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Johan Binneman
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The aim of *Southern African Field Archaeology* is to communicate basic data to professional archaeologists and the public.

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.

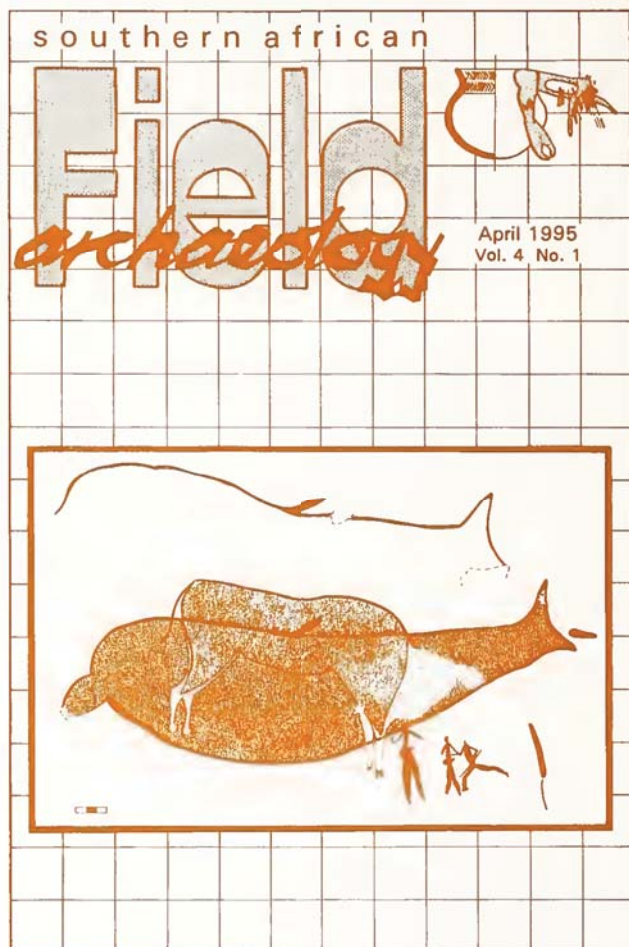
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Cover illustration:

Rock painting of two ichthyoids from Rose Cottage Cave, Ladybrand District, Free State, p. 3.

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OPINIONS

The good news is that Southern African Field Archaeology is now an accredited journal. The bad news is that this does not change the journal's financial position. It goes without saying that this achievement would not have been possible without the contributions and support of our colleagues. We would like to extend our gratitude to those who submitted papers for publication during the past three years and to those colleagues from Declared Cultural Institutions who recommended that Field be accredited. We would also like to thank the Editorial Board and other referees who devoted their time and energy in assisting us. We are grateful for encouragement and advice which we received during the past few years. You may have noticed that the composition of the Editorial Board shows some changes from the previous editions. We have decided to give some members a 'rest' and others a chance.

Field was established in 1992 and is now in its fourth year of publication. The aim of Field is to publish papers relating to southern African archaeology. Field was created as a forum for original research, site reports, student research projects, contract projects, etc. In other words it is intended to provide an avenue for the publication of basic data not readily available to researchers and which would not generally be published by other journals. To encourage students to publish their research, Field has run a student competition in the past and will continue to do so in the future. However, much to our disappointment only one South African Archaeology Department has subscribed to Field during the past three years and another subscribed this year. Notwithstanding, it has come to light that Field articles are regularly used in teaching.

This brings me to another important point touched on earlier. Accreditation, apart from a certain amount of status, does not provide any benefits to Field. Publication costs (cost of paper increased by 26% in 1994) and postage increase every year, while subscriptions on the other hand do not follow this trend. Much of the cost of publishing Field come from subscribers, but a substantial amount is contributed by

the Albany Museum. The question is how does one cope with ever rising costs and a slow growing subscription rate without increasing the subscription fee substantially?

It would appear that this problem is certainly not experienced only by Field. The previous editor of the South African Bulletin, Janette Deacon, raised similar issues in her Editorial of June 1993. She rightly asked a very pertinent question ... "is publication of your results a right or a privilege?" She continues to note that;

Unfortunately, the decision whether or not to publish a paper cannot always be based solely on merit. In the current depressed economic climate in South Africa and elsewhere, it can be influenced by financial considerations, particularly in the case of longer articles. Some journals are now requiring authors to pay up to R100 a page for publishing their articles; other will publish only if an institutional subsidy is received; and some ask for a non-returnable fee to be submitted with every article.

It will no doubt be a sad day for archaeology if research results cannot be published because the researcher or the institution cannot pay publishing fees. However, it will be an equally sad day if there are no journals to publish research due to a lack of publishing funds. Let's analyse the situation.

We are all aware that most researchers these days work under the sword of "publish or perish" and as a researcher said the other day, "publications bring research money into my department". This is exactly the point I want to make. When Field was launched in 1992 some colleagues from Declared Cultural Institutions indicated that they were not prepared to

publish in Field, because they would not benefit financially from it. As a matter of fact some were even discouraged by their institution from submitting papers to Field.

Researchers at Declared Cultural Institutions, or the institution (not at provincial level), get handsome subsidies for publishing articles in accredited journals. Some researchers benefit directly from these subsidies, others don't. Whatever the case, they still have access to institutional publishing funds. Therefore, it would not be unfair of journals to charge page fees to cover layout and printing costs.

In the good old days radiocarbon dates were free, now researchers must budget directly or indirectly for this service. The same applies to academic journals, as they provide a service (pay 14% general sales tax on subscriptions) to the researcher. Thus, as in the case of other research expenses, it will be required from researchers in the future to budget also for publishing costs. As much as we regret this, Field will be obliged from next year to charge a page fee from those researchers at institutions who receive publication subsidies or who can afford to do so. However, we will never reject an article for publication on financial grounds only - communication of basic archaeological data will always be our primary purpose.

If you have any opinion regarding this or any other issue, feel most welcome to air your view by writing to the editors.

Johan Binneman

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REPORTS

AMERICAN ROCK ART RESEARCH ASSOCIATION: INTERNATIONAL ART CONGRESS 1994

FRANS PRINS

*Natal Museum, Private Bag 9070,
Pietermaritzburg, 3200*

During the period 27 May - 3 June 1994 an international rock art congress was held at the Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff under the auspices of the American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA). ARARA is a member of the International Federation of Rock Art Organisations (IFRAO) which represents 20 organisations world-wide including the South African Rock Art Research Association (SARARA). Every year one of the organisations affiliated with IFRAO hosts an international rock art congress - the venue for the 1995 congress, for instance, will be at Torino in Italy under the auspices of the Centro Studi E Museo D'Arte Preistorica, Pinerolo.

Although delegates to this congress were mostly Americans, speakers from other nationalities were also represented and included countries as diverse as Australia, Macedonia, Britain, Norway, Holland, Germany, France, Mexico, Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Namibia, Portugal, Canada and South Africa. In addition the organisers of the conference extended invitations to representatives of American Indian groups who are presently living in areas containing Indian rock art. South African delegates to this congress included Thomas Dowson, David Lewis-Williams, Tony Manhire and Frans Prins. The ARARA Congress was attended by well over a thousand people making this one of the

largest international rock art congresses ever held.

The variety of papers presented were dealt with in twenty separate sessions. These included general sessions as well as those dealing with more specific topics such as The Shamanistic Interpretation of Rock art, Serpent Motif, Arizona Rock art, Ecology of Rock Art, Rock Art and Religion, Oceania, Preservation and Conservation, Archaeometry, Recording and Early Rock Art in the Americas. The session dealing with the shamanistic interpretation of rock art was well attended - not surprising as many American researchers favour the shamanistic approach.

Thomas Dowson presented a paper on Shamanism and rock art - an historical overview. In this paper he showed that shamanistic interpretations have been applied since the 1890's and that some of these early interpretations were applied in American rock art. David Lewis-Williams presented a paper entitled *Dying to the world: shamanistic metaphor and animal behaviour in southern African rock art*. This paper investigated some of the animal related concepts of the "death" metaphor as it was used by San shamans and artists. Tony Manhire presented a paper on the motifs and metaphors in the rock art of the south-western Cape. He argued that the rock art imagery of the south-western Cape carries symbolic and metaphoric meaning as well as literal

information. His paper in particular examined a number of motifs and linked images illustrating the relationship between artists belief systems and their environment. I presented a paper entitled Social change and its implications for altered states of consciousness in San rock art. In this paper I argued that altered states of consciousness are socially structured and that a change in the social structure of any particular group will be accompanied by transformations in the trance-like experiences of magico-religious functionaries belonging to such groups. Altered states of consciousness could change into a new form, transform into overt ritual or disappear completely. Such transformations are also depicted in some examples of rock art thereby showing that the San producers of rock art were highly dynamic and that their world views did not remain static.

Although the shamanistic interpretation of rock art may be well advanced in southern africa there are other lines of rock art research where this is not the case. American and Australian researchers, for instance, have established a more refined and accurately dated sequence of rock art styles than has been the case in South Africa.

British, American and especially Australian researchers have done outstanding work on pigment analysis. It also appears from the conference papers that American and Australian researchers have managed to integrate the so-called dirt archaeology more successfully with rock art interpretations than has been the case in southern Africa. Particularly interesting was a production or utilisation of rock art sites by contemporary societies - these studies are more anthropologically orientated in contrast to most rock art research which is guided by archaeological principles. Although southern African rock art has potential to be studied along lines similar to those utilised abroad relevant research programmes still need to be implemented. However, the various papers presented at the congress have been valuable in that they highlighted both the strengths and weaknesses of South African rock art studies.

The ARARA congress was concluded with fieldtrips to famous rock art sites such as Barrier Canyon, Homolovi, Red Cliffs, and Newspaper Rock. These included rock art examples which clearly belonged to different periods and styles.