

MUSEUM DOCUMENTATION: CAPTURING DIMINISHING CULTURES: A CASE STUDY OF ZIMBABWEAN TRADITIONAL ASPECTS

By Nyamagodo Stanley (Zimbabwe)

The Mutare Museum





The documentation of the **ICH** of the Eastern Shona people was done under the following categories of National inventories which are

- traditional medicine
- knowledge about nature eg indigenous knowledge system
- social practices
- ritual, ceremonies, myth and beliefs

Documented intangible cultural heritage in the Museum

1. The functional, social and religious meaning of the traditional hut has been documented.

The traditional hut has been constructed in the museum for visitors to rest and recreate in the hut in a traditional way while listening to the intangible heritage associated with it.



Traditional dances



Home screen showing the types of dances that can be played on this flat screen Tv for visitors to enjoy



Rituals and ceremonies, traditional beliefs, myths and religious practices

- Rain making ceremonies



witchcraft

- The documentation was done out of the realisation that amongst the Eastern Shona people belief in witchcraft is still prevalent despite the advent of Christianity and the law suppressing its practice.
- In the documentation process the museum held several talk shows with the members of the public and conducted interviews with self confessed witches and their stories were captured .
- As a result of the documented stories of witchcraft, a flip book was designed in the museum which shows several stories, videos and contemporary newspaper articles that visitors can read in order to understand the belief in the Eastern Shona society

Display of part of the objects which are associated with the Witchcraft act in the Museum.



Traditional healing.



This documented information has been used partly in the development of traditional healing exhibition in the Museum and some of the documented objects are on display



Religion

- It constituted the central basis of the African tradition as all their traditions, rituals, and ceremonies were deeply ingrained in it

Great Zimbabwe site which was once a centre of religious activity



Traditional games

- Traditional games like Tsoro and Nhodo which have been practiced for generation as part of recreational and entertainment purposes for both children and adults has also been documented.

conclusion

- The presentation has shown that the capturing of fading cultures by Mutare museum has been done as an effort to safeguard traditions that are slowly dying due to foreign cultural influences.
- These documented cultural values, beliefs and norms will serve as future reference and help communities connect with their ancestral roots.

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Thank you for listening.