

# **RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR A PHASE 2 INVESTIGATION OF A LATE IRON AGE STONE WALLED SITE NEAR THE PILANESBERG NORTH-WEST, PROVINCE**

## **Broad historical background**

The pre-historical and historical background to the Rustenburg-Pilanesberg region in the North-West Province of South Africa has been documented in a number of sources which range from oral historical accounts of the origins and settlement history of indigenous people such as Tswana groups who occupied the region from as early as AD1600 (Legassick 1969, 2010; Horn 1996; Manson 1996; Morton 2003, 2008; Bengha & Manson 2010); post-graduate studies which outline the origins and development of the town of Rustenburg (Pretorius 1967; Bergh 1992), and ethnographic accounts about the origins, settlement history, cultural life ways and material culture of Tswana groups who lived in the area during the last four centuries (McDonald 1940; Breutz 1953, 1987; Pauw 1960; Redelinghuys 1968).

## **Tswana and Ndebele archaeology**

The pre-history and history of Tswana groups who occupied the Rustenburg-Pilanesberg region has archaeologically been investigated and has resulted in the publication of a number of research articles during the last two to three decades. This author also have been active in the field of heritage surveys which covered a large part of the Bankeveld which resulted in a number of unpublished papers which outline the spatial distribution of stone walled sites across the Rustenburg and Pilanesberg region. The focus of most of the research articles is on the distribution of stone walled sites across the region; settlement patterns, settlement features and settlement styles which can be distinguished.

The research resulted in identifying a well and clearly defined Tswana settlement pattern which outlines the spatial composition of the Tswana village on a macro as well as on a micro level (Pistorius 1992, 1996). Whilst the Tswana macro settlement pattern can be equated with the Batswana village (*motse*) the micro settlement

features which are contained in the village (*motse*) represent wards (*dikgoro*, singular *kgoro*) which were occupied by related and unrelated family groups (*masika*, singular *lesika*). The residential unit of the chief (*kgosing*) is usually the largest settlement in the village and serves as the focal point in the village (Pistorius 1996). This 'blue print' for the spatial composition of pre-historical and historical Tswana settlements was established by combining archaeological data with ethnographic information.

Historical evidence also points to the presence of a Nguni population in the Rustenburg-Pilanesberg region from as early as AD1500 (Breutz 1953, 1986). Nguni groups such as the Thlako and Po possibly preceded Sotho-Tswana clans but in time were culturally absorbed by the Sotho-Tswana. Mzilikazi's Ndebele entered the Rustenburg region during AD1827 (Rasmussen 1978) and re-established Nguni settlement patterns and cultural life ways amongst subjugated Tswana chiefdoms (Harris 1963; Lye (ed.) 1975). At least two of Mzilikazi's village complexes in the region were recovered with historical evidence whilst one of the settlement complexes was archaeologically investigated (Pistorius 1997a, 1997b, 1998). This research outlined the Nguni settlement features which are associated with Matabele (Ndebele) villages and how these villages differed from local Tswana settlement patterns, styles and building features.

### **Aim with the investigation**

Pilanesberg Platinum Mine (PPM) intends expanding the Tuschenkonst Open Cast Pit as well as its associated waste rock dump. It is highly likely that two stone walled sites (PTS01, PTS02) which are located against the northern slope of Phatswane may be covered when the waste rock dump is expanded or may be accidentally damaged as a result of the fact that they are located adjacent to the waste rock dump. Consequently, these two settlements must be subjected to a process of documentation and excavation before they may be covered by the waste rock dump.

The Phase 2 investigation of Site PTS01 and PTS02 will entail the documentation and excavation of these sites with the following objectives:

- To compile detail ground plans for the sites by means by means of surveying and mapping of these two sites.
- To compare the spatial evidence from Sites PTS01 and PTS02 with other stone walled sites in the Rustenburg area.
- To excavate settlement components (homesteads/dwelling compounds; enclosures for stock; court areas; middens, etc) of both Site PTS01 and PTS02 in order to determine the function and interrelationships of these site's various spatial components with each other, with other settlements in the region and with ethnographic evidence in order to generate explanations for these spatial features.
- To collect material remains from Sites PTS01 and PTS02. These remains will be analysed and described in the Phase 2 report. These remains will be stored at the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology at the University of South Africa.
- To compile a Phase 2 report which will describes the results of the findings of the Phase 2 investigation.

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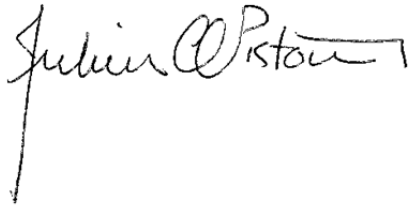
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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julius CC Pistorius". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long vertical line extending downwards from the 'P'.

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