

**THE FAUNAL REMAINS FROM THE
MAKGABENG PLATEAU, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

**By
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Declaration

I, Sharon Holt declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Science at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.



__ 10 __ day of __ May __, 2009

For my parents Geoffrey and Eileen Holt

Abstract

The faunal remains from five sites in the Makgabeng Plateau, Limpopo Province were examined. Many of these shelters contain rock paintings of sheep and the occupations span the later Holocene, which is the period during which livestock and ceramics would have been introduced to this area. Was there a gradual change to herding in the Makgabeng or was a herding way of life introduced abruptly, along with new material culture indicative of the arrival of immigrants? Or did livestock herding in fact come much later, with the Iron Age? Examination of the faunal remains will allow us to see if there were any changes in the hunting strategies of the occupants through time. Initially, it was hoped that livestock remains would be found among the faunal sample that could shed light on the question of how, when and by whom livestock was brought into this area. Some of the sites in the Makgabeng can be described as dispersal phase sites while others are seen as aggregation phase site. Two of the sites are situated in one drainage basin while two other ones are in another drainage basin. It is possible that we are looking at two different groups of people in two different areas of the Makgabeng. Of these groups, one or the other may have had more access to livestock. But the faunal remains do not shed conclusive evidence on any herder occupation at any of the sites examined.

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