

The Social, Environmental and Economic Factors Leading to the Degradation of the Sacred Sites in the Eastern Free State, South Africa

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ABSTRACT The ecological crisis of the sacred sites in the Eastern Free State has become a matter of concern both provincially and nationally. From various quarters, attention is drawn to the harm human beings and their activities do the environment and the need to arrest this menace. The paper argues that environmental conservation concerning the sacred sites is not a recent phenomenon. Past generations knew about environmental degradation and the need for preservation of the sacred sites in the Eastern Free State. The paper investigates the factors leading to the social, environmental and economic decay of the sacred sites in the Eastern Free State in South Africa. Further, the paper aims at monitoring the abuse of the sacred sites by the pilgrims and those residing on them. The paper seeks to show that the disregard for traditional checks and balances, especially of those visiting the sites, has adversely affected their status.