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**Penguins versus pigeons: some insights on coastal resource exploitation (or not) during the Middle Stone Age of South Africa provided by the analysis of bird remains from Diepkloof Rock Shelter and Sibudu Cave / Pingouins contre pigeons : quelques éclairages sur l'exploitation (ou non) des ressources côtières au Middle Stone Age en Afrique du Sud fournis par l'analyse des restes d'oiseaux de Diepkloof Rock Shelter et de Sibudu Cave.**

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**Résumé**

Coastal resource exploitation is central in debates regarding the evolution of our species on the African continent. Regardless of how significant the inclusion of coastal resources into the diet really was on *Homo sapiens*' cognitive and behavioural developments, most of the archaeological evidence for technological innovations and the emergence of symbolic practices in South Africa does come from coastal and near-coastal rock shelters. Here, I consider the role played by birds in hunter-gatherers techno-economical systems as a proxy to evaluate late Pleistocene human subsistence variability. I expose the results of the analyses of the avifauna from two near-coastal sites in South Africa, Diepkloof Rock Shelter and Sibudu Cave. Despite apparent similarities between both rock shelters, located at the same distance from the current shoreline of, respectively, the South Atlantic and the Indian Oceans, preserving long archaeological sequences dated to MIS 5-MIS 3 and characterized by the same techno-complexes (the Still Bay and the Howiesons Poort), there are striking differences regarding the bird assemblages. Both assemblages differ greatly in terms of size, taxonomic composition and mode of accumulation into the deposits. The possible influence of ecological and cultural factors is discussed.

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