

# The Past Is a Divided Country: Transforming Archaeology in South Africa

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## Abstract

This article examines the political and institutional dimensions of archaeological practice in South Africa during the apartheid era and since the transition to democratic rule in 1994. We focus on the archaeological practices within institutional structures—the universities, heritage agencies, and museums. We examine the roles these institutions played in either perpetuating or challenging the disconnection between archaeological heritage and descendent communities prior to 1994, and whether the political changes that occurred since the end of apartheid have succeeded in creating an inclusive archaeological practice in South Africa. The Transformation Charter, adopted in 2008 by the Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists (ASAPA), requires that all those working in the field of archaeology in South Africa practice a form of archaeology that is “rooted in social awareness and social engagement” and aims to be “socially responsible.” We examine the extent to which progress has been made towards achieving those objectives.

## Keywords

South African archaeology; Social transformation; Apartheid; Post-apartheid; Social responsibility

## Introduction

The political history of the discipline of archaeology in South Africa has received much attention in the post-apartheid era (e.g., Delius and Marks 2012; Hall 2005; Ndlovu 2009a; Shepherd 1998, 2002a, b, 2003a, b; Schlanger 2002, 2003; Schrire 1995). In particular, Nathan Schlanger and Nick Shepherd have critically evaluated the manner in which archaeological practice was established in South Africa, the key personalities involved, the tensions that existed as a part as well as a product of South Africa’s apartheid history, the priorities of the early research agendas, and the politics in the production and dissemination of archaeological knowledge. More recently, Nick Shepherd and Martin Hall have explored the paradoxical growth of funding for the discipline during the 1970s and 1980s, a period one

might expect archaeology to have been suppressed by the government because of the potential contradiction of apartheid ideology by archaeological records.

Bruce Trigger (1990, p. 316) unambiguously concluded that the South African archaeology from 1960 through 1990 was "...the most colonial of all African archaeologies." It was a creation of the "white minority intelligentsia" whose "relationship to the majority of South Africans remains highly ambiguous" (also see Shepherd 2005, p. 123). Tony Humphreys, drawing examples from the apartheid-era works of Ray Inskip, Tim Maggs, and Revil Mason, has however argued the unfairness of labeling the aims of all South Africa-based archaeologists as colonialist. Humphreys explained the paucity of indigenous archaeologists trained prior to 1994 in terms of a broader societal lack of interest in archaeology and perceptions about poor job opportunities (see Ndlovu 2009a). He then sought to depoliticize the limited training opportunities for indigenous archaeologists during the apartheid period by noting "how little indigenization has taken place even since 1994" (Humphreys 2011, p. 2).

In this paper, we address the broad question that emanates from Humphreys' conclusion: why has little indigenization taken place in South African archaeology since 1994? We argue that this question can be answered adequately by considering the legacies of apartheid-era archaeology on contemporary practices and speaking with the living archaeologists and heritage practitioners in South Africa about their experiences. Our research agenda involved recorded interviews with senior South African archaeologists as well as with current and former archaeology students. This article is based on the information from those interviews. Most of our interviewees requested anonymity, and we only acknowledge the informants who explicitly asked to be named. Whereas there are now several publications on the history of South African archaeology, this is the first paper to focus solely on the oral history of the intersections of race and archaeological practice in South Africa in the context of post-apartheid social transformation. We draw inspiration from the work of Lyn Wadley who has written on the broader history of transformation and, in particular, of gender transformation within South African archaeology (Wadley 1997, 2013). We organize our discussion using the categories of universities, heritage agencies, and museums because these institutions broadly define the state of archaeology in South Africa.

## **Universities**

### **Pre-1994 Archaeology and Training**

The first university in South Africa to employ an archaeologist was the University of Cape Town (UCT) when it appointed John Goodwin as a research assistant in ethnology in 1923. Goodwin, a South African, earned his Ph.D. at the University of Cambridge under the supervision of Miles Burkitt. In the mid-1920s, he began teaching archaeology as a course within UCT's anthropology program. The first South African trained graduate to choose a career in archaeology was Barend Malan. He graduated from UCT in 1932 and was appointed in 1935 as a staff archaeologist at the newly established Bureau of Archaeology, founded and directed by Clarence Van Riet Lowe.

Another 20 years would pass before UCT produced its second archaeologist, Revil Mason, who graduated from the institution in 1953. Janette Deacon provides a generous explanation for this, excusing it as a result of the small number of enrolled students during the depressed years of the Second World War and its aftermath (Deacon 1990, p. 50). However, Mason (personal communication, 2012) laid the blame upon Goodwin's poor mentoring abilities. He

credited Keith Jolly, who taught first-year archaeology, for kindling his interest in archaeology. In contrast, Mason remembered that Goodwin, who taught second-year archaeology, failed to attend classes regularly and was poorly prepared when he did. Given the time that has passed, there is no one to corroborate or deny Mason's unfavorable view of Goodwin. In spite of this, Mason went on to study under Goodwin for his doctoral work. However, it was because of these concerns that Mason asked Van Riet Lowe, an amateur archaeologist, to serve as his co-supervisor. Mason was Goodwin's only doctoral student, and he graduated in 1958.

Besides Malan and Mason, three other students completed their baccalaureate degree in archaeology under Goodwin and went on to make a name for themselves as professional archaeologists: Peter Beaumont (1955), Hilary Deacon (1955), and Glynn Isaac (1958). David Lewis-Williams (pers. comm. 2011) attended archaeology at UCT under Goodwin and graduated in 1955, but chose geography over archaeology because of the limited archaeology-related employment opportunities in the 1950s.

In contrast to the period under John Goodwin, significant changes took place at UCT following the appointment of British archaeologist Raymond Inskip as a professor in 1960. Inskip produced more professional archaeologists in his 11-year tenure than did Goodwin during his 30 years at UCT (Schrire 2003, p. 100). Among his students were Tim Maggs, Carmel Schrire, Janette Deacon, Garth Sampson, Graham Avery, Tony Humphreys, Mike Wilson, Renee Hirschon (who later changed to cultural anthropology), Peta Jones, Cedric Poggenpoel, Leon Jacobson, Paul Sinclair, Elizabeth Voigt, and Lyn Wadley (Schrire 2003). Many also pursued postgraduate degrees under him, including Goodwin's students, Hilary Deacon and Peter Beaumont.

Inskip's students defined archaeology in South Africa for a generation. He was intellectually and socially progressive and played a pivotal role in UCT's landmark decision in 1968 to create an archaeology department, separating it from anthropology. Nearly half of Inskip's students were women. Under his tutelage, Poggenpoel became the first non-white South African graduate of archaeology. He was of multiracial indigenous descent—*Colored* in official parlance. However, Poggenpoel's career may have been constrained because of his race. He was often relegated to the role of excavation assistant, essentially a manual laborer. He was given author acknowledgment in a series of publications but was always listed after his white contemporaries whose academic careers progressed incrementally while Poggenpoel's did not. It is significant that out of Poggenpoel's many co-authored papers, he was the first author only in the paper he co-authored with an archaeologist who was not affiliated with a South African academic institution (Poggenpoel and Robertshaw 1981).

Inskip left South Africa at the end of 1971, mainly because of a deep sense of frustration with the apartheid system (M. Posnansky personal communication, 2010). But he left a discipline transformed, from one dominated entirely by men to one in which women were well represented, although not completely liberated from the patriarchal influence embedded in the broader South African society. It is hard to imagine that any individual will ever again have the impact that Inskip had on the discipline in South Africa. For most of his time in South Africa, UCT was the only university offering courses in archaeology. But this was changing radically by the time he departed.

Revil Mason began teaching archaeology in 1965 at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) in Johannesburg. At that time, archaeology courses were taught within the geography degree,

and Mason supervised a handful of postgraduate students, including Robbie Welbourne. His research focused mainly on the Iron Age. It was not until 1977 that archaeology was offered as an independent degree at Wits, following the appointment of Thomas Huffman, an American-trained archaeologist. In 1949, following the appointment of Hannes Eloff as a lecturer, the University of Pretoria (UP) began offering archaeology courses. However, the offering of these archaeology courses took place within the anthropology degree. This changed in 1967 when a two-year major in archaeology was created. In 1969, Eloff expanded the program to include a full archaeology honors degree. All courses at UP were taught in Afrikaans.

Hilary Deacon, one of Goodwin's former students, was appointed in 1971 to head a new archaeology department at the University of Stellenbosch and was charged to create an archaeology degree program. Although Hilary Deacon taught in Afrikaans at the entry level, his classes were conducted in English in the third year and higher levels because the available literature was mostly in English. Upon Deacon's retirement in 1999, the University of Stellenbosch closed its department of archaeology. He was the only head for the duration of the department's existence.

In spite of all of these developments, archaeology largely remained an academic discipline for South Africa's 10% minority population—the people of European descent. The apartheid policy ensured that the Universities of Pretoria and Stellenbosch were closed to indigenous African and Colored students. Wits and UCT were nominally open to non-white students in that they accepted them but were forced to adhere to the regulations of the Bantu Education Act—(Act no. 47 of 1953; later renamed the Black Education Act, 1953). This law set up a system to enforce racial segregation in the education system. Under the Bantu Education Act, schools were segregated by race, and different curricula were developed for each racial category in the system (see Ndlovu 2009a). This Act was one of the most hated pillars of the apartheid system, and it ensured a grossly inferior education for the majority of South Africans. Separate “Black,” “Indian,” and “Colored” universities were set up in 1959, and Wits and UCT were no longer permitted to enroll new students from any of these groups, except where the newer universities were not offering degrees in particular subjects.

Archaeology was one of those *access* subjects, and this is why Inskeep was able to graduate Poggenpoel. At other universities, archaeology professors and department heads could have taken advantage of this loophole. However, they did not. This loophole closed in 1971 when the University of Fort Hare (UFH), an institution set up for the training of “non-whites,” set up an archaeology degree. Robin Derricourt, a young graduate from Cambridge with strong liberal political views (Revil Mason, personal communication, 2012), was hired to develop an archaeology program within the school's general arts degree. The first students enrolled in 1971. Some 15 students took first-year archaeology courses, and four (all Africans) registered for the second year. The latter graduated (with general arts degrees) in 1973, just before Derricourt left Fort Hare to head the Heritage Commission in independent Zambia in 1974. His departure brought socially engaged archaeology at Fort Hare to a sudden end. His departure also brought to an end the possibilities for the continued transformation of the discipline. Conservative Afrikaaner nationalist Hermanus Opperman took Derricourt's place, and the number of archaeology students dropped significantly.

Two of Derricourt's students continued with archaeology. Themba Zwane initially worked for the KwaZulu Monuments Council, before being transferred to Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali in 1997 where he worked until his death in 2008. Before departing Fort Hare, Derricourt

arranged for Lewis Matiyela to continue his studies at UCT where he earned an Honors degree in archaeology (Ndlovu 2012, p. 275). When Matiyela graduated with an honors degree in 1975, he became South Africa's first archaeologist of indigenous African descent. Themba Zwane (who previously used the Nogwaza surname) did not attain his honors degree until much later (1991), eventually getting a Masters degree in archaeology from UNISA in 2002. He became the first indigenous South African archaeologist to publish a paper in the *South African Field Archaeology* journal (Nogwaza 1992).

Matiyela later participated in a groundbreaking public archaeology program organized by Revil Mason. Mason had been using archaeology to give race counseling at schools in 1976 to undermine racial segregation. On the back of this program, African students assisted him with excavations at one of the oldest farming settlement sites in South Africa: Broederstroom. Against the norm, Mason provided the names of Africans who assisted him in his publications, giving them recognition that was not known in other archaeological projects (Fig. 1). In 1976 and 1977, with the support of the South African Institute for Race Relations, eight African students worked at Olifantspoort with Mason and Robbie Steel (Revil Mason pers. comm. 2012). Lewis Matiyela participated in this work and then registered for his Masters degree at UCT. To collect material for his research project, he and Mason excavated the site of Sambok Zuin Kraal near Pretoria (Revil Mason pers. comm. 2012). This site was part of the land "given" to a Tswana community by the early Boer settlers in return for the provision of labor. However, Sambok Zuin Kraal soon became one of the first sites of African resistance against colonialism. Andries Pretorius, one of the Boer leaders credited with creating the South African Republic, led the commando that suppressed the resistance. The Tswana community was shot at and driven out of the land. The selection of Sambok Zuin Kraal for excavations, therefore, marked the genesis of liberation struggle archaeology in South Africa. In April 1976, Matiyela also led a group of students from the University of Fort Hare to survey Late Iron Age sites along the bank of the Swart Kei River in what is now Eastern Cape province (formerly, Republic of Transkei).



**Fig. 1.** Members of Revil Mason's archaeology team at Broederstroom in 1974 (photo credit: Revil Mason 1989: fig. 40)

Matiyela's first archaeological publication was in the *South African Archaeological Bulletin*; it was also the first paper in the journal authored by an indigenous South African archaeologist (Matiyela 1976). He participated in the conferences of the Southern African Association of Archaeologists (SA3) which was founded in 1970 by Inskip, and renamed in 2004 as the Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists (ASAPA). In 1980, Matiyela was named as Curator of Transkei State Museum, now the Umtata Museum, and he stopped participating in field archaeology research (L. Matiyela personal communication, 2008). He later became the museum's director, a position he held until his death in 2011 (Ndlovu 2012). Matiyela, during an interview in 2008, cited two reasons for his decision to disengage from field archaeology. First, it was because of his dissatisfaction with being an "outsider" in an untransformed discipline of archaeology. Second, he found it difficult to make headway as a field archaeologist in the fraught political landscape of the apartheid-era Transkei Homeland, and the fact that positions for indigenous South Africans were non-existent outside the Homeland system.

The 1980s saw little progress in the transformation of archaeology in South Africa. It was also a decade that saw increasing international pressure against the apartheid government and its institutions. After the Southern African Association of Archaeologists (SA3) failed to pass a motion condemning apartheid at its conference in Gaborone, Botswana, in 1983, most non-South African members of the Association resigned. In 1985, South African archaeologists were disinvited from the 1986 World Archaeological Congress and then formally banned from the congress. While many archaeologists held a strong private distaste for the policies of the apartheid government, few made strong public anti-apartheid statements or published direct challenges to apartheid misrepresentations of archaeological facts (but see Hall 1990; Mazel and Stewart 1987; Parkington 1987; Shepherd 2003a; Smith 1983; Wright and Mazel 1987, 1991).

Aron David Mazel has reported on the efforts of a few younger-generation archaeologists in the 1980s, "who were aware of their responsibility to society and, with limited resources and organizational support, were responding to the injustices of apartheid" (Mazel 2014, p. 1). He recalled the establishment of the Archaeology Awareness Workshop (AAW) in 1985 by nine archaeologists. These archaeologists were concerned by the "rather passive stance that archaeologists in South Africa were taking regarding the political process" and "who expressed the belief that South Africa should be a democratic non-racial, unfragmented state based on the will of all the people, irrespective of colour, sex or belief" (Mazel 2014, p. 1). In the late 1980s, AAW members organized public displays and school programs and wrote magazine articles to correct apartheid's misrepresentations of the past.

An increase in the number of professionally trained graduates from the late 1970s through the 1980s made the archaeology profession less reliant on avocationist volunteers. The discipline took on a more professional-sounding vocabulary and the standardized scientific jargon of New Archaeology (see Lewis-Williams 1972, 1974). The revolutionary social agenda pursued by Mason for Iron-Age archaeology was supplanted by new rhetoric related to creating neutral, objective, scientific facts (e.g., Huffman 1980; Maggs 1993). This new jargon and statistics-laden science obscured the sociopolitical importance of archaeological finds (Hall 1990, p. 63; Shepherd 2002b, p. 198) and held almost no interest to anyone other than a small clique of archaeologists. This is one reason why, in spite of its political significance, archaeology was ignored by the majority of the population throughout the 1980s, including the Black Consciousness Movement (Hall 1990, p. 72–73). Even the work of members of the AAW and some published rock-art research written in a more accessible

and engaging language (e.g., Lewis-Williams 1981, 1983) failed to gain social and political traction.

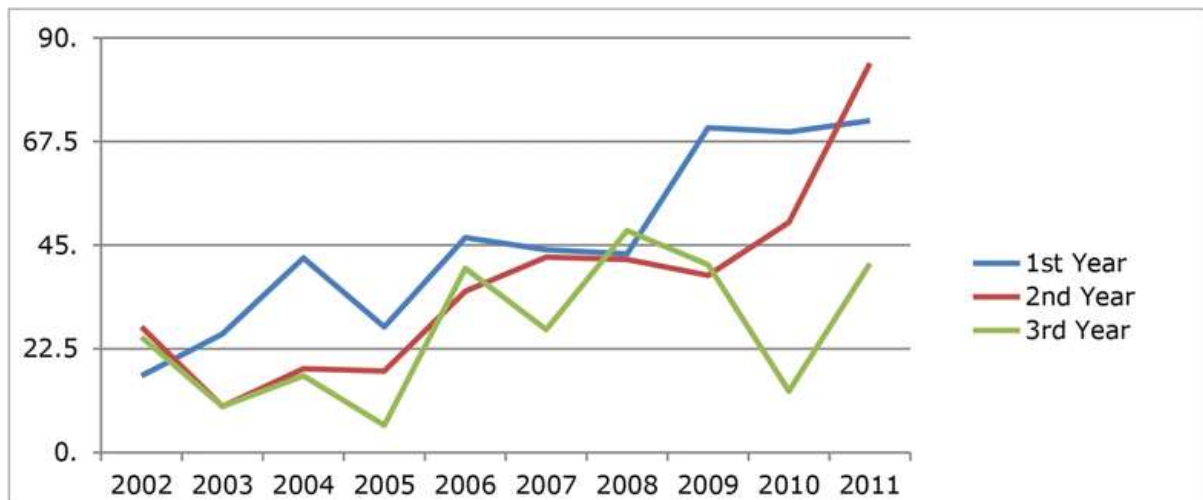
As Mason noted: “It seems that, whether they like it or not, South Africans determine their intergroup relationships in terms of the racialist template provided by the...300 year-old racial traditions of the country” (Mason 1989, p. 267). By the early to mid-1990s, South African archaeology was still very much defined by apartheid’s racial-segregation policies with very few African students having graduated in archaeology. To underscore perceptions about archaeology as a white academic discipline (see Ndlovu 2009a), by the mid-1990s, only four indigenous Africans had earned degrees in archaeology. Matiyela and Zwane had graduated from the University of Fort Hare; and Poggenpoel and Zuki Jakavula from UCT. None came from Wits, UP, or Stellenbosch.

### **Post-1994 Archaeology and Training**

It is clear from the review above that archaeology remained a white academic discipline until liberation in 1994. Post-1994 undergraduate classes at Wits and UCT began to see a few African and “Colored” faces, particularly in first-year courses. Until the late 1990s, most African students were not advancing to second-year archaeology. Several reasons are usually cited for this, including their poor academic backgrounds, a scarcity of archaeological employment opportunities that made the field less attractive, a lack of awareness of archaeology, and a lack of role models in archaeology. Another reason is the family pressure that encouraged first-generation students to pursue higher education experience that would lead to top-paying jobs, among others (see Ndlovu 2009a for a discussion of these reasons). Each of these explanations may indeed apply, but other disciplines with similar constraints (e.g., history, anthropology, and philosophy) saw more rapid rates of transformation and inclusivity for indigenous African students.

Wits, the Institution for which we have access to the statistics, started showing a significant transformation in undergraduate archaeology enrolment after 2000 (Fig. 2). The challenge now facing the field is to extend this increased enrolment of indigenous African students to all types and levels of archaeological practice. To help facilitate this, in 2008, ASAPA, enacted a Transformation Charter for South African Archaeology. The Charter aimed to bring about genuinely equal access and opportunity in all sections of the discipline and for all South Africans. This required a commitment on the part of all archaeologists to be socially engaged and socially responsible in their practices (Ndlovu 2009b; Smith 2009). To address some of the reasons why African students have been held back from full participation in the discipline, the government enacted a National Policy on Archaeology and Palaeontology in 2011 and, in the following year, a National Strategy on Archaeology and Palaeontology. These made provisions for special undergraduate student bursary opportunities and increased Ph.D. and Postdoctoral Fellowship funding in archaeology. Both the policy and the strategy committed the government to create a Centre of Excellence and research chairs in archaeology; and also made a provision for appropriations to support the appointment of young indigenous archaeology staff for a nurturing period and to prepare them for full-time employment. Research grant support is promised for basic research and, importantly, “for applied research in fields such as heritage conservation, heritage management practices, heritage ethics, public engagement” as well as collections management (South African Strategy for the Palaeosciences 2012: 16). This new emphasis is transformative, incentivizing archaeologists to act upon their responsibilities and to engage with the tax-paying public meaningfully. The legislative effort and implementation plan show that the South African

Government has been at the forefront to support archaeological transformation in the universities. With a growing sense that the way was there, but perhaps not the will, ASAPA embarked on a multi-pronged initiative to achieve the expected transformation in all areas and at all levels of archaeological practice and education.



**Fig. 2.** The decade of transformation. The number of Indigenous- and Asian-origin archaeology students at Wits University from 2002 to 2012

One thing ASAPA has recognized is the need to expose the unwritten role that Africans have always played in the discipline. Since the time of Goodwin, Africans have provided much of the labor of archaeology: excavating, carrying, cleaning, sieving, sorting, labeling, bagging, backfilling, cooking, and so on. These people are broadly nameless and unacknowledged in reports, notebooks, letters, and publications (Shepherd 2002a), but without their efforts, the majority of important archaeological findings would never have been made. They are sometimes seen in the background of excavation photographs, and if referred to at all, it is generally to that colonial catch-all, “the boy” (Shepherd 2002a: 142). Shepherd describes how he tried to uncover the name of a Goodwin’s co-worker who appears in a number of photographs (Fig. 3): “The closest that I got was a terse entry in a site notebook recording the cost of ‘Boy for a day’, and beneath it the cost of Goodwin’s hotel lunch (at roughly double the first entry)” (Shepherd 2002a: 142). While this is an old example, and we recognize some notable exceptions (e.g., Revil Mason; Aron Mazel; Len van Schalkwyk), African archaeological laborers are still rarely acknowledged in many archaeological reports and publications.





**Fig. 3.** John Goodwin with an unnamed African

Although there is evidence of a healthy transformation of undergraduate-level university archaeology in all South African universities, it remains the case that archaeology is offered mainly in a few urban centers of Gauteng and Western Cape Provinces. In recent decades, only two additional universities have created undergraduate programs in archaeology: the University of South Africa introduced a full undergraduate degree in archaeology in 2007 and the University of Venda created an Archaeology honors program in 1996. But these efforts fall short of what needed to be done to expand the archaeological curriculum and to open up the discipline across the nation. For instance, the relatively new Sol Plaatje University in Kimberly is focused on heritage studies but could potentially offer archaeology modules to its students. Kimberley is close to Canteen Kopje, an archaeological site that is now used by the Sol Plaatje University for its field school, in collaboration with the University of Toronto and the McGregor Museum.

Nevertheless, government interventions, in the form of the national policy and strategy document, have helped to increase the number of indigenous South African graduates of archaeology. The primary challenges now relate to diversifying the teaching and research positions. Since 1994, there have been more than 30 research and teaching positions advertised in archaeology at South African universities. A few of these positions have gone to indigenous South Africans. Ndlovu, who was until 2011 the manager of archaeological collections at Wits, was appointed to the position of senior lecturer at UP in 2013. He was subsequently named, on a 5-year contract, as Editor-in-Chief of the 70-year old South African Archaeological Bulletin in 2015, the first indigenous African archaeologist to occupy the position. Also, Eric Mathoho was appointed to a lectureship position at the University of Venda in 2016.

Besides the appointments of Ndlovu and Mathoho, Wits and UNISA have created contract and junior-level positions that have been occupied by indigenous South African archaeologists. Keneiloe Molopyane, who holds a Master of Science Degree in Archaeology from York University, was appointed as an associate lecturer at Wits. Shahzaadee Karodia Khan, who holds a Master of Science Degree in Archaeology from Wits, and Mpho Maripane, with an Honors degree in Archaeology from UP, were both appointed junior lecturers in archaeology at UNISA, with Maripane replacing Khan early in 2016. Khan later moved on to Sol Plaatje University until 2018 when she returned to UNISA as a heritage studies lecturer. Itumeleng Masiteng, a former heritage officer at SAHRA, was also appointed lecturer by Sol Plaatje University, in 2016. The same year, Jane Adigun, who earned a Ph.D. in archaeology from Wits was appointed as a junior lecturer at UNISA. She has since been promoted to the senior lecturer position at UNISA.

Jerome Reynard, Ph.D. in archaeology from Wits, received a temporary appointment as an associate lecturer at the school. His position was made permanent in 2016. Most recently, in 2018, Winnie Kgotleng, who also earned a Ph.D. in archaeology from Wits, was appointed to a research position at the University of Johannesburg (UJ). She has since been named as director of the university's Palaeo Research Institute. Deano Stynder, who holds a Ph.D. from UCT, has been a lecturer at the same institution since 2010. There are three indigenous South African archaeologists registered for doctoral degree around the world: Bongumenzi Nxumalo at the University of Cambridge, Kefilwe Rammatloua at Yale University, and Mncedisi Jabulani Siteleki at the University of Oslo.

The groundwork for real transformation in the field of archaeology in South Africa is therefore slowly being laid. While highlighting the appointments of indigenous South Africans in the last decade, it is important to note here that foreign-trained archaeologists had previously dominated the lecturing market at English-speaking South African universities. This may reflect perceptions that foreign qualifications are worth more than locally secured academic success. As a result, before 2000, Mason, Lewis-Williams, and Simon Hall were the only South Africa-born and trained archaeologists to teach at open South African universities. Many other very successful South Africa-trained archaeologists, among them Tim Maggs and Aron Mazel, never received appointments at these institutions in spite of their substantial contributions to archaeological knowledge. In the past decade, several universities in South Africa claimed to have met their institutional transformation imperatives by appointing archaeologists from other parts of Africa. For instance, African scholars who currently hold or have recently held positions at South African academic institutions include Siyakha Mguni from Zimbabwe and Catherine Namono from Uganda, both at Wits; Zimbabwean Shadreck Chirikure at UCT; and Innocent Pikirayi, also from Zimbabwe, at UP.

Even, with the appointment of expatriate African archaeologists, the percentage of the overall African academic staff in South African institutions remain abysmally low (Table 1). This means there are only a few role models for indigenous South African students aspiring to become archaeologists. And, there are fewer of them in comparison to other racial and ethnic groups, who can hold research grants and drive changes in national archaeological research agendas. Different reasons have been provided for the low numbers of African archaeologists as lecturers in South African universities. Hiring managers and some senior academics have suggested that the best indigenous South African candidates are lured into other sectors by higher salaries and more immediate opportunities for advancement. Indigenous graduates have told us that they left archaeology after being continuously passed up in job interviews. Archaeological employers have assured ASAPA that they appoint on merit based on

academic credentials and experience. It is our view that other sectors have followed different appointment strategies and now show a very different complexion. Heritage agencies provide an example.

**Table 1.** Race/ethnicity/nationality of the teaching-academic archaeology staff in South African universities, April 2019

| University | Indigenous South African | African International | Non-indigenous South African | White international | Professor Emeritus |
|------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| UCT        | 1                        | 1                     | 4                            | 2                   | 4                  |
| Wits       | 2                        | 1                     | 5                            | 2                   | 4                  |
| UP         | 1                        | 1                     | 2                            | 1                   | 0                  |
| UNISA      | 2                        | 0                     | 3                            | 0                   | 0                  |
| Limpopo    | 1                        | 0                     | 1                            | 0                   | 0                  |
| Venda      | 2                        | 0                     | 0                            | 0                   | 0                  |
| UJ         | 1                        | 0                     | 2                            | 1                   | 0                  |

## Heritage Agencies

### Heritage Agencies Before 1994

The history of formal heritage management in South Africa extends back to 1905 when a group of individuals, keen on preserving and restoring historic buildings and places of natural beauty, formed the South African National Society (Harding 1954, p. 230). This Society also became concerned with protecting archaeological sites and played a seminal role in the enactment of the Bushman Relics Protection Act in 1911, the first heritage legislation in South Africa (Legassick and Rassool 2000, p. 25). There have been some other pieces of legislation and amendments over the years, including the 1923 Natural and Historical Monuments Act; the 1934 Natural and Historical Monuments, Relics and Antiques Act; and the 1969 National Monuments Act (Deacon 1993, p. 5). The National Heritage Resources Act is the current heritage legislation in the country.

Of the various entities that manage heritage resources in South Africa, we will focus on the National Monuments Council (NMC). This organization had a larger paid staff in comparison to its predecessor, the Commission for the Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments. Barend (“Berry”) Malan was the last archaeological director of the NMC. Following his retirement in 1976, there was a significant shift in the politics and focus of the commission. The next two directors, Obie Oberholster (1976–1980) and George S. Hofmeyr (1980–2000), were right-wing leaning Afrikaaner historians. Both were connected to the inner circles of the Nationalist Party—Oberholster was Broederbond member number 4444 (Frescura 1991). During their tenure, Oberholster and Hofmeyr shifted the focus of NMC towards the preservation of settler buildings and, with funding support from the tobacco billionaire Anton Rupert, initiated a series of major projects to preserve old settler towns, including Stellenbosch.

While the historical monuments section of NMC grew in size, archaeology was limited to a single professional employee. Tony Humphreys was the archaeologist for NMC from 1977 to 1978. Jalmar Rudner succeeded him and served from 1978 through 1989, followed by Janette Deacon, 1989–1999. Although the Nationalist Party rule ended in 1994, the NMC remained a small operation with approximately 15 professional staff employed to manage all aspects of heritage in all of South Africa outside the so-called Homelands.

The extent to which the Nationalist Party directly interfered in NMC operations and its priorities is difficult to sort out. The Party's influence appears to have been structural; for example, members of the NMC were appointed by the Minister of Culture. They were typically a mix of English and Afrikaans speakers, but Nationalist Party supporters and sympathizers were in the majority (Frescura 1991). The Council administered all NMC staff appointments and budget allocations. This guaranteed close adherence to Nationalist Party agendas, even without direct interference. According to Janette Deacon (personal communication, 2012), there was no clear evidence of gender discrimination at NMC during her tenure. However, unequal treatment based on race was the standard practice in all government departments, and it was required by the Labour Relations Act of 1956, which sought to reserve all administrative jobs exclusively for whites. Therefore, the elevation and appointment of so-called colored and black staff within the NMC were impossible until after 1994.

### **Heritage Agencies After 1994**

South Africa saw significant changes in the racial profile of staff members within the NMC after 1994. Peter Mokoena and Ntsizi November were part of the first group of Africans employed within the professional ranks of the Council. Mokoena was hired in March 1997 as assistant regional manager of the Transvaal regional office in Johannesburg. That same year, November was hired as assistant regional manager of the North West and Free State regional office. Both came from teaching backgrounds. Mokoena has a teaching diploma from the University of the North, and November has a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) from Vista University. In 1997, Colin Fortune was hired as the regional manager of the Northern Cape office (David Morris, personal communication, 2019). In August 1998, Dumisani Sibayi became the first indigenous South African appointed as assistant director of the NMC. He subsequently employed Thanduxolo Lungile as regional manager for the Eastern Cape. None of these early appointees had archaeological training. This is not surprising. No indigenous South African applicant was holding an archaeological degree at the time they were hired. NMC had two white archaeologists at this time, Janette Deacon and John Gribble.

In 1999, the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA, No. 25 of 1999) replaced the National Monuments Act of 1969. Under the new Act, the NMC was renamed the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). Since the founding of SAHRA, indigenous South Africans have always held leadership positions, as Council Chairs and as Chief Executive Officers (CEOs). The exception to this was in 2000 when Andrew Hall served as CEO in the initial stages of the organization. This dominance by Africans ended 77 years of formal heritage-management leadership by white South Africans.

The NHRA set out a three-tiered approach to preservation: heritage sites of national significance would be managed centrally, while sites of regional and local significance are to be managed by provincial and municipal authorities respectively (Deacon 1997, 2000; Scheermeyer 2005; Ndlovu 2011). Further, the scope of heritage resources covered under the legislation was significantly broadened, giving much more responsibility to SAHRA. As a result, SAHRA needed a fundamental readjustment of its old NMC divisions to reflect the shift away from a singular emphasis on settler heritage. When Janette Deacon retired in 1999, Mary Leslie was appointed as head of the Archaeology, Palaeontology, and Meteorites (APM) unit. The archaeological section was expanded. For example, an assistant archaeologist office was created; and as new projects, such as the Archaeological Register Project, were launched, more jobs were created for archaeologists. In addition, a new Burials

Grounds and Graves (BBG) unit was established. According to SAHRA, the main objectives of the BGG unit are to rehabilitate and declare royal graves, and those linked to military wars fought within and outside South African borders, particularly the liberation struggle. Indigenous African graves of any kind were not managed under the previous Monuments Act.

In contrast to the pattern in the university sector, the majority of SAHRA appointments have gone to indigenous South African archaeologists. Zuki Jakavula, who earned a Masters in Archaeology at UCT, was employed from 2000 until 2005. In 2003, Phalantwa Isaac Montlha, who received an Honors degree in Archaeology at the University of Venda, was appointed as a general assistant researcher. Montlha later became the only indigenous South African to have worked in the Maritime Division with his appointment as assistant researcher. Cecilene Muller and Collette Scheermeyer, who earned their Masters degrees in Archaeology from UCT, and Alitta Mosupyoe, with a Master of Science Degree in Archaeology from Wits, were all appointed in 2004. Additionally, Portia Ramalamula who earned an Honors degree in Archaeology from the University of Venda; Ndukuyakhe Ndlovu (Masters in Anthropology at Rhodes University in 2007); Nkosinathi Tomose (Master of Science Degree in Archaeology at Wits); and Nokukhanya Khumalo (Honors degree in Archaeology, University of Pretoria), were all appointed between 2009 and 2015.

In 2010, Mary Leslie retired and the first African (MoTswana) archaeologist, Nonofho Ndobochani, who holds a Masters of Philosophy in Heritage Studies from the University of Botswana, was appointed to head APM. When Ndobochani left SAHRA in 2011 to go back to Botswana, the first indigenous South African, Collette Scheermeyer, was promoted to lead the unit. She has since moved on, taking a senior post at Heritage Western Cape. In 2016, Phillip Hine, who earned his Masters in Archaeology at UCT, served as acting manager of APM before stepping down when John Gribble was appointed to act in the same position. After Collette Scheermeyer, Phillip Hine became the second indigenous South African to be at the helm of the unit. As of the time of writing, Gribble has resigned from SAHRA, and Hine is back as acting manager of APM.

Since 2000, there has been an impressive level of transformation within the Archaeology, Palaeontology, and Meteorites (APM) unit and at SAHRA, as a whole. However, criticisms have been leveled at the unit regarding some aspects of its operation. Among the white archaeologists interviewed for this research, there were concerns that the racial transformation within SAHRA has compromised the effectiveness of agency operations. We will address this matter shortly. But, we must first consider the role of APM within the management of South Africa's archaeology.

The National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) made provisions for the progressive devolution of power from APM within SAHRA to a set of Provincial Heritage Resources Authorities (PHRAs). At the time, only the KwaZulu-Natal region had an existing PHRA: Amafa Heritage aKwaZulu-Natali, established in 1997 following the amalgamation of the KwaZulu Monuments Council and the Natal regional office of the NMC. Implementation of the NHRA, therefore, required the establishment of eight new PHRAs and the 52 municipal heritage offices needed for local heritage administration.

According to the NHRA, PHRAs should have been created in all nine provinces by 2002. However, for various reasons, this did not happen. One key reason is a failure on the part of the provincial Executive Councils to establish PHRAs. But this is not a violation of the Act

because Section 23 of the NHRA does not make it mandatory for the executive councils to establish PHRAs. Instead, it only suggests that they *may* establish PHRAs. Nevertheless, the Kroon judgment of 2002, which resulted from a dispute between SAHRA and businessman Neville Gordon over the renovations of historic Cock's Castle in Port Alfred, Eastern Cape, increased public pressure on SAHRA to ensure the establishment of eight PHRAs.

The expectation was that the PHRAs would then enter into agency agreements with SAHRA so that the latter could fulfill its responsibilities until the regional agencies were able to employ trained archaeological staff. Therefore, SAHRA made provisions to keep its provincial offices open until provincial archaeological competence was put in place. This decision backfired. It provided provinces with an excuse to delay spending on the creation of heritage capacity. So far, only the PHRA offices in Limpopo Province, the Western Cape Province, and the Eastern Cape Province have been certified by SAHRA as competent in managing the archaeological resources in their provinces.

To resolve the challenge of poorly resourced PHRAs, Sibongile Masuku, then CEO of SAHRA, took the dramatic step of closing all SAHRA provincial offices in 2011. This may have been an attempt at forcing the provinces to accept their heritage-management responsibilities. However, the immediate result was a vacuum at the provincial level before agency agreements were signed. In such circumstances, there was a crisis; no one had authority over heritage compliance at the provincial level. Ultimately, this strategy worked as other provinces have since put more effort into establishing PHRAs. For example, the Northern Cape Province appointed a new Council in 2014. Both Mpumalanga Province and Limpopo Province appointed new Councils early in 2016. In accordance with the provisions of NHRA, SAHRA must continuously use its mandate to assess the competency of each PHRA in implementing the heritage legislation.

As a result of the absence of archaeological staff at the regional level, a great deal of workload pressure has been placed on APM staff members. This absence also means that new employment opportunities are not being created for archaeologists at the regional and local levels, a major blow to the transformation efforts within the archaeological discipline. Allegations by professional archaeologists that the staff of the transformed SAHRA lack training and experience, along with direct criticisms over specific decisions, have affected morale and produced significant staff turnover. During our various discussions with staff, there have been complaints about not being given full responsibility and authority to make decisions.

One of the unpopular provisions of the NHRA is the requirement that charges committees of experts with making major decisions, on behalf of the local and regional councils, on matters relating to the granting of permits for work that might impact archaeological and other heritage sites. These experts come from government agencies, universities, and museums, and some are independent professionals with expertise in heritage matters. They make final decisions on matters such as excavation permits, development permits, and heritage impact assessments. Ndlovu (2011) has argued that although these committees are set up to assist heritage staff in implementing and enforcing heritage legislation, they have reduced the heritage professionals to the equivalent of clerical staff. Members of the heritage staff simply receive, summarize, and circulate paperwork upon which others make a final decision. Heritage staff members then communicate these decisions or recommendations to the applicants for the various permits.

Therefore, the committees have rendered the heritage staff insignificant, disempowering them, and taking away their primary functions as managers of heritage resources. The transformative role that SAHRA and PHRA staff should play in the management, promotion, and preservation of the heritage of South Africa is thereby fundamentally undermined. For this reason, the SAHRA Council, acting on the recommendations of Ndlovu, during his tenure as Chairperson of the Council's Heritage Resources Management Committee, agreed that these committees be disbanded. The same decision was arrived at and implemented at Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali. These decisions are meant to enable indigenous African professionals, who dominate the heritage sector, to apply their skills to make decisions about preserving the regional and local heritage resources, rather than becoming disempowered heritage clerks.

Moreover, the alleged inadequate training of the SAHRA archaeologists is a diversionary argument. As we have documented above, most of the archaeology staff in SAHRA have attained archaeological qualifications that are higher than those working as archaeological impact assessment contractors. For instance, by 2014, all APM staff members minimally had Masters degrees in archaeology, and some had been working in the heritage sector for more than 5 years. Any failings related to training in heritage preservation can be attributed to South African tertiary institutions which until 2017 provided no Masters coursework in archaeological heritage management. For a long time, most archaeology departments at South African universities showed little to no interest in offering training in heritage management. This attitude is changing slowly.

For many years, Benjamin Smith tried to set up a Masters degree program in archaeological heritage management at the University of Witwatersrand but failed to gain institutional support. In 2017, Wits established such a degree with the first intake of students in 2018. This is a noble idea and a good beginning. However, the creation of advanced degrees and curricula are not sufficient to address all of the issues. Funding for the heritage management sector is an obvious issue in South Africa. There is a need for significant investment that would address more than a century of neglect of indigenous South African heritage. In 2012, the South African Government acknowledged this by launching a National Strategy for the Paleosciences, including Paleontology, Paleo-anthropology, and Archaeology. The promulgation of the NHRA in 1999 also created a legislative framework for effective preservation of heritage resources.

These state and administrative efforts have created opportunities for young indigenous archaeologists to establish their consulting firms to undertake impact assessments relating to heritage sites. Three companies stand out in this regard: Nzumbululo, Vhubvo Archaeo-Heritage Consultants, and NGT Holdings. Founded in 2003, Nzumbululo is led by McEdward Murimbika (earned doctoral degree in Archaeology from Wits) and Moses Mabuda (earned an Honors degree in Archaeology at the University of Venda). With a Masters in Archaeology from UP, Munyadziwa Magoma is the sole director of Vhubvo, which he founded in 2010. Established in 2012, NGT Holdings is under the directorship of Nkosinathi Tomose, who earned a Master of Science in Rock Art Studies and Bachelor's degree in Archaeology at Wits. These three companies are among the leaders in contract archaeology in terms of the number of projects they have undertaken in the last few years. In addition to Mabuda, Magoma, and Tomose, other indigenous African archaeologists have made significant strides in contract archaeology, including Mamoluoane Seliane, who is now employed at the National Department of Art and Culture, and Makhosazana Mngomezulu, a sole director for Vungandze Projects established in 2015.

## Museums

### Museums Before 1994

During the apartheid era, only seven museums had archaeology departments. There was the South African Museum in Cape Town, the McGregor Museum in Kimberley, the National Museum in Bloemfontein, the KwaZulu-Natal Museum (formerly known as the Natal Museum) in Pietermaritzburg, the Albany Museum in Grahamstown, the Polokwane Museums in Polokwane (formerly known as Pietersburg), and the Transvaal Museum in Pretoria. There is a sizeable body of critical literature about how South African history was represented in these institutions during the apartheid era (Wright and Mazel 1987, p. 1991; Dowson and Lewis-Williams 1993; Mazel and Ritchie 1994; Rodéhn 2013). Of particular interest to us is the extent to which the government dictated the archaeological research agenda of museums and, ultimately, the exhibitions mounted in support of that agenda. What challenges did museum archaeologists face during that period? Equally important, what was the profile of visitors to the museums? In seeking answers to these questions, we focus on the Natal Museum, now the KwaZulu-Natal Museum, in KwaZulu-Natal Province, and the McGregor Museum in the Northern Cape Province. We do not suggest that these two museums are representative of the whole. Indeed we suspect they are not, but they provide useful insights.

Each museum is led by a director who answers to a Board of Trustees or a Museum Council. In the case of the McGregor Museum, members of the Board of Trustees were appointed by the Provincial Government. This was not the case for the Natal Museum where the Museum Council was composed of State appointees, a City Council representative, a representative of Natal University, now KwaZulu-Natal University, and others (Mazel, personal communication, 2016). Generally speaking, membership was drawn from intellectual rather than political circles, although there was clearly some overlap. Former employees of the two museums provide evidence for independence in decision-making on the part of management. According to Tim Maggs (personal communication, 2014), the Natal Museum was among the most independent of South Africa's museums. Its administration strongly rejected attempts by the Pretoria regime to control the museum.

Maggs was the first professional archaeologist at the Natal Museum. He established the department of archaeology in the early 1970s. Current and previous archaeologists at the museum have played pivotal roles in the quest to understand South Africa's past. These efforts, in particular, set the museum's department of archaeology apart from other museums. Besides its regular academic posts, the museum's department of archaeology hosted various funded projects in the late 1970s and early and mid-1980s (Mazel, personal communication, 2016). For example, extensive surveys at proposed dam sites were undertaken, which represents some of the first rescue archaeology projects in the province. Two archaeologists, Gavin Whitelaw and Gavin Anderson, were based at the museum to oversee these projects. All of the professional archaeologists who worked at the Natal Museum were white, and their field and technical assistants were often isiZulu-speaking, but they were generally only employed through temporary contracts, and none of them went on to acquire professional accreditation in archaeology.

Besides these museums and project-funded archaeological positions, the central government funded a small number of more controversial archaeological projects within Natal and the KwaZulu homeland in the late 1970s and early 1980s. For example, the Nationalist



government implemented a military service program, whereby young white men were required to enlist and perform military training and service. Under the command of Richard Wade, one group of trainees conducted archaeological excavations in the KwaZulu homeland on the condition they sought out and reported on the activities of African insurgents. Johannes Loubser and Len Van Schalkwyk are among the archaeologists who gained experience through this project. Interviews with one of them and with others who knew them (and preferred anonymity) have indicated that both were deeply traumatized by the experience. While both became archaeologists, they also became conscientious objectors to the apartheid regime (J. Loubser personal communication, 2012).

Many archaeologists ostracized Richard Wade at the time. Today, he continues to work on archaeological material, but he is infamous for his denial of indigenous involvement in major precolonial cultural achievements (Meskell 2005, p. 74). Under the apartheid government, the archaeological military service trainees were required to wear the military uniform even while excavating. Ndongondwane, an Iron Age site in the former KwaZulu homeland, was one of the sites excavated. The presence of white men in military uniform excavating in black South African homelands might have contributed to the suspicion Africans have for archaeology. The relationship between the discipline and the military—an institution of African oppression—was too close. This may be one reason why indigenous South Africans did not rush to explore a career in archaeology after 1994.

In contrast to the Natal Museum, the department of archaeology at the McGregor Museum has never had a large personnel. Through privately raised funds, the McGregor Museum paid salaries to a series of general assistants. These assistants supported the museum's archaeologists in their work, cleaning and sorting archaeological materials. From time to time, general assistants were also asked to support foreign and local archaeologists who were working within the Northern Cape Province. As with the Natal Museum, there is not much evidence of any efforts to provide these indigenous assistants with formal training or, in other ways, help them attain qualifications in archaeology.

Neither the Natal Museum nor the McGregor Museum received much direct funding for archaeological research from the apartheid government. Archaeological research at the Natal Museum was funded in large part by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)—the central government's quasi-autonomous humanities funding agency. For example, between 1981 and 1996, HSRC funded almost all of Mazel's excavation projects; whereas the Department of Forestry funded his 1980s excavations. The McGregor Museum received funding from the HSRC, the De Beers, and the Anglo-American Chairman's Fund. Government funding allocated for general operations was also utilized for research purposes within both museums. Most of the funding received by the Natal Museum and McGregor Museum in the later 1980s supported Later Stone Age research. According to Tim Maggs (personal communication, 2015), there was nothing sinister about this; that was the choice of the archaeologists at each of the museums at that time. At the Natal Museum, this helped to balance an earlier emphasis on Iron Age research. According to the archaeologists who worked at both museums during this period, there was never explicit pressure from the government to encourage a particular area of research. Archaeologists at both institutions state that they were at liberty to select their research topic and to present their findings however they wished. Mazel (personal communication, 2016) noted that from the early 1980s onwards, he operated in a historical materialist framework, an approach that never had any consequences for his funding from the HSRC. Lewis-Williams (personal communication, 2012) corroborated this perspective. He speculated that at the time Marxist approaches might

have even received preferential treatment for funding, as the HSRC seemed to bend over backwards in its attempt to demonstrate political independence.

The Museum Council approved all decisions made by museum management in the case of the Natal Museum, and by the Board of Trustees for the McGregor Museum. According to Maggs (personal communication, 2015), administrative leadership at the Natal Museum never openly supported the apartheid regime, nor did it allow the politics of the time to influence the work of the professionals it employed. He added that Natal's archaeologists participated in the South African Museum Association (SAMA) conference in 1986, which was also attended by academics opposed to the apartheid policy. In solidarity with John Kinard, an African-American social activist pastor and director of the Anacostia Museum in Washington, DC, invited to the conference, the majority of the delegates walked out when Eugene Louw, a member of the Nationalist Party and administrator of Cape Province, challenged them to focus on their work and be apolitical (Mazel personal communication, 2016).

The Natal Museum management's relative political independence is further emphasized by the open attitude it exhibited towards human evolution displays. The apartheid government and its pro-apartheid public had leveled criticism against the evolutionist displays at the Transvaal Museum that directly contradicted Christian National ideology. It must be remembered that only creationist views, informed by conservative Christian doctrines and not the science of human evolution, were permitted to be taught in schools during the apartheid era. The specific and changing content of the archaeological displays at the Natal Museum have been discussed in the article, "Thus our display will be honest, but it may be controversial" (Rodéhn 2013). This work provides evidence of credible archaeological displays at the museum before 1994 that challenged the apartheid authority, but a bigger question is who saw these displays?

A review of the racial groups that visited the Natal and McGregor Museums during the 1970s and 1980s is very insightful. It must be stated here that, unlike some national museums in South Africa, neither the Natal Museum nor the McGregor Museum had an access policy defined by race. However, for a complex variety of political and practical reasons (e.g., transportation, cost, and distance) indigenous South Africans seldom visited these museums. Mazel (personal communication, 2016) noted that he often wondered if the Natal Museum's location next to a major police station may have contributed to poor attendance by indigenous South Africans. Those few who did visit were mainly schoolchildren attending as part of organized school groups. South Africa's museums drew largely middle-class visitors, who were mainly white; a small number were Indian South Africans.

The Departments of Archaeology and Education at the Natal Museum initiated two projects, in the late 1980s and early 1990s to broaden the visitor base, challenge the distorted version of the past in most textbooks, and demystify the approach applied by archaeologists to the production of knowledge about the past. These were *Adventures in The Past (ATP)* and *Introducing History: concentrating on the San hunter-gatherers*. According to the drivers of these projects, by "...developing these [programs] we were conscious of the need not only to impart accurate and well-informed knowledge about South Africa's pre- and early-colonial history, but also to show school children how archaeologists go about their work and produce information about the past" (Mazel and Mtshali 1994, p. 4). The ATP program, which dealt with archaeology, precolonial, and early colonial history, initially attracted mostly white children and "Indian" children, with low participation by African children. To address this

problem, the program was moved to Edendale, a township outside Pietermaritzburg, where it was immediately accessible to African children. The second program, *Introducing History*, targeting members of the Museum Children's Club, was established in 1992. Meeting at the museum for an hour and a half, once a week, the course was divided into 12 sessions, and it proved to be popular with children from all backgrounds (Fig. 4).



**Fig. 4.** Members of the Museum Children's Club from local schools attending an archaeology course at Natal Museum (photo credit: Aron Mazel)

### **Museums After 1994**

After 1994, all South African museums acknowledged the need to transform their archaeological displays. The Natal Museum and the McGregor Museum were among the first to completely replace their archaeology galleries. A new archaeology gallery was installed when the old Africana Museum in Johannesburg was refashioned as MuseuMAfrica in 1994. For the first time, the National Cultural History Museum of Pretoria gave the public access to some of its most important archaeological collections through its African Window development. This included its permanent collection of Schroda figurines, first exhibited in 2002. Additionally, two South African universities opened permanent museums—the University of Pretoria opened the Mapungubwe Museum in 2000, and Wits opened the Origins Centre in 2006. Each museum, for the first time, displayed important materials from their archaeological collections.

In 2003, the Iziko Museum in Cape Town upgraded and expanded its rock art exhibition. And, as of this writing, the National Museum in Bloemfontein is in the process of upgrading its archaeology gallery. The McGregor Museum also took up the role that heritage authorities had failed to play in safeguarding and presenting archaeological sites, including Wildebeest Kuil, Wonderwerk, and Canteen Kopje, thereby providing a model for the future of public archaeology in South Africa (see Ndlovu 2016 for a discussion on community archaeology in

South Africa). The museum has shown extraordinary leadership by taking on this role. But new mechanisms for broader governmental support will be needed if the museum's efforts are to be sustained and emulated elsewhere.

While the management structures of museums transformed rapidly after 1994, with almost all falling under the management of indigenous South Africans within just a few years, the pace of transformation in the archaeological sections of museums has been slow. No museum archaeology department is currently headed by an indigenous South African, and very few have indigenous assistants. Gugu Mthethwa at the Natal Museum was one of the first full-time indigenous museum-based assistants in archaeology. She was appointed in 1981. Sven Ouzman, at the National Museum in Bloemfontein, appointed Gabriel Thlapi, which made him the first indigenous assistant in a rock art department. That department continued to follow a progressive agenda when it appointed Shiona Moodley, its current head and the first South African of "Indian" ancestry to head an archaeological department.

The McGregor Museum has appointed a few indigenous assistant curators within its archaeology department. However, none of these appointees have remained in the position for more than a few years. Most other museums in South Africa have either not shown intentionality or have not succeeded in recruiting and retaining African archaeologists among their curatorial and management ranks. In a way, they have not capitalized on the opportunities presented by the new order to expand their activities and to diversify their staff in the ways that SAHRA has done. Most complain of budget cuts, and there have even been losses of archaeology positions in some museums, including Iziko, MuseuMAfrica, and African Window. There is the sense that, outside of traditional funding structures, a great opportunity existed for these departments in the first ten years of democracy. However, we argue that this opportunity was missed because of the continued reliance on established sources of funding. It is also an open question whether museums have done enough in the post-1994 era to make themselves continuously relevant.

In terms of visitorship, while the number of indigenous South Africans visiting museums was relatively low before 1994, an upward trend was noticed following the establishment of democratic rule. The McGregor Museum has been documenting the attendance figures in its annual reports since 1997. The reports show that the number of indigenous South Africans visiting the museum surpassed the figures for 1997 by wide margins (Table 2). The main cause behind this upward trend is a massive increase in the number of indigenous school children who come to the museum as part of organized school trips. However, a closer examination of these figures reveals that while there has been a general upward trend in attendance, there has also been a decline in the number of visits to the museum by the white community. It is possible that the decline was caused by the inability of the museum to change its displays due to funding problems. The same experience with visitor numbers has been noted at KwaZulu-Natal Museum.

**Table 2.** Visitors to the various satellite sites of McGregor Museum

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Indigenous South Africans</b> | <b>Non-indigenous South Africans</b> | <b>All schoolchildren</b> |
|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1997/1998   | 443                              | 2,679                                | 3,651                     |
| 1998/1999   | 2,563                            | 16,943                               | 12,022                    |
| 1999/2000   | 2,439                            | 11,321                               | 8,149                     |
| 2000/2001   | 1,444                            | 8,678                                | 6,465                     |
| 2001/2002   | 1,473                            | 7,289                                | 6,145                     |
| 2002/2003   | 2,577                            | 6,192                                | 4,525                     |
| 2003/2004   | 1,846                            | 6,396                                | 8,451                     |
| 2004/2005   | 1,687                            | 5,353                                | 8,940                     |
| 2005/2006   | 2,282                            | 5,045                                | 9,321                     |
| 2006/2007   | 1,648                            | 6,447                                | 14,167                    |
| 2007/2008   | 1,320                            | 4,877                                | 8,063                     |
| 2008/2009   | 1,435                            | 3,806                                | 7,900                     |

These figures must be read with caution because of potential misrepresentations. The museum stopped profiling visitors according to their race due to the sensitivities attached to such a practice

The museum archaeologists still raise funds for their field research, in addition to the financial assistance they receive from their institutions. There is a considerably larger amount of money available at the National Research Foundation (NRF) than there was formerly at the Human Science Research Council. Large sections of NRF funding are ring-fenced for archaeology through African Origins Platform funding. But, archaeologists also have other potential NRF research funding opportunities through the special programs for community engagement, blue-skies research, education research, and indigenous knowledge systems, among others. Nationally, archaeologists have increased their research funding levels considerably. Museum staff members have played only a minor role in this. The funding opportunities for large joint research projects with universities, and major public outreach and education projects have not been utilized. Although the African National Congress government has provided funding for greater public engagement, this opportunity has not been adequately capitalized on by museum archaeologists.

## **Conclusion**

Not too long ago, Phillipson (2015) commented: “Despite the political changes of the past quarter-century, South African archaeology remains inward-looking and encapsulated, with [honorable] exceptions, its practitioners—still largely belonging to a single ethnic minority—seem to view it as a closed shop supported by a tax-paying public that is not expected to participate...” It saddens us that our findings lead us to concur. Phillipson went on to note that the 2014 PanAfrican Archaeological Congress in Johannesburg gave him cause for cheer in the “number, diversity and calibre” of students attending. He expressed concern about the “absence or low profile of several eminent senior researchers” (Phillipson 2015, p. 1) but we saw strength in this.

A far more diverse new generation of archaeologists is increasingly becoming more noticeable on the archaeological landscape of South Africa. They are a multi-faith, multi-lingual, and multi-colored generation. Even the long-held conception of indigeneity is beginning to break down as young South Africans grow up together in inter-racial families, schools, and communities. They understand the connectedness of South Africans in ways previous generations were denied. While the African Renaissance promoted under the Mbeki

regime was not a feature of the Zuma Presidency, we hope that the profile of the archaeologists in South Africa will become representative of the country's demography in terms of race, gender, and religious identities. This means that more indigenous South Africans must become an integral part of the archaeological profession. More important, this population group needs to be incorporated into the academic staff of South African universities and not just heritage institutions. Otherwise, this would imply that indigenous archaeologists are only good for heritage management positions, and not the university system, the center of the production of knowledge where the new South African leaders are also being trained. As South African archaeology becomes embedded within South African society, we can look forward to a socially engaged, socially relevant, and popular discipline that is in tune with and responsive to the taxpayers who fund it. This will forge a society that is keen to learn about the ongoing archaeological findings, fund expanding research, visit archaeological sites on holidays, engage with and support local museums, and integrate archaeology into education at all levels.

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