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MAGALIES WATER  
EVN CONSULTING ENGINEERS  
NATIONAL MONUMENTS COUNCIL

MMATSHETSHELE, A SETTLEMENT FROM THE DIFAQANE OR PRE-DIFAQANE PERIOD ON THE FARM TWEEDEPOORT (283JQ) IN THE RUSTENBURG DISTRICT OF THE NORTH-WEST PROVINCE: RESULTS OF A PHASE II ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION FOR THE VAALKOP SOUTHERN REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY SCHEME

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Archaeological research has been conducted in the Magaliesberg valley and in the Central Bankeveld during the past three decades. This research consists of surveys and extensive excavations of Stone Age and Iron Age sites as well as of the recording of rock art sites. This region, which, ecologically speaking, is situated between the Highveld in the south and the Bushveld in the north, has a rich archaeological heritage comprised of remains dating from both the prehistoric and the colonial periods of South Africa. These archaeological and historical remains include:

- Stone Age sites which may be associated with the San people and which date back thousands of years;
- Iron Age sites occupied by Bantu groups during the past two millennia; and
- Remains dating from the previous century when the first colonists settled in various places to the north and the west of the Magaliesberg.

Archaeological remains in this part of Gauteng and the North-West therefore encompass a rich heritage which represents the cultural historical record of most groups living in South Africa today.

Magalies Water intends to build reservoirs on Mmatshetshela Mountain on the farm Boschpoort (283JQ) in the Rustenburg district of North-West. Prominent landmarks in close proximity to this farm are the Pilanesberg to the north and the Magaliesberg to the west. Mmatshetshela forms part of the range of granite kopjes which are referred to in this study as Thaba ea Nape. These kopjes separate the flats north of Rustenburg from Marikana in the east.

The study area, considered from an archaeological and historical perspective, was part of the sphere of influence of the Bafokeng who, for the past five centuries, occupied the divide between the Magaliesberg in the west and Thaba ea Nape to the east. The main

There are many historical and prehistorical remains of these Batswana clans in the divide between the Magaliesberg and Thaba ea Nape, around the Pilanesberg and between the granite hills south and east of Mmatshetshele.

It seems that the area around Mmatshetshele was occupied by the Bakwena Baphalane, a tribe whose headquarters are situated further north at Kamakoka. Clans belonging to this group of the Batswana, however, are today found south of Kamakoko near Marikana and northwards towards Thabazimbi (Brentz 1953, 1986). Together with the Bafokeng, Bakgatla, Bapô, Bakwena Bamaqôpa, and other Batswana groups, the Bakwena Baphalane occupied the Bankeweld for centuries before the first white colonists arrived in this part of what is today North-west during the early nineteenth century (Pretorius 1967; Bergh 1992).

body of this tribe today occupies Phokeng and numerous other surrounding towns and townships in this great divide. The Pilanesberg to the north and the Matlapynsberg further to the west were occupied, at the time when the Bafokeng lived further to the south, by clans such as the Batlokwa, the Batlhako and the Bakgatla Bagakafela.

## 2 THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL REMAINS IN THE MAGALIESBERG AND THE BANKEVELD

### 2.1 Archaeological research and assessment studies in the Bankeveld

During the last two decades, archaeological and historical remains in the Magaliesberg and the Central Bankeveld of Gauteng and the North-West have increasingly received the attention of archaeologists. The author's involvement with archaeological research in the Bankeveld consists of:

- A long-term archaeological research project undertaken between Onderstepoort and Rustenburg entitled: "*'n Argeologiese Rekonstruksie van die Invloedsfere, die Geskiedenis en die Leefwyse van die Ystertydperk Sotho-Tswana van Brits-Rustenburg (Mabyanamatshwaana) en die Pilanesbergdistrikte van die Noordwes-Provinsie van Suid-Afrika*" (Pistorius 1997a). This project is sponsored by Kelgran and Marlin (Kudu) Granite Mines and financial support has also been received from Eskom and Highveld Steel.
- Archaeological assessment studies for developers in the Bankeveld (see Bibliography). These assessment studies and the research project supplement each other and enable the author to explain, conserve and promote, in various ways and with the help of local communities, the archaeology and history of this region.

### 2.1 Batswana domains and oral history in the Bankeveld

The Bankeveld is a narrow strip of land between the northern part of South Africa and the centrally situated Highveld. This area is roughly demarcated by Krugersdorp in the south, the Pienaars River to the north, Bronkhorstspruit in the east and the Pilanesberg to the west. This region can be divided into three parallel ecozones, running from east to west, namely the grassveld of the southern Highveld, the northerly Bushveld and the Magaliesberg valley forming a central ecozone.

The central ecozone of the Bankeveld is covered by older grabbo

penetrated by younger volcanic magma which formed a series and chains of pyramid-shaped granite hills from the Plianesberg in the north-west to Onderstepoort near Pretoria in the east. These hills, as part of the Magaliesberg valley, represent a unique ecozone which is characterised by grassveld, savanna veld and near wooded valleys. The region has abundant surface water supplies, because the local Pienaar, the Moretele, the Hex and the Apies Rivers all drain their waters into the Crocodile River (Liebenberg, et al. 1976; Horn 1996).

The interaction in this part of the Transvaal, over millions of years, between the climate, geology, topography, and the fauna and flora in the Bankeveld has established a milieu in which the first Batswana, who practised herding, agriculture, metal working and trading, found a suitable living environment. It was here that their chiefdoms flourished.

The settlements of these early Batswana chiefdoms are characterised by an impressive and elaborate stone-built tradition. Thousands of sites were built along the base lines of the granite hills. These chiefdoms emerged, according to oral history, from the start of the seventeenth century onwards. Small vanguards of these agro-pastoralists may, however, have been present in this area as early as the fourteenth century. One of the earliest ancestors was known as Mogale, from whose name the Magaliesberg derives its name.

These archaeological remains have provisionally been termed the Mabyanamatswhaana complex. This arbitrary identity is derived from oral history which describes a diaspora of Sotho-Tswana clans from two particular localities (there must be more) in the Transvaal. One of these centres was Mabyanamatswhaana (or Swartkoppies) which is situated to the north-east of Brits. Rathateng, which is situated at the confluence of the Crocodile and Marico Rivers, is a second centre of dispersal.

Bakwena clans dispersed from Rathateng to settle primarily in the north-western parts of the Transvaal (e.g. the Bamodimosana, Bahurutshé, Baphalane, Bamagôgôpa). Bakgatla clans spread from Mabyanamatswhaana to settle in the Plianesberg and, from there, they migrated to Botswana (Bagakgatela), to the Springbok flats and to Sekhukhuneiland (Bamothsa and Bammakau). Some Batokeng and Bakwena clans who departed from Mabyanamatswhaana, probably during an earlier period, settled further south near Heidelberg and in the Orange Free State.



Complex historical events occurred over a period of two centuries (1600-1800 AD) and some are only very briefly outlined above. The causes underlying the movements of these clans were political and ecological: an increasing number of groups competed for grazing, agricultural fields, minerals such as iron and copper and trade routes to convey various commodities.

Trade developed rapidly between mega-centres (or dominant spheres of influence) in the Bankeveld, but also between Batswana domains and emerging chiefdoms elsewhere in the Transvaal, e.g. those of the Bapedi (in Sekhukhuneland), the Bahuruthse (in the Zeerust/Marico districts) and the Barolong/Bathlaping (in the Northern Cape and in the far south of the North West on the route to the Cape Colony). During the eighteenth century, trade took on formidable proportions as the Cape Colony (through middlemen such as Griqua traders) bartered with the Batswana chiefdoms of the interior.

These historical events were complex and are not fully recorded in oral traditions or in any other records. They can therefore only be unravelled by means of the methods and theory associated with archaeological research.

### 3 MOTIVATION FOR THIS PHASE II INVESTIGATION

#### 3.1 Archaeological remains and legislation

Mmatshetshela is situated within the Bankeweld and lies between the centuries-old Batswana spheres of influence outlined above. Descendants of these tribes still live in this area today. All Batswana settlements older than fifty years are protected by legislation. A synopsis of the relevant legislation is provided below. It must serve as a guideline which must be considered before any development project is undertaken.

##### 3.1.1 The National Monuments Act (Act No. 28 of 1969)

In South Africa, all palaeontological, archaeological and historical sites older than 50 years are protected by the National Monuments Act (Act No. 28 of 1969, as amended). According to this Act, it is an offence to destroy, damage, excavate, alter, or to remove from its original site, or to export from the Republic any part of such a site or such material without a permit.

If convicted of an offence in terms of the Act, a person could be liable for a fine of up to R10 000 or two years imprisonment, or both. Permits for excavations, the removal of, damage to or the export of archaeological/historical relics are issued by the National Monuments Council. Permits for the destruction of such remains can only be obtained in consultation with professional archaeologists.

##### 3.1.2 The new Heritage Bill

The National Monuments Act is currently being reviewed and will be replaced in 1998 by the "Heritage Bill." The new law will require all developers (including engineers, farmers [agriculturists] and mines who previously have been excluded from the bill) to undertake archaeological impact studies whenever any type of development activities are undertaken. Phase I archaeological impact studies will consequently become a common procedure for all development activities, even if such development may be exempted in terms of the Environment

Conservation Act.

The new law will ensure community participation in the protection of national heritage resources and will involve all three levels of government in the management of the country's national heritage. The South African Heritage Agency (SAHA) will establish and maintain a national policy, strategy plans and standards for heritage resources management and will monitor the system as a whole. Heritage authorities will assist and cooperate with individuals and organisations concerned with the study, the conservation and the promotion and utilization of national heritage resources. A newly established National Heritage Resources Fund will provide financial assistance for heritage projects.

### 3.1.3 The Environment Conservation Act (Act No. 73 of 1989)

In addition, the Environment Conservation Act (Act No. 73 of 1989) makes provision for the drawing up of reports concerning the impact on the environment of activities identified and prohibited in terms of Sections 21 and 22 respectively. Such reports must evaluate the impact development may have on the natural and man-made environment, and including archaeological sites.

Local and regional authorities (Town Councils, Regional Governments and Regional Services Councils) also have regulations requiring evaluation of the possible effects that rezoning and development schemes may have on the environment, including the cultural environment. These regulations must be studied to ensure that they are implemented correctly.

### 3.2 The Phase II investigation of Mmatshetshela

In order to comply with the National Monuments Act and the Environment Conservation Act, Magalies Water requires knowledge of the presence and of the significance of any archaeological or historical remains which may occur on Mmatshetshela as such remains could be affected by the intended construction of reservoirs on this mountain. Such knowledge is essential to allow pro-active measures to be taken with regard to any significant archaeological or historical remains which may occur in this area and which may be affected, damaged or destroyed by the proposed development activities.

Consequently, the writer of this report was commissioned by

Magalies Water and EVN Consulting Engineers to undertake a Phase I archaeological survey of Mmatshetshela Mountain and the surrounding area. This survey revealed the presence of significant archaeological and historical remains on the mountain and along the base line of Mmatshetshela.

It was subsequently proposed that a Phase II investigation of these remains should be undertaken (Pistorius 1996c). This report presents the result of this Phase II investigation on the farm Tweedepoort (28350) and in Magalies Water's intended development area.

#### 4 MMATSHETSHELE, A SETTLEMENT OF A COMMUNITY DISPLACED IN THE BANKEVELD

##### 4.1 Introduction

The description of Site MMA001 and the hypothetical explanation that Site MMA001 on Mmatshetshele Mountain near the Bospoortdam north of Rustenburg was occupied by a refugee group or a displaced group of people (*dislocados*), probably during the pre-*difaqane* and *difaqane* wars in the Bankeveld, are based on:

- knowledge gained after years of field surveys and studies of Batswana cultural remains in the Bankeveld;
- observations and records of the spatial features and the limited presence of archaeological remains found on Site MMA001;
- the absence of a specific settlement pattern and particular types of archaeological remains and features associated with Batswana residential sites (*metse*);
- predicted explanatory evidence consisting of criteria and features associated with the settlements of refugees or of displaced people in the Bankeveld; and
- supplementary evidence consisting of ethnographic and historical evidence which describes instances of conflict, the way of life and the settlement patterns of *dislocados* during the pre-*difaqane* and the *difaqane* periods in the Bankeveld.

The description of Site MMA001 is based on empirically observed and recorded archaeological remains found on this settlement site. This data set consists of the spatial features and the spatial composition of Site MMA001 as well as the noticeable absence of the general types of archaeological material normally found on Batswana residential sites.

The hypothetical explanatory model presented for the settlement is based on the integration of the archaeological, the ethnographic (historical) and the predicted explanatory evidence.

Site MMA001 was studied by means of a survey of the ground plan of the settlement. The building features of the site were also surveyed and the building techniques were studied. Recognisable building features such as hut platforms were documented using photographs and plan drawings. These features, however, were not abundant. No excavations were conducted on the site as the site did not have any archaeological deposit.

The spatial and archaeological evidence from Site MMA001, as well as the absence of the usual types of archaeological material and features on this site, was analysed in conjunction with the predictive (hypothetical) criteria and features proposed for refugee settlements and with historical (ethnographic) evidence. By means of a synthesis of these sources, it is possible to explain the fact that Site MMA001 does not represent any "normal" or "traditional" Batswana settlement. The site's unique spatial location, its spatial features and composition and the absence of certain types of archaeological material on this settlement site required an explanation for its meaning to be considered in the context of the conflict and the displacement of people during the pre-*difagane* and *difagane* wars in the Bankeweld.

This report describes one of the settlements on Matshehshela Mountain (MMA001) and also attempts to explain the settlement style and the historical significance of this settlement within the context of the pre-*difagane* and *difagane* wars in the Bankeweld. To achieve this objective, Site MMA001 was surveyed and documented so that the spatial composition and layout of this settlement could be studied. Historical and ethnographic literature was scrutinized for instances of conflict and for evidence of the disruption of settlement patterns of communities displaced during this time period. Historical (ethnographic) records refer to numerous wars in the Bankeweld and illuminate the disruptive effects which conflict and raids had on the settlement patterns and life styles of the peoples of the Bankeweld.

#### 4.2 Method and approach

The hypothetical model provided for Site MMA001 therefore consists of a contextualised explanation of hints of the lifeways and disrupted settlement pattern of a refugee community living through wars which raged in the Bankeweld during the late eighteenth century and the first three decades of the nineteenth century.

Site MMA001 is poorly preserved. The site's location against the slope of the mountain is not conducive to its protection and preservation. The site is slowly disintegrating due to erosion, which is most noticeable on the Middle Part (MP) of the site. Erosion is largely responsible for the collapse of the site's retaining (terrace) walls and of the elevated platforms or hut foundations.

#### 4.3 Problems in interpreting Site MMA001

It is not clear whether Site MMA001 was occupied by a Batswana community consisting of men, women and children or whether the site was occupied by a mixed Batswana and Matabele community consisting of men, women and children. Historical descriptions mention settlements with mixed populations during the Matabele's siege of the Bankeveld between 1827 to 1832, but they also mention cattle stations occupied only by young men or settlements utilized for specific economic subsistence patterns such as agricultural towns.

The Batswana chiefdoms of the Bankeveld, during and before the *difaqane* wars, must have been characterised by various types of specialised settlements and not only by common residential villages (*metse*). Settlements occupied by *dislocados* displaced during the pre-*difaqane* and *difaqane* wars therefore represent one of these types of specialised settlements. Other specialised settlements which probably existed were:

- ceremonial centres such as rain-making sites;
- initiation sites for boys and girls situated some distance from residential sites; and sites where traders rested during long journeys.
- metal working (smelting and forging) sites;
- military or regimental villages; and
- cattle stations.

With the exception of a Matabele residential and military town, no other types of specialised settlements have as yet been studied in the Bankeveld (Pistorius 1997c, 1997d).

Finding an explanation for the meaning and significance of Site

- The remains destroyed around Mmatshetshela are historically associated with the Batswana. It seems that the northern part of Marikana (around Mmatshetshela) represents a frontier where the domains of the Batokeng, Bakwana Baphalane and the Bakwana Bamogopa may have met in the past.
  - The potsherds found on the settlement site can be associated with the Batswana.
  - The building of stone walled villages in the Bankeveld can safely be traced back to the second half of the seventeenth century on the basis of radio-carbon dates from Molokwane (SRL1 and SRL2) and from site ZK001 (Pistorius 1995b, 1997b). Settlements with elaborate stone walls built earlier than this period have not yet been recorded in the Bankeveld. Dates earlier than the eighteenth century can be associated with deposits laid down before the stone walls were built (Mason 1973, 1974, 1996; Pistorius 1995b, 1997b).
  - Criteria and features used for the arbitrary dating of site MMA001 to the last quarter of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth century included the following:
    - Large scale granite mining and dam building operations at the base of Mmatshetshela has destroyed important contextual evidence which could have provided information regarding site's MMA001 spatial and temporal association with these remains.
    - No historical evidence was found to demonstrate Site MMA001's unequivocal association with a Batswana group or even with the *difaqane* period.
    - No archaeological remains found on Site MMA001 could be absolutely dated.
  - No refugee settlement has yet been studied in the Bankeveld. An explanation for the meaning of site MMA001 is subsequently qualified by the absence of comparable studies and the lack of a recorded pattern of archaeological features and characteristics which characterise refugee settlements (although one accepts that variations in this category do occur).
- MMA001 was made difficult by several factors.



past. According to Mòkgatle (1971:16) these clans were one tribe before they separated at Mogoase to the north of Rustenburg and Marikana. Mmatshetshele is located in close proximity of the settlements Maile (Mahle, Mallê) and Makgope which seem to be associated with either or both the Bakwena Baphalane and the Bakwena Bamôgôpa.

- Only one historical reference could be found for the name "Mmatshetshele". (This is discussed below).

Archaeological finds and features which gave Site MMA001 a Batswana identity were the following:

- A limited number of pot sherds which can be related to the Batswana (with perhaps one exception).
- Refugee settlements were built during abnormal times. The site's geographical location, against the slope of a mountain, therefore complies with conditions which reflect the lack of tranquillity associated with conflict and unrest. Periods of stress did not allow a "culturally fixed" spatial patterning to be used. Refugee settlements may also have been occupied by peoples that did not necessarily share identical cultural backgrounds or similar settlement styles.
- The techniques employed to build the stone walls of the settlement and certain features (e.g the best preserved dwellings in the settlement) compare favourably with building techniques occurring on Batswana settlements sites in the Bankeveld.

An archaeological site which has remained intact near Mmatshetshele was Site MMA002, which is situated on top of the mountain and not in close proximity to Site MMA001. This settlement, however, is minute in size in comparison with Site MMA001. Its exceptionally high spatial location also supports the interpretation that this site and Site MMA001 were refugee sites. Site MMA003, which is only represented by a prominent wall running down the southern slope of Mmatashetshele, also has a high spatial location. This settlement probably also extended to the base of the mountain. The lower part of the site, however, has been destroyed by the dam building operations.

#### 4.4 Predicted criteria and features for refugee settlements

Refugee settlements can be considered a specialised category of sites. Different types of specialised settlements must have existed in the Bankeveld. With the exception of a Matabelle village complex which was composed of residential (*imisi*, *imisi amatanga*) and military settlements (*ikhanda*), guard posts and an iron smelting site, none of the other types of specialised settlements have as yet been studied in the Bankeveld (Pistorius 1997a, 1997b). Specialised sites are characterised by certain criteria, which, however, could differ for a particular type. In general, however, refugee sites may be characterised by the following criteria and features:

- Refugee settlements were only occupied for short periods of time and during times of intense conflict. During these times, sudden unprovoked and unpredicted attacks were common.

- Refugee settlements have unique spatial locations, such as high, inaccessible sites which can be defended easily, which are not accessible to the enemy and which are hidden from view. The mountain fortresses of Moshesh and Sekonyela in Lesotho and the Orange Free State ensured that the South Sotho were never conquered during the *difaqane*. High mountains, such as Matshetshele, which is one of the highest in the Thaba ea Nape range, offered numerous escape routes and defensible shelters on the highest slopes of the mountain.

- While some refugee sites may be hidden from view, such as the Gatsrand caves near Potchefstroom where Batswana *dislocados* hid from Mzilikazi, other settlements, such as the inhabited trees near Rustenburg, were not hidden from the enemy (Chase 1830; Motlat 1842; Haughton and Wells 1942). This difference reflected the degree of freedom which the respective groups enjoyed. The subjected groups did not have to hide, while those that were not yet conquered were in a state of war and had to defend their autonomy.

- Due to their short existence, refugee settlements did not feature any archaeological material which can be dated with absolute dating methods. (This was proved by the paucity of

archaeological remains from the Matabele village complex. The complex had limited cultural remains, no middens and no other archaeological deposits. The complex was probably occupied for no longer than fifteen years (c.1825-1840) [Pistorius 1997c, 1997d]).

- Very little archaeological material is found in refugee settlements. These settlements have left no deposits or middens. The remains of pots and other utensils which require tedious and meticulous manufacturing processes are not normally found on these sites.
- Refugee sites occupied for several years developed into more stable residential units. The Matabele village complex north of Rustenburg is a case in point. Using diachronic evidence derived from ethnographic data, it was possible to explain how an *umuzi* (residential site) could develop out of a military kraal (*ikhanda*). Nkulumane's burial in Phokeng also demonstrated that Matabele warriors and Batswana (Bafokeng) residents, in a relatively short period of time, had intermarried (Pistorius 1997c, 1997d).
- Refugee settlements are not associated with all the domestic activities which used to occur in the residential settlements (*metse*) of the Batswana. Such activities included stock herding and agricultural pursuits. Refugee settlements therefore did not have stock enclosures or open fields where crops could be planted. This, however, does not imply that storage structures or utensils needed for the preparation of plant foods (e.g. upper and lower grinding stones) had to be absent on refugee sites.
- Refugee settlements often do not have any clear ground plans or any logic spatial compositions such as those which have been identified in Bakwena and Bakgatla settlements near Rustenburg and Brits in the Bankeveld (see below) (Pistorius 1992, 1994, 1995).
- Refugee sites are not always located close to permanent sources of water such as rivers or streams. Fountains and streams were abundant in the granite hills of the Bankeveld in the past, and would suffice to meet the needs of the refugees.
- The granite hills of the Bankeveld offer a habitat to a large number of tree species which bear edible fruits, such

The macro settlement patterns of Bakwena villages were characterised by a tripartite division, namely the *kgosi* or central part of the village occupied by the *kgosi*, and two other divisions located on both sides of the *fa gare* (central part), namely the *nthla ya godimo* and the *nthla ya thlase* occupied by the paternal relatives of the chief. These Bakwena residential villages (*metse*) were built on level ground due to the large surfaces they covered. It seems that the macro settlement

outlined below, is therefore hardly to be found in refugee sites. The spatial patterning of Batswana residential sites, which were established in times of prosperity and peace in the composition as Bakwena, Bakgatla or other Batswana settlements and family life intact, it is to be expected that refugee settlements will not have the same spatial features and structures as Bakwena and Brits in the Bankeveld. As *dislocados* are unlikely to have had any rigid social structures and family life intact, it is to be expected that refugee settlements do not necessarily have to have any clear ground plans or any logic spatial compositions such as those which have been identified in Bakwena settlements (e.g. Molokwane's SBL1 and SBL2) and in Bakgatla settlements (such as Site ZK001) near Rustenburg and Brits in the Bankeveld. However, refugee settlements do not necessarily have to have any compare favourably with Batswana residential sites (*metse*). The spatial features and composition of Site MMA001 do not

#### 4.5 Settlement patterns and spatial features of Batswana residential settlements

- Refugee settlements are normally characterised by one (or more) elaborately constructed wall(s) which were used for defensive purposes and located on the perimeters of such sites.
- Permanent or lasting building material, such as clay, is unlikely to have been used to build huts in refugee settlements. Clay is not readily available on the mountains and, it was required to build huts, it would have to be carried up the mountains. The bush-clad slopes of the granite hills of the Bankeveld have abundant organic building materials (such as wood and grass) with which dwellings could have been built. These material would have left no traceable remains in the archaeological record.
- as the marula, mispel, moepel, etc. This type of fruit could have supported the *dislocados* during the summer months.

patterns of Bakgatla villages did not have the same cohesive nature that Bakwena villages had. Bakgatla villages were, in some instances, located on higher ground but still against the lower contour lines and against the softer slopes of hills.

The micro settlement patterns of both Bakwena and Bakgatla villages were marked by outer scalloped walls which housed numerous related family groups (*masika*) and which encircled a varying number of kraal complexes. Bakwena *dikgoro* were characterised by "the Bakwena spatial nexus" which describes a spatial relation between a main dwelling, a principal cattle kraal and a courtyard. Bakgatla (or Bapedi) *dikgoro*, however, were characterised by the *letlatswa* which consisted of a main entrance, a court (*kgotla*), a *kgorong* and a cattle kraal (Pistorius 1992, 1994, 1995a). Both Bakwena and Bakgatla villages therefore had clear interpretable spatial features and compositions which could be related to Bakwena and Bakgatla ethnography.

Extensive damage has been done to some of the smaller foothills and to the lower base of Mmatshetshela Mountain. Contractors working on Bospoort Dam also gathered large quantities of soil from the base of the mountain to build access routes and the wall of the dam. In more recent times, squatters have erected shacks on the Frontal Part and the lower Middle Part of Site MMA001. Although they used stones from some of the terrace walls as building material they did not cause large scale damage to the stone walls of the site.

and acted as a spokesperson for this study). (Hitler Maile is today employed by Kudu Granite Quarries above). Batswana residential site (of which the features were described their dwellings. This settlement probably represented a typical walled village on the northern foot of the mountain to build mountain. Maile and other residents used the remains of a stone mining took on more formidable proportions at the base of the Mmatshetshela today. They were also resettled when granite workers can still be seen along the northern foot of foundations of the compounds and the houses of Maile and his co-workers from the local granite mines, such as Hitler Maile, used to live near the northern foot of the hill in the 1970's. The foundations of the compounds and the houses of Maile and his co-workers can still be seen along the northern foot of Mmatshetshela today. They were also resettled when granite mining took on more formidable proportions at the base of the mountain. Maile and other residents used the remains of a stone walled village on the northern foot of the mountain to build their dwellings. This settlement probably represented a typical Batswana residential site (of which the features were described above). (Hitler Maile is today employed by Kudu Granite Quarries and acted as a spokesperson for this study).

No historical evidence relating to the early archaeological remains on Mmatshetshela Mountain or to Site MMA001 could be obtained from Batswana spokespeople living in the vicinity of the mountain. However, it is said that the remains of relatively recent settlement features at the base of the mountain are those of Batokeng people who lived there. These people were resettled by the government in 1955 when the Department of Water Affairs started their building operations for the Bospoort Dam. When the dam was flooded, the abandoned residential remains as well as a large cemetery was submerged under the water, leaving only a few some of the residential structures, located on the western and northern foot of the mountain visible.

## 5.1 Contemporary evidence

## 5 HISTORICAL AND ETHNOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

The only available historical reference to the name "Matsetsele" was found in the history of one of rulers of the Bakwena Bamôgôpa, namely Tsoku, who had a regiment called "Matsetsele" (or "the old men"). It is not clear at present whether this regiment was associated with Mmatshetshele Mountain. The history of Tsoku is summarised below (Breutz 1953:84-86).

Ditswe Tlowodi became chief of the Bakwena Bamôgôpa during the first half of the eighteenth century. He had three sons, namely More Motsile, Kau-a-Tlowodi and Tsoku. Tsoku was the son of the head wife but he was only born after Tlowodi's death. His uncle, Mooketsi, consequently acted as regent for the tribe. When he became too old to rule he handed over the chieftainship to More as Tsoku was still too young to rule. "More is said to have been a mighty chief who ruled the tribe very well" (Breutz 1953:85). During More's rule the tribe was continually fighting against the Bapô and the Bakgatla. More brought up Tsoku with his own son Segwati. They were circumcised together and More provided both with wives, and Tsoku also received a regiment called "Matsetsele" ("old men").

When Tsoku was old enough to rule, More presented him with the chief's regalia, consisting of a spear, an axe and the horn which contains the chief's ointment. More and his followers moved away and Tsoku became chief of the section of the Bamôgôpa who had remained with his uncle Mooketsi. His military leader was his uncle, Tsikane More, who was killed in battle against the Bapô.

It is said that Tsoku became a ruthless, cruel and arrogant ruler who estranged many of his subjects. Large numbers of his followers broke away from his rule. Only a few of his brothers remained behind. In time, however, they also left Tsoku to join More due to their fear of attacks from the Bapô.

Tsoku fought several battles against the Bapô about cattle. Tsoku eventually went to live under the Kgatla chief, Mmusi a Tanaga. He married a Kgatla woman in order to become the son-in-law of the chief. "While Tsoku and his regiment, Matsetsele, were celebrating the wedding, Mmusi ordered a regiment to burn Tsoku's kraal and seize all his cattle..." (Breutz 1953:86). Tsoku and his remaining followers crossed the Apies River and sought refuge with More. Eventually he was killed by More and Segwati for all his misdeeds. More was recognised as chief and returned to the Mabyanamatshwaana hills during the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

The demise of Batswana chieftoms in the Bankeweld can be attributed largely to the destruction caused by the Matabele of Mzilikazi, who, according to Rasmussen (1978:59-62), entered the Bankeweld in the winter of 1827 and remained in this part of what is today Gauteng and the North-west until 1835. The Matabele conquered the Bankeweld within two years and only met resistance from clans such as the Bafokeng of Nôge and the Bakgatla of Motsepe. Historical accounts, however, also mention numerous other conflicts and wars in the Bankeweld which preceded the *difagane* and which could have weakened influential Batswana chieftoms before the arrival of the Matabele. It is therefore possible to refer to pre-*difagane* wars which predate the arrival of the Matabele in the Bankeweld and to the *difagane* period when the Matabele were in full control of the Bankeweld (c.1827-1832).

Wars between different Batswana groups in the Bankeweld were numerous. Political struggles between paternal kin were also at the order of the day, and these struggles had far-reaching consequences. The succession feud between Nôge and Thête (Mmakgongwana) of the Bafokeng led to the intervention of the Bapedi and subsequent attacks on the Bafokeng, the Babo and the Bakwena Bamogôpa during 1823 and 1824. These pre-*difagane* wars severely disrupted the life of these Batswana clans. They had been plundered so heavily that these groups were not attacked by Sebittwane's hordes in 1824 and 1825: "They had been left with nothing worth a marauder's attention" (Coertze 1987:32). These wars seem to have been restricted to the western and the middle parts of the Bankeweld, because the Bakgatla Bagakgatela who lived in the Pilanesberg and the Bakwena Bamodimosana Bamatau who lived in their capital Molokwane, west of the Magaliesberg, have no recollection of these attacks on their Batswana neighbours. The attacks of a large combined force consisting of the Bakgatla, Bahwaduba, Bamolelane, Bamako [Bathlako (?)] and Baseabe from the eastern parts of the Bankeweld some time during the period from 1818 to 1824 on the Bafokeng, Babo and Bakwena Bamogôpa may, according to Breutz (1953:87-88), also have represented or included the attacks of Malekutu of the Bapedi on these Batswana

## 6.1 Historical evidence for conflict

# 6 CONTEXTUALISING THE BANKEWELD: HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR CONFLICT AND SUBJECTION



chiefdoms.

After the Bapedi's attack on the Bafokeng (1823-1824) the Bammatau regularly conducted cattle raids on the weakened Bafokeng. Thêthe, chief of the Bafokeng, warned Nkotswê, son of chief Kgasoane, to refrain from these cattle raids. Nkotswê ignored these warnings and was subsequently killed by men from a village called Malomêgo, south of Phokeng and north of Rustenburg. It is possible that this place may refer to the same people (Matlhômegô) with whom the Baramanamêla clashed. The geographic location of Malomêgo, "... roughly at the point where the present tarmac road to Phokeng turns north, about eight kilometers west of Rustenburg ..." (Coertze 1987:33) corresponds with the general geographic location of the Matabele village recently discovered north of Rustenburg (Pistorius 1997c, 1997d).

Conflicts also occurred west of the Magaliesberg between the chiefdoms of the Bamodimosana Bammatau and the Bamodimosana Baramanamêla. The oral history of the Baramanamêla in particular refers to three successive wars during the first quarter of the nineteenth century and thus to the period before the arrival of the Matabele in the Bankeveld. The first war consisted of a clash with the Batlôkwa of Mantatise in 1823-1824, the second of a war with the Matlhômegô and the third of a battle with Ratsêbê (Breutz 1953; Pistorius 1996a). The raids of Mantatise's Batlôkwa are not recalled by the Bammatau and it is doubtful if they ever occurred (see Kriel 1976:56-60). Clashes between the Batlôkwa who lived in the Matlapynsberg north of Bôitsemaganô, the capital of the Baramanamêla, however, seem to be a possibility, especially one considers the fact that the domains of these two groups are in close proximity and that transgressions of borders could have exacerbated such conflicts.

The role of Ratsêbê as one of the renegades (or war lords) during the *difaqane* period, and earlier further south in the Vaal River region, is of particular interest with regard to conflict in the western parts of the Bankeveld. Ratsêbê was a ruler of the Phuti and he was captured by Mzilikazi near the Vaal River in 1823. He served under Mzilikazi and commanded a captured group of Sotho/Tswana. He broke away from the Matabele in 1831 when the Griqua attacked the Matabele. He was pursued by the Matabele into Bamangwato and Shona territory in Botswana and Zimbabwe (Rasmussen 1978:76-77). The conflict between the Bamodimosana Baramanamêla, who lived west of the Magaliesberg in their capital Bôitsêmagano, and "Ratsêbê" in c.1825 (see Breutz 1953:430) can therefore be linked with the aggressive intentions

of this war lord who, at this time, was still an ally of the Matabele and therefore probably acted upon the instruction of Mzilikazi.

The Matabele established several villages in the Bankeweld. At least seven names are mentioned in historical documents for sites the precise geographic location of which is not known, namely Emhlahlandlela, Enkungwini, Endinandeni, Nlozi, Nkenekene, Mziyanti and Ngodweni (Mziki 1926; Rasmussen 1978). At present, the geographic location of only one of the Matabele's villages is known, namely that of the village complex north of Rustenburg and in the domain of the Bafokeng (Pistorius 1997c, 1997d), while a second village, Enkungwini, was probably located near Silkaatsnek (Becker 1964; Lye 1975:258). From these centres, the Matabele controlled the Bankeweld and extended their influence to the far North-west and southwards towards the Vaal River region.

Conflict in the Bankeweld, however, was not limited to succession disputes in Batswana chiefdoms or to clashes between Batswana groups or to battles between Batswana groups and the Matabele. Attacks by the Griquas and the Zulu on the Matabele in the Bankeweld also occurred on at least four occasions (Rasmussen 1978).

A long stable period unaffected by conflict, similar to that which the Bakwena Bamodimosana Bamatau experienced under Kgasoane's, who ruled from approximately 1775 to 1828, proved how political stability contributed to the development of mega-sized settlements and affluent spheres of influence in the Bankeweld. Matabele village complex north of Rustenburg, were stable residential sites where fixed cultural patterns left stable and interpretable archaeological settlement patterns which can be correlated with ethnographic evidence (Pistorius 1992, 1994, 1995a, 1996a, 1997c, 1997d).

## 6.2 Subjection, deprivation and destruction

Within two years after the Matabele entered the Bankeweld in 1827, most of the chiefdoms occupying this vast region came under the control of Mzilikazi (Rasmussen 1978:59). When Schoon and McLuckie (1829), Robert Moffat (1829) and Andrew Smith (1835) travelled through the Bankeweld, they found the Batswana dejected and in a state of submission, oppression and deprivation. The Matabele victors abused their superior status. The subjected

Batswana were maltreated, they had to abuse themselves and were degraded by their conquerers. Any form of recalcitrance was severely punished, even by death. Batswana men in particular wore the clothing of their Matabele masters (Lye 1975:265).

On his way to the north, Smith noted several villages of "poor Bechuana". "They appeared ... to be most miserable and in poor spirits." He saw them as being abused by the Matabele and complained that they "are ordered about like dogs and if they wish any peace of favour they are necessitated to supplicate young Matabeli (*sic*) in an almost humiliating manner, to exhibit the most supplicating looks, employ the most humiliating gestures and give utterances to the most endearing and at the same time most submissive expressions such as 'Baba kosi'...." If any Matabele cattle in the care of the Batswana "should become sick or die, they were accused of bewitching them, and they would be tried and killed" (Lye 1975:264).

Although the part of the country through which Smith travelled, roughly near the confluence of the Marico and the Crocodile Rivers, was not occupied by the Matabele, they "patrolled the countryside in raiding parties, sometimes killing the occupants of the land, other times just taking their karosses, beads, assegais, and other valuables" (Lye 1975:265). The Batswana were not allowed to keep any meat, even if it was already cooked, for themselves. When the Batswana hunted animals, the meat was either dried in the veld or sneaked to their homes where it was cooked at night. "Even the poor Tswana, who had no property, could be freely commanded to become herders for the Ndebele" (Lye 1975:264).

The subjection of Batswana groups did not only occur through direct confrontation or battle. According to Andrew Smith, Mzilikazi used cunning strategy and sometimes subjected the Batswana through a ruse. The Matabele would normally move into the proximity of a Batswana village and live in friendship with the latter group. When the Batswana were at ease, the Matabele would, under cover of the darkness of night, surround the village and attack its inhabitants at dawn when they were not yet fully alert. The old men and women were moved away while the young men and women would be integrated with the Matabele (Lye 1975:265).

Mzilikazi's conquests were also described by Moffat, who highlighted the cunning and tyrannical nature of the despot: "... in the first instance [the Matabele] generally cultivating acquaintances and intercourse, then familiarity followed by

The communities which nineteenth century travellers encountered in the Bankeveld consisted either of subjected Batswana groups, of Matabele communities or of groups consisting of both

### 6.3 *Dislocados* and altered settlement patterns

(Wallis 1945:9-10).  
is all that remains of the great Chief of the Blue Cattle." the palm of his hand and holding it out to me, he added, 'This all sides and killed till their hands were weary'. Blowing over the town. Early in the morning they ascended the hill from the town. They slaughtered abundantly and danced and sang the reached while the Matabele were engaged in pillaging and burning yonder table hill. All fled thither, which the most of them of victory. Precautions had been taken to have the cattle at laid hundreds on the ground. The clash of shields was the shout enemy like those who had already won the fight. A few moments of a forest. The Matabele, like lions, rushed on their numerous Their first onset was as the voice of lightning and the shaking. The men seized their arms and rushed out as if to seize a prize. convinced the anxious expectants that they were naked Matabele. fear of the rapidly advancing party. Their near approach soon was changed to dismay. They saw columns of smoke rising in the beheld on yonder height the approaching foe. Their noisy mirth who had fled from their towns. They danced and sang until they boasted in their spears and laughed at the cowardice of others plain. They thought their numbers would awe their enemies. They were like the densest mist on the mountain brow. They covered the lived the great chief of a tribe among his thousands whose cattle he, pointing to very extensive ruins just before our view, 'There probably that of the Babo, was destroyed: "Look there!', said in his party as to how one of the Bankeveld's chiefdoms, most described an account given to him by one of the Batswana servants Several Batswana chiefdoms were totally destroyed. Moffat

1945:10).  
their sovereign and be spies on all their transactions" (Wallis defending them and their property, but in reality to represent object of assuring them of Moselekats'e (sic) friendship, and he promptly acceded, immediately sent consuls with the professed aggressors. When any town or towns... sued for his protection, sufferer, with a right to retake his own and punish the or other offence given, Moselekats'e (sic) considered himself the appear to have been easily duped. When such cattle were taken, of cattle allowed to wander in the way of the natives, who also haughtiness and overbearing conduct; then would follow temptation

populations. When Smith approached the Magaliesberg from the west in June 1835, he trekked either through the Elands River valley or along the Roosspruit. He noted: "[h]ere and there towards the base of the slope the dormitories of the cattle and the persons entrusted with their keepings were observed. The latter at some of these were entirely of the conquered natives, at others they were partly of the vanquished tribes and partly of the Zooloo (*sic*)" (Lye 1975:244).

Some settlements were not comprised of both genders, while others contained women and children. At some settlements, crops were planted and stock was herded, while other settlements only served as cattle stations or as agricultural centres. John Burrow, who trekked with Smith, but who departed with other members of Smith's party on a separate excursion, visited a settlement with a mixed population on 20 July 1835: "This kraal was situated close under (*sic*) a hill, and cornfields extended almost as far as the eye could reach. The inhabitants were mixed and under an inferior *Toonah*, ... and immediately upon his entering the kraal men, women and children came flocking around us with milk for sale; and in the morning abundance of cows and goats were seen being driven off to the hills" (Kirby 1971:59).

The Matabele's influence on the cultural life and the settlement patterns of the Batswana was enhanced by the fact that they remained in the North-West for approximately ten years. They did not annihilate the Batswana, as they needed them to maintain their comfortable parasitic lifestyle. The Bakwena Bamôgôpa planted tobacco for the Matabele (Lye 1975:259), while the Bakgatla (Bapedi) built at least one of their villages, namely Emhlalandlela (Arbousset and Daumas 1968:186). The Bakgatla also manufactured iron implements, most probably for the Matabele (Pistorius 1995a; Pistorius & Steyn 1995).

Other settlements used specifically for the economic subsistence of the Matabele were sites where crops were planted and where stock was kept. Burrow described a part of the Bankeveld where corn was planted for the Matabele: "The part of Masulikatzi's (*sic*) country we were now in appeared to be cornfields. Every piece of land thus sown was enclosed in a hedge of the *Camel doorn* [Kameeldoring], and was generally guarded by six or seven of these watch huts I have before mentioned" (Kirby 1971:60). Burrow also observed large numbers of cattle stations occupied only by young men in this part of the Bankeveld (*op cit* p. 59).

Refugee settlements may have been quite abundant in the granite

Small villages consisting of houses built on pole frameworks were observed by Schoon and McLuckie (Chase 1830:406), Moffat (Wallis 1945:7), Andrew Smith (Lye 1975:245-246), Burrow (Kirby 1971:53) and in a dilapidated state by Cornwallis Harris (Harris 1963:147,148). This type of village seems to have been plentiful

This phenomenon was described by Schoon and McLuckie (Chase 1830:406): "At this place they saw a large tree... upon which 17 conical huts were constructed as dormitories for shelters from the lions which are very numerous and destructive of human life, especially since the Mantatee incursions;...". Moffat visited the inhabitants of this tree "and mounted the aerial abode and, to my astonishment, counted no fewer than seventeen houses and part of three others unfinished. On reaching the topmost, about thirty feet from the ground I entered and sat down. The only furniture was a hay carpet, a spear, spoon, and a bowl full of locusts. . . . These are the humble though lofty domiciles of the poor aborigines, who are destitute of everything like cattle and live only on the fruits of the field and the chase. They adopt that plan in order to escape the lions, which must often stroll under the tree alive with inhabitants, terribly chagrined" (Wallis 1945:7).

Distorted settlement patterns occurred during the *ditagane* in the Bankeveld. The extent to which these settlement patterns may have been influenced by Matabele settlement features, however, is uncertain. The construction of round cone-shaped huts may be attributed to Matabele influence, although this building technique may also have had earlier roots in Batswana architecture. Dwellings built in a massive fig tree near Rustenburg were observed by the traders Schoon and McLuckie in 1829 (Chase 1830) and three months later, in October, by Robert Moffat (Wallis 1945). Both parties probably saw the same inhabited tree which was not observed six or seven years later by Andrew Smith (Kirby 1940; Lye 1975) and Cornwallis Harris (Harris 1963) en route to the Bankeveld (Pistorius 1997c).

Granite miners tell stories of how they encountered pots and human skeletons in crevices and in small rock shelters in the granite kopjes north of Marikana during mining operations. The pots were used to store water and food when the refugees hid in the hills during times of conflict and war. The bodies of those who died during these unsettled times were "buried" in cracks and between crevices formed by large granite boulders. Many of these settlements and sites, however, have been destroyed by mining activities.

and probably occurred in the Elands River valley, west of the Magaliesberg and en route to where the Ngwaritsi and Elands Rivers join.

At one of these villages, Andrew Smith reported that "we found no cattle and comparatively little for the support of its inhabitants. The situation was either not suited for cattle or the Zooloo (*sic*) king did not regard the Mariutsi to be trusted with them for they were not employed as herdsmen. They trusted to the spontaneous production of the soil for subsistence and partly to the raising of corn, millet and pumpkins which they raised in situations adapted to agriculture" (Lye 1975:246). Moffat noticed large quantities of bones and horns of animals killed by the inhabitants for food discarded in a central open space in the settlement (Wallis 1945:7).

It seems as if the general ground plans and spatial compositions of these refugee settlements consisted of cone-shaped dwellings constructed with lath frameworks and covered with grass. These dwellings were built on pole constructions arranged in a circle. These villages were surrounded by outer circular wooden stockades while the houses encircled central open spaces where waste was discarded. The occupants of such a village would sit in the shade of the raised dwellings by day and in the night they would ascend to the dwellings with the aid of the forked branches of a tree. These settlements were all located on level ground. The architecture of the houses of these villages may be derived from Matabele types of dwellings. According to Burrow (Kirby 1971:53) the Matabele "have in all their corn gardens similar houses, but smaller, in which a sentry is placed in the daytime to keep the birds off, and in the night wolves, which tread down the corn. These pole houses are all enclosed in a kraal like the others, but they never come down if they can avoid it at night, as the lion will sometimes lie in wait the whole night and only walk off at daylight".

7.1 Location

Mmatshetshele Mountain is one of the largest mountains in the mountain chain which stretches from near the Pilanesberg in the north to the west of Marikana and to the east of Rustenburg. Naboth Molotlegi refers to this mountain range as Thaba ea Nape, using the mountain Nape which is situated in the northern part of the range as a reference. This mountain was one of the places where the Batokeng settled first when they arrived in the Rustenburg district. From here the Batokeng clans gradually expanded their influence and presence southwards until the whole of the region between the Magaliesberg in the west and south and Thaba ea Nape in the east were occupied by this Batswana group (Molotlegi 1971:19).

Mmatshetshele Mountain is situated close to Makgope Hill and to a Matabele settlement north of Rustenburg where excavations were done in 1995 and 1996 (Pistorius 1996b, 1997c, 1997d). Mmatshetshele Mountain is situated on the northern banks of the Bospoortdam. It is in close proximity to where the Mutsukubye (Hex) River once flowed over the farm Tweedepoort (283JQ). The mountain is at present surrounded by modern Batswana settlements such as Mosonthane, Marakana, Mabitse, Kankeleyane, Kankunyana and Phewane. The farm Tweedepoort (283JQ) is today the property of the Batokeng Bathekwane tribe of Rustenburg.

7.2 General spatial features

Several refugee settlements were located on Mmatshetshele Mountain. Site MMA001 is the largest and most elaborate of these and serves as a representative example of other sites observed on Mafothelo Mountain north of Mmatshetshele and on Motanyane Mountain south of Mmatshetshele. These settlements are also probably remains of refugee sites.

The surface of Site MMA001 covers part of the foot, slope and top of Mmatshetshele Mountain. The site stretches from the level ground into a long narrow ravine on the northern slope of the mountain and extends through a slope (or "ramp") onto a small flat plateau on the most westerly neck of the mountain. From the



plateau the site ascends the eastern slope of the neck. This is the highest part of the site and this area lies at a right angle to the part on the northern slope of the mountain. The site's general appearance can therefore be described as long and narrow and spread over part of the foot, the slope and the top of the mountain.

The spatial composition and layout of Site MMA001 can be divided into four spatial units or components, namely:

- a Frontal Part (FP) which is situated on level ground. This part of the site also has an extension, namely the Frontal Part extension (FP-ext).
- a Middle Part (MP) which is situated in the ravine and on the northern slope of the mountain. This part of the site has two extensions, namely an extension to the west (MP-ext west) and an extension to the east (MP-ext east). The extension to the east has not yet been surveyed and is therefore not visible on the ground plan. Its spatial position, however, is indicated on the ground plan of the site.
- an Upper Part (UP) consisting of the small plateau in the neck of the mountain (UP-plat) and the higher component which is located against the slope and which is an extension of the plateau (UP-slope).

The Middle Part (MP) of the site is joined with the Frontal Part (FP) on level ground with an elaborate constructed stone paved foot path. The junction between the Middle Part (MP) and the Upper Part (UP) of the site consists of a slope which is part of the natural slope of the mountain.

It seems as if the UP with its two well-preserved dwellings contained the high-status dwellings of Site MMA001. The MP of the site represents the largest component of the site and probably housed the largest part of the community.

### 7.3 Building features

The MP of Site MMA001 was literally cut into the ravine on the northern slope of Mmatshetshela Mountain. The UP slope component and the MP extensions (west and east) of the site were, however, constructed with a minimum of effort. The FP exhibited a similar building technique as the MP but was used on a smaller scale due

The FF of the site also reflects the cutting, moving and back-filling of soil behind terrace walls. This is particularly noticeable in the FF-ext which is situated against a steeper slope than the rest of the FF. Due to the generally level surface of the FF, these terrace walls are low and do not exceed 50cm in height. Only two of these terraces or platforms were built on the FF and both are situated at the steepest angle of the FF. Dwellings raised on soil platforms and with circular stone foundations are conspicuous features in the FF. These raised dwellings may indicate what the dwellings on the MP of the site looked like before they were eroded.

The building technique utilized in the UP-slope and in the MP-ext (east) components of the site was restricted to the levelling of surfaces between large, natural granite boulders. Very rudimentary dwelling structures were built on these platforms and between the massive granite boulders. Smaller boulders may have been moved and shifted to create the dwelling niches which were then covered with some type of roof structures. The structures were referred to as dwelling niches.

The second building technique was employed in one of the two extensions on the Middle Part of the site (MP-ext west) and against the slope of the UP of the site (UP-slope). Only two low terrace walls were built and back-filled on the UP-slope of the site. The absence of retaining walls with back-filled platforms on these parts of site MMA001 can be attributed to the absence of a colluvium deposit which is restricted to the ravine on the northern slope of the mountain.

The principal building technique consisted of digging, moving or shifting and building the rocks and soil of the colluvium deposit, which also forms the ravine on the northern slope of the mountain, into several large descending terraces. These terraces cover the length of the ravine and the most westerly part of the northern slope of the mountain. The terrace walls also serve as retaining walls and were back-filled with soil. The terraces thus built created platforms which descended from the plateau or neck of the mountain to its foot.

to the level surface of this part of the site. The two different building techniques and the degree to which the first technique was applied can be related to the angle of the slope on which the particular settlement components were located and to the presence of the colluvium deposit which was limited to the ravine.

The UP-slope component also exhibits the cut and back-fill building technique. Here it is not as noticeable as on the MP of the site. The levelling of the plateau's surface, the building of the first level of terraces against the slope and the construction of the defense wall of this component, however, was done with great effort and commitment. The two most prominent terraces on the lower part of the UP-slope are associated with the ruling élite of the settlement. These two platforms had the best-preserved dwelling remains on Site MMA001.

The terraces (or platforms) at all levels of the site, with the exception of the FP with its level surface and wide open spaces, were connected with a network of paths which are particularly noticeable in the MP. Paths were also established between the more haphazard and isolated terraces on the UP-slope and MP-ext (west) components. These paths, however, are not as well-established or visible as those in the MP of the site.

Isolated granite boulders and knolls were functionally incorporated into the settlement. They were utilized as part of retaining walls or as part of dwelling niches, particularly in the UP-slope and the MP-ext (east) of the site. The knolls could also be utilized as guard posts and their crevices were used as storage places for water and other commodities.

On the basis of the building techniques employed on Site MMA001, at least four types of dwellings can be distinguished, namely:

- rudimentary dwelling niches built on the UP-slope and the MP-ext (east) of the site;
- dwellings represented by circular, upright foundation stones on the two lowest levels of the UP-slope component of the site (these dwellings are associated with the ruling élite and are the best preserved dwellings on the site);
- dwellings built on the descending terraces of the MP of the site (these dwellings were, however, badly ruined due to their location against the slope of the mountain; consequently very little could be established about their features); and
- dwellings with circular stone foundations raised on soil platforms in the FP.

• a boulder with several depressions on its surface (boulders with similar depressions were previously noticed on settlements in Phalaborwa, but also in the frontal part [Jelatswa] of Site ZK001, a Bakgatla settlement on the farm Swartkops, north-east of Brits. In Phalaborwa these features were associated either with the crushing of marula

The only conspicuous features in the open, empty space of the FP consists of:

Two or perhaps three incomplete structures occur west of the main entrance (or to the right side when viewed from outside the entrance) of Site MMA001. These structures consist of a mixture of soil and stones intended to be built into hut foundations raised on platforms of soil.

The FP has an entrance and a hut foundation built with stones and raised on a soil platform. This hut on its raised platform is situated to the left of the entrance (when viewed from the entrance). It is possible that this dwelling served as a post to guard the entrance to the site. The FP may have been closed with a wooden stockade erected or stacked over its outer perimeter wall. A second hut foundation raised on soil occurs near the entrance to the MP of the site. This entrance is marked by a long narrow "ramp" constructed with stones and which ascends to the lowest terrace of the MP of the site. This "ramp" and entrance once served as the main entrance of Site MMA001, before the site expanded to include the FP.

The FP is built on the northern foot of Mmatshetshele and therefore on level ground. Extensive damage has been done around the FP due to granite mining activities and the removal of surface soil for the construction of the Bospoordam. A few scallops, comparable to those of *malapa*, or the outer scalloped walls of Batswana settlements (*dikgoro*), occur north of the FP of Site MMA001. It seems as if these scallops were part of a stone walled site which used to exist on level ground on the northern foot of Mmatshetshele but which was largely destroyed by dam building operations.

#### 8.1 The Frontal Part (FP)

### 8 THE SPATIAL COMPONENTS OF SITE MMA001

kernels or with the crushing of iron ore [Pistorius 1989, 1995a]);

- three short retaining walls which gradually descend as platforms onto the more level part of the FP of the site; and
- only one lower grinding stone found on Site MMA001 on the lowest of these three platforms. Lower and upper grinding stones were numerous in the damaged parts of the stone walled site which existed at the foot of Mmatshetshele.

The FP has an extension in the form of two platforms. These two units are the newest additions to Site MMA001 and are both located against a steeper slope of the mountain than the FP itself. These roughly circular enclosures consist of low stone walls whose inner surfaces were levelled to form platforms, similar to the MP of the site. Several circular foundations, approximately one metre in diameter and consisting of low stone walls, are noticeable on these platforms. These hut foundations were built off-centre and between or as part of the retaining walls of the terraces. The remaining larger parts of the terraces were therefore probably unused. This arrangement resembles the placement of structures which have been interpreted as dwellings on platforms of the MP of the site.

## 8.2 The Middle Part (MP)

The MP of Site MMA001 consists of six levels of terraces built with heavy, prominent retaining walls. These walls, however, are extremely dilapidated. Dwellings were constructed on these platforms. These dwellings comprised circular foundations, approximately one metre in diameter, built at one end of such a platform. All these dwellings are in a poor state of preservation and little could be established about their original appearance.

It seems that these dwellings were built with perishable materials as no remains of clay (for the walls) were found in any part of the settlement. Only the remains of some of the houses' foundations, which perhaps consisted of circular stone lines, are still very vaguely recognisable. It seems as if the walls of these living quarters were definitely not built with clay.

The flat surface of a granite knoll at the western end of the MP was transformed into a living platform and was subsequently

Other features include the massive defensive wall on the southern border of the site. Smaller features include a stone paved staircase, unidentifiable small stone structures in close proximity to houses and in the corridor.

The UP of Site MMA001 can be divided into two spatial units which are functionally linked, namely the UP-slope located against the slope, and the plateau situated in the most westerly saddle or neck of Matshetshele (UP-plateau). The UP of Site MMA001 has several distinguishing features, including the two lowest terraces against the slope. These terraces housed the two best-preserved dwelling structures (UPsd01 and UPsd02) built on Site MMA001.

### 8.3 The Upper Part (UP)

The MP extension (to the east) of Site MMA001 consists of a few isolated platforms which are comprised of rudimentary dwelling niches. These features are similar to those on the UP-slope of the site and were not included in the survey.

A prominent corridor can be noted on the western perimeter of the MP of the site while at least two smaller stone staircases or "ramps", one on the eastern perimeter of the MP and the second on the plateau, were observed in Site MMA001. It also appears that steps may have been built between the different levels of terraces but this can clearly not be seen due to the dilapidated nature of the MP of Site MMA001.

It seems that these enclosures and dwellings were not the only structures built on the MP of site MMA001. Smaller circular structures built with stone also occur near the houses and in some instances (in the Upper Part) in corridors. No clear spatial relation between these structures and the hut foundations could be established. It is possible that these structures served as storage platforms for granary bins but this suggestion is based on mere speculation as only one lower grinding stone was found on the site.

identified as MP-ext (west).

## 9 THE ABSENCE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS ON SITE MMA001

Archaeological material remains on the site are limited. The following artefacts or categories of remains were found on Site MMA001:

- Stone artefacts were found all over Mmatshetshela Mountain and at the foot of the mountain. These artefacts, however, clearly have no temporal association with Sites MMA001, MMA002 or MMA003.
- Very few potsherds were collected on the surface of Site MMA001. These potsherds belong to a Batswana pottery category with perhaps one or two exceptions. Two categories of pottery were distinguished, namely decorated and undecorated potsherds.
- Three rubbing stones were found on different terraces on the site. These artefacts were carried from the bank of a river, probably the Hex River, to the site where they were used for rubbing or polishing purposes.
- Only one lower grinding stone was found on the Lower Part (LP) of the site.
- Although pieces of magnetite ore, quartzite stone and lime were found on one of the site's terraces, there is no clear evidence which indicates that iron ore was smelted on the site. Attempts to heat (forge) iron ore into iron implements may have occurred on the site if this was metallurgically possible. Evidence for large scale metal working, however, is absent and such activities can, at best, only be speculated about.

Although Site MMA001 complies with some of the criteria for refugee settlements, the site also contains evidence which indicates that it was not occupied by a group of desperados similar to those who occupied dwellings erected on pole constructions or who built houses in trees. The settlement features of Site MMA001 suggest that it was occupied by *dislocados* who led a stable existence, similar to that of those who occupied the caves of Gatsrand and of the Sotho refugees who occupied high mountain fortresses of Lesotho and the Orange Free State. This assumption is based on the elaborate building features and the huge efforts made in the preparation of Site MMA001 by digging, moving and shifting large quantities of soil in the ravine on the northern slope (the MP) of the mountain. The spatial layout and composition of the site, which covers three faces of Mmatshetshela Mountain and which is characterised by "staircases", corridors and well-organised dwelling niches,

hypothesis are now considered. existence of regimental towns amongst the Batswana. These two first due to the absence of ethnographic evidence to support the The latter assumption, however, seems less satisfactory than the a group of *dislocados* or that of a Batswana regimental village. Site MMA001 were either that of a refugee settlement occupied by the Bankeveld. The closest analogies which could be proposed for Different types of specialised settlements must have occurred in Site MMA001 represents a specialised type of settlement.

Batswana residential site. clear that Site MMA001 does not represent any "traditional" is compared with those of Bakgatla and Bakwena villages it is MMA001 to some extent. When its spatial layout and composition settlements, contextualise the meaning and significance of site composition and layout of "traditional" Batswana residential of conflict in the Bankeveld and the evidence of the spatial criteria, in conjunction with historical (ethnographic) evidence between Mzilikazi's Matabele forces and the Batswana. These between Sotho renegade groups and certain Batswana chieftoms and pre-difaqane and *difaqane* wars between Batswana chieftoms, nineteenth century. This period was characterised by numerous the eighteenth century and the first three decades of the characterise refugee settlements which date back to the turn of It is essential to formulate and to identify criteria which may

## 10 CONCLUSION



attests to a well-formulated overall plan for Site MMA001.

The most important features which typify Site MMA001 as a refugee site include the absence of an archaeological deposit and archaeological remains on this site. The scarcity of pot sherds and the absence of middens is conspicuous and it is an anomaly with regard to Batswana residential sites which usually contain substantial numbers of broken pots and deep middens. Two broad categories of pottery were distinguished on Site MMA001, namely pottery belonging to an undecorated range found in the westerly parts of the Bankeveld and a second group which have decorations and which generally appear to be more common in the Bakgatla and the Bakwena Bamôgôpa domains in the eastern parts of the Bankeveld as well as further north towards Warmbad and Thabazimbi. The mixed occurrence of decorated and undecorated pot sherds may suggest the gathering of people from different spheres of influence in the Bankeveld. If such a conclusion is correct, the wide range of pottery types, although limited in quantity, may further support the proposition of refugee status for Site MMA001.

The Matabele village complex north of Rustenburg contained a limited number of Batswana pot sherds. The settlements in this complex did not have any Nguni pottery to identify the Matabele's presence in this complex. It is therefore unlikely that the presence of a mixed population (such as Matabele and Batswana) in one settlement could be established on the basis of the stylistic features of pottery used in a settlement. If Site MMA001 housed a mixed population of refugees from different corners of the Bankeveld, or even a mixed Batswana and Matabele population, this cannot be established from the stylistic features of the pottery found on the settlement or any other archaeological features such as the type of dwellings built or the spatial features of the site.

Some settlements in the Matabele village complex were only occupied by men, such as the military kraal (*ikhanda*) (Pistorius 1997c, 1997d). This type of settlement eventually grew into a residential site (*umusi*), incorporating women and children. This may also have been the case with Site MMA001, particularly when one considers the general absence of pottery, grinding stones and middens which are normally associated with the activities of women.

Only one lower grinding stone was found on Site MMA001. This implies that the occupants of the site did not partake in

Other features and criteria which could imply that site MMA001 served as a regimental town include the exceptional view the site had over the surrounding area. From the saddle (or UP) of the site, the Matabelo village north of Rustenburg could be clearly seen. The site is also situated half-way between the Matabelo village and Mooroskop where, in 1831, the Matabelo killed a large

(Willoughby 1909).

temporarily occupied and was destroyed after the ceremony which the boys belonged. The initiation village was only village was laid out according to the rank of the dikgoro to rank of the boys who attended the ceremony. The initiation temporary villages were built according to the social status and village built some distance from the residential site. These phase of the *bogwera* ceremony was held in a specially constructed initiation ceremonies normally held every four years. The first past. Amongst the Batswana, regiments were formed during regimental towns, or whether such towns did in fact exist in the be found about the nature and the appearance of any Batswana "Matsetsele" (Brentz 1953). No ethnographic information could MMA002 and MMA003, and the regiment of Tsoku which was known as Mmatshetshelo Mountain, and particularly between sites MMA001, It is not clear whether there was any association between

fact that it protected the site from any approach from the south. served a defensive role, given its height and length and the The prominent wall on site MMA001's southern border probably later became prosperous and permanent residential settlements. Initially occupied as refugee settlements during the *difagane*, and MMA003. Mountain fortresses in Lesotho and the Orange Free, site, strongly support the refugee status of sites MMA001, MMA002 in the Thaba ea Nape range and its properties as a defensible Site MMA001's location on a mountain which is one of the highest

mornings (Kirby 1971:59).

certain villages, stock were kept on hills and driven out in the Mountain if one considers John Barrow's observation that, at of cattle and other stock could have been kept on Mmatshetshelo from the residential village (Willoughby 1909). Small numbers or regiments) initiates received their food in a prepared state grinding stones. At the *bogwero* (initiation site for young men The Matabelo village complex also did not have any lower or upper sorghum could have been brought to the site in a prepared state. plant foods on the site for consumption. It is possible that more importantly, that they probably did not prepare certain agricultural pursuits (which could suggest a stable life), but

number of Griquas who stole their cattle (Rasmussen 1978). The question thus arises whether Sites MMA001, MMA002 and MMA003, as well as other settlements around Mmatshetshela, did not serve as bullwarks from where swift counter-attacks could be launched against any aggressive intentions of the Matabele village further to the south. As such the site could have been occupied by a regiment, such as the one known as "Matsetsele", which was attached to the leadership of Tsoku of the Bakwena Bamôgôpa. The site could even have been intermittently used by such a regiment during the wars in the Bankeveld.

Site MMA001 can be divided into three parts, if the UP, MP, and the FP are considered to be separate spatial entities. This correlates with the division of the Batswana village (*motse*) into three components. According to this scheme, the MP of Site MMA001 could have been the *fa gare* (or *kgosing*) where the senior men of the regiment lived, while the UP and the FP may have represented the respective *dinthla* divisions of the Batswana *morafe* (tribe). According to Schapera (1976), the Batswana army was composed of the regiments present in these three divisions of the tribe. This proposal, however, is mature at present and cannot be tested due to a lack of archaeological evidence.

The absence of archaeological material and archaeological deposits on Site MMA001 suggest a relatively short period of occupation for this settlement. The Matabele village complex north of Rustenburg was also occupied for a relatively short period of time, perhaps only for ten to fifteen or even twenty years. This complex contained very little archaeological material and no archaeological deposits. Nevertheless, historical evidence has proved that the village complex took on formidable proportions and that it was occupied by a substantial Matabele population (Pistorius 1997c, 1997d).

Despite the lack of archaeological remains and the absence of archaeological deposits on Site MMA001, it is possible that this site could have been occupied for a similar time period as the Matabele village complex. Although the site is situated on a mountain, it was not hidden from view. Its existence, therefore, must have been known to any potential enemy. Its size suggests that it was occupied by a substantial group of people who probably won some acclaim for their defensive skills. Its refugee inhabitants could also have attained stability by serving a subservient role to the Matabele conquerers.

The pre-*difaqane* and *difaqane* wars in the Bankeveld caused havoc

and disruption amongst nearly all the Batswana chiefdoms of the Bankeweld. The settlement patterns of Batswana communities were severely disrupted, whole tribes were displaced, and some groups of *dislocados*, sometimes consisting of mixed Batswana and Matabele populations, provided services to the Matabele overlords of the Bankeweld. Villages occupied by *desperados* consisted of houses built on poles and dwellings erected in large trees while *dislocados*, such as those whose established villages on mountains or in under-ground caves, maintained some autonomy.

The disruptive effect of these wars on Batswana chiefdoms is not yet fully understood. Nor have all the places of conflict been recorded and studied in the archaeological record. The effects of large wars, such as those of the Bapedi against the Batswana before the *difaqane*, weakened and unsettled Batswana chiefdoms. These chiefdoms were subsequently easily overrun by the Matabele. The cumulative effect of the pre-*difaqane* and *difaqane* wars laid the basis for new settlement patterns and lifestyles which emerged in the Bankeweld from the early nineteenth century onwards. With the arrival of the first colonists in Rustenburg, Schaapkraal and other localities in the Bankeweld (Pretorius 1967; Bergh 1992), additional cultural influences came which further altered the lifestyles of the indigenous Batswana. Batswana settlements such as Phokeng, the capital of Mokgatla of the Bafokeng, were occupied into the second half of the nineteenth century and were described by Deleorgue (1990) and Sanderson (1860) who visited this village during 1843 and 1852 respectively (also see Maggs 1992).

Subjected Batswana groups remained in the Bankeweld during the *difaqane*. The region was not totally depopulated as some historical writings imply. More settlements of these refugees have to be studied in order to obtain a clearer understanding of the lifestyles and the settlement types of *dislocados* and *desperados*. A study of Site MMA001 has shown that the settlement pattern and lifestyles of these groups, however, were in clear contrast with the near rigid and well-established settlement patterns of Bakwena and Bakgatla villages (Pistorius 1992, 1994, 1995, 1996).

## 11 RECOMMENDATION

Site MMA001 was thoroughly studied during this Phase II archaeological investigation. EVN Consulting Engineers and Magalies Water have consequently complied with all the requirements laid down by the permit issued by the National Monument Council for the destruction of archaeological remains on Mmatshetshele Mountain.

Development activities on Mmatshetshele Mountain can proceed with the knowledge that the archaeological remains have been studied to the best of our knowledge and means.

The results of this Phase II investigation will be published in the December issue of the *South African Journal of Ethnology* (1997:vol.20;no.4).

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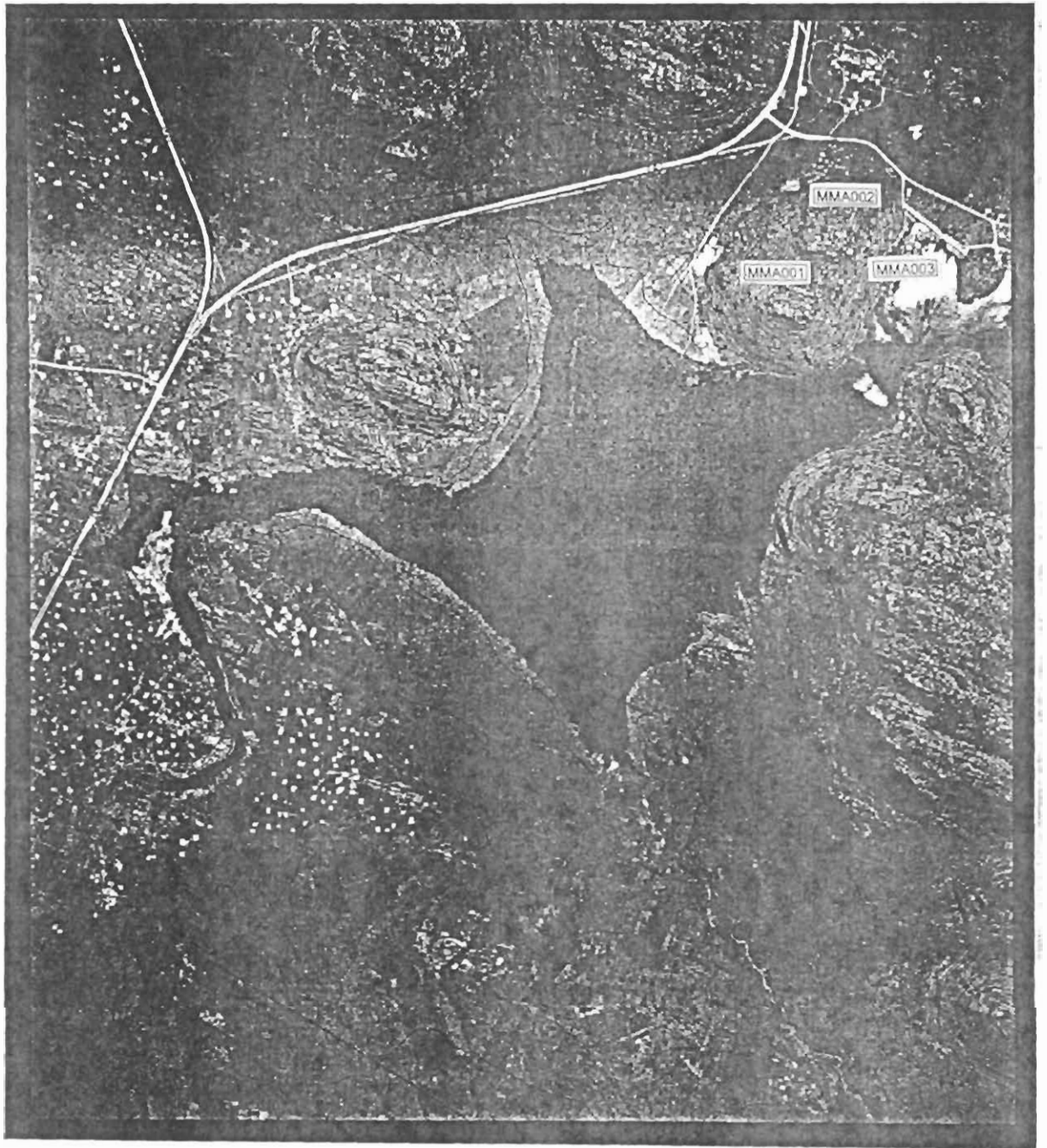
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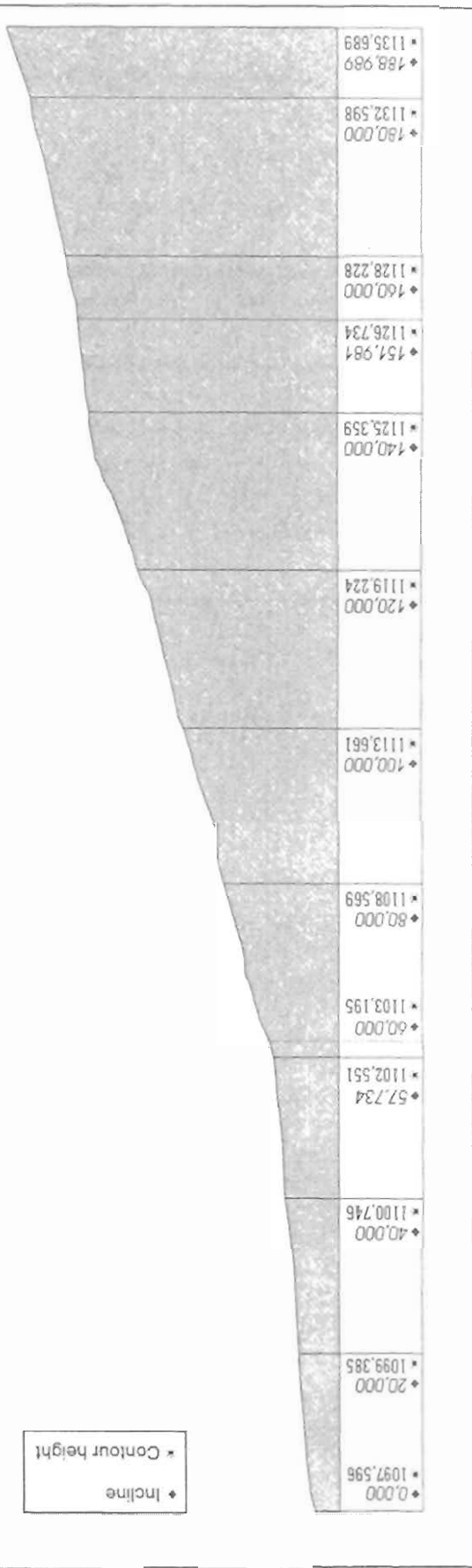
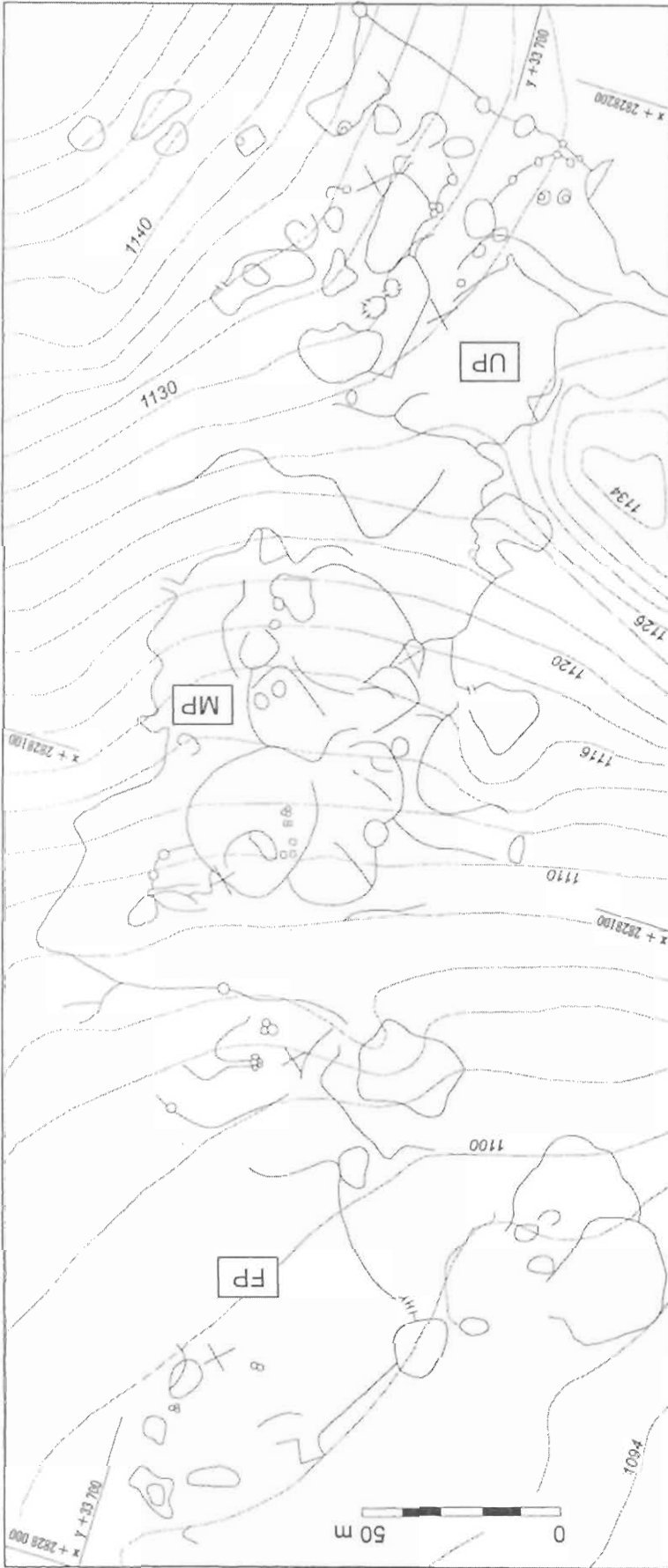
LIST OF FIGURES

- 1 Mmatshetshele Mountain north of Marikana is one several Batswana settlements which has been archaeologically investigated over the past few years. The mountain is one of the highest in the chain that once divide different spheres of influence in the western part of the Bankeveld.
- 2 An aerial view of Mmatshetshele reveals the spatial location of specialised settlements such as refugee sites (MMA001-MMA003) on the mountain.
- 3 Site MMA001 is located on three levels. The site rises from level ground (FP) through successive levels of terraces (MP) into the most westerly neck (UP) of Mmatshetshele Mountain (also cf. fig. 4).
- 4 The ground plan shows the spatial layout, composition and main archaeological features of Site MMA001.
- 5 Dislocated in the Bankeveld occupied dwellings raised on pole platforms, huts erected in large trees and houses built in underground caves (drawing by John Burrow in Kirby 1971:56-57).
- 6 The formidable wall on the southern perimeter of Site MMA001 served a defensive role.
- 7 Remains of well-preserved dwellings on the UP of Site MMA001 consist of upright standing foundation stones arranged on the circumference of circles.
- 8 Foundation stones of well-preserved huts between which flexible branches were wedged for the construction of hemi-spherical huts.
- 9 A "staircase" consisting of paved stones joins the FP and the MP of the site. This "ramp" also forms the main entrance to Site MMA001.

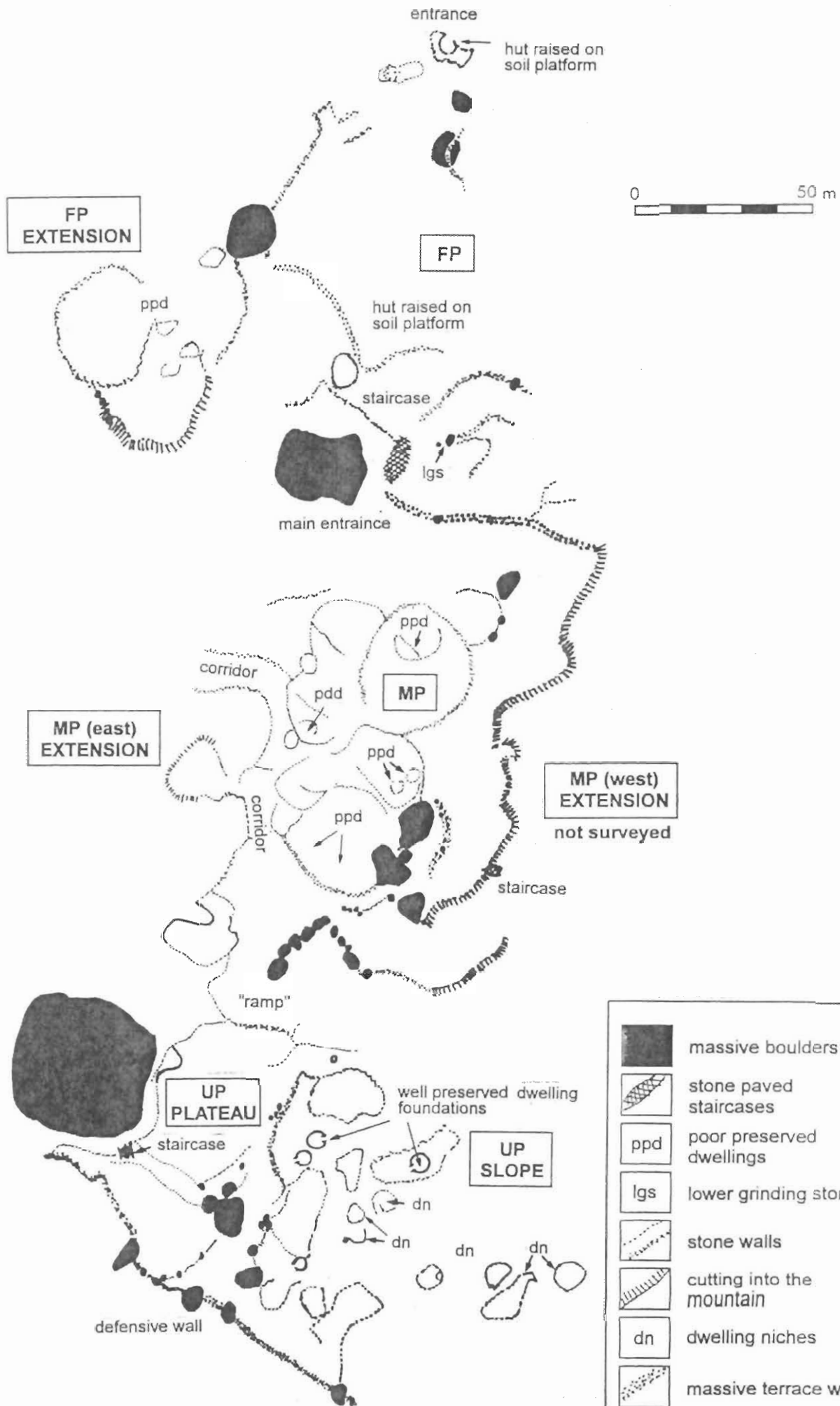
- 10 The style of the pot sherds from Site MMA001 reveals that the pottery belongs to a Batswana pottery category. Note the undecorated sherds (left) and the decorated sherds (right) in the collection.
- 11 Marula kernels were probably crushed in the dimples on a rock in the FP of Site MMA001.

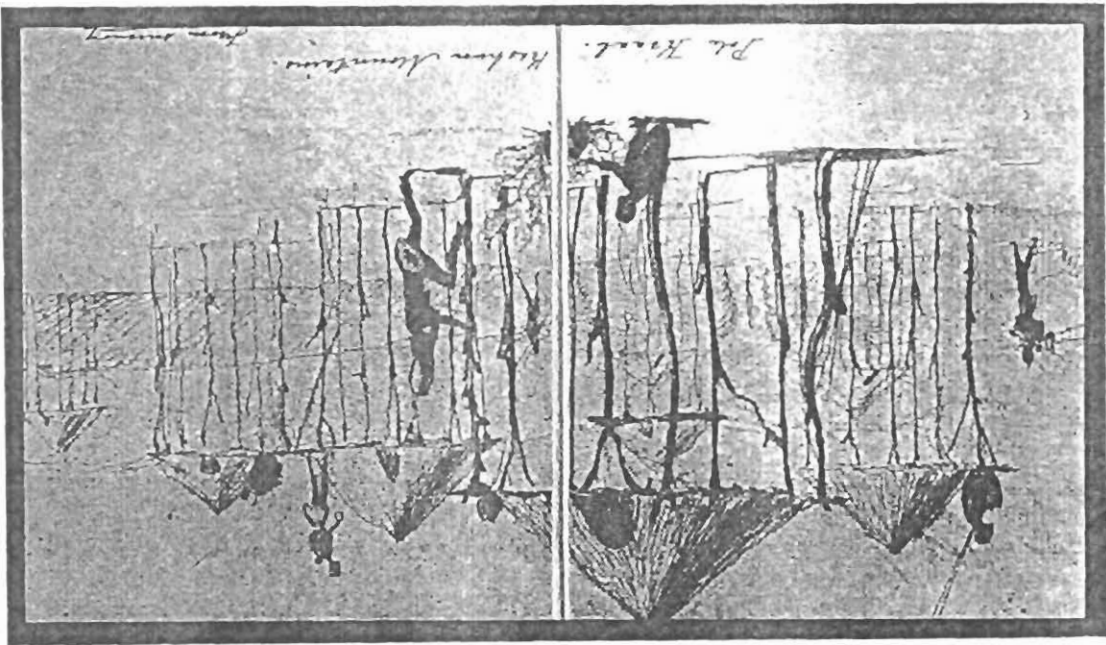






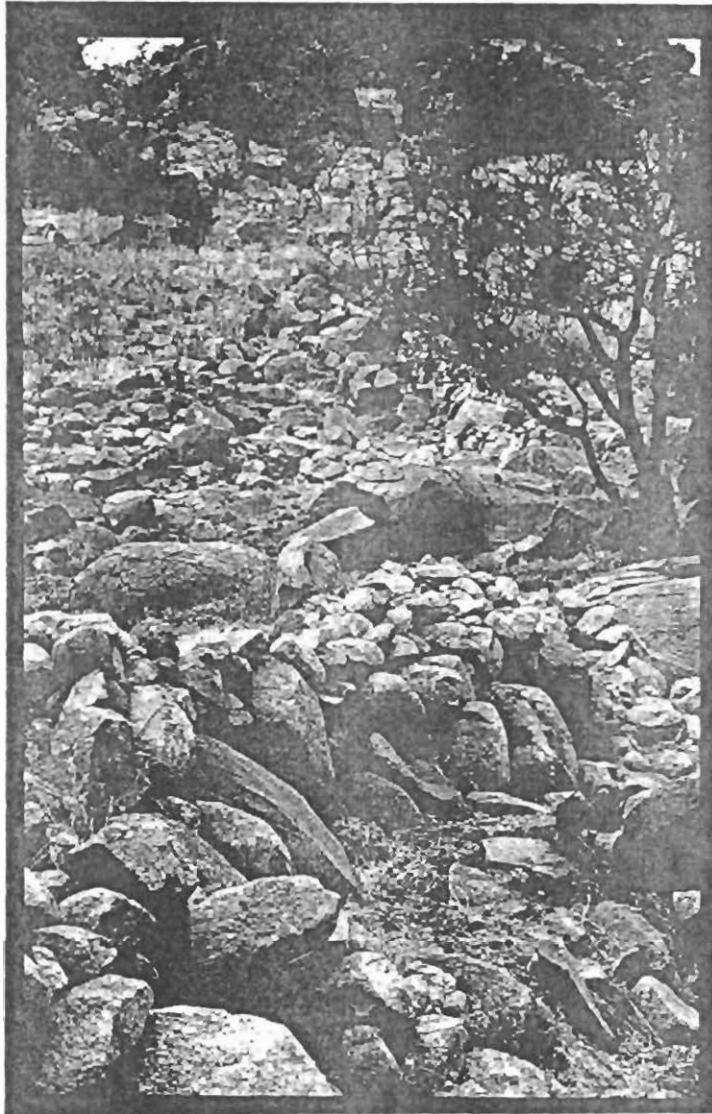


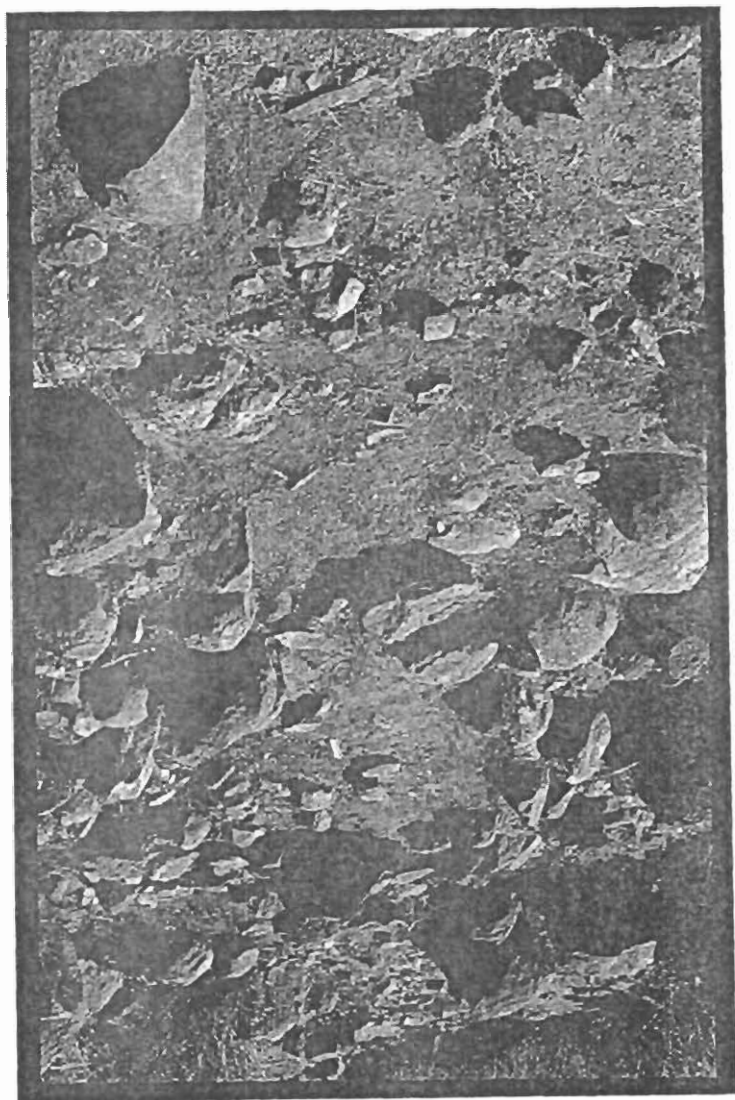




Dislocados in the Bankevela occupied dwellings raised on pole platforms, huts erected in large trees and houses built in underground caves (drawing by John Burrow in Kirby 1971:56-57).

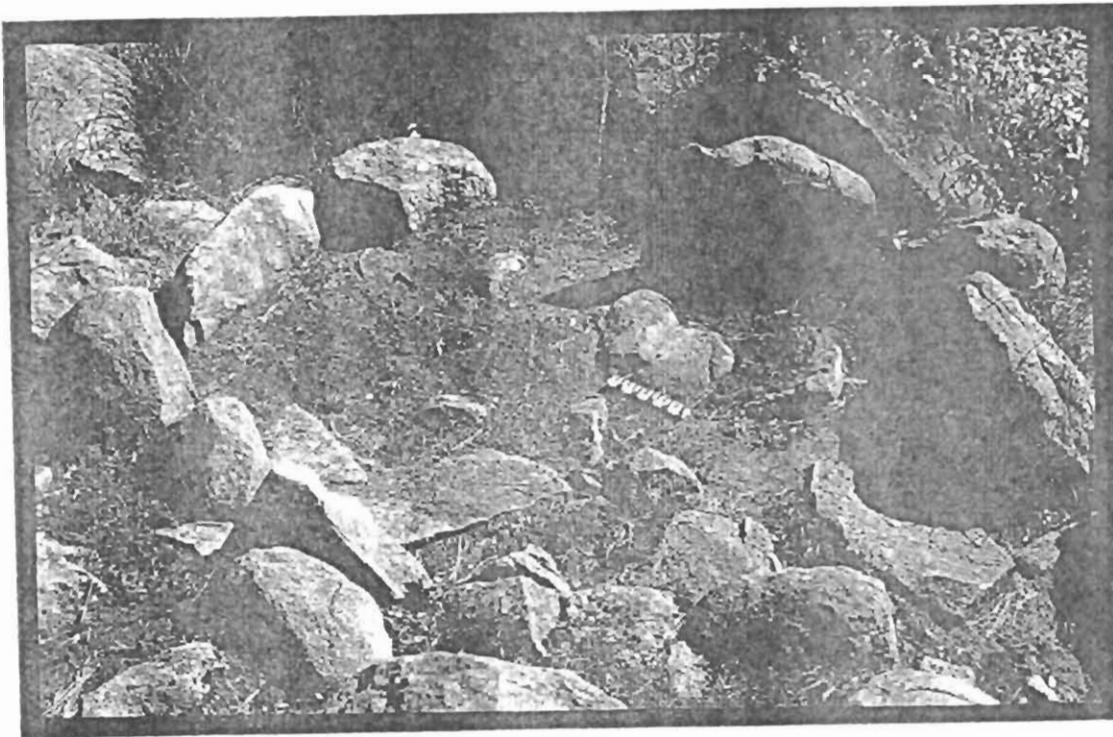
- 6 The formiddable wall on the southern perimeter of Site MMA001 served a defensive role.





7 Remains of well-preserved dwellings on the UP of Site MMA001 consist of upright standing foundation stones arranged on the circumference of circles.

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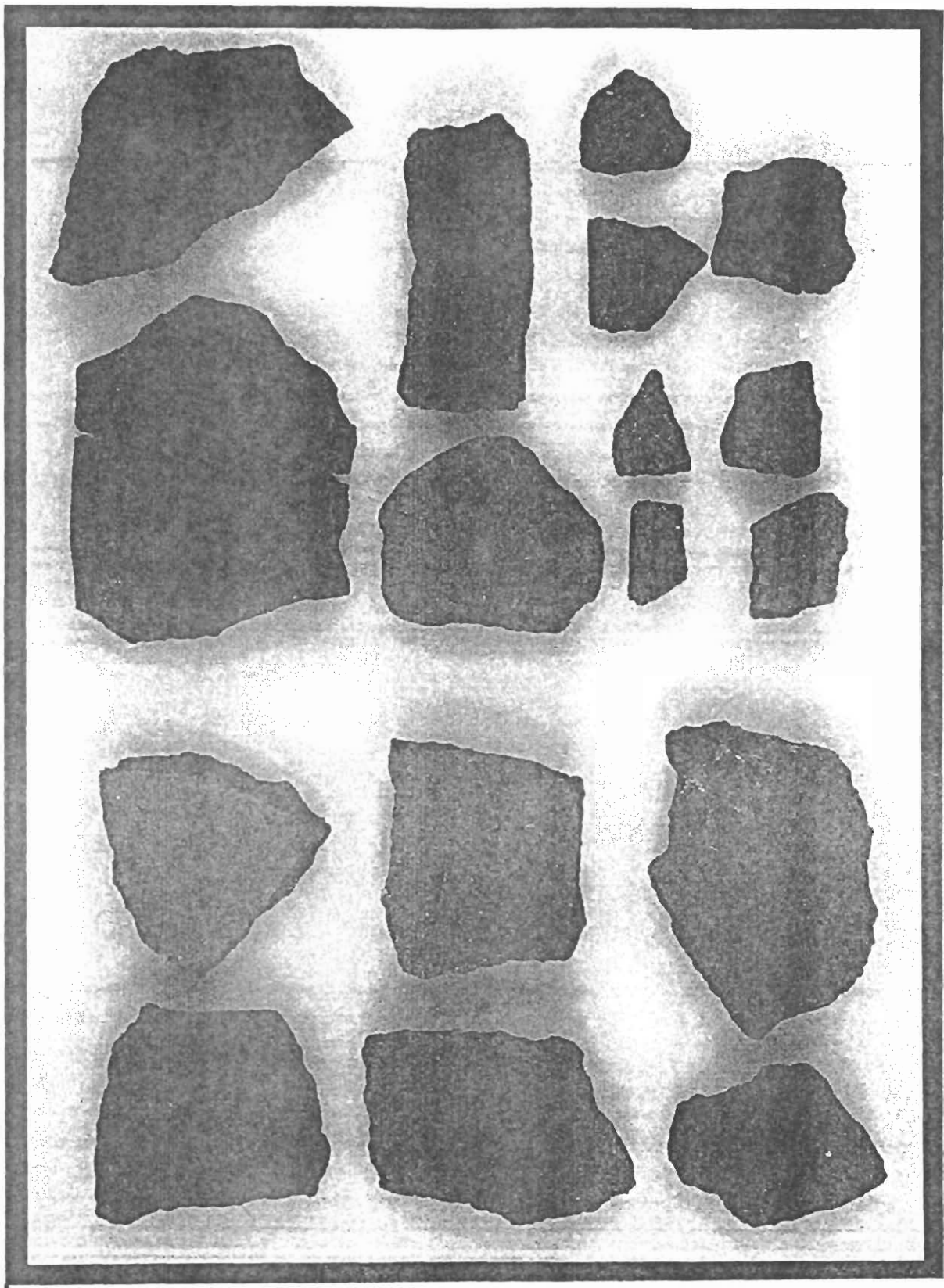




9 Foundation stones of well-preserved dwellings between which flexible branches were wedged for the construction of hemispherical huts.

- 9 A "staircase" consisting of paved stones joins the FP and the MP of the site. This "ramp" also forms the main entrance to Site MMA001.





The style of the pot sherds from Site MMA001 reveals that the pottery belongs to a Batswana pottery category. Note the undecorated sherds (above) and the decorated sherds (below) in the collection.

10



- 11 Marula kernels were probably crushed in the dimples on a rock in the FP of Site MMA001.

