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Henry, Leila

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ROCK ART AND THE CONTESTED LANDSCAPE OF THE NORTH EASTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

Leila Henry

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, June 2010.

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.

_____

(Leila Marguerita Henry)

_____ day of_____, 2010

ABSTRACT

The north Eastern Cape is well known for its exceptional fine-line rock art. Recently, two non-fine-line traditions have been identified in the high mountains of this region. These corpora of rock art formed part of the interaction between San and non-San individuals in the creolised context of the nineteenth century. My discovery of further non-fine-line rock art, on the inland plateau, offers an opportunity to better understand the development of non-fine-line rock art and the role it played in relations between different groups. I argue that these three corpora of non-fine-line rock art are chronological variants of a single tradition, which I label the Type 2 tradition. The development of this tradition is associated with the breakdown of independent San-led bands and their loss of control of the space of painting, which became a contested landscape as multi-ethnic groups vied for political influence in the region and access to the San spirit world that would aid in their raiding prowess.

For my Father, who strengthens me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Laurie Winch and especially Phumzile Klaas, my field assistant, were a great help during my field work. I would also like to thank the residents and land-owners in and around Maclear for their hospitality, allowing me access to their property and sharing their knowledge of local rock art sites, especially Helen Lechmere-Oertel, Adele Moore, Sheila Bell-Cross and Jim Feely. Thanks especially to John Filmer and the Van Niekerks for their generous hospitality during my stays in Maclear.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This research project focuses on rock art found in the southern portion of the south-eastern mountains of South Africa, referred to today as the north Eastern Cape. During the early colonial period, this area was known as Nomansland and lay between the Cape and Natal Colonies. Although thought of as a No Man's Land, the area was occupied by several different groups of people, including *!Gã !ne*-speaking San groups who are recorded as having made rock paintings in the area (Anders 1935; Vinnicombe 1976: 104; Traill 1995). The region I refer to as the north Eastern Cape encompasses the land along the base of the Drakensberg from the headwaters of the Mzimkhulu River down to the sources of the Mbashe River near the town of Elliot (Fig. 1). I focus mostly on the central portion of this broader region around the town of Maclear. This area corresponds to Geoffrey Blundell's (2004) Nomansland Core Study Area, from the Pitseng Valley in the north, to the town of Elliot and from the Drakensberg escarpment to the settlement of Ngcengane.

The north Eastern Cape comprises three topographical zones–the Great, or primary, Escarpment at approximately 1900 meters above sea level, an inland plateau situated at approximately 1300 metres above sea level, and a secondary escarpment at 1100 meters above sea level (Feely 1987: 28-29, after Du Toit 1917). I refer to the Drakensberg and its foothills between the Great Escarpment and the inland plateau as the high mountains. Dates from archaeological evidence suggests that hunter-gatherers have ranged over much of the north Eastern Cape for at least the last 29 000 years (Opperman 1996). During the last 2000 years, hunter-gatherers occupied the area below the primary escarpment, while Iron Age Bantu-speaking peoples mainly inhabited the more coastal regions below the secondary escarpment and did not occupy the inland plateau until more recent times (Derricourt 1977; Feely 1987).

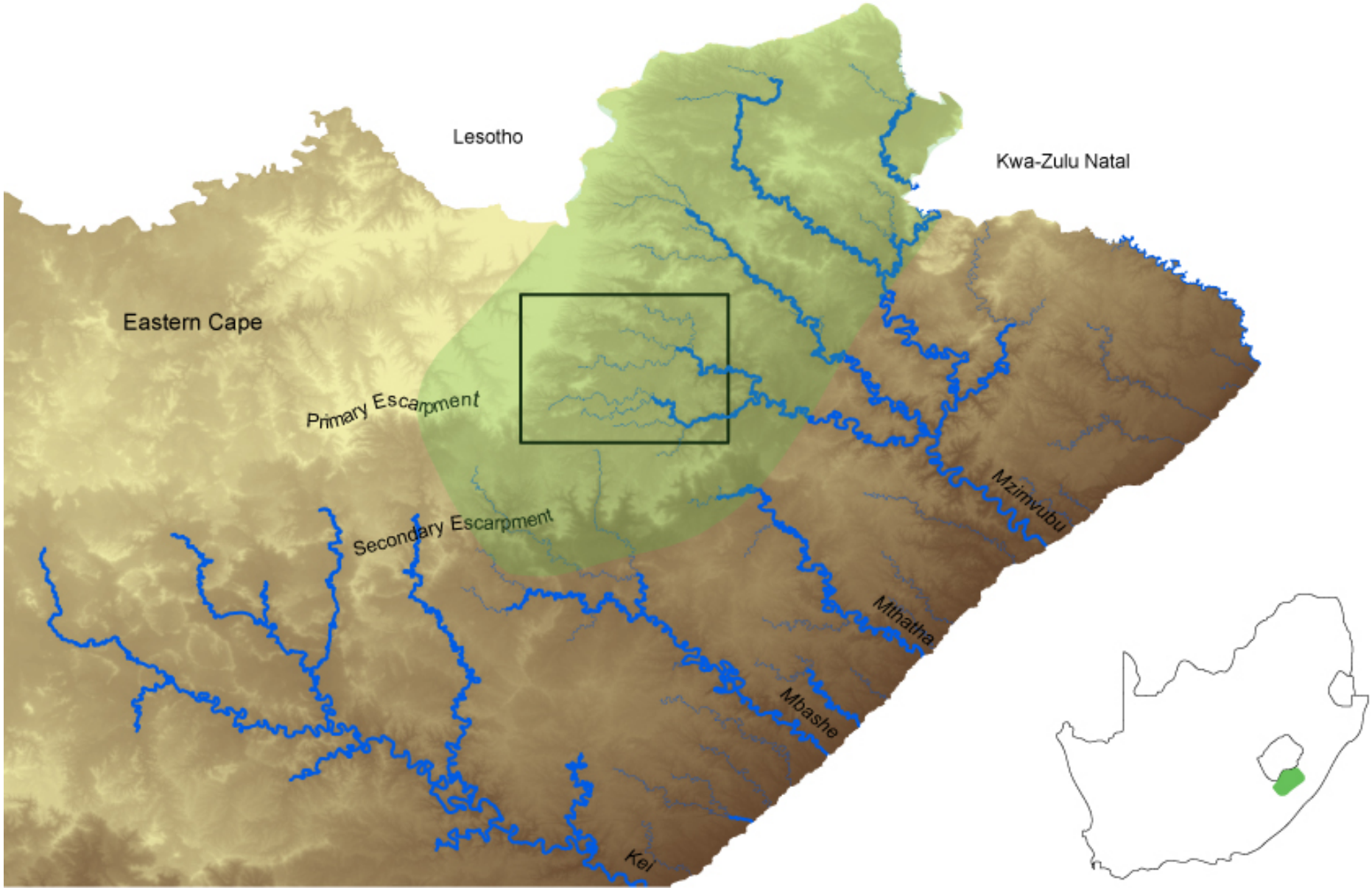


Fig. 1. Map showing the location of the north Eastern Cape. The blocked area represents my study area, the central portion of the north Eastern Cape (shown in greater detail in Fig. 9).

The rock art of the north Eastern Cape is characterised by San fine-line painting. Fine-line rock art is brush painted in an array of colours, sometimes with careful shading. These images are often highly detailed and naturalistic (Fig. 2). Dates from painted slabs in excavated contexts indicate that fine-line rock art has been made in southern Africa for as much as 27 000 years (Wendt 1976).



Fig. 2. Examples of fine-line rock art

More recently, dates have been obtained from fine-line paintings in the northern Drakensberg (Mazel & Watchman 2003). These dates, mostly ranging between 2000 and 3000 years ago, suggest a more recent age for the paintings that have survived in the Drakensberg range. In the north Eastern Cape, the surviving fine-line paintings– due to their state of preservation, the presence of colonial subject matter and archival material on the San–indicate that much of the rock art in this area may have been made relatively recently, perhaps within the last five hundred years (Blundell 2004: 34, 49-52). Owing to the recent nature of much of this rock art, historical records form an important resource on which to draw for its interpretation. Through these historical records, much is known about the San groups that existed in the north Eastern Cape and their relationships with other groups in the region.

By the nineteenth century, most of the San were based in the high mountains of the north Eastern Cape below the primary escarpment. They interacted closely with Bantu-speaking groups–as they had done for over a thousand years (Maggs 1984)–whilst still maintaining their independence. Relationships between San and Bantu-speaking groups were complex and varied and included ritual relationships, co-

operation in raiding livestock and intermarriage (Stanford 1910; Macquarrie 1962; Wright 1971). During this period, the north Eastern Cape also became a refuge for those evading colonial control, including escaped slaves, Khoekhoen and Nguni-speaking peoples (Penn 1999). By the middle of the century, San bands had incorporated non-San individuals (Stanford 1910). In at least one San-led band–that of Nqabayo–the San controlled the processes of acculturation and sought to maintain a distinct San identity (*cf.* Blundell 2004).

By the end of the 1850s, the San bands had been disbanded and the remnants went to live with Bantu-speaking groups below the secondary escarpment (Stanford 1910). A descendant of one of these San individuals was located and interviewed in the Tsolo district in the Eastern Cape in the mid-1980s (Jolly 1986; Lewis-Williams 1986). Manqindi Dyantyi was the daughter of a San man, Lindiso, and an Mfengu woman, who grew up amongst the western Mpondomise near Tsolo. Manqindi's elder sister was a rainmaker and had significant knowledge of San beliefs and rituals. Their father painted in nearby Ngcengane Shelter until the 1920s (Prins 1990: 113; Jolly & Prins 1994: 18; see map Fig. 8). This testimony is an invaluable resource for studies of rock art and San society in the north Eastern Cape, especially with regards to San interaction with Bantu-speaking groups (Lewis-Williams 1986; Jolly 1986, 1994, 1995, 1996a, b, c, 1998; Prins 1990, 1994; Prins & Lewis 1992; Jolly & Prins 1994; Blundell 2004; Challis 2008, 2009; Mallen 2008). These historical processes provide insight into the context of production of the different kinds of images painted in the high mountains and the inland plateau, and, as we shall see, suggest that the break down of San identity and control of rock art sites played a significant role in the production of rock art.

Previous rock art research in the north Eastern Cape has largely focused on the fine-line rock art of a small area–the high mountains below the primary escarpment (Vinnicombe 1976; Dowson 1994, 1995, 1998; Pearce 2001; Blundell & Lewis-Williams 2001; Mallen 2005, 2008; Blundell 2004). This research has led to a significant understanding of San society and the role of rock art within their society in this region. Research by Thomas Dowson (1994, 1995, 1998) has explored the relationship between fine-line rock art and changes in San society due to interaction with Bantu-speaking groups. He argued that fine-line rock art was an active

constituent of San society and that San shamans used painted imagery to negotiate their roles in society. Dowson (1994) also posited a progression of three phases of paintings of shamanic groups relating to the changing social role of shamans in the south-eastern mountains: communal, consortium and pre-eminent. The first phase comprises communal groups including several shaman figures. The shamans are depicted in much the same manner as the other figures, without any special adornment or clothing. He interprets these groups as representing a time when there were several shamans in a community and they were not afforded any special status (*ibid.*: 335-336). However, with the pressures of colonialism, San groups became increasingly closely associated with Bantu-speakers, and as a result, the mechanisms of spiritual potency, prestige and power in San society changed and it became more complex (*ibid.*: 336-337). Dowson claims that this socio-historic progression can be seen in the paintings. Shaman consortia–groups of human figures where a few shamans are painted with more embellishment and accoutrements–reflect a situation where shamans had become aware of their potential political status and banded together in consortia (*ibid.*: 338). The final stage of this progression, he argues, could be seen in paintings of pre-eminent shamans–individual shamans painted in greater detail with much decoration and sometimes larger than size than surrounding figures. These images were apparently made to negotiate and naturalise the prominent social position of certain shamans (*ibid.*: 339).

Dowson (*ibid.*: 340) acknowledges that neither the three categories of paintings nor the historical processes he outlines can be tied to exact dates or locations. Rather, he argues, the occurrences he refers to probably occurred at different points in time in different locations. Dowson's chronology has been criticised on several points. In terms of his data, the paintings he uses as examples come from different parts of the south-eastern mountains (Blundell 2004: 68-69). Also, he has not presented studies of superimpositioning to substantiate his claims and, as he acknowledges, there are few cases where his chronology is found in sequence in a single site (*ibid.*). The most serious criticism of Dowson's work has been that he has attempted to tackle issues of chronology without having dates for any of the paintings in question (Mazel 1993; Mitchell 2002a: 407).

Part of Dowson's motivation for this research was a desire to integrate San rock art into the history of the Drakensberg, which had become a subject of contention in South African archaeology (Mazel 1992, 1993; Dowson 1993). Aron Mazel (1993: 750) highlighted that the San had either been treated in an offhanded–mostly prejudicial–manner or were largely neglected by historians. He then attempted to briefly re-evaluate the San's role in the region's history. Dowson (1993: 641), however, claimed that this paper ignored an important source–San rock painting. Thus, he states that rock art images are "evidence in their own right for historical processes" (Dowson 1994: 332). However, the problem with correlating San rock art with historical records is that the paintings lack a clear chronological context (Mazel 1993: 890-891, 2009). For this reason, it is not possible to validate hypotheses such as Dowson's shamanic group progression. However, these issues are less of a concern when dealing with depictions of historical subject matter (Mazel 1993: 891). This issue is discussed further in Chapter 4.

Building on Dowson's work, Blundell (2004) has investigated the dynamic processes of interaction in the north Eastern Cape over the last 500 years and the influence this has had on fine-line rock art painted in the high mountains. One image category he studied–based on Dowson's pre-eminent shaman category–was that of Significantly Differentiated Figures (SDFs) which are concentrated in a limited area in the high mountains of the north Eastern Cape. SDFs are highly decorated human figures, often large in size, that stand out from the other painted images in a site (Fig. 3). They sometimes have animal features and disproportionately large heads depicted in much detail. This emphasis on the heads of these figures is sometimes taken to the extreme and a few SDFs are depicted without bodies. The increasing importance of the head in these figures is explained in terms of the greater importance of rainmaking–as opposed to the healing–function of shamans (*ibid.:* 156). Blundell suggests that this occurred as a result of increased San dependence on their role as rainmakers for Bantu-speaking chiefs (*ibid.*: 145).



Fig. 3. Examples of Significantly Differentiated Figures

Blundell interpreted SDFs as a reflection of the importance of individual shamans in San society, which became a form of portraiture in the spiritual realm (*ibid.*: 155). Sites with SDFs display spatial patterning in their distribution and in the arrangement of painting (*ibid.*: 158). SDF sites are also structured in terms of the types of images present. He suggests that individual shamans owned these sites and controlled the painting and consumption of images in them, resulting in a standardisation of the kinds of images depicted (*ibid.*: 172, 177). Blundell suggests that these SDF sites may be linked to a mixed group led by a San man, Nqabayo, which lived in the high mountains during the first half of the nineteenth century, or their ancestors (2004: 132).

A significant site in Blundell's research is Storm Shelter, which has a high density of beautifully preserved fine-line paintings (Blundell & Lewis-Williams 2001). Blundell considers this a 'type site' for the pattern he identifies in SDF sites. Here, all the elements that are consistently found in sites with SDFs are found. Furthermore, most of the SDF sites in the north Eastern Cape are concentrated in the valleys around Storm Shelter (Blundell 2004: 132). Another significant site is Ngcengane Shelter, where Manqindi Dyantyi's father, Lindiso, painted. This site is highly significant and unique as it can be linked with individual San painters from the end of the 1850s through to the 1920s (Gladwin 1909; Stanford 1910; Jolly 1986, 1999; *cf.* Blundell

2004). This late history is evident in the kinds of images painted in the site. Ngcengane Shelter comprises a variety of images, including classic fine-line images such as eland, an ox-wagon, horses, crude antelope and finger-painted smears (Jolly 1986; Prins 1990; Fig. 4). Significantly, this shelter also has an SDF and is the only SDF site found below the high mountains.



Fig. 4. Photograph showing the range of images found at Ngcengane Shelter

Blundell (2004) also identified another kind of imagery found in the high mountains, which he labelled Type 2 (Fig. 5). This non-fine-line rock art is distinct from fine-line painting in its manner of depiction, pigment and subject matter. Type 2 art is brush painted in monochrome or bichrome unshaded red, white or yellow pigment with a powdery texture. The subject matter comprises conventionalised antelope that emulate fine-line eland and a few horses with riders (Blundell 2004: 113-115). An important characteristic of this imagery is that, although painted at sites with fine-line imagery, they are almost always painted on a separate surface to the fine-line images in the site (*ibid.*: 113). Blundell argues that–as with SDFs–Type 2 imagery is implicated in the maintenance of San identity and control over painted space (*ibid.*: 32).



Fig. 5. Type 2 eland

More recently, Lara Mallen (2008) has identified another non-fine-line rock art tradition concentrated in the high mountains of the north Eastern Cape, called Type 3 (Fig. 6). This rock art is found at 12 known sites. Type 3 rock art is not spatially separate from fine-line rock art but is painted over it, even at SDF sites. Interestingly, this major difference indicates that the social contexts of production of these corpora of rock art were different. This difference is one of the issues I deal with in this dissertation.



Fig. 6. Panel of Type 3 human figures

Whilst the research undertaken by Dowson, Blundell and Mallen contributes substantially to our understanding of San society, it is focused only on one area of the north Eastern Cape–the high mountains. In contrast, little research has been undertaken on the inland plateau and below, especially in the region that was part of the Transkei 'homeland' under Apartheid. Rock art in the area toward the secondary escarpment has not been studied in detail and only a cursory survey of sites has been undertaken (Blundell 2006 pers. comm.). The paucity of research in this region is partly due to the fact that it is remote and difficult for researchers to access.

One of the major contributions to the archaeology of the Transkei region is the book *Prehistoric man in the Ciskei and the Transkei* (1977) published by Robin Derricourt. Although this is still the most seminal archaeological work done in the area to this date, Derricourt acknowledged that this was merely a review of the potential of the region for future research (*ibid.*: 1). Unfortunately, over thirty years later, this potential still has not been realised. Rock art formed part of Derricourt's research, although it was only selectively examined (*ibid.*: 8). He mentions non-fine-line rock art in his stylistic analysis of the rock art found in this region, describing these images as "crude, daub line paintings" (*ibid.*: 91-92). One of these sites was located in the Tsolo district, south of Maclear. Interestingly, he suggests that these images were produced after late fine-line paintings made when the San were raiding. Furthermore, he posits that they may have been made by Bantu-speakers (*ibid.*). Derricourt's study of rock paintings indicates the potential for rock art research in particular areas of the Transkei, specifically the Tsolo and Mthatha districts.

Another major contribution was made by Patricia Vinnicombe (1976), who undertook extensive research of the rock art of the south-eastern mountains from the southern Drakensberg in Kwa-Zulu Natal to the Mount Fletcher district of the north Eastern Cape and including a large part of Lesotho. This work not only heralded a new era in the interpretation of San rock art but also included valuable tracing and copying work. She described the rock art found in this area in detail and this has become a valuable resource for other researchers (for example, Campbell 1987; Challis 2008, 2009). Using ethnographic material on the /Xam San collected by linguist Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd during the nineteenth century, modern Kalahari ethnography and archival material, Vinnicombe examined the history of the southern San and the role

of San rock art in their society. The first part of her book focused extensively on the history of the San, which was accompanied by 'contact' era San rock art. In the second, interpretive part of her book, she adopted a structural-functionalist approach (*cf.* Blundell 2004) and argued that rituals such as the trance dance and making rock art were emotionally cathartic to the San (Vinnicombe 1976: 350). She also highlighted the importance of symbolism in San rock art, especially that of the eland.

Despite the work by Derricourt and Vinnicombe, the former Transkei, as well as the inland plateau of the north Eastern Cape on its border, has remained meagrely researched. It is disconcerting that this has continued into the 'new' South Africa. Recently, attention has been brought to the need to introduce specific measures to transform South African archaeology and bring it in line–and up to date–with similar processes occurring in other professions and industries in the country (Smith 2009). The result has been the drafting of a Transformation Charter for South African archaeology by the Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists (ASAPA 2009). The goals of the Charter include the transformation of archaeological practice through encouraging the writing of

> an archaeological past that does not privilege any section of our society, whether past or present, above another. Our practice will be rooted in social awareness and social engagement and our aim is to be socially responsible (*ibid.*).

The task of remedying the legacy of South Africa's Apartheid past in the practice of archaeology includes bringing down the geo-political boundaries that have influenced the research of the previous era. The north Eastern Cape is an interesting area in this regard. As we shall see in Chapter 4, from the 1880s, the region was divided into 'white' areas around Maclear and other towns at the base of the Drakensberg and a 'black' section west of this towards the secondary escarpment and beyond (Brownlee 1923: 37, 58; Ross 1976b). This separation was later made into an official political boundary under Apartheid, with the 'white' area falling under the Cape Province and the 'black' area forming the 'independent homeland' of the Transkei (Ross 1976b). These areas developed along very different lines, especially economically, with commercial farming and forestry practised in the Maclear area and small-scale subsistence farming practised in the Transkei.

Although this political boundary was dissolved under the new democratic government in 1994, it still exists in the minds of most of the inhabitants and few 'white' people cross into the 'black' area except when travelling through it on highways. The 'white'-owned farms along the boundary of the former Transkei are generally not occupied by the owners. Several farms are owned by 'black' individuals in the former 'white' area of Maclear, but the owners do not reside on these farms and their 'white' neighbours hardly know them. The town of Maclear may be described as a "colourful multi-cultural community" (Blundell 2004: 180) but it is still deeply divided. Furthermore, the relative multi-culturalism that can be found in Maclear diminishes sharply as one moves south towards the border of the former Transkei. During my fieldwork, one boy was scared to direct me to a rock art site as he had never interacted with a 'white' person before. Therefore, although this is no longer a political boundary it remains a socio-economic and ideological one.

This boundary also exists in the academic literature regarding this region. Many sources–printed before 1994–refer to either the Cape or the Transkei portions of the north Eastern Cape. Maps were cut off at the boundary of the Transkei, leaving one area blank and giving little sense of what was happening in the region as a whole. There are, however, exceptions to this, most notably the work of Vinnicombe (1976) and Wright (1971). As I have mentioned, little archaeological research has been done in the former Transkei, especially in rock art research, which has focused on the high mountains, located in the Cape 'white' section of the north Eastern Cape. The former Transkei remains remote to many archaeologists.

This dearth of research, along with hints of the existence of non-fine-line rock art here, made this an attractive area to investigate. One of the few sites recorded on the inland plateau–RSA BUX1–features non-fine-line rock art, suggesting that perhaps more of this art could be found in this area (Fig. 7). Only one site below the high mountains–Ngcengane Shelter–has previously been studied in detail. Preliminary survey indicated that there was a possible absence of SDF sites on the inland plateau and that there was only one known SDF site–Ngcengane Shelter–below the secondary escarpment (Blundell 2006 pers. comm.).



Fig. 7. Finger-painted human figures at RSA BUX1 on the inland plateau

I therefore undertook a survey for sites in two areas of the inland plateau towards the secondary escarpment. My fieldwork and analysis of sites focused on four main issues:

- whether there is a difference in the kinds of imagery found in sites below the high mountains
- whether fine-line rock art sites include non-fine-line rock art in the same painted space within shelters
- whether there are SDF sites, other than the single known site of Ngcengane Shelter, below the high mountains
- whether these SDF sites are structured in the same way as those in the high mountains

This fieldwork was undertaken in November 2006 and April/May 2007 and comprised over nine weeks of survey. I surveyed within two areas, Sample Area 1 north of the town of Maclear, and Sample Area 2 south of Maclear towards the secondary escarpment (Fig. 8). Sample Area 1 stretches north to the Pot River Pass, south to Maclear, to the Elands Heights road in the west and to the Tsitsa Falls in the east. Sample Area 2 has Maclear as its northern boundary, the junction of the Umnga and Inxu Rivers in the south, Ugie town to the west and St Augustine Mission Station to the east. I did not survey the whole of these areas but rather the sample areas represent the areas in which I surveyed. The survey comprised a combination of direct survey by foot and information from local inhabitants. The areas of direct survey and preliminary survey were marked on field maps. The exact location of each site was

recorded using a Global Positioning System (GPS). These data were then entered into a Geographic Information System (GIS) program to visualise the distribution of the sites in the physical landscape. All sites were photographed to form a visual record.

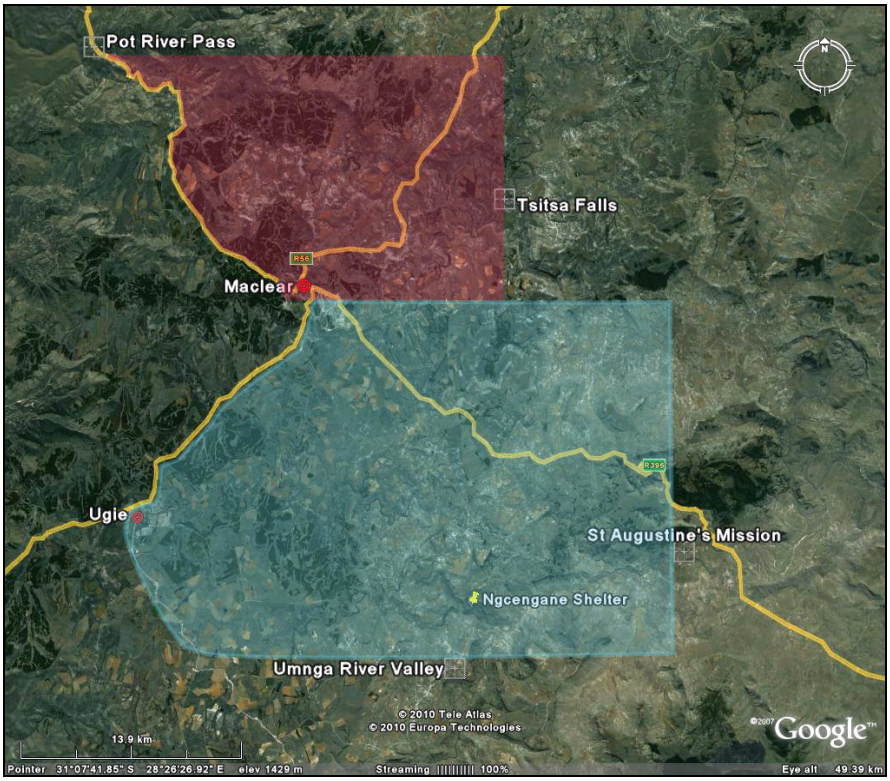


Fig. 8. Map showing the areas in which I surveyed. The red area represents Sample Area 1 and the blue area represents Sample Area 2.

The two surveys differed in certain respects. The first survey–in Sample Area 1–was undertaken in commercial agricultural and forestry lands. In the forestry area the trees obscured possible rock shelters from view. Most of the survey was intensive foot survey with few sites located by asking local inhabitants. The advantage of this is that both large and small sites were located. However, this also meant that a smaller area was covered. On the second field trip, I covered a wider area less intensively in the hope of finding more sites than I had during the first survey. In the Maclear district of Sample Area 2, there was a lack of local knowledge of rock art sites. In the Tsolo district, local knowledge of rock art sites was better as local herders frequented rock shelters while tending their stock. However, this also means that there is a potential bias in the sample in that people usually know of the larger sites but not the smaller ones. Reliance on local knowledge meant that less intensive foot survey was undertaken, although the valley of a located site was always surveyed for more sites.

In total, I located 54 new sites: 25 in Sample Area 1 and 29 in Sample Area 2. To these sites can be added the sites already recorded by other researchers. This comprises six sites in Sample Area 1 and nine in Sample Area 2, bringing the total of sites to 31 in the first area and 38 in the second. The sites previously recorded in Sample Area 2 are all located near Maclear, with only one located near the secondary escarpment. These sites–except three–have solely fine-line imagery (Table 1).

Table 1: Analysis of painted sites on the inland plateau (including those previously recorded)

	Fine-line Only	Non-fine-line Only	Mixed	Total
Sample Area 1	27	0	4	31
Sample Area 2	28	2	8	38
Total	55	2	12	69

This survey revealed certain unexpected and remarkable patterns (Fig. 9). First, no SDF sites were found, confirming Ngcengane Shelter as the only recorded SDF site below the secondary escarpment. What I did find was a surprising number of non-fine-line rock art images, which occurred at 22% of the sites found.

I provisionally label this intriguing art ‘Maclear-Tsolo’ rock art. This provisional label is used to compare this rock art with the non-fine-line rock art traditions previously identified in the north Eastern Cape–namely Type 2 and Type 3 rock art–and to consider the formal relationships between these corpora of rock art to determine the stylistic designation of this distinctive rock art.

It is important to note, however, that this sample area is small and the overall geographic distribution of Maclear-Tsolo art is unknown. Finger-painted horses with riders similar to those found in Maclear-Tsolo art are found in many areas of South Africa, including other parts of the Eastern Cape, the Free State, the Natal Drakensberg and Lesotho (Challis pers. comm. 2010). Unfortunately, at the time that the survey was planned I did not expect to find so much non-fine-line art and the scope of my project had to be expanded after my field work.

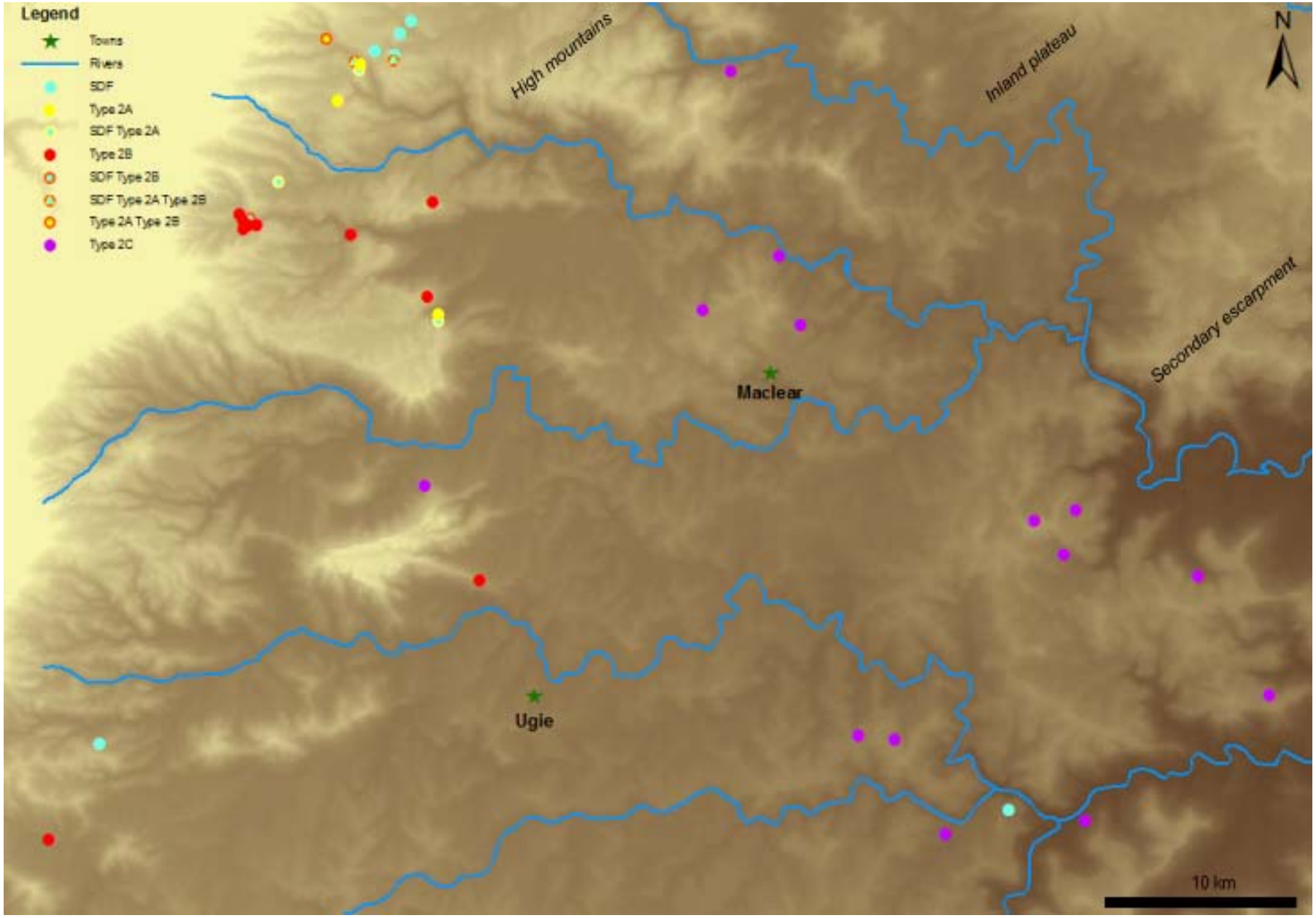


Fig. 9. Map of the distribution of imagery in the north Eastern Cape study area (shown as the blocked area in Fig. 1). Type 2A is equivalent to Blundell's (2004) Type 2, Type 2B is equivalent to Mallen's (2008) Type 3, and Type 2C is equivalent to Maclear-Tsolo rock art.

Many aspects of Maclear-Tsolo art require exploration and explanation but are beyond the scope of this dissertation–such as its geographical extent, meaning and relationship to other finger-painted rock art found in the south-eastern mountains. Here, I focus on the socio-political role this art may have played in relations between groups in the central portion of the north Eastern Cape. With so little known about this art, the interpretations I offer are merely working hypotheses, which hopefully will form the basis of further research.

This project links to ongoing research in the north Eastern Cape that concerns the construction and contestation of identities and how rock art is incorporated into these constructs and contests. Both Blundell (2004) and Mallen (2008) focus heavily on identity and rock art, but in slightly different ways. Blundell considers San identity as negotiated through the body over time while Mallen analyses non-San identity as negotiated through non-fine-line images she terms Type 3 and their placement within panels of fine-line rock art imagery. While this project draws on the work of these two researchers, it differs in that it is an analysis of how San and non-San identity were constructed and contested through both imagery and the changing placement of images in the space of painting. In this sense, the walls of shelters and the spiritual implications of painting became a contested landscape.

Blundell (2004) and Mallen (2008) have also discussed the complex nature of identities in the region in terms of hybridisation. Generally speaking, hybridisation–often termed as creolisation–refers to "the intermingling and mutual influencing of two or several distinct bodies of cultural flow" (Eriksen 2001: 299). This mixing results in the creation of new meanings and identities (*ibid.*: 252). Blundell (2004: 148, 153) highlights that interaction–especially intermarriage–in the nineteenth century north Eastern Cape would have resulted in the creation of new ways of thinking and doing, and ultimately, new identities. He contends that, because of this, identities in this context should be seen as continually shifting and often contested (*ibid.*: 153, 176).

Mallen (2008: 132-133) expands on the concept of hybridisation, arguing that this process did not necessarily occur in all situations of interaction, but rather that specific social sectors are more disposed to the creation of new identities. She argues

that groups that coalesced around raiding would be one of these sectors. She also points out that when certain non-San members of Nqabayo's band left the group, they returned to contexts that favoured their original cultural identity (*cf.* Stanford 1910). Therefore, she suggests that the members of mixed groups such as Nqabayo's would have retained a sense of their original cultural affiliations and, instead of having a hybrid identity, they had multiple cultural identities that they used and cast aside as they pleased.

Sam Challis (2008) makes use of the term creolisation in his conceptualisation of identity in mixed groups in the north Eastern Cape. He follows Nicholas Spitzer's (2003) definition of the concept, which emphasises the creation of a new identity in a new setting where aspects of constituent beliefs and practices are differentially preserved with transformed meaning. In this context, prior beliefs and practices were often maintained and sometimes even venerated, although with some alteration in meaning. Challis (2008: 176) highlights that this process often occurred around beliefs and practices members held in common. Importantly, he also suggests that changes that occurred as part of this process were specific to each group and that groups creolised to different extents (*ibid.*: 13, 253). This is significant when considering the identities of mixed groups in the north Eastern Cape. I propose that creolisation can be seen as a process whereby a 'multi-ethnic' group, whose members retain their original cultural affiliation, becomes 'creolised' over time and forms a new identity. Often, it is the progeny of multi-ethnic groups–as products of intermarriage–that forge a new, creolised identity (*ibid.*: 30). In reality, however, trying to apply such definitions to groups we know little about is difficult. Therefore, I use 'mixed' as a general term, and, when evidence allows it, 'multi-ethnic' for groups such as Nqabayo's and 'creolised' for groups with a wholly, or largely, amalgamated identity.

Historical records and oral history indicate that, after San-led groups had disbanded, most of the remaining San individuals–including members of Nqabayo's band–moved down from the high mountains and settled near the secondary escarpment, where they joined Bantu-speaking groups from the end of the 1850s. An important question arising out of this known historical progression and Blundell's argument concerning SDFs is this: can the breakdown of *!Gã !ne*-speaking San identity be traced through

spatial differences in the rock art imagery? The differences between the kinds of imagery found in the high mountains and my sample area suggest that social relations between the San and others in the north Eastern Cape associated with the production of these corpora of rock art were significantly different. These differences, when examined in conjunction with historical processes that occurred in this region, are potentially revealing of how San identity and their control of rock art sites broke down in the second half of the nineteenth century and how this affected their relations with others.

In evaluating the differences in the imagery found in the north Eastern Cape, I make use of stylistic analysis, which I discuss in Chapter 2. First, I outline the use of stylistic analysis in defining rock art traditions. Important in this is the definition of terms such as 'style' and 'tradition'. I discuss the main problems associated with stylistic analysis–the meanings of styles to the makers, their relationships to cultural groups in space and time and their use as a form of chronology–and clarify my use of the concept of 'style'. Finally, I discuss the main rock art traditions found in South Africa, as well as the non-fine-line corpora of art found in the north Eastern Cape. This forms a platform from which to analyse the non-fine-line rock art found in my survey area on the inland plateau.

The important issue dealt with in the third chapter is whether Maclear-Tsolo rock art can be considered as part of Type 2 or Type 3 art, or if it is a new, distinct rock art tradition. I describe this art according to the following attributes: conventions of depiction, placement and subject matter. I then compare Maclear-Tsolo art with the non-fine-line art already identified in the region–Type 2 and Type 3. This comparison leads to fundamental questions about the relationships between Type 2, Type 3 and Maclear-Tsolo rock art.

The fourth chapter uses historical material to understand the relationships between these corpora of art with regards to authorship and chronology. The historical processes discussed in this chapter highlight significant changes in the relations between the San and other groups, which influenced the production of rock art in the north Eastern Cape in the second half of the nineteenth century. I outline three historical phases–Independence (1800-1858), Contestation (1858-1873) and Colonial

Control (1873-1900)–that trace the breakdown of San control over the high mountains and the practise of painting. I then propose a hypothesis of how the development of the non-fine-line rock art described in Chapter 2 and 3 could be associated with this process.

In the fifth chapter, the concept of landscape is used to understand the relationship between the production of rock art and the changes in social relations outlined in the preceding chapter. Important in this is the role of rock art in socio-political relations that were played out on the rock surfaces of shelters, which I argue became a contested landscape. Hence, contestation in this landscape was not between different groups occupying and vying over territories but rather about access to the San spirit realm. This chapter explores how the San may have allowed for the creation of non-fine-line art and how, subsequently, the breakdown of their control of the high mountains allowed for contestation of the space of painting–and thus the spirit realm–to arise.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I summarise what this research has accomplished as well as highlight its limitations. I also suggest how this work contributes to rock art research and archaeology in South Africa. The relevance of this research to current issues in the practise of archaeology, specifically in terms of the transformation of archaeological practice in marginal areas associated with Apartheid policy, is also demonstrated.

As we shall see, the non-fine-line rock art found in the north Eastern Cape offers a prime opportunity to refine our understanding of the complexity of San interaction with other groups in the nineteenth century and the role that material culture played in such processes. More specifically, Maclear-Tsolo rock art found on the inland plateau offers a significant opportunity for deeper understanding of how groups used rock art to contest control over the landscape. This contestation was associated with the loss of San power in the region. It also provides an opportunity to analyse the development of a new, non-fine-line, corpus of rock art distinct to fine-line rock art in the north Eastern Cape. This is especially significant as it deals with the role of material culture such as rock art in the complex processes of creolisation within multi-ethnic groups.

CHAPTER 2
ROCK ART CLASSIFICATION: ISSUES OF 'STYLE'

One of the fundamental considerations in this research is how the unusual non-fine-line rock art found in my survey on the inland plateau is related to the other rock art traditions found in the north Eastern Cape and whether this can be considered a discrete rock art tradition. This is essentially an issue of classification. Archaeologists classify and categorise material culture to help make sense of it, to identify patterning and to aid in interpretation. An important component of this classificatory research is the identification of styles. 'Style' plays an integral role in rock art analysis and is widely considered the principal organisational rule structuring rock art (Francis 2001: 221). Understanding stylistic analysis leads to insight into the rock art imagery of the north Eastern Cape discussed in this dissertation. This chapter outlines the classificatory framework within which to evaluate the relationships between Maclear-Tsolo rock art and the other non-fine-line rock art traditions in the north Eastern Cape. It is important to note that I do not intend to set up a classificatory system for this region but rather, I consider how Maclear-Tsolo rock art fits with the stylistic categories of non-fine-line rock art already established in this region.

This chapter sets out by discussing the concept of 'style' and the method of stylistic analysis. Stylistic analysis in archaeology is plagued by certain theoretical and methodological problems. The most important of these concern the meanings of styles to the makers, their relationships to cultural groups in space and time and their use as a form of chronology. The stylistic category of traditions forms the basis of most stylistic analyses of rock art in South Africa. Three major rock art traditions have been identified in South Africa, with only one of these traditions found in the north Eastern Cape. Recently, two localised nineteenth century rock art traditions have been identified in the north Eastern Cape that fall outside this general South African classification–namely Type 2 and Type 3 rock art. This discussion forms a context in which to discuss the non-fine-line rock art found in my survey on the inland plateau and its relationship to Type 2 and Type 3 rock art.

‘STYLE’ AS AN ANALYTICAL TOOL

‘Style’ is a particularly problematic concept in rock art research and archaeology in general. ‘Style’ is a tool used to classify archaeological material. Archaeologists, in their analysis of material culture, all have to confront the issue of ‘style’. It is almost unavoidable (Conkey & Hastorf 1990: 1). Despite this–or perhaps because of it–there is little consensus about what ‘style’ is and how to apply it. This is due to the tendency of researchers to use this term in a variety of ways without clearly defining it. In this dissertation, a general definition of ‘style’ is used. Julie Francis (2001: 237) defines ‘style’ in rock art as a

> repetitious figure type or series of figure types that show internal continuity with respect to specific techniques of manufacture and combinations of design elements, and with a limited temporal and wider spatial distributions.

A rock art style can thus be defined as a grouping of pictures that use common conventions, which are considered to have been produced in a particular time and place (Smith 1998: 218; Chippindale 2001: 259). The three elements of shared conventions, spatial distribution and provenance in time are crucial to the definition of ‘style’ used in this research.

Stylistic classification is carried out at a number of scales, for example different styles of a motif found at a site or number of sites or, on a more regional scale, a group of motifs characterised by certain shared attributes. Therefore, ‘style’ can refer to a concept used to classify images or to a classificatory unit. Here the term ‘style’ is used to refer to the concept, while the term ‘tradition’ is the stylistic unit used to discuss the classification of Maclear-Tsolo rock art. ‘Traditions’ are here taken as “temporal continuities represented by consistent configurations in single technologies or other systems of related forms” (Willey & Phillips 1988: 37). It is generally assumed that traditions are found in extensive geographic areas and are made over thousands of years (Francis 2001: 237). This assumption, however, is challenged by recent evidence discussed later in this chapter.

A related term is that of ‘type’, which is used by both Blundell (2004) and Mallen (2008) as labels for groups of non-fine-line images in the north Eastern Cape. Francis (2001: 236) defines a ‘type’ as a “grouping of rock art figures based on a conscious recognition of dimensions of formal variation in those figures which exhibit consistent patterning of attributes”. Descriptive ‘types’, along with classes–a more generic unit of classification–form the basis of traditions (*ibid.*: 237). However, both Blundell (2004) and Mallen (2008) use the term ‘type’ to describe a rock art tradition. By implication, Type 1 rock art refers to classic San fine-line rock art, in contrast to which Type 2 tradition is defined (Blundell 2004: 32). Mallen (2008) presumably used ‘type’ to indicate the close relationship between the rock art she studied and Type 2 tradition. Blundell’s use of the term ‘type’ is possibly due to his wish to move away from the tendency to name rock art traditions according to the ethno-linguistic group that is believed to have produced it. As he has stated:

> Research…has yet to move from efforts to provide cultural provenance to rock art to the more complex issue of the role of the art in the construction of identity (2004: 113).

Mallen (2008: 76) has taken up Blundell’s challenge and has explored the role of Type 3 art in historical processes of identity formation and contestation in the north Eastern Cape (see also Challis 2008, 2009). My research is similar to Mallen’s (2008) study in that it investigates the role of rock art in the contestation of identities, but here the focus is on how contestation was effected spatially. Hence, in Chapter 5, I focus on how contestation was played out in what could be termed the painted landscape of rock shelters in the north Eastern Cape.

Mallen (*ibid.*) has also criticised the use of the term ‘San’ rock art in favour of ‘fine-line’ rock art due to the complexity of identities in the north Eastern Cape (*ibid.*: 28). However, although San identity and rock art did change during the late nineteenth century, historical records suggest that fine-line rock art did retain a distinctive quality of ‘San-ness’. Although the production of rock art in the north Eastern Cape became implicated in interaction between non-San members within San-led bands, painting retained a strong association with San identity in the second half of the nineteenth century (Blundell 2004: 130). This is important to remember when evaluating the role of non-fine-line rock art in relations between groups in the north Eastern Cape.

Although the classification of rock art imagery according to neatly bounded cultural 'packages' is problematic, I argue that fine-line rock art in the north Eastern Cape should not be divorced from San identity. This is important because non-fine-line rock art is, in many ways, defined in contrast to fine-line rock art, the only other rock art found in the region.

Problematic assumptions

The concept of 'style' is not only fraught with difficulties in its definition but also in its usage. There has been much heated debate over the usage of 'style' in rock art and some have even heralded a 'post-stylistic era' (Bahn & Lorblanchet 1993a; Bednarik 1995). This 'post-stylistic era' does not, however, entail the disposal of the concept but rather a

> transition from a period focused on stylistic studies, used spontaneously for describing, dating and comparing rock art, to a period in which styles are no longer systematically considered as chronological indicators, but as the products of a wide variety of factors (Bahn & Lorblanchet 1993b: vii).

This statement highlights the need to move beyond certain problematic assumptions associated with both the concept and application of 'style'–discussed below–to a more nuanced view of it. Whilst these problems may be insurmountable, researchers should at least be aware of them and clarify their application of the concept. Despite these problems, 'style' remains essential to the description and analysis of rock art. Below, I highlight the main problems with stylistic analysis and how they are treated in this research. These issues include:

- The significance of stylistic units in their original contexts of manufacture
- Stylistic units as culture-history units
- Stylistic sequences as relative chronologies

The significance of stylistic units in their original contexts of manufacture

One of the main problems with the use of the term ‘style’ and with classification in general is the significance of these groupings of material culture to their makers–are they constructed by researchers or do they reflect the choices made by the original makers? These issues were first raised in the ‘typological debate’ that emerged in the 1940s (Krieger 1944; Wylie 2002). This issue has not been–and probably never will be–resolved. Some researchers consider classification as merely a tool to order data (Brew 1946; Ford 1954). Therefore, groupings are formulated by the researcher and have no *a priori* relationship to the maker’s intentions (Chippindale 2000; Francis 2001). This is referred to as an ‘outsiders’ or etic view of ‘style’ (Conkey & Hastorf 1990). Other researchers adopt an ‘active’ view of ‘style’ and emphasise that human beings thought up, made, used, re-used and often discarded that which we have as archaeological materials. For these past human actors there were styles of making, using and knowing, and ever-changing contexts that these styles derived from and defined (*ibid.*). Researchers espousing this view of ‘style’ aim to achieve at least an approximation of an emic or insider’s classification founded on the belief that insight into the intentions of the makers in the manufacture of material culture items is possible (Francis 2001: 223).

The assumption made in this research is that–at the level of rock art traditions–these stylistic units of rock art would have been distinguished as different to each other in their original contexts of production. In the next chapter, I argue that the makers of this rock art consciously manufactured their imagery in relation to the other rock art made in the region–that made by San fine-line artists. Benjamin Smith’s (1998) discussion of the process of image-making with its focus on shared conventions presents an illuminating approach to this issue (see also Chippindale 2001). He states that all artists have to convert a three-dimensional subject into a two-dimensional image, and how he or she does so is dependent on their knowledge of the way other individuals have done this. Thus,

> 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 (Smith 1998: 214).

Furthermore, he argues that the reasons for which certain conventions were chosen by the makers form a common strand in the images grouped in a stylistic unit (*ibid.*: 219). This common strand can be identified through the analysis of the shared conventions or 'style' that characterise a body of rock art. Once this common strand has been identified, ethnographic and historical information can be used to gain insight into the meaning of this commonality and what the makers were trying to communicate or achieve through their picturing choices (*ibid.*). Thus, the conventions used in Maclear-Tsolo rock art are discussed in Chapter 3 and the common conventions that characterise this corpus of rock art are compared to those used in Type 2 and Type 3 rock art to gain insight into their relationship to one another. Only once this is done are the relationships between these stylistic units considered within their socio-historical context to understand their possible cultural significance.

Stylistic units as culture-history units

One of the most problematic and widespread assumptions made about 'style' is that a stylistic category indicates the existence of a certain culture in a certain period. This is linked to notions of the relationship of identity and place, discussed in detail in Chapter 5. One of the founders of this (mis)conception in North American archaeology was Meyer Schapiro (1953: 287), who argued that "style...helps him [the archaeologist] to localize and date the work and establish connections between groups of works or between cultures". This notion resulted in the association of rock art traditions with cultural groups and the assignment of a particular tradition as a diagnostic indicator of a culture. Similarly, the temporal provenance of rock art imagery was assumed on the basis of stylistic attributes.

Inherent in this association between rock art traditions and cultures is the assumption that any one culture is responsible for only a single rock art tradition and therefore there can only be one tradition per culture. This simplistic association of traditions with cultural groups is problematic as variation in stylistic conventions may be the result of a number of things such as function or social differentiation (Bahn & Lorblanchet 1993b: vii; Whitley 2001: 25). Rock art research making use of ethnographic information has demonstrated that several traditions were made at the

same time by the same cultural group for different reasons, as seen in Northern Sotho rock art (Prins & Hall 1994; Smith & van Schalkwyk 2002; van Schalkwyk & Smith 2004; Namono & Eastwood 2005). Furthermore, groups never exist in isolation but share landscapes and interact with other cultures. Therefore, rock art traditions should not be defined solely by the cultural group that made them but also the set of ideas which they represent. It is this recognition of a range of causes of stylistic variation that typifies the 'post-stylistic era' (Bahn & Lorblanchet 1993b: vii).

Another, linked assumption is that the producers of a rock art tradition formed a homogenous cultural group that shared the same cultural identity. However, the producers could have been connected by other factors. In certain historical contexts–such as that which existed in the north Eastern Cape in the second half of the nineteenth century–social groups existed which did not share the same cultural background but were hybridised groups made up of people with different ethno-linguistic backgrounds. Despite the cultural diversity of these groups, they produced stylistically coherent material culture such as Type 3 rock art (Mallen 2008: 48; see also Challis 2008, 2009).

Instead of focusing on shared ethno-linguistic associations, a more useful approach is to emphasise the importance of the context of production of a tradition (Conkey 1990). In studying the context of a tradition, the causes of stylistic variation need to be examined through independent analysis (Conkey 1990; Whitley 2005). Therefore, when considering Maclear-Tsolo rock art and the other non-fine-line rock art found in the north Eastern Cape, I am cautious in ascribing cultural and chronological affiliation to these groupings of rock art. Chronological provenance is ascribed according to temporal indicators within the rock art such as historical motifs. I am also mindful that stylistic variation may be the result of a number of factors besides cultural affinities. Furthermore, the producers of a rock art tradition may be a heterogeneous, hybridised group. These points are kept in mind when considering the relationships between the corpora of non-fine-line rock art found in the north Eastern Cape in Chapters 3 and 4.

Stylistic sequences used as relative chronologies

Temporal provenance constitutes a significant component of stylistic analysis. Thus, stylistic units–conceived of as culture-history units–are often grouped in sequences to form a relative chronology for entire regions (for example, Heizer & Baumhoff 1962 for North American rock art and Leroi-Gourhan 1965, 1967 for European Palaeolithic rock art). The development of new dating techniques for rock art has brought many of these sequences into question (Chippindale 1995; Bednarik 1995; Whitley *et al.* 1999). However, these methods are still not sophisticated enough to provide reliable dates and dating remains a critical problem in stylistic analyses of rock art, especially in South Africa (Nelson 1993; Mazel 1993, 2009; Chippindale 1995: 869; Mitchell 2002b: 17).

Stylistic sequences are often based on the idea of stylistic evolution, taken from art history and human evolution studies. Many researchers assume that styles change gradually over time, in a specific direction (Chippindale 2001: 251; Francis 2001: 222; Whitley 2005: 48). A certain progression of types of imagery was assumed to occur over time–from being simple to complex, and from geometric and stylised to naturalistic or representational. It is also assumed that early styles are crude and simplistic and they develop to become finer and more sophisticated, later deteriorating back to crudeness (Whitley 2005: 48). This perspective is derived from an art-historical concept of cyclical change used by Schapiro (1953). Art history has significantly influenced stylistic analysis in rock art research. This approach is problematic for rock art studies, especially since it is based on Western notions of art (Francis 2001: 234; Whitley 2001: 25). There is very little indication that rock art traditions in South Africa developed over time according to this pattern. The oldest known examples of fine-line rock art–from the Apollo 11 site in Namibia–have been dated to 27 000 years ago and are not very different or much cruder than more recent fine-line rock art (Wendt 1976). The most recently painted fine-line site in the north Eastern Cape known to researchers–Ngcengane Shelter–generally conforms to ‘classic’ fine-line painting even though the social conditions of painting had changed and the practice had been separated from a functioning San society (Blundell 2004: 117; see Chapter 5 for further discussion).

The rock art of the north Eastern Cape has not been securely dated, rendering rock art research in this region susceptible to the assumptions outlined above. However, the subject matter and other features of the non-fine-line rock arts of this area can give temporal provenance to these corpora of rock art. It is noted that rock art traditions do not develop in a set progression and relative crudeness cannot be taken as an indicator of the age of a tradition. The comparison of Maclear-Tsolo rock art, Type 2 and Type 3 art–discussed in Chapter 3–reveals that stylistic variation over time is more complex than this simplistic evolutionary progression suggests.

Stylistic analysis of rock art

Stylistic analysis comprises three stages (*cf.* Francis 2001), of which the first stage is dealt with in this chapter. This stage is purely formal and this is where attributes are chosen to define a tradition. Next, the stylistic attributes of a group of rock art images are analysed and compared to that of other stylistic units. This is undertaken with regard to Maclear-Tsolo rock art in Chapter 3. The final part of stylistic analysis is the investigation of the socio-political uses of the tradition. It is here that ethnographic and historical sources play a role in our understanding of a rock art tradition and its development. This is dealt with in Chapters 4 and 5.

A key aspect of 'style' as used in this dissertation is that it is "always a relational, comparative or statistical description" (Davis 1990: 27). Formally speaking, a tradition exhibits internal homogeneity in that its constituents are similar while exhibiting external inconsistency with regards to other kinds of the same object (Francis 2001: 237). Thus, both similarities and differences are important in evaluating the stylistic correlations of groups of rock art images. The homogeneity of rock art traditions is seen as patterning–there are certain rules or conventions that structure a group of objects that make up a tradition (Smith 1998). This 'way of doing' (Hodder 1990; Wiessner 1990) is also characteristic of a specific space and time. Therefore, there is a spatial component to a rock art tradition and its distribution is usually patterned and/or limited. Traditions–in terms of the traits they exhibit–are also defined in contrast to others, for example representational versus geometric imagery and finger versus brush-painted manner of depiction.

The assumption underlying a rock art tradition is that it has certain coherence– conventions that are adhered to and that act as rules structuring a corpus of rock art (Hall & Smith 2000; Smith & van Schalkwyk 2002; Smith & Ouzman 2004). Therefore, repeated patterning of certain attributes can be used to delineate a rock art tradition. Certain attributes figure regularly in these definitions. Some attributes are more heavily weighted than others, especially manner of depiction and subject matter. Researchers choose attributes that are appropriate to the rock art images they study (*cf.* Lewis-Williams & Loubser 1986). The attributes most commonly used to define rock art traditions are:

- manner of depiction or technique
- pigment colour
- pigment composition and/or texture
- subject matter or iconography
- stratigraphic relationship to other rock art tradition(s) in the region or placement
- physical attributes of the sites the images are placed in
- distribution in the landscape
- function or purpose

As seen in Blundell's (2004) SDFs (see Chapter 1), an important aspect relating to 'style' is that material culture does not merely passively reflect past cultures but played an active role in the societies in which they were manufactured. In this way, artefacts actively constitute social practice (Conkey 1990: 13). Social actors created and used 'style' in their relations with others (Hegmon 1992). Thus, the production of 'style' becomes a tool in power relations (Hodder 1990). Similarly, it can be inferred that the authors of Maclear-Tsolo rock art used 'style' to mediate their relations with other groups in the north Eastern Cape. Therefore, it is important to consider how and why rock art became a socio-political tool for the makers of Maclear-Tsolo rock art. Importantly, the power relations in which 'style' plays a role include control asserted over space (*ibid.*). Thus, the spatial distribution and placement of rock art in sites is important in understanding its role in power relations in the north Eastern Cape. This is explored in Chapter 5 with reference to control over the space of painting.

The relational quality of ‘style’ also encompasses the notion that rock art traditions–like the people that made them–develop over time and may be related to one another. Therefore, it is important to consider similarity between different traditions. Hence, comparison of the features of Maclear-Tsolo rock art with those of Type 2 and Type 3 is critical to understanding their relationships to one another. In addition, studying variation in conventions over time and space can lend insight into the reasons for changes in traditions. This variation and how it occurs is important in understanding what a tradition means and the reasons for its occurrence (Smith 1998). Therefore, studying the variation between Maclear-Tsolo rock art and the non-fine-line traditions of Type 2 and Type 3 could lead to interesting insight into their relationships.

This emphasis on context in stylistic analysis guides the investigation of Maclear-Tsolo non-fine-line rock art in the north Eastern Cape. In the following chapters, I examine this body of rock art within its stylistic, historical and socio-spatial contexts to gain insight into the possible meanings associated with this rock art and the role it played in relations between groups in the north Eastern Cape.

PAINTED ROCK ART TRADITIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The concept of ‘style’ has been used in South African archaeology, especially rock art research. Stylistic analysis of rock art in South Africa has changed in emphasis in the last fifty years. Up until the late 1960s, the traditional view of ‘style’ predominated and stylistic sequences abounded–especially in the south-eastern mountains–with much debate as to which sequence was most accurate (for example, Battiss 1948; Willcox 1963; Rudner & Rudner 1970; Pager 1971). Rock art ‘styles’ were believed to evolve over time from crude to fine, then reverting to crudeness towards the end of its appearance (for example, Willcox 1963: 38-39 for the Drakensberg; see also Lewis-Williams 1995a: 71). This reversion to crudeness was often associated with the immigration of new groups, especially Bantu-speakers (Lewis-Williams 1990; Lewis-Williams *et al.* 1993: 274). Hence, rock art was split into two main phases–an idyllic one prior to Bantu-speaker immigration and a period post-dating their arrival characterised by restiveness and conflict (*ibid.*; for example, van Riet Lowe 1952: 7). This assumed deterioration to crudeness was also attributed to a loss of cultural knowledge in the face of colonisation (for example, Rudner & Rudner 1970: 239).

Both of these arguments were rooted in the prevailing imperialist and Apartheid ideologies of the day (Lewis-Williams *et al.* 1993: 276).

As cultural-historical units, during this period, rock art styles usually associated with archaeological remains, especially stone tool industries (Willcox 1963; Rudner & Rudner 1970). The geographical distribution of rock art styles was often interpreted as evidence of migration of cultural groups or the diffusion of ideas (Willcox 1963; Cooke 1969; Rudner & Rudner 1970). The 1960s saw the adoption of quantitative techniques of classifying rock art (Maggs 1967; Vinnicombe 1967; Pager 1971; Lewis-Williams 1972, 1974). These techniques, however, did not aid in the interpretation of the meaning of fine-line rock art but rather pointed to the necessity of ethnographic information as the basis of interpretation (*cf.* Lewis-Williams & Loubser 1986 for a critique of classification). Therefore, from the 1970s there was a shift in rock art research towards an informed approach to interpretation. Researchers have relied on the wealth of ethnographic material available about the makers of rock art traditions for their interpretations. This has resulted in a slightly different character of stylistic analysis in South Africa as opposed to elsewhere. In other parts of the world, much emphasis is still placed on stylistic analysis of rock art traditions and many stylistic sequences have been proposed for certain bodies of rock art (for example, see Heizer & Baumhoff 1962 for North American rock art). In South Africa, less emphasis has been placed on chronology in rock art research and there has been a concomitant lack of in-depth stylistic analysis over the past thirty years (Lewis-Williams 1993: 49, 1995a: 66).

Stylistic analysis in South Africa has focused on the scale of traditions, associated with certain ethno-linguistic groups. Three major cultural groupings of painted rock art traditions have been identified in South Africa–San, Khoekhoen and Bantu-speaker rock art. However, it is recognised that a culture can be responsible for more than one rock art tradition, and there are different subtraditions within these larger cultural groupings. Besides these, several nineteenth century rock art traditions have more recently been identified in South Africa, such as Korana raider rock art (Ouzman 2005), Type 3 rock art (Mallen 2008) and AmaTola fine-line rock art (Challis 2008, 2009). Such rock art traditions challenge more traditional concepts of rock art traditions as produced over long periods of time and over large geographic

areas. San fine-line rock art has attracted the most attention in academic and popular literature while the other traditions have only been given attention more recently.

San fine-line rock art

Fine-line rock art made by San hunter-gatherers is the most numerous and best understood rock art tradition in South Africa. It is found in the Cape Fold mountains, the south-eastern mountains, the eastern Free State and Limpopo province (Mitchell 2002a: 192-193). There are clear regional variations in this tradition, especially with regards to subject matter and manner of depiction. An example of this is 'poster-style' art found in the Caledon Valley of the Free State, which features domestic ungulates and shields depicted in unshaded or 'blocked' powdery pigment (Loubser & Laurens 1994). In my study area, the central portion of the north Eastern Cape, fine-line rock art is found mostly in the high mountains and the inland plateau. The imagery in the high mountains is especially well preserved and finely made. Fine-line rock art has been dated to as much as 27 000 BP in Namibia and persisted up until the early twentieth century (Wendt 1976; Prins 1990). Fine-line rock art is characterised by fine-line brush-painted imagery, often executed in much detail (Fig. 2, 3). The predominant pigments used are white, black and various shades of red. The paint used in fine-line rock art is made up of pigment and binder, usually well blended. Pigments include ochre for red, gypsum for white and charcoal from specific trees for black (How 1962; Hall *et al.* 2007). Red, yellow and white clays were also used as pigment (Apthorp 1913 cited in Rudner 1982: 54). These pigments were mixed with substances such as water and the fat of certain animals (*ibid.*). Blood–especially that of the eland–was sometimes used as a binder (How 1962; Jolly 1986: 6; Prins 1990: 112). Paint was applied to the rock face using pieces of grass, feathers and brushes made by tying together antelope hairs and attaching them to a thin reed (Apthorp 1913 cited in Rudner 1982: 54; Stanford 1910). It is possible at some sites–especially in the high mountains of the north Eastern Cape–to see the brushstrokes where the rock was painted thickly. Images are painted in monochrome, bichrome and polychrome and are often finely shaded. A wide variety of subject matter is painted including animals, humans and material culture items, usually painted in a 'naturalistic' manner. Non-real elements–such as therianthropes and so-called 'threads of light'–are also

frequently depicted. Fine-line rock art forms part of the belief system of the San, which is based on shamanism (Lewis-Williams 1981, 1982).

Bantu-speaker rock art

Rock art made by Bantu-speaking agro-pastoralist peoples in South Africa is commonly called 'Late White' rock art and it comprises several distinct subtraditions (Prins & Hall 1994; Smith & van Schalkwyk 2002; Namono & Eastwood 2005). This rock art is not as prolific as fine-line rock painting (Smith & van Schalkwyk 2002). Late White rock art is concentrated in the northern part of South Africa–particularly in Limpopo Province–and although it is found in other parts of the country, it is not common (Prins & Hall 1994; Smith & van Schalkwyk 2002; Namono & Eastwood 2005: 77). The Bantu-speakers in the Eastern Cape region have no known tradition of painting and this tradition is absent from the north Eastern Cape. Late White images are painted using the finger or sometimes a stick and are characteristically of thick white pigment made from clay (Smith & Ouzman 2004; Fig. 10). Red, black and orange pigments are less commonly used (Namono & Eastwood 2005: 79). Subject matter comprises humans and animals depicted in a stylised manner, as well as some geometric forms. Northern Sotho rock art, found in the northern part of South Africa, is made up of three subtraditions–male initiation rock art, female initiation rock art and protest rock art (Smith & van Schalkwyk 2002; van Schalkwyk & Smith 2004; Namono & Eastwood 2005). A common motif of initiation rock art is the spread-eagled or saurian design. Such painted imagery played a mnemonic and didactic role in both male and female initiation practices (Prins & Hall 1994; Namono & Eastwood 2005). Late White rock art associated with boys initiation is also made by the southern Sotho and the Zulu (Smith & Ouzman 2004). The Northern Sotho art of political protest is characterised by imagery from the historical period such as trains, wagons and horses (van Schalkwyk & Smith 2004).



Fig. 10. a: Late White initiation rock art



Fig. 10. b: Late White protest art

Khoekhoen rock art

This tradition has only been identified relatively recently and the meaning of the imagery is little understood. Khoekhoen herder rock art is characteristically painted with the finger (Smith & Ouzman 2004; Eastwood & Smith 2005; Fig. 11). The images are usually executed in monochrome red pigment, although other colours such as white, black, yellow and orange are also sometimes used (Eastwood & Smith 2005). The imagery is mostly schematic and geometric but also representational. The Khoekhoen seem to have preferred to paint in small rock shelters with low recesses inside them (Smith & Ouzman 2004). The distribution of Khoekhoen rock art follows proposed migration routes of Khoekhoen people into southern Africa (*ibid.*: 512;

Eastwood & Smith 2005). Khoekhoen rock art shows regional and temporal variation. The earliest Khoekhoen rock art is found in the northern part of South Africa where it is thought to date to the early first millennium (Smith & Ouzman 2004: 512; Eastwood & Smith 2005). The Khoekhoen rock art of the central interior is younger, while the Western Cape Khoekhoen rock art may only be a few hundred years old (Smith & Ouzman 2004). In northern South Africa, circular imagery is most common. This art also includes handprints, finger dots and aprons (*ibid.*: 512; Eastwood & Smith 2005). Angular imagery dominates the subject matter of this art in the central interior. In the Western Cape the subject matter is quite different, including handprints and representational imagery such as human figures, domestic stock and material culture items (Smith & Ouzman 2004: 512). Khoekhoen rock art is also found in the Eastern Cape, where geometric images are much less frequent (*ibid.*). It is found above the primary escarpment and is absent from the central portion of the north Eastern Cape. Khoekhoen rock art is almost entirely absent from the adjacent regions of Lesotho and KwaZulu-Natal (Smith & Ouzman 2004: 51; Cain 2009: 39).



Fig. 11. Examples of Khoekhoen rock art

Nineteenth century rock art

A new tradition of rock art has been identified in the central region of South Africa, which Sven Ouzman (2005) has argued was made by a nineteenth century creolised raiding ‘nation’ known as the Korana (Fig. 12). This rock art is found mostly in the Free State Province and the eastern border area of Lesotho and coincides with the area known historically to have been occupied by the Korana (*ibid.*: 103). These sites are

usually hidden and not easily accessed (*ibid.*). Korana rock art is characterised by finger- and rough brush-painted monochrome imagery in coarse, thin pigment (*ibid.*). This rock art is painted in a variety of colours including red, orange, black, white and yellow. The most numerous subject is that of the horse, often painted with a rider. Other subjects include human figures, geometrics, stretched out animal skins or aprons, guns, finger dots and smears (*ibid.*: 105). Ouzman argues that this subject matter reflects the Korana's diverse ethnic composition–which included people of Khoekhoen, San and Bantu-speaker descent that was used to form a new identity (*ibid.*: 109). Hence, he argues that this rock art "provided a magical militantism that consolidated Korana identity" (*ibid.*).



Fig. 12. Examples of Korana rock art

More recently, Sam Challis (2008) has identified what he argues is a new tradition of nineteenth century fine-line rock art. This rock art is found in the northern portion of the north Eastern Cape, in the area between the southern Drakensberg in Kwa-Zulu Natal and Mount Fletcher district in the south and into the Maloti Mountains to the Senqu River in Lesotho (*ibid.*: 55). This rock art is fine-line but painted in flat, two-dimensional colour that is unshaded (*ibid.*: 9; Fig. 13). The colours used are also different with more black, yellow, bright red and orange used at the expense of darker red pigments (*ibid.*). The subject matter of this rock art includes horses with riders that often carry weapons and wear knobbed headdresses, hats, or long feathers on their heads (*ibid.*: 12). Challis identifies a pattern of associated subject matter at these sites, called Horse Site Dancing Groups, characterised by human figures in dancing postures wearing feathered headdresses, horses, baboons and baboon therianthropes (*ibid.*: 86). The distribution of this rock art coincides with the area known to have

been inhabited by a large creolised raiding group called the AmaTola–also referred to in historical records as the Thola–whom he argues authored this rock art (*ibid.*). This art is interesting in that, although fine-line, it cannot be regarded as traditional 'San' rock art.



Fig. 13. Examples of AmaTola fine-line rock art

Challis uses historical records to trace the origins of the AmaTola and their movement into the northern portion of the north Eastern Cape and adjacent areas. He argues that the origins of this group started with a group such as the Nguni-speaking AmaTolo, who lived in the foothills of the Natal Drakensberg but dispersed due to the conflicts of the *Mfecane* (*ibid.*: 116). Some of this group moved to the Eastern Cape frontier in the early nineteenth century, where they and other groups like them became Mfengu–a term used for groups dispersed by the *Mfecane* (*ibid.*: 121). Here they joined mixed raiding bands that constructed a creolised identity around shared religious beliefs centred on the baboon and medicinal roots and the powers of protection they–and, by association, horses–were believed to possess, which stood for the ability to raid and get away unscathed (*ibid.*: 23, 176, 168). He argues that these groups then moved into the northern portion of the north Eastern Cape in the mid 1830s, bringing with them horses and guns, and forming the AmaTola (*ibid.*: 23). This group would have included San members, which accounts for the strong San influence in their art (*ibid.*: 226-7). The AmaTola were notorious raiders and, unlike the other San-led multi-ethnic raiding bands of the time, kept large herds of stock (*ibid.*: 239). Evidence of this group persists into the 1860s, after which the group probably broke up and was absorbed into Bantu-speaking groups (*ibid.*: 262, 306). This fine-line rock art made by

a nineteenth-century creolised raiding group contrasts sharply with the non-fine-line rock art made by similar groups to the south of this area in the north Eastern Cape. This contrast and the possible reasons for this are discussed in the final chapter of this dissertation.

The underlying assumption of the major South African rock art classification is that the three main traditions are so different that they must have developed independently of each other (Hall & Smith 2000). More recently, nineteenth century rock art traditions which have been identified challenge such a notion (Blundell 2004; Ouzman 2005; Mallen 2008; Challis 2008, 2009). One such tradition–Type 2 rock art–has been argued to have emerged out of interaction between San fine-line painters and the non-San members of their bands (Blundell 2004). This challenges the notion that for a body of rock art to be considered to be a discrete tradition it must have developed independently of other existing traditions. Thus, a rock art tradition can have a genesis connected to another rock art tradition but, due to certain conditions, developed separately from the original tradition. Type 2 rock art, along with Challis's (2008, 2009) AmaTola art–fine-line rock art that is not solely the product of traditional San society–highlights the trouble with naming rock art traditions according to ethno-linguistic groups. Research is increasingly showing that past identities were far more complex, especially in areas of intense interaction and creolisation such as the north Eastern Cape.

NON-FINE-LINE ROCK ART IN THE NORTH EASTERN CAPE

The north Eastern Cape region is principally characterised by fine-line rock art. Khoekhoen rock art has not as yet been identified in the north Eastern Cape. There are, however, fine-line images of fat-tailed sheep and Khoekhoen pack oxen in the region. Bantu-speaker rock art is also absent from the north Eastern Cape. However, two of the smaller, more circumscribed rock art traditions distinct from those outlined above, have been identified in the north Eastern Cape–Type 2 and Type 3.

Type 2 rock art

Type 2 rock art is a non-fine-line tradition so far found at nine sites in the high mountains (Blundell 2004: 113). Apart from a single exception, Type 2 rock art always occurs in the same site as fine-line imagery and is often found at sites with SDFs (*ibid.*: 114.). A crucial characteristic of Type 2 rock art is that these images are– with one exception–painted in separate areas of the rock shelter from fine-line images (*ibid*.). Type 2 rock art has very limited subject matter and shows little variation (*ibid*.). Type 2 images are brush-painted, although not as finely as fine-line rock art. They are monochrone or bi-chrome and are painted in red, yellow and white pigment. The texture of this pigment is characteristically thin and powdery (*ibid*.: 113-114). Its subject matter is dominated by depictions of antelope that emulate fine-line conventions of eland depiction with a projection in the larynx, horns and a dewlap (*ibid*.: 113; Fig. 5, 14a). Other subject matter, found at one site, is that of horses with riders (Fig. 14b).


a

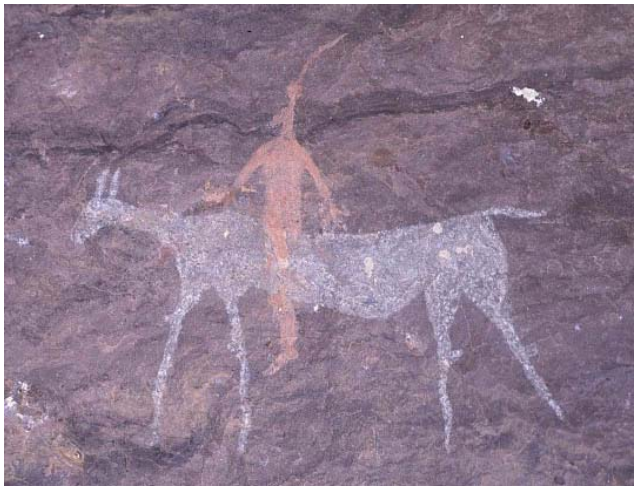

b

Fig. 14. Type 2 subject matter. a: eland; b: horse with rider

Blundell argues that Type 2 rock art is not a late degenerate form of fine-line rock art and was not made by the San (*ibid.*: 117). The spatial separation in the painting of Type 2 images–along with certain formal similarities with fine-line rock art–indicates that these images were made by non-San individuals living with San bands. This interpretation is based on the testimony of Mapote, the son of a Phuthi chief, Moorosi, who lived in southern Lesotho (How 1962). Mapote painted in rock shelters with his half-San stepbrothers. However, he and his half-San step-brothers painted at the opposite end of the shelter to 'true' San painters.

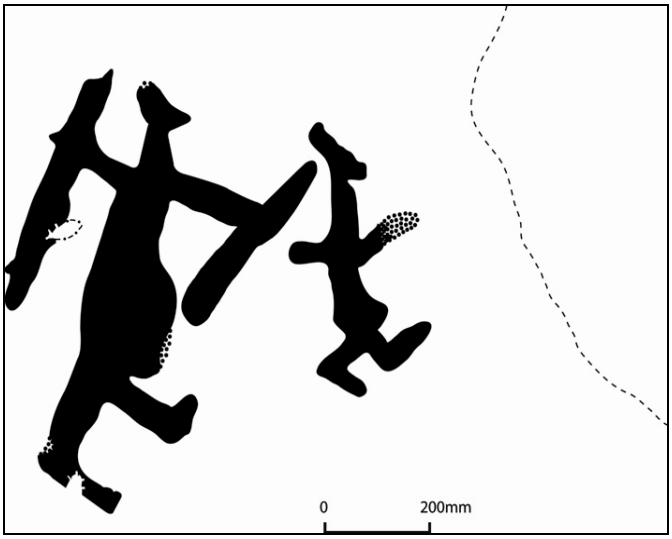
The horses depicted as part of Type 2 rock art indicate that this art was made during the nineteenth century. By this time, San-led bands in the north Eastern Cape were made up of people of different descent including Khoe- and Bantu-speakers (Stanford 1910). These groups seem to have coalesced around raiding (see Blundell 2004; Mallen 2008). The pattern of separate placement of Type 2 rock art suggests that–in this context of interaction and hybridity–the San felt the need to control their identity and used their art as part of identity construction. They maintained the distinctiveness of their identity and controlled the processes of acculturation by restricting where people of non-San descent could paint (Blundell 2004: 130).

Type 3 rock art

The other non-fine-line tradition in the north Eastern Cape is the Type 3 tradition. Mallen (2008) has identified Type 3 rock art at twelve sites, concentrated in the high mountains. Five additional sites with Type 3 imagery have subsequently been discovered. They are excluded from the discussion below, as they are consistent with that discussed by Mallen (*ibid.*). Type 3 images, except in three cases, occur in sites with fine-line rock art. At these sites, Type 3 imagery is almost always painted on top of or amongst fine-line images rather than on an unpainted surface. This differs significantly from Type 2 images, which were restricted to areas separate from fine-line images in a shelter. Fine-line rock art is never painted over Type 3 imagery, indicating that this is a later tradition. The superpositioning of Type 3 rock art over fine-line rock art and the historical subject matter of this rock art suggests that this is a relatively recent tradition. Horses were introduced into the north Eastern Cape in the early nineteenth century (Vinnicombe 1976: 18, 48; Challis 2008).

Type 3 rock art is characterised by an unusual combination of finger-painting and rough brush-painting (Fig. 6, 15a). Type 3 images are executed in red or pinkish red pigment, usually thick and coarse in texture but sometimes thin and watery. Images are usually monochrome, although there are a few bichrome examples. Type 3 iconography is dominated by human figures. They are frequently depicted with a protrusion near the head, probably representing a headdress (Fig. 15b). They also often carry weapons such as bows and arrows, spears, sticks and knobkerries (Fig. 15).


a



b

Fig. 15. Type 3 human figures. a: rough brush-painted; b: finger-painted. Black represents red and the dotted line represents a step in the rock face. Re-drawn by L. Mallen

Horses are also depicted in Type 3 rock art, occurring at five sites. They are painted with much consistency in style–in profile with long ears and a raised tail. At one site, a horse is depicted with a pack on its back (Fig. 16). There is also one instance of a horse depicted with a rider.

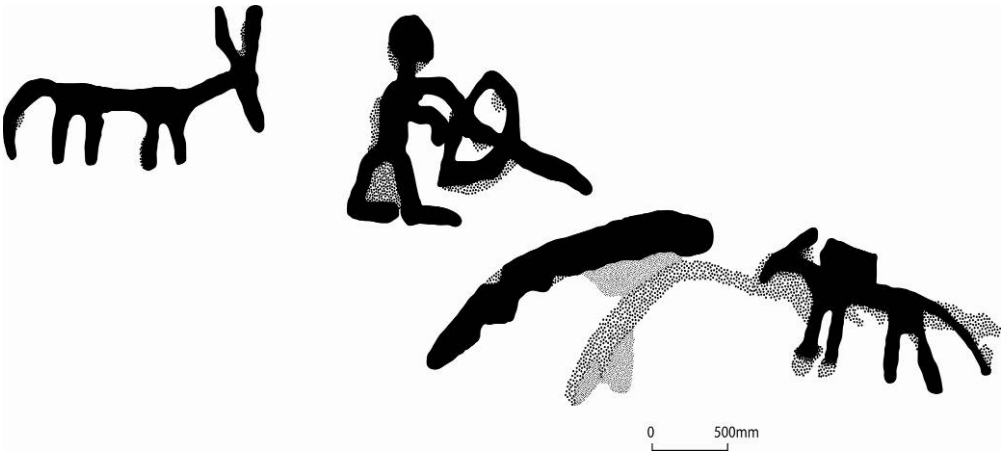


Fig. 16. Type 3 human figure associated with two horses. Black represents red and stipple represents faded red. Re-drawn by L. Mallen

A distinctive motif–found at two sites–is that of a rough brush-painted feline (Fig. 17). These felines are painted in watery pigment with an open mouth, white teeth and an unnaturally long tail, with which human figures are associated. They are depicted over fine-line imagery and at one site the feline is painted in such a way as to interact with fine-line human figures.

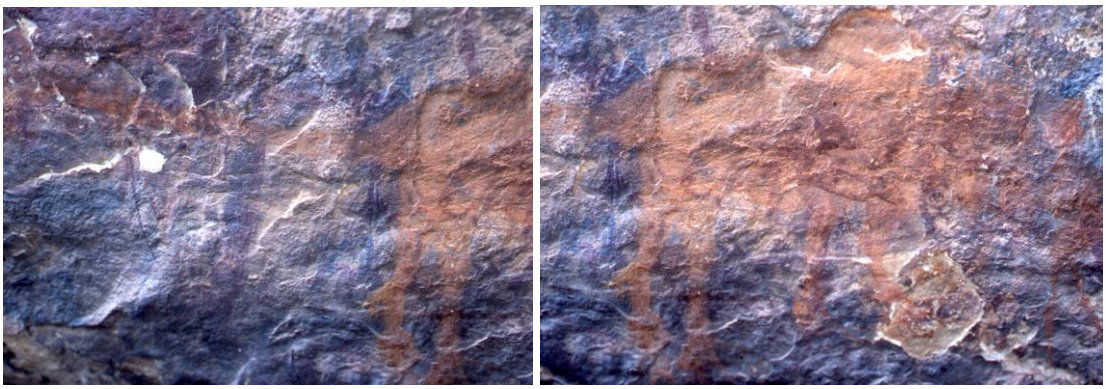


Fig. 17. Rough brush-painted feline with long tail

A significant characteristic of Type 3 rock art is that it draws on fine-line rock art in technique, placement and subject matter, which indicates that the makers knew about the production and consumption of fine-line rock art and appropriated certain aspects of it to form their own tradition (*ibid.*: 115). Type 3 also displays links to Type 2 rock art. At RSA RED1 (Fig. 18), there is a panel where several images–including human figures, antelope and horses with riders–exhibit a combination of Type 2 and Type 3 traits, painted in the same red pigment (*ibid.*: 60). These images are both rough brush-painted and finger-painted. Some images display Type 3 traits such as human figures, depicted with feet but without hands, holding knobkerries and bows and arrows (Fig. 19a). Other images have Type 2 traits such as horses and antelope with protrusions from the knees (*ibid.*: 62; Fig. 19b). The images at this site indicate that these corpora of rock art are closely related and that the classificatory boundary between these traditions is blurred (*ibid.*: 63).



Fig. 18. Panel at RSA RED1 where figures exhibit both Type 2 and Type 3 traits



a b

Fig. 19. a. Horse with Type 2 traits b. Human figure with Type 3 traits

Mallen proposes that Type 3 rock art was probably made by a small, short-lived group of people made up of individuals from different cultural groups who engaged in raiding. The members probably comprised Khoekhoen, San, runaway colonial slaves, Bantu-speaking people and so-called ‘Coloureds’ (people of mixed descent). She (*ibid.*: 125-6) identifies three possible candidates for authorship. The first prospect comprises San descendants who had either lost some of their knowledge of producing fine-line rock art or had actively changed their way of depicting rock art as part of their negotiation of social relations at the time. The second possibility is that the authors were non-San people who had lived with bands led by San individuals before the 1860s. After the break up of these bands, some of the non-San members probably established new groups that had their own identity and worked differently from San-led bands. The last option is that Type 3 rock art was made by non-San people who had never lived with San bands, but had some knowledge about the making of fine-line rock art from interaction with the San. In light of the close relationship between Type 2 and Type 3 rock art, I suggest that it is most likely that the group that made Type 3 rock art included non-San people who had lived with San groups and had made Type 2 art.

CONCLUSION

This discussion of stylistic analysis provides a framework in which to study the Maclear-Tsolo imagery found on the inland plateau of the north Eastern Cape. Practically, classifications are formulated through comparing things and grouping similar things together. These constant comparisons are important in coming to grips with the formal features of a sample of rock art images. These descriptions of Type 2 and Type 3 rock art–according to the stylistic attributes of manner of depiction, pigment colour and texture, subject matter, placement and distribution of sites–forms a basis of comparison with the Maclear-Tsolo rock art imagery discovered during my survey on the inland plateau. This Maclear-Tsolo imagery is described in the following chapter and analysed in comparison to Type 2 and Type 3 rock art to determine the stylistic relationships between these corpora of non-fine-line rock art. The final part of stylistic analysis is undertaken in Chapters 4 and 5 where I explore the role of these images in their socio-historical contexts.

CHAPTER 3
CLASSIFYING MACLEAR-TSOLO ROCK ART

Stylistic analysis forms a framework in which to study the non-fine-line rock art found in my survey on the inland plateau. This chapter focuses on the formal features of this non-fine-line rock art and whether it forms a new, discrete tradition or whether it can be classified as part of either Type 2 or Type 3 tradition, as defined by Blundell (2004) and Mallen (2008) respectively. First, I describe Maclear-Tsolo rock art according to certain descriptive attributes that characterise this rock art. These descriptive attributes are: conventions of depiction, placement and subject matter. Once this rock art is described, I deal with the classification of this corpus of art. As I established in the previous chapter, classification is an expression of comparison and similarity. Therefore, in order to determine the stylistic categorisation of Maclear-Tsolo rock art, I consider the similarities and differences between these images and the already defined Type 2 and Type 3 non-fine-line rock art traditions using certain stylistic attributes. This comparison highlights important relationships between these corpora of rock art.

MACLEAR-TSOLO NON-FINE-LINE ROCK ART

As part of this research, I surveyed within two areas of the inland plateau in the Maclear and Tsolo districts of the north Eastern Cape, outlined in Chapter 1 (Fig. 8). I found 54 new sites: 25 in the first sample area and 29 in the second (Table 1). This survey revealed a number of interesting patterns in the kinds of imagery found in this area. Fine-line imagery dominated in both sample areas with 42 sites (78%) made up of only fine-line rock art. Non-fine-line rock art was found at twelve sites (22%), with two of these sites featuring only non-fine-line rock art.

Significantly, no SDF images were found, leaving Ngcengane Shelter as the only known SDF site below the foothills of the primary escarpment. Another important discovery is that Type 2 images were absent on the inland plateau. Interestingly, although Ngcengane Shelter features some non-fine-line rough brush-painted and finger-painted images, there are no characteristic Type 2, Type 3 or Maclear-Tsolo motifs such as horses with riders at this site. The absence of SDFs and Type 2 images

in this area suggest that the social context in which rock art was produced differed between the high mountains and the inland plateau.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Mallen (2008) has defined Type 3 rock art. My research, however, overlaps slightly with hers. Mallen's (*ibid.*) sample is made up of twelve sites, two of which are found on the inland plateau. The first site, RSA BUX1, contains the only images in her sample not made of red or pink-red pigment (Fig. 7). The other site, RSA NGC3, was actually located as part of my 2007 survey. Therefore, these two sites should be considered part of the sample of Maclear-Tsolo rock art.

The non-fine-line rock art images found on the inland plateau are described in detail according to the following descriptive attributes:

- Conventions of depiction
- Placement
- Subject matter

Conventions of depiction

The conventions of depiction used in Maclear-Tsolo rock art are discussed according to manner of depiction, pigment colour and pigment texture (Table 2). The non-fine-line images in this sample are both rough brush-painted and finger-painted. The majority of images were finger-painted, while rough brush-painting was less common, making up only 8% of the images in the sample. Rough brush-painted images are found at three sites, with the highest number of images at RSA NGC1 (Fig. 20). All the images executed by rough brush-painting were depictions of quadrupeds, a few of which may represent antelope.



Fig. 20. Rough brush-painted and finger-painted quadrupeds

Table 2: Conventions of depiction (expressed as percentages)

Technique	
Finger-painted	92
Rough brush-painted	8
Pigment Colour	
Red	45
Black	13
White	12
Off-white	12
Orange	9
Pink-red	5
Yellow	3
Red-orange	2
Grey	1
Blue	0.6
Bichrome	4
Pigment Texture	
Thin	40
Thick	60

A key characteristic of Maclear-Tsolo rock art is that it is depicted in a wide range of colours. Red is the dominant colour used, while black, white, off-white and orange are also used. Less commonly used colours are pinkish-red, red-orange, yellow, and grey. A few sites seem to have their own distinctive palette and dominant colours–for example, black and grey at RSA NTW2 (Fig. 21) and shades of red and orange at RSA VIE1 (Fig. 22).



Fig. 21. Horses with riders depicted in grey and black pigment at RSA NTW2



Fig. 22. Finger-painted imagery in red, orange and black at RSA VIE1

The majority of non-fine-line images were painted in monochrome, with only four bichrome examples in the sample. These include a horse with rider at RSA VIE1 (Fig. 23a), a horse at RSA GQA7 (Fig. 23b) and a chain of finger dots at RSA NGC1 (Fig. 24). This bichrome horse is notable because its head is painted in an unusual blue-grey pigment most likely made using laundry blue, also known as Reckitt's blue (see Matthews 1979 for use in Xhosa murals). Another exceptional image is found at RSA NGC3, where a horse and rider are depicted in a mixture of off-white and red pigment.


a


b

Fig. 23. Examples of bichrome images

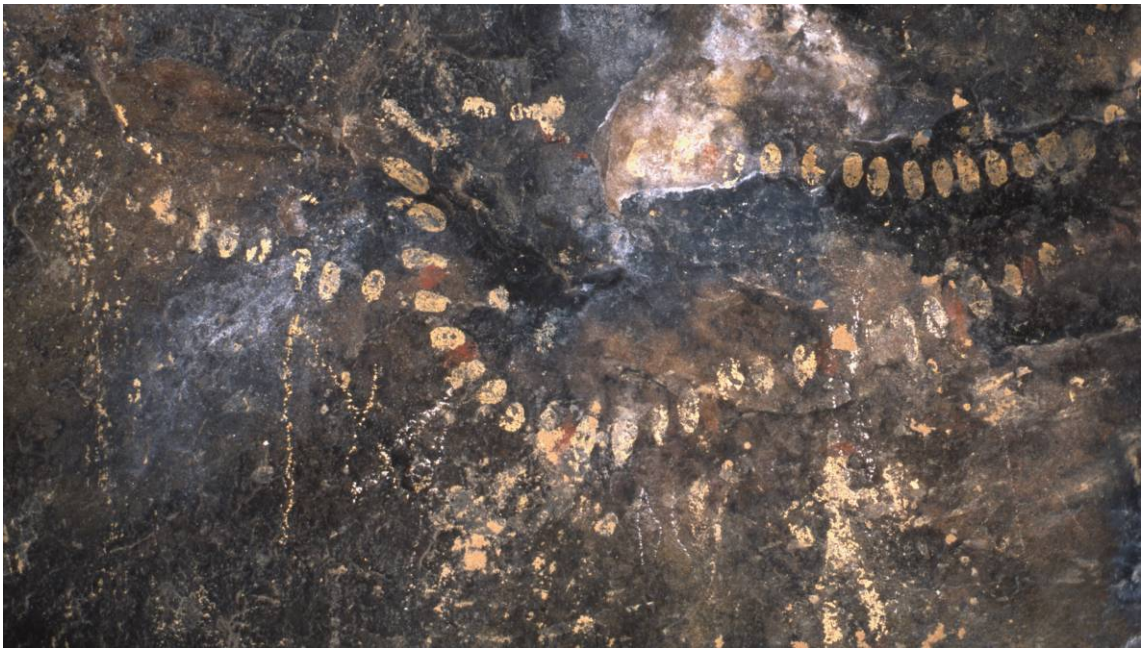


Fig. 24. Chains of finger dots painted on a ceiling

The texture of the pigment used in Maclear-Tsolo images is divided into two kinds– thick, coarse pigment and thin pigment including powdery and watery pigment. The predominant pigment texture used is that of thick, coarse pigment. Thin pigment made up a smaller proportion of the sample.

Placement

The description of the placement of Maclear-Tsolo images includes site distribution and location within sites with reference to fine-line images and features of rock shelter walls (Table 3, 4). Sites with Maclear-Tsolo rock art are not evenly distributed across the survey area. There are only three sites with non-fine-line rock art in Sample Area 1 north of Maclear (12%), while there are nine (31%) to the south in the second sample area (Table 1). In addition, the non-fine-line rock art in Sample Area 1 comprises only one or a few images in each site whilst those in Sample Area 2 most often occur in higher numbers at sites, with two sites made up of non-fine-line images only. Maclear-Tsolo rock art is therefore concentrated towards the secondary escarpment.

Maclear-Tsolo rock art is almost always painted at sites that contain fine-line rock art. Importantly–unlike Type 2 imagery–Maclear-Tsolo non-fine-line images are never painted in a separate area of the shelter from fine-line rock art. Rather, Maclear-Tsolo images are either painted on top of fine-line rock art or interspersed amongst it. Interestingly, superpositioning of non-fine-line images on fine-line images tends to be marginal, comprising a few overlaps. Superpositioning amongst non-fine-line images is also rare, occurring in only two cases (Fig. 25).



Fig. 25. Human figure superpositioned on a horse

Maclear-Tsolo images are placed in sites in various ways, which are divided into three categories–scattered, interacting and independent (Table 3). The categories are not mutually exclusive and sometimes a site can be characterised by more than one kind of placement.

Table 3: patterns of placement at sites (expressed as presence/absence)

	Site	Scattered	Interacting	Independent
Sample Area 1	GEI1	✓		
	PLU2	✓		
	SCY1	✓		
Sample Area 2	GQA1	✓		
	GQA7	✓	✓	
	NGC1			✓
	NGC3			✓
	NTW2			✓
	UMN1	✓	✓	
	VIE1		✓	✓
	WLS1		✓	
	WOS2	✓		

Scattered

Scattered placement of non-fine-line rock art is found at seven sites and is the most common type of placement. Most Maclear-Tsolo art is scattered in placement and, interestingly, all non-fine-line art in Sample Area 1 occurs in a scattered manner. Scattered non-fine-line images show no apparent pattern of placement in sites. They usually occur as a few non-fine-line images or sometimes only one image in a site dominated by fine-line imagery. These images are not placed obtrusively over fine-line images or in places in the site that are strikingly visible. There is also no apparent connection between non-fine-line images and fine-line images in terms of superpositioning or iconography (Fig 26). An example of scattered placement at RSA GEI1 comprises a black finger-painted image painted over white fine-line images. In addition, the subject matter of scattered non-fine-line imagery tends to be idiosyncratic.



Fig. 26. Example of ‘scattered’ placement of a black finger-painted motif

Interacting

Maclear-Tsolo imagery is sometimes painted in such a way that it interacts with fine-line images in a site. This includes meaningful placement of non-fine-line imagery in fine-line panels and the emulation of aspects of particular fine-line images in the same panel. Interacting placement of non-fine-line imagery is found at four sites. At RSA WLS1, three large finger-painted human figures are depicted directly above three

smaller fine-line human figures, suggesting a deliberate statement was being made about the fine-line images (Fig. 27).



Fig. 27. Finger-painted human figures painted above fine-line human figures

At RSA UMN1, there is a panel of three fine-line rhebuck depicted as if leaping towards a fine-line human figure. Just below the human figure, a finger-painted quadruped is depicted emulating the postures of the three rhebuck (Fig. 28).



Fig. 28. Finger-painted quadruped (bottom right) emulating the postures of fine-line antelope

Interacting images are also sometimes placed conspicuously within the main panel of fine-line images in a site. This occurs at two sites. At RSA GQA7, several finger-painted images are depicted in the main panel, on top of several faded fine-line images (Fig. 29). A significant feature of this panel is a step in the rock face that runs vertically across the panel, as mentioned previously. Two finger-painted images–a horse with a rider and an antelope–have been depicted on either side of this step, below the fine-line images as if emulating their interaction with the step.



Fig. 29. Finger-painted images interacting with fine-line images associated with a step in the rock face

At the second site, RSA VIE1, the main panel is composed of ten fine-line antelope, some of which can be identified as hartebeest, depicted in profile and facing in different directions (Fig. 30). On the bottom right edge of this panel, several finger-painted quadrupeds have been depicted. Significantly, most of these non-fine-line images are facing in the same direction as the fine-line antelope closest to them. The way these finger-painted quadrupeds are depicted gives the impression that they were intended to form part of the group of fine-line antelope.



Fig. 30. Finger-painted quadrupeds depicted as part of a group of fine-line antelope

Independent

The last kind of placement of Maclear-Tsolo imagery is where it occurs in an independent manner. This category of non-fine-line images occurs either entirely independently of fine-line images at a site, or, makes up the majority of images in a site with fine-line images, but importantly, without any apparent relationship to these fine-line images. Interestingly, independent placement of non-fine-line rock art seems to cluster in the eastern part of the second sample area. Two of the four instances of independent placement comprise only non-fine-line images. These sites are dominated by horses and horses with riders and generally show more homogeneity in subject matter (Fig. 21, 31).



Fig. 31. Example of ‘independent’ Maclear-Tsolo images (Photograph: L. Winch)

Maclear-Tsolo rock art also shows certain patterns regarding placement in association with features of the rock surface. Unlike Type 3 rock art, these images show no general preference for painting onto facets or hollows and this only occurs at two sites, including RSA GQA1 where most of the non-fine-line images are concentrated in a specific area of the rock shelter where there are many facets (Fig. 32).



a



b

Fig. 32. Images associated with features of the rock face. a: finger paintings on facets; b: paint smeared into a crevice

Like Type 3 rock art, Maclear-Tsolo images are sometimes painted as if to interact with features of the rock face such as crevices, steps and cracks. At RSA NGC1, a line of finger dots issues from a crack (Fig. 33). There is a further clear case of interaction of non-fine-line imagery with the rock surface at RSA GQA1 where pink-red paint has been smeared into a crevice (Fig. 32b). At RSA GQA7, a line of finger-painted vertical lines have been depicted below a crevice, as if coming out of it (Fig. 34).



Fig 33. Finger dots emerging from a crack in the ceiling



Fig. 34. Lines emanating from a crevice

This site features a second interesting case of interaction with the rock surface. A prominent step in the rock face runs diagonally across the main panel of this site (Fig. 35). Three fine-line images are depicted associated with this step–a human figure walking towards it and two antelope emerging from it with only their forequarters depicted. Below this, two finger-painted quadrupeds are depicted, one on either side of this step, despite the abundance of space elsewhere in the panel. These figures may just be emulating the placement of the fine-line images depicted above them or may represent the expression of San beliefs–or knowledge of these beliefs held by the San–with regard to the rock surface (*cf.* Lewis-Williams & Dowson 1990). Although these images have been deliberately painted in relation to the step–unlike the fine-line images above them–they are not depicted as if emerging from it with only part of the figures depicted, the rest being 'hidden' behind the rock face in the spirit world. This suggests that the authors did not have intimate knowledge of San beliefs about the rock face and the spirit world. This is discussed further in Chapter 5.



Fig. 35. Fine-line and finger-painted images interacting with a step in the rock face

An interesting feature of Maclear-Tsolo rock art is that certain images indicate a preference for painting in certain areas of rock shelters. One motif category–series of finger dots and smears–are always painted on the ceiling of the shelter. Twelve of these motifs are found at RSA VIE1 (Fig. 36) and RSA NGC1 (Fig. 24, 33). Notably, these motifs are absent from Type 2 and Type 3 rock art. These finger dots painted exclusively on the ceilings of shelters raise important questions about authorship, which are discussed later in this chapter.



Fig. 36. Lines of finger dots and smears on a rock shelter ceiling

There is another interesting choice of painting area at RSA VIE1. The lower area of the back wall of this shallow shelter forms a shelf on the underside. This area–although not very visible or easily accessible to paint on–is filled with depictions of unidentifiable quadrupeds (Fig. 37). The awkward position for painting probably resulted in the species being indeterminable due to the messiness of the painting. However, despite this the artists were determined to paint here. This suggests that these images were not merely made to be visible to consumers but that the act of painting was meaningful in itself.



Fig. 37. Finger paintings on the underside of a low shelf (Photograph: L. Winch)

Table 4: Placement within sites (expressed as percentages)

Superpositioning on non-fine-line	1
Painted on facet	3
Interaction with rock face feature	5

Subject matter

The subject matter of Maclear-Tsolo rock art is divided into five categories–horses and horses with riders, human figures, quadrupeds, geometric imagery and enigmatic imagery (Table 5). A key characteristic of Maclear-Tsolo rock art–compared to Type 2 and Type 3 art–is that its subject matter is wide and varied. Within sites the subject

matter is usually quite homogenous, especially where there is predominantly non-fine-line rock art. There is little standardisation in non-fine-line images and the only image category depicted in a consistent manner is that of horses and horses with riders. The numerically dominant image categories are that of quadrupeds and horses and horses with riders. Human figures and geometric motifs are also commonly depicted.

Table 5: Subject matter (expressed as percentages)

Horses & horses with riders	**22**
Horse	6
Horse with rider	16
Rider holding reins	48
Rider with gun	22
Human figures	**12**
Simple	8
Broad-torso	4
With bow & arrow	10
With painted circle(s)	20
Quadrupeds	**37**
Antelope	5
Unidentifiable quadrupeds	32
Geometric	**13**
Geometric	6
Lines of finger dots & strokes	7
Enigmatic	**16**
Unidentifiable	9
Paint smear	7

Horses and horses with riders

Horses and horses with riders are the most standardised motif in Maclear-Tsolo rock art and make up the second largest image category in the sample. Horses are found at four sites and often occur in high numbers at sites where there are a lot of non-fine-line images. All horses are finger-painted and depicted in profile (Fig. 21, 22). They have a characteristic long neck and elongated head, are depicted with either all four legs or only two, and in most instances have a tail (Fig. 21, 22). Horses are most frequently depicted with riders and occur at four sites. At two of these sites, they account for the majority of the images in the site–63% at RSA NGC3 and 53% at

RSA NTW2–with only a few other images depicted (Fig. 21, 38). Riders are often shown holding reins with only one arm depicted (Fig. 38). They are either drawn simply as a vertical line emerging from the horse's back or with the head of the figure distinguishable from the torso.



Fig. 38. Horses with riders painted at RSA NGC3

Some of these horses with riders are depicted with an interesting detail, found at two sites. This feature is depicted most clearly at RSA NGC3 (Fig. 39), where several of the riders have a short line angled upward emanating from the back or the neck of the rider. The angle of this line and in some cases the position of it in the back of the neck suggest that this is not the depiction of a second arm, angled to match the slant of the arm holding the reins. Close inspection reveals that the short line is separate from the line representing the arm holding the reins. Therefore, the angle of the line was a deliberate choice by the artist. Similar depictions are found among finger-painted riders painted in the eastern Free State by the Korana–a creolised raiding 'nation' originally of Khoekhoen descent that existed in the late 1700s and 1800s (Ouzman 2005; see Chapter 2). He argues that they may represent rifles carried by the riders (*ibid.:* 104). I therefore argue that similar depictions in Maclear-Tsolo art represent riders armed with guns. By the 1840s, most groups in the north Eastern Cape possessed guns (Stanford 1910; Wright 1971: 54, 56; Etherington 2001: 183; Challis 2008: 174). Interestingly, although weapons are frequently found in Type 3 rock art, firearms are absent (Mallen 2008: 41).



Fig. 39. Mounted figures possibly carrying firearms

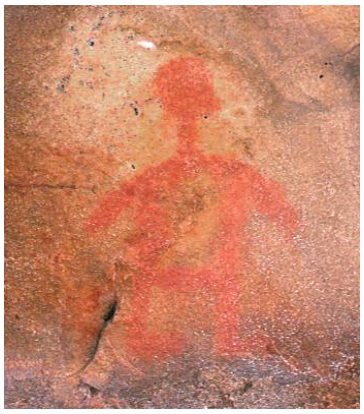
Human figures

Human figures are commonly depicted in Maclear-Tsolo rock art, constituting 12% of the total number of images and occurring at six sites. Human figures are not detailed and are not usually associated with accoutrements. These non-fine-line human figures can be divided into two types–simple and broad-torso figures. Simple human figures resemble ‘stick’ figures’. They are most frequently depicted singly but also occur as a row of several figures (Fig. 24, 40). These figures are always depicted face on without feet or hands. In one instance, at RSA NGC1, a simple human figure is depicted holding a bow (Fig. 24).



Fig. 40. Row of simple human figures

The second kind of human figure is slightly more detailed and is characterised by a broad torso that is often square in shape. Broad-torso human figures are only depicted at two sites with a total of six figures at these sites. Two broad-torso human figures are depicted at RSA VIE1 (Fig. 41a). Their torsos are outlined, a convention used to depict other non-fine-line images discussed below. Two of these human figures have facial features painted in profile and one of them is depicted showing feet. One of these figures is associated with a circle painted to one side of it in the same pigment (Fig. 41b).


a

b

Fig. 41. Broad-torso human figures depicted at RSA VIE1

At RSA WLS1, there is a row of three broad-torso human figures with solidly painted torsos (Fig. 42). They are also associated with circles, painted to one side of them. The depiction of these painted circles in such a similar way is interesting and they are found at a site discussed later. These human figures also have a vertical line emanating from the torso that may represent a penis. To the left of these figures is a bow and arrow in the same pigment depicted as if ready to shoot. This is one of only two depictions of bows and/or arrows in this sample. The only other weapons depicted are guns carried by human figures on horseback.



Fig. 42. Broad-torso human figures associated with a bow and arrow

Quadrupeds

Quadrupeds account for the majority of non-fine-line images on the inland plateau. Several quadrupeds can be identified as antelope, comprising eight images found at four sites. The actual number of depictions of antelope may be higher as they may have been classified as unidentifiable quadrupeds. Depictions of antelope are characterised by a heavy body, a short, slender tail, and horns (Fig. 20, 43). Due to the characteristic lack of detail in Maclear-Tsolo imagery, the species of these antelope are indeterminable. Unidentifiable quadrupeds number 55 images and occur at eight sites. Most unidentifiable quadrupeds are finger-painted, with a few rough brush-painted examples. These quadrupeds are depicted in a variety of ways ranging from crude and simply depicted to more detailed examples with what appear to be horns (Fig. 20).



a b

Fig. 43. Finger-painted antelope

Geometric images

Interestingly, geometric imagery comprises a substantial portion of the non-fine-line imagery in this survey. These motifs are all finger-painted and occur in a variety of forms. RSA NGC1 features off-white finger dots in a circular form (Fig. 44a), as well as a directional arrow painted in similar pigment (Fig. 44b). At RSA GQA7, there is a triangle with a vertical line next to it–depicted in pigment similar to more typical non-fine-line imagery in the panel (Fig. 35, 44c)–and elsewhere a row of vertical lines painted in white below a crevice, resembling fringing (Fig. 34).



a





b c

Fig. 44. Finger-painted geometric imagery. a: finger dots in a circle; b: directional arrow; c: triangle with a vertical line

One rather curious geometric form is found at three sites on the inland plateau. At RSA VIE1 and RSA WLS1, there are several human figures associated with painted circles (Fig. 41b, 42). A similar occurrence is found at RSA CRA6, which was previously classified as Type 3 (Mallen 2008: 62). Here there are seven finger-painted human figures in white pigment (Fig. 45). Two of these figures have a circle painted to the side of their heads. A few of them also appear to have a penis, as seen in the RSA WLS1 figures. Although, at this point, the meaning of this circle motif is unknown, the fact that it is repeatedly depicted in such a specific manner indicates that this motif was significant to the authors. Interestingly, human figures painted in a similar manner, associated with a painted circle, are also found in Korana rock art (see Ouzman 2005: 105).



Fig. 45. Human figures associated with painted circles at RSA CRA6

Another distinctive kind of geometric motif is that of chains of finger dots and strokes, found at RSA NGC1 and RSA VIE1. These motifs are found at sites where non-fine-line rock art dominates and in both cases are depicted on the ceiling of the rock shelter. RSA VIE1 features eight short lines of finger dots and smears painted in thin red pigment in no apparent pattern (Fig. 36). At RSA NGC1, there are two large finger dot chain motifs that form an elaborate meandering pattern along the ceiling (Fig. 24, 46). Both chains are painted in predominantly off-white pigment with a few finger dots executed in red pigment. The line motif to the left is a single chain of dots that emerges from a crack in the rock surface (Fig.33). This chain wanders along the rock surface and then loops around to rejoin itself, with a short line emanating from it. Below this is a finger-painted human figure depicted in the same off-white pigment (Fig. 24). A second line motif is found on the other side of the crack. This motif comprises a double chain of finger dots that meanders along the rock face. A single finger dot chain curves around the tip of the double chain, giving the motif an arrow-like appearance.

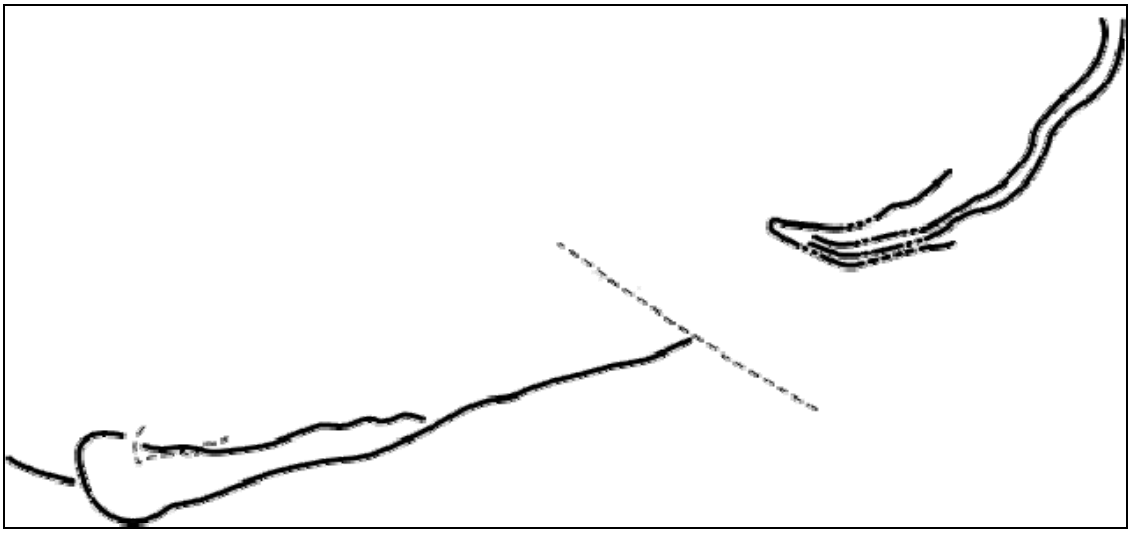


Fig. 46. Sketch of finger dot chains (represented as lines) on the ceiling at RSA NGC1. Dashed lines represent discontinuities in the rock surface.

Finger dots constitute an interesting image category of South African rock paintings in terms of authorship and have been the subject of much discussion (Dowson 1989; Lewis-Williams & Blundell 1997; Smith & Ouzman 2004). Finger dots are characteristically part of Khoekhoen tradition rock art, but are also found in fine-line rock art (Smith & Ouzman 2004: 512). They occur in several regions of South Africa such as the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, eastern Free State and the Limpopo Province but are absent from the Drakensberg mountains (Dowson 1989: 84). Finger dots are often painted as long, sometimes double or triple, chains (Lewis-Williams & Blundell 1997: 51). An interesting feature of Khoekhoen-authored finger dots in the Limpopo Province is that they are usually painted on the ceilings of rock shelters or on the underside of projecting rock surfaces (Eastwood & Smith 2005: 72). Rows of finger dots are also painted on shelter ceilings in Korana rock art (Ouzman 2005: 106; discussed in Chapter 2). When painted in association with fine-line images related to trance, finger dots may be regarded as entoptic images, associated with altered states of consciousness, produced by the San (Dowson 1989: 91; Smith & Ouzman 2004: 506). A significant aspect of non-entoptic, Khoekhoen-authored finger dots is that they are sometimes painted so as to interact with fine-line imagery. These instances indicate that finger dots were involved in interaction between the San and Khoekhoen and formed part of a “cross-cultural conversation” (Smith and Ouzman 2004: 502).

I suggest that the finger dots in Maclear-Tsolo rock art are likely to have been painted by people of Khoekhoen descent as they are not deliberately painted in association with trance-related images and are painted on shelter ceilings, like the Khoe-authored finger dots found in Limpopo. The chains of finger dots at RSA NGC1 are executed in the same colour pigment as the other non-fine-line images at the site, confirming that they are part of Maclear-Tsolo rock art and are not odd outliers of the Khoekhoen tradition. It is significant that this image category has been associated with interaction between San and Khoekhoen groups. I submit that, in the creolised 'melting pot' of the nineteenth-century north Eastern Cape, the finger dots in Maclear-Tsolo rock art may represent the inclusion of people of Khoekhoen descent with a knowledge of rock painting in the group that produced this rock art.

Enigmatic images

An interesting characteristic of Maclear-Tsolo rock art is that a fair proportion of non-fine-line imagery in this sample consists of enigmatic images that are either abstract or whose subject matter is indeterminable. Such imagery is found at five sites and constitutes 28 images. These images are all finger-painted. They are highly idiosyncratic and are generally found at sites with few other non-fine-line images. Although idiosyncratic, the majority of enigmatic–and geometric–images are executed in the same colour pigment as other more typical non-fine-line imagery in the same sites. This suggests that although there does not seem to be much apparent coherence to non-fine-line rock art these images are indeed related.

A distinct kind of enigmatic imagery is that of paint smears, which constitute 46% of enigmatic imagery. At RSA PLU2, there are a set of finger smears in thick white pigment above faded fine-line images (Fig. 47). Patches of pinkish-red pigment were applied to facets at RSA GQA1 (Fig. 32b). The occurrence of finger smears in Maclear-Tsolo rock art suggests that finger painting was not just important as a means to depict certain subjects but that the act of placing paint on the rock face with the fingers was also important.



Fig. 47. A set of paint smears at RSA PLU2

To sum up, Maclear-Tsolo rock art is characterised by finger-painted and rough brush-painted imagery in a wide range of colours. These images are usually executed in a thick coarse pigment, as well as thin, watery or powdery pigment. The subject matter of Maclear-Tsolo imagery is also diverse, comprising mostly unidentifiable quadrupeds, horses and horses with riders and enigmatic imagery. Maclear-Tsolo rock art is usually depicted in sites with fine-line rock art, where it is always on top of fine-line rock art and never below it. These images tend to be painted on top of or amongst fine-line rock art instead of on unpainted spaces in a site. There is little superpositioning amongst non-fine-line images. Often non-fine-line images are depicted so as to interact with the rock surface and/or fine-line images. This interaction with fine-line images–as well as the emulation of fine-line imagery–shows that, instead of merely being arbitrarily painted over fine-line images, this rock art is often placed in meaningful relationships to fine-line rock imagery and draws on it in various ways.

The survey of new areas for non-fine-line rock art–such as that undertaken as part of this research–reveals that non-fine-line rock art in the north Eastern Cape is more numerous and varied than previous research indicated. The idiosyncrasy of many of the images on the inland plateau suggests that anomalous non-fine-line imagery could form part of a coherent tradition. This includes images at RSA SOM1, which features a series of circular motifs painted in thick red pigment over fine-line images (Fig. 48a), as well as similar circular imagery in powdery red pigment at RSA CRA6 (Fig. 48b). Thus, imagery that initially seems odd and that does not fit neatly into any

particular tradition may be seen to form part of a coherent tradition when the images are studied as part of a larger data set. This is discussed further in Chapter 6 with reference to prospects for future research.


a


b

Fig. 48. Finger-painted circular imagery at RSA SOM1 (a) and RSA CRA6 (b)

COHERENCE AND VARIATION WITHIN A TRADITION

An important aspect of ‘style’ is that it is a comparative statement. Therefore, in order to define the stylistic relationships between Maclear-Tsolo art and the other non-fine-line rock arts in the north Eastern Cape, and to discern whether this constitutes a discrete rock art tradition, I compare these corpora of rock art. In Chapter 2, I noted that several stylistic attributes are commonly used to define rock art traditions. This is not an absolute or definitive list of attributes. Rather, attributes should be chosen according to their suitability to the corpus of rock art in question. With this in mind the attributes used in the evaluation of the relationship between Maclear-Tsolo rock art and Type 2 and Type 3 art are as follows:

- manner of depiction
- pigment colour
- pigment texture
- subject matter
- stratigraphic relationship to other rock art tradition(s), or placement
- distribution of sites in the landscape

Comparison with Type 2 art

There is very little similarity between Type 2 rock art and Maclear-Tsolo rock art (Table 6). The most significant correspondence is in the similarity of pigment texture. Both use thin, powdery pigment. They also both include rough brush-painted imagery. Significantly, horses with riders form part of the subject matter of both these corpora of rock art. Also, they both draw on and emulate fine-line rock art, although in different ways. Type 2 art does so by emulating the style of fine-line depictions of eland, whilst Maclear-Tsolo accomplishes this by painting images in association with features of the rock face and by emulating specific fine-line images, more in posture and placement than in manner of depiction.

Maclear-Tsolo rock art is for the most part significantly different to Type 2 rock art. They are different in manner of depiction, pigment colour, subject matter, placement and distribution of sites. One of the main differences is subject matter–Type 2 has a very narrow and standardised subject matter while that of Maclear-Tsolo rock art is wide and quite variable. Although both corpora of art feature antelope, none of the Maclear-Tsolo antelope feature the distinctive traits of Type 2 antelope such as a protrusions at the knees or a dewlap. Similarly, although horses feature in both Type 2 and Maclear-Tsolo art, Type 2 horses are rough brush-painted in a similar style to that of Type 2 antelope, whilst horses in Maclear-Tsolo art are always finger-painted and lack the diagnostic features of Type 2 images. As with subject matter, a much wider variety of colours are used to depict Maclear-Tsolo art than there are in Type 2 art. Maclear-Tsolo art also differs from Type 2 rock art in that it is often finger-painted. Significantly, the two differ in their placement in sites–Type 2 is spatially separated

from fine-line rock art while Maclear-Tsolo imagery is generally painted over it. Also, Type 2 is found in the high mountains whilst Maclear-Tsolo rock art is found on the inland plateau.

Table 6: A comparison of Maclear-Tsolo art with Type 2 art

	Type 2	**Maclear-Tsolo**
Manner of depiction	Brush-painted	Rough brush-painted Finger-painted
Pigment colour	Red White Yellow	Wide variety
Pigment texture	Powdery	Thick and coarse Powdery Watery
Subject matter	Narrow, standardised Antelope Few horses with riders	Wide Few human figures Many horses with riders Few weapons, 'modern' Quadrupeds Antelope Enigmatic images Geometrics
Placement	Almost never painted over fine-line Painted in separate area Not painted in association with features of the rock face	Painted over fine-line Painted in association with features of the rock face
Distribution	High mountains	Inland plateau

Comparison with Type 3 art

Maclear-Tsolo rock art is quite similar to Type 3 rock art and coincides with this art in manner of depiction, pigment texture and placement (Table 7). They also share some similarities in subject matter and have a similar relationship to fine-line rock art. Both these corpora of rock art are rough brush-painted and finger-painted in pigment that ranges in texture from thick and coarse to powdery and even watery. As far as placement within sites is concerned, they both tend to be painted in shelters with fine-line rock art where they are usually painted on top of or amongst fine-line imagery rather than on unpainted space. Both are always found on top of fine-line rock art and

never beneath it. The painting conventions used are also similar. Both groups of rock art include finger and rough brush-painted imagery. Images are generally monochrome with a few bichrome examples. Like Type 3 images, there is almost no superpositioning among Maclear-Tsolo images. Both corpora of rock art also include a few cases of images depicted in outline. There are also some similarities in the subject matter of these two bodies of rock art. They both feature the horse and horse with rider as the most standardised motif. A significant trait these groups of images have in common is their relationship to fine-line images. They both make use of fine-line conventions such as interaction with features of the rock face and emulate aspects of fine-line images.

The major differences between Type 3 and Maclear-Tsolo rock art are in pigment colour, subject matter and site distribution. Type 3 images are almost always painted in red or pink-red pigment whilst Maclear-Tsolo rock art is painted in a wide range of colours. The characteristic Type 3 pink-red pigment is also not common in Maclear-Tsolo rock art. A further important difference between these corpora of rock art is their subject matter. The subject matter of Type 3 rock art is quite limited and the imagery tends to be rather standardised, while Maclear-Tsolo images are more varied with many idiosyncratic, unidentifiable images. In general, Maclear-Tsolo images are also painted in a lot less detail than Type 3 images. Significantly, the enigmatic and geometric image categories that make up a considerable portion of Maclear-Tsolo subject matter are absent in Type 3 rock art. In Maclear-Tsolo rock art, human figures are depicted less frequently than in Type 3 rock art and are not typically associated with accoutrements. Weapons are rarely depicted in Maclear-Tsolo rock art and those that are depicted are usually guns as opposed to bows and arrows, spears and knobkerries depicted in Type 3 rock art. The two felines that occurred in quite a standardised manner in Type 3 rock art are not found in Maclear-Tsolo rock art. Although both share the horse motif, horses and horses with riders are considerably more numerous in Maclear-Tsolo rock art than in Type 3. Generally, Type 3 rock art is more limited and standardised than Maclear-Tsolo rock art, which is more varied, especially in subject matter and pigment colour.

Table 7: A comparison of Maclear-Tsolo art with Type 3 art

	Type 3	**Maclear-Tsolo**
Manner of depiction	Rough brush-painted Finger-painted	Rough brush-painted Finger-painted
Pigment colour	Red Pink-red	Wide variety
Pigment texture	Thick and coarse Powdery Watery	Thick and coarse Powdery Watery
Subject matter	Limited Many human figures Few horses with riders 'Traditional' weapons Accoutrements Felines	Wide Few human figures Many horses with riders Few weapons, 'modern' Quadrupeds Antelope Enigmatic images Geometrics
Placement	Painted over fine-line Painted in association with features of the rock face	Painted over fine-line Painted in association with features of the rock face
Distribution	High mountains	Inland plateau

The relationship of Maclear-Tsolo art to Type 2 and Type 3 art

As discussed in Chapter 2, rock art traditions generally comprise a combination of coherence as well as some variation. This comparison between the corpora of non-fine-line rock art found in the north Eastern Cape reveals that the non-fine-line rock art found in my survey is most similar to Type 3 rock art and does not share much similarity with Type 2 rock art. I argue that the correlations between Maclear-Tsolo rock art and Type 3 rock art are significant enough for these two corpora of art to be considered the same tradition. Furthermore, Mallen (2008: 62) has suggested that, given their close relationship, Type 2 and Type 3 constitute variations within a single tradition. I therefore argue that Type 2, Type 3 and Maclear-Tsolo rock art are related and are in fact variations of a single tradition.

Whilst the distinction between Type 2 and Type 3 rock art was necessary for Mallen's analysis, I propose that the discovery of further non-fine-line rock art may render the separate naming of these corpora of rock art confusing and potentially misleading. I

suggest that this non-fine-line rock art tradition in the north Eastern Cape should rather be labelled the Type 2 tradition, with the variants defined by Blundell (2004) Mallen (2008) and myself forming the subtraditions of Type 2A, Type 2B and Type 2C, named for the order in which they were found.

Furthermore, the comparison between Type 2B and Type 2C art indicates that it is necessary to amend the traits argued by Mallen to characterise Type 2B rock art. Type 2B rock art should encompass only red or pink-red non-fine-line rock art found in the high mountains of the north Eastern Cape. Therefore, images that are painted in other colours and are located on the inland plateau–such as those at RSA BUX1 (Fig.7) and RSA CRA6 (Fig. 45, 48b)–should be reclassified as Type 2C. This affects the temporal provenance of these variants of the Type 2 tradition. Mallen (2008: 56) has argued that Type 2B rock art was made between 1860 and 1900, based on human figures wearing dresses with bustle pads at RSA BUX1 (*cf.* Strutt 1975: 202; Fig. 7). These images, however, can now be reclassified as Type 2C as this site is located on the inland plateau and these images are painted in off-white and other colour pigments. Therefore, Type 2C rock art was most probably made just before and/or after 1860.

What remains to be explored is the nature of the relationships between these variants of the Type 2 tradition. This pertains to questions of authorship and chronology, which are related issues. In view of the discussion of style and variation in Chapter 2, I propose that there are three main possibilities regarding the relationships between the Type 2 variants. They might be:

- Contemporaneous and made by the same group but for different purposes,
- Contemporaneous and made by different ethno-linguistic groups, or
- Chronological developments of a single tradition made by the same group over a period of time

To address the first point, often the different purposes for which different art is made are linked to the activities of different social groupings within a cultural group. In Chapter 2, we saw that there are two contemporaneous subtraditions of Northern

Sotho Late White art–one relating to male initiation and the other to female initiation (Prins & Hall 1994; Namono & Eastwood 2005). The differentiating feature between these variants of Bantu-speaker art is their subject matter (Namono & Eastwood 2005: 84). They are often found in the same shelters, although usually painted separately to one another (*ibid.*). Unfortunately, more survey is needed to identify patterning in the distribution of Late White female initiation art (*ibid.*). Another example can be found in southwest California in the United States where three different yet contemporaneous styles made by a single cultural group during the historical period (*cf.* Whitley 2000, also 2001: 25-26, 2005: 49). One style was made as part of female initiation, the other as part of male initiation rituals and the third style was made by shamans. Interestingly, each of these styles is distinct in the kinds of motifs depicted, the colours used and the location of sites.

With these examples in mind, if the variants of the Type 2 tradition were made by the same ethno-linguistic group but for different purposes, one might expect that the subject matter–and/or some other attribute(s)–of the three corpora would show more distinctiveness and less similarity. One might also expect that rock art made for different purposes may not be painted in the same shelters as one another, as with the Californian example. Importantly, this scenario would not explain the panel at RSA RED1 where images painted with the same red pigment exhibit a combination of both Type 2A traits and Type 2B traits in that they are both rough brush-painted and finger-painted, some of the quadrupeds have protrusions from the knee and human figures are painted with feet and are associated with bows and arrows and knobkerries (Fig. 18, 19).

An example of the second possibility–culturally distinct groups painting in the same area during the same time period–can be found in the Limpopo Valley in northern South Africa. Archaeological evidence suggests that San hunter-gatherers and Khoekhoen herders lived and painted in this area in the first millennium AD (Hall & Smith 2000; Eastwood & Smith 2005: 51). The rock art produced by these groups is vastly different in manner of depiction, subject matter, pigment and site location (see also Chapter 2). San art comprises fine-line brush painted images of subjects such as human figures, antelope and elephants, mostly in red pigment with black and white features (Hall & Smith 2000: 39). Khoekhoen art is finger-painted in thick pigment in

a range of colours including red, white and orange. Its subject matter is characterised by geometric motifs (*ibid.*). These traditions are often painted in the same shelters. In some cases, the geometric art is painted conspicuously over San art (Hall & Smith 2000: 42). However, in most cases these groups chose to paint in separate areas of the shelter (Eastwood & Smith 2005: 72). They also preferred to paint at different places in the landscape (*ibid.*).

If the second possibility is correct and the variants of the Type 2 tradition were made by different ethno-linguistic groups at the same time, one might expect that there would be more dissimilarity between the three variants. However, the similarity in the rock art might be accounted for if the authoring groups were related and therefore shared a similar cultural identity. If two of the three supposed groups were more closely related to one another, then that might explain the closer stylistic correlations between Type 2A and Type 2B, and between Type 2B and Type 2C. However, if they were made by different groups–especially in the case of Type 2A and Type 2B, which are painted in the same geographic area and often in the same shelters–one would expect that they would have painted over each other's images, as occurred in the Limpopo. However, the variants are never found superpositioned over each other. Significantly, this scenario also doesn't explain the combination of attributes at RSA RED1.

Problems with the dating of rock art make it difficult to find reliable examples of the third possibility–that of chronological variants of a single tradition. Such arguments are usually made using studies of superpositioning (for example, Vinnicombe 1967; Pager 1971; Pearce 2001) which, as we have seen in the previous chapter, are problematic. Based on superpositioning studies, Ed Eastwood and Ben Smith (2005: 71) suggest that there is an earlier and a later phase of Khoekhoen paintings in the Limpopo. They posit that changes in subject matter, pigment colour and site location occurred over time. The earlier phase is characterised by depictions in red pigment of simple geometrics, finger dots on vertical surfaces and few aprons. These images are usually painted in rock shelters on hillsides or hilltops. The later phase is typically painted in white pigment and features complex geometrics, numerous aprons and finger dots painted on both vertical and horizontal surfaces. These sites are sometimes located on hills but are also found in lower lying areas.

So-called ‘contact’ art perhaps offers a more reliable source of examples of stylistic change over time in traditions as the subject matter gives some indication of the age of the art. An example of this is Johannes Loubser and Gordon Laurens’ (1994) ‘poster-style’ art found in the Caledon River Valley in the Free State (mentioned in Chapter 2; see also Smith & Ouzman 2004: 507-8). This art is distinct from earlier, ‘classic’ fine-line art in manner of depiction, pigment texture, pigment colour, placement and subject matter (*ibid.*: 89). These images are painted in monochrome or bichrome unshaded or ‘blocked’ pigment that has a powdery texture. More black, grey and bright orange colours are used than in classic fine-line paintings. Unlike classic fine-line art, they are painted with wide spaces between them and are rarely superpositioned over one other. They are–with one exception–always painted over fine-line art or in a separate panel but never beneath fine-line art. Subject matter includes horses, sheep, cattle, shields, human figures and eland. These images are also concentrated in a certain area–between Ladybrand and Aliwal North (*ibid.*: 90). Using archaeological and ethno-historical information, Loubser and Laurens (*ibid.*) associate this art with interaction between the San and Sotho-Tswana agro-pastoralists in the eighteenth and nineteenth century (*ibid.*: 116). The animals and material culture involved in this interaction, which forms the subject matter of this art, were incorporated into the shamanistic worldview of the San artists (*ibid.*). Significantly, although the art changes in form, there is still continuity in the belief system of the artists, albeit with some transformations.

If the variants of the Type 2 tradition were made by the same group, over a period of time this would account for the similarities between them, especially in the attributes possibly pertaining to their beliefs such as their shared tendency to draw on fine-line art. This would also explain why there are strong stylistic similarities between Type 2A and Type 2B, and, between Type 2B and Type 2C but not between Type 2A and Type 2C. One might also expect to see a certain ‘direction of change’ in the tradition–the similarities and differences between them would have a pattern across the consecutive variants (although not in the evolutionary sense discussed in Chapter 2). This would also explain the combination of attributes at RSA RED1–this site could be interpreted as representing the development of one variant out of another. When considered together, the solitary case of Type 2A horses (Fig. 14b) and the

amalgamated Type 2A and Type 2B images at RSA RED1 (Fig. 18, 19) could be interpreted as revealing how the art changes over time to become Type 2B art. The historical evidence discussed in the next chapter shows that this is the most likely scenario.

CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to define the relationship between the Maclear-Tsolo rock art found in my survey on the inland plateau and the non-fine-line traditions of Type 2 and Type 3 and to determine whether or not this is a new, discrete rock art tradition. Maclear-Tsolo rock art is found on the inland plateau and is usually painted over and amongst fine-line images. This art is characteristically varied in subject matter, pigment colour and pigment texture. The most standardised image painted is that of the horse, which is often painted with a rider. Maclear-Tsolo images are finger and rough brush-painted and are typically monochrome.

A comparison of this art to Type 2 and Type 3 art showed that this art was quite similar to Type 3 art. I concluded that Maclear-Tsolo rock art does not constitute a new tradition but rather is related to the established non-fine-line traditions. Therefore, I propose that the corpora of Maclear-Tsolo, Type 2 and Type 3 art can be considered as the same tradition and are thus renamed the Type 2 tradition, with the subtraditions of Type 2A, Type 2B and Type 2C. Understanding these corpora of rock art as variants of a single tradition raises two interesting questions. First, who were the possible authors of this rock art tradition? And second, what is the chronological relationship between these variants of the Type 2 tradition? I have proposed three main potential relationships between the variants of the Type 2 tradition. In the next chapter I outline the historical processes that occurred in the region during the nineteenth century and from this basis I discuss the scenario I believe is most likely.

CHAPTER 4
ROCK ART AND HISTORICAL PROCESSES IN THE NORTH EASTERN CAPE

As we have seen, Maclear-Tsolo rock art can be considered a variant of what I have labelled the Type 2 tradition. Questions remain, however, about the nature of the relationships between Type 2A, Type 2B and Type 2C art, specifically with regards to their authorship and chronology. Unfortunately, at this point, there is no ethnographical or historical evidence that ties any specific group to the production of this tradition. This is a limitation to our possible understanding of this art. However, historical records can give us a relatively detailed picture of the major processes occurring in the north Eastern Cape during the nineteenth century, which forms a basis for hypotheses regarding the identity of the makers of this rock art and the chronological relationships between its variants.

Blundell (2004) and Mallen (2008) have already suggested possible authors for what I have now termed Type 2A and Type 2B art. Blundell (2004: 129) has suggested that Type 2A art may have been made by non-San individuals living with San bands. Mallen (2008) has postulated that the authors of Type 2B art were a small raiding group composed of individuals from diverse ethno-linguistic backgrounds. As we shall see, several mixed raiding bands are mentioned in the historical documents, including those led by 'Coloured' individuals such as Hans Lochenberg, Smith Pommer, Esau du Plooy and Adam Paul, as well as Sotho groups under Joel, Lehana and Lebenya. There were probably other mixed raiding groups in the north Eastern Cape not recorded in historical documents that may have made Type 2B rock art. The question of the authorship of the recently located variant, Type 2C, depends on the nature of the relationship between it and Type 2B art, which is discussed later.

There is a substantial amount of historical information regarding this area of the Eastern Cape. These sources include the diaries, reminiscences and correspondence of settlers and visitors to the area (Hook 1908; Scully 1913; Anders 1935; Lister 1949; Harber 1975; Shephard 1976), missionaries (Callaway 1919, 1969; Dower 1978) and colonial officers (Harding 1850; Stanford 1910; Brownlee 1923; Fynn 1950; Macquarrie 1958, 1962; Orpen 1964), as well as oral history (Kingon 1916; Soga

1930; Hammond-Tooke 1962, 1998, 1999; Jolly 1986, 1999; Prins 1990). These sources are well-known and have been widely used in studies of the southern San and rock art in the south-eastern mountains (Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976; Campbell 1987; Dowson 1994, 1998, 2000; Jolly 1994; Blundell 2004; Wright & Mazel 2007; Challis 2008, 2009; Mallen 2008). They reveal that social relationships in the north Eastern Cape in the nineteenth century were highly complex and there were many, often small, groups moving about, with unstable relations between them.

I divide the historical processes occurring in nineteenth-century north Eastern Cape–and the south-eastern seaboard in general–into three phases characterised by particular trends: Independence (1800-1858), Contestation (1858-1873) and Colonial Control (1873-1900). This is not an absolute chronology but rather groupings of events that provide a framework within which to evaluate changes in the relations between different groups in the region. In addition, these historical phases are not discrete and certain processes may continue in later phases. With these processes in mind, I turn to the issue of the relationship between the variants of the Type 2 tradition. I then use the historical phases outlined to form a chronological framework in which to hypothesise changes within the Type 2 tradition.

Problems with an historical approach

Much of the history of the San in the nineteenth century focuses on their interaction with other groups, which has become the subject of much heated debate. Concerns regarding research of the San and how they are represented in academic–and popular–literature have been raised in the Kalahari revisionist debate that emerged in the late 1980s (Denbow & Wilmsen 1986; Wilmsen 1989; Solway & Lee 1990; Wilmsen & Denbow 1990; Gordon 1992; Kent 1992). Ethnographic work–especially that of the Harvard Kalahari Project–has been criticised for misrepresenting Kalahari San groups as pristine and isolated (Wilmsen & Denbow 1990). In addition, they have also been presented as modern correlates of ancient Stone Age hunter-gatherers, 'living fossils' that had not changed for thousands of years (*ibid.*: 503-4). This traditionalist view did not take interaction with neighbouring Bantu-speaking communities into account and San groups were seen as closed cultures largely unaffected by interaction (*ibid.*: 505; Kent 1992: 45-6). Revisionists have argued that San groups need to be placed within

regional and even international networks of political and economic interaction with other groups. They regard San societies as being transformed by the influences of other peoples (Denbow & Wilmsen 1986: 1514). Hence, San groups were subordinated to Bantu-speaking groups as a result of colonisation (Wilmsen & Denbow 1990: 496). Revisionists also argue that hunting and gathering as a mode of subsistence in the Kalahari relates to historical conditions and class formation rather than being essential to San culture or identity (*ibid.*: 519). Revisionists have in turn been criticised for relegating San groups to an economic underclass of dominant Bantu-speaker society (Solway & Lee 1990; Kent 1992). Many researchers disagree that the influence of other groups necessarily leads to San subordination (Solway & Lee: 1990: 109). They also disagree with the insinuation that San society is incapable of adapting to change (*ibid.*: 110). As stated by Susan Kent (1992: 56), revisionists have granted the Kalahari San history while denying them autonomy. Rather, groups "can be autonomous without being isolated and engaged without being incorporated" (Solway & Lee 1990: 110). Another important issue is that revisionists only consider Bantu-speakers as influencing San culture and not the other way round. In general, this debate has highlighted the necessity of situating specific San groups within their own particular socio-historical contexts instead of making generalisations (Solway & Lee 1990; Kent 1992).

These issues also apply to the San groups in the north Eastern Cape and their relationships with other groups. It is important to acknowledge that San groups and individuals had agency and were not merely reactive, 'passive receptors'. As much as they were tied into the processes of colonisation occurring in the nineteenth century, they worked within this context to negotiate their position in the changing political and economic climate, as they had been doing for centuries in their interaction with Bantu-speaking groups. Even when living with Bantu-speaking groups they did not merely become subordinate vassals but used their resources–specifically their spirituality–to resist Bantu-speaker 'domination'. This is discussed later with reference to rainmaking and other rituals performed by the San (see also Prins 1994). It is also important to note that the San are just as likely to have influenced Bantu-speaking society and beliefs as theirs are likely to have been influenced (see Prins 1996, 1999; Hammond-Tooke 1998, 1999). A common pitfall of focusing on changes in San society associated with interaction with other groups is the insinuation that

contact is the only major source of change in San society (see Blundell 2004 for critiques of Dowson and Campbell). Archaeological evidence indicates that this is not the case as San society has undoubtedly undergone changes outside of interaction (see Binneman & Hall 1993, Hall 2000 and Pearce 2008 for evidence from San burials). It is important for rock art researchers–and historians to a lesser degree–to demonstrate that interaction between San groups and others is a far more elaborate and complex process than revisionists–or traditionalists–make it out to be. Importantly, the Type 2 rock art tradition offers a prime opportunity to refine our understanding of the complexity of San interaction with other groups in the nineteenth century and the role that material culture played in such processes.

Another major issue is that of ethnic identities in the nineteenth century, especially regarding the San (see Jolly 1996b and Challis 2008 regarding the complexities of the term 'Bushman' in historical records). As we shall see in the ensuing section, identities in the nineteenth century north Eastern Cape were complex and changing. For example, there were local San living in the Drakensberg, and there were San that moved into the region from places such as the Witteberg native reserve to the north-west near the present town of Aliwal North (Wright 1971: 168; Vinnicombe 1976:29), as well as from the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony, who were part of multi-ethnic, or creolised, groups (Challis 2008). There were three groups identified as 'Bushman'–by colonial officials and other 'Bushmen'–in the north Eastern Cape in the mid nineteenth century. Two were led by a San individual, whilst the third cannot be confirmed to have been (Harding 1850; Stanford 1910; Challis 2008). This group, the AmaTola, seems to have had a slightly different identity to the other, San-led, 'Bushman' groups (although they constructed themselves as San) and they originated, as a creolised group, on the eastern frontier (*cf.* Challis 2008). For this reason, I treat them as a mixed raiding band and rather use the bands of Nqabayo and Mbwebo as examples of San–or San-led–bands. I also must note that neither the historical records nor the subject matter of the Type 2 tradition offers much information for understanding the meaning of the art or the identity of the makers. Therefore, I am cautious in ascribing meaning to the art and in hypothesising the beliefs of the makers with regards to the adoption and adaptation of the beliefs of constituent group members–i.e. creolisation (defined in Chapter 1). In light of this, I start with what is most known about–the San–and hypothesise from here.

Independence: 1800 to 1858

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Drakensberg and its foothills were an important area for San groups in the north Eastern Cape who hunted and, like most other groups, raided stock from neighbouring groups and European colonists (Derricourt 1974: 50; Wright 1971). Although other groups probably traversed this area, the Drakensberg formed the core of San territory in the north Eastern Cape at this time and they were the only occupants of this area. Therefore, one would expect that they exercised some sort of control or claim over this area (see Chapter 5 for issues with territoriality). San groups were fairly independent, although they interacted closely with Nguni-speaking groups and co-operated in raids with them. Raiding was an important economic activity amongst the groups living in the south-eastern mountains during the nineteenth century and the San were well-known for their raiding abilities (Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976; Wright & Mazel 2007; Challis 2008, 2009). Non-San individuals often joined San bands for short periods to raid with them (Stanford 1910). In one of these bands, it can be argued that the San controlled the acculturation of non-San members and maintained a distinct San identity (Blundell 2004). From the 1850s, the arrival of new groups in the north Eastern Cape and measures taken by colonial officials against raiding believed to have been perpetrated by the San further complicated relationships in the region and increased the tension between groups.

During the nineteenth century, relations between different groups in the north Eastern Cape were complex and fast-changing. These relations included fragile alliances and cycles of raids and counter-raids between rival groups. The main Cape Nguni-speaking agro-pastoralist groups inhabiting the Eastern Cape at the beginning of the nineteenth century were the Mpondo, Mpondomise and Thembu (Soga 1930; Fig. 49).

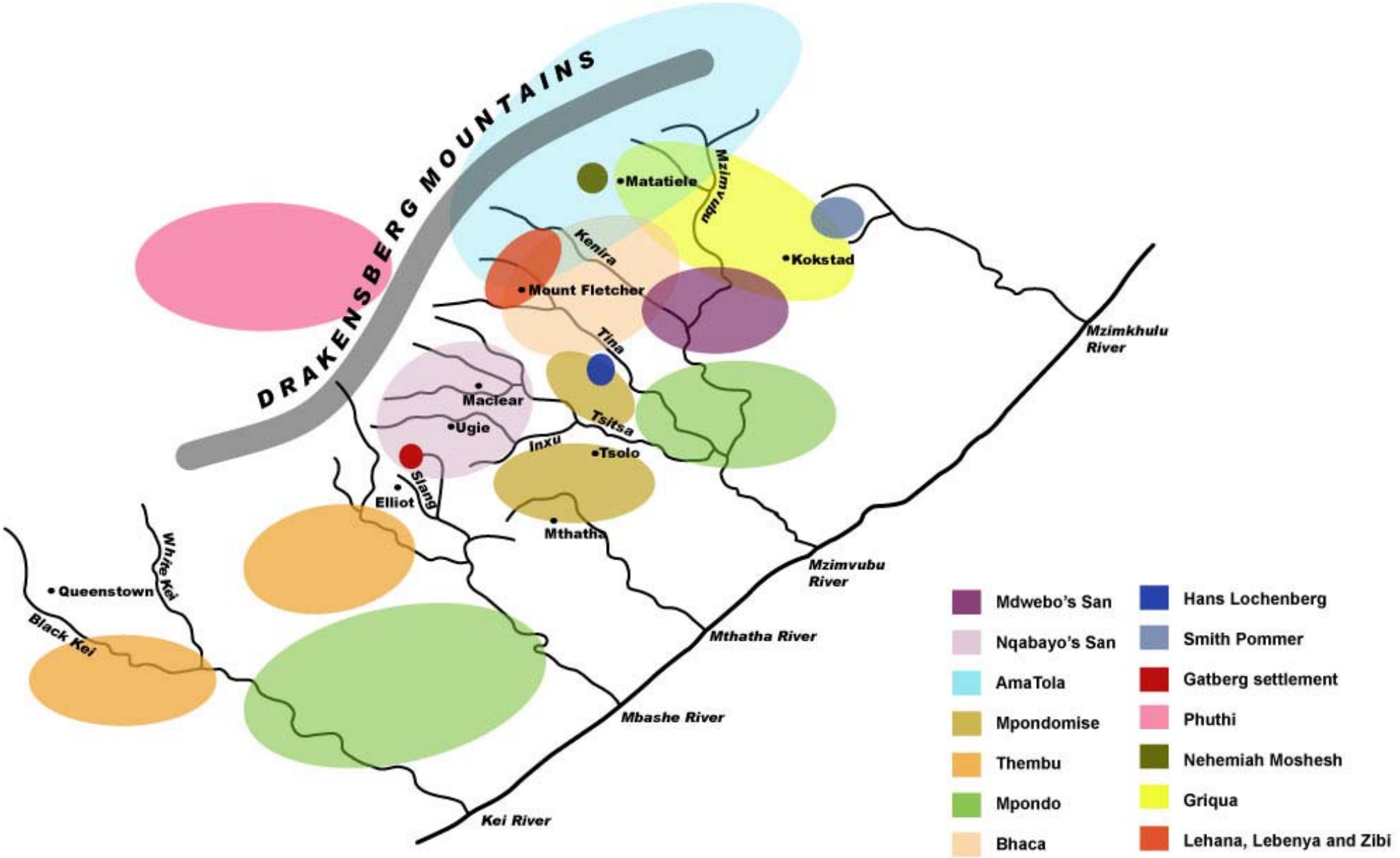


Fig. 49. Map showing the groups inhabiting the north Eastern Cape during the second half of the nineteenth century.

By the 1820s, the conflicts of the *Mfecane* had significantly affected the region, causing disruption amongst these groups (Derricourt 1974: 39). *Mfecane* means "the crushing" and refers to the conflicts and movements of groups associated with the rise of the Zulu kingdom in Kwa-Zulu Natal in the early nineteenth century (Mitchell 2002a: 369). The series of conflicts that ensued were concerned with access to land, cattle, food and labour and the underlying causes of these processes can be found in the adoption of maize and the transformation of age-sets into regiments (Hamilton 1995; Wright 1995). The effects of *Mfecane* were wide-reaching, and groups were displaced even as far as the Zambezi River (Mitchell 2002a: 369). Several such groups moved into the northern regions of the Eastern Cape, most of them becoming known as Mfengu. The Bhaca, the largest immigrant group, settled in the Mount Frere area and became a powerful entity in the region from the 1830s (Soga 1930: 343-4). They frequently raided their neighbours and, at one time, the entire group constantly moved around, stopping for only a planting season (Hammond-Tooke 1962).

San groups in the north Eastern Cape interacted closely with Bantu-speaking groups in a number of ways, including trade, intermarriage, stock herding and raiding–both raiding partnerships and raiding of one another (Soga 1930; Fynn 1950; Wright 1971; Jolly 1996a, c). San groups entered into alliances with Bantu-speaking groups and gave them a share of the stock they had raided in return for a certain extent of protection from these chiefs (Wright 1971: 189; Wright & Mazel 2007: 88). With increasing pressure on San groups in the north Eastern Cape during the nineteenth century, such coalitions became vital (Wright 1971: 189). These alliances went further than mere co-operation and often Bantu-speakers joined San groups for periods of time (Stanford 1910; Whitelaw 2009). Historical records show that as early as the end of the 1820s there was a multi-ethnic group of elephant hunters living on the lower Mzimvubu River led by a San individual (Lister 1949: 118). The San of the north Eastern Cape were not only involved with the other ethno-linguistic groups living in the region but also with broader processes of colonisation and state formation on the subcontinent. Prior to the 1830s, several San individuals had moved into the north Eastern Cape from the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony to escape the pressures of colonial presence (*ibid.*). Mixed raiding groups from the eastern frontier started to move into the north Eastern Cape in the mid 1830s, bringing with them horses and guns (Challis 2008: 174). Another process affecting the San of this time were the

conflicts of the *Mfecane,* which was a major cause of Bantu-speakers opting to join San-led raiding groups (Dowson 1995). Many Nguni-speakers had become impoverished and saw raiding as a means to obtain the cattle necessary to restore their wealth (see Whitelaw 2009 for the possible antiquity of this practice).

Two groups led by San individuals were recorded in the north Eastern Cape during the mid 1800s–those under Mdwebo and Nqabayo. These San bands were made up of a core of San individuals and people of other ethno-linguistic groups who joined the group for short periods of time (*cf*. Blundell 2004). Such groups seem to have coalesced around stock raiding, which was an important economic activity in the region. Mdwebo's band was located near the Bisi River, a tributary of the Mzimvbu River (Wright 1971: 19). The core of this band was made up of thirteen San men (Harding 1850), sometimes joined by Nguni-speaking individuals–such as Mpondomise under Mandela–bringing the number of people in the band to over 100 (Wright 1971: 54-56). This increase in number may be due to the fact that Mdwebo was related to Mandela (*ibid.*: 56). San groups in the north Eastern Cape had a key raiding alliance with the Bhaca in the 1840s and the early 1850s (*ibid.*: 17). In 1849, Mdwebo's band moved south to live amongst the Bhaca (*ibid.*: 126). His band often raided with the Bhaca and even when they raided on their own they shared what they had obtained. Several San lived close to the Bhaca chief Mchithwa and owned livestock, some of which were tended by Mchithwa's brother (Fynn 1950).

Nqabayo's band lived to the south of Mdwebo near the headwaters of the Xuka and the Mooi Rivers and numbered approximately 43 men (Stanford 1910: 435). They were highly mobile and traversed vast areas in their raiding activities. Nqabayo and his band often came into conflict with other groups, especially the Thembu and European farmers (*ibid.*: 437). Most of our information about this group comes from the testimony of a young Thembu man, Silayi, who joined Nqabayo's band for almost three years. Silayi originally lived with the Thembu under Jumba on the White Kei River. In approximately 1850, he moved to the Tsitsa River, where he met a Khoekhoen man named Hans, his son Jan and his half San nephew, Ngqika (*ibid.*: 435). They set out on a raiding expedition together and joined up with Nqabayo's group to ensure success. The group found Nqabayo at the Prentjiesberg near the present-day town of Ugie. They accompanied five of Nqabayo's men on a raid and

returned with several horses. The San men, however, resented the presence of inexperienced non-San men on this raid (*ibid.:* 436). Afterwards, Silayi returned home to give the chief a share of the spoils. However, the Thembu–fearing reprisal from the European farmers–detained Silayi and two others, whom they later released (*ibid.*). This treatment caused them to leave the Thembu and join Nqabayo's band. They were welcomed by Nqabayo only because Ngqika was half San (*ibid.*). During his stay with the San, Silayi married Hans's daughter, Ndaralu (*ibid.).* After almost three years, he left Nqabayo's group at the request of his family (*ibid.*: 439-440). Hans and Ngqika moved on at the same time and eventually settled amongst the Griqua in Kokstad (*ibid.*: 439).

Silayi's account highlights several important points regarding San-led bands at this time. His relationship with Hans and his family shows that cultural categories were quite fluid and a lot of mixing occurred between individuals of different cultural groups on a rather *ad hoc* basis. This, however, seems a bit different when it came to Nqabayo's band. Here, I argue, there was differentiation between San and non-San individuals. Silayi was only allowed to join the band because he was accompanied by people of San descent, revealing that–at least at this point–Nqabayo may not have easily welcomed people of other groups. The fact that San individuals led these mixed groups and that others had to ask permission to join them suggests that, at least in this group, the San were in control of acculturation.

An important factor in the increasingly complex relations between the San and other groups in the north Eastern Cape was the immigration of groups into the Eastern Cape due to colonial expansion at the Cape and Natal colonies. The result was that, from the mid 1830s, disparate groups were pushed out of these areas into the Eastern Cape (Wright 1971: 128; Challis 2008: 180). According to Challis (2008), one of the mixed raiding groups to relocate from the eastern frontier to the north Eastern Cape during the mid 1930s were the Amatola, mentioned in Chapter 2. As with most other mixed raiding bands in the north Eastern Cape, there are few records of this group (Challis 2008: 178). However, the AmaTola were probably the largest and most notorious raiding group in the region (Challis 2008: 188). They numbered between one hundred and two hundred men and were led by Biligwana (Harding 1850; Wright 1971: 126). This large group was probably divided into a number of constituent bands (Challis

2008: 249). They inhabited the area north of the Bhaca, at the headwaters of the Mzimvubu River, both below and above the Drakensberg escarpment. It is likely that in the late 1830s, the AmaTola were allied with the Bhaca and raided with and/or for them (*ibid.*: 188). This alliance, however, is likely to have ended after a commando of Afrikaans farmers retaliated against the Bhaca–whom they thought were responsible for raiding them–at the end of 1840, killing 150 of them (Wright 1971: 38; Vinnicombe 1976: 24). The AmaTola were at enmity with the San-led groups under Mdwebo and Nqabayo (Harding 1850). This was possibly because they were not "Bushmen in the received sense" and were not native to the area (Challis 2008: 242). Since the San in this group were probably from the eastern frontier, they probably spoke a different language to that spoken by Nqabayo's and Mdwebo's bands (*ibid.*: 241-2). Furthermore, there were differences in economy between these groups. Unlike the groups under Nqabayo and Mdwebo, the AmaTola accumulated horses, cattle, goats and sheep in large numbers and could be considered hunter-pastoralists (*ibid.*: 244).

There seems to have been a fresh wave of newcomers in the early 1850s, mostly 'Coloureds' of mixed descent from the Cape Colony. After the end of conflict on the eastern frontier in 1850, several mutineers of the predominantly 'Coloured' regiment–Cape Mounted Rifles–and rebel 'Coloureds' from the disbanded Kat River Khoekhoen settlement, moved into the Eastern Cape (Marais 1957: 216, 222, 245; Ross 1976a: 109). Some of these 'Coloureds' probably joined groups such as the AmaTola (Challis 2008: 225). By 1855, there were an estimated four hundred 'Coloured' rebels and mutineers in the Eastern Cape (Theal 1908b: 445).

One of the Kat River rebels was Smith Pommer, who settled in the north Eastern Cape on the Mvenyane River, a tributary of the Mzimkhulu River (Shephard 1976: 68-9). Pommer and his followers raided neighbouring groups during the 1850s, making enemies of the Bhaca (Ross 1976a: 97). They lived in the area inhabited by the AmaTola and may have lived with them or at least may been allied with them (Challis 2008: 263). By the 1860s, Pommer had built up significant sway over certain smaller chiefdoms in the area (Marais 1957: 67). Through an alliance with the Amaxama chief, Sidoi, his group engaged in trade in guns and transport riding between the Natal Colony and Mpondo territory (Shephard 1976). Pommer also built up relations with

the Griqua, who moved into the area in 1863. Some time after 1863, the Bhaca mounted a retaliatory attack against Pommer's group and it was broken up (*ibid.*: 70). Pommer then went to live with the Griqua and he acquired a post in the Griqua government (Marais 1957: 67; Shephard 1976: 70).

Hans Lochenberg, son of a fugitive Dutch hunter and trader who had traversed the north Eastern Cape as early as the 1820s, was another 'Coloured' man to lead a mixed raiding group in the north Eastern Cape (Holt 1953). His group numbered approximately two hundred people and consisted mainly of Mfengu and Mpondomise, as well as a few San individuals (Wright 1971: 118; Vinnicombe 1976: 57). This group lived on the upper reaches of the Tina River, in the Mount Fletcher area (Wright 1971: 118). Lochenberg had close ties with the Bhaca chief Mchithwa before his death in 1851. His group were involved in trade between the San and the Mpondo (Vinnicombe 1976: 60). He had close relations with the San under Mdwebo and Nqabayo and regarded them as being under his protection (*ibid.*).

Another group of so-called 'Coloureds', numbering between forty and fifty men under the leadership of a man named Martinus, became closely associated with Mdwebo's band (Wright 1971: 131; Vinnicombe 1976: 64). In 1851, they parted ways with Mdwebo and the group moved to the upper Mzimvubu River, joined by a few San individuals who had become unsure of their alliance with the Bhaca due to pressure from colonial officials against San raiders (*ibid.*: 132). This is interesting in that, instead of non-San individuals seeking to join San-led bands, San individuals were now leaving San-led bands to join mixed groups led by non-San individuals. Later in 1851, Martinus's group raided the Bhaca, who then retaliated. The Bhaca chief Mchithwa was killed in the clash (*ibid.*: 132). The alliance between Mdwebo and Nqabayo and the Bhaca broke down in the early 1850s due to tension caused by efforts of colonial officials to curb raids on the Natal colony–discussed below–and after this, these bands moved south and co-operated more closely with the Mpondomise (Wright 1971: 131-2; Vinnicombe 1976: 64-5). There are some reports that after this Mdwebo travelled farther south, crossing the Mthatha River and is not heard of again (Wright 1971: 132). Other reports state that in 1852 he moved north to live with the Bhaca again (Vinnicombe 1976: 65).

Raiding groups based in the north Eastern Cape often targeted European farmers living in the Natal colony. With the expansion of the Natal Colony, colonial officials became increasingly concerned about such raids, which were believed to be conducted primarily by the San, although they were in fact not the only culprits. Other groups endeavoured to maintain this illusion in order to divert suspicion away from themselves. Relations between the San and certain Bantu-speaking groups became strained due to steps taken by the Natal government to curb 'San' raids on Natal farmers. These measures took several forms and impacted the north Eastern Cape both directly and indirectly. The Mpondo played a key role in the Natal government's strategies against San raiders living in the north Eastern Cape. In 1844, the Natal government signed a treaty with Chief Faku, which held him responsible for all the people in the area from the Mthatha River to the Mzimvubu River, from the Drakensberg to the sea (Brownlee 1923: 92-95). He was also responsible for bringing to justice any criminals harbouring in this territory. The Natal government used this treaty to pressurise Faku into taking action against 'San' raiding groups. Early in 1846, the Natal government requested that Faku return the stock stolen during recent raids on Natal and hand over the suspected raiders. Faku responded that the San were not under his control and were independent entities (Wright 1971: 57-58). Furthermore, he claimed that the area above the secondary escarpment had never been under his control (Macquarrie 1962: 40).

One of the key measures taken by the Natal government against raids on European settlers in the colony was to settle Bantu-speaking groups at the base of the Natal Drakensberg. The first of these buffer locations was established in 1847, followed by a further four locations in 1849 (Wright 1971: 68, 93). The Natal government also provided these groups with arms and ammunition to fend off raiders (Wright 1971: 97; Vinnicombe 1976: 54). The establishment of buffer locations was not immediately effective and often the raiders passed right through these locations to raid European farmers beyond (Wright 1971: 100; Vinnicombe 1976: 39). The inhabitants of the buffer locations were also raided, increasing tension between raiders and these groups (Wright 1971: 68; Vinnicombe 1976: 51).

In 1849, the colonial government took more direct action against ‘San’ raiders based in the north Eastern Cape and sent Henry Francis Fynn to probe who was responsible for recent raids on the Natal colony (Wright 1971: 114). Fynn–whose official mandate was rather vague–took an aggressive stance against suspected raiders. Fynn’s actions significantly disturbed relations between San groups and others in the region, especially the Bhaca. He requested that Mchithwa, Mandela and Hans Lochenberg hand over the San raiders with whom they were associated and return the stock taken by them (*ibid.*: 115-119). At Fynn’s request, Faku sent a group of Mpondo to act against the Bhaca (*ibid.*: 118). Fynn also offered cattle as payment to those bringing him San suspects (Vinnicombe 1976: 60). Wesleyan missionaries in the north Eastern Cape intervened, arguing that Fynn did not have enough evidence against these groups (Wright 1971: 120). The Natal government then ordered an inquiry into the matter, which was undertaken by Walter Harding at the end of 1849 (*ibid.*: 122, 124). Harding demanded Faku remunerate the Natal government for thefts on Natal (*ibid.*: 130). Faku complied, although some cattle were later returned to him in hopes of gaining a cession of land (*ibid.*: 130). After this, Faku fined the chiefs under him living in the Drakensberg foothills 3000 cattle for aiding San groups in raids on Natal (Vinnicombe 1976: 67). In addition, it was reported that Faku, angered at the loss of livestock, attacked the San and killed many of them (*ibid.*: 64). The effects of the breakdown in relations between the San and certain groups–especially the Mpondo and Bhaca–brought about by political pressure from colonial officials may have caused the decrease in raiding on Natal in the early 1850s (Wright & Mazel 2007: 92). After this, in the mid 1850s, the San strengthened their relations with the Mpondomise and the Phuthi and raided the Natal Colony with these groups from 1856 (*ibid.*: 93).

The tensions exacerbated by colonial officials also affected the AmaTola. Challis (2008: 237) notes that by 1850 the AmaTola were isolated and at odds with not only the San-led groups under Nqabayo and Mdwebo but also with their former allies, the Bhaca. During Fynn’s and Harding’s investigations, members of Nqabayo’s and Mdwebo’s bands–as well as others–consistently blamed the raids on Natal on the AmaTola (Harding 1850; Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976). After the investigation, a group under Mdwebo, along with ‘Coloured’ gunmen, attacked the AmaTola to clear any suspicion of their own raiding activities (Wright 1971: 128,130; 2007: 125,128). Five AmaTola men were killed and seventeen women and children were taken as

prisoners and presented to a local missionary (Wright 1971: 128). This attack may have been part of a succession of raids and counter-raids between Mdwebo and the AmaTola (Challis 2008: 265). After this, it is likely that the AmaTola allied with the Phuthi (*ibid.*: 262). Not much is known about their activities after this, although there is evidence of their continued presence into the 1860s (Wright 1971:152,157-8; Vinnicombe 1976:78, 94).

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the San groups in the north Eastern Cape were for the most part independent entities. They were the sole inhabitants of the Drakensberg and would have exercised some claim over the area, perhaps through painting and access to supernatural resources (see Chapter 5 for further discussion). San groups incorporated individuals of different descent and, at least in one case, controlled the process of acculturation of these members. They were well-known for their raiding skill and this would have made associating with them appealing to others with the same aims, as in the case of Silayi (Stanford 1910; Wright 1971: 189). Raiding groups used the Drakensberg as a refuge to avoid being traced with stolen stock and the San's intimate knowledge of the Drakensberg, which was notoriously difficult to navigate (Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976), probably constituted an important element of their raiding prowess. Although the known San groups were relatively small, and in this sense were not powerful in comparison to other groups, their raiding prowess and probably also their access to supernatural resources afforded them some status in the region so that they were at least on a par with other groups. Unfortunately, raiding caused tension between San groups and others such as the Bhaca and the AmaTola. This was exacerbated by the Natal government's attempts to stop raids on colonial settlers. Although the San in the north Eastern Cape remained influential and autonomous into the 1850s, after 1849 several occurrences signalled the beginning of the end of their independence. The early 1850s saw the end of Mdwebo's band after colonial pressure deteriorated their alliance with the Bhaca and some of the San members left to join a 'Coloured' band. This suggests that, perhaps by the early 1850s, confidence in San leadership of raiding groups–and therefore San influence in the region–was starting to decline.

Contestation: 1858 to 1873

This period is marked by a significant change in relations in the north Eastern Cape. From the 1850s, the position of San bands in the north Eastern Cape was gradually compromised and relations started to shift to their detriment. By the end of the 1850s, the independence of San raiding bands had come to an end. Most of the remaining individuals went to live amongst Bantu-speaker groups below the secondary escarpment. This meant that it is most likely that the San no longer exercised control over the high mountains and the inland plateau. During the 1860s–as a result of separate processes–the inland plateau was settled by Bantu-speakers for the first time (Feely 1987: 42), as well as the Griqua–a powerful Christianised group made up of people of different and mixed descent, although originally of Khoekhoen ancestry (Ross 1974, 1976a; Dower 1978). As a result of these arrivals, the inland plateau became highly contested.

Colonial officials certainly increased tensions between groups in the north Eastern Cape and retaliations against San groups increased. The final blow came in 1858 when the Thembu chief, Mgudhlwa, retaliated against Nqabayo's raids and attacked his band at Gubenxa southwest of Maclear. Almost the entire band was killed. Only two boys and one woman survived the attack, while a few men–including Nqabayo–were out hunting and thus escaped (Stanford 1910: 439). They fled to Chief Mditshwa of the western Mpondomise. A few of the men, including Nqabayo, stayed amongst the Mpondomise for a short period before returning to the Drakensberg. They probably continued to raid, possibly with the Phuthi, a mixed Sotho group under Moorosi that lived above the Drakensberg escarpment (Wright 1971: 152). The last Nqabayo and his companions were heard of they were staying near the headwaters of the Mzimvubu River (Stanford 1910: 439). This marks the end of Nqabayo's band as an independent entity.

From the late 1850s, population pressure in the adjacent areas of the Orange Free State and Lesotho started to affect the north Eastern Cape (Wright 1971: 166). As we saw in Chapter 1, this region was known as Nomansland for much of the nineteenth century and colonial officials saw this as a vacant area to which Bantu-speaking groups could be relocated (Brownlee 1923: 44). Several groups relocated to the north

Eastern Cape from the late 1850s as a result of land shortage and conflict between Afrikaans farmers and Sotho groups in the Free State (Wright & Mazel 2007: 109). In 1859, Nehemiah Moshesh moved down the Drakensberg to settle in the Matatiele area at the headwaters of the Mzimvubu River (Brownlee 1923: 44; Ross 1974: 131). However, with the arrival of the Griqua in 1863, Nehemiah's group was forced to return to Lesotho after conflict with this group. In the early 1870s, Joseph Orpen, Chief Magistrate of East Griqualand, allowed Nehemiah's and his followers to return (Brownlee 1923: 50). Nehemiah claimed to have eradicated San raiders from the mountains of the north Eastern Cape (Ross 1976a: 108). While this claim cannot be validated, it is an indication of his hostility to the San and his presence is sure to have impinged upon San activity in the area.

By the early 1860s, there was a settlement of 'Coloured' people at Gatberg, near Maclear, known as the 'Bastard Location' (Anonymous 1978: 183; Ross 1974: 131). The Gatberg was home to a mix of people of different descent, including slaves and people of Khoekhoen descent who had fled the Cape Colony, as well as a few Griqua individuals (Ross 1976b: 45). This settlement formed the 'Raad of Freemansland' under Esau du Plooy and Adam Paul, which remained independent of Griqua rule (Ross 1976a: 109). In 1863, William Murray travelled to the Gatberg area to establish a mission station, which he named Ugie (Smit 1964: 14). The Gatberg settlement numbered 354 persons by the mid 1870s (Ross 1976a: 110).

Groups also settled in the south-western portion of the north Eastern Cape. The Thembu Paramount, Gangeliswe, allocated land at the headwaters of the Xuka River in the Drakensberg foothills to the Amavundle, under Stokwe Tyali in the 1860s (Macquarrie 1958: 57). Gangeliswe also granted land to Europeans to serve as buffers on his borders with other groups (*ibid.*: 59). The Slang River Settlement, located in the Slang or Kowe Valley, was established in 1861 (Ross 1976b: 46). This includes the settlement that later became the town of Elliot (Macquarrie 1958: 59).

The Griqua, under Adam Kok, relocated to the north Eastern Cape in 1863. They left their home in Philippolis in the Free State due to European encroachment on their land (Ross 1974, 1976a; Dower 1978). They journeyed over the Maloti Mountains and settled in the Mount Currie area and later, in 1872, their base was moved to

Kokstad. The colonial government allowed them to take control of the area west of the Mzimkhulu River to the north of the Mpondo, hoping they would be a stabilising force in the region (Ross 1976b: 42). The Griqua were a Christianised creolised group, including San individuals, a few European traders and many uprooted 'Coloured' individuals (Ross 1976a: 109). Several smaller multi-ethnic groups–such as that under Smith Pommer–became associated with the Griqua and Griqua individuals also joined other groups such as the group at the Gatberg. The arrival of the Griqua in the north Eastern Cape was followed by ongoing conflict with surrounding groups such as the Sotho, Mpondomise, Bhaca and Mpondo (Wright 1971: 167, 2007: 127). Raiding within the north Eastern Cape increased as there was no group powerful enough to create political stability in the region (Wright & Mazel 2007: 112).

Several Sotho groups were also offered land in the north Eastern Cape after conflict with the Free State Boers between 1965 and 1968 (*ibid.*: 111-2). In 1867, a dispossessed Sotho group under Makwai moved to the 'waste land' of the north Eastern Cape, where he settled near the Mzimvubu River in Griqua territory (Brownlee 1923: 46, 47). Between 1867 and 1869, the Sotho chiefs Lebenya and Lehana, a Tlokwa chief and a Hlubi group under Zibi were allocated land in the Mount Fletcher district near the Tina River (*ibid.*: 46, 129). At the end of the 1860s, a Sotho group under Joel moved down from Lesotho and was offered land in the Maclear area (Macquarrie 1958: 30, 164). In 1873, a traveller through the area noted that Joel was attached to the residence of the local magistrate, Joseph Orpen (Anonymous 1978: 191). He officiated several meetings between the magistrate and leaders in the area (Orpen 1964: 191). Many places in the high mountains near Maclear bear witness to Joel's influence in the area, such as "Joel's stronghold", "Joel's Nek" (Macquarrie 1958: 164) and "Joelshoek" which still features in current maps.

The instability in the north Eastern Cape caused by the arrival of new groups and the devastation of San bands in the late 1850s affected raiding patterns, including those on Natal, which stopped for a period during the early 1860s (Wright & Mazel 2007: 93). The influx of new groups into areas previously inhabited by the San impinged upon the last vestiges of autonomy of the remnant San individuals in the mountains

(*ibid.*: 93-94). In the late 1860s, a group of San, possibly the last independent remnants of Nqabayo's band, joined the Mpondomise and settled amongst them, once again undertaking raids on Natal (Wright 1971: 140). From this time, raids on Natal decreased until 1872 when they ceased altogether (*ibid.*: 144). This marks the end of San groups based in the Drakensberg of the central portion of the north Eastern Cape and a shift in the location of the centre of San habitation and, importantly, of spiritual power from the high mountains to the secondary escarpment.

This phase is marked by the end of San independence in the north Eastern Cape and increasing instability in the region. As we have seen, at the end of the 1850s, the remaining influential San-led band in the central portion of the north Eastern Cape, led by Nqabayo, was attacked and disbanded. The few remaining members went to live amongst Bantu-speaking groups below the secondary escarpment, while some returned to the mountains. The demise of Nqabayo's group probably would have left a power vacuum in the region as the San lost their standing as a raiding group inhabiting this area. By the 1860s, the San had lost sway over the inland plateau. At the same time, as part of separate processes, other groups such as the Griqua and several Sotho groups started to settle on the inland plateau for the first time. Much conflict and contestation ensued between these groups as they vied for influence in the region. This would have aided the disintegration of the autonomy of the remnants of San groups based in the Drakensberg.

Colonial Control: 1873 to 1900

This historical phase marks the extension of colonial administration over the north Eastern Cape. Magistrates were appointed during this period and by the 1890s, the whole of the Eastern Cape beyond the Kei River had been officially annexed by the Cape Colony. With the extension of colonial control over the region came the settlement of European farmers on the inland plateau in significant numbers. By the early 1880s, the inland plateau had been set aside for European occupation and several towns sprang up in the region. These processes meant that, for raiding groups that used this area as a refuge, access to the Drakensberg was becoming gradually restricted. The few San individuals who remained in the area were living amongst the Mpondomise in the Tsolo district below the secondary escarpment, acting as

rainmakers and painting at Ngcengane Shelter (Jolly 1986, 1992, 1999; Jolly & Prins 1994; Lewis-Williams 1986; Prins 1990).

In 1873, Joseph Orpen was appointed British Resident of Nomansland and Magistrate of the Gatberg division, which later became the districts of Mount Fletcher and Maclear (Brownlee 1923: 47; Orpen 1964: 2). He was appointed specifically to start the annexation process in the region and was given extensive powers (Orpen 1964: 1). Orpen initially resided in the foothills of the Drakensberg (Smit 1964: 9; Harber 1975: 16; Anonymous 1978: 189). Orpen's residence in the high mountains would have resulted in knowledge of the movement of groups in this area and his presence probably hampered the operation of raiding groups in the high mountains. Later, when his family joined him, he moved his residence to the area near the junction of the Tsitsa and Inxu Rivers (Harber 1975: 16). By the end of 1874, Orpen had succeeded in persuading the Mpondomise, the Gatberg settlement and the groups under Lehana, Lebenya and Zibi to accept British rule (Ross 1976a: 127). In 1875, Orpen resigned and was replaced by John Thomson, who became the Magistrate of Maclear (Brownlee 1923: 52). Later, magistrates were also stationed in Qumbu and Tsolo. By 1878, the whole of the Eastern Cape, with the exception of the Mpondo area, had come under the control of magistrates (Saunders 1974: 188). East Griqualand, including the Mpondomise and Bhaca, was officially annexed in 1879 (Dower 1978: 55). These territories were divided into districts and magistrates appointed for each (Redding 1996). By 1894, the whole of the Eastern Cape region had been officially annexed (Saunders 1974: 188).

The extension of colonial authority in the north Eastern Cape encouraged the movement of European settlers into the area in significant numbers. European settlement coalesced around the Ugie mission station in the foothills of the Drakensberg and by 1874 there were eighty families settled here, mostly Afrikaans farmers (Brownlee 1923: 28). The first trading store was established in 1874 and in the same year the missionary started a school at which to educate the children of the European settlers and traders in the region (Smit 1964: 37, 38). Another European settlement was also established by the Thembu chief Gangeliswe in 1874, located on the Mthatha River, which later became the town 'Umtata'–and now 'Mthatha'–(Theal 1908a: 47). By the end of the 1870s, European settlers started moving into the north

Eastern Cape in greater numbers and settlements mushroomed near the different magistracies (Macquarrie 1962: 13). In 1876, a commission was appointed with the task of surveying the north Eastern Cape. Most of the foothills of the Drakensberg in the western part of the north Eastern Cape had been surveyed and sectioned into farms by 1890 (Shephard 1976).

Colonial officials also re-organised the settlement of groups in the north Eastern Cape. Most of the land redistribution was undertaken after a rebellion broke out amongst native groups against the colonial government in 1880 over implementation of the Peace Preservation Act, also referred to as the Disarmament Act (Macquarrie 1958: 107-116). The land upon which the town of Mthatha was located was bought from Gangeliswe by the Cape Government in 1882 (Brownlee 1923: 38). By 1884, the European population of Mthatha numbered 490 people (*ibid.*). The Griqualand East Vacant Lands Commission was appointed in 1883 to manage the redistribution of land after the 1880 rebellion (*ibid.*: 58). The land at the base of the Drakensberg was set aside for European occupation (*ibid.*: 37). Land in the vicinity of the magistracies of Qumbu and Tsolo was also earmarked for European occupation (*ibid.*: 36, 58). The entire district of Elliot, in which the Slang River European settlement was located, was reassigned as an area for European settlement (Ross 1976b: 45). Several farms were surveyed and sold before the Commission was even set up and large numbers of Europeans invaded the empty tracts of land without government authorization (Brownlee 1923: 37, 59). Bantu-speaking groups residing in Maclear and Matatiele were encouraged to relocate to Tsolo or Qumbu (Brownlee 1923: 58; Tropp 2003). Those that remained were given their own locations. The people at Gatberg were allowed to remain where they were situated (Ross 1976b: 45). As a result of these decisions, the settlement of the Maclear and Tsolo districts was greatly rearranged (Tropp 2003).

By the 1870s, most people believed that the San had been exterminated in the north Eastern Cape, probably because they no longer existed as independent groups (Anonymous 1978: 188). They now lived as clients of Bantu-speaking groups in eastern Lesotho and the more mountainous regions below the secondary escarpment of the north Eastern Cape (Wright & Mazel 2007: 119). The San had links to several Nguni-speaking groups through having offered them aid during times of

impoverishment as well as through intermarriage (Jolly 1994; Whitelaw 2009). There were several San individuals living amongst the Mpondomise in the Tsolo district. Walter Stanford interviewed a group of San living in a homestead near the Umnga River in approximately 1885 and 1888, providing insight into the lives of the San in the north Eastern Cape at this time (Macquarrie 1962). This group consisted of three individuals–the leader, Luhayi, Mkahlila, and a woman, Mamxabela–remnants of Nqabayo's band. Luhayi's group had been living with the Mpondomise for several years and were the official rainmakers of the Mpondomise under Mditshwa and previously also to his father. This group led by Luhayi was part of a larger San group of several families that lived together (Hammond-Tooke cited in Jolly 1992: 91). Other San that once lived in the Drakensberg–probably from Nqabayo's band–had gone to live with Mditshwa before Nqabayo's band was broken up, suggesting that theirs was a long-term relationship. The Tsolo San stayed in contact with Nqabayo and the remnants of his band living in the Drakensberg until the group disintegrated (Macquarrie 1962). These last individuals probably joined the Tsolo San in the late 1860s (Wright 1971: 140).

There are several later reports of groups of San people living among the Mpondomise, especially in the Tsolo area (Gibson 1891: 34; Hook 1908: 327; Scully 1913: 288; Kingon 1916: 619; Anders 1935; Callaway 1969: 85; see also Jolly 1992). Although these San lived amongst the Mpondomise, they constituted a discrete community and were distinguished by their San ancestry (Jolly 1992: 91). Their role as rainmakers formed a significant part of their existence amongst the Mpondomise and they subsisted partly on tribute they received for their rainmaking activities. The Mpondomise chief, Mditshwe, sent them gifts when there was a drought (Callaway 1919: 50) and they were also allowed a small portion of crops harvested each season (Brownlee 1923: 123). Two San men, Lindiso and Poponi, were encountered in the early 1930s by H. Anders near the Inxu River. He recorded the San language they spoke and it has been named *!Gã!ne* (Anders 1935, Traill 1995). This is probably the language spoken by Nqabayo's band, and probably also the related band under Mdwebo.

A first generation San descendant living in the Tsolo district was interviewed by researchers in the 1980s, providing a link with the San that had moved down from the Drakensberg over one hundred years previously (Jolly 1986, 1999; Lewis-Williams 1986; Prins 1990; Jolly & Prins 1994). Manqindi Dyantyi was the daughter of Lindiso–the same man that was interviewed by Anders–and an Mfengu woman from Mthatha. She grew up amongst the Mpondomise in the Tsolo district (Jolly 1986; Prins 1990). Lindiso was the son of Mamxabela, one of the remnants of Nqabayo's band, who was interviewed by Stanford in the 1880s (Gladwin 1909; Macquarrie 1962). Lindiso and his brother, Masela, were rainmakers and painted in Ngcengane Shelter until the 1920s (Prins 1990: 113). Lindiso lived in Ngcengane rock shelter with a group of San people and then left them to live amongst the Mpondomise after he got married (Jolly 1986: 8; Prins 1990: 110; Prins & Jolly 1994: 18). The rest of this group left the shelter after a magistrate attempted to collect taxes from them in approximately the 1920s (Prins & Jolly 1994: 18). Another source states that the Tsolo San left the area in the 1940s after friction with the Mpondomise chief, Lutshoto, because of a drought (Prins 1990: 111). This may have been the group that settled amongst the Mpondo in the nearby Tabankulu district (*ibid.*).

Lindiso, although distinguished from the Mpondomise because of his San ancestry, also acculturated to their society to some extent. He would have been especially influenced by his Mpondomise neighbours in his later years, when he was separated from a functioning San society (Jolly & Prins 1994; Prins 1994; Jolly 1995, 1996a, b, c, 1998). His daughters, Manqindi and Chitiwe, grew up amongst the Mpondomise. When there was still a group of San living at Ngcengane Shelter, he took them there to visit them. However, they never saw him paint as this was his 'secret' (Prins 1990: 112). Manqindi had some knowledge of San beliefs and rituals, including painting (Jolly 1986: 8). Chitiwe was a rainmaker and conducted rainmaking rituals for the local Mpondomise in Ngcengane Shelter (Jolly 1986: 6; Prins 1990: 111; Jolly & Prins 1994: 19).

The last three decades of the nineteenth century saw the end of the remoteness of the high mountains and the inland plateau of the north Eastern Cape in terms of colonial administration. This process was initiated with the appointment of Orpen as Magistrate of Gatberg. The imposition of colonial authority over this region would

have interrupted the activity of raiding groups in this area. In addition, the settlement of the inland plateau by Europeans and the laying out of farms would have hindered the movement of raiding groups in the Drakensberg and it is likely that these groups would have eventually disbanded and joined larger, settled groups. The remnants of Nqabayo's band had settled amongst the Mpondomise and acted as rainmakers for them. These San individuals acculturated into Mpondomise society to a certain extent, but maintained a distinct San identity as a significant part of their livelihood–based mainly on rainmaking–depended on it. The Tsolo San also continued making rock art, which was an important part of their San identity.

THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE TYPE 2 TRADITION AS A CHRONOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The historical processes outlined here can be used as a framework in which to hypothesise the nature of the relationships between the variants of the Type 2 tradition, specifically in terms of the related issues of authorship and chronology. It is important to note that the rock art of the north Eastern Cape–including the Type 2 tradition–has not been securely dated by scientific methods. Moreover, these dating techniques are of little use in dating nineteenth century paintings as they are too recent (Solomon 1996: 294). I am aware that without direct dating, chronological arguments about rock art are hypothetical and, in most cases, their accuracy cannot be verified (see critique of Dowson in Chapter 1; *cf.* Mazel 1993, 2009). I therefore offer chronological associations of rock art images with historical processes as working hypotheses. Temporal indicators within the rock art–such as subject matter–are used for situating this rock art in time. The horses painted in all three variants of the Type 2 tradition indicate that this rock art was made during or after the mid 1830s (Vinnicombe 1976: 18, 48; Challis 2008). Fortunately, the historical subject matter of this art mitigates the problems with chronological arguments to some extent since we can narrow down the period in which this art was made (Mazel 1993: 891).

At the end of Chapter 3, I suggested three main ways in which the variants of Type 2 could be related. They could either be contemporaneous and made by the same group but for different purposes; they could be made by different groups at the same time; or they could be made by the same group at different times and therefore be chronological developments of a single tradition. In light of the historical processes I have outlined, I suggest that the most likely of these possibilities is that the variants are chronologically related.

If they are chronological, then the next issue would be the order in which they arose. One could interpret the stronger stylistic correlations between Type 2A and Type 2B, and between Type 2B and Type 2C as indicating that these corpora of rock art are closely linked temporally. In the case of Type 2A and Type 2B, further evidence of this could be found in the images at RSA RED1 (Fig. 18, 19), which could be interpreted as representing the 'missing link' between the two successive variants.

If, as Blundell (2004) has postulated, Type 2A art was indeed made by non-San individuals living with a San-led group, that would make this variant the earliest of the Type 2 tradition as historical records show that the last known San-led band broke up at the end of the 1850s. This, along with the horses depicted in some of the art, suggests that the Type 2 tradition–in its earliest form of Type 2A–arose some time between around 1830 and 1858. Following the implications of Mallen's (2008) work, the close stylistic relationship between Type 2A and Type 2B suggests that Type 2B arose out of Type 2A. Mallen (*ibid.*: 119, 131) has proposed that Type 2B art arose after the last San-led band broke up in the late 1850s (the reasons for this hypothesis are discussed in the section on Type 2B art below). In light of the historical context in which Type 2 rock art was arguably produced, I suggest that Type 2B art was a relatively short-lived subtradition (*ibid.*: 53) and that Type 2C art pertains to much of the 1860s and 1870s and is therefore the latest of these variants (Fig. 50). An independent thread of evidence–that of figures wearing dresses at RSA BUX1 (Fig. 7), which indicate that at least some Type 2C images were produced after 1860–provides some substantiation for this hypothesis.

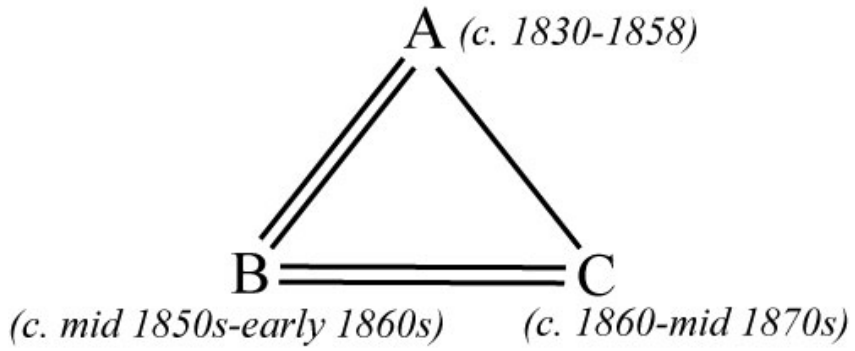


Fig. 50. Diagrammatic representation of the relationships between the variants of the Type 2 tradition. Lines represent the stylistic similarity between variants.

At the end of Chapter 3, I also suggested that if these variants were chronologically related, one might expect there to be a direction of change in the attributes of the corpora of rock art. I think this can be seen across the variants of the Type 2 tradition. Type 2A rock art is very limited in placement, subject matter and painting conventions. Type 2B is characteristically a lot more varied. Significantly, the placement of these images is not limited to areas separate to fine-line images. There is also a wider range of subject matter and conventions used to depict these images. Type 2C art is even more varied, to the extent that–besides horses and riders–there are very few recurring image categories or conventions in this art. This subtradition is also a lot less detailed than Type 2B. Thus, there is possibly a progression over time–and across space–in the Type 2 tradition whereby this art becomes less detailed and standardised, suggesting that the rules that circumscribed this tradition eased and gradually diminished over time. I propose that this chronological progression in the Type 2 tradition may be interpreted as a breakdown in the rules that governed the production of this rock art.

As we have seen in Chapters 2 and 3, certain subject matter and conventions used in the Type 2 tradition indicate that this art bears some relationship to San rock painting and beliefs. It is interesting that part of the historical processes I have discussed charts the breakdown of San autonomy and a subsequent alteration in the nature of their influence in the region. I suggest that perhaps the breakdown in the rules governing the production of the Type 2 tradition may be tied to the changing status of the San in the region in the nineteenth century. I now discuss how the socio-historical processes

I have outlined may have affected the production of rock art in the central portion of the north Eastern Cape in the nineteenth century.

SDFs in the nineteenth century

Two descriptions of San painting in the mid to late nineteenth century–one by Silayi and a later one by Lindiso–suggest that the San of Nqabayo's band at least may have still been producing paintings that may be considered fine-line, although whether this art was of the beautiful shaded polychrome standard is unknown (Stanford 1910; Apthorp 1913 cited in Rudner 1982: 52). Importantly, there is no mention of them finger painting. Therefore, it cannot be ruled out that fine-line images such as SDFs may have been painted into the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, no SDFs have been dated as yet.

Blundell (2004: 145) has argued that SDFs were made in the last 2000 years, although some may have been made in the last 500 years. Although we cannot know if SDFs continued to be made into the nineteenth century, the social conditions purportedly related to the production of these images existed at this time–San individuals acted as rain makers for Bantu-speaking groups and independent San groups incorporated non-San members (*cf.* Blundell 2004). As mentioned in Chapter 1, Blundell (*ibid.*: 145) suggests that the emphasis on the head and face of SDFs may be associated with the increasing dependence of San shamans on their roles as rainmakers to Bantu-speaking communities. There is much historical evidence of the esteem of the San's rainmaking abilities amongst Bantu-speaking groups during the nineteenth century and San individuals went to live amongst Bantu-speaking groups and acted as rainmakers for them well before the end of the 1850s (Macqaurrie 1962: 29, 31).

Blundell (2004: 172) has interpreted SDFs as portraits of powerful individual shamans who owned the sites at which these images were painted. These shamans controlled who painted at these sites and what they painted (*ibid.*: 172-3). Some SDFs incorporate facial features from other ethno-linguistic groups, suggesting they were made at a time when San groups interacted closely with other groups and intermarried with them (*ibid.*: 155). Blundell (*ibid.*) argues that, in this way, powerful shamans tried to manipulate the hybridisation and acculturation that was occurring. As we have

seen, in the mid nineteenth century, San groups in the north Eastern Cape–such as Nqabayo's–were made up of people of different descent and the San controlled the process of acculturation of these individuals. By the end of the 1850s, the influence of these San groups had broken down. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that SDFs would have been produced after this time.

Type 2A rock art in its social context

Type 2A images are usually found at sites with SDFs, suggesting a link between these kinds of images and the notions of control they are argued to have embodied (*cf.* Blundell 2004). Even if these images were not produced at the same time, it is possible that the makers of Type 2A were aware of the notions connected to these images. The key features of Type 2A images are: emulation of fine-line images of eland, very limited subject matter comprising standardised antelope and a few horses with riders, and placement in shelters with fine-line rock art but in separate areas (Blundell 2004: 113-115). Type 2A rock art may have been made by non-San individuals who lived and painted with San groups (*ibid.*: 129). Therefore, this rock art possibly arose during or after the 1820s, when southern San bands were first recorded as incorporating individuals of other descent (Eldredge 1993: 43). The spatial separation of painting suggests that the San were in control of the acculturation of non-San members. According to Blundell (2004: 173), the San individuals in these bands controlled the placement of these images and in this way sought to preserve a distinct San identity. Thus, the San controlled not only acculturation but also the space of painting during this period. These San-led groups could be considered multi-ethnic since their members retained their original cultural identity (see definition in Chapter 1). By the end of the 1850s, both the known San-led bands in the north Eastern Cape had been disbanded and ceased to be independent entities in the region. This suggests that Type 2A rock art ceased to be made after 1858.

Type 2B rock art during the period of contestation

I propose that the development of Type 2B rock art may be tied to the changes that occurred in the 'Contestation' period. If SDFs continued to be made in the nineteenth century, the powerful San shamans that owned these sites and controlled what was

painted there would not have permitted other people to paint in the same panel as their powerful images (Mallen 2008: 124). However, Type 2B images are often painted over fine-line rock art and over panels with SDFs, which suggests these images were made after the San-led groups that may have controlled the space of painting had broken up (*ibid.*). In 1858, the last known autonomous San-led band in the north Eastern Cape–under Nqabayo–was broken up and the remnants dispersed. The San would have thus lost sway over the high mountains and control of the space of painting. A power vacuum most likely ensued and other groups would have vied for occupancy of, and also influence over, this region (*ibid.*: 119). It is likely that rock art was instrumental in this process. By placing Type 2B images over and amongst fine-line rock art–especially SDF panels–the makers may have been drawing on the political power associated with these images and asserting their replacement of the once-influential San-led raiding bands (*ibid.*: 135). Thus, they appropriated the meaning of the SDFs in expressing ownership and control over the space of painting. In addition, by adopting certain fine-line conventions they would have also appropriated the spiritual power associated with fine-line rock art.

As I have mentioned, Type 2B rock art is closely linked to Type 2A rock art and, I argue, most likely developed out of it. Type 2B art is more independent of fine-line rock art than Type 2A–it has a wider range of subject matter and is both rough brush-painted and finger-painted. The combination of Type 2A and Type 2B attributes at RSA RED1 suggests that Type 2B may have developed out of Type 2A quite rapidly, possibly just after the last known San-led band in the north Eastern Cape broke up. Mallen (2008: 125, 135) has argued that a new raiding group, probably made up of non-San members of San-led bands who authored Type 2A art and possibly a few individuals of San descent, arose to take their place. Rock art would have formed part of the construction of their identity and they probably drew on fine-line rock art to appropriate the spiritual resources previously held by San-led raiding bands (*ibid:* 135). In this way, Type 2B art formed part of the creolisation of the identity and beliefs of this group.

Type 2C rock art during the period of contestation

I posit that Type 2C art may have also been made during the 'Contestation' phase. As we saw in Chapter 3, features of certain Type 2C images–the depiction of horses and the use of laundry blue in pigment–indicate that these images were made in the second half of the nineteenth century. Images of women wearing dresses at RSA BUX1 indicate that this variant was made between 1860 and 1900 (see Chapter 3; also Mallen 2008: 56; Fig. 7).

Furthermore, I propose that the same group that authored Type 2B art also made Type 2C art and that they shared the same collective identity. Certain changes undoubtedly occurred in the composition of the group that made the Type 2 tradition, resulting in the more diverse Type 2C rock art with slightly different emphases to Type 2B art. In Chapter 3, I argued that the presence of geometric imagery and finger dots in Type 2C art is suggestive of a Khoekhoen membership and/or influence in the group that made this rock art. The fact that these motifs are absent from earlier Type 2B rock art suggests that during the time that Type 2C was made, this group incorporated a slightly different Khoekhoen element, that practised painting, to the eastern frontier 'Coloureds' that were most likely part of the group that authored Type 2B art.

Type 2C rock art is generally more varied than Type 2B art, especially with regard to pigment colour and subject matter. This variant also appears less closely linked with fine-line rock art and San beliefs. More emphasis is also placed on horses and riders and firearms are depicted instead of bows and arrows or sticks. Mallen (2008: 113-114) has suggested that, in San-led bands such as Nqabayo's, bows and arrows may have come to signify San identity. Unlike Type 2B art, this weapon is not common in Type 2C art. These differences suggest that, at the time that this rock art was made, the authors may not have been associating themselves as closely with the San as previously, or at least not in the same way. I propose that Type 2C rock art reflects a more creolised identity of the makers compared to earlier variants. Not only were San painting conventions and beliefs being incorporated into this art but we also see indications–in the form of geometrics and finger dots–that Khoekhoen beliefs and painting practices became integrated into the identity of this group.

The geographical shift in the production of Type 2 rock art to the inland plateauis likely to have been associated with the settlement of the inland plateau by various groups–mostly Bantu-speakers–during the 1860s. There was increased contestation between groups in this area and competition over raiding as a resource would have intensified. I posit that the production of Type 2C rock art may have formed part of the way the authors negotiated this new social milieu.

Colonial control and the end of Type 2C rock art

The appointment of Orpen as Magistrate of Gatberg in 1873 marks the beginning of the annexation process. Increased colonial presence and control imposed over the north Eastern Cape meant that, for raiders wishing to hide their activities–or rather, the fruits of those activities–access to the Drakensberg was becoming restricted. The small raiding groups–most likely including the one responsible for Type 2C art–that had once ranged over the inland plateau and high mountains of the north Eastern Cape probably broke up due to increasing colonial presence and the pressures that went with it. The incessant and hazardous conflict that a raiding lifestyle engendered may have also been a factor in the disbanding of such groups. This would have meant the end of Type 2C rock art, which probably ceased to be made by the 1880s.

The end of fine-line rock art: Ngcengane

San individuals and their descendants continued to paint until the 1920s, at least at Ngcengane Shelter (Jolly & Prins 1994: 18). This is a highly significant site–three generations of San descendants, traced back to the mid nineteenth century, can be tied to it. Ngcengane Shelter is located on the banks of the Inxu River, just below the secondary escarpment in the Tsolo district (see map Fig. 8). This rock art site is made up of fine-line, rough brush-painted and finger-painted images. Most of the images are ‘classic’ fine-line with typical subjects such as eland, human figures (some in trance postures), therianthropes and rhebuck (Fig. 4). They are executed in shaded polychrome, bichrome and monochrome pigment. Subjects related to more recent times are also depicted, such as cattle, wagons, human figures in European clothing and horses with riders. Significantly, this site features an SDF–a human figure with a somewhat large head depicted in white pigment (Fig. 51).



a b

Fig. 51. Fine-line paintings at Ngcengane. a: Human figures associated with a trance dance scene; b: SDF

There are also several images at Ngcengane that are cruder than the ‘classic’ fine-line images. These include horses, eland and other antelope that are not as finely painted and well-proportioned as classic fine-line examples (Fig. 52). These images appear somewhat awkward in form and tend to be slightly elongated. They are painted in monochrome and unshaded bichrome pigment, usually red and/or white. Some of these antelope are depicted in a slightly powdery, bright red pigment.



Fig. 52. Crude fine-line images painted at Ngcengane

Several of these crude fine-line antelope and horses resemble paintings made by a Sotho man at Quthing in 1929, as well as those made by Mapote, son of the Phuthi chief Moorosi (How 1962; Cawston 1931; see Jolly 1996b: 205-7; Fig. 53, 54). Moorosi had two San wives and several half San children (How 1962: 13, 33). Mapote was interviewed by Marion Walsham How in Lesotho in 1930 (*ibid.*: 26). As a young man, probably in the early 1870s, Mapote painted in rock shelters with his half San brothers. However, they painted at one end of the shelter whilst 'true' San painted at the other (*ibid.*: 33). Although there are no Type 2 tradition images at Ngcengane, Mapote's evidence is important when considering the cruder fine-line images at this shelter. Mapote made paintings for How on a stone–an eland, a hartebeest and three human figures (How 1962: 38). These images provide examples of fine-line painting that was not produced as part of a functioning San society. Their disproportion and awkwardness resemble certain of the cruder fine-line images at Ngcengane and quite likely represent a late stage of fine-line painting, possibly executed by an individual such as Lindiso.



Fig. 53. Crude fine-line images produced by Mapote (housed at the Origins Centre)



Fig. 54. Crude fine-line paintings made by a Sotho man at Quthing.

Ngcengane also features cruder, non-fine-line images (Fig. 55). These monochrome antelope and unidentifiable quadrupeds tend to be concentrated in one area of the shelter. They are executed in red or white pigment similar to that used to produce fine-line images in the site and most are rough brush-painted, with a few examples possibly painted with the finger.

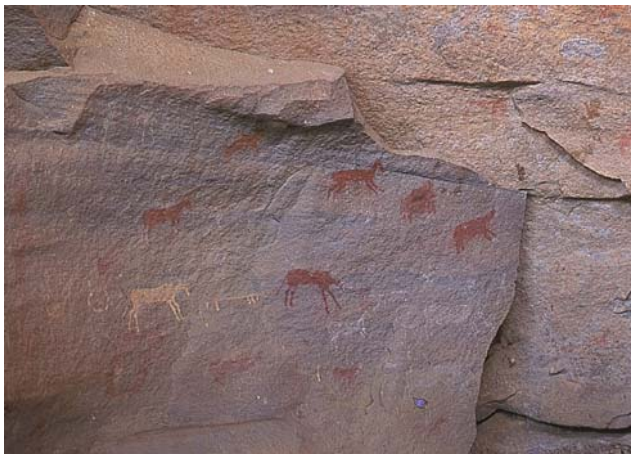


Fig. 55. Non-fine-line quadrupeds painted at Ngcengane (top right)

There are also several finger smears in red and black pigment, often painted over fine-line images at Ngcengane. Manqindi said that these finger smears were made as protection from lightning. She also said that they were produced by her father, Lindiso, as part of a rainmaking ritual (Prins 1994: 189). This belief has some support in San ethnography, although Prins (*ibid.*) argues that this practice may have also been

influenced by Nguni beliefs. Such motifs are also made by Sotho-speakers in shelters in the Maloti Mountains and therefore are probably associated with Bantu-speaker beliefs (Challis 2010 pers. comm.). The association with lightning and rain control suggests that these finger smears were made in the second half of the nineteenth century or early twentieth century, when the painters were largely reliant on rainmaking for their subsistence and status in Mpondomise society (Jolly 1986: 7). Although this site features crude antelope and horses, they are not made of the same kind of powdery pigment that was used in Type 2A images and they do not have the distinctive morphological characteristics of Type 2A quadrupeds. Although Ngcengane features non-fine line rough brush-painted and finger-painted motifs, there are no Type 2B or 2C motifs at this site.

Ngcengane shelter features crude fine-line and rough brush-painted images that provide examples of late fine-line painting produced after San society in the north Eastern Cape had broken up. These images at Ngcengane and those produced by the Phuthi man, Mapote, are examples of rock art that was intended to be fine-line rock art, although the makers had been separated from the origin of this rock art tradition. This contrasts with Type 2 rock art, which, although it developed from fine-line rock art and incorporated some features of fine-line painting, was consciously made to be different from fine-line rock art. In this way, the Type 2 tradition embodies the expression of a distinct and discrete identity.

CONCLUSION

The historical phases outlined in this chapter highlight important shifts in the relationships between groups and the changing role of the San in the north Eastern Cape during the nineteenth century. I suggest that similar shifts can be seen in the kinds of images painted in different areas of the north Eastern Cape. The San interacted closely with their Bantu-speaking neighbours over a long period of time, and although some exchange of beliefs and practices certainly occurred–such as painting–there is some evidence to suggest that, at least in some cases, they sought to maintain a discrete identity (*cf.* Blundell 2004). As I discuss in the next chapter, these attempts at maintaining San identity actually allowed a new rock art tradition–Type 2–to develop.

This outline of the history of the north Eastern Cape during the nineteenth century shows how complex, varied and changing San relationships with other groups were during this period. Far from passively yielding to more 'complex' societies such as that of Bantu-speaking agro-pastoralist groups or Griqua pastoralists, the San of this region maintained complex relationships with such groups. Even when the autonomy of San groups started to disintegrate, certain groups and individuals managed to create a niche for themselves within Bantu-speaking society, relying largely on their spiritual abilities for their livelihood and status. Historical relations in the north Eastern Cape were different to those in the Kalahari in that here San individuals both led and were members of multi-ethnic groups.

The complex political and cultural dynamics of these multi-ethnic groups are as yet poorly understood and require further study (see Challis 2008, 2009 for a valuable contribution). Some San, who continued to make fine-line art, probably used rock art as a means of maintaining a distinct San identity during the nineteenth century. In contrast, the Type 2 tradition is part of the development of a new identity, independent of the San but making use of a San strategy for identity-construction in the form of rock painting. With Type 2A it can be argued that the San controlled the production of rock art produced by the non-San members of their multi-ethnic bands. Although their control of the space of painting broke down after the last San-led group broke up, the links to fine-line rock art in Type 2B and Type 2C art suggest that perhaps individuals of San descent continued to influence the production of rock art in the mixed group that authored this rock art, although their influence does seem to have dwindled over time. This San contribution, however, would have occurred in a creolised context and thus the beliefs related to their input probably changed over time (see Challis 2008).

The changes in the images painted in this region of the north Eastern Cape can be associated with San control of the landscape and of who and where people painted. This relationship can be seen as taking the form of contestation. I suggest that the makers of Type 2B and 2C rock art contested San control of the space of painting. This contestation is discussed in the following chapter with reference to the socio-political landscape of the north Eastern Cape and concepts of the San spiritual landscape.

CHAPTER 5
ROCK ART SITES AND CONTESTATION

During the nineteenth century, a new tradition of rock art–which I have labelled the Type 2 tradition–developed in the north Eastern Cape. This tradition is part of the development of a new identity, independent of the San but at the same time using a San strategy for identity-construction in the form of rock art. As we saw in Chapter 1, creolisation often entails the maintenance and even veneration of earlier beliefs and practices (*cf.* Spitzer 2003: 58-9). I therefore suggest that the production of rock art formed part of the creolisation of this group, wherein they made use of San beliefs to bolster their raiding abilities.

As argued in the previous chapter, the production of Type 2 rock art can be associated with certain historical processes. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the foothills immediately below the high mountains formed the core of San territory and Bantu-speaking people inhabited the area below the secondary escarpment. At this time, San groups were multi-ethnic, with non-San individuals joining San bands for periods of time (Stanford 1910). It was in this multi-ethnic milieu that Type 2A imagery probably arose. By the end of the 1850s, the multi-ethnic groups led by San individuals had broken up, leaving a power vacuum in which Type 2B art arguably developed (Mallen 2008: 119). During the 1860s, several groups moved into the north Eastern Cape and settled on the inland plateau and this area became the site of intensified contestation. I suggest the painting of Type 2C was involved in these processes of contestation on the inland plateau. However, it is important to note that the contestation in this landscape to which I refer does not involve different groups vying over territories but rather access to supernatural resources. Therefore, I suggest that, in contesting San raiding prowess, the makers of the Type 2 tradition used rock art to claim access to the San spiritual world to reinforce their own raiding abilities.

The Amatola, who lived to the north of my study area (see Chapter 2), also made use of San religious beliefs in the production of their rock art (Challis 2008, 2009). This creolised group chose to highlight San beliefs in their identity and rock art (Challis 2008: 268). This is evident not only in their use of the fine-line painting technique but also in the trance dance postures of many of the human figures–which are often

depicted with items of material culture associated with Bantu-speakers or Europeans– as well as the depiction of therianthropes (Challis 2008: 200, 226-227). Challis argues that San beliefs were incorporated into a 'creolised cosmos' and that individuals of San descent may have been revered within the group for their "ability to capture, in paint, the experiences undergone within this creolised cosmos" (*ibid.*: 303). He argues that this art was made by ritual specialists for the purposes of controlling the weather (i.e. rainmaking) and accessing the potency of baboons and horses, which would help them in their raiding (*ibid.*: 71).

A similar process of creolisation probably occurred amongst the group that authored Type 2B and Type 2C rock art. However, there is no apparent evidence of beliefs associated with the San trance dance or San rainmaking in Type 2 rock art. Therefore, it is likely that the makers of the Type 2 tradition had different spiritual beliefs to the AmaTola and perhaps accessed the spirit world in a different manner. Unfortunately, Type 2 rock art offers few keys to understanding its meaning, making it difficult to determine the maker's beliefs. In light of the painting conventions used in this art, I suggest that the makers of Type 2 appropriated San beliefs and accessed the spirit world through the act of painting in rock shelters. The socio-political implications of the painting of Type 2 rock art in the north Eastern Cape and the contestation that this constituted can be explored using the concept of landscape.

POSTPROCESSUAL LANDSCAPE ARCHAEOLOGY

Issues of landscapes and places have formed the focus of much recent archaeological and anthropological research (Bender 1993a; Tilley 1994; Feld & Basso 1996; Chippindale & Nash 2004a; David & Thomas 2008a). Within the processualist approach to archaeology, research on this topic has characteristically adopted an environmentalist approach whereby the physical attributes of the land are emphasised, especially as a resource base. From the 1980s, with the rise of postprocessual archaeology, research has stressed the importance of landscape as a cultural construction. Phenomenology tends to be the dominant approach to landscape in recent studies and most research of archaeological landscapes is influenced by this school of thought.

Part of the postprocessual paradigm in archaeology is the recognition of the importance of landscape and the need to redefine this concept in more meaningful terms. In addition to changes in geographical theory, a combination of the development of social archaeology and an interest in phenomenological thought has shaped the sub-discipline of landscape archaeology (see David & Thomas 2008b). Part of the development of postprocessual archaeology has been the recognition and centring of the importance of the social significance of archaeological remains–that material cultural items and archaeological sites are embedded in social processes. This is a central tenet of landscape archaeology today. Thus, landscape is not merely a neutral backdrop for human activities but the product of interaction between people and the world around them (*ibid.*: 32). This idea led to an interest in symbolic practices and social processes–such as interaction–and their impacts on landscape. Ethnographic and ethnohistorical information became important in understanding these processes and archaeology became more anthropological (*ibid.*: 35). This close connection with anthropology has fundamentally shaped landscape archaeology and the influence of anthropology can be seen in the work of many landscape archaeologists, such as Barbara Bender (1993a, b, c, 1998, 2000; also Bender & Winer 2001).

From the 1990s, landscape archaeology has been shaped by another development in archaeology–the rise in importance of phenomenological thought. Amongst others, phenomenology is founded upon the work of Edmund Husserl (1970, 1983, 1989), Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962), Pierre Bourdieu (1977) and Martin Heidegger (1962, 1977), all of whom were concerned with perception and how individuals experience the world. A central idea shared by these writers is that the world we live in is not external to us but only exists as it is perceived by individuals (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 131). Furthermore, perception is not a neutral, universal, mechanical process but is governed by the pre-existing beliefs and experience of the subject (see Ferguson 2000). The landscape approach to archaeology is largely based on this premise. Therefore, landscapes are socio-cultural constructions formed through people's experience of, and involvement with, the world around them (Bender 1993b: 1).

An important aspect of phenomenology is the importance of the body in perception, stressed in the work of Heidegger (1962, 1977) and Merleau-Ponty (1962), who argue

that perception always takes place through the body of the individual. According to Tilley (2008: 271), a pioneer of phenomenological landscape archaeology, the body of the researcher is his or her "primary research tool". In contrast to landscape studies with a foundation in social archaeology, phenomenologists focus on the materiality of the landscape instead of considerations of landscape as primarily a cognitive construction that forms part of the imagination of the subject (*ibid.*).

A further key point is that phenomenological thinkers, many of whom worked in a post-structuralist framework, aimed at eradicating dualisms such as subject-object, mind-body and culture-nature (Brück 2005: 49; see Heidegger 1962; Merleau-Ponty 1962). Heidegger argued that people and objects were embedded in complex relationships and could only be perceived relationally. This is fundamental to the concept of 'dwelling', which refers to the manifold relationships people have with the places they experience, which give those places meaning (Heidegger 1977). Therefore, the terrain, material objects and human inhabitants of a landscape are all interconnected and interrelated (Thomas 2001a: 176). Julian Thomas (2008: 301-2) argues that an understanding of 'dwelling' is an essential component to phenomenologist landscapes, such as seen in the 'dwelling perspective' proposed by Tim Ingold (1995).

Problematic assumptions

Although landscape approaches to archaeological research are common, there are several problematic assumptions tied to the conceptions of landscape often applied in archaeological studies. Certain of these assumptions have a bearing on my research. These include:

- The concept of experience
- Focus on macro-topography
- Relationship to identity, boundedness and familiarity

The concept of experience

The question of how people in the past experienced the landscape is key to phenomenological studies of archaeological landscapes. Although there is no particular methodology for phenomenological landscape studies (Tilley 1994: 12; Thomas 2006: 48), the application of phenomenological concepts commonly includes travelling through the landscape, experiencing the landscape for one's self, and then using the insights you have gained through your experience of that landscape and/or place to construct an argument proposing how people hundreds or even thousands of years ago experienced it (Smith & Blundell 2004; Brück 2005: 54; Thomas 2006: 43). This practical application of phenomenology in archaeology has been severely criticised (but see Thomas 2008 for a rebuttal).

Critics highlight the fact that archaeologists attempting experientially to approximate prehistoric conceptions and relationships to landscapes are constrained by modern, Western, perceptions of landscape. When these perceptions are projected back in time, the modern Western viewpoint–as well as the personal viewpoint of the individual archaeologist–is presented as a timeless, universal way of perceiving landscape (Thomas 2001a: 176-7; Chippindale & Nash 2004b: 12; Brück 2005: 56). This method thereby obscures change and difference in the archaeological past (Gosden 1996; Weiner 1996). It also contradicts a central tenet of phenomenology–that experiences of landscapes are highly specific, not only to specific cultures, but also to the individual (for example, Tilley 1994: 12).

These criticisms apply to the north Eastern Cape. Modern, usually European, archaeologists cannot hope to 'see' this landscape in the same way as the people who inhabited it, even if the period under study is merely two hundred years ago. Although the major groups who inhabited this region have been ethnographically documented, we cannot assume that they have remained the same over this period. In addition, the ethnohistorical information about the major groups that inhabited the north Eastern Cape in the nineteenth century was produced from the viewpoint of colonial officials and missionaries who were generally very critical of indigenous beliefs. Importantly, some groups–such as mixed raiding groups–were not documented or only briefly mentioned in these documents. Therefore, we have little to no information about the

beliefs of the groups likely to have made Type 2 rock art. A similar aspect of the problem with using the archaeologist's experience of a landscape as the basis of research is that he or she can only really experience one viewpoint–that of the modern Western researcher–when in reality there were many people of different socio-cultural backgrounds inhabiting a past landscape. There is a problem of whose landscape the researcher is trying to experience. This is especially true of the north Eastern Cape, which was a shared landscape, a landscape of interaction. Not only was there interaction between different cultural groups–in many cases sustained over considerable periods of time–but there was also interaction within groups whose members came from diverse cultural backgrounds.

An important issue when experiencing landscapes as part of archaeological enquiry is that one cannot assume that the physical form of the landscape has remained unchanged over long periods of time (Thomas 2006: 55). Although Tilley (1994: 73-4) contends that the shape of the land remains constant over time, geomorphological and weathering processes can produce changes in the physical form of landscapes over the centuries. In the case of rock art sites, the differential preservation of images within and between sites affects patterning both within and between sites in the landscape (Chippindale & Nash 2004b: 9-10). Resources, both floral and faunal, that constitute part of the physical aspect of landscape also change over time. Landscapes are also fundamentally altered through modern impacts such as commercial farming, forestry and the construction of buildings and roads (*ibid.*: 9). The physical landscape of the north Eastern Cape has certainly been transformed, even after only two hundred years, both by natural causes and human activities. The preservation of images in rock art sites particularly have been impacted by fires, weathering, water action and domestic stock. The most profound impact on the physical landscape of the north Eastern Cape would be human in origin, especially in the form of development and changes in land use in the form of commercial farming and forestry. Rock art sites have been altered and damaged by the use of these shelters as stock pens by farmers, as well as by fires in forestry areas. This affects not only the form of the shelter but also the preservation of the images painted there.

Focus on macro-topography

Landscape archaeology is also often criticised for an over-emphasis on the importance of macro-topological features. The identification of significant landscape features is widely considered crucial to understanding the relationship of a site to its physical setting. This assumption can be questioned for two reasons. First, in experiencing a landscape it is uncertain–if not impossible to know–whether the features, factors and relationships perceived by the archaeologist to be significant actually were significant to the past inhabitants (Smith & Blundell 2004: 241; Brück 2005: 51). Furthermore, as Brück (2005: 56) argues, the physical elements of a landscape are themselves only made identifiable and understandable through social and ideological structures. Modern experience alone, without knowledge of the beliefs of the past inhabitants, cannot hope to afford the researcher discernment to assess the importance of topographical features to past inhabitants.

Second, the perceived importance of macro-topographical features originates in Western concepts of landscapes. Ethnographic material shows that people of other cultures, such as San hunter-gatherers who numbered among the inhabitants of the north Eastern Cape, focus instead on micro-topographic features (Smith & Blundell 2004: 247-8). As Mairi Ross (2001: 545) states,

> hunter-gatherers have a sophisticated, specific and intimate relationship with the natural land upon which they live. This relationship is based…on an acute observation of the environment.

For example, significant places in the Kalahari San landscape were places where food resources could be found, such as a small patch of an edible plant species (Marshall Thomas 1959: 10). In the case of San rock painting, research has shown that the distribution of sites in the landscape and/or their relationships to macro-topographical features is not a significant factor in its production (Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2004a: 175). Rather, the micro-scale–the relationship of images to features of the rock surface–is integral to San beliefs tied to the production of their art (Lewis-Williams & Dowson 1990; Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2004a: 180). Such things would not be noticed by the modern archaeologist without the help of ethnography, especially when he or she is focused on contemplating larger topographical features.

Relationship to identity, boundedness and familiarity

The last set of problematic assumptions often made in landscape archaeology concerns the way people inhabit landscapes. The notions that underlie these assumptions of identity, boundedness and familiarity are all interlinked. A widespread notion in landscape archaeology is that people's attachment to particular places implies that these places were necessarily tied to their identity. Thus, groups of people were assumed to inhabit a particular, bounded territory (Smith & Blundell 2004: 251). Brück (2005: 62-3) has pointed out that such approaches are in danger of conceptualising identity as an oversimplified, idealised relationship between blood and soil (*cf.* Wickstead 2008). This conception of the relationship between identity and landscape originates in Western landscape painting traditions and is part of the 'Western gaze' (Smith & Blundell 2004: 251). Smith and Blundell (*ibid.*: 254) argue that there is a "model implicit in western thought that sees identity as inextricably concretized in a bounded landscape". This results in an assumption that landscape is universally associated with the forming of identities (*ibid.*: 252). Such approaches to the placement of rock art sites in the landscape tend to view rock art as marking territorial boundaries (for example, Bradley 1997). This assumption is also linked to conceptions of style in material culture (discussed in Chapter 2). Hence, similarities and differences in rock art imagery across space are mapped to define boundaries between cultural groups (for example, Domingo Sanz *et al.* 2008: 20). Such notions should be validated spacio-temporally with reference to particular groups of people instead of being merely assumed.

A linked notion is that groups of people inhabit the landscape in bounded spaces or territories. Thus, a landscape is often conceived as subdivided into sections with boundaries demarcated by the different people occupying a landscape to prevent access by 'others' (Ingold 1986: 156). This view, however, is based on Western geopolitical thinking (Zedeño 2008: 211). Zedeño (*ibid.*: 212) points out that although there may be archaeological evidence–such as patterns in the spatial distribution of certain artefacts or man-made alterations of the physical landscape–that could be inferred as representing a territory, one cannot assume that the behaviours of the makers included exclusive control over that area. Part of this problem is that

researchers often refer to bounded surface areas of the earth ('land') instead of places, which are not necessarily bounded (Ingold 1986: 150). This problem is more characteristic of traditional (processual) archaeology and less the case with phenomenological approaches which sometimes consider different groups as inhabiting totally different landscapes in the same social space (Thomas 2001b: 181-2).

These Western notions of inhabiting the landscape cannot be haphazardly applied to other cultures. Kalahari ethnography has shown that San hunter-gatherer concepts of territory are very different to those in Western society. Amongst the !Kung, territories are conceptualised in terms of natural resources and centre on a permanent waterhole (Marshall & Ritchie 1984: 82). Each collection of natural resources–*n!ore*–is owned and is passed down the generations. However, this does not equate to a single family group owning a particular territory that is inaccessible to others. The members of a band can have rights to several *n!oresi* through kinship ties and *xharo* exchange relationships (Wiessner 1982). Also, members of other bands can gain use of a *n!ore* by asking permission from the owner, which is rarely declined (Lee 1979: 336; Silberbauer 1981: 141). This results in frequent movement of people between *n!oresi* with the residents at a particular waterhole changing often (Yellen 1977:43-7). The boundaries between *n!oresi* are not fixed and often overlap (Lee 1979: 335). Thus, rather than being a territory, a bounded piece of the earth's surface as in the Western sense, "a *n!ore* is primarily an idea, a collection of rights that person carries in his mind" (Marshall & Ritchie 1984: 83).

An underlying reason for this kind of association between people and places is the focus on people's experiences of familiar places and how people's relationships to the landscape they inhabit are built up over time, by experiencing it and moving through and between familiar places (for example, Ingold 1993; Tilley 1994). This approach is part of phenomenological understandings of 'dwelling' and the importance of embodied experiences of the world. Through this sense of familiarity, it is assumed that a sense of belonging and thus identity is established (Bender 2006: 306). Tilley (1994: 19) argues that, through living in certain places, people develop a feeling of being a part of those places and in this way places are critical in identity-construction. This focus on familiarity has been criticised as reflecting a Western concern for roots

and belonging (Bender 2006: 309). It is also tied to Western notions of bounded space and territories, and thus sedentism. These assumptions about the importance of familiarity in relationships to landscapes are flawed in that one does not necessarily have to inhabit a place or landscape to identify with it. There are also remembered landscapes and mental landscapes that are part of the imaginary (Russell 2008: 639; see also Bender & Winder 2001). Through cultural practices such as oral tradition, people can possess a connection to places that they have never been to or have only visited a few times in their lifetimes (*ibid.*). It is through such shared mental landscapes that indigenous peoples, such as Aboriginal Australians, maintain links to their heritage even when displaced or not allowed access to places they traditionally inhabited (*ibid.*).

Implicit in these assumptions is that in order to feel rooted and familiar with certain places, one has to remain in a particular vicinity over an extended period of time (Bender 2001: 7). However, people also move outside of the familiar and encounter new and different places. There is a lack of studies on how mobile people ('people-on-the-move') experience and relate to landscapes–how they

> relate to unfamiliar and often hostile worlds, how they carve out a place for themselves, create bridges between what is and what has gone before (Bender 2006: 310; see also Bender & Winer 2001).

In some cases, 'people-on-the-move' do not develop a meaningful relationship to the places they move through and inhabit. Some anthropologists argue that the development of significant relationships to place and the corollary construction of identity is not a human universal. As stated by Karen Blu (1996: 219),

> Not everyone has a sense of a home place, some people are born somewhere and move onto other places and none of the places where they have lived or conjured up exists in their imaginations or experiences as all-important or identity-bestowing.

Thus, people's relationships to landscapes and places are highly complex and varied and it cannot be merely assumed that identity and familiarity with places and spaces correspond. In reality, these relationships may be disorderly, ambiguous, and even contradictory (Bender 2006: 310).

Whilst it is important to avoid simplistic conceptions of peoples' association with landscape in the sense of neatly bounded territories, it is also important not to go to the opposite extreme and assume that certain people have no specific connection to places in the landscapes they inhabit. This is particularly problematic in the case of the San, who, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, were seen as aimlessly wandering nomads with no sense of land ownership (this conception endured into the twentieth century in popular literature, for example Michener 1980). Missionary Henry Tindall (1856: 26) wrote that of the San: "He has no religion, no laws, no government, no recognised authority, no patrimony, no fixed abode…bound down and clogged by his animal nature". This perception of the San suited the imperialist ambitions of colonial society, legitimising their denial of indigenous land rights and genocide of the San (Lewis-Williams 1993: 273, 1995a: 67, 2006: 346). The discussion of !Kung San territorial concepts above demonstrates that the San did have ties to specific regions and did not wander aimlessly. Rather, they were bounded to some degree and ranged over a certain area.

The same can be said of the San groups that lived in the north Eastern Cape in the nineteenth century. The *!Gã !ne*-speaking San inhabited the high mountains and inland plateau–specifically in the central portion of this region (Stanford 1910)–which formed the core of what could be termed their 'territory' up until approximately 1860. Even after this time, when their identity was no longer tied to the high mountains, San individuals did not live as wanderers but rather went to live on the edges of and amongst settled Bantu-speaking groups. Bantu-speaking groups settled in somewhat fixed territories, although there was also a lot of movement of groups during the nineteenth century. Bantu-speaking groups lived below the secondary escarpment up until the 1850s. The inland plateau became settled in the 1850s, mostly by mixed raiding groups as well as a few Bantu-speaking groups. Most nineteenth-century groups cannot be seen as narrowly territorial as the main economic activity–stock raiding–was carried out over long distances, in areas inhabited by other groups. The smaller, mixed raiding groups were certainly mobile, 'people-on-the move'. There was a lot of conflict between different groups and, for this reason, it is possible that movement through others' territories was at least partly based on alliances. If this was so, the fragility of alliances may have caused routes taken to reach preferred targets

for raiding to have changed often. In general, although groups did have a core area which they inhabited, geographical boundaries were rather fluid in the region.

Smith and Blundell (2004: 253) have argued that the absence of cultural marking of boundaries amongst the Kalahari San suggests that rock art probably did not act as a boundary marker for San in the south-eastern mountains. Conceptions of rock art images as boundary markers are based on the notion that the primary function of rock art is the communication of information. However, in Chapter 3, I argued that certain features of Type 2C rock art–the significant proportion of finger smears and the painting of images in awkward places not easily visible–indicate that the act of making this art was meaningful and this was more important to the makers than the art's communicative function. I therefore discount the notion of Type 2 art as marking boundaries.

Not only were geographical boundaries in the north Eastern Cape fluid but so were cultural boundaries. Mallen (2008) has made use of anthropologist Liisa Malkki's (1992, 1995) studies of refugees and displacement to understand the identity of the makers of Type 2B art, which can also be applied to the authors of Type 2C art. Malkki also criticises essentialised ideas of the relationship between culture and place. Instead, she adopts a more sophisticated view of identity, which whilst influenced by socio-spatial context, is fluid, multifarious and flexible (Malkki 1992: 37). She points out that displaced people often assimilate and manipulate several identities gleaned from their new social context (*ibid.*). In other cases, although they do adapt to their new social setting, they still retain a strong sense of belonging to the larger settled group from which they originated. The multi-ethnic raiding groups in the north Eastern Cape drew on their social context in various ways and probably had a multi-faceted identity drawn from a variety of sources, which they employed as they wished (Mallen 2008: 133-4). The members of these raiding groups would have retained a sense of their original cultural identity, especially since they often joined these small groups for short periods of time, later returning to the larger settled groups from which they came. However, I argue that, by the time Type 2B art was being made, the authoring group was not merely multi-ethnic (defined in Chapter 1) but becoming creolised and forming a new, composite identity. Furthermore, by the time Type 2C art was made this group had become a creolised entity.

The value of a postprocessual landscape approach

These criticisms of assumptions commonly made in landscape approaches to archaeology highlight the major problem–common to all fields of archaeology–of modern Western perceptions being uncritically applied to the past. Smith and Blundell (2004: 256) argue that ethnography and/or ethno-historical material is essential for landscape analysis. Landscape studies should be used as one component of a multi-stranded approach to studying the archaeological past (*ibid.*: 259; for example see Whitley 1998). Unfortunately, this is not possible with Type 2 rock art due to the dearth of information regarding mixed raiding groups in the north Eastern Cape. However, some of the ideas offered by anthropology and phenomenology can enhance our conception of landscape in archaeology, emphasising the importance of considering how people in certain cultural and spatio-temporal contexts relate to the world around them. The above discussion highlights the difficulties associated with the phenomenological use of experience as a research tool in landscape archaeology. Whilst I acknowledge the importance of the notion that landscapes are not merely external to their inhabitants, a neutral backdrop for human activities but rather a conception formed in the minds of its inhabitants through experience of the world and interrelationship with it, I do not consider phenomenology a methodology that could help me to understand the role of Type 2 rock art in nineteenth-century north Eastern Cape. Rather–bolstered by other forms of evidence–"phenomenology can encourage us to think imaginatively about the social and political implications of spatial layout and landscape setting" (Brück 2005: 65). Anthropological understandings of landscape–socio-political implications in particular–greatly enhance archaeological understandings of landscape and influence this research more than phenomenological ideas. In the next section, I discuss the socio-political aspects of landscape that can be applied to the north Eastern Cape to better understand the implications of the painting of Type 2 rock art.

CONTESTED LANDSCAPES

A valuable element of postprocessual landscape analysis is its considerations of the socio-political and ideological implications of landscape. Landscapes are treated as fundamentally political, dynamic and contested (Bender 1993c: 276). Tilley (1994: 12)–drawing on social theorists such as Foucault–has argued that the experience of space is always endowed with power. Control over spaces plays a critical role in the maintenance of power relations, on both an individual and group level (Tilley 1993: 81). Ways of relating to the landscape were controlled and manipulated by powerful individuals or sectors of society using language and imagery such as rock art (Bender 1993b). In this way, landscapes are continually in process, continually being constructed and reconstructed (*ibid.*: 3). Landscapes are also profoundly relational and places are interrelated. Throughout history, people have continually appropriated places and sites from the past and used them for their own political ends. By doing this they enhanced their own power and prestige (Bender 1993c: 249). Therefore, significantly, contestation does not necessarily refer to competition between contemporaneous groups. Researchers seek to understand and explore how places in the landscape were contested, negotiated and renegotiated through time (*ibid.*: 276).

These notions of the political implications of landscapes and how places are used in power relations have led to the study of what has been termed ‘contested landscapes’, as proposed by Bender (1992, 1993a, c; Bender & Winder 2001). According to Bender (1999: 308), landscapes become contested when there is conflict between groups of people because of their different concepts of, and ways of engaging with, places and landscapes. Studies of contestation often focus on the changes in people’s interaction with a landscape and people’s differing relationships to it over time (for example, Bender 1993c). They also focus on the different views of and interactions with a single physical landscape inhabited by different cultural groups. This contestation often becomes territorial but is also manifested in other ways.

A key question regarding landscape contestation–especially in the cultural sense–has been raised by Julian Thomas (2001b: 181-2): when several cultural groups live in the same social space, is it a single physical landscape, perceived in different ways by the various groups, or do these communities actually inhabit different landscapes, which

intersect in various ways? He takes the latter position and argues that contestation arises when several differing landscapes converge in the same social space (*ibid.*: 187). He further argues that, since these differing understandings of and interactions with landscape are incommensurate, the ensuing conflicts cannot be surmounted merely through mutual understanding (*ibid.*: 182). Thomas, however, does not consider the effects of long-term interaction between different groups inhabiting the same physical landscape and the processes of creolisation that often result. San and Bantu-speaking groups have interacted in the north Eastern Cape for over a thousand years (Maggs 1984). This interaction has taken many forms over this time, including ritual relationships, hunting and trade relationships, intermarriage and raiding (Soga 1930; Fynn 1950; Macquarrie 1962; Wright 1971). The sustained, long-term nature of this interaction is evident in the click-sounds in Nguni languages (Lanham 1964; Herbert 1990; Traill 1995). Spiritual beliefs formed part of this interaction and there has been much research into the nature and extent of cross-pollination of religious beliefs between San and Sotho- and Nguni-speaking groups (Jolly 1994, 1995, 1996a, b, c, 1998; Hammond-Tooke 1998, 1999). The north Eastern Cape cannot be seen as merely an intersection of different, entirely incommensurate or opposing landscapes. There was a flow of ideas and beliefs between the different groups in the region. Interaction intensified during the nineteenth century and this region became the context of much hybridisation and creolisation (Blundell 2004; Mallen 2008; Challis 2008). This was especially the case with nineteenth century mixed raiding groups. The north Eastern Cape was a shared landscape, a landscape of interaction where boundaries between groups were fluid, both geographically and culturally. Therefore, we cannot consider contestation in this landscape as being between different groups occupying and vying over different territories.

Rather than concentrating on the differences between different cultural groups' conceptions of and interactions with landscape–which cannot be specified in the case of mixed raiding groups in the north Eastern Cape–it is more helpful to examine their general interests and in this way understand something of the socio-political implications of the painting of Type 2 imagery. Jackson (1984: 8) highlights an important aspect of the conception of landscape–it functions and changes *to serve a community*. Similarly, Bender (2001: 4) states that "people select the stories they tell, memories and histories they evoke, interpretive narratives they weave, *to further their*

activities in the present-future" (my italics). Thus, an important way of understanding the painting of Type 2 rock art would be to examine how the painting of these images may have furthered the interests of its makers.

Ideological contestation in the north Eastern Cape

Rock art forms part of the way in which different groups and individuals in the north Eastern Cape negotiated power relations. An important question to ask regarding Type 2 rock art is what was the painting of these images supposed to contest? Here I consider the cultural aspects of contestation and how Type 2 art mediated interaction between the makers and other groups, specifically the San. I also consider historical aspects of contestation and examine the changes in Type 2 rock art over time. However, this contestation is not about physical resources or territories–although there may have been such implications at some point–but rather about interaction in a shared landscape. It is important to remember that, as seen in the previous section, the appropriation of past places and sites plays a significant role in contestation, as highlighted by Bender (1993c). Therefore, although the San no longer inhabited the high mountains and inland plateau, their residual presence and power in these regions could still be contested.

A key element of landscape contestation is the role of ideology in people's beliefs and interaction with landscape, especially in the construction and reconstruction of places. A general concept of ideology can be defined as

> that aspect of culture which concerns how society ought to be organised; in other words, it concerns politics, rules and the distinction between right and wrong (Eriksen 2001: 161).

In this way, fine-line rock art can be seen as structured by certain rules of convention as well as a set of spiritual beliefs. As discussed in Chapter 2, Type 2 rock art developed in association with San fine-line rock art in the first half of the nineteenth century. Therefore, one can argue that from its inception, Type 2 rock art can be associated with San ideas of landscape, and particularly the San spiritual landscape, which was the subject of their painting. Fine-line rock art sites were places where supernatural resources resided and could be tapped into (Lewis-Williams 1996, 1997;

Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2004a, b). As Taçon (2008: 221) has argued, the type of boundary that the southern San were most concerned with marking–via rock art–is that of the boundary between the everyday material world and the spirit world. Thus, the contestation that Type 2 rock art constitutes can be said to concern the spiritual world as conceived by the San. This is not a territorial contestation of the physical terrain but rather an ideological contestation of the spirit world. Thus, the makers of Type 2 were contesting control over the space of painting and hence control of the rules of painting and how to access the spirit world.

This ideological contestation was played out on the rock surface of shelters i.e. the space of painting (see Hall & Smith 2000 for a similar approach). Landscape studies generally focus on the macro scale–the distribution and placement of rock art sites in an extensive landscape (Chippindale & Nash 2004b: 1). The placement of fine-line sites in the north Eastern Cape, and south-eastern mountains in general, shows no pattern of distribution related to topographical features (Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2004a: 175). Type 2 sites also lack any discernible patterning in relation to topography and do not follow any known distribution of any cultural grouping. The distribution of Type 2 sites with relation to fine-line sites also shows no discernible patterning. In the most part, Type 2 rock art is found at sites with existing fine-line images, but they also occur independently. Since there is no distinguishable pattern of distribution of fine-line sites and Type 2 sites in the landscape, this dissertation focuses on the micro scale–the placement of images on the rock surface of shelters. Therefore, the panel constitutes the contested landscape.

TYPE 2 ROCK ART AND CONTESTATION

As mentioned above, I argue that Type 2 rock art constituted a contestation of the San spiritual landscape. A discussion of the significance of painted shelters in the San landscape is key to understanding key features of Type 2 rock art that indicate an awareness of San spiritual concepts. Fine-line rock art sites were important spiritual places in the San landscape. Fine-line images were painted in meaningful relationships to the rock surface of shelters (Lewis-Williams & Dowson 1990). Many fine-line images interact with the rock face in various ways, for example they are often painted to look as if they are going into or coming out of cracks and steps in the

rock face or are carefully painted onto facets. Thus, the rock surface formed part of their depictions and carried meaning. This interaction with the rock face suggests that the San believed that the spirit world existed behind the rock face (*ibid.*). The rock face formed a permeable membrane or 'veil' between daily life and the spiritual realm. Rock shelter walls and the holes and steps in the rock face served as entrances to the spirit realm. Thus, rock shelters played a mediatory role in the San cosmos (Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2004a). Often the pigment used to make fine-line images contained potent ingredients, including eland blood, making the images potent (Lewis-Williams & Dowson 1990: 14). This potency was sometimes accessed during trance dances by facing the paintings (Lewis-Williams 1986).

As we saw in Chapter 1, the spirit world had a significant impact on everyday life for the San and played a major role in San social relations. Shamans travelled to the spirit world while in trance and performed certain tasks concerning the weather, hunting and the health of band members (Lewis-Williams & Dowson 1999: 32; Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2004a: 103-4). Importantly, the activities of shamans in the spiritual realm–especially concerning rain control–played a key role in ensuring the success of stock raids. For example, rain after a raid would wash away the tracks of stolen animals so that they could not be followed and heavy rains or mist would cause their pursuers to get lost in the mountains (Vinnicombe 1976; Stanford 1910).

Rock shelters also constituted settings for action, and painting–particularly in the south-eastern mountains–formed part of the way San shamans negotiated their roles in society (Dowson 1994, 1998; Blundell 2004; Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2004b). The painting of rock art had political implications and could be used for such ends. In this way, the production of rock art images constituted socio-political intervention (Lewis-Williams 1995b: 143). Lewis-Williams and Pearce (2004b) have argued that the inequalities in San society involved access to the spiritual realm, which could only be achieved by shamans. In the north Eastern Cape, powerful shamans owned certain sites and controlled the space of painting and the kinds of images that could be painted (Blundell 2004).

I suggest that the makers of Type 2 rock art were almost certainly aware of the political implications of fine-line rock art and, in a similar way, used the painting of

their images as ideological contestation of the space and rules of painting. Mallen (2008: 135) argues that the makers of Type 2B rock art were alluding to the powerful raiding groups led by San individuals that had preceded them. In addition, the placement of Type 2B images over fine-line rock art–especially SDFs–was probably used to make political statements regarding leadership and control over the space of painting. She concluded that Type 2B art was produced as part of the assertion by a new raiding group of their power and control over the space that had previously been controlled by San-led raiding groups (*ibid.*). However, I argue that this contestation was not primarily about control over a geographical area but rather about access to the San spirit realm.

In this context, the painting of images in rock shelters was an act with both socio-political and supernatural implications. Fine-line images were themselves supernaturally potent and were a testament to one's access to the supernatural. As seen in Chapter 3, the makers of the Type 2 tradition used some of the same conventions used in the production of fine-line imagery and certain Type 2 images exhibit features that indicate the makers had knowledge of and/or practised San beliefs regarding rock shelters and the spirit world. Significantly, a test conducted in 1998 showed that 75% of the samples taken from Type 2A eland contained traces of blood (Blundell 2004: 161). Thus, much of Type 2A imagery was made to be spiritually potent. Unfortunately, when these tests were done, researchers were unaware of the other non-fine-line images which I now suggest are later variants of Type 2A. However, Type 2B and Type 2C do include images that are painted carefully onto facets and interact with features of the rock face such as crevices, cracks and steps (see Chapter 3; Mallen 2008: 33). In addition, paint smears and the painting of images on 'hidden' surfaces indicate that the act of applying rock art to the rock surface was meaningful to the authors and that this act had spiritual and/or ritual significance.

But why was the contestation of San spiritual beliefs so important to the makers of Type 2 rock art? The authors of Type 2 rock art were almost certainly a raiding group, as attested to by the subject matter of the rock art they produced. As mentioned, an important element of the success of San raiding groups was their access to supernatural resources. Therefore, I argue that, in their contestation of San pre-

eminence in raiding, the makers of Type 2 used rock art as a means to claim access to the San spiritual realm to aid in their raiding prowess (*cf.* Challis 2008).

Changing ideological contestation over time

I argue that the Type 2 rock art tradition is varied over time and across space and therefore have divided it into the subtraditions Type 2A, Type 2B and Type 2C. I have interpreted the differences between these subtraditions as representing a progression over time in which the rules governing the painting of Type 2 slacken and the tradition broadens (see Table 6 and 7). Hence, Type 2A is characterised by strict rules in terms of placement of images, subject matter and pigment colour, Type 2B has less strict rules but remains limited and Type 2C has few rules and is highly varied. This progression can be associated with changes in San society during the nineteenth century. The historical phases of Independence (1800-1858), Contestation (1858-1873) and Colonial Control (1873-1900) trace the breakdown of San control over the high mountains and the practice of painting. This section explores how the San may have allowed for the creation of Type 2 rock art and how, subsequently, the breakdown of their control of the mountains allowed for contestation of the space of painting–and thus the spirit realm–to arise.

There is some evidence to suggest that, as occurred in other parts of the south-eastern mountains (Dornan 1909; Cawston 1931; How 1962), the San in the north Eastern Cape shared some of their knowledge of the skill and purpose of painting with the non-San members of their bands and allowed them to paint in the same rock shelters as they did, but to one side (*cf.* Blundell 2004, based on How 1962). It can be argued that the Type 2 tradition is different to other rock art made by non-San individuals living with San groups in that, although tied to San society, it became a separate entity and developed into an independent rock art tradition. This is interesting in that fine-line painting in the north Eastern Cape–possibly up until the early nineteenth century–may have been characterised by strict rules regarding what images could be painted in shelters owned by powerful shamans depicted as SDFs (Blundell 2004). Whilst the limited nature of Type 2A art attests to control over the production of rock art images, the fact that non-San people were allowed to paint at all suggests that the codification of San beliefs and control may have started to ease and decline.

The San also seem to have passed on something of the meaning and purpose of painted images–that they were associated with access to the spirit realm. The subject matter of Type 2A art, however, seems to indicate that the makers were not associating with the spirit realm in the same way as San painters as there is a lack of discernibly shamanistic imagery. The subject matter is almost entirely made up of eland, suggesting that perhaps the makers were invoking the potency of this animal. This is further suggested by the presence of blood–a potent substance–in the pigment used to depict these antelope. It is likely that the accessing of the spirit world by non-San painters would have affected the San cosmos–the rules of access to the spirit world were changed and a creolised cosmos had been created (*cf.* Challis 2008). Non-San people could now access the spirit world, a realm which may have previously been tightly controlled by powerful San shamans (*cf.* Blundell 2004).

If the San did indeed impose strict rules on painting by non-San band members, and thus insisted on the creation of a separate, discrete rock art tradition, in doing so they inadvertently set the stage for contestation. This may have set contestation between the makers of these two traditions in motion, and this was played out on the walls of rock shelters. I argue that the highly conventionalised and limited nature of the majority of Type 2A imagery indicates that this rock art did not emerge as a form of contestation. However, the few instances where Type 2A violates these strict rules indicate that, perhaps towards the end of the period in which this rock art was made, contestation between the non-San makers of this rock art and their San leaders and teachers started to occur. Evidence for this is found at RSA LAB 11, where horses and riders are painted (Fig. 14b) and at another site, where there is a Type 2A image painted over a panel featuring an SDF. This suggests that perhaps this art was already starting to venture beyond the bounds set by San leaders. I propose that these uncharacteristic occurrences of Type 2A can be associated with the disintegration of independent San groups by the end of the 1850s.

At this point, the high mountains changed from being a ‘territory’ occupied by San-led raiding bands to being contested by other groups, most notably mixed raiding groups. Type 2B rock art probably formed part of the way the authors asserted their presence and control in the high mountains (Mallen 2008: 135). This art was arguably

used to make a political statement of power and control (*ibid.*: 123). Of particular importance was control over the space of painting. A crucial attribute of Type 2B rock art–which differentiates it from Type 2A–is that it is painted over and amongst fine-line images. I argue that, in this way, the makers' contestation of San control and power was played out on the surfaces of rock shelter walls.

The remnants of San groups living in the high mountains would have formed new groups, joined by people of other ethno-linguistic backgrounds. However, being few in number, it is unlikely that they would have held much authority in these groups in terms of leadership. Over time, San individuals probably lost power and status within these groups as they became outnumbered. However, they would have retained ritual status due to their knowledge of the supernatural. It is quite possible that such San individuals formed part of the group that made Type 2B rock art, although they did not exert the same control over the production of this rock art as with Type 2A. There is strong evidence of San influence in the way these images are depicted as well as in their subject matter. It is likely that–separated from a functioning San society and part of a new group in the process of becoming creolised–some San individuals abandoned classic fine-line painting and were amongst the painters of Type 2B images. Their ability to paint, and thus access the spirit world on behalf of their group, may have afforded them status within this group (*cf.* Challis 2008: 303). I assume that, if fine-line rock art continued to be made in the high mountains at this time, it occurred on a very small scale. There were still a few independent San individuals living in the high mountains up until the late 1860s (Wright 1971: 140). I suggest that, considering the close relationship between Type 2A and Type 2B rock art, the mixed raiding group responsible for Type 2B art probably also included non-San members that had been part of the multi-ethnic San-led band that made Type 2A rock art. It is possible that, since they were now independent of San leadership and control, these individuals that may have been taught to paint by the San continued to paint but produced images that were different to those they had made before.

It can be argued that Type 2B art is characterised by a combination of appropriation and contestation of fine-line rock art and the power associated with it. I propose that the painting of these images in shelters in the high mountains constituted an appropriation of San power in a region that was closely linked to San power and

identity. Furthermore, by painting in fine-line sites, the makers of Type 2 were reconstructing these places and marking them with a new identity (*cf.* Bender 1993c). It has already been argued that Type 2B rock art played a significant role in the construction and maintenance of the identity of the authoring group (Mallen 2008: 135). Therefore, the authors of Type 2B may have adopted aspects of fine-line rock art to establish the importance of their new rock art tradition (*ibid.*: 115). Although the makers of Type 2B art were contesting the power of the San, they were also acknowledging it at the same time by using aspects of fine-line painting. Even in the choice of using painting as a mode of contestation they were acknowledging and drawing on San power. In addition, although the makers of Type 2B were asserting their identity in contestation with the San, they chose a medium of expression that was integral to San identity, thereby choosing to contend in San terms.

The San were well-known for their spiritual abilities, especially amongst Bantu-speakers (Vinnicombe 1976: 54), some of whom would have numbered amongst the makers of Type 2 art. Bantu-speaking groups believed that, as the original occupants, the San had special ties with the spirits of the land (Engelbrecht 1936: 73-75; How 1962; Prins & Rousseau 1992: 34-35). The chief in the Tsolo area acknowledged the San living there as the original occupants of the region (Callaway 1919: 49). Many Bantu-speaking ritual practitioners still believe that the San have powerful medicines and spiritual abilities (Prins 1990). They often hold rituals in rock shelters with fine-line rock art and even use pigment from fine-line rock art in their medicines (Laydevant 1933: 362; How 1962: 34; Prins & Lewis 1992: 141). Thus, painting was regarded as an integral part of San identity and was seen by others in the north Eastern Cape as associated with accessing supernatural resources.

The importance of San spiritual power explains why the makers of Type 2B would want to appropriate this power in the making of their rock art. Not only were they making claims on San raiding abilities but also the spiritual abilities related to this activity. The way the makers of Type 2B art drew on the power of fine-line images to appropriate San supernatural power would have added to their identity as powerful raiders in the region. Access to the spirit realm was a significant component in San raiding activities and enhanced their success. I propose that by painting, and thus attesting to have access to the spirit realm, the makers of Type 2B were appropriating

San spiritual resources to aid their own raiding proficiency and enhance their reputation of raiding prowess. Challis (2008, 2009) has demonstrated how San rainmaking beliefs may have been employed by the creolised AmaTola and it is likely that other creolised raiding groups with members of San descent such as that which arguably made the Type 2 tradition also incorporated such beliefs into their raiding identity. Thus, Type 2B rock art and the claims on San supernatural power that this embodied would have given the makers of this rock art 'the edge' over their rivals and formed an important part of asserting their importance in the region (*cf,* Challis 2008, 2009).

The historical material discussed in Chapter 4 suggests that shifts started to occur in San society and spirituality after most of these individuals went to live amongst Bantu-speakers below the secondary escarpment. In this context, San identity may have become mainly based on their spirituality, rather than their raiding prowess as previously (Blundell 2004: 156). It is likely that the San exploited Bantu-speakers' esteem for their spiritual abilities to negotiate their position in these groups (Prins 1990, 1994). San individuals acted as rainmakers for Bantu-speaking chiefs in exchange for gifts (Hook 1908; Stanford 1910; Prins 1990). Therefore, San spirituality would have been used for the service of others rather than just for themselves. This process was possibly occurring before this, but since there were no remaining independent San bands at this time, this was now happening on a far wider and more pervasive scale. The decline in San control over raiding and shift in spiritual identity fits in well with the emergence of Type 2B as an independent rock art tradition contesting San control.

As argued in the previous chapter, the production of Type 2 rock art shifted from the high mountains to the inland plateau during the 1860s. I suggest that the same group made both Type 2B and 2C rock art and that, although the membership of this group probably changed over time, the differences between these subtraditions were primarily the result of changes in social relations in the region brought about by the settlement of the inland plateau. A notable change in the membership of this group occurred as people of Khoekhoen descent participated in the production of Type 2 rock art.

Type 2C rock art is more varied and idiosyncratic as well as more independent of fine-line rock art than Type 2B is. This can be interpreted as the result of further disintegration of San influence over the production of these images. This lack of San control could be due to a decline in San influence in the mixed raiding groups as they became more heterogeneous and San individuals became outnumbered. Alternatively, if San members of mixed raiding groups had acculturated to their new cultural setting instead of maintaining their San identity, this would also explain the apparent reduction of San influence in Type 2C rock art compared to earlier variants (see Chapter 3). Besides Ngcengane Shelter, there are no known SDFs painted on or below the inland plateau. It can be inferred that the San never actively exerted control over the space of painting in this region as they had in the high mountains. In this sense, the space of painting would have been open to contestation in this area. This may have also influenced the variability and lack of restrictions in Type 2C rock art. The last remaining independent San living in the high mountains settled amongst the Mpondomise in the late 1860s (Wright 1971: 140). Therefore, I assume that by the time Type 2C was being made there were no independent San living in the high mountains. They had either joined mixed raiding groups and adopted a creolised identity or had gone to live with Bantu-speakers on the edges of the secondary escarpment.

During the 1860s, the inland plateau became settled in significant numbers for the first time. This probably led to increased competition amongst raiding groups, possibly taking the form of persistent cycles of raids and counter-raids between rival groups. I propose that the makers of Type 2C continued to use rock art as a vehicle for contestation, although with a slightly different emphasis. As the inland plateau became settled by new groups, the Type 2 artists turned their attention to this area. It would have been necessary to maintain easy movement through this region to access the high mountains, crucial for hiding stolen stock and avoiding confrontation with the pursuing owners. Thus, competition on the inland plateau would have made this an important area for the makers of Type 2C to assert their presence and raiding prowess.

A significant characteristic of Type 2C rock art is that the most common and most standardised motif of is the horse, often depicted with a rider. Mallen (2008: 135) has argued that the collective identity of the makers of Type 2B–and by inference Type 2C–was largely related to raiding. Making use of Barth's (1969) concept of sectors of articulation in situations of interaction, Mallen (2008: 132) has argued that raiding would have been an area of mutual interest for people of different ethno-linguistic backgrounds. This would have allowed the members to develop a shared sense of community in this context while still retaining other aspects of their individual identities (*ibid.*: 133). Interestingly, the emphasis on horse imagery is more pronounced in Type 2C rock art than in Type 2B. Horse imagery is also concentrated at sites where Type 2C rock art is painted in shelters without fine-line rock art or painted as if to dominate the fine-line rock art there (discussed under placement in Chapter 3). Horses dominate the subject matter at these sites. One can infer that horses became more important to the identity of the makers over time. This is not unusual for raiding groups as horses are crucial to a mobile raiding lifestyle (Challis 2008: 110). Challis (*ibid.*) has argued that the horse became an important symbol in the creolisation of the identity of the AmaTola. It is arguable that a similar process occurred amongst the group that made the Type 2 tradition.

With these differences in mind, I argue that whilst Type 2B art was focused more on constructing an identity and establishing prominence in the region, Type 2C art may have been more focused on maintaining their identity in the face of increased competition from newcomers. By the time Type 2C was being made, most San individuals were living amongst Bantu-speakers, gradually becoming acculturated to their new cultural contexts. Therefore, I argue that more emphasis was made on contesting the power of other groups than contesting San control in the production of Type 2C art.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the sites where Type 2C imagery dominates are concentrated toward the eastern side of my sample area. It is interesting that Ngcengane Shelter–where a group of San rainmakers and painters were living–is on the western side of this area. Perhaps the makers of Type 2C imagery felt more at liberty to develop their own identity that included painting away from the area around

Ngcengane where the San still maintained control over the space of painting. The tendency of the makers of Type 2 to paint away from Ngcengane Shelter also suggests that they had some sense of, or respect for, San control of the space of painting. Although they were contesting San control, they acknowledged it at the same time.

The shift in San spirituality and identity that would have started after most of the last independent San of the central portion of the north Eastern Cape had moved down to live with Bantu-speakers below the secondary escarpment in the late 1850s had probably solidified by the time Type 2C was being made on the inland plateau. As argued by Blundell (2004: 156), during the late nineteenth century San independence in the north Eastern Cape shifted from being mainly based on their military abilities as renowned raiders to being based more on their ritual rainmaking skills. San individuals living amongst Bantu-speaking communities sold their powers as rain controllers, as well as their knowledge of healing medicines. This enabled them to accumulate material wealth, placing them in a position to negotiate the politics of the Bantu-speaking societies they were now–to some extent–part of. This new situation resulted in San religious power being used to attain political and economic power within Bantu-speaker groups in the face of their marginal status (Dowson 1994; Prins 1994; Blundell 2004).

This process would have affected the painting of images at Ngcengane, which as we have seen in Chapter 4, features crude fine-line and non-fine-line images. Prins (1994: 182) has argued that Lindiso–the last known San painter who was probably born in the late 1800s and whose father had painted in the high mountains–assumed a new identity different from the San who lived in the mountains that was more acceptable to the Mpondomise. It is also possible that these changes in the painting of fine-line images were affected by the contestation embodied by Type 2 rock art. Once the San had allowed people of other ethno-linguistic backgrounds to paint–resulting in the inception of Type 2 rock art–it became acceptable for rock art to reflect and play a part in the creolisation of San society that took place in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Beliefs were interchanged between fine-line rock art and Type 2 rock art. In this way, the creation of the Type 2 tradition has its roots in the creolisation that started to occur within multi-ethnic San-led raiding groups, while the unconventional fine-line-like images painted at Ngcengane Shelter could be seen as part of the

creolisation of San groups that occurred after they became attached to Bantu-speaking communities. Many researchers have pointed out the probability that late San painting, such as that found at Ngcengane Shelter, was influenced by the beliefs of Nguni-speakers (Jolly 1994, 1996a, c, 1998; Prins 1994). Therefore, as we have seen, it can be argued that 'classic' fine-line rock art ceased to be made partly because the San had allowed another rock art tradition to arise.

CONCLUSION

Insights from landscape archaeology–particularly those focusing on socio-political issues–can be used to understand the implications of the production of Type 2 rock art in the north Eastern Cape. Specifically, the concept of contested landscapes forms a framework in which to evaluate the role of Type 2 tradition in relations between groups in the north Eastern Cape. Contested landscapes are concerned with socio-political issues and how groups and individuals use places and landscapes to mediate their relationships. In this sense, the space of painting in shelters in the north Eastern Cape constitutes a contested landscape. Bender (1993c) has highlighted that landscapes are continuously in process as people construct and reconstruct places to suit their own ideologies and interests. Therefore, the painting of Type 2 tradition can be interpreted as both an appropriation and reconstruction of the space of painting and the rules of access to the spirit world that lay behind the rock face.

The contestation that the Type 2 tradition constituted changed over time. Type 2A rock art was borne out of interaction between San painters and the non-San members of their bands. By sharing their painting skill and beliefs, these San painters set the stage for contestation. When the powerful San-led bands broke up, another raiding group arose to take their place and contested San raiding prowess and access to the supernatural by painting in fine-line sites. They painted over fine-line images, thereby taking control of the space of painting. In the 1860s, the inland plateau became populated by several groups and this became an area of increased contestation. The makers of Type 2 turned their attention here and painted Type 2C rock art. They used this rock art and the supernatural implications of painting to assert their presence on the inland plateau.

Therefore, the painting of Type 2 images can be seen as part of the way non-San individuals negotiated their role in the region, especially after the break up of San-led raiding bands. In this way, painting became a powerful tool in social relations in the region, with the makers of Type 2 both appropriating aspects of fine-line art to add to their legitimacy and 'inventing' a new tradition–partly based on the old–that contested San control of the space of painting and hence the spirit realm. This marks a significant occurrence unique to this region of the north Eastern Cape–non-San individuals painted independently of San society and developed their own independent rock art tradition. A similar process occurred amongst the Amatola, but it is likely that their painting tradition formed on the eastern frontier before they moved to the north Eastern Cape (Challis 2008).

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

The north Eastern Cape is well known for its riches in fine-line rock art made by the San. Recently, attention has been given to the existence of non-fine-line rock art in the high mountains of this region in the form of Type 2 and Type 3 art (Blundell 2004; Mallen 2008). The survey I undertook revealed that a surprising quantity of non-fine-line rock art is also found on the inland plateau. These distinct corpora of non-fine-line art share many important characteristics. Therefore, I have argued that they constitute variants of a single rock art tradition, which I have labelled the Type 2 tradition with the variants of Type 2A, Type 2B and Type 2C. I also argue that these may be chronological variations. Therefore, the differences between these variants can be interpreted as a chronological progression whereby the rules governing the painting of this rock art tradition decreased and it became more varied and idiosyncratic over time.

The progression that I argue is evident in the Type 2 tradition can be tied to historical processes that occurred in the north Eastern Cape during the nineteenth century. Thus, the development of the Type 2 tradition may be associated with the decline of San influence in the region and concomitant loss of control of the space of painting. This process can be understood with reference to conceptions of landscape. Places, through their construction and reconstruction, play an important part in the formation, preservation and questioning of ideologies (Bender 1993c). I argue that the painting of Type 2 art over fine-line art constituted an ideological contestation of San control of the space of painting, the rules of painting, and access to the supernatural world that lay behind the rock face. In this way, the rock art panel became a contested landscape.

Following Blundell (2004), I argue that initially the San shared their painting skills with the non-San members of their bands, resulting in the development of the Type 2 tradition. There is evidence to suggest that some San individuals maintained a distinction between San and non-San people and controlled the acculturation of non-San members (Stanford 1910; *cf.* Blundell 2004). Thus, it is arguable that they also controlled the space of painting. The limited nature of Type 2A rock art attests to San control of the production of this art. Interestingly, there is also evidence to suggest the

San shared their spiritual beliefs associated with painting. This is likely to have affected the San cosmos and changed the rules of access to the San spiritual landscape. If the San did indeed insist that non-San members paint both separately to and differently from themselves (*cf.* Blundell 2004), I argue that they inadvertently set the stage for the development of a new rock art tradition, and the contestation that ensued.

By the end of the 1850s, the powerful San-led bands had broken up and most of the remaining individuals went to live on the edges of the secondary escarpment amongst the Mpondomise. This marks the end of San independence in the north Eastern Cape. The high mountains and inland plateau of the central portion of this region were no longer occupied by San-led groups and it is likely that a power vacuum ensued in this area (*cf.* Mallen 2008). I argue that non-San individuals continued to paint and Type 2 rock art was thus separated from San society and control and was used for a different purpose–to construct the identity of a multi-ethnic raiding band, which was in the process of becoming creolised. Thus, Type 2 rock art became part of the development of a new identity, independent of the San but at the same time using a San strategy for identity-construction in the form of rock art. Type 2B rock art was deliberately painted over and amongst fine-line imagery to draw on the political and spiritual power of these images (Mallen 2008). This placement constituted a political statement of power and control of the space of painting (*ibid.*). Type 2B imagery also appropriated aspects of fine-line painting, suggesting that the authors were drawing on the supernatural potency of these images and the rock surface as the interface between the spirit and natural realms, which would have enhanced their raiding abilities.

I argue that the production of Type 2 rock art probably shifted geographically to the inland plateau during the 1860s. This shift, I suggest, is associated with the extensive settlement of the inland plateau for the first time. There was much conflict between these new inhabitants as they vied for control in the region, resulting in increased competition over raiding, possibly taking the form of persistent cycles of raids and counter-raids between groups. Type 2C art is characteristically very varied and there are few conventions in this rock art. This is partly due to the disintegration of San influence over the production of this rock art, and also perhaps due to the possibility that the San had never actively controlled the space of painting on the inland plateau. I

argue that Type 2C art was focused on maintaining their identity in the face of increased competition from new groups establishing themselves in this area and less on contesting San control.

San society also changed significantly during this period. By the beginning of the 1860s, San bands had been dispersed and most San individuals went to live on the edges of or amongst Bantu-speaking communities, where they acted as rainmakers for local chiefs. Their status and livelihood within these communities was based largely on their rainmaking skills and it is possible that, as a result, San spirituality shifted to being used to obtain political and economic power. Furthermore, San individuals started to acculturate to Mpondomise society as part of negotiating their position in Bantu-speaking society, This can be seen in the imagery at Ngcengane Shelter, which includes crude fine-line images and non-fine-line images. Significantly, there are no Type 2 images at this site. The cruder fine-line images are similar to that made by non-San individuals who learnt how to paint with the San whilst living with them, such as Mapote (How 1962). This highlights an important aspect of Type 2 tradition– unlike other images made by non-San people that were meant to be fine-line, this tradition was consciously made to be different from fine-line rock art, expressing a separate and unique collective identity.

I also argue that the development of Type 2 tradition and the way this changed the rules of painting in the north Eastern Cape may have affected late San painting. The development of Type 2 tradition allowed for painting to form part of creolisation and, in this way, may have influenced the changes in late San painting associated with their acculturation to Bantu-speaking society. Thus, the painting of classic fine-line rock art may have come to an end partly because the San, in their efforts to maintain a discrete identity in multi-ethnic groups, had allowed for the creation of another rock art tradition. Overall, one can posit a progression in the rock art of the north Eastern Cape in the nineteenth century wherein a new tradition emerged, changed and then influenced the pre-existing tradition.

Contribution to South African archaeology

This research in the north Eastern Cape adds to our understanding of rock art and archaeology in three ways. First, it demonstrates that it is both possible and fruitful to associate rock art and historical processes more closely and to use historical material to understand changes in rock art during the nineteenth century. Second, it adds to our understanding of the complex ways in which both San and non-San individuals may have contributed to creolisation and the role rock art can play in this process. Third, it offers an opportunity to push back one of the boundaries plaguing transformation in South African archaeology.

The discovery of Type 2C rock art on the inland plateau of the north Eastern Cape presents an opportunity to more fully understand the development of the non-fine-line rock art tradition I have labelled Type 2. Although the earlier variants of Type 2 rock art have been identified and studied (Blundell 2004; Mallen 2008), the discovery of additional, related imagery has indicated that a more wide-ranging process was occurring in the north Eastern Cape than previous researchers initially thought. Accordingly, this dissertation has aimed at gaining more insight into how the three variants of this tradition might be related to each other and how they may have developed over time. By considering the changes within this rock art in association with the nineteenth-century historical record it has been possible to understand the conditions which may have resulted in the production of these corpora of rock art. This is an important step forward as, although rock art has previously been studied within the historical context of the north Eastern Cape, it has not been tied to historical periods this closely, especially with regards to changes within a tradition. Indeed, Challis (2008: 306) has recently suggested that it may be possible to map nineteenth-century events onto the rock art of the south-eastern mountains. I propose that this may be possible with the Type 2 tradition because, unlike most of the fine-line rock art studied previously, the subject matter of this art places it unambiguously within the temporal context of the nineteenth century. Therefore, it has been possible to hypothesise the creation of the Type 2 tradition, the changes within it and how it may have affected the production of fine-line rock art within a chronological context using historical information.

The second aspect of the importance of this research is the contribution it makes to our understanding of the complex and changing processes of interaction between San and non-San individuals in the creolised context of nineteenth-century north Eastern Cape (see also Blundell 2004; Challis 2008). I argue that the Type 2 tradition formed an integral part of the processes of creolisation that occurred in the north Eastern Cape during the nineteenth century and may have been used to mediate the socio-political relations between the authoring group and others in the region. Blundell (2004: 25) has criticised revisionist attempts to rewrite San history for failing to consider how San individuals might have played a role in producing a hybridised culture, especially in ways other than politics and economy. Similarly, Challis (2008: 178) has faulted rock art researchers for not acknowledging that many nineteenth-century 'San' groups actually included non-San members. He cited Blundell's (2004) work on Type 2(A) rock art as an exception to this. Therefore, the Type 2 tradition is ideally placed to enhance our understanding of the processes occurring within multi-ethnic groups and the role San individuals may have played in such contexts of creolisation. As I have stated, the complex socio-cultural dynamics of such groups are still poorly understood. However, Type 2 tradition gives some insight into how these groups functioned and how they made use of material culture–in the form of rock art–and ideology.

AmaTola fine-line art (*cf.* Challis 2008, 2009; see Chapter 2) provides a fascinating contrast to the Type 2 tradition. These traditions were both produced in the same period, in the same region and by a similar kind of group, yet they are drastically different. The most apparent difference is in their manner of depiction–Type 2 is finger-painted and rough brush-painted whilst AmaTola rock art is fine-line. Their subject matter–besides horse riders–is also vastly different. As we have seen in Chapter 4, the AmaTola were very different to the other San-led bands to the south under Nqabayo and Mdwebo. They originated on the eastern frontier and were a much larger group that kept large herds of domestic stock. There was much animosity between the AmaTola and the related bands of Mdwebo and Nqabayo, perhaps because they were so different. It also seems that the historical processes that occurred in the central portion of the north Eastern Cape, such as the stratification of San groups due to increased interaction with Bantu-speaking groups arguably seen in the depiction of SDFs, did not occur in the case of the AmaTola (Challis 2008: 256-7).

This is interesting when considering the Type 2 tradition and processes that probably occurred in *!Gã !ne*-speaking San society in the north Eastern Cape during the nineteenth century. I suggest that the main reason for the difference in these traditions of rock art made by mixed groups lies in their different socio-historical contexts of production. The Type 2 tradition can be considered the product of unique processes that occurred in the central portion of the north Eastern Cape, especially San attempts to preserve a distinctive San identity whilst controlling the acculturation of the non-San members of their bands, suggested by the painting of SDFs and the kinds of imagery painted in association with them, including Type 2A (*cf.* Blundell 2004). Therefore, non-San members had to paint on a separate surface, in a different manner and with different quality pigment to San fine-line paintings.

This demonstrates that, although the general context of manufacture of these traditions was similar, local conditions unique to the authoring groups played a definitive role in the formation of these rock art traditions. This is also a warning against making sweeping regional generalisations based on the limited historical information available. Therefore, future studies of rock art made by nineteenth century mixed groups needs to be focused on specific, localised areas and rock art corpora since it is apparent that these rock art traditions develop along very different lines, even in different areas of the same region.

The third contribution of this research is that it attempts to push back one of the limitations to the transformation of South African archaeology. As mentioned in Chapter 1, part of the north Eastern Cape formerly constituted the 'homeland' of the Transkei under Apartheid. My fieldwork in this area revealed that, amongst the residents, this division sill exists to a large extent. Moreover, little historical and archaeological research has been done in the former Transkei, which perpetuates the marginality of this region in the academic sphere. If archaeology is going to be socially responsible and relevant–one of the aims of the Transformation Charter (ASAPA 2009)–research has to present a past that is integrated and reminds people that such boundaries are merely an Apartheid construction and are by no means 'natural'. Therefore, it is necessary for these marginal former homeland areas to be integrated into mainstream archaeological research. This research works towards

redressing this imbalance as it treats the two formerly separated areas as a whole, both historically and archaeologically. Furthermore, it foregrounds the complex processes of interaction and creolisation that occurred between different ethno-linguistic groups in this region of South Africa.

Limitations

Although I have attempted to make convincing arguments, there are several limitations to this research which render these arguments mere working hypotheses. Much of this dissertation has focused on the rock art found in my survey, which I have labelled Type 2C art. As mentioned in Chapter 1, not much is known about this newly discovered rock art and many aspects of it remain to be investigated, such as its meaning, geographical extent and relationship to other finger-painted rock art, specifically featuring horses with riders, found in the south-eastern mountains. In addition, as discussed in Chapter 4, none of this art has been directly dated.

A significant limitation to this research is that we have little knowledge of the meaning of Type 2 rock art, especially Type 2C art. Although my research has not focused on the meaning of Type 2 imagery but rather on its possible role in social relations, these two aspects of this art are linked and further understanding of its meaning may lead to new and deeper insights into how it may have been used socially. Therefore, it is crucial for future research to get to grips with the meaning of this art. Investigations of the meaning of the Type 2 tradition will, however, have to deal with the issue of identifying the authors of this art. Currently, there is no archaeological, ethnographical or historical evidence to suggest which specific group may have made this art.

The geographical extent of Type 2C art is also unknown. The area in which I surveyed is small and the boundaries were arbitrarily determined (Fig. 8). More survey work needs to be undertaken to determine the overall geographic distribution of this art. Judging by the distribution of Type 2C sites in my sample, it would be worthwhile to survey to the east of Sample Area 2 (see Chapter 3). The geographical extent of Type 2A and Type 2B art is less of a concern because, although specific surveys for this art have not been carried out, they are found in the high mountains

where much rock art research has been done. As mentioned in Chapter 3, when there is a larger data set, it is more likely that images that initially seem anomalous could be associated with a coherent tradition. Similarly, the many enigmatic images found in Type 2C rock art especially may make more sense when considered together with a larger sample of images. The discovery of more Type 2 rock art might also affect the definition of this art and its variants, as well as our understanding of the nature of the relationships between them. The sample size of sites where Type 2 images occur is rather small. This tradition has been identified at 40 sites–9 Type 2A sites, 17 Type 2B sites and 14 Type 2C sites. In comparison, AmaTola art has been identified at 72 sites (Challis 2005: 17) and Korana art at 31 sites (Ouzman 2005: 103). Further survey would also reveal how many sites with the Type 2 tradition there actually are.

I mentioned in Chapter 1 that images of finger-painted horses and riders are found in many parts of South Africa, including the south-eastern mountains. The relationship of Type 2 art to these images is unknown and this warrants further research. Additional surveys may shed some light on this matter. More research his needed on nineteenth century finger-paintings, especially of horses with riders (but see Ouzman 2005 for an example), and the relationships between such images found in different regions. The general distribution of these paintings suggests that they were associated with processes of creolisation amongst groups moving ahead of colonial frontiers. As I have mentioned, it is important to consider local variations in such images in conjunction with local conditions that may have affected their production, rather than assuming that because they are visually similar they are part of a single broad historical process or made by same group that moved over a large area. The study of the Type 2 tradition suggests that local conditions may have produced pockets of finger-painted horse with rider rock art.

A major part of this dissertation concerns the relationship between the variants of the Type 2 tradition. I have proposed that these variants are chronologically related and have tentatively associated them with dated historical phases (see Chapter 4). However, since this rock art has not been dated by scientific means, these suggestions remain hypotheses and cannot be verified. The historical subject matter does, however, indicate that this art was definitely produced in the nineteenth century, which mitigates the dating problem to a certain extent. Dating of this art may be

problematic as methods commonly used to date rock art do not work with paintings made as recently as the nineteenth century (Solomon 1996: 294). The chronological assumptions of my hypothesis could, however, be tested in other ways, such as by obtaining dates for SDFs. It is likely that this will be accomplished in the near future and a project is currently underway to do so (Pearce 2010 pers. comm.). Although dating is important to studies of rock art, particularly those regarding change over time, it could be a long time before we have a secure chronological framework that can be used to determine regional sequences. In the meantime, I propose that it is worthwhile to produce hypotheses about changes over time that may have occurred in certain corpora of rock and, in the case of nineteenth century rock art, its relationships to historical processes. These hypotheses can be tested against reliable scientific dates as dating projects and techniques advance. Otherwise, rock art research runs the risk of going to the opposite extreme and becoming ahistorical.

To conclude, this study of the development of the Type 2 tradition highlights the complex processes of interaction and creolisation that occurred in the central portion of the north Eastern Cape during the nineteenth century. However, this and research in other parts of the south-eastern mountains and South Africa in general (for example, Ouzman 2005; Challis 2008, 2009) only forms a small beginning of our understanding of such processes and the role rock art may have played in them. Future research combining ethno-historical material and rock art is needed to supplement our knowledge of these processes, especially on a local scale. Another issue important in our understanding of these processes is how the inclusion of non-San individuals in the painting activities of the San may have affected late San painting and how this may have blurred the boundaries of what we now consider as fine-line and non-fine-line rock art. I therefore offer the hypotheses entailed in this research as potential springboards for further research and hope that it stimulates researchers to examine new and deeper questions relating to nineteenth century rock art, and specifically that of the north Eastern Cape.

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