

Traditional Management Systems at Heritage Sites in Africa



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In memory of
Moses Wafula Mapesa
1965 - 2016

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TRADITIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AT HERITAGE SITES IN AFRICA

Preface

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This publication by African heritage experts is a contribution to the general debate on heritage management and conservation. It presents a number of testimonies and research on concepts and methodologies which have been used for generations to sustain the values and attributes of places of heritage significance on the continent. Let me emphasize that, following extensive work in this field, the need to recognize, formalize and document Traditional Management Systems emerged as one of the key messages of the Second Periodic Report (World Heritage) in Africa in 2011. Many researchers perceive the multilayered use of custodian practices as a potential contribution from Africa to improve the implementation of World Heritage as well as strengthen the unavoidable dialogue between the 1972 and 2003 Conventions. Intangible is indeed the soul and the source of tangible evidences which can provide the concrete support for heritage management. That interlinkage is apparent on the African continent particularly in the use of Traditional Management Systems to reinforce and sustain places of significant. This publication is an outcome of the work carried out by seven African researchers in partnership with heritage institutions in different parts of the continent. It has been made possible through the collaboration of various organizations including EPA, CHDA, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, ICCROM and the Nordic World Heritage Foundation. At the core of this research study was the intention to provide methodology and best practices on how to document custodian systems and explore ways of harmonizing them with existing World Heritage management requirements. The approaches are diverse, however, the resulting volume is a living testimony to the importance of the age old management systems still in use at heritage places. Finally, this publication, in English and French, would not be possible without the support of the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I would like to reiterate our gratitude to them. My wish is that this book will inspire best practices to ensure the promotion and better management of the continents heritage. It is only a start which we hope will encourage further research and publications on this important topic. One Africa, One Destiny.

Webber Ndoro
Director of AWHF



Acronymms

ADC	Area Development Committee
AWHF	African World Heritage Fund
BSAC	British South Africa Company
CHDA	Centre for Heritage Development in Africa
CVCP	The Culture, Values and Conservation project
DANO	District Administration (Native) Ordinance
DDC	District Development Committees
DNPWLM	Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management
DPC	Directorate of Cultural Heritage
EPA	School of African Heritage
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FFI	Flora and Fauna International
GVH	Group Village Headmen
HRP	Her Royal Princess
HRH	His Royal Highness
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICOMOS	International Council of Monuments and Sites
IFAW	International Fund for Animal Welfare
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LATF	Local Authority Transfer Fund
KRT	Kasubi Royal Tombs
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MMCL	Mount Mulanje Cultural Landscape
MMCT	Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust
MMFR	Mulanje Mountain Forest Reserve
NC	Native Commissioner
NA	Native Authorities
NCA	Ngorongoro Conservation Area
NCAA	Ngorongoro Conservation Area Act
NCCA	Ngorongoro Conservation Council Act
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
NMK	National Museums of Kenya
NMMZ	National Monuments and Museums of Zimbabwe
NPWMA	National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority
NRMFA	Norwegian Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NWHF	Nordic World Heritage Foundation
OBR	Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu
OPC	Office of the President and Cabinet
OG	Operational Guidelines
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
RDC	Rural District Council
RMNP	Rhodes Matopos National Park
RKSF	Rabai Kaya Sacred Forest

TA	Traditional Authority
TCS	Traditional Custodianship System
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
TMS	Traditional Management System
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
VDC	Village Development Committee (Malawi)
VFA	Village Forest Area
VH	Village Headmen
VIDCO	Village Development Committee (Zimbabwe)
VNRMC	Village Natural Resources Management Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
WH	World Heritage
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwean African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe Peoples' Revolutionary Army

Glossary

Kasubi/Kaya	
Bujjabukula	Main entrance to the palace at Kasubi Tombs
Katikiro	Prime Minister at the Royal Palace
Kabaka	The Buganda King
Lubuga	The King's Mother in Buganda Kingdom
Mulamba	Door Keeper/Principle Guide at the Royal Palace
Mzee	Elder in Aravai Language
Mulungu	God in Aravai Language
Nalinya	The King's Official Sister in Buganda Kingdom
Omodanda	Beer server at the royal palace in Buganda
Konso	
Aba Timba	Chief Administrator of the Paleta and Keeper of the sacred drum
Daga-Diruma	Tele to commemorate deceased heroes
Daga Hela	Manhood stone
Dawra	Elderly ritual leaders believed to have spiritual powers to settle disputes between Paletas, pray for rain during draughts and bless people
Etenta	Group of farmers (farming and land owning class)
Gurula	Class of very old men who do not have any social responsibility
Harda	Water ponds
Hela	Active male group/ generation
Hawda	Group of artists, blacksmiths, potters, tanners, butchers, and weavers
Helta/Heleta	Age group organization
Helita	Adult age
Kabata	Terraces

Kafa	Clan/lineage organization
Kanta	Neighbourhood organisation (ward)
Kara	Ritual ceremony marking the transfer of responsibilities between generations and erection of a stela
Kimaya/Orshada	The elders
Konso clans	Kertita, Tikisayta, Eshalayta, Elayta, Argamayta, Togumaleta, Sawdata, Mahaleta, and Pasanta
Kulkusa	The younger group and Hirba the older group of the same generation
Mora	Public and ritual place, also serves as a dancing place during festivities, a spot for storytelling by the elders and a meeting place for the community members
Mura-Dawra	Sacred grooves
Pafta	Specially constructed one storey thatched house at one end of the Mora that also serves as a sleeping place for the young adults and guests
Parka	Work groups (individual or collective labour)
Paleta	Traditionally built walled towns (traditional towns)
Poquola	Clan chief, regional spiritual leader livein eachtown (Paleta)
Poquola Mulga	representing each clan (Kafa) and performs rituals to members of his clan.
Poquola Tuma	Chief with traditional powers that are hereditary passed down from father to son (Kala, Bamale, Kufa). Leads secluded life in the middle of a Juniper forest located on top of a hill overlooking the surrounding lands.
Senkeleta	A coordinator of the Hela group
Tinayela	The male children (also known as Fereyda)
Ulahita	A generation marking tree erected every eighteen years
Waka	Carved wooden statues which, are anthropomorphic and zoo-morphic
Rwenzori	
Irungu	The god and spirit of wilderness
Kahiyi	The god for all animals
Kalisya	The god for hunting
Kithasamba	The livelihood god, who live in the glaciated Rwenzori Mountain peaks; is a giant force controlling the natural environment and the lives of all the mountain people
Mugenyi	The god of visitors and domesticated animals
Mulindwa	The god of the unfortunate, who makes people's plans
Ndahura	The god of diseases, known to cause and cure diseases
Nyabibuya	The goddess of blessings
Nyabinji	The god of abundant harvest
Nyamuhanga	The creator of everything
Nzururu	The god of snow and a father to the gods Kithasamba and Nyabibuya
Mbe	
Ankobi	(sing.Nkobi) Traditional referent and member

Boulou	of the tékéroyal court
Dzan	Forest's name in the Mbe sacred domain
Ebala	Supreme God, creator of Earth, Skies and Stars
Etiele	Forest's name in the Mbesacred domain
Idzoualmfoula	Forest's name in the Mbesacred domain
Ilolo	Forest's name in the Mbesacred domain
Impoh	Forest's name in the Mbesacred domain
Inkoui	Forest's name in the Mbesacred domain
Inkwi	Deceases' spirits and protector of sacred forests of the Mbe royal domain
Intiere	Forest's name in the Mbesacred domain
Makoko	Title of the King of téképeoples
Mampele	One of the Ngatsii of Mbedomain
Mampiele	One of the 12 AnkobiofMbe forest
Mampiele	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Mbali a Nkani	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Mbenkoulou	Forest's name in the Mbe sacred domain
Missima	Forest's name in the Mbe sacred domain
Mouagao	One of the 12 Ankobi of Mbe forest
Mouangao	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Mouindzou	One of the 12 Ankobi of Mbe forest
Mouindzou	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Moutsiri	One of the 12 Ankobi of Mbe forest
Moutsiri	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Mpie	Forest's name in the Mbe sacred domain
Ndoua	Forest's name in the Mbe sacred domain
Ndzoua	Forest's name in the Mbesacred domain
Ngadzion	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Ngakaon	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Ngalieno	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Ngalion 1	One of the 12 Ankobi of Mbe forest
Ngalion II	One of the 12 Ankobi of Mbe forest
Ngalion	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Ngampo	One of the 12 Ankobi of Mbe forest
Ngampo	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Ngandzion	One of the 12 Ankobi of Mbe forest
Ngankaon	One of the 12 Ankobi of Mbe forest
Nga-nkourou	Forest's name in the Mbesacred domain
Ngatsibi	One of the 12 Ankobi of Mbe forest
Ngatsibi	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Ngatsii	Heads of clan or landowners in the téké kingdom
Nguebiou	One of the 12 Ankobi of Mbe forest
Nguebiou	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Ngueïpan	One of the Ngatsii of Mbe domain
Nguelieno	One of the 12 Ankobi of Mbe forest
Nkô	Forest's name in the Mbe sacred domain
Nkoue Mbali	Great spirit of téké pantheon, representing God (Dzan) on the earth
Oudzouo	Second day of the four days sacred

Oukila	week of téké peoples Third day of the four days sacred week of téké peoples
Oukoué ou Tsaba	First day of the four days sacred week of téké peoples
Outsara ou Nkoue Mbali	Fourth day of the four days sacred week of téké peoples
Tsa aBâ	Forest's name in the Mbe sacred domain

Otammari/Ganvie

Ahé	Non-initiated individual to vodun esoteric groups
Ako	Clan constituted of more than five generations in the gun and fon sociocultural groups of Southern region of Benin
Berba	Sociocultural group in the North-West region of Benin
Bèssoribè (sing. Ossori)	Sociocultural group in the North-West region of Benin
Bètammari (sing. Otammari)	Sociocultural group in the North-West region of Benin
Bètiabèou bètchabè (sing. Otchao)	Sociocultural group in the North-West of Benin
Biliguede	Vodun esoteric brotherhood in the South of Benin
Boko Haram	Islam-inspired extremist groups in the North-East region of Nigeria
Dan	Name of Dan vodun (meaning Snake) in the Aja-Tado area
Difoni	Initiatory age group's ritual reserved to Bètammari male kids and teenagers
Dikuntri	Initiatory age group's ritual reserved to Bètammari female kids and teenagers
Ditammari	Language of the Bètammari in the North-West region of Benin
Diyonfouan	Extended family in the Bètammari peoples
Dwubu	Initiatory ritual of the Bètammari
Egungun orkuvito	Esoteric brotherhood of Yoruba origin in the Southern region of Benin
Fèwaafè	Otammari mythic snake
Gan	Vodun name of Ganvié populations
Ganho	Hut covered with corrugated iron roof (Ganvié)
Gansou	Mythic orn sparrowhawk of Ganvié population
Hennu	Extensive family comprising up to five generations in fon and gun sociocultural groups in the Southern region of Benin
Hennugan	Head of Hennu
Henta	Family comprising up to three generations in fon and gun socio-cultural groups in the Southern region of Benin
Hounonou Houngan	Head of traditional pantheon in aja-tado societies
Hounvi	Adept of vodun traditional religions in aja-tado societies
Kiho	Hut covered with raphia palm leaves (Ganvié)
Koutammakou	Land of Tambermain the Northern region of Togo
Koutammari kou	Land of Bètammari in the North-

Koutchati	West of Benin Songs' jousting following harvest in Bètammari societies
Kpakounto Kumpiéri	Assistant or follower of Zangbéto Age group initiatory ritual where the Otammari individual is locked in a convent
Kun	Tribe in the gun and fon socio-cultural groups in South Benin
Moro-Naba	Title of the Moose King in the current Burkina Faso
Natempa (sing. Tayaba)	Sociocultural group in the North East of Benin
Oro	Esoteric brotherhood of Yoruba origin in the Southern region of Benin
Sansanho Takienta	Hut covered with straw (Ganvié) Traditional storeyed house in the North-West region of Benin
Tangninon	Older aunt invested with ritual and ceremonial powers in the aja-fon populations of South Benin
Tibenti	Funerary ritual organised for male and female deceased who had run at least seven cycles of initiatic rituals
Tipenti	Songs' jousting aiming to launch the sowing season in the Bètammari
Toffinou	Inhabitants of lakeside pile-dwelling settlements of Ganvié
Vidaho	Representative of youth in aja-fon populations of South Bénin
Zangan Zangbeto	Head of Zangbeto esoteric convent Vodun esoteric brotherhood in South Benin
Zoun	Suffix meaning (sacred) forest in the aja-fon socio-cultural groups

Author's Profile

Albino Pereira de Jesus Jopela

Albino Jopela is a Lecturer in archaeology and heritage studies in the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique. He is a PhD candidate at the School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. Albino is also a researcher at Kaleidoscopio (Research in Public Policy and Culture) in Mozambique and Vice-President of the Pan African Archaeological Association. His research interests include heritage management systems (traditional custodianship systems), rock-art conservation, heritage socio-politics and liberation struggle heritage in southern Africa.

Eugenie Opou Mouayini

Her Highness Princess Eugénie Opou Mouayini was born in Brazzaville and is a married mother of six children. She trained in Havana, Cuba as a high Technician in Stomatology. She served as a civil servant in Congo Brazzaville and also as Dental Prosthetic and medical representative in France. Princess Eugénie Opou Mouayini is an achiever in many fields and among the many credits to her name are: Woman Entrepreneur as creator of Elle Ebene Institute Council 1998-2005; Municipal Councilor elected in 2005 in Lyon, France; and as Provincial Councilor, elected in 2015 in Brazzaville, Congo. She is a prolific writer with numerous books to her name that include: *Le royaume téké* (2005); *Sa-Mana* (2006); *La reine Ngalifourou* (2007); *l'incroyable histoire du collier du roi* (2010); *Une femme candidate* (2013). Apart from chairing many associations, especially on international solidarity with women, she has also represented the King of the Teke Kingdom on issues of women and cultural values at national and international levels.

George Okello Abungu

George Okello Abungu is an archaeologist and former Director-General of the National Museums of Kenya; founding Chairman of Africa 2009; and a member of the International Standing Committee on the Traffic in Illicit Antiquities and the Centre for Heritage Development in Africa. He has been a guest scholar at the Getty Conservation Institute Los Angeles, and visiting professor at universities world-wide. He is a Fellow of the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies, was the Elizabeth Eddy Professor of Applied Anthropology at the University of Florida in Gainesville in 2013, and is currently Associate Professor of Heritage Studies at the University of Mauritius. George is a recipient of the IFA Prize in Museology (2007), the distinction of "Passeur du Patrimoine", Ecole du Patrimoine Africa (2009), NMG honour for his contribution to research and development of Coastal Archaeology in Kenya (2011), the Association for Research into Crime against Art for Lifetime Achievement in Defense of Art (2012), and Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, the Republic of France (2012). He was advisor to Aluka project of the Mellon Foundation, the Global Heritage Fund, Vice-President of ICOM, and Member of the International Jury of the UNESCO Melina Mecouri International Prize for Safeguard and Management of Cultural Landscapes. He has sat on World Monuments Watch Panel, and was Kenya's Representative to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, and Vice-President of Bureau (2004-2009).

Hermione Nonhome Koudakossi Boko

Hermione Nonhome Koudakossi Boko has a Masters in Environmental Management and Sustainable Development. She is currently a teaching assistant and a PhD candidate in Environment Management and Sustainable Tourism at the University of Parakou, Republic of Benin. Hermione previously worked with a Beninese NGO, Benin Ecotourism, which uses sustainable tourism as a tool for economic development of local communities in areas where traditional activities are declining and in localities where heritage conservation is threatened with disappearance. Her research focuses on natural heritage management and

community-based tourism in Atacora, in the Republic of Benin.

Moses Wafula Mapesa

The late Moses Wafula Mapesa held postgraduate qualifications in Environment, Natural Resource Management, Governance and Leadership and had worked as a conservationist and natural resource manager for 26 years. Having started his career in protected areas in 1988, Moses served as a researcher, law enforcement officer and manager. He established the planning unit at Uganda Wildlife Authority, and headed it until 1998. In 2001, he became Director of Conservation. Between 2005 and 2010, Moses worked as the Chief Executive Officer of Uganda Wildlife Authority. From 2010 to 2015, Moses worked as an independent consultant in natural resource management. Moses was a recipient of the Rotary Award in recognition of his organisational skills, professional excellence, dedication and selfless service to wildlife and environment (2007) and the IUCN Fred Packard International Parks Award for outstanding service in furthering the conservation objectives of protected areas to society (2008). He was Board member on national and international bodies: Regional Vice-Chair for the IUCN Commission on Protected Areas for eastern and southern Africa, Board member of Leadership for Conservation Africa, and Board member of the Cross Cultural Foundation in Uganda.

Patrick Ouma Abungu

Patrick Ouma Abungu is the Assistant Director in charge of the Western Kenya Region at the National Museums of Kenya (NMK). He previously served as a Senior Curator at Shimoni Slavery Museum, an institution he was instrumental in establishing under the National Museums of Kenya. Patrick works with communities in Kenya on the sustainable utilisation of heritage as a tool for development to address contemporary needs. He holds a Master's Degree in Museology, a Postgraduate Diploma in Museums and Heritage Studies, and an Advanced Certificate in Information and Communication Technology. His research areas and publications include heritage and community development, memory and identities, Traditional Management Systems and the Slave trade.

Phillip Jimbi Katana

Philip Jimbi Katana is an ICCROM trained Architectural Conservationist and also holds a Postgraduate Degree in Heritage Management from Iron Bridge UK. Following a professional work experience of 33 years with the National Museums of Kenya (NMK), Jimbi retired from the NMK in 2011 where he was based first as a researcher in the Department of Coastal Archaeology and Heritage Conservation and later as Chief Curator of the Fort Jesus World Heritage Site and Museum. He is currently with Okello Abungu Heritage Consultants as well as working with local communities along the Kenya Coast in transformation of their heritage into resources for development.

Yonas Beyene Gebremichael

Yonas Beyene earned his PhD in Prehistory from Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France in 1991. For over 25 years, Yonas worked in different capacities for the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia. He has served as the Academic and Research Vice President of Wolkite University, Ethiopia, and lectured African archaeology and prehistory at Addis Ababa University for more than 10 years. He was a member of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee between 2009 and 2012 and is a Corresponding Member of the Institut de Paleontologie Humaine (MNHN) Paris, France and Ethiopian Academy of Sciences. His publications, some of which feature in well-known scientific journals such as *Nature Science* and *PNAS*, include the results of his paleoanthropological research, stone technology and behaviour of early humans and their land-use patterns, cultural landscapes and heritage management.



Introduction

George Okello Abungu

Traditional Management Systems (TMS) are possibly just as old as humans on earth. It is a systematic way of managing social values that are significant to human life. TMS involves known behaviours and practices that have been experienced, tested and accepted. These include the dos' and the don'ts with a set of rules and regulations that govern human practices and ensure responsible utilisation of resources and harmonious co-existence. The existence of these unwritten rules applicable among people has a positive effect of minimising conflicts between individuals.

In societies where writing was not practiced, systems were developed that guided the behaviours of individuals, groups as well as communities and societies in their daily interaction with their environment and with each other. These systems clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of each for the common good. Among these systems were the sharing of natural and other resources, control and distribution of the means of production, graduation from one age group to the other, relations between different age groups, gender relations, roles and responsibilities as well as reward and punishment. Often, these were embedded in rituals and beliefs that applied to all members of a society.

Due to the fact that TMS is about managing human behaviour, needs, resources, most of which are shared, it operates in a highly contested and politicised terrain. Thus, in researching the role of TMS in heritage management, this reality has not been taken for granted and forms a critical part of the discussion in many of the papers in the volume. This has meant that from the beginning, researchers realised and acknowledged the importance of the ethnography of the various communities in their investigation of the role of TMS.

This volume has ten case studies selected on the basis of their significance in demonstrating the power, effectiveness, diversity and durability of TMS in the management of heritage sites. Among the highlights in these case studies is the need to conceptualise the context in which the TMS operates. Each of these studies brings elements that not only demonstrate the similarities but also differences across the continent. These are the elements that have brought about social cohesion among communities and societies within the continent, sustainable use of land and its natural resources even in a hostile and ever changing global environment. The various regions covered by these case studies are as follows: southern Africa (Matobo Hills in Zimbabwe and Mulanje Mountain Biosphere Reserve/Mount Mulanje Cultural Landscape in Malawi) by Albino Pereira de Jesus Jopela; North-eastern/Horn of Africa (Konso Cultural landscape) by Yonas Beyene GebreMichael; East Africa (The Rabai Kayas of Kenya and the Kasubi Royal tombs of the Buganda Kingdom in Uganda) by Patrick Ouma Abungu and Jimbi Katana; Ngorongoro and Rwenzori by Moses Wafula Mapesa also in East Africa; West Africa (Otamari Land and Ganvie in Benin) by Hermione Nonhonme Koudakossi Boko; and Central Africa (Teke Kingdom of Mbe in Congo) by Her Royal Princess (HRP) Eugenie Oyou Mouayini.

The case studies used in this volume have social, political, economic and ecological angles to their existence. It is also clear that these sites are illustrative of competing interests that require careful managing.

In addition to the sites listed in this book, Africa already has

some World Heritage properties that have integrated TMS into their operations. These include, among others, the Royal Palaces of Abomey (Benin), the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove (Nigeria), Koutammakou, the Land of the Batammariba (Togo) and Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape (South Africa). Properties on Tentative Lists that are managed through the same system include Tiebele Royal courtyard (Burkina Faso), Tenzug-Tallensi settlements (Ghana) and Barotse cultural landscape (Zambia). Despite the great potential of TMS as a community-based management system, it is still not really accepted in the general scheme of institutionalised heritage management practice and is poorly integrated with current management systems and training/academic curricula.

Lack of recognition and use of this established knowledge system and practice creates key problems facing heritage organisations in their efforts to preserve the cultural significance of heritage places imbued with local, national or universal values. It is for these reasons that, during the consultations of the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting Exercise in Africa, the enhancement of documentation and the use of traditional management practices were identified as essential for the improved implementation of the WH Convention. The WH Committee, in one of the versions of its Operational Guidelines (2013 paragraphs 97, 108-111), recognises TMS as a credible management system but stipulates that its various components need to be documented in order to be considered as credible (par 108).

Despite colonial disruption of the societal organisation within the African continent, including how heritage resources are owned and managed, many parts of the continent in the post-colonial period are still rich in traditions and customary practices that influence peoples' daily lives and how they relate to their environment and to one another. TMS/custodianship is still widely applicable and governs many peoples' lives as well as influence the way they manage their resources including their cultural and natural heritage. Lack of recognition and use of this established knowledge system and practice therefore create key problems facing heritage organisations in their efforts to preserve their heritage. In acknowledging this aspect of heritage management, the WH Committee adopted the recommendation of the Second Periodic Reporting for Africa to carry out research and produce a publication on Traditional Management Systems in Africa. This volume is the result of the recommendation. Unfortunately there are no case studies from North Africa in the book. However, it is hoped that the ones presented and discussed here do represent an accurate picture of TMS in the continent.

Research team

The work was carried out by individual researchers with a coordinator who was supported, at the final step of the process, by experienced peer-reviewers and editors. The researchers conducted the research on a geographic and thematic basis. All of the researchers are heritage practitioners who have knowledge and experience of the subject and are from various institutions within the continent including universities, heritage institutions and civil society.

The properties, including WH Sites, selected for research were discussed and agreed between the coordinator, the researchers and AWHF. This was adhered to as much as possible despite the various challenges normal with such exercises. One of the challenges being the languages of communication, which were both English and French and not everybody mastered the two. The AWHF staff were very helpful and available at all times for the researchers and the coordinator with their input as required. This included translations and summaries of the various works and this book is equally due to their diligent and committed inputs.

Background of the Research Project

This volume is the result of the research work carried out as part of the implementation of the Second Periodic Report in the Africa Region. The Periodic Reporting is a statutory and participatory exercise to review the implementation of the WH Convention and the State of Conservation of WH properties. The Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting for the Africa region was carried out in 2010-2011 and resulted in a Report and an Action Plan 2012-2017 adopted by the WH Committee in 2011 and 2012 respectively.

The Periodic Report identified four regional priority needs to be addressed in the Africa Region, among them, documentation, recognition and implementation of TMS. While recognising the rich potential and successful initiatives in the Africa region, the report noted that effective management of WH properties has been challenged by the lack of sufficient resources, including legal and technical. It was therefore imperative to co-operate in the research and subsequent production of this volume to ensure that the significance of TMS is realised within the formalised heritage management approach. The research study was carried out during the 2014-2015 period.

Aims and objectives

The foundation of this project was the need to adopt realistic measures that would address the various challenges of managing WH in Africa. There were two broad aims. First, to improve the effectiveness of management systems of WH properties in Africa by assessing the extent to which the existing traditional/custodian management systems could be integrated into the current state-based systems. Second, to provide an effective documentation methodology and to explore ways to use the same in capacity building endeavours and academic curricula.

Informed by these two aims, the research study was anchored on six objectives that were to be achieved in the short and long term.

These were:

- a) *To provide a comprehensive methodology on how to document the existing TMS at African World Heritage properties, both natural and cultural, with an approach based on case studies and comprehensive fieldwork;*
- b) *To analyse, through comparative case studies, present and past TMS in cultural/natural World Heritage properties;*
- c) *To investigate the processes and forms of using TMS within local communities in and around World Heritage properties;*
- d) *To identify the potential sources of tension between TMS, various national (states parties') legal frameworks and World Heritage requirements;*
- e) *To investigate the effectiveness of the traditional/custodian management practices when it comes to conservation and management of selected cultural/natural WH properties; and*
- f) *To reflect on the possible applications of the outcomes, for instance their integration into legal framework and state-based management of World Heritage properties and the development of training and academic curricula.*

Research Methodology

Researching such a subject is complex and multi faceted as there are different practices and different contexts that have to be taken into consideration. The area covered is wide, ranging from Southern Africa, Eastern Africa, North Eastern and the

Horn, Central and West Africa. It is a multi-lingual and multi-cultural space with French and English being the main languages of official communication based on the colonial past. The TMS are however held and practiced in the local languages that are equally diversified. Unfortunately, due to limited time and resources, only a number of case studies could be carried out but it is hoped that they can be considered to be fairly representative of the African continent. Such a vast area has its diversity of heritages, heritage issues, and heritage practices including the application of TMS. Due to the nature of the research that calls for community engagement and institutional collaboration and partnership, the research methodology for the book was informed by a bottom-up approach, whereby the diversified voices of communities are central elements in all phases of the research. Field based ethnographic research that involved community meetings, interviews, observation and discussions was carried out. This approach, together with desktop studies, some of which had previously been carried out by the same authors, was applied to a number of case studies including Kasubi, Konso, Ngorongoro, Otammari land, Mbe and Rwenzori. Presentation of results and discussions to relevant stakeholders/communities particularly the youth is yet to take place. While this was envisaged, it is work in progress that will require time and resources but is recognised to be crucial for the success of the exercise.

Analysis and interpretation of research data collected was done in a rigorous way. A critical review of the work undertaken was held during a workshop in November 2014 in Harare (Zimbabwe) and then in May 2015 in Midrand (South Africa). At these meetings, various researchers and editors discussed the outcomes, a process that further enriched the various chapters of the book.

1

THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANSHIP SYSTEM IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Albino Pereira de Jesus Jopela

Introduction

The identity of present and past societies is often closely associated with specific locations and structures in the landscape (Fowler 2002). These landscapes may become cultural or sacred by virtue of the symbolic interaction between people and such locations over space and time (UNESCO 2011). Like in many parts of the world, various southern African communities consider certain natural locations as places to respect because of their ability to connect them with their ancestors (Van Rensburg and Koltze 2002). Amongst such natural locations could be forests, mountains, rivers, sacred pools, as well as man-made features like rock art and dry-stone structures. Spiritual areas like these are subjected to taboos (Sheridan 2008). These range of rules and regulations determine peoples' behaviour in relation to the sacred space, and imply a set of beliefs often in relation to spirits and ancestors (Carmichael et al. 1994). The use of these heritage assets (cultural or natural) is governed by customary rules that are enforced by traditional custodians (Mumma 2005). Numerous communities across the world still have Traditional Custodianship Systems (TCS/TMS) to ensure protection and survival of sacred sites (Ngoro et al. 2008; Wild and McLeod 2008). Experience shows that whenever places are perceived as powerful oracles for communication with the ancestors or as sources of healing water and medicinal plants, they usually benefit from a remarkable traditional custodianship from local communities (Jopela 2011). Examples of such sites in southern Africa include the Matobo Hills WH Site in Zimbabwe and Mount Mulanje Cultural Landscape (also known as Mulanje Mountain Biosphere Reserve) in Malawi. Traditional Custodianship Systems (TCS), also referred to as Traditional Management Systems (TMS) elsewhere in this book, may be defined as cumulative bodies of knowledge, practice and belief about the relationship of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environment that are generated, preserved and transmitted in a traditional and intergenerational context. As a knowledge-practice-belief complex, TCS include the worldview or religious traditions of a society as well as an unwritten corpus of long-standing customs (Taylor and Kaplan 2005). The use of heritage assets (cultural or natural) in this system is governed by customary rules that are enforced by traditional custodians. These people have the prime responsibility for organising the use and safekeeping of each heritage resource. This includes enforcing social mechanisms (rites and taboos) to maintain respect for places that are culturally significant and sacred for the community (Berkes et al. 2000). TCS, therefore, comprises "all mechanisms and actions guided by customs and belief systems, carried out by local communities, aiming for the continuous use of the place including the preservation of its symbolic and cosmological significance" (Jopela 2011:107). It is widely accepted today that the primary management responsibility of heritage custodians is to conserve and protect the values that make a place significant (The Australian ICOMOS 1999). With regard to the management of intangible values at heritage sites, research now shows that TCS are vital prerequisites for any management strategy in a rural setting and that management systems must arise from the ethos and social environment of the local culture (Ngoro 1996; Pwiti 1996; Jopela 2011). Such an approach places tangible heritage in its wider context, particularly in the case of sacred sites, relating it more closely to communities so as to afford greater weight to spiritual, political and social values (Bouchenaki 2003). When considered

in this light, people associated with heritage sites are the primary stakeholders for stewardship (Mitchell et al. 2009). Thus, the best approach for managing such intangible values is one that gives the 'holders' of the heritage direct responsibility over its use, since survival of such values is contingent upon cultural traditions and contemporary needs of the stakeholders (Katsamudanga 2003). In this way, TCS provide an opportunity for the effective management of both cultural and natural heritage sites because, in many ways, they are community-based in terms of philosophical conservation orientation; have institutional legitimacy (as they derive their legitimacy from local communities); and embody community values (Mumma 2003; Ngoro 2006). Although the great potential of TCS as a decentralised and community-based management system is not contested, it is also argued that multiple threats and the changes in social, political and cosmological relationships, during colonial and postcolonial periods, erode its institutional legitimacy and cultural relevance (Milton 1996). Scholars like Michael Sheridan (2008:13) have warned that, along with the current trend to advocate for the blanket use of traditional custodianship systems for the effective management of heritage sites, there is "much potential for fallacious and erroneous management strategies guided by nostalgic and stereotyped views based on an old fashioned set of assumptions about 'local community', 'tradition' and 'religious belief systems'". Thus, the way forward is not to advocate for the blanket use of TCS in the management of WH properties across southern Africa. Rather, a conviction about the role of TCS in or alongside with the state-based heritage management framework must derive from a close examination of the assertions on the role and efficacy of TCS and the challenges they present.

Managing heritage in pre and post independent Africa

State-based heritage management, which includes the identification, documentation and promulgation of necessary legislation, was introduced throughout the African continent as part of the European colonisation (Pwiti and Ngoro 1999; Ngoro and Pwiti 2001). Consequently, state-based heritage organisations inherited rigid colonial legislation in the post-independent Africa. As can be expected, colonial legislation did not recognise the importance of traditional ways to protect heritage places (Maradze 2003) and this did not change after independence, a period during which traditional custodianship systems are still largely overlooked (Ngoro and Pwiti 2005). A number of reasons have been brought forward to explain this state of affairs. For instance, it was based on the belief that there had been a complete decline or 'suffocation' of TCS due to factors such as the colonial experience, the hegemony of mainstream religious faiths (e.g., Christianity) and processes of globalisation (Katsamudanga 2003). Due to increasing conflicts with local communities over perceptions of heritage, some archaeologists and heritage practitioners have, since the 1990s, shifted the heritage management paradigm from the 'monumentalist approach' that focused only on the protection of tangible aspects of heritage to a 'holistic' and 'value-based' conservation approach which recognises the need to build a more locally attuned heritage management framework (Deacon 1993; Pwiti 1996; Ngoro 2001). This paradigm shift led to debates on how to manage the cultural significance (values) of heritage places, especially sacred sites. Despite this, state-based heritage managers often criticise the 'damage' done to the sites as a result of the traditional uses (Taruvinga 2007). Example of this 'damage' is the practice of splashing traditional beer onto rock paintings (at Mongomi wa Kolo in Kondo, Tanzania) and the lighting of fires during rituals activities (Domboshava rock art site in Zimbabwe) (Pwiti and Mvenge 1996; Bwasiri 2011). Given the limited resources at their disposal, which negatively impact on the capacities of state-based her-

itage organisations (which still promote western notion of heritage conservation), scholars and heritage practitioners recognise that effective management of immovable heritage or any other place of cultural significance cannot be achieved by state-based heritage organisations on their own (Mumma 2003). Shifting focus to biodiversity, similar trends are evident. Following the failure of many state-led 'fortress conservation' efforts, many biodiversity researchers and policy-makers began adopting 'participatory community-based conservation' approaches for natural resource management (Singh and van Houtum 2002: 256). The same approach is now being discussed for sacred heritage sites. As a result, TCS seem to provide an opportunity for the effective management of both cultural and natural heritage sites. There are three reasons for this. First, they are community-based in terms of philosophical conservation orientation. Second, they have institutional legitimacy. Third, they embody community values (Mumma 2003; Jopela 2011). However, in spite of their potential as an authentically decentralised and community-based management system, TCS are often overlooked in the general scheme of institutionalised heritage management. They are, therefore, not integrated with current management systems and training/academic curricula. In southern Africa, sites such as the Matobo Hills (Zimbabwe), Tsodilo Hills (Botswana), Chongoni Rock Art Area (Malawi) and Kondo Rock Art Sites (Tanzania) were inscribed onto the WH List also under criterion (vi). Sites listed under this criterion must be "directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, of outstanding universal significance" (UNESCO 2013: OG Paragraph 77). These inscriptions were thus confirmations of the strong association of these sites with living communities and traditions. Some of these sites still have active TCS. The problem however remains that TCS is often accorded an inferior status in relation to the state-based systems and thus play a very limited role in the preservation of the cultural significant heritage places (Ngoro et al. 2008). This regressive tendency has also been identified in the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting concerning World Heritage in the Africa region which was carried out between 2009 and 2011 (UNESCO 2011). Thus, and despite the common assumption that the solution for many problems is contingent on the successful integration of traditional systems into state-base management framework (Sheridan 2008; Jopela et al. 2012), the place of traditional custodianship is yet to be appropriately addressed. This study investigated whether a deeper understanding of TCS by heritage managers can add value to the effective and sustainable management of African World Heritage Sites in the region. Using two case studies, the investigation focused on the current TCS at the Matobo Hills WH Site in Zimbabwe and Mount Mulanje Cultural Landscape (also known as Mulanje Mountain Biosphere Reserve) in Malawi. These sites share a common feature: a strong intangible association between the landscapes and contemporary local communities' traditions. However, the geographical, political, and socio-economic contexts in which they are located present different dynamics in terms of the relationship between TCS and the existing state-based management frameworks. These are discussed in greater detail below.

Brief overview of Traditional Custodianship Systems in Southern Africa

There are currently (as of April 2015) sixteen properties from southern Africa inscribed on the WH List under at least one cultural criterion. Twenty five percent of these properties were inscribed also under criterion (vi) of the UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the WH Convention (OG) due to their strong association with living communities and tra-

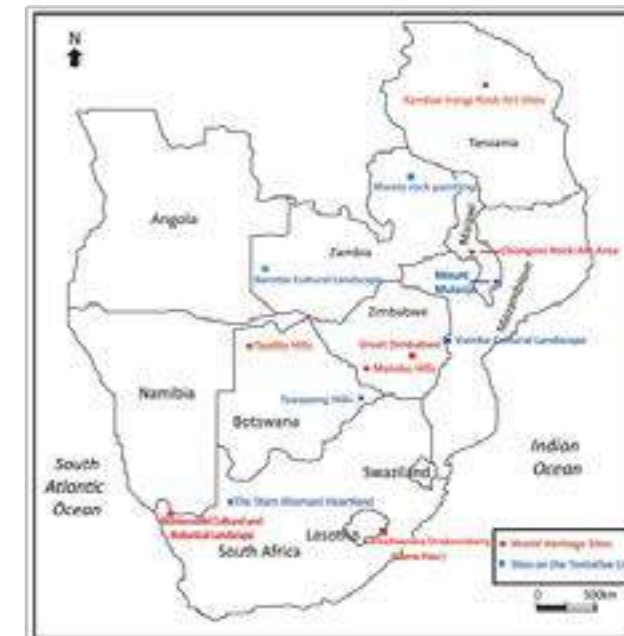


Figure 1. Map showing the location of sites mentioned in the text.

ditions. It is interesting to note that forty four percent of these sixteen properties, including those not inscribed under criterion (vi), are imbued with sacred values and currently used for rituals by the living local communities. Furthermore, twenty four percent of the twenty nine properties inscribed on the State-Parties Tentative Lists, have strong association with living communities. The role of local communities in the active custodianship of heritage through living traditions has been observed in many places across the region. For instance, Mongomi wa Kolo, a hunter-gatherer rock art site in Kondo Rock-Art WH Site in northern Tanzania, is a focal point for regular ritual practices among the Bantu language speaking Warangi and Wasi/Waragwa communities in Kondo (Loubser 2006). Traditional healers visit Mongomi wa Kolo with goats, sheep or chickens to sacrifice in healing rituals. Rainmakers from a nearby village practice various rituals at Mongomi wa Kolo while individuals also go to the site for divination. Oral traditions indicate that Mongomi wa Kolo is a land spirit and it is considered more powerful than other ritual places in Kondo (Chalcraft 2008; Bwasiri 2011). Similar to Mongomi wa Kolo, the communities of Hambukushu (Bantu speakers) and the! Kung (Khoisan speakers) have strong traditional beliefs attached to Tsodilo Hills, a WH Site in north-west Botswana, as a place of worship and ancestral spirits. Local shamans, guides and herbalists point to specific areas within the site, which are testimony to the marks of the first animals, the first people, first sex spot as well as the first and eternal water spring in the Tsodilo landscape. These examples clearly illustrate that present living communities still have a strong bond with the natural and cultural elements in their surrounding landscape. In fact, "the ritual significance of archaeological sites suggests that communities in these landscapes draw on the past material cultures [Stone Age sites] to negotiate and reconstruct their present identities and their ritualised world-views" (Pwiti et al. 2007:103). As pointed out by Ngoro and Pwiti (2001) and others (see e.g., Munjeri 2005; Nyathi and Ndiwini 2005), post-independence heritage legislation is silent on TCS. Various conflicts have been witnessed between local communities and state-based heritage management institutions across the region as a result of the exclusion of TCS from heritage legislation. The famous case of Domboshava rock art shelter in Zimbabwe is a clear example of this situation. For local people, Domboshava was a rainmaking shrine under traditional systems, which provided an important setting for traditional ceremonies. However, for the

National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ), the most important heritage asset at the site was the rock art. Since Domboshava was declared as National Monument in 1938, traditional ceremonies were seen as detrimental to the preservation of the rock art, thus leading to the ban of the practices by NMMZ. Despite this ban, people continued to secretly hold the ceremonies, leading to the souring of relationship between NMMZ and the community. Subsequently, local community members destroyed the NMMZ curio shop at Domboshava in 1995 and the dialogue initiated with local traditional leaders in 1994 failed. The greatest damage that occurred on the site was the application of a brown oil paint on the rock art panels in 1998 (Pwiti and Mvenge 1996; Taruvinga and Ndoro 2003). Perhaps incidents such as these would not have occurred if a TCS that took cognisance of the community's relationship to the site was recognised by the state-based heritage institution (i.e. NMMZ).

Traditional Custodianship Systems in

Southern Africa: Some case studies

Traditional Custodianship Systems are firmly anchored in the intangible heritage (ethical values, social customs and belief systems) of communities and largely informed by local cosmologies (Jopela 2011). Such cosmologies are dependent on local social mechanisms, political systems and religious conventions that regulate the use and management of natural resources. Therefore, the discussion on TCS at the Matobo Hills World Heritage Site and Mount Mulanje Cultural Landscape will focus on the analysis of three major aspects of these systems: the local communities' worldview and the use of places of cultural significance; the role of the traditional authority in the management of heritage resources; and the challenges facing TCS including the requirements under the World Heritage Convention.

Matobo Hills World Heritage Site, Zimbabwe

Location and description of the site

The Matobo Hills area, also known locally as Matopos or Matonjeni, lies some 35 km south of Zimbabwe's second largest city of Bulawayo in Matabeleland South Province. The area is approximately 3100 km² (Makhuvaza and Makhuvaza 2012). The most distinctive landforms are the inselbergs, whalebacks, and castellated hills (commonly known as kopjes). These geological formations and landforms, which resulted from geomorphological processes, have given rise to a wide diversity of niches supporting a variety of fauna and flora. The large granite boulders have also provided abundant natural shelters and have been associated with human occupation from the Early Stone Age (ESA) right through to the early historical period, and intermittently since (NMMZ 2004; Makhuvaza and Makhuvaza 2012). According to the Nomination Dossier produced by the National Monuments and Museums of Zimbabwe (NMMZ 2002), communities constitute the major stakeholder in the Matobo Hills area. This is because they have permanent residences and derive their subsistence from the resources within the World Heritage area. Communities living nearby are the Matobo, Gulati, Kumalo (Matobo District Council), Urnzinyathini and Nswazi (Urnzinyathini District Council). In addition, the Nomination Dossier stated that the Matobo Hills World Heritage Site are characterised by rock paintings; Stone and Iron Age archaeological sites; historical sites from pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. Amongst these post-colonial historical sites are the burial sites of King Mzilikazi, founder of the Ndebele nation and Cecil John Rhodes, after whom the country came to be known as Rhodesia. It was later renamed Zimbabwe after it attained independence in 1980.

What gives Matobo its continuing relevance to local communities today is the strong persistence of indigenous beliefs and practices associated with Matobo as a sacred place or the seat of God, (Mwari/Mlimo), the home of ancestral spirits, and the focus for rituals. As a result, the area has been linked to rain-making and harvest ceremonies as well as other ritual activities. Chiefs, headmen and spirit mediums all play an important role in coordinating such traditional activities and mobilising the people. Within the Matobo Hills, certain places have become known as shrines. Njelele, specifically associated with agricultural rituals, is one of the most important rituals and attracts people from as far as South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and Lesotho (NMMZ 2002; ICOMOS 2003). Besides heritage resources, the area is also rich in natural heritage (i.e. rock forms, high biodiversity, rare species) and a living intangible culture associated with the rock forms. The NMMZ, manages all cultural resources found in the Matobo Hills area irrespective of boundaries and ownership. This is in accordance with the NMMZ Act (Chapter 25:11). However, the situation on the ground demands that the management be done in conjunction with other stakeholders such as the Rural District Councils' Conservation Committees, National Parks officials, Chiefs and shrine custodians (NMMZ 2004). According to the last Management Plan (2004-2009), the conservation of Matobo Hills World Heritage Site is coordinated by a Management Committee comprising representatives from the traditional leadership (Chiefs and custodians of shrines), NMMZ, Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management (DNPWLM), Matobo and Utizingwane Rural District Councils and Natural Resources Board. This is said to be a committee of decision makers. However, the day-to-day conservation activities are carried out by a team of technocrats appointed by the Management Committee with the assistance of various non-governmental organizations (NMMZ 2004). Since the implementation time frame from the Management Plan came to an end in 2009, no Management Committee has been appointed. This is because of the contestations between communities, National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (NPWMA) and NMMZ. The former made three accusations: they accused the Management Committee of failing to arrange regular meetings to check on the progress of implementing the site management plan. In addition, they criticised the NPWMA for renegeing on the relaxing of stringent state policies, which prevent the local people from benefiting from the park's resources. Furthermore, they accused NMMZ of being interested only in the revenue generated without investing this into the conservation and maintenance of roads leading to cultural sites managed by NMMZ which became inaccessible to the community. What all of these contestations meant was that the proclamation of the hills as a World Heritage Site had not helped to have state laws relaxed as was purported during the nomination time (Makhuvaza and Makhuvaza 2012: 26). Besides all these challenges, NMMZ officials are in the process of finalising a new five year Management Plan.

Traditional Custodianship System at the Matobo Hills

Local community's worldview and sacred places

Traditionally, the Matobo Hills is home of shrines of the Mwari/Mlimo cult believed to play spiritual roles in the lives of the Shona, Kalanga and Ndebele, both in the past and amongst the present communities (Ranger 1999). For the local communities, the Matobo Hills are Malindadzimu, 'a burial place', and hence a sacred place. From historical times, they buried their relatives in different parts of the hills. One Ndebele king, Mzilikazi, was also buried in Matopo. This is the reason why Rhodes demanded that

he too be buried at Malindadzimu. Many families in and around the Matobo Hills have specific places or sites where they carry out family or clan rituals such as appeasing spirits, praying for the sick, praying to territorial spirits in times of disasters or the outbreak of diseases, and performing other traditional ceremonies which are important in their day-to-day lives. Another important activity is the continued extraction of traditional medicines by local herbalists to treat the sick in the community (NMMZ 2004).

Prominent in the landscape are a number of religious shrines such as Njelele, Dula, Zhilo, Wirirani and Manyanga. Amongst these shrines, Njelele is the most important. It is often referred to as Dombolotshipoteleka: the shifting or turning rock. Njelele is a rock outcrop situated on a hill southwest of Rhodes Matopos National Park in the Khumalo communal area. Access to the site is through a sacred forest that stretches for more than 500 metres (NMMZ 2004). It is believed that the voice of Mwari/Mlimo is heard from the stone at Njelele and must not be tampered with in any way (Ranger 1999). There are regular visits by priests and messengers from various chiefs throughout the country to appease Mwari/Mlimo by sacrificing and presenting him with cattle and beer. The cult could also be consulted and Mwari/Mlimo invoked in times of illness and death, domesticated animal diseases, during agricultural seasons of sowing and reaping, succession disputes, natural phenomena such as rainfall failure, and even in times of politics and war (Makhuvaza 2008:166). Although Njelele remains the centre of rain-control ceremonies as well as other religious activities in this cultural landscape, several other places are regarded as sacred as well. For instance, local people regard the rock art site, Nswatugi, as the place where Mwari/Mlimo passed enroute to the Njelele shrine, where he now resides (Pwiti et al. 2007). Silozwane is another Later Stone Age (LSA) rock art site within a sacred forest in Matobo Hills valued by the local people as a rain-control shrine (Ndoro 2003). These powerful oracles link local communities to the Matobo Hills – where the ancestral spirits live in sacred forests, mountains, caves, hollow trees, pools and rock art sites. The Matobo Hills have become "objects of spiritual significance from where local people derive inspiration, fertility and health and contact their ancestral spirits" (NMMZ 2002:9). The TCS at Matobo Hills is characterized by the active use of shrines and sacred places closely linked to traditional, social and economic activities (ICOMOS 2003). The respect accorded to these sacred areas and their environs lies partly in a series of customary usage and access laws to these places (taboos relating to sacred site etiquette). To illustrate this respect, people attach great reverence for the environment because they argue, by desecrating it they deprive their God and their ancestors of a place to live. Thus, a traditionally appointed custodian resides at the Njelele shrine to manage it. The shrine custodian, guided by traditional rules which everybody must observe, leads all pilgrims from within Zimbabwe and neighbouring countries in all ceremonies performed at the site (NMMZ 2002). Amongst the site etiquettes that must be observed within the sacred cultural and environmental landscape of Matobo Hills are that (i) individuals or groups of people must visit a sacred place or its environs only in the presence of the official priest or priestess or his/her appointee; (ii) songs of praise to the ancestors precede an approach to the shrine and a spiritual custodian leads all visitors; (iii) it is taboo to cut down a tree in a sacred place since trees constitute the dwelling place of the ancestral spirits and removing them is tantamount to exposing Mwari and the spirits; (iv) the traditional custodian must obtain ancestral spirits' consent before a tree is cut down within the sacred forest; (v) when visiting sacred places in the Matobo Hills, the acceptable behaviour is to remove shoes, wristwatches, and money before entering the area; (vi) all the shrines are accessible throughout the week except on Wednesdays because on this day known as 'Chisi' or 'Zilo', all people are expected to rest.

Failure to observe these norms is believed to result in punishment by the spirits of individuals, or their families, or the entire community (NMMZ 2002, 2004; Makhuvaza 2008). It is apparent that traditional custodianship was, and still is to a large extent in place to manage activities within Matobo and that it is primarily related to religious shrines such as Njelele.

Traditional authorities and the management of heritage resources

The pre-colonial Ndebele State was characterised by an association between the people of the Matopo Hills area and their natural environment. The co-operation between the religious and political authorities served to generate taboos that ensured environmentally friendly economic and social practices. The King appointed and installed all Chiefs with the help of izinyanga and izangoma (medicine men and spirit mediums). The role of the Chiefs, as custodians of the land, was to rule under the guidance of spirit mediums and council elders. The Chief led religious/spiritual ceremonies in their areas, while national ceremonies like inxwala (the first fruits ceremony) were presided over by the King. The Chiefs also played judicial roles to maintain law and order (Ndlovu and Dube 2012). The annexation of Matabeleland by the British Pioneer Column in 1893 took away the nationhood of amaNdebele. The country was then divided into the Mashonaland and Matabeleland Provinces. Chiefs were under a Chief Native Commissioner. Below him was a Native Commissioner (NC) stationed in each district who was assisted in his administrative duties by African functionaries including Chiefs, kraal heads and messengers. Chiefs were transformed from leaders to minor colonial civil servants (Ndlovu and Dube 2012:57). From then on, chieftainship and other positions depended not only on inheritance laws but also on governmental approval. This also eroded the role of the spirit mediums in nominating and installing traditional leaders (Makahamadze et al. 2009). When Zimbabwe attained its independence in 1980, the post-colonial ZANU-PF government adopted socialist policies that excluded the roles of traditional leaders. Powers were shifted from traditional authorities to the state under the District Councils Act (1980), Communal Areas Act (1982), Prime Minister's Directive on Decentralisation (1982), and the Rural District Councils Act of 1988. For instance, the District Councils Act (1980) removed the power to allocate land from the traditional Chiefs and headmen to District Councils, while the Prime Minister's Directive on Decentralization (1982) resulted in the establishment of local institutions known as the Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) and Ward Development Committees (WADCOS). The latter formed a parallel institution to the traditional authority in place at village level, creating friction between elected leaders and the traditional leaders at community level (Makahamadze et al. 2009). After eighteen years of independence, the ZANU-PF government made a sudden shift regarding the way it related to the traditional institutions. The government returned some powers to local chiefs and other traditional leaders with the enactment of the Traditional Leaders Act of 1998 and via amendments made to the Act in 1999, 2001 and 2003 (Makahamadze et al. 2009). The Act governs the conduct and duties of traditional leaders mandated with the task of reviving traditional value systems. The reinstatement of traditional systems in the management of cultural heritage coincided with the land redistribution programme in the late 1990s and early 2000s whereby the government promised to redress the distortions created by colonialism and to return ancestral lands to their traditional owners. This ushered in a new era in which local communities invaded commercial farms and other areas previously owned by white people in order to reclaim their ancestral lands. This was accompanied by a major drive to revive traditional ceremonies such as rainmaking rituals and rites to appease the

ancestors. Some of these ceremonies were even funded by the government (Jopela et al. 2012). Despite the political manipulation, many traditional leaders still remain influential in contemporary Zimbabwe, especially in rural local government. Conflicts over the recognition of priesthood and custodianship of Njelele have been witnessed (Ranger 1999). A case in point is the contests among traditional custodians (i.e. Sitwanyana Ncube, David Ndlovu, and Ngcathu Ncube) on the one hand, and the politicians on the other, over the control of Njelele. From the mid-1980s, all three contestants (Sitwanyana, Ndlovu and Ngcathu) claimed to have been legally installed as custodians and each also claimed strong traditional spiritual connections to the shrine (Ranger 1999; Makhuvaza 2008). Before this contestation over custodianship, the colonial government had tried sometime before the 1960s to declare Njelele a national monument under the Monuments and Relics Act of 1936. Having failed to declare the site a national monument due to strong resistance of local communities on religious grounds, the National Parks Board, decided in 1961 to completely separate the local people and Njelele from Matobo National Parks by moving the park boundary further north to where it is today (Makhuvaza 2008). The issue of proclaiming Njelele a national monument resurfaced again in 1998. Gathering in a public meeting, the then ZANU-PF Minister of Home Affairs, Dumiso Dabengwa, intended to convince the gathering that if Njelele was not going to be proclaimed a national monument, the Matobo hills might not be proclaimed a World Heritage Area. However, the invited public refused to have Njelele proclaimed a national monument, arguing that the shrine would be opened up for tourism opportunities if the proclamation was to go through. Their objection against tourism development was that this will only benefit the NMMZ (Makhuvaza 2008). The site was eventually inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 2003. Various conflicts over Matopo Hills have continued over the years. In two separate incidents, ex-ZANLA (Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army) combatants, apparently in the company of 10 traditional leaders from Mashonaland, repeatedly visited the Matobo shrine to conduct their cleansing ceremony without consulting local traditional leaders. In another incident, over 500 former ZANLA combatants visiting the ZIPRA's (Zimbabwe Peoples' Revolutionary Army) Nampundu and Freedom camps in Zambia collected soil and stones from graves of their cadres who were killed during the liberation war and took them to Matobo Hills in August to conduct rituals (NewsDay, October 9, 2012). In another incident a year later, a group of war veterans wrote a letter to chiefs in Matabeleland South informing them of their intended visit to the Njelele shrine to conduct their rituals at the place of pilgrimage, while also celebrating ZANU-PF's victory in the July. Traditional Chiefs immediately condemned the intended visits, resolving that the police should stop the group from visiting the shrine. Chief Masuku's later added that "after realising government could not protect their shrines, cultural leaders and villagers took it upon themselves to do so" (Financial Gazette, October 3, 2013). A year earlier, the intended visits were described by Chief Malaki Masuku as showing "lack of respect for Ndebele chiefs" (NewsDay, August 10, 2012). A similar concern was raised by the shrine's custodian, uKhulu Tobheka Sifelano Ncube (Radio Dialogue, August 16, 2012). Besides all these challenges, traditional custodians are still exercising control over the access and use of places of cultural significance in the Matobo cultural landscape.

Challenges facing Traditional Custodianship Systems

'Local' socio-cultural and political dynamics
The ICOMOS Evaluation Mission noted in 2003 concerns by elders that younger people were no longer showing much in-

terest in learning and carrying on the traditions in the Matobo area (ICOMOS 2003). According to Makhuvaza and Makhuvaza (2012:29), the recognition and restoration of traditional laws in managing the hills is also made difficult by some in the local communities who had begun embracing Christian values, thus abandoning their traditional beliefs. What this illustrates is that the traditional values that had protected the hills, especially their intangible elements, could now be perceived and regarded as ungodly. As a result, they are challenged by those who hold Christian morals. This led to uKhulu Ncube, the custodian of the Njelele shrine, suggesting that people have turned their backs on traditional rituals, values and beliefs. He urged government to revisit the issue of sacred places and enact laws to protect these shrines and elevate them to national heritage status. According to him, the situation has been worsened by the fact that some traditional chiefs have converted to Christianity and now despise traditional values as backward (The Herald 2014). As a result, some Chiefs no longer pioneer traditional Ndebele shrines as the answer to social, economic or even political problems. For instance, Headman Moyo, who is under Chief Masuku in the Khumalo communal lands, is Christian and no longer appreciates traditional beliefs and customs that sustained his forefathers (Ndlovu and Dube 2012:60). Despite the fact that the conservation ideology imposed by the rain-shrines has helped to preserve the environment, such an empowered conservation ideology is lacking because the traditional custodianship systems have been tampered with by colonisation and the post-independence politics. Consequently, there is rampant cutting of the grey mukwa tree due to demand for curios. The taboos that would have once restricted the cutting of these trees are no longer enforced or respected, nor do they hold sway amongst the population, whose ultimate concern is monetary gain. Today, even though it is recognized that traditional custodianship are still effective in parts of the Matobo Hills, this management system is limited to areas outside the park, as State laws still prohibit locals from performing activities that are deemed to threaten its environment and wildlife (Makhuvaza and Makhuvaza 2012). While this has been the case, the new conservation ethic (the western approach) has not been embraced by local communities (Nyathi and Ndiwini 2005). Another challenge to the traditional custodianship systems is the perception by local communities that local government institutions are extensions of the ruling party, ZANU-PF. The Traditional Leadership Act provides that chiefs are not allowed to be partisan. However, due to political interference in succession and installation, and thanks to the monetary gains available to them by the government, chiefs end up submitting to politics. They become civil servants on the government payroll. The politicisation of tradition leadership had given birth to a mistrust and disrespect of traditional leaders (Ndlovu and Dube 2012). For instance, with regards to the current under-development in the Matobo district, some community members point fingers at the traditional leadership system. Chief Malaki Masuku and his traditional leadership are often accused of failing to represent the interests of the people due to his political affiliation with ZANU-PF. The Chief's relocation to a farmhouse 90 km away from community has created a widening gulf between himself and the community members, as he is not easily accessible (Ndlovu and Dube 2012:60).

Requirements under the World Heritage Convention

Regardless of the challenges facing TCS, it is undeniable that traditions and values associated with specific places in the Matobo Hills cultural landscape are still living and valued by modern-day peoples of Zimbabwe. They still invoke and consult the shrine in times of crisis such as drought, illness and death, domestic and animal disease, and during agricultural seasons of sowing and reaping, among other things (Makhuvaza 2008; Makhuvaza and

Makhuvaza 2012). Despite the political interference, the case of Matobo Hills also illustrates that the traditional custodians and the traditional leadership remains a very important actor in the safeguarding of places of cultural significance such as Njelele. It is also important to realise that elements of TCS have been integrated into the state-based management of the site. In fact, according to the Matobo Hills World Heritage Site Management Plan 2004-2009 (March 2004) a number of principles and rules are in place to safeguard sacred areas and sites. For instance, (i) no gardens or homesteads are supposed to be erected close to the sites; (ii) water should not be collected using a pot with soot or a pot that is used for cooking; (iii) the wells should not be any physical intervention, that is, no cement should be used to construct well covers and no metal pipes are allowed to be fitted on the sites; (iv) no tourists and young people who are sexually active are allowed during the rain making ceremonies; (v) tree around the wells should not be cut down; (vi) custodians of the sites should always inform people of the 'dos' and 'don'ts' at those sites; (vii) only very old women who neither engage in sexual activities nor have menstrual periods are allowed to clean sacred wells (NMMZ 2004:51).

Mount Mulanje Cultural Landscape, Malawi

Location and description of the site

Mount Mulanje is the highest mountain in south-central Africa, located in Mulanje and Phalombe Districts of south-eastern Malawi. The highest point at MMCL is Sapitwa at 3,002 m above sea level (MTC 2013). The Mountain itself and the area immediately around it (with villages, small-scale cultivation, and tea estates), makes up the Mount Mulanje Cultural Landscape (MMCL). This property is proposed for inscription on the World Heritage List and is in the Tentative List of the State Party of Malawi. The core zone of the MMCL consists of the Mulanje Mountain Forest Reserve (MMFR), with an area of 642.5 km² and the buffer zone, consisting of 851 km² of land. The MMCL is well known for its endemism, complex biotic evolutionary history and biodiversity, containing the unique Mulanje cedar and other endemic plants and animal species. The property also contains two architectural sites, one of which is registered as a national monument (Fort Lister) and a former military post created to suppress the Indian Ocean trade of enslaved people and colonial mansions. Besides these two architectural sites, the MMCL also has several archaeological sites related to the Late Stone and Iron Age (MTC 2013). Mount Mulanje is a living associative cultural landscape linked to the Mang'anja (Nyanja), Yao and Lhomwe people. The mountain features act not only as a symbol, but also as the centre of associated belief systems. While stories, ritual and spiritual associations are linked to the entire mountain, few places are ascribed special significance. Specific ceremonies, songs and prayers are undertaken before and during journeys to the mountain. Mount Mulanje is ascribed the ability to cause rain and fertility, to heal diseases, to withhold visitors for limited or unlimited time and to move the earth and to cause hazard and death. These beliefs, and the associated rituals, transcend the younger religions of Christianity and Islam that were established in the region and hold together all communities residing around Mount Mulanje (ICOMOS 2014). The main ethnic groups in Mulanje are the Lomwe, Yao and Mang'anja, who traditionally follow a matrilineal system of descent and kinship. The local population within 7 km distance of the mountain is estimated to be around 400,000 and are distributed in 139 villages (Wisborg and Jumbe 2010). Many of these locals practice subsistence farming and those living near the MMFR boundaries also harvest and sell forest products such as honey, fruits, wild vegetables, medicinal plants, mushrooms and some wildlife. In addition, they also gather firewood, tim-

ber, and grass for thatch and broom making. A small number of people run ecotourism ventures and collect wood for carving. The MMFR is in accordance with the Forestry Act of 1997 managed by the mandated authority, the Department of Forestry. The Department of Forestry has the mandate to conserve biodiversity and protect watersheds, through the co-management of forest reserves (MTC 2013). Another important stakeholder is the Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust (MMCT). This independent, non-governmental endowment trust was established in 2001 and funded through the World Bank. Its aim is to provide long-term, reliable support for the management of MMFR and the MMCL, and to provide a stream of funds and assistance to local communities to demonstrate tangible benefits from conservation of the resource base. The conservation of Malawi's cultural heritage is within the mandate of the Department of Culture. Conservation of monuments is the mandate of the subsidiary Department of Antiquities, while the Department of Arts and Crafts and Museums of Malawi focuses on moveable and intangible heritage. The Departments of Culture has managed the Fort Lister monument and initiated their commitment to other responsibilities at Mulanje (MTC 2013). The creation of MMCT was rooted in a strong perception that the government, through the Department of Forestry, lacked adequate resources, both financial, human and institutional, to cope with the challenges of sustainable resource management on Mulanje Mountain. It is no surprise that the MMCT appears to be the most active of the main partners and has taken a clear lead and initiator role in management processes. However, while MMCT is driving the planning, the implementation remains the duty of the Department of Forestry. This has led the MMCT to encroach upon the public authority of the Department of Forestry by engaging in 'law enforcement' (Wisborg & Jumbe 2010). In fact, while the work of the MMCT is important (e.g. awareness-raising and outreach programmes to the local population), the Trust neither have the expertise nor mandate to manage the cultural heritage resources of the property (ICOMOS 2014:64). Thus, the relationship between the Department of Forestry and the MMCT is fraught with tension and needs to be improved in several respects.

Traditional Custodianship System at Mount Mulanje

Local communities' worldview and sacred places

The TCS at Mulanje is based on knowledge transmitted predominantly by elders or specifically designated teachers of the ritual practice and spiritual associations. The teachings by these people include conservation messages concerning the protection of forests (MTC 2013). These messages are passed in different forms. The belief systems attached to Mulanje have strong associations with the ancestors of all of the different cultural groups living around the Mountain as well as with their predecessors, the Abatwa. Each cultural group has its own traditions around how they came to live in the shadow of Mount Mulanje including when that happened (MTC 2013). Amongst the cultural ceremonies attached to Mulanje are those of birth and initiation. For instance, and as in other forests across neighbouring districts, forest medicine from Mulanje plays a strong role for mothers and their new-born babies. The importance of forests for initiation ceremonies varies. According to the study by Concern Universal (2014:26), this was said to be greatest for the Chewa, Lomwe and Yao people and still very significant across the Mulanje district. Besides the birth and initiation ceremonies, there are graveyards located inside the forests. These belief systems have created a sacred landscape that demands, of users of the Mountain, a strict code of behaviour.

Such behaviour is designed to protect them when visiting the site, and to protect and sustain the resources of the Mountain (ICOMOS 2014). Besides the taboos associated with Mount Mulanje, there are ceremonies that are associated with a journey to the mountain. To ensure that such taboos are always adhered to, amongst others, it is claimed there is a spirit snake, Napolo, which captures people who look up at the Mountain. It is described in some legends as a human-like one-eyed, one legged, one-armed creature that floats slowly in the air, and waits to capture (MTC 2013). Generally speaking, the mountain is a powerful rainmaker and is turned to during times of drought, being a place for rainmaking ceremonies. In this regard the Dziwelankhalamba pool at the foot of the Mountain is particularly significant. It is linked to the Abatwa. The fact that Chiefs are only ex-officio members of the Assemblies, and often restricted to being simply advisors to their local development committees, also diminished their powers (Cammarack et al. 2009). As a result, Chiefs frequently complain that freedom and democracy have undermined people's respect for them since the transition to democracy (Concern Universal 2014). On the other hand Chiefs have been able to regain some ground at sub-national level. Recent studies in Mulanje show that traditional leaders, especially at VDC level, play roles beyond the advisory role to, often times include assent, veto and even overruling powers regarding VDC and VNRMC decisions (Jana 2009; Concern Universal 2014). In addition, the State has relied on the traditional leaders to champion its development agenda by using them as agents of change. Finally, the ability of Chiefs to mobilise votes means that they have gained significance in the multiparty era (Cammarack et al. 2009).

Traditional authorities and the management of heritage resources

The framework for Local Communities participation in Natural Resource Management in Malawi is defined under the Decentralisation Policy of 1998 and the Local Government Act of 1998. Accordingly, Mulanje District follows the local government structures where the District Assembly is set up as a statutory body. Below the District Assembly are, Area Development Committees (ADC) that oversee development activities in several villages that fall under a Traditional Authority (Chief). The TA seats as an ex-officio member of the ADC (Jana 2009). MMFR falls under the jurisdiction of three Traditional Authorities, Nkanda, Laston Njema and Mabuka (Concern Universal 2014). At the base of the districts' governance systems there are Village Development Committees (VDC). There are seventy nine VDCs (546 villages in total) in Mulanje, each having an average of seven villages (Taulo et al. 2008). The relationship between the state and the institution of traditional leadership has been adversarial and cordial depending on the prevailing circumstances. In many instances, Malawi's traditional Chiefs have suffered serious blows to their powers since 1994. The introduction of local councillors challenged the Chiefs' position as representatives and gatekeepers to the local population. Nonetheless, Wisborg and Jumbe (2010:29) suggests that "while giving de jure authority and resource rights to communities with one hand, state agencies recentralized de facto authority and disempowered many communities with the other through rigid procedural and technical hurdles to community eligibility". For instance, two Group Villages (Nakhonyo and Mangombo) in Mulanje area, where the co-management agreements between the Department of Forestry is operational, the Lomwe community had reportedly reduced the length of their initiation ceremonies from 30 to 7 days in part as a result of the scarcity of well covered forest areas, and they were not permitted to conduct their ceremonies inside the MMFR (Concern Universal 2014). In fact, the co-management agreements currently in place (e.g. in Mulanje and Kasungu) do not include cultural provisions despite the fact

that it has been noticed that initiation ceremonies are scarcer and shorter in many areas around Mulanje owing, at least in part, to a lack of tree cover outside the neighbouring forest reserve. Another difficulty in the relationship between the State agencies and Traditional Authorities lies in the fact that there is still a lack of genuine effort from State agencies and NGOs to learn from communities, embrace or negotiate with their perceptions of the 'values' of the mountain, which are sometimes taken-for-granted (Wisborg and Jumbe 2010:35). In fact, little consideration is given to the development of management plans and the involvement of forest-dependent communities in the management of the local forest resources. Negotiated management plans are potentially a tool for equalising and integrating local/traditional and the Western scientific knowledge and interests. Yet the implicit need for formal scientific validity of this tool creates a barrier to equality in negotiations (Zulu 2012). As a result, institutions such as the MMCT tend to take for granted 'lack of knowledge' or 'lack of interest' from the local community in the environment as the cause for environmental degradation around Mount Mulanje area.

Challenges facing Traditional Custodianship Systems

There is no doubt that the cultural traditions of the Mang'anja, Yao and Lhomwe people underpin the spiritual value and ritual practice associated with Mount Mulanje. As recently noted by ICOMOS (2014), specific cultural values, fears and taboos act as traditional protection mechanisms at Mount Mulanje. In other words, the traditional custodianship systems are still effective. However, it should be noted, as Wisborg and Jumbe (2010:29) rightfully put it, that "it is not the 'unique value' of the mountain [and its traditional custodianship system] that will save it, but rather the agency of individuals and groups based on the real opportunities they have in using the mountain and on their ability to learn and take their insight into action". It is, therefore, important to nurture people's sense that they do have knowledge and that they play a role in sustainable resource use. The State agencies (Department of Forestry) and NGOs (MMCT) need to acknowledge the fact that communities operating within traditional custodianship systems can manage their heritage on behalf of the State. However, there are various elements that have been identified as posing threat to traditional custodianship systems. First, there is a widespread feeling among villagers in Mulanje that previously, it was possible for the Chief and Village Headmen to set and enforce by-laws on the management of the riverbanks, springs and streams. People feel that since the new political dispensation which has brought 'many freedoms', enforcement of these rules and regulation has been made difficult (Concern Universal 2014:28). Second, because the rules and regulation under traditional custodianship are not written down, enforcement is dependent on the charisma and strength of the local leaders. Thus, if the local leader is weak, villagers do not fear/respect him or her (Kafakoma and Silungwe 2003). Third, there has been decline in the value attached to the forest by locals. Fourth, population growth and poverty were causing a severe threat to the trees and forest areas (Concern Universal 2014). Fifth, and as noted in a recent ICOMOS Report (2014), the current management plan does not address the cultural aspects in particular the spiritual and traditional custodianship systems. The lack of reference to and interaction with traditional custodianship practices in the management plan and current official management system increases difficulties in terms of community involvement.

Lessons from the case studies

From the on-going analysis of the nature of TCS in the cultural landscapes of Matobo Hills and Mount Mulanje, several points of significance emerge. First, the analysis clearly illustrates that

the use and management of natural and cultural resources is sustained by a wider frame of religious beliefs that define the codes, roles, obligations and behavioural patterns of the community towards the space and the resources. Control of access and the use of such sacred places, is vested in specific members of the community, the traditional custodians. Notwithstanding the potential of traditional custodianship for managing heritage places that are imbued with sacred values, these systems can lose their effectiveness, or be weakened at best, in a context of overwhelming socio-political stress. Four points that are a significant threat to TCS should be highlighted here: (i) in the case of Matobo Hills, the 2004-2009 Management Plan indicates that graffiti, usually in the form of charcoal, is a problem at some sites with rock art, with those grossly affected being in communal areas such as Silozwane; (ii) the violation of taboos and access restrictions to sites by both the local people and visitors has led to the desecration of some heritage places; (iii) due to high population, uncontrolled burning, and the absence of alternative sources of fuel for domestic use, deforestation has become a pronounced problem in communal areas; and (iv) the high demand for curios has contributed to uncontrolled logging of selected wood species. Such practices have severely degraded parts of the WH Site (NMMZ 2004). These situations clearly show that traditional systems are currently under strain and their effectiveness in protecting places of cultural significance in and around Matobo Hills has been reduced. Second, sacred sites are contested landscapes. Likewise, the custodianship and management of such heritage places is often inseparable from issues of power and, ultimately, from local and national politics. The disputes among traditional custodians and between these and politicians for the control of sacred places have been witnessed, as per the Matobo case study discussed above. Sites like Njelele in the Matobo and other places of cultural significance are manifestations of power and all who need power, either to control a small community (village) or the whole chieftaincy (district), turn to them for legitimisation. The power dynamics associated with the current control over heritage resources are clearly part of the local politics that are also shaped by power relations amongst members of the community. Third, the custodianship system is largely dependent on local social mechanisms and social institutions that regulate the use of resources. These institutions follow the shifting of the social organisation of societies and the flux of historical change. In fact, apart from the local power dynamics, current traditional custodianship systems have undergone and will certainly continue to undergo dynamics and evolutionary changes as factors such as migrations, civil-war, and globalization constantly incorporate new value systems into people's understanding of the spiritual, social and physical environment (Katsamudanga 2003). However, if traditional custodianship has survived thus far (or appears to have) and continues to play a key role in the management of heritage, we can assume that it will continue, despite the impact of factors such as globalisation or modernity. As I have argued above, traditional custodianship is a value-based system that is prone to change according to dynamics in the socio-cultural and political-economic atmospheres of the community in which it operates. Currently, the general consensus is that culture needs to be recognized as dynamic and having the ability to adapt under change (Cocks 2006). Therefore traditional custodianship systems, as derived from specific cultural settings, must be understood as operating within the dynamic processes of social, political, ideological, economic and cultural exchange with the constant re-articulation of tradition resulting in a persistence of certain cultural practices among the local communities. Lastly, traditional leaders (custodians), both living and those who have passed on, play a key role in ensuring that the uses of heritage assets are governed by customary rules and government laws (Sætersdal 2004; Jopela 2010a, 2010b). And traditional institutions (traditional custodians) are hybrid in nature;

they operate at both traditional and modern levels, appearing as African custodians of local tradition and heritage, and also as modern cosmopolitans. The case studies also illustrate the 'false' dichotomy that exists between 'traditional' and 'modernity'. For instance, Christianity has been singled out as one of the causes for the decline of traditional custodianship systems. However, it is important to note that this may not always be the case. For instance, the late traditional custodian of Chinhamapere rock art site in the Vumba Cultural Landscape (Manica, central Mozambique) used to attend mass every Sunday. However, she also spoke with her grandmother's ancestral spirit by walking up the slope to Chinhamapere rock art site. Similarly, the supreme traditional leader of Manica district, mambo Chirara, is a devout Christian, and is very often visited for bible study. Thus, although the traditional authority and the local community frequently refer to community behaviour and practices as 'traditions', often with nostalgia (expressing the feeling that something 'traditional' has been lost), they also embrace what we might consider symbols of modernity (e.g. Christianity) that become part of their contemporary way of living (Fairweather 2003). In the Matobo area, despite one's religious orientation, annual contributions of money and grain towards the Njelele Shrine pilgrimage are required in Hobodo community in Mangwe. Every year towards the beginning of the rainy season, Chief Hobodo, as the custodian of Kalanga religion and customs, sends a delegation of amawosana (people with rain-making spirits) to the Njelele Shrine to go and ask for rains from Ngwali on behalf of the community. Before the departure of the high-powered delegation comprising amawosana, senior village elders and heads, each family contributes money for the trip and grain to feed delegates during the normally week-long pilgrimage. Notwithstanding the Njelele pilgrimage and other traditional religious rites the Kalanga people are involved in, almost ninety percent of villagers are members of different Christian churches such as the Roman Catholic Church, Zion Christian Church, Holy Apostolic Church of Zion, Twelve Disciples, Twelve Apostles and other apostolic sects. Some villagers have actually complained that cohabitating of Hobodo villagers with both Christianity and African traditional religion has created a religious crisis as there are now Christened inyangas (Tshuma 2012). Such dynamics are also illustrative of the fact that cultural heritage resources are constantly appropriated, re-constructed and re-used by living communities to suit their present needs, such as their use for tourism or ritual activities. In fact, traditional institutions operate at both the traditional and the modern level. They act as African custodians of local tradition and heritage, (traditional ceremonies, sacred places, etc.) and also as modern cosmopolitans who engage with other cultures (Appiah 2006). They do these by dressing in African, European and Asian clothes, interacting with neighbours through labour migration across southern Africa region and in religious belief, within the geographic space of Matobo. This hybrid nature of traditional custodians is an important element for developing an improved system for the effective management of sacred sites.

The way forward: should traditional custodianship be integrated into the state-based management framework?

From the community point of view, the objective of traditional custodianship systems is to ensure the continuous use of cultural and natural resources, while safeguarding the site and its associated values. This view is consonant with the current accepted values-based management approach, wherein "conservation of heritage sites comprises all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance"

(The Australian ICOMOS 1999:2; Lennon 2002; Pearson and Sullivan 1995). Seen from this perspective, traditional custodianship systems may offer sustainability in terms of conservation (as defined above) of the values that make sacred sites significant to communities. This would be the role of traditional custodianship systems within an integrated management framework. Traditional custodianship represents a value-based model of natural and cultural heritage stewardship. For instance, traditional custodianship would guide the preservation of the values associated with sacred places that are continuously used for local traditional practices (e.g. Njelele). Drawing on Sheridan (2008:29-30), and in light of the challenges outline above, I believe that traditional custodianship systems are unlikely to be integrated into state-based systems without disrupting the social relationships and cultural conservation mechanisms of traditional systems. Thus, it is crucial to question, not only how to incorporate traditional custodianship systems into state-based management frameworks, but also, how to re-orientate heritage management in Africa through engaging with social institutions of TCS (Jopela and Fredriksen 2015). The adoption of a legal framework that preserves and facilitates the dynamism manifested in cultural landscapes as well as the interaction between different management systems is perhaps one of the crucial steps towards a more integrated management system. Therefore, I believe that the concept of legal pluralism in heritage legislation, as defined by Mumma (2002), would be best suited for a more integrated and meaningful management system. The legal pluralism concept is premised on the idea that the "legal protection of cultural landscapes is best provided by a protective system, which incorporates the various normative systems that, in practice, operate in the African communities concerned, i.e. the state law regime and the customary/traditional law regime. Both regimes would be placed in a symbiotic and complementary, rather than in an antagonistic, relationship" (Mumma 2002:156). In such a framework, the State agencies will act more as a regulatory authority (e.g. setting broad standards or benchmarks to be adhered to in the management of heritage places) rather than as the 'owner' of heritage. It will also provide expertise, where necessary, on how heritage should be managed (Nodoro and Kiriama 2008:62). This would leave the day-to-day management of heritage to the local communities, through their traditional custodianship systems. This would all take place within a management framework with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and incentives for all role players. The suggested heritage framework has the potential to ensure the rights of local communities to access cultural heritage. For places like Njelele, traditional custodianship would allow for the continuous use of the site and the preservation of values within a framework of social, cultural, political and natural environment that is dynamic. At the same time, through the formalisation process, traditional custodianship would also be given charge of protecting other elements of natural and cultural sites (tangible heritage) that are currently protected under the formal heritage legislation (e.g. the Mulanje Cedar in MMCL), but that are presently unimportant elements for the local communities. While the TCS, would manage the continuity, or change, of the spiritual values associated with the sites, the formal heritage system would be in charge of guiding the TCS to protect the broad range of values that are not currently protected under TCS. Hence, the adoption and implementation of an integrated management system for World Heritage in southern Africa will require much more than just reforming legislation (e.g. thereby making traditional custodianship systems 'formal') and putting in place implementation arrangements. The process transcends the purely legal, to the attitudinal, and calls for the political willingness of the formal heritage institutions to move from a state-centred management system to a more integrated one.

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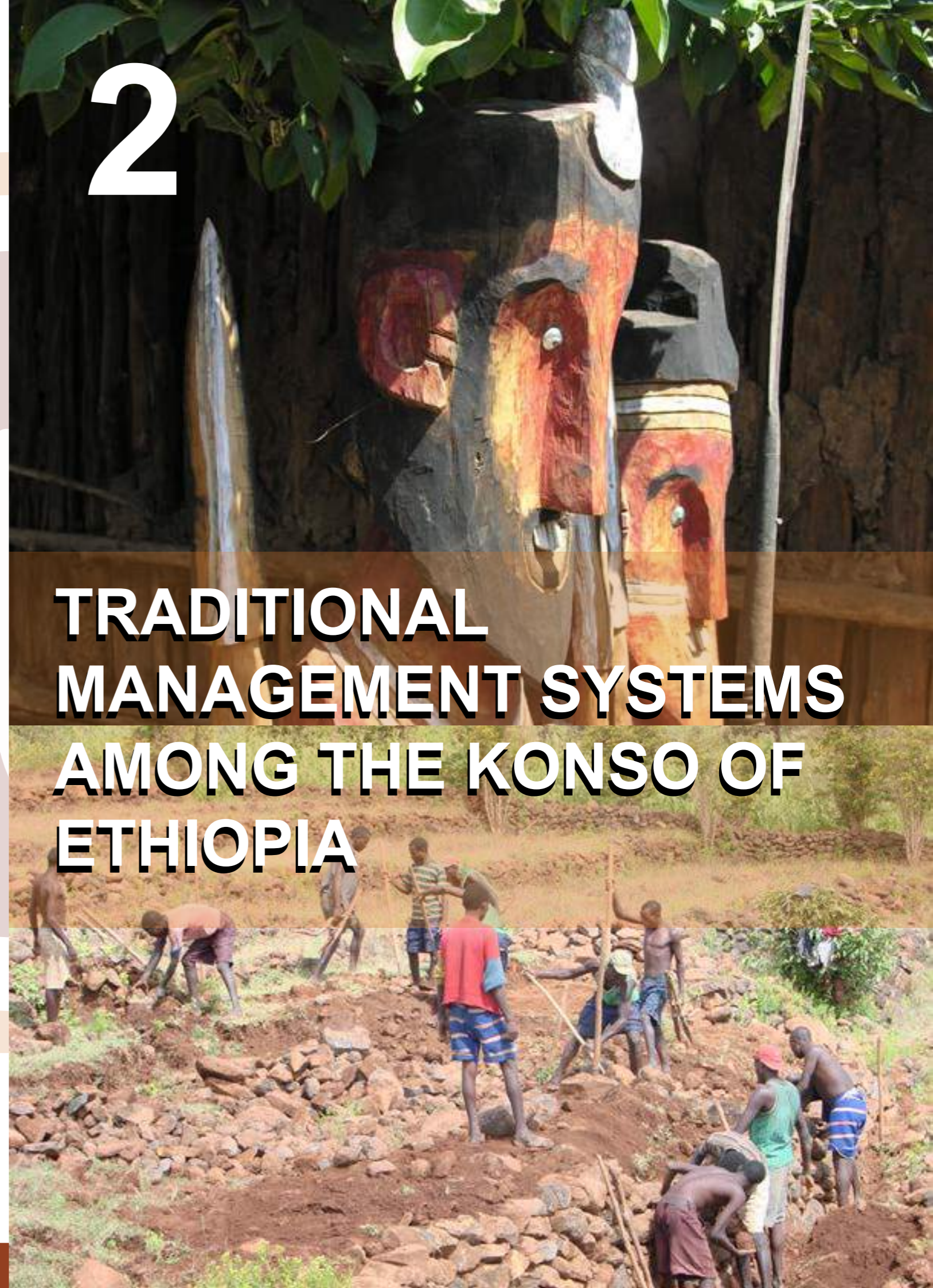
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2

TRADITIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AMONG THE KONSO OF ETHIOPIA



Yonas Beyene Gebremichael

Background

Ethiopia, unlike many other African countries, did not experience the modern western concept of heritage management until the mid-1950s. The heritage wealth of the country encompasses historical archaeological sites, prehistoric and paleontological sites, natural sites, unique fauna and flora, varied ethnic groups and their life ways, intangible heritage surrounding the main religious and other belief systems. This wealth was protected, since the mid-1950s, by laws provided by the central government. However, the actual protection of the cultural heritage was mostly done by the respective communities who have always lived in harmony with their environment. Although a modern heritage management system has been adopted and management structures put in place since 1958, it was not possible to effectively implement them on the ground due to the country's vast heritage diversity and lack of capacity. The main focus of modern heritage protection and management was on the spectacular historical and archaeological sites such as Axum, Gondar, Lalibella and Harar. The rock-hewn religious sites in Lalibella were always managed by the clergy who have practiced Orthodox Christianity for over 800 years. The Axum stelae field was neglected for several hundred years, until the mid-1960s when the then regional governor took the initiative and responsibility of reorganising and protecting it. Gondar served as the seat of the Ethiopian empire until the end of 1860s. It was, however, neglected as a cultural property until the mid-20th century. Harar, founded around the 12th century AD retained its 'originality' and 'integrity' with its vibrant living culture, managed by living traditions. Modern heritage management systems are currently implemented at all the sites mentioned above. In reference to the above, issues of ownership and tourism management have raised limitations and overlaps at certain areas/sites. The role of the modern management system is appreciated by the local communities specifically when it comes to the issues of conservation of the properties in the sites and tourism promotion. There are provisions in the Ethiopian Constitution which provide for the respect and protection of cultural and natural heritage and sites. It is only since the 1990s that the importance of traditional heritage management is recognised. However, the interphase between modern and traditional heritage management systems was not clearly understood. Thanks to the management plan exercise that was undertaken for the inscription of the Konso Cultural landscape on UNESCO's WH List, basic work was done to understand the link between the cultural properties and their traditional management systems. The attributes that constitute the "Konso Cultural landscape" have always been managed by a system which links all aspects of the Konso traditional, political and socio-economic ways. The management plan has taken these facts into consideration and designed a strategy through which the modern heritage management system could be tied to it. In Konso, the traditional management system takes the lead in the protection, preservation and conservation of the heritage properties. But how long could this hold-on in this fast-changing period of social, economic and political transformation? What should be done to further insure and strengthen the link and synergy between the traditional and modern management systems? Lessons from the Konso traditional heritage management system can be taken as good practice, where the inter linkage between man and environment are forged by hundred years of interaction. The Konso people are among the 76 ethnic groups that con-

stitute modern Ethiopia. They inhabit a 2,354 sq. km area in southern Ethiopia, with a total population of around 280,000 people (Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010). The Konso are known for their hard-work and resilient qualities. Their land bears witness to several hundreds of years of their toil expressed in the extremely vivid traditional engineering skills. This is particularly demonstrated in the dry-stone agricultural terraces that beautifully mark the rugged landscape on about 10% of the total Konso land. In this landscape they have developed a remarkable sorghum based agricultural system. In addition, the Konso are known for their water management systems, forest protection, traditional town planning and architecture. These have been realised because of their uniquely sustainable traditional management systems.

Brief historical background on the Konso people

The Konso are bordered by different ethnic groups. To the North are the Derashe lowlanders, to the East the Borena/Borana and Guji Oromo lowland groups, and to the West the Tsemay lowlanders and the Malé. The Konso land is well delimited by rivers in most parts and the densely inhabited traditional land is situated at an altitude of 1400 to 2000 meters above sea level. The regional geomorphology is a fertile volcanic soils and rocky basement sediments and rocks (Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010; Beyene 2013), with the land mostly hilly, rolling and rugged. Except in few places, the general Konso land is rocky and not suitable for farming. Rainfall is very meager, with small showers in September, and between February and April. When it rains, the water runs fast in the slopes and drains quickly to the lowlands (Hallpike 1971; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010). Until recently, the lowlands all around the traditional Konso settlement were mostly left uncultivated and uninhabited due to either disease such as malaria - or conflict with the neighbouring groups. Since recently, however, the availability of medicine, improved accessibility, and better relationship between the neighbouring populations has encouraged the Konso to cultivate such previously desolate areas. The Konso language belongs to the Eastern Cushitic language cluster and represents one of the many Cushitic languages spoken in Ethiopia. There are no direct dates attributed to the early settlement history of the Konso and the very limited archaeological research on the Konso does not provide conclusive dates about their early history. However, oral history suggests that their original settlement in the area goes back to about 500 years ago (Kimura 2004; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010). According to Konso oral history, the traditional towns located to the east of the core Konso land represent the earliest settlements. These traditional towns are well fortified by dry stone walls that reach up to five meters high and three meters wide. Most of the traditional towns have between one and three rounds of walls, although one has been documented to have six (Kimura 2004; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010). The Konso lived as an independent people under traditional leadership until they were incorporated into the Ethiopian empire at the end of the 19th century AD. Prior to the incorporation, each Konso traditional town enjoyed an autonomous status and was administered by its own traditional institutions with councils of traditional elders placed on top of these institutions. The Konso follow a traditional caste system which places the people into two social groups called the Etenta and Hawda. The Etenta group are farmers who own and cultivate the land. The Etenta also assume responsibility in the traditional administration system. The Hawda group comprises of artists such as blacksmiths, potters, tanners, butchers, and weavers. Hawda members are not allowed to serve in the council of elders or occupy the office of Aba Timba – management of

the town, the Paleta as the Etenta. They are also not allowed to own land even through purchase, or to intermarry with the land-owning Etenta. However both groups live in the same Paleta. The whole trend is currently in the process of change.

The Konso Land tenure system

The Konso land tenure system before incorporation into the Ethiopian empire was traditionally run, one in which individual farmers owned private holdings through a long chain of closely related family inheritance. The traditional ritual chiefs also owned a large-enough land kept under the ownership of their family. However, the ritual chiefs were providing/leasing pieces of their private land to farmers who did not own any. The sacred forests were also under their ownership, a title respected by all community members. The introduction of the feudal system to Konso, following its incorporation, did not affect much the traditional land ownership. Because the Konso land tenure system was mainly based on a small plot ownership of a series of privately owned terraces and agricultural yield was not surplus, it was not very attractive for the newcomers to fully impose the feudal system. In addition, the unpredictability of the rains and the arid environment must have played a role in protecting the traditional system. This might have also buffered the area from other influences of the empire and contributed to the continuation of much of the traditional Konso values through the close of the 19th and much of the 20th centuries. The ascension to power of the military junta in 1974 by overthrowing the feudal system created a new land use and ownership system in the country. The "socialist" military government put land under the ownership of the state and redistributed it to individual farmers. This, however, did not affect the individual small terrace plot owners of Konso. But the owners of larger plots of lands, and the traditional leaders called the Poquola suffered considerable loss. Most of their land holdings were taken away and distributed to farmers. The sacred forests under their protection were profaned by the political teams and some Konso individuals. For example the Bama sacred forest was almost completely destroyed due to logging. The Kufa sacred forest suffered the same treatment, although the Kala sacred forest was much less affected. Since the beginning of the 1990s and creation of the new federal political system in the country, the traditional systems and cultural ways are better recognised and policies to enforce them have been adopted. The protection of the traditional forests and sacred lands has been insured, through the recognition of land and culture rights. Land right of the farming communities is maintained and their holding rights continue. The constitutions at both the federal and regional level have recognized the roles and rights of traditional societies to preserve and exercise their cultures. The Konso people have largely maintained their traditional ways of life throughout these historical times. Their resilience is demonstrated not only through their struggle to maintain the fertility of their land, but their persistence through various political and social upheavals. Throughout the last one hundred years, the Konso maintained their traditional farming system, which is founded on strong social system. As indicated below, the system is mainly based on the principle of the age grading of its members and on institutions that are created to insure its continuity.

Research methods

Traditional management among the Konso has been addressed at length by various researchers such as Hallpike (1971); Watson (1998); and in Konso Nomination dossier submitted to UNESCO in 2010. However, the role of the Konso Traditional Management System (TMS) in relation to their cultural heritage management has not been attended to. As the Konso cultural landscape is an expression of the amalgam of various aspects of the Konso in

general, their social system is interwoven with the traditional cultural management. The traditional management system is analysed based on literature by researchers who worked there since the turn of the last century. Documents developed for UNESCO, specifically the one on World Heritage communities' Traditional Management Systems in African region, were consulted. The same was undertaken with traditional leaders and community elders through interviews, and the review of policies and legal documents. In addition to the above, personal observation based on over 20 years among the Konso has been applied.

Traditional management among the Konso

The traditional heritage management system in Konso land can best be understood if viewed from the general Konso social organisations and their functionalities. An outline of both these elements is provided below.

The Konso have three major social organisations: (i) the Kafa: clan/lineage organization, (ii) the Kanta: neighbourhood organisation, (iii) the Helta: age group organisation. In addition to these organisations, there are institutions which are in charge of the traditional administration.

The Kafa (clan/lineage organization)

The Konso attribute themselves to nine clans that constitute the whole Konso population. These clans are: Kertita, Tiki-sayta, Eshalayta, Elayta, Argamayta, Togumaleta, Sawdata, Mahaleta, and Pasanta. Members of these clans live in each of the Konso traditional towns. In the core-land Konso, these clans have three traditional leaders known as the Poquola. The Poquola live in isolated sacred forests that are located on top of high grounds. The traditional towns called Paletaare located not far from these forests. The sacred forests also serve as ritual sites for the various ceremonies and as burial ground for the Poquola and his wife. The three main Poquola of the traditional Konso are the Kalla, Bamalle, and Kuffa. These Poquolas are at the head of the traditional Konso hierarchy.

The Kanta (Neighbourhood organisation)

Konso communities in the core land live in traditional dry stone walled towns organized on the basis of neighbourhood/ward institutions called Kanta. Each Kanta comprises members of immediate neighbours from all the nine Konso clans. Each Kanta has its own public place called Mora, where all cultural, religious, social and neighbourhood administrative activities take place. At one end of the Mora a specially constructed one storey thatched house called Pafta. Pafta serves as a sleeping place for the young adults and guests. Kanta could be regarded as an example of the decentralized administrative system in Konso traditional towns, since they have their own council of elders who are responsible for administering their Kanta. Parka: In each Kanta, there are special work groups formed by a union comprising of 10 to 30 people who collaborate and take turns to work in terraces and agricultural fields. These work groups are called Parka. Each group is constituted by unrelated people and women can also be members of a Parka and work in the farms (Hallpike 1971; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010).

The Helta (Age group organisation)

The fabric of Konso society is based on a system where all male community members are assigned, on the basis of age. The age group classification of the society usually referred to as "age grading system" has been addressed by several researchers (Hallpike 1971). The Helta organization and its functioning is exercised in each traditional town;

and organized from bottom up, from the Kanta to the Paleta level, assuring the cohesion of the community. In general, men are grouped into four categories based on their age. 1) The male children called Tinayela (also known as Fe-reyda) are not assigned to any social responsibility. They do not get married until they reach adult age—the Helita. 2) The Helitagroup comprises of young strong and very active males who assume the responsibility of handling the affairs of the community. They secure the peace and security of the community from any danger such as wild animals, fire, enemies etc. This group was also the “warrior group” in the past. All Konso males have a duty and obligation of passing through this stage. 3) The third class is that of the elders called Kimaya or Orshada. Members of this group would have served their community while they were in the Helita age group. They are assumed to have accumulated enough experience in understanding their community while in the Helita. These elders are responsible for managing community affairs. A member of the Kimaya can be a member of the council of elders. 4) Gurula represents a class of very old men who do not have any social responsibility. They sit in Moras, look at the distant lowlands from the high points, to try and understand the seasons and the stars. These social organisations are interlinked with the institutions which are in charge of the traditional administration/authority.

Konso Traditional Authorities

The main Konso traditional authorities are classified as follows: (i) The Council of elders (Kimaya), (ii) The Hela, Senkeleta, (iii) Aba-Timba, (iv) Dawra and (v) Poquola.

The Council of elders (Kimaya)

There are councils of elders at both the Kanta (i.e. neighbourhood) and Paleta (i.e., traditional town) levels. These are elected by their respective Kantamembers, who share the same Mora; and Paleta residents. These are elected based on their knowledge of Konso culture, wisdom and impartiality to pass judgment, honesty and integrity. The Kanta council of elders arbitrates issues that are within its neighbourhood, members that share the same Mora(s). The Paleta councils of elders are composed of members of Kanta council of elders and address issues of Paleta concern (Hallpike 1971; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010; Kala Gezahegne, Dinote, pers. comm. May 2014). The council of elders elects the Aba-Timba and the Senkeletato assume responsibility, and decide on the duration of their service time. They decide on the periodic passage rites of community members from a certain age group to the next level. They evaluate the performances of each generation (Hela) and commend its performance based on merits such as conservation of walls of the traditional towns (Paletas), cultural spaces (Moras) and their Paftas, terraces (Kabata), water ponds (Harda). They also decide on the placement of the Man-hood stone called Daga Hela which is erected as witness after the performances of the generation (Hela) represented at the end of the Kara ritual. The Kara ritual is at the heart of the Konso belief and rites (Hallpike 1971; Konso Cultural Landscape management plan 2010). In addition, the elders are responsible of running the management affairs of the Paleta, such as providing advice and education to the young on terrace building, maintenance and water drainage management techniques.

The Hela

Hela is the active male group in Konso traditional age group system. This group of active and responsible men passes through an important ritual process before and after assuming the responsibility of safeguarding the security of their Paleta and the wellbeing of their walled town, terraces, ponds,

and forests bestowed upon them by the community council of elders. This ritual process/ceremony is called Kara. Kara takes place every 7 and 11 years in the Karati area which lies in the northern and eastern part of the Konso core land. Kara is performed for every passage and a stela (i.e. a columnar stone) is erected every 7 and 11 years, representing the younger group called Kulkusa and the older group called Hirba, of the same generation; and witnessing their success or failure. During the process, the two groups of the generation pass through a number of rituals. They go to the wild and hunt a lion or a leopard, perform ritual dances in the assigned Mora, and perform the ritual erection/ placement of the generation stone called Daga Hela, which marks the culmination of the Kara ritual. Together the two groups make up one generation called Hela at a full cycle of 18 years. To mark this important moment, they erect a juniper tree brought from the sacred forest, in the main ritual Mora (Konso Cultural landscape Management Plan, 2011). In the past the Hela served as a warrior group protecting the community (Paleta) from external aggressions. Of late however, only the peace-time functions prevail. These include: serving as a link between the council of elders and the members of the community; protecting the town from fire and conduct maintenance/conservation work on the town’s protective walls; building the cultural space the Mora and the multipurpose thatched house the Pafta, and restore them when needed and take a major role in the building and maintenance of the water ponds, the Harda.

Senkeleta

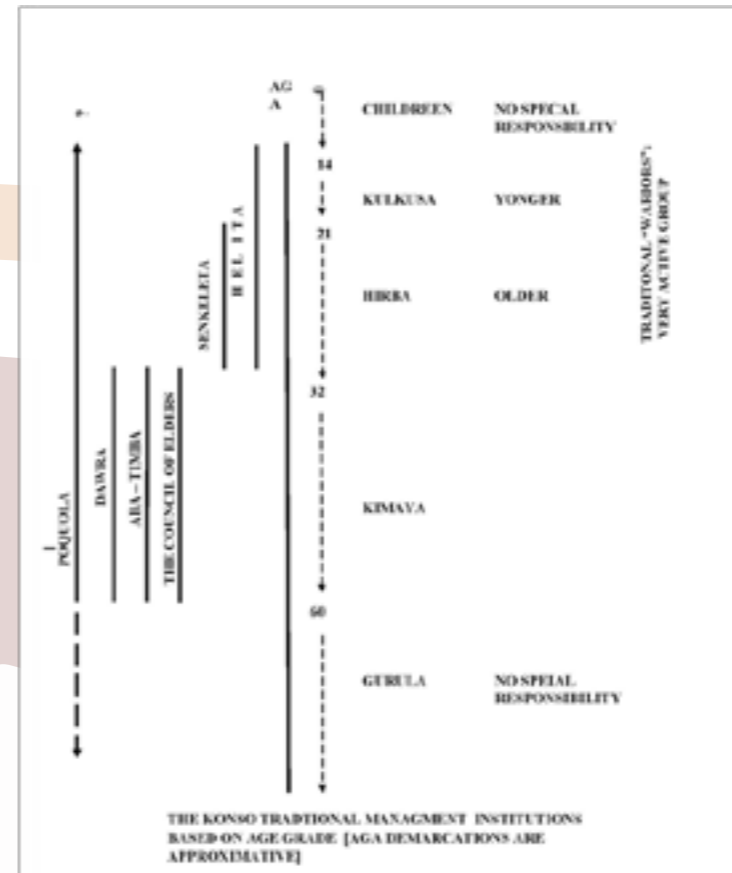
The Senkeleta is a coordinator of the Hela group. He is elected by the Hela based on his personal integrity, good conduct, and is approved by the council of elders (Gelgelo Denebo & Tefera Gebabo, pers. comm. 2007). In addition to his role in the Hela, he also receives orders from the council of elders and the Aba Timba (Chief administrator of the Paleta) and executes them using his fellow Hela members (pers. comm Kala Gezahegne 2007, May 2014, Urmelle, Kusse 2007 and Dinote 2007, 2008, May 2014).

Aba-Timba

Aba-Timba (father of the drum) is the Keeper of the sacred drum which is the symbol of the Konso traditional administration. He is the head of the traditional council of elders of his Paleta. (Dinote pers. Comm, 2007, May 2014, Sagoya, Kolcha and Kusse, pers. Comm. 2007). Aba-Timba is elected by the Paleta council of elders to administer and represent his Paleta (traditional town) for a certain amount of time (usually one year). His election is based on his good conduct and knowledge of Konso traditional ways. The election of Aba-Timba is not based on clan lineage as he can be elected from any one of the nine clans (Hallpike 1971; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010). Aba-Timba is also the head administrator of his Paleta. He executes decisions passed by the council of elders through the Senkeleta and the Hela. He oversees the performance of the Hela. In addition to his executive powers, he occasionally provides certain ritual services such as praying for rain in times of drought, and for fertility of both the land and the community members. He is the symbol and guardian of the traditional belief system as well as the unity of the clans and the traditional management.

Dawra

The Dawra are elderly ritual leaders believed to have spiritual powers. They settle disputes between Paletas, pray for rain during droughts, bless people/individuals, so that their wishes of child birth and land productivity are granted. They are also responsible for the protection of the sacred grooves called Mura-Dawra, which are found outside every traditional town. They are the guardians of peace and represent the Poquola in each Paleta (Hallpike 2008; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File, 2010; Kala Gezahegne and Dinote Kussia, pers. comm. May 2014).



Poquola (Clan chief)

The Poquola is the clan chief, serving as regional spiritual leader. There are two hierarchies of the Poquola called Poquola Mulga and Poquola Tuma. The Poquola-Mulga live in each town (Paleta) representing each clan (Kafa) and performs rituals for members of his clan. The PoquolaTuma traditional powers are hereditary, passed down from father to son. The chief leads a secluded life in the middle of a Juniper forest located on the top of a hill overlooking the surrounding lands. Currently, there are three Poquola Tuma in the core Konso land living in their own sacred forests. These are Kala, Bamalle, and Quffa. Kala lives in the Kala sacred forest and his traditional authority is over the Gamole, Garati, Duro regions. Bamalle lives in the Bamallesacred forest and his traditional authority is over the Dokatu, Burkuda and Hulmie Paletas. The third one, Quffa lives in the Quffa sacred forest and his traditional authority is over the Kena region. These traditional chiefs protect their sacred forest where they live and are buried there when they die. These Poquola have special locations within their forests where they perform certain rituals. They provide juniper woods to the communities/Paletas when needed for the performance of rituals and passage of generation rites (Hallpike 1971; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010). They perform rituals for the fertility of the land and good harvest and are said to communicate directly with God. They also settle conflicts whenever they arise between the Paletas, and mediate to settle conflicts between the Konso and the neighbouring ethnic groups and are respected by all and generally accepted as the supreme leaders.

The Konso cultural properties

Below is a description of properties that constitute the Konso Cultural Landscape and, as noted in the executive summary of the Nomination Dossier, “Konso is a complex cultural landscape that has an amalgamation of unique architecture, land use, space planning and management, resource mobilization, and ritual practices, all combined into one in an otherwise hostile environment” (Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010).

Land use: soil and water conservation

The Konso are farmers who have adopted a terrace-based farming system that mainly grow sorghum with an agro-forestry approach. More than five different types of sorghum are currently grown and harvested in Konso. In addition to sorghum they also cultivate coffee, cotton, soya bean, corn, banana, chat (qat) and papaya. In order to cultivate the hilly and dry lands they have built extensive dry stone terraces using volcanic rocks. These extensive terraces retain the soil from erosion and create saddles as well as collect enough water and discharge the excess. The terraces are the main features of the Konso landscape and could reach up to 5 meter high in some areas (Hallpike 1972; Watson 1998; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010; Beyene 2013). Hallpike (1971: 21) captured this well when he said “...perhaps nowhere else in traditional Ethiopia has the hand of man so impressed itself on the landscape as in Konso”. The terraces are very extensive and cover about 236 sq. km (Kimura 2004; Konso Cultural landscape Nomination File 2010). The Konso claim not to know when and how their terraces were first built. Plots of land protected by these terraces are individually owned and cultivated using individual or collective (Parka) labour. Whenever a part of a terrace is damaged due to age or erosion, it is conserved using the Parka work group. The Konso landscape is dotted with water ponds called Harda, constructed using traditional engineering skills with spots which are low and well located in the catchments and away from the towns selected and used to build water reservoirs. These water reservoirs are built collectively, by all members of the community living in the walled towns and, the Harda location, selected by the council of elders (Hallpike 1971; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010; Beyene 2013; pers. comm. Kala Gezahegne and Dinote, May 2014).

Traditional towns

The second most important feature of the Konso Cultural Landscape are the traditionally built walled towns called the Paleta. The placement of these towns took into consideration altitude, geographic location and the distribution of clans. These walled towns are mostly located to the East and North of the Konso land. The Konso have chosen the high points on top of the hills to construct their traditional towns. The Konso who settled outside of the core land live in small clusters of houses that make up several hamlets (Hallpike 1971; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010). Each Konso walled town is encircled by one to six circles of high dry stonewalls, which sometimes reach up to five meters of height and 3.8 meters in thickness. These walls are constructed using local volcanic rocks in most case which are boulders of medium to large size. The walls have a few gates designated for day to day uses such as exits, to go to farm lands, water points, markets, or toilets and for special occasions such as hunting or ritual ceremonies. The walled towns accommodate between 4,000 and 12,000 people, and up to now the traditional day-to-day Konso life is exercised in these towns (Hallpike 1972; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010; Beyene 2013). Based on the traditional social system, the Konso ritually erect stela called Daga-Hela commemorating the transfer of responsibilities from older to the younger generation and Daga-Diruma to commemorate, their deceased heroes. A generation that is recognized for its remarkable service rendered for its community earns recognition by placing its generation-stone in the main Mora so that all members can see and learn from it. Also, a generation marking tree called Ulahita is erected every eighteen years (Hallpike 1971; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010; Beyene 2013). Mora also serves as a dancing place during festivities, as well as a spot for storytelling by the elders and as a meeting place for the community members. Specific Mora is designated for ritual

purposes as well. All the Mora within a walled town, are interconnected by foot trails; foot trails also interconnect individual homesteads with the neighbourhood Mora (Hallpike 1971; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010; Beyene 2013). The Konso land is dotted with small patches of forests used as

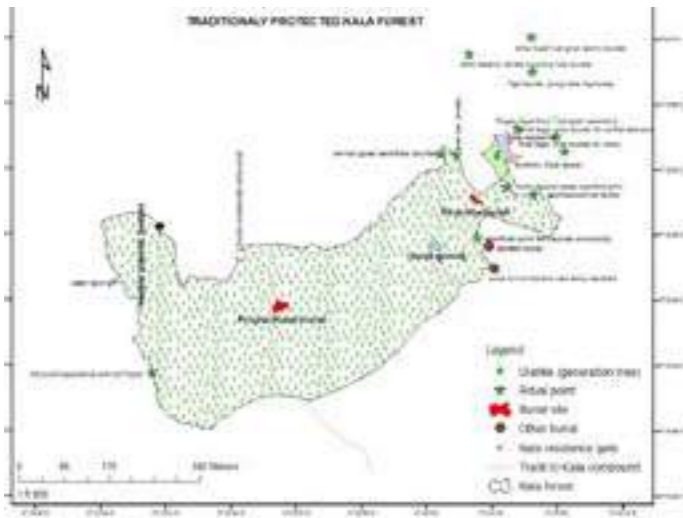


Figure 1: The Kala sacred forest and its ritual sites are protected by the traditional management

living and burial areas for the ritual leaders. In the main traditional Konso land, there are three such forests, namely Kalla, Bamale and Kuffa, in which or adjacent to them, the ritual leaders live and perform their rites. Traditional land, which they use for farming, is also located adjacent to the forests. These forests also serve as reserves for juniper trees used for ritual purposes and as reserves for traditional medicinal plants (Hallpike 1972; Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010; Beyene 2013).

Respect for the dead at burial sites

The Konso are known for their carved wooden statues which are anthropomorphic and zoo-morphic called Waka. They are placed on the graves of the deceased and speak of his/her exploits during their lifetime. Waka representing the heroes are placed at specific Mora for the community to admire and are protected by the Kanta (ward) and family members. Other Waka placed at ordinary burial sites outside the walls or in the farms are protected by the family members, until they naturally decay. Waka representing the Poquola are specially made and erected on the grave of the deceased ritual leader, following an extended series of rituals in the middle of his ritual forest. These are protected by the Poquola himself and the whole community (Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File 2010).

Traditional management of cultural properties in Konso

The Konso still cultivate their terraces and live in their traditionally built ancient walled towns still abide by their traditional management system in addition to the formal state governance. They protect their sacred forests and take part, to a certain degree, in the exercise of their rituals. They continue to conserve their traditional ponds and terraces. They also perform a unique type of ritual called Kara, marking the transfer of responsibilities between generations and culminating in the erection of a stela. The management and conservation of the identified cultural properties is the duty of the whole community through the traditional administration and the social organization systems. Members of the community are systematically incorporated

in the social organizations. However, the traditional administration is decentralized, but at the same time, the system enables all its offices to have a direct and/or indirect role in the protection and management of their heritage properties. A Konso elder once said that soil is analogous to a mother's breast. It feeds grains without which the Konso people could not survive. Soil is like home in which the Konso are buried when deceased (Ormayle Chewle, pers. comm. December 2008). This is a testimony to the respect given to the soil and that it should be respected and taken care of where ever it is found by all the Konso; be it in the fields or in living places. Soil and water conservation work is performed irrespective of age or sex. Young and old, male and female all have the responsibility and duty of working in the terraces and water ponds except for the very old who provide the spiritual leadership. The whole traditional social and political fabric in Konso revolves around the productivity of the land. The core function of the traditional management system is mainly to ensure that the social and economic of the Konso is sustained.

Management and conservation of values through traditional management system

The Terraces - These are individually owned, but built and maintained by the work group (Parka). If serious damage befalls the terraces, the council of elders oversee rehabilitation of the agricultural landscape. The Walled towns - The neighbourhood (Kanta) residents have the responsibility of building a Mora and Pafta by providing the necessary building materials. The Hela (the generation in office) provides the required labour in both the construction and conservation of Mora and its Pafta including its protection. Decisions to build Mora at the Kanta level, including its location, are made by the Kanta council of elders. Ritual Mora are constructed on the basis of the recommendations of the Paleta council of elders. The Manhood/Generation stones (Daga Hela) are placed at different locations within the Mora premises and are protected by the whole community including all the administrative bodies. The Waka, the carved anthropomorphic statuettes are protected by the members of the family of the deceased and the Kanta. The town stone walls are built and conserved by the Kanta and the Hela and the council of elders observing all activities. The performance of the Hela is noted by the council of elders and evaluated during the Kara ritual. As the head administrator of the Paleta, Aba-Timba ensures the protection of the Paleta grooves, construction and maintenance of waterponds, construction and maintenance of roads within Paletas, and construction and conservation of the Paleta protective walls. The Harda (ponds) - The council of Elders decides upon the placement and location of the ponds. All the community (all the Kanta residents) takes part in their construction; the Hela takes special responsibility, in addition to construction, the continuous maintenance of the ponds. The ritual forests- The whole community has the responsibility of respecting the same. The community rituals (initiation for young boys and girls, grain sacrifices (blessings), major conflict settlement between Paletas) take place at given locations within the sacred forest. Hela as the force in power and its chief (Senkeleta) ensures its security and protection. The Poquola, as the top ritual leader, resident and rightful owner of the sacred forests has the power of decision on its use based on the deliberations and proposals of the Council of Elders of each Paleta. The figure 2 below illustrates how the intricate decentralized management system works in the traditional management of the Konso heritage.



Figure 2: Simplified schematic diagram of traditional heritage management system

Discussion

The Konso traditional heritage management system is currently actively in use. Research undertaken during the preparation of the Nomination File and Management Plan for the inscription of the Konso Cultural Landscape into the WH List has however brought to light some issues that need to be addressed. The Konso traditional management system was developed through community participation and further discussed with the various communities that live in the twelve Paletas which are located in the core Konso land. It was agreed between communities, community elders/leaders, government representatives and stakeholders to protect the traditional management system and make use of it together with modern management system. The management plan prepared to this effect was endorsed by all and a legal document prepared outlining the role to be played by the traditional management system, taking into account the participation of the traditional community elders/leaders in the management committees. This symbiotic relationship between the government bodies on one hand and the traditional management system on the other can ensure the future preservation of the cultural properties. Konso, being the only recognised cultural landscape in Ethiopia, could provide best practice lessons to other areas regarding traditional management of cultural properties. The decentralised but intricate heritage management system in Konso shows how the Konso communities have well understood and put into practice a check and balance system to sustain the fragile landscape which is forged by hundreds of years of human-nature interrelation. This system has enabled them to maintain the landscape. Unless thoroughly understood and managed with extreme caution, the sustainability of this unique agricultural system and the fragile heritage built around it may be endangered. Aspects of population increase and land shortage is one of the major challenges as unplanned new settlements and expansion of towns are claiming portions of the terraced landscape. New houses are built without consideration to the integrity of the traditional towns. Modern education and the advent of new religions reduce the trust of the youth on the functional importance of the Kara ritual and thus the Hela. There is a growing lack of interest in the traditional system by intellectuals. Neglecting the rituals and the cultural activities negatively reflect

on the conservation efforts. There is a need for thorough understanding by implementors of the basic provisions in the constitution, policies (environmental and cultural), proclamations (land) and the strong symbiotic interrelationship between traditional management system and agricultural landscapes. As outlined in the objectives of African Regional Action Plan 2012-2017 (UNESCO 2013) some progress is under way in Konso. Since the inscription of the Konso Cultural Landscape on WH List, there have been some efforts introduced by the government Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) to support the conservation of some of the elements that constitute the Konso Cultural Landscape. The Government has allocated a budget for this purpose whereas the actual conservation work is done following the traditional system by the community. The Regional government has also allocated 80% of the tourism revenue in Konso to be used by the community. Out of this, 50% is allocated for heritage conservation (such as for the conservation of terraces and Mora) and remaining 50% is allocated for heritage related infrastructure development (such as community health care, schools and paths within the Paleta) based on proposals presented by the community. A museum has been built in the Konso administrative center, Karat, to showcase the Konso work of art, Waka. The museum was built based on an agreement between communities, the Konso administration, Federal and Regional culture offices and the French Embassy in Addis Ababa, with additional support from UNESCO and other stakeholders. The communities have contributed half of the cost of construction of the structure in the form of building materials and traditional architectural skills and technology. The museum is now a tourist hub for those interested in seeing and learning about the Konso culture. An information center was also built to introduce the Konso traditional culture to tourists. A cultural center has also been put in place by the community, the administration and the Italian Embassy in Addis Ababa with support from the European Union. This cultural center plays an important role not only in introducing Konso to the outside world but to the youth in Konso through books and internet connections. Young students from Konso have begun pursuing their higher degrees (M.A.) in cultural heritage management, taking Konso as their case study. These young scholars who were born and brought up in the traditional ways also know the functions of the traditional management system and will soon take-up important positions in the modern management system. It is time that young students in Africa in general and in Ethiopia in particular access information on this unique landscape and learn about how traditions, cultures, and production systems have forged resilient societies with mosaic attributes such as the Konso. For this purpose, geography and heritage curriculum of universities could integrate unique landscapes such as Konso and the cultures that forged them. Konso could also contribute knowledge development about its living megalithic tradition for higher level education programs and research topics, to better understand the long-vanished megalithic cultures in this part of the world. The traditional agricultural system could be regarded and treated as part of the 'Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems'. The elders and other main players in the traditional management system continue to play a major role in the heritage management committees. The Konso experience provides lessons on how community led heritage management could serve greater purpose, even when at crossroads with major social and economic transformation in the host country. Despite these successes, the prevailing challenges require additional support from the government, local and regional authorities and institutions, international organizations such as UNESCO, FAO, AWHF and other stakeholders to further document this uniquely important and multi-faceted landscape and its people's traditions; to look at the heart

of the management systems and to insure the conservation of the Konso Cultural Landscape. Unless the traditional management system is further understood, strengthened and supported, the organic linkage between the Konso culture and the socio-economic system may be endangered.

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3

TRADITIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN THE EAST AFRICAN REGION: THE CASE OF THE RABAI KAYA SACRED FORESTS (KENYA) AND KASUBI ROYAL TOMBS (UGANDA)

Patrick Ouma Abungu and Philip Jimbi Katana

Introduction

For generations, groups of people in Africa have undertaken cultural practices within certain spaces, making these places sites of significance to these communities. In East Africa for example, the close association between communities around Rabai sacred kaya forests and Kasubi royal tombs have ensured their continued existence and positive use by the communities for their wellbeing. Heritage has complex layered historical, symbolic, economic, and political values to specific groups of people, and religious meanings and applications to communities (Pikirayi 2011). On the other hand, UNESCO (2003) Convention also advocates for the safeguard of the intangible cultural heritage of the communities to ensure respect of the same, groups associated with them and individuals concerned. Both Kasubi and Rabai kaya forests were homes which gained sacred status as a result of historical and cultural events associated with them. Over the years, traditional practices by the people within these landscapes have seen them gain values which include but not restricted to spiritual, social, political, aesthetics and economic gains. Cultural activities in the form of rituals, sacrifices, prayers and taboos by these communities have led to a harmonious co-existence between the people and their environment, and to the survival of these heritage resources. Senyimba (2011) argues that culture is not “satanic” much as it might contain many “satanic” activities introduced by fallen men. When looked at positively, cultural insights can help religious bodies like the Church or Mosques to communicate the truth to people immersed in their cultures. At the international level, UNESCO (2005) Convention seeks to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions in order to encourage dialogue among cultures in the world to ensure a wider and balanced cultural exchange in favour of intercultural respect and of peace. Using Kenya’s Rabai (Aravai) sacred kaya forests and Kasubi Royal tombs of Uganda as case studies, this chapter looks at the Traditional Conservation and Management Systems (TMS) in the east African region. The chapter interrogates how traditional conservation methods have to date, successfully withstood external pressure from forces such as colonialism, Christian and Islamic religious movements to keep their heritage places and practices alive. The chapter seeks to address traditional management structures within these landscapes, their attributes, actors and functions. The chapter also examines issues such as TMS’s conformity to present day legal systems, their effectiveness, challenges, opportunities and sustainability. Comparative analysis with other regions is done and relevant suggestions for positive application of the same in the contemporary world provided. For the purpose of clarity with regards to the kaya sacred forests, Aravai and Rabai mean the same thing, and are used interchangeably in the chapter.

An overview of Traditional Management Systems in East Africa

There is a general belief amongst many African societies that spirits of the departed, including chiefs, live on after death and can be consulted by the living for divine intervention through different mediums. The conservation of heritage places such as the Rabai sacred Kaya forests and Kasubi Royal Tombs (KRT) is therefore not only tied to the past, but also relates to

the present and shapes the future. The conservation objectives of such heritage places varies from community to community, but of paramount importance are the roles these places play in the lives of the community as spaces of spiritual dialogue and intervention. The spiritual connection between the departed and the natural world in these heritage sites reinforce their sacredness, and justify the need for their protection from negative exploitation. Memories of ancestors who lived and were buried in these spaces are considered as living heritage. By respecting these spaces, the community engages with the ecosystem in the case of the kayas through spirit mediums. From the outset it is imperative to acknowledge that long before the introduction of the Western colonial government gazette notice systems of heritage conservation and management in East Africa and Africa in general, local communities had their own ways of safeguarding their cultural heritage. A biased view on the lack of authentic African history has been advanced by scholars, colonialists and pretender ‘experts’, mainly based on a Western system of record keeping. However, it is common knowledge that, for instance, rock art as a form of record keeping and documentation was widely used in Africa, and in places like Egypt, the art of writing and record-keeping had been ongoing for centuries. Furthermore, through oral storytelling and apprenticeships, traditional knowledge and practices were/are still passed on in Africa from generation to generation.

Location and Historical Background of the Study Rabai sacred Kaya Forests

The Rabai sacred kayas forests are located between latitude 3 S 55' - 4 S 10' and longitude 39 E 35' - 39 E 45', west of Mombasa Island, Kenya. They are found along the coast region and form part of the larger Mijikenda, the nine villages or subgroup who claim origins from Singwaya, believed to be in the current northern Kenya-southern Somali border (Spear 1978; Mutoro 1987). For unclear reasons, probably community conflicts, the Mijikenda migrated from Singwaya around the early 16th Century to settle on the fortified hill-tops named Kayas (homes) along the present Kenya coastal region (ibid). The forests cover a total area of 756 hectares. Rabai Kayas include Kayas Mudzi Mweru, Mudzi Muvya, Bomu and Fimboni, and belong to the Aravai community, a sub-group of the Mijikenda. The above named Kayas are all linked together as a unit in the socio-cultural and spiritual systems of the Aravai (Chiro 2007). Although separated ‘symbolically’ by a no man’s land’ zone known as chanze, the forests are closely linked to the villages as spiritual systems are still active within the kayas and continuity is ensured by the cultural practices undertaken by the elders on behalf of the community (Chiro 2007). As a result of population pressure around the end of the 19th century, the community left their forest refuge and began to clear, and cultivate outside the forests (Spear 1978; Mutoro 1987; Willis 1996). The sites were maintained as sacred places and burial grounds by the local communities led by their elders, and are considered as habitats of the Mijikenda ancestors, and carriers of group identity. The Rabai community has successfully used controlled access into the kaya forests to safeguard the resources and entry is only allowed to the initiated Elders. There are strict rules to be observed within the forests. Non-initiated members of the community and visitors can only access the sites with permission from the elders. However, there are places that even the initiated persons cannot enter due to their sacredness. At times, special rituals are conducted for permission to be granted for entry into the forest, and for anything to be taken from the Kaya forest. The survival of the kayas to date is an outstanding example of continued existence of traditional forms of land use that sup-

ports biological diversity. The sacredness of these sites is as a result of the traditional practices by the people on the heritage landscape which in turn, assigns them spiritual, social, political, economic and aesthetic values amongst others. In 2008, out of the ten Kenya’s kayas inscribed on the UNESCO WH List, three were Rabai kayas. The sacredness not only contributes to the safeguarding of the natural, but to the cultural resources as well.

Kasubi Royal Tombs

Kasubi Royal Tombs are located at 32° 33'11.92" East and 0° 19' 44.57" North and was established in 1882 by Kabaka Muteesa I as his palace at the strategic Kampala-Hoima hill in Uganda. Because of its unique architectural features, and as an icon of the Buganda kingdom, the site was listed as a WH Site in 2001. Kasubi Royal Sacred Tombs is an important player in the history of the East African Region. Just like the Kaya forests, the hill top location of Kasubi and other palaces was historically practiced by the Baganda Kabakas, as a security strategy to spot an oncoming enemy, to find easy ways to escape in case of an invasion or a rebellion, and to control major roads to the palace. According to oral traditions, the Baganda have a political history that dates back to the 13th century AD. The first Kabaka of the Buganda, Kintu, came with his wife Nambi, and is believed not to have died, but to have disappeared into the forest at Magonga. Although the dates of the reigns of the Kabakas are only precisely known from Kabaka Suuna II who ruled from 1836 to 1856, the first Kabaka to be buried at Kasubi was the 35th King, Muteesa I. By hosting John Hanning Speke, the first European visitor to Uganda in 1862, Henry Stanley in 1875, and by showing interest in some Islamic practices, Muteesa I the founder of Kasubi, became the first Kabaka to be influenced by foreign religion and education. According to the traditions of the Buganda kingdom, a separate burial site was established for a Kabaka who died away from the Palace. Subsequently, a royal shrine was established to house the King’s jawbone which is traditionally believed to contain his spirit. The shrines are staffed by descendants of the Kabaka’s leading chiefs, his wives, ritual half-sister Nalinya, and a spirit medium through which the dead Kabaka communicates with his successors. Kasubi is an important shrine and religious center for the royal family and the Baganda community because of outstanding historical values. The site is significant as a place where four succeeding Kabakas of Buganda Kingdom are buried. It has to be noted that Kabaka I was buried whole at his palace (Kasubi). This broke the tradition of burying the Kabaka’s jawbone in a culturally selected space. Buried at Kasubi are, Kabakas Mwanga II (1910), Daudi Chwa II (1939) and Muteesa II (1971). Each prince and princess who is a descendant of the four Kabakas is also buried in the outer fence behind the main shrine at Kasubi. The site is culturally important as the cemetery of the royalty of Buganda kingdom and also for its ritual value.

Traditional Management Structures and Attributes The Rabai Kayas Sacred Forest

Heritage is fluid, and depending on the prevailing circumstances, the communities can keep on re-creating it to suit their contemporary needs (Abungu 2011). The council of elders carry out the day to day management of the kaya forests on behalf of the community. It is the responsibility of the elders to ensure checks and balances with regard to the set regulations of managing the sacred forests are adhered to. This is done by determining control of access and use of the natural resources (Nyamweru and Kimaru 2008 & 2012; Nyamweru et al. 2008; Githitho 2003 & 2005). The elders’ roles within the sacred forests enable the community

to mould their heritage to fit within the prevailing circumstances. To be a member of the council of elders, one has to undergo an elaborate process of initiation, which must end with a sign of divine confirmation that an individual is chosen by the ancestral spirits. This process is not competitive but spiritually inspired. From personal interaction with the Kaya elders, one aspect that I noted is that “it is a calling”. Every elder spoken to narrated their experiences of enlistment that often came through constant and persistent dreams and visions. Some left active employment positions, while others heeded the call from active membership of Christian Churches and Islamic faith to take up the roles of kaya eldership. It is this ancestral spiritual connection that ensures that authenticity of the kaya forests is upheld, since imposters will be detected during the rituals, and consequences can be dire if one tries to find their way into the service by deceit. A close observation of the traditional management systems used by the elders in the kayas reveals that a lot of consideration is given to the use of natural resources according to changes that have occurred in the long term. For instance, the biodiversity sheltered in the sacred Kaya forests varies with each individual kaya as they are greatly dependent on the ecological factors and cultural practices related to them since their creation (Abungu and Githitho 2012). From the places above, it is apparent that sustainable cultural heritage does not refer to cultural tourism and its benefits only (Abungu 2013, Ballarin et al. 2013), but in the sustainable use of traditional conservation methods and knowledge processes that help communities to live in harmony with their heritage resources to ensure the long term conservation of their values.

The Kasubi Royal Tombs

The traditional management systems of the Buganda Kingdoms under the Kabaka were well structured. Services and responsibilities based on clan systems are similar in all the palaces and the King makes all appointments of the community leadership. Buganda Kings had/still have their own Katikiro (Prime Minister), meaning that Kasubi has had four Katikiros, because four Kings are buried there. Kasubi heritage site is systematically organized with the main tomb (Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga) on the west, with a number of structures and graves behind it, and on the eastern side is a large area meant for agricultural activities. Inside the Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga, is a huge bark cloth that separates the most sacred place (or “sacred forest” called Kibira) with the four royal graves. Just like the sacred kaya forests, entry into the sacred places is controlled. The royal family, the Nalinya and the Katikiro are the only ones allowed entry into the “the sacred forest” area. The architectural and spiritual values of Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga make Kasubi royal tombs a symbol of power and harmony. Within Kasubi, is the main door (Bujjabukula) manned by the Mulamba. All visitors are required to pass through this gate. The second entrance is on the right side of the main gate. The gate is not manned but entry is discouraged by use of taboos. The second entrance is mainly used for removing and bringing in the dead from the palace. Since it is a common belief that one assumes the position of the dead by passing through the gate meant for the dead, people are dissuaded from accessing the palace through the unmanned gate because they believe that by doing so, the result can be death. This is a perfect example of using intangible heritage to control access and effectively safeguarding the site’s values.

Traditional actors and their functions

The Organisational structures at Rabai Kayas

A kaya can be described as a circular opening of several hundred metres in length (Chiro 2007), with a wooden fence or stockade around it. Access into the kayas is through paths that cut in dense primeval forests through gates of dry walling of two metres (Chiro 2007; Kiriama 2013), into a wooden door frame protected by powerful charms and manned by armed guards. The kaya council of elders is organized hierarchically in a well defined order of seniority. The order of seniority includes; Avyere, Mviri, Mhahu, Bora and Msavula. Each rank has its own functionality and socio-ritual role. Depending on the order of seniority, responsibilities for the kaya elders range from installation of grave posts by the Bora, administering of oaths by the Msavala, while the Mhahu are the messengers who run errands. Just like in the case of Kasubi royal tombs where females play very crucial roles in the management of the intangible heritage aspects of the site, women play major roles in the administrative structures of the kaya which complement the cultural activities conducted by the males. Gender parity is adequately addressed by the council of elders with the inclusion of women kaya elders whose special responsibility includes administration of oaths, divination and preparation of sacrificial foods during the rituals. Within Rabai sacred kaya forests, there is a well-organized administrative system dealing with community matters ranging from health issues to legal matters. The courts resolve disputes among the community members, and the elders can also refer cases to the government's judicial system depending on their nature. The council of elders (ngambi) hold village meetings in a grove of trees or a large thatched hut known as a moro located at the centre of the kaya. During such meetings, the elders discuss day to day matters pertaining to the welfare of the community, arbitrate disputes between families, community members and make decisions on which rituals to be undertaken. In Rabai, such meetings take place every Monday at the main village parliament, while two other meetings are held on two separate days (Nzalachache and kaya Fimboni) a few kilometres from Rabai village. In case there is need to administer an oath to the parties, the elders must seek permission from the central government's provincial administration through the local chief. The Rabai are divided into two main clans; the Amwezi and the Achiza. Each clan has a number of sub-clans. Rabai kayas are bound with a living cultural tradition, and like the other Mijikenda kayas, it is the focus of magical religious ceremonies such as rainmaking rituals and for the wellbeing of the community. The kayas have an annual ritual cycle related to the protection of the community and the preservation of the heritage landscape. Several rites are performed depending on the intended outcome, and the objectives of the rituals range from repair of a fault, initiation of an elder to a higher rank or for a more specific request. The role of the elders is to control access into the sites and sustainable utilization of natural resources, the forests that are cultural constructs resulting from the ritual management by the elders.

The most sacred places within the Kaya Forests - Rituals and sanctification

The Rabai kaya elders strongly believe that sacred protective objects consisting of a pot full of an assortment of medicines known as fingo, brought from Singwaya (the original homeland of the Mijikenda), and essential for the well-being of the communities are buried in a secret location in the kaya (Chiro 2007; Kiriama 2013). The sites are used to perform cultural rituals for the well-being of the community. Work such as building of a small hut (kazuma) to offering of sacrifices is distributed according to seniority order. Construction materials are sourced from the forest and nothing is allowed to come from outside or leave the forest. The objectives of performing these rituals include; to pray for good rains in case of prolonged droughts, to seek for peace, to seek for good crop harvest, to appease the spirits, to thank god for the community and to authorize entry by non-community members.

In relation to rituals, there are some that can be witnessed by community members and outsiders on request and there are some that are strictly conducted by the elders inside the kayas and nobody else is allowed access. The process involves the elders retreat into the kaya forest for two weeks sanctification process and prayers to their gods. When offering sacrifices for whatever intervention the community is seeking for, just by observing the movement of smoke which should be white and upwards moving towards their god (mulungu), the elders would know if their offerings have been accepted or not. In case, the sacrifice and prayers are not accepted by mulungu, the elders will seek divine help through prayers and further relevant rituals until it is revealed to them what the problem is, and how to address it. After a period of two weeks of sanctification is observed, another set of sacrifices is made until a positive answer and acceptance of the sacrifice is received from their god. Everything done by the community within the kayas, such as sacrifices, prayers and interventions, there is always a divine connection to their god through ancestral spirits who are buried inside the sacred grounds. The results are always spiritually determined and answers given accordingly as illustrated in the conversation held with the Mzee (Elder) Daniel Garero "Last time we conducted prayers for rains in the forest, just by looking at the white smoke rising straight to our maker, we knew the prayers had been accepted. I told the elders to finish the remaining activities fast because looking up I saw a small cloud starting to form. By the time we left the forest and some of us had not reached our homesteads, the rain was pouring furiously, so people got water and good harvest that year".

The Organisational structures at Kasubi Royal Tombs

Kasubi is one of the most striking traditional architectural masterpieces in the region. The structure was constructed using traditional thatching techniques. The buildings at Kasubi exhibit construction skills of the Buganda and are a symbol of unity for all the 52 Buganda clans. Every Buganda clan has a duty at Kasubi and all are committed in their duties to serve the King and the Kingdom. As a spiritual site and a place of worship which connects the living and the dead, Kasubi is a living cultural landscape that reflects the dignity and identity of the Baganda and their kingdom. Like the kayas, recruitment to serve in various capacities at Kasubi is spirit driven and determined by clan and family lineage. Some of the office bearers and actors at the Kasubi heritage landscape include The Mulamba, The Nsigo –Messenger/Police, The Master Thatcher, The Musenera - The Beer Server, The Katikiro, Kasubi Tombs, Nyalinya (King's Official Sister) and The King's Wife/Wives.

The Mulamba

The Mulamba is the Principal guard at the Kasubi Palace, and is stationed at the gate house on the right hand side of the guard house immediately after the main gate. He protects the Kabaka's properties (both the tangible and the intangible), and the overall heritage site (Kasubi) from vandalism and disrespectful activities. Mulamba's roles include control of access at the main gate (Bujjabukula) and vetting of visitors to the Palace. He has authority to permit, refuse or direct visitors to relevant places within or outside the Palace. He also has the authority to arrest or subdue undesirable characters coming to the Palace. The Mulamba also plays the important role of announcing to the spirits of a visit by the Kabaka by blowing a horn, beating a drum or both, before leading him to the shrine where he kneels down to announce the visiting Kabaka's presence to his predecessors. To serve as a Mulamba, one has to belong to a particular clan and must be called by the ancestral spirits. At Kasubi sacred site, obedience in serving the Kabaka and respect to the ancestral spirits can determine an individual's success and wellbeing in the society.

The Nsigo –Messenger/Police

The role of Nsigo, who is equivalent to a messenger or a police officer, under the authority of the King, is to arrest or summon anyone who has shown disrespect to Kabaka's institution. Currently at Kasubi Royal tombs, the Nsigo works side by side with a seconded Police officer from the Central Government. The officer from the central government is fully equipped with a Motorbike and other gadgets for modern day security surveillance and ease of operations.

The Master Thatcher

The thatching technique and duties related to it is a preserve of the Ngeye clan (Colobus monkey clan) and is passed on from generation to generation. During undertakings such as the ongoing works at Kasubi or during a building construction activity, special rules of purity of the craftsmen are of utmost importance. Just like the case of Kenya's Rabai sacred kaya forests, in order to attain a sanctified state during the entire period of construction or ritual activities, separation from physical contact with the opposite sex is a must. The current Master thatcher at Kasubi tombs Christopher Kawooya started work at Mengo in 1955 before he moved to Kasubi in 1968. Kawooya learnt the art of thatching from his father, and according to true African tradition, is in turn mentoring his children and other apprentices.

The Musenera - The Beer Server

The beer server (Omudanda) is a calling by the ancestral spirits just like any office bearer at Kasubi. Rebelling against the wishes of the spirits leads to dire consequences to the individual and his/her family. There will be no peace in such a family until the chosen person takes up the service. Local beer and roasted coffee beans play a very important role in the Baganda society as a symbol of friendship, unity and was always used as a way of bonding people together. Beer is served during special occasion such as ceremonies after the harvesting period, as well as the time when the subjects pay homage to the Kabaka.

The Katikiro

According to the Buganda governance system, the Katikiro is an equivalent to the Deputy Prime Minister in the hierarchical order. The katikiro is responsible for the social welfare of the people serving at Kasubi and the physical part of the heritage site.

Nyalinya (King's official sister)

The Nalinya, is the official sister of the Kabaka and the overall overseer of all the traditional customs and rituals taking place within the heritage landscape.

The King's wife/wives

The roles of the King's wives vary in nature, but, a common factor is that they are inherited and restricted to the clan lineage. Some are experts in embroidery and their responsibilities include all the decorations in the main house, as well as taking care of the symbolic twin objects. When the King's wife completes work on the royal objects, the handing over ceremony involves putting the finished objects in a basket before giving it to the King.

The most Sacred Places at Kasubi Royal Tombs

Bark Cloth and Sacred Places at Kasubi

The bark cloth made from the fig tree (*Ficus natalensis*) is a fascinating Baganda skill that has been inscribed by UNESCO as a masterpiece of Oral and intangible heritage of Humanity (2005). The bark cloth has a strong spiritual meaning to the Buganda culture and neighbouring communities. The cloth is widely used for ritual activities and burial ceremonies in the region. At Kasubi and other royal tombs associated with Baganda Kingdom, there is an area behind a bark cloth curtain known as Kibira or "sacred forest" where sacred rituals are performed. The Kibira is the space where the Kabakas' tombs are located. Raised platforms corresponding to the position of each Kabaka's tomb are located behind the curtain. Kasubi heritage site has a well-organized system of office bearers, each with specific duties to perform. Just like Rabai sacred kayas forests, the officials at Kasubi were enlisted by the ancestral spirits, hence a strong connection between the departed ancestors and the living descendants.

Traditional Management Systems and the present day legal systems in East Africa

Active protection and use of the kayas by the community and partnerships with individual researchers, local, government and international institutions, the resources were gazetted by the government as National Monuments under Sites and Monuments Acts and National Museums Act since repealed and replaced by Museums and Heritage ACT of 2006. The Government of Kenya proposed some of the kayas for nomination by UNESCO for listing as WH Sites, and in 2008, the Rabai kayas, namely Bomu, Fimboni and Mudzi Muvya were inscribed on the UNESCO WH List. The inscription recognized the Mijikenda religious beliefs and practices, and the kayas due to the earlier use as settlement and habitation, and as sacred grounds associated with Mijikenda spiritual beliefs and ancestral spirits. The kayas are considered as the carriers of group identity due to their status as sacred places and home to the Mijikenda. Currently, there are forty five kayas along the Kenyan coast and its hinterland in the form of residual forest patches averaging 10 to 400 hectares (Kiriama 2013) gazetted by the government as National Monuments or Forest reserves. Out of the forty five, ten are listed on the UNESCO WH List for their Outstanding Universal Values (both natural and cultural). Out of the ten listed kayas, three belong to the Aravai (Rabai) community.

Kasubi Royal Tombs and related heritage landscape

Kasubi Royal heritage site covers a total area of 26.8 hectares. The site is a gazetted historical monument under the Historical Monuments Act, 1967 of Uganda. It was inscribed on the WH List by UNESCO in 2001. At Kasubi and its sister site of Wamala royal tombs, there is a rich mixture of traditional and modern security arrangements put in place. Within the Baganda community, there are legal structures and offices that were set up by the Kabakas are still active today. These offices undertake administrative duties on behalf of the Kings from the grassroots all the way to the Buganda Parliament. Disputes are resolved from village level to the highest Court station within the Buganda Parliament.

Traditional Management Systems in Modern Context

The Rabai Kayas sacred forests

The traditional management systems reveal that a lot of consideration is given to the use of natural resources according to

changes that have occurred in the long term. The Rabai have a rich mix of both ethnicity and religious beliefs which often lead to contestations of meanings and identity. Other factors impacting heritage sites include diverse negative global trends and living patterns of the local populations due to adoption of Western ways of doing things. The eminent threats facing the kaya forests are varied in nature (Willis 1996; Gigitho 2003 & 2008). These include growing human population and encroachment into the heritage resources for agricultural activities; deforestation and uncontrolled pressure to develop tourist resorts targeting prime heritage resources. One positive aspect of traditional management systems as practiced by the Rabai community under the leadership of the elders is control of the on-going activities within the heritage sites. It is evident that despite all the partnerships, the kaya elders have managed to maintain and control the processes taking place within and around the sites. Checks and balances by the elders using cultural rituals and intervention mediums such as prayers ensures that before anyone enters or before anything is taken out of the kayas, permission must be granted. This applies to research activities as well. During archaeological excavations by the National Museums of Kenya's coastal archaeology department in April 2009, June 2010 and December 2011, the kaya elders had to carry out special ceremonies to appease the spirits of the ancestors, and also to ask for permission from the spirits for the team to carry out excavations within the kayas. Without the ceremonies that involved construction of tangible things such as construction and dedication of traditional miniature huts to offer sacrifices to the ancestors, it is believed the spirits would harm the research team. Ritual activities include pouring of coconut oil, slaughtering a black or white chicken, which are left together with calabashes of maize flour for the spirits to feed on. More than anything, they are meant to reinforce the identity of the Aravai, and also, to reinforce their ownership of the sacred forest (Kiriama 2013).

Kaya Elders, Traditional Medicine and Intangible heritage

The Kaya Elders are well vested with traditional knowledge, offering cure for different diseases using herbs. They understand and know the medicinal value of the trees in the scared forest. However, it is important to understand that besides understanding the values of the flora, there is an intangible aspect to the understanding. These values have been used not only to serve community members approaching the Kaya for assistance. The Government has also come to understand and appreciate the knowledge of the elders in terms of offering alternative medical solutions to conditions that do not respond to western or conventional medicine administered in modern hospitals.

Political Influences of the Kaya Elders

Due to their practice and mastery of intangible heritage, the kaya elders have attained positions of respect and authority as community leaders. This status has seen them become major players in the political arena in Kenya. They now have power for example, to influence political outcomes by declaring their support for a contestant of a political party. It is a common practice, especially during elections for politicians from different faith backgrounds such as Christians, Muslims, and Hindus to solicit for support and endorsements from the kaya elders. Most of the politicians who would normally consider the ritual practices as paganism are willing and ready to sit in front of the elders bare chested, covered in traditional clothes to be installed as honorary kaya elders. The belief by the politicians is that the position comes with authority and favourable views from the local communities. The elders and kaya forests have therefore become a factor on the political landscape in Kenya (Abungu 1996).

Kasubi Royal Tombs

At Kasubi royal tombs, intangible meanings are expressed by the architectural designs of the structures, the decorative features and the fireplace at the courtyard (Ekyoto) that symbolizes the omnipresent nature of the Kings spirits. Similar to the Rabai sacred kaya forests, Kasubi is a place of interaction between nature and culture, as well as spirits of the dead and the living that binds all Bagandas together, as represented by the 52 rings on the roof of Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga structure. The success in safeguarding the intangible heritage values that make Kasubi a living site have been maintained by female representatives of the royal family. These include the four Nalinyas who are the chief guardians and sisters to the deceased Kings and the Lubuga, who represents the Mother. The Nalinyas and Lubuga, keep sensitive (secret) knowledge which is only passed on orally to the next generation. For the Baganda community, Kasubi is a living heritage landscape where they visit to pay homage to the Kabakas of Buganda, and ancestors of their Kings. At the site, people perform rituals to appease the spirits of the dead Kings, to ask for protection and success in their endeavours. The responsibility of keeping the purity of the heritage site is with the women relatives, especially the King's ceremonial sister, mother and wives who are charged with the responsibility of making sure that unsuitable behaviour or activities are not done within the heritage landscape. By undertaking all rituals and ceremonies associated with the site such as the full moon and as consultation mediums, they ensure continuity of spiritual ties between the dead and the living.

Wamala Palace and Sacred Tomb

Wamala Palace was built much earlier than Kasubi but their spatial organizational structures are more or less identical. The person currently in charge at Wamala is 34 year old Mkonda Namsoki Mkondo, who serves as the Kings wife, and also doubles up as the Katikiro, Nalinnya and the communication medium between the community and Kabaka Suuna. A 5th generation wife of the Kabaka Suuna, Namsoki moved to Wamala in 2003 to inherit her position after the death of her grandmother. Her role is to take care of the royal palace, through supervision of all activities at the site and the surrounding heritage landscape. This is to ensure that the traditional customs and practices that uphold the values of the site are respected. Namsoki belongs to the Asiga clan and the selection of the Kings wife is only within her lineage. In her case, she was selected and enlisted by the spirits through messages coming to her via dreams and visions, as well as physical encounters (which she did not wish to elaborate on). The ancestral spirits separated Namsoki, the current King's wife at Wamala from her former husband who was forced to relocate from Uganda to Nairobi, Kenya. Since their separation, there has never been/will never be contact between the two, and their two children by the former husband are now the King's children and live with her at Wamala as part of the King's family.

Communication Medium

An encounter with the Kings wife (Namsoke) and her activities at Wamala heritage site gives a very clear demonstration of the power of intangible heritage within the landscapes. Apart from the normal duties of a married woman such as taking care of Kabaka's two children, she is also the custodian and supervisor of the palace. She plays the major role of a communication medium between her husband (SseKabaka) and the people who visit the place to seek assistance or for consultations. Often on a one on one basis Namsoke physically presents her requests to the King who in turn gives her answers through dreams and visions.

Challenges and interventions

Heritage resources are potential development tools (Abungu 2013), but observing development trends in East Africa, these important places are under threat from various factors, including but not limited to population increase and the resultant pressure on land resources. The following narrative gives a common occurrence of abuse of office by those entrusted with the responsibility on behalf of their communities. It also gives an illustration on how traditional management systems, through cultural practices can be used to give instant justice for malpractices where the governments judiciary systems might take long to address, hence giving a complementary service to its people and the nation. Namsoke revealed to us during interviews that the former Katikiro fraudulently sold Kabaka's land at Wamala which has been reduced from 100 acres to the current 5 acres. When asked if any legal action had been taken, the answer was that traditional ways of interventions are more effective than the court processes where the culprits are able to use money to hire lawyers to influence the outcomes in their favour. At Wamala, the traditional forms of intervention through rituals have been performed by the current Katikiro, (the King's wife) with positive results being realized for all to see. An example is the dire consequences to those who encroached on Kabaka's land at Wamala which, include constant torments by the spirits until they were forced to abandon their houses, while others practically went mad. The former Katikiro who sold the land was dealt with by the spirits and put to shame for community members to see (she did not elaborate on the nature of shame). The people who encroached in the land were tormented and could not sleep at night because the Kabaka's spirits continuously asked why they took his land and ordered them to surrender it back. Most of the houses constructed on the illegally acquired plots were abandoned, demolished and the land repossessed after the intervention of the ancestral spirits. In order to be forgiven and to lead normal lives once again after the spiritual evacuation, the wise amongst the offenders come back to Wamala to ask for the King's forgiveness. However, to stop further encroachment, the Central government has attached one policeman to provide security to the site. A Commission of Inquiry has also been appointed by the Senior Katikiro (Prime Minister) in the Buganda parliament to look at the land grabbing issue with a view to prosecute those who were involved. In comparison to Kasubi, Wamala is a typical case of bad management with regards to the land subdivision and sale. But, at the same time, it is a good example of an application of traditional management systems and modern ways of protection in an integrated approach to heritage management.

Spiritual interventions

Spiritual interventions are sought by the communities when there are needs to pray for, such as rain in case of prolonged drought, forgiveness due to constant calamities and ailments that might befall the people amongst other issues. During such instances, offerings and sacrifices are given to the ancestral spirits who respond accordingly. At Wamala, the spirits are so powerful that sometimes the responses are immediate. The following account was narrated to us by the site attendant (Musisi William), a Muvonge (given to the site on behalf of somebody else). Musisi narrated how he intercepted an arsonist who was in the process of torching the tomb house at Wamala. He said; "I was cleaning the site when I noticed someone walking towards the main structure, so I decided to check if he needed assistance. But, my approach disturbed him and his intended plans because I noticed that he had already set fire on the western side of the structure and wanted to move to another section. When I shouted, he ran away taking one of Kabaka's artifacts near the fireplace, but I could not chase him because I had to put off the fire before it spread beyond control. This misdoing was reported to Kabaka by Namsoke, (King's Wife), and a punishment was meted out to

the man who became mad. Every day, until he eventually died, the man went naked around all the villages surrounding Wamala daily before finishing his routine at the main gate at Wamala site". From the above examples, it is evident that traditional management systems through taboos are alive and is one of the most effective ways of safeguarding the people's heritage. At Kasubi and related heritage sites such as Wamala, Kabaka's spirit is very much alive and in control of the day to day occurrences. At Kyabaggu a tomb, which is one of the Kabaka's Palaces, although not as active as Kasubi, communities actively pay a visit to the site to consult with the ancestral spirits. At the site, a young man plays the double roles of a caretaker and a communication medium between the spirit and physical world.

Challenges to Traditional Management Systems

As can be discerned from the case studies discussed here, there are a number of threats facing heritage resources in East Africa. Amongst these are (i) stiff competition from commercial enterprises and the privatisation of land by the colonialist governments that transformed the once communal entities to assets, to be bought and sold for commercial purposes; (ii) negative modernity that threatens cultural beliefs; (iii) religious intolerance from foreign faiths such as Christianity and Islam (others with elements of extremism and intolerance to any traditional practices considered paganism); (iv) western education; (v) globalisation and its effect; (vi) top-bottom management approach; and (vii) political threats and lack of goodwill. These harmful activities are a threat to the heritage resources, such that those in charge like the elders resort to strict rituals not only to reconstruct their identity, but for reinforcing and maintaining the landscape as well. Effects of urbanization and social transformations such as religious influences have seen the fast diminishing effects on traditions and cultural practices within the sacred landscapes. These heritage resources are also threatened due to lack of proper documentation and lack of recognition by relevant government departments that can have them incorporated into the administrative and national legal frameworks to enhance the protection of their physical and non-physical elements. It is evident that national and international institutions cannot effectively undertake heritage management and conservation without the active involvement of other stakeholders, especially the local communities who are likely to have several values assigned to these cultural landscapes. For Kasubi, conservation and management challenges of this particular site is not only cultural and technical, but political as well. The Tombs and the Royal Palace taken away by former President Milton Obote in 1960s were returned in 1993, when President Yoweri Museveni granted the request to give back the tombs, palace and the land around them. The disruption of the cultural practices did not only rob the Baganda of their rights of beliefs and association but also the rights of the international community who view this heritage, as heritage of humanity. Apart from its spiritual, architectural and living heritage values, Kasubi has political significance to the Buganda Community as a symbol of unity.

Legal Policy Frameworks

A transformed legal framework is needed in order to address these challenges. Thus, a formulation of a common policy framework for the protection of heritage resources in Africa by countries in the continent will go a long way in enhancing their use as educational tools and examples of good or alternative conservation systems. These policies should clearly recognise the important roles of traditional conservation and management systems in the conservation of the heritage resources, as well

as the generation and sharing of knowledge from the same. Most importantly, there should be active involvement of local communities, local/regional authorities, teachers, government departments and relevant stakeholders in decision making and management of their heritage resources and within their jurisdiction respectively. To some extent, this is already happening in Rabai kayas and Kasubi Royal Tombs where the central governments and local communities are working side by side and respecting each other for the common good of heritage conservation and management. To ensure that legal frameworks are effective in terms of implementation, mechanisms should be put into place to safeguard full participation of various communities in heritage management at local, regional, national and international levels, and to create relevance by carrying forward relevant intangible values into new developments.

Possible Remedies: Co-management/Integrated Management Systems

According to Smith (2006), "heritage is a process of negotiation about using the past and collective or individual memories to negotiate new ways of being and expressing identity. While, within this process of negotiation, heritage objects, sites, places or institutions like museums become cultural, and are considered as tools or props to facilitate this process, but do not themselves stand in or act for this process" (Smith 2006: 4). On the other hand, the involvement of the indigenous populations in the decision making, interpretation, and management of their heritage sites and material relics is one way of acknowledging their human rights issues in archaeology (Manyanga 2005).

Mentorship and educational curriculum

Mentorship programmes for the youth and willing researchers by holders of knowledge such as the kaya elders will be one way of ensuring that Africa's ways of education, through oral traditions is encouraged within these heritage spaces. In order to be an effective learning tool, and to create more awareness and interest within diverse audiences, knowledgeable persons in traditional conservation methods such as the kaya elders, and the Master Thatcher at Kasubi would, through schools and colleges and other forums, be able to share their knowledge, even as guest speakers. For such programmes to succeed, governments should introduce the programmes as an official part of educational curriculum in order to encourage uniformity in knowledge sharing.

Mass Media

Effective communication will be through radio, television programmes, newspapers, research publications and meeting forums that will specifically highlight the importance of heritage resources as tools of development. Identification, documentation and conservation of heritage resources not only for the future but also for contemporary use, will help bring out the values and significances heritage resources. In the case of Kasubi, social media is already accessible to the international audiences when compared to the local populations in Uganda. This communication medium seems to work well for people outside the continent where internet services are readily available and efficient. It should be noted that basic mobile telephone handsets in Africa now come with internet settings, but the use of social media for matters of cultural significance should be encouraged. The trend will enable people to learn more about values of their heritage resources and be able to appreciate them. In addition to social media, there is a role for radio, television and local newspapers. These mediums can be used effectively at local levels, and Uganda is already applying these mediums

of communication in influencing information dissemination. The local radio stations, newspapers and television crew members conduct interviews with the site managers and responsible officers. In other instances, live broadcast of telephonic interviews are done by radio stations using local languages, and in the process, relevant heritage sites information is collected and disseminated to the communities to create more awareness.

Publications

There is a general consensus in places like Kasubi that all stakeholders including the Baganda government, the Central government, institutions, individuals and other interested partners, should all work on the translation of already published works in Luganda to other languages. Therefore, there is likelihood that the translation might increase the number of readers and awareness.

Challenges

Some of the challenges faced by the community in Uganda for the continuity of heritage values in heritage sites like Kasubi Royal Tombs currently and possibly in the future include, (i) lack of raw materials including grass, twine and woods from special tree species for construction (Kasubi); and the allocation of land heritage places to real estate developers around (Kasubi). In order to satisfy and encourage the continuity of traditional building practices and maintenance, community leaders are encouraging their people to establish grass farms, and planting of tree species around their compounds. This was a traditional practice by the Baganda community during the earlier Kabaka's leaderships.

Spiritual connections and Taboos

At Kasubi, according to the deputy Katikiro, when people started constructing rectangular houses at the site, the ancestral spirits were consulted on the new developments, and the answer was that they are unwanted because it is robbing the site of its spiritual values and there is need to revert back to the circular design. Purity is of utmost importance and sexual activities are prohibited during repair works or construction of the houses. If defied, there is bound to be dire consequences for the culprits because activities at Kasubi are spirit driven.

Conclusion

It is a recognized fact in many places of the world that the disappearance of heritage places can have negative effects on the community related to them. Therefore, the notion of continuity and social change is a critical component of this relationship. Rabai kayas are a good example of community's true achievement of a harmonious existence between the ancestors (ancestral spirits) and their descendants. This has been possible because the community has taken care of, and sustained the remnants of heritage spaces that connect them to their ancestors, hence continuity between the past and the present. On the other hand, communities at Kasubi, Wamala and Kyabaggu sacred tombs all have one element in common; they all address the late Kabakas in the present and not in the past. The people strongly believe that the Kabakas are alive and able to respond to their petitions, requests and needs. Results of studies documenting traditional management systems advanced by this chapter when given a detailed comparative analysis with documented western conservation practices (at times referred to as good practices), will form a very valuable learning tool for students of heritage studies as well as heritage professionals across the globe. Enshrining the traditional management systems into country legislative frameworks, and putting into place systems of implementation of the same, will go a long way in ensuring that through active participation of communities who are the creators and custo-

dians of the same, the intangible knowledge and heritage resources are concurrently conserved and utilized effectively.

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4

TRADITIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN NATURAL WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN EAST AFRICA

Moses Wafula Mapesa

Introduction

World Heritage Sites are a creation of a UNESCO 1972 convention as an additional mechanism for safeguarding natural and cultural phenomena described and recognized for their “outstanding universal value” to humanity. Often such sites will already have attained national recognition as parks, reserves, monuments of historical or cultural values in their respective countries. The national recognition in most cases dates back a few decades in time yet these phenomena have existed for hundreds of years safeguarded by traditional practices, beliefs systems and ways of life by people living in those areas. In Africa, many of the WH Sites are currently listed as WH in Danger owing to several, and largely, external threats. It is now widely anticipated that Traditional Management Systems (TMS) of old may adequately address the threats. At the inception of western and state based natural resource management in the 19th and 20th centuries, traditional practices and beliefs were outlawed. In addition, Christian and Islamic religious teachings further alienated communities from their traditions and beliefs, which for many centuries safeguarded the natural and cultural phenomena. In actual fact, the new political state and religion systematically started destroying, plundering and exploiting the natural and cultural heritage. Yet, it outlawed access and use by local and indigenous communities only to come back later to proclaim that the resources are under threat and belong to the global community. This is not only an African phenomenon but has been a common trend in many other parts of the world.

Traditional Management Systems

Several studies carried out in the past 30 years acknowledge the importance of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) to environmental conservation and management and indeed the existence of TMS even when they are not officially recognised (Brockman 1997; FFI-UWA 2012). Bowers (2012) has argued that many environmental challenges faced by the world over are a direct result of industrialisation – a product of Western science. Therefore, the Western science that largely created the problems will not provide the solutions but rather the TMS that are time tested, spanning thousands of years. TEK in Africa, which is the cornerstone of TMS, is believed to date as far back as 4,000 BC (Berkes 1989). It is described as knowledge ingrained in the relationship of living organisms living with one another in their environment and it represents experience in some cases acquired over thousands of years of direct human contact with the environment refined and passed on through several generations (Christie 1991; Berkes 1999). Traditional Knowledge is in many respects similar to Western science because it is based on cumulative observations, with trial and error experiments and dynamic in that new knowledge is continuously added. However, it also builds upon the historic experiences of a people and adapts to social, economic, environmental, spiritual and political change (Brockman 1997; Berkes et al. 2000; Hammersmith 2007). Natural sites in Africa were being protected using traditional systems way before they were declared WH Sites. Through these declarations, the traditional management practises on these sites were outlawed and became totally disregarded. Access to these resources by the people living within the surrounding areas became restricted. As a result, there was a disruption in the application of traditional knowledge and practices. Therefore, the only way to access the traditional knowledge and management systems in Africa is through research, documentation and training. As it became increasingly clear that protected areas and for that matter natural WH Sites cannot be managed without cultural considerations of the people who live

near or even lay claim over them, the concept of community conservation or collaborative management with communities was introduced in the 1990s. The concept sought to ‘involve’ communities in the protection of natural sites and ‘win’ their support with limited access to a few resources and some hand-outs in the name of ‘benefit sharing’. This too, however, has its shortcomings as aptly observed by Infield (2002:51) who stated that “understanding the park as a cultural entity, rather than only a scientific or economic entity, would allow it to be managed so as to reflect a wider range of values”. It is about TEK and systems which cuts across culture, science, economics and religion. Blomley (2002:53) poses a fundamental question on conservation standards when he asks: “why is it that we apply one set of standards in Europe and a totally different set in developing countries...?” He thus recommends that, “we must move away from naive ideas of conservation education (community conservation) where ... communities are taught about the importance of protecting natural heritage” (ibid: 53). The terminologies ‘traditional knowledge’, ‘traditional ecological knowledge’ and ‘traditional management systems’ came into widespread use from the 1980s. However, the link between humankind and nature has existed and been known for thousands of years in the form of ethno-science, culture and religion (Agrawal 1995; Conklin 1957; Lewis 1975 and Wyman 1964). Gadgil (1991), on comparing Western science and tradition found that scientific prescriptions often resemble or match ‘pre-scientific’ prescriptions based on TEK. Yet, based on available data, the scientific prescriptions have had little impact in addressing environmental challenges compared to traditional systems based on culture, religion and social norms. Gadgil (1991) further observed that with all its power, science seems unable to halt and reverse the depletion of resources and environmental degradation. He thus emphasised that there is need to conserve the diversity of traditional resource management practices and systems. There is evidence that people living in traditional communities conserved nature and biodiversity through TEK and systems quite effectively. Such knowledge will be of benefit for Protected Area Agencies and WH Site management teams (Berkes et al 2000; Western 2000; Byers et al 2001). Borri-Feyerabend et al (2004) and Maffi and Woodley (2010) have documented a number of examples globally that demonstrate the use and the need to apply TEK in natural heritage management. Although there is now widespread recognition of the role of TEK in the conservation of biodiversity and WH Sites (UN 1992; UNESCO 2013), traditional management as a system of management is not yet universally accepted. Scholars like Alvrđ (1983) and Diamond (1986), while acknowledging that traditional ecological knowledge did exist in Africa and elsewhere, argue that there were no systems for management because biodiversity conservation involves restraint and requires careful planning to guarantee availability of resources for future generations - attributes that were not found among traditional people according to these scholars.

Context and scope of the study

The aim of this study is to demonstrate through documentation the effectiveness of traditional practices, beliefs and people’s ways of life that for many centuries have safeguarded the natural phenomena that are WH Sites in Africa today. A case for integration of what is now known as traditional ecological knowledge or traditional management systems with Western science based systems has been made. Suggestions for capacity building modules that integrate TMS have been made too. Two natural WH Sites were chosen as case studies, Rwenzori Mountains National Park in Uganda and Ngorongoro Conservation Area in Tanzania. Obviously considering the geographical scope of Africa and that the case study sites are in Eastern Africa, this may appear as a small sample. However, it is important to note

that based on the available literature, the conventional and traditional practices are quite similar in principle and practice across Africa. The study had limitations of resources in terms of human expertise and funding. Nevertheless, the available literature was used to cite examples from other parts of Africa and the world.

Structures and attributes for Traditional Management Systems

For more than 100 years, when the first batch of protected areas were created, conservation efforts have been centralised and known to be the primary responsibility of government. There has been increasing recognition in recent years of the role of local communities, traditional knowledge, and culture in biodiversity conservation and management. At the World Parks Congress held in Durban in 2003, a strong case was made for recognition of traditional authorities, institutions and representative organisations for the better management of protected areas. Recommendations to that effect were made through the Durban Accord on our Global Commitment for People and Earth's Protected Areas (2003). Traditional societies have for thousands of years lived in harmony with their environment based on time tested management structures and attributes (Pirrot et al. 2000; Elmqvist et al. 2004; FFI-UWA 2012). The key structure and attribute of the TMS is the homogeneity of a society or a people based on language, culture and livelihood needs. In any given landscape where WH Sites and protected areas are located, people have either existed or there has been a physical interaction and nature. The various landscapes have always been settled or owned by people commonly referred to as 'First Nations', with set norms and a hierarchy responsible for wise resource use. Elmqvist et al. (2004) observed that Indigenous groups of people offer alternative management perspectives and knowledge based on their time-tested management practices using studies in northern Canada. In assessing international literature to examine the role of traditional knowledge and systems in responding to and managing ecological processes and functions, a diversity of local and traditional practices for ecosystem management have been identified (Brockman 1997; Berkes et al. 2000). These include multiple species management, resource rotation, succession management, landscape patchiness management, and ways of responding to and managing pulses and ecological surprises (Brockman 1997; Berkes et al. 2000).

In the majority of cases, threats to WH Sites and Protected Areas have been as a result of external influences and in-migration of people from other areas resulting in the break up of traditional systems for commercialisation and new developments. There is widespread realisation that modern day science cannot replace traditional knowledge nor solve the problems it has created, but rather there is a case for integration as most attributes are similar (Gadgil and Berkes 1991). Studies carried out among the Aboriginal peoples of Canada have shown the effectiveness of homogeneity and especially the first language as a key structural element in natural resource management and conservation (Brockman 1997). The study noted that Aboriginal languages are a primary means by which First Nations and Inuit cultures are shared and passed on from one generation to another (Elmqvist et al. 2004). They also contain knowledge that cannot be captured in other languages (emphasis mine). Brockman (1997:3) goes on to quote a local Aboriginal representative, Eli Taylor of Manitoba, addressing the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs: "Our Native language embodies a value system about how we ought to live and relate to each other... it gives a name to relations among kin, to roles and responsibilities among family members, and with the broader clan

group. There are no English words for these relationships because your social and family life is different from ours. Now if you destroy our language, you not only break down these relationships, but you also destroy other aspects of our Indian way of life and culture, especially those that describe man's connection with nature, the Great Spirit, and the order of things". Obviously, this statement is true for any indigenous language. In this study, a very elaborate management structure was articulated by the Masaai of Ngorongoro Conservation Area and the Bakonjo of the Rwenzori Mountains National Park. As previously mentioned, both of these case studies were undertaken on WH Sites where the Masaai and Bakonjo have been part of the ecosystems for over 200 years.

The Masaai structure and attributes as a Traditional Management System in Ngorongoro conservation area

The Masaai are a homogeneous people who are traditionally pastoralists. They have lived in Ngorongoro with their vast numbers of livestock for over 200 years. Their culture and lifestyle has over the years enabled them to co-exist with wildlife in the Ngorongoro. The wildlife of Ngorongoro and broad swathes of wildlife land straddling the rift valley in Tanzania and Kenya owes its continued existence to the protection offered to it by the Masaai over past centuries. Ngorongoro was one of the first natural sites to be inscribed on the WH list in 1979. Not only does it encompass one of the world's most diverse assemblages of large mammals but it is also a paleontological site where evidence of human origins has been found. It is, therefore, associated with a long human history spanning millions of years. In recognition of the long human history in the Ngorongoro, it was inscribed as a mixed WH Site in 2010. The Ngorongoro Conservation Area was established in 1959 under an agreement between the Masaai Elders and the Tanzanian Government. The aim of the agreement was to conserve and develop the natural resources of the area and to safeguard and promote the interests of the Masaai citizens engaged in the livestock industry in the conservation area. As part of this study, various people were interviewed about the Masaai attributes and structures for conservation. Amongst these were the leading conservationists in Kenya and Tanzania interviewed as well as a groups, of Masaai (elders, young men and women) drawn from the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Other interviewees were the conservation area managers, central and local government officials and representatives of civil society and international bodies (such as AWHF, IFAW, LATF, IUCN, UNESCO). Emanating out of the interviews was a general agreement that the Masaai have played a very critical role in the conservation of wildlife not only in the Ngorongoro but in the whole of the Rift Valley Area.

Attributes identified as supportive to nature and wildlife conservation by the Masaai

Masaai elders explained at length that the simplistic description of the Masaai livelihood as dependent on livestock is erroneous. They further emphasised that they do not need any awareness raising and 'so-called' education programs from Protected Area managers on the value and need for conservation of the Ngorongoro. This provides one with a clear and unquestionable understanding that their livelihood depends on nature. The Masaai elders describe Protected Area managers as 'outsiders' only interested in harnessing the wildlife wealth (through tourism) without due regard to the true protectors of the wildlife and nature.

I provide a number of attributes practiced by the Masaai below

which are supportive of nature conservation:

- An elaborate set of norms for conservation, implemented through a system of identity with wildlife in the form of totems and restrictions in the form of taboos. The system is passed on from generation to generation orally and children are taught from the time they begin to speak (~ 2 or 3 years) through their lifetime and therefore the system is self enforcing. All the clans amongst the Masaai identify themselves with wild animals and plants as totems. It is a special relationship that is personal, spiritual and family. To illustrate the special relationship, a Masaai elder explains that, for example, an elephant is considered part of some Masaai clans and to kill an elephant is taboo, it is like killing a clansman (brother or sister). And by extension, clans that marry from the elephant clan cannot kill elephants as that would be equivalent to killing an in-law. Therefore anybody killing an elephant would either be cleansed if the person has a relationship with the clan member or punished if they do not have a relation or from outside. This is the origin of the well-known Masaai attribute of not eating wild game – because wild game is part of them. This is a self enforcing mechanism given the overlap of Masaai 'territory' with wildlife.
- A clan and inter-clan structure with clear roles is spelt out for elders, women and youths. Respect for elders as a fountain of wisdom and learning, youth for protection, and women as livelihood support. Clan elders are responsible for resource use allocation. They decide on grazing areas, rotation times, burning regimes, harvest methods and quantities. It is the elders who set policies and give policy direction based on their collective wisdom attained through experience and knowledge passed on from generations. Diviners (priests) play advisory roles and check the powers of the elders by invoking spirits and God. The youth practically monitor resource use and offer protection reporting back to the elders for guidance. The women were largely users who also participate in monitoring by reporting back to elders. As an illustration, the Masaai women boast of enormous knowledge about medicinal plants. Directly linked to this knowledge of medicinal plants, women do not cultivate because they do not want to destroy God's garden from which they get 'healing power'.

• The Masaai are very much aware and have practised resource management systems for hundreds of years. These include:

o Multi-species management:

The Masaai know that different animals feed at different levels and this is useful for balancing ecosystem. As a result, they keep goats, sheep and cattle but importantly they also know that wild animals play a greater role in vegetation management. For example, elephants have the ability to check the natural succession process into a savannah anti-climax good for livestock grazing while the carnivores (like lions and hyenas) are known to be good for 'cleaning out' diseased and dead animals even when sometimes they will attack their healthy livestock.

o Rotation management:

The Masaai practice rotational livestock grazing to allow for natural renewal processes. They are aware of the concept of carrying capacity, which is the reason they would trade livestock with their neighbouring cultivators. Combined with the concept of multi-species management, co-existence with wildlife becomes practical and sustainable.

o Succession management:

The Masaai have long been aware of the use of fire

and have used it as a supportive tool to large mammal disturbances in maintaining a savannah anti-climax vegetation suitable for both wildlife and livestock.

o Landscape patchiness and response to ecological changes:

The Masaai understand the need for patches of forests particularly for purposes of water but also as habitats of important medicinal species. They know that the patches are useful reservoirs for various plants and animals in times of bad weather or prolonged dry seasons which also benefit their livestock. The other practical action as a response to ecological changes is to move away from a given location and allow it time to recover.

o Population growth:

One of the single most important factors that remain a big challenge to nature conservation in Africa is the growth of human population and the resultant demand for more land. The Masaai argue that they have been able to control their population growth through the traditional birth attendant methods. The natural herbs they administer at childbirth also help in child spacing and delay the conception of the next child by as long as 3 years. While their neighbouring cultivators might have a child every year, the population growth among the Masaai is lower than that of other ethnic groups. They dismiss the rather harsh wilderness conditions as a reason for their lower birth rate. Instead they argue that their numbers have only increased within the Ngorongoro as a result of in-migration. They also attribute poaching pressure in the Ngorongoro to 'outsiders' and have proudly stated that whenever they have been called upon to help curb poaching they have done it successfully.

- Language has been important in binding the Masaai together but more importantly in passing on the conservation attributes from generation to generation. Some of the attributes when translated in English sound strange and shallow. For example, how can an animal be a 'clan member' or a 'brother', but in the Masaai language the understanding is clear and elicits a sense of pride that is difficult to describe or even feel unless you get fully immersed in the Masaai culture. In practice, it becomes a much more powerful tool for conservation than the ecological importance of the animal.

Present day legal framework for conservation of Ngorongoro

Owing to the need to 'safeguard' the wonderful assemblage of large mammal populations in the Serengeti plains by the government at the time, an agreement was reached in 1959 between the Masaai and the government. The purpose of the agreement was to exclude them from the Serengeti National Park but 'allow' them the use of Ngorongoro Conservation Area. An opinion leader, advocate and lawyer of the Ngorongoro Pastoral Council, William Tate Olenasha, describes the situation after 55 years of the agreement:

The Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) is a multiple land-use area that was excised from Serengeti National Park in 1959 as a compromise deal between the resident Masaai pastoralists and the British Colonial Administration. While the Masaai pastoralists were forced to vacate Serengeti National Park following years of campaigning by international conservation organizations, they were 'guaranteed' the right to continue to use and occupy the adjacent NCA, where wildlife conservation was to be reconciled with the rights of the Masaai in a multiple land-use context. The Masaai and the British signed the famous Anglo-Masaai Agreement to vacate Serengeti on 21 April 1958. In

this agreement, the Maasai renounced their claims and rights to Serengeti National Park in exchange for a solemn pledge by the government that they would be 'permitted to continue following or modify their traditional way of life subject only to close control of hunting' in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Specifically, the NCA was conceived as a 'special conservation unit, administered by Government, with the object of conserving water supplies, forest and pasture – primarily in the interests of man, but with due regard for the preservation of wild animal life'. The NCA was therefore officially created on 1st July 1959 through an Act of Parliament – the Ngorongoro Conservation Act (Cap 284 of the Laws RE of 2002). This law has since then been subjected to a series of amendments with the major ones taking place in 1975. The Act establishes the NCAA as a body corporate, with a seal and perpetual succession capable of suing and getting sued. The management and functions of the NCAA are vested with the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is chaired by a chairperson who is appointed by the President. The Minister at the time responsible for Natural Resources and Tourism appoints not less than 9 and not more than 11 directors to serve in the Board. The Minister can also appoint assistant Conservators who are responsible to the Board. The Conservator who is an appointee of the President is the Chief Executive Officer of NCAA and is accountable to the Board.

The Functions of the NCAA Authority are:

- i. **To conserve and develop the natural resources of the Conservation Area;**
- ii. **To promote tourism within the Conservation Area and to provide and encourage provision of facilities necessary or expedient for the promotion of tourism;**
- iii. **To safeguard and promote the interests of Masai citizens of the United Republic engaged in cattle ranching and dairy industry within the Conservation Area.**
- iv. **The authority has powers to make subsidiary legislation in relation to control of a variety of things and activities such as entry, residence, settlement, cultivation, grazing and protection of natural resources. In exercising these powers the NCAA is not obliged to consult local communities and District Council, these powers were removed by the 1975 Amendments.**
- v. **The Authority can impose penalties for the breach of orders under the law. To effect, it can do the following: order seizure of stock, machinery, weapons, traps etc. which may have been used in contravention of the law, to effect arrests without warrants for persons who are in conflict with the law including forceful entry into lands other than those with dwelling house for purposes of enforcing the law.**
- vi. **The Authority has powers to hear appeals against orders and decisions made by it such as for example refusal to provide permits.**

William Tate Olenasha points out various flaws in the current management system and echoes the several calls that have been made for review of the law. First, he notes that permission to continue to follow or modify their traditional way of life subject only to close control of hunting in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area was unnecessary and uncalled for as this was the Maasai land for hundreds of years. In any case, the Maasai are not hunters save for the initiation ceremony of morans (Maasai young men). A young man has to kill a mature lion single hand-

ed as an act of initiation into manhood. Second, while the 1959 law was a lot more encompassing and holistic in addressing the needs of the Maasai and conservation, it fell short of defining the role of the Maasai in the conservation effort. Nevertheless, it provided for consultation with the Maasai and the local government in decision making. The section allowing for consultation was removed in the 1975 amendment. The law as it stands now provides for no management role for the Maasai despite their vast knowledge and the fact that they originally owned the land (the Maasai still believe they own the land) and the wildlife in Ngorongoro and Serengeti. Both Ngorongoro and Serengeti are WH Sites thanks to the existence of the Maasai. The appointment, powers and composition of the Board and management make no provisions for the Maasai which has evidently fanned conflict between NCCA and the Maasai for over 30 years amidst serious development pressures within and around the NCCA and fears of long-term deleterious consequences. Already, there are attempts by the Maasai to cultivate and to poach which goes against their way of thinking and how they had always managed the land and the resources found on it. In an attempt to address the longstanding conflict and stem any adverse impacts to the management of the WH Site, the NCCA has attempted to include the Maasai in management structures. The Ngorongoro Pastoralists Council was created in 1990 but only became operational in 1994 and the legal recognition came 6 years later in 2000. The Council is however subordinate to the NCCA Board, and thus lacks a credible constitution and has no mechanism for consulting with the ordinary Maasai. The Council is composed of politically elected individuals and therefore their allegiance to the Council is secondary. Many Maasai opinion leaders and elders believe the creation of the Pastoralist Council was unnecessary as the traditional Maasai institutions existed and could have played the role of the Council better i.e. practical participation in the conservation of Ngorongoro and decision-making on matters that affect the Maasai as a people. There have been calls to review the NCCA Act as it limits the enjoyment of the human rights of the Maasai, collides with other laws which are relevant to nature and wildlife conservation such as the Land Act; and is a hindrance to the practice of multiple land use in the Ngorongoro, a concept that was at the core of its creation. There is a growing concern that the co-existence between the Maasai and nature (wildlife) in the Ngorongoro is in jeopardy. This concern has brought government at loggerheads with International Conservation Agencies. Following the Maasai Hunger of 2011/2012 and attempts at eviction of the Maasai from Ngorongoro, government was blamed by civil society organisations for abdicating its role of livelihood support for the Maasai citizenry within Ngorongoro. Government blames the International Conservation Agencies of being more concerned about the wildlife instead of striking a mutually beneficial relationship between people and wildlife. Considering all these challenges with the management of Ngorongoro since the agreement in 1958, could an integration of the traditional management systems of the Maasai help find solutions to the simmering conflict? As illustrated later in the chapter, the possibility is great. The Maasai would, however, have to document their management systems rather than rely on oral knowledge which in most cases is found with a few individuals.

The Bakonjo (Bakonzo) structure and attributes as a Traditional Management System in Rwenzori Mountains

The Rwenzori Mountains National Park, with stunning views of gla-

acier and snow-capped mountains just kilometers from the equator, was inscribed as a WH Site in 1994. It is the third highest mountain in Africa (after Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya) at 5,109 m above the sea level. The Rwenzori Mountains are the highest and most permanent sources of the River Nile, and constitute a vital water catchment for Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo. The mountains are well-known for their unique alpine flora which includes many species endemic to the Albertine Rift in the higher altitude zones including giant heathers, ground-sels and lobelias. The Park also supplies local communities with various wild resources and is an important cultural heritage. The Rwenzori Mountains are the homelands of the Bakonjo people, who are also known as the mountain people. These Bantu-speaking people have lived on the mountain for many years, and are well adapted to the steep slopes and climate of Rwenzori. They have a set of beliefs which collectively have contributed positively to the conservation of the Rwenzori mountain ecosystem over hundreds of years. The Bakonzo creation story begins with the creator, Nyamuhanga, making snow called 'Nzururu' (Bwambale, pers. com). The Bakonjo believe that Nzururu is the father of the Kithasamba and Nyabibuya spirits who are responsible for human life and the welfare of mankind. The spirits are called gods, who are also believed to live within the snowline of the mountains and have control over the natural environment and the lives of all of the mountain people (Bwambale pers. com). The Bakonjo have a long association and spiritual link with the mountain and its ecosystem. The name of the mountain, 'Rwenzori', is an English corruption of 'Inzururu' meaning of snow. Each ridge on the mountain has a local name with a meaning although the early European climbers gave them different names. Before 1941, there were no marked boundaries for the Rwenzori Mountain ecosystem. The Bakonjo community managed the landscape based on their traditional knowledge and structure. The Rwenzori Mountain people, for centuries, depended on the mountain resources, regarding the mountain as a free gift of nature. The Rwenzori Mountains has always been important in the livelihoods and culture of the Bakonjo communities who regarded it as a gift from God for their survival. When the higher mountain and forested areas were declared a Protected Area, first as a Forest Reserve and later as a National Park, access and use of the area by the mountain people was restricted.

Attributes identified as supportive to nature and wildlife conservation among the Bakonjo

Based on a traditional structure, the Bakonjo community had a well developed management system at a landscape level that still exists today. The Bakonjo believe that the entire Rwenzori Mountains and the natural resources therein belong to them. It is home to their gods and a source of their livelihood. They have a duty to protect it for their own benefit for generations to come. In the words of one interviewed elder: "The Rwenzori Mountains were owned and are still owned by us, it is only the new people who do not know this and the young people have been made to forget their traditional rights over the mountains". The Bakonjo gods living in the mountain include:

- o **Nyamuhanga:** *the creator of everything.*
- o **Nzururu:** *the god of snow and a father to the gods*
- o **Kithasamba:** *Kithasamba and Nyabibuya the livelihood god. Kithasamba is believed to live in the glaciated Rwenzori Mountain peaks, is a giant force who controls the natural environment and the lives of all the mountain people.*
- o **Nyabibuya:** *the goddess of blessings*
- o **Mugenyi:** *the god of visitors and*

- o **Ndahura:** *domesticated animals the god of diseases, known to cause and cure diseases*
- o **Kalisya:** *the god for hunting*
- o **Kahiyi:** *the god for all animals*
- o **Nyabinji:** *the god of abundant harvest*
- o **Irungu:** *the god and spirit of wilderness*
- o **Mulindwa:** *the god of the unfortunate, he makes people's plans work or fail.*

There are over 20 gods believed to live in the mountain and worshiped in different shrines located at various sacred sites mainly in the higher altitudes of the mountain. This was a very effective control measure against settlement and agriculture on the higher mountain slopes, guaranteeing conservation. Access was restricted to very few self respecting people like priests and ridge leaders. Needless to say this belief and structure was broken with the advent of colonialists and introduction of Christian and Muslim religions which declared the higher uninhabited ridges a forest reserve and later a national park, subsequently becoming a WH based on the same attributes as already understood and practised by the Bakonjo that is water catchment from the snow that feeds the landscapes in the lowlands and the biodiversity already intertwined with the Bakonjo culture. And yet the creation story of the Bakonjo sounds very much like the biblical Garden of Eden, Rwenzori Mountain being the Eden of the Bakonjo. Each mountain ridge had a ridge leader. A single or several ridges belonged to a given clan, whether inhabited or not. Ridge leaders had delegated authority from the clan head to whom they reported. The role of the clan leader was to maintain law, order, unity and security and to govern the use of resources associated with a particular clan in the form of totems or taboos to which people of that clan had to adhere.

Examples of totems are given below:

Clan Name	Totem
Baswagha	Leopard
Abahira	Guinea fowl
Abathagi	Chimpazee
Abahambu	Red eyed dove
Ababinga	Baboon
Abasukali	Bushbuck

Tradition has it that totems are not to be killed or harmed in any way by the clan members. As with the Maasai, it is illegal for a relative such as a wife, who may be from a different tribe or clan and therefore associated with a different totem, to hurt or let alone kill the totem of her husband or vice versa. Through an interview, an elder asserted: "Those animals we call totems are part of us, we share a common ancestry and they are our ancestors. To hurt a totem is to hurt a community's ancestors." Severe punishments such as banishment, fines, hard labour, or death were applied to anyone who disrespected their totem. Therefore, people could not and indeed did not kill or eat animals considered as their totems or the totems of their relatives. The punishments were very rarely meted out as the norms were taught from childhood and were therefore common knowledge among the community and highly respected. Although ridge leaders were subordinate to clan heads, they were highly respected among the Bakonjo community. They had shrines at their residence where the community would convene for the ridge leader to pass on information from the gods. They were believed to communicate with the gods directly who were

resident in the mountain. They ensured taboos were respected which in turn effectively regulated resource use in the mountains. Examples of taboos include: taking young bamboo from the mountain to the valley, stopping and resting in undesignated places in the mountains, cutting medicinal trees, looking from side to side when moving through the mountains, cultivation near riverbanks, making noise in the mountains, leaving burning fire used in ritual sacrifice, having sexual intercourse while in the mountains, cutting down a tree in which honeybees stay, killing mother monkeys or their babies, killing "leader" animals, using footpaths through the mountains during the rainy season, cutting or breaking sticks while moving in the mountain from one village to another, and killing something which a person will not eat. It was taboo to do all the above things and many more, which without any scrutiny are more or less the same as the present day park rules, regulations and bye-laws. Only that for the Bakonjo one Ridge leader would suffice for 'enforcement' in form of passing on the knowledge of the do's and don'ts at the shrine. There were elaborate rituals of purification if a community member was found at fault. The taboo system has died out as a result of 'new' government policies, rules and regulations governing the use of natural resources in the mountains that excluded the mountain people from any decision making and made it illegal for them to even step in the 'protected area'. New religions have also led to the abandonment of taboos as some Ridge leaders converted to Christianity or Islam and the structures broke down even though the attributes remain relevant. From the above, it would seem that the Bakonjo understand the principle of natural ecological resilience (supported by their god Kithasamba up in the mountain). So in addition to the resource control measures in form of taboos, any over-use of any given resource would be periodically stopped to allow for natural recovery including shifting away from a given ridge. Although the population at the time made this practically easier to implement, the key attribute here is the principle of monitoring and self regulation in resource use. They did not need somebody from outside the community to regulate resource use even where taboos were not applicable.

Present day legal and policy framework for conservation of Rwenzori Mountains

The Rwenzori Mountains National Park and WH Site is managed by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), a government agency established in 1996. The park was gazetted in 1991 and inscribed as a WH Site in 1994. The park is managed under the Uganda Wildlife Act of 2000, whose mandate is to conserve and manage wildlife resources and protected areas in Uganda. The Uganda Wildlife Policy (1999) and Uganda Wildlife Act (2000) provide for the development of initiatives that allow for the participation of surrounding communities in the management of protected areas and benefit sharing as a means to encourage harmonious relationships between the protected area authorities and surrounding communities. The Act also recognises historic rights of individuals in conservation areas. However, it does not recognise nor provide for traditional management systems, if anything, it bars access by communities into the park save with permission of the Executive Director. The establishment of the National Park in 1991 exacerbated the conflict between the Bakonjo and the central government management agency, UWA. The government agency was more restrictive than the Forest Department that managed the park earlier. The international recognition of WH status in 1994 did not create a positive difference for the Bakonjo people. In actual fact, they felt further alienated rather than be the proud owners of a globally recognised heritage, asserts an elder contacted during this study. Using relevant clauses in the law (Part III, 15 and 26), UWA started implementing a collaborative management framework

in 1996 with the Bakonjo. The focus has been on 'involvement' and reward through controlled access to non-timber resources and revenue sharing – handing out a percentage of entry revenue cash from tourists. However, as noted in a recent study by FFI-UWA (2012), investment in community oriented management initiatives in Uganda's National Parks, like in other countries around the world, has generally failed to build positive relations with local communities. With support from Flora and Fauna International, UWA has since 2005 sought to change its approach from conventional community conservation involvement and reward system to cultural values based on traditional management systems. This was through a pilot project implemented in the Rwenzoris. The new approach was boosted government recognition of the Bakonjo cultural institution called Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu (OBR) in 2008. The Bakonjo are enthusiastic about revitalising traditional practices inside the park which UWA is agreeable to (FFI-UWA 2012). This means allowing the Bakonjo an opportunity to engage in practices at sacred sites in the mountains, some of which are inside the borders of the park. Historically, Bakonjo people would offer sacrifices for blessings, thanksgiving and forgiveness. Allowing for the traditional practices could be interpreted as a way of 'returning' ownership and responsibility for partial park management to the Bakonjo people. The Culture, Values and Conservation project (CVCP) implemented by UWA with support from FFI in Rwenzori seemed to be a good opportunity to integrate traditional management systems and Western science based systems for conservation of national parks and World Heritage Sites based on supportive clauses in the legal and policy framework of conservation in Uganda.

Lessons from around the world on Traditional Management Systems

In their guide for development and conservation practitioners for ecosystem management, Pirot et al. (2000) lists several case studies relevant to traditional managements systems, namely, India (Keoladeo National Park); Niger (Ron Palm Ecosystem); Mexico (Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve); Guinea-Bissau (Coastal Zone Management), and Canada (Anishinaabe people). They noted that not only are local people an integral component of ecosystems, but there are very important reasons for involving them. According to Pirot et al. (2000), local people (i) have an inherent interest in the management process of any ecosystem that they are part of given that they are mostly dependant on the services the ecosystem provides; (ii) have often had considerable, relevant knowledge of the ecosystem and of the ways in which it can be managed; (iii) have, in most cases, cultural, ethical and spiritual values that have evolved on the basis of a long-standing interaction within an ecosystem, and so their interest goes beyond simply deriving material benefits from the system; (iv) have, in almost all cases, developed traditional use or tenure systems that can be adapted to the aims and objectives of an ecosystem management program without necessitating blue prints from elsewhere; (v) can be a threat to the integrity of ecosystems especially due to population increase, new technology and changing tastes and, without their involvement, ecosystem management runs a high risk of failure.

Analysis and effectiveness of Traditional Management Systems in the modern context

The case studies discussed in this chapter bring out a number of important aspects in regard to natural resource management. First, although traditional knowledge is recognised as useful and effective in resource conservation, there is a tenden-

cy to isolate 'traditional ecological knowledge' from traditional knowledge. Traditional knowledge needs to be understood as a whole, and ecological knowledge is simply part of it. Resource management cuts across a broad spectrum of cultural, ecological and economic values and therefore it must be understood as a socio-ecological system, meaning traditional management systems cannot be ignored. A key omission in most of the earlier studies is failure to recognise TMS. The failure to recognise the existence of traditional management systems (let alone use of traditional knowledge) has been a major contributory factor to resource deterioration, depletion, conflict and mismanagement that are also evident in many WH Sites in Africa. Elmqvist et al. (2004) notes that one of the two unconventional but promising sources of innovation for biodiversity management and the design of new social institutions is indigenous and local communities and their systems of management, the other being resource industries. Conventional science and management has a questionable record with regard to long-term sustainability, whereas some indigenous or traditional peoples have developed systems that seem more sustainable. Traditional resource management systems that have long been ignored now seem to be viewed as successful experiments in living in harmony with nature. There are several similarities between traditional or indigenous management systems and adaptive management. It is further argued that if the orderly and rational science of the 'Age of Enlightenment' is replaced by a new paradigm along the lines of adaptive management, the chasm between indigenous knowledge and western science essentially evaporates. In support of this view, traditional ecological knowledge and management systems are described as 'Native Science' which focuses upon the study of 'natural laws of interdependence'. Berkes et al. (2000) concluded that many of the prescriptions of traditional knowledge and practice are consistent with modern day adaptive management as an integrated method for resource and ecosystem management. From the foregoing, it is clear that TMS have proved effective in resource management even in the modern times and do provide opportunities for long term sustainability, challenges notwithstanding.

Challenges and opportunities

In this study, it is necessary to bring out challenges and at the same time turn them round into possible opportunities to pursue. As mentioned earlier, language is very important when it comes to understanding and applying traditional systems. Most often than not, foreign languages have been used in the study of ecological sciences and studies carried out by outside researchers. It is very important to appreciate the fact that indigenous/local languages contain knowledge that cannot be captured by other languages. Sadly, many of the indigenous or local languages have been corrupted by foreign languages and many words and expressions have been lost especially among the younger generations. Folklore, stories, idioms, riddles, totems, taboos, proverbs all of which in the indigenous local languages held a lot of meanings or carried powerful meanings have either been distorted or lost altogether. Perhaps the single most challenge to acceptability and use of TMS is the absence or inadequacy of documentation. In the modern era it is no longer possible to pass on knowledge orally from elders since children go to school from infancy, moreover authenticity or truthfulness is very critical, the source is as important as the information/knowledge itself. Many sources of traditional knowledge documented are described as stories and legends, often read for leisure or studied as African literature without deciphering the broader link between man and nature and the systems for managing. The stories are open to misinterpretation and misunderstanding after publication takes place since no reference is made to the context and circumstances under which they were told. It is extremely illogical as demonstrated

through the case studies for anyone to believe that there were no management systems for the various ecosystems that constitute WH Sites today. Thus, present day governments' structures and laws were not the first methods to manage these sites. Communities living in different localities for hundreds of years certainly developed systems of management and had names for the different geographical and habitation landmarks that were ignored by visiting foreigners and renamed in their own interests. In addition, present day scholars in Africa, with the exception of a few who rebel against the status quo, have been taught to disregard traditional knowledge which is also mostly not documented preferring to use the sometimes misleading western ways of thinking and have therefore not been able to document traditional knowledge. While the existence of traditional knowledge is now generally accepted, and has been compared in many studies to modern science (Berkes et al, 2000), there still seem to be an impasse on its integration into management practice. This is even when there is agreement that both approaches are important. What is still missing too is a general agreement among scholars and Protected Area managers that TMS may be accepted. All they want to pick out is traditional knowledge. The challenge is in bringing together ecological science and traditional knowledge and to transform institutions into respecting both. The barrier to integration is the continued use of training modules in schools and higher institutions of learning that portray African indigenous local systems as barbaric, archaic, unscientific and satanic and the general western bias. It is high time Africa began looking at itself for solutions to natural resource management challenges and southern America and Asia for lessons. As a result, it has been a challenge to bring together ecological science and traditional knowledge and to build on existing local institutions as was manifested in the Ngorongoro case study. Instead of building on the local Masaai Elder's institutional hierarchy to work with the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority and possibly have the Masaai ultimately take over, the authority was established as if there had been a vacuum. When the Masaai complained, a Pastoralist Council was created, which Masaai elders still contest as unrepresentative of their views, needs and aspirations. Building on existing local institutions requires strong political will and struggle. This was the case when the Bakonjo in the Rwenzoris demanded and fought for political recognition that only came to pass in 2008. What now remains for the Bakonjo is the institution of co-management mechanisms. Building functional and effective institutions require a sense of receptivity, modesty, honesty and sensitivity on the part of those charged with the responsibility and the staff of the institutions. Many Protected Areas and WH Sites have in the past been created with unrealistic expectations of tourism and employment impressed upon the community by government as they are denied access to resources. Relationships between communities and their environment is complex as exemplified in the case studies and need to be understood in order to succeed in management of protected areas and WH Sites. Understanding historical, cultural and ethical traditions is very important.

Conclusion

Traditional Management Systems and its integration into conventional systems should not be understood as going back to the past but rather as using time-tested mechanisms with present day science and technology for better living and resource conservation. Documentation and dissemination of TMS among the actors and policy makers will help remove the barrier to integration and allow for sustainability. Although the terms of reference for this study included development of a methodology for documentation and recommendations for curricula review and inclusion of traditional management systems in training institutions, for purposes of better results and sustainability that should be a follow on exercise that requires the practical involve-

ment of key stakeholders as this has largely been a desk study.

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5

TRADITIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS: A CASE STUDY OF HOUSING IN OTAMMARI LAND AND GANVIE IN BENIN

Hermione Nonhonme Koudakossi Boko

Introduction

Very early on, man used shelter created by nature to protect himself. Over time, thanks to his ingenuity, he acquired and developed different construction methods with the use of the materials in his environment. Soil (earth) was, and remains one of the primary building materials, and has enabled the design of different types of architecture from one civilisation to the next (Ogou 2013). The Republic of Benin is a melting pot, a mirror of the biological diversity of West Africa. In terms of cultural heritage, Benin has rich biodiversity, with six large socio-cultural groups and nearly seventy sociocultural sub-groups (Triaca 1997). Each cultural group has its own specific perception and representation of its living space and components. These representations are the source of the relationships between different community members. The types of environmental exploitation are also based on man's representation of his environment (Boko 2003). These perceptions and representations influence ways of life and practical know-how (Bachoud et al. 2002). These factors can be seen in the different types of homes, dressing and food. Likewise, societies have put in place systems to manage and protect the creations that were judged to be important for the community. This is the reason why people developed a management system and norms to facilitate continuity, and places are considered sacred due to their spiritual meaning. It is a question of specific places or creations that drive a set of rules and taboos regarding the behaviour of groups of people in relation to space, which implies a set of beliefs often relating to spirits and ancestors. In the years following independence, the challenge facing the new States was to incorporate all of the local communities living within the same territory. With this in mind, some traditional management standards and regulations were included in modern city-state management systems. On the other hand, several practices relating to the regulation of society were abandoned. This shift can be explained by the plethora of traditional practices, their unfamiliarity and, in particular, their incompatibility with the rules of the modern social system. With regard to cultural heritage, laws and management methods are generally specific to set groups. The protection and survival of cultural sites and heritage are a function of their role and importance within communities. Through this heritage, the communities see cultural, spiritual and sacred values, the management of which they entrust to the custodians. Faced with environmental problems, the Republic of Benin had its official basis in the traditional system for the management of natural heritage such as forests, water and wildlife. It also attempted co-management in most of the country's natural parks, forests and community-protected zones. However, this official approach to cooperation remains difficult in the field of cultural heritage. Consequently, the best management approach is to assign direct responsibility to "bearers", because the survival of the values depends on cultural traditions, the current needs of the people and the use of the aforesaid traditions. Thus, traditional management systems provide an opportunity to effectively manage cultural sites and natural heritage. The effectiveness of this system depends on the rules governing management and conservation, which are recognised and promoted within the communities themselves. This is the case for the takienta, traditional multi-storey houses located in north-west Benin, and the colonisation of submerged land in the south of the country, such as Ganvié. This study seeks to analyse traditional architectural heritage management systems in Benin. It also seeks to identify

opportunities for the integration and capitalisation of these systems within the regulatory and legislative frameworks of heritage management. Specifically, this is a question of:

- identifying the traditional management systems and processes within local communities living in and near architectural heritage sites in Otammari land in north-west Benin and in the aquatic sites in South Benin;*
- identifying potential sources of conflict between the traditional system and the regulatory legal environment;*
- identifying opportunities for the capitalisation and transmission of traditional methods of heritage management for future generations.*

After a brief presentation of the general context of traditional architecture in West Africa, we will elaborate on the distinctive features of two types of traditional architecture in Benin; namely, the stilt houses Ganvié and the takientas of Otammari land.

Background to the study

In many regions throughout the world, local communities had and continue to have traditional management systems to ensure the respect and protection of the sites that they value. These traditional management structures, based on religion and belief systems, were administered by custodians, with the support of community leaders. In many parts of Africa, colonisation introduced formal management which was based, among other things, on the identification, documentation and legislation of heritage resources by government authorities. In the post-independence era, government bodies that had inherited colonial policies did not generally recognise the importance of traditional modes of protection for heritage sites. Questions concerning traditional systems of management for cultural and natural heritage sites were largely neglected and not incorporated within the post-colonial legal heritage. Where customary systems were tolerated, they were often perceived as being backward, suspect or associated with practices of "sorcery", and were frequently discouraged, forbidden or contested. In the same way, the religions that were revealed set themselves apart by rejecting traditional management systems on the basis of their ties to traditional beliefs. In many circumstances and particularly during the colonial era, laws were adopted to undermine traditional practices, including traditional management systems, which were seen or considered as being inferior and counter to development. This state of affairs may explain the occasional clashes between traditional management and its functioning, and the provisions laid out by law. This has brought about a series of negative consequences for the management and protection of notable properties and the universal value of African world heritage. For instance, with regard to sacred sites in particular, one can cite vandalism and poaching in national parks. The limits of jurisdiction in matters of heritage protection and the development of modernity have contributed to the decline, even the disappearance, of entire swathes of cultural heritage in some regions. However, protection systems still remain in place in several West African locations, especially within cities and other agglomerations. Indeed, West Africa has a reputation for the wealth and diversity of its traditional (traditionally inspired) architecture. Ancient cities and caravanning posts such as Timbuktu, Djenné, Gao, Bandiagara (Mali), Loropeni (Burkina Faso) and Agades (Niger) are masterpieces inscribed on the WH List in the past 15 years. The essential features of these several hundred year-old centres have been preserved through the ages thanks to local know-how that has been passed down, for some and thanks to the cyclical practices of community upkeep. The mosques

of Timbuktu and Djenné, for instance, benefited from cyclical maintenance sessions, organised by the management councils of the mosques, which assign specific and codified roles to families. These practices, which have endured for centuries, illustrate how specific knowledge is transmitted from one generation to the next. They are also an expression of the attachment of the people to their heritage. In the historical agglomerations located further South, on the Atlantic coast (Abomey, for example), which feature on the UNESCO WH List, similar practices exist. Here, the responsibility of maintenance is generally dictated by family relations and may take several forms, including rituals or sacralisation of sites. The rituals that were developed and the architectural formats promoted are called upon to not only respond to the need to guarantee a particular dynamic in terms of authenticity, but also to maintain the filial ties of the royal family to their heritage. Such examples can be duplicated in this regard. This study involves cases of architectural heritage management in Benin, more specifically in Otammari land in the North-West, and in the aquatic sites of Ganvié in the South.

Geographical location of the case studies

Otammari land

The first case study concerns Otammari land. Otammari land is a territory at the crossroads of Benin and Togo. In Togo it is known as Koutammakou, and covers an area of 500km². The Togolese section has been listed as a UNESCO WH cultural site since 2004 and is inhabited by the Tamberma. The word Tamberma came from Batam-mariba, which means « great tata builders » (Sulj 1986). In Benin, Otammari land covers 4000km², i.e. 80km from Korontière in the West to Kotupounga in the East, and from Toucountouna in the North to Tchoumi-Tchoumi in the South (Mercier, 1968). It covers five communes, namely: Boukombé, Toucountouna, Tanguiéta, Matéri and Cobly. This territory, known as Koutammari in the local language (Ditammari) is inhabited by the Bètammari (sing: Otammari). The cultural heritage of Benin is made up of a range of dwelling types, of which the most famous is that widely referred to as Tata Somba (MCAT 1996) in the North-West region. The term Tata encompasses a number of dwellings made up of multi-storey clay houses. These buildings are similar but may have features that are specific to builders from certain ethnic groups. The Bètammari people are known for their specific building techniques and their rich traditions. The takienta is a fortress, a fortified castle in a region that faced serious problems regarding the security of goods and people. The takienta serves several purposes: to provide a home for the family, to shelter or support grain silos and to provide shelter for domesticated animals. It also serves as a shed for beehives. All in all, the takienta is the perfect haven for people, animals, birds and insects. It is also a sanctuary for the clan (Maurice 1986).

Ganvié

Our second case study relates to the wetlands of South Benin. In these areas, the submerged islets provided protection against raids during the transatlantic slave trade period, which developed from the 16th to the 19th Century. The most well-known are the islands and peninsulas of the So-Ava commune, which includes the city-state of Ganvié located 40 km north of Cotonou, in the lower valley of the Ouémé River. Dubbed "the Venice of Africa", Ganvié brings together several thousand wooden huts built on stilts, and today counts around 30,000 inhabitants, who depend mostly on fishing activities, but also increasingly on tourism. Today, the region is the largest lake village in West Africa. Ganvié has been inscribed on the tentative list for Benin (<http://www.tourismebenin.bj/>) since 1996 and as

such, it could be nominated for inclusion on the UNESCO WH List in years to come. Life here is infused with Voodoo culture.

The takienta, architectural heritage of Otammari land

While they were among the peoples who historically settled in this area, the history of the Otammari ancestry remains poorly understood. Most of the authors who have shown an interest in these people have indicated that the Bètammari left what is today southern Burkina Faso (Kouagou 1984). Proponents of this theory mainly draw on the cultural similarities between the communities. This is especially true for their homes and similar oral traditions. According to oral tradition, the first Otammari came to the world thanks to the mythical snake "fèwaafè", who incubated the eggs from which all people originated (Koussey 1977; N'Tcha 1990). The first step of their migration to present day Benin was Dinaaba, whose geographical location is unknown. Some researchers have indicated that Dinaaba is the Moro-Naba, the king of the Moose. The settling of the Bètammari in the Atacora region and surrounds occurred at the same time as the great movement of people following the establishment of the moose kingdoms. At Kubentiekou, located to the north of Boukombé, the group split into two. Some of the migrants advanced towards the south up until Boukombé and dispersed within the Kanté region (present day Togo). The second group headed east to settle on the Kouaba plains and surrounding areas. According to some authors (Mercier 1968), Atakora provided them with shelter against the Gulmanceba and the Moose between the 16th and 18th Centuries. Organisationally, the Bètammari had no centralised political system. These people developed and maintained their own authentic building technique, the takienta. In Benin and Togo, Otammari land is a hub for tourism development, not only due to its distinctive landscape, but especially because of the built heritage, which represents the vernacular takienta dwelling. The takienta is a house and fortified castle built with locally available materials such as clay and wood. The Otammari refer to themselves as "builders". The takienta (still known today as tata) is a multi-purpose dwelling, the shape of which varies from one ethnic subgroup to the next. The external morphology tends to hide the specific roles and functions of each type of takienta. In the zone of study, we generally came across five types of takienta (Boni Teiga 2014), as described below.

The takienta Tayaba or Natemba Tata

The takienta Tayaba is the only takienta where the entire structure is completely tiled, including the roof. The upstairs area can be accessed via a ladder in the outside courtyard. Initially, this type of Tata had two terraces: the first with two large rooms and a second terrace with six rooms. A single granary could be built on the terrace or outside the Tata. A converted pathway at the back provided access from upstairs to the ground floor and vice versa in time of war. These pathways are used by hunters on their return from a big hunt, in order to exit via the main entrance. They are found primarily in the Tanguiéta commune.

The takienta Otammari or Tata of Bètammari

Formerly, the Tata Otammari had three rooms upstairs and seven granaries above them. While the number of rooms remains unchanged, the number of granaries has been halved. The Tata can be accessed by means of a ladder made out of a tree trunk. The ladder forms a staircase and ends in a V-shaped fork. This arrangement allows for the ladder to be easily positioned against the wall. This type of Tata has three terraces. The upper section of the wall is equipped with arrow slits. This type of Tata is located primarily in the Koussoucoingou district, and in the villages bordering the Toucountouna municipality.

The takienta Otchao or Tata of Bètiabè (or bètchabè)

The Otchao group inhabits the commune of Boukombé. They are an integral part of the Bètammari. The Tata Otchao is a modification of the Tata Otammari. Unlike the Tata Otammari, the upstairs area is tiled and the ladder overlooks one of the two small terraces. One also has to cross the second terrace to reach the larger one. A hole in the tiling enables smoke to be evacuated from the kitchen and animal odours to escape. Some refer to it as the Tata of Boukombé, or even Tata Otammari. It can also be found in the Toucountouna commune.

The takienta Ossori or Tata of the Bèssoribè

Most Bèssoribè can be found in the Natitingou commune. The takienta Ossori has a large terrace that can be accessed via a ladder. Upstairs, there are three rooms and four granaries wrapped around the circumference. This tata bears numerous similarities with the Tata Tamberma of Togo, which features on the WH List.

The takienta Berba

The Berba people are found in the Matéri commune. The Tata Berba is the only tata that does not comply with the construction features of a typical takienta. As a matter of fact, it does not have an upstairs area. The ladder allows for the front wall of the internal courtyard to be scaled, around which nine huts and two granaries are found. The internal courtyard is formed by a wall that encloses the spaces between the huts. In the southern part of the country, specifically in Ganvié, one can also find a variety of dwellings.

Stilt houses in Ganvié

The establishment of lake villages in the coastal region was an instinctive measure of self-defence adopted by the communities that used natural resources to defend, clothe, care for and provide shelter for themselves. Indeed, following the example of other lake cities in lower Benin, Ganvié (still referred to as the “Venice of Africa” was originally a small lake village that served as a sanctuary. It was founded in the first half of the 18th Century by refugees led by Chief Agbodogbé (Houéton, 2009). Under threat from troops sent by the kings of Abomey as well as pressure exerted by the Yoruba kingdom of Oyo in Nigeria, the people originating from Adja Tado settled in the Sô river area. This sanctuary assured them a means of subsistence and provided them with a means to defend themselves naturally against the warriors of the kings of Allada and Abomey, who conducted a three-way slave trade with the European powers. Oral sources assign a triple etymology to the name “Ganvié” (Danvi 2004):

- Ganvié could mean the worshippers of the sparrow hawk gansou, kept in the Gansou-gbamey district of the lake city. According to oral tradition, during their journey the inhabitants of Ganvié were assisted by a male sparrow hawk to cross the swamps of the Sô River, Legend has it that Ganvié also refers to the worshippers of the Voodoo gan. Gan was the leader of the Sindomey migrants prior to their settling in Ganvié.
- Ganvié also means “the community of people who have finally found peace”. This explanation, which seems to be the most plausible, perfectly harmonises with the sanctuary-like nature of the village (Bourgoignie, 1972). Indeed, in the local Toffingbé language, Gan is an expression of relief and respite, meaning: “we are saved”, with vié signifying the collective.

The specific quality of Ganvié lies not only with its history, but also in its homes, whose defining characteristic is that they are

built on stilts. The spatial organisation of the interior of a stilt house is as follows:

- the area demarcated by stilts on the watersurface: this is a natural or man-made knoll that serves as a vessel packing area, or even a pen for pigs, swine, sheep and goats;
- the intermediate platform: a belvedere made of twigs which serves as a livestock farming area;
- the access platform: This is much like a classic central courtyard serving as a terrace. This platform is built in front of the head of the homestead's hut, and provides access to the entire plot. It is built about 1m higher than the lowest water level, which barely reaches 1 m;
- the washroom area: This is a space typically reserved for showers and toilets, comprising a simple bunker built into the floor that acts as a conduit for used water and faecal matter. Referred to as “the hiding places”, washroom areas are usually located just inside the entrance to the plot, on the main façade or even in a corner of the hut, where a curtain may be used to conceal the user;
- the huts: This generally consists of a communal room, intended for receiving guests and other domestic activities, erected at least 1.5 metres above the lowest water level, and a private room that is also built on the platform tower, at about 1.70 m above the lowest water level;
- attics: These are half-floors built above the communal room and used as a cellar or a store-room for a variety of objects.

Classification of the houses in Ganvié is based on the roofing and the frame of the house. In general, three types of roofing exist (Akouété 2010).

Kiho, or huts with roofs made of palm fronds (raffia leaves)

Different leaves from each palm frond are gathered from one side of the mid-rib. A set of four or five palm leaves thus treated and overlaid make up the roofing, which is then used to form additional layers, from the safety beams to the ridge beam. This set of leaves is less thick and heavy than a straw roof (Sansan), but it requires more frequent repairs to ensure that it remains watertight. The material that was originally used for roofing in the lake cities comprised entire thickets of raffia palms. Nowadays, this type of roofing is no longer used due to difficulties with procurement and high costs. It can be found especially in old households or in old buildings.

Sansanho, or huts covered with straw

This is the type of house most commonly found in Ganvié. To build a Sansanho, whole sheaves of straw, attached to the battens covering the frame, are used. Roof installation begins from the eave purlin (that is, the maximum height reached by the major floods) and extends to the ridge beam. The ridge requires its own specific fitting procedure. Hip roofs with 45° angles and greater can easily last 12 to 15 years with repairs. The Sansanho is a type of architecture derived from earth houses with adobe walls. It has a thick roof (20 to 40 cm) made of Sansan grass of local origin, which has to last as long as the house. The Sansanho is built on five rows of stakes, exceptionally four rows for more modest structures. The external stakes are reinforced to support both high and low wall plates.

Ganho, or huts with corrugated iron roofs

This roof is distinguished by its use of exogenous materials. Sheets of corrugated iron have been used on building sites since around 1910. Priced as a luxury material, sheeting is used by homeowners as a symbol of affluence. However, its thermal properties can be a source of discomfort; moreover, its durability is reduced (by about 10 years) due to the saline nature of the environment, which is at the root of its rapid oxidation (Noukpo 2012). The respondents confirmed that this type of material (corrugated iron sheets), even those that are galvanised, does not last as long as the Kiho and Sansanho roofs because of the spray mist. Today, the landscapes of Ganvié and Otammari land have undergone some changes as a result of the introduction of new types of dwellings. This is a consequence both of the emergence of new needs and of weaknesses in the renewal of structures used for the transmission of knowledge and know-how. Indeed, the social organisation of the community determined the different channels for the transmission of identity-based knowledge.

Traditional knowledge management systems: stakeholders and functions

In the manner of numerous African societies, members of local, leaderless communities in Otammari land and those from the lake city of Ganvié (characterised by a strong hierarchical structure) are subjected to specific standards and regulations. Communities are organised depending on the social status of their members as well as the clan and socio-professional group to which they belong.

Social organisation in Otammari land

Otammari culture is characterised by a non-centralised social structure. It is based on clans and bloodlines, initiation classes and various brotherhoods. It is an egalitarian society in which everybody has the same rights, including the spiritual leader. However, a pyramidal structure (hierarchy) can be observed with respect to the elements and statutes that determine the roles played by individuals.

The clan / bloodline

- The takienta

This is the basic unit of the social group, bringing together a man, his wife and their unmarried children. It is the source of the use of the name takienta to describe homes. A takienta is a plot of land belonging to a nuclear family. It is made up of the head of the family, usually a man, along with his wife and children. The Bètammari were not familiar with polygamy as it occurs today, with several wives living in the same household. According to the matrimonial system the man was allowed to keep mistresses, and even to have children with them. However, these mistresses were not permitted to appear in the household of the legitimate wife. A takienta could also describe a female head of the family, in the case of a widow living with her minor children. In this case, the takienta only has two (2) turrets to indicate to outsiders that the male head of the household is deceased.

- The Diyonfouan

This is a term used to describe an extended family, with the concept of dual ancestry (Comite de Pilotage/Cabinet R-Sud 2010). The collective of sages and the heads of the tata are consulted in the event of inter-bloodline or inter-clan conflicts.

Initiation age groups / classes

Several rituals mark the passage from childhood to adolescence, and then to adulthood:

- the dikuntri is an initiatory rite reserved for female

members;

- the difoni is the initiation rite reserved for male members;

- the kumpiéri: an initiatory rite where the individual is sent to a convent (in the past, this was for a 3-month period). This is an initiation that brings together both girls and boys from ages 15 to 18 years. When they leave the convent, individuals are baptised and given a new name. Henceforth, only the new name is used.

In Tanguiéta region, the Kumpiéri is preceded by the Dwubu. Among the Natemba people, the Kumpiéri is not compulsory, but the Dwubu is an initiation rite imposed on everyone. It takes place over 9 days, during which time the initiates are interned at the lower level of a takienta Tayaba. The initiate stays here, out of direct sunshine. With the arrival of Christianity, this initiation came to be known as “the novena of the Natemba”. During the course of this initiation, the participant learns a language reserved exclusively for initiates, who use the language only in times of danger. Jousts are also sung by the strongest singers, whose duty it is to boost courage, dexterity, perseverance and endurance among the youth. They have a moralising function as this is a strategy to publicly denounce bad behaviours on the part of members of a rival or neighbouring community.

Below is a list of the jousts that are sung:

- the Koutchati refers to jousts that are sung after the harvests. This is a communication and teaching strategy to urge people to do better in general.
- the Tipenti refers to chanted jousts that are recorded at the beginning of winter to launch the sowing season and invite the youth to apply themselves in their work.

These two rites are almost always practised by two or more villages sharing a common ancestor. At times, related clans invite one another to celebrations and arrive with their best singers to denounce the bad treatment to which their daughters or sons were subjected at the hands of the community member responsible for the organisation of the ritual. To seek forgiveness, the accused family may put forward, in a separate chant, the reasons for the bad treatment complained about by the related family, or commit to ensuring that the non-native member feels more at home. Nowadays, these chanted jousts are in danger of disappearing.

- the Tibenti is a funeral rite that is held for a deceased member having been subjected to at least seven (7) cycles of initiatory rites, irrespective of his/her sex.

Aside from bloodlines and initiation classes, Otammari land is home to socio-professional groups with specific knowledge, such as: the blacksmiths' clan, the gravediggers' clan, the fishermen's clan, and the brotherhood of hunters.

Socio-professional groups

• The blacksmiths' clan

Limited in number, they are linked to each clan or bloodline. Their role is to pass down the art of manufacturing iron tools for sacred rites. The position of head of scarification is entrusted to a woman originating from this clan. Socially, the blacksmiths are considered healers. Despite their importance, they have no specific social status. On the contrary, matrimonially, marriage between two members of the blacksmiths' clan is forbidden.

• The gravediggers' clan

They manage tragic cases of death. They are the only clan authorised to enter the tombs and are in charge of the preparation of the burial vaults. The gravediggers fol-

low the practice of levirate. If the wife fails to observe the rules of levirate, her new spouse runs the risk of dying.

• **The fishermen's clan**

Members of this clan live around the affluent Pendjari people and are comprised mainly of the Natemba, Berba and Gulmanceba groups. Their subsistence is 90% dependent on fishing and 10% on agriculture. Their responsibilities are limited to the preparation and provision of dried fishing products for the other communities of Atacora.

• **The hunters' guild**

Hunting was viewed as an initiation during the course of which young men demonstrate their bravery and courage in the face of danger. Initially, the main responsibilities of this guild consisted of:

- **supplying meat for the community,**
- **sharing and re-distributing meat according to the different bloodlines present at the time of sharing. Each bloodline is entitled to a specific part, depending on the type of animal slaughtered.**

Nowadays, with hunting being an activity that is regulated by the State, their current responsibility is almost wholly directed towards fighting crime (banditry). While their presence is tolerated, the guild is not incorporated within the formal security system. Moreover, some people take a dim view of former hunters carrying weapons (handmade shotguns) without a legal permit. However, the hunters still take on the role of sharing out the meat at popular festivities.

Spatial organisation in Otammariland

In addition to the sacred parts of the takienta, the living space is also sub-divided into profane and sacred spaces. Even if at first glance the boundary between the two is not clearly defined, the function of the space is dependent on the time of day and the season. Insofar as the management of space is concerned, forests and sacred spaces should be taken into account. Sacred spaces include the forest cemeteries located outside the housing area due to prohibitions relating to these sites. Sacred woods surround the cemeteries. These woods continue to be exploited within the framework of agricultural activities that are contributing to their progressive destruction. Under the prohibitions in effect in all of the communes, the ban on entry by non-menopausal women is worth noting. Similarly, any young person who has not undergone any initiation ceremonies is subject to the same prohibition. Sacred groves for initiation ceremonies and sacred tatas guarded by the eldest in the bloodline have two sacred spaces. They can be found in the centre of the homesteads or at a distance. The forests are also exploited for traditional medicine. Aside from communal knowledge of certain plants by all members of the community, notably to protect against malaria and muscle soreness each bloodline has a descendant specialised in the treatment of an affliction. This is indicated by objects that are hung in front of the takienta. Snail shells, for instance, signal that the homeowner is an ENT specialist. During initiation rites, the heads of household have access to phyto-therapeutic knowledge to treat certain illnesses, such as convulsions among new-borns and sudden stomach cramps. In addition to altars of the ancestors, which are in front of the tatas, jars containing specific medicines known to the head of the household can be found here.

Gender in the transmission of knowledge linked to built heritage in Otammari land

Each of the sexes has a specific role to play in the building of a takienta. This knowledge is acquired from a parent of the same sex, but also during various initiation rites and classes.

Over and above the tasks allocated specifically to women in all patrilineal societies, notably full responsibility for caring for the children aged 0-3 years, meal preparation, making the bed, etc.; in Otammariland, women occupy an important place in the building of the takienta.

Tasks and interventions that are specific to women and girls include:

- *Arranging the wooden pallets for the construction of the terrace;*
- *Tamping the soil clumps / building the terrace of the tata;*
- *Decorating the walls of the tata (Amoussou 2008);*
- *Applying the finishing touches to the building, including clodding the walls of the takienta with layers of clay or cow dung mixed with a brew of plants with sticky sap (generally the *Griwilla bicolor*) or a brew of ground *néré* fruit husks (*Parkia biglobosa*) to waterproof the floors and walls.*

The walls of the takienta are decorated in honour of the mistress of the house, as they demonstrate her mastery of aesthetics and her ability to make her husband's home attractive. They were very delicate and provided a glimpse into the family affiliation or bloodline of the woman or man. Nowadays, older women complain about the incompetence of their daughters-in-law when it comes to assuming this tradition. Having spent the greater part of their teenage years at school, they find this decorating (which has to be started all over again two winters later) annoying and even completely senseless. Decorating requires ongoing maintenance, which implies being available to do it. Building a takienta, irrespective of the model chosen, requires massive community mobilisation (physical and human resources). While giving a gift (poultry or small livestock) to the head bricklayer and providing a meal for all participants during the building process would have sufficed in the past, the arrival of the monetary economy has dealt a hard blow to African solidarity. To this may be added several other challenges that the Otammari community must overcome to ensure the survival of its heritage.

Social organisation in Ganvié

The main families are the Gun and Fon. Social organisation is based on the principle of patrilines and kinship that are characteristic of any social structure. The preservation of habits and customs in addition to a strong sense of solidarity between the "men of the water" are the main defining characteristics of this lake community. Social organisation is based on clans and local communities, traditional religious leaders and esoteric brotherhoods or guilds. Regarding the clans and local communities, there are four distinguishable social entities, ranging from the household (nuclear family) to the Kun tribe. The intermediate entities are the Sinta, which is a family (household) comprising 2 to 3 generations, and the Henuu. This term describes an extended family bringing together 5 generations or having a common ancestor named Hennugan. Ako is the name used to describe a clan made up of more than five generations. The hierarchical head of each structure is assisted in his/her duties by the tangnion, the great aunt or the vidaho, a youth representative. As for the traditional religious leaders, they draw on the local pantheon (Adja Tado - Ile lfe) to govern the community, by assisting the king in his duties, but also by governing the management of and access to resources that are vital for the survival of the community.

They are ranked according to a hierarchy (Houéto 2009) and include:

- *the Hounon or the houngan (traditional leaders)*
- *The Hounvi are the adept initiates from whose ranks the community supervisors are chosen. The Zangan and the*

Kpakounto are elected from among this group.

- *the Zangan are the heads of the Zangbéto convent. Without their permission, the Zangbéto are not allowed to leave. Zangan literally means « night chief »;*
- *the Kpakounto are the companions of the Zangbéto. They are the ones who show lead the way.*
- *The ahé are non-initiates. They do not belong to any religious organisation or traditional religious circle.*

Due to the prevalence of voodoo culture, there is a large panel of esoteric guilds (brotherhoods), of which the largest in the study area are the Zangbéto, Oro, Biliguede and Egungun. Biliguedé is a mask like the Oro but much more folkloric. For the communities, the differences between the brotherhoods lie with their area of intervention. The Oro, the strictest, live in the bush. The Egungun stay at home because they are committed to the family ancestors, and the Zangbéto can be seen in public places. Their presence is indicated by statues draped in raffia or plant fibres. They take on the role of community policemen and oversee the security of people and goods. They are often called on to regulate social practices and behaviour. This mostly involves raising awareness among people who succumb to profanities and verbal abuse, and those who rely on alcohol or prostitution. Because of the wetland habitat, the law is especially strict with respect to the environment.

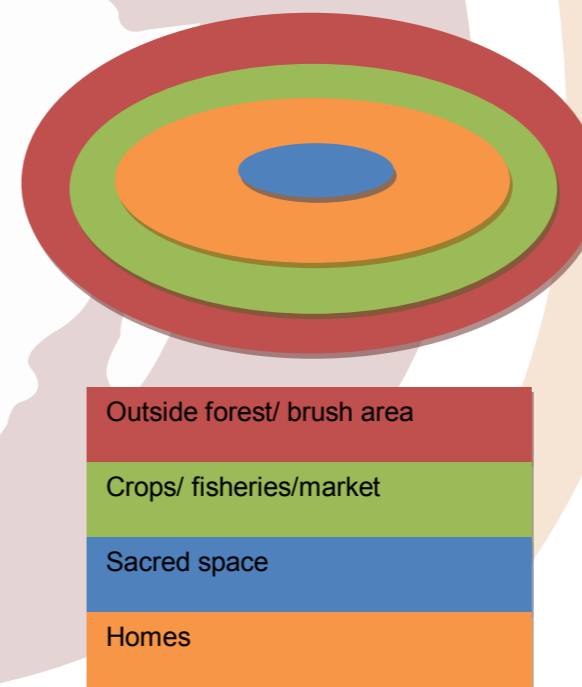


Figure 3: Use of space by the people

Spatial organisation and natural resource management

Spatial organisation entails innovative and creative planning to respond to the exploitation of resources. The traditional space cannot be explained without reference to the sacred. The stated presence of deities and their interventions extends to all aspects of daily life. While voodoo has an influence on the community's perception of space, it also provides them with a unique means of humanising their space.

Natural resource management is closely linked to the organisation of space. One of these resources is water. Practices relating to water management were subject to a single law, namely, the prohibition of contamination. Water, as a dwelling place for spir-

its, must always be kept clean to avoid displeasing the spirits. The contamination of water would bring misery to the community and, at times, the "departure" of benevolent spirits for other, more appropriate places. Water is managed by priests and religious leaders who are committed to water voodoo (Boko 2003).

Standards of water management include the following:

- **A ban on defecating in the water or nearby;**
- **Women are banned from visiting water points while menstruating;**
- **The sacralisation of certain parts of the lagoon surfaces, where all human socio-economic human activity is proscribed;**
- **A ban on the practice of acadja (use of fish traps). This ban is no longer respected;**
- **A ban on fishing with the use of a fine-meshed net, and finally;**
- **Observance of a day of rest, depending on the socio-professional group.**

Another resource which management is adapted to the organisation of space is plant life. In the coastal regions of Benin, most semi-deciduous forests are sacred and carry the local name zoun. Each type of voodoo (vodoun) deity is associated with a forest. Thus, a distinction can be made, for instance, between Danzoun, the forest of the Dan deity, and Lissazoun, the forest of the Lissa deity. These relic forests are often used as convents, places of pilgrimage and ceremonial sites for voodoo worship (Dossou-Guedegbe and Houinsou 2011). Under the combined impact of destructive fishing practices and the detrimental influence of imported religions, we have borne witness to the destruction of different swathes of forest in recent years. Wildlife can be added to the two resources that have already been discussed. Wildlife plays an important part in sustaining human life. Several taboos govern the communal lives of the toffinou. The Madjanou, for example, are banned from eating palm rats; the Tossonou are forbidden from eating tisserin birds, and crocodile meat is banned among the Togonou. These animals, at a certain point during their migration, played a decisive role in safeguarding the migrants and ensuring their protection. Members of the Hinvié group, who were helped across the river by a crocodile, are also forbidden from killing crocodiles and eating their meat. When they settled in different locations, certain species of fish even played an important role. At times the justification for the bans on their consumption is linked to a resemblance to objects or other species that contributed to their protection. In the same way, adherents of voodoo refrain from eating or harming the totem species of their gods. It is for this reason that fish species collectively known as Asson, Tounvi and many others are not consumed by those originating from certain lake communities. However, they are permitted to trade with other communities, within reason.

The traditional system versus the modern management system

Traditional systems of management are dependent on cultural diversity and regional specificities. The heritage management system in Ganvié differs from that in Otammari land, but similarities do exist. These similarities are summarised in the table below:

Table n° 1: Similarities between management systems in Ganvié and Otammari land

Stakeholder	Elements	Location/ Degree of structuring
Customer authorise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional leaders/ Collective of sages Leaders of clans or bloodlines Religious leaders Land chiefs Heads of families 	Community
Territorial organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local conflict management committees Socio-professional organisations 	Community
Knowledge transfer channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extramural (extra-curricular) education Heritage/Family education à Learning by doing Chosen by the ancestors – consulting the oracle Chosen of the child's own volition Third party apprenticeships 	Parents Bloodline
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of knowledge Advanced age of those in possession of knowledge/know-how Young generations migrating East – Exposure to religious extremism (Boko Haram and evangelical churches) 	

nicipality". Communities are therefore authorised to manage their cultural heritage within the boundaries set by Law 2007-20.

• Law n° 2007-20 of 17 August 2007 on the protection of cultural heritage and natural cultural heritage in the Republic of Benin

This law (Assemblée Nationale du Bénin 2007) is a major step forward for the protection of tangible and intangible heritage. It covers issues relating to the protection, inventory and classification of elements of tangible and intangible cultural heritage; the right of pre-emption and the export of cultural goods; the protection of cultural goods in case of armed conflict; the protection and development of traditional homes; excavations and discoveries, and sanctions relating to transgressions of the provisions of the law. The Benin Constitution of 11 December 1990 guarantees access to culture by its citizens as well as the safeguarding and promotion of "the national values of civilisation, both material and spiritual, in addition to cultural traditions". Similarly, the 1991 Republic of Benin Cultural Charter, which has force of law, supports this statement by repeating that the State, through the Ministry of culture, has a mandate to promote national cultural development. The State also has a mandate to safeguard and protect the "promotion of tangible and intangible heritage" and a responsibility to prevent any alterations to this heritage. Heritage management and the question of national cultural development fall within the domain of the State (Art. 7 para. 2 of Law 2007-20). For this reason, the Ministry of Culture must be the central organ (Law 91-006, Art.1). The Ministry exercises its powers through technical directorates, with the exception of the national archives, which fall under the jurisdiction of the Presidency of the Republic.

• The Directorate for Cultural Heritage (DPC)

The DPC was created by Decree N° 037 of 21 March 2007 and is responsible for "the implementation of the State's policy with respect to tangible and intangible cultural heritage". The modern system is thus structured around laws and the institutions entrusted with enforcing them.

Transmission of know-how and capitalisation: an overview of the traditional learning system

Informants indicated that individuals are born with aptitudes relating to a specific career. As they grow older, these aptitudes are developed and enable them to develop and improve in their area of expertise. They then make an occupation out of it. The transmission of knowledge and know-how in the traditional world was achieved through daily practice. Nowadays, this system is in steady decline to the extent that it has been reduced to mimicry. There are several reasons for this decline. The primary cause is a decline in apprenticeships, particularly in the artisanal sector. It is also used as a recovery system for the reinsertion of those having left the formal educational system. At the same time, it is a last resort for the most vulnerable and at risk social groups to access the training provided by the formal education system (Ogou 2013). In spite of the presence and the watchfulness of the Development Fund for Continuous Education and Training (FODEFCA), established in 1999, this sector continues to be under-valued by members of the public, and one of the major challenges it faces is the pedagogical and didactic regulation of training. Indeed, to date, educational materials have been exclusively entrusted to master trainers, whose skills are often diversified and complementary, and at times limited by controversial practices. Under the present circumstances, apprenticeship in Benin, in its most common form, has proven to be sorely lacking when it comes to mastering the theoretical tools and knowledge derived from traditional knowledge

and technological developments (Ogou 2013; Hitt 2011). Oral tradition has not laid out special channels for the sharing of knowledge based on the know-how of different types of takienta. Contrary to the Koutammakou (Togo), as reported by Gaël Amoussou (2008), there is no head bricklayer in Benin. This makes it impossible to set up an apprenticeship contract between master and apprentice within the framework of training for the acquisition of knowledge and know-how regarding the construction of traditional tatas. The only path to apprenticeship is on-site participation at different locations in order to receive training. In Otammari land, the usual mode for the transmission of knowledge and know-how is "watch, try and do". Effectively, all of the present day builders we encountered learned to build takienta by participating in construction work. Otammari culture allows all males to try their hand at the art of takienta building. But not all of them meet the challenge. It is therefore quite common to come across master bricklayers who have mastered the art of building with clay banco but who are incapable of building a takienta. Their expertise is limited to rectangular houses. They are collectively referred to as "Gaulier bricklayers". Among the Koutammakou in Togo, as well as in Otammari land in Benin, the channel of transmission is filial (passed down from father to son) or from mother to daughter, in the case of takienta upkeep or finishing work. From childhood, during construction or repair work, the adults identify those who have a greater ability to work with clay. From that time onward, these youths are invited and encouraged to take part at all construction sites, in order that they may improve and develop their potential. Today, with formal education, children spend more away from home, far from their parents. They only really spend time with elderly people during the holidays, and the school holidays coincide with the rainy season, during which no construction work takes place. To bypass this problem, over weekends and public holidays, young people of school-going age participate in traditional construction works, which includes building takienta, in an effort to gain knowledge. During maintenance work, only two out of twenty or so youths of school-going age, aged 8 to 25, learn the art of takienta building with their parents or grandparents. In Ganvié there are people who specialise in building stilt houses. Based on preference and financial resources, prospective homeowners may build on stilts, or with reinforced concrete or wood. Today more than ever, obstacles need to be overcome to safeguard and protect the architectural heritage of Ganvié and Otammari land.

Challenges and opportunities for the capitalisation of traditional knowledge and know-how relating to heritage management

While both communities studied here have tended to evolve at a rapid rate without truly taking the time to reconcile the promise of modernity/ globalisation with their intrinsic cultural identities, Otammari land has faced greater challenges. This is due to its still recent history of contact with schools and the modern world. The Otammari people have not had the time to analyse and choose between the demands and drawbacks of modernity and of their culture. In Ganvié, the continued existence of voodoo and the fact that it is officially recognised have instead reinforced pride in, and adhesion to, this practice, as a driver of culture.

Challenges in Otammari land

Several ills threaten the survival of vernacular housing in Otammari land. Nowadays, the takientas are less resistant as a result of tunnels being dug out by termites in the walls

of the fortress. The presence of these termites is associated with the disappearance of a type of plant known as « elephant ears », which used to secrete a natural toxin that repelled termites. They were historically planted next to the takientas and acted as a biological control agent against these insects and the wood borers, which also attack the biomass (wood with a straw roof) super-structure. The fact that the tatas are left almost permanently vacant also contributes to a reduction in their life-span: a fire needs to be left burning constantly inside the takienta to facilitate not only the drying of the walls, but also to create smoke to deter insects. In order to adapt to current needs, such as tuition for children, communities have had to acquire tables and chairs for study purposes. However, there is insufficient space inside the takienta to accommodate much furniture. There is just enough space for beds and bedding. This naturally led to households vacating the takientas and keeping them for the sole purpose of initiation ceremonies. This arrangement has left the tatas vulnerable to the elements. Previously, takientas had a potential lifespan of 50, even 60 years, when they benefitted from maintenance work at the end of each winter. Most of our informants confirmed that in present times, they only last 4 or 5 years before entire sections collapse. Additionally, certain tasks, such as weaving rope with sisal plant fibres, weaving straw (even cutting and harvesting straw) for roofs, and weaving doors with palm wood, are activities mastered exclusively by people over the age of forty. Children are no longer available to learn the profession and acquire the manual skills required for this type of work. Finally, it should be noted that the majority of migrations, both in Ganvié and even more so in Otammari land, were towards the east, and more specifically, to northern Nigeria, which is an Islamised region. On returning from their journeys, some converted youths break the tradition of knowledge transfer by refusing to adhere to initiation rites within their communities. Worse still, most falling within this category are not educated and see the rites as proof of an unjustified and unwarranted obfuscation in the 21st Century. In cases where this knowledge is introduced into the schooling system, this marginal group thus finds itself further excluded. Owing to the advanced age or death of some knowledge bearers, a loss of local know-how can be observed, for instance, the spinning of plant fibres such as sisal used to weave straw. While it is not possible to create specific educational programmes for individual communes, it is possible to include local crafts in the curriculum for primary school lessons, but on a departmental basis. For the past ten years, the new curriculum has advocated 2 hours of manual labour per week for scholars. Scholars are sometimes left alone by teachers and often perform tasks relating to environmental health and hygiene. This time allocation can be formalised to introduce traditional know-how and expertise relating to arts and crafts into schools, with parents giving workshop-style classes.

Opportunities

These are essentially based on the proposals made by Ogou (2013) in his study of the royal palaces of Abomey. The central pillar is about raising awareness among the various stakeholders involved in and affected by different reforms. There is also a need to lobby decision-makers to make resources available for the realistic implementation of these reforms. Insofar as reforming the formal educational system is concerned, the following actions should be implemented:

- Specifically, the content of career centres must be adjusted, by bringing together professionals and heritage structures to assist with defining training areas. It has been suggested that career centres be converted into specialised training centres for heritage-related professions. They could collaborate with specialised institutes such as the CRATerre-Ecole d'Architect-

ture in Grenoble (France) and the African School of Architecture and Urban Studies (l'École Africaine des Métiers d'Architecture et d'Urbanisme (EAMAU)) based in Lomé (Togo);

- Bring together researchers for better historical understanding of and insight into communities and the archaeological study of ancient sites;
- Reformulate the curricula to integrate new concepts relating to the safeguarding of traditional know-how in the fields of construction and the conservation of earthen architecture;
- Rearrange classes to include knowledge holders and members of the parents' association in their children's curriculum, in order to make manual skills classes more practically oriented;
- Train teachers to assist community knowledge bearers with the inclusion of practical work hours;
- Motivate learners and teachers to access and familiarise themselves with national heritage resources, in order to include them in daily teaching practices.
- Hold a « Beninese school week » at least once a year for cultural events in the vein of those held during the Revolution years (1975-2007), to raise awareness among the youth about the cultural values of the country.

Conclusion

Traditional management systems are present and continue to exist in spite of years of conflict and clashes with the modern system. At times imposed and at times adapted, their substance remains nevertheless faithful to the needs of the community from which they stem, despite a day-to-day lifestyle that is more social and planet-focussed.

We therefore recommend:

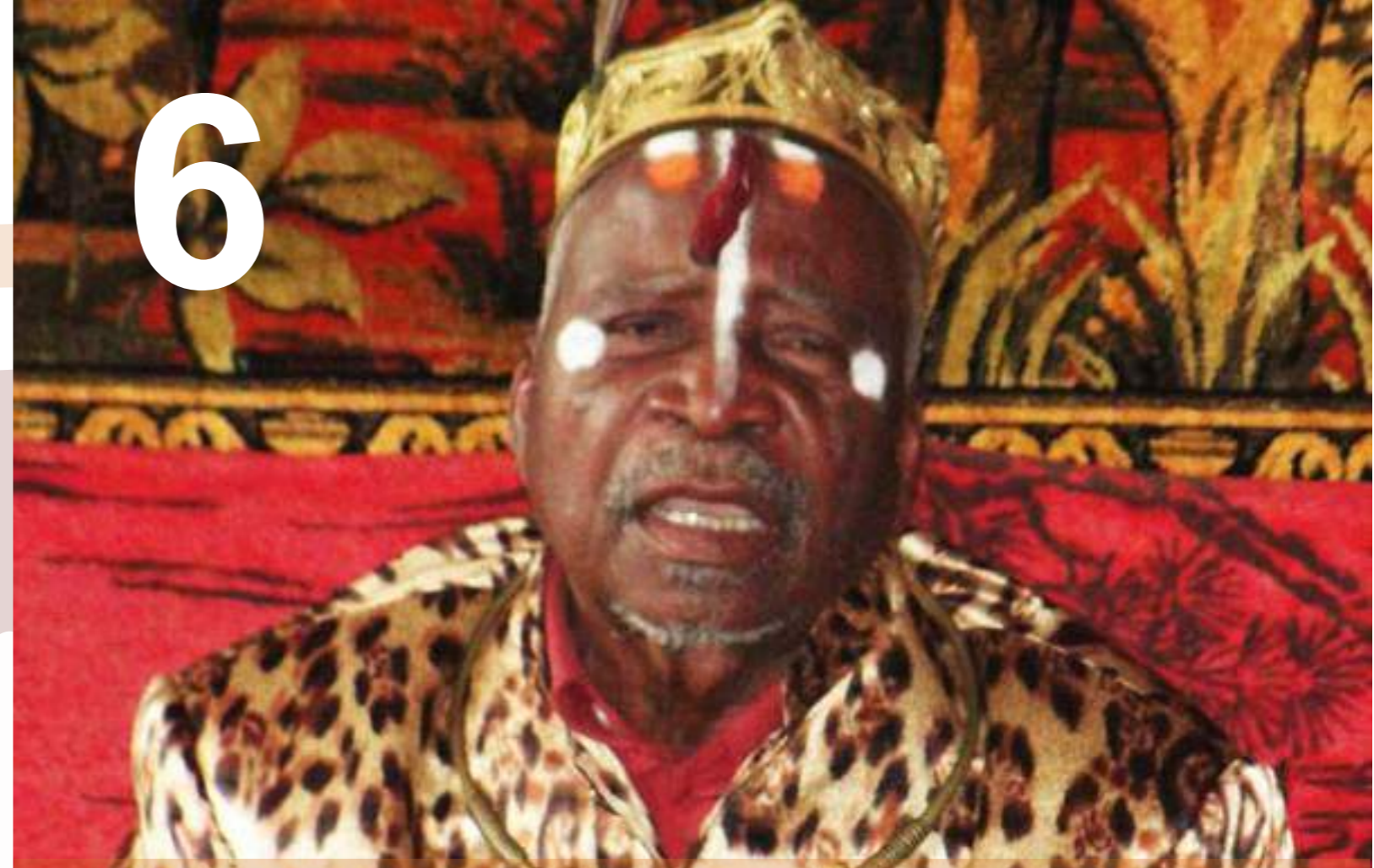
- strengthening the links between educational programmes and the UNESCO 2003 Convention on Intangible Heritage;
- aligning schools (the entire schooling system) more closely with communities for the passing down of customs and cultures;
- reviving UNESCO clubs as a springboard for the dissemination of various agreements and to foster an interest among younger generations for heritage in all its forms;
- increasing the number of broadcast shows about customs and traditions via the modes of communication that are most easily accessible to communities, such as radio, sign boards, comic strips and town criers.

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6



TRADITIONAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN CENTRAL AFRICA: THE ROYAL DOMAIN OF MBE

Eugénie Oyou Mouayini

Introduction

Dignitaries from the téké kingdom describe traditional and local knowledge of the forests as a common thread reflecting the body of practical knowledge, built and developed in space and time and an inherent part of dynamic exchanges between man and forest. This knowledge comes into play in daily life for the sustainable and beneficial use of sacred spaces (forest species, wildlife, seasonal rhythms and cycles). The sacred forests of Mbe fall under the responsibility of the king and are managed by a clan of dignitaries. Foreigners are prohibited from entering them. This explains why rituals are conducted on the outskirts. Only select initiates are allowed access, and only in cases of extreme emergency. The management of this arrangement is guided and directed by a four-day calendar (Oukoué, Oukila, Oudzouo, Outsara or Nkoué Mbali). Of these four days, three are working days and one day (Nkoué Mbali) that is considered sacred, is closed. According to Congo tradition, land ownership is by lineage, i.e. groups of individuals who share a common known and named ancestor, and who are related by links of unilineal descent. Lineages are acknowledged as being key players in the management of resources. The law on traditions, habits and customs recognises the presence and power of customary chiefs and landowners.

With regard to the traditions governing the Congo, land is viewed as having three dimensions:

- **The technical dimension: land as a physical element acted on by man for his survival.**
- **The social dimension: Land as a body on which fundamental social relationships are forged.**
- **The sacred dimension: land as a resting place for the ancestors (the spirits of deceased members of the lineage).**

The legendary power of the Makoko and his dignitaries remains relevant and respected to this day. The traditional rules are followed and are generally still kept in place. The present day Makoko of Mbe was appointed in 2004 following the death of his predecessor. He is recognised as the spiritual high chief of the téké community, which officially makes up half of the Congo's population. Today, as in the past, the Makoko is at the head of a kingdom devoid of clan-based divisions, whose major organising principle is the chiefdom and where the village is the most important social unit. The kingdom emblems are the lion, the panther and the civet, and its reference colour is red, a symbol of the human blood that it is forbidden from being shed. The king is not affiliated with any modern political parties. However, due to the demographic weight of the téké people, he is often invited to important ceremonies and cultural as well as political events. Considered by the Congolese people to be a vanguard of morality, even more now than before, some are of the view that nothing can happen without the consent he embodies. In brief, tradition preserves and supports culture, and vice versa. This is the reason we bear witness to the continuity of a culture that leaves in its wake the continuity of tradition. In this ancient civilisation, one of the pillars of education is oral tradition, which ranges from the concrete to the sacred and is passed down from father to son and from mother to daughter. The téké people adhere to traditional belief systems. Local beliefs, firmly anchored in the founding myths of the communities, leave room for choice among the spirits, the ancestors and the deceased. They are based on Nkoué Mbali, the spirit representing God on earth.

Background

Traditional knowledge is rooted in the moral values of African people, where many villages are arranged into chiefdoms. Traditional management systems draw their strength from several sources: customary law, beliefs and rituals, the village unit, and interpersonal relationships. Personal accounts given by the Ngakaon and the Ngallion of Boulankio confirm that in the royal domain of Mbe, twelve dignitaries have always asserted their views in terms of the management and monitoring of territories. They are in charge of hunting and agriculture as well as natural resources that are considered sacred. For example, among the téké people, women are banned from eating tortoise, monkey, hippopotamus and elephant meat; and all community members are banned from eating any acidic fruits or vegetables (sorrel, grenadine, lemons, oranges) on Nkoué Mbali (the day of rest). According to the Ngatsii, the consumption of all snake species is also strictly prohibited. Immediately following the birth of a téké child, his/her parents and especially the mother (the first teacher) have a duty to instinctively pass on these teachings to the child. Immediately following the mien mwana Nkoué Mbali declaration (which translates to 'I am a child of the Nkoué Mbali'), tradition dictates that any child who disobeys these rules will suffer considerable damage to his/her health or integrity. In the same vein, the community vows to respect certain figures known as Ankobi (singular Nkobi), of which there are twelve:

- To the north of Mbe: Nganko and Ngueipan are ruled by Mouindzou, who plays the part of commander-in-chief.
- To the east of Mbe (Ngabe): Moutsiri, Ngabitsi, Nguebiou.
- To the south of Mbe: Mouagao, Ngueliéno, Ngandzion, Ngampo, Ngalion 1 of Mbina, Ngalion II of Boulankio, Mampiele and Ngankaon.

The Ankobi are traditional referrers, veritable allies of the central administration and of relations with village communities. The Ngatsii, clan chiefs or even landowners, are the only people allowed to address the spirits and ask them to bless the community, in accordance with established custom. They therefore have a responsibility to guarantee the fertility of the land and success in work. They also watch over animals and plant seeds.

- Ngaliéno: owner of the forests on Mandiele land (Ignie district in the Pool region).
- Ngadzion: owner of the forests on Imbion land (Ignie district in the Pool region).
- Mouangao: owner of the forests on Mbe land (Ngabe district in the Pool region).
- Moutsiri: owner of the forests on Ngabe land (Ngabe district in the Pool region).
- Ngatsibi: owner of the forests on Ngabe land (Ngabe district in the Pool region).
- Ngueipan: owner of the forests on Ngoh 2 land (Ngabe district in the Pool region).
- Ngalion de Boulankio: owner of the forests on Boulankio land (Ignie district in the Pool region).
- Nguebiou: owner of the forests on Ngabe land (Ngabe district in the Pool region).
- Mouindzou: owner of the forests on Tsaah land (Ngabe district in the Pool region).
- Mampiele: owner of the forests on Lefini land (Ngabe district in the Pool region).
- Mbali A Nkani: owner of the forests on Lefini land (Ngabe district in the Pool region).
- Ngalion de Mbina: owner of the forests on Mbina or Ingouolo land (Ignie district in the Pool region).
- Ngampo: owner of the forests on Bapoh land, extending from the d'Imboulou dam, via Idzoulou up to Ngabe (Ngabe district

in the Pool region).

- Mampiele: owners of the forests on Mban land. This land, which begins at the peak of the Lefini river, in the south of the royal domain of Mbe, is home to the sacred source from where dignitaries draw the water to be drunk by the king, Nkoué Mbali.
- Ngakaon: owners of the forests on Ombion land (Ngabe district in the Pool region).

In addition to the presence of a favourable social climate for the protection of heritage, culture and nature also play a role in the management of traditional values.

Culture / Nature

Traditional management systems, custodians of traditions, habits and customs, play a vital role in the transmission of values, and thus come to be drivers of identity within local communities. This system, which promotes sacred forests, can be found on all continents and in many cultures. Traditional systems of management continue to influence and give rhythm to community life. The traditional management system is quite complex. Knowledge is passed down from father to son and from mother to daughter. In the téké kingdom, traditional management systems have their basis in rituals inherited from the ancestors.

These rituals, which support and strengthen the traditional management system, have the following objectives:

- increase the supernatural force capable of vanquishing demons of nature (natural disasters and other dangerous phenomena, in order to restore or achieve natural equilibrium);
- honour female and male powers;
- encourage harmonious relationships between humans and nature;
- contribute to the training and emancipation of future generations;
- maintain control of the sacred forests and other elements contributing to the balance of natural forces;
- Tackle or stamp out external threats.

Traditional management systems combine rituals with a number of principles such as restrictions of a religious nature, certain age groups or sexes, taboos, secrets, succession (heredity) and faith. While these practices are very restrictive, they have the advantage of enabling the custodians of the sacred sites to retain a degree of influence over their management. In the téké kingdom, the weekly calendar is a special feature. This calendar manages the day-to-day lives of the general population, and visits to the sacred forests in particular. The success of this system of management for the sacred forests is dependent on adherence to this this four-day calendar comprising the following:

- Oukoué or Tsaba
- Oudzouo
- Oukila
- Nkoué Mbali or Outsara.

Oukoué or Tsaba is a big market day. This is a festive day where excesses are permitted. Oudzouo and Oukila are ordinary days. Nkoué Mbali or Outsara is the day of prohibitions, a holy day par excellence. This is a day of meditation, where all outings are prohibited. As it is a holy day, there is a formal ban on visiting holy or sacred places (in this case, forests and springs); and hunting or eating meat. The principles of Nkoué Mbali suggest that people remain at home, or risk being reprimanded. Only court dignitaries are allowed to draw water from the Nkoué Mbali spring for the

king, and even then, only at a specific time and for a set duration.

Features of the traditional management system of the domain of Mbe

The management of the sacred forests of the royal domain of Mbe is operated by a well organised social system, whose primary objective is to ensure careful attention to the rules and bans. This system calls on the knowledge of the aforementioned dignitaries.

Hierarchically, this system is managed as follows:

- The king is considered to be the master of the sacred spaces, aspiritual leader and custodian of all sacred forests. Every person has a duty to respect and oblige him. He is the link between the sacred (holy) and the visible.
- The Ankobi (sing. Nkobi) are the custodians of knowledge and know-how, guardians of the interests of the community and the sacred perpetuation of the forests. They are entrusted with the difficult task of carrying out the major works, namely the appointment of the kings and queens. It is their duty to endorse (or not endorse) the initiation processes, take on the role of intermediary between the sacred, so-called "invisible" world and the lived, so-called "visible" world. The king's vassals, dignitaries and especially the notaries (comprising the Mouangao, Moutsiri and Ngatsibi) wield influence over the Mbe and Ngabe land. Their role is to ensure strict adherence to the rules and to advise the hierarchy (their superiors) in cases of known infringements. In addition to the Ankobi, the king's vassals and the dream advisers and interpreters assist in keeping keep the forest sacred. These dignitaries are also tasked with authorising rituals, and regulating the comings and goings of visitors. They are additionally responsible for mediation between spirits and people, applying the rulings and sanctions imposed on offenders, and reporting to the king, master of the space.
- Landowners have the same role as the royal court described above. As land masters they are tasked with the day-to-day management of the sacred forests. They also defend the territory against potential illegal occupants. No ritual ceremony can occur without their permission, which acts as a permit.
- The village chief is the court watchman. He takes on the role of intermediary between the king and dignitaries of different ranks. In case of a breach, the village chief is alerted first and he has a duty to inform the hierarchy.
- The village community is the cornerstone of the system. It plays the part of detective and is in charge of watching over the sacred forests closely in an effort to detect any breach or drift.

Mythical management of the sacred forests of Mbe

Traditional resource management also has a mystical dimension. Although the Supreme Being Dzan is conceived as the creator of the earth, the sky and the stars, this relationship does not assign a religious practice that is essentially focussed on specialised ancestors and spirits. Relations with the specialised ancestors and spirits from nature determine the appointment of customary chiefs at the time of banning of the sacred forests. The sacred forests of the royal domain of Mbe are under the high protection of Nkoué Mbali, which embodies life and death. Dzan is loved and feared by the téké community, whose members dread angering him. Below the Nkoué Mbali are the Inkwi, which represent the spirits of the deceased (kings, dignitaries, public figures). They are recognised by the community and have defended the sacred forests of the royal domain of Mbe since the dawn of time. Their authori-

ty is recognised and feared by the téké community because they are capable of imposing harsh sanctions. According to accounts by the dignitaries, in cases of alleged abuse, the Inkwi do not hesitate to make themselves heard. They may demand that the offender leaves the space immediately under penalty of sanctions. For example, only a small sample of the resource that is needed from the sacred forest may be taken. The Inkwi can command you to leave should a second sample be taken. Ngakaon and Ngallion attest that in cases of non-compliance with the ordinance, the offender is in danger of disappearing mysteriously. To attract the mercy of benefactor spirits, each of the Ankobi has his/her own totem. This totem is a type of jar whose interior lath is made of palm branches, which are also called Nkobi, from which they draw their power and whose contents are kept secret. In cases of food scarcity, epidemic or drought, the Nkobi dignitaries address the spirits and Nkoue Mbali by the medium of the Nkobi totem, a symbol of power that acts as a messenger. The Nkobi totem is a very important element of royal power, around which the social and administrative organisation of the kingdom is structured. The twelve Ankobi get their names from the Nkobi totem, a symbol of their spiritual and moral strength. Traditional management systems thus play an important role in society.

Functions and advantages of traditional management systems

They have many functions. These include ensuring the longevity of man and nature, preserving nature in all its diversity, positioning themselves as custodians of cultural survival and ensuring that people respect prohibitions. The spaces also need to be protected and secured. Other functions include guiding and informing people, and transmitting cultural heritage. This contributes to strengthening social cohesion (conflict resolution and reconciliation processes) and promoting the values of traditional democracy. It is one of the many advantages of the customary system of management in téké societies. Respect for prohibitions, the hierarchy, the traditional calendar, nature, the guardians of sacred spaces and authority are fundamental values in téké society. Moreover, shared responsibility involves everyone, and faith, belief, and fear of spirits and ancestors limit the actions of individuals. Listening is a quality that enables the resolution of problems because communication is the foundation of understanding. Community members are also asked to adhere to the principles of Nkoue Mbali, which include showing respect and love for others and refraining from deceiving or killing one's neighbour. It must be noted that this behaviour is tied to the state of mind of the leaders, because they have to be calm and above the crowd, constructive and open-minded. Leaders must also have the management skills required of all members of the royal court. Additionally, one of the greatest advantages of the traditional system is belonging to a shared territory.

In 2009, an article published in La revue congolaise d'étude et de pratiques diplomatiques (Congolese review for the study and practice of diplomacy) indicates that « from the north to the south of the Congo, the first shared baseline indicator of organisation is the land on which the village communities are built. The village therefore forms the basic structure that bring together a group of families with at least several links of parentage. All villages in the Congo are separated by natural borders which, over time, have favoured the development of micro-States. Most villages are headed by village chiefs, whose power is based on bloodlines. This is the territorial unit from which the kingdoms and chiefdoms exercised their authority and where they continue to exercise their authority in present times».

This shows the link between the people, their surroundings, and the leaders who govern. In the Congo, the sacred forests take root in the land that is allocated to or redistributed among

different lineages. This land is perceived as having three dimensions: technical, social and sacred. With this knowledge, landowners combine and multiply traditional practices to assert themselves. The royal domain of Mbe, renowned for being home to numerous sacred sites, particularly the forests comprising the protected domains and strict nature reserves (pantheon forests, libraries and food reserve) is vast. The Congo, and particularly Mfoa (present day Brazzaville) is Téké territory par excellence. Likewise, the Maya Maya airport in Brazzaville, which means « Welcome » in téké language, is an expression of this recognition. The coat of arms of the city of Brazzaville is derived from a combination of herald symbols of the Brazzaville family and the insignias of the téké kings. The royal domain of Mbe is thus an integral part of the treasures kept in the Republic of Congo. It is located between Ngabe, the village of the Ngantsibi that borders the Congo River, the Mbouambe Lefini village on the Lefini riverbanks, and the «Dieu le veut» village on National road n°2, where the Mouele A Boulou creek can be found. Local people, fuelled by fears around the Nkoue Mbali and supported by traditional systems, had a habit of exploiting the natural ecosystems while exercising caution and conscientiousness. In order to better manage the natural resources, the conduct of local people is guided by a number of rules.

Rules and conditions of access

Access to the sacred forests of the royal domain of Mbe is governed by strict and inviolable rules based on prohibitions. Considered to be sources of impurity, certain groups of people are forbidden from entering the sacred forests.

These groups include:

- menstruating women;
- pregnant women and
- youth who have not undergone initiation rituals.

The sacred forests are traditionally hermetically closed to the outside world. At times, the treatment of diseases requires that healers call on the Ikwí (benefactor spirits), via rituals and chanting. Healers may only proceed with the healing rituals and sample medicinal plants once their calls have been heard by the Ikwí and access to the sacred forest has been authorised by the managers.

Healers must first consult the managers of the sacred forest. In order for their request to not be declined by the Ikwí, they must bring one or more bottles of alcohol (wine, liqueur, palm wine). This alcohol is used as an offering to the Ikwí and the ancestors, who show their approval or disapproval by signs that are detected by the mediums. Members of the court and the village chief are tasked with proceeding with the chanting, with the intention of getting a response from the Ikwí, to request their full attention as well as access to the forest, all the while appealing for their protection. This procedure is fast-tracked in serious cases (snakebite, epileptic fit, fainting, severe pain, being struck by lightning, etc.) These urgent cases require an exceptional response under the personal guidance of the manager. In the event of failure to urgently obtain permission to access the sacred forest, healers turn to the forest known as the "nursing teat" to find the necessary plants. If- and only if- the nursing forest does not meet their needs, they may seek the assistance of the master who, depending on the degree of urgency, may exceptionally grant a visa to enter the sacred forest. In present times, the modern system must integrate traditional systems in order to better manage society and its values.

The integration of traditional management systems in the modern African context

To facilitate the integration of traditional systems of management

in modern settings, the State needs to make a list of traditional knowledge and strengthen collaboration between traditional authorities and state institutions. Non-governmental organisations that emphasise heritage conservation must support the efforts of people who work to defend and uphold ancestral values. This support can take many forms, such as the provision of human resources (trainers) and logistical resources to assist in the fight against all types of contraband. Traditional and village organisation is based on the actions of a small group of influential people, where family ties are recognised. This is a reliable arrangement; however, it needs to be supported and recognised at international level. Organs of the State also need to support socio-cultural and traditional arrangements for better overall forest management. With regard to the royal domain of Mbe, the royal institution holds the power and has gained legitimacy. In the interests of longevity, the royal institution must bring together different types of organisations (associative, state or community) working to safeguard the forests. The royal institution is a reliable interlocutor for all stakeholders invested in nature conservation. This institution has a real need for recognition at both national and global level. During a workshop on the intervention of a sub-regional convergence plan held in Brazzaville (Congo) from 20 to 23 September 2011, the problem of managing the sacred forests was raised. At the conclusion of this workshop, it was recommended that the forests be taken into account in all forest development processes. This was also the case for the 4th session of the conference relating to the ecosystems of the dense and humid forests of Central Africa, held in Kinshasa (DRC) from 10 to 13 June 2002, where a committee deliberated on the importance of the sacred for the conservation of biodiversity.

The case of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Given the importance of the sacred forests, the DRC has accounted for the aforesaid forests by law under the Forest Code. Forests belonging to local populations are recognised as being intended for conservation and protection (Luketa, 2005). Customary laws govern the traditional management system, which has the potential to enrich the national policy on biodiversity. Consequently, these laws have been recommended for all forest development processes taking place at regional level (ibid).

The case of Gabon

Another example of the incorporation of traditional knowledge within the legal framework that has held our attention is that of Gabon. To establish its strategy on environmental protection and natural resource management in keeping with the recommendations of the United Nations conferences relating to the environment, in Stockholm (1972) and Rio (1992), the Gabonese government adopted Law no. 16/93 of 29 May 1993 on environmental protection and improvement, with a particular emphasis on traditional indigenous practices. Within this context, forests receive greater attention from government authorities (CEI 2002). Traditional indigenous practices relating to worship, culture and traditions (sacred forests, cemeteries, totems) that contribute to the conservation of biodiversity occupy an important place in Gabon (Rapport national du 17 février 2004).

The case of Cameroon

The case of Cameroon also deserves special attention. Since the 1990s, several fundamental documents, especially the Forest Act (loi forestière n° 94/01 du 20 janvier 1994) and framework law no. 96/12 of 5 August 1996 relating to environmental management, seek to organise the sustainable management of forests in Cameroon. Article 9 of the framework law recognises the principle of participation, whereby

"decisions concerning the environment must be taken following coordination and consultation with business sectors or concerned groups". There is thus a legal requirement to involve local communities in the decision-making process immediately following forest development (Lescuyer 2005).

The case of the Congo

A further instance of the use of traditional knowledge is that of Congo Brazzaville. In the Republic of Congo, the Forestry Code (code forestier du 20 novembre 2000) stipulates: *"The State must ensure sustainable forestry production, while at the same time maintaining environmental conservation, in particular, biological diversity and meeting the needs of local communities"*. To do this, the State should draw on the traditional management system.

Two levels of socio-political organisation regulate life in the villages.

- A modern structure that meets national political and administrative requirements.
- A traditional structure based on customs and traditions inherited from the ancestors. This structure relies on customary law, which represents the set of rules governing the traditional management of natural land resources.

There have been attempts to formalise the collective regulation of land management within the framework of the development or management of a protected zone with its basis in customary law. These experiments remain tentative. In light of this clarification, it is therefore a given that, in Congo Brazzaville, the traditional system of management is implicitly recognised (Okouya 2009). To our knowledge, no effective strategies have been put in place to involve it more broadly in the systematic management of the affairs of the country. The experience of traditional management practices has thus not really been drawn upon.

The case of Senegal

In West Africa, Senegal is one of the countries that has succeeded in incorporating its traditional value system within modern procedures. Senegal has managed to incorporate its traditional management system within the law on the management of natural resources. Indeed, the law states that the land only belongs to he who enhances it (Cisse Fall, 2006). Thus, a customary parliamentary system prevails, whereby all social strata and generations are represented. Its organisation is based on an executive board, a legislative board and a parliament comprising two chambers (bicameral parliament), namely Jambour and Ferey (ibid.). The executive board is made up of three personalities: the Jaraf, the Ndey-Jirew and the Sal-tigue. The legislative board is made up of people's assemblies.

Conclusion

Several studies show that traditional management systems have positive aspects and that they have the potential to enrich national policies. The traditional structure is still the most effective and respected structure, as it includes customary legal principles that have demonstrated their effectiveness in terms of conservation and protection over thousands of years. Not only does accounting for traditional knowledge and know-how contribute to bringing about a shift in mentality; it also- more importantly- helps to break the pockets of silence and even contempt; it will help to improve the image of our society. In these so-called modern times, where the youth are increasingly distancing themselves from customary knowledge (which at times may instil fear), the present generation of traditional managers has the onerous responsibility of informing as well as train-

ing. The need for the sustainability and longevity of traditional knowledge requires that they adapt to the modern context. This implies that traditional systems must escape from the coats of arms that contain them and open themselves up to other systems, which includes strengthening and extending the effectiveness of the provisions of the formal system. However, traditional curators need recognition in order to strengthen the protection and valorisation of the shared heritage built on ancestral values. They need to be supported and strengthened. It is essential for modern legal systems to lay out new modalities, by taking into account the current realities facing African societies. Awareness-raising and information campaigns targeting concerned populations can make use of several channels, such as tee-sheets printed with the logo "TMS" and images promoting the protection of endogenous resources. It is equally important to train in TMS practitioners from the formal system who work for the preservation and safeguarding of natural and cultural heritage. A simplified manual, written in standard local language, could be a very useful means of conveying messages. In the same vein, the creation of web sites as well as radio and television broadcasting can contribute to awareness-raising efforts. At present times, traditional management is confronted with numerous difficulties, including population growth, which comes with its share of impoverishment. To this list, one might add instability due to civil war and a cause of looting, and inadequate awareness-raising among concerned populations about the importance of sacred forests. Another concern has been the increase in poaching. In light of these destructive causes, collective efforts must be made and built on by State and traditional authorities in order to ensure the conservation and preservation of the sacred forests of Mbe, a heritage at risk of being classified as "endangered".

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CONCLUSION

George Okello Abungu, Ndukuyakhe Ndlovu and Foniya- ma Elise Iboudo Thiombiano

This book demonstrates the power and resilience of the knowledge of the people in managing their heritage and their environment. The chapters presented in the book address TMS case studies at sites listed on National Tentative Lists or as WH in various parts of Africa. The practices of TMS within these sites are diverse in nature and scope and applicable beyond their borders with relevance to properties elsewhere on the continent and beyond.

For convenience, the book is organized on regional basis. It covers local management systems in Africa, known by different terms such as traditional management systems (TMS), traditional custodianship system (TCS) or traditional ecological knowledge (TEK). The authors have attempted to define this knowledge system with what appears to be unanimity in the meaning that comes down to the all-inclusive TMS. Whereas there may be variations based on practice there is a common understanding of TMS's communal nature and its foundation on a strong set of rules and regulations often in ritual or spiritual form that bind all within a community. Further, it is time tested and lived experiences that are applied by communities to sustainably manage their environments and to ensure use and protection of values and valuable assets.

The book shows various TMS approaches that are diversified, but are not strictly regionally based as one country may even possess all the cases described. These commonalities may be explained by the historical fluidity of movements of populations and exchanges. For instance, in Southern Africa as well as in Otammari land, appointed individuals act on behalf of the community in providing leadership and custodianship of the heritage including its use such as in the rain making and housing. In East and Central Africa, the case studies highlight other angles of TMS operationalization where either the responsibility is in the hands of elders, like in the case of the Kayas, on strong centralized kingship like in the Buganda or Mbe, or decentralized but complex arrangement of age set and caste systems like in Konso. In all cases, the TMS are built on complex subsidiarity and interlinked systems where the balance relies on the vitality, flexibility and respectfulness of the whole structure.

The numerous application fields of TMS (wildlife, forest, agriculture, aquatic, mountain and housing) should not be seen as isolated and stand-alone features. Resource management cuts across a broad spectrum of cultural, social, ecological and economic values and therefore it must be understood as a holistic system that cannot be overlooked in the understanding/management of natural/human settlements. This indeed sums up the spirit of the practice; one that combines tangible and intangible, cultural and natural demonstrating the close relationship and inter-linkages between the same. The book succeeds in not only demonstrating the interconnectedness of these various elements but also the deep rooted and strong foundation and use of the system in various African societies.

It is unquestionable that traditional societies have for thousands of years lived in harmony with their environment based on time tested management structures and attributes that have been used to ensure controlled resources utilization and en-

vironmental protection for the benefit of people and society. However, as many of the authors have observed, the failure to recognise this management systems and lack of use the traditional knowledge associated with it could be the major contributory factor to resource deterioration, depletion, conflict and mismanagement that are prevalent in many WH Sites in Africa. The lack of appreciation and structured use of these cumulative bodies of knowledge, practices and beliefs that provide time tested experiences of relationship of living beings with one another and with their environment and generated, preserved and transmitted over a long period of time is detrimental to environmental and heritage conservation. The decision therefore by the WH Committee to accept TMS as a viable management system in world heritage sites and the need for its documentation and wider application and use should contribute to better management of sites in and beyond Africa.

It is important to note that "traditional" does not imply that it is less valid than other forms of management; on the contrary, its resilience, adaptability and survival to the present, is based on its deep rooted and time tested values, a fact expressed across the book and that makes it a reliable and dependable management strategy. Further TMS carries with it community philosophical conservation orientation and embody community values. The authors in this book point to the central role of TMS in their various sites that goes beyond heritage protection per se to cover everyday life that includes maintenance of law, order, unity and security and to govern the use of resources.

For example, the Bakonjo and the Maasai taboos for the protection of the natural environment show that these are more or less the same as the present day park rules, regulations and by-laws. The set up for all cases studied aim also to ensure sustainable management through well organized and well ironed structures, rules and procedures that tie benefits to responsibility. Thus, unlike modern heritage management systems that are carried out by professionals as designated job responsibilities, TMS is lived, experienced and practiced.

Communities of practice have an inherent interest in the management of their environment as they are not only dependent on the services and resources from the same, but in most cases are physically and spiritually attached, to it with an interest that goes beyond the material benefit. This combined with their deep accumulated knowledge of their environment (ecosystem) makes them the best managers, conscious of proper management and sustainable use for present and generations to come. TMS is also described as an inclusive and top down approach to management performed at grassroots level. However because of its nature as a grassroots, people oriented and belief based, that is what makes it difficult to adopt beyond its context, and especially into the realm of the academic world something that even this book has not fully succeeded addressing.

While all these strengths attest to the central role TMS plays in the communal life of peoples and in the management of heritage in Africa, TMS is not without challenges. Most of the authors have pointed to the threats facing it including those that were placed on it at colonization and the introduction of exogenous monotheist religions. Today as much as the stigmatization of TMS from colonial hangover continues in some places, some new challenges have emerged in the form of population dynamics, politics, infrastructural developments, environmental degradation, cultural dilution and various other forms of threats discussed in the book that threaten the knowledge and practice. TMS is not apolitical nor is it non-religious, two elements that are twinned with human life experiences. In addition, the power of TMS, its relevance to a large majority of communities and the sacred places often associated with it has sometimes

generated conflict and contestation in terms of use, management and responsibilities. The degree of the conflicts can even go as far as political manipulation with jostling for control of management responsibilities and the powers that come with it.

A theme that runs across many of the chapters is the element of tourism, as a source of income for communities within and around these places. However based on the sacred nature of most of the sites, tourism is also a potential threat. The question then becomes one of how to balance tourism with maintaining the sacredness of the place and the authenticity and integrity the World Heritage Committee and its Advisory Bodies demand of such properties. These are challenges that the book tries to address. All the authors agree on the paramount importance of the sites and the need to ensure their health and some, like the kayas have elaborate control/access mechanism for everybody including the custodians themselves. In other cases like Mount Mulanje, there are conflicts even between government organs with responsibility to manage the sites and respect of traditions are left with the people whose real world is fast changing with acute needs, some of which could contribute to degradation of the heritage. As the traditionally implemented checks and balances disappear, new systems are required to replace them.

All the authors also point out the increasing abandonment of the TMS practices by the youth and the intellectuals that has negative effects on the long-term conservation of the heritage. This is a matter of concern to all as it is in the youth and the intellectuals that TMS can find its way into the curriculums of institutions of higher learning and its formalization as a system of management (within states parties) to address current heritage management challenges.

One of the ways to ensure that TMS continue to be effectively recognized and sustainably used in a fast changing world is to develop mechanisms of incorporating its documentation, teaching and dissemination through formal structures such as universities and heritage studies institutions. This will involve the development of syllabi and their international recognition as a system of heritage management that can be pursued to the highest level of learning. However this poses a challenge, given that TMS is more of a lived and experienced practice that require more than just a set of rules and regulations.

As cumulative bodies of knowledge, its generation, preservation and transmission has so far been carried out in a traditional and intergeneration context that requires knowledge practice based on belief complexes beyond the realm of pure academics. The challenge is how to translate this knowledge based on belief systems to a contemporary academic practice while retaining its inner essence that at times involves rituals, and without which its effectiveness may dissipate.

Despite one of the stated objectives of the book "to provide an effective documentation methodology and to explore ways to use the same in capacity building endeavors and academic curricula", the dissemination of the research produced here alone may not have the desired effect of formalizing the practice and the adoption of TMS' teaching at university level. It will need more than that. While this book should be considered a crucial first step, more needs to be done to finding ways of incorporating TMS into the contemporary educational systems. This was something that was beyond the remit of the book, given the available time and resources. It is however a next logical step that should at the same time at global WH level lead to a reflection on setting up a methodology framework for TMS instead of the current generalization in the Operational Guidelines. This will be the only way to effectively and fully utilize this cumulative and time-tested heritage management system of the world.

Despite all the challenges, it is clear from the foregoing that TMS has a major role to play in many of the sites in Africa and beyond including in WH sites. Further, all the authors agree that documentation and dissemination of TMS is crucial for its survival and use and that the only way to access the traditional knowledge and management systems in Africa is through research, documentation and training. This indeed should be the way forward as the international community strives to domesticate TMS into the international conservation practice and management framework.

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