

Abstract

Southern Africa is known for its fine brush painted San rock art that extends from the Southern Cape up to the Zambezi River. North of the Zambezi San rock art stops and the Schematic art zone begins. The latter art is dominated by geometric designs, which were termed Red Geometric Tradition Art and arguably 'BaTwa' groups culturally akin to modern-day Pygmy groups were the authors of this art. No examples of San rock art are known North of the Zambezi. No examples of Red Geometric Tradition art and Nachikufan tools are known south of Zambezi. Although it is easy to walk across the Zambezi because it is often very shallow, it appears to have been a hunter-gatherer frontier. This dissertation considers the nature of this boundary or frontier in the Cahora Bassa Dam area. Theoretical writings on boundaries and borders suggest hypotheses on how the Zambezi River may have operated as a boundary. The results of this research demonstrate that two hunter-gatherer groups with different archaeological signatures occupied both banks of the Zambesi in the Cahora Bassa Dam area, and that the idea of the Zambezi River being a border separating San and BaTwa hunter-gatherers needs to be re-evaluated in the light of the evidence presented.