

**Expert Report on the significance of mountains and caves in African religion,
with particular regard to Madimatle Mountain.**

By

Kara Heritage Institute



Expert report for Werksmans Attorneys

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Project summary

The Kara Heritage Institute is a leading South African organisation, working for the humanity of Africa by bringing our past African heritage into the present, and shaping our future. It is committed to leveraging the knowledge and ethos of Africa's heritage to grow sustainable and empowered communities, which ultimately gain the freedom to shape their own destiny. By reigniting awareness of our past African heritage and bringing indigenous values and principles back into our present culture. It also plays a fundamental role in educating and building African heritage, culture, tradition and religion. It is a human right to express cultural and spiritual practices. Therefore it remains a significance to preserve sacred sites such mountains, caves, springs or natural environment were activities of praise, worship and initiation are profound.

The mountains and caves are natural elements which occurs on all the continents on the earth. During the ancient times they were thought to have mystical powers and associated with ancestral worship. According to extensive research on the African religion it was discovered that natural environments such as mountains and caves were highly regarded as spiritual. These are the areas were local communities would go for prayers, the traditional healers, Sangomas would go *go phasa and/or phahla*, some people called for initiation purposes pursue their duties on the mountains and caves.

In African religion mountains and caves are believed to be sacred sites. Unfortunately, there are numerous mountains and caves which have not been documented but exist in the oral traditions. The threat is the loss of the rich cultural heritage association with the site. It is imperative that such sites are documented and protected before it is too late. It is vital to record the very little knowledge system left behind. It was one man who said "African history is worth writing about. A people without a culture is a lost, people without a history are without souls". Howard University (Washington, USA) created a unique opportunity for institutional collaboration on "learning from our past to shape our future". This approach embraces the concepts that we need to use knowledge from our past, through which heritage of different cultures are

developed, to continuously adapt to changing living environment in order to ensure prosperous future in harmony with our natural environment for all.

This project aims to identify the significance of mountains and caves in the African religion with particular emphasis and regard to Madimatlé Mountain. This comprise on the documentation of the knowledge of discovery, beliefs, customs and traditional uses associated with mountain and caves. This knowledge will be used to suggest that African religion plays a fundamental role in shaping the significance of sacred sites. The natural environment such as water springs, forest, mountains and caves remain sacred because of the system beliefs which needs to be preserved and protected. African religions are closely associated with African peoples' concepts of identity, encompassing beliefs in supernatural beings, ritual acts of worship, and all aspects of life, focusing on the eternal questions of what it means to be human, what is the meaning of life, and what are the correct relations among human beings, spiritual powers, and the natural world. African religious systems also seek to explain the persistence of evil and suffering, and portray the world as operating with some degree of order and predictability.

Both quantitative and qualitative research designs and methodologies were used. The structured questionnaires forms the basis of the interviews of traditional knowledge stories, customs, rituals performances and beliefs in Madimatlé . Secondary data is the expert reports on the sacred mountains which illustrates the fundamental aspect in African systems.

Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyse the significance and preservation of natural environment in the African background. It emphasizes on the mountains and caves which are regarded sacred, holy and possesses mystical powers. Such sites are identified as part of a cultural heritage. This is so because of the belief system and the attribution of healing qualities. If the sacred sites are natural elements, made since creation, why are they associated with spiritually? What are the significances? And what implementation should be taken to preserve and expand the traditional knowledge of the local community.

In this introductory report, the various mountains and caves are discussed, followed by the association with the African religion. Most importantly focuses on the protection and significance of the site. The mountains are scattered around the country surrounded by some of the famous legends which are passed down from generation usually about spectacular events or powerful gods. On the other side, caves are usually found at the mountains and forests sites. According to archaeological discoveries rock arts are profound in caves. The art gives an interpretation of the culture of a people. The spiritual aspect of man and the gods. This expert report pays particular emphasis on the mountain known as Madimatle (beautiful blood) and the Gatkop cave which are under the surveillance of a mining company.

Keyword: Mountains, Caves, Madimatle, African religion

1. INTRODUCTION

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The mountains and cave serve as the most fundamental natural environments for the African people. They are regarded to be sacred and holy because of the mystical power. They are important for the traditional and religious purposes as well as the natural resource obtain from them. However, their greatest value are tangible resources such as water, plants and stones. For the centuries, mountains were regarded as ancestral places where the gods reside. They are visited by the Sangomas, traditional healers and the local community for ritual and thanksgiving ceremonies. According to Kazembe (2009) rituals are often associated with important human events: birth, marriage, death, planting, and harvest. They serve to reinforce important religious beliefs through meaningful activities that bring comfort or joy and thus strengthen the unity of the followers of the religious tradition. The African religious belief and practices are not restricted to one day or occasion. They remain to be part of the daily activities as well as in special ceremonies, providing people with a system of values, customs and beliefs. The natural environments for African ceremonies need to be preserved to honour the people's belief systems. It is an abomination to deconstruct places of human value. Some of the well-known mountains which contain caves for ancestral worship are Modimo'olle, Ramatshala, Makonde and Sedimontholle. This expert report illustrates the significance and emphasis on the preservation of the mountains and caves. It pays particular attention to Madimatle (beautiful blood) and the Gatkop caves which are endangered because of the iron resources at the site.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem is the unlawful commerce of a mine construction on the remainder of the farm Donkerpoort and the farm Randstephne, located east of Thabazimbi. The area is surrounded by indigenous practices which play a vital role for the spirituality of the local community. The identified mountain Madimatle (beautiful blood) is a very spiritual and sacred place for the

community. The issue is the mining company that aims to proceed with the excavation and construction at the site. However, the local community is against such activities. It will produce noise pollution, disturbance for prayers and have an effect on the environmental resources. Although the mining can re-do or fix what it has damaged. It is impossible to reconstruct the natural order or spirituality of a people. The caves known as Gatkop are the gate way to the mountain Madimatle. It is believed that people died in the caves and the bones lie there.

It is until recently, as the witness's statements from Moruleng and Thabazimbi illustrates the concern of the community. It should be significant to recognise the dignity and rights of the people. Hence stand on the grounds to fight for inheritance and preservation of Madimatle. According to a section on the Constitution everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, though, belief and opinion. Therefore, it is extremely important to emphasize on the natural environments uses for spiritual and religious purposes.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The report identifies the spirituality and religious associations to the mountains and caves in Africa. The indigenous community have since used the sites for not only natural resources, but mainly as spiritual places where they interact with the ancestors, the spirit world and the creator. The primary aim is to determine the significance of mountains and caves with particular emphasize to Madimatle.

1.3.1 OBJECTIVES

- Documentation about the history, customs, rituals, and belief and uses of caves and mountains in South Africa.
- Identify endangered mountains and caves which are under threat for mining and developments.
- Determine the status as sacred among the local community
- To illustrate the cultural and spiritual significance of the mountain
- To indicate the relationship between African religion and mountains
- To recover and promote Africa's heritage and indigenous knowledge systems.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODS

The research project included an ethnographic fieldwork aimed at exploring the cultural and spiritual phenomenon. According to Bernard (1994) ethnographers are continuously asking questions and many of the questions they ask are about the topics and issues they are trying to make sense of. Therefore a holistic understanding of cultural systems within a local group was studied. This includes the accounts of mountains, caves, contemporary beliefs, customs, traditions and significance of the natural environment. The methods included questionnaires, unstructured and structured interviews and focus groups.

On the 23rd and 24th May 2014 the Traditional Healers Organisation (THO), Werksmans Attorney and Kara Heritage institute embarked on a workshop and

fieldwork. The research methods for the study included qualitative and quantitative approach.

1.5 DATA COLLECTION

1.5.1 QUESTIONNAIRES

There were two types of structured questionnaires. The first one were filled by the traditional healers in Bakgatla community hall Moruleng. The second type of structured questionnaires were for the local community members in Thabazimbi near Madimatle. There were eight four questionnaires.

1.5.2 INTERVIEWS

The main purpose of the interviews is to explore undefined domain in the formative conceptual model and identify new domains. The interviews ranged from informal, conversational, general interview guide, the standardized and open ended interviews. They took place on 23 and 24th May 2014 in Bakgala Ba-Galefa Community hall in Moruleng and Madimatle. However, some of the interviews and meeting were held prior to this dates.

On the 23rd May 2014 the traditional healers were present at the workshop held by Traditional Healers Organisation (THO) and the Werksmans Attorneys. They had the opportunity to ask questions with regard to the mountains and closure of the gates at Gatkop caves.

On the 24th May 2014 a public meeting was held with the local community members of Thabazimbi near the Madimatle Mountain. It included men, women, youth and the traditional healers. The unstructured interviews questioned were asked by the (THO) and Werksmans individuals whilst Kara preventative took videos and photographs. In this perspective members

expressed their concern, the value and significance of Madimatle. Some community members did not know Madimatle but were certain that it is important because they might receive a calling directed to the mountain. They've heard stories about the healing powers and services provided by the gods.

1.5.3 CONCERN STATEMENTS

In agreement to the preservation and protection to the caves and mountain. The local community members depict in the statement the history, heritage and effects on the closure. The concern statements illustrate the loss of significance religious, spiritual and cultural practices. There were twenty eight statements signed and written by the community.

2. THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF SACRED MOUNTAINS IN AFRICAN RELIGION

The African Sage Khem (or Ham), founded the African Religion of Light. Lord Khem (or Ham) also known as ThauThau-Harama (Greek ThoTh-Hermes), was the personification of the mind or word of God Ptah. The names Khem and Ham have the following variations:

- cham chamo
- chem. Axum as in Akachum
- chembe chum as in Akxum/Aksum
- nyambe khame
- sambe as in Sambesia
- zambi as in Mozambique

These names mean the Word of Ptah, the self-begotten primal God.

Lord Khem or ThoTh-Hermes was the scribe and messenger of the Gods (Neteru) of the First Time (Zep Tepi). This African Sage was the custodian of ancient African wisdom which came to be known as khemetic or Hermetic

wisdom. The disciples of Lord Khem came to be known as Bonabakhuluabasekhemu (i.e. The Ancient Ones of the Land of Khemu). The ancient ones were priest of Isis who included Sangomas and sanusis.

This society of the Ancient Ones was introduced to Egypt by the Shamsu Hara (Gr. Shemsu Hori e. Followers of Horus). The Pharaohs of the Old Kingdom including Pharaoh Khufu (Greek Cheops) were a descendants of the Horus Kings or Shamsu Hara.

Diverse African societies that descended from the Followers of Horus inherited khemetic or Hermetic Wisdom which is today held by the Ancient Society. This Wisdom included knowledge of the origins of God, gods, the universe and humanity. Mountains and sacred pools played a prominent role in the evolution of humanity and its continued interaction with Gods and ancestors.

The Evolution of God(s), Nature and Humanity

The African Sage Khem or ThoTh-Hermes wrote many books which expounded on the evolution of God(s), nature, and humanity. The exposition of this evolutionary process aids an understanding of sacred mountains and sacred pools.

The Evolution of The Gods

The Ancient Ones taught that at the beginning there was Nothingness (Nahas) or the Great Silence (Khitu). God Ptah was the first spiritual being that emanated from the Nothingness or Great Silence. This God was defined as the One or the Unknown God.

The One (Ptah) was the self-begotten God (Mutangakugara/umvelingqangi) who emanated the Ennead (Pauti i.e. nine principles) popularly known as angels (i.e. messengers of God Ptah. The One (Ptah) and its nine emanations (Pauti) constituted the Amani/Amun) of God, Ptah. The creative energy (Amani/Amun) of God Ptah manifested itself as the Virgin of the World (Kore Kosmu) which was both female (ma/maia) and male (Ra) or, in short, mara or Maria.

The Virgin of the World (Kore Kosmu or Mara) emanated the Spirit (ka) of the Sun (Ra) known as Kara or Raka). This spirit of the Sun or the Spiritual Sun (kara) manifested itself as a triune principle of unity or oneness (arkana or arhana) which underlies all reality or existence. This triune principle, in turn, emanated the four elements of water, fire, earth and air. Thus the manifested reality consisted of seven principles including:

1. usara (mind/spirit)
2. maat/musasi (thought/soul)
3. Ra (word/body)
4. Manu (water)
5. Aakhut (fire)
6. Rastau (earth)
7. Amenti (air)

The triune principle was One in three or three in One (usarmaatra). The constitutive principles of reality are the seven or five. The five elements are :

1. Ether (usaramaatra/kabachat/Mundu)
2. water (Manu)
3. fire (aakhut)
4. earth (rastau)
5. air (amenti)

These five elements are symbolised by the root or trunk (zindj) of (ka) the sacred fire (Fura). The seven elements are symbolised by the Cube (Kaba)

The ether (Kabachat/Mundu) or the triune principle (usarmaatra/arkana) projected the four elements of water, fire, earth and air into the four quarters of the universe in the form of four spiritual or light. Beings (kheru) namely:

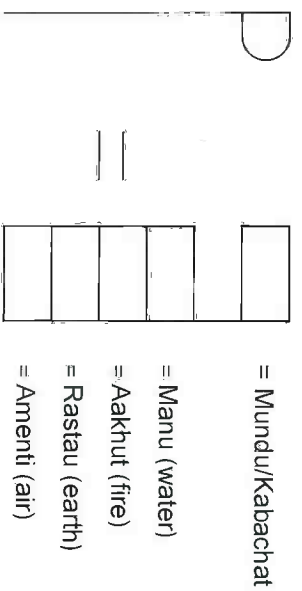
- Mundu /Faltam (man or goat)
- Mutapa/Omphta (eagle)
- Mwanamutapa/Mophtah (lion)
- Amani/Amun (Bull or Lamb of God).

The union of the triune (kabachat/mundu) and the four elements found expression in solar



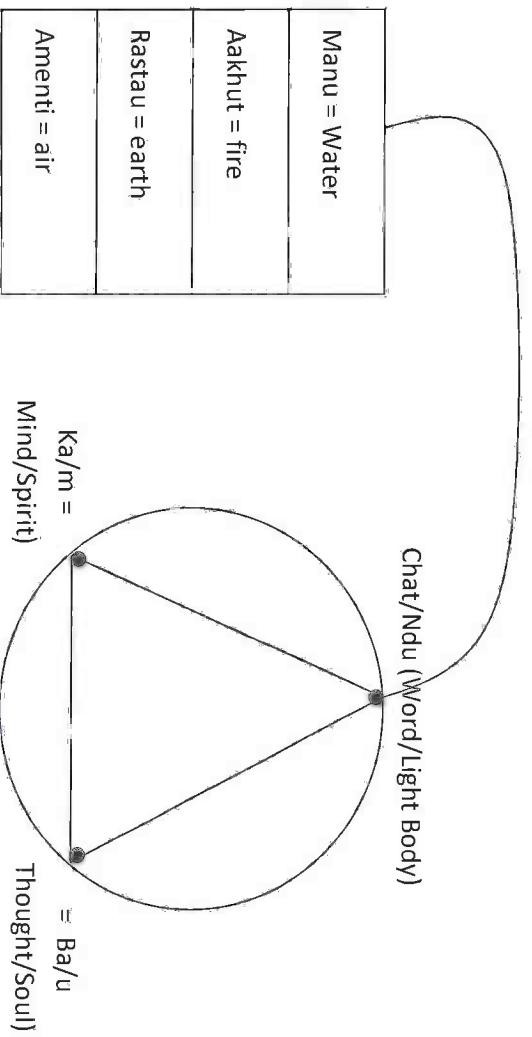
The root or trunk (zindj) of (ka) the sacred fire (Fura) was symbolised by the Ancient Pillar (P) in solar monogram. This ancient pillar (P) also symbolised the solar (Ra) principle with five cubes or squares mounted on a pillar or rod.

The Ancient Pillar



The ethereal element (Mundu/Kabachat) is a triune principle. The ethereal and four other elements therefore constitute the seven constitutive elements of reality symbolised by the Cube (Kaba).

The Cube



The ancient pillar (P) and Cube (Kaba) mean that all reality is the union of spirit (Mundu/Kabachat) and the matter four (i.e elements of water, fire, earth and air).

The seven constitutive principles of being manifested themselves as the seven Pleiades or circumpolar (menrah/khelemela) stars surrounding the solar (kara) principle. The four Holy Beasts (kheru) surrounding the solar (P or Ra) principle unfolded themselves into the twelve houses of the zodiac which are linked to the Sun (kara) God by the seven Pleiades of circumpolar stars. The ancient Pillar or the root or trunk (zindi) of (ka) the sacred fire (Fura), in short, zindi-ka-Fura, is the primal mountain (zindi/zandj) which contained and generate the sacred fire (Fura) that created everything in heaven and on earth. In other words, a mountain is a link between the spiritual and the material world.

The material world emanated from a cave or grotto in the primal mountain. This cave or grotto was called Dadya or Duat (i.e. the underworld). The Dadya or Duat was the incubator of the astral Gods. The primal mountain (zindi/zandj) contained an underground pool (Dzivaguru), a python (Demba/Domba) God, a white crocodile (Nyambe) and three river stones (mabweadziva or mabweamwari). In other words, the sacred pools within the caves or grottos underneath sacred mountains are not only the meeting place of heaven and earth but also the incubators in which human life was fashioned and links between the spiritual and the material worlds were constructed. Thus the caves or grottos within mountains are the holiest of holies.

The Celestial Holy of Holies

The God of Light and its surrounding seven Lights formed the Holy mountain of Dandura (or Tantura i.e. mountain of the female (ma/maia) and male principle(ra).The Holy mountain of Dendera or Mara has a counterpart on earth.

According to the law of analogy the celestial and terrestrial sacred mountain are substantial the same. In other words, the religious observances in the holy of holies in heaven are reflected in the religious observances on earth.

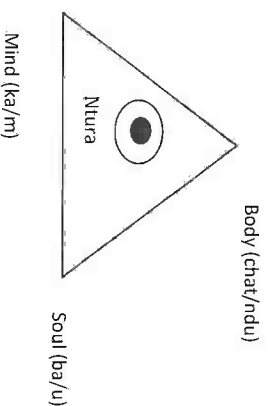
The land of the Gods (Tantura), also known as the city of the sun (Annu or ZauN), emerged from and was surrounded by the waters of origins (Dadya or Duat). The mother (mara) of the God of Light (kara) also came to be known as Sabanyadatja (Greek Sopdet). The Divine Land (Tantura) or city of the sun (Annu) appeared as a sacred mountain where the Sun was born (Inzalo ye langa). In other words, the sacred mountain (Tantura or Annu) is the birthplace of the Spiritual Light (kara) and life (akhte), in short Harakhte.

The Virgin Mother (Ntura) reproduced the vital force (akhte or ThauThau-maatkara) which manifested itself as the Spirit (ka) of the Sun (Ra), known as (kara or Raka). The Full name of this God of Light (kara or raka) is Jah or lao Abakara or Abaraka (Greek Abraxas). This God is one and the same with the God Ra Harakhte or Xpakhte.

The sacred life (Akhte or ThauThaumaatkara) manifested itself as:

- ThauThau (mind/spirit)
- Maat (Thought/soul)
- Kara (word/light body)

Thus ThauThaumaatkara gives expression to the mind, body and soul symbolised by an equilateral triangle.



The constitutive principles of this triangle found expression in the concept:

ThauThau	+	maat	+	kara	=	ThauThaumaat
Ka	+	ba	+	chat	=	Kabachat
M	+	u	+	ndu	=	Mundu

The concept Mundu has the following variations:

M	+	u	+	nde	=	Mundu
M	+	u	+	ntu	=	Muntu
M	+	u	+	nthu	=	Munthu
M	+	o	+	tho	=	Motho
M	+	u	+	tu	=	Mtu
M	+	o	+	to	=	Moto
Mind	+	thought	+	word	=	Higher Self
Mind	+	soul	+	body	=	Higher Self
Spirit	+	soul	+	body	=	Higher Self

This means that the Higher Self or spiritual personality (mundu or muntu) emanated from the sacred mountain (Tantura or Annu).

The sacred mountain



is also represented by the three stars of the

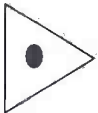

Orion (urhana) belt. These stars look like three pigs (Dikolobe or Honde). Thus the region of three stars of the orion (urhana) belt are also known as Makolobeng or Luonde i.e. mountain of the pigs). The totem of the author, for instance, the Wild Pig (kolobe) of Luonde mountain. In other words, he is the descendant of the Gods of the sacred mountain of Luonde also known as NeDemba or NeDomba (i.e. the son of the python God (Demba/Domba) or python charaoh.

The three gods of the sacred mountain of the Wild Pig (Luonde or Makolobeng) are:

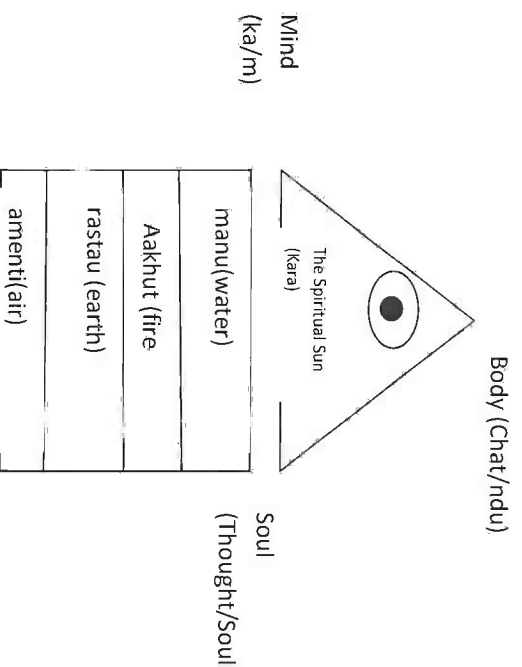
Nuba	+	maat	+	Ra	=	Nubmaatra
Mena	+	maat	+	Ra	=	Menmaatra
Usara	+	maat	+	Ra	=	Usarmaatra

Usara + mara + kara = Spiritual Trinity
 Usara + musasi+ Hara = Spiritual Trinity
 Osiris + Isis + Horus = Spiritual Trinity
 Mind + Thought + word = " "
 Mind + soul + body = " "


These constitutive principles of the spiritual trinity are known as Mind, body and soul.

The Spiritual Trinity  emanated and incarnated in the four elements of water, fire, earth and air. The union of the Spiritual Trinity  and the four elements manifested itself as the BannuBannu (Benben) Stone or pyrammat (Greek pyramid)

The Pyramid



In this pyramid or Benben Stone:

-  represents the Virgin Mother (mara or sabanyadatja)
-  represent the Spiritual Trinity (i.e. mind, body and soul) which


emanated from the Virgin Mother

 represents the earth or material body made up of the four elements of water, fire, earth and air.

In popular language it means that the pyramid (pyramaat) represents:




 = spirit

 = matter

This means that the Union  of spirit and matter in the form of a pyramid symbolises the totality of all reality or existence. The human personality is a microcosmic (i.e. little image) of the macrocosmic (Great image) of the pyramid or sacred mountain of Lunode or Makolobeng. The pyramid and the human personality are made up of:

pyra = fire ()

maat = water ()

The Union () of fire  and water  creates life (akhte). In other words, life (akhte) emanated from the Spiritual Sun or Divine Light (kara). Thus this light (kara/Hara) and Life (akhte) that emanated from the sacred fire (Ra) was called Ra Harakhte or Xpakhte (Greek Xpictoc), pronounced Christos. The Christ (Harakhte) was also called lao (or Jah) Abakara or Abaraka (Greek Abraxas). The divine titles lao and Jah mean: The Alpha (Ia/Ja) and Omega (o/h) or the Eternal One. The names Abakara and Abaraka means: The Father (Aba) of the Divine Light (kara of Raka). Hence the African Religion of Light was called Karaism.

The divine title Jah is the root of the name Jahweh (or Jahveh) which was pronounced Jehovah. Thus in Judaism, Christians and Islam, a mountain is also a sacred place. For instance, the founders of the three religions received their revelations on mountains.

- Lord Khem or ThoTh-Hermes mount Hara (Greek Horeb)
- Moses (mount Horeb (now called Mount Sinai)

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- Mahommed Mount Hara or Horeb, now Sinai

The Sacred Mountain in popular Religion

The ancestors of the author are known as Vathavhatsinde (The people of the Pole in the courtyard). Etymologically, the name Vhathavhatsinde means: The people (vha) of the primal (tsinde/zindj) mountain (thavha). The primal mountain (Tsinde or zindj) was also known as zindj-ka-Fura, the root or trunk (zindj) of (ka) the sacred fire (Fura).

Underneath every sacred mountain there is a sacred pool (Dzivaguru) which was the incubator of human life. In these sacred pools, like in Lake Fundudzi in the Zoutpansberg (or Tswaing mountains) sacred Pool (Dzivaguru) represents the Rain Goddess Mara or Maria.

These names have the following variants:

Mari (Egypt and Ethiopia)
 Meri ("")
 Meru (Burundi and Ruanda)
 Meroe (Ancient Ethiopia/Sudan)
 Mwari (Zimbabwe)
 Mwarinkulunkulu (Zimbabwe)
 Mwalinkulunkulu Zimbabwe/South Africa)
 Mwali (Zimbabwe /South Africa)
 Muali (""")
 Muhali (South Africa/Lesotho)
 Muhale Moholo (Lovedu/South Africa
 Mogale Mogolo (Sotho/South Africa
 Nwari (Tsonga/South Africa
 Nwali (Venda/South Africa

In other words, the entire continent worshipped a rain goddess which dwelled in sacred pools below mountains.

In these sacred pools such as Lake Funduzi there are:

- White crocodiles (Zambe/Nyambe i.e. word of God)

- Python God (Domba/ charaoh i.e. creative energy of God)

Thus Africans and Vhathatsinde, in particular, venerated crocodiles and pythons and sacrificed maidens to the Virgin Mother (Mwari we Denga i.e. Queen of Heaven). These sacrificial maidens who became the wives of the Python God were responsible for the fertility of the earth and women.

On Lunode and Luvhola mountains near Elim Hospital there are sacred pools which are often visited by the Queen of Heaven (Mwari we Denga). The original rain-making centre of this Goddess was on Maphungubwe hill. When the royal court of the People of the Sun (Bakhalaka) was relocated to Great Zimbabwe the rain-making centre was also relocated.

After the split of the empire of the People of the Sun (Bokhalaka) into Mukaranga in the North and Urozwi in the South the rain-making centre was relocated to Matopos (i.e. Matomboni) in the Njerere Valley, Guruhusekwa, now called Matebeleland. The worshippers of the Rain Goddess (Mwari) at Matomboni includes: Nationalist politicians, traditional healers, Zionists and apostolic priests.

There is a spiritual heritage route stretching from Matomboni, South West, Zimbabwe, to the land of offerings (Vulovedu) of Queen Mudjaji, the incarnation of the Queen of Heaven and earth. From Matomboni the Rain Goddess travels to Masisi in Southern Zimbabwe.

At Masisi the Rain Goddess lands on a big rock near Masisi mission station in the form of a star. Upon its appearance women ululate and clap hands saying that the Rain Goddess landed on the rock to greet them on her way to visit her daughter, Mudjaji the Rain Queen.

From Masisi the Rain Goddess lands in a cave (Bakholia Nwali) on Makonde mountain. Upon her arrival an earthquake occurs and women ululate and clap hands. The Rain Goddess then departs for mount Luonde before leaving for Maulwi mountain in Vulovedu. During her presence on mount Luonde it became misty and everyone was expected to pray to this goddess and not to work or move around.

Footprints of the Gods

The gods left their footprints on earth. For instance, in Lake Victoria (Nolubale) there are three islands Kalanga Land, Mara and Ukara islands. On Ukara Island there are two rocks, one flat and another upright. On the flat one there is a footprint of Kusane (i.e. the prince of Light) who created humanity and left his footprint before ascending to heaven. The upright rock swings when addressed by a member of the priestly class. The creator God Kusane is commonly worshipped as:

Kuzwane

Khutsane

Cosana

Kosana

Hosana

The creator God Kosana is the husband of Muhali Muhulu and father of Thobela.

These three gods manifested on earth as three human ancestors:

Shorogulu + Marumbe + Rundji-Ntare

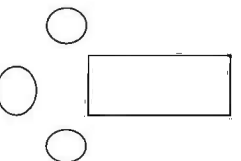
Sorogulu + Marumbe + runji

Sororhendou _ Malumbe + Lundji /undi

Serokolo + Malope + Luti

Sorokola + Banyakaba + runji

These three human ancestors are symbolised by three River Stones (Mabweadziva) or Stone of the Rain Goddess (Mabweamwari). The shrine of these primal human ancestors consists of a trunk of the tree surrounded by three river stones.



Every family kept this shrine or a plant on a round earth mound. This plant is called Thidikwane Modimo was fase. Another shrine consists of three river stones mounted on a square stone. This shrine symbolises the union of spirit and matter. These stones rein force the significant of mountains in African Religion.

Family shrines are the meeting places between the family and ancestors. Senior family members make sacrifices at these shrines and ask the family ancestors to intercede with God and Gods for the health and wellbeing of their children and to ward off evil forces or spirits that threaten the security of the family.

African people believe that the material or physical world is a reflection of the spiritual world and that the two are substantially the same. They believe that there is a heavenly mountain that emerged out of the waters of origins just as sacred mountains on earth did. They therefore believe that sacred mountains are the abode of the Gods on earth just as the sacred mountains (Luonde or Tantura) in heaven is the abode of the gods and source of life.

No wonder that mountain tops and/or sacred caves (Dadya/Dzata) are holy places where African people worship God (Modimo) and Gods (Badimo).

The Son of the Rain Goddess (Mara) was symbolised by the python charaoh (i.e. Serpent God) which lives in caves on mountains e.g. Boyakome (i.e. Rain shrine of Valovedu of Mudjadi). The Royal family make sacrifices to the serpent God known as the Ancient One (Mukhalabwe i.e. Ancient Stone) in the cave of Boyakome. When one throws any object into this cave it comes back. The maternal ancestors of the writer are the custodian of the cave of Boyakome. Sacred caves or mountains are meeting places between heaven and earth and gods and men. Thus the destruction of a sacred mountain is a violation of the spiritual integrity and humanity of the people concerned.

The ancestors of the writers were rain priests of the Rain Goddess Mwari we Denga. A rain priest was also called Dzomo rha Dzimu or Dzomo rha Mwari

(i.e. mouthpieces of God.) S/he is an intermediary between the python God (Python charaoh/NeDemba) or the Rain Goddess and the People. Thus the Valozwi (or Ramafalo, descendant of Muhale, were called Musikavanhu (i.e. creator of people). The name Motshekga derived from hu tsika/husika i.e. to create)

The VaRozwi of Ramafalo (including Mutsika/Motshekga/Maepa and Makwana) were the rain priests of all Valovedu (or VaRozwi) monarchs and Queens. Until this day certain families still have sacred objects and charms for rain-making.

3. MOUNTAINS AND CAVES IN AFRICAN RELIGION

A mountain is identified as a natural creation which is part of the environment. In many belief systems meanings are given to objects or structures. In the African context, mountains been the area land that rises very high above is closest to God. According to Masoga (2003) mountain or anthills are used to perform rituals as a way of connecting, reconnecting, advancing, re-negotiating, re-appropriating and establishing an understanding with a spiritual space. They offer the suppliant the space and time to draw the 'now reality' more closely into contact with the spiritual space. The occupation of land presupposes the occupation of space, noting all its dimensions.

There are other known mountains were similar ritual activities take place. Thaba ya Matlala is surrounded by myths and legends. It is believed that when visiting the site, one should not scream or make noise. Those are the signs of disrespecting the silent place. The strange phenomenon is that if anyone calls your name you should never reply. However, if you reply you shall forever get lost.

3.1 THABA YA MODIMO'OILLE

Thaba ya Modimo O' Ile (God has devoured) which is near Nylistroom. The mountain is associated with ancestral spirits and regarded as a 'haven' for ancestral activities. According to Maamushi who is a Mopedi diviner-healer

(ngaka), from Makgane, Ga-Sekhukhune in Limpopo province. Most Bapedi and Batlokwa go up the mountain to perform rituals to invoke the ancestors and plead with them to intervene in stopping the drought by bringing rain. The belief system was that God and the ancestral spirits resided there and were not supposed to be disturbed at all. In this case, it was better to be bothered by the ancestral spirits than to bother them. Thaba ya Modimo O' lle is surrounded by the following common belief system:

Go tloga kgale-kgale go be go sa swanela gore batho ba ye kgauswi le thaba ya Modimo O'lle. Ge motho a be a ka fihla gona, ka kgonthe o be a sa boe. Tumelo ke gore badimo le Modimo ba dula gona mo thabeng. Ga se tshwanelo ya gore ba tshwenywe ntle le ge e le bona na re tshwenyago.

Long, long ago, the living were not allowed to come close to the mountain. If a person happened to come close to the mountain, he or she would not return or be seen alive (Translation).

The mountains are important to negotiate meaning and to assist suppliants and traditional healers. It should be noted that they become a central place for the communication between ancestors and the living takes place. Masoga (2003) notes that ancestors are said to be centrally located within the anthill. It is important to note the communion between ancestors and the living, and how this communion is used to address to human pleas and problems. The protruding shape of the mountain emphasises the importance of cycle, as well as the 'protrusion' experienced by pregnant women. It is necessary to add that anthills are used to treat pregnant women experiencing birth problems, with soil from the anthill prescribed together with other medicinal mixtures to ease pain.

One of the respondents Madite Peter Nkwane was raised in Modimo'Olle (retired elder of the community) who explained that this is an ancestral mountain which possess magnificent powers. There were certain procedures that one has to follow before going to the spiritual site. For instance, one will have to *go ikilela* before going to the mountain, should not urine or swear at the site. Whoever disregards the procedures of the site will suffer the

consequences. It remains to be a place where the traditional healers and prophets go for ritual performance. There are three caves on top of the mountain which are used for prayer purposes. In the valley of the mountain was a wall of water. The people would go take stones, water and plant resources.



Figure 1.1 Thaba Ya Modimo'Olle 2013(The photograph of the mountain which continues to be visited by the local community)

Some of the most important mountains includes Thaba Bosiu, Sedimontolle Mapungubwe and Madimatle (Beautiful blood)

3.2 CAVES

The caves are typically of natural origin with meaning given by people. They are regarded to be sacred sites of ancestral worship. The early prehistoric inhabitants left behind rock arts which depicts their way of life. About four

hundred years ago caves were regarded to be sacred sites. They are used for cultural and religious activities. Some of the special caves visited around South Africa include as mentioned by Masogo are Lehaha la MmaNtsopa ('the cave of MmaNtsopa'), Lehaha la Matita ('the cave of Matita') and the Clarens site called Badimong ('the place of ancestors').

The above illustrate the various caves which are used for spiritual purposes. It is an ancient practice passed on from generation to generation. They depict the significance of African religion together with connection to the natural environment. Their strong belief in the existence of spiritual beings requires that they attend their day-to-day activities and relationships with caution, respect for human dignity and in peace with their environment. Offences, wickedness, violation of societal norms, and other sinful acts are not spared by god according to traditional African religion. Kazembe(2009) notes that in most African religious traditions women and men may serve in any leading capacity, one of the most important functions being officiating at religious ceremonies, a practice that is very important for maintaining religious and cultural traditions and is vital to maintaining a close-knit community.

4.MADIMATLE MOUNTAIN AND GATKOP CAVES

The Madimatle also referred to as Meletse is sacred because it has a history. Madi means blood and matle means beautiful hence Madimatle. The mountains is a centaurty to the African people. It is where people go for religious, spiritual and cultural proposes. This is an inheritance of heritage handed over from generation to generation and should continue to prevail. According to a book written about Madimatle. The mountain has been kept to its original form as described by the elders. It is a place where the ancestors of the Bakgatla people reside. This is where the Bakgatla people would receive their blessings and signs from the ancestors. The culture and the lives of the people are strengthened by Madimatle. There is a cave where they would send their request. It is said that when there was no rain, people would go to the cave and send their prayers. Immediately, before they would leave it will shower with rain. The natural environment should not be disturbed for any

other reasons. The following are the significance of the mountain with efficient evidence from the traditional healers and community members' statement.



Figure 1.1 Madimatle Mountain.

4.1 CULTURAL HERITAGE

The concept of culture is complex .It is used to refer to a way of life linked to civilisation and our environment. According to Pilane (2002) it is a construct that describes the total body of beliefs, the way of life of any people, the things that such people have, the things they do and what they think. It remains to be the fundamental aspect of people and should be respected. Madimatle as a cultural heritage depicts the ancient philosophical tradition passed on from generations. As Itumeleng Maropeng a member notes that the mountain was a part of her culture. She would visit the site with her mother a practicing Sangoma in Thabazimbi. She illustrates that the future generation might hear and not be able to see the mountains of her great grandfathers. This is a site of cultural heritage as many individuals would be called by the ancestors to the mountain. Any destruction would destroy the cultural heritage of the people. The government should recognise, protect, and promote the people's rights to

their territories “to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions and institutions”

4.2 SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS

The ideology of spirituality plays a fundamental role in the African religion. According to Motshekga (2014) African religion consists of the spiritual (i.e inner) and religious (i.e outer) belief system. The spiritual aspect is mystical while the religious is a diagrammatic and ritually – based belief systems. African religion can therefore be divided into the spiritual or mystical and the material aspects. The Africans define themselves and establish their relationship with God and nature. Imported religions have distorted the African stream of history and culture leading to the African identity crisis and the current moral degeneration.

The spiritual and religious importance are intangible elements which trances hundreds of years ago. The Paleontological Scientific Trust uses Africa unsurpassed fossil heritage to build the Africa’s surpassed fossil heritage to build African dignity and promote environmental conservations. Mircea Eliade (1959) postulates, “for religious man, space is not homogenous, he experiences interruptions, breaks in it, some parts of space are qualitatively different from others. The Sangomas, prophets and any local member within the community is allowed to visit the site. However, one would have to perform proper rituals and understand the consequence thereof. The African tribes, Batswana, tshiVenda, Bapedi, Basotho and Tsonga have used mountains for communication with the ancestor and for initiation ceremonies. According to Ms. Grace Masuku who was named a National Living Treasure by the National Heritage Council. The mountain and caves as an inheritance of their heritage that has been handed to them from their ancestors. It is something that one should value and protect. Importantly should the mountain be interrupted where would the spiritual ritual take place?

4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

The relationship between god, nature and humanity are fundamental aspect for the Africans. The natural environment offers resources for healing qualities. According to testimonials by persons the stones, water, soil and plants are elements used for spiritual purposes.

“I have personally witness the supremacy of the place. At first I did not know Madimatle I only heard about it. The place is very tricky because we hear that it has water but when we go there it's dry. It happened that one day I was shown to come here to collect water. When I came to this mountain I found the water. I now have two litre of water from mountain. It is extremely difficult to get the water as the place remains to be dry. I go to the mountain for prayer purposes, I've received a job, know people who were healed and go *go phahla* and *go phasa*. We go to receive the blessings for the children to pass at school, it is important to mathwasana, for baptism purposes and for woman who are burden and can't have children. The younger generation should learn about the mountain. There are songs and poems praising Madimatle,

There are people who honour and respect the sacredness of the mountain and caves. According to Wetzimaier (2012) For indigenous peoples, who belong to the most marginalised and vulnerable sectors of society, large-scale mining often leads to the loss of their lands and thus poses a serious threat to their livelihoods. Therefore mining affects the strong cultural ties of communities and leads to the loss of their culture and identity. The land to a community means more than a mere source of livelihood. The term land is strongly associated with a home that refers to the traditional territorial claim and an identity as a community with socio-cultural values closely linked to the environment.

5. CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL EFFECT ON THE MADIMATLE

Cultural expression is a mark of every civilisation. But the question of how to enable the full potential to be realised and how to preserve and make known the significance of spirituality remains a challenge. Cultural and spiritual significance of a society is determined by the environment and practices associated with them. Therefore, when a place of importance is damaged it

has a tremendous effect on the community. This results to the psychological and mental disturbance of a person. More particularly when the site is highly regarded spiritual. The place of hope, prayer, ancestral worship cannot be replaced whatsoever. The future of ancestral domains, including the community's cultural heritage and natural resources are endangered. Therefore so much can be lost as (Turner, et al.2 008) identifies several of these "invisible losses", including cultural and lifestyle losses, health losses, losses of identity, losses of self-determination and influence, emotional and psychological losses, losses of order in the world, knowledge losses, and indirect economic losses and lost opportunities. Many sacred connections with the environment fall under the umbrella term of "invisible losses" to indigenous communities.

5.1.1 MINING IN MADIMATLE

Mining activity often poses a tough and divisive dilemma for indigenous people and their communities. On the one hand, mining activity and its associated social and environmental impacts pose a threat to indigenous ways of life and livelihoods and to important cultural and spiritual sites. On the other hand, indigenous communities have in some instances welcomed mining as an avenue of regaining economic self-sufficiency in the face of the enormous impacts of colonization. Nevertheless the community, are seeking the power and ability to control their lives, sustain their economic and cultural existence, and protect their environment. As Moody (1992) states that respect for this inherent right to self-determination is the key to building relationships between indigenous communities and other parties, whether they be governments or commercial interests such as the mining industry. Adherence to the principle of self-determination means providing adequate and meaningful mechanisms for veto or for substantive economic outcomes such as community infrastructure, jobs, profit sharing, and royalties.

According to the Shangani Management Services (2014) Aquila holds the prospecting rights to the Meletse iron ore deposit located near the town of Thabazimbi in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. Prospecting of iron ore was conducted at the Klipgat LP613 and Donkerpoort LP1301 tenement, and this project is referred to as the Meletse Iron Ore Project. An opencast iron ore

mine with an estimated Life of Mine (LoM) of 18 years is proposed on the remainder of the farm Donkerpoort 448KQ and the remainder of the farm Randstephane 455KQ. In addition to the opencast mining operation it is proposed that a beneficiation plant also be constructed and operated. Currently there are no mining activities taking place on the site. In contrast to this, photographs will illustrate the excavations on the site, which went beyond recommended instruction.

5.1.2 POLLUTIONS

The mining interferes with the set of values of the community, as is it considered a symbol of Western culture of consumption that enters into conflict with the people's culture. The traditional healers, prophets and local members followed a proper procedures to obey and respect the mountain. This meant that no noise, smoking, alcohol or photographs allowed at the site. They still question the legality as the affected areas has been declared a sacred mountain.

5.1.3 NOISE

Aquila has went above to construct roads on the mountain irrespective of the sacred site. The noise effect was calculated with the conclusion that it is kilometres away from the site. The fact remains spirituality and belief cannot be calculated or concluded on the grounds of modern perspective. In simple terms, what can be described as noise to someone else be can be a destruction? The definition of what is or what is not can be described by different cultural groups in many ways. The Aquila mining managed to destroy the spiritual structure and natural environment of the Bakgatla ancestors. Its theory is based on the scientific evaluation of maths, distance calculation on how noise, excavations and machines will not cause any anticipated destruction.

The impact identified by the mining report are as follows:

- Disturbance of fauna and flora species;
- Disturbance of Sensitive landscapes;

- Visual impacts of proposed infrastructures as well as the proposed waste rock overburden
- and discard dumps;
- Soils erosion;
- Siltation of watercourses(drainage lines)
- Dust generation
- Loss of land use and land capability and;

There is no mention of the cultural or spiritual impact of the community. It is based on the physical environment aspect. In addition, the above impacts have a negative effect on the sacred site. For years, the community went for prayer, cleansing and other ceremonies without any disturbance. However, today the physical structure and vibrational energy has had an impact on the Traditional healers who state that, they no longer have power or feel like they are at the ancestral caves or mountains. This is because of the requested entry, to ask for permission and the many roads on the mountain. "Our ancestral domain is infiltrated and the ancestor will begin to wonder why we no longer go there? And what has occurred to the site?"

1.5.4 CULTURAL REACTION

The cultural response to such infiltration is lack of respect to ancestral domain. The community is connected to their environment, not only through direct resource use but also through sacred beliefs and practices. These sacred connections with the environment remain vital parts of the life, even when technological or other forms of change occurs. As Aquila has severely damaged the environment by pollution. It is impossible to reconstruct the spiritual aspect as it has already harmed the people.

5.1.5 ANCESTRAL BELIEF

The ancestors of the Bakgatla people reside in Madimatele. It is sadden that the place of worship is intruded with so much construction. According to Pilane (2002) the Batswana believe in the help of the dead. They hold that the souls of the dead people become spirits (badimo) who ultimately find their way to a world to protect them and they lead a life very similar to that on earth. These

ancestors continue to take an active interest in the fortunate of the living descendants over whose behaviour they exercise a powerful control. They reward with good health and prosperity those who treat them with due respect and obedience but they also believe that those who neglect their ancestors, would be punished with sickness, economic loss or some misfortune. In addition, the ancestral aspect of belief is disregarded as reports of Aquila does not consider the spiritual significance.

The cultural identity and environment are at risk. This will have an impact on the ceremonial practices and way of life of the people. According to Wetzlmaier (2012) many groups possess a “sacred ecology” by which they conceptualize and form sacred connections with the environment, connections that are often seen by these communities as under threat by human-induced changes in the environment. Some of the ecological impacts which leads to negative impacts are

- ✓ soil and water damaged,
- ✓ damage to vegetation through blasting,
- ✓ deforestation,
- ✓ social damage to social structures of the community

The mining is a source of conflict that affects the sacred site, hinders protection of cultural heritage and of natural resources. As one traditional healer put it “I don’t want outsiders to come here and destroy our land. This is our ancestral place and we should protect it”(Madimatle, 2014)However, there is benefit which the mining company anticipate which are , job opportunity for the community . As Miranda *et al* (1998) writes that the traditional concepts and values of indigenous community tends to erode when socio-economic relativities force people to look for alternatives sources for live hood and when power relations within communities change. Communities are divided between the responsibility to protect their ancestral heritage and prospects of economic development. In this case, economic development or job opportunities was not a problem. As illustrated by the community that, whenever they need help, jobs or food. They would go to the mountain, offer gifts, ask the ancestors whatever they need and they will receive.

The perception of Madimatlé, traditions, custom, cultural heritage and spiritual site is on the line of extinction. The mountain is a live hood to the people in South Africa and outside. Aquila mining clearly bears the potential of disastrous effects not only on the environment, but also on the sacred caves and mountains. The sacred site should be protected by government and be a “no-go zones” for mining companies.

Below, are photographs that illustrated the excavated mountain with various roads linking to different paths. This clearly show the lack of respect and consideration to a spiritual aspect of humanity.



Figure 1.3



Figure 1.4



Figure 1.5

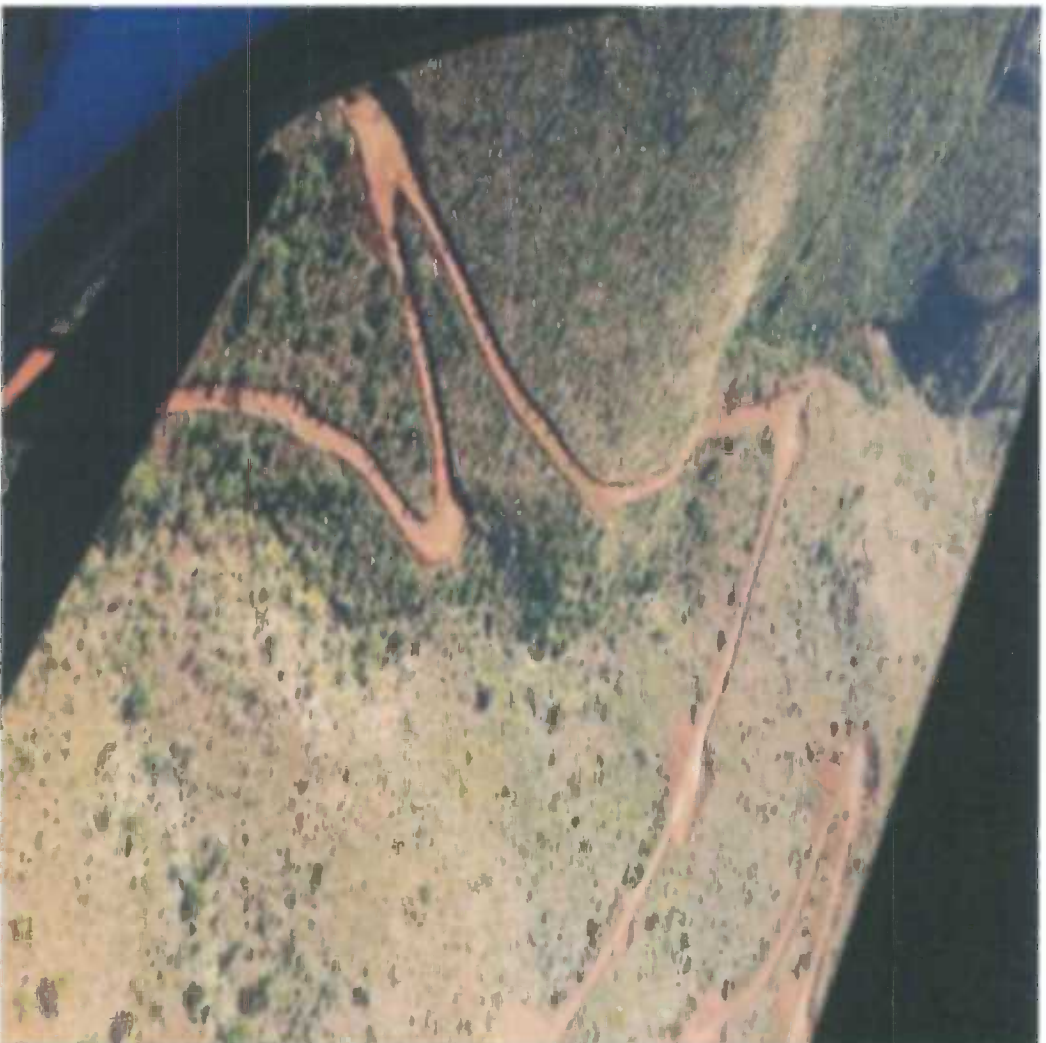


Figure 1.6



Figure 1.7



Figure 1.8



Figure 1.9



Figure 1. 20



Figure 1.21



Figure 1.22



Figure 1.23

4. THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THE COMMUNITY .

The purposes of the section is to report and give evidence on the questionnaires conducted on the significance of Madimatle and Gatkop cave. The focus is on the traditional ecological knowledge of the traditional healers and the local community.

Questionnaire "A"

Name and Surname: Mariam Phege

Date of Birth: 1960 March 03

Age: 54

Female/Male: - Female

Race: African

Type of spiritual training: Sangoma

Preferred Language/First Language: Tswana

Physical address: Phatsima

How long have you lived in this area? Over 20 years

Are you a full time traditional healer? If not, what do you do? Sangoma

Have you ever had imigidi or inhlombe in the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Yes I have.

Is there anyone you know who was initiated at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Yes, but the people I know moved away from this area.

Have you ever visited the Gatkop cave and Madimatle? I had the opportunity to visits the site only once .

Why do you visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? For traditional purposes , the main reason which is *go phasa badimo*.

What do you do at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? There various rituals that one has to perform at the site, you can go and communicate with the ancestors, offer them gift or sacrifices.

How often do you visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? I've only visited it once with Gobela . But since they've moved I go to other mountains.

Do you take people/patients to Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? If so, why? ' Yes, at times but we don't take people there when they are on their death bed. Rather we collect medicine to cure them

How often do you take people/patients to Gatkop Cave and Madimatle mountain? Mostly , medicine , plants or water from the mountain are the most important for our practices .

Do you know if amathwasa and oGobela from all the spirituality clans (Banguni, Ndzawu, sotho, baporofita, xhosa, ngomanhloko, tswana) visit the Gatkopcave and Madimatle mountain? Not only Sangomas go there, religious groups , apostle and prophets visit the site .

Do you ever stay overnight or longer in order to meditate and talk to the ancestors at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Yes, some of the healers go over night or prescribe days depending on the reasons.

Do you use plants on Madimatle Mountain to make traditional medicine to heal your patients? Traditional medicine makes use of natural resources. Therefore it plays a fundamental role in my practice. Most definitely I use plants.

Which spirituality clan do you belong to and is there any history that you were taught by your Gobela about the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Traditional healers organisation, Gobela told me that it is a place for the ancestors.

Do you visit the Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain alone or with you church group or both? Different religious group visits but I only went once.

Is the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain important to you? Why?

Gobela said ,”the ancestor resided there. It is a spiritual place to speak with them,*go kopa sedimo* and for prayers .

Do you believe that Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain have special healing powers? Yes, special healing powers to heal any kind of illness.

Do you "pahla" at Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain?

I went during the Easter times, but some other people go when they are called or feel the need to visits the ancestors.

When last have you visited the Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain?

I wish to visits the mountain again, it has been years since I went there.

Have you heard of its closure/restriction on entry?

Yes, it sadden me because I would like to go again. This will hinder my plans of visitation.

How do you feel about the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain being closed/and that nobody allowed to enter without permission from the mine? They should not close it because it is the sacred place for our ancestors.

Is there an alternative place of worship that has the same importance and/or meaning that you can visit instead of the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? There will no longer be a mountain like this ever again . This is the only place of the Bakgatla ancestors. Even if, there was another mountain, Madimatle is the only place of our ancestors as Batswana .

Will noise and dust caused by the mine affect the rituals and communication with the spirits (ancestors), at Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

It should be quite at all time, noise will disturb the ancestors.

What effects will mining on Madimatle Mountain have on your cultural practices and religion? It will hinder the people’s visitations, prayers and rituals. The ancestors will be extremely angry.

Have you tried to visit the Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain ever since it has been closed off by the mine? If so, when? No, but I will be upset because I want to go again.

How do you feel about the mine being built on the mountain? a r -L Has anything bad happened since the closure of the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain/restriction on entry? I'm sadden and vey speechless because this is our heritage.

Questionnaire "B"

Name and Surname: Katherine Rakoma

Date of Birth:1960/01/25

Age:54

Female/Male: Female

Race:African

Type of spiritual training: Inyanga

Preferred Language/First Language: Tswana

Physical address: Lerome , Paula Section

How long have you lived in this area? 23 years

Are you a full time traditional healer? If not, what do you do? Yes

Have you ever had imigidi or inhlombe in the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Yes, several times

Is there anyone you know who was initiated at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? I know close family, friends and relatives.

Have you ever visited the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? I'm not sure of the number but I've been there many times .

Why do you visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? I go there to pray and communicate with the ancestors .

What do you do at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain often do you visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain?

Firstly , I would knock with a stone at the door, listened to the noise of the stone ,and I would know I am allowed to enter or not .

Do you take people/patients to Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? If so, why? Every year during the Easter time .

Do you take people/patients to Gatkop Cave and Madimatle ? This happens when we receive confirmation from the ancestors .

Do you know if amathwasa and oGobela from all the spirituality clans (Banguni, Ndzawu, sotho, baporofita, xhosa, ngomanhloko, tswana) visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? It depends on the ancestors .

Do you ever stay overnight or longer in order to meditate ancestors at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Yes , we stay as long as we are allowed by the ancestors .

Do you use plants on Madimatle mountain to make traditional your patients? Yes, we also use water at Madimatle for medicine ,

Which spirituality clan do you belong to and is there any history that you were taught by your Gobela about the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? To the Tswana , yes Gobela instructed us to obey the rules and regulations of the mountain .

Do you belong to a church or another religious group, what is the name? Yes, the power of God Apostolic Church.

Do visit the cave or Madimatle Mountain alone or with you church or both? I go alone or with other members of the community.

Is the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain important to you? Why? It is very important because his is our ancestors site , they heal us when we are sick .

How far back have you and your family members and ancestors been visiting Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Many times,

Do you believe that Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain have special healing powers'? Yes, it does, people confess and I've witness the healing powers.

Do you pahla° at Gatkop cave or mountain? Yes, that's the purpose for my visitation

When, last have you visited the Gatkop cave or Madimatle mountain? I went last year winter, when we go in winter we don't need the ancestors permission

Have you heard of its closure/restriction on entry? No I haven't! It's the first time I hear about it.

How do you feel about the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain being closed/and that nobody is allowed to enter without permission from the mine? I'm scared, frighten because whoever closes Madimatle will face certain death.

Is there an alternative place of worship that has the same importance and/or meaning that you can visit instead of the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? No, Madimatle is unique, it's also close by for me to go and pray.

Will noise and dust caused by the mine affect the rituals and communication with the spirits (ancestors), at Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? Yes, disturbance for the ancestors.

What effects will mining on Madimatle Mountain have on your cultural practices and religion? The biggest God is on Madimatle and he can destroy everything if he is angered, consequences will be faced.

Have you tried to visit the Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain ever since it has been closed off by the mine? If so, when? No, I haven't.

How do you feel about the mine being built on the mountain? I'm extremely unhappy.

Has anything bad happened since the closure of the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain/restriction on entry? Yes, no rain for days and people are dying .

Questionnaire "C"

Name and Surname: Benard Msomi

Date of Birth: 1961/09/09

Age: 49

Female/Male: Male

Race: African

Type of spiritual training: *Prophet*

Preferred Language/First Language: IsiZulu

Physical address: 4594 Lethabong Hartheenspoort

How long have you lived in this area? 20 years

Are you a full time traditional healer? If not, what do you do? Part time

Have you ever had imigidi or inhlombe in the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Yes ,

Is there anyone you know who was initiated at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Yes, relatives and close friends

Have you ever visited the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? Why do you visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

I pray, ask and communicates with gods.

What do you do at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

I go to ask for life and fortune for the people

How often do you visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

It depends on the people / patients that are sick that need to go there.

Do you take people/ patients to Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? If so, why? We only send them there for spiritual purposes and when the time has allowed us .

How often do you take people/patients to Gatkop Cave and Madimatle Mountain? It depends on what the spirits says whether or not the patients should go.

Do you know if amathwasa and oGobela from all the spirituality clans (Banguni, Ndzawu, sotho, baporofita, xhosa, ngomanhloko, tswana) visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? It depends on the ancestors of the patient that will direct us for the trip to be longer or short .

Do you ever stay overnight or longer in order to meditate and talk to the ancestors at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? It depends on the spirits of the patients whether to stay longer or shorter .

Do you use plants on Madimatle mountain to make traditional medicine to heal your patients' Yes , I do take some plant and create a required medicine for patient .shorter

Which spirituality clan do you belong to and is there any history that you were taught by your Gobela about the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Prophecy

Do you belong to a church or another religious group, what is the name?

The Christina Apostolic Church in Zion

Do you visit the Gatkop cave or Madimatle mountain alone or with you church group or alone ? It depends on the spirit of a patients but I don't go alone .

Is the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain important to you? Why?

Yes, it is for healing purposes.

How far have you and your family members and ancestors been visiting Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

From a very young age.

Do you believe that Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain have special healing powers? This is a very powerful mountain, I believe in the healing powers.

When last have you visited the Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain? I went sometime this year.

Have you heard of closure/restriction on entry?

I heard about it was deeply hurt.

How do you feel about the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain being closed/and that nobody is allowed to enter without from the mine? I'm sad because I came to respect and cherish the mountain,

Is there an alternative place of worship that has the same and/or meaning that you can visit instead of the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

No alternative mountain but only this one for prayers.

Will noise and dust caused by the mine affect the rituals and communication with the spirits (ancestors) at Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

It will disturb the spiritual performance at the site.

What effects will mining on Madimatle Mountain have on your cultural practices and religion?

The people's life and culture will be lost.

Have you tried to visit the Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain ever since it has been closed off by the mine? If so, when? I haven't tried to go there but I'm hurt by the mines decision.

How do you feel about the mine being built on the mountain?

I'm unhappy and wish something could be done.

Has anything bad happened since the closure of the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain/restriction on entry? Yes, the people cannot receive help from the mountain and cave .

Questionnaire "D"

Name and Surname: Dikgang Molope

Date of Birth: 1928/10/01

Age: 84

Female/Male: Male

Race : African

Type of spiritual' training: Ngaka /Traditional healer

Preferred Language/First Language: : Tswana (Kgatla)

Physical address: Sandfontein (7 km from Moruleng)

How long have you lived in this area? 84 years

Are you a full time traditional healer? If not, what do you do? I'm a Headman of Bakgatla- Bakgafela

Have you ever had imigidi or inhlombe in the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? No, I am aware of such activities and the mountain site .

Is there anyone you know who was initiated at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Yes , I know many of my elders .

Have you ever visited the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

I have visited Madimatle, but on my recent visitation I was unable to access the site .

Why do you visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

I go there to seek herbal remedies and plants

What do you do at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

There are plants I collect to make medicine.

How often do you visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

I have been there three times.

Do you take people/ patients to Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? If so, why? I have not berceuse I do not initiate sangomas, as the Nguni.

How often do you take people/patients to Gatkop Cave and Madimatle Mountain? It depends on what the spirits says whether or not the patients should go. Culturally as a Tswana healer we do not take patient there .

Do you know if amathwasa and oGobela from all the spirituality clans (Banguni, Ndzawu, sotho, baporofita, xhosa, ngomanhloko, tswana) visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? It depends on the ancestors of the patient that will direct us for the trip to be longer or short . Yes , there are many stories.

Do you use plants on Madimatle mountain to make traditional medicine to heal your patients' Yes , I do take some plant and create a required medicine for patient shorter or longer . I only go there to collect plants

Do you belong to a church or another religious group, what is the name?

NG Kerk (United Reformed Church)

Do you visit the Gatkop cave or Madimatle mountain alone or with you church group or alone ? It depends on the spirit of a patients but I don't go alone . I visit with other traditional healers ,

Is the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain important to you? Why?

It is a sacred site for our ancestors who have power over our lives .

How far have you and your family members and ancestors been visiting Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

My elders told me about it.

Do you believe that Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain have special healing powers? This is a very powerful mountain, I believe in the healing powers.

When last have you visited the Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain? I went sometime this year.

Have you heard of closure/restriction on entry?

I'm sad and very upset because this is our ancestors.

How do you feel about the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain being closed/and that nobody is allowed to enter without from the mine? I'm powerless, I feel like I was just stab with a knife.

Is there an alternative place of worship that has the same and/or meaning that you can visit instead of the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain?

No other mountain but only this one for prayers.

What effects will mining on Madimatle Mountain have on your cultural practices and religion?

Mining will have a huge impact in our mountain

Have you tried to visit the Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain ever since it has been closed off by the mine? If so, when?

Yes, in September 2013

How do you feel about the mine being built on the mountain?

I'm sadden and belief that should the mine procedure there would be great disaster.

Has anything bad happened since the closure of the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain/restriction on entry? Yes, the people cannot receive help from the mountain and cave .

I'm not aware of

Questionnaire "E"

Name and Surname: Salome Mmasepi Mathake

Date of Birth: 1946/07/28

Age: 68

Female/Male: Female

Race : African

Type of spiritual' training: Prophet /Traditional healer

Preferred Language/First Language: Tswana

Physical address: House no, 30004, Greenside section, Moruleng

How long have you lived in this area? 68

Are you a full time traditional healer? Yes, and also a prophet

Have you ever had imigidi or inhlombe in the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? No, but I go to other site like Mautse and Motlollong

Is there anyone you know who was initiated at the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? I heard about the caves and know people who went there.

Do you take people/ patients to Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? If so, why? Yes, but one has to follow the instruction of the ancestors.

How often do you take people/patients to Gatkop Cave and Madimatle Mountain? It is between September and December.

Do you know if amathwasa and oGobela from all the spirituality clans (Banguni, Ndzawu, sotho, baporofita, xhosa, ngomanhloko, tswana) visit the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain? Yes, they do come at Mautse.

Do you use plants on Madimatle mountain to make traditional medicine to heal your patients' Yes, the natural resources help me to make medicine.

Do you belong to a church or another religious group, what is the name?

Mondau

Do you visit the Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain alone or with you church group or alone? With other healers and church members.

Is the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain important to you? Why? Yes, because we get medicine there and we connect with our ancestors.

How far have you and your family members and ancestors been visiting Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? Over 30 years

Do you believe that Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain have special healing powers? Yes, I've witness the miraculous events.

When last have you visited the Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain? I went sometime this year. It was in November 2013

Have you heard of closure/restriction on entry? No, but I know that there was a part that was closed but re-opened.

How do you feel about the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain being closed/and that nobody is allowed to enter without from the mine? I disagree with it. There may be a child or patient that requires spirits from the great place.

Is there an alternative place of worship that has the same and/or meaning that you can visit instead of the Gatkop cave and Madimatle Mountain? Madimatle will remain relevant. A calling may require a patient to go to Madimatle.

What effects will mining on Madimatle Mountain have on your cultural practices and religion? It will destroy and eradicate a sacred, feared place.

Have you tried to visit the Gatkop cave or Madimatle Mountain ever since it has been closed off by the mine? If so, when? Not recently

How do you feel about the mine being built on the mountain?

This will I destroy what is left of our belief and culture.

Has anything bad happened since the closure of the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain/restriction on entry? Yes, possibly many deaths, earthquake and mass natural havoc.

ARGUMENT

CLAIM

The mountains and caves should be protected and promoted. Any interruption will destroy the cultural heritage, disturb the ancestors and the environment resources.

REASON

The constitution protects the rights of any persons belonging to a cultural, religious and linguistic community to practice their religion and culture.

EVIDENCE

Mr . Ndlovu states that the Traditional Healers Organisation (THO) has protected mountains like this going back as Modimo'Olle, Sedimontolle. I still hope (THO) will continue to protect such environments. When you go to the mountain you are not allowed to wear, gold's, jewellery, no cell phones and cameras. When you get there you should have a sniff, a traditional Pedi or Tswana beer. There are certain times when you should go and leave the mountain. (Time for the gods)

The mountain is our gold, when we need a spiritual ceremony or a job we go with a sniff and beer. When we kneel down to pray we know shall receive. If the mountain is taken away, it will be gone forever. The mountain is for everyone from Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and everywhere. It's free to go there, you don't need an ID or passport .One has to follow the procedures and should not bring along forbidden elements like guns, knife and alcohol. We plea for the protection of this ancestral mountain.

- Melita Shwafu state that they visits the mountain for ritual purpose. It is a gate way to connect with the ancestors. It is impossible to separate the mountains and cave, they link together. Whenever I have a problem or a need such as a job, marriage or a child .I receive most of the things I ask. Although

other mountains exist were one can go thwasa and go phasa there would never be any Madimatele.

4.2 ARGUMENT 2

CLAIM

The African religion incorporates the relationship between, god, nature and the environment.

REASON

The African stream of history and culture is not only in the Khemetic literature but it is also embedded in nature itself.

EVIDENCE

Johannes Marupeng notes, this is the place where our ancestor reside therefore we can't live without the place. I came here and was told by Ntate Motlhopi about the mountain. I discovered that this is a place where people come go phahla and/or phasa, for prayers purposes. I've seen miracles, heard stories and also believe that the places gives us strength and should be protected. I ask the government for the protection of the mountain because there is no other mountain but this one. We ask from our ancestral, people are shown the mountain through signs and dreams. Some are shown when and which mountains to go for ceremonial purposes. Therefore should it be destroyed or taken away from us. The government will be destroying us because this is a natural environment which provides us with strength and hope. I love and cherish the mountain because it is our gods place. It will truly hurt me to see it perish. This is the place where we ask and receive our blessings. I get my strength and build the foundation of my children there. I don't want to lose it because I receive whatever I ask for.

- Emmanuel Mosimanya moved to Thabazimbi after the ancestors showed him the mountains. He went there go phasa and pray. He use work piece jobs but after the prayers at the mountain, he was awarded a job at the municipality. He notes that three ago when the mining company tried to

extract some minerals, the next day their machines were destroyed. The mountain should be respected. The problem with closing access and entry to the caves and mountain, it hinders us to communicate with ancestors.

4.3 ARGUMENT 3

CLAIM

The ancestral mountain provides the spiritual and physical needs of the local community.

REASONS

A society's belief system is structured around the inheritance of spirituality passed from generations. Madimatle is a place for the Bakgatla ancestors, were they received their blessings and directions.

EVIDENCE

- This place is of high importance to me as it has helped me a lot. We should learn and forward the information. It is an African mountain where our ancestor reside. They were rumours that the graves will be moved to another location. How can they do this to our elderly? This is the only site I've known all my life. I've asked jobs for my children, and the gods heard us. Today three of my sons employed, one is a soldier, police officer and the other is a traffic officer. We ask for jobs we receive, we ask protection, we are protected. The mountain is our strength and live without it we are dead. I plea for them not to kill our hope.

- Christina Foti Maropeng state that from young age she would visit the mountain with her family and church group on special occasion, in honour to honour the ancestors. The history of Madimatle was passed from her by the grandfathers. There are people from around the country who travel to visit the site. In her Sangoma practices, the mountain is represented by a stone amongst the items she uses when throwing the bones. The religious significance includes, healing from illness she was once healed from breast cancer, initiation of Sangomas as part of their training and for personal fast and prayers.

4.4 ARGUMENT 4

CLAIM

The closure of the Gatkop cave and Madimatle mountain restriction on entry.

REASON

The current interruption hinders the spiritual practices. The people have to request permission in this natural environment.

EVIDENCE

- Mrs Matlala Stephina Mothloki is a residence of Madimatle. She visited the mountain with other community members for prayers. It was through the Apostolic Church that they went to phahla, to talk with the ancestors about their problems or request from them. This is a Great place and only place for the purposes of worship, prayer and to phahla. Although she did not have knowledge of the mining construction, she could see from her home the construction of the road through the mountain. Like many others, she feels powerless because the mine owns the land.

- Joel Moatshe heard of the mountain from his forefathers, who used it to ask for rain and connect with the ancestors. The 21st century has lost its culture and they must work together to resolve issues regarding the disregarded our culture and belief. Madimatle is very mountain and it will be an insult to our ancestors and culture. The denial of access is affecting our ability to communicate and stay connect with our ancestor.

STATEMENT REPORT

MOREWANE THOMAS MOTH LOK

I do hereby state —

1 I am an adult male pensioner, currently resident at Madimatle.

2 The facts contained herein, save where the contrary appears, are within my own personal knowledge and to the best of my belief both true and correct.

KARA HERITAGE INSTITUTE

012 323 7737

Admin@kara.co.za

3 I was born on 18 October 1938 in Madimatle. I have lived in this area my whole life.

4 Ever since I was born, I have known of the healing powers of Madimatle Mountain.

People go to the mountain for healing, commemorating and speaking to ancestors.

I also know of "Meletje" Mountain (meaning "associated with water").

5 I was surprised about a year or so ago when people came to take samples on the mountain. I then noticed that there was a road being constructed on the mountain.

6 I have not had any dealings with any person from the mine. There have been no prior discussions with me about a mining operation.

7 According to my knowledge, the entire area is owned by the mine. The previous farm owners and employers who were living here (with whom I was living when I was employed) moved when the mining came.

8 When the mine people arrived here at Madimatle, I had already been living here since 1938. I had been a herdsmen here prior to retiring as a pensioner.

16 First of all, the access to the mine never had a big fence or that gate historically when I was growing up. This is a novelty. The last time I tried to access Madimatle was on 11 March 2014. I did not try to enter through the gate. In my belief, even though the gate is closed, I do not believe that it is actually locked.

17 There is no specific time of the day or year that people access Madimatle. Day and night every day, people want to access Madimatle, there is no busy or quiet period.

18 I know of people wanting to gain access since the notice board was erected. In this week alone, 3 different cars approached me to say they would like access. As the gate is currently not locked, the mine policy is that people must first come to me, and I must send them through, so people have been able to

access it even though here is the notice board. I am the one who puts the locks on and they are hanging on the gate handle but not locked.

19 I think the mine people are very much aware of the need of the people to access the mine area and that the people from the mine based in Thabazimbi are aware of this.

20 Even though the mine has put up the notice board and have this "access" policy, they are in a difficult position because trying to control access to the mine is very difficult. In my view they will have a very tough time. The policy does not work and people will not stop accessing Madimatle.

21 To my knowledge, there are no longer people constructing the road, after prospecting activities as they simply dug up the road and left it as it is, without any rehabilitation.

22 I witnessed a lot of activity in the form of trucks driving past the house when the road construction was underway, now and again, the noise from the machinery is quite noticeable. I was not affected as much by the dust.

23 I do not see how there could be a mine that co-exists with the cave. In my opinion it is still unlikely that there will be a mine. I find it very difficult to imagine a mine in that area, so close to the mountain and the caves.

9 I think that there was some kind of meeting between the mining officials and the farm owners who were my employers in this area, but I was not invited to and did not attend. I was not party to those discussions.

10 The mine people approached me to ask me to relocate to another property, but I refused on the basis that I was born here, raised here and have no desire to move anywhere else. The mine people came back and informed me that they had discussed my matter in Pretoria and indicated to me that they had agree that I remain on the farm but only within the bounds of this fence around my house, no further, because the entire surrounding property is now owned by the mine.

11 I was never given any money, promises or any benefit from the mine.

ACCESS TO MADIMATLE

12 As a result of having lived near the entrance to Gatkop Cave at Madimatlé, I have for many years often shown visitors to Madimatlé where and how to access the Gatkop Cave.

13 Over my lifetime, it is impossible for me to quantify how many people access the mountain on a daily basis or have accessed the mountain over the years because the number of people who often enter the mountain and cave is far too vast.

14 I often go to Madimatlé because I grew up here but I have not had the calling to become a sangoma. Part of the purpose of the mountain is for sangoma initiation process, but it also has significance to many people for many different reasons.

15 I think that the notice board preventing entry to Madimatlé without permission was put up in about the 3rd month of this year, very recently. Since the board was put up, various people from the mining house have come here and requested me to control the locks to the access gate. I said I want nothing to do with or have any involvement with the access issue. I do not want to man the gate or refuse people access. People from the mining company have been coming in and out, wanting to block access. I know they have put up a sign, but I do not think the gate is locked, to my knowledge the gate is not locked.

24 It is too difficult to identify the people who come to Madimatlé. People come from all over, including Moruleng, Welgevaa, Mabopane, Ga-Rankuwa, Johannesburg,

Bloemfontein, Lesotho and "Rhodesia".

25 There is no traditional, customary king, chief or clan that connects the people here. We are all mainly labour tenants working on farms and lodges.

This statement was orally translated from English into Sepedi and then signed at (1v] 0 on this

March 2014.

MOREWANE THOMAS MOTHLOKI

CHRISTINA FOTI MAROPENG (ID)

Do hereby state —

1 I am an adult female housekeeper, currently employed .

2 The facts contained herein, save where the contrary appears, are within my own personal knowledge and to the best of my belief both true and correct.

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

3 I was born on 9 June 1963 at Verdrag, Limpopo Province. I have lived in this province, near the Thabazimbi area for my whole life.

4 About 15 or so years ago, I completed my training as a traditional healer

IMPORTANCE OF THE MADIMATLE (MELETSE) MOUNTAIN

5 From a young age, I went to the mountain known generally as the Meletse Mountain but known to my community as the Madimatle Mountain ("Madimatle") with my family and our church group on special occasions, in order to honour our ancestors.

6 Later in my life, I was taught by my father, and by his father (my grandfather) that Madimatle has important significance to our traditional life and sangoma practices.

7 The importance of the Madimatle has been passed on to generations of my family in the oral tradition of storytelling.

8 I am aware that the Madimatle attracts a variety of different types of visitors from different cultural groups, churches and races as a sacred place. I have known of people coming from Johannesburg and as far as Polokwane and Mpumalanga to visit Madimatle, and more specifically the entrance to and chambers of the Gatkop

Cave.

9 I know of at least two other traditional healers (including the chief sangoma Ntate Khumalo) who accompany patients to Madimatle for religious reasons.

10 In my sangoma practice, Madimatle is represented by the symbol of a specific stone amongst the items I use when "throwing the bones". The fall of this stone indicates message to me from the ancestors that the patient must visit Madimatle as part of his/her healing process.

11 Some of the ways in which the Madimatle is of religious significance include

11.1 As the earthly base for all our ancestors and the place which houses the god of gods. I believe that all power comes from Madimatle;

11.2 healing of people suffering from illness. I personally went to the Gatkop Cave after having been diagnosed with breast cancer and was due to have a mastectomy operation. After visiting Madimatle, I believe I was cured by my ancestors;

11.3 young children are brought to Madimatle and Gatkop Cave for different purposes, including introduction to our ancestors;

11.4 initiation of sangomas as part of their training; and

11.5 As a site for undertaking a personal fast and prayer.

12 Due to the sacred and religious significance of Madimatle and the Gatkop Cave, certain behaviour is not allowed at or near these sites, including —

12.1 taking of photographs;

12.2 use of torches, radios or cell phones. Caves are lit by candlelight;

12.3 wearing of pants by female visitors;

12.4 wearing of shoes (with the intention that the soil of the cave sticks to one's bare feet); and

12.5 playing of loud music or making loud noise. Only songs of prayer or worship are allowed.

13 Before entering the Gatkop Cave, the appropriate ritual is to throw a stone into the mouth of the cave and to listen for one's path inside the cave.

14 On certain occasions, visitors may sleep over inside the cave.

EFFECT OF THE MINING ACTIVITY ON MADIMATLE

15 I am concerned that the mining activity will affect the ability of future generations to visit the mountain and Gatkop Cave for different purposes.

16 The mining activity will impede on our ability to have children initiated there.

17 The mining activity destroys the mood of Madimatle because part of ancestral worship requires a sense of peace and tranquillity. Noise and pollution of a mine change the character of the mountain.

18 I am also concerned that the blasting may collapse the caves. For me, this is very symbolic because the collapse of the caves would mean the collapse of this ancestral practice.

19 I have always know the Madimatle and Gatkop Cave area to be open and accessible to all people, without any fencing, cost or rules of entry.

20 If Madimatle and the Gatkop Cave is not available for us to use for our ancestral worship and other religious and cultural practices, there is no alternative venue that has such meaning for us. The effect of this is that these practices can no longer be undertaken, as this venue is essential to their occurrence.

21 I did not know that entry to the Gatkop Cave and access to Madimatle had been fenced off. I am upset about this because no one spoke to me about this and how it is affecting me and my beliefs. I would like to have been informed so that I could have gathered with other sangomas to discuss the consequences of these actions.

22 I believe that we have already witnessed the spiritual consequences of the closure of access to the Gatkop Cave and Madimatle in the form of the recent flooding in

Bela-Bela, to which many lives were lost. I further believe that it is in the interest of the whole of South Africa to protect Madimatle and the Gatkop Cave.

This statement was orally translated from English into Sepedi and then signed at on this 2014.

CHRISTINA FOTI MAROPENG

In conclusion, the report presentation has shown the importance of mountain and caves in the African religion with particular regard to Madimatle. The mountains are regarded to be sacred and possess mystical powers for healing qualities. Such sites are identified as part of a cultural heritage of a people. The Africans define themselves and establish their relationship with God and nature since creation. The significance are spiritual for thanksgiving; ancestral ceremonies and go phasa . The local members, prophets and the traditional healers identified the ritual performs and emotions towards the sacred site. It should be noted that the anthill becomes a central place around which communication between ancestors and the living takes place. Moreover, ancestors are said to be centrally located within the anthill. It is important to note the communion between ancestors and the living, and how this communion is used to address to human pleas and problems. Despite , the distance or kilometres of the excavations .The excessive matter is the respect of human dignity and right to freedom of spiritual practices.



The workshop held with the Traditional Healer Organisation



The traditional healer certificate ceremony .



During a public meeting in Thabazimbi near Madimatle .



Jack Marupeng expressing the significance and spirituality of the mountain.

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