

# TLOKWA HISTORY: REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF STONE-WALLED SITES IN THE NORTH-EASTERN FREE STATE\*

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## ABSTRACT

Several previously undescribed stone-walled sites in the north-eastern Free State are recorded and considered with reference to our present knowledge about the distribution and characteristic features of Late Iron Age settlement patterns. An unfamiliar find of structures with bilobial houses (Type Z) in association with a cluster of byres with connecting walls (Type V) is addressed. This combination raises questions on the origin, association and classification of some of the sites, and it is expected that future research could add new dimensions to our current views. The north-eastern Free State represents the traditional area occupied mainly by the Tlokwa tribe of Sekonyela and Basia people of Mantatise during pre-Difaqane times. Due to a lack of archaeological information on the cultural history sequence of this area, these living sites have not been linked with the history of the early inhabitants. The paper also describes and debates rectangular stone-walled features possibly dating from the occupation by early European stock farmers.

## INTRODUCTION

The Iron Age archaeology of the Free State is characterised by a wide distribution of stone-walled sites. These prehistoric structures on the flat-topped ridges have generated interest over the years and the dome-shaped stone huts (Fig. 1) in particular, have captured the imagination of both layman and scientist. Studies on the history and ways of living of the early inhabitants of the region have revealed detail and consistency in the arrangement and design of the structures. People's expression of culture has left its imprint on the material environment. Thus, recognised settlement patterns display people's perceptions with regard to social clustering, economic system and political organisation. Patterns are indicated by the arrangement of huts, byres and middens in a particular order and in relation to one another. Spatial organisation in general is characterised by the central position of stock byres and the placing of the main dwelling area on the perimeter of the settlement. From the archaeological investigations it also becomes clear that during the Later Iron Age the emphasis was not only on stone-building, for additional structures of perishable materials, supplementing living space, have also been revealed (Fig. 2). All the characteristics of settlement patterns allow the immediate recognition of specific groups of people populating the landscape.

It is important to note that the majority of stone walls erected by indigenous people in the Free State since the 17th century were built in a customary manner of two faces of stacked stones with a rubble infill (Fig. 11).

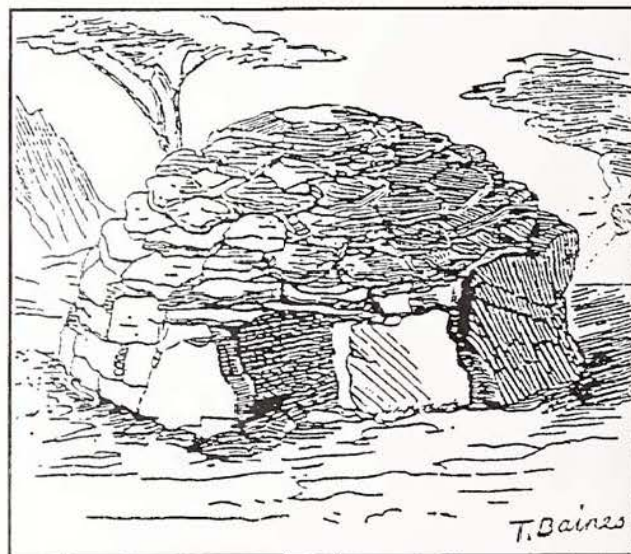


Fig. 1. Corbelled stone hut (Thomas Baines).

Furthermore, all the stone structures from the prehistoric era are either circular or oval in plan. Rectangular buildings or byres are normally either associated with missionary predominance or could represent European preference during early colonial times (*cf.* Frescura 1989).

The first major contribution to our knowledge of the prehistory of the Free State was afforded by Maggs' 1976 classification of settlement patterns recognised on aerial photographs. This classification produced a stand-



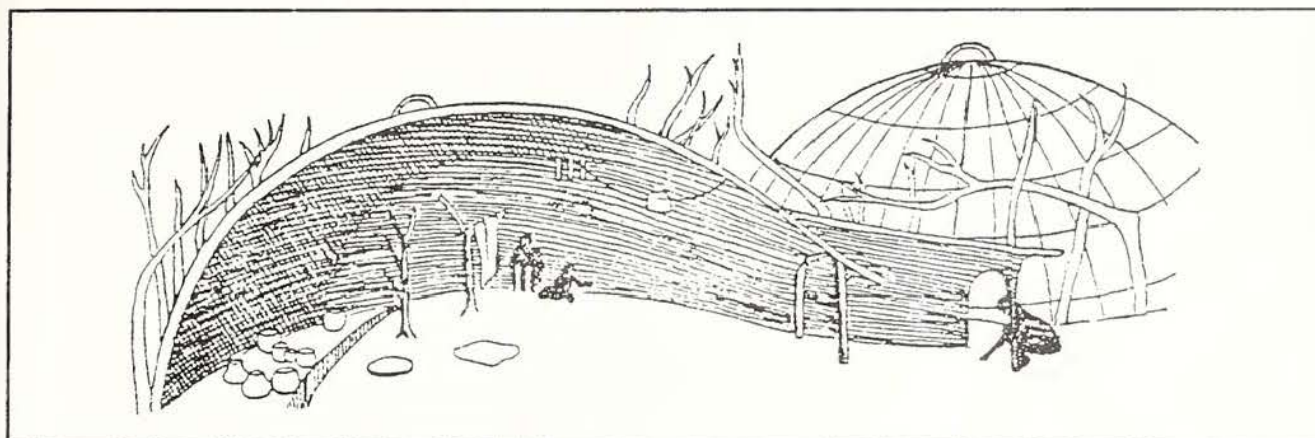


Fig. 2. Traditional hut of the Basotho (Casalis 1861).

ardised archaeological framework for the ordering of structures and sites characterised respectively by connecting walls (Type V), surrounding walls (Type N) and huts with bilobial courtyards (Type Z). Furthermore, the research indicated that the division of sites based on layout is confirmed by associated pottery assemblages with different decoration styles (Maggs 1976:290). Different settlement patterns also produced huts of different materials in different styles.

#### PRESENT KNOWLEDGE ON LATE IRON AGE SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

Settlement patterns and related hut types and pottery styles of the three main classes defined by Maggs (1976) for the southern highveld will now be discussed. The distribution of settlement types (Maggs 1976:38-39) and elaborate descriptions of the characteristic features of the different patterns have been given previously (Maggs 1976; Dreyer 1991, 1996) and will only be summarised here.

##### Type V

Type V is named after Vegkop, the well known Ndebele - Voortrekker battle site of 1836 south of Heilbron. Major excavations were conducted some 50 km from Vegkop at Makgwareng (OO1) near Lindley, and at OU2(2) on Smaldeel 719, Vrede, as well as at OND3 (Tihela) in the Mequatling area, Clocolan district. Recent research at Jansfontein 368, Ventersburg, has given supportive dates and findings, but the report has not yet been finalised (cf. Coetsee 1986, 1987; Dreyer 1992).

Settlements classified as Type V are located in the central and eastern Free State over a considerable area roughly marked off by the towns of Marquard, Ventersburg, Senekal, Lindley and Heilbron, and in the districts of Bethlehem, Reitz, Frankfort, Warden and Vrede to the east.

Village layout consists of a group of circular or oval stone enclosures of varying sizes arranged in a rough circle, joined by connecting walls to form a large single enclosure (Fig. 3). Excavated remains indicate that huts

of perishable materials were erected on the periphery some distance from the central group of stone structures (Maggs 1976; Dreyer 1992).

Corbelled stone huts were in some cases part of the central cluster of cattle byres, but are not considered as a characteristic feature of Type V settlements (Maggs 1976:28, 314). These huts were built of rough undressed stone without any mortar. To form the dome, stones were stacked in such a way as to make each consecutive circular layer smaller than the previous one, the wall thus curving inwards until the final opening at the top could be closed by a single flat stone. A very low lintelled doorway is left at ground level. Although certain individual specimens remain undamaged, the majority of these huts are in a collapsed state. The ancient appearance and the relatively small size of the structures led to a belief by local people that the huts were occupied by a now extinct pygmy tribe (Taylor 1986).

The locality of some of these huts in association with stock enclosures suggest that they could have been used as shelter or protection for young or small domestic animals. The retrieval of pottery, beads, iron implements and grinding stones on well smeared floors and hearths in courtyards in front of the corbelled huts at Makgwareng (OO1) and OXF1 (Maggs 1976) and Bekkersberg, Ventersburg (White *et al.* n.d.), proves that others were occupied by humans.

Early authors such as Stow (1905), Arbousset (1846) and Ellenberger (1912), favoured the Leghoya as the builders of the corbelled huts. Information indicates that the Leghoya eventually landed up with the Taung in the south of Lesotho (Walton 1956:27). The Leghoya assumption for the origins of the corbelled huts was followed up by Walton (1956, 1965) and Van Riet Lowe (1927), who popularised and established the name. Maggs (1976:4-5) did not fully support this view. He argued that the Type V sites could be ascribed to an occupation by Kgatla, Taung or Tlokoa peoples (*ibid* 316). In reality the distribution of Type V is too widespread for them to have been built by a single Sotho group (Maggs 1976:142). It is also true that the area occupied by the Taung coincides with the distribution of



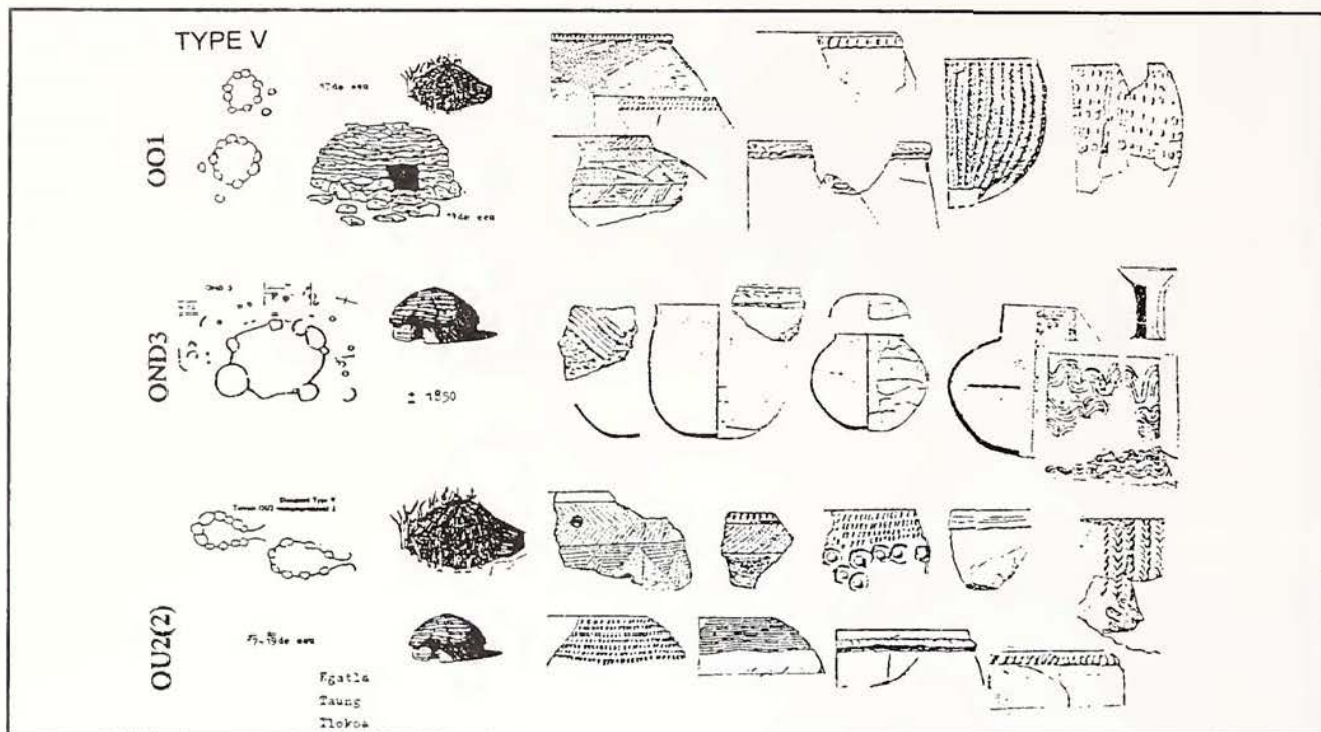


Fig. 3. TYPE V: Settlement pattern, hut type and pottery assemblage.

the corbelled stone huts in the area more to the west (Maggs 1976:5, 229, 314, 316; Arbousset 1846; Moletsane 1967).

The pottery assemblage associated with Type V is characterised by rough finger-pinched decorations in bands below the rim and on the body of vessels, and comb-stamping in pendant triangles combined with ochre burnish (Fig. 3). Pottery from OND3, however, display different vessel profiles and decoration modes (Maggs 1976:193-210).

According to radiocarbon dating and historical sources, Type V sites were occupied during the 17th to early 19th century at Lindley (OO1) and Vrede (OU2(2)), and about 1850 at Clocolan (OND3).

#### Type N

These settlements are named after Ntsuanatsatsi (Tafelkop), a solitary hill along the road between Frankfort and Vrede. Great symbolic value is attached to the name and some Sotho still believe in an almost Biblical creation legend which proclaims that man originated from a reed bed at Ntsuanatsatsi (Ellenberger 1912:18).

Type N settlements are located in the north-eastern Free State around the towns of Warden, Frankfort and Vrede, where excavations have been done at the farms Helena, OU1 (Ntsuanatsatsi) and Zoethron 151, OU2(1) in the lower Klip River valley.

The settlement plan shows a central complex of stock pens surrounded by a ring of domed grass huts, in their turn enclosed by boundary walls, with middens scattered on the outside. At some of the sites (OU2), Type V

settlements and an elongated version of Type V (OU2 unit 2) occur. Corbelled huts are totally absent. The houses were of reeds and grass plastered with clay, and the floors consisted of dung smeared over stone paving.

The finger-pinched and comb-stamped pottery with ochre burnish, closely resemble the Type V assemblage (Fig. 4).

The occupation of Type N settlements is linked to the early Fokeng, Koena and Kgatla lineages (Maggs 1976:315). Based on radiocarbon dating and lore, Type N sites were occupied during the 15th century (OU1) and 16th to early 17th century at OU2(1).

Maggs (1976:159, 192, 315) claims that a transition in settlement pattern took place when corbelled huts were added to the Type N settlement in a restricted area at Skaaprand, to the west near Ntsuanatsatsi, transforming these units to Type V. This change allegedly took place during the 16th to early 17th century or even as late as the 18th or beginning of the 19th century. Although alterations to the walls clearly took place these ruins do not appear convincing as corbelled huts, but rather very much resemble the low stone-walled structures at Doornpoort, Winburg (Dreyer 1992). The postulated transition from Type N to Type V is also not supported by the evidence at sites on nearby Peme (Leeukop) where corbelled huts are totally absent (Maggs 1976:144).

#### Type Z

Type Z settlements are sparsely scattered over a relatively limited area in the vicinity of Doringberg (Maphororong) (Dreyer 1997) and Sandrivierspoort (Mariba), adjacent to the Sand River near the main road



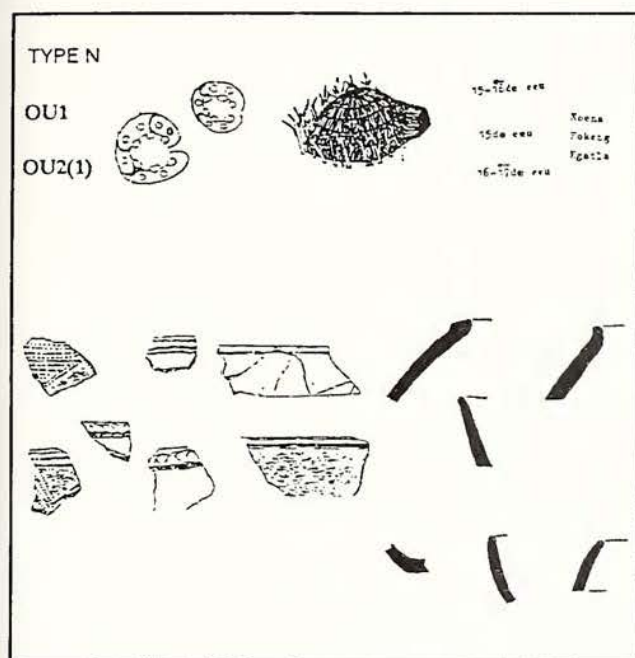


Fig. 4. TYPE N: Settlement pattern, hut type and pottery assemblage.

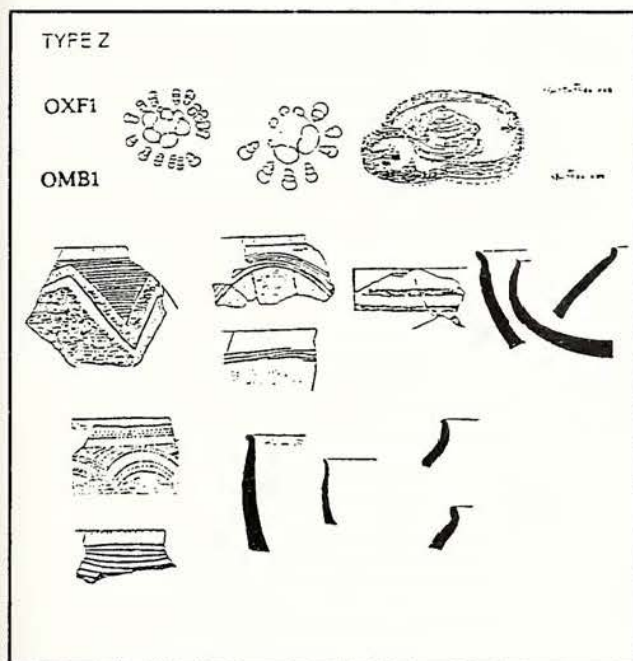


Fig. 5. TYPE Z: Settlement pattern, hut type and pottery assemblage.

between Winburg and Ventersburg (Maggs 1976:317), and to the north-west along the Vals River in the districts of Kroonstad and Bothaville, including a few sites on the Renoster River, east of Viljoenskroon (Maggs 1976:231).

Excavations were done at Matloang (OXF1 Ventersburg) and Mophathe (OMB1 Bothaville) respectively (Maggs 1976). More recent work at Jansfontein 368 on the Doringberg ridge near Ventersburg, produced new

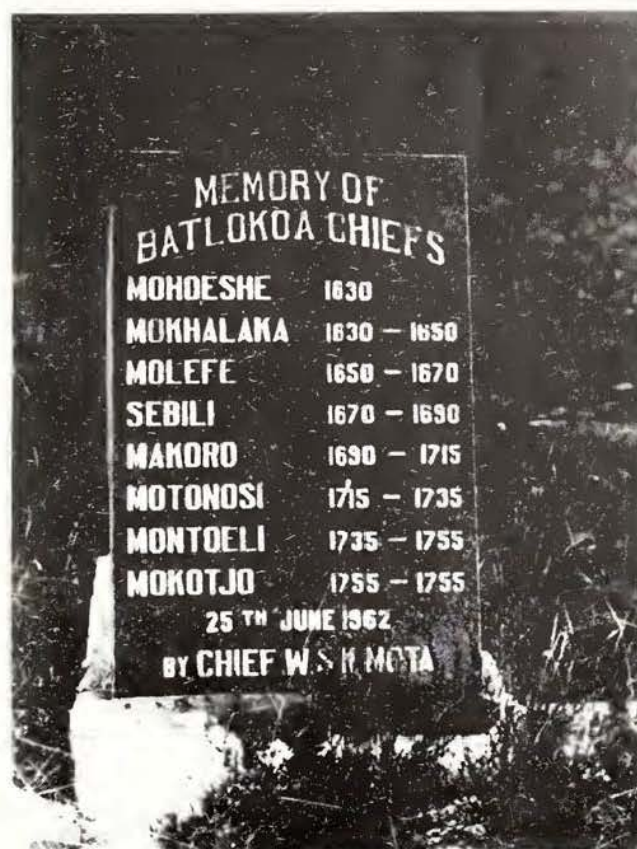


Fig. 6. The monument commemorating eight generations of Tlokwa chiefs at Sunrise (Nkwe) near Verkykerskop (Sefate).

supporting dates (Dreyer 1992:355) but findings are still to be published (Coetsee 1986, 1987).

Hut remains inside the broader living area, normally show up as a ring of upright stones surrounding a paved floor. From this it is concluded that Type Z dwellings consisted of a cone on cylinder hut with stone-walled courtyards at both front and rear (OXF1), forming a bilobial layout. These bilobial dwellings were normally arranged around a cluster of central cattle byres. Raw materials have been substituted at different localities, resulting in a variation in Type Z settlements where clay walls replaced stone-walling of the front lobe at Mophathe (OMB1) (Maggs 1976), Middenspruit 151 on the Vals River, west of Kroonstad (personal observation by author) and near the Sand River in the Willem Pretorius Game Reserve, Ventersburg (Dreyer 1997:88).

The OXF1 type site is located on a low dolerite ridge at the farm Strydfontein 211, about 4km west of Ventersburg on the way to Henneman. According to Maggs (1976:230, 317), this area is known as Matloang, a name which is also given to Erasmusspruit south of the site.

The site consists of an elaborate arrangement of stone-walled structures. Large middens and extensive building indicate a prolonged occupation. The settlements are particularly concentrated but still leave sufficient space for easy movement. In some cases where the circular form of the byres was retained, the proximity of byres



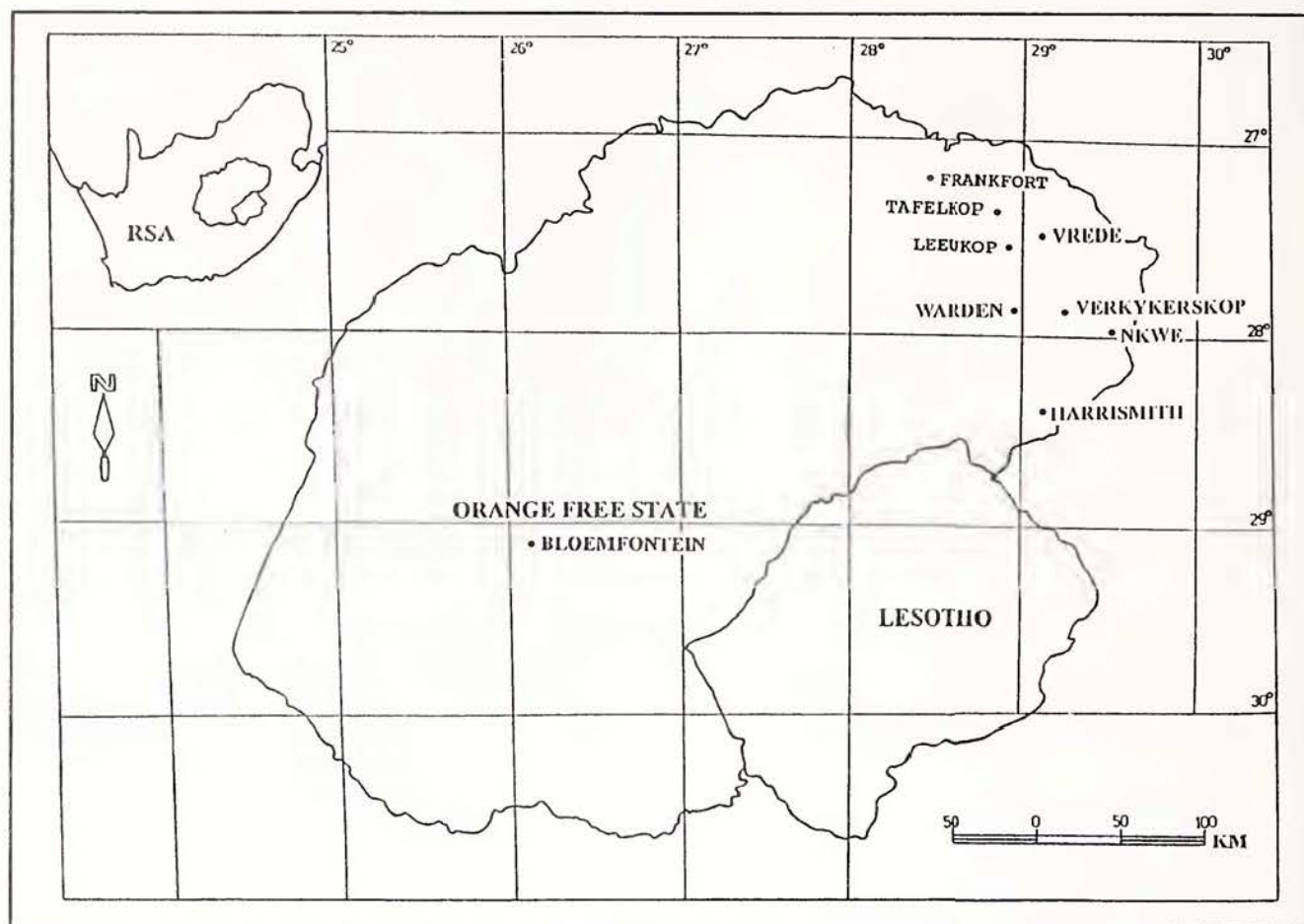


Fig. 7. Survey area.

resulted in double walling and a waste of the triangular area formed between three pens. Where the structures become crammed, it tends to be difficult to distinguish individual settlements, although the Type Z hut layout is clear throughout.

Cattle byres occupy the central area of the settlement with bilobial dwellings arranged on the outside. Maggs (1976:232) indicates the thickening of the kraal walls on either side of the entrance as a characteristic feature of the stone walling at Type Z.

No individual corbelled hut occurs in association with either bilobial dwellings or the central cattle byres, but an exceptional group of these huts is located some distance away towards the southern limits of the site. These include two circular structures of a lighter construction which might have had thatched roofs over low stone walls (Maggs 1976:244).

Pottery decorations associated with Type Z are characterised by shallow line incisions in bands and triangles below the rim and on the shoulder, combined with straight or curved lines and areas of red ochre burnish on the body of vessels (Fig. 5).

Ceramics from the corbelled hut cluster display the characteristic grooved decorations and ochre lines, similar to the rest of the Type Z assemblage. Vitriified clay, flaked stones and drawn copper wire were also

recovered. Several lower grinding stones were found in association with the huts, indicating grinding as an important activity (cf. Walton 1951:45).

Corresponding pottery indicates that the occupation of the corbelled hut settlement was contemporary with the rest of the site (Maggs 1976:244). The variation in building style and placing outside the Type Z complex could imply a social difference and lower status in the occupants (cf. Ellenberger 1912:19, 56; Laidler 1936:56).

Maggs (1976:293) ascribes the occupation of the sites with bilobial dwellings to Thlaping and Rolong groups. He also states that it is possible to link Kubung people to every known Type Z settlement (*ibid.* 317). According to radiocarbon dating and oral history, Type Z sites were occupied from the 16th and 17th to early 19th century at OXF1, and 18th to early 19th century at OMB1. A single bone sample from Jansfontein 368, located to the east of Ventersburg, produced a calibrated date of 1670, which is slightly later than OXF1 (Dreyer 1992:355).

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SURVEY AREA

The region around Warden, Frankfort, Vrede and Verkykerskop has always been accepted as the traditional



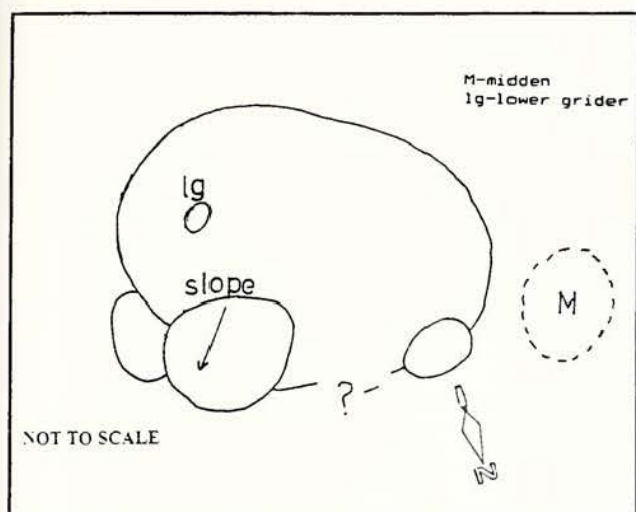


Fig. 8. Site plan Live and Hope 1074 Harrismith 2829AB.

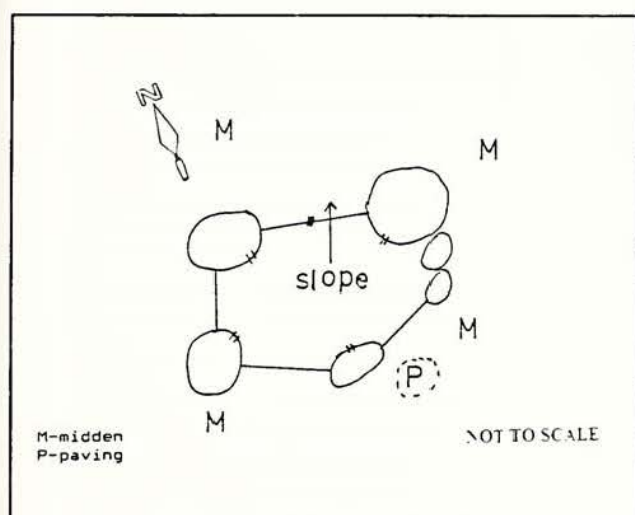


Fig. 9. Site plan Alluviaal Randt 1393 Harrismith 2829AB

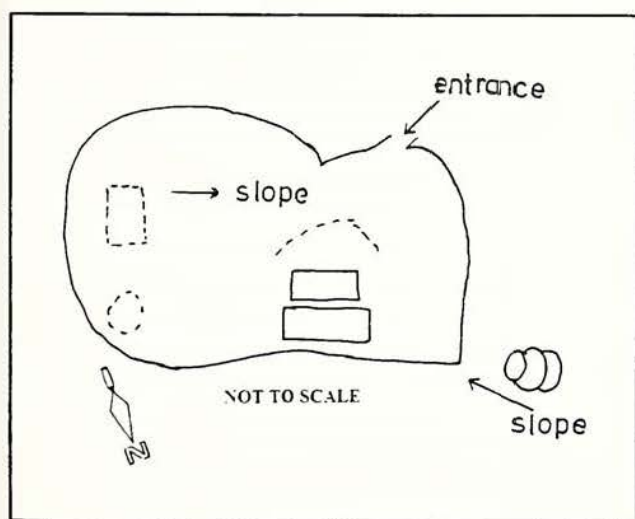


Fig.10 Site plan Unit 1 Nox 938 Harrismith 2729CD.

living place of the Batlokwa and Basia people before the Difaqane. (Ellenberger 1912; Steytler 1932; Sharratt 1968; Maggs 1976:142; Kriel 1976; Hawkins 1984).

Informed people have always been aware of the historical significance of the region and others are becoming increasingly interested in the actual history of their ancestral sites. A monument to commemorate Tlokwa heritage and to indicate the larger area in which at least eight generations of their chiefs were buried (Kriel 1976), was erected by the late Chief Wessels Mota of Qwaqwa on the farm Morgenlicht 869 (Sunrise) in 1962 (Fig. 6). According to landowners people still visit these sites regularly to pay homage through prayers and sacrifice.

Some of the more important sites are known but other Tlokwa historical sites in this region have not yet been identified. Tlokweg, where Motonosi allegedly gathered his people is indicated somewhere near the town of Vrede and the Vaal River (Kriel 1982a:25). There is also reference to Lejwe Motho, located between Ntsuanatsatsi (Tafelkop) and Vrede, where Lebaka of the Bamokgalong (Tsotetsi) group settled for some time (Kriel 1982a:21,25). This reference brings us to Leeukop (Peme), south of Ntsuanatsatsi (Maggs 1976:142). The Malakeng, an independent Tlokwa group, was also living at Seropong (Ellenberger 1912:47; Webb 1950:56), a locality which is still unknown.

Basia people were in this particular region, somewhat further up the valley of the Wilge River, always in close relation with the Tlokwa (Ellenberger 1912:119; Maggs 1976:142, 309, 316). To complicate matters further, it is known that shortly before the outbreak of the Difaqane, a group of Hlubi under their chief Motsholi came from east of the Drakensberg to settle in the Tlokwa area (Ellenberger 1912:45; Kriel 1982a:28; Kriel 1982b:21). The localities of their settlements are still unidentified.

## ENVIRONMENT

The survey area is characterised by undulating grass-covered hills and ridges above low-lying stream beds. The vegetation has previously been described as the southern variation of the *Cymbopogon-Themeda* veld, characterised by a moderately dense grassveld cover of mainly *Themeda triandra*, *Cymbopogon plurinodis* and *Eragrostis* sp. (Acocks 1988:100, veld type 48a). The hills are almost treeless with only scatters of indigenous shrubs and karroid intrusion in places. A more recent description classifies the vegetation as Moist Cool Highveld grassland at an altitude between 1400 and 1600 m. The annual rainfall is around 600 to 700 mm (Low & Rebelo 1996:43, veld type 39).

Soils of the region originate from sediments of the Karoo Sequence upon Witwatersrand shales and lava of the Ventersdorp Supergroup (Low & Rebelo 1996:43). The height of these hills and ridges is confusing and often underestimated. The ridges with stony outcrops form the





Fig. 11. Wall construction Nox 938 Harrismith 2729CD.

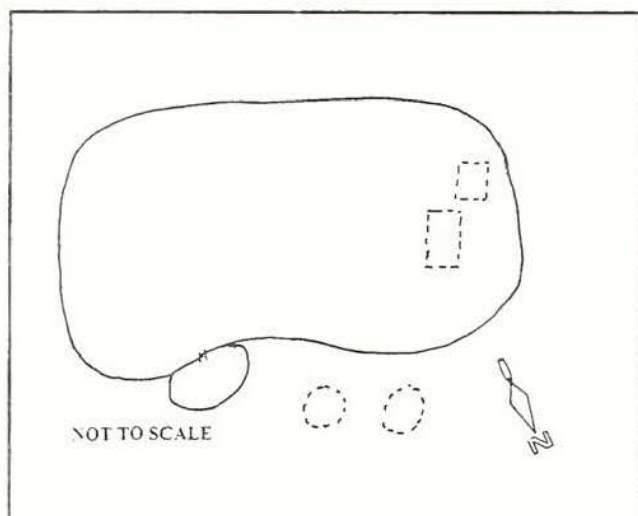


Fig. 12. Site plan Unit 2 Nox 938 Harrismith 2729CD.

locality of stone-wall remnants of the early inhabitants of the area.

### THE PRESENT SURVEY

The survey involved a preliminary assessment of stone-walled archaeological sites in the north-eastern Free State (Fig. 7). The aim of the survey was to locate and record the sites, to assess their significance and to determine their cultural affinities. No excavations were done. The survey was based on an open approach to implement all the available information about the history and cultural heritage of the region. This included a review of the existing data base at the National Museum, Bloemfontein, an examination of the official 1:8000 aerial photographs and a short field visit.

Sites recorded during the present survey correspond to the criteria for the Type V settlement pattern according to Maggs' 1976 archaeological framework. Although Maggs (1976:318) associates the Type V sites with the occupation by the Tlokwa and Taung, a direct correlation

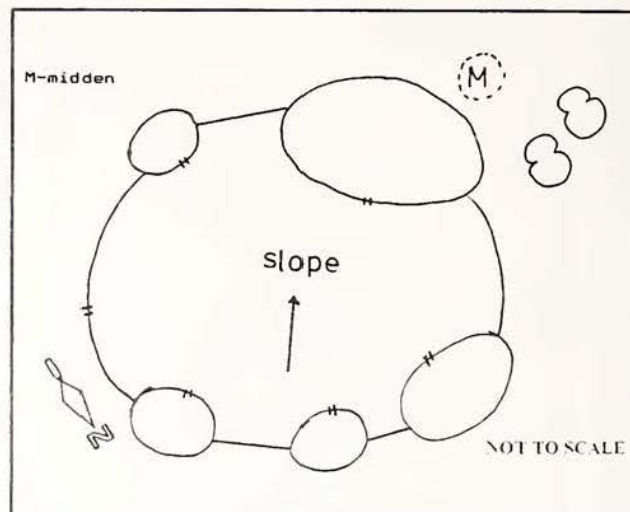


Fig. 13. Site plan Dinasdeel 1494 Harrismith 2729CC.

of the stone ruins in the survey area with Tlokwa history has not been established. Personal observations at the known Tlokwa sites (Sefate and Nkwe) showed remains of large central cattle byres without the connecting walls that are the characteristic feature of Type V.

A 1982 reconnaissance concentrated specifically on Tlokwa sites in the vicinity of Verkykerskop, while the present survey covers a wider area towards Warden. A total of 26 stone-walled settlements were identified, with another 35 possible sites to be investigated. This involved about 25 farms, but after some assessment the number could be reduced to only 5 farms containing sites of significance. A field visit was undertaken during September 1998 to locate, record and investigate the stone-walled sites for settlement pattern, pottery assemblages and other characteristics, as well as their state of preservation, and to evaluate the importance of some of the most prominent features.

### STONE-WALLED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

This report includes information on the location of stone-walled sites, their characteristic features and significance. It is also attempted to ascertain their cultural value and historical background.

#### Live and Hope 1074 Harrismith

The farm Live and Hope 1074 (28.03S; 29.23E) lies about 17 km south-east of Verkykerskop (2829 AB, 1966) in the district of Harrismith (Fig. 7). Stone-walled sites are found on the hill above the farmhouse (28.03S; 29.22E.). The settlement consists of a single large oval byre of about 35 m by 43 m diameter, with several smaller enclosures in association (Fig. 8). The walls seem to be in a fairly well preserved state. A midden is located a little distance up the slope above the byre. Undecorated potsherds were visible on the surface and a relatively large lower grinding stone was found inside the byre.



### Alluviaal Randt 1393 Harrismith

Alluviaal Randt 1393 (28.04S; 29.22E) is situated in the district of Harrismith (2829 AB, 1966), about 18 km south-east of Verkykerskop (Fig. 7). Stone-walled settlements occur on the ridge (28.05S; 29.22E) to the south above the farmhouse. Although the walls have been robbed extensively, the settlement pattern is still very clear from the remaining wall foundation stones (Fig. 9). The layout consists of four oval enclosures which could be described as byres with several smaller structures in association, all linked together by connecting walls to form a single large enclosure. According to these features the settlement is classified as Type V (Maggs 1976). At least four middens could be recognised on the periphery. Undecorated potsherds were visible on the soil surface. A paved area nearby indicated the remains of a hut floor.

### Nox 938 Harrismith

The farm known as Nox 938 is located (27.51S; 29.18,25E.) about 9 km north of Verkykerskop and about 34 km directly east of the town of Warden (Fig. 7). A single circular stone-walled structure of about 4m diameter was found on a low lying area (27.51S; 29.17,5E.) south of the Cornelis River which cuts through the farm (2729 CD, 1987). There is no midden or further indications of occupation associated with this structure and its purpose is not clear.

Two stone-walled complexes occur on top of the hill above the river (27.50S; 29.18E.). Settlement unit 1 is situated slightly lower down towards the edge of the cliff overlooking the river to the south. The layout includes a single large enclosure ( $\pm$  50 m x 25 m) which seems to be a stock byre (Fig. 10). The wall forms a clear rectangle on the north-west corner and an opening on the southern side could have been an entrance. Inside the main enclosure there are the remains of at least two smaller rectangular structures situated opposite the entrance, separated by narrow passages from each other and the outer wall. There are also the faint foundations of two features near the eastern wall on the cliff edge. A cluster of several smaller structures is found a little distance away towards the west. All the stone walls were built in the traditional manner of two faces of stacked stones with a rubble infill (Fig. 11).

Settlement unit 2 lies further to the north on top of the ridge. It consists of a large oval structure of about 25 m by 45 m (Fig. 12) with a smaller oval structure attached and opening into it. The stones of the foundation of two rectangular buildings are found inside the main enclosure.

Several other rectangular cattle byres are located in the vicinity. The context of these structures is not known. It is suggested that they could have been cattle posts during the colonial period when European farmers were occupying the area. The possibility that the material from traditional stone-walled sites was re-used by European farmers and their labourers cannot be ruled out.

### Rondekoppies 1212 Warden

The farm Rondekoppies 1212 (27.40S; 29.13E) is situated about 32 km north-east of Warden, 28 km south

of the town of Vrede and more or less the same distance north of Verkykerskop (Fig. 7). Presentkraal, Herklaaskop and the Witkoppe are prominent features in the vicinity (2729 CA, 1987). Several stone-walled complexes occur on this farm (27.40S; 29.13E.) and on the adjacent farm De Aar 702 (27.40S; 29.13E.). This includes rectangular stock byres and other structures that are clearly the remains of dwellings.

### Dinasdeel 1494 Harrismith

The farm is situated (27.52S; 29.07E) 15 km east of Warden on the gravel road to Verkykerskop (Fig. 7). Several clusters of stone-walling are found on top of the ridge and also below the outcrop, facing the Cornelis River in the distance, with the prominent Blouberg further towards the north.

In general the stone walls are in a relatively well preserved state, while specific individual cases of site movement are indicated by the remaining wall bases, which can still be recognised on the surface (*cf.* Maggs 1976:135, on site movement). At present the walls have a height of about 0,50 m, while the lack of excess stone could indicate that the walls were originally not much higher than at present.

The settlement pattern clearly consists of an arrangement of large and smaller oval or more or less circular structures, linked together by connecting walls to form an additional larger enclosure (Fig. 13), characteristic of the Type V settlement pattern (Maggs 1976).

In one particular case on the ridge, the presence of two living units with clearly identifiable front and rear courtyards forming a bilobial dwelling typical of Later Iron Age Type Z settlements (Fig. 5) makes this site very exceptional. The stone-walling of these particular structures does not seem to be any different from the rest of the site. With the associated midden on the periphery of the settlement, it undoubtedly forms part of the entire layout. Undecorated potsherds on the surface give no indication of the pottery assemblage associated with these bilobial structures.

A combination of these specific features, *i.e.* huts representing Type Z in association with a Type V settlement pattern (Fig. 3), have never been found previously. In the other exceptional case of OXF1, corbelled stone huts characteristic of Type V occur as part of a Type Z settlement (Maggs 1976:244).

## DISCUSSION

Several previously unrecorded stone-walled sites identified during the survey produced remains of two obviously different periods of occupation. The sites on Live and Hope 1074, Dinasdeel 1494 and Alluviaal Randt 1393 clearly represent a Later Iron Age occupation, while stone-walled structures on Rondekoppies 1212 and Nox 938 most likely date from a more recent period when the land must have been occupied by European farmers.

Features of several of these sites correspond with characteristics of the Type V Later Iron Age settlement



pattern (see also Allemansgras 611, Berwick 81, Sylvan 558). Others however, differ drastically from our previous knowledge and seems to indicate that different influences and priorities were important in this area during prehistoric times.

The diversity of layout patterns in the Free State shows that independent groups occupied the different settlements. It is generally accepted that the occupants of these stone-walled sites were the ancestors of the present day Sotho peoples (Wilson 1969, Maggs 1976, Evers 1984, Maggs *et al.* 1986). Although several authors refer to individual ethnic groups inhabiting the interior (Arbousset 1846; Ellenberger 1912; Moletsane 1967; Maggs 1976), we can only speculate about the occupants of specific sites. I argued in a previous publication (Dreyer 1992) that present and future archaeological studies can merely aim to identify different cultures rather than actual groups or individual leaders. In the past groups of people lived as independent political entities, or "ditjaba", and the ruling line of each had its own totem, or "seboko" (Ashton 1938). When their history is traced, confusion surrounds the application of these terms to the different groups (*cf.* Wilson 1971; Maggs 1976). The difference between lineages and political subdivisions has therefore not yet been correlated with cultural changes (Maggs 1976:318).

I also felt that the identification and classification of these defined units are of less importance in archaeological studies. If we search for lineages and tribes, we entangle ourselves in an impossible task. Therefore, the only aim should be to identify different cultures rather than to name specific groups (Dreyer 1992). In the present case, however, to clarify the history of these sites the decisive identification of a more specific cultural group is hoped for.

Although the sites have not been excavated, the characteristic features of the bilobial house layout of Type Z settlement pattern are quite obvious. No final explanation for the close association between the bilobial houses (Type Z) at a site characterised by cattle byres with connecting walls (Type V) can be given. Maggs' 1976 classification is based on the assumption that settlement layout is bound and prescribed by cultural perceptions, thus conceding to the identification of different ethnic groups from the way in which traditional peoples organised their different living places in terms of space and time (*cf.* Deetz 1967, Trigger 1968; Malan 1987). The final result was directed by cultural preference (choice) and function (Maggs 1976:285). Furthermore, the importance of livestock, personal status, kinship, social organisation and the diverse roles of men, women and offspring have always been important in the understanding of settlement patterns (Maggs 1976:23).

Bilobial dwellings have been linked to the Tlhaping and Barolong. In this case the eastern limits of the Type Z settlement pattern coincides with the known distribution of Tlhaping occupation (Maggs 1976:282). Furthermore, the building of cone-on-cylinder huts clearly depended on the availability of wood, which could have been an obstacle in the area presently under

discussion. If the structures found at Dinasdeels 1494 are indeed the remnants of bilobial dwellings and more were to be found in the area, it could extend the distribution of these sites and refute Maggs' (1976:282) assumption about the absence of bilobial huts from the mainly treeless area of the eastern Free State. Further research during the second phase of the current project may clarify this matter.

Rectangular stock byres and other structures as found at Nox 938 and Rondekoppies 1212, most probably date from the early European occupation of the area. These sites have never previously been documented, described or investigated by historians and archaeologists. The origin of these structures is unknown and enquiries among people in the area offered no reasonably acceptable explanation. Wall construction consisting of two faces of stacked stones with a rubble infill seems to indicate black expertise, while the rectangular form on the other hand, tends to imply European influence.

A possible explanation may be found in the size, layout and distribution of the units. It has been narrated by the old people that in bygone days, migratory stock farmers ("trekboere") from the area and from other districts such as Standerton and Volksrust -further north and east across the Vaal River, used to move their cattle on a seasonal basis to winter pastures in Natal and even to Swaziland. These treks were usually under the supervision of young European boys assisted by black herders. According to lore this movement of stock took place from long before the South African War and continued until the 1930s and 40s.

Bearing this in mind, it can be concluded that these byre sites could have been an aspect of a system of stock migration dating from colonial times. If it is kept in mind that European settlers were already herding stock, occupying land, building houses and burying their dead on the central highveld since the first two decades of the 19th century, it might be of importance to take note of these settlements during future archaeological research.

## CONCLUSION

The north-eastern Free State represents the traditional area occupied by the Tlokwa of Sekonyela, the Basia of Mantatisé, some Hlubi and other tribal groups during pre-Difaqane times. Due to a lack of archaeological information on the cultural history sequence of this area, these living sites have not been linked with the history of the early inhabitants. The association between the archaeological distribution and historical occupation of the area has not been clarified either and was again brought to the fore during the present survey.

Before these problems can be solved, an intensive archaeological investigation of the known Tlokwa sites is needed in order to identify their settlement pattern, house form and pottery assemblage. An elaborate recording and survey of sites in the area should be extended to include structures dating from colonial times. An association of sites and history should then be attempted.



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## CORRECTION

In the September 1998 issue of the *Southern Field Archaeology* Vol. 7 No. 2, part of Table 1 from the article; The compositional relationship between pottery and its source clay part 1: an example from the work of a traditional potter on the farm Nonnashoek, Bethlehem, Free State, by L. Jacobson, W.A. Van der Westhuizen and J. Dreyer, was omitted. Table 1 should read:

**Table 1. Data for the five potsherds and two clays. Base, rim and body refer to the type of sherd analyzed; "bc" is the black clay and "wc" the white clay. Major elements as oxides in weight per cent, traces as ppm. See text for further details.**

	bc 8	base 0	rim 4	body 7	wc 9	base 5	body 6
SiO <sub>2</sub>	67.00	76.27	74.74	73.39	76.81	81.04	80.62
TiO <sub>2</sub>	0.44	0.54	0.58	0.58	0.67	0.71	0.72
Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	13.78	13.78	14.37	14.96	10.99	11.23	11.68
Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	6.24	5.29	5.55	5.71	3.39	3.76	3.98
MnO	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
MgO	0.54	0.57	0.60	0.61	0.28	0.28	0.28
CaO	0.54	0.46	0.51	0.52	0.25	0.25	0.27
Na <sub>2</sub> O	0.12	0.23	0.18	0.21	0.04	0.00	0.00
K <sub>2</sub> O	1.51	1.82	1.86	1.86	1.40	1.52	1.54
P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub>	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03
H <sub>2</sub> O-	3.70	0.21	0.26	0.66	1.88	0.29	0.27
LOI	6.57	0.79	1.97	1.67	3.93	0.65	0.85
TOTAL	100.49	100.02	100.69	100.21	99.68	99.77	100.25
Rb	116	119	119	127	81	88	88
Sr	72	71	73	76	45	49	49
Y	32	36	37	38	26	30	31
Zr	195	243	253	261	358	381	390
Nb	7	10	10	11	11	13	13
Cu	17	15	16	17	6	9	9
Ni	30	25	25	26	13	12	13
Zn	62	55	55	60	32	33	33
V	91	85	85	89	96	88	87
Cr	91	74	79	81	70	65	66
Co	16	11	11	10	4	3	4