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## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the NHRA affords SAHRA the opportunity to manage archaeological sites with the interest of all stakeholders in mind and not just for the express purpose of scientific value. Rather SAHRA has the ability to do so much more. As the Act states, our heritage defines our cultural identity and therefore lies at the heart of our spiritual well being. It has the power to build our nation, reshape our country's national character, redress past inequities, facilitate healing and symbolic restitution and provides us with an opportunity to celebrate our achievements as the spirit of the Act intended (NHRA, No. 25 of 1999, Gov. Gazette, 28 April 1999, No. 19974, Vol. 406: 2).

There are still many challenges that SAHRA faces in managing its heritage resources, but since the Act's inception in 1999 heritage management has a greater awareness of the people and communities it serves and the role all parties can play to help develop effective heritage management in South Africa in future.

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## WHO IS DOING COURSES IN ARCHAEOLOGY AT SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES? AND WHAT ARE THEY STUDYING?

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## INTRODUCTION

Some time ago, as part of a broader project surveying the state of the discipline in South Africa, I began collecting information on the profile of students enrolling in courses in archaeology at South African universities. I also looked at archaeology syllabi at the major teaching institutions, with an eye to the kinds of headings and topics in terms of which archaeology was being taught. As a side project I looked at the number and nature of projects in archaeology receiving funding from the National Research Foundation (NRF), the major local funder of archaeological activity. In this paper I present the results of this survey for the period 1987–2005<sup>1</sup>. I should say at the outset that while I have included all the data that I have at hand, this survey makes no claims to being either systematic or comprehensive. I collected information where I could. Some departments and institutions were more forthcoming than others. In some cases figures for students taking courses in archaeology were lumped together with students in anthropology. In other cases detailed student records were unavailable, or were withheld. What I present here is a somewhat impressionistic account, which nevertheless captures some important trends in student enrolments and archaeology course offerings.

My intention in undertaking this survey was to provide one way in to understanding some of the transitions within the discipline in the post-1994 period. More than most local traditions of archaeology, South African archaeology has

operated over the past fifteen or so years under the expectation of transformation. When Bruce Trigger described South African archaeology in the late-1980s as the “most colonialist” archaeology in Africa (Trigger 1990) he had in mind both the small number of black archaeologists working in the region, and the perceived implication of South African archaeology in the social and political contexts of colonialism and apartheid. Equally, when the World Archaeological Congress held its 4th Congress in Cape Town in 1999 (having formed around the boycott of South African archaeology in the mid-1980s) it was with the expectation that social and political transformations were in train which would, in turn, have an effect on the discipline of archaeology (Ucko 1990; Hall 1998). This study is based on the assumption that the changing social base of a discipline or field might be observed, in part, in the profile of the students that it attracts, as well as in the nature of its course offerings. So, just who is doing courses in archaeology at South African universities? And what are they studying?

## STUDENT ENROLMENTS

The University of Cape Town (UCT) is, along with the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), a major centre of archaeological instruction. Student enrolments in courses in archaeology at UCT in the period 1987–2002 show a number of perceptible trends. The proportion of black students in classes in archaeology has increased steadily, from an average of 20% in the five-year period 1987–91, taken across all courses at all levels, to an average of around 30% in the period 1992–97, and an average of just below 40% in the period 1998–2002. The highest proportion of black students, at 41% of the total, was recorded in the years 1998 and 1999, down to 36% in 2001 and 2002. This is against a total student population at UCT in which black students make up just below 50% of the whole (University of Cape Town Faculties Report 2000–2001)<sup>2</sup>. The proportion of women students taking courses in archaeology has shown a similar increase, averaging 60% in the period 1998–2002, and 50% over the preceding five years. Women students currently make up 48% of the total student body, although they outnumber men students in the Humanities where they make up 63% of the total head count enrolment as opposed to 44% in Science (University of Cape Town Faculties Report 2000–2001). The number of students taking courses in archaeology, considering all courses at all levels, has increased from an average of 276 students per year in the five-year period 1987–91, to 350 students per year in the period 1998–2002. Over the same period the average number of postgraduate students per year has dropped slightly from 25.4 to 23.2 students.<sup>3</sup> In the five-year period 1987–91 just 8% of the postgraduate students in the Department of Archaeology were black. This increased to 25% on average for the period 1998–2002.

The Department of Archaeology at the University of Stellenbosch, a small department in an historically-white, Afrikaans-speaking university, provides an interesting point of comparison. Student enrolments were surveyed for the period 1985 to 1999, at which point the department was closed as part of a process of ‘rationalisation’. Total student numbers remained constant over this period, averaging 49 students per year in the five-year period 1985–89, and 48 students per year in the period 1995–99 (taking all courses at all levels). As with the Department of Archaeology at UCT, there is a trend towards increasing numbers of women and black students, although in the latter case this works off a much smaller base. Women students constitute a majority of student enrolments in courses in archaeology at an early date, averaging 64% in the period 1985–89, and 68% in the period 1995–99. Black students made

up a mere 1.8% of enrolments in the period 1985–89, and 13% in the period 1995–99 (peaking at 18% in 1996).<sup>4</sup>

The University of South Africa (UNISA) is the largest provider of distance education in South Africa. Archaeology is taught as part of a combined Department of Archaeology and Anthropology. The proportion of women students taking courses in the department has shown a steady increase, from an average of 51% of enrolments over the three-year period 1987–89, to 61% over the period 1992–94, to 70% over the period 1999–2001. Black students made up a majority of enrolments at an early date, averaging 63% of all students over the five-year period 1987–91, dropping to 51% over the period 1997–2001. However, the majority of these students took courses in anthropology only. In 2002, of a total of 3100 enrolments, 516 students (16.5%) took courses in archaeology.<sup>5</sup> Of these 516 students, 390 (75%) were white.

One of the most interesting trends in combined enrolments in courses in archaeology and anthropology concerns the relative numbers of black women students. In the years 1987 and 1988 black men outnumbered black women, but this switches in 1989 with a progressively increasing proportion of black women enrolling in courses. By 1996 black women outnumbered black men by a factor of 2:1. Over the surveyed period overall numbers of students decreased from an average of 2755 per year for the period 1987–1991, to 1950 per year for the period 1997–2001, so that the increasing proportion of women students in general is a factor of both an increase in the absolute number of women students, and the withdrawal of black and white men from the system.

The University of the Witwatersrand recently collated figures for their postgraduate student enrolments.<sup>6</sup> They provide an interesting snapshot of postgraduate activity in a major teaching department. A total of 58 students registered for M.A. or M.Sc. degrees in archaeology in the period from 1997 to 2005 (including completed and ongoing projects). Of these, 34 are women. Breaking this down into the various sub-fields of archaeology shows the following distribution of students: Stone Age (30), Iron Age (5), Ceramic 'Neolithic' (2), Rock Art (17), Heritage Studies (1), Education (1), Archaeology and Geomorphology (1), and Palaeoarchaeology (1). At the Ph.D. level there are 32 students listed for the period 1996–2005, of whom 18 are women. The distribution of students by sub-fields is as follows: Stone Age (11), Iron Age (5), Historical Archaeology (1), Rock Art (7), analysis of animal and human bones (4), Heritage Studies (1), Environmental and Landscape Studies (2), and Palaeoarchaeology (2).

### ARCHAEOLOGY CURRICULA

University archaeology curricula provide a sense, not only of changing intellectual currents and developments within the discipline, but also of its responsiveness to changing social and political circumstances. I looked at prospectuses and course guides for the period 1987–2005 from three different institutions, UCT, Wits and the University of Pretoria (UP). Courses at the University of Cape Town follow a standard archaeological framing that combines 'aims and methods' courses (for example, 'Aims, methods and scope of archaeology'; 'An introduction to world archaeology'), with courses organised in terms of modes of subsistence and forms of production ('Development of food producing societies in Africa'; 'Hunter gatherer studies in Africa'). A feature of such courses at UCT in the late-1980s was their focus on African archaeology ('African archaeology'; 'The African fossil record'; 'Issues in African archaeology'). There have been three broad changes to this pattern at UCT. The first was the introduction of multi-disciplinary courses and programmes, in particular, 'An

introduction to archaeology and social anthropology', 'An introduction to earth and environmental sciences', and Honours and Masters degrees in 'Western Cape Historical Studies'. A second change involved the institutional relocation of the Department of Archaeology from the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences to the Faculty of Science, and a general orientation towards the sciences. One casualty of this reorientation was the course 'Historical archaeology', which was not offered after 1999.

A third change has involved the recasting of some courses in terms of contemporary topics and buzz-words. From 2001 students could choose from 'Southern African hunters and herders: Khoisan history, identity, rock art and heritage', 'The roots of black identity: the peopling of South Africa', and 'Global interaction and the transformation of southern African society'. This same move towards topicality is evident in archaeology curricula at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), although there is a stronger vocational slanting at post-graduate level. A Masters programme in rock art studies offers courses in 'Rock Art Management', 'Culture and the Socio-economics of Tourism and Heritage', and 'The Role of Public History and Heritage in Education'.

Perhaps the most interesting site of comparison from the point of view of archaeology curricula is the University of Pretoria (UP). Archaeology courses at UP in the late-1980s have a fairly standard framing ('Introduction to archaeology'; 'First food producing societies and first civilizations'; 'Archaeological theory and method'). The most significant difference is the manner in which archaeology is tied to the discipline of anthropology. From 1990 they form part of a combined Department of Anthropology and Archaeology. In keeping with an apartheid context, Anthropology at UP in the late-1980s and early-1990s was organised around the idea of race. Typical course offerings include 'Die rasse en volke van Afrika en die wereld' (The races and peoples of Africa and the world), 'Inleiding tot die Kultuur- en Rassekunde' (Introduction to Cultural- and Ethnic/Racial-studies), 'Die Swart State' (The Black States), 'Swartes in die RSA-gebied' (Blacks in the territory of the RSA), and 'Arbeidsverhouding met Swartes' (Labour relations with Blacks). Curriculum changes at UP take place on a five-year cycle. In the post-1992 curriculum there are a number of substitutions and terminology changes. 'The Third World' ('die Derde Wereld') takes the place of 'the Black States', 'South-east Bantu-speakers' ('Suid-oos Bantusprekendes') replaces 'the Blacks', and the notion of development ('ontwikkeling') plays a more prominent role.<sup>7</sup>

The 1997 curriculum sees the final disappearance of references to race, in favour of a notion of humankind (and mankind). Course offerings include 'Antropologiese studie van die mens' (Anthropological study of Mankind) and 'die biologiese basis van menslike gedrag' (the biological basis of human behaviour). However, the most significant change is in terms of the widespread deployment of a concept of culture, which replaces the notion of race and its substitutes. Typical course offerings include 'Die herkoms, migrasies en vestiging van kulture van die wereld' ('The origin, migrations and distribution of cultures of the world'), 'kulturele determinante, die fasette van kultuur en die invloed van kultuur op menslike gedrag' ('cultural determinants, the aspects of culture and the influence of culture on human behaviour'), 'multi-culturality of communities in RSA', 'links between prehistoric human types and current cultural groupings in southern Africa', 'cultures and cultural influences from outside Africa' (this is under an archaeology course code), and 'material cultural heritage'. Applied anthropology is collapsed into anthropology in the new curriculum, but continues to announce its presence

via the notion of 'culture utilization', and a series of course offerings in which a notion of culture is the key social and behavioral determinant. These include 'Culture-congruent planning facilitation', 'Culture-congruent workshop techniques... principles of culture congruent time and space planning... Role of the cultural broker and advocate', and – in a series of modules that recall the culture historical archaeology of an earlier era – 'culture historical development in South Africa', and 'culture historical sites and phenomena'. A post-graduate syllabus published in 2002 offers modules on 'Indigenous southern African cultures (c.1600 to c.1900)' and 'The VOC and Cape Dutch culture'.

A 2005 archaeology syllabus from the University of Pretoria shows a move to a more standard framing, with first year modules comprising a general introduction to the discipline and the prehistory of southern Africa ('The science of Archaeology', 'Peopling of southern Africa'), and second year modules looking in more detail at periods and divisions in the archaeological record ('The African Stone Age', 'The African Iron Age', 'The archaeo-chronology of humankind'). Third year courses are more methodological in nature ('Archaeological collections', 'Archaeological field research', 'Ethno- and Historical Archaeology'). They also include a module on 'Isotope ecology and dating', the result of a collaboration with the Quaternary Dating Research Unit at the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research in Pretoria, and a module on 'Applied Archaeology' (including Contract Archaeology, tourism and education).

## RESEARCH GRANTS

The National Research Foundation (NRF) is the major local funder of archaeological activity. Patterns in the distribution of grants give a rough measure of research activity, although it should be noted that what follows excludes other sources of funding, most notably international funding. Neither does it take into account the size of individual grants, nor the types of projects attracting funding. Each of these constitute clear topics for future research. Total grants given by the NRF to archaeology projects increased significantly in the period 1987–2000, from an average of 9.2 grants per year in the five-year period 1987–1991, to an average of 28.8 grants per year for the period 1996–2000. Leading recipient institutions are UCT with a total of 121 grants over the period 1987–2000, Wits (56 grants), and the University of Pretoria (39 grants). The three-year period 1998–2000 has seen a turn-around, with Wits standing at 36 grants, UP at 24 grants, and UCT at 16 grants. The real news on this distribution table is the surge in activity at the University of Pretoria post-1995, with all but six of its grants coming from the more recent period. The number of Ph.D.s supported by the NRF has increased slightly from an average of two per year in the five-year period 1987–1991, to just over three per year in the period 1996–2000. The figures also give a picture of the relative degree of activity in Departments of Archaeology at universities *versus* museums. The museum sector as a whole accounts for 45 grants over the surveyed period. Twenty of these are from a single institution, the National Museum in Bloemfontein, with a concerted cluster in the period 1992–1998, most likely the result of a single active researcher. In the two years 1999–2000 the seven museums in the sector account for just two grants.

## CONCLUSION

This brief survey is intended to give a partial overview of some of the changes in the discipline of archaeology in South Africa since the late-1980s. It is also intended to form a starting point for further surveys of this nature. Any local archaeologist engaged in teaching and research will have first-hand observa-

tions to contribute regarding current trends and developments. At the same time there are a number of areas for further research, perhaps most pressingly to do with patterns of employment in the discipline. What kinds of positions are opening up in archaeology, and who is filling them? Are university curricula sufficiently responsive to the changing world of work in archaeology? There is a clear indication of increasing numbers of black students taking courses in archaeology (although they remain under-represented in general); has this translated into increasing numbers of black archaeologists? Perhaps the clearest and most dramatic trend revealed here is the increasing number and proportion of women students in archaeology, to the point where they make up a majority (in some cases a substantial majority) of undergraduate and postgraduate enrolments. This in turn has implications for the world of work in archaeology. What are the reasons for this turn-around? And has the increasing number of women students translated into an increasing number of jobs in archaeology for women?

With regard to research trends, a number of questions occur: Where does research capacity exist? Which are the active centres of research activity? On the face of things there would seem to be a decline in research capacity in museums; should this be a cause for concern? Or is this part of a more general reorientation in the discipline? What new sources of research funding have become available? And how do these compare to patterns of NRF funding? What are the active sub-fields of research activity? What are the areas in which graduate students are choosing to specialize, and how do these match up to research priorities?

With regard to archaeology curricula at major teaching institutions, there are signs of a shift towards greater market responsiveness, as well as towards emergent debates in the discipline globally. At the same time some topics remain neglected (gender in archaeology, Indigenous Archaeology). The loss of capacity in teaching Historical Archaeology would seem to be a cause for concern. More generally: recent points of conflict and contestation in South African archaeology have involved issues of social accountability, ownership and control (the events around Prestwich Street are a case in point). To what extent are university courses in archaeology equipping future practitioners to intervene meaningfully in such debates and contestations? To what extent do archaeology students understand themselves to be part of a society in transformation?

Finally, my hope is that surveys like this help to ground discussions within the discipline around issues of transformation, social responsiveness, and the nature and future of archaeology in South Africa. That such discussions are long overdue is a thought that I share in closing.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Some of these results have appeared previously in the *Journal of Southern African Studies* 29(4) as part of a survey paper entitled 'State of the Discipline: Science, Culture and Identity in South African Archaeology, 1870–2003' (Shepherd 2003). Many people assisted with the research for this paper. Particular thanks are due to: Carin Strydom of the Bureau for Management Information (UNISA), Sven Ouzman, formerly of the National Museum (Bloemfontein), Kathryn Mathers of the University of Pretoria, Ben Smith and Karim Sadr of Wits, Neil Grobbelaar of Management Information (University of Stellenbosch), and Mary Hilton of the Communication Department (UCT). Janine Dunlop was, as always, an exemplary research assistant. Financial support came from the National Research Foundation, the Project on Public Pasts, and the Wenner-Gren Foundation, and is gratefully acknowledged.

<sup>2</sup>Figures for student enrolments in the Department of Archaeology are from the Communications Department (UCT). The figures for black

students are of the inclusive sort, and refer to all students not classified white.

<sup>3</sup>This includes Honours, Masters and Ph.D. students across all faculties.

<sup>4</sup>Source: Neil Grobbelaar, Management Information (Stellenbosch).

<sup>5</sup>Source: Carin Strydom, Bureau for Management Information (UNISA). Student enrolments in courses in anthropology and archaeology are not reported separately prior to 2002.

<sup>6</sup>Source: Ben Smith and Karim Sadr (Department of Archaeology, Wits).

<sup>7</sup>Information on courses and curricula has been taken from the faculty handbooks of the relevant institutions. The translations from Afrikaans are my own.

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