

# ABSTRACT

Excavations conducted at Thaba Nkulu, an Early Farming Community homestead with associated metal working debris, led to the recovery of iron slag, tuyères, furnace lining, iron ore, copper artefacts and iron artefacts. Using the material recovered, this dissertation identified chemical signatures for metal artefacts and metal smelting and smithing associated material. This was achieved through the use of a combination of X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) and Scanning Electron Microscopy coupled with *Energy-Dispersive X-Ray Spectroscopy* (SEM-EDX). The artefacts recovered were analysed, and 3 sets of possible chemical signatures were recorded.

In addition, the excavations and material culture (both metal and non-metal) were used to grapple with the spatial configuration of Thaba Nkulu. This includes the position of metal working relative to the homestead.