

Cultural Protocols and Behavioural Patterns in the Sacred Sites in the Free State Province

Mohlomi Masooa and Chitja Twala¹

Department of History, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa
¹*E-mail: twalacm@ufs.ac.za*

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ABSTRACT The main focus of this study is to investigate cultural protocols and behavioural patterns in the sacred sites with specific reference to the Free State Province. Emphasis is on the adherence to such cultural protocol and behavioural patterns and the necessity of their observance. Consequently, in most cases these provisions lead to misunderstandings of cultural performances by the different ethnic groups in South Africa. This is due to the fact that the South African population has been ethnically and racially divided over a period of time. Such divisions led certain cultures be undermined while others were promoted by the then governing National Party (NP). Historically and anthropologically, the Free State has many sacred sites, particularly in the eastern part of the province but little is known about their importance. The best known sacred sites in the eastern Free State are Motouleng (between Fouriesburg and Clarens), Mautse (between Rosendal and Ficksburg) and Mantsopa (at Modderpoort near Ladybrand). The findings of this study show that there are cultural protocols and behavioural patterns which should be observed during the visits to these sites. In most cases, these protocols and behavioural patterns are not known by those visiting the sites. Although there are many of such observances, for the purpose of this study, few are identified and discussed.