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ROCK ART AND IDENTITY IN THE NORTH EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

Lara Mallen

A dissertation for the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Johannesburg, March 2008

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

_____

(Lara Rosemary Mallen)

_____ day of_____, 2008

Abstract

A new and unusual corpus of rock art, labelled as Type 3 imagery, forms the focal point of this dissertation. Type 3 art is found at twelve known sites within the region once known as Nomansland, in the south-eastern mountains of South Africa. It is significant because it differs from the three major southern African rock art traditions, those of San, Khoekhoen and Bantu-speakers in terms of subject matter, manner of depiction and use of pigment. The presence of Type 3 art in Nomansland raises questions about its authorship, its relationship to the other rock art of the area, and the reasons for its production and consumption, which I consider in this dissertation. I argue that this corpus of art was made in the late nineteenth century, probably by a small, multi-ethnic stock raiding band. I consider the inception of this rock painting tradition, and the role of the art in the contestation and maintenance of identity.

For my mother and father, and for David

Acknowledgements

I thank particularly Geoff Blundell, my supervisor, and David Lewis-Williams and David Pearce for their generous sharing of knowledge and expertise, as well as insightful comments on drafts of this dissertation. I am grateful to Ben Smith, Catherine Namono, Leila Henry, Alex Schoeman and Leslie Zubieta for thought-provoking conversations. David Pearce and Leila Henry accompanied me on my fieldtrips and helped with tracing and photography, and Adele Moore, Helen Lechmere-Oertel, Sheila Bell-Cross and Jim Feely provided invaluable help in the field. I thank also various land-owners who gave permission to work on their properties in Maclear. Azizo Fonseca, Liza Barker and Tammy Hodgeskiss helped with the scanning and procurement of images.

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Introduction

According to *Flux Trends,* a prominent Johannesburg company that studies social trends, there is a burgeoning inclination towards what they call ‘rootstalgia’ among contemporary South Africans. This hybrid word refers to nostalgia for one’s history. According to the company’s research, ‘rootstalgia’ is a feeling that translates into a trend towards fashionable merchandise, such as clothing, being created in a way that combines past and present designs. The popularity of material cultural items that blur these temporal boundaries is significant. South Africans consider the past to be an important aspect of their identity in the present. People actively manipulate identity, and often use the past in order to define their identity in the present. This manipulation frequently involves the use of material cultural items. Rootstalgia, for example, is often expressed in clothing design.

The archaeologist, Ian Russell (2006), has considered this relationship between modern collective identities and material cultural items that are linked to the past. He notes that there has been a great deal of recent discussion about ‘heritage consumption’ and the need to ‘market heritage’ within the growing marketplace of ideas and commodities, and argues that “in contemporary western society, consumption is beginning to eclipse other forms of social participation as the primary performance of identity” (Russell 2006:192). In some ways, then, the construction of identities incorporates aspects of the past in order to say something novel in the present. This contemporary approach to material culture often takes the form of consumption, used in the Capitalistic sense.

In the following chapters, I consider the complex relationship between material culture and identity, and how people manipulate them. Rather than consider trends in the present, however, this thesis deals with conceptually similar trends in the past. The springboard for a consideration of these concepts takes the form of a small corpus of very unusual rock paintings, found in the remote mountains of the southern Drakensberg.

These rock paintings are located in 12 known sites in the Maclear District of the Eastern Cape Province. The sites are scattered across an approximately 50 km² area, bounded by the mountain called Gatberg in the west, by the town of Matatiele in the east, in the north by the Pitseng Valley, and in the south by the village of Ncengane (Fig. 1). This region is referred to by Geoffrey Blundell (2004) as the 'Nomansland Core Study Area'. The core study area falls within a larger area historically known as Nomansland. In previous years it has also been named East Griqualand, Ciskei, Transkei, North Eastern Cape, and today, most often, north Eastern Cape. Located at the southern end of the Drakensberg mountain range, it consists of remote peaks and valleys that are riddled with sandstone shelters, filled with rock art. The core study area has two escarpments, the first formed by the high basalt mountains of the Drakensberg rock formation (Feely 1987:20), and the second formed by the Molteno rock formation, which represents the edge of an inland plateau, and drops down to a maze of steep valleys and hills that form the Transkei coastal plateau (*ibid.*).

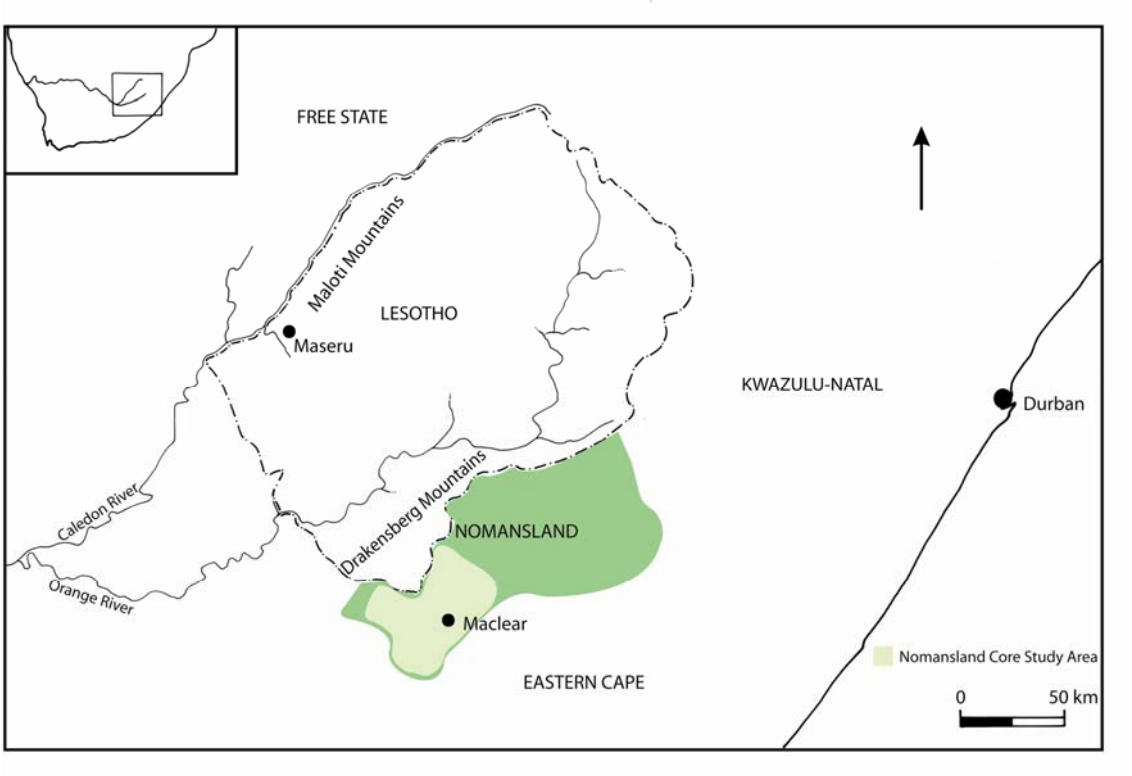


Fig. 1. Map showing Nomansland, and the Nomansland Core Study Area.

Archaeological excavations show that the area has been inhabited for at least the last 29 000 years (Opperman 1996; Opperman & Heydenrych 1990), and historical material provides a relatively clear view of hunter-gatherer occupation of Nomansland for the last 500 years (Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976; Wright & Mazel 2007). In addition to this, there is substantial historical information, and some archaeological details relating to the Bantu-speaking groups who have occupied areas on the edges of Nomansland for at least the last 500 years (e.g., Soga 1930; Hammond-Tooke 1962; Saunders & Derricourt 1974; Derricourt 1977; Maggs 1980; Beinart 1982; Feely 1987), as well as the Griqua and other more ephemeral groups that moved through Nomansland in the 19th century exists (e.g., Ross 1976). The lifeways of and interaction among San, Khoekhoen, Bantu-speaking and European people throughout the Eastern Cape has long been a subject of research (e.g., Hewitt 1920; Harinck 1969; Shephard 1976; Derricourt 1977; Giliomee 1979; Mostert 1993; Hall 1994; Jolly 1994, 1996).

An ongoing project in this 50km² area (1992 to 2004 surveys) has revealed that there are approximately 200 rock art sites that contain San paintings, and undoubtedly numerous others yet to be found (Blundell 2004). Research in the core study area over the last two decades has focused almost entirely on the San rock art of the area, creating a clear and detailed understanding of the social order from a San point of view (e.g., Dowson 1994, 1998, 2000; Blundell & Lewis-Williams 2001; Pearce 2001; Blundell 2004). This focus is in line with rock art research carried out more broadly in southern Africa. There are more than 10 000 recorded rock art sites in southern Africa (Deacon & Deacon 1999: 163). Although some of this art is attributable to pastoralists and agro-pastoralists, the vast majority was made by hunter-gatherers. Hunter-gatherer or San rock art is not only numerically dominant, but has also received the overwhelming majority of academic interest throughout the history of southern African rock art research. This is largely due to an interpretative breakthrough in the 1970s (Vinnicombe 1976; Lewis-Williams 1981) that has made the corpus of San paintings one of the best understood rock art traditions in the world (Whitley 2005).

In addition to this San rock art, some of the sites in the Nomansland Core Study Area contain images that are different from the fine-line rock art of the area. I refer to these representations as 'other' rock art: imagery that does not correspond with the well-established image categories associated with the three major southern African rock art traditions. In particular, I consider a corpus of 'other' rock art labelled as Type 3 (Pearce 2004 pers. comm.). As a by-product of more than a decade of intensive research on, and recording of, the San rock art of Nomansland (Blundell & Lewis-Williams 2001; Pearce 2001; Blundell 2004; Mallen 2005; Henry 2006; Turner 2006), it has been revealed that Type 3 imagery is present at 12 of the 200 known rock art sites in the area. Although less prolific, and less visually spectacular than the San rock art, these images are significant. Indeed, the distinctively different nature of Type 3 rock art raises important questions that must be considered against the broader backdrop of other southern African rock art, and rock art research.

Type 3 is not the only 'other' rock art identified in Nomansland, another corpus of rock art described in detail by Blundell (2004), and labelled Type 2, also exists within this landscape. Type 2 consists almost entirely of images of quadrupedal animals that differ from the San rock art in terms of technique, pigment and manner of depiction. The presence of this new Type 3 rock art tradition in Nomansland raises questions of its relationship with Type 2 rock art, and with the numerically dominant San rock art of the area. It also requires a consideration of who painted Type 3 rock art, and of possible motivations for its production. The role that its production and consumption would have played within the social milieu of Nomansland is also important. Type 3 rock art is newly identified and therefore little understood. In addressing these issues this project aims to contribute to a more comprehensive knowledge of the multiple rock art traditions of Nomansland.

In line with Alison Wylie's (1989, 1993) suggestion, following Bernstein (1983) that arguments should be like cables, made up of numerous threads of evidence, this research relies on historical information, distributional data, the subject matter of the Type 3 rock art, the stratigraphic and conceptual relationship between Type 3 images and San rock art, and theories of cultural identity.

Wylie's (1989) metaphorical notion of tacking back and forth between these various strands of evidence is employed as a means of constructing arguments.

Various techniques were used as part of this methodological approach. The exact spatial distribution of the Type 3 rock art tradition was established through the recording of GPS (Global Positioning System) co-ordinates for all the known sites. The details of the painted images themselves were recorded using photography and direct tracing. The stratigraphic relationship of Type 3 imagery with the San rock art was considered as part of the process of ascribing a relative time-frame to the making of the art, as well as the conceptual relationship between these two traditions.

In Chapter 1 I examine rock art research in southern Africa retrospectively. Although San rock art has traditionally received the majority of both academic and amateur attention, 'other' rock arts were written about more frequently than many would suppose. I consider past research on these other, unusual arts as a context for a consideration of other Nomansland rock arts.

Chapter 2 focuses on the newly identified Type 3 rock art tradition. This rock art tradition challenges our methods of categorisation, and I consider this in detail. In addition to this, the presence of Type 3 imagery at only 12 sites, in a small delimited area, is significant for research on spatial variation in rock art. Spatial variation is one of the less explored aspects of rock art research, as it must usually be teased out from within a large over-arching tradition, is not always easy to identify and, if recognised, poses a great challenge in terms of understanding its significance (e.g., Lewis-Williams & Dowson 1994). The opportunity to deal with such a closely circumscribed painted tradition, so obviously different from the surrounding rock art, is extremely unusual in southern African rock art research. In this chapter I also establish a broad time-frame for the making of Type 3 imagery. I rely on the state of preservation of the art, pigment use, historical information and the stratigraphic relationship between Type 3 imagery and San rock art in order to do this. I assess the relationship between Type 3 and Type 2 imagery, as well as their associations with the classic San rock art of the area.

The complex cultural interactions of the last 500 years in Nomansland mean that issues related to the formation and modification of identity are brought to the fore. This research considers the relationship between the Type 3 rock art tradition and the situational and emerging identities of the frontier environment of Nomansland, and a theoretical framework that draws on notions of cultural identity is thus employed as a means of gaining insight into these complex relationships. Chapter 3 considers the relationship between rock art and identity in more detail, with a view to honing in on some of the unwritten complexities of this relationship.

In Chapter 4, I consider the authorship of the 'other' rock art of Nomansland. I argue that the issue of authorship cannot be resolved in terms of a simple correlation between art and ethnicity, and rather suggest that authorship of Type 3 imagery needs to be understood in terms of the complex interaction between the many inhabitants of Nomansland over the last 500 years. In accordance with this, I explore the possibility that the authors of this art were people with a composite identity.

The existence of the Type 3 art tradition in Nomansland, probably related to people of composite ethnic make-up, raises important questions about the relationship between rock art and the formation and contestation of identity in a changing society. In chapters 5 and 6, the implications of this relationship are explored. Although Nomansland was inhabited by a multi-ethnic and constantly changing population during colonial times, research focusing on a detailed combination of historical and painted evidence has established that a substantial part of the area in which Type 3 imagery is found was controlled by a group of people under the leadership of a San man called Nqabayo in the nineteenth century (Blundell 2004:45). Given this 'San-dominant' context, the emergence of a new, non-San, painted tradition in this area means that questions of the inter-personal and inter-group relations that accompany or precipitate this tradition are paramount.

This project complements extensive research already carried out in Nomansland. While research over the last two decades has focused almost entirely on the San rock art of the area, creating a clear and detailed understanding of the social order from a San point of view (e.g., Dowson 1994, 1998, 2000; Blundell 2004), this project considers the same area, and the same social order, but from the perspective of the non-San rock art of the area, and its authors. This means that it contributes to an even more nuanced understanding of the relationship between the different art traditions, different people, and the social milieu of Nomansland in which identity was constructed and contested.

The Type 3 rock art tradition, and its authors, do not comply with the neat categories of identity that were so forcibly disseminated during the apartheid years, and that were fundamental to much of the archaeological research of the last few decades (Trigger 1990). Situations such as the presence of the Type 3 rock art tradition have a history of being misrepresented or ignored and until recently, these indistinct elements of societies have remained subjugated and largely invisible. In line with an emerging corpus of post-colonial archaeological research in southern Africa (e.g., Blundell 2004; Gosden 2001), this research will reinforce the absence of rigid categories of identity and is oriented towards acknowledging and understanding a previously ‘invisible’ element of society, which the presence of Type 3 rock art bears testament to.

Chapter 1

Tangerine Traditions

It is now widely accepted that there are three main rock art traditions in southern Africa. One made by the San, characterised by fine-line, brush painted, and detailed representational imagery (e.g., Vinnicombe 1976) (Fig. 2), as well as representational engravings. A second made by Khoekhoen pastoralists, characterised by monochrome, finger-painted geometrics and engraved geometrics (Rudner & Rudner 1959; Willcox 1959, 1960, 1984; Manhire, Parkington and van Rijssen 1983; Van Rijssen 1984, 1994; Yates, Parkington and Manhire 1990; Dowson *et al.* 1992; Manhire 1998; Wadley 2001; Smith & Ouzman 2004) (Fig. 3), and a third made by Bantu-speakers (Hall & Prins 1993; Prins & Hall 1994), which has at least two manifestations. One made by northern Sotho people and typified by white, stylised finger-paintings of primarily humans and animals, related to initiation and protest (Smith & van Schalkwyk 2002; van Schalkwyk & Smith 2004) (Fig. 4), and another consisting of rock engravings associated with Nguni/Late Iron age settlements (Maggs 1995).



Fig. 2. Example of a shaded polychrome eland of the San rock art tradition.

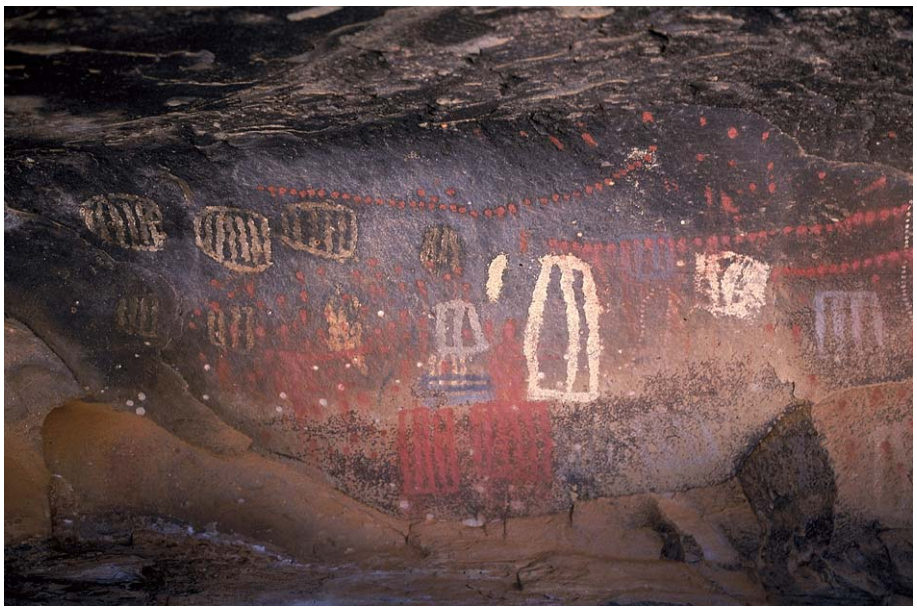


Fig. 3. Example of geometric imagery of the Khoekhoen rock art tradition.



Fig. 4. Example of imagery from the Bantu-speaker painted tradition.

The authorship of these three rock art traditions is now fairly well established, and consequently the majority of contemporary southern African rock art research is oriented towards interpretation of the imagery. However, clusters of rock art exist that do not fit in with these traditions. Most recently, Sven Ouzman (2005) has argued that one such corpus of finger-painted art found in the central interior of South Africa was made by Korana raiders and was related to magical and military aspects of this ‘raider nation’. Similarly, Hannalie van der Merwe

(1990) and Gavin Anderson (1996), have considered rock art that was made during the ‘contact’ period in the Western Cape, and Simon Hall and Aaron Mazel (2005) have argued that certain representational finger-paintings in the Western Cape were made by descendants of Khoekhoen and San inhabitants of the area, who had become labourers on colonial farms. It is the presence of art such as this, a category of ‘other’ rock art that would include the Type 2 and Type 3 art of Nomansland, that keeps the question of who made which art pertinent in the present research environment.

Although unusual in the present research climate, this question formed the lifeblood of southern African rock art research in the past. Before the interpretative breakthrough in the 1970s, rock art research was overwhelmingly concerned with issues of authorship. This was partly because the authorship of any given corpus of rock art is the logical starting point for research, but was also related to broader research agendas in the past. Interestingly, images that contemporary researchers would now label as ‘other’ rock art, caught the attention of researchers in the past more often than many would suppose. The bias towards research on San rock art that characterises the last two decades of southern African rock art research did not apply to the past. In this chapter I consider certain aspects of the history of research on these ‘other’ rock arts as a means of contextualising the ensuing consideration of the ‘other’ rock art of Nomansland.

Research on ‘other’ rock art

In 1951, South Africa’s first professional archaeologist, John Goodwin, described a corpus of paintings he had found at a cluster of three rock art sites in what is now the Western Cape Province (Fig. 5). The paintings that attracted Goodwin’s attention seemed to have been made later than the other fine-line imagery at the sites, and their manner of depiction was notably different. They had been made in what Goodwin (1951:68) described as a “brilliant orange pigment”, and he therefore named the corpus of imagery the Tangerine Tradition.

They struck him as being significant because of their unusual nature, and in an almost ‘throw away’ sentence at the end of the article he published about this art, Goodwin suggested that the art may have been made by a person or people in the process of changing from hunters or herders to farmhands.

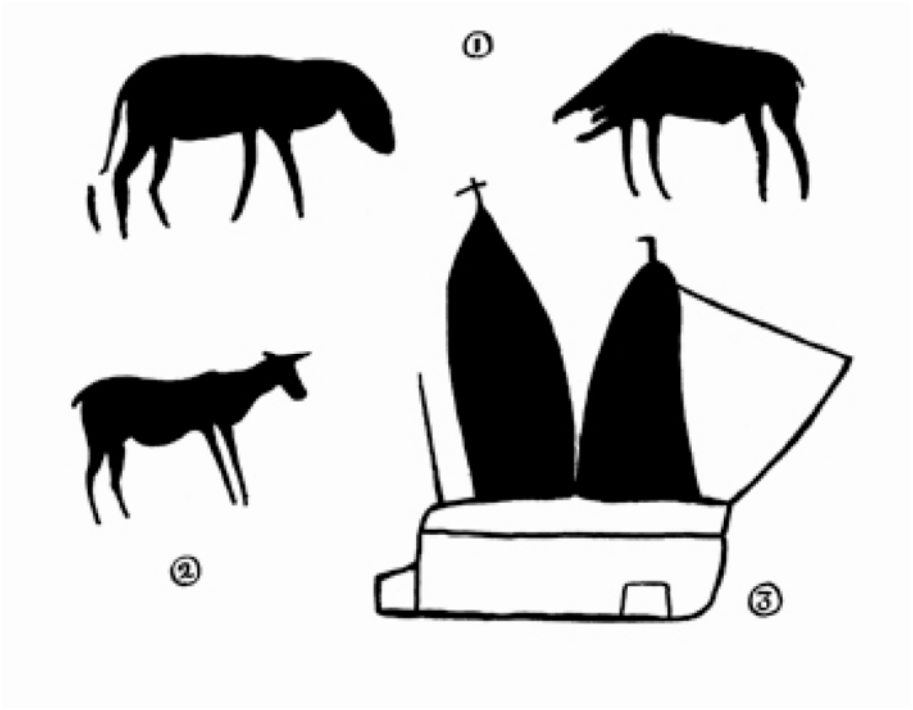


Fig. 5. Goodwin’s drawing of the images that formed part of the Tangerine Tradition.

Goodwin’s short publication on the ‘brilliant orange’ rock art is more significant than he was likely to have realised. His recognition that a small corpus of rock art existed that looked different from other known rock art, and his consideration of the authorship of this art address a complex issue at the core of rock art research, and indeed at the core of this research project: who made which paintings? Related to this is the question of where we draw the boundary lines between different rock art traditions, and different groups of people, and if we are able to do so at all.

At the time Goodwin was writing, the issue of authorship was hotly debated for almost all rock paintings found in southern Africa. A strong current in thought at the time was that many of the paintings in southern Africa had been made by ‘exotic’ authors (e.g., Dart 1925, 1962; van Riet Lowe 1949; Breuil 1949, 1955).

In particular, people thought that fine-line rock art had been made by foreigners who were more sophisticated than the indigenous inhabitants of southern Africa. I suggest that this line of reasoning led them to focus on ‘other’ rock art; they assumed that ‘other’ rock arts, which often appeared to be more ‘crude’ than classic fine-line art, were made by local inhabitants. They were thus extremely interested in these ‘other’ arts, and about what insights they could provide into South Africa’s past.

Although those who postulated an exotic authorship for fine-line San art were mistaken, as numerous authors have noted (e.g., Willcox 1956, 1963; Lewis-Williams 1995a), those who wrote about ‘other’ rock art were beginning to focus on some important and complex issues. Here we may recall Goodwin’s observation that tangerine images could have been made by people in the process of a transition from hunter-gatherer or herder to farmhand. In this statement, Goodwin touches on some very important issues at the core of a consideration of these ‘other’ rock art images. What would rock art look like if it was made by people who are not easily assigned to a large cultural or ethnic group? If people were going through processes of economic or social change, which are historically known to have occurred, what would the rock art they made have looked like?

Although questions of authorship are far less prevalent in the present research climate, they are not yet a ‘thing of the past’. Anomalous paintings, such as those described by Goodwin are found at many sites throughout southern Africa, but in the last three decades of rock art research, they have received little attention (but see Dowson *et al.* 1992; Wadley 2001; Hall & Mazel 2005; Ouzman 2005). Goodwin’s interest in the ‘tangerine tradition’ is thus noteworthy, but it is not only his interest in the art that is remarkable, but also the date of his publication — 1951. Goodwin’s description of the tangerine tradition was published during a particularly interesting phase in the history of archaeology in South Africa, and this phase is worth examining more closely.

Rock art and its intellectual importance

Rock art research in southern Africa may be broadly divided into at least two phases: pre-1965, when it was largely the preserve of interested amateurs, and post-1965, when an unparalleled breakthrough in the interpretation of San rock art (e.g., Lewis-Williams 1972, 1981; Vinnicombe 1976) ushered in a new era of research. In the last three decades there has been what is often described (e.g., Whitley 2005) as a revolution in southern African rock art research. Along with it has come a change in the standing of rock art research within the discipline of archaeology.

The pre-1965 era is often considered to have been a period of research in which little real progress was made. Although this is an accurate observation of the lack of progress in the interpretation of San rock art that characterises this era, two aspects of rock art research at this time are worth noting. The first is that rock art research was seen as a central and important aspect of the writing of South Africa's past, and the second is that there was fairly widespread interest in what we would now describe as 'other' rock art. For these reasons, the pre-1965 phase of rock art research requires more attention than it is usually afforded.

It is often noted that rock art research is largely overlooked in archaeological publications that aim to provide syntheses of the African past (e.g., Wadley 2005). This trend is waning in the present, and a closer consideration of the history of rock art research reveals that the tendency to overlook this form of research may have a shorter history than many would suppose. Two rather strong statements about the importance of rock art are an example of some of the thinking during the pre-1970 period. Dorothea Bleek, writing in 1932, suggested that the "Rockpaintings [sic] found in many parts of South Africa are among our most important historical documents left us by the early inhabitants of the country" (Bleek 1932:72). Similarly, York Mason, writing in 1933, commented on rock paintings in the Cathedral Peak area of the Natal Drakensberg, saying: "I was able to obtain evidence which throws some fresh light on two problems, the age of the paintings and the culture of the painters. The importance of these

problems to the more perfect understanding of South Africa's past, cannot be over-emphasised" (Mason 1933:131).

Statements such as these are in direct contradiction of the idea that rock art research was overlooked. On the contrary, they suggest that before 1965, the study of rock art was taken very seriously, and rock art data was considered to be central to the explanation of South Africa's past. It seems, then, that just as it is today, there was a time in the history of rock art research when it was widely considered to make important contributions to the discipline of archaeology. A more detailed consideration of the history of rock art research suggests that it played itself out in a less uniform manner than is usually suggested. Rather than rock art research being overlooked, it is the details of the history of rock art research that are often overlooked.

Why were such strong statements being made about the importance of rock art? What was going on in the intellectual climate of South Africa between 1900 1970? The answers to these questions lie in a situation in which rock art research, physical anthropology and archaeology came to play an influential role in political and social issues related to identity. Also, it is necessary to distinguish between the history of San rock art research, and the history of 'other' rock art research. Indeed, 'other' rock art was popular as part of the overall pre-1970s research agenda, and I focus particularly on the role it played in this past research.

Skeletons, stone tools and artistic skill

In the 1921 presidential address for the anthropological section of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science, James Duerden (1921:5–6) suggested that "anthropological studies should contribute to the upbuilding [sic] of the State by offering a scientific understanding of the peoples within it…No other country in the world has so many distinct races and nations settled within its borders, and at such diverse stages of social evolution". He went on to

propose that the future of the then emerging Union of South Africa was to become a melting pot in which people from many different cultural backgrounds would be thrown together (*ibid.*). Duerden's perception of an almost overwhelming complexity of different races and cultures within South Africa, both past and present, is typical of his time. His address belies a fear of the processes of interaction involved in the making of a 'melting pot'. It is likely that this uncertainty about the future of the country led Duerden to emphasise the need to understand these processes from a 'scientific' point of view. This address provides useful insights into the kind of thinking that underpinned the intellectual endeavour of the time.

Duerden, interestingly, was a zoologist by training, but he was by no means the only such academic, with little training in human anatomy, to become involved in research on the human past. Indeed, the sentiment expressed by Duerden was shared by many at the time. Research that was focused on the "scientific understandings" of all the people within South Africa, formed one of the core foci of numerous academics for the next three decades. Duerden and others at the time were writing from within what Saul Dubow (1994) refers to as the dominant inter-war racial paradigm which was built on three main ideas: 1) That culture could be explained in terms of biological race, 2) on an "obsession" with classifying human beings along typological lines, and 3) on a desire to rank 'types' of human beings on a scale of "rising biological, moral, and aesthetic worth" (Dubow 1994:357).

The early palaeo-anthropological research was based on the now discredited typological method which involved a strong emphasis on the splitting of data into samples that were biased towards conceptions of race that already existed (Morris 1986). In other words, researchers manipulated physical anthropological data in order to place human beings within various distinct typological categories. This does not seem to have been an active process of deception, rather, the typological method was based on a theoretical error relating to the nature of variation within a given human population. Researchers at the time thought that minor morphological variations represented distinct racial

categories. As a result of this, researchers were pre-occupied with defining and understanding the racial identity of past and present inhabitants of South Africa – in effect, the writing of a racial history of the country.

Perhaps the most well-known way in which researchers of this time went about assigning cultural affinity was through typological assessment of skeletal morphologies, and the relationship of these skeletons to stone tool assemblages. A proliferation of typological literature emerged at this time (e.g., Shrubsall 1911, 1922; Peringuey 1911; Broom 1923; Hewitt 1925; Stapleton & Hewitt 1927, 1928; Dreyer 1934, 1936; Keith 1934; Bernstein 1935; Laidler 1935; Meiring 1937, 1953; Goodwin 1926; Kohler 1943). Numerous skeletons were excavated, and detailed studies on recent as well as archaeological skeletons were carried out which were then ascribed with a particular race. More often than not, these 'races' of people were considered to be associated with particular stone tool assemblages. For example, Sir Arthur Keith wrote: "The cultural objects at this level were of the Mossel Bay type. The skull [found at the same level] represents the people who carried on this culture" (Keith 1934:151), and Dreyer (1934) described a 'Matjes river race', newly arrived, who brought with them the 'Mossel Bay' microlithic culture. This practice of linking certain categories of people with lithic assemblages is something that many archaeologists have commented on.

As part of this endeavour, other academic literature of the time focused on identifying and categorising the various 'tribes' found in South Africa, with a particular focus on the identity of San and Khoekhoen groups, both present and past (Hewitt 1920; Schapera 1926, 1930; Maingard 1931; Du Plessis 1932). The identity of the people with whom early travellers in the 17th and 18th centuries came into contact in what is now the Western Cape Province played an important role in academic debates at this time. The diaries of these travellers, in particular that of Jan van Riebeeck (e.g., Du Plessis 1932), provided detailed but often confusing and contradictory descriptions of the inhabitants of the Cape. The information from these diaries further complicated the picture, and social anthropologists, as well as physical anthropologists, became involved in these

issues. Unlike the Bantu-speakers, by the early 20th century, San and Khoekhoen groups were particularly enigmatic because those that had not been exterminated had been mostly assimilated into other cultural groups.

Early approaches to theorising identity formation were inextricably tied up with conceptions of race, and its relationship to culture. The intersection of ideas about identity and archaeological research that occurred at this juncture is worth considering. Theories of identity are used frequently in contemporary archaeological research, and numerous papers have been written about the intellectual and political importance of the relationship between archaeology and identity (e.g. Meskell 2002). I consider this relationship in detail in the next chapter, but mention this here because this relationship has a far longer history than many would assume. An understanding of the history of the intersection between archaeology and ideas about identity is important in assessing contemporary approaches to these issues.

Isaac Schapera (1926) considered the relationship between the 'hottentots', 'bushmen' and 'strandloopers', using ethnography, history, physical appearance and skeletal information. John Hewitt (1920:307–308), in a statement typical of the time, suggested that the strandloopers were "the earliest and purest type of Bushmen, whilst the ordinary inland Bushman, and possibly also the Hottentot, have diverged therefrom through admixture with other stocks". Likewise, L.F. Maingard (1931, 1935), Du Plessis (1932) and Edward Dunn (1937) used early travellers' accounts to try to impose typological order on these questions of identity. The combination of evidence from all these different sources led to a proliferation of categories and sub-categories of human beings such as 'Boskop man', 'pre-bushmen', 'strandloopers', 'proto-bushmen', 'bushmen', 'Hottentots'. It was as a result of the idea that there were numerous different races of people that had occupied southern Africa in the past that researchers became interested in rock art.

‘Other’ rock art

The last three decades of southern African rock art research have seen the growing dominance of interpretative approaches to southern African rock art, primarily to San paintings and engravings. However, from as early as 1900, researchers have intermittently considered the authorship of imagery that does not conform to the San rock art tradition. Perhaps one of the most distinctive characteristics of rock art research between 1900 and 1970 was a search for phases within the rock art that could be assigned to different races or cultural groups. The timing of these publications was no coincidence, although the palaeoanthropological, archaeological and rock art publications of this time do not always ‘speak’ to one another explicitly, their overall agenda certainly coalesces. Within the dominant inter-war racial paradigm (Dubow 1994), rock art, particularly ‘other’ rock art was seen as an important strand of evidence in the creation of racial typologies.

As we have seen, exotic explanations for the authorship of fine-line art were favoured by certain researchers (e.g., Van Riet Lowe 1949; Breuil 1955; Dart 1962) during the first part of the 20th century. These authors thought that most of the fine-line imagery found throughout southern Africa had been made by early foreign visitors to southern Africa. As a result of the publication of research on rock art relating to foreign immigration into Africa, references to rock art began to emerge in the physical anthropological publications. Whereas previously, authors within these two disciplines were writing separate but contemporaneous articles dealing with issues of race and human typologies, a few publications began to deal with all this information simultaneously. Based on evidence from Matjes river, Meiring (1953), a zoologist, argued that the Wilton people, named after the Wilton stone tool complex, had brought rock painting to South Africa. Their skulls were said to be different from those of “Bushmen, Hottentot or Bantu”, but were said to show a resemblance to late Palaeolithic skeletons from North Africa and Southern Europe. In 1958, Abraham Hoffman supported this statement, saying that the discovery of a painted grave stone at Matjes river suggested that these Wilton people were the original artists. Authors such as

Meiring and Hoffman were writing within a different framework to those who published on ‘other’ rock art. It seems that they were hoping to use a combination of skeletal and artistic evidence to argue that ‘Wilton people’ had exotic origins.

Although debate raged around foreign versus local authorship of the fine-line rock art, such as that found on the painted stone at Matjes river (Louw 1960), the exotic explanation does not seem to have been advanced in support of the authorship of non fine-line rock art. It seems that this rock art, which was generally considered to display less artistic skill, was always assumed to have been made by local inhabitants. This is probably one of the key reasons why there was a substantial amount of interest in ‘other’ rock art, such as the ‘tangerine tradition’ at this time. Rock art research was being mobilised in terms of questions about the identity of the past and present inhabitants of southern Africa. As there was still some uncertainty as to the authorship of the fine-line art, ‘other’ rock art must have seemed to be a more useful tool for gaining insight into past inhabitants of the area. Clearly, what may have been considered to be anomalous rock art in the period before 1965, may well now fall into one of the three major rock art traditions that are recognised in southern Africa. In this discussion, I am not concerned with the accuracy of their ability to assign authorship, but rather with the rationale behind the research that was being conducted.

The questions that rock art researchers were interested in were almost exactly the same as those asked by the physical and social anthropologists. For example, in 1932, Dorothea Bleek suggested that “the interpretation of these documents [rock paintings] presents us with many problems. We ask: Were all the paintings the work of one people? What race or races produced the artists?” (Bleek 1932:72). Certainly, research at the time was occupied by questions of the authorship of various unusual rock art ‘styles’ that had come to light, and, in a similar fashion to palaeo-anthropological and archaeological work, equated these ‘styles’ with distinct races and cultures. This approach to answering questions about rock art can be traced to a book on South Africa’s past, published by the Cambridge

archaeologist Miles Burkitt in 1928, called '*South Africa's Past in Stone and Paint'*. Burkitt brought with him what is described as an empiricist geological approach to rock art research (Lewis-Williams 1983). As part of this approach he suggested that the methods used for studying stone tool industries, such as stratigraphy and typology should be applied to rock art research (Burkitt 1928). In rock art research, superpositioning was equated with stratigraphy, and typologies were equated with style (Lewis-Williams 1995a:70-71).

This kind of thinking is what inspired archaeologists such as Clarence Van Riet Lowe, (1931, 1937). He made use of a superpositional analysis of rock paintings at Pelzer's Rust, in the eastern Free State, where he suggested that a final period of black monochrome images was associated with artefacts (stone tools) from the Upper Smithfield Culture, and referred to the people associated with these tools and images, in a manner reminiscent of physical anthropologists such as Keith and Dreyer, as "Upper Smithfield Folk" (Van Riet Lowe 1931:56). This seems to have been a pre-cursor to his later proposition (Van Riet Lowe 1944) that rock art could be divided into at least two phases, an "Earlier Period" and a "Later Period". He characterized the later period as being "generally inferior both in style and in technique, but above all they reflect a restlessness which is never apparent in the earlier, pre-Bantu period" (*ibid*:39). He suggests that the earlier art was made by an unspecified 'stone age man', and that the later art represents 'true bushman paintings'. Van Riet Lowe's technique of dividing the rock art into phases was essential, because these phases needed to be correlated with levels in which stone tool assemblages had been found. This method was characteristic of most rock art research at the time.

In a similar vein, Goodwin (1936) described a painted shelter at Vosburg (located in the present-day northern Cape) that contained 'maroon' coloured finger-paintings of concentric circles and human figures. He argued that the paintings were directly related to the stone tools found in the shelter. In relation to rock engravings found at the same site, he expressed the idea that different 'styles' of rock art would be associated with groups of stone implements that represent the makers, although this relationship was not clear at the Vosburg site.

Similarly, Jalmar Rudner and Ione Rudner (1959:106–8) writing about the rock art and stone tool industries in the Brandberg of Namibia suggest that Wilton stone tool assemblages and rock art of the Brandberg were made by ‘Hottentots’, or people with a herding economy. These arguments are clearly a product of the wider intellectual agenda of the time, equating a particular group of people, with a particular stone tool industry and now, with a particular rock art style.

In addition to linking phases of rock art with stone tools, certain ‘other’ rock art that was considered by various researchers to have been made quite late, was linked to specific races of people who were thought to be the last in a long progression of multiple race groups that inhabited southern Africa. In 1920, Hewitt (1920:315) wrote a paper describing the ‘aborigines of the Eastern Province’ and suggested that the rock art around Grahamstown may have been made by those he terms the ‘Damasonqua hottentots’. He suggests that they may have “contained Bushman admixture and thus might be explained the fact that several of the paintings have a modern appearance, both in the freshness of colour and in the quasi-European dress of certain human figures there represented” (1920:315). In a precursor to Goodwin’s musings on the tangerine tradition, Hewitt was grappling with the issue of who the authors of rock art that seemed to be fairly recent and unusual may have been. Implicitly, this research was concerned with complex issues of the relationship between material culture and identities in flux. Early researchers were focusing on complicated issues that are still pertinent to any consideration of rock art made during the historical period.

In 1955, J. Dekenah expressed a similar idea to those of Hewitt, Goodwin and others. He wrote a piece about a site in the then Cape Province that contained “a number of paintings that are not the conventional Bushman paintings” (Dekenah 1955:108), but rather consisted of arrangements of ‘blobs’ of paint on the roof of the cave. Dekenah ventured then that these paintings may have been made by Khoekhoen rather than San, “they remind me of similar blobs of colour seen many years ago in a mud hut occupied by a Coloured couple who must have been well over 80 years old, and once slaves belonging to the farm” (*ibid.*). This

emphasis on the idea that recent and unusual rock art could have been made by people who fell into the gaps between large cultural groups is intriguing, and is pertinent in the present given burgeoning interest in how identity is asserted and contested in contemporary rock art research.

A shifting agenda

Perhaps the overriding characteristic of scholarship at this time is that of a multiplicity of conclusions. Indeed, Alan Morris (1987:12), writing about physical anthropology, has suggested that "the studies often reached conflicting conclusions, but all of them shared a dogmatic typological approach as their methodological basis". It is important to note, however, that this paradigm did not go unchallenged at the time, and from the mid-1930s, various liberal South African academics began to challenge the conceptions of race put forward within this paradigm. Dubow (1994) points out that Goodwin introduced the term 'culture' into discussions of archaeological material in place of the term 'race'. This is evident in the title of his influential 1929 book, *The Stone Age Cultures of Southern Africa*, which he co-authored with Van Riet Lowe.

Writers outside of archaeology and palaeoanthropology, such as the anthropologist Hilda Kuper (1947), I.D. Maccrone (1936, 1949), a psychologist, and John Gray (1944), a sociologist, emphasised the "agency of culture and the environment" (Dubow 1994:358), in order to downplay the ideas about the biological bases of behaviour that predominated. In 1958, Singer published a thorough refutation of the conclusions reached by numerous physical anthropologists based on a multiplicity of races. He argued that "it is now obvious that what was justifiable speculation (because of paucity of data) in 1923, and was apparent as speculation in 1947, is inexcusable to maintain in 1958" (Singer 1958:177).

> The demise of typological thinking dates from the end of World War II when human biologists began to reconsider both the methodology and the usefulness of their classifications. The central theme in this revolution of

> thought was the recognition that a wide range of variation was a normal occurrence in any human population (Morris 1986:3).

Although the demise of racial typologies is certainly not lamentable, the ways in which rock art research, particularly 'other' rock art research was mobilised as a strand of evidence at this time are worth considering. The arguments put forward, although clearly situated within a narrow, racial paradigm, have a resonance beyond their time. Indeed, they prefigure some of the arguments that still remain central to rock art research today.

Some of the suggestions for the authorship of 'other' rock art such as those put forward by Hewitt (1920), Goodwin (1951) and Dekenah (1955) are the same kind of things that researchers would argue some decades later, although writing within a completely different and far less pejorative paradigm. Indeed, in the last decade or so, an increased focus on these issues has reinforced and developed some of the more tentative earlier statements. The need to classify the 'other' rock art of southern Africa broadly in terms of authorship has understandably formed a major focus of research. It is only within the last five years that the research agenda has been expanded to include more complex considerations of the link between these traditions and the formation and contestation of identity, and of the roles these other art traditions may have played in society (e.g., Prins & Hall 1994; Smith & Van Schalkwyk 2002; Moodley 2004; Smith & Ouzman 2004).

The relationship between rock art and ideas about identity is, however, often asserted rather than considered in detail. Identity is a concept that is notoriously difficult to define, and many researchers disagree about what is meant by this term. In addition to this, conceptions of identity have changed substantially in the last century. As is clear from a consideration of the period between 1900 and 1965, rock art research and ideas about identity have a far longer and more complex association than many would realise. A retrospective consideration of the relationship between rock art and identity sheds some light on the ways in which we deal with it now. Research on 'other' rock art traditions, such as Type

3 imagery, is both informed by, and complements, this important aspect of rock art research in southern Africa.

Two things can be seen in this glimpse of rock art research in the past:

> 1) Early researchers considered rock art, particularly 'other' art that seemed to be unusual and anomalous, to be an important tool for a better understanding of the complexity of southern Africa's human past.
>
> 2) There was a strong focus on the identity of the makers of the art. Even if the ways that researchers conceived of these identities were racial, they were probing the issue. They were intrigued by the idea that 'other' rock art may have been made by people in the process of changing culturally. Their overall research agenda, however, did not allow them to probe these issues further because of their obsession with rigid categorisation.

These two aspects of rock art research in the past are still pertinent to contemporary research. Intimately tied up with questions that arise about non-San rock art, are questions about the identity of the pre and post-colonial inhabitants of southern Africa. Over the years, conceptions of identity have changed. As we have seen, until very recently, the word identity would have conjured ideas about culture and race that were bounded in both time and space, yet its contemporary implications both undermine this, and reach far beyond this. Necessarily, then, the way in which we envisage the relationship between rock art and identity has changed substantially. Although the interpretative revolution in southern African rock art research has certainly catapulted San rock art onto the centre of the archaeological stage, we are poised, once again, to consider the non-San rock art.

Indeed, recent research is beginning to focus on 'other' rock art once again. More than a decade ago, a paper focusing on finger-painted imagery from the Hart's River Valley was published (Dowson, Blundell & Hall 1992). At this time, the major focus of rock art research in southern Africa was on the San rock art

tradition, using an approach that may broadly be described as interpretative. Having considered the strange and enigmatic finger-painted imagery, the authors suggested that the presence of this art pointed to "some interesting questions that require attention if we are to understand the social and historical context underlying geographic and stylistic differences in southern African rock art" (*ibid*: 31).

The 1992 Hart's River Valley paper displayed a substantial amount of foresight in terms of the future foci of rock art research, and subsequent publications have picked up on this issue once again. In particular, research done on 'colonial period rock art' in the Western Cape (Hall & Mazel 2005), and on Korana rock art in South Africa's central interior (Ouzman 2005) grapple with these issues of authorship and situations of complex social interaction.

Hall and Mazel (2005) argue that the imagery that they term 'colonial period rock art' was made by the descendants of both Khoekhoen and San who "as the colonial frontier closed around them, lost their economic independence and ideological identities, merged and became fully subordinated within the labour needs of the rural farm economy" (*ibid*:124). The argument that this anomalous rock art may have been made by people whose economic situation had changed from those of hunter-gatherers or herders to labourers on farms echoes Goodwin's (1951) interest in the tangerine tradition which, as we have seen, he thought had been made by people in the process of a similar economic and concomitant social transition. Hall and Mazel (2005) consider the extent to which there is a continuity in features of pre-colonial painting traditions and colonial ones, and by extension, whether there are cultural continuities. Ultimately Hall and Mazel are interested in the extent to which this unusual rock art of the Western Cape may be implicated in changing identities related to multi-ethnic interaction.

Similar themes run through Sven Ouzman's (2005) consideration of Korana rock art. Based on "site preference, pigment, iconography, archaeology, ethnography and historiography" (*ibid*: 101) a new rock art tradition is identified. Ouzman

argues that this new rock art tradition was made by a multi-ethnic band of Korana raiders, for ‘magical’ and military purposes (*ibid.*). His discussion related to authorship of the art is an insightful one, with the suggestion that “more than simple ‘borrowings’ from distinct ethnicities, the rock art documents an active ethnogenesis” (*ibid*.:107). In his consideration of material culture produced by a multi-ethnic society, Ouzman paves the way for an approach to such studies that is historically specific and socially insightful. Indeed, the broad issue that these papers contribute to, of seeking a more detailed understanding of the geographic and stylistic variation in southern African rock art is the overarching framework within which the present research is situated.

In the following chapter I elucidate the details of the ‘other’ rock art that forms the focal point of this thesis, and why it is important for our understanding of the social relations in the historical period in the north Eastern Cape.

Chapter 2

Blurring the Boundaries

The common starting point for rock art research is to link a corpus of images with its authors — with a group of people of a certain cultural identity, which can be located within space and time. In other words, boundaries are drawn between groups of images, and groups of people. A particular corpus of images is usually recognised as a coherent whole based on classification in terms of style. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the concept of style has been applied to rock art research in South Africa for decades, by both amateurs and professionals alike. Style is described as a "taxon that is taken to have specific meaning with regard to the age and cultural affiliation of a particular motif, site, or rock art corpus" (Whitley 2001:24). Style is thus a crucial aspect of rock art research, yet it is also one of its greatest predicaments. The key is knowing whether the stylistic boundaries we ascribe coincide meaningfully with entities such as a particular archaeological culture or phase. As Bettina Arnold (2001: 221) suggests, the question is not whether the patterns we see as archaeologists are real, but whether the patterns we see actually matter, would they have been recognised as significant or 'real' to the study population.

Another "major failing of the use of style has been the implicit presumption that essentially all stylistic variability is cultural-historical in nature" (Whitley 2001:24). This presumption creates a situation in which stylistic difference is thought to relate to different cultures, rather than representing functional or social variability within a rock art corpus. This issue is not easy to arbitrate. As we have seen in the previous chapter, in the history of southern African rock art research, and in many parts of the world still today, one of the major issues facing researchers is how to distinguish between different rock art traditions — are the perceived differences something other than functional, spatial or temporal variation within a tradition? It is in this endeavour that difficulties often arise. Because taxonomic boundaries between

groups of people and groups of rock art may be more blurred than we would assume, I use the term fine-line rock art, rather than that of San rock art, throughout the rest of this thesis. The label San rock art implies that this is the only corpus of art that could have been made by people who considered themselves to be San. Because of the complex history of interaction in the Nomansland area (discussed in Chapter 4), many people who called themselves San had been through multiple social, cultural, economic and religious changes, and it is possible that they could have made rock art images that were different from fine-line art. I consider this point in more detail in relation to the authorship of Type 3 rock art.

Rock art research in southern Africa usually proceeds from a point at which the identity of the authors is known (with the exception of recently identified Khoekhoen rock art, see Smith & Ouzman 2004), thereby circumventing many of the pitfalls of categorization. Type 3 rock art represents a situation in which its relationship to other groups of rock art, and groups of people is not apparent. Thus the question of where and how to draw legitimate taxonomic boundaries is brought to the fore by the presence of this rock art in the Nomansland Core Research Area.

I begin the process of addressing this issue with a detailed and systematic description of Type 3. I then go on to consider its formal relationship to other rock art categories in the area.

Description of Type 3 rock art

Type 3 rock art is characterised by a limited range of subject matter, that encompasses finger-painted and rough brush-painted, monochrome human beings, felines and quadrupedal images (e.g., Figs 7–12). The paintings are predominantly made with a distinctive coarse pinkish red pigment that is applied thickly to the rock surface. Cursory observation shows that this art is distinct from the wealth of fine-line or San art found throughout Nomansland and elsewhere in the Drakensberg. The

particulars of this art must be taken into account so as to assess the validity of this observation. In order to better understand the details of what characterises this art, an analysis of both the paintings themselves and the sites in which they are found, is necessary. Certain questions related to this may be posed in order to analyse the patterns and anomalies associated with Type 3 art.

1) Is the placement of Type 3 rock art sites significant?
2) Is the placement of Type 3 rock art panels or individual images significant?
3) Is the subject matter, colour or association of individual painted images significant?

Site placement

A consideration of site placement within the landscape yields little information. Natural features that may have influenced the placement of sites within the landscape are not easily discernible. Closeness to water has been argued to be one of the major identifying factors for the placement of Khoekhoen rock art (Smith & Ouzman 2004; Morris 2002). It is extremely unlikely, however, that Type 3 sites were chosen due to the availability of water: almost every valley in the research area is fed by a perennial river. In addition to this, the area has some of the highest annual rainfall figures in southern Africa, with an average summer rainfall of 600-1000mm annually (Low *et. al.* 1996:45). This means that almost all rock art sites are located near to water, suggesting that this is not a distinctive factor in the choice of site placement. The suitability of painted shelters for occupation is also an unlikely factor in the choice of Type 3 sites, as almost all the shelters throughout the research area, although ranging in size from small to large, are suitable for occupation. The size of the shelter does not seem to play a role either: Type 3 images are found in some of the larger known shelters in the area, and also in shelters that are fairly small.

Type 3 rock art sites are not restricted to one particular section of the core study area. Certain categories of fine-line rock art sites, such as those containing a particular image category described by Blundell (2004) as significantly differentiated Figures (SDFs) (e.g., Fig. 6), are found almost exclusively at sites above the second escarpment, with only one known exception (Blundell 2005 pers. comm.). Unlike these, Type 3 sites are found both above and below this secondary escarpment. The sites are thus located in the high mountains, below them in the foothills, in large, densely painted sites, and in small, sparsely painted sites. The location of Type 3 sites on the landscape is fairly evenly spread across the Core Study Area (Fig. 7). Indeed, the fairly even spread of Type 3 sites is perhaps the most significant characteristic of their location within the Core Study Area.



Fig. 6. Example of an SDF image, showing large head size in relation to body.

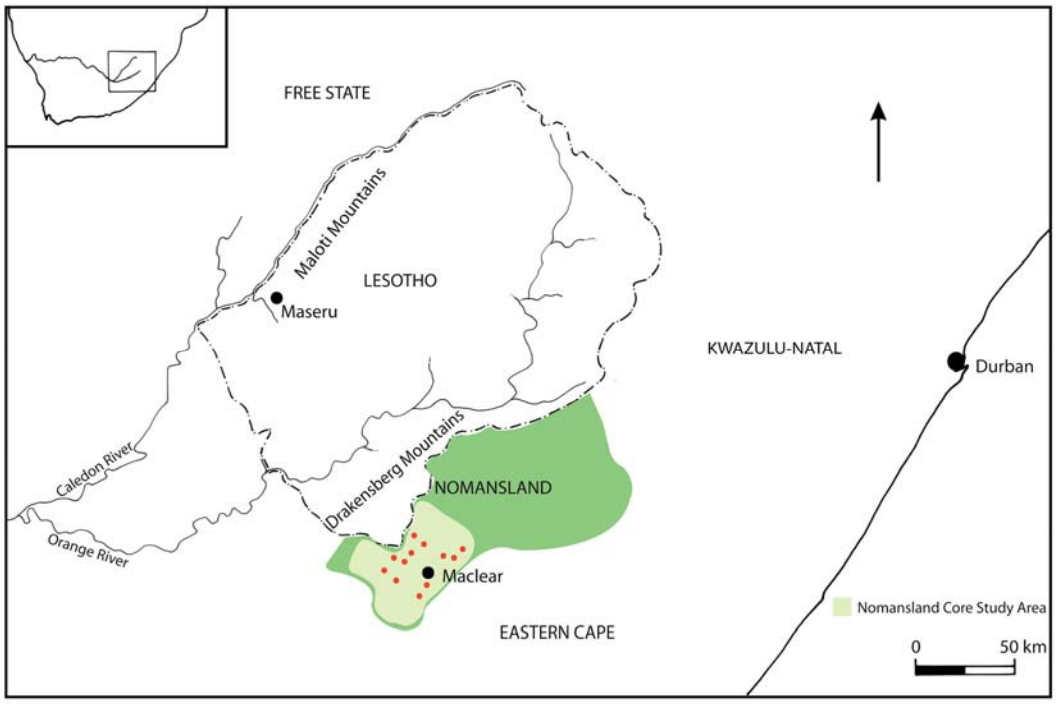


Fig. 7. Map showing fairly even spread of Type 3 sites in the Nomansland Core Study Area. Red dots represent Type 3 rock art sites.

Image placement

A consideration of the second question, pertaining to the significance of the placement of individual images and painted panels is more revealing than the macro-scale analysis of the placement of rock art sites in the landscape. There are two striking characteristics of the placement of Type 3 rock art panels. The first is that Type 3 images are, with three exceptions, always placed in sites that already contain fine-line rock art. In these instances, Type 3 paintings are almost always placed on top of existing fine-line imagery, i.e., Type 3 rock art is superimposed upon fine-line art. Although various factors would almost certainly have been involved in the choice of sites in which to make Type 3 images, the only one that is clear from an etic perspective is that suitable surfaces on which to make Type 3 rock art were those that already contained other fine-line painted images. There may, however, be details of the underlying fine-line rock art that led the painters of Type 3 art to choose particular painted shelters, or particular painted panels in a shelter. It is not

possible to gain insight into the possible pattern related to the underlying art with the present data.

Importantly, the authors of Type 3 rock art do not seem to have felt restricted about where they were able to place their paintings. In three instances, they are placed in sites that contain SDFs, RSA LAB1, RSA MEL9, and RSA TYN2. Blundell (2004; see also Dowson 1994) has argued that sites containing these figures would have been controlled by socially powerful San shamans, an issue that I consider in more detail in Chapter 5. This placement of the images in SDF sites certainly suggests that there was little restriction on where Type 3 painters chose to paint. Because Type 3 is prominent and often displayed in a large frieze, it it is unlikely that the paintings were meant to be concealed or secret. Rather, the opposite seems to be the case, and I suggest that Type 3 images were deliberately painted in such a way that they form prominent displays (e.g., Fig. 8).



Fig. 8. An example of a large and prominent panel of Type 3 images. Faded fine-line rock art may be discerned beneath the Type 3 imagery.



Fig. 9. Drawing of the photograph in Fig. 8., showing humans and quadrupedal images. Black represents red. Stipple represents faded red.

Another characteristic of Type 3 rock art that is apparent at two sites in particular, RSA LAB1 and RSA RED1, is the placement of the paintings in relation to the rock surface itself. The idea that paintings are sometimes deliberately depicted as if interacting in certain ways with the topography of the rock surface is something that has been argued convincingly for numerous fine-line rock art images (Lewis-Williams & Dowson 1990). The observation that certain fine-line images appear to interact with the rock surface is linked to beliefs about the nature of the rock surface, specifically, that the rock face is conceived of as a veil between the real world and the spirit world (*ibid.*). However, this relationship between paintings and their 'canvas' is not something that is apparent in other known southern African rock art traditions.

Remarkably, Type 3 rock art displays evidence of deliberate use of aspects of the rock face. At RSA LAB1, careful use has been made of a relatively unevenly stepped rock surface, such that particular image groups have been painted on certain facets of the rock face. Almost certainly, the groups on particular surfaces are not random, and the images that have been placed in relation to a particular feature of the rock surface are interacting with them in some way (e.g., Fig. 10). Similarly, at RSA RED1, small facets of the rock face have been used as separate panels upon which certain images have been placed (Fig. 11). It is important to note that although the painters of Type 3 art made use of features of the rock face, they did so in a

different way to that in which fine-line paintings interacted with details of the rock surface.

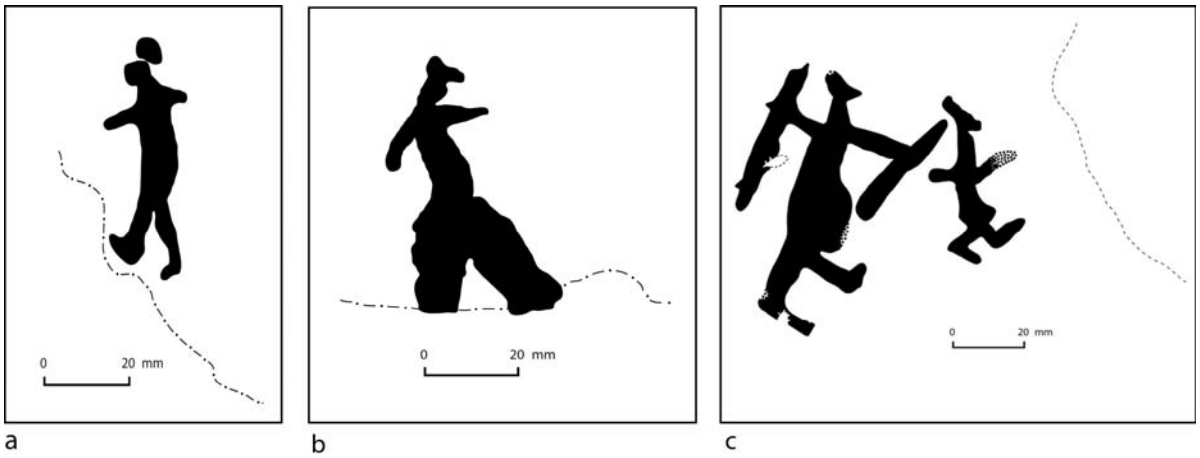


Fig. 10. Drawings showing Type 3 figures depicted in relation to details of the rock surface. Dashed lines represent steps in the rock surface. Black represents red. Stipple represents faded red.



Fig. 11. Photograph showing Type 3 images placed on facets of the rock surface.

Type 3 images

I turn, then, to the third issue, and an analysis of the paintings themselves according to variables such as colour, subject matter, and association. At 9 of the 12 sites at

which Type 3 imagery is found, the images are made in a thick, monochrome red pigment, which sometimes appears slightly pink in colour. At one site, RSA BUX1, although each image remains monochrome, a range of colours made from a thick pigment are used in addition to red: yellow, white, and pink (e.g., Fig. 12.), and at RSA NGC3 (Fig. 13a) and RSA CRA6 (Fig. 13b), white pigment is used in addition to red.



Fig. 12. Type 3 images depicted in pink. (Photo: D. Pearce).



Fig. 13. Type 3 images depicted in pink-white pigment. (Photo 13a: L. Henry).

The vast majority of images painted are human figures, depicted either face-on, or in profile. On almost all the human figures, the feet are clearly depicted, which helps to establish the intended directionality of the image. Although arms are clearly shown on the majority of the images, the hands are never depicted (e.g., Fig. 14). At certain sites, all the images are clearly finger-painted (e.g., Fig. 9), and at other sites, both finger-painted and rough brush-painted human figures occur (e.g., Fig. 15). This combination of finger-painting and brush-painting is extremely unusual, and is associated with only one other rock art tradition, found in the central interior of southern Africa and argued to be authored by nineteenth century Korana raiders (Ouzman 2005).



Fig. 14. Human figures showing feet and arms, but no hands. Black represents red. Stipple represents faded red.



Fig. 15. Rough brush-painted human figures at RSA RED1.

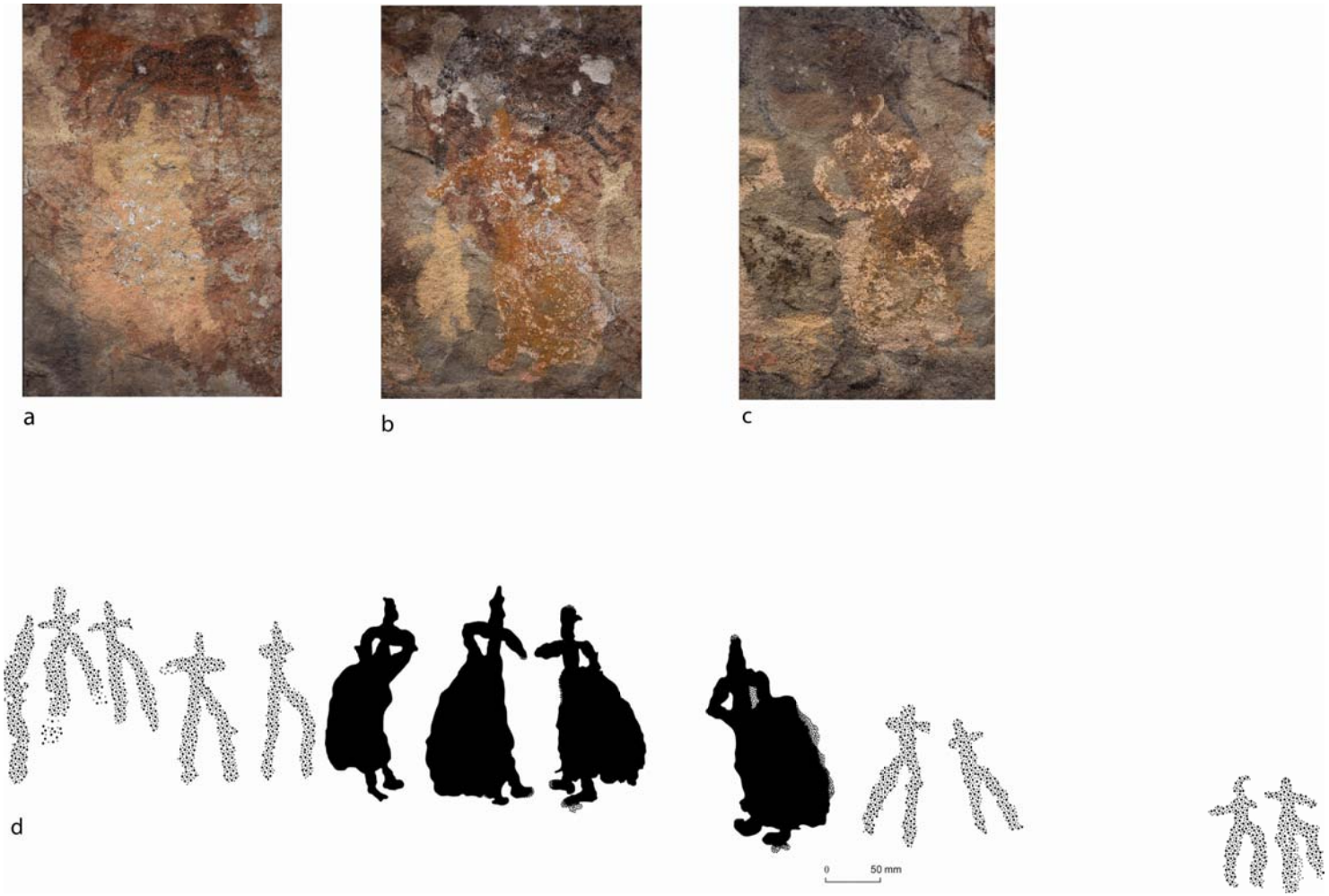


Fig. 16. Human figures at RSA BUX1. Black represents pinkish-white, stipple represents yellowish white. (Photos: D. Pearce).

At certain sites, the human figures appear to be clothed. At RSA BUX1 there is a panel that includes four figures with distinctive, long dresses, such as those associated with European women, and eight figures juxtaposed with these images that are almost certainly male, due to their lack of dresses (Fig. 16 d). Set slightly apart from this panel, are four other figures depicted in long dresses (Fig. 16 a,b,c). At RSA LAB1, there are certain figures that appear to be wearing dresses, skirts or aprons (Fig.14). The possibility that they are wearing aprons is suggested by the length of the clothing, which is depicted with the full extent of the leg protruding from beneath the clothing. Although some figures wearing full skirts at RSA BUX1 (Fig. 16), show only the feet protruding, others do display more than this. It is difficult to say whether the length of leg painted is deliberate, or a result of the imprecise manner of depiction chosen for these images.

Many of the human figures depicted have a circular or slightly elongated protrusion from the top or side of the head. Sometimes these entities are depicted as if separate from the head, but they are usually continuations of the head area (e.g., Fig. 10, 14). It seems that these figures are deliberately being shown to wear a headdress of some description, although the paintings are not detailed enough to be able to suggest precisely what these headdresses may be.

Numerous human figures carry weapons. These include sticks, bows and arrows, spears and knobkerries (Figs. 10c, 15b, 17, 18, 19). Significantly, the spears are an unusual example of bichrome Type 3 images, often depicted with red handles and white points (e.g., Fig. 18). In some instances, figures hold both a stick and a spear in one hand, or two sticks, one in each hand. There is thus a strong emphasis on weaponry in the art (e.g., fig.8). It is often the case that figures holding weapons are depicted facing one another, or in small groups, as if interacting with one another in some way. Also, bows and arrows are always held by a human figure. The bows are always drawn with an arrow fitted as if ready to shoot. In some instances, human figures are depicted as if holding both a bow and arrow in one hand (e.g., Fig.20). This suggests that it was important to show the person with a bow and arrow, but

that the accuracy of showing how a person would hold a bow and arrow when shooting it was not paramount.

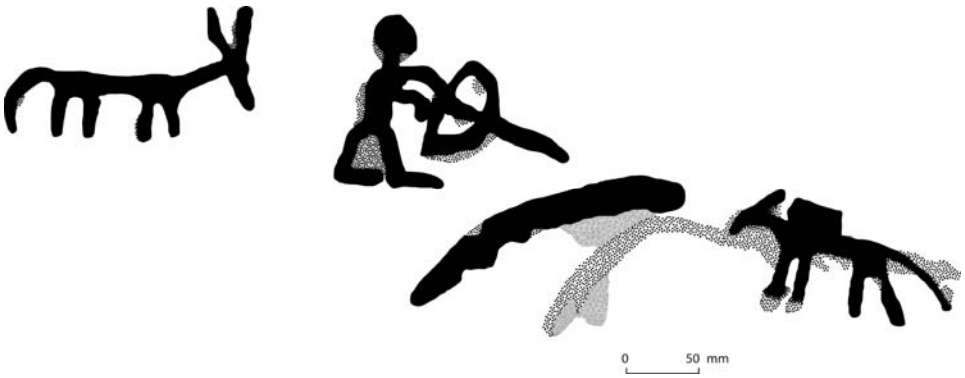


Fig. 17. Drawing of RSA GAB1, showing human figure holding a bow and arrow, as well as two quadrupedal figures. Black represents red. Stipple represents faded red.



Fig. 18. Drawing of images from RSA LAB1, showing a human figure holding a bow and arrow and another human figure holding what are possibly two sticks. Black represents red. Stipple represents faded red.



Fig. 19. Human figure holding a spear and a knobkerrie. Black represents red. White represents white. Stipple represents faded red.



Fig. 20. Human figure from RSA LAB1 holding a bow and arrow in one hand.

The groups that include human figures with weapons also often include human figures without weapons, and quadrupeds. They do not seem to be narrative battle scenes, in which the figures are engaged in fighting with each other, but rather each figure seems to be emblematic, used to make a statement about the importance of weapons and or horses, rather than tell a story that happens to involve weaponry. Significantly, no depictions that are identifiable as firearms are discernible. I take up these considerations in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6, when I suggest reasons why this rock art may have been made.

Quadrupedal figures are found at five sites, and are depicted in a notably uniform manner at all these sites. They are always depicted in profile. They either have all four legs portrayed in a row (e.g., Figs. 17, 18), or only two legs showing (e.g., Figs. 9, 13). Two ears, relatively long in relation to face size, are drawn and a tail that is depicted as if flying out behind them is also always depicted (Figs. 9,13,17,18). Three sites provide insight into a possible identification of what animal these images may depict. At one site, RSA GAB1 (Fig. 17), a quadrupedal figure is depicted as if carrying some kind of pack on its back, represented by a distinctive rectangular shape rising from its spine. At a second site, RSA TYN2, two of these figures are depicted as if someone may be sitting, or standing, astride them (e.g., Fig.21). At another site, RSA NGC3, further insight is provided in the form of numerous quadrupedal images, some of which have humans sitting astride them, as if they are riding them. This suggestion is further strengthened by what appear to be reins associated with some of these figures (Fig. 22). I thus suggest that the presence of human riders and reins indicates that the quadrupedal images are likely to be representations of horses or possibly donkeys. Riders with reins however suggest that they are most likely to be horses.

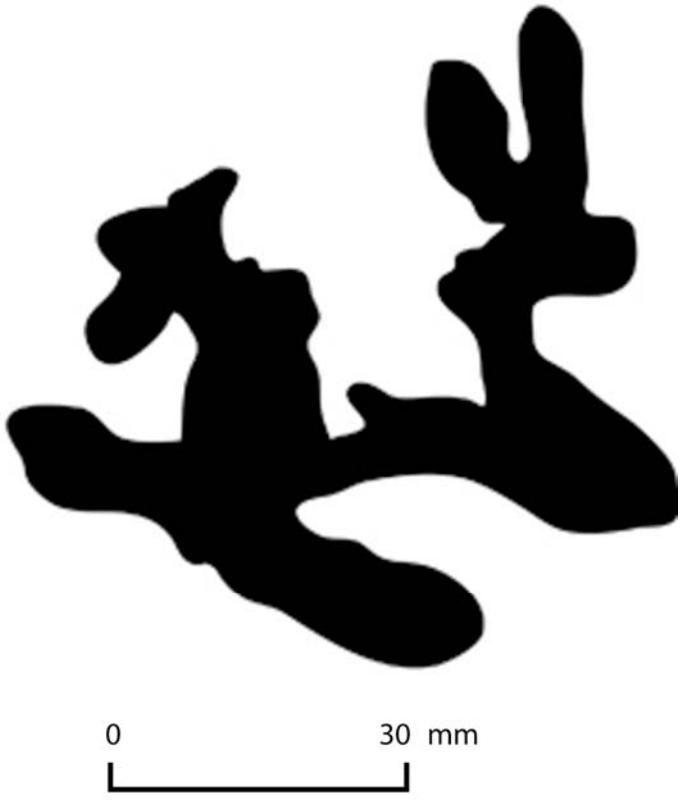


Fig. 21. Depiction of a quadrupedal image with a human figure that appears to sit or stand astride it. Black represents red.



Fig. 22. Depictions of quadrupedal figures with riders and reins from RSA NGC3. (Photos: L. Henry).

Variation within a corpus of rock art

Having broadly described Type 3 imagery, I consider some of the variations within this corpus of rock art. One of the most intriguing aspects of Type 3 rock art is the appearance at two sites, RSA MEL9 and RSA FRE1, of rough brush-painted feline-like images (Figs. 23, 24, 25). These images have tails that are long in relation to the body size, and, in both instances, the tails are associated with rough brush-painted human figures. At RSA MEL9, the feline-like image is painted in a watery monochrome red. It measures approximately 250mm across, and its tail extends for about 1m across a densely painted panel of fine-line rock art. The image has claw-like protrusions on the ends of its feet, and an open, gaping mouth, filled with sharp teeth. Similarly, at RSA FRE1, the image, although smaller – measuring about 80 mm in body length, and 100 mm in tail length, has white claws on its feet, and an open mouth filled with white teeth (Fig. 25). At this site, the depiction is made in an orange-red watery pigment. Both images have feline-like rounded ears, and felid body shapes. They are also some of very few examples of bichrome Type 3 images. Although I have described these quadrupeds as ‘feline-like’, it is not possible to discern the exact species upon which they are modelled. The bodies, do, however, appear to be heavyset, suggesting that they are modelled on either lion or leopard.

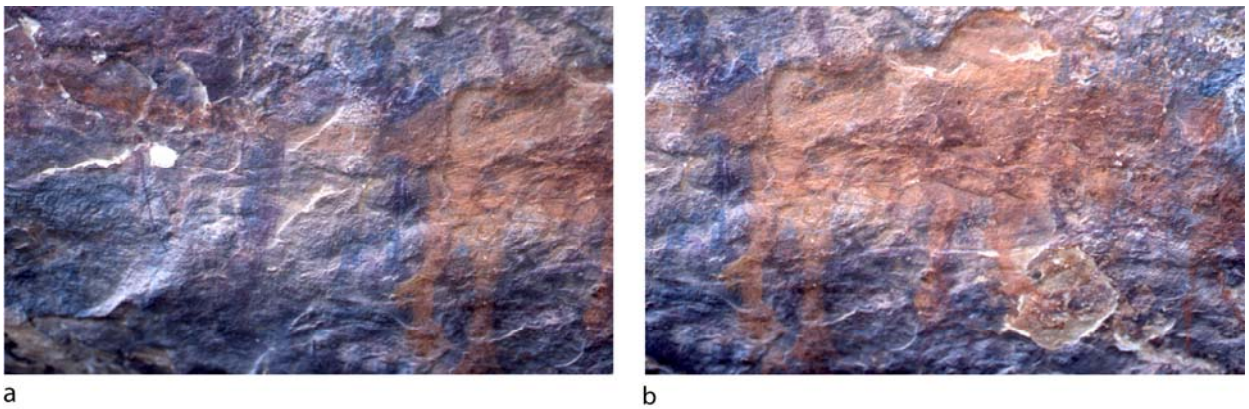
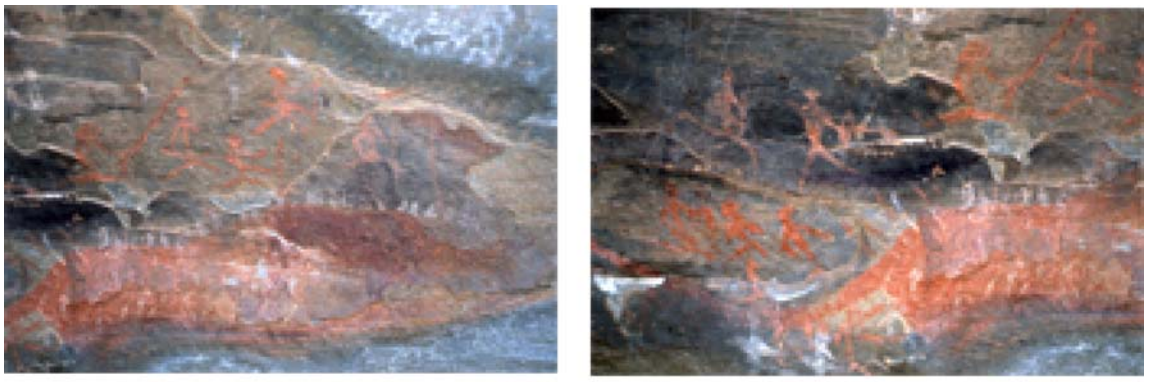


Fig. 23. Rough brush-painted feline-like image at RSA MEL9. (Photos: D. Pearce).



Fig. 24. Human figure depicted as if lying down beneath tufted tail of feline at RSA Mel9.



a b

Fig. 25. Rough brush-painted feline-like image from RSA FRE1, with human figures associated with the figure. Fine-line human figures may be seen in association with the Type 3 images.

At RSA MEL9, the human figures are painted in the same monochrome red pigment as the feline, and are associated with the tail of the animal. There are four human figures, two appear to be running along the tail of the animal, one is depicted in a supine position beneath the tuft at the end of the tail (Fig. 24), and one is associated with the head of the animal (Fig. 23b). At RSA FRE1, there are six human figures, all painted in the same orange-red colour as the felid. Three are associated with the

tail of the animal (Fig. 25b), and three are depicted above the feline (Fig. 25a). Two of these figures carry a bow and an arrow. At both sites, the felines are painted on top of numerous San images. It is possible that two fine-line human figures near the tail of the feline at RSA FRE1 are meant to be associated with it. In other words, it is likely that the placement of the feline was deliberately chosen to associate the fine-line images with it.

In addition to this probable relationship, at one particular site, RSA BUX1, a Type 3 human figure has been depicted in a direct relationship with the underlying fine-line imagery (Fig. 26). This human figure is finger-painted in a monochrome pinkish white colour. It has been depicted as if sitting astride a fine-line monochrome yellow hartebeest. This is clearly a case of very deliberate superpositioning of a particular Type 3 image on top of a particular San image. This case of clear and deliberate superpositioning suggests that other less obviously related superpositioning or juxtapositioning may also have significance. At RSA TYN2, a Type 3 human figure has been depicted amidst a group of three fine-line paintings of baboons. Considering that all the other Type 3 imagery at this site is painted in a large group on a separate panel with faded fine-line rock art beneath it, the placement of this single image in that particular location is clearly deliberate and almost certainly significant. The image forms part of a larger San panel that contains an SDF figure, which is also important. I consider the details of why this relationship is significant in Chapters 5 and 6.

Also at RSA BUX1, two of the Type 3 figures have been repainted in a different colour. This re-painting is deliberate, and can be clearly seen as the outlines of the topmost images are slightly different from the original images below them (Figs. 16b, 16c). This repainting of the original Type 3 image is clearly deliberate, and suggests that individual images had an importance that was worth highlighting or re-inforcing.

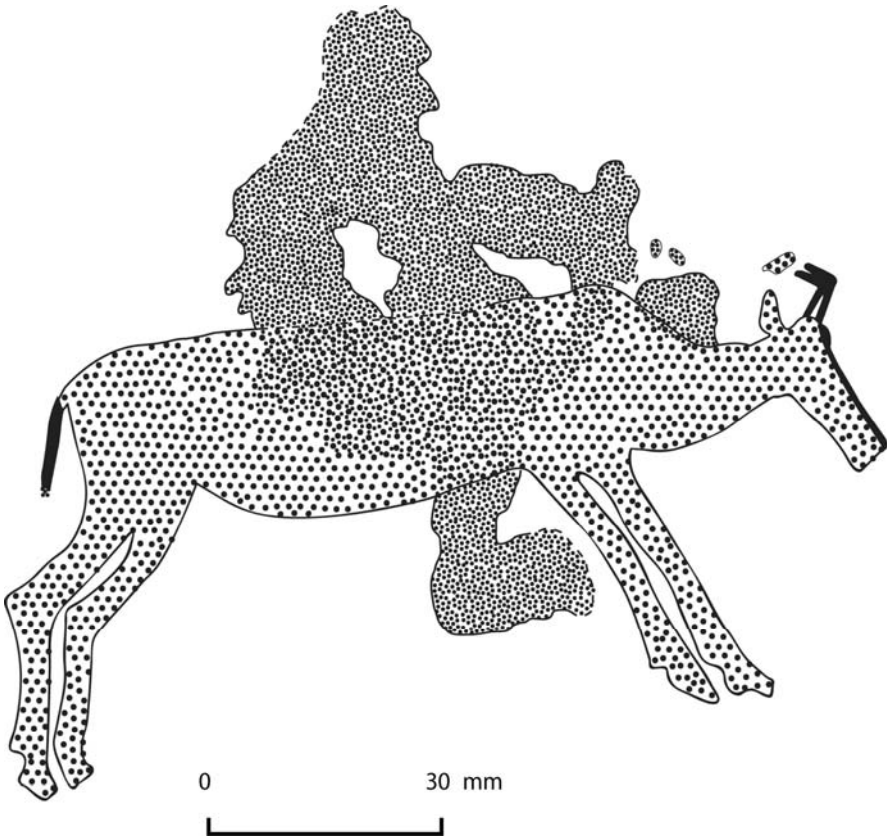


Fig. 26. Type 3 human figure depicted as if riding a fine-line hartebeest. Black represents black. Fine stipple represents pinkish white. Wide stipple represents yellow.

Given what we now know about the corpus of Type 3 rock art, we are in a position to assess it in relation to what we know about other rock art in southern Africa. It will already be clear from the above description that Type 3 rock art is unusual, and therefore challenging. Its very existence forces us to re-examine our methods — the processes of defining and describing groups of rock art, and the relationships between art complexes. This has implications beyond the ordering of data. Rock art provides us with insights into the minds of its makers, and as such, the way we order the art impacts on the way we consider the people who made it.

Rock art traditions

The corpus of fine-line rock art is the most prominent tradition in southern Africa and is undisputedly recognised as such on the basis, primarily, of direct ethnographic and historic links between hunter-gatherers and the art. Ethnographic and historic accounts of descendants of painters commenting on paintings or copies of paintings (e.g., Orpen 1874; Hahn 1879; Jolly 1986; Lewis-Williams 1986; Deacon 1988; Prins 1990; Jolly & Prins 1994) provide strong evidence that these images were made by southern African hunter-gatherers. Some of the paintings date back to 27 000 years before the present (3 C14 dates: 26 300±40 BP; 26 700±650BP; 28 400 ±450 BP) (Wendt 1976). At such an early date, the only possible authors of this art are Later Stone Age (LSA) hunter-gatherers, from whom the San are descended.

Although fine-line rock art is not without regional variation (e.g., Hampson *et al.* 2002), it is identifiable as a coherent corpus of art characterised by complex shading of colour, extremely fine detail and a range of human, animal and fantastic or supernatural subject matter. “The paintings concentrate in the Drakensberg/Maluti mountains, the eastern Free State, the Cape Fold Belt, Matopos, Tsodilo Hills, Namibia’s inselbergs and the Waterberg Plateau and Soutpansberg mountains of South Africa’s Northern Province” (Mitchell 2002:193). Slightly different emphases in terms of subject matter are clearly present in these different regions, but what is more difficult to ascertain is the extent to which there may be temporal variation within any given area or between regions.

The possibility that Type 3 rock art is a later variation on fine-line rock art, made by the authors to whom classic San fine-line art is attributed, must be considered. An important study in this regard is that by Jannie Loubser and Gordon Laurens (1994), in which they demonstrate that a certain image category, termed Poster or Block Style imagery, is representative of a shift in the San painting tradition of the Caledon River Valley area over time. I suggest, however, that this explanation for the making of Type 3 rock art is unlikely for two main reasons.

First, Type 3 imagery is mostly finger-painted, which is a substantially different technique of depiction to the characteristic fine, brush-painted San rock art. Second, Type 3 art has an extremely restricted range of subject matter that includes only humans, horses and two felines, whereas San rock art includes a far more varied spectrum of humans, antelope, other animals, and fantastic creatures. The Type 3 rock art is thus sufficiently different from fine-line rock art to rule out the possibility that it is purely a later variation on this tradition made by San people.

Although distinct from the wealth of San art found throughout the Nomansland Core Study Area these images are, with one known exception, painted in shelters that contain fine-line rock art. Unlike some of the other non-San art in the area, many of them are superimposed upon fine-line paintings. In one instance a finger-painted human image is deliberately depicted astride a fine-line depiction of a hartebeest, suggesting some kind of intentional juxtapositioning. There are no instances in which the converse occurs and fine-line rock art is superimposed upon Type 3 images.

A Bantu-speaker rock art tradition?

Bantu-speakers' rock art, sometimes referred to as the Late White tradition is, like certain Type 3 images, a finger-painted art that includes human and animal figures. It is considered to be a coherent rock art tradition, notwithstanding certain variation within the tradition.

> "…The Bantu finger-painting tradition and associated worldview has a distribution which transcends certain geographical, historical and cultural boundaries… However, many variations can be identified within this tradition in terms of style, content and size." (Prins & Hall 1994:193).

Although it is referred to as a Bantu-speaking rock art tradition, not all southern African Bantu-speakers are candidates for authorship. Northern Sotho-speakers are known to be the makers of a predominantly white finger-painted tradition (Smith &

van Schalkwyk 2002, van Schalkwyk & Smith 2004), and Sotho-Tswana and Natal Nguni-speakers are known to be the authors of certain rock engravings that depict the settlement patterns that these people would have adhered to during the Late Iron Age (Maggs 1995). Significantly, the Cape Nguni, who occupy the areas immediately adjacent to the Nomansland Core study Area, have no known painting tradition. There are no records of any rock engravings in the core Nomansland study area. There are thus no engravings associated with Type 3 art, meaning that it is clearly not associated with Bantu-speaker rock engravings.

In addition to this, although some geometric images associated with girls' initiation are depicted in red and black (Namono 2004), the vast majority of representational Bantu-speaker rock paintings are made in a thick, white pigment. In contrast to this, the Type 3 images, all of which are representational, are predominantly made in red pigment, with only a few images depicted in white. Also, the range of animals and human postures that are depicted in Bantu-speaker rock art are far broader and more varied than the images that form part of the corpus of Type 3 art. Type 3 art thus differs substantially from Bantu-speakers' rock art in terms of subject matter and use of colour. It is thus extremely unlikely that it could be included within the broader Bantu-speaker rock art tradition. Although, at this point, I do not rule out the possibility that Type 3 art shares certain cognates with Bantu-speaker art.

A Khoekhoen rock art tradition?

The manner of depiction associated with Type 3 art, that of monochrome finger-painted images, suggests that it may be possible that Type 3 rock art is a variation on Khoekhoen rock art. Given that the majority of Khoekhoen rock art includes non-representational or geometric imagery (Smith & Ouzman 2004), and that of some 200 rock art sites known in the Nomansland Core Study Area, not one of these sites is known to contain geometric imagery, it seems fairly unlikely. Representational imagery in the form of monochrome red humans and animals, is, however, present at

a number of rock art sites that may be related to Khoekhoen people, in the Western Cape province (van der Merwe, Sealy & Yates 1987; Smith & Ouzman 2004).

Similarly, the art of the Korana, a multiethnic raiding group with Khoekhoen origins, contains monochrome finger-painted and rough brush-painted representational imagery (Ouzman 2005:109). It is thus possible that Type 3 imagery shares certain cognates with Khoekhoen art. There is, however, the possibility that we may be too quick to attach significance to these similarities. The use of red pigment is common in southern Africa in part because of the prevalence of red ochre as a raw material, and the use of a finger to apply paint to the rock face is also fairly widespread. These two things taken together, mean that different groups of people could have made rock art for very different reasons, even though it may be superficially similar. This does not mean that all painted characteristics are undiagnostic, simply that some characteristics of paintings are more common than others, and therefore less diagnostic.

The few similarities that Type 3 shares with San, Khoe and Bantu-speaking rock art mean that the boundaries at the edges of these categories become blurred. However, Type 3 imagery clearly does not fit comfortably within any of these three major rock art traditions. We must thus consider the possibility that Type 3 imagery is different enough to be representative of a new rock art tradition.

A new tradition?

Fine-line rock art constitutes the longest continuous art tradition in the world, and it is perhaps the model that researchers have in their heads when considering what characterises a rock art tradition. This may be somewhat misleading because not all rock art clusters are as widespread or as long-standing. Although fine-line rock art itself is not a homogenous tradition, it is widespread and shares a distinctive manner of depiction across its entire distribution. Indeed, the intuitive reaction to the

identification of Type 3 imagery as a new tradition is that it is substantially smaller and more closely circumscribed than any other tradition yet identified. It is thus important to explore the ways in which rock art traditions are defined, and why they represent an important unit of categorization.

In southern African rock art research, the three main painting traditions are recognized on the basis of a combination of manner of depiction, subject matter and use of colour. This information is then combined with data that connect groups of people to the art. In the case of Type 3, the process is more complicated. A more detailed consideration of how rock art traditions are defined is thus required, in particular, the processes of categorization that are commonly employed in rock art research.

Various authors have suggested definitions for certain formal concepts employed in the process of discerning between different clusters of rock art. Julie Francis (2001: 237) suggests that “Class and descriptive types form the basic framework by which to begin initial examinations of spatial and temporal variability within and between sites and geographic regions”, and that these “classes and types may then be grouped into traditions”. Traditions are defined by Willey and Phillips (1958:37) as “temporal continuities represented by consistent configurations in single technologies or other systems of related forms”. Following Willey and Philips, Francis (2001:237) suggests that traditions may span thousands of years and that they generally cover broad geographic areas.

A formal definition of a tradition, such as that of Willey and Philips, or Francis would seem to exclude Type 3 rock art based on criteria of a long time span and a large geographical area. I suggest, however, that the definition of tradition needs to be probed. The underlying reason that the concept of a tradition is important is because they represent a cognitive and social break of some sort between different groups of rock art. Traditions are associated with meaning and motivation, that is what makes them significant. The visible differences between groups of rock art are

potential indicators of these differences. Indeed, Benjamin Smith (1995:172-173) suggests that in order to examine art meaning and motivation, it would seem essential to define and differentiate separate art traditions. He argues that "meaning and motivation are likely to remain similar across time and space within a single tradition, only evolving as a slow and steady process. Between two traditions, major and sudden changes may occur" (*ibid*.:173). Smith emphasises the importance of differentiating between the "natural changes that occur between areas and across time from the hiatus changes that occur between traditions" (*ibid*). I suggest that certain aspects of this definition are useful for a consideration of Type 3 rock art, but also, that Type 3 challenges Smith's concept of slow and steady evolution within a rock art tradition.

Importantly, Smith (1997:213) suggests that the way in which images are made, in terms of form and subject matter, will be influenced by the artist's experience of existing symbols and other designs. Things such as choice of place in the landscape, painting surface, method used to apply the mark, implement and pigment will all be affected by prior experience or knowledge of other painted traditions. He argues that

> All artists creating a depiction face essentially the same problem: how to transform a three-dimensional subject (material or of the mind) into a two-dimensional picture, a transformation that involves many losses…the way an artist tackles this transformation process will be defined by his or her experience of how others have tackled the same problem. This creates, in space and time, complexes of locally interacting artistic traditions where artists belonging to the same tradition use common conventions to overcome common picturing problems and to comply with common picturing wishes (*ibid:* 214).

Through repeated use and with the passage of time, a convention thus becomes the accepted way of doing something. Conventions can grow up relating to any of the choices in the picture-making process but are particularly notable "when associated with the choice of manner of depiction" (*ibid.*: 218). Conventions tell us something about the artists wishes, because they will have been chosen for their suitability and success at fulfilling some artistic purpose. Recognizing certain sets of conventions

which appear to belong to particular times and places means that we may group rock art into ‘styles’ that share common conventions (*ibid.*).

It seems clear that the corpus of rock art that I refer to as Type 3 imagery certainly shares a set of picturing conventions including manner of depiction, subject matter, use of pigment and placement on the rock surface, that suggest it may be regarded as a cohesive stylistic entity. In addition to this, as discussed above, it is also substantially different from other known rock art traditions, and from the dominant style of fine-line paintings in the Nomansland Core Research Area. This is not to say that it would not have interacted in certain ways with other rock art traditions in the area, but the reasons for making Type 3, and what was required of the images were clearly different from what was required of fine-line rock art, for example. The idea that Type 3 art fulfils a different artistic purpose to that of the fine-line rock art of the area is borne out by its stylistic cohesiveness, as well as the repetitive occurrence of a restricted range of subject matter within the corpus of Type 3 art.

Although Type 3 seems to draw on certain aspects of fine-line rock art, it is also significantly different from classic fine-line rock art. This has important implications for its authorship — whoever was making it had a different agenda from the makers of fine-line rock art. This difference in the cognitive aspects that underly the making of the images, postulated on the basis of formal differences in the picturing conventions used to make Type 3 rock art, suggests that it should be considered to be a separate rock art tradition. It seems that what Smith (1995, 1997) refers to as a hiatus change is present between Type 3 rock art and fine-line rock art. Smith’s concept of slow and steady changes within a tradition, however, is something that does not seem to apply to Type 3 rock art. This tradition is made at only twelve sites in a restricted geographical area, suggesting that it emerges, changes and disappears within a short space of time. This suggestion is re-inforced by a consideration of the possible time period in which Type 3 imagery was made.

Dating Type 3 art

As is the case with the vast majority of rock art in southern Africa (for exceptions see Mazel & Watchman 1997, 2003), it is not possible to obtain direct dates for Type 3 rock art. It is possible, however, to assign a tentative date range for Type 3 rock art, partly because of its relationship to the fine-line rock art in the Core Study Area, and partly because of the subject matter of Type 3 art. As we have seen, Type 3 rock art is always painted over fine-line rock art, and there are no known instances in which the converse occurs. This means that Type 3 rock art was made after the fine-line rock art upon which it is superimposed, and gives the impression that Type 3 imagery is fairly recent.

Certain rock art images in southern Africa are known to be extremely old, such as the oldest representational paintings from Apollo 11 cave in Namibia which date to about 27 000 years before the present, and paintings from the Matopos in Zimbabwe which date to at least 10 000 years before the present (Walker 1996:11–14). Rock painting in southern Africa has a long history, and given that the Nomansland area has been occupied for some 29 000 years, it is possible that hunter-gatherers have been making rock art in the area for an extremely long time.

Although there is the potential for great antiquity of the art in Nomansland, it seems likely that the majority of the fine-line imagery that is still visible today in this area was made within the last 500 years (Blundell 2004:49). There are three main reasons why this is likely to be the case. 1) The subject matter of the art includes some historical period images, including horse, wagons, soldiers with guns and people in colonial clothing. 2) Many of the images are made using white pigment, or contain white pigment. White pigment is widely known for its lack of durability. In addition to this, the precarious sandstone upon which the images are made, as well as the extremely high annual rainfall in the area are not conducive to pigment preservation. The amount of vivid white pigment found in the Nomansland art thus strongly suggests that many of the images were made fairly recently (Blundell 2004:50–51).

3) Accelerated Mass Spectrometry (AMS) radiocarbon dates taken from samples of paintings in the south-eastern mountains to the north of the Nomansland core study area suggest recent dates for the paintings sampled. One of these dates is 507–297 before the present, and the other is 690–650 before the present (Mazel & Watchman 1997). This suggests that the images that we are able to see in the south-eastern mountains were made far more recently than many would assume. Of course, hunter-gatherers may well have been making rock art in the region for as long as they have occupied it, but these earlier paintings are probably no longer visible (*ibid*).

Taken together these strands of evidence suggest relatively recent dates for the fine-line rock art of the area. This is significant because Type 3 rock art is, with two exceptions, always superimposed on the fine-line rock art, suggesting that it was made more recently than the fine-line art. There are no instances in which fine-line rock art images are placed on top of Type 3 images. In addition to the evidence of the fine-line art in Nomansland, additional strands of evidence associated with the age of Type 3 art exist. The first of these is in the form of European style dresses worn by figures at RSA BUX1 (Fig.16), and possibly at RSA LAB1. The dresses at RSA BUX 1 do not display a great deal of detail. There is however, an emphasis on depicting the dress with a 'protrusion' at the rear. This is almost certainly a reference to the wearing of a bustle pad (Fig. 27), which was common practice at various times between the 17th and 20th centuries in Europe (Bradfield 1981).

The depiction of bustle pads at RSA BUX 1 allows for slightly finer resolution on possible dates for the art. Bustles were worn by some of the earliest European colonists in South Africa. Jan van Riebeeck's wife and daughters are depicted in dresses with bustles (Strutt 1975:2) (Fig.27b), suggesting that they were in use in the mid 17th century in the Cape Colony. By the early 1800s, European women's dress in South Africa had become more simple, with slim-line skirts and no bustles (*ibid.*:183). In the early 1860s, however, bustles seem to re-appear in colonial South

African fashions (*ibid.*:202), and by the 1890s, they are no longer worn by colonial South African women.



Fig. 27. a: photograph of 1860s dress with bustle-pad. b: line drawing of Jan Van Riebeeck's wife and daughters wearing bustle-pads in c.1652. c: drawing of human figures wearing dresses at RSA BUX1, that appear to have bustle-pads. (Photo and line drawing after Strutt 1975 p. 2, 202).

Although dresses may well have continued to be worn for sometime after they were 'in fashion', it seems likely that the depictions at RSA BUX 1 would have been made within a few years of the advent of dresses with bustles in the Eastern Cape. This places the depictions either within the period between 1650 and 1800, or the period roughly between 1860 and 1900. I adduce additional evidence in later chapters that makes the period between 1860 and 1900 the more likely option. Importantly, the presence of European dresses does not necessarily suggest that these are depictions of European women. As I discuss in Chapter 4, interaction, trade, intermarriage, and clientship among the multiple inhabitants of the Eastern Cape would have meant that clothing (as well as other material culture) would have

been extensively exchanged and would not necessarily only have been worn by European colonists.

The second of these is the presence of horses in the art. Horses were first introduced into South Africa in the mid 17th century by the Dutch East India company (Child 1967), but were only present in the south-eastern mountain range relatively late – probably some time around the 1830s. The point at which dresses and horses overlap occurs during the latter half of the nineteenth century. This means that it is fairly safe to assume that Type 3 rock art was made during this time. Although the temporal distance between the Type 3 tradition and fine-line imagery cannot be specified, it seems clear that Type 3 imagery is a very recent addition to the Nomansland landscape.

The 'other' rock art of Nomansland

So far, I have considered the corpus of Type 3 rock art as it was initially identified some years ago based on observation (Pearce 2004 pers. comm.). As I noted in the introduction, in addition to the tentatively labelled Type 3 rock art, Blundell (2004:113—130) has also described and explained a non-fine-line rock art tradition in the north Eastern Cape, named Type 2 imagery. The quadrupeds that form part of this tradition display antelope features, though, and it seems that they mimic certain features found in classic San paintings of eland. These features include "the projection formed in the antelope's neck by the anterior extremity of the thyroid cartilage of the larynx, antelope horns and dewlaps" (*ibid.*:113). Blundell thus suggests that it is likely that these images represent stylized eland (e.g., Fig. 28). One site that has been identified as a Type 2 site represents an exception to this rule. At this site, RSA LAB11, the quadrupedal images are identifiable as horses, with riders and reins (Fig. 29). This suggests that at least certain Type 2 images were made during the 19th century in the Nomansland area.

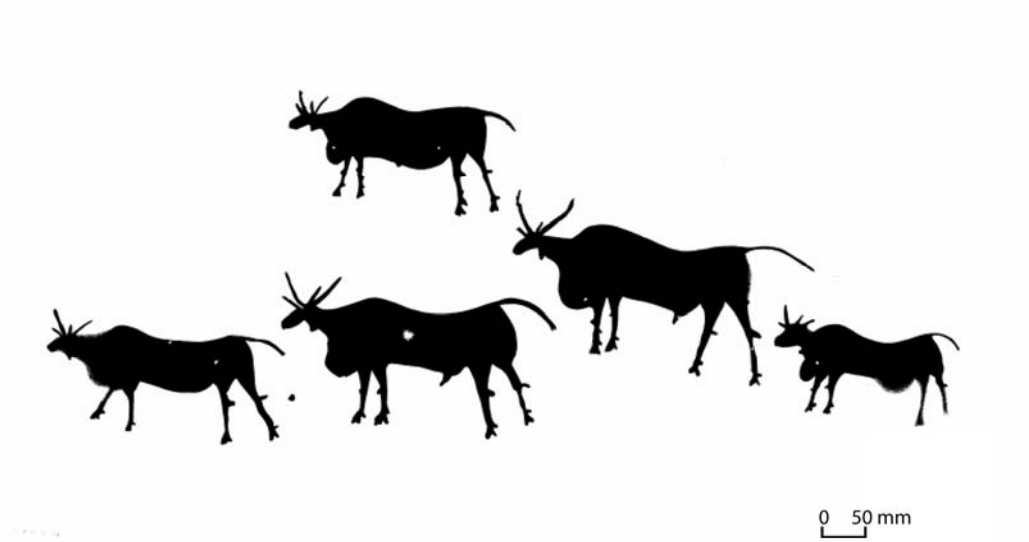


Fig. 28. Type 2 images from RSA MEL9, showing features such as dewlaps and antelope horns that mimic those of eland. (Drawing: J. Oloffson).

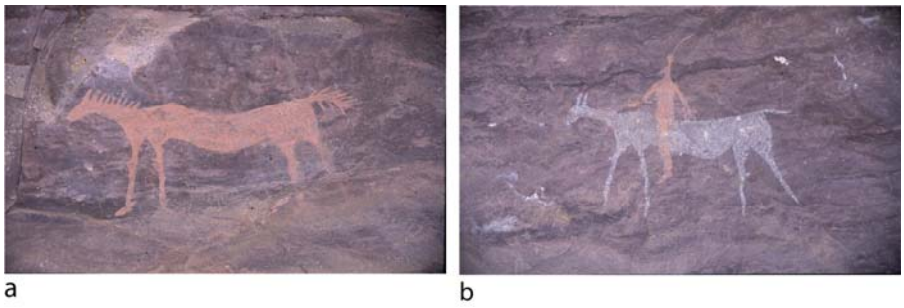


Fig. 29. Type 2 images from RSA LAB11, showing manes, tails extended, and a rider and reins.

Typically, the Type 2 depictions are either monochrome or unshaded bichrome. Pigment colours include predominantly red, as well as white, yellow, and pale pink. The images are brush painted, but in a slightly rougher and more untidy manner than the majority of fine-line painted images found in the area. These images have so far been recognized at nine sites in the Nomansland area. Eight of these sites also contain ‘classic’ San paintings, and two of the sites also contain Type 3 images. Unlike Type 3 paintings, however, the Type 2 images are normally executed in a separate part of the shelter, on an unpainted rock surface.

Blundell (*ibid.*) maintains that Type 2 images may be considered as a separate tradition based on the differences in pigment quality, manner of depiction, and variability between these images and the fine-line rock art tradition. The pigment used to make these images is thin and powdery in contrast to the pigment used in most fine-line rock art. The images also display very little variation in their posture, and are substantially less diverse than fine-line paintings of antelope. In all known cases, the Type 2 quadrupeds are painted from the side (*ibid*:114). Many of the images have small protrusions in the 'knee' area (e.g., Figs. 28, 29b).

Although Type 2 seems to be a 19th century addition to the Nomansland area, Blundell (*ibid*:114-116) argues that this tradition is not a later tradition that replaces fine-line rock art. Historical evidence suggests that San rock art continued to be made in the area until the 1920s (Macquarrie 1962, see Chapter 4), and Blundell thus suggests that fine-line rock art and Type 2 imagery may have been made at the same time. He argues (*ibid*:129) that Type 2 rock art was probably produced by non-San people living with the San and painting together with the San of Nomansland. This argument is based on evidence gleaned from the testimony of a Sotho man, called Mapote, who had lived and painted with a San group. Mapote told Marion Walsham How (1962) that members of the group who were not San, such as him, were required to paint in a separate part of the shelter. Blundell thus suggests that San dominance over the painting space would have meant that others who lived with them had to paint separately, hence the placement of Type 2 images in separate parts of the rock shelters.

One of the potential difficulties with this argument is that rather than us knowing that fine-line rock art was being made until the 1920s, an argument that Blundell has made based on historical information, we know that people who considered themselves to be descendants of the San were making paintings until the early 20th century. This is important because even though these people considered themselves to be San, we cannot know for sure that they were making fine-line rock art. Indeed,

we do not know what the rock art would have looked like that was being made by the San informant Lindiso, who said that he had made paintings at Ngcengane shelter, located near the town of Tsolo in the present-day Transkei (Macquarrie 1962). This particular rock art site contains numerous images, some of which are fine-line images and others of which are rough brush-painted. Although Lindiso and his family considered themselves to be San people, this does not necessarily mean that they were making classic fine-line images. They may have made the rougher brush-painted images at the site that are different from 'classic' fine-line imagery. Of course, either of these options is possible.

This casts some doubt on the authorship and timing of Type 2 rock art. This uncertainty is significant for a consideration of the relationship between Type 2 and Type 3 art. If we are unable to be certain that fine-line art continued to be made until the 1920s, then descendants of the San are in the running for the authorship of both Type 2 and Type 3 art. I consider this possibility in more detail when I probe the authorship of Type 3 art in Chapter 4. It is thus necessary to explore the details of the relationship between Type 2 and Type 3 imagery.

I turn now to observation of the painted images themselves, which allow us to compare Type 2 and Type 3 imagery. A particularly interesting site, RSA RED1, visited for the first time by researchers during the course of this project throws some light on this issue. At this site, various images are depicted that resemble both Type 2 and Type 3 rock art. They include characteristics that are distinctively associated with both Type 2 and Type 3 imagery. The majority of the images are painted in one panel. They include humans, quadrupedal animals, and one unidentifiable image. They are made using both rough brush-painting and finger-painting techniques, and the red pigment used to make all the images is so similar that it appears to have come from the same paint pot (Fig. 30).



Fig. 30. Panel at RSA RED1 in which numerous human and quadrupedal figures may be seen.

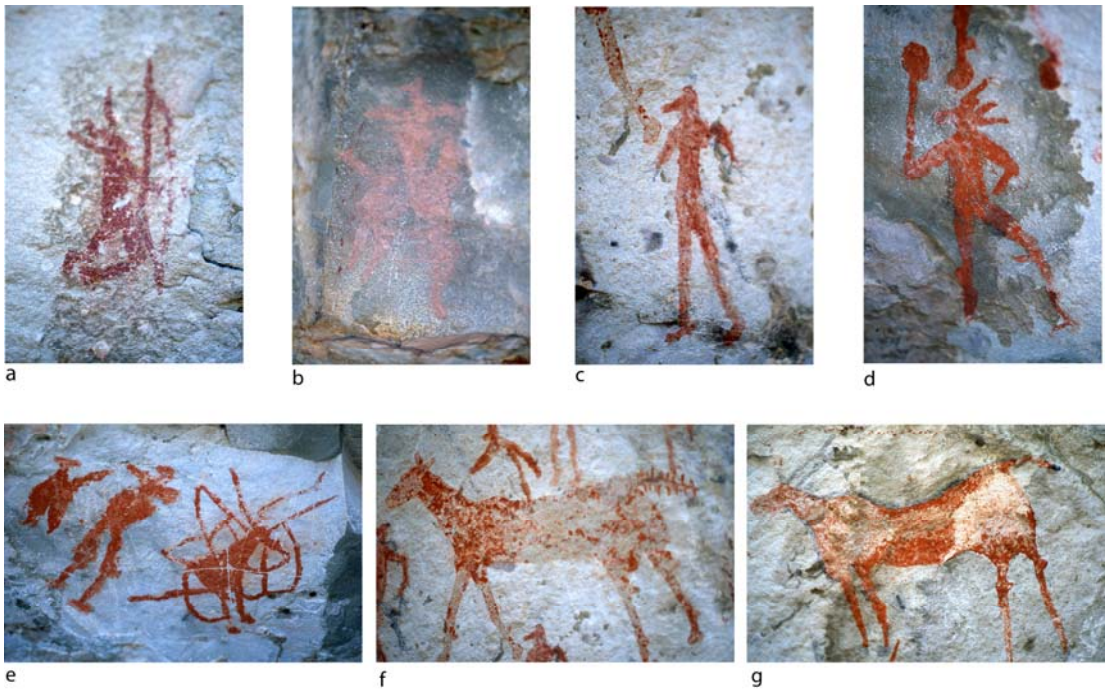


Fig. 31. a,b,c,d,e: human figures that are rough brush-painted and combine characteristics of Type 2 and Type 3 imagery. f,g: quadrupedal images that fit in with Type 2 imagery.

Certain images at the site display the attributes that are typical of Type 3 imagery (Fig. 31. a,b,c,d,e), such as feet, but no hands, bows and arrows and knobkerries. In addition to this, certain images seem to merge certain distinctive Type 3 characteristics with those one would expect to find as part of Type 2 images (Fig. 31 d,e). Distinctive aspects of Type 2 images, such as the protrusions from the knees, are seen depicted on these images. The overlap in the characteristics of these images suggests that there is some sort of meaningful relationship between Type 2 and Type 3 imagery. This is not just a site where Type 2 and Type 3 images have been made in the same panel. Certain images at this site clearly straddle the two traditions. Certainly, though, the boundary between Type 2 and Type 3 is more blurred than the separate naming of these traditions would suggest. Temporal relationships between the two are unclear and remain to be resolved.

As well as the recognition of Type 2 and Type 3 imagery, it has been suggested that two of the sites in the area (RSA CRA6 and RSA BUX1) may include 'Late White' or Bantu-speaker art. Rather than being typical of known Bantu-speaker rock art in southern Africa, such as that from the Limpopo Province (e.g., Fig. 4), it seems more likely that this art was initially labeled as such simply because it is finger-painted, some of the images are made using white paint, and it appears to be fairly recent. Comparison of images from these sites with imagery at certain Type 3 sites, in particular RSA RED1, RSA LAB1, RSA TYN2, suggests that images coincide in terms of subject matter, manner of depiction and in some instances, use of pigment. Forthcoming research on the spatial distribution of this non-fine-line rock art (Henry 2008 Manuscript) considers this issue in more detail. I suggest, however, that it is possible that there is less of a proliferation of small sub-traditions in Nomansland than was originally thought. It is possible that the images originally categorized as Type 2, Type 3 and Late White rock art are variations within a single corpus of rock art that is more cohesive than was initially thought. Certainly, the images previously labelled as Late White would fit better within the Type 3 rock art tradition.

This chapter began with a consideration of taxonomic categories and their application to groups of images. Based on manner of depiction, use of pigment and subject matter it is possible that the taxonomic categories of Type 2 and Type 3 have boundaries that may blur into each other. It seems clear that there is some form of relationship between these two traditions. There are various possible explanations for this relationship: 1) Type 3 may be a later development of Type 2 rock art, or vice versa, 2) These two traditions may represent two separate manifestations of the same social changes that occur in 19th century Nomansland, 3) They may represent functional variations within an overarching 'other' rock art tradition.

Although there are certain striking similarities between the two traditions, there is one extremely important difference, which is the placement of the images within the site. Type 2 images are typically made on a separate panel from that of fine-line art in the same shelter, and Type 3 is mostly made on top of the fine-line art. The significance of this difference between the two traditions should not be underestimated, and I consider it in more detail in Chapter 4 and 5. It is for this reason, as well as uncertainty about the exact temporal relationship between Type 2 and Type 3 rock art, that I retain the separate names for these two rock art traditions. Although they are clearly related, the precise nature of this relationship is not possible to discern using existing evidence. In addition to this, the major focus of this thesis is on Type 3 rock art. The process of the creation of this tradition is much more complex and interesting than simply the identification of this new tradition. Indeed, it raises complex issues about the identity of the image-makers, as well as the social aspects of the inception of a new painted tradition in the Nomansland core study area, which I explore in the next four chapters.

Chapter 3

Images and Identities

A special issue of *Time* magazine in 1995, had an article that considered the multiethnic future of American society, with an accompanying computer generated image of a woman's face that is described as the offspring of 'morphing', a computer process that images the products of "racial and ethnic miscegenation" (127:2). The image and the accompanying article demonstrate a thriving contemporary interest in identity and ethnicity. Indeed, as Yannis Hamilakis (1996:975) suggests "…the fragmentation of modern western societies, the crisis of and the obsession with identities and the 'deadly serious' ethnic and nationalist conflicts in many parts of the world" has led to a pre-occupation with issues related to identity formation. The archaeologist Alexander Joffe (2003:77) argues that "our current thrall with identities in the past, and the difficulties in penetrating those identities, are a reflection, or transferral, of our anxieties and interests in the present".

Certainly, the *Time* magazine article belies both fascination and perhaps trepidation in relation to the concept of ethnic merging. In part, this contemporary interest in such things is based on the very pervasive idea that social groups exist as bounded wholes with specific, long and traceable historical identities. It is precisely this misapprehension about the ways in which identity operates that the subject matter of this study, Type 3 rock art, challenges.

Joffe (2003) is undoubtedly correct in saying that archaeologists are currently enthralled by the concept of 'identity'. In the last two decades, identity has become one of the major pre-occupations of archaeological research, with a plethora of publications on nationalism, ethnicity and cultural identity (e.g., Mcguire 1982; Shennan 1994; Dietler 1994; Jones 1994, 2000; Kohl 1998; Sokefeld 1999; Gosselain 2000; Meskell 1999, 2002). Although statements are often made about the central theoretical importance of ideas about identity (e.g., Meskell 2002), exactly what is meant by this is seldom clearly elucidated.

Indeed, as the epilogue for this chapter suggests, archaeology has an identity problem (*ibid.*). One of the main problems archaeology has is that conceptualising identity is located at the core of some of the issues that have plagued the discipline for decades. Most important of these issues are 1) the relationship between individuals and society, and 2) the division of material culture into categories that are assumed to correlate meaningfully with groups of people in the past. The ways in which ideas about identity have been brought to bear on these two major issues within archaeology may be described as a theoretical quagmire.

There is a vast body of literature that considers the importance of making use of ideas about identity. When trying to understand identity in the past, how do we make this entanglement of ideas useful? How do ideas about identity articulate with the data? In this Chapter I consider these issues, and attempt to isolate a set of ideas about identity that may be usefully applied to the data.

Part of the problem is that the word 'identity' has become ubiquitous. The very fact that it is used so often, in such a wide range of circumstances, means that it defies elucidation. As Philip Gleason (1983:910) suggests:

> Today we could hardly do without the word identity in talking about immigration and ethnicity. Those who write on these matters use it casually; they assume the reader will know what they mean. And readers seem to feel that they do – at least there has been no clamour for clarification of the term. But if pinned down, most of us would find it difficult to explain just what we do mean by identity.

Significantly, Gleason is an anthropologist. Although 'identity' had become an oft-used concept in anthropology by the 1980s, archaeologists were not yet explicitly considering this issue. It is only in the last two decades of archaeological research that identity has been brought to the forefront. Indeed, archaeologists today seem to be making up for lost time, and just as Gleason suggested in 1983, we seem hardly able to do without the word identity, yet many do not take the trouble to enunciate exactly what they mean by it when using it.

This, in part, is because the word 'identity' has a definitional history that has contributed to a certain amount of confusion surrounding its meaning. Indeed, the concepts associated with the word identity have "undergone paradigmatic shift[s] in recent decades" (Sökefeld 1999:417). A consideration of this history of the use of the word is insightful and sheds light on some of the problems related to present-day use of the word. It is important to understand some of the complexity inherent in the concept of identity so that we may propose ways of using it in a fruitful manner.

A semantic history of the term *identity*

The use of the word 'identity' as a popular term in the social sciences is relatively recent, appearing in about the 1950s. In an analysis of the semantic history of the word 'identity', Gleason (1983) traces some of the reasons for the ambiguities of meaning that we deal with in the present usage of the term.

The word 'identity' comes from the latin root *idem*, which means 'the same'. Its earliest usage in English can be traced back to the sixteenth century, when it was a logical term used in philosophical contexts (*ibid*:911.), defined by the Oxford English dictionary as:

> The sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances; the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else; individuality, personality.

This definition of identity is intimately tied up with the ideas of philosophers such as John Locke (1690) and David Hume (1739) who were concerned with the concept of the 'unity of the self'. Identity was described by Locke as "…nothing but a participation of the same continued life, by constantly fleeting particles of matter, in succession vitally united to the same organized Body". This philosophical tradition of the usage of identity was important in that it

invested the word with "intellectual significance and moral seriousness" (Gleason 1983:911), but it was a restricted, somewhat technical tradition. This philosophical interest in identity continues today, but it was some time after the sixteenth century that the word began to be used in a less technical manner.

In the 1950s, a very influential psychologist by the name of Erik Erikson was responsible for popularising the word identity (*ibid*). Erikson's idea of identity concerns a process that is located within the individual ego and yet also in the core of the communal culture in which a person participates. He suggests that the process of interaction between these two aspects of identity is what allows for the establishment of an identity (Erikson 1950:240). Erikson thus suggested that identity "involves an interaction between the interior development of the individual personality, understood in terms derived from the Freudian id-ego-superego model, and the growth of a sense of selfhood that arises from participating in society, internalising its cultural norms, acquiring different statuses, and playing different roles" (Gleason 1983:914). Identity was used in psychology to mean "selfsameness" and was understood as "a disposition of basic personality features, acquired during childhood and, once integrated, more or less fixed" (Sökefeld 1999:417).

Erikson distinguishes eight stages within an individual's life-cycle. Throughout these stages, the individual ego experiences certain things and is confronted with certain tasks (Erikson 1950:219-234). The way that Erikson conceives of these experiences and tasks is multifaceted. Although he suggests that they are related to biological maturation, he also argues that they are linked to the social environment of the individual through social interaction. He further suggests that the features of that social environment are in turn informed by the specific historical situation of the culture in which the individual and his counterparts exist (Gleason 1983:914). Erikson came up with the now much-used expression 'identity crisis', which was envisaged as a climactic turning point in this process. Gleason (*ibid.*) suggests that the subtlety of Erikson's definition of identity may be the cause of the vagueness that consumed the term soon after it was popularised, because Erikson's ideas could not be popularised without being "blunted and muddied". In the decades following Erikson's treatise on identity,

another common usage of the term appeared, which referred to it, in contrast to Erikson, as a constantly changing state related to group membership (*ibid.*). It is clear from these two contrasting definitions that the issue of the locus of identity, within individuals or within their social groups, was paramount. Ultimately, the spread of the use of the word identity was intimately related to a fascination among social scientists about the relationship between the individual and society. This concern about the relationship between the individual and society has certainly made its mark on archaeology, and the ways in which identity has been brought to bear on archaeological theory and practice cannot be considered in isolation from this overarching issue.

Identity and archaeology

It is only recently that 'identity issues' have come to be stated as an explicit aim of archaeological research. They have, however, formed a central concern in archaeology for far longer than this (Trigger 1990). New and ever-changing jargon is used in relation to identity, but archaeologists are essentially trying to answer the same questions related to individual and group identity. It is simply the case that our conception of what an 'archaeology of identity' looks like has changed substantially through the decades. Perhaps one of the most obvious ways in which identity-oriented research first manifested itself in archaeological scholarship was in the writing of culture histories, as developed by Gustaf Kossinna (1928) and popularized by V. Gordon Childe (1929, 1936, 1942), and David Clarke (1968).

The culture-historical approach is one of the most influential schools of thought ever to rise to prominence in archaeology. In this theoretical framework, it was assumed that cultural traits were transmitted as a function of the extent to which interaction between individuals and groups occurred. Unfortunately, the advance in interpretation achieved by the use of the archaeological culture concept came at a considerable price (Graves-Brown *et al*. 1996, Diaz-Andreu 1996) in that it paved the way for nationalist interpretations, where specific, bounded archaeological cultures were unproblematically seen as ancestral to

contemporary ethnic or national groups. This procedure, which implied a static, durable, or essentialist conception of ethnicity/nationality was often promulgated by explicit state policies (Kohl & Fawcett 1995; Kohl 1998).

The legacy of the culture-historical approach means that typically in archaeology, group identities are represented as unified, monolithic wholes, with histories that progress in a linear manner. The political impact of such studies became apparent in some of the nationalist inspired archaeology that rose to prominence in the 1930s and 1940s, and still remains pertinent today. Ideas such as this are used in the "legitimation of claims to political autonomy and territory within the prevailing ideological climate of ethnic nationalism" (Jones 2000:445). These expectations of "boundedness, homogeneity and continuity which have been built into ideas concerning culture since the nineteenth century are related to nationalism and the emergence of the nation state" (*ibid*:447).

This is particularly interesting in light of South Africa's past in which colonial administrators followed a political agenda of placing particular groups of people within bounded territories on a map. This is one of the reasons why it is important to gain insight into the formative relationships and interactions among people, prior to the finalisation of territorial boundaries and the concept of a unitary South African nation. Indeed, the identities that we talk about in present-day South Africa are often modern identities, ironically inherited from Apartheid. Our present view of identity and nationhood colours the way we conceive of identity in the past.

This is significant in relation to the Type 3 rock art tradition. Its unusual nature suggests that those who made it do not comply with the neat categories of identity that were so forcibly disseminated during the apartheid years, and that were fundamental to much of the archaeological research of the last few decades (Trigger 1990). Situations such as the presence of the Type 3 rock art tradition have a history of being misrepresented or ignored and until recently, these indistinct elements of societies have remained subjugated and largely invisible. In line with an emerging corpus of post-colonial archaeological research in southern Africa (e.g., Blundell 2004; Gosden 2001), this research is oriented

towards acknowledging and understanding a previously 'invisible' element of society, which the presence of Type 3 rock art bears testament to.

Drawing on the work of Michel Foucault (1989, 1990) and Jacques Derrida (1978), Lynn Meskell (1999) has criticised identity studies that are based on the rigid assignation of culture. Rather than considering the relationship of the individual to society, they often treat individuals as micro versions of larger social entities (Meskell 1999:20-21), and simple correlations are made between material culture and group identity. This is one of the major problems with the way in which the concept of identity is used, it is not always accompanied by a thorough explanation of how it functions in society (Baumeister 1986; Meskell 1999).

Indeed, one of the criticisms of the use of the concept of identity is that, as we saw earlier in this chapter, it is based on a modern Western construction of the notion of individuality. This criticism is based on the conflation of the term 'individual', with the concept of individualism. Lynn Meskell (1999:9-10) argues that "an individual can be a single person, whose identity is made up of a host of social variables, whereas individualism is a particular historico-cultural conception of the person – the social actor as ostentatiously distinct, sovereign and autonomous". Even if we accept the legitimacy of the individual in theory, there is the potential for these 'theoretical individuals' to be seen, in practice, as mere products of social relations (*ibid*:18).

The issues attached to the concept of the individual agent give rise to important questions of how this notion can and should be used archaeologically. Ian Hodder (2001) identifies the play off between the 'small scale' and the 'long term' as a central tension in the relationship between archaeology and theories of agency. The processes that archaeologists consider stretch out over vast spans of time, which resist the perception and comprehension of individuals, yet our understanding of these long term processes depends on the traces of the small, insignificant acts of individuals. Indeed, as Matthew Johnson (1989:190) notes, "the individual has been triumphantly reinstated at the centre of the stage in

theory, but quietly relegated to the wings, or written out of the script altogether, in practice".

In response to these problems with identity, a growing body of archaeological literature focuses on the multidimensional, fluid and situational nature of identity associated with active individuals and groups that have permeable and constantly changing boundaries (e.g., Jones 2000; Bender 2001; Gosden 2001; Harrison 2002; Blundell 2004). The anthropologist Liisa Malkki provides important insights into the nature of identity in relation to territorial displacement. She suggests (1989:8) that reactions to displacement potentially involve assimilation, and manipulation of multiple identities derived or borrowed from a new social context suggesting that people may create "creolized, rhizomatic identities – changing and situational rather than essential and moral" (Malkki 1995:36).

Malkki (1992:27) makes the important point that the default view of nations and culture is that they are rooted in place. Malkki suggests that this idea leads to the "pathologization of uprootedness in the national order of things" (Malkki 1992:27). She points out that "territorially uprooted people are easily seen as torn loose from their culture" (*ibid*:34). This is clearly a concept that is ill-developed in archaeological thought – groups of people who have moved somewhere are seen as having either assimilated or lost their culture. "it would not be ethnographically accurate to study these as mere approximations or distortions of some ideal "true roots". The most important aspect of Malkki's work, however, is that these considerations of a society in flux lead her to suggest a definition for identity that encompasses the relationship between the individual and the collective, and also the nature of identity and the ways in which it is used during social change:

> identity is always mobile and processual, partly self-construction, partly categorisation by others, partly a condition, a status, a label, a weapon, a shield, a fund of memories, et cetera. It is a creolised aggregate composed through bricolage (Malkki 1992:37).

Similarly, Benedict Anderson (1991:5), in his now famous and widely used quotation, provides insights into collective identity from the perspective of nations and 'nationhood'.

> In an anthropological spirit, then, I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community — and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.

Importantly, Anderson suggests that perhaps even "primordial villages of face-to-face contact" (*ibid.*) may be considered to be imagined communities. This concept of an imagined community may be usefully applied to communities that do not conform to modern concepts of nationhood. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Anderson's concept of imagined communities is his suggestion that we may distinguish between communities by the "style in which they are imagined". What Anderson provides insights into when he refers to imagined communities is in effect the process by which collective identities are constructed. This notion of collective identity is often phrased by authors in the social sciences in terms of the concept of ethnicity.

Ethnic identity

The term 'ethnicity' is, similarly to that of 'identity', riddled with definitional problems that have political resonance. It also came into popular use in the social sciences in the 1950s and gained wider usage in the ensuing decades (Hutchinson & Smith 1996:v). "From its inception, ethnicity has remained a 'hot potato' of sociology" (Malešević 2004:1). It seems that like identity, this term became important in the West partly coinciding with the collapse of colonialism, beginning in the 1950s (Tonkin *et. al.* 1996:22). The Anglo-American academic tradition adopted ethnicity as a term that referred to minority groups located within the larger society of the nation-state, while the European tradition regularly opted to use ethnicity as a synonym for nationhood. Both traditions, however, aimed to replace what had become a widespread term, but after WWII, a term that became increasingly pejorative – that of 'race'(*ibid.*) This was indeed the case in South Africa, and as we have seen in Chapter 2, this increased

concern with these issues, had an effect on the way in which rock art research was carried out at this time.

The problem in South Africa, as well as in other parts of the world, was that ethnicity took on multiple meanings, some of which themselves became pejorative. In a similar manner to the use of the word 'identity', the word 'ethnicity' has become so widely used that its meaning is not always clear.

> Because of the fuzziness of the term ethnicity, the frequent conflation of nationality, ethnicity, and race in the literature and in common sense, and the problematic politics of ethnicity as evinced in its intellectual genealogies, some scholars have suggested replacing the term as an analytical category with peoplehood, race, or nationalist ideology. Although I agree with these critiques of ethnicity, I remain convinced that drawing analytical distinctions between different forms of imagining peoplehood is methodologically useful (Alonso 1994:391).

I suggest that Alonso is correct about the usefulness of drawing analytical distinctions between "different forms of imagining peoplehood" despite the pitfalls of the concept of ethnicity. The reality is that often these different 'categories' are emic as well as etic, and that many individuals self-identify as being associated with a particular collective identity. I use the words ethnicity and ethnic identity in this thesis because I consider them to be methodologically and conceptually useful. In addition to this, certain authors who have written important theoretical works relating to the concept of ethnicity make use of this word, and the attendant complications of ignoring this usage are significant. I reject any pejorative connotations that the words 'ethnic' and 'ethnicity' may have.

In the 1960s and 70s there arose a critique of existing social scientific concepts, and a proliferation of research into ethnicity. These approaches mostly followed along a culture-historical model, until the writings of the anthropologist, Fredrik Barth. Barth's (1969; 1987) seminal work on cultural difference is widely considered to be a revolutionary contribution to the study of ethnicity. Before Barth, cultural difference was explained in very static terms, along the lines of the culture-histories discussed earlier. Social groups were seen to possess

different cultural characteristics which were fairly stable and persistent, and allowed researchers to distinguish among them.

Barth addressed the traditional understanding of ethnicity directly, stating that "this history has produced a world of separate peoples, each with their culture and each organized in a society which can legitimately be isolated for description as an island to itself" (1969:11). Rather than this sort of explanation, Barth suggests first, that "self-identification [is] the critical criterion of ethnic identity" (Barth 1969:24). Second, he takes what he describes as a "generative viewpoint", which emphasizes the processes by which ethnic groups are generated and maintained, rather than considering a "typology of forms of ethnic groups and relations (*ibid*:10), and third, he suggests that research focus should be on ethnic boundaries and boundary maintenance, rather than on the "internal constitution and history of separate groups" (*ibid.*). He goes on to say that cultural differences may well endure, despite multi cultural contact and inter-dependence: "boundaries persist despite a flow of personnel across them. In other words, categorical ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of mobility, contact and information" (*ibid*:9-10). Indeed, Barth suggests that it is not an association with a certain package of cultural characteristics that makes groups distinct, but rather that inter-group interaction is the factor that enables visible and meaningful social differences (*ibid.*:15). In considering inter-group relations, Barth (1969:15) argues that

> the dichotomization of others as strangers, as members of another ethnic group, implies a recognition of limitations on shared understandings, differences in criteria for judgement of value and performance, and a restriction of interaction to sectors of assured common understanding and mutual interest.

Barth goes on to say, however, that when people from different cultures interact there is a reduction of differences because "interaction both requires and generates a congruence of codes and values – "in other words, a similarity or community of culture" (Barth 1969:16). Barth suggests that there are a variety of sectors of articulation and separation that structure interaction, and that these will change depending on the particular interaction (*ibid.*). It is for this reason that certain aspects of culture are confronted and modified and certain aspects are protected from these processes (*ibid.*).

In many ways, Barth's explanation of ethnicity forces us to overcome any pre-conceived static ideas about the way in which ethnic differences emerge and change. Barth's recognition that ethnic groups are fluid, self-defining systems which are embedded in economic and political relations, was an extremely important contribution to the way we understand the maintenance and transformation of ethnicity. What was particularly important about this approach was that it suggested that there is rarely a straightforward correlation between cultural similarities and differences and ethnic boundaries. He conceived of ethnicity as a process, in which identities emerge, are maintained or adapted depending on social boundaries. Drawing on this concept, Anthony Cohen (1994:123) suggests that "anthropology has been pre-occupied with the boundaries between cultures rather than boundaries between minds/consciousness", and this is also true for archaeological research. A pre-occupation with the abstract concept of cultural boundaries means that the individual, thinking people involved in the process are often excluded, yet identities are located at an individual level, and also within a broader social milieu that helps to define them (Meskell 1999, Baumeister 1986, Kuper 1999).

Since Barth's work, numerous other scholars have gone on to consider the ways in which ethnic groups emerge and change (ethnogenesis and ethnomorphosis). Ethnogenesis is associated with the "beginnings or initial formation of a given ethnic group; more significant and more complex are the changes that group will experience over time-its ethnomorphosis" (Kohl 1998:232). It is possible for these changes to cause the appearance of new ethnic groups, although they will not necessarily produce these results (*ibid.*).

In considering these processes of ethnomorphosis, it is essential to consider that cultural traditions cannot be "fabricated out of whole cloth; there are real limits to the invention of tradition" (*ibid.*). Any emerging ethnic identity will inevitably draw on what has gone before it. In addition to this, it will be influenced by numerous other aspects of the social milieu in which a person finds themselves.

Lynn Meskell (2001:189) summarises this, saying "ethnic identity is only one social determinate which can be cut across by status, occupation, gender etc that allows contact between groups. But it involves the social negotiation of difference and sameness, and it often entails larger tensions between individuals, the group and the state". Indeed, something such as: Identity is a fluid, transgressive, performative construct is often stated in contemporary archaeological use of ideas about identity. However, this notion needs to be interrogated. Archaeologists seldom enunciate the school of thought in relation to identity with which they are aligning themselves. "Archaeologists, however, show ever-greater caution in making any ascription of material culture identities to broader concepts of ethnicity. At least a part of this caution comes from the theorisation that archaeology has taken in from social anthropology concerning the constructedness of ethnicity" (Smith 2006:78).

Authors such as Barth, Malkki and Anderson, although writing at different times, and from different disciplinary backgrounds, provide certain fundamentally important notions which underpin my consideration of identities in Nomansland, and how these identities emerged and changed. I consider some of the details of the ways in which these ideas about identity may be related to rock art, and particularly to the 'other' rock art of Nomansland. Given the multi-ethnic nature of the Nomansland area, including the substantial number of migrant or displaced people that constituted the population (Blundell 2004), this approach to identity has potential resonance. It is, however, the evidence of the rock art that must be used to assess this relevance and provide constraints on possible explanations.

Identity and rock art

The appearance of Type 3 imagery in Nomansland raises questions about the role that this art played in historical processes of identity formation and contestation. The relationship between rock art and identity is often theorised in terms of the relationship between material culture more generally and identity. Material cultural objects play an important role in the construction and maintenance of identities. Julian Thomas (1996) argued that objects are never separate from

people. They become social through their relationship to human beings, they are conceived of, created, altered, and often discarded, and through these processes, they are implicated in the formation and contestation of identity (i*bid.*).

It is clear that certain artefacts provide particularly insightful glimpses into the nature of cultural boundaries such as those theorized by Barth (1969), and discussed above. Ian Hodder's (1979, 1982, 1985) ethnoarchaeological research draws heavily on these concepts of cultural boundaries and how they are assaulted and maintained. Hodder's detailed consideration of why some artefacts form boundaries and others move across them is aimed at elucidating the role of material culture in the sort of ethnic interaction postulated by Barth. As part of Ian Hodder's (1985) famous consideration of the role that decorated calabashes play in Tugen and Njemps society, and in the boundaries between these societies, he argues that "Before it is possible to explain why some artifacts form boundaries while others move across them it is necessary to consider what the artifacts "mean" within their own cultural arena" (1985:144).

As part of this issue, Hodder asks why it is that calabashes are decorated at all? (*ibid.*), and thus why they are useful boundary markers. Although questions of frequency and symbolism of decoration are also asked, this first question is fundamental to a consideration of the relationship between material culture and identity associated with cultural boundary formation and maintenance. Why are calabashes a suitable medium for communicating certain ideas? This issue is equally central to a consideration of rock art. Why is rock art a medium that is considered suitable for communicating certain ideas? Why the particular images used in Type 3 rock art? What is the link between rock art and the social concerns that the maker wishes to negotiate? (Hodder 1985:149).

> To explain why some artifacts are used to emphasize social boundaries while others are not, we need to look at internal strategies (in this case those involving relationships between old men, young men and women) and at the particular meanings that have come to be associated historically with particular material attributes (containers, milk, decorations of a particular type). These meanings are created through the association with functions and they are emphasized in ways that are

> archaeologically identifiable (as in the decoration of milk containers). (Hodder 1985:159).

Hodder's concept of considering internal group strategies in order to understand which items of material culture are used for the maintenance of social boundaries is significant for Type 3 art. We need to try to understand internal strategies of the groups that made the images in order to understand why Type 3 art may have been used, and if it was used in the processes of boundary maintenance.

The idea that communities are imagined means that collective identity (ethnicity) is located within people's minds, it is a cognitive construct. Rock art, as a form of material culture that provides us with insights into the minds of the makers, is thus, in a range of ways, a tool that can be used for gaining insight into these imagined communities in the past. Indeed, Benjamin Smith and Sven Ouzman (2004:514) suggest that a great deal of the meaning that we are able to extract from rock art is related to individual and group identities. "Rock art is durable and highly visible, ideally suited to displaying and reinforcing notions as well as challenging and nuancing identities. It is capable of transmitting messages with regard to the identity of its makers, and it encourages comment and challenge" (Smith & Ouzman 2004:514).

Crucially, the relationship between rock art and identity functions on at least two levels, an etic one, in terms of what rock art tells us about the identity of the artists, and an emic perspective, in terms of what rock art tells us about what the artists thought about their own identity - how the production and consumption of the art sought to uphold or challenge that perception. As Frankel suggests, "it is worthwhile considering…not only whether any material or territorial match can be made between the named ancient peoples, but what the ancient authors themselves meant by these identifications" (Frankel 2003:40). It is this second aspect, concerned with when and how certain categories of rock art can be considered to be a conscious expression of identity on the part of those who made it, that allows for a more complex and dynamic insight into the multi-faceted nature of identity, and is most pertinent to a consideration of Type 3 imagery and the social milieu in which it was made. Indeed, Smith (2006:78)

argues that rock art "is a rare and explicit record of the socially constructed world of past minds. It is therefore a piece of inheritance that has the potential to provide a bridge between aspects of emic and etic identities both past and present".

Although there is a clear link between rock art and various forms of identity, I suggest that we need to differentiate between images and image complexes that seem to be explicitly about identity, and image complexes that are about something else, such as religion, but may also reference information about individual or collective identity. In the course of this dissertation I consider not only evidence for the role that Type 3 rock art played in the formation and contestation of identity, but also issues such as why rock art was used as a tool for the negotiation of cultural boundaries.

Theory distilled

This overview of some of the concepts involved in the discussion of ethnicity and identity enables the isolation of certain terms that will be useful in my study of rock art in Nomansland. The ensuing use of these terms refers to the specific ways in which they are explained below. Especially, I shall employ the notions of:

1) **Identity**: I appropriate Liisa Malkki's (1992:37) definition of identity due to the fact that it encapsulates the many levels on which identity functions in a succinct and thorough manner. It is this concept of identity that I am referring to when I use the word 'identity' subsequently.

> identity is always mobile and processual, partly self-construction, partly categorisation by others, partly a condition, a status, a label, a weapon, a shield, a fund of memories, et cetera. It is a creolised aggregate composed through bricolage (Malkki 1992:37).

2) **Ethnicity**: Based on Fredrik Barth's (1969) approach to ethnicity, I suggest that this should be seen as a self-ascriptive category that refers to the ongoing processes by which the collective identity of a group is set up in opposition to

others, and involves the maintenance and of and assault on multiple social boundaries.

3) **Social boundaries**

These are tangible and intangible entities that serve to differentiate between groups of people, and are negotiated in processes of collective identity formation.

4) **Imagined Communities**

These are groups of individuals who share a collective identity, and participate in social processes that emphasise this collective identity.

Whether the theory and the available data together permit the kind of precise answers that we may wish to formulate remains to be seen. The important aspect of this consideration of rock art and identity is not so much to produce cut-and-dried answers, as to construct a way of approaching what is a highly complex issue.

Chapter 4

Chinks and Crevices

> The Eastern Cape became a ‘border area’ or ‘frontier zone’, a site of ethnic ambiguity and intensive social construction. New identities were assembled, older ones reshaped.
>
> Clinton Crais 1992:14

There are always chinks and crevices in our understanding of the past. Chinks and crevices are small points of irregularity in a surface, and they are often overlooked. Similarly, certain individuals and groups of people who lived in a landscape sometimes remain archaeologically obscure, and their social influence is overlooked. There are social chinks and crevices everywhere in the past—people who do not form part of the dominant group in any given archaeological period. People who fall into these gaps, as it were, usually do so because they leave an ephemeral material culture signature. This does not mean that their presence on the landscape and their level of influence was insignificant.

Type 3 rock art is a rare find—something that potentially elucidates one of these archaeological chinks. It emerged out of, and also contributed to, particular social and political circumstances. It draws attention to people who would otherwise be overlooked. Who these people are, however, is not immediately apparent. As we have seen in Chapter 2, Type 3 rock art does not seem to form part of any of the major known southern African rock art traditions that may be associated with contemporary ethnic identities. One of the most fundamental issues of rock art research thus forms the focal point of this chapter in the form of the question: Who made the art?

Candidates for authorship

Significantly, none of the present-day inhabitants of Nomansland have a tradition of making rock paintings. In order to better understand the emergence of Type 3 rock art in the Nomansland core study area, we must look to the past of Nomansland, and to the people who lived in the area, the people who moved

through it, and those who lived on its edges. As I argued in the previous chapter, it is probable that Type 3 rock art was made sometime within the nineteenth century. In this chapter, I consider historical information relating to the Nomansland core study area and the relation of that material to Type 3 rock art.

Although phrases such as “border area” (Crais 1992:14) and “frontier zone” (*ibid.*) are often used to describe areas such as the Nomansland core study area, these words fail to evoke the complexity of the situation in the north Eastern Cape in the 18th and 19th centuries. The word ‘frontier’ was first used by Frederick Jackson Turner in 1893 to describe contact between Colonial settlers and native Americans in the Western areas of what is now the United States of America. The word frontier has never managed to shake these colonial connotations, and it is most often used to describe European colonial penetration into southern Africa (e.g., Lightfoot & Martinez 1995:474-475). Although authors such as Igor Kopytoff (1987) have adapted this concept to describe interaction in pre-colonial Africa, the way in which the word is used fails to escape the implications of a relatively static situation in which two social groups interact across a known boundary area. Kopytoff (*ibid.*) assumes that people involved in a ‘frontier environment’ chose to be there. Of course, this is sometimes the case, but the situation is usually substantially more complex than this.

Blundell (2004) has considered the use of the word ‘frontier’ in relation to the north Eastern Cape, and argues it is not a particularly accurate way of describing the Nomansland situation. No matter how thoroughly it is theorised, he suggests that it often conjures the idea of a line on a map that “masks more complex processes of social and cultural hybridization that were taking place long before the official boundaries of the Cape Colony extended to the edges of Nomansland” (*ibid*:146). I suggest that rather than being a ‘border’ or a ‘frontier’ area, Nomansland represented a geographical and social ‘chink’ that was surrounded by ‘organised’ society, mostly in the form of large and powerful Cape Nguni-speaking groups. Perhaps the most useful way of envisaging this situation is through the idea of borders as a mental phenomenon. Although these mental borders would have had geographical correlates in some cases, what is

significant about this is that it allows us to view interaction in a more detailed way.

Social relations over the last 500 years in the north Eastern Cape were complex and constantly shifting. Nomansland was populated by a multiplicity of both groups and individuals, who interacted across numerous constantly shifting boundaries, both geographical and social. As a result of these changing boundaries, relationships between different groups and different individuals were contingent and often volatile. A combination of Bantu-speakers, San, Khoe, Griqua, people described as 'coloureds', and a scattering of European magistrates, traders and missionaries created what is often described as a 'melting pot' of people in this area. The inhabitants of Nomansland were involved in trading, raiding, intermarriage, co-operation and conflict, These were underlain by complex economic, political and social agendas. It is within this morass of groups and individuals, with constantly shifting social allegiances and boundaries that Type 3 rock art began to be made.

As I discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, the boundedness of ethnic groups is questionable. The fluidity and diversity that characterise Nomansland society represent a major challenge to the idea that ethnic groups are static and enduring, and that over-arching cultural labels may be used to identify them. However, in a consideration of the concept of discrete ethnic groups posited as part of apartheid ideology, the anthropologist John Sharp (1997:7-12) makes the important point that reality, and the representation of reality are not always discrete. He suggests that even though the apartheid vision of the division of South African society was a "distortion of social reality", and was "replete with lies" (*ibid*:7), we need to consider that even distorted representations such as these are "part of social reality" (*ibid*). Sharp thus suggests that people have certain ideas about what is real, and no matter how 'mistaken' these may be, they have "material and social consequences" (*ibid*:7). This is significant for Nomansland, because, no matter how we may view the concept of discrete ethnic groups in contemporary academic circles, there is historical evidence that suggests that people self-identified with certain ethnic groups (e.g., Macquarrie 1962; Shephard 1976). This reinforces the need to apply Barth's (1969) concept of self-ascription when

trying to identify ethnic groups. Of course, this is not always practical in an archaeological context. The historical information for Nomansland allows us to circumvent this problem to some extent. In the ensuing discussion I use these cultural labels then partly as an acknowledgement of this self-identification, but also as a way of simplifying very complex identity dynamics in the Nomansland area. Almost all the groups referred to encompass a wide range of people from different backgrounds. Indeed, much of the historical evidence discussed in this chapter reinforces this fact. At first glance, the candidates for authorship of Type 3 rock art seem numerous.

Historical insights

Although a simple equation between presence of people in or near to the area in which Type 3 art was made is the obvious first step for the identification of possible authors, this information alone is not enough to ascertain whether these people were involved in the making of Type 3 art. In addition to the criterion of geographical co-incidence, I identify two other criteria that should be considered as part of the question of potential authorship of Type 3 rock art. The first of these is the relationship between San and the authors of Type 3. I consider this to be important, because as we have seen in Chapter 2, the rock art data suggests some form of relationship between Type 3 and fine-line art. This relationship between the two art traditions implies a relationship of some sort between the authors of the art traditions. The second criterion is whether the groups that inhabited the landscape in which Type 3 art is found have any known rock art tradition, or any history of making rock art.

I begin with a consideration of the three known San groups associated with the Nomansland area. I consider these groups not as potential authors of Type 3 art, because as I argued in Chapter 2, the fine-line tradition is distinct from that of Type 3 art. In addition to this, Blundell (2004) has argued cogently that at least one of these groups was involved in making the fine-line imagery that is visible in the Nomansland Core Study Area. Rather, I consider these groups in order to gain insight into their relationships with other groups and individuals in

Nomansland. I then move on to consider four large agro-pastoralist Cape Nguni-speaking groups who live, or have lived on the edges of the Core Nomansland Study Area. These are the Bhaca, The Mpondo, the Mpondomise and the Thembu. I also discuss the Phuthi, a Sotho-speaking group, and other groups, including three small Sotho-speaking groups, the Griqua, and other smaller, more transient groups. Although I discuss each group in turn, the extent to which these groups interact with others, and the potential for fluid group membership and group boundaries should not be underestimated. All groups referred to, and the areas in which they settled and moved in the late nineteenth century may be referred to in Fig. 32.

The San

The earliest evidence for hunter-gatherer occupation in Nomansland dates to about 29 000 years ago (Opperman 1996), and people who are descended from them may have remained in the area until the 20th century. From about 1837 until about 1990, however, we are provided with more detailed historical information on the San of Nomansland through the diaries of Henry Francis Fynn, a colonial agent for the Mpondo, and later from his successor, Walter Harding (Blundell 2004:36). It seems that three major San groups operated in the wider Nomansland area during this period: The Thola under chief Biligwana (MBelekwana), a group united under a San man called Mdwebo, and a group under a San man named Nqabayo (Wright 1971; Wright & Mazel 2007:89-91).

The Thola were located on both sides of the Mzimvubu river and were described as being large in number, with between 80 to 100 members (Wright 1971:126). They included San, and people who are described as ‘coloureds’, under a chief called Biligwana (*ibid.*). The two other San groups, under Mdwebo and Nqabayo respectively, were much smaller than the Thola and considered the Thola to be their enemies. Mdwebo’s band, numbering some thirteen members were originally located on the Mzimvubu river, but were observed from 1846 onwards moving further and further south, to the Bisi river, and eventually taking up residence among the Bhaca (Wright 1971:131). Due to their location on the

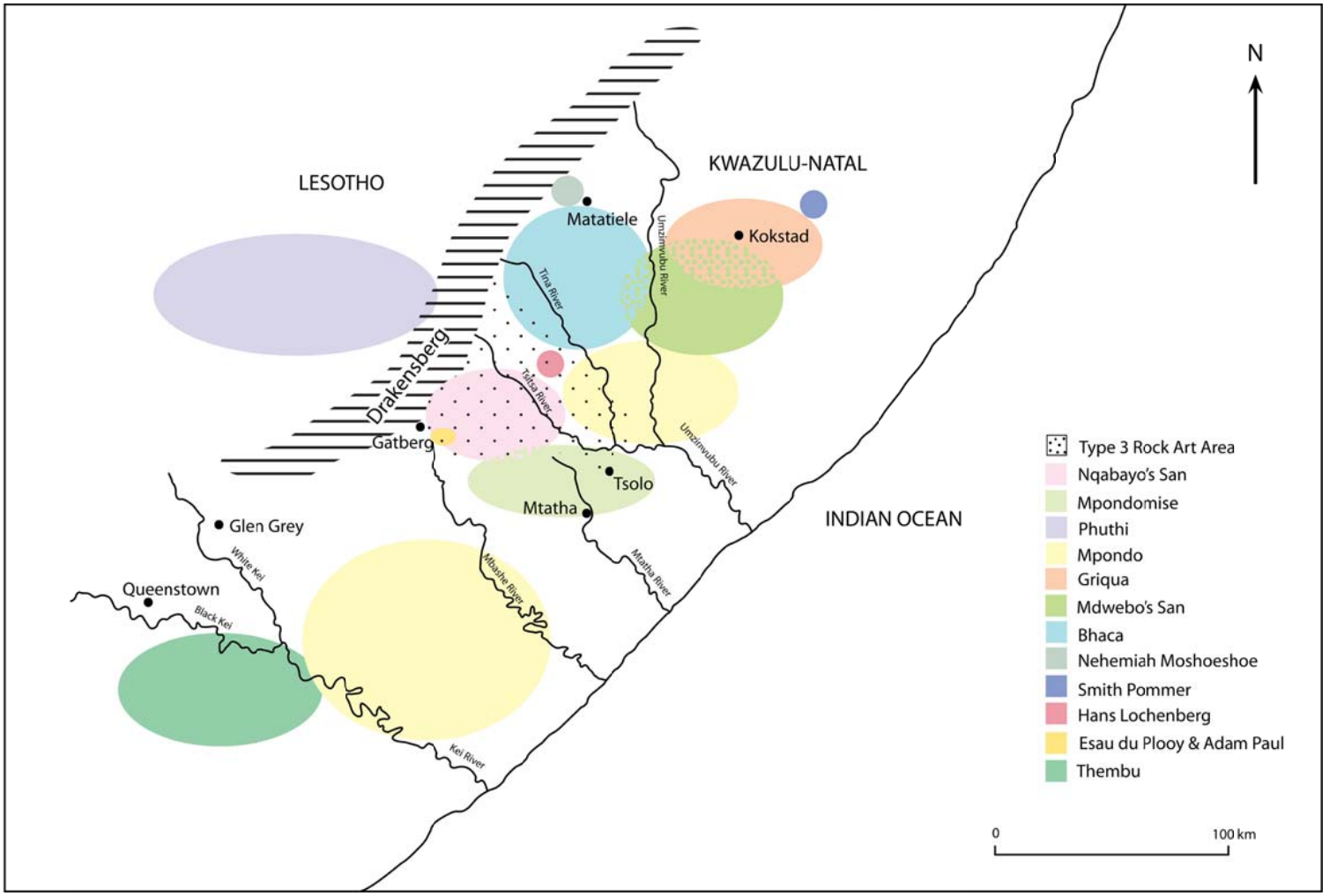


Fig. 32. Map showing the location of groups mentioned in the text, who lived in Nomansland during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

landscape, it is thus unlikely that Mdwebo's San or the Thola were responsible for the fine-line paintings made in the core Nomansland Study Area (Blundell 2004:36).

Insight into Nqabayo's band is provided by statements of three San people interviewed by Sir Walter Stanford, a magistrate in the Transkei. These people, by the names of Luhayi, Mkahlila, and Mamxabela were living under the protection of the Mpondomise chief at Tsolo at the time of giving their statements, but had previously been part of Nqabayo's San band (Macquarrie 1962). They told of family members who used to paint, and of an attack on their band by in 1858 by Umghudlwa, the Thembu chief at the time, which killed most of its members. These Mpondomise chiefs were said to praise the San as rainmakers (Macquarrie 1962:28; Derricourt 1974:50).

Stanford also met a Thembu man named Silayi, who had lived and raided with Nqabayo's band for three years (Macquarrie 1962:31). Silayi made a statement to Stanford on the 7th of May 1884, describing his lifestyle with the San, which had begun in about 1850. I consider Silayi's statement in some detail, because it provides valuable insight into the lifestyle of this San-led raiding group. Silayi explained how he had befriended a Khoekhoen man by the name of Hans, and his nephew, Ngqika, who had a San father. Silayi, along with Ngqika and a son of Hans joined up with Nqabayo's group while they were living at the sources of the Xuka and Qanqaru rivers.

They sought out Nqabayo's group because they wanted to go on a stock raiding expedition, and thought that they would be assured of success if they joined them (*ibid.*). Silayi reports that Nqabayo's band "could muster forty-three men" (*ibid.*), who were armed mostly with bows and arrows, although some of them had spears and three had guns. Ngqika explained to Nqabayo that they wished to go on a raiding expedition, and the San chief provided five men to accompany them (*ibid.*:32). Silayi's group managed to steal a number of horses from the Kraai

river area, and returned to the Thembu "kraal at Tsitsa" (*ibid.*). They gave two horses to the chief, and sold two to a trader.

In the interim, the Dutch farmers from whom they had stolen the horses followed their tracks. This caused some alarm amongst the Thembu, and the chief ordered for all three of the stock raiders to be tied up (*ibid.*). Although the Dutch farmers did not trace them all the way back, and they were released, Silayi reports: "this treatment we resented because what we had done was known and we had presented two of the horses to the chief" (*ibid.*). As a result of this incident with their chief, Ngqika, Jan and Silayi decided to take the stolen horses and join Nqabayo's San group. In addition to this, "Jan's father Hans went, and while living with the Bushmen I married his daughter Ndaralu" (*ibid.*). They were received in a friendly manner by Nqabayo's group, which they attributed to the fact that Ngqika was part San. They received bows and arrows, and became involved in numerous stock raiding expeditions.

Silayi provided some insight into the everyday life of the group:

> it is a custom of the Bush people, when any expedition like that I am describing is away [raiding expedition], for the women and children, in searching for roots and anything they require, always to take the direction in which the men have gone, and they will travel a long way in this manner (*ibid.*:33).

Silayi also provides numerous details of stock raiding experiences, including theft in broad daylight, and raiding expeditions many hundreds of kms away from the Nomansland Core Study area. In addition to raiding, they also hunted various game animals. The group did not remain in one place for very long, moving from "cave to cave and mountain to mountain" (*ibid.*:36).

Silayi reported that the poison for their arrows was prepared by Nqabayo, the chief, from a combination of the root of a shrub and the bark of a tree. The poison took days to prepare, and when it was ready it was handed out by Nqabayo. In addition to the making of poison, Silayi notes that the San had some form of medicine that protected their horses from lions: "There was a root we dug, which we pounded and attached to the manes and tails of the horses,

together with the smelly parts of a skunk. Our horses were then safe. The root had a very unpleasant smell, and together with the skunk was too much for the lions" (*ibid.*:36).

Silayi reported that "the Bushmen were friendly with the neighbouring tribes although they often stole stock from them" (*ibid.*:34). Interestingly, Silayi is careful to differentiate between the San and others, such as himself, who lived with the group. He described San marriage and coming of age rites of passage, and is careful to point out the differences between these and the ones that associated with Thembu and other Bantu-speakers do (*ibid.*:34-35).

Silayi explained that he left the San group when his people sent for him, and that Hans and Ngqika left Nqabayo's groups at around the same time. Hans and Ngqika eventually went to live with the Griqua, under Adam Kok. This is significant because it seems that Silayi, Hans and Ngqika, although integrated into Nqabayo's raiding band for some years, continued to identify culturally with their own roots.

Importantly, Silayi corroborated the information that Nqabayo's group were attacked by the Thembu in 1858, because they had stolen some of Umghudlwa's cattle. Nqabayo and a few others escaped, and took refuge with the Mpondomise chief Umditshwa.

Drawing on historical information about these three San leaders in the area, Blundell (2004) points out that by the nineteenth century, the San groups in the Nomansland area were no longer composed of purely San people. Rather, these groups consisted of a nucleus of San, orbited by people with other cultural identities, whose membership of these groups was often transitory. As we have seen, Silayi eventually went back to live with the Thembu chief, and his friends Hans and Ngqika left Nqabayo's group to go and live with the Griqua at Kokstad.

Blundell (2004:157) suggests that the San would have fought to retain their separate identity in spite of, or perhaps because of the heterogeneous groups that

were clustered around them. Indeed, it seems that not only were certain San leaders successful in maintaining this separate identity for much of the nineteenth century, but that "they exercised control and leadership over people from many different cultural backgrounds" (*ibid.*). An example of this is a fourth San leader, Madolo, who lived slightly to the West of Nomansland. Madolo exercised control over hundreds of people of San, Khoekhoen and Bantu-speaking origins at the Bushman school/mission station (Saunders 1977). It seems that these various San groups were fora in which people from diverse cultural backgrounds coalesced around powerful San leaders.

By the late 1850s and early 1860s, however, the San had begun to lose their autonomy in the area, and all the previously San-led groups sought the protection of larger Bantu-speaking polities (Wright & Mazel 2007:92-93). In particular, the remnants of Nqabayo's group who went to live with the Mpondomise, and another group of San who lived under the protection of the Phuthi.

The Bhaca

The Bhaca are fairly recent immigrants into the north Eastern Cape (Hammond-Tooke 1962:xv). According to oral traditions, they are descended from a group of Nguni-speakers who used to live in the area beneath the Lebombo Mountains, between Swaziland and South Africa, who called themselves the Zelemu (*ibid*:2). Sometime before 1800, the Zelemu moved south, and by about 1800, they found that their immediate neighbours, the Wushe, recognised a common ancestor. They formed a combined entity, the Zelemu-Wushe, under a much respected chief Madzikane. But this group was soon threatened by the expanding Zulu state. Some were absorbed into the advancing Zulu groups, but many fled south across the Mkhomanzi river (*ibid*:4). The route along which the Bhaca fled was the same one that had been taken earlier, by another refugee group, the Cunu, and these two groups united to drive the Mpondomise out of the areas near Mount Ayliff in which they wished to settle (*ibid.*). The Zelemu-Wushe eventually settled in the Mount Frere area (Fig. 33), which is located to the East of the Nomansland core study area.

Historical information about the Bhaca from this time on is riddled with accounts of Bhaca raids. These were conducted against Xhosa, Thembu, Mpondomise and Sotho. These raids were widespread and occurred on a large scale, involving the movement of entire families and their livestock, stopping only to plant sorghum and then move on again after they had harvested their crops (*ibid:*5) The Bhaca under Madzikane became steadily more powerful, and more of a threat to Shaka's Zulu state, and in August 1830, Shaka's military made a final advance on the Zelemu-Wushe. The Zulu advance was thwarted by a snowstorm that killed many of their fighting troops, and the Bhaca leader Madzikane was widely considered to have orchestrated this event. The magic smoke from his ritual fire was said to have caused the clouds that brought the snowstorm (*ibid*:5-6).

Soon after this event, Madzikane was killed while involved in a raid. His heir was too young to lead, and Ncaphayi, who was the next in line, became the leader of the Bhaca. Ncaphayi was known to be a "daring and warlike freebooter whose tribe was strengthened by deserters from the Zulu and who made raids on all the surrounding tribes" (Vinnicombe 1976: 24). In the mid 1830s, Faku, the then leader of the Mpondo, formed an alliance with the Bhaca under Ncaphayi, and the Bhaca moved to the Mpondo territory. Ngcaphayi became a "tributary" to Faku, where they joined forces in a series of raids on the Thembu, Mpondomise and Bomvana (Hammond-Tooke 1962:6). The Bhaca and the Mpondo did not remain as allies, though, and after withdrawing from Mpondoland, Ncaphayi attacked Faku in about 1844, and was killed in the ensuing battle (*ibid*:6-7). After his death, the Bhaca split into two groups, one under Mdutyana moved back to the Mzimkhulu area, and the other, was ruled by Ncaphayi's son, Makhaulu, who was still a minor, meaning that this section was ruled by a regent, Diko, and Ncaphayi's wife, Mamjucu. When Makhaulu finally became chief he made peace with the Mpondo, and applied to be taken over as a British subject, which was effected in 1875 (*ibid*:7).

The early part of this history of Bhaca presence in Nomansland establishes two important things for a consideration of their potential to be authors of the rock art. The first of these is that they are descended from Nguni-speakers who lived

near Swaziland, and the second of these is that they have been in the Nomansland area since the early 1800s. These two things are important because the Swaziland and Natal Nguni-speakers have no known tradition of making rock paintings. They are, however, known to have made engravings related to settlement patterns (Maggs 1995). Type 3 rock paintings do not resemble these images in any way.

In addition to this, contemporary Cape Nguni-speaking groups have no known rock art tradition. Indeed, a vast body of anthropological literature relating to the Bhaca specifically, and to Cape Nguni groups more generally has been written (Kuper 1980; Hammond-Tooke 1962, 1963,1964,1965,1974,1984). Interviews conducted in 2005 for heritage management purposes among Cape Nguni-speakers, including certain individuals who identified themselves as Bhaca, suggest that they have no memory of ever having made rock art. This is significant, because the Bhaca have occupied the Nomansland area for less than 200 years (Hammond-Tooke 1962), which is a short enough time to suggest that they should still have some memory of having made paintings, if members of their group had been the authors. It thus seems extremely unlikely that Type 3 images represent a macro-scale ‘Bhaca art tradition’.

Before it is possible to rule out the possibility of Bhaca authorship of Type 3 imagery, though, there is another aspect of their history that must be considered. Although the historical evidence above establishes that the Bhaca were notorious raiders in their own right, there is also substantial evidence to suggest that they were involved in close co-operation with certain San groups in stock-raiding expeditions. I thus consider the relationship between the San and the Bhaca. Although this interaction clearly involved overarching alliances and economic commitments at a group level, this interaction is more pertinent to the issue of authorship of Type 3 rock art when considered at the level of individuals and small sub-groups. As a result of the raiding relationship with the San, certain individual Bhaca would have broken away from the main Bhaca settlement and spent time living and raiding with San groups in the Nomansland area. Alternatively, small raiding groups of Bhaca may have co-operated with small raiding groups of San.

From about 1840 onwards, theft from European farms began to be reported in the Nomansland area, and it was established that the thieves were a group of San who lived in caves near to the settlement of the Bhaca chief, Ngcaphayi on the sources of the Mzimvubu river (Vinnicombe 1976, Wright 1971:115). “It is known from later evidence that the Pondoland [north Eastern Cape] San not only bartered the animals they stole for other effects, but that they also had an arrangement whereby their stock was kraaled among the neighbouring Bhaca” (Vinnicombe 1976:33). Ngcaphayi’s people were reported to participate in, if not organise, stock raids by the San. Evidence presented by the Boers as justification for an attack they launched on Ngcaphayi’s people further corroborates this evidence for co-operation between the Bhaca and the San at an individual level: “One of our patrols overtook some San with stolen stock, of whom several were killed, and they were mostly accompanied by [Bantu-speakers], one of whom the patrol caught who belonged to Ngcaphayi…; the patrol on this occasion also followed the spoor to within sight of Ngcaphayi’s kraals” (Vinnicombe 1976: 27). At least one of the people accompanying this San raiding group was Bhaca. This statement also suggests that other Bantu-speakers, potentially from other groups accompanied them as well. Later, the Bhaca leader Mchithwa was implicated in collaboration with the San related to stock raiding (Wright 1971:15).

In April 1848, Henry Francis Fynn, was appointed as British Resident among the Mpondo (Wright 1971:115). In this position, he came across information not only related to the Mpondo, but also various allies of theirs, including the Bhaca. When he had established that the Bhaca were participating in stock thefts, Fynn demanded that the San thieves should be handed over. The main members of the Bhaca group responded that this would be impossible because the San were away hunting. Fynn’s envoy then visited Mamjucu, who said that Mchithwa had declared that the San should be left in peace at all costs, so if she went against them it would not only cause upheaval among her own people, but the Mpondomise under Mandela would also go against them because they had intermarried with the San who were living with the Bhaca (*ibid.*). This would also invoke the displeasure of another small raiding group in the area, under

Hans Lochenberg, who had said that 'The San and Mandela's people are under my feet. Anyone who molests them will find me fighting in their cause" (Vinnicombe 1976: 60). It is clear that a complex network of alliances existed at this point in time between the Bhaca and the San, as well as others with vested interests.

Fynn's enovy also visited Mchithwa, who was aggressive during the interview and in subsequent encounters. His brother Bhekezulu had returned from Lesotho at the beginning of 1849 with various cattle, and before going had told the San that they needed to make their own kraals for their cattle and not use those belonging to the Bhaca anymore (Vinnicombe 1976). "He admitted that the San did in fact have large grazing kraals nearby" (*ibid*:60). The Bhaca were threatened by attack from the Natal government if they continued to harbour stolen stock, yet they protected their relationship with the San. An idea of importance that emerges from a consideration of the history of Bhaca presence in Nomansland is that they certainly had a fairly sustained relationship with San stock raiders.

The relationship between the Bhaca as a group, and the San seems to have been largely based on shared economic goals related to stock raiding and trade. Individual Bhaca, however, may well have had a closer relationship with certain San groups. In particular, they may have spent a great deal of time with, or even lived with San groups as part of their raiding relationship, as is suggested by historical details above. I thus do not rule out the possibility that certain Bhaca individuals, or small breakaway groups, may have been involved in the making of Type 3 art.

The Mpondo

The Mpondo currently occupy an area of the Eastern Cape in which they have lived since at least 1686, when they were observed there by the survivors of the shipwreck *Stavenisse* (Soga 1930:302). Although the Mpondo were to some extent harried by Shaka and his army during the early 19th century, they

remained the largest and most powerful of the Bantu-speaking groups in the north Eastern Cape, and maintained political independence under Faku, their chief, until relatively late in the colonial period (Beinart 1982:9-11). The Mpondo were, however, forced to relocate within the north Eastern Cape a few times in the early nineteenth century due to the incursion of Shaka's armies into Mpondoland (Kuckertz 1984, 1990).

After the second major raid by the Zulus in 1828, the Mpondo were left almost completely crushed. They had almost no cattle remaining, and relied on intensive cultivation, producing two crops a year instead of one. They then traded the surplus of grain for hides, beads and cattle with neighbouring groups (Beinart 1976:27). Another major way of regaining cattle seems to have been raiding, and the Mpondo were involved in an alliance with the Bhaca to this end, as discussed above. Hunting was also an important source of meat and articles to trade. The Mpondo traded bluebuck skins in exchange for cattle.

Up to the 1840s there was also a thriving ivory trade in the area (Beinart 1982). Although the Mpondo hunted elephant themselves, they also acted as middlemen for San hunters. One group of San who were settled on the Mzimvubu river were described by Steedman: "They usually roam about between that river and Natal, shooting elephants, the flesh of which they eat, and exchange the ivory with Faku's people for corn and tobacco" (Steedman 1835:280 in Beinart 1976:28). By 1860, however, elephants in the area had probably been exterminated. The major aspect of the San-Mpondo relationship is that they were trading partners. By 1861, the Mpondo had expanded and were taking part in the lucrative cattle trade with the Cape and Natal, with bartering with cattle traders occurring on a large scale (Beinart 1982:22-23). In addition to this trade relationship, the Mpondo and the Bhaca were allies, which suggests that San may have been involved in any co-operative military ventures among these two Bantu-speaking groups.

The 1840s saw Pondoland fall under the protection of the Cape Colony due to a treaty agreement signed with the Cape Government in 1844. As part of this treaty, Faku, chief of the Mpondo, was given jurisdiction over "a large tract of

country south of the Mzimkulu river extending from the sea to the Drakensberg mountains" (Vinnicombe 1976: 57). Faku was responsible for seizing anyone in this territory who had committed an offence against the British and was meant to deliver them to the nearest colonial authority. The same went for any stolen cattle, horses or other property that was found in his territory (*ibid*; Wright 1971).

Colonial employees hoped to use Faku's power as a buffer against San stock raiders based in Nomansland. For this reason, the territory given to him included the areas in which the San were known to be living. In 1846, Faku was called upon to put the treaty that he had entered into with the colony into effect after a raiding party of San was traced into his territory. He replied: "The San are wild bucks who fly from rock to rock; they are things that run wild and I hold no authority over them. I do not recognise them in any way…I have nothing at all to do with them, nor have I the means of pursuing them or punishing them" (Vinnicombe 1976:57). The British agent living among the Xhosa corroborated Faku's story. Faku had not a mounted man in his entire territory, while many of the San were mounted. Mandela, chief of the Mpondomise, lived just outside Faku's area, and replied similarly to colonial requests to subdue the San, that he would be unable to do so.

In December 1848, a large number of stock was stolen from the Bushman's river area, and the Natal government asked Henry Francis Fynn, the British Resident among the Mpondo, to enlist the help of Faku in an attack on the San. Fynn moved to the northern part of Faku's territory in order to facilitate this planned attack, which never materialised. Faku refused to take responsibility for the actions of the San, and instead tried to enlist the help of colonists, ostensibly to remove the San from his territory (Blundell 2004:123). It seems likely that Faku did struggle to control the San groups in his territory. But, in addition to this, Faku's overt distancing of himself from the San with whom it is clear that he had at some point had a fruitful trading relationship may have something to do with his awareness that the Natal colony desired land under his control for European settlement. San raids on Natal farms provided an excuse for colonial authorities to pressure Faku to give up land (Wright & Mazel 2007). Drawing on missionary

support and advice, Faku played a complicated political game, asking for support from the Cape colony and denying that he had any control over the San. Shortly after this, Faku's troops attacked various San groups in his area, suggesting that he had more idea of their whereabouts than he had let on (Blundell 2004:123.).

In my earlier consideration of Bhaca history, I suggested that two aspects of historical information were particularly significant for the consideration of the authorship of Type 3 rock art, 1) the origins of the group, and whether they have a known painting tradition in the past, and 2) the relationship of each group with the San. Like the Bhaca, the Mpondo are also descended from Natal Nguni-speakers who, as we have seen, have no rock painting tradition. The Mpondo themselves have no recorded painting tradition, either in the past or the present. Their relationship with the San seems to have been based on trade and stock raiding. Although this relationship was clearly fairly sustained and fairly lucrative for both sides, it seems that as a group they did not venture beyond this economic contact, although it is possible, if not probable, that certain Mpondo individuals had closer and more sustained contact with San groups or individuals.

I thus suggest that the Mpondo as a group did not make Type 3 rock art, but that individual Mpondo-speakers or smaller breakaway groups may have been involved in its production.

The Mpondomise

The Mpondomise are said to be descended from the same ancestral group as the Mpondo, and are thus closely related to them (Soga 1930:334). The Mpondomise are said to have moved from the sources of the Umzimvubu river to parts of the Transkei, between the Tina and the Tsitsa rivers, where they still reside today (*ibid*:335). Oral history tells that one of the early Mpondomise chiefs, by the name of Ncwini, had a San wife, with whom he had a son, called Cira. Cira was said to have become his father's favourite, resulting in the displacement of the heir, Dosini, from the chieftainship (*ibid*:338). Soga (1930:338) thus suggests that the main line of the Mpondomise is descended from Cira. There were two

branches that emerged from this main Mpondomise line, one under Mhlontlo's successors between the Qanqu and the Tsitsa rivers, in present-day Transkei, and Mditshwa's Mpondomise, who occupied the territory around the Tsolo district.

This recognition on the Mpondomise's part that they descend from a San woman may have had an impact on their relationship with the San living nearby. For example, the Bhaca, who as we have seen were allied with a San band under the leader Mdwebo, raided livestock from the Mpondomise on various occasions during the nineteenth century (Blundell 2004:124). This situation could have given the Mpondomise reason to be hostile towards the San, but it is among them that Nqabayo's San found refuge after being attacked by Mghudlwa's Thembu in 1858. After Nqabayo's band was attacked, the survivors, including Nqabayo himself went to live with the Mpondomise under Mditshwa (*ibid.*). This particular group were living West of the Tsitsa river, in present day Tsolo district. Pieter Jolly (1992:89) lists various accounts of observations of San rainmakers living among the Mpondomise in the the late 20th Century and early 21st century.

The Thembu

The Thembu have a relationship to other south-eastern Nguni groups that is not straightforward. It is possible that they are more closely related to the Sotho, or to a group that Soga (1930:466) refers to as the 'Ama-Lala'. Either way, they have a genealogy that reaches too far back for them to have been descended from Natal Nguni-speakers, and they are thus unlikely to be related to the Mpondo, Mpondomise or Bhaca (*ibid.*). They were settled in the coastal belt of the north-Eastern cape some time before the Mfecane forced the other groups considered above to migrate into the area. The earliest date of their occupation appears to have been some time after 1620. The movement of people from the north into present day Kwazulu-Natal resulted in the Thembu splitting into two groups, one of which remained in Natal, and the other moved south. This second group seem to have been encountered in 1686 by survivors of the shipwreck *Stavenisse,* who called them 'temboes' (*ibid*:468). They have clearly been in the north Eastern

Cape for some decades. Thembu oral tradition reports that a battle for supremacy occurred between the two principal sons of the ruling family in about 1650 on the Msana river, which is a tributary of the Bashee (*ibid.*). This places the Thembu in the north eastern Cape even earlier than the *Stavenisse* reports. According to Soga (*ibid.*:470), the graves of identifiable Thembu leaders that date back to the eighteenth century can be found in the area that the group still occupies today, which suggests that they have been there for some centuries. This area is found to the south of the Core Nomansland Study Area.

The Thembu seem to have been on the receiving end of various military actions that took place in the nineteenth century in this area. The Bhaca and the Mpondo invaded Thembuland on three occasions, removing most of the Thembu's cattle. Although the Mpondo had carried out raids on the Thembu, their chief Ngubencuka, married a daughter of Faku, the Mpondo chief (*ibid*:478). The Thembu seem to have had a more hostile relationship with the San than the other groups already considered. One of their chiefs, Bawana, is said to have expelled the San from the Queenstown area, and occupied the land (*ibid.*).

Also, it was the Thembu leader Umgudhlwa who attacked and killed many of Nqabayo's San. The Thembu's attack on Nqabayo's San is unsurprising given that Nqabayo's San were closely allied with Mdwebo's San, "who in turn were allies of the Bhaca – enemies of the Thembu for most of the nineteenth century" (Blundell 2004:125). Although the historical evidence of the relationship between the San and the Thembu discussed above suggests that they had a hostile relationship, this is in direct contradiction to the statement of Silayi, the Thembu man who went to live with Nqabayo's San band for some years.

Indeed, it is the insight provided by what we know about Silayi's experience of living with a San band that further re-inforces the necessity of making a distinction between Bantu-speaking groups, and individual Bantu-speakers. A clear trend in the available historical information is that, with the exception of the Thembu, there was co-operation at a group level between San and Bantu-speaking entities. It seems likely that as part of these overarching alliances and

co-operation among groups, certain small groups, or individuals, such as Silayi, would have interacted with the San in a close and detailed enough manner to allow for the transfer of some knowledge about making rock paintings. Again, I conclude that there is a possibility that there may have been some Thembu influence on the making of Type 3 art.

Before I delve deeper into the question of Cape-Nguni influence on Type 3 art, I consider historical information about four other Bantu-speaking groups that were located on the edges of and within the Nomasnland core study area. All four of these groups were southern-Sotho speakers. The first of these is the Phuthi.

The Phuthi

In addition to the Nguni-speaking people discussed above, certain Sotho groups are known to have occupied the areas on the edges of Nomansland. In particular, a group known as the Phuthi were known to have close relations with the San of Nomansland during the nineteenth century. The Phuthi can be traced back to the early eighteenth century, when a group of people under the Mazizi clan left the area of the Natal Drakensberg in which they were living and moved into what is now northern Lesotho. A group known as the Maphuthing were already occupying this area, and "received them so well that they settled there" (Ellenberger 1912:24), and continued to live as one large group for the next 50 years, adopting the emblem of the Maphuthing, and calling themselves the Phuthi (*ibid*:25).

At some point, however, an argument over succession rites occurred between these two groups, and the Phuthi left and migrated southwards, stopping for a short while in various places. They formed an alliance with the Bafokeng, another Sotho group living further inland, and eventually settled in the area of Mohales Hoek, in present-day Lesotho, towards the end of the 18th century. In about 1795, the famous Phuthi leader, Moorosi was born. The Mfecane had an effect on southern Lesotho from about 1820 onwards and at about this time, the Phuthi split into two groups – one group, including Moorosi went to live with the

Mpondomise below the escarpment (Ellenberger 1912:159). Other members of the Phuthi chose to remain with the San, who they clearly had a close relationship with, along the Blekana and Tele rivers on the escarpment just above Nomansland (*ibid.*). After a short stay with the Mpondomise, Moorosi returned and all the Phuthi now began living in various rock shelters near the town of Lady Grey. From this base, the Phuthi and the San raided cattle from the Cape colony, and from various Nguni-speakers living further south, particularly the Thembu (*ibid*:160).

In order to further facilitate their raiding activities, the Phuthi moved into the Lundeans Nek area which was a "more convenient spot for their raids" (*ibid*:161). In about 1824, the Phuthi were attacked at this location by the Motleyoa, forcing them to flee towards the Kraai river. In 1825, Moorosi led the Phuthi in defeat of the Motleyoa and they re-settled the Lundeans Nek area. Soon after this, however, the Thembu launched a massive retaliatory raid, in which they reclaimed all the stock that had been stolen from them by the Phuthi. Soon after this raid, Moshesh, "whose power had been increasing since his arrival at Thaba Bosiu" (*ibid*:163), sent his brother to raid livestock from the Phuthi. The timing of this raid meant that they found nothing which they could take, and instead they took all the women, children and young men as hostages. Although the release of women and children was negotiated, all the young men were taken to Thaba Bosiu, where they were eventually released after the Phuthi paid tribute to Moshesh and recognised his authority (*ibid.*).

Part of the Phuthi's recognition of Moshesh seems to have been an involvement in stock theft below the escarpment. For example, in 1828 Moshesh and Moorosi raided the Thembu and returned with over 1000 head of cattle (*ibid*:192). Blundell (2004:126) suggests that although it is difficult to know for sure, it seems likely that San would have taken part in these raids. Moorosi had a close and sustained relationship with the San, marrying two San women and having a number of children by them. In addition to this, the Phuthi attracted various dispossessed individuals during the Mfecane period, from various different groups. Moorosi led a multi-cultural group of people, and managed to unite them into a group with a strong political presence. Moorosi was eventually killed

during battle with the Cape Colony, at the end of a long siege at his stronghold, Thaba Moorosi (Wright & Mazel 2007).

The Phuthi clearly had a very close association with the San. They do not, however, have a known painting tradition. Their sustained and close contact with the San, particularly the information that suggests that they lived in rock shelters with the San near to the town of Lady Grey suggests that they would almost certainly have known something about the production of rock art, and the motivation for doing so. The areas which the Phuthi as a group are known to have occupied, around Lady Grey and Lundean's nek, do not however have any known instances of Type 3 imagery. Phuthi and San raiding parties, would, however, have moved through the landscape in which Type 3 art is found, and thus these groups, or individual Phuthi people, may have been involved in the making of Type 3 art. Again, I conclude that Type 3 art is not a Phuthi art tradition, but that individual Phuthi may have been involved in its production.

Other Sotho Groups

Another Sotho influence in Nomansland was that of Nehemiah Moshoeshoe, King Moshoeshoe's junior son, who had lost his land to the Orange Free State. He was allowed to settle in Nomansland in 1858, by Faku, and also with the encouragement of Governor Sir George Grey (Van Calker 2004:69). Nehemiah Moshoeshoe had only fifty fighting men with him in 1861, but had been attempting to set up a principality from about 1859 onwards, around Matatiele (Ross 1974:131). He was a force to be reckoned with because he could call on the large numbers and experience of various groups in Lesotho, and also of groups described as "the mountain bandits of the south", notably a chief by the name of Poshuli, whose power had already been exercised over the Drakenseberg against the Mpondomise (Van Calker 2004:132). It seems that Nehemiah Moshoeshoe had aims to be an educated overlord of Bantu-speakers and was rumoured to be in co-operation with the Mpondo to drive out the Griquas (*ibid.*:131-132). As a result of this, a regular system of stealing developed between Nehemiah's followers and those of Adam Kok (*ibid.*). The war between

the Sotho and the Orange Free State in 1865, however, allowed the Griquas to drive Nehemiah out of Nomansland.

Nehemiah Moshoeshoe was followed into the Nomansland area by Lubenja (Lebenya) and Lehana, two other Sotho chiefs, along with their followers (*ibid.*:69). Lubenja was a grandson of Mohlomi of the Monaheng, the most renowned leader of the pre-Mfecane Sotho, and he was a refugee from Basutoland. Lehana was a junior son of the Tlokoa chief Sekonyela, who had been one of Moshoeshoe, the great Sotho chief's rivals for control of the Caledon River Valley. Lehana had thus been expelled from the area in 1853 (*ibid.*). In Nomansland, Lehana situated himself on the upper Tinana River, and was a sworn enemy of the Hlubi, an Nguni-speaking group, who lived below. It was said that one of the reasons that these groups were able to occupy this part of Nomansland in the 1860s was that by this time, there were very few San remaining in the area to defend it with their notorious poison arrows (Moths 2004:161). A later reference to these Sotho groups is in the form of the Reverend Brownlee (1873 in Orpen 1964:190), who reported that both Chief Lehana and Lubenya had about one hundred and sixty well armed and horsed followers.

These smaller Sotho groups entered Nomansland in the late 1850s and became deeply involved in various social, economic and political networks. Although there is no direct historical information about their relationship to any San still in the area, it is clearly possible that they interacted with San stock raiders. Significantly, though, they only entered the Nomansland area after the San-led multi-ethnic groups had been scattered. Their interaction with San people would thus have been somewhat different to that of groups such as the Bhaca and Mpondo who were involved with powerful San groups.

The Griqua

Adam Kok, the leader of the Griqua who were based at Philippolis was offered land in Nomansland by Sir George Grey in 1859 (Smit 1962). The Griquas were a large and organised multiethnic group, that recognised certain Khoekhoen

origins (Ross 1974, 1976). The Griquas sent an exploratory party to Nomansland in 1859 (Ross 1976). This party went through modern Dordrecht and around the northern borders of the Transkei, through the towns of Maclear and Mount Fletcher and then down into the plains between the Mzimkulu and the Mzimvubu rivers. Most of the party remained in this area, where they found that very few people were living (*ibid*:98). Some visited Faku, the leader of the Mpondo. They were satisfied with what they found, and returned via a more direct route over the Drakensberg. They went across the Kenega River and up the escarpment over the mountains at Ongeluks nek. Then they went through the Orange valley, past Mount Moorosi, and through Hanglip and Smithfield back to Philippolis (*ibid*).

In January 1860, after this exploratory expedition had returned, a meeting was held to decide whether or not to move to Nomansland, and the decision was not unanimous but was agreed by a majority. Negotiations to secure a section of land led to them being given ownership of the highland area between the Mzimkulu and Mzimvubu rivers, that part of it north of the Ingeli mountains (*ibid.*:102). In the course of the negotiation over land, however, the Griquas created "a powerful enmity with the Natal government and many of the colonists which was to last throughout the period in East Griqualand" (*ibid.*). Adam Kok came back from Cape Town with six two-pounder canons to warn off any opposition they may have come up against in the mountains. From 1860 onwards, the Griquas began to sell off whatever farms they had in their possession and decamped to Hanglip, where some of them remained for the winter before they made an assault on the mountains.

In 1861, though, there was a very bad drought that crippled the Griquas. "Hundreds of cattle and horses, and thousands of sheep and goats, died in every direction…" (*ibid.*:103). Also, the mountain chieftains of southern Lesotho began to harry the Griquas, taking all the cattle and horses that they could get. The San were also involved in these hunting parties. They used picks and crowbars and hammers and drills to build a track over the mountains. Between 1862-3 they dragged their wagons over the mountains, many of them were destroyed, and they went down Ongeluks pass, they then came down through Matatiele and on to Mount Currie. During the trek they had become an impoverished and

demoralised people (*ibid.*). They settled finally near Mount Currie, at a site that became the present-day town of Kokstad.

The Griqua thus trekked through the exact area of Nomansland, around the town of Maclear, in which Type 3 rock art was found. It is thus a possibility worth considering that the Griqua made the art. Although they are in the right place at roughly the right time, two main factors mitigate against the likelihood of Griqua authorship. The first is the distribution of Type 3 art. All twelve Type 3 sites are found within a small circumscribed 50km² area. At present, no Type 3 sites are known in Philippolis, where the Griqua came from, or in Kokstad where they eventually settled, or for that matter, in any of the other areas along the route they took during their trek. If the Griqua made Type 3 rock art, it seems unlikely that they would have made the art in one small area, and nowhere else along the entire route they took. The Griqua, also, do not have a known painting tradition, either in the past or in the present. In addition to this, the Griqua trek of 1860-1 reduced them from being a relatively wealthy and prosperous group of people into a poor and struggling group. They experienced the wrath of the Eastern Cape weather, they were constantly harried by thieves who stole their stock, they had outbreaks of illness. It seems unlikely, although not impossible, that they would have time for additional enterprises such as the making of rock art while they were in this situation.

Others

Although it is possible to rule out certain large groups as authors of the art with a fairly strong level of confidence, others are less easily dismissed. There are some groups that inhabited or spent time in Nomansland that we know less about than the Cape Nguni, the Sotho and the Griqua – groups that fall into the chinks and crevices of history. These are mostly smaller, often heterogeneous groups, which consisted of people from multiple cultural and genetic backgrounds. These include Smith Pommer and his band of so called ‘marauders’, Hans Lochenberg and his followers, Esau duPlooy and Adam Paul and their followers, and Joel, a Sotho man. These are the groups whose presence is attested to in historical

records, but it is extremely likely that more groups such as these, that were small, multi-ethnic and short-lived, may well have formed part of Nomansland society.

Smith Pommer

The Griquas apparently heard about Nomansland from a man named Smith Pommer, who had been part of a rebel uprising at the Kat River settlement, a Khoekhoen mission station, in 1851. Along with some of his fellow rebels, he had been outlawed from the Cape Colony and fled to Nomansland. He and his band "occupied a stronghold on the Mvenyani river from which they did nothing but create trouble" (Shephard 1976:68-69). Some reports suggest that their stronghold was on the Ibisi river (*ibid.*). Pommer is said to have described himself as "a pure Hottentot, boasting that he had not a drop of other blood in his veins; a leader of men and a born soldier" (*ibid.*:68). He became the leader of a band of marauders, who are described as 'coloureds' (Ross 1974:131), who established themselves in the contested area of Nomansland, beneath the Drakensberg mountains during the 1850s.

This band had aroused the enmity of the Bhaca, with whom they were supposed to be on friendly terms, by stealing horses from them (Shephard 1976:69). The Bhacas retaliated and drove Pommer from his stronghold, forcing he and his band to take refuge near to the area where the present day city of Kokstad stands (*ibid*.). They were therefore in need of the arrival of a large amount of reinforcements in the form of the Griqua (*ibid.*). Pommer is known to have visited the Griqua at Phillipolis where his positive accounts of Nomansland strongly encouraged Adam Kok to move there. In addition to this, Kok gave him a gift of horses, guns and ammunition. This meant that Smith Pommer returned from his encounter with the Griquas somewhat enhanced in prestige by their support (*ibid.*).

Despite the Bhaca attack, Pommer did eventually manage to re-organise and settle with his group again at the Ibisi river. Here he seems to have formed an alliance with Sidoi, who was a young chief of the Amaxama. This alliance

involved gun-running and transport riding between Natal and Pondoland (*ibid.*). We know that Pommer and his band were still in the area in 1863, because it is recorded that they were involved in an incident with an elephant in Nomansland at this time. At some point after that date, the Bhaca who had been continuously harried by Pommer's band, mounted an attack on them, killing most of the members, including Pommer's wife (*ibid.*:70). This broke up Smith Pommer's gang and he sought refuge with the Griquas.

Smith Pommer and his group certainly moved through the area in which Type 3 rock art is found, and they may have had some form of relationship with the San. They are, therefore, potential candidates for the making of Type 3 imagery.

Hans Lochenberg

Hans Lochenberg was the leader of a small band of individuals in the Nomansland area. Henry Francis Fynn, the British Resident among the Mpondo, had learned that some of Hans Lochenberg's followers had set themselves up as agents between the Mpondo and the San. "It was cited that a Pondo client obtained a cow in exchange for a roll of tobacco which the agent transmitted to the Bushman vendor. The commission received by the agent was another roll of tobacco plus a garden hoe" (Vinnicombe 1976: 60). Lochenberg thus acted as a middleman between the San and the Mpondo, and seems to have had some form of sympathy or alliance with the San and the Mpondomise. As discussed above, when the Colonial officials asked the Bhaca to surrender the San raiders living under their protection, they explained that one of the reasons they did not want to comply was that Hans Lochenberg had said that the San and the Mpondomise were under his protection, and that he and his band would fight for their cause. (Vinnicombe 1976: 60).

Again, it is possible that this band of raiders made Type 3 art, as they certainly spent time in the area in which it is made, and they had a close relationship with the San.

Esau du Plooy and Adam Paul

A report from 1873 suggests that while travelling towards Gatberg drift, an area near to the present-day town of Ugie, six horsemen were encountered. Two of these individuals were recognised as chiefs at what is described as a "bastard location" (Brownlee 1873 in Orpen 1964:185) that was situated nearby. These chiefs were known by name, Esau du Plooy and Adam Paul. The location of Adam Paul's farm is hinted at, because the author went past it just before crossing the Inxu river, which is the source of the 'Teitsa' (probably the Tsitsa river) (Brownlee 1873 in Orpen 1964:186).

It is well attested to that people described as 'coloureds' were living near to Gatberg mountain from about 1860 onwards (Moths 2004:163-165; Ross 1974:131). This report almost certainly refers to some of these groups. Although the report provides little detail of the groups that these two chiefs were associated with, two interesting pieces of information may be gleaned from it. 1) it is clear that these groups living near Gatberg had horses, and 2) the use of the word 'bastard' at this time usually referred to people of Khoekhoen or mixed descent, suggesting that these chiefs were associated with what are described as 'coloured' groups living at Gatberg. Given the little detail that is known about these groups, it is not possible to rule them out as the authors of Type 3 art. Although the historical information does not provide details of any interaction with the San, there is every possibility that they may have been involved in trading or raiding with San groups. Significantly, they are located well within the area in which Type 3 art is found. They may thus be included in the list of possible authors of Type 3 art.

Joel

Joel was a Sotho petty chief, who entered Nomansland because he had been expelled from what was then called 'Emigrant Tembuland', located to the west of the Nomansland Core Study Area (Macquarrie 1958:164). In 1881, the British

responded to an uprising in the Nomansland area, about which Sir Walter Stanford wrote detailed diary entries (*ibid.*). It seems that Joel was associated with the 'rebels', and in the course of military action, Stanford refers to places in the Nomansland Core Study Area that were associated with Joel. These include a "spur of the Drakensberg known as Joel's stronghold" (*ibid.*), "Joel's Nek" (*ibid.*:165), "Joel's kraal", which was burnt by the British, and "Joel's Mountain". These locations are reported to be near to the "watershed between the Mooi and Pot Rivers" (*ibid.*). When Orpen became magistrate, Joel became attached to his household and acted as an official at various proceedings (Orpen 1964:191). The fact that certain parts of the landscape were named after Joel suggests that he and his followers were fairly influential within the Nomansland landscape. The fact that they lived within the Nomansland Core Study Area for a certain amount of time in the late nineteenth century makes them possible authors of Type 3 art.

Possible Type 3 authors

The elimination of large Bantu-speaking groups, Griqua as a group, and San as a group, means that a smaller multi-ethnic group is almost certainly associated with the authorship of Type 3 art. This group may have included individuals from the various larger, more settled groups. This group may well have been one of those that is known from historical information, but it may also have been a group that was never included in the historical record.

Although traditional methods of ascribing authorship to the rock art by attempting to link people to the particular place in which the art is found have allowed us to rule out certain possible authors, they have not allowed for adequate consideration of the issue. Having narrowed down the potential candidates, we are left with groups of people that are 'ethnically ambiguous'. Rather than being able to assign the rock art to a large ethnic group, with an archaeological and a historical identity, as we are accustomed to doing, the possible authors of Type 3 are difficult to find. I suggest that traditional methods are unable to deal with the situation of a society in flux, with a plethora of multi-ethnic groups involved in and manipulating these processes.

At this point, I approach the issue of authorship from another angle that is two-pronged. I consider the production of rock art in Nomansland, and also the data of Type 3 rock art itself, as a means of gaining insight into these issues.

Chapter 5

Birth of a Tradition

In asking the question of who made Type 3 rock art, we must simultaneously ask the question of how and why a new rock art tradition comes to be made. Type 3 rock art, as we have seen in Chapter 2, is not just idle daubing. It represents a cohesive corpus of rock art that I have argued should be considered to be a new rock art tradition. How this tradition came into being, and what the details of its production and consumption were, are issues that I now consider in tandem with the question of its authorship. I hope to show that these questions are reciprocally illuminating.

The Type 3 rock art tradition did not just emerge out of nowhere, and it would not have been made purely for art's sake. David Lewis-Williams (1995) makes the point that every corpus of rock art came out of specific social and intellectual circumstances, as indeed all material culture does. He points out that rock art images and the rituals with which they were associated were open to manipulation by individuals and interest groups in the reproduction or challenging of social relations (*ibid.*). Rock art provides insights into cognition in the past. Type 3 rock art was made under certain social and intellectual circumstances that are worth considering.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, numerous groups of people inhabited and moved through the Nomansland area. All these people would have made and used items of material culture in multiple different ways. Of these groups, the only one that has a known tradition of making rock art is the San. I have already discussed the relationship between Type 3 art and fine-line art, and I now explore the possibility that Type 3 rock art emerged in direct relation to the fine-line rock art of Nomansland. In the ensuing discussion, I provide some insights into the nature of this relationship, and into the evidence for this claim.

Fine-line and Type 3 imagery

There are at least five strands of evidence that reinforce the suggestion that knowledge about fine-line rock art influenced the making of Type 3 images. I consider these strands of evidence further on in relation to why the rock art was made, but at this point I use them only to highlight the relationship between San art and Type 3.

The first of these is superpositioning. As we have seen in Chapter 2, with the exception of one site, Type 3 rock art is always superimposed on fine-line rock art. The authors of type 3 rock art could have made the images in shelters that had no painting in them, or in unpainted parts of the chosen shelters. Instead, they made paintings that covered or at least partially obscured the underlying San images. This implies a deliberate relationship between fine-line rock art and Type 3. This suggests that it is possible that Type 3 authors had some understanding of San concepts of building up and drawing on meaning of underlying imagery through the use of superpositioning. Alternatively, even without any knowledge of the reasons for superpositioning in fine-line art, they may have wished to make a statement about either the fine-line art, or the people who had made it, through the positioning of their Type 3 imagery.

The second strand of evidence is in the form of chinks and crevices, used in a less metaphorical sense than they were at the beginning of the chapter. Type 3 rock art is often painted in small crevices or on small steps in the rock surface. This placement is clearly deliberate, and suggests cognisance with the practice associated with the fine-line painting tradition, of placing certain images in deliberate relationships with steps, crevices, cracks and chinks in the rock surface.

The third strand of evidence is technique. One of the most distinctive aspects of the fine-line rock painting tradition is that it is brush-painted. In contrast, Bantu-speaker and Khoekhoen rock art is finger-painted. Intriguingly, Type 3 rock art contains images that are brush-painted, although with rougher lines than the smooth and delicate lines associated with fine-line imagery, as well as finger-painted images. This is significant, because in southern Africa, the technique of

making paintings using a brush is specifically associated with the fine-line rock art tradition.

The fourth strand of evidence is in the form of certain images included in the art. The first of these is felines. At two of the Type 3 sites, RSA MEL9, and RSA FRE1, rough brush-painted feline-like images, with claws, teeth, and human figures associated with their tails, are depicted. Anyone living in Nomansland in the 19th century would have known about or encountered felines. In the late 1880s, animals described as 'tigers' are reported in the forests of the Transkei (Tropp 2003:514). Although there are no tigers in Africa, this is a fairly common colonial reference to indigenous southern African felines. Almost certainly, there would still have been leopards and possibly lions in the more mountainous areas up until the early 20th century. Indeed, Silayi reports that lions were feared by Nqabayo's raiding group, and that special medicines were made to protect their horses from these animals (Macquarrie 1962).

Interestingly, felines are one of the image categories that seem to become important in the fine-line rock art of Nomansland. Felines are often associated with SDFs, this is something that Blundell (2004:154) has noted in terms of the pattern of images often found at sites in the Nomansland area. Also, the felines depicted as part of the Type 3 tradition are fantastic images. One of them has a tail that is substantially longer than its body, and people hold onto this tail, and are depicted as if running along it, which is an unlikely real-life event. Although supernatural imagery is not strictly the preserve of fine-line rock art, it is certainly a distinctive aspect of fine-line rock art. It may not be a coincidence that these fantastic felines occur in Type 3 rock art, and I consider this overlap between fine-line art and Type 3 art in more detail as part of my discussion on motivation for the making of Type 3 images further on in this chapter.

Another image that recurs at 11 of the 12 Type 3 rock art sites is that of bows and arrows. This is an intriguing item of material culture, as it is associated with the San. It is extremely unlikely that any other group of people living in the Nomansland area would have made or used bows and poison arrows, unless they had been taught by the San, or were descended from them. Pieter Jolly (1995:247) suggests that certain Bantu-speakers and Khoekhoen were known to

have used bows and arrows, but acknowledges that they must have been taught to use these weapons by the San. Although other groups may have used them, bows and arrows are linked to the San, either literally, in that they were the major weapon associated with the San, or possibly in a more symbolic way.

Bows and arrows are also interesting in a more detailed way. Insight into bows and arrows is provided by Silayi's statement to Sir Walter Stanford (Macquarrie 1962: 32). When he, and Hans and Ngqika decided to join Nqabayo's San band as a result of being disgruntled with the Thembu chief's treatment of them, they received bows and arrows. I reproduce this section of Silayi's statement in full, because it is in the details of his words that some of the most tantalising clues lie:

> They took eight of the stolen horses and went to join Ngqabayo's band. Jan's father, Hans, also went and while living with the Bushmen I married his daughter, Ndaralu. They were received in a friendly manner by Ngqabayi, mostly on account of Ngqika, who was half Bushman himself. We received bows and arrows and became members of the tribe (Macquarrie 1962:32).

This final sentence holds at least two possibilities:

1) The words "members of the tribe" conjure a close sense of solidarity, and imply that it was possible that these bands had some kind of 'formal' process by which one's membership was recognised. This idea of membership is re-inforced by the fact that they were received in a friendly manner because of Ngqika who was "half Bushman". It seems that membership of this raiding band, and perhaps others in the area, was based on certain criteria. One couldn't just approach these groups and expect to be received in a friendly manner.

2) Bows and arrows may have been symbols of this membership of the 'tribe' and may have been given as some form of 'initiation' into the San band.

Of course, it is necessary to concede that the turn of phrase used in this statement may be purely coincidental, or may have been introduced in the process of translation. The possibility remains, though, that aside from the more practical aspects of making and using bows and arrows for hunting or raiding, it seems

that in the social situation in Nomansland in the last 200 years or so, in which interaction among multiple people with many different kinds of material culture occurred, the bow and arrow may have come to symbolise the San in certain ways. Bows and arrows may have been representative of certain things the San would have been recognised for, such as stock raiding prowess and ritual abilities. This means that their inclusion in Type 3 rock art may mean that they are meant to reference ideas and concepts associated with the San.

Taken together, these four lines of evidence suggest that the relationship between Type 3 and fine-line rock art is not a casual one, but rather is an insightful one, in which certain details about the production of rock art, the placement of images, manner of depiction and subject matter, related to fine-line art and to the San themselves, seem to have been known and deliberately appropriated by the makers of Type 3 imagery. There seems to be an extremely close relationship with fine-line rock art, and an intimate knowledge of painting techniques and the motivation for painting. This suggests that a group of people who would never have had contact with, or known about, large and powerful San bands making paintings could not have made the art.

Although I have emphasised the extent to which Type 3 art draws on fine-line rock art, it also displays certain very independent traits. One of these is the use of pigment. A distinctive trait of Type 3 rock art is the use of monochrome red pigment, that often appears slightly powdery. The raw material used to make Type 3 rock art can be seen all around the valleys of Nomansland, often located extremely near to the rock art sites in which Type 3 is made. It is soft and therefore easily procured, and was probably used for reasons of expedience. This is in direct contrast to what we know about the making of paint used to produce fine-line rock art images. Although there is not much recorded evidence related to this, there is an important account of the making of paint that was recounted by Mapote, an old southern Sotho man, who had lived with the San in his youth, and learnt to paint with them (How 1962:36).

Indeed, Mapote’s statement about the paint making process strongly suggests that there was a great deal of ritual involved. The red pigment that How showed

to him was known to him as *qhang qhang*. Mapote said that this substance was dug out of the high basalt mountains, and many southern Sotho regarded it as a powerful medicine that could ward off lightning and hail (How 1962:34). The fact that this ochre had to be fetched from the high mountains is in direct contrast to the raw material used for Type 3 pigment, which is not restricted to a far off location. Mapote also suggested that the process of making this ochre into pigment involved ritual. A woman had to beat the *qhang qhang* out of doors at full moon until it was extremely hot. Then it was ground between two stones until it became a fine powder. The second ingredient that Mapote required for his paint was "the blood of a freshly killed eland" (How 1962:37). He said that *qhang qhang* was the only thing that the San mixed with eland blood, and that other raw pigments were mixed with other entities. "The production of red pigment was, therefore, at least in certain circumstances, a collective enterprise in which people possessed different kinds of technical expertise" (Lewis-Williams 1995b:146).

Given that almost all Type 3 rock art images are monochrome, and that the pigment did not require much effort to procure, it seems that the authors either did not know about the details and rituals involved in the production of pigment for fine-line rock art, or they were not concerned with that aspect of the production of rock art. Ritual processes associated with the making of pigment were not necessary for the messages that Type 3 rock art conveyed.

Another sphere in which we see this gulf of difference is in the restricted subject matter of Type 3 rock art, and the lack of detail. While fine-line rock art is known for its broad range of subject matter, and intricate attention to detail, these aspects of making images do not seem to have been important to Type 3 artists. Similarly, the technique differs. Although some of the Type 3 images are brush painted, a great deal of them are finger-painted. With the exception of dots made with finger-tips that have been argued to be part of the corpus of San rock art (e.g., Lewis-Williams & Blundell 1997), finger-painting is not something that is found in fine-line rock art.

Two significant issues arise out of the relationship between fine-line art and Type 3 art. The first is insight into how the Type 3 tradition came into being, and

the second is that the differences between these two rock art traditions imply a social disjuncture. I suggest that something quite significant changed in Nomansland society when Type 3 rock art began to be made.

Birth of a tradition

The authors of Type 3 rock art were clearly not merely trying to mimic fine-line rock art. The authors of Type 3 rock art actively manipulated aspects of the production of rock art for their own ends. Through the use of different subject matter, pigment and manner of depiction, they inscribed their own picturing wishes into the art. The authors of Type 3 art were consciously negotiating a new group identity.

The combination of dependence on certain aspects of fine-line rock art with various differences and independent statements has significant implications for our understanding of this rock art. What we are seeing in the presence of Type 3 rock art in Nomansland, is the invention of tradition. Although throughout this thesis I have used the word tradition in the sense of a corpus of rock art that shares certain traits, in this usage of the word 'tradition', I refer to Eric Hobsbawm (1983:1), who provides a definition:

> Invented tradition is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.

The example that Hobsbawm provides of this is the choice of Gothic style for the nineteenth-century rebuilding of the British parliament, and the equally deliberate decision after World War II to rebuild the parliamentary chamber on exactly the same basic plan as before.

> The historic past into which the new tradition is inserted need not be lengthy, stretching back into the assumed mists of time…insofar as there is such reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of 'invented' traditions is that the continuity with it is largely factitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old

> situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition (*ibid*:2).

Hobsbawm draws a distinction between 'tradition' and 'custom'. Using the example of judges in a court, he suggests that 'Custom' is what judges do, while 'tradition', or invented 'tradition' is the "wig, robe and other formal paraphernalia and ritualised practices surrounding their substantial action" (*ibid*:3). The decline of custom will change the tradition with which it is enmeshed. In addition to this, Hobsbawm suggests that networks of convention and routine, such as those that develop when any social practice needs to be carried out repeatedly (e.g. the work of an aircraft pilot), are not invented traditions. This, he argues, is because their functions, "and therefore their justifications, are technical rather than ideological" (*ibid.*:3).

This distinction between 'tradition' and 'custom' is important. It seems almost certain that various customs that had previously been part of the social order in Nomansland would have declined. We know from historical information that this would have occurred through interaction, contestation of identity, new and different economic practices, changing relationships with one's neighbours, shifting group allegiance, and the disappearance of certain groups from the landscape. This decline or change in custom, seems to have led to a change in the traditions with which it was enmeshed, hence the end of a classic fine-line painting tradition, and the inception of 'other' painted imagery, such as Type 3 rock art.

If we consider the idea of an invented tradition in relation to Type 3 art, we see that it bears many of the traits that Hobsbawm suggests it should have. Type 3 rock art seems to have been a response to a "novel situation", which arose as a result of the heterogeneous society in flux that 19th century Nomansland was. Type 3, however, also references the "old situation", the 'historic past', through the act of making rock art itself, and through the links that may be made between this rock art and the more traditional fine-line rock art. It seems likely that the references to fine-line rock art that are evident in Type 3 images may be a means of establishing the significance of the tradition, by drawing on what has gone

before it. Although it references the past, it is also an active response to or manipulation of some ‘novel situation’.

The obvious disjuncture between the imagery in San and Type 3 rock art suggests a social disjuncture. It is possible that this ‘break’ takes the form of the historical circumstances that occured in the late 1850s, which led to all three powerful San stock raiding groups in the area being crushed and largely dispersed (Wright 1971; Wright & Mazel 2007). The breaking of San power and control would have substantially shaken up the social situation in Nomansland. Group leadership and territorial boundaries would have been open for negotiation and appropriation due to what was probably a short-lived power vacuum in the Nomansland core study area. I consider the details of the ‘novel’ situation in which Type 3 was made more thoroughly in the next chapter.

The process of the invention of a new rock art tradition in Nomansland provides important clues as to the authorship of Type 3 imagery. I argue that the answers to the questions of why rock art was chosen as an aspect of material culture that could be successfully manipulated in order to say something new, as well as why Type 3 rock art references fine-line rock art, lie in the production and consumption of rock art in Nomansland. In turn, the answers to these questions provide further insights into possible authorship for Type 3 imagery.

The production and consumption of fine-line art in Nomansland

Lewis-Williams (1995:143) provides a cogent summary of the issues related to the making of a rock art tradition:

> Like other genres of material culture, rock art did not merely reflect the society in which it was made, its economy, power structures, myths and so forth. It also constituted, reproduced and sometimes subverted social relations and beliefs. In that sense, the making of each rock art image by an individual or interest group was a socio-political intervention

Fortunately, the Nomansland research area is a part of southern Africa where we have some of the most detailed information about the production and consumption of fine-line rock art. It is now widely accepted that fine-line rock art is largely associated with shamanic beliefs, rituals and practices (e.g., Lewis-

Williams 1981, 1990, 1998; Lewis-Williams & Dowson 1989). These shamanic beliefs and practices were, however, situated within a context of "dynamic social relations both within San communities and, in more recent centuries, between San communities and other people" (Lewis-Williams 1995b:144). It seems likely that in 'traditional' San society, shamanic power and political power were mostly separate. It seems, however, that in the particular area of the southern Drakensberg which forms part of the Nomansland core study area, evidence from the rock paintings suggests that 18th and 19th century shamans took on political as well as religious roles, and that some "shaman-artists manipulated rock art motifs to negotiate their positions in the changing and complex southern African society of that time" (*ibid*).

As we have seen in the previous chapter, certain San individuals were powerful members of Nomansland society. They often led large heterogeneous groups, and maintained control in the area for many decades in the nineteenth century. Indeed, research in Nomansland over some decades has led to various arguments for the coalescence of ritual and political power, which is evident in the rock art (Campbell 1987; Dowson 1994, 1998, 2000; Blundell 2004). Colin Campbell (1986, 1987) put forward a structural-Marxist approach to understanding change in the fine-line rock art in the Drakensberg. Campbell focused on 'contact' rock art —imagery that had clearly been made after Nguni-speakers and colonists had moved into the southern Drakensberg. He used the notion of symbolic labour (an idea introduced into Marxist theory by Maurice Godelier [1975, 1977] and first applied to fine-line rock art by Lewis-Williams [1982]) to suggest that San interaction with new arrivals led to social change through the development of a new element in the relations of production, what he referred to as the "*shamanistic relation of production"* (Campbell 1987:46, original italics). Campbell suggested that contact images formed a backdrop that reinforced the political changes that occurred in San society as a result of their interaction with others.

Thomas Dowson (1994, 1995, 1998, 2000) took the process of understanding the relationship between fine-line rock art in the south-eastern mountains and political power further by employing structuration theory (as described by

Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1984). This approach provided a more detailed explanation of social change in San societies within the south-eastern mountains. Dowson argued that interaction between San and Nguni-speakers who migrated into the area, precipitated change in San society, from which San shamans benefited. Focusing on 'traditional' fine-line imagery, he suggested that three phases of social change are evident in rock art in the south-eastern mountains, and he called these phases communal groups, consortium groups, and pre-eminent shamans (Dowson 1994, 2000). Dowson argued that Shamans used the processes involved in making paintings to depict themselves as a means of making certain political statements. These depictions initially took the form of communal groups, in which there is little differentiation among human figures. Later, consortium groups were depicted, which emphasised groups of shamans in painted contexts that suggest a growing level of control. The final phase involves the depiction of individual pre-eminent shamans, that are completely differentiated in terms of size and number of accoutrements from other human figures associated with them.

Importantly, Dowson saw the art not only as a reflection of the processes of social change, but as actively involved in the negotiation of these processes. Perhaps the most important problem with Dowson's work is that he suggests that the social change amongst the San who produced the paintings he considers was initiated by economic changes brought about by interaction amongst San, Bantu-speakers and Europeans. Without direct dating or associations with contact period imagery, it is possible that the phases he identifies could illustrate changes amongst pre-contact hunter-gatherers. Dowson's foresight and insight in considering rock paintings to be part of active agency relationships should not, however, be underestimated. Indeed, he paved the way for an approach to fine-line rock art that linked the art to social change, and to active social negotiation by individuals.

More recently, this consideration of the relationship between fine-line rock art and social change has been enhanced by Geoffrey Blundell (2004). Drawing on ethnographic and painted evidence he argues that the art was experienced rather than intellectualized and that the production and consumption of rock art needs

to be seen as an embodied process. Although the fine-line rock art of Nomansland displays a similar manner of depiction to that of other fine-line rock art throughout southern Africa, it also has certain very different characteristics. In particular, distinctive images such as Significantly differentiated figures (SDFs) and Large headed SDFs (LH-SDFs) suggest that the "historical trajectory of Nomansland and its rock art was different from other areas; Nomansland cannot simply be treated as an undifferentiated part of the greater south-eastern mountains" (Blundell 2004:176).

Using theories of embodiment to explain social change in the San communities in Nomansland, Blundell argues that these SDFs, were depictions of "powerful individual potency-owners who probably 'owned' the rock art sites [in which these images were made] and controlled access to the production and consumption of the images" (*ibid.*). He suggests that a progression in the painted evidence from SDFs to large-headed SDFs represents a shift in the role of San ritual specialists through time. He argues that as global and local processes of interaction came to have more of an effect on Nomansland, the changing role of San ritual specialists from healers to rain-makers served to decrease the importance of the post-cranial body (Blundell 2004:176). Arguing that the body is intimately tied up with identity construction, he suggests that we should see this change in the depiction of images as evidence for a shift in the way individual identity was constructed in the San communities of Nomansland (Blundell 2004:157).

What we know about the production and consumption of the fine-line rock art of Nomansland thus tells us at least two important things:

1) Making rock art, in particular, making certain image categories, such as SDFs, became a politically significant action in the Nomansland Core Study Area. Certain rock art images in this area were related to control of space, and the assertion of authority.

2) Rock art may have been actively used as a means of negotiating individual, and possibly group identity

These two things mean that we understand some of the ways in which Nomansland rock art was related to the social situation in the area. Importantly, it seems that the authors of Type 3 rock art were cognisant of this situation. I suggest that this is the key to unlocking at least some of the 'secrets' of the making of Type 3 rock art.

Authorship re-visited

Three of the sites at which Type 3 rock art occurs, RSA MEL 9, RSA LAB 1 and RSA TYN 2, are large shelters, densely painted with fine-line rock art, that have SDFs at the site. I suggest that this is no coincidence: The authors of Type 3 art had a choice of hundreds of other shelters in which to paint, implying that they selected these particular shelters for a purpose. There is nothing to differentiate these sites from the numerous other shelters in the Core Study Area, except that they are densely painted with fine-line imagery, and they contain SDF images. I thus suggest that the most likely reason that these three shelters were selected was related to the fine-line imagery at these sites.

Given what we know about the making of SDF images, and control of space, it is certainly significant that these three sites were used for the making of Type 3 rock art. It seems that the authors of Type 3 rock art were almost certainly drawing on knowledge of the power and control that was associated with SDF images, with the people who had painted them, and with the shelters in which they were made. I consider these intriguing possibilities in more detail in the next chapter. At this point, I highlight the notion that the placement of Type 3 images means that the authors of this rock art almost certainly knew something about the religious and political reasons for making rock art in Nomansland, and about what could be achieved by painting images on rock surfaces.

It is possible, though, to probe this issue further. The question of whether Type 3 art could have been made within the same time period as the classic fine-line rock art images, including the depictions of SDFs, is one that is worth considering as it provides important clues as to authorship. The answer to this

question lies in what we know about certain fine-line rock art images, such as SDFs. I suggest that if SDF images were being made by powerful individual potency-owners, who 'owned' the rock art sites and controlled access to the production and consumption of the images, as Blundell (2004) has argued, it seems extremely unlikely that they would have allowed anyone to make paintings in the same panel as their own powerful and politically resonant images.

More insight is provided by Mapote, an old southern Sotho man, who had lived with the San in his youth, and learnt to paint with them, who was recorded by Marion Walsham How (1962) as saying that he painted at the other end of the shelter from the true San. As Lewis-Williams (1995:146) notes, "Mapote's statement implies that the San whom he knew maintained a distinction between their own paintings and paintings done by other people: painting, as they saw it, was an essentially San activity". In addition to this, it seems that they took measures to ensure that other people's rock art was not placed on top of their own. Indeed, the audacity that the act of painting on top of imagery that was probably created by powerful shaman-leaders would require makes it an unlikely act. If someone were to deliberately paint over this classic fine-line imagery, possibly as a means of challenging San power in the area, it seems very likely that the San themselves would have reacted to this, possibly by making more classic San images on top of them. Significantly, there are no instances in which fine-line rock art is painted over Type 3 rock art.

Almost certainly then, the San groups that have been associated with the fine-line rock art of Nomansland (Dowson 1994, 1998, 2000; Blundell 2004) were no longer in control of the landscape when Type 3 rock art was made. I thus suggest that it is extremely unlikely that these two rock art traditions were contemporaneous. By extension, it is very unlikely that Type 3 rock art could have been made by 'other' people while they were living with these powerful San groups, as has been argued for Type 2 imagery (Blundell 2004).

In addition to this, I suggest that the authors of Type 3 art were most likely to be depicting themselves in the art, rather than depicting others. I base this suggestion on the above discussion of the placement of Type 3 imagery. I have

argued above that the invention of the tradition of making Type 3 art is linked to an understanding, and active manipulation of certain power relations associated with fine-line art. I suggest that it is unlikely that people would paint others under these circumstances. For the same reasons that Dowson (1994, 1995, 1998, 2000) and Blundell (2004) have argued that San shamans were depicting themselves in the fine-line rock art of Nomansland as a means of asserting and negotiating certain power relations, I suggest that the authors of Type 3 were depicting themselves. The negotiation of these power relations would most likely have involved the authors making a statement about themselves in relation to others, both past and present, both real and imagined. Type 3 art is most likely related to a collective self-identification. I take up these issues in Chapter 6, in a more in-depth discussion of the motivation for making the art.

In the previous chapter it became apparent that the most likely authors of Type 3 art were a multi-ethnic group of people, that may have included Bantu-speakers, Khoekhoen, escaped slaves from the Cape Colony, San, or people of mixed descent. In this chapter, I have argued that there is a relationship between fine-line art and Type 3 art, that the art was made by people who were cognisant of the political role of rock art in Nomansland. I have suggested that it is unlikely that the art was made at the same time as the fine-line imagery made by powerful San-led groups, and I have suggested that the authors of Type 3 art were probably depicting themselves in the art. Based on multiple strands of evidence drawn from this and the preceding chapter, I thus suggest three main possibilities for the authorship of Type 3 art:

1) Descendants of the San authors of fine-line art. These people may have retained certain knowledge about the production and consumption of rock art, but have ‘lost’ certain aspects of this knowledge, leading them to produce images that are different from fine-line imagery. Or, rather than a ‘loss’ of knowledge, they may have deliberately manipulated the subject matter and manner of depiction of images as part of an active negotiation of changing social and economic circumstances.

2) ‘Others’ who had lived with the San-led bands: after the expulsion of the San leaders from the Nomansland area, at least some of those who remained would

have formed new groups, with different power structures and new forms of collective identity.

3) ‘Others’ who had never lived with the San-led bands, but would have known certain things about the motivation for making rock art because they had interacted with San groups and individuals in various spheres of social and economic life.

The arguments put forward for the authorship of Type 3 art have gone some way towards answering related questions, such as why this rock art tradition emerged, and why these images were depicted. In the following chapter, I take up the question of the motivation for the making of Type 3 art, and consider it in more detail.

Chapter 6

Interstitial Identities

I suggested in the previous chapter that the most likely candidates for authorship of the Type 3 art tradition are a multi-ethnic group of people. At least some members of this group would have needed to 1) be descended from the San who made the traditional fine-line imagery in Nomansland, 2) have lived with a San-led group prior to the early 1860s, or 3) have had relatively detailed knowledge of one of these San-led groups, and of why they made rock art. Although certain details about the authors of Type 3 art, such as the ones advanced above, may be inferred, these groups largely fall into the interstices of history. There is little historical detail relating to them, and there is no available ethnographic information. We thus have no direct details about these groups, or their motivation for making Type 3 rock art.

However, certain aspects of historical information about Nomansland society in the nineteenth century provide us with useful insights into the nature of the multi-ethnic groups that made Type 3 art. Perhaps the most significant thing that may be gleaned from the historical information discussed in Chapter 4 is that almost every group, both large and fairly sedentary, or small and nomadic, was involved in livestock raiding of some sort. Of course, this is not the only economic activity undertaken by these groups, but it does seem to have been a widespread phenomenon. I do not wish to imply that the motivation for participating in raiding expeditions would have been the same for all individuals or groups. I wish to establish, though, that the authors of Type 3 art were almost certainly involved in stock raiding. In addition to this, based on the small number of sites, and their fairly even distribution, it seems likely that this group was a smaller, nomadic stock – raiding group. In drawing attention to stock raiding, I reject any negative connotations associated with it.

Thomas Dowson (1995) has argued that an emphasis in academic literature on the San as raiders has contributed to their political and historical marginalisation.

In the years since this argument was advanced, a great deal of research has been conducted that aims to re-tell history from a San perspective (e.g., Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2004; Blundell 2004). The historical reality remains, though, that amongst other things, the San were heavily involved in stock raiding in Nomansland in the nineteenth century. In addition to the San, though, almost all the inhabitants of Nomansland were involved in these raids. Raiding is thus not specifically something that is associated with the San. Rather than the now outdated views that the San raided livestock because they had no concept of ownership, or because they were forced into raiding by colonial and Bantu-speaker encroachment on their land, it is important to note that San had been involved in raiding networks in the south-eastern mountains for many decades prior to the nineteenth century (Wright & Mazel 2007:88-89).

The San, although not the only raiders, were consummate stock raiders, and their skills were recognised by those around them as being superior. Here we may recall Silayi's statement to Sir Walter Stanford (Macquarrie 1962) in which he explained that although he and his companions had decided to go on a raiding expedition of their own accord, they decided to seek San assistance in order to ensure the success of their expedition. Similarly, as we have seen in Chapter 4, various Cape Nguni and Sotho groups formed complex alliances with San raiding groups, which were based on what they stood to gain from San raiding prowess, amongst other things.

I suggest that more than a decade after Dowson argued that raiding should be de-emphasised in historical considerations of San groups, we are in a position, once more, to emphasise this aspect of their history, and of the history of the many groups that shaped the raiding economy of nineteenth century Nomansland. Rather than seeing San raiding groups as a nuisance to the colonists, and as the last gasp of a people about to be exterminated, we should see them, as it seems many of their contemporaries did, as important and powerful groups that played a major political and economic role in the south-eastern mountains in the nineteenth century.

Of course, the raiding groups that are candidates for the authorship of Type 3 art are different from the San groups that Dowson (1995) refers to. They almost certainly had some form of relationship with, or memory of San raiding groups, and the practice of stock raiding is thus significant for our understanding of certain aspects of the lifestyle and worldview of these groups. I have argued previously that Type 3 rock art was made after the authors of the fine-line rock art in the area were no longer in leadership positions, which would have been some time after the 1860s (Wright 1971; Wright & Mazel 2007). This means that the disappearance of San leaders from the raiding arena would have left a power vacuum.

Although it is known that many of the followers of the powerful San leaders were scattered in the late 1850s, and that some took shelter among larger groups such as the Cape Nguni and the Griqua (Macquarrie 1962), various multi-ethnic raiding groups continued to operate in the Nomansland area after San-led groups had been crushed. The historically known groups include Smith Pommer's band of marauders, Esau du Plooy and Adam Paul's groups, Hans Lochenberg's group, Joel's group, and the groups under the two Sotho-speaking chiefs, Lubenja and Lehana. There are almost certainly other groups that formed in this area that are not recorded historically. It is these sort of groups that are almost certainly associated with the making of Type 3 art. I thus suggest that we need to consider the effects of raiding as an economic and social enterprise on individual and collective identity in Nomansland.

Stock raiding as an economic and social enterprise

The historical situation in which stock raiding became a major economic enterprise was created in part due to an influx of people into the south-eastern mountains and their surrounds (Wright & Mazel 2007). One possible way of understanding these economic and social circumstances is in terms of stress that may be related to a particular aspect of a society under pressure.

> Changes in social structure may involve changes in economic organisation and place stress on the productive capacity of certain sections of society. On the other hand, economic stress may necessitate a greater reliance on social or neighbourhood ties and increase the overt dichotomy between groups. As an example, if stress is placed on existing resources within the context of a particular adaptation to an environment, social relations within and between groups may develop that are related to and allow economic competition for the available resources. Stress may also affect the internal structures of societies and may be particularly felt in certain domains of economic and social relations within groups (Hodder 1979:450).

Hodder's point clearly comes out of Marxist ideas about the relations of production and the forces of production. Of course, it is impossible, and not particularly useful to try to pinpoint which came first, the economic or the social stresses and changes, indeed, these two things often act reciprocally to effect change in the relations within and between groups.

This situation is illustrated in Nomansland in the historical period within which Type 3 rock art was made. Social upheaval in terms of changing interaction, in which traditional hunter-gatherers became involved in client relationships with neighbouring Bantu-speakers, as well as individual Bantu-speakers and Khoekhoen who went to live with these small, itinerant groups. And the formation of multi-ethnic raiding groups of people from numerous different backgrounds, meant that economic and social upheaval were almost certainly factors affecting the lives of those in Nomansland. Economic upheaval in the form of changing practices from hunting and gathering, and in some instances farming and herding to a focus on livestock raiding represented immense economic upheaval. It is impossible to say which of these changes came first, but they were clearly involved in a mutually structuring relationship.

Hodder goes on to consider what would happen to material culture in changing social and economic circumstances: "In such instances part of the material culture patterning may be expected to relate closely to those aspects of the social structure under stress. These aspects may therefore become more "visible" to the archaeologist if there is adequate survival and recovery of the evidence" (Hodder 1979:450).

Although these changes in material culture may take the form of implements or items related to certain technical changes in economic practices, they may also be linked to conceptual changes such as social/group identity. I argue that Type 3 rock art is one aspect of material culture that becomes "visible" in the Nomansland region as a result of the role it played in changing economic and social relations in the area. Certain aspects of social structure were under stress – in fact, more than this, new social structures, and new group identities were actively being negotiated, and part of that negotiation seems to have involved the making of Type 3 rock art. It is possible to explore this further, particularly in relation to Fredrik Barth and Liisa Malkki's concepts of ethnicity and identity.

Sectors of articulation

In nineteenth century Nomansland, small multiethnic groups coalesced around the economic activity of stock raiding (Wright1971; Shephard 1976; Vinnicombe 1976; Van Calker 2004; Moths 2004). Until the late 1850s, the majority of these groups were led by powerful San individuals. After this, however, new groups would have formed around new and different leaders. It is the processes involved in the formation of a new collective identity that I probe in order to better understand these composite raiding groups, and ultimately, the production of Type 3 art.

Barth (1969:15) argues that situations of interaction involve a recognition on the part of those involved that there are "limitations on shared understandings", and that as a result interaction will be largely restricted to "sectors of assured common understanding and mutual interest". That being said, though, interaction also results in a reduction of differences, because it requires what Barth describes as a "congruence of codes and values" (1969:16). Barth suggests that there are a variety of sectors of articulation and separation that structure interaction, and that these will change depending on the particular interaction (*ibid.*).

This concept of sectors of articulation is significant for an understanding of multi-ethnic groups in Nomansland. I suggest stock raiding represents what Barth refers to as a sector of articulation. This economic activity would have been a sphere in which people had mutual understanding and interest, despite their potentially different backgrounds and cultural affinities. What is important about the concept of sectors of articulation and sectors of separation is that it allows for an understanding of interaction that is detailed and nuanced. I suggest that these raiding groups were based on fairly transitory sectors of articulation, that formed, and then disbanded. Historical information suggests that these groups may have lasted for a few years at a time, and that they had transitory membership.

Blundell (2004:153) suggests that these processes entailed prolonged periods of creolization and hybridisation and the emergence of new identities. New physical traits would have emerged from intermarriage among Europeans, Asians, Bantu-speakers and San unions. The legacy of the culture-historical approach means that quite often group identities are represented archaeologically as unified, monolithic wholes, with linear and continuous histories. Historical information shows that this is clearly not the case in Nomansland, and Blundell (*ibid.*) is right to emphasise the potential for change and flux and the development of new identities. However, the concept of hybridisation put forward by Blundell (*ibid.*), and others (e.g., Ouzman 2005) must be considered in more detail.

The word hybrid is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as:

1) *Biol.* the offspring of two plants or animals of different species or varieties.

2) Often *offens.* A person of mixed racial or cultural origin.

One of the problems with the word hybrid is that it conflates two processes into one. That of genetic ‘mixing’, and that of cultural ‘mixing’. Importantly, these two things do not necessarily go together. Does the existence of composite groups, which we have ample historical evidence for, automatically mean that these people would also have had ‘hybrid identities’? Interaction and even intermarriage do not necessarily create a hybrid culture, although they may and

in some instances clearly do. This is where Barth's concept of sectors of articulation is useful for a more nuanced approach. Rather than talking broadly about hybridity of culture as a result of interaction, we are able to consider specific sectors of society in which new identities were forged, while being aware that this would not necessarily have occurred in all sectors of society. I argue that new collective identities would have formed around the practice of stock raiding, but that the individuals involved in these groups may well have retained other aspects of their original identities, such as cultural affiliation. This is strongly suggested by the evidence from the multi-ethnic group under Nqabayo's leadership. Once their leader was deposed, this group scattered, and those with Khoekhoen affiliation sought shelter with the Griqua, and Silayi, a Thembu man, went back to live with the Thembu (Macquarrie 1962:32). Rather than hybridity of identity in these raiding groups, we are seeing a proliferation of multiple cultural identities that may be used and discarded at will.

As I discussed in Chapter 3, the anthropologist Liisa Malkki (1992) makes certain interesting points in relation to mobile groups of people. Although somewhat removed from her specific study focus on 20th century refugees, the raiding groups that are historically known to have been found in Nomansland are certainly mobile, and in some ways they may be seen as displaced. The majority of them were in Nomansland because they had been expelled from other areas nearby. Malkki (*ibid.*:34) notes that "territorially uprooted people are easily seen as torn loose from their culture", and that "it would not be ethnographically accurate to study these [cultural groups] as mere approximations or distortions of some ideal 'true roots'." Using the results of research involving Rwandan refugees, Malkki makes the important point that people who are no longer physically part of a large rooted group, do not necessarily stop considering themselves to 'belong' to that group. Cultural identity is not easily lost. Of course, in some instances, cultural identity will be adapted and aspects of it will be lost, the important point is that this is not necessarily the default option. This is significant for our understanding of the composite raiding groups of Nomansland.

We should not see the authors of Type 3 art as a coalition of individuals who had lost their sense of self because they had been "torn loose from their culture". Rather, I argue that a new collective identity had formed related to raiding, but that individuals retained certain ideas about their own identity related to membership of other cultural groups. Malkki's ethnographic example is in line with Fredrik Barth's suggestion that differences may endure despite multi-cultural contact and inter-dependence. There are multiple social boundaries at play at any given moment in time. And these boundaries may cross-cut one another. The significant thing to remember is that these groups were short-lived. New identities formed and were negotiated, but these were identities in flux, just as easily left behind as they were created.

Imagining a community

The ways in which these multi-ethnic raiding communities were imagined almost certainly involved the manipulation of material culture. Ian Hodder's (1979:452) statement about interest groups and ethnicity is significant in this regard: "The archaeologist cannot hope to identify all the tribes or ethnic groups that existed in the past, but he can identify *ethnicity* if by this is meant the mechanism by which interest groups use culture to symbolise their within-group organisation in opposition to and in competition with other interest groups". Hodder is using Barth's concept of social boundaries in order to inform his definition of ethnicity, and almost certainly drawing on Spicer's argument that an ethnic boundary is maintained or created through the manipulation and display of symbols (Spicer 1971:796). Importantly, while the use of material culture as part of various social strategies may not necessarily be a deliberate or conscious process (Gosselain 2000:189), certain "acts of appropriation are related to deliberate expressions of identity" (*ibid.*). I argue that the use of material culture such as Type 3 art was certainly deliberate and conscious, given that it represents the active invention of a new tradition, as discussed in Chapter 5. The art thus represents an insight into a specific statement about identity.

As Randall Mcguire argues, “the oppositional process determines which cultural symbols will become meaningful for ethnic boundary maintenance. For example, if the oppositional process focuses on altering the religion of a group, then religious symbols will become important boundary markers” (Mcguire 1982:168, following Spicer (1971:797). It seems likely that newly formed raiding groups would in some ways have defined themselves in relation to others, would have set themselves up in opposition to others. Part of the oppositional process would have involved a focus on something that meant that rock art became one of the important ‘boundary markers’. I suggest that the reasons that rock art was considered to be a useful symbolic tool for the creation and maintenance of social boundaries, for imagining a new community, is the association between rock art in Nomansland and powerful San leaders of raiding bands who were linked with the making of art in rock shelters. Importantly, the making of Type 3 imagery was probably also related to existing members of Nomansland society, as well as to the memory of past inhabitants of the area. There are three main reasons why this may have been the case, and they are not mutually exclusive.

1) The act of making rock art, as well as often placing it on top of fine-line rock art, may have been a deliberate association with the renowned San-led stock raiding groups that had made it.

2) The superpositioning of Type 3 art may have been related to the political nature of the underlying fine-line images themselves. Type 3 art may thus have been used to make a similar statement about leadership and control of the space in which the imagery is made as has been argued for fine-line art in the area (Dowson 1994, 1998, 2000; Blundell 2004).

3) Type 3 art may have been made as an emphasis on the presence of a new raiding group in the area, who had replaced the San-led groups and were emphasising their power and control over the space, in opposition to the memory of the San-led groups that had controlled the area before them.

Type 3 rock art would thus have been implicated in the formation, maintenance and probably contestation of a relational collective identity related to stock raiding. Identity is, of course, potentially constantly in flux, and as Clifton Crais suggests, “the issue is not which is the "correct" representation, but rather when and why one representation attains a certain, and frequently fragile, hegemony” (Crais 1992:101). Type 3 rock art bears testimony to a representation of a new

collective identity that rose to prominence in the latter half of the nineteenth century in Nomansland. This new collective identity references the past, even as it is involved in the negotiation of new and dynamic social processes. It seems likely that this new collective identity was formed around the stock raiding, not only as an economic process, but as a site of social interaction and identity formation.

Whittling down a block of information

Type 3 rock art may be situated within a broader context of other unusual rock art complexes that do not correspond with the three major southern African rock art traditions. Although it may be seen within this wider network of 'other' rock arts, it is related to historically specific processes in a particular geographic area. A more detailed understanding of this rock art tradition thus contributes both to an overall picture of diversity in southern African rock art traditions, and also to a more nuanced understanding of social relations and the negotiation of identity in the latter half of the nineteenth century in Nomansland.

Although Type 3 rock art defies our traditional methods of approaching the understanding of a corpus of art, other approaches nevertheless reveal useful and insightful details about the art that allow us to take our understanding forward. Historical information, the details of Type 3 rock art itself, and what we understand about the production and consumption of rock art more generally in Nomansland allow us to whittle down the seemingly impenetrable block of information that Type 3 provides us with. The understanding of the making of Type 3 art provides us with insights into "the dynamic and historically contingent nature of identity" (Jones 1997). Type 3 rock art also represents, what Hobsbawm terms, the invention of a new tradition. Being able to identify invented traditions in the rock art of southern Africa or even in global rock art is a rare opportunity. The presence of such a tradition in the Nomansland landscape allows us to study southern African rock art in a manner that goes beyond the more traditional hermeneutic research (with its emphasis on ahistorical

interpretation) that has dominated the discipline for the last three decades, and to consider the complexities of how art forms originate and then change through time. Indeed, as important, it also offers an opportunity to understand how such traditions come to an end and it is to this aspect that future research should look.

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