome designs. The same design trend held true for Zinjanja where 60% were simply burnished, 32.8% were graphite burnished and 3.8% had red ochre slip. Applied designs at Zinjanja constitute a mere 2.3% of the entire assemblage. At Naletale cluster sites a greater part of the assemblage was simply graphite burnished with 42.9%, incised designs constituted 23.8% while punctuates comprised 14.3% of that particular assemblage.

Table 7.9 Summary of vessel exterior colour from Khami and Danamombe						
Site Name	Black	Grey	G. Brown	R. Brown	Soot	Total
Danamombe	69	14	42	18	45	188
% Freq.	36.70%	7.45%	22.34%	9.57%	23.94%	100%
Zinjanja	88	87	808	143	118	1,244
% Freq.	7.07%	7%	64.95%	11.50%	9.49%	100%
Naletale	3	0	3	0	0	6
Gomoremhiko	0	0	76	1	0	77
Nharire Hill	4	4	39	0	0	47
Grant Total	7	4	118	1	0	130
% Freq.	5.38%	3.08%	90.77%	0.77%		100%
Key:						
G. Brown= Greyish brown R. Brown= Reddish brown						



Figure 7.5: Decoration motifs for Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja

Table 7.10 Summary of decoration technique and technique combination: Danamombe										
D.Tech.	Inc.	Pun.	B/Po.	Gb.	Pai.	C/st.	Engr.	App.	Total	Freq.
Inc.										
Pun.										
B/Po.			88						88	49.44%
Gb.				74	2				76	43.68%
Pai.					7				7	4.02%
C/St										
Engr.				1	1		1		3	1.72%
App.										
Total			88	75	10		1		174	100%
Freq.			49.44%	43.10%	5.75%		1.72%		100%	
key:										
D.Tech.= Decoration technique Inc.= Incision Pun.= Punctates B/Po.= Burnished polished										
Gb.= Graphite burnished Pai.= Red ochre paint C/st.= Comb-stamped Engr.= Engraved										
App.= Complex designs including several technique combinations										

Table 7.11 Summary of decoration technique and technique combination: Zinjanja

D.Tech.	Inc.	Pun.	B/Po.	Gb.	Pai.	C/st.	Engr.	App.	Total	Freq.
Inc.	2								2	0.43%
Pun.										
B/Po.			282						282	60.13%
Gb.				154					154	32.80%
Pai.					18				18	3.84%
C/St										
Engr.							2	6	8	1.70%
App.								5	5	1.07%
Total	2		282	154	18		2	11	469	100%
Freq.	0.43%		60.13%	32.80%	3.84%		0.43%	2.35%	100%	
key:										
D.Tech.= Decoration technique Inc.= Incision Pun.= Punctates B/Po.= Burnished polished										
Gb.= Graphite burnished Pai.= Red ochre paint C/st.= Comb-stamped Engr.= Engraved										
App.= Complex designs including several technique combinations										

Table 7.12 Decoration technique and technique combination: Naletale cluster sites

D.Tech.	Inc.	Pun.	B/Po.	Gb.	Pai.	C/st.	Engr.	App.	Total	Freq.
Inc.	5								5	23.81%
Pun.		3							3	14.29%
B/Po.			1						1	4.46%
Gb.				9					9	42.86%
Pai.					1				1	4.46%
C/St										
Engr.							1	1	2	9.52%
App.										
Total	5	3	1	9	1		1	1	21	100%
Freq.	23.81%	14.29%	4.46%	42.86%	4.46%		4.46%	4.46%	100%	
key:										
D.Tech.= Decoration technique Inc.= Incision Pun.= Punctates B/Po.= Burnished polished										
Gb.= Graphite burnished Pai.= Red ochre paint C/st.= Comb-stamped Engr.= Engraved										
App.= Complex designs including several technique combinations										

On the whole it appears only two vessel types belonging to classes 2, 2a, 4 and 4a were predominant at all the sites, of which a majority of them were simply plain and polished. These were followed by graphite burnished ones and the least had textured designs in polychrome colours. The stratigraphic distribution of these wares does not show any major changes attributable to the Torwa/Rozvi political shift. This ceramic stylistic continuity does not suggest that there was any external group inversion at any point in time, rather the prevalence of graphite burnishing as a decoration technique should be understood as signifying cultural continuity of the Zimbabwe Culture. The highly standardised vessel forms

clearly indicate that there were local potters who manufactured both utilitarian and a few lavishly decorated pots for elite display of wealth and power. The next section comparatively examines beads that were recovered from the three sites.

7.3 Bead analysis and results

Beads have always been an integral part of African societies with uses ranging from ornamentation of people and objects, serving as forms of currency and more interestingly mediating socio-political relations. Their ubiquitous occurrence in the archaeological record has attracted a lot of scholarly attention, prompting archaeologists to study their original source areas, regional chronological sequences; implications on trade networks and technology as well as reconstructing their numerous symbolic meanings (see Bisson 1975, 1997; Bvocho 2005; Davison 1972; Hebert 1984; Kinahan 2000; Machiridza 2012; Tapela 1995; Thondhlana 2005; Robertshaw *et al.* 2010; Wood 2005, 2012). In this study, glass, shell, copper and bronze beads were recovered and analysed in order to address questions relating to chronology, trade and their manipulation by Rozvi ethnic agents. Owing to the diversity of research interests on beads and material used in their manufacture such as glass, shell, ivory, bone, clay, gold, brass, bronze, iron, copper and plant seeds, variable classification systems have been built up by researchers over the years in attempts to typologically describe them. Descriptions of beads by Kinahan (2000), Wood (2005, 2011), Tapela (1995), and Tondhlana (2005) therefore formed the basis for an analytical scheme used in this study.

7.3.1 Glass beads

Material of manufacture like glass, shell and metal was used as the primary means to separate bead varieties into distinct classes. Subsequent analysis was then done using standard procedure for each particular material of beads following guidelines defined by Kinahan (2000) and Wood (2005, 2011). Glass beads were analysed because they varied through time in colour, size, shape and end treatment. Owing to the limited number of glass beads recovered, totalling twenty two in all from the three sites; it was difficult to draw meaningful conclusions on the basis of the recovered samples alone. The low bead count was due to the scale of excavations, which mainly took the form of test pits mainly situated on elite occupational zones with sealed contexts. Naturally, these deposits cannot be expected to yield large quantities of glass beads like middens. Furthermore, most of the sites chosen for study generally had shallow cultural deposits owing to their late cultural development. Hence a

bead master sequence built for southern Africa by Robertshaw *et al.* (2010) and Wood (2005, 2011) premised on radio-carbon dates and bead attributes like shape, size, diaphaneity and colour was used as a comparative guide. This bead master sequence is therefore briefly outlined below for purposes of this study:

- a) Zhizo series (8th to mid-10th century): dominated by transparent to translucent chopped drawn tubes made from plant-ash glass. Diameter ranges from (2.3-7mm) and length from (0.7-25mm). Blue is the most frequent colour followed by yellow and then blue-green, while green is rare. Their actual source is not clear but they are broadly traced from the Middle East, east of Euphrates.
- b) The K2-IP series (mid-10th to early 13th century): comprise of minute to small diameters (2-3.5mm) and length (1.2-4mm) of drawn tubular beads of various blue-green and green shades. Beads made of transparent to translucent soda-aluminium glass from south or south-east Asia.
- c) East Coast-IP series (early 13th century): consisting more of cylinders with slightly larger diameters (2.5-4.5mm) and shorter lengths than K2-IP beads. The glass contains many bubbles and inclusions while bead colour ranged from black, blue-green, blue and yellow in descending order, other colours found include brownish-red, green and orange. Diaphaneity varies from opaque, opaque-translucent to translucent.
- d) Mapungubwe Oblate beads (second quarter of 13th century): characterised by small to minute sizes (2-3.5mm) diameter, mostly uniform oblate drawn beads but commoner areas have larger and less uniform cylinders. These beads were made of mineral-soda-lime-silica glass from southern Asia. Diaphaneity varies from opaque; translucent to opaque-translucent in black, blue-green and yellow colours other colours like light green, orange and cobalt blue are rare.
- e) Zimbabwe series (end of 13th century): similar to their predecessors in terms of glass chemistry but slightly larger in size resulting in cylindrical shapes. The glass is more transparent in blue-green, yellow, dark green, greyish-green, cobalt blue and black colours.

- f) Khami-IP series (early 15th-17th century): beads are chemically distinct from the early K2-IP and East Coast-IP series, and in terms of size they only come second to Zhizo beads with (2-7mm) diameter ranges. They are mostly opaque irregular cylinders in black, brownish-red, translucent to opaque-translucent blue-green, green, yellow, orange, dark and light blue as well as opaque white. These beads are believed to have come from north-west and south-east India.

The total number of glass beads recovered from the three research sites amounted to just twenty two. These beads were chemically examined by an XRF machine. A portable Thermo Scientific Niton XL3t GOLDD (Geometrically Optimized Large area Drift Detector) spectrometer was used for the semi-quantitative XRF measurements of the selected samples. The spectrometer consists of a 4W Ag anode X-ray tube, capable of a maximum voltage output of 50 kV at a current of 200 μ A as well as a GOLDD. A Niton XL3 portable test stand was used to measure the glass and metal beads as well as samples of slag. For glass samples, the instrument was calibrated by using the fundamental parameters as employed by Mining Cu/Zn modes. Four range methods, namely main, low, high and light with measurement duration of 60s each, were applied to detect amounts/traces of 36 elements. The limit of detection of the elements (LOD) was calculated using a 2-sigma range. For metal beads and slag, the instrument was calibrated by using the fundamental parameters as employed by General metals mode. Three range of elements, namely main, low and light with measurement duration of 60s each, were applied to detect amounts/traces of 28 elements. From the results, the concentrations of five major elements (Fe, Cu, Sn, Zn and Pb) after normalizing have been reported in weight percentage (wt%). Table 7.13 below highlights their physical and chemical properties, while Figure 7.6 depicts some of the listed glass beads.

Table 7.13: Showing the typology of glass beads from Danamombe, Zinjanja and Naletale cluster sites								
Site Name	Danamombe							
Cont.	Lv	Structure	Shape	Size in mm	Diaphaneity	Colour	Bead Series	Comment
Tr. 1	4	Simple	Cylinder	Large	Tsl	Dark blue	?	corroded/not analysed
	4	?	Oblate	4x3	Op	?	?	Charred/not analysed
	6	?	Oblate	4x3	?	?	?	Charred/not analysed
	7	Compound	Barrel	Very large	Op	Brownish-red on black	Europe	Low alumina
	7	?	Cylinder	Very large	?	?	?	Charred/not analysed

	7	Simple	Oblate	Medium	Op	White-greyish	Europe	Calcium antimoniate
	8	Compound	Barrel	Very large	Op	Brownish-red on black	Europe	
	8	Simple	Irregular	4x6	Op	Brownish-red	Europe	Low alumina
	8	?	Oblate	Very large	Op	?	?	Charred/not analysed
	10	Compound	Cylinder	Very large	Op	Indian red on black	Europe	No U
	10	?	Oblate	large	?	?	?	Charred
	11		Barrel	6x4	Op	White	Khumi-IP	
	12	Simple	Cylinder	Medium	Tsl-op	Dark blue	Khumi-IP	
TP. 2	6	Simple	Oblate	Small	Op	White	Europe	Calcium antimoniate
	8	Simple	tube	Medium	Op-Tsl	dark blue	Europe	Low alumina-no U
	8	Simple	tube	Small	Op-Tsl	Dark blue	Europe	Low alumina-no U
Site Name Zinjanja								
TP. 2	3	Simple	Cylinder	Small	Op	Dark blue	Khumi-IP	
	3	Simple	Cylinderl	Small	Tsl-op	Light blue	Khumi-IP	
TP. 3	3	Simple	Oblate	6x4	Op	Yellow	Khumi-IP?	Charred-Not analysed
Site Name Gomoremhiko/Naletale cluster site								
TP. 1	1	Simple	Oblate	Minute	Tsl-op	Light blue	Mapungub we-Zimbabwe?	Too small for detecting Mg in the bead
Site Name Nharire Hill/Naletale cluster site								
TP. 2	2	compound	Cylinder	Very large	Opaque-Tsl	Oyster white	Europe	Calcium antimoniate Eroded
Key: Cont.=Context, Lv.= Level, Tr.=Trench, TP.= Test Pit, Size: Diameter X Length, Tsl= translucent, op=opaque								

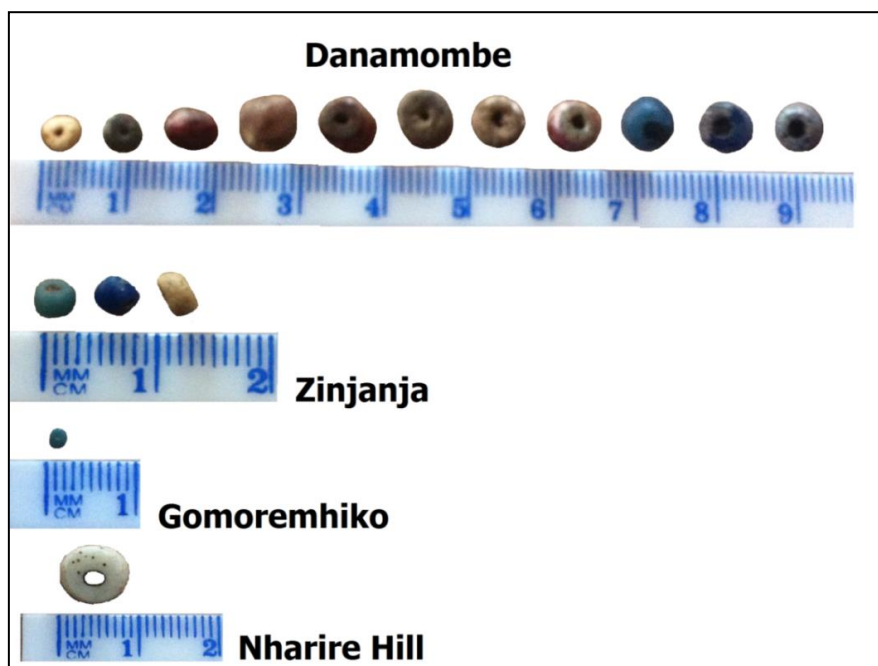


Figure 7.6: Glass beads from Khumi-phase sites under study

The sample above fits very well into Randall-McIver's (1906:46) small glass beads of numerous colours, Caton-Thompson's (1931:169) over 600 opaque beads of numerous colours, Robinson's (1959:145) group I and II beads, Wood's (2011) K2 Indo-Pacific and Khami series, van Waarden's (2012:142) Vumba beads and Mukwende's (2016:125-135) Khami bead assemblage. This particular sample had 4 charred beads, however white beads had the highest frequency of 5, followed by 4 Indian red, 3 light blue while the rest of the colours listed in Table 7.13 had a single bead representation. Oblates were more frequent with a total of 9, followed by 7 barrels, 5 cylinders and a single unusual small disk bead respectively. Although most beads were retrieved from Danamombe, the few beads recovered from Zinjanja and Naletale cluster sites somehow suggest that the sites were contemporary. Because symbolic values or meanings are rarely inherent in the intrinsic attributes of physical form, but are consciously bestowed by people on specific features of an object, ethnic related meanings shall be elicited from relevant historical and ethnographic sources later on in this chapter.

7.3.2 Shell beads

A total of 214 shell beads were also recovered during excavations and these varied from ostrich eggshell, giant land snail (*achatinidae* sp.) to fresh-water mussel snail (*unionidae* sp.). According to Tapela's (1995:60) both hunter-gatherers and farmers manufactured shell beads; the only major distinction between their beads was size, as those manufactured by farmers tended to be larger. Hence a classification scheme emphasising shell bead size rather than method of manufacture was adopted for this study. Figure 7.7 shows the distribution of some of the shell beads, while Table 7.14 indicates their size variation and frequency per site.

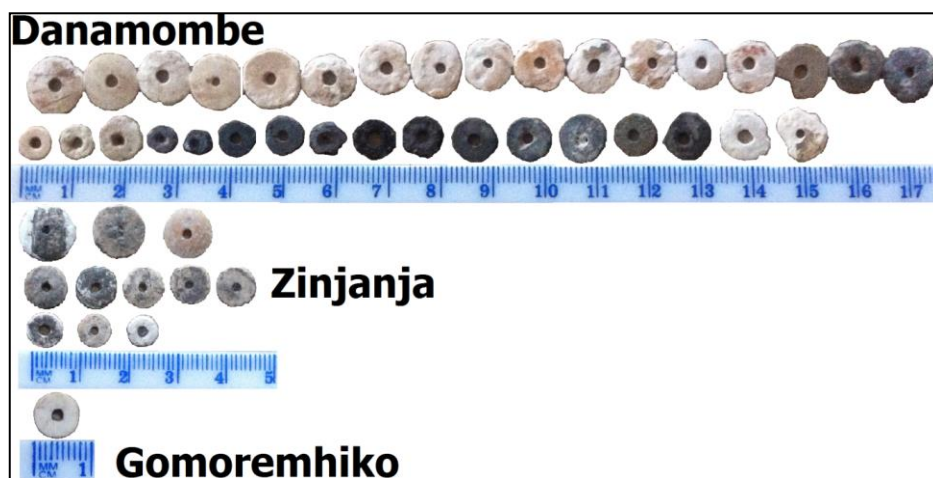


Figure 7.7: Shell beads from Danamombe, Zinjanja and Naletale cluster sites

Table 7.14 Summary of shell disc beads from the research sites

Site Name	3.3-6 mm	6.1- 14 mm	Charred	Total
Danamombe	10	193	62	197
Zinjanja		16		16
Naletale				
Gomoremhiko		1		1
Nharire Hill				
Grant Total	10	210	62	214

As indicated in the Table above, shell beads with larger diameters were by far the most common type. Despite their uneven distribution at the three research sites, their common occurrence in space and time suggests they were locally manufactured and fashionable even among elite settlements. Shell fragments, incomplete beads and rough-out fragments also indicate that these shell beads were manufactured on site and not acquired through trade alone. At Danamombe, shell beads were evenly distributed in almost all stratigraphic levels and this somehow challenges the predominance of the external trade hypothesis in the evolution of state formation in southern Africa. Furthermore, the incessant distribution of shell beads in all stratigraphic levels also asserts their enduring social values and ready availability through time. Though the specific cultural values of shell beads at Later Iron Age sites remain enigmatic, Tapela's (1995:64) ethnographic study in Botswana provides some insights. He notes that shell beads possessed healing powers and helped children to grow faster as such; they were made part of bracelets, necklaces and headbands, while other people used them to decorate female aprons and male loin cloths.

7.3.3 Metal beads

After running tests using a portable XRF machine, it turned out that all metallic beads collected during excavations were made of bronze. Since copper mining started as early as AD 200, its importance and distribution in Africa is so far well appreciated. Culturally, copper and its alloys had ornamental, political, religious and economic values (see Bisson 1975, 1997; Herbert 1984; Kinahan 2000; Soper 2002; Summers 1969; Swan 1994, 2008; Thondhlana 2005). This explains why most Iron Age sites in Africa yielded reasonably large samples of copper and copper alloy beads. Thondhlana (2005) systematically examined copper and copper alloy beads in terms of material, shape, seam-type, technique of manufacture, size and finish in order to assess their stylistic changes through space and time. His classification scheme was quite successful in defining spatial-temporal trends; hence it

was also adopted for purposes of this study. All metal beads were examined by an XRF machine and Figure 7.8 and Tables 7.15 and 7.16 below highlights their physical nature and distribution at the three research sites.

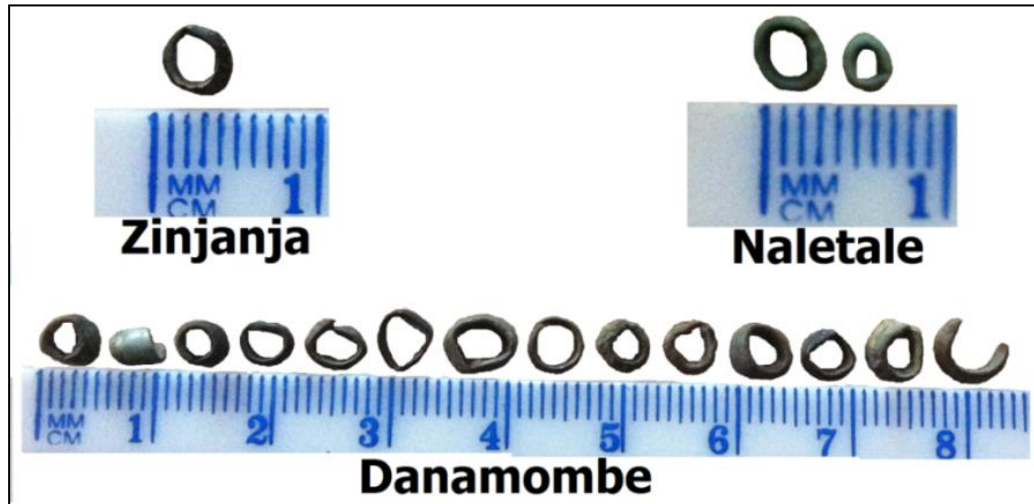


Figure 7.8: Metal beads recovered from the research sites

Table 7.15: Typology of metal beads from the research sites								
Site Name	Danamombe							
Cont.	Lv.	Material	Shape	Diameter	Length	Seam type	Technique of Manu.	Comm.
Tr. 1	5	Bronze	Barrel	4mm	2mm	Butted flush	folded	
	5	Bronze	?	6mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	damaged
	12	Bronze	bicone	5mm	4mm	Butted flush	folded	
	15-20	Bronze	barrel	4mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	brownish
	20-25	Bronze	bicone	4mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	corroded
	20-25	Bronze	bicone	4mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	brownish
TP. 2	4	Bronze	bicone	6mm	4mm	Butted flush	folded	
	4	Bronze	barrel	6mm	4mm	Butted open	folded	
	4	Bronze	barrel	6mm	4mm	Butted flush	folded	
	4	Bronze	barrel	6mm	4mm	Butted flush	folded	shiny
	4	Bronze	barrel	6mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	
	4	Bronze	barrel	6mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	shiny
	4	Bronze	barrel	6mm	3mm	Pointed butt	folded	
	4	Bronze	cylinder	6mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	shiny
	4	Bronze	barrel	6mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	
	4	Bronze	cylinder	6mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	shiny
	4	Bronze	barrel	6mm	3mm	Butted slight gap	folded	
	5	Bronze	bicone	6mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	shiny
	5	Bronze	bicone	4mm	4mm	Butted flush	folded	
	6	Bronze	barrel	6mm	4mm	Butted slight gap	folded	
	8	Bronze	barrel	6mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	
	8	Bronze	cylinder	6mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	shiny
	8	Bronze	barrel	6mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	
	8	Bronze	cylinder	3mm	3mm	Butted slight gap	folded	tiny
	8	Bronze	disk	6mm	1mm	Butted flush	folded	rare

	8	Bronze	bicone	?	3mm	Butted slight gap	folded	damaged
	9	Bronze	barrel	6mm	3mm	Butted flush	folded	brownish
Site Name	Zinjanja							
TP. 3	1	Bronze	barrel	5mm	4mm	Pointed butt	folded	shiny
Site Name	Naletale Main Platform							
TP. 2	1	Bronze	bicone	6mm	4mm	Butted flush	folded	
	1	Bronze	barrel	4mm	2mm	Butted flush	folded	shiny
Key: Cont. = Context, Lv. = Level, Tr. =Trench, TP. = Test Pit, Comm. = Comment, Manu. = Manufacture								

Table 7.16 Summary of metal bead size and shape variation

Site Name	minute	small	medium	Bronze	Barrels	Bicones	Cylinders	Disk	Total
Danamombe	1	9	16	26	14	7	4	1	26
Zinjanja		1		1	1				1
Naletale		2		2	1	1			2
Gomoremhiko									
Nharire Hill									
Grant Total	1	12	16	29	16	8	4	1	29

Key:

Minute: < 2.5 mm

Small: 2.6 - 5mm

Medium: 5.1- 7.5mm

Beads in the small to medium category accounted for the most common ornaments and all metal beads turned out to be bronze. In terms of shape, barrels were the commonest followed by bicones and cylinders, disks were the least common. All metal beads were manufactured through the folding technique, their butts being flush and surfaces shiny indicating they were produced by skilled craftsman. Although regional patterns in the consumption of tin and bronze in southern Africa are poorly comprehended, Rooiberg in South Africa is believed to have been the main source of supply. Most tin and bronze objects were traded by the Sotho-Tswana (BaKwena and BaHurutse) groups from Rooiberg to other regional markets since the demand for these products was lower than gold and ivory on the international market (Bandama 2013:40). This suggests that bronze beads were probably acquired through local trade networks from Rooiberg and their distribution was closely conditioned by the movement of the respective traders. In Butua and Rozvi states, trade in foreign and local prestige goods was closely associated with the elites and this often created huge economic rewards for specialist traders (see Bandama 2013:49-50). Herbert (1984) also notes that from the 2nd millennium AD, bronze was widely valued for its colour as a decorative metal. Although the analysed sample was quite small, it confirms conclusions earlier on by other scholars. Thondhlana (2005:42) concluded that small to medium sized beads dominated all Early and Later Farming Community (LFC) sites; however cylinders outnumbered barrels in

the Early Farming Community (EFC) period. Although bicones were totally absent among EFC sites, during the LFC era, bicones and barrels dominated in assemblages, while cylinders became rarer (see Robinson 1959; Soper 2002; Thondhlana 2005). In fact, among most LFC sites' copper and copper alloy beads were thicker, made with careful seam treatment and a finer finish. Undoubtedly, all metal beads from the three sites are similar and their quality and distribution suggests they were made by skilled craftsman. Interestingly, Bandama (2013) also notes that in southern Africa, smithing and fabrication techniques for iron, copper, tin and bronze largely remained similar.

7.4 Other local and imported finds

Figure 7.9 and Table 7.17 highlights the other artifacts that were retrieved through excavations and these signify wealth and craft production at elite centres. Such finds attest to the presence of possibly dependent and independent craftsmen who produced numerous luxury and utilitarian goods for elite consumption. The role of metals in the signification of wealth, class distinctions and prestige cannot be overstated (see Chirikure 2007; Swan 2008; Stein 1998; Thondhlana 2005; van Waarden 2012). Some of the finds like smithing debris, ornament fragments and iron tool remains suggest elite control of skilled labour. The finds inventory highlighted below indicates that metals were fashioned into various ornaments, tools, weapons and musical instruments. Although gold products were not found during recent excavations, it does not necessarily follow that elites at these Khami-phase sites never had access to it since Hall and Neal (1904) report of such finds from these sites. Possibly gold objects were simply missed by the excavation sampling strategy used. The single un-pierced round disk from an old potsherd recovered from Danamombe was probably a spindle whorl in the making. Numerous spindle whorls have previously been reported from Danamombe and other Khami-phase sites indicating spinning and weaving of cotton was a well established trade especially from the 15th century onwards (see Huffman 1971; Mukwende 2016; Robinson 1959; van Waarden 2012).

While Later Stone Age (LSA) flake tools were reported from the earliest occupation levels at Danamombe by (Caton-Thompson 1931), none were found from there during recent excavations, instead only two such tools were recovered from a midden at Zinjanja. The stone flake and bladelet were probably used to incise decorations on pots or carry out other general tasks that required a sharp edge. Other objects like the imported glass fragment recovered from Test pit I on a midden just outside the main platform at Danamombe and wheel-made

ceramics from Trench I main platform Danamombe illustrate elite control of long distance trade as well as their manipulation of such wealth into ‘politically charged commodities’. Previous extensive excavations conducted at Danamombe and Naletale yielded material culture of a similar nature, suggesting the importance of local and external trade in the rise of these elite centres. By far, Danamombe was the most important elite site in terms of craft production industries and wealth. While Naletale and Zinjanja had fewer exotic and local finds, their cultural products were quite similar to those found at Danamombe.

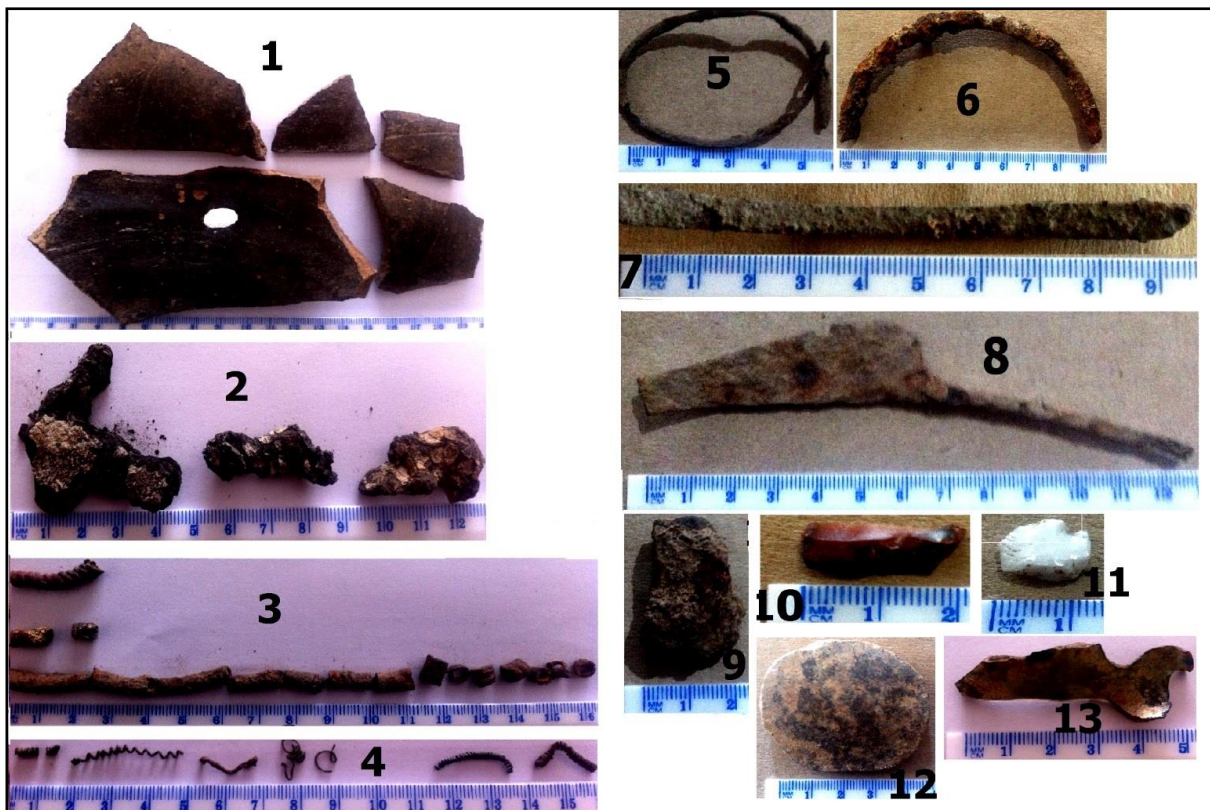


Figure 7.9: Images of artifacts listed below, 1-Danamombe imported ware, 2-Danamombe iron smelted pieces, 3-Danamombe wound iron pieces, 4-Dananamombe and Zinjanja wound copper wire, 5-Gomoremhiko iron bangle, 6-Danamombe iron bangle, 7-Danamombe thumbnail/mbira key, 8-Gomoremhiko arrowhead, 9-Gomoremhiko iron piece, 10-Zinjanja bladelet, 11-Zinjanja medium scraper, 12-Danamombe preformed spindle whorl, 13-Danamombe European Olive glass fragment

Table 7.17: Distribution of other local and imported crafts from the research sites

Danamombe Excavation unit	Level	Ceramic sherds	Stone tools	Glass Frag.	Iron wire	Copper wire	Iron Obj.	Comment
Trench I	1	5 frag.						Imported wheel-made brownish ware
	4						1 slag frag.	Smelted iron fragment
	5					1 frag.		2mm thick bangle coiled wire with a hollow
	6					2 frag.	1slag frag.	2mm thick bangle coiled wire with a hollow
	7						1	Smelted iron fragment
	8				1			6mm thick bangle coiled wire with a hollow
	10				2frag.			6mm thick bangle coiled wire with a hollow
	11	Ground disk potsherd			1frag.			7mm thick bangle coiled wire with a hollow
Test Pit I	1				1frag.			6mm thick bangle coiled wire with a hollow
	3			1frag.				16-18 th century Olive European glass fragment
Test Pit II	7						1	Thumb-nail key (<i>Mbira</i>)
	8				15frag.	1		Coiled bangle fragments and 1 iron wire
	10						1	6mm thick solid bangle fragment
Zinjanja	Level	Ceramic sherds	Stone tools	Glass Frag.	Iron wire	Copper wire	Iron Obj.	Comment
Test Pit II	4		1					Medium scraper
Test Pit III	2		1					Microlith blade
	3					2		1.5 & 3mm thick coiled wire fragments
	5					1		1.5 mm thick coiled wire fragment
Naletale/Go moremhiko	Level	Ceramic sherds	Stone tools	Glass Frag.	Iron wire	Copper wire	Iron Obj.	Comment
Trench I	1						1	2.5mm thick solid bangle fragment
Test Pit I	1						1	Arrowhead
	2						1	Un-worked iron lump

*NB. Frag.= Fragment(s)

7.5 The faunal assemblage

Faunal remains were examined in order to establish the importance of the animal economy in the development of complexity in south-western Zimbabwe. The analysis specifically sought to establish the taxonomic nature of animals exploited (wild or domestic), their abundance and distribution per site. Preliminary analysis involved placing faunal remains into trays, sorting them according to site, excavation unit and stratigraphic context. The remains were then cleaned using brushes to enhance detailed analysis of each specimen. After cleaning, sorting of bones into identifiable and non-identifiable categories, detailed analysis was then done with the assistance of Dr. P. Senjere-Nyabezi from the University of Zimbabwe. Identifiable bones were those specimens that could be assigned to taxonomic group as illustrated by Plug (2014). Other specimens that were too fragmentary to be identified to species level but recognisable to skeletal elements were simply assigned to skeletal categories. Owing to lack of scholarly consistency in the assigning of animal bones into body size groups (see Brain 1974, 1981; Manyanga 2000; Plug 1999, 2000; Voigt 1979, 1980, 1983), Manyanga's (2001:106), four bovine classes were used as guide. Non-identifiable specimens were those small fragments without articular surfaces or recognisable anatomical characteristics. Examples of such include long bone flakes, fragments of ribs, enamel, skulls, vertebrae and other miscellaneous fragments (crumbs and pieces of unspecified bones). Finally, both identifiable and non-identifiable bones were examined for burning, cut and gnaw marks to understand human behaviour and post-depositional taphonomic processes.

All bone fragments from the three research sites amounted to 955, weighing a total of 5246.7g. Of these, 170 (17.80%) only were identifiable to taxon and basic skeletal category, meaning 785 (82.20%) were non-identifiable. The Number of Identifiable Species (NISP) was distributed as follows; domesticates 45 (4.71%), of which cattle outnumbered the sheep/goat samples. 10 (1.05%) were mainly small game species, while 115 (12.04%) could only be classified as Bovid I, II and III. In terms of frequency, bovid I had 13 (11.3%), bovid II had 19 (16.52%) and bovid III had 83 (72.17%) individual counts. It is most likely that fragments classified as bovid III in this assemblage also belonged to cattle since only one large game animal (wildebeest) had been identified to taxonomic level. Adult faunal remains were predominant, suggesting that domestic stock was allowed to fully mature before slaughter. Of the non-identifiable bones, ribs topped the list at 383 (48.79%) because they are the most numerous bones in any skeletal body. These were followed by flaked bones at 245 (31.21%) because these were often crushed for marrow, skull fragments were 90 (11.46%)

because they easily detach from each other once steak is removed. More so, they are often crashed before cooking and during consumption as the edible parts are often concealed in narrow hollows. Cut marks and burning of bones signify human cultural processes associated with food preparation and consumption, while gnaw marks attest to post-depositional processes by rodents and other animals. Tables 7.18 and 7.19 summarise the nature and distribution of faunal remains from all the research sites.

Table 7.18: Distribution of identified faunal remains from the research sites											
Danamombe Trench I						Level					NISP
Species						9	10	13	15	16	
Geochelene pardalis (tortoise)							1				1
Lepus Saxatilis (southern scrub hare)									1		1
Bovoid I							2				2
Bovoid II							1	2	1	1	5
Bovoid III						1	3		10		14
Danamombe Test Pit I						Level					NISP
Species						1	2	3	4	5	
Francolin-sized bird							1				1
Bovoid I									3		3
Bovoid II						2		2			4
Bovoid III							1	1	1		3
Danamombe Test Pit II				Level							NISP
Species				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Medium Aves					1	2					3
Sylvicapra grimmia (duiker)						1		1			2
Bos Taurus (cattle)				1	2		3	4	1	2	18
Bovoid I						1				1	2
Bovoid II							2	1	1	2	6
Bovoid III				9	7	2	3	1	3	7	38
Zinjanja Test Pit II						Level					NISP
Species						3	5	6	7		
Ovicaprines (goat/sheep)								1			1
Connochaetes taurinus (wildebeest)									1		1
Bos Taurus (cattle)							6	1	1		8
Bovoid I							2				2
Bovoid II								1	1		3
Bovoid III						2		1	1		4
Zinjanja Test Pit III						Level					NISP
Species						1	3	4	5	6	
Ovicaprines (goat/sheep)										1	1
Lepus Saxatilis (southern scrub hare)							1				1
Bos Taurus (cattle)						2	9	4	1		16
Bovoid I							3	1			4
Bovoid II										1	1
Bovoid III								11	3	10	24

Nharire Hill/Naletale cluster site Test Pit II	Level					NISP
Species	1	2				
Bos Taurus (cattle)	1					1

Table 7.19: Summary of non-identifiable and culturally modified bones from the research sites

Danamombe	Rib Fragments	Bone Flakes	Miscellaneous	Vertebrae	Enamel Fragments	Skull Fragments
Trench I	34	20	37	1	1	
Test Pit I	77	19	1		2	
Test Pit II	98	58	3	4	3	81
Zinjanja						
Test Pit II	28	39	3		2	3
Test Pit III	131	107	3		2	4
Gomoremhiko/Naletale cluster site						
Trench I	10	2		1		
Nharire Hill/Naletale cluster site						
Test Pit I	2		1		1	
Test Pit II	3		2			2
Grant Total	383	245	50	6	11	90
Cultural modifications for the entire faunal assemblage		Cut Marks	Burnt	Gnawed	Worked	Grand Total
Total		38	16	24	1	62

7.6 Khami-phase material culture: an overview

The analysed pottery from Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja constitutes a single homogenous Khami-phase assemblage characterised by neckless constricted spherical jars with simple or rolled rims synonymous with **Form III** (Hughes 1997), **Form A** (Robinson 1959); **Category E** (Machiridza 2012) and van Waarden's (2012) type 5 vessels. The other fairly common vessels were spherical constricted pots with vertical/insloping, concave necks and out-turned rims corresponding with **Forms B** and **C** (Robinson 1959), **Forms I** and **II** (Hughes 1997), **Category D** (Machiridza 2012) and Waarden's (2012) types 1, 2 and 4. Surprisingly, bowls were quite rare in the three assemblages; only a few plain constricted bowls were recorded. The analysed ceramics were highly standardised in terms of vessel shape and finish, they were predominantly plain. Their surfaces were often polished; a few with graphite burnishing while other isolated fragments had polychrome band and panel designs. Although clustering of ceramic styles in time and space does not automatically imply we are dealing with one ethnic, political or linguistic group, the examined wares were clearly similar in style. The broad similarities in ceramic styles suggest close ethnic and linguistic ties, which permitted potters to interact and share styles of design according to social group value systems. Apart from graphite burnished sherds, there is nothing from a ceramic

standpoint to suggest any cultural intrusion from either Great Zimbabwe or the Mutapa state (also associated with Zimbabwe tradition wares). In fact, there were no external influences behind the general development of the current sample of Khami-phase sites.

On a related note, the scarcity of polychrome band and panel ware at the three research sites possibly signals changing ceramic demands as these were once very frequent at Khami. Its ubiquitous occurrence at Khami and sudden rarity at other Khami-phase sites like Danamombe, Selolwe, Vumba and Naletale has already been noted by scholars like Caton-Thompson (1931), Machiridza (2008, 2012), Randall-McIver (1906) and van Waarden (2012). In a way, the decrease in frequency of this type of ware both in space and time suggests it became highly valued and strategically used to symbolise elite status, wealth and power. Alternatively, one may also posit that Torwa leaders at Khami might never have symbolically valued these wares since they were once abundant at Khami. It is also possible that this ware was always manufactured in small quantities without necessarily having any special socio-cultural meanings. The reduced frequency could also mean that the new Rozvi leaders did not see the need to produce such ceramics in abundance. However, the earliest oral accounts collected by some archaeologists clearly identified polychrome band and panel ware as Rozvi, Caton-Thompson (1931), Randall-McIver (1906) and Robinson (1959, 1966) also identified it as such. van Waarden (2012:227) was however a bit cautious in interpreting its ethnic affiliations. She only suggested that the multiple colours on the pottery possibly had symbolic meaning or they were just meant to enhance ceramic beauty. Although the analysed sample was quite small, previous studies conducted at Danamombe indicated that polychrome band and panel ware was quite rare (see Machiridza 2012:138). Possibly, the rarity of this ware in space suggests that it was systematically appropriated by Rozvi elites as their ethnic identity symbol.

It appears the manipulation of cultural material for political mileage was not only confined to ceramics but other cultural objects like ornaments. According to Loubser (1988:295) only powerful chiefs and prominent Lemba could wear copper ornaments or possess copper ingots. Ncube (2004:12) also observed that among the Nambya, a post-Rozvi group, a new ruler was given a string of beads during the installation ceremony as a badge of office. Bullock (1927:40) further stated that Rozvi emissaries carried a gourd cup and wore the insignia of black beads as a means of controlling other chiefs through religion. To further reinforce the importance of glass beads among the Rozvi, Gann (1965:7) pointed out that cloth and beads acquired through trade were often used to pay followers and soldiers by

Rozvi chiefs. Unfortunately, there is no other historical source that provides a detailed description of those Rozvi beads. Archaeological evidence from their main settlement sites somehow closes that gap. It shows that Indian red, royal blue, light blue, yellow and white beads were the most popular colours (see Caton-Thompson 1931; Machiridza 2012; MacIver 1906; van Waarden 2012). The sample of glass beads recovered from recent excavations more or less reflects the same bead colours, meaning these were the most common beads used for purposes cited above. Therefore the more common the bead colour, the more popular it was during the Torwa and Rozvi eras. Shell beads were very common at Danamombe, while only a few were recovered from Zinjanja and Naletale cluster sites. Their common occurrence at all these sites however signals that locally manufactured crafts remained valid in expressing status and other social identities.

It is also important to note that while ivory and gold ornaments were never recovered during recent excavations, they were previously recovered from some of the sites in question (see Hall and Neal 1904; Randall-McIver 1906; Summers 1971). While commenting about the Singo, Loubser (1988:295) also remarks that ivory and its ornaments were symbols of power; hence Singo chiefs always claimed a task from each elephant. Since the Singo were an offshoot of the Rozvi, we could as well extrapolate this evidence to interpret the meaning of ivory and its ornaments previously recovered from Rozvi settlements. Already the importance of valuable metals in the creation and negotiation of power relations has been noted above. Interestingly, it turned out that copper and copper alloy beads were popular ornaments at all the three sites, although their distribution was quite uneven. Barrels and bicons crafted with a high level of craftsmanship commonly appeared at Danamombe. Their low frequency at Zinjanja and Naletale possibly relates to the sampling strategy adopted during excavations, largely elite occupational areas were targeted because of their potential to yield reliable chronometric samples. Even a regional analyses of cuprous metals indicates that they were quite widespread in southern Africa both at elite and non-elite sites (see Bandama 2013; Chirikure *et al.* 2007; Herbert 1984). Apart from local crafts and imports, the wealth and power associated with Danamombe, Zinjanja and Naletale sites is also projected through numbers of faunal remains, which emphasise elite control of large cattle herds.

Faunal results from the three research sites indicate that there was more of a herding than hunting economy at all the examined sites. Earlier on, Tapfuma (2010) concluded that Danamombe had a herding economy that was complemented by occasional hunting of kudu, hartebeest, zebra and rock rabbit. Unfortunately, a full picture of the nature of game animals

exploited at the three research sites could not be established from the current faunal sample due to high bone fragmentation. Although small stock was kept at the three research sites, they were by far fewer than cattle, which is not surprising because of the favourable environment for cattle breeding. The faunal analyses therefore corroborates conclusions earlier on made from survey results in Chapter 5 and by several other scholars who cite the prevalence of cattle wealth in this broad study area (see Beach 1980; Burrett 1998; Gann 1965; Mudenge 1974; Mukwende 2016; Randles 1979; Tapfuma 2010; Thorp 1995; van Waarden 2012). Furthermore, the early rise of Changamire Dombo as well as his consolidation of power in south-western Zimbabwe has been widely attributed to great cattle wealth (see Beach 1980, 1983; Mazarire 2009; Mudenge 1974a, 1974b; van Waarden 2012).

7.7 Conclusions

The broad ceramic similarities recorded from all the sites in question suggest parallel developments of the sites and undeniable cultural continuity. In fact, the archaeological evidence examined so far, indicates that these sites were purely Khami-phase and significantly overlapped. Either the founders of these sites were initial sub-polities of a fully fledged Khami culture or they were competing outgrowths from the Danamombe capital. Although the sites under study historically coincide with two separate ruling dynasties, namely the Torwa and Rozvi, the vertical and horizontal distribution of the retrieved material culture does not show any distinct stylistic changes attributable to these political shifts. Above all, this chapter has muted several factors key to the general development of cultural complexity. The next chapter therefore attempts to synthesise and comprehensively explain the origins of cultural complexity in the broad study area in the context of an agency landscape framework.

Chapter Eight

Cultural Complexity, Landscape and Ethnicity

“Landscape archaeology is a framework for modeling the ways that people in the past conceptualised, and manipulated their environments and the ways that those places have shaped their occupants’ behaviours and identities.” (Branton 2009:51).

8.1 Introduction

The Rozvi first rose to prominence at a time when cultural complexity in south-western Zimbabwe was already well advanced. As such, ascertaining their actual role in the evolution of Khami-phase sites depends on a meticulous handling of all associated archaeological and historical datasets. This chapter therefore explores the chronology of Insiza cluster sites and related historical narratives in attempts to define Rozvi identities. At the same time, the growth of cultural complexity in southern Africa remains a topic of ongoing debate because explanatory frameworks continue to be contested, while new data is constantly emerging to challenge some of the dominant views. Intermittently, combinations of the above cited factors have sometimes triggered radical rethinking of the development of the Zimbabwe Culture (see Chirikure *et al.* 2012; 2013; 2014; 2017; van Waarden 2011). It has been subtly suggested that Khami-phase sites evolved out of Great Zimbabwe and Mutapa state breakaways (Beach 1980; Garlake 1973; Mazarire 2009; Mudenge 1974b, 1988; Pikirayi 2001; Robinson 1959). Other scholars have also suggested that Khami-phase sites directly evolved out of Leopard’s Kopje cultures (Chirikure *et al.* 2013, 2017; Mukwende 2016; van Waarden 2011, 2012). These diverse scholarly views are hereby given special attention in the context of empirical data gathered from the sites of Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja.

8.2 Defining the Insiza Khami-phase cluster

This section specifically examines the chronological development of Khami-phase sites situated east of the Khami capital in Insiza district. Attempts are made to explore the implications of radiocarbon dates acquired from each research site and to establish how these sites possibly related to each other and many others situated beyond the Insiza district. The analysis of material culture in chapters 5 and 7 revealed that dry stonewalled monumental architecture, local ceramics; local and imported beads as well as several other craft products found across the entire spectrum of Khami-phase sites were stylistically similar. In addition, radiocarbon dates from Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja confirmed that these sites

significantly overlapped although Danamombe was established a bit earlier than the other two sites; precisely during the first half of the 15th century. Although these three sites overlapped chronologically, they formed three major clusters that need further explanation. Such clusters include Danamombe associated with Ndunanombi 1 and Ndunanombi 2. Naletale associated with Bhila ruins, Arupanga, Shangangwe, Gwenaguru, Nsalansala, Debshan 1 and Debshan 2. Zinjanja associated with the northern extension sites, Altyre 1 and Altyre 2, Journey's End, Pioneer estate 1 and Pioneer estate 2. The site of Manyanga constitutes the fourth cluster, which however, remains to be thoroughly explored as it was not covered as part of this study. Already, the idea of perceiving the site of Khami as the original centre from which the rest of Khami-phase sites developed is now in doubt. Radiocarbon dates collected from Danamombe have shown that this site was actually as old as Khami because it yielded two early dates of AD 1420 and AD 1435. These dates appear in relatively later occupational layers suggesting stonewalls had already been constructed and Danamombe was probably occupied way before it became an elite capital. This data therefore challenges the dominant view that Danamombe only became prominent after Khami had collapsed around AD 1644 (see Beach 1980; Pikirayi 2001; Robinson 1959; van Waarden 1998, 2012).

In view of the early 15th century dates from Danamombe, it is now clear that the AD 1644 civil war at Khami occurred at a time when this site was already well advanced. The archaeological evidence so far gathered around Danamombe demonstrates that this was the oldest and largest site in the broad Insiza cluster. Danamombe also has the least number of satellite sites in its vicinity, only two isolated dry stonewalled enclosures located a few kilometers to the west were recorded, the rest were open field sites. Firstly this site was strategically situated at the apex of the watershed, which probably promoted easy communication with other key players involved in the Indian Ocean trade like it does today through its dense road, rail and administrative networks. It is therefore argued that Danamombe was strategically located to take advantage of the Zambezi trade route in the north and to extract locally produced mineral and agricultural resources from the broader south-western interior. Considering the size of Danamombe, huge amounts of cultural finds so far recovered from the site, we have every reason to believe that this was actually a serious contender to Khami in the west. Furthermore, the traditional belief that upon the demise of Great Zimbabwe around AD 1450, some of the dynasties migrated north to found the Mutapa state while others moved south-westwards to found the Torwa state can no longer be sustained. The dates acquired from Danamombe clearly suggest that historical claims that the

Torwa emerged from the AD 1490 Mutapa state revolt by a certain Changamire is problematic. Above all, radiocarbon dates from Danamombe corroborate historical views that the Rozvi only took charge of a site that had long been established. Thus, radiocarbon dates acquired from this site indicate that although the Rozvi ruled from Danamombe, they were certainly not the true site founders.

On a related note, the natural resources found around Zinjanja constantly attracted several people to the same landscape; a development that ultimately culminated in the construction of Zinjanja around AD 1649 as a major economic and administrative centre. If it can be accepted that the numerous dolly holes and smooth grooves that were discovered at Danamombe, Naletale, and Zinjanja constitute proxy evidence for gold mining and processing, then gold was a key resource around these settlements. In addition, several archaeological cattle posts found around Zinjanja and associated faunal remains also prove that cattle were a major component of the local economy. This settlement probably grew in stature owing to the contribution of numerous local people who specialized in gold mining, trade, cattle ranching, hunting and crop production. These economic activities significantly boosted the local ruling elites' wealth through tribute and tax payments. Because of the rich gold belts found around Zinjanja, we can as well argue that apart from local gold trade, the Indian Ocean trade also played a significant role in the general evolution of this site. On the basis of chronometric dates acquired from this site, it is hereby argued that Zinjanja rose during the terminal era of Torwa governance. By the 1680s, the Rozvi had taken over this entire region and they systematically unified the fragmented Torwa dynasties into the emerging Changamire Rozvi state. These developments equally affected the other nearby Khami-phase site of Naletale, which significantly flourished as one of the major centres of power during the Rozvi era of governance.

Naletale cluster sites represent the most interesting case for this study because architecturally, they are the most profusely decorated. This cluster also has the most architecturally diverse sites, having a series of site enclosures and platforms that are situated very close to each other. In terms of cultural material, these sites have so far yielded very little through excavations. The limited build-up of cultural material around most of these sites however implies that they were suddenly developed and briefly occupied. This assumption is premised on a series of radiocarbon dates that were collected from Naletale itself, which range from AD 1649 up to the 20th century. It is therefore postulated that Naletale and related sites were also built during the terminal Torwa era, which was characterised by intense political rivalry.

This era was also epitomized by great architectural improvements as aspiring candidates to the throne sought to outdo each other (van Waarden 2012). Eventually when the Rozvi arrived to takeover politically during the early 1680s, they maintained old Torwa building traditions and situationally ascribed new identities on inherited cultural features. Although most satellite sites found around Naletale are yet to be excavated, survey results clearly indicated that cultural material around these sites is sparse. Through surveys, evidence for cereal agriculture, gold processing, cattle keeping and external trade was documented around this area. The exceptional architecture characterising this site cluster suggests that elite wealth and power was most likely derived from these varied economic resources.

This thesis also acknowledges the relevance of the model of Shona rotational succession systems in explaining the general development and distribution of Khami-phase sites under study as well as their broad stylistic homogeneity. Several historical state systems like Mutapa, Torwa and Rozvi are known to have been founded by individuals who came from specific lineages (see Beach 1980; Chirikure *et al.* 2012; 2017; Mudenge 2011). In most cases these dynastic founders appointed their close kin to head provincial, district and ward centres. This succession system culminated in the rise of dynastic clusters or ruling houses locally termed *dzimba dzoushe* (Chirikure *et al.* 2012; 2017; Mudenge 1988, 2011). In the event of the founder's death, one of the sub-rulers took over as king. This new king was not obliged to move and rule from the founder's residence, rather he often chose to rule from his own home, which he systematically developed by creating numerous other sub-administrative structures of his own. In this way, Shona rotational succession systems gradually led to the development and spread of numerous contemporaneous elite centres with broadly similar material culture stylistic patterns. When this model is evaluated against the distribution of Khami-phase sites in the Insiza district, it would appear that Danamombe, Naletale, Zinjanja and Manyanga situationally alternated as centres of political power.

Since chronometric dates recovered from Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja signalled that these sites were contemporaneous; it is also possible that their rise and spread was part of these Shona rotational succession systems. In this case, power would have first shifted from Danamombe then later to Zinjanja before finally shifting again to Naletale. Until more fieldwork is done around the Manyanga site cluster, it remains very difficult to define the status of this cluster in relation to those in the Insiza district. All we know is that oral traditions claim that the last Changamire Chirisamhuru died on his way to Manyanga following a barrage of Nguni attacks on Danamombe (Pikirayi 2001:218). Whether these

traditions are factual or not, remains yet to be proven through fieldwork around this particular cluster. Therefore the density of Khami-phase sites in the Insiza district, their proximity to one another and their similarity in terms of architectural styles, ceramic evidence and other ornaments somehow suggests that the model of Shona rotational succession systems was probably at play. The spatial and chronometric datasets highlighted in this study now persuade us to challenge the way that some historians and archaeologists have been reading the history of this particular landscape. Already, van Waarden's (2012) thesis has provided a comprehensive archaeological characterization of Khami-phase sites in north-eastern Botswana. However, she did not quite problematise the Torwa/Rozvi dichotomy.

To date, the bulk of what we know historically about Khami-phase sites in south-western Zimbabwe has been inferred from a few Portuguese documents that made vague references to a region called Butua once governed by Changamire or the Toloa meaning Torwa dynasties (see Machiridza 2012, 2013; Mudenge 2011; Randles 1979). Since the Portuguese were only after commercial interests and not local dynastic histories, their references to this region remained mum on other finer details about these particular dynasties. Therefore several scholars simply generalise that the Torwa were strangers/outside to the Mutapa, whose origins trace back to certain rebels who later founded Khami-phase sites (see Beach 1980; Machiridza 2013; Pikirayi 2001). Given our current hazy understanding of the Torwa in Zimbabwe and the total silence about them in north-eastern Botswana, except the mere mention of Chibundule of Butua, it becomes crucial to reconsider all that has been said about them to date. So far, archaeological evidence tells us that the earliest dates for Khami-phase origins stretch as far back as AD 1400 or AD 1420, yet Changamire's rebellion from the Mutapa state took place around AD 1490 (Mudenge 1974b:21). If this Changamire who is also claimed to have founded the Torwa state of Guruuswa/Butua rebelled from the Mutapa state around AD 1490, when Khami and Danamombe were already 90 years and 70 years old respectively, then there is need to clearly address the identity of the people who were in charge of the initial stone buildings.

Several propositions have so far been made about the Torwa but none of these are really convincing. For instance, Garlake (1973) defined the Torwa as relatives of the second Mutapa who ruled the Mbire/Guruuswa provinces together with Changamire. Earlier on, von Sicard (1948:13) stipulated that the Twamamba/Torwa were the original inhabitants of Butua who should never be traced from the Mutapa state. Randles (1979:20) also postulated that the name Torwa implied vassalisation of Khoisan people in Butua by the Mutapa Karanga

people. van Waarden (2012:51) assumed the Torwa were synonymous with Kalanga people who trace their origins back to Madabhale whose praise name was Chibundule. Unfortunately there are no reliable oral traditions for the Kalanga people, who are also widely perceived as the original inhabitants of south-western Zimbabwe since the 1400s (Beach 1980:218). Most Kalanga traditions do not even recall the Torwa; rather they cite people like Ngelengele, a man and his sister Nenumbata and Nemushodzi, the Nyubi under Sibuntuli and a Kalanga Ndumba (Beach 1980). Henceforth, there is need to seriously consider whether all Khami-phase sites scattered in southern Africa are really synonymous with Torwa dynastic rule or they represent something else.

8.3 The Rozvi, ethnicity and Khami-phase sites

Most archaeological and historical accounts generally describe the broad south-western landscape as former territories of both Torwa and Rozvi dynasties (see Beach 1980; Garlake 1973; Huffman 1996, 2007; Mudenge 1988; Pikirayi 2001; Randall-McIver 1906; Randles 1979; Robinson 1966; van Waarden 2012). These insights are quite interesting considering that the periods AD 1400-1650 associated with Torwa origins and development, AD 1644-1685 characterised by Torwa succession struggles and demise, AD 1685-1830 marking Rozvi takeover and eventual collapse have been linked to several sites under study (see Beach 1980; Chirikure *et al.* 2017; Pikirayi 2001; van Waarden 2012). For instance, the mid-to-late 17th century, precisely from AD 1644 to 1685 was characterised by intense rivalry for power among fragmented Torwa dynasties (Beach 1980; Huffman 2007; Robinson 1959). This fifty year period of Torwa political rivalry is assumed to have witnessed the second phase of construction of numerous Khami-phase sites like Danamombe, Zinjanja, Manyanga and Naletale (Huffman 1996, 2007; Pikirayi 2001; van Waarden 1987, 2012). Of course now we know that Danamombe had since been constructed. The results of material culture stylistic analysis from the three research sites also indicated that when the Rozvi eventually conquered and assimilated the Torwa, they allowed them to continue with their former cultural traditions. Such a development therefore makes it difficult to archaeologically distinguish the Torwa from the Rozvi materially.

In a way, these results sort of rubber stamped the general belief held by many scholars that although the majority of dry stonewalled Zimbabwe sites were occupied by different historical groupings, their material culture basically remained unchanged (e.g. Beach 1980; Mudenge 1988; Muringaniza and Ruwita 1996). However, this perspective contrasts with

the way archaeologists have always theorised ethnicity and its materialization in the archaeological record. In particular, archaeologists broadly share the view that objects and landscapes reflect social identities through stylistic clusters and spatial configurations (see Anschuetz *et al.* 2001; Gaffney and van Leusen 1995; Hand n.d.; Huffman 2007; Johnson 2006; Kvamme 1997; Machiridza 2012, 2013; Tilley 1994). This follows the premise that when social formations or ethnic groups converge in particular geographical localities, they tend to produce similar stylistic patterns in material culture, which are often distinct from those found in other geographical localities. Hence most of our classification systems continue to emphasise the identification of cultures; phases and types, which however militate against slippery concepts like agency and ethnicity (see Johnson 2006). If these rigid culture historical concepts are allowed to continue dominating the way we approach material culture, then other fluid concepts like ethnicity will remain quite elusive as reflected by the data acquired from Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja.

Given the broad material culture similarities noted at the sites cited above, which we confidently know to have been inhabited by different political groupings at separate historical times, perhaps it is time that we begin to seriously evaluate the way we do archaeology in Africa. The data that emerged from the three research sites in south-western Zimbabwe clearly indicates that old material culture patterns remained unchanged in the face of radical historical social and political changes. In this case, there is need to fully explain why material culture at these Khami-phase sites remained the same in the context of well documented Torwa and Rozvi political shifts (see Beach 1980, 1994a, 1994b, 1995; Mazarire 2009; Mudenge 1974b, 1988; Ncube 2004). The answer to this tricky question lies in the dynamic nature of ethnicity, which situationally fluctuates from visibility to non-visibility dimensions (Pikirayi 2017 *pers comm.*). This means when ethnic forces are at play, their impact on social players are variable depending on the prevailing political, economic and social contexts. In the context of the respective sites under study, Rozvi elites could have simply chosen to conceal any stylistic differences between themselves and the Torwa in the spirit of promoting ethnic harmony. Furthermore, the profuse use of names, totems, sub-clan names and myths suggests that indigenous philosophies were more important in projecting Rozvi identities than material culture stylistic patterns.

Since naming patterns shift as society changes, the sudden use of the name Rozvi across space and time indicates that it was actively used as a symbol of both ethnic identity and

territorial control. This explains why in 1758 Ignacio Caetano Xavier reported that Changamire's lands were populated by the 'Borobzes' meaning Rozvi people. Thus, Guyot and Seethal (2007:3) notes that the politics of name changes cannot be separated from conflicts and tensions over political and cultural hegemony. Mashiri (1999) also adds that identity construction happens through place naming. Among the Shona, names are important vehicles of socio-cultural communication because they reflect shifting power relations. Unfortunately, the Rozvi name has never been given serious attention in this respect by most archaeologists. This is simply because of the general belief that names can never be objectively interrogated through material remains. However, names are more than just mere labels. They are in fact powerful invisible symbols of identification with place and the past. Krogseth (2012:164) affirms this by stating that the named ancestral home gives space for shared memory both on mental/symbolic and material terms. In this case, Rozvi identities were symbolically inscribed on the broad landscape through the mere manipulation of naming patterns and mythological constructions.

According to Sinamai (2015, 2017) myths and legends signify metaphors that symbolise historical connections between people and places. Tilley (2006:25) also adds that myths incorporate historical events and make sense of them through local understandings; they rework time so that past and present exist concurrently in relation to a desired future. Myths therefore represent the cultures that they serve; they communicate social values and memories in a special language that is only understood by community members and not outsiders. Sinamai (2017:407) further states that myths and legends appropriate the landscape into community behaviour, beliefs and being; they create a body of knowledge about the landscape and environment in the minds of community members. In this regard, the Rozvi managed to construct and inscribe their identities on the broad south-western landscape through simply chaining out myths that emphasised their outright ownership of several *dzimbahwes* (monuments). Sinamai (2017) further adds that usually when monuments feature profusely in myths, they represent centres of life that were intimately connected to a community's sources of water and food. This explains why Rozvi elites initiated numerous customs of sacrificing to *Mwari* (God) from stonewalled sites like Manyanga. Such rituals strengthened their claims of having direct control over people's main sources of livelihood and powers to build stonewalled sites. Through using myths, Rozvi identities even became intertwined with the natural world, where trees, grass, rocks, mountains and several places

were strategically objectified as their symbols of identity. Posselt (1935:140-3) highlights the following Rozvi tale:

The Barozwi kings displayed great vanity during this period of migration and on various occasions they were filled with the desire to possess exalted “stools” or thrones. To gratify that desire they ordered their subjects to remove bodily massive hills to serve this purpose. Among others Mt. Hurungwe, a granite pinnacle of nearly 800 feet in height in the Mrewa District, is still pointed out as one so selected; the weathering of the rock is believed to be the marks of the implements of the men who tried to remove it... Thus Lembewu became king and they carried him to Manyanga, where Chihunduro and Tumbare were chiefs, both laying claim to a hill each, as a symbol of their royalty. The Mambo ordered Nerwande to collect earth and pile it up until it grew higher than the hills of Tumbare and Chihunduro. They piled it up as ordered. Then they took elephants’ tusks and built steps to the top-hence the name “Manyanga”...

Historically, we know that the Rozvi preferred a policy of expansion through merely blending in with the locals. Resultantly, their material culture signatures remained broadly similar to those of their conquered subjects. For instance, when the Rozvi migrated to other regions, they often changed their Rozvi names to match the local ones (see Machiridza 2012; Ncube 2004; Pikirayi 2001). In fact, their political expansion was always characterised by the adoption of new identities in attempts to suit the prevailing dynamic socio-political circumstances (Pikirayi 2001:217). When they migrated to south-eastern Zimbabwe they became part of the Ndau under the Mutema dynasty. In Mafungabusi plateau they became Nambya and Shangwe under the Hwange and Chireya dynasties and in the Nzhelele valley they became Venda under the Singo dynasty (see Beach 1980; Loubser 1988; Mazarire 2009; Ncube 2004; Pikirayi 2001). Apart from inheriting Torwa material culture, the Rozvi also assimilated and appointed former Torwa rulers like Tumbare, Nerwande and Mavhudzi as senior Rozvi officials (Beach 1980). This shows that the Rozvi controlled their core and peripheral territories through blending with their subjects. For purposes of solidarity, they exploited the *Mwari* religion, gave away their young girls in marriage to other chiefs and promoted investiture ceremonies where they appointed several local chiefs to power as Rozvi representatives (see Bullock 1927; Bhila 1982a; Daneel 1970; Machiridza 2012; Posselt 1935). Considering these political strategies, it should not really surprise us when we find that their material culture basically remained similar to that of their conquered subjects (the Torwa).

Therefore the amassed data shows us that Rozvi elites were not very keen to distinguish themselves from their subjects through promoting ‘changes’ in material culture stylistic production. Rather their political strategy was to maintain old stylistic codes in the various areas that they conquered or assimilated, so that the continuity of common cultural practices

through production of the same stylistic patterns would reinforce ethnic solidarity. In this respect, Rozvi elites simply assigned new meanings to old material culture. This explains why polychrome band and panel ware widely became synonymous with Rozvi identities (see Caton-Thompson 1931; Randall-McIver 1906; Robinson 1959, 1966). Even ethnographic data gathered from post-Rozvi houses in Bikita revealed that the Rozvi simply used ordinary cultural objects, which they situationally ascribed with Rozvi meanings (see Machiridza 2012). All they did as part of identity construction was to objectify certain objects by consistently using them in the “so-called” traditional Rozvi customs. Ncube (2004:12) actually highlights how the Nambya, a post-Rozvi group used to give a string of beads to a new ruler during installation ceremonies as a badge of office. We also learn from Bullock (1927:40) that Rozvi emissaries often carried a gourd cup and wore the insignia of black beads as a strategy of controlling other chiefs through religion. Furthermore, imported cloth and beads acquired through trade were often used to reward soldiers by Rozvi chiefs (Gann 1965:7). These few examples at least demonstrate that ordinary objects were manipulated and situationally imbued with meaning as Rozvi symbols of identity. Since the actual origins of Khami-phase sites remain contested, the next section briefly explores how these sites relate to the broader Zimbabwe Culture.

8.4 Khami-phase/Great Zimbabwe relations revisited

The Zimbabwe Culture dating between AD 900 and 1900 has been arbitrarily divided into three main phases based on the dominant capital, technique and style of walling as well as associated ceramic styles. In this regard, various smaller stone buildings in southern Africa have been generally perceived as administrative extensions of the following state capitals Mapela (AD 1055-1400), Mapungubwe (AD 1220-1290), Great Zimbabwe (AD 1300-1550), Mutapa (AD 1450-1900) and Khami (AD 1400-1830) (see Chirikure *et al.* 2014; Huffman 1982, 1996, 2007; van Waarden 2011, 2012). Furthermore, the traditional belief that the Zimbabwe Culture evolved in a linear sequence whereby Mapungubwe was the first state capital followed by Great Zimbabwe, Khami and Mutapa peer polities respectively has led to the biased focus on major centres as the only hubs of cultural complexity processes. This neo-evolutionary approach has further instigated the uncritical treatment of smaller sites as mere provincial, district and ward centres of these few major capitals. Consequently, numerous smaller sites of the Zimbabwe Culture have sometimes been mistakenly treated as mere administrative extensions yet their rise was independent of the so-called state capitals (see Chirikure *et al.* 2013; 2014; 2017; van Waarden 2011, 2012). For instance, recent fieldwork

has demonstrated that most of these major centres did not necessarily succeed each other, rather they overlapped significantly while some of the perceived “smaller sites” like Mapela actually pre-date state capitals like Mapungubwe (see Chirikure *et al.* 2014; 2017). In the same manner, it is also emerging that the role of state capitals like Great Zimbabwe in the rise of other state systems like Mutapa in the north and Torwa in the south-western region was also exaggerated (see Chirikure *et al.* 2014; 2017; Pikirayi 1993; Pwiti 1996a; van Waarden 2011).

For quite some time, Great Zimbabwe has been credited for the evolution of all Khami-phase sites (see also Caton-Thompson 1931; Huffman 2007, 2015; Pikirayi 2001). This view is also widely shared by historians who believe that following the demise of Great Zimbabwe around AD 1450, one dynastic group migrated north to found the Mutapa state while the other went south-westwards to establish the Torwa state (e.g. Beach 1980; Mazarire 2009; Mudenge 1988, 2011; Ncube 2004). Interestingly, both survey and excavation data gathered as part of this study did not confirm these propositions. Some scholars are already pointing out that both ceramic sequences and architectural typologies recorded from Great Zimbabwe and Khami project two parallel developments (Chirikure *et al.* 2017; van Waarden 2011, 2012). While Great Zimbabwe was flourishing between AD 1300 and the late 17th or 18th centuries, Khami-phase sites were on the course of development between AD 1400 and the 1830s (see Chirikure *et al.* 2017; Mukwende 2016; van Waarden 2011, 2012). Thus, Great Zimbabwe tradition sites predominantly consist of free-standing walls forming circular to oval enclosures that concealed the ruling elite inside. In contrast, Khami-phase sites comprise of dry stone-retaining walls that formed terraced platforms often encasing a small kopje with elite houses on top. Most Khami-phase sites also have peculiar check designs, plain ceramics and a few profusely decorated pot sherds with complex polychrome designs. Although Great Zimbabwe and Khami-phase sites share a few other general cultural features, the differences cited above are now being considered as clear signs of the former existence of two separate but overlapping cultural phases (Chirikure *et al.* 2017).

These observations have further prompted some scholars to argue that Leopard’s Kopje cultures were the progenitors of both Great Zimbabwe and Khami-phase sites (see Chirikure *et al.* 2017; Huffman 2015; Mukwende 2016; van Waarden 2011). This follows the general proximity of Khami-phase sites to Woolandale sites, their ceramic co-occurrences, where Khami ware is often superimposed on the latter, as well as other broader stylistic similarities noted in ceramic typologies and architecture (see Chirikure *et al.* 2017; Manyanga 2007; van

Waarden 2011). Once again, this study could not quite confirm this proposition through empirical data. Although it was anticipated that either a Leopard's Kopje or Great Zimbabwe cultural stratum would be encountered somewhere in the stratigraphy of the three research sites, this never happened. Instead, all stratigraphic contexts from Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja yielded pure Khami-phase cultural material. In view of this data, perhaps it is high time that we begin to appreciate that certain innovations can result from a combination of factors happening within a broad landscape. Such a scenario makes it impossible to pin-point that exact locality of "Khami-phase" cultural innovation because the Zimbabwean plateau was always characterised by several socio-political movements (see Beach 1980, 1994a, 1994b; Chirikure *et al.* 2014; Mazarire 2009). Considering that the broad south-western region has a series of Leopard's Kopje culture sites, which are all believed to pre-date Khami-phase sites, it becomes quite tempting to suggest that the Khami-phase subsequently succeeded proto-Kalanga communities. The ensuing section now narrows-down the discussion to the actual factors that might have influenced the evolution of the Khami-phase in south-western Zimbabwe.

8.5 A multi-scalar model for cultural complexity

The development of cultural complexity in south-western Zimbabwe should therefore be understood as part of the desire by numerous competing agents to exploit favourable natural resources in that region. To start with, the long linear feature running from north-northeast to south-southwest across the study area, otherwise known as the 'Great Dyke' is characterised by rocks like granite, basalt, dolerite and ironstone. These are the same rocks which provided ready building material that enabled the construction of numerous dry stonewalled sites. The topography around these regions also created conducive settings for the construction of elite settlements, which had to be elevated above their subjects on isolated hills and kopjes. This 'Great Dyke' region also boasts of numerous prestigious metals, which were pivotal in the acquisition of foreign imports, expression of class distinctions and boosting of subsistence agriculture. When granite rocks were later formed, superheated lavas further concentrated gold, copper and iron into cracks of older schist rocks as well as their contact zones with granite. This explains why Ellert (1993:22) remarked that Butua was known as the 'Mother of Gold'. It is therefore not surprising that as early as the 13th century AD, several gold reefs in south-western Zimbabwe were already being exploited by Zhizo, Mambo and Woolandale communities (see Summers 1969; Swan 1994, 1996, 2008).

The prevalence of Leopard's Kopje cultures along greenstone belts indicates their dependance on gold mining and livestock production (refer to Figs. 2.2 and 5.1 for clarity). Their spatial distribution in the selected study area actually indicates that there were several chiefdoms that were competing for gold resources. It has already been noted that most Leopard's Kopje chiefdoms specialised in gold mining, cattle ranching and trade (see Chirikure *et al.* 2013, 2014; van Waarden 1998, 2011, 2012). Thus the desire to exploit gold rich deposits persuaded these communities to flood the same geographical regions (see Swan 2008:37). This explains why several gold reduction sites, iron smelting and smithing remains were frequently encountered during surveys. Architecturally, only two sites recorded during surveys, namely Gomoremhiko and Lawndale demonstrated attributes synonymous with these early Woolandale sites. Although these two sites had fragments of Khami-phase ceramics on their surfaces, the R-style retaining walls built along the top edges of hilltops are typical of most Woolandale elite settlements. In this context, one can argue that the abundance of gold deposits in these regions triggered population shifts, which in turn led to greater wealth accumulation and power for already established chiefdoms. Eventually more wealth acquired through gold and the Indian Ocean trade, coupled with cattle and agricultural production culminated in the evolution of the more sophisticated Khami-phase sites.

These Khami-phase sites most likely developed as part of the Torwa/Butua state, whose capital is presumed to have been Khami. It is believed that Khami directly evolved from an advanced Woolandale chiefdom located at the foot of a granite kopje near Khami River (Chirikure *et al.* 2017; Mukwende 2016; van Waarden 1998, 2012). A number of similarities have already been documented between Leopard's Kopje cultures and Khami-phase sites and these revolve around stone building traditions and ceramic typologies, which are often found superimposed on each other in stratigraphic sequences (Chirikure *et al.* 2017; Manyanga 2007; van Waarden 2012). It has also been suggested that the rise of Khami during the early 15th century was triggered by the rerouting of a trade route from the east coast trading centre of Kilwa via Great Zimbabwe, to the new Ingombe Iede-Quelimane-Angoche trade route via the Cuama (Zambezi) River (Beach 1980; Newitt 1972; van Waarden 1998, 2012). Such a development positioned Torwa elites to take full advantage of locally available resources like ivory, furs, ostrich feathers, gold, copper and salt, which used to be traded to Great Zimbabwe by Woolandale chiefdoms in exchange for food (van Waarden 2012:50). This full control of local resources eventually resulted in the sprouting of numerous Khami-phase elite settlements in the broad south-western landscape.

According to Loubser (1988:298) external trade facilitated centralisation and incorporation of different ethnic groups into one major political unit. Therefore it has been suggested that the principal lineage at Khami continuously expanded outwards towards north-eastern Botswana and the south-central parts of Zimbabwe through networks of sub-rulers who extracted tribute, part of which was used to sustain foreign trade (Huffman 2007; van Waarden 1998, 2012). While this proposition is valid, the role of external trade in the rise of Khami-phase sites should not be over-emphasised as the sole contributing factor (see Burrett 1998; Mudenge 1974a, 1988; Swan 2008; van Waarden 2012). The numerous granary remains, upper and lower grinding stones recorded during surveys can also be accounted for by paying close attention to the altitude of the central watershed, which ranges from 1200 m to 1512 m above sea level. Such an altitude effectively stimulated high rainfall and cooler temperatures, which enhanced cereal agriculture. Great Zimbabwe period settlements were quite restricted around these regions because of the dry climatic conditions that once prevailed between AD 1290 and AD 1475 (van Waarden 2012:24). However, the AD 1500 to AD 1675 climatic shift to wetter conditions conversely stimulated the rise of several Khami-phase sites around these regions (see Garlake 1978; van Waarden 2012). This happened because soils derived from greenstone, dolerite and granite rocks are very productive when well watered (see Huffman 2007; Summers 1969; Swan 1994, 2008; van Waarden 1998, 2012).

The weathering of greenstone schists and dolerite produces very fertile shallow to moderately deep, dark or reddish luvisols with more silt and clay. In areas where drainage is very poor, these schist belts generate dark and heavy clay vertisols (Key 1976). In contrast, gneissic (granitoid) rocks weather to produce easily workable shallow light brown to light red-brown acid sandy, regosols and arenosols that are usually associated with low fertility. However, poor soil fertility common around granite regions was often compensated for by the dense network of streams and rivers as well as a relatively higher water table that created swampy fertile zones for crop production. All these environmental factors greatly enhanced cereal agriculture and lush pasture for both game and domestic livestock. These conditions also meant human populations, domestic livestock and wild animals were ever converging within the same landscape localities. Oftentimes when rains are high enough, schist, dolerite and granite derived loamy luvisols and regosols promote diverse forms of vegetation growth. The young foliage of *Colophospermum* Mopane, nutritious pods of *Acacia* species and the edible parts of *Grewia* spp. shrub, together with diverse grass varieties provided excellent feed for cattle and wildlife throughout the year (Bradley and Dewees 1993; Hunt 1951; Pardy 1951).

In addition, temperatures ranging below 16°C prohibited the breeding of tsetse fly (*Glossina morsitans*) the carrier of sleeping sickness (*Trypanosomiasis*), which kills cattle. Owing to these factors, south-western Zimbabwe was always free from these insects thereby permitting extensive cattle breeding and wealth accumulation for the local inhabitants (Burrett 1998; Summers 1967; van Waarden 2012).

This explains why several documentary sources have always emphasised the importance of cereal agriculture and cattle breeding in south-western Zimbabwe (Beach 1980; Mudenge 1974b, 1988; Randles 1979). For instance in 1569 Fr. Monclaro reported that ‘cattle in Butua were as big as the large oxen in France’, and Fr. Antonio Gomes (1648) exclaimed that ‘one had to stand while milking them’. This suggests these were very huge breeds (see Mudenge 1974b; van Waarden 2012; Zachrisson 1978). In view of these environmental factors, it is therefore no coincidence that numerous Khami-phase sites gradually developed in this region. Although several enclosures appearing like cattle pens were documented during the course of this research around mountains and plains in the Fort-Rixon area near Zinjanja, their surfaces had no signs of vitrified dung and their internal diameters were just too small to accommodate even a very small herd of cattle. This implies that these enclosures were probably used by herders as accommodation while watching their cattle herds grazing in the grass plains below. Chipunza (2017 *pers comm.*) has also suggested that very small dry stonewalled enclosures found near elite residences like the one at Naletale were used to keep cattle calves. While this is a possibility, the nature of such enclosures makes this perspective doubtful because the perimeter walls are rather too high for mere calves. Only six clear cattle pens (*matanga*) characterised by buffalo grass were recorded during surveys, these include the huge western courtyard and north-eastern enclosure at Danamombe, Journey’s End, Pioneer estate, Bhila ruins and Arupanga enclosure. In the Zimbabwe Culture, the breeding population of cattle was often kept far from inhabitants of *zimbabwes*, cattle enclosures were seasonally-occupied and located at the peripheral edges of the transhumance cycle (Garlake 1978). This suggests the rulers were not directly involved in cattle herding but prime stock reached them in the form of tribute or as product of herds distributed in a system of patronage comparable to the Rozvi system of *kuronzera* (Garlake 1978:493).

The presence of these enclosures and the low samples of cattle faunal remains recovered from Danamombe and Zinjanja, suggest that cattle certainly played a pivotal role among Khami-phase sites. In fact, many scholars have actually suggested that the major economic base for both the Torwa and Rozvi state systems was cattle. Cattle were a major form of wealth in

southern Africa; their primary economic importance was not only meat or milk but obtaining wives from other families (Loubser 1988:285). In this regard cattle provided special opportunities for their owners to gain higher economic, social and political status. According to Mudenge (1974b) cattle were the savings banks and insurance policies among rulers; they even bonded society together through the system of *kuronzera* (use-loan of cattle to vassals). In this respect, the high concentration of Khami-phase sites in the Insiza district was no coincidence. The development of cultural complexity in the study area should therefore be understood against the framework of human agency, whereby various Shona groupings conglomerated within the same geographical localities in search of numerous socio-economic opportunities. Through the passage of time, the natural landscape was altered or scarred by the diverse archaeological sites that were documented through surveys. Until today, these archaeological manifestations continue to testify of the people, wealth, power and cultural innovations that once characterised these regions.

8.6 Directions for future research

It has already been hinted that sometimes dominant views are not always supported by field data. When researchers begin to systematically revisit the past through renewed fieldwork, sometimes widely accepted assumptions succumb to archaeological facts. Since most sites in the study area had never been scientifically dated; most interpretations were based on mere assumptions. This thesis has only covered the major Khami-phase sites in the Insiza district leaving out the rest of smaller sites that were obviously part of these major cultural landmarks. If ever we are to fully understand the cultural dynamics that led to the evolution of all these sites within such a wide landscape, there is need to conduct more extensive fieldwork. Currently we still lack very basic information about open field sites scattered around Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja. An investigation of these smaller elite and commoner sites is bound to further broaden our understanding of these Khami-phase sites. So far very little is known about Manyanga and its cluster sites. However, claims about a distinct Leopard's Kopje component at Manyanga have already been made (see Chirikure *et al.* 2017; Robinson 1966; Sinclair 1987). Such claims suggest that this site has evidence that was never found at Danamombe, Naletale and Zinjanja. It would be interesting if this site is thoroughly explored in future to verify some of these propositions and to determine the general evolution of this site through associated radiocarbon dates.

More so, radiocarbon dates acquired from the major Khami-phase sites in the Insiza cluster with particular reference to Danamombe have potential to change the way we have always read the south-western landscape. For quite a long time, Khami has always been perceived as the hub of power in south-western Zimbabwe during the early 15th century. This has prompted several scholars to trace all major developments happening in this region as part of events that were taking place at Khami (e.g. Beach 1980; Burrett 1998; Garlake 1973; Huffman 2007; Pikirayi 2001; Summers 1969; van Waarden 1998, 2012). However, an early date coinciding with the early part of the 15th century has also come from Danamombe, suggesting that this site was not a late 17th century phenomenon as previously suggested (see Randall-McIver 1906; Pikirayi 2001; van Waarden 2012). If Khami and Danamombe were contemporaneous, then what was their relationship to each other and to several other sites that are scattered in broader regions? Earlier on in this chapter, the actual influence of Great Zimbabwe and the Mutapa state on the rise and spread of Khami-phase sites has been questioned. As indicated above, if the Torwa who rebelled from the Mutapa state only arrived in south-western Zimbabwe when these sites were already advanced, then why should the Torwa continue to be traced from the Mutapa state? Furthermore, there is no need to continue assuming that the Torwa controlled all Khami-phase sites in south-western Zimbabwe, north-eastern Botswana and the northern parts of south-Africa. The big question now is, were there no other independent dynasties sharing broadly similar material culture?

Finally, the growth of historical archaeology in Zimbabwe has largely been crippled by a culture historical approach towards the past. Numerous scholars that worked on most Zimbabwe Culture sites were obsessed with describing the origins and spread of cultures through the aid of relative dating techniques and material culture typologies. Occasionally, Portuguese documents and roughly collected oral traditions were uncritically borrowed to confirm the researcher's preconceived assumptions for recognised cultures, phases and typologies at different sites (e.g. Randall-McIver 1906; Caton-Thompson 1931; Robinson 1959, 1966; Summers 1969; Burrett 1998). Archaeological reasoning therefore became constrained by these typological approaches to material culture. These traditional approaches to archaeology largely undermined the potential of documentary sources and oral traditions in illuminating finer landscape histories and associated movements. From now going forward, historical archaeologists should radically shift from simply equating material culture typologies to associated dynastic groups. Rather they should seek to fully explore how people defined themselves through indigenous philosophies relating to landscapes. There is need to

also explore how people acted and interacted with one another in specific historical contexts. Therefore historical archaeologists should thrive to understand the various ways in which, the landscape relates to people/indigenous philosophies and vice versa.

8.7 Conclusions

This study specifically sought to account for the rise and spread of Khami-phase sites in south-western Zimbabwe by drawing insights from relevant historical datasets. There was no evidence from all the three research sites to suggest that the Khami-phase originated from Leopard's Kopje cultures, Great Zimbabwe or the Mutapa state as previously assumed. Rather, it was the intensification of cereal agricultural production, cattle ranching; gold exploitation, local and foreign trade by agents in south-western Zimbabwe that ultimately inspired the Khami-phase growth. Historically, the Torwa are widely perceived as those agents who inspired this cultural growth although their origins also remains a mystery. Later on, the Rozvi usurped power from them and inherited almost all their stone-buildings. This study therefore scientifically explored this convoluted Torwa and Rozvi archaeological past by examining radiocarbon dates and associated cultural material. The results indicate that all sites were similar stylistically and they started developing long before the Rozvi emerged politically. Since the Rozvi only arrived much later in these regions, their actual role in the construction of Khami-phase sites was quite minimum. Also considering the fluid nature of ethnic identification processes, it is not surprising that there was no clear-cut stylistic distinction between the Torwa and Rozvi occupational phases. Thus, the Rozvi managed to imbue their identities on the broader southern African landscape by simply inhabiting prominent Khami-phase sites and manipulating naming patterns, myths and legends. Overall, numerous "things" ranging from mountains, Khami-phase sites, polychrome band and panel ware, metal and glass beads were situationally imbued with Rozvi ethnic meanings.

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APPENDIX B: Data Capture Sheet for Beads

Site Name: _____

[illegible]

Key Acc.-Accession Number; TP/TR - Test Pit/Trench; Lev-Level; M.Tech.-Manufacturing Technique; Diaphe-Diapheneity; Deco-Decoration

APPENDIX C: Data capture sheet for archaeological surveys

Site name	Grid Ref.		Elevation	Cultural period	Site type		Ranking	Comments
	X	Y			Settlement Site	N-Settlement Site		

Key: **ZH**-zhizo, **LK**-Leopard's Kopje, **GZ**-Great Zimbabwe, **KH**-Khami, **?**-not clear, **N-settlement**-non-settlement, **Df**- *dhaka* fragments, **Ps**-Pottery scatter, **Iw**-Iron working, **Sw**-stone wall, **Bu**-Burial, **Rp**-Rock painting, **Lg**-large, **Md**-medium, **Sm**-small