

BaTonga EXIST

preserving. preserving. preserving.

pre = before: we get lost

to exist: the story to be told
re-told

again and again
what do we mean by:
our culture

they took our river
removed us
long time ago

the story of displacement
dis-place
but we exist

I fight!!!

every day. to reverse
the forgetting
the un-agency
pushing for self esteem

education-power
making space to be there
for the young
to grasp the world

the world of circular
and consequences
the drought cycles

females {}
undermined in the past
only males were sent to school

while girls ARE meant for
marriage
property. possession

**the collection of barks
the weaving process**

must I use English to exist?

**what about BaTonga
the local language**

**will the algorithm ever know us
do we even want them to know**

us?

**kinship networks
the monkey nut tree exists**

{how long}

**our hidden hidden knowledge
how to preserve it
but not exploit it
share but
careful**

**not like Mbila
the sacred becoming
tourist attraction**

**the old ways
wife inheritance practice
the AIDS has
disrupted**

**the kids, I train them
mat making
they grow up to be skilful**

to survive

**preserving our culture
seven types of stools
consequences to our people**

**preserving our way
dances . plays. way of life
baobab fruit. bean-like (busika)
recording our technologies**

**our grandparents were smoking
inchelwa**

**water. fire. sorghum.
parcel of our identity...**

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**in our culture
we compose a song
about what happened**

**they took our river
our water
access
Zambezi river
forced to resettle**

we sing

we sing

**we sing
as way of correcting
each other
a whole community
what happened will
be sang in public
when they sing using horns**

community accountability

**my relative
singing in between smoking
with the company of the goat**

**when
the lake was walled of
Lake Kariba**

we sing

**along the livestock
kraals within the yard
to protect from hynas**

We sing as a way of correcting each other

