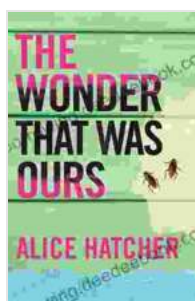


# The Wonder That Was Ours: A Long-Lost History of the Great Zimbabwe Empire

The Great Zimbabwe Empire was a powerful and prosperous civilization that existed in southern Africa from the 11th to the 15th centuries. Its capital city, Great Zimbabwe, is one of the most impressive archaeological sites in Africa and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



## The Wonder That Was Ours by Stacy Reid

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1701 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 272 pages



## The Rise of Great Zimbabwe

The Great Zimbabwe Empire emerged in the 11th century as a result of the expansion of Bantu-speaking peoples from the north. These people brought with them new technologies and ideas, which they combined with the existing cultural traditions of the local Shona people.

The empire grew rapidly in size and power, and by the 13th century it had become one of the largest and most prosperous empires in Africa. Great Zimbabwe was the empire's capital city, and it was home to a population of over 10,000 people.

## **The City of Great Zimbabwe**

Great Zimbabwe is a vast and impressive archaeological site. It covers an area of over 700 acres, and it is home to over 300 stone structures. These structures include palaces, temples, and fortifications.

The most famous structure in Great Zimbabwe is the Great Enclosure. This is a massive stone wall that encloses an area of over 10 acres. The Great Enclosure is thought to have been the residence of the emperor.

Other notable structures in Great Zimbabwe include the Temple of the Birds, the Hill Complex, and the Valley Ruins. The Temple of the Birds is a small, round building that is decorated with soapstone birds. The Hill Complex is a series of stone terraces that overlook the city. The Valley Ruins are a group of stone ruins that are located in a valley outside the city walls.

## **The Decline of Great Zimbabwe**

The Great Zimbabwe Empire began to decline in the 15th century. There are a number of factors that contributed to the empire's decline, including:

- **Climate change:** A series of droughts and famines in the 15th century caused the empire's population to decline and its economy to collapse.
- **Disease:** The of European diseases, such as smallpox and measles, also weakened the empire's population.
- **Internal strife:** The empire was also weakened by internal strife, such as wars of succession.

The Great Zimbabwe Empire finally collapsed in the 15th century. The city of Great Zimbabwe was abandoned, and the empire's population dispersed. The empire's legacy lived on, however, in the form of its stone ruins.

## **The Rediscovery of Great Zimbabwe**

The ruins of Great Zimbabwe were rediscovered by European explorers in the 19th century. The explorers were amazed by the size and complexity of the ruins, and they began to speculate about the identity of the people who had built them.

In the early 20th century, archaeologists began to excavate the ruins of Great Zimbabwe. These excavations revealed that the city had been built by Bantu-speaking peoples, and that it had been one of the most powerful and prosperous empires in Africa.

## **The Legacy of Great Zimbabwe**

The Great Zimbabwe Empire is a reminder of the greatness of African civilization. The ruins of Great Zimbabwe are a testament to the skill and ingenuity of the people who built them.

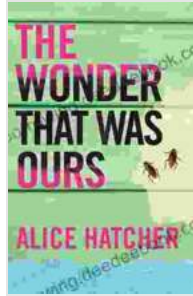
The empire's legacy lives on in the form of its stone ruins, and it continues to inspire people around the world.

## **Image Credits**

The following images are used in this article and are in the public domain:

- Great Zimbabwe Panorama

- Great Zimbabwe Hill Complex
- Great Zimbabwe Valley Ruins



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