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Manuscripts of original research undertaken in southern Africa will be considered for publication. These may include reports of current research projects, site reports, rock art panels, rescue excavations, contract projects, reviews, notes and comments. Students are encouraged to submit short reports on projects. *Southern African Field Archaeology* also welcomes general information on archaeological matters such as reports on workshops and conferences.

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Logo

Decorated pot from an Early Iron Age site in the Great Kei River valley, eastern Cape, and a painting of a 'trance figure' from the same region.

Cover illustration

Painted slab from Roodekranz Shelter near Alicedale, eastern Cape, p.89.

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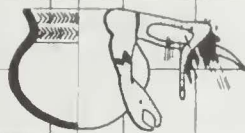
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OPINIONS

Employment, and the prospect or lack of prospect of employment, is a major concern of archaeologists and those wishing to pursue archaeology as a career. A functional classification of archaeologists could be based on their employment status: permanent teaching staff at universities and research staff at museums; researchers working at universities and museums on relatively short-term contracts, bursaried post-graduate research students; unpaid undergraduate students; and amateurs.

Amateurs may struggle to get permission to conduct research involving excavation and university staff may struggle to raise research funds to finance their endeavours, but to their good fortune they are not confronted by the question that perpetually plagues the others - when and where, if ever, will I get an archaeology job?

We all know that there are fewer than fifty permanent professional posts in archaeology in southern Africa, and that most of them are occupied by relatively youthful people, mostly with decades of employment ahead of them. We also know that the global recession makes it very unlikely that many professional archaeologists will leave for posts overseas. And we tacitly acknowledge the need to keep student numbers up, if not increasing, in universities to justify the continued employment of those paid to teach and direct research at those institutions. With the employment bus apparently stalled, is there sense in piling more people on board? What real employment prospects do students, from undergraduate to post-doctoral level, face?

Many students who may have an interest in archaeology avoid it at university because of the lack of employment prospects. This may explain the dearth of black student enrollment in undergraduate archaeology courses. Glossy pamphlets promoting careers in archaeology are not likely to succeed if the honest answer to the question "Will I get a job when I qualify?" is "Probably not". Many undergraduates respond to the perceived employment crisis by abandoning archaeology after an introductory course - sensible but disheartening for their lecturers. Post-graduate students and contract researchers thrash around, consuming increasing proportions of their productive energy on job hunting, writing applications, wringing yet another year's grace out of a shrinking pool of research funding, and contemplating alternative careers like housewifery, computer programming, gemmology, and goat farming in Venezuela.

Realistically the availability of permanent employment for archaeologists cannot be expected to increase. Nor will the shrinking sources of research funding suddenly erupt in plenitude. The employment crisis for undergraduates and contract researchers is real and deserves recognition. By relieving the sense of personal failure, recognition of the global nature of this crisis is in itself beneficial for graduates who are unemployed or about to be unemployed. Young graduates should be appraised of the reality of the situation and consider if it is wise to gain yet further qualifications that will not necessarily improve their prospects. The available financial resources for full-time but short term research appointments are spread very thin and senior post-graduates and contract researchers may be wise to hone whatever alternative skills they may have or actively explore the new prospects emerging in the field of contract rescue archaeology and development consulting. At present this enterprise tends to be dominated by the universities and the transition to a competitive market may be rough going for independent individuals or small consultancies.

If tinkering with the engine and trying to push the bus both fail then it is sensible to consider walking. One could consider putting the bus to novel uses. A training in archaeology should equip one to more than excavation, sorting, analysis, and the production of research reports. That is the legitimate domain of academic archaeologists but another chronically underpopulated field of enterprise exists which archaeology graduates should be well placed to occupy. This field encompasses journalism, popular authorship, and non-university education.

The popular demand for access to the fruits of largely government-funded scholarship is hard to ignore and many academic archaeologists in this country have striven to make their output more accessible. But it is unreasonable to expect highly qualified and specialised academics to fulfill the role of popular educators and simultaneously maintain a high level of research output. There is an almost total lack of trained writers and illustrators who concentrate on communicating technical and academic discoveries to the public in ways that are appropriate and factually accurate. Students need to be trained in writing and communication skills that will not only enable them to produce arcane and abstruse theses but will also equip them to convey the substance of scholarship in popular contexts without dismal corruption of the content.

Academic archaeology is well placed to play the necessary catalysing role of providing a broad education. Archaeology students are exposed, or should be, to the full spectrum of human enterprise. They study human social behaviour, technological endeavour, biological development, and interaction with the environment, and should have a sufficiently sound understanding of anthropology to be able to relate knowledge of the past to current human concerns. Archaeology should be an exciting and profoundly civilizing study and it should inspire its graduates to communicate their knowledge. The demand for popular education could be met with the conscious response of aiming to equip at least some archaeology students as educational writers or illustrators.

This would relieve some of the pressure on academic researchers to popularise their work personally, would address the growing need for factually accurate but readily accessible accounts of academic research (not only in archaeology), and provide new avenues for potential employment for archaeology students.

I suspect this could be accomplished relatively easily with the introduction of courses such as "Writing and Communicating Archaeology", setting out explicitly to teach clear verbal and written expression, a variety of styles of presentation, skill in appropriate choice of illustration, text and display layout, word processing, lecturing to non-academic audiences, exhibition presentation - in short, communicating archaeology and human science outside as well as inside an academic context. This involves real skills training with the clear objective of enhanced employability. We probably could all benefit from such training.

Duncan Miller
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This issue of *Southern African Field Archaeology* marks a departure from our editorial policy of publishing site reports and research notes. The debate regarding the archaeological identity of hunters and herders which readers may have been following in the *South African Archaeological Bulletin* is continued in this journal with a critique by Yates & Smith followed by a response from Schrire. We are publishing these papers in *Southern African Field Archaeology* because the *South African Archaeological Bulletin* is only able to publish them in the June 1994 issue.

* * * * *

The Editors of *Southern African Field Archaeology* are running a competition for the best report by an archaeology student. The winner, as well as his/her Archaeology Department, will each receive one year's subscription to *Southern African Field Archaeology*, absolutely free! The majority of post-graduate archaeology students will have either excavated a site or undertaken an archaeological related project at some stage of their university careers. Although students are required to write theses or reports on their research most of this material is never published and professional archaeologists often find it extremely difficult to trace this material. By publishing a summary of your thesis or report you will be contributing to the wider dissemination of archaeological knowledge. You will also be learning new skills in writing scientific papers. This type of experience is vital for those students wishing to pursue a career in archaeology. So we urge university lecturers to encourage students to submit articles and we hope students will be motivated to participate. Remember, the deadline is the 30 November 1993, but may be extended to mid-January on request.

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

EARLY IRON AGE IN THE EASTERN CAPE: A RESPONSE BY
MAGGS TO BINNEMAN *ET AL.*

TIM MAGGS

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Congratulations on your published note on the Kulubele Early Iron Age site on the Kei River (Binneman *et al.* 1992). It is nice to see confirmation of the first millennium agriculturist settlement as far south and west as this, as well as to note the locality inland in a major river valley. I would agree that the illustrated pottery resembles Msuluzi material from Natal (Maggs 1980a) which is of a similar age.

There is just one point in the note with which I would like to quibble, namely the first sentence which claims that "Until recently the southerly limit of Early Iron Age settlement was thought to be along the Transkei coast ..".

As early as the 1960's Rudner (1968) reported pottery similar to Schofield's NC3 reaching as far west as the Port Alfred - Bathurst area. Derricourt (1977) recorded sites of his Shixini Ware as far west as the Chalumna River in the Ciskei, recognising its similarity to NC3. From as early as the 1970s NC3 and Shixini have been recognised as belonging to the Early Iron Age (Maggs 1973) and we have been regarding the Chalumna River, which is 100 km south-west of the Kei, as the southerly limit of known EIA settlement (eg. Maggs 1980b).

The idea that EIA occupation might extend as far as the Great Fish River (Binneman *et al.* 1992) is very tempting, especially in view of the place that this river holds in the colonial history of the eastern Cape. Is it not

time that we took another look at the pottery referred to by Rudner (1968) from west of the Chalumna River? Perhaps we can extend the limits of first millennium agriculturist communities another 100 km along the coast. How about our Albany Museum colleagues picking up the challenge?

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A RESPONSE TO MAGGS: DERRICOURT MISINTERPRETED

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We take your point about the distribution of potsherds with Early Iron Age (EIA) attributes as far west as Port Alfred, and agree that we should have phrased the first sentence of our report (Binneman *et al.* 1992) slightly differently. Our concern, however, was with providing a short report on a new site. We were aware of the

material cited by Maggs (above) but we were intending to comment on it in greater detail in a more comprehensive paper dealing with evidence for the Early Iron Age in the eastern Cape.

We should like to take this opportunity to discuss the misconception which has been generated in the literature

around the nature of the potsherds from Derricourt's Chalumna excavations (1977). In your letter you say "Derricourt (1977) recorded sites of his Shixini ware as far west as the Chalumna River in the Ciskei, recognising its similarities to NC3". A careful examination of his published account suggests that there is insufficient evidence to support such an interpretation. Derricourt named the pottery from his Chalumna excavations "Chalumna Ware" (Derricourt 1977:130, 131:table 17, 132:table 18, 133) for the following reasons, "The pottery is unusual compared with certain other coastal assemblages in several ways: **the absence of any incised or impressed decorations** or stratified burnish places it outside the known coastal assemblages and most inland groups. There is no assemblage in the region clearly parallel" (*ibid*:98, our emphasis). On page 130 he repeats in his description of Chalumna Ware, "The pottery is undecorated". Furthermore, it is only of medium thickness, and in table 18 (*ibid*:132) he notes that the rims do not conform to the types common to Shixini Ware. He clearly distinguishes between Chalumna Ware and Shixini Ware. There is no compelling evidence to suggest that the excavated site at Chalumna River represents an Early Iron Age site, indeed the date of 510 ± 45 BP (Pta-932) for the pottery horizon indicates that it is not.

The confusion regarding the exact nature of the ware from the Chalumna excavations may have arisen as a result of a number of unfortunate juxtapositions in Derricourt's publication. Drawings of Early Iron Age potsherds (*ibid*: 130 fig. 33), labelled Shixini Ware are positioned next to his description of Chalumna Ware creating the impression that these sherds came from his excavations. However, these illustrated potsherds are from his sites 570 and 686, which refer respectively to the site of Shixini in the Willowvale district and to Lambasi in the Lusikisiki district.

Apart from the excavated midden at Chalumna, which he named CHE, Derricourt also recorded (but did not excavate) a number of other shell middens to the south-west of the river mouth, one of them being site 586. This site, with cattle and sheep/goat remains, he notes "also has very different pottery from CHE; it has ware close to that we link in this volume to Iron Age by parallel in type with inland sites and decoration seen up coast with this temper parallel to Natal Iron Age" (*ibid*:108). In other words the pottery from site 586 represents his Shixini ware from the Chalumna River. In his description

of the pottery he mentions 133 plain body sherds but no decorated sherds. It is clear that he sees the affinities between his surface collections from site 586 at Chalumna and the EIA material from Natal to be in the temper of the pottery. Despite the fact that the site contained no decorated pottery it was, however, listed as one of his Shixini sites (*ibid*:130). His other Shixini sites on the Ciskei (west of the Kei River) coast are Ncera Mouth, Cove Rock and Gonubie Springs. We have examined the potsherds from these sites (they will be discussed in a later paper) and do not believe that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that they represent EIA settlements.

Numerous potsherds which could be ascribed to the EIA have been collected in the past from the coast west of the Kei River (Rudner 1968). However, isolated fragments of EIA pottery, some found as far west as Alexandria, do not necessarily represent Early Iron Age (or early agriculturist (Maggs 1992)) settlement. Very little is known about the nature of the occupation along the Ciskei section of the Eastern Cape coast during the first millenium AD. Historical accounts mention that the Gonaqua Khoikhoi occupied this region but we have yet to determine how, if at all, their archaeological signature may be distinguished from the Early and Later Iron Age peoples. Extensive interaction and trade between the various inhabitants of the Eastern Cape cannot be ruled out as a possible explanation for the widespread distribution of EIA potsherds west of the Kei River. In our paper (Binneman *et al.* 1992) we emphasised the significance of the fact that Kulubele is in fact an *in situ* EIA settlement whereas there is no similar hard evidence from the coast.

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