# Chapter 10

# Heritage Awareness and Education in the Southern Gauteng Province, South Africa

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## ABSTRACT

*Heritage awareness and education in Africa is vital to heritage management. The knowledge of pre-colonial Stone Walled Structures (SWS) and Iron Age is an important element of South African history. Without awareness and education of both heritage managers and heritage stakeholders, SWS are at risk of destruction from development. This chapter reviews awareness and information dissemination techniques that can make people more aware of SWS in southern Gauteng Province. The results of the author's study revealed there are international best practices such as the use of information centres, education, and information technology tools that can apply in this study area.*

## INTRODUCTION

Many pre-colonial stone-walled structures (SWS) in the area between Johannesburg and the Vaal River are under threat by development (Sadr, 2017). Southern Gauteng Province (case study) is located in South Africa, with Johannesburg being part of the case study (Figure 1). These SWS were built by ancestors of today's Tswana between the fifteenth and the mid-nineteenth century AD (Hall, 2012; Loubser, 1985; Pelser, 2003; Taylor, 1979). The Late Iron Age ruins are a valuable source of information about conditions here before written historical records (Sadr, 2017: p.1). The preservation of heritage sites is also important for tourism, aesthetic values, enhancing a location's sense of place, educational and scientific purposes (Graham, Ashworth, & Tunbridge, 2000; Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009). So, what should be done about the threatened ruins?

Through awareness, heritage conservation and preservation can be attained (Shankar & Swamy, 2013). The significance of heritage preservation is based on the values that are ascribed to tangible heritage (Graham *et al*. 2000), and intangible heritage (Ndoro, 2001; Ndlovu, 2011). However, to preserve these

values, initiatives to promote awareness and education of heritage are necessary. Nyaupane and Timothy (2010), reveals a gap of heritage research on awareness all over the World, with a few exceptions of Yan and Morrison's (2007) study of visitors' awareness of a site's World Heritage status in China. Poria, Butler & Airey (2003) evaluated heritage tourists based on their awareness of, and motivations for, visiting historical sites in Israel. Awareness of tangible heritage and buildings in Arizona, United States (Nyaupane & Timothy, 2010). Shankar and Swamy (2013) suggested heritage awareness strategies for heritage sites in Mysore City, India and Mudzamatira (forthcoming) who researched public opinions and awareness of pre-colonial stone-walled structures in the southern Gauteng Province, to mention a few. Therefore, this chapter suggests strategies that may assist in improving this gap.

To add, international organisations such as United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) rely on the global awareness of World Heritage Sites to foster heritage conservation and preservation through educational and informative efforts (Kuijper, 2003). These efforts range from using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for the dissemination of information, educational projects of awareness and education. Therefore, to understand the importance of awareness on heritage preservation, an international example is highlighted below.

There are lots of heritage sites lost due to lack of public awareness (Nyaupane & Timothy, 2010). Historic buildings and heritage sites in Chicago were once prone to developmental threat. These sites were destroyed due to a lack of public awareness, and failure of the public to lobby against the development of an Olympic village planned towards the bid of the 2016 Olympic games campaign (Nyaupane & Timothy, 2010). Many journalists and academics attested that there was not enough public outcry to lobby against development that threatened the 1880s historic building complex in Chicago (Becker, 2009; Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009). However, without effective communication between communities, heritage practitioners and other stakeholders, heritage sites are at risk of developmental destruction. Therefore, this chapter will suggest strategies that can improve awareness of SWS in this case study.

Furthermore, the key concept of heritage awareness in this chapter is defined by separating heritage and awareness. Heritage has two aspects, tangible and intangible. Tangible refers to historic buildings, monuments, architectural remnants, and sites. Intangible heritage refers to philosophies, traditions, values, ceremonies, music, dance, and oral histories (Nuryanti, 1996). Awareness is defined as having the knowledge or cognisance of one's environment (Tuan, 2001), which can be formed and influenced by an individual's experiences. Education is a form of awareness that is used in academic institutions (Nyaupane & Timothy, 2010). Therefore, heritage awareness in this paper includes the awareness of the existence of SWS and awareness of the destruction of SWS.

This chapter focuses on awareness of SWS and awareness of developmental damage. The threat of development to SWS in the study area can be traced back to the population growth of Johannesburg, which enabled infrastructural development (Mudzamatira, in-press). The growth of Johannesburg followed the discovery of gold deposits in 1886 (Mubiwa & Annegarn, 2013: p.7), thus, influencing the migration of workers for mining. To supply goods and services for this migrating population, other industries were prone to increase their capacities. Suburbs expanded north and south of Johannesburg (Harrison & Zack, 2012: p.564). According to the City of Johannesburg Records in 1967, the population of Johannesburg was 1.3 million people, and the city covered nearly 246 square kilometres. Today, the population of Johannesburg is estimated to be 4.4 million, with an area of over 1600 square kilometres (Statistics South Africa [STATSSA], 2016). From the 1960s onwards development such as mining, transport networks, and power lines have damaged or destroyed SWS (Mudzamatira, in-press).

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