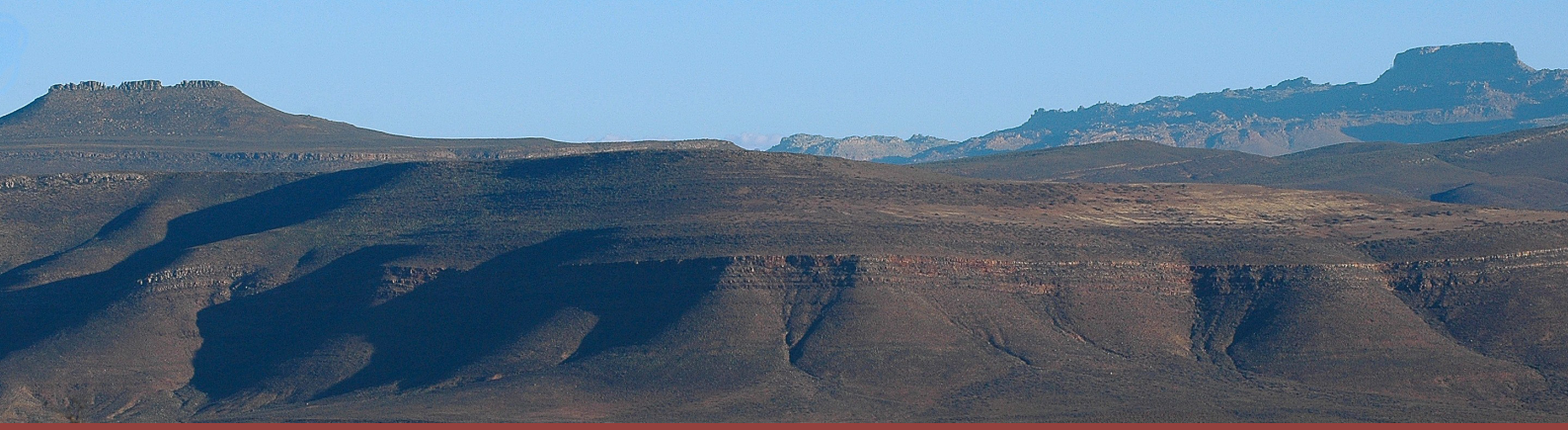

Archival Theory, Chronology and Interpretation of Rock Art in the Western Cape, South Africa

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African Archaeology 93 • Cambridge Monographs in African Archaeology

Access Archaeology

Archaeopress Access Archaeology

Archaeopress Publishing Ltd
Gordon House
276 Banbury Road
Oxford OX2 7ED

www.archaeopress.com

ISBN 978 1 78491 446 2
ISBN 978 1 78491 447 9 (e-Pdf)

Cover: Imagery from Stompiesfontein and the Cederberg landscape

Cambridge Monographs in African Archaeology 93
Series Editors: Laurence Smith, Brian Stewart, Stephanie Wynne-Jones

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For my parents, Susan and Jacob

Abstract

SINCE ABSOLUTE DATING of rock art is limited, relative chronologies remain useful in contextualising interpretations of ancient images. This book advocates the archival capacity of rock art and uses archival perspectives to analyse the chronology of paintings in order to formulate a framework for their historicised interpretations. The Western Cape painting sequence is customarily accepted to include the hunter-gatherer phase from *c.* 10,000 BP, pastoralism from *c*. 2,000 BP and finally the historical-cum-colonial period several centuries ago. Painting traditions with distinct depiction manners and content are conventionally linked to these broad periods. This study evaluates this schema in order to refine the diverse hunter-gatherer, herder and colonial era painting contexts and histories. Using superimpositions as one analytical tool, the notion of *datum* aided the referencing and correlation of layered imagery into a relative sequence. Although broad differences separate painting traditions, and these variations are generally indistinguishable within a single tradition, it is clear that the long-spanning hunter-gatherer segment of painting in this region reflects a hitherto unrecognised sub-tradition. Some painted themes such as elephants, fat-tailed sheep, handprints and possibly finger dots occur within various levels of the sequence, which this study views as shared graphic fragments occurring between and across traditions and sub-traditions. Through the archival concept of *respect des fonds* such observable complexities were clarified as coherent graphic narratives that run through the entire chronological sequence of the Western Cape rock paintings. Probing archaeological, ethnographic and historical sources revealed that while these themes remained fundamentally consistent throughout the stratigraphic sequence as preferred subject matter, their meanings might have transformed subliminally from earlier to later periods, possibly reflecting layered shifts in the socio-economic, cultural and political circumstances of the region. Fundamentally, the framework of image histories shown by the choice and sustenance of specific themes is understood to mean that their significance and specific graphic contexts throughout the chronological sequence are pivoted and mirrored through the long established hunter-gatherer rock paintings which predate periods of contact with other cultures. The resulting sequence and interpretation of these painted themes is a descriptive and organisational template reflecting the original organic character in the creation of the paintings and ordered cultural continuities in the use of animal/human symbolism. This book's agenda in part involves reviewing the Western Cape's changing social and historical landscape to show variation in painting over time and to project possible interpretative transformations. Painting sequences and cultural (dis)continuities are thus intricately entwined and can be disentangled through a recursive analytical relationship between archaeology, ethnography and history. This amalgamated analytical approach produces historicised narratives and contextual meanings for the rock paintings.

EXPLANATORY NOTES*

Site names

Rock art is a fragile heritage. Common wisdom instructs us that the unbridled exposing of sites to humanity places them in great danger of destruction over time. In South Africa, the Heritage Resources Act (No. 25) of 1999 protects all archaeological sites from uninvited attention and vandalism. This study does not provide site names and coordinates in the spirit of protecting them from human threats. Names are used only for those sites that are already known to the public or those sites important only to research communities. With only a few exceptions, these sites are largely on private properties or conservation areas, where even *bona fide* researchers must seek permission to study them. So, they generally enjoy some protection.

Ethnic names

Southern African has undergone particular historical circumstances over the past five centuries that have culminated in the adoption of various terminologies used to label diverse regional peoples. Most are fraught with unflatteringly pejorative connotations. None are so bedevilled by deleterious historical legacy than the names often reserved for the people known collectively today as Khoisan. This term was coined in the late 1920s to encompass both the Bushman/San hunter-gatherers and Khoekhoe pastoralists (Schultze 1928). The term refers to the linguistic and biological affinities of click speakers of southern Africa, who are more closely related genetically than they are to other African populations. "Khoisan" is now regularly rendered as "Khoesan" while some prefer "Khoesaan" (Smith *et al.* 2000) or now commonly "KhoeSan" (an appellation used in this study, in line with current developments in this field). Alan Barnard (1992: 7) argues for the use of the original spelling "Khoisan", since it captures a foreign construct that does not exist in original Nama language.

Although in common usage today, in many ways the appellation "San" (also recently rendered as "Saan"), like the much more conventional "Bushman", is equally problematic given its history. In one Nama dialect, as in other Khoe languages, "Sa-n" means "forager people" (non-gender pl.). Others suggest that in the Cape the term may also have implied a people with no stock animals and thus of lower standing. They argue that when domestic animals became much easier for the former hunters and gatherers to hunt than wild game, the name "San" became associated with stock thieves (Smith 1998). It also appears that "Bushman" (as an Anglicised form) was from the Dutch literal translation of this "San" moniker with its associated wild connotations. Despite etymological debates around these names, what is incontrovertible is the fact that both have been used pejoratively. But since there is no single self-appellation used among the hunters and gatherers beyond their own group names, such as |Xam, Ju|'hoansi, !Xoõ, G|wi, Naro and so forth, writers and the public alike follow convention to use one or the other of the former terms. This study is no exception; however, it rejects all earlier derogatory connotations and uses the terms in a positive sense.

KhoeSan clicks

KhoeSan languages use clicks, as additional consonants to add meaning to words. Inflections and omissions will inevitably alter the meaning of words.

| (or /) Dental click: produced by placing the tongue behind the front teeth to make the "tut" sound.

ǂ (or ≠) Alveolar click: produced by sucking the tongue against the ridge behind the upper front teeth.

ǁ (or //) Lateral click: produced at the side of the mouth.

! Palatal click: produced by clucking the tongue on the roof of the palate.

Dates and chronology

Unlike history, archaeology and prehistory deal with long time frames. They render chronologies in two conventional ways. The first is to quote dates by reference to the present era, usually written as **BP** (before present). The reference year is + 1950, an arbitrary cut-off time reference. All dates are negative in relation to + 1950 (e.g. 2,500 BP = – 550). Archaeologists often follow this convention, used with calibrated radiocarbon dates. The second way uses the Christian era as a reference point: this approach prefixes a + or – sign to the quoted date. When quoting chronology in centuries, the upper case letters **BC** and **AD** ("before the Christian era" and "of the Christian era") are appended to the dates (e.g. 3,000 BC = – 3,000 or AD 1,450 = + 1,450). Historians prefer this format. This book uses the first approach following usage in archaeology and rock art studies.

* Information contained on this page appears in the book "Termites of the Gods" (Mguni 2015: xvi-xvii)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I gratefully acknowledge the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa for partially funding my research during the initial phases of this project. From Bushmans Kloof Wilderness Resereve in the Western Cape where I largely conducted my research, I thank the Tollman family (Stan and Bea, Brett, Vicky, Toni and Gavin), for affording me the opportunity to study rock paintings on their private property. Due to my association with this family, I had a unique opportunity to study several adjacent farmlands over a period of five years that I spent working on their reserve. I thank those farmers and individuals who allowed me access to their farms and also those who in some cases showed me the rock paintings under their safeguarding. Still on the Bushmans Kloof Wilderness Reserve association, I wish to thank Clive Bennett who was Managing Director overseeing the Tollman ventures in South Africa during that period, then Marketing Manager Jill Wagner, and a succession of General Managers of the reserve under whom I worked: Fred and Josie Stow, Nelson and Janine Rodrigues and Graham and Ronel Kennedy. To them and many other colleagues at the reserve I express my gratitude for the wonderful moments I shared with them. In all these years I have had inspiring interactions and professional links with my teachers, colleagues and friends, who include John Parkington, Andy Smith, Janette Deacon, Ione Rudner, Simon Hall, Tony Manhire, Judy Sealy, Peter Slingsby and the late Edward Eastwood. I thank you all most sincerely for your collegiality. There are many others to whom I am indebted but for whom I have no space to acknowledge; I thank them too. In the production of this book, I thank Neil Rusch for helping me with the reconfiguration of four illustrations, and then the Archaeopress team, particularly David Davison, Laurence Smith and Ben Heaney who made the publication of this study possible. Last but not least, I extend my heartfelt thanks to my family nexus, my parents Jacob and Susan Mguni, my brothers and children starting with Bhekinhlanhla, Norman, Banele, Nobandile, Sakhile, Sesethu, Lwandle and all the others I have not mentioned by name in my extended family web, for their unwavering support over many years. Thank you all, you will always remain dear to me.

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CHAPTER ONE

Conceiving Rock Art Archives

> *Ephemeral objects are paradoxically things full of thingness but also flimsy, fragile, easily imagined as mere screens for the real. The fragility of the objects in turn made them in some sense more real: we were capturing these items before they disappeared…we were preservers of the past.* (Michie & Warhol 2010: 419–420)

1.1. PAINTING SEQUENCES AS ARCHIVES

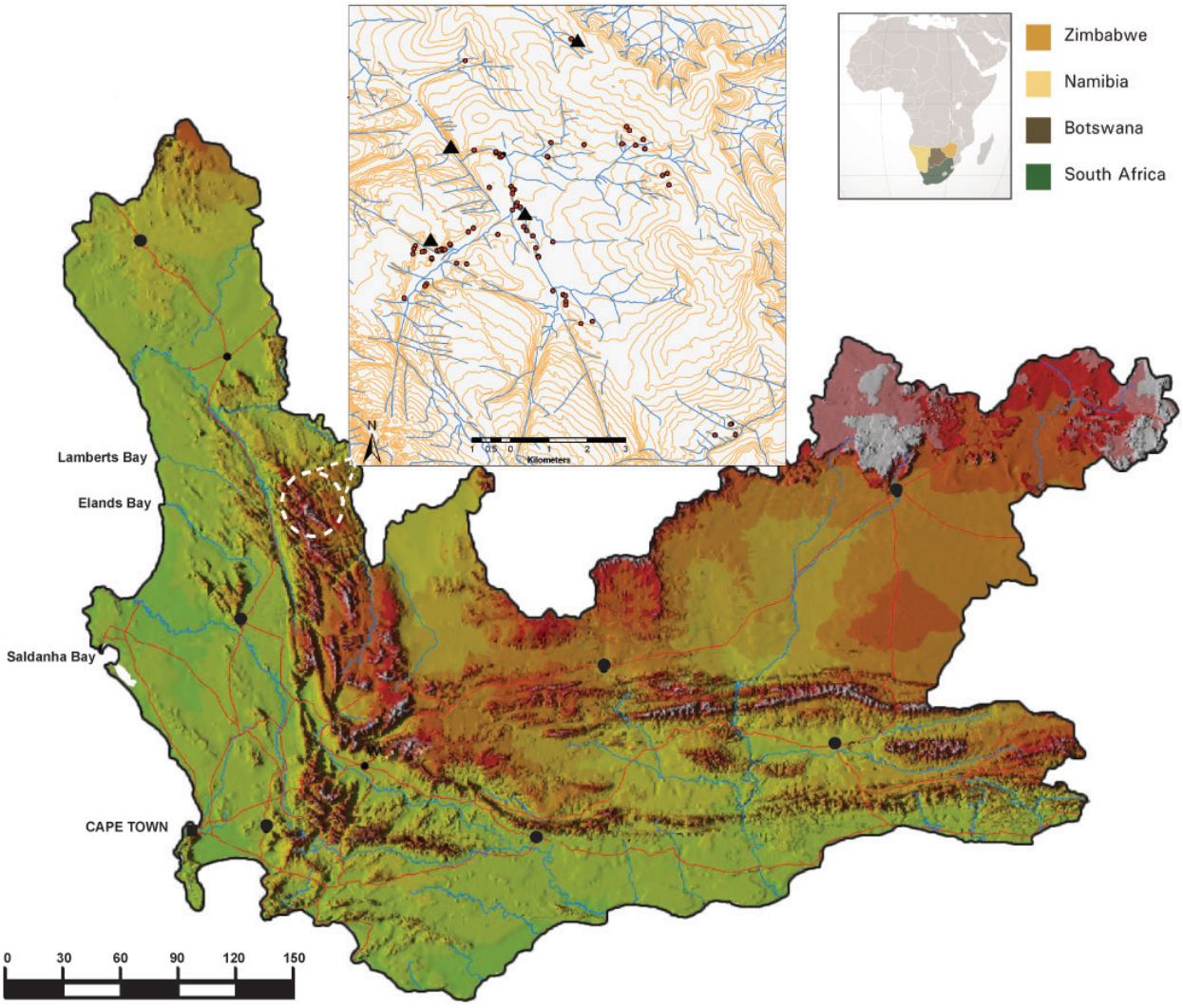
A persistent problem in southern Africa is that the chronology and interpretation of rock art are approached as though they are separate domains of knowledge about the art, its ancient producers and their social histories. There is a view that the development and proliferation of rock art studies over the past four decades in the region largely overlooked chronology (Mazel 2009: 84-85). In formulating the chronology of various painting traditions in the Western Cape, with a view to aiding rock art interpretation, this book proposes the archival approach as a potential framework for contextualising rock painting sequences, wherever possible, in their historical purview. This proposition does not aim to replace existing approaches to chronology studies, but instead it affirms the archival approach as an augmentation methodology or a supplementary analytical tool to aid wholesome interpretations. As shall be seen later when this approach is discussed in detail, the inbuilt organisational principles of the archival approach based on the *respect des fonds* concept (discussed in chapter five) make it useful for visualising and interpreting rock art subject matter and themes that span different painting traditions and therefore also the stratigraphic levels of the image sequences. To achieve this methodological ideal, rock art as archaeological materiality needs to be conceptualised in a manner that is amenable to archival analysis. This chapter therefore begins by presenting the notion of rock art as archive. Rock art as archive is a central methodological pivot that is unified and used in tandem with several other commonplace approaches in wrestling with the chronological complexities of the painted and engraved records, associated past human experience and history. In this regard, the archival perspective is a suitable platform for promoting interpretations that stimulate historicism in the narratives about the ancient painters and the artistic record which they placed in the rocky landscapes of southern African.

Historicism, as a concept and in practice, has been used, contested and examined over the past few centuries and especially after the mid-1800s in anthropological and historical disciplines and literary criticism, yet it has not been embraced sufficiently in rock art studies and archaeology in general. The concept is broadly defined in contemporary literal theory as "a critical movement insisting on the prime importance of historical context to the interpretation of texts of all kinds" (Hamilton 1996: 1-2). This contextualisation of interpretations emphasises the foregrounding of specific geographies, periods, histories and cultures in analysing materials from the past. Rock art, as a pictorial record that bears testimony to the social history of its ancient producers requires this kind of treatment in our formulation of interpretations and chronologies. However, since the effectual and widespread application of direct dating of rock art largely remains a remote prospect, it is prudent to continue with efforts on improving relative chronologies as these provide a means to organise the images in basic terms of their sequential ordering. Such chronologies have the potential to place subject matter and themes in their varied moments of production relative to each other within a single tradition or across multiple artistic traditions. Paul Hamilton points out that, "Artworks and historical events, like our reworkings of them, are inseparable from their moment" (1996: 12), but also that, "The particularity of historical event and artwork fixes them in time yet opens them up to a mode of explanation which changes over time" (*ibid*.: 15). In this regard, the archival approach allows the expansive interpretation of particular painted subject matter and themes that occur at various levels of the chronological sequence and even across different traditions, something that has not been attempted in conventional approaches in rock art studies. In the second chapter there is a definition of the central constituents of the rock art as archive formulation, whose philosophical force is partially alluded to in the epigraph. The discussion proceeds to outline the painting assemblage repositories of this analysis and finishes with a statement on the ways and means to this end: that is, the appropriate conceptual and practical strategies for this investigation of painting sequences. Key notional issues from this précis are developed further to lead onto and dovetail with considerations of theory and methodology frameworks in chapter five and ultimately the resulting formulation of the Western Cape regional sequence in later chapters.

Except where such mention is warranted for historical reference or comparative arguments being advanced, this book does not discuss rock art regions outside the Western Cape (Map 1.1). Few associations are made in

later chapters with the rock art regions outside the Cape under the historical-cum-iconographic discussion on the interpretation and meaning of selected subject matter and themes of San or Bushman[1] rock paintings. Issues of meaning and motivation are undoubtedly weighty hermeneutic themes but overall, as many today would agree, they have been better researched and are now largely well understood in other regions (see this view in Lewis-Williams 2006: 344). The central objective is therefore to formulate an exploratory frame for articulating and contextualising rock art chronology and interpretation of a selection of painted themes using archaeological, anthropological and historical sources. This approach relies largely on studying the painting sequences with the prime conception of the former regional inhabitants and artists as active archivists of these artistic and material records. This thread in the study prefigures the archival approach as a potential perspective alongside other analytical approaches in studying chronological sequence and painting history in the Western Cape. As shown in advancing the idea, the paintings are in several respects very much like other kinds of assemblages whose material and informational qualities conjure up the notion and constitution of what is called the "archive" in modern-day semantics. Besides mirroring the archive, painting assemblages have an intrinsic archival value in and of themselves, as one component among several past records of historical significance. Rock art is thus a subject that should not only be dealt with as an intellectual exercise of its decipherment using an assembly of analogies, but also as a body of material that provides complementary support for other information sources such as early travellers' writings, ethnography, ethno-historical and excavated records. Rather than rock art being a passive recipient of interpretative support from these various sources, it is arguably a powerful source in its own right deserving to be used to inform other records in an expansive and bidirectional manner. This dialectical

1 In this book San and Bushman (*n*, -man [sg.]; -men [pl.]) are used as both *noun* and *adjective*, without their former negative or pejorative connotations. Where a specific group or linguistic designation is not specified, these names are used interchangeably, although these people had their own names to refer to themselves and their contemporaries.



Map 1.1: This map shows the study area, circled in red with a line pointing to its close-up, in the broader Western Cape. The black triangular icons are some of the sites analysed in the study.

approach requires scholarly rigour and probity accorded archival bodies of material with the use of appropriate analytical tools. Rock painting assemblages therefore require contextualisation chronologically, historically and culturally if our interpretations of the paintings are to be successful in particularising image change over time and understanding the social histories of the ancient rock painters.

1.2. ROCK PAINTERS AS "ACTIVE ARCHIVISTS"

It is hard to imagine that the prehistoric rock artists were unaware that the images they created would endure long after their own lifespans. Likewise, it is implausible that these artists were less self-conscious human beings who did not recognise the patrimonial worth of the previous images made on the same rock faces by their forebears and other earlier generations. Following this logic implies that these artists anticipated the prospect of their own creations of imagery in turn forming a legacy to be passed down to and viewed by future generations long after their own existence. This may seem speculative, but to deny these long gone people this basic human capacity is to deny them a healthy, conscious sense of their own history, their past and future and, by extension, their total humanity. They were as fully human as any other person today. When asked about the engravings at Tsodilo Hills, Xuntae Xhao, a Ju|'hoansi man who lives in a nearby village, answered that these had been "made so that future generations could see what the older people had done" (Walker 2010: 62). Furthermore, it is also revealing that one of the central |Xam informants whose copious dictations in the 1870s are contained in the Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd archive, the old man ||Kabbo, said he "much enjoyed the thought that the Bushman stories [which he narrated] would become known [in the future] by means of books" (Bleek & Lloyd 1911: x, parenthesis added). Even if in this instance ||Kabbo did not mention this with the rock art heritage in mind *per se*, it is evident that the he clearly understood the prospect of books propagating the KhoeSan legacy down the generations. Although such propagation would occur in a foreign textual medium, but showing |Xam verbatim dictations alongside English translations, this possibility was not a completely alien notion to his San cultural framework. Although the futuristic propensity of archival materials is generally accorded to Western traditions, it can also be argued that in their cultural practices the pre-industrial and preliterate societies in most parts of Africa do indeed share a strong notion of history, the past and future. Generally, it is in their expressive culture—oral histories, artisanship, folklore in the form of myths, fables and legends—that the past–future dichotomy is eminently reflected.

Regarding the long-gone southern African hunter-gatherer artists, some writers have similarly argued that, "As they worked, they knew that, later, someone would see their images and probably add to the panel" (Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2009: 42). This view accords with (and indeed seems to be its derivative) David Lewis-Williams's earlier declaration that, even though the |Xam were not painters of rock shelters, they nevertheless "recognised the art as products of their own people, and they had the same cognitive system as the last artists" (Lewis-Williams 1981: ix). Moreover, it might be added that given the ubiquity and prolificacy of this enduring artistic tradition across southern Africa, few people today would dispute that its long-term creation probably involved many, rather than isolated artistic individuals, over many successive generations. The making of the art therefore might have been a communal effort (see Lewis-Williams 1992: 20), with most people generally artistically adept. This is in direct contrast to the earlier view that, "[T]hese rock paintings must have been the work of a few individuals while the Bushmen populace as a whole presumably found outlets for their artistic ambitions in quite different fields like dancing, music or ornamentation" (Pager 1971b: 28). In this view, artisanship in rock art production was therefore a higher order pursuit, a preserve of only a few gifted individuals, while other forms of expressive culture were a kind of catchall unoccupied category for all and sundry. This view reflects a mildly patronising perception of San artists that is quite consistent with the earlier crude versions generally entertained about these hunter-gatherer people, even by those who seemed to be sympathetic towards them. In much earlier times, before the 1970s when most writers were generally better informed, those who propagated unpalatable views concerning San hunter-gatherers in travelogues and journals were amateur writers in the mould of traders, explorers and travellers, big game hunters and even missionaries. Although we now know that he was mistaken, missionary Henry Tindall (1856: 26) once wrote of the San: "He has…no patrimony…a soul, debased, it is true, and completely bound down and clogged by his animal nature." Equally mistaken was German anatomist and ethnologist Gustav Fritsch (1872: 418), who later denigrated the San in similar vein: "The Bushman is the most unfortunate childish creature, capable of living only for the moment." Quite the reverse, the San were (and still are) as fully human as these two men: they did not live wholly in the present like animals do, without future aspirations or a sense of past and history.

Visceral truisms expressed above concerning the hunter-gatherer sensitivities about history and future may not as yet attract sufficient consideration, for reasons of their seeming subjectivity, as they do not refer to any direct testimony of the artists themselves, people who have long since disappeared. Yet the oral traditions as recorded in the 19th and 20th centuries show that indeed these hunter-gatherer people had a strong sense of history, their past, present and future. In contrast, Lorna Marshall's (1999) assertion that the Ju|'hoansi, then known as the !Kung of the Kalahari Desert, have no sense of past may have been mild misinterpretation. If the Ju|'hoansi lacked this perspective, they would have no temporal notion of situating their creator deities nor of their ancestors in mythology and folklore, frequently mentioned in their primal time myths, about which Marshall amply wrote. Their reference and use of the time past signals their sense of history even if it is expressed in mythological terms. As gleaned from anthropologist Megan Biesele's (1993) studies of folklore

and expressive life among the Kalahari's former hunter-gatherers, the Ju|'hoan folktales are called *n=oahnsi o n!àusimasi*, 'stories of the old people' set in a long-ago time (Biesele 1993: 17) passed down by their ancestors to the present generations (*ibid*.: 20). As /Ai!ae N!a'an, one of her informants ended some of his stories: "'Hey! The doings of the ancient times were foul [*/kau*], I tell you'" (*ibid*.: 20). It is also of interest in this book that in the early 1970s when Biesele first went to Botswana she expected to find "only a limited number of competent storytellers … a special class of raconteurs, and that other people's narrative abilities would be decidedly inferior" (*ibid*.: 18). To her surprise, the number of competent storytellers, both women and men, was large although generally the old people were the main storytellers and among this category she also found that there were several who were 'really excellent … in verbal and dramatic abilities' (*ibid*.: 20). The principal view in this study is that there is no reason why rock art ought to have been a different order of artisanship to folklore, music, ornamentation and so forth. All were produced within a communally understood and practiced repertoire of artistic skills in a specific hunter-gatherer cultural context. Hence the notion of rock painters as active archivists is communally and community oriented framework of analysis.

Nevertheless, from the foregoing declarations it can be surmised that over several millennia the former indigenous[2] rock artists were purposefully creating archives of images as part of a protracted cultural tradition and sequence. Stated differently, in the prehistoric milieu of the former societies, artistic creativity was thus a robust social phenomenon of active production of rock art and, conceivably, its subsequent "archiving" by generations of people over time. Such archiving processes may have manifested in different forms, but direct and indirect, whereby the artists carefully placed their images in protected spaces and stable surfaces of shelters, and although there is still little that is known about the specific recipes used in the making of paints, it is generally agreed that some of these pigments appear to have been manufactured to ensure the longevity of the paintings. Indirect archiving would have entailed that the artists placed their own images in meaningful juxtapositions and superimpositions with reference to the existing earlier imagery. They may also have used shelters in ways that avoided the defacement of earlier imagery; certainly there are no known veritable signs or evidence of prehistoric defacement or vandalism of rock art in southern Africa. So these varied forms of active engagement with earlier images in the rock shelters by later artists or their deliberate avoidance altogether of such imagery entailed aspects of recognition, either by appropriation or reverence.

Why would the artists and their societies seek to maintain and pass on to future generations the custom of making paintings with their related practices? First and most concretely, if in some respects and in specific regions the painted panels mounted up as "reservoirs of power" (see Lewis-Williams 1992: 25) or some other kind of symbolic accumulation, which artists and their contemporaries understood to be amenable to a variety of uses or to drawing from some power or inspiration on a continual basis (and therefore art production not being entirely a culmination of a one-off series of actions and events), it was in their interest to sustain these paintings in their original contexts. Furthermore, this intended accumulation or safeguarding what accumulated before can be conceived of as a facet of "storage", an archival conception to which this discussion shall return below and in chapter five. This statement is not arguing for the notion of curatorship as recognised in the profession today, but instead the notion of making images that are long-lasting, either (or both) by using durable materials or by placing them in carefully chosen shielded spaces so that they survive time while adding or deriving meaningful nuances on the existing imagery. For, as Lewis-Williams (1998: 96) has written in respect of the shamanistic explanation of the paintings, "The main focus of San art was the building up, through generations of painters, of cumulative manifestation of the spirit world…In this way, through the construction over time of a complex 'progressive manifestation', San painters played not only a religious but also a social role, establishing…symbols and experiences of a shamanistic cosmos." The long-term symbolic imaging therefore appears not to have been defined by singular truncated events, extemporaneously fixated on the "now" or a one-off creative action, but by mutually threaded and interdigitating incremental additions from earlier to later generational graphic panoplies.

In other publications, Lewis-Williams (1972, 1974b) earlier observed from his quantification studies that in San rock paintings, "[T]he apparent preferences governing the use of superpositioning point to the proposition that some iconic paintings were deliberately related to each other to function as symbols in a system of communication" (Lewis-Williams 1977: 52; see also Vinnicombe 1976: 141) which the "painters…wished to achieve and convey to their viewers and, *importantly, to later participant painters*" (Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2009: 43, emphasis added). This rationale of deliberately relating iconic images through time is in itself the strongest indicator of the artists' sense of the past and future relevance of their artworks. Further, a revealing insight is provided by the concept of "cultural storage", which Megan Biesele (1993: 52, 59) invokes in her discourse regarding oral systems of communication and the role of expressive forms in transmitting cultural traditions in preliterate societies, in her case the 1960s–1970s Ju|'hoansi hunter-gatherers. She draws from Eric Havelock, who argued that, "All societies support and strengthen their identity by conserving their

2 The terms "indigenous" and "indigenism" are contested anthropological notions with problematic ambiguities, some of which Mathias Guenther (2006: 18) has contended border on "essentialism and primordialism". Therefore this book uses "indigenous" loosely in the sense of "Indigenous One" expounded by Richard Lee (2006: 6–8) as generally referring to "small peoples facing Euro-colonial invasion and conquest". I have elected to use this definition given the social and political setting of the Cape colonial frontier, with its capitalist and statist expansion resulting in the encapsulation and marginalisation of those dispersed remnants of former hunter-gatherer and herder communities, who eventually became a social and economic underclass (Yates *et al.* 1994: 59).

mores. A social consciousness, formed as a consensus, is as it were continually placed in storage for re-use" (Havelock 1978, cited in Biesele 1993: 51). In the study of ancient painted panels, the locus of "cultural storage" needs to be identified and defined. The discussion will refer to this issue in detail in later chapters.

In this study of rock art, cultural storage is conceptualised phenomenologically as an abstract, mental and corporeal phenomenon (e.g. as in oral history, folklore and related expressive performances, among other ephemeral—only as contrasted with rock art permanence in place—forms) that exists both as an internal entity in the "brain" and also as a real physical one with an external existence (e.g. as in spatial arts of rock engraving or painting, which constitute enduring materialities that have remained static over long periods, fixed in place). Storage, as can be argued further, is predicated on the idea of "archive as accumulation and capitalisation of memory on some substrate" (Derrida & Prenowitz 1995: 15). As Rudolf Arnheim (1969: v) suggested a while ago, artistic activity and visual thinking can be thoroughly rational and so ancient hunter-gatherer painters were conscious carriers of this iconographic archive, in their heads, which they fixed on rock surfaces for durability. Because this symbolic accrual of materiality in the form of images over time was not random, but consciously selective, the view presented here finds solace in some current writers' formulation that, "Objects from a given historical period activate a metonymic chain by which those looking at, holding…them can feel asymptotically closer to the historical reality from which the objects derive" (Michie & Warhol 2010: 416). How else could the artists and their audiences have engaged meaningfully with the symbolic content and context(s) of former images in their shelters if there was a historical and cultural dislocation?

The artists would have probably formulated their own repertoire of skills and knowledge in relation to the previous cache of graphic and expressive assemblages accumulated through time within their historical and ecological milieu. The aspect of image accumulation in time and the resulting juxtapositions and superimpositions, the notions of cultural storage and re-use (in whichever ways it occurred and that we might not as yet fully understand) are central to the advocated archival perspective for synthesising rock art sequences and interpretation of subject matter and themes that cross-cut traditions in different layers. All material and symbolic phenomena were obtained within the purview of the artists' social, political, and economic spheres, themselves metaphorically mediated through people's reference to the spiritual worldviews using rituals and other practices. The nexus of activities and ideologies need contextualisation in various specific ecological settings where the people existed and, crucially, in the Western Cape within their normal domiciles inside (but not always) the caves and shelters where they partially lived their lives and painted their experiences. While these itinerant hunter-gatherers walked and combed the landscape in their daily pursuits, they habitually used shelters as their home bases judging by the archaeological evidence of deep and extensive occupation deposits in most large shelters in southern Africa.

The physical and abstract connection of the "archive" and "home" is an important one and has been explored by archival scholars (Derrida & Prenowitz 1995). Jacques Derrida (1996: 2) noted that the archive concept originates from the Greek *arkheion* (also rendered as archeion; see Sickinger 1999: 6; Steedman 2001), which was "initially a house, a domicile…residence of the superior magistrates, the *archons*" or "those who commanded" (Derrida & Prenowitz 1995: 9). It was in the homes of these authorities that official government records were filed; the archons were therefore the "documents' guardians" (Derrida 1996: 2; Sickinger 1999: 2–6). While this principle of guardianship is essential in the analysis presented in this book, it is important to note that the archive institution itself has thus from its very inception associated the public and private domains in various illuminating ways. This spatial-politico dualism, according to Derrida, gave both a hermeneutic and jurisdictional authority to the magistrates, as the guardians of ancient records. The associated state control and monopolisation of power to interpret the records, what he calls the *domiciliation* or "state of house arrest", is therefore where the archive concept is enmeshed. Although Derrida's appropriation of the archive/house conception is somewhat unfitting for the modern forms of archives, some scholars still recognise this conceptual correspondence (Steedman 1998: 70, 2001: 72), probably at an affective level. Some scholars even amplify this emotional metaphor into a religious one. An archive, for the researcher or any end-user, is thus like a place of pilgrimage or "the Mecca of historians" (Phelps 2007: 1) where unique, authentic sources are normally believed to reside (Connors 2003: 225). Likewise, for some, "To be in the archive is to accede to one of its dominant fantasies: that we can go beyond words, beyond traces, to things" themselves (Michie & Warhol 2010: 419). However, beyond these archival bodily experiences, a divergent and hitherto significant construal of these metaphors is the view that originally the Greek archives to which Derrida alludes were also largely what the "people as a whole maintained [as] records of the decisions they themselves made as a community" (Sickinger 1999: 6). (These records were sometimes inscribed, but not always, on stone stelai, especially in Athens by the communities.) Even with his *domiciliation* concept granted, true state control of the records in ancient Greece was not as absolute as Derrida would have us believe in his analysis.

The community collectivist position accords with the archival theorist Carolyn Steedman's (1998: 70, 2001: 72) contention that Derrida's allegory is not a fitting one for our purposes because "the archon operated a system of law in a slave society…dealt with the majority of local populations, only as aspects of their owners' property and personality". This point becomes relevant to this study because, as we all now know from anthropological studies, the KhoeSan[3] artists' societies with whom this book is concerned maintained a strong "communal ethos" as a central *modus operandi* in their social and cultural

interactions with one another and across to all other aspects of nature around them. The San, for instance, are particularly known to have been largely egalitarian societies (Biesele 1993: 9; Guenther 1999: 14, 41–42; Katz 1982: 26–27), with little or no traditional authority or leadership. Reverting to Steedman's observation, her point of departure draws instead from, and augments, the 19th-century French historian Jules Michelet's (1982) thoughts on archives. Michelet's significant idea for archival studies was that in resurrecting the past from the archive for the community, the actual "Magistracy, is History" (according to Steedman's [2001: 39] translation of the original French text from Michelet 1982: 268). Yet again, the problem with Michelet's central perception is that he draws from an understanding of the magistrate as being one, at least in the context of England and France within the modern era, who was "specifically charged with care and management of the poor, and mediation of social and class relations" (Steedman 2001: 40). This notion remains inappropriate here since the magistrate's elite status and authority, like Derrida's archon metaphor, was steeped in the rule system of law, juridical and state power. It also lacks communal agency, which is relevant for the case of rock paintings as archives, created consciously by rock artists and their communities.

From this foundation, Steedman examines some of the written accounts of self-narratives from the ordinary working class, often the poor people within 18th- and 19th-century England archives made for administrative and judicial purposes. Conceding the problem of involuntary "forced narration" in these accounts, she nevertheless encourages, perhaps for reasons of what she calls greater specificity, an autobiographical standpoint of self-fashioning and self-perception. What the people themselves chose to "tell" for inscription became a significant trope. In consequence, the magistrate was then just one of the sites of storytelling where he essentially became "the necessary and involuntary storyteller" (*ibid*. 55–56). Much as Biesele (1993: 18) was surprised at not finding a select class of hunter-gatherer storytellers in the Kalahari, the production of rock art may not have been a preserve of maestros (as assumed by Pager 1971b: 28), who as a result commanded authority or elevated status in their communities. Instead, in line with the recognised organisation of hunter-gatherer cultural life along "co-operation and harmonious social relations" (*ibid*.: 9), all forms of San expressive culture were not produced as secret, but as public knowledge based on shared social values, histories and experiences. It is thus in the rock paintings and other related sources of information that researchers will uncover what these people chose to "tell" to their contemporaries and future generations. This self-inspired viewpoint is germane to the notion of rock art assemblages as principally and purposefully chosen creations by the indigenous artists as active archivists. Similarly, the archaeologist or anthropologist, like the metaphoric magistrate, then occupies a secondary level as archivist, scribe and narrator of the past(s) of these hunter-gatherers and other former inhabitants of the Western Cape. Returning to the fundamental analogy, those former rock painters therefore consciously created a through-time repository of images depicting in their residential rock shelters their own individual and their communities' lived-through bodily and social experiences. These ancient rock art repositories reflect characteristics of *accumulation* and *durability* (see the concept of enduring or long-term value of archives in Sickinger 1999: 5), both of which are also truly and entirely consistent with the defining traits of the notion of the archive.

The idea of envisioning the former rock painters, and *not* archaeologists and prehistorians or even historians, as people who actually intentionally made the archive of images is fundamental. In addition, this standpoint is predicated on the acknowledgement of the long-term custodial role of these rock artists (i.e. painters and engravers in various regions) in respect of their creative, dynamic and expressive record. This indigenous custodianship viewpoint recognises the purposeful role of the artists in making important choices regarding the selection of a variety of available painting materials, techniques of painting, subjects to depict, themes and entangled symbolism, purposeful juxtapositioning and superimpositioning, as well as the actual image placement on the protected and stable rock faces in terms of the inter-site and intra-site spatial locations. This study challenges the temptation to regard the survival of the painted record as a pure accident of natural processes; instead, it is accepted that, although we may as yet not know the full range of recipes of paint making, it is observable that the bulk of the art was made from durable materials. It is probable that the earlier detailed rock art was invested with resilient materials because of its long-term significance to its producers in contrast to later colonial-period tradition in the Cape or Bantu-speaker farmer tradition in northern South Africa, whose purpose was probably ephemeral in the particularistic contexts of rites-of-passage (Namono 2004; Namono & Eastwood 2005) and also during the upheavals of colonial encroachment and subjugation (Smith & van Schalkwyk 2002). It should be admitted that the artists of the rock art clearly wished their creative artistry to endure in time from the mere fact that an overwhelming majority of observable rock art sites appear at present to have been chosen for their protective overhangs or sheltering qualities. Pointedly, this approach offers possibilities for locating communal agency in rock art analyses and constructions of frameworks for their chronological and interpretative contextualisation.

Analysing superimpositions is an empirical enterprise, but distinguishing and locating the agency of image creators as implicated in chronology is essentially a hermeneutic venture premised in the ideals of historicism. Ultimately, this process involves careful mediation and interpretation of relationships between individual images and their

3 This term is "a neologism coined in the 20th century and used to describe two related peoples: the pastoral Khoi or 'Hottentots' and the hunting and gathering San or 'Bushmen', both speaking unusual click languages" (Lee 2006: 462). The original appellation "Khoisan" (Schultze 1928) was initially intended as a biological label, but now also encompasses common features of language and culture (Wells 2005).

moments of creation within and across traditions in the stratigraphic sequence. In this interpretative mediation, contrary to the familiar adage, facts alone do not speak for themselves, which is a topic that treads on matters of objectivity and subjectivity. While some writers advocate empirical objectivity in archival studies, others have challenged this aspiration as being naïve and a form of outmoded positivist objectivism (Ridener 2009). To understand the significance(s) of the empirically observed image characteristics, their stratigraphic and juxtaposition relationships and the cultural selections that the artists consciously made in producing the rock art, it is important that the methodological grounds are laid down for probing the varied contexts of analytical assemblages. These contexts are the historical, social, cognitive, ritual, ecological and economic factors within which the rock painters operated to produce the interlaced copious archaeological and artistic records through time. As some argue, "it is not possible to divorce the rock art from the associated archaeological remains that document the history of hunter-gatherers, herders[4] and even European colonists in the [Western Cape] area" (Parkington & Manhire 2003: 31, paranthesis added).

1.3. BREAKDOWN OF CHAPTERS

To appreciate the nature and composition of the archival materials that this study explores, chapter one started with an exploration of the notion of artists as active artists consumed in the appropriation of earlier artworks and creating their own forms for contemporary use and passing down to future generations. This articulation provides the thinking behind looking at the rock art as an archival body of materials to be approached in similar ways. In chapter two, a general description of the rock art is explored as a central assemblage of focus in the study area. There is also a review of archaeological information associated with this artistic assemblage. From then onwards, the rock paintings are thought of in their own terms as essentially an archival material of some kind. Chapter three discusses the environmental and landscape context of the Western Cape area. This is a multi-sided context with physical, social and ecological variables, which impacted on the formation and variability of material culture and hence the archival accumulation and storage. In chapter four, this discussion is further threaded and enmeshed with the historical background, charting the documented path of the social and cultural contexts of indigenous populations as reconstructed from the colonial historical records. This section contextualises the cultural and chronological complexities arising from the multilayered archaeology and history of the past two millennia in the region. Further on, chapter five discusses theory and methodology in a dialogue that amplifies the above discussion on the ways and means of the proposed archival approach. It also includes a review and amendments of some methodological issues that bear direct relevance to the key question of the usefulness of relative chronology. Recognising the complexity of imagery change over time requires the use of an amalgamation of promising methodologies rather than just the familiar dependence on the analysis of superimpositions as the sole basis for relative stratigraphic sequence of imagery.

From theory and methodology, chapter six discusses three key sites that are the central focus of this study. The discussion also refers to relevant evidence from smaller sites that form the constellations of the three major sequence sites. These sites were selected on the basis of their spread in contrasting ecological settings: the sandveld near the coast and the inland mountainous chains. All but one site are in the mountains; the exception is Diepkloof Kraal Shelter, which reflects the main sequence in the coastal area. This is a customary, yet important, ecological division in the determination of temporal and spatial variation of various sites in the region. Chapter seven presents the new formulation of the unified Western Cape rock painting chronology. From here is the description of the levels that are identified in the sequence in terms of image forms and content of the relevant painting assemblages in each stratigraphic level. The final sections of this chapter set the scene for the interpretative trajectory that follows in chapter eight for a selection of subject matter and themes identified as spanning some levels of the sequence and across different traditions. The agenda concerns demonstrating imagery change over time through the traces or clues the chronology, subject matter and associated painting contexts within and beyond traditions of painting.

Chapter eight proceeds from the newly developed painting chronology to demonstrate interpretative possibilities grounded in the analysis of some historical, ethnographic and archaeological sources. A selection of elephant and fat-tailed sheep depictions as prominent subject matter from the newly devised regional chronology schema is used to demonstrate contextual, locality-focused interpretations. It is a demonstration of how sequence may indicate that some aspects of the painting record can be interpreted in terms of historical change through time in particular contexts. Thus, in the final analysis and conclusion in chapter nine, the painting sequence is integrated with some standpoints from the archival perspective, ethnography, history and aspects of the post-colonial notion of entanglement (e.g. see Nuttall 2009), in order to reveal the multifarious social, economic and historical circumstances that led to several image categories continuing through time as favoured themes to the exclusion of others, though their central meaning tropes might have shifted according to particular historical periods. This idea of entanglement is summoned to augment the ideas around acculturation that went with frontier circumstances and how the rock art in certain geographical contexts might well have been a product of people who lived and perceived their worlds as those involving humanity of variously mixed identities. In the Western Cape, this sort of historicist reading of the past is fostered by notions of frontier, borderlands or seam, which relate to colonial encounters as well as those before colonialism, which involved diverse cultures. Fundamentally, therefore, this body of work is a theoretical

4 "Herder" is contentious term; some see it as an economic differentiation category between hunter-gatherers with sheep and Khoekhoen with sheep (see Schrire 1992).

and methodological analysis that advocates a recursive association of temporal sequence with historicised narratives. The syntheses that use rock art as archive have the ability to refine interpretations that are aligned with relative chronologies. The chronology and archival approaches are both a means to an end that seeks a greater understanding of the complexity of the Western Cape's pre-colonial and early colonial life-worlds. This proposition attempts to develop multilayered and secure archaeological-cum-historical narratives and subsequent interpretative approaches for unravelling the meaning of rock art in densely painted localities. It does not seek to generalise across space and time, but it is general enough for a localised understanding of specific regional circumstances and thus contextual interpretations. The concluding chapter nine deals with the issues of contingency and how the painting records interdigitate with the production of multilayered archives and narratives that can feed multiple functions. This structure allows the use of a tripartite perspective for understanding rock art as archives and the development of holistic and historicised interpretative frameworks that cover pre- and post-colonial painting and archaeology assemblages.

CHAPTER TWO

Shifting Rock Art Perspectives

> *Rock art is simply too important a facet of the archaeological record not to be a closely integrated component of the kinds of history we need to write.* (Yates *et al.* 1994: 59)

2.1. CAPE ROCK PAINTING ASSEMBLAGES

The core material for this analysis is a sample from the many thousands of paintings found in the Western Cape. From archaeological surveys started in the late 1970s by the University of Cape Town SARU[5] researchers, it was reported in 1983 that the group had recorded a total of 1,000 painting sites in the Western Cape (Manhire *et al*. 1983: 30). Over a decade after the estimate increased to over 2,500 painting sites (Deacon 1994b: 33; Parkington 2003: 15; Yates *et al*. 1994: 31). The current estimate is that there are over 3,000 sites containing tens of thousands of individual images (Nicholas Wiltshire, pers. comm. 2010; see also Yates *et al*. 1993: 62). Over 20 years ago, John Parkington (1988: 13) surmised that having seen the record of over 2,000 sites, "the final total will exceed 10,000", which is a realistic probability since the intensive surveys have only concentrated on localised areas (Johnson & Maggs 1979; Johnson *et al*. 1959b; Manhire *et al*. 1983). All these sites contribute to the remarkably rich prehistoric archive of both the archaeological and painting assemblages in this region (Mguni 2007). The bulk of the substantive material analysed in this book comprises the paintings representing several rock art traditions. Although the core of the painting sequence is comprehensively analysed from three sites—two are in the mountains and one is in the sandveld—the general analysis is informed by observations made from over 200 sites in the Western Cape. The material was accumulated from a survey and the study of sites in the Clanwilliam District, which the author conducted over a period of five years. The analysis does not include the rock engravings (for studies on this tradition, see Deacon 1988, 1994a, 1998; Dowson 1988, 1992; Morris 1988, 2003; Parkington *et al*. 2008) because they generally occur outside the study area in the outlier regions immediately to the north and northeast. Nor does the study consider other image forms used in ornamentation, such as minute decorations of various kinds on eggshells, sticks and so forth, all of which are outside the context of the art variety from the study area. Below is the definition and characterisation of the general nature of the rock art archive in the Western Cape.

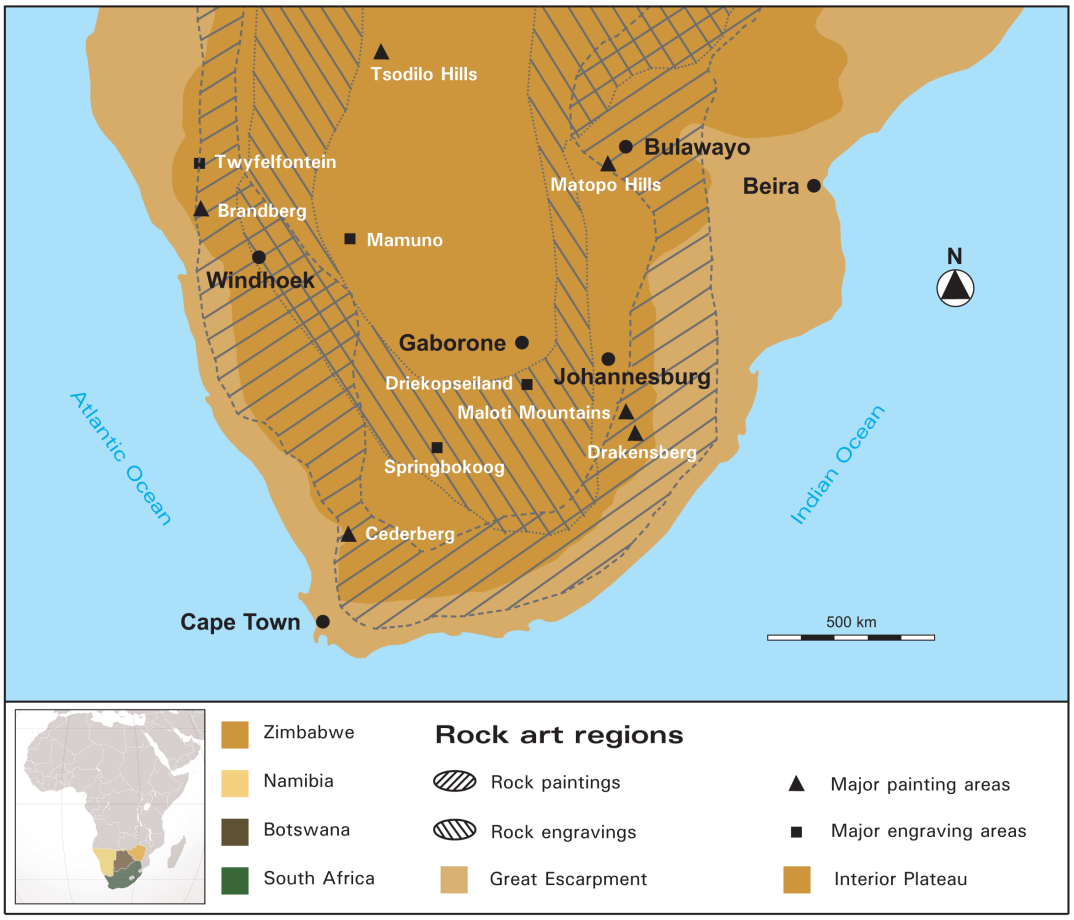
5 The Spatial Archaeology Research Unit was active mainly from the early 1980s to late 1990s.

The bulk of the paintings comprise what is broadly considered the finely detailed pre-colonial assemblage. This is principally a representational and naturalistic category depicting a variety of subject matter (Figure 2.1). Human figures, which Timothy Maggs (1967b) showed to be a dominant theme in his 1960s quantitative study, appear with material culture which includes hunting and gathering implements (e.g. quivers, bows, arrows, knobkerries, sticks or unstrung bows, stone-weighted digging sticks, bags and so forth). While their gender is often clearly marked, there are large numbers of indeterminate examples whose gender can be assumed from their contextual associations. Male figures are commonly depicted wearing cloaks usually in processions (Parkington & Manhire 1997), while females generally as well as other male figures are found uncloaked. These figures usually have distinctive hook-heads (Figure 2.2) (usually due to lighter painted facial infill having faded) (van der Riet *et al*. 1940: xi–xii). Hook-heads are more common in the Western Cape (Sampson 1968) than anywhere else (Map 2.1) throughout southern Africa. Anatomical exaggeration of calves and posterior physiques of all classes of human figures is unique to the Cape. Various bodily movements and postures include a striding gait; crouching, standing or sitting; and archers with bows-at-ready posture, sometimes directed towards animals as well as, notably, aimed at other people (i.e. identified as fight scenes). Even as a class, fights or battles and what might be hunting depictions are rare. Seldom represented, but seen from time to time, are squatting women and somersaulting figures some of whom also bend acrobatically backwards, as well as part-animal/part-human figures (therianthropes) and other apparent non-realistic forms (see observations in Manhire *et al*. 1983; Mguni 2007; Slingsby 1997, 2000) and indeterminate representations.

In addition to the common processional groups, there are other less common human groups—for example, the so-celled "group scenes" (Figure 2.3), which are distinctive sets of human figures featured in crouched clusters surrounded by their belongings (Maggs 1967a). There are several rare material items such as "hunting nets", triple-curved bows (Manhire *et al*. 1985; Parkington & Manhire 1997, 2003) and others. Some images can be interpreted as flywhisks, contrary to the belief that this article of material culture is entirely absent in the Western Cape paintings (Anthony Manhire, pers. comm. 2005). In several depictions people appear to be holding tufted objects with a terminal cluster of fanning out or sometimes

Figure 2.1: Detailed representational images, or fine fine-lines, which are attributed to early hunter-gatherers, depict a range of subject matter. In this example, human figures with hunting equipment are seen alongside antelope, pigment patches and a baboon therianthrope aiming a bow and arrow towards the antelope.

Figure 2.2: Rock paintings in the Cape commonly feature a type of human head (sickle- or question-mark/?-shaped), generally known as the "hook-head" shown is various perspectives and colours.



Map 2.1: The map shows the distribution of paintings around the continental periphery characterised by mountain chains and engravings in the relatively flat plateaux of the interior escarpment of South Africa (from Mguni 2015).

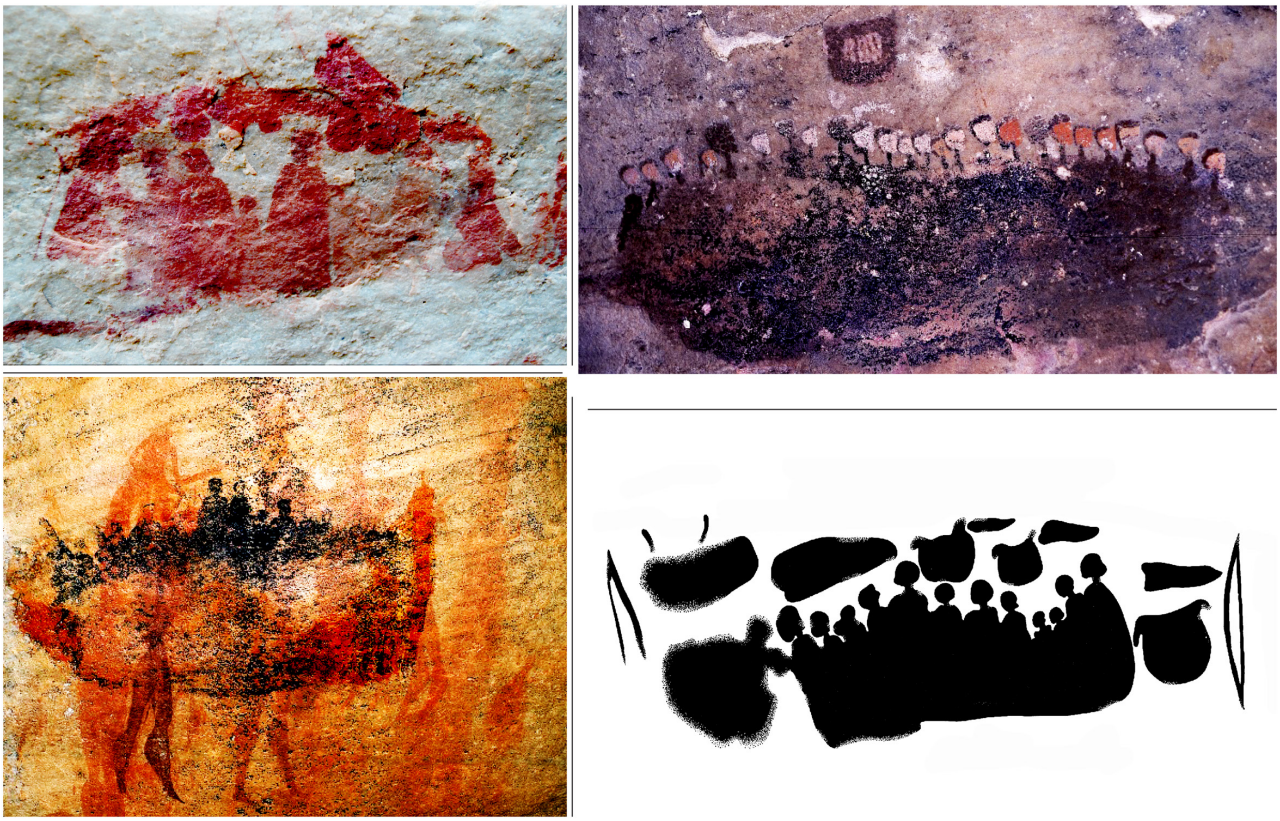


Figure 2.3: While the Cape paintings are known for their common feature of human and animal processions they also reflect a unique type of grouping, especially in a small locality of the Cederberg ranges, that depicts a distinctive arrangement of human groups clustered together with their equipment arranged around.

leaf-shaped bracts. This image is similar to an object found in some historical etchings and paintings by early travellers. This object is held in one hand by a man in one of the pictures drawn in accompaniment of Item 68 (Goerd Meister's diary of 1688); the caption reads "Hottentots [*sic*] at the Cape of Good Hope" (Raven-Hart 1971b: 348). While this one is unidentified, a later caption under Item 104 (Abraham Bogaert's diary of 1702) explains that the so-called Hottentots "use a handkerchief, made from the tail of a wild cat drawn over a short stick, which they call Zou; and this they always have in their hand to wipe off the sweat, mucus, dust and sand, and to keep off the flies" (Raven-Hart 1971b: 485). Another possibility is mentioned occasionally by early travellers: a short stick tufted with a jackal's tail for fanning the face as witnessed by Vasco da Gama in his December 1497 encounter with Khoekhoen (Colvin 1912: 35). Plausibly, this article might therefore be a flywhisk. Although there are recognisable overlaps in painting categories, they are in subject matter across distinctive and self-contained assemblages in the region.

Of the animal world, Maggs's 1960s study found that the second largest painted class comprised the large antelope species, and principally the eland being the most common. Next are mega-herbivores such as elephants and to a lesser extent the rhinoceros, followed by equids (e.g. zebra, quagga or wild horse) and carnivores, mainly felines (e.g. lion, leopard and cheetah). Few images have been suggested to be *Canis* species (Slingsby 1997), but definitive images of dogs are largely found in the Drakensberg. Recent surveys show the presence of other animal species such as hartebeest (or bontebok) and a selection of smaller species comprised of steenbok or duiker, various birds including ostriches, korhaans (birds called bustards, Otididae family), francolins and other larger land and aquatic species (including a pair of egrets which recently discovered by the author), as well as raptors. Beyond these common faunal and avian species the other classes of animal life are seldom painted. This widespread rock art tradition, although far from being fully described, is customarily known as the fine-line[6] assemblage, whose authorship is attributed to San hunter-gatherers.

Another strong Western Cape painting assemblage is the finger-painting tradition, often comprising coarsely produced images. As the name suggests, these images were made using the finger although it is also accepted that some might have been made with a crude type of instrument or thick brush (Johnson 1960; Johnson *et al*. 1959b; Mguni 1997; Parkington *et al*. 1986; Yates *et al*. 1993, 1994). Images in this tradition include human figures, often with the distinctive hands-on-the-hips posture, horses or mules, horse riders, men (sometimes with exaggerated genitalia) and a range of colonial material items such as guns, wide-brimmed hats, crinoline dresses, high-heeled shoes, smoking pipes and so forth. Images of ships, animal-drawn vehicles (e.g. wagons, carriages, coaches), a variety of geometrics and other indeterminate designs have been recorded (Manhire *et al*. 1986; Mguni 1997; Van Rijssen 1985, 1994). Although this assemblage is occasionally referred to, and at times restrictedly so, as "colonial paintings", the subject matter can also be both chronologically and stylistically pre-colonial in content and form (e.g. see Loubser & Laurens 1994; Manhire *et al*. 1986).

Some earlier contact images, pre-dating the historical period, include the finely detailed fat-tailed sheep. Although other introduced domesticates such as cattle are rarely depicted, they have been identified in coarsely applied pigments (Mguni 1997; Sampson 1968). While there are instances of finely depicted fat-tailed sheep paintings, they also appear in the coarse finger-painting assemblage. These domesticates were introduced with the advent of herding *circa* 2,000 BP (Manhire *et al*. 1986; and from the archaeological excavations, see Parkington & Poggenpoel 1971; Rudner & Rudner 1959; Sealy & Yates 1994, 1996), a date which forms their *terminus ante quem*. Visibility of domestic animals is variable and their frequency largely unascertained. Although fewer than 20 out of over 2,000 sites (see Parkington & Manhire 2003: 31) in the Western Cape were known to feature fat-tailed sheep a few years ago (see Hollmann 1993; Jerardino 1999; Manhire *et al*. 1986; Van Rijssen 1994: 169; Yates *et al*. 1994: 35), this number has grown slightly from recent surveys (Mguni 2007). From all known examples, it appears that the earlier contact imagery was more finely detailed in manner than the slightly more profuse, yet regionally circumscribed, later assemblages, which generally tend towards coarseness.

There are further possible subdivisions, within the contact art assemblage. Those who are familiar with the Western Cape paintings will recognise differences between the finger-painted and the instrument-produced coarse images (Yates *et al*. 1993). An unfamiliar (for reasons that will be encountered in later chapters) artistic assemblage, falling neither within the detailed fine-line variety nor the finger or coarse brush-produced contact assemblage, includes various types of finger dots, strokes, smears and pigment patches. Apparently associated with this finger-painted imagery and, importantly, what Dorothea Bleek—hereafter D.F. Bleek (van der Riet *et al*. 1940: ix–xi)—signalled as a distinctive feature of the Western Cape, are the handprints (which have subsequently been studied by several writers, including Manhire 1998; Meister 2003; Willcox 1959). D.F. Bleek observed that hand impressions are often in proximity to dots or finger marks and concluded that, "[T] hey are associated with very poor painting" (van der Riet *et al*. 1940: x). Various types of dot forms, handprints and their putative association with coarse image forms constitute a significant portion of the concerns that this study seeks to clarify chronologically and culturally.

Western Cape paintings are typically ochreous (Figure 2.4), reflecting various pigment hues of red, maroon, brown, orange, mustard and sometimes yellowish shades. To a lesser extent, other pigments include black, white and other lighter shades (although, lamentably, these are ephemeral colours and what is now visible may be a tiny fraction of what was previously painted in those colours).

6 We will return in later chapters for a definition and subdivision based on the current analysis of the painting traditions in the study areas.

Though paintings are chiefly monochromatic, there are many cases of bichrome images, with various ochreous shades still a dominant mixture. The blocked technique is common, where colours are not blended into each other. There are, however, good examples of shaded polychromes in the area, although these are far more prevalent in the Drakensberg (van der Riet *et al*. 1940). On account of such modest colour use, D.F. Bleek considered Western Cape paintings to be artistically mediocre. Based on our current knowledge of this artistic tradition, this assessment is clearly erroneous. A variety of depicted forms rank among the most refined and detailed examples anywhere. She might have judged San artists from an aesthetic basis alone, an aspect that was perhaps not their main focus or reason for painting (see Mguni 2004). However, the difficulties of dealing with San rock art go beyond these straightforward issues around its creative and aesthetic charm.

2.2. ISSUES BEDEVILLING THE CHRONOLOGY OF ROCK ART ASSEMBLAGES

As with most regions of southern Africa, the main issue with these painting assemblages concerns the vestigial nature of most visible images. This complicates chronology studies. As a consequence, southern African rock art, unlike other parts of the world, remains mostly undated (Jerardino 1999; Thackeray 1983). Ironically, there is a fairly long history of attempts to date rock art directly, with mixed success, in the region (Denninger 1971; Thackeray 1983; Thackeray *et al*. 1981; Walker 1987; Wendt 1976). Rock paintings were generally assumed to be no more than three centuries old (Lewis-Williams 1981: 24). In South Africa, Edgar Denninger tested a dating method using the paper chromatography method based on the racemisation of amino acids found in the pigment binders such as egg albumen, blood, and proteins in milk and so on in the 1970s. He concluded that the Western Cape art was older than 500 years and that while most paintings in the Drakensberg were produced in the last 500 years some were older (Denninger 1971; Willcox 1971). One site in the Mhlwazini Valley revealed a date of 800 years and thus overall the paintings in the region were all younger than 1000 years, whereas the bulk of paintings in Namibia were younger than 1800 years (*ibid*.). Due to methodological problems and differential rates of amino acid decay the technique was abandoned as unreliable (Rudner 1983: 15-16; Thackeray 1983: 22-23). Dating efforts continued in the 1980s, however, leading to the first ever accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS) radiocarbon date from a rock art image in the Western Cape (e.g. van der Merwe *et al*. 1987). This attempt encouraged further investigations and refinement of the technique in other parts of the world. In consequence, and particularly from studies in the past two decades, new dates were proclaimed for several sites in the Drakensberg (Mazel 1994, 2009; Mazel & Watchman 1997, 2003). In one excavated site, a painted rock from a collapsed ceiling revealed a minimum date of 650 years ago while another painted slab came from a deposit radiocarbon dated to 1800 years ago (Mazel 2009: 88). Furthermore, Aron Mazel and Alan Watchman obtained several AMS radiocarbon dates from mineral crusts that underlie and overlie images. Contrary to general belief, they showed that the Drakensberg painting tradition spans over 2000 years and possibly even over 3000 years ago (Mazel 2009: 91). While these dates have advanced our knowledge of rock art chronology in the region, some writers believe that these dates are dubious (Blundell 2004: 67, 68). With numerous radiocarbon dates from archaeological materials across southern Africa ranging from painted and engraved stones, exfoliated slabs and spalls from shelter walls to burial stones obtained from excavated shelter and cave deposits, the hunter-gatherer assemblage is now believed

Figure 2.4: Varieties of red ochre occur in the vicinity of the painting sites in the northern Cederberg especially on the fringes of the mountains and the Karoo where shale is a dominant rock type.

to be as young as a few centuries and possibly as old as thirty millennia. Although direct AMS radiocarbon dates for rock art were first published over two decades ago in South Africa (van der Merwe *et al*. 1987), it is incongruous that such dates are still very limited.

Another related chronology problem is finding datable contexts in the deposits, which could in turn be linked to the relative painting stratigraphy on the shelter walls. Archaeological practice generally uses a one-dimensional approach by engaging one or the other of these main analytical domains: rock paintings or excavation deposits. In the Western Cape Parkington and co-workers have lamented that, "[R]ock paintings have tended to be studied somewhat extracted from the rest of the archaeological record" (Yates *et al*. 1994: 30). A corollary is that fewer researchers in this region have a particular rock art focus than those whose interests are in other branches of archaeology. To some degree, this scenario resonates with earlier observations in North America (also true, in fact, for other parts of the world) that rock art was until fairly recently rarely afforded serious thought in archaeological syntheses, putatively because "of the absence of chronological control" (Whitley & Dorn 1987: 150). As a result, rock art has lagged behind other branches of archaeology and for a long time it was accepted only as artistically interesting decorative epiphenomena of unscientific grade. In some quarters, rock art was even seen as too simplistic to merit theoretical discourse (see discussion of this view in Lewis-Williams 1983: 3–4); this perception is still prevalent in certain parts of the world (David Lewis-Williams, pers. comm. 2012). Although lack of scientific credibility, particularly the unremitting difficulty of dating rock art is lamentable, this offered opportunities in southern Africa.

For southern Africa, however, in hindsight such obstreperous attitudes seem to have vitalised a paradigm shift to an anthropological hermeneutic emphasis for understanding the rock art. There are some, in agreement with David Whitley and Ronald Dorn's viewpoint above, who believe that the growth and success of the hermeneutic approach in South Africa was the fortuitous consequence of the general difficulty of dating rock art, as well as the overall paucity of dates in the region (Blundell 2004: 61; Yates *et al*. 1994: 29). It is a legacy that rock art studies have had to pay dearly for, although now research on chronology is gaining momentum. In general, rock art research over the years has tended to sidestep the problem of chronological analyses. Lewis-Williams (1983: 10) wrote, "Some writers, for instance, consider the present impossibility of dating much of the art to be an insuperable barrier to interpretation. Certainly, we need a way of dating parietal art, but I doubt if this is the most urgent need in the study of our rock art today as it was considered to be a decade ago." This standpoint was suitable then for the hermeneutic project at hand, but as time has gone by firmer dates are needed today. It is desirable in the region that as new dates become available they be linked with the regional relative chronology, such as the one presented in this study.

Since rock art and archaeology deposits are often implicitly held to be discrete analytical domains, they tend to be evaluated separately and differently. Parenthetically, they are differentiated in their physical constitution and configuration, modes of disposal and accumulation, geological substrates that support them, as well as suitable methods and techniques for examining them. As Christopher Chippindale and Paul Taçon (1998: 4) argued, "In as much as rock-art is rather an archaeological subject apart, so will the methods of its study be set rather apart." Whereas the general thrust of their argument is the consolidation of rock art studies within the larger and older discipline of archaeology, the unintended consequence is reinforcement of the alienation of rock art from conventional archaeology. Broadly, each of these study areas has, in effect, what the other lacks. For this reason, in principle they need not be disconnected; their respective strengths compel their recognition as two separate but interdigitating spheres of enquiry. It is unwise to consider painting chronology outside the cultural processes related to deposit accumulation in the same sites.

Painting assemblages and occupation deposits may overlap to varying degrees in ways that we do not yet fully comprehend. There are difficulties in demonstrating their temporal correspondences or mutual content that can be used to integrate them. However, in the Western Cape a strong correlation has been noted between the spatial patterning of the painting and domestic sites (Parkington 2003: 18). In addition, rock art and archaeological deposits may occasionally reflect each other culturally, albeit indirectly—that is, painted content showing material culture and other items found in the deposits. Part of their disjointedness in form is because the rock art, as noted in the introduction, was more of an intentionally created and organised assemblage than the largely unconsciously accumulated archaeological deposits. Drawing from their knowledge of extant San societies, early writers intuitively accepted a penecontemporaneity of production (Yates *et al*. 1994) and defined the bulk of southern African rock art as Bushman authored (e.g. Cooke 1969; Humphreys 1971). The earliest known such attribution was Ensign Frederick Beutler's 1752 account of the paintings in the Kei River area, Eastern Cape (Theal 1897: 133). Such attributions were not wrong, since the origins of many cultural items as known from residual hunter-gatherers in various parts of South Africa and the twentieth-century Kalahari San material culture are traceable in archaeological sites: ostrich-eggshell beads and water containers, digging sticks, and light-draw bows, probably with poison arrows, among others (Sealy 2006: 569).

In the Western Cape, D.F. Bleek (van der Riet *et al*. 1940) observed the overall co-distribution of paintings and Wilton Industry artefacts, concluding that the bulk of the paintings were Bushman authored. A similar approach assumed the association of human engravings and people who occupied sites in the Aar area, Namibia (Wendt 1977). Though without substantive demonstration, this intuition primarily emanated from the assumed spatial and cultural links between the rock paintings and inferred

attendant deposited material culture (e.g. see conclusions drawn in Willcox 1959: 297, in his handprints study). On chronology, the excavated deposits are unlike rock art in that they usually provide datable contexts. However, if the surviving rock art and material culture within the deposits sprang from approximately related sources or synchronous historical events, under what circumstances are they to be associated or disassociated? Answers to this question cannot simply be asserted nor can it be argued that correlations of rock art and deposit are unreliable on the basis that these cannot be proven. This issue has for a long time bedevilled researchers in their attempts to produce coherent narratives of the past that also reflect change through time.

With these problems in mind, there is a good possibility of using an approach that combines the archival perspective with historical and ethnographic sources in the analysis of rock art as a component of the archaeological record. This approach envisages rock art to be a resource that embodies archival qualities and therefore should be engaged with as if it were a body of archival material straddling several traditions and periods. This perspective is promoted as supplementary to the customary view of the southern African archaeological record, particularly the rock art, being interpreted on the basis of social anthropological models. Anthropological approaches thrived from the 1970s when Lewis-Williams (1977, 1981) and Vinnicombe (1972, 1976), alongside a few of their contemporaries, turned to social anthropological theory for answers to the meaning of San rock art. Starting primarily in South Africa's southeastern mountains, the Drakensberg and Maloti ranges, their ethnographic approach flourished over the decades with various studies adopting it in different regions of the subcontinent. Central to this analogical approach are the several San ethnographies collected largely during and over a century and a half from the northern and southern parts of the subcontinent below the Zambezi and Kunene rivers. To a large extent researchers now use these collections in tandem with contemporary historical records and the analysis of San linguistic texts and other bodies of knowledge (e.g. see Lewis-Williams 1987b; Lewis-Williams & Challis 2011). In spite of the success of the ethnographic approach (also known as the dual ethnographic-neuropsychological model), and its widespread applicability in the region (Mitchell 2002: 213), some of its aspects have courted controversy. In particular, as we saw above some have chastised the ethnographic approach as lacking historicity, which is generally linked to the persistent lack of absolute dates for rock art. The prevailing general feeling that the subcontinent lacks historically oriented archaeological and anthropological analyses prefigures this study's position. The criticism is largely valid given that rock art alone, as evidence of social history, is not a conclusive framework for understanding the past, mainly the pre-colonial period. It is important to establish some chronological framework with which interpretative ethnographic analyses must be steeped: how can narratives about the past be couched as social history without them being anchored on chronology, absolute or relative?

2.3. ETHNOGRAPHY AND ROCK ART INTERPRETATION

Researchers use several ethnographic and ethnohistoric sources to understand the underlying meaning and motivation of San rock art. In the Cape the mid-19th century |Xam were studied by, and foremost amongst early writers, Wilhelm Bleek and his sister-in-law Lucy Lloyd (and after their deaths by his daughter, D.F. [Dorothea] Bleek who continued with these studies well into the 1900s) (Bleek & Lloyd 1911). Added to this copious archive of over ten thousand pages of first-hand |Xam verbatim dictations and their English translations juxtaposed, there are further materials from those residual San who lived in parts of the south-eastern mountains and Maloti region (now Lesotho). Their beliefs and mythology are gleaned from a San guide named Qing who worked with and was partly documented by the colonial administrative official Joseph M. Orpen in the mid-1870s (Bleek 1874; Orpen 1874). Both these groups are now culturally and linguistically vanished. This combined collection of records, however, in spite of regional variances has been shown to bear remarkable commonalities with another equally impressive corpus from the north, the 20th-century Kalahari San ethnography and ethno-historical records. These collections are now considered ideologically complementary and are used in tandem to explain the iconography of the southern African KhoeSan artistic assemblages (Lewis-Williams 1981; Lewis-Williams & Biesele 1978; Parkington 1984, 1996; Parkington & Manhire 2003; Skotnes 1996a, 2007). Additionally, there are various extracts of relevant ethnohistoric material about the way of life of these former indigenes as gathered from the colonial record from the 17th century onwards; for purposes of this study, these records are regarded as informative although they are problematic when used on their own (Sealy 2006: 569). Yet, taken together, all these collections contribute meaningfully to the archive of information, which informs chronological and interpretative analyses of rock art.

Over the last four decades southern African rock art studies have focused much of their attention on the matters of motive and meaning. It is a historical milieu that nurtured Patricia Vinnicombe and David Lewis-Williams's ethnographically inspired interpretative approach (e.g. Lewis-Williams 1981; Vinnicombe 1976). Their hermeneutic approach extended the symbolic emphasis of San hunter-gatherer rock art. The artistic richness, sophistication and metaphoric significance of this tradition have all subsequently been widely demonstrated in various rock art regions of the subcontinent (Garlake 1992, 1995; Huffman 1983; Mguni 2002, 2005; Parkington & Manhire 1997; Parkington *et al*. 1996; Yates *et al*. 1990). The heuristic and theoretical articulations of these studies have subsequently been advanced as a common methodology to cover all the other rock art traditions, which are associated with the Khoekhoe-speaking herders and Bantu-speaking agropastoralists (Eastwood 2003; Eastwood & Smith 2005; Namono & Eastwood 2005; Prins 1994; Prins & Hall 1994). Recently, several writers working mainly in northern South Africa established the metaphorical intent and symbolic meaning(s) and motivation of these later rock arts (Namono & Eastwood 2005; Smith & Ouzman 2004), highlighting that they are neither simplistic nor can they be deduced prima

Figure 2.5: A variety of finger-daubed imagery in ashy pigments from Maidens Pool Shelter. This form of painting is neither hunter-gatherer nor herder produced and appears on top of all imagery in the sequence.

facie or dismissed as graffiti defacing earlier San artistic records (as once earlier assumed, e.g. see Cooke 1969). As we shall see later, although largely unreported previously, some of the later traditions are indeed present (Figure 2.5) in the Western Cape.

The significance of these research efforts cannot be overemphasised; however, the central concern in this study is to understand the role of "active archiving" by the artists themselves and how their various painting assemblages may have developed in relation to each other over time. In this context, although others have argued that the chronology of rock art is central to all efforts of interconnecting this record with the archaeological record (Mazel 1994, 2009), this study focuses approaches to interpretation that link certain types of subject matter and themes that occur across the relative chronology and different painting traditions in the Western Cape as a step towards historicised narratives about the past. In this endeavour it is important to concede the prosaic fact that in southern Africa rock art is still problematic to date and is largely undated; hence the very limited number of direct dates (Humphreys 1971; Mazel 2009; Mazel & Watchman 1997; Thackeray 1983; van der Merwe *et al*. 1987). Consequently, this study advocates the view that if the rock art assemblages reflect archival features and occur in well formulated chronological sequences, then it is prudent to analyse them accordingly using the archival approach. This perspective might be valuable in disentangling historical and chronological processes that contributed to the formation of both the painting and archaeological assemblages in the region. The next section advances the archival approach through applying the ways and means that are the backbone of this form of interpretative rock art analysis.

2.4. OUTLINING THE ARCHIVAL PERSPECTIVE

There is a prospect of obtaining interpretative remedies for resolving rock art chronological complexities at the level of methodology. These remedies are partly the analytical strategies that are commensurate with image accumulations over time that may satisfactorily explain how artistic practices interdigitated with social histories of the artistic communities. In unravelling this vision and building a model for analysing painting sequences, it is critical to define the archival approach by discussing whether it is a theory or not and if not, explore what it entails. For some scholars, the archive is "the awkward but resonant singular which invokes a notion of traveling… Time travel and its new historicist baggage offer the literary scholar a presence, indeed a metaphysics of presence…And that presence can be embodied, not only by a time period… or a vague but attractive collective representing that period… but also by a perhaps-representative individual" (Michie & Warhol 2010: 415). From this basis and throughout the discussion in the book, the syntheses will test the theoretical and heuristic potential of this archival perspective. Although the philosophy and ontology of the archive notion, its mission and underlying theoretical outlines have long been debated, some of its important theoretical considerations thrived in the 1990s and into this century (see comment in Bantin 1998: 20; Eamon 2006). Different ways of thinking about archives corresponded with technological advances that occasioned profound social, political and epistemological transformations and shifts in the role of the archives in cultural and heritage contexts (Craven 2008: 1). The archive notion, more practised than theorised, led to intellectual ambivalence in most writings as to whether there is a theory of the archives.

On archive theory and why it is important, some scholars have argued that, "The first object of archival theory is the nature of archival documents or records" (Eastwood 1994: 125). Even more recently, Terry Cook (in Ridener 2009: xvii–xviii), acknowledges that there is an understandable skepticism in the archival profession about its basis on theory and what that theory might be, perhaps because theory and practice in archival work are often regarded as polarities. In an expanded assessment of this view, Terence Eastwood (1994: 126) argued that the dispute on whether a theory of the archive exists comes from disproportionate efforts directed at issues of method and practice, the "means of treatment" rather than the question of the material properties themselves. The archival endeavour, he argues, concerns building knowledge about archival documents and ways of acting on them methodically in order to protect their intrinsic properties. It is critical to establish these intrinsic archival properties. Four years later, another archival theorist Louise Craven (2008: 1) characterised the problem as one of too much focus on the "how" rather than the "why" of archival work. For Eastwood, however, the theoretical emphasis should be on what exactly the archival properties are that need protection and why they should be protected. He listed five properties (below), which most agree with, that should underwrite the archival theory and for which all efforts on method and practice must be employed to preserve their intrinsic features. Below is a list of the five most important archival properties.

Impartiality: Concerns the relationship of facts with interpretation, the promise of faithfulness in the archival documents.

Authenticity: Contingency on facts, maintenance and custody. These are at the heart of issues of information generation and preservation.

Naturalness: Quality of documents being created for specific purposes at hand and needs for which they are then preserved.

Interrelatedness: Relationships between documents and the affairs from which they arose, which render them interdependent of meanings and evidence of past activity.

Uniqueness: A unique place each document has in the archival structure, as evidence of a past activity in relationship with other accumulated documents. But the content or information in each document may or may not be unique.

These five characteristics are argued to be common to all archives and so are a starting point for archival theory, which, as all theories do, seeks to generalise the nature of the archives in order to set the intellectual framework for method and practice (Eastwood 1994: 129). Nevertheless, Eastwood also acknowledges that the list may not be exhaustive. And as others have argued part of the crux of the matter is that "the archival terminology is not entirely uniform" (Sickinger 1999: 5). There are debates, and still raging, among archivists and historians of archives concerning the nature of what should and should not be considered archival records and what should be paramount in reconstructing historical accounts using these records. These issues are dealt with in chapter five as the discussion moves towards the characterisation of the archival perspective for the analysis of rock art imagery.

The emerging scheme concerns methodological possibilities for contemplating relationships between traditions, images, themes and their overall clusters. The proposed scheme moves beyond the focus on only the superimposition or above/below image relations to an approach that cautiously threads image relationships even when there are no obvious superimpositions. From the central theoretical standpoint in archival studies, there is the concept of *respect des fonds* (Cook 1993), which is useful for our thinking about image relations and the chronological phases and sub-phases of image categories in the overall sequence. In the archival framework the fonds (singular/plural) is the highest level of arrangement in archival materials, and this concept may sometimes be used to describe the entire archive or a collation of documents in the archives. In archival terms, the fonds is not equivalent to a "record group" or an array of "collections" (*ibid*.: 27), a term that is now increasingly reserved for document or record aggregations assembled, but not created, by an archivist or collector at any given moment. Any rock art tradition such as, for instance, the colonial-era finger paintings, may be an equivalent of what this concept covers. Fonds may be divided into sub-fonds, generally the records of different branches of archives or key themes from the documents of an individual creator or archival arranger. Sub-fonds are themselves further divisible into series, which are often the groupings of individual types of documents (e.g. a will, minutes from meetings, correspondence files, deeds and so forth), followed by sub-series, then files and items as lower order assemblages. An item is the smallest discrete archival unit, and is usually indivisible (e.g. a single letter or volume from an individual). These levels are expandable into further subdivisions depending on the complexity and magnitude of the materials. The archival properties and the fonds concept are developed further in chapter five as tools for conceptualising painting categories, their interpretations and chronologies.

The notion of rock art as archive recognises the artists' agency in the purposeful creation of painting assemblages and the subsequent meaning frameworks as historical actors in shaping their cultural landscape. The nature of the archival assemblage, as developed in the painted record, acknowledges the awareness of possible change and continuity over time. In this formulation, the archival perspective also implies a process rather than an event or end product; predictably as Steedman argues, "nothing starts in the archive…though things certainly end up there". Because in the archive there are "the middle of things; discontinuities" (Steedman 2001: 45), our indigenous artistic record can be conceptualised as being a broad fragment within a sequence of cultural practices, some of which may also have entailed material accumulations in the archaeological deposit. Archives are thus a product of the people in the normal course of their lives and therefore they are not impersonal or absolute entities. There is a

very strong element of intention in the selection of what gets to make up the archive. For instance, Steedman (2001: 68–69) has argued that the archive is made out of selected and consciously chosen documentation from, or fragmentary traces of, the past. In the case of rock art, the artists chose to depict particular subjects or themes and ignored many others. Particular sites and materials used for these chosen subjects were also cultural selections. As has been mentioned, Western Cape artists repeatedly depicted the human form, then various animals such as eland, elephants, fat-tailed sheep and other restricted forms, which are featured in association with other image types over time almost to the exclusion of certain subject matter (Maggs 1967b). Additionally, these image forms appear in varying proportions geographically between the mountain and coastal zones (Manhire *et al*. 1983). What do these choices tell us in the light of our understanding of the *selectivity* of the archive?

To unravel the subtleties of a methodological nature in terms of what is selected or ignored in our assemblages from the past we need not only empirical observations, but also theory or theories to frame understandings of our observations. Customarily, archaeologists often use theory, method and techniques as the essential set of tools for rock art analysis. Although not always explicit, these tools form the three main components of research in social sciences (as indeed in many other scientific disciplines). In our research projects there tends to be, however, no defined hierarchy or necessary order in the deployment of these conceptual tools. There are common views on what theory is or what it should be. In this section, this sketch provides two broad, albeit mutual, views on theory. One is quite general: the pursuit of interpretations that support our understanding of, for example, natural or social phenomena for the sake of knowledge could be defined as "theoretical". In this view, theory encapsulates contemplation and explanation as an intellectual exercise. The second view is specific, adding on to and expanding the first, and regards theory as a systematic framework of ideas for explaining observed phenomena. In this definition, a theory can be made up of a hypothesis (or multiple hypotheses), which is a general proposition or a set of propositions established by experimentation or observation (Johnson 1999: 176). Hypotheses make general statements in relation to a specific theory, bridging diverse forms of data in relation to that theory. They show relationships between the data and modes of explanation employed.

Furthermore, explanatory propositions should generally be accepted as accounting for those facts or explained phenomena. Thus, as Jonathan Culler (2009: 3) notes, "A theory must be more than a hypothesis…[as] it involves complex relations of a systemic kind among a number of factors." In this light, one could say Marxism, feminism, structuralism, orientalism and so on, are all illustrations of theories in social science, literary and cultural studies. Although there is disagreement on this point, an important operational concept within the purview of theory is methodology. Methodology encompasses technique and method, which are the pragmatics and practicalities of assembling and explaining observed data or realities. Stratigraphic drawings, excavation plans, Harris matrices, photography, tracings, digital image manipulation, and so forth are all examples of techniques; these are the practical applications for gathering, processing and presenting

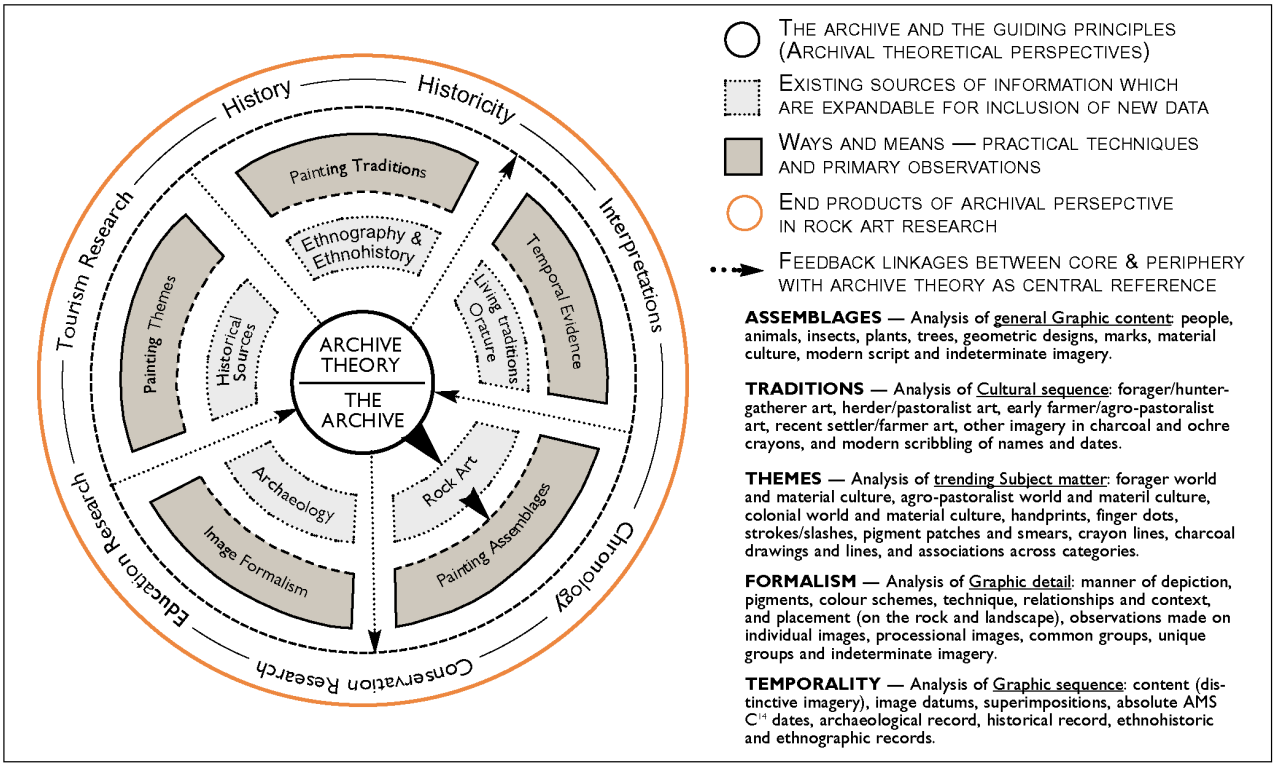


Figure 2.6: Relational diagram showing the "ripple-effect" principle advocated in the archival approach to understand latent ways and means of generating information from primary observations of superimpositions of individual and clustered imagery to resolving them into chronological sequences of paintings in the Western Cape.

evidence. In contrast, method (*not* methodology) concerns the rationale or formulae for developing a form of argument, which could be analogical, inductive or deductive, that leads into a specific explanation of phenomena. Induction, which is now widely a discredited method, attempts to induce general explanations, laws or theories from data. While inductive arguments by themselves may be logically valid, it does not necessarily follow that, if the premises of an inductive inference are true, then the conclusion must also be true. Deduction, on the other hand, follows the opposite vision: if the premise of an argument is true, then the conclusion must also be true (see Chalmers 1978). This section does not detail approaches in the methods of argumentation and the application of theory, as these are discussed in chapter five.

In this book method is seen as a bridging mechanism for the augmentation of theory and various kinds of information (or what is generally called data) that are generated in the explanation of phenomena. As discussed later in chapter five and applied in the subsequent discussions, this study employs an amalgam of theoretical perspectives in order to manage the multiplicity of the range of analysed sources of information concerning Western Cape rock art history and prehistory. The fundamental exploratory framework is the archival perspective, adapted from archival studies. This is a useful tool to understand rock art materiality, hitherto regarded as not possessing archival qualities and by extension not amenable to analyses or characterisation in archival terms. This study demonstrates that recognising archival qualities of rock art allows the formulation of rewarding theoretical and methodological avenues for understanding temporal sequences, painting events and associated social histories of people who used the sites. A simple diagram with a tetrad of distinct circular components recalling the "ripple-effect" principle defines the archival perspective's central ways and means for ordering and synthesising painted imagery (Figure 2.6). The archive theory is the centrifugal force that pries into and propagates information incrementally outwards and across the concentric layers until the outer layer, where the "ripples" dissipate into the "pool" of desired outcomes that feed back to the core. Hence the archive theory, as a frame of reference, draws from these three layers by amalgamating bodies of generated information into a unified rock art archive in the centre. Conceptualised in this manner, rock art archives are therefore organic, self-propagating and expandable. Chronological formulations that are so modelled allow the dynamic perception of image change through time and lead onto finer and historicised interpretations of the past.

In this schema, several analytical concepts and their associated components cast regional painting assemblages as a unified rock art archive that can be analysed for various kinds of purposes and projects. Segments of the relational diagram are essentially linked in a multi-directional manner without any overriding structural hierarchy between them. The framing "ripple-effect" principle includes (but not exhaustively or exclusively) the following components from the core outwards: The first layer comprises all possible forms of information sources that create our knowledge of rock art in any region. These include the rock art record itself, the archaeological record and where available their absolute dating evidence as well. Alongside, also where available, there are historical sources (i.e., records and archives from colonial administrators, missionaries, explorers, ethnologists and scientists, and various other kinds of records by travellers and writers etc.), ethnohistorical and ethnographic records on all the KhoeSan people (Southern—|Xam, ‡Xegwi, !Kun, Griqua, Nama, etc.—and Northern—Ju|'hoansi, G|wi, Naron/Naro, !Xoõ, |Gana, Damara, etc.—collections) as well as orature and various forms of living traditions (i.e., tangible and intangible heritage) among the present communities in an area. Where fragments of information from these sources corroborate each other, they strengthen the interpretations and generated knowledge. In the second layer, primary observations, which can be independently verified empirically through the use of available techniques, include the identification and classification (specification and documentation) of all forms of depicted content (subject matter in painting assemblages) according to graphic attributes on individual images and their cross relationships in clusters (formalism, distinctive image traits and forms) into painting themes (content forms, image categories) and rock art traditions (cultural sequences, which can be linked to forms of material culture reflected in the archaeology and rock art) and finally ordering imagery into relative sequence (superimpositions, juxtapositions and other temporal evidence). Relationships between assemblages are observed empirically and they require various levels of verification for their organisational and chronological integrity. Temporal evidence is allied with the analysis of subject matter and image forms in ways that allow for the precise definition of broader image categories, themes and traditions in relative sequence. Empirical observation alone may, however, be useless unless it is coupled with archaeological, ethnographic, ethnohistorical and historical sources among other available forms of evidence. All analytical levels necessitate the consideration and understanding of painting and social histories, interpretation, chronology and the formulation of historicised narratives concerning the artists and their contemporaries. Analytical components feed each other in recursive multidimensional informational pathways reminiscent of the "tacking" and "cabling" model. If one or several components are strongly stranded together they can strengthen other related components in the schema whose informational value is weak. Finally, the archive theory is the ultimate anchor binding these analytical components and the end product is the expanded multidimensional rock art archive. The expansion of the rock art archive enables the formulation of exploratory frameworks for explaining the artistic, archaeological, anthropological and historical domains. Such an approach also aids in the presentation and preservation of all rock art heritage in southern Africa.

The rock art archival formulation, further developed in later chapters, reveals more similarities than differences between the archives notion and rock painting accumulations. In the chart, the researchers' own mechanical observations of superimpositions show that archival bodies generally retain an element of horizontal

and vertical time relationships that are useful for relative periodisation and content interpretation. The significance of this analytical schema is in the recognition that neither superimposition alone nor absolute dates on their own may lead meaningfully to significant and historicised narratives of the past. On the contrary, in tandem with the temporal considerations of archaeological, historical, ethnohistorical, ethnographic, and other forms of sources, there are other analytical segments, including formal qualities of images (i.e. colour, technique, detail, relations, etc.), image categories and specific subject matter that would, when taken together, allow an interpretative enterprise that reveals underlying meanings and change through time. By shifting the focus and attendant analytical grammar from painting superimpositions alone as an end in itself to a broad-based interpretative enterprise constructed on the notion of "rock art as archive", this study anticipates a better interlocution of rock art, ethnographic, ethnohistorical, archaeological and historical sources, however fragmentary these may be in any given region.

2.5. WHY A ROCK ART ARCHIVE?

The "rock art as archive" formulation necessitates a holistic synthesis of painting sequences into relative chronology, which is then used as an adjunct source of information in the reconstruction of image change within pre-colonial and early colonial painting histories in the Western Cape. Unlike several other expressive traditions of indigenous cultures, which manifested alongside various other materialities, rock art in particular is an enduring legacy that is unique in its ubiquity and durability. Its quality as a source material of social history of those long gone artists and their communities is carried in its long-term character, derived directly from the natural and human domains themselves filtered through the ancient world views and daily experiences of the rock art creators (see similar views in Garlake 1995). Accepting particular epistemologies in order to understand systems of belief and cosmologies of past cultures can contribute significantly to the development of new premises of envisioning social histories of connected as well as individual cultural groups. Painting production, as distinct from other past materialities, is central to all social, political and cultural interactions and associated milieu. It will become clear later in the discussion that painting traditions played an active role in the articulation of underlying values, beliefs and world views at the centre of the daily vicissitudes of human social life.

As social life and political power are played out daily and over time, they become essentially historical: in the African context some historians have observed that people "tell, sing, produce (through dance, recitation, marionette puppets), sculpt, and paint their history" (Mudimbe & Jewsiewicki 1993: 3). It is wrong, though, to see past societies in their daily life activities as intentionally "documenting history" in these artistic domains; history emerges as a by-product of time and transmission of information down the generations. Similar to Martin Wobst's (1977: 322) view on the transmission of material culture, the efficacy of the painting record is in its intrinsic feature that causes recurrent cultural themes and human behaviour to be detectable through time. In rock art studies, the persistent challenge concerns assembling meaningful units of analysis for understanding how history may be extracted from the time-bound subject matter and themes as well their relationships and importantly which of their visible graphic properties are "markers" of temporal change. Contextual imagery change involves how generations of artists envisioned their place within shifting social, political and natural environments, as well as how they represented their own creations following a multiplicity of experiences. These experiences include awareness of existing images left by former generations in the same shelters within which they made their marks. This is an issue of normative modes of cultural expression, individual and communal agency and the extent to which an aggregation of human choices over generations impinges on and physically informs painting sequence and ultimately the assemblages that we order into a relative chronology.

The elementary evaluation involves carefully selecting the analytical units—the images that overlap each other—that reflect temporal shifts within assemblages of imagery. However, this approach becomes much more difficult in southern Africa, as a region lacking reliable datable rock art contexts (Jerardino 1999: 543, 548; Parkington & Manhire 2003: 33). The existing gaps, due to the paucity of absolute dates, mean that we cannot track with any specificity the possible cultural and formal changes over time. Nevertheless, even as the rock art has largely weathered away, some sites in localised protected areas have endured the elements of decay and time and they stand today as the only archival evidence of past human culture and history. It can be argued that some measure of the problem has also been with the growing trend of working with painting chronology strictly archaeologically, as fixed stratigraphic sequences to be established empirically. In this one-dimensional mode of thinking, the exhibited subject matter, themes and their distinctive manners of painting are seen as transient customs, leaving behind only minor traces of their presence (or absence) in time. One-dimensional approaches are not appropriate for dealing with expressive cultural elements in complex contexts of human interaction that, to all intents and purposes, show that different groups and their social activities variously overlapped, interlocked and disengaged in unpredictable sequences through time. Therefore the graphic fluidity within and between painting traditions and the emergent forms of entangled imagery requires a different frame of operation and thinking about time-referenced change in painting assemblages. It is partly for this reason that the archival perspective, as outlined above, becomes a useful methodological adjunct in rock art analysis. Sites with palimpsests of overpainting can therefore be contextualised in localised areas as strong archival records reflecting change over time and a regional chronological assemblage might be realised if this sequence is replicated at various other sites. The archival perspective thus befits a derivative methodology to organise, extricate and interpret painting assemblages from different traditions. The methodology inspires a multi-linearity of syntheses

expounded by Wylie (1989). The discussion now moves to a selection of previous sequence studies and their difficulties as background.

2.6. SHORT HISTORY OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN SEQUENCE STUDIES

Starting from the beginning, in the late 1920s Miles Burkitt (1928) was the first to advocate the use of painting superimpositions to deduce chronology although he did not conduct any such study. A few years later, however, the Abbé Henri Breuil (1930) was the first prehistorian to undertake a major chronology project analysing a variety of colour schemes from four rock shelters in what was then the Orange Free State in South Africa. From the analysis he concluded that two main periods were distinguishable, that were made up of a total of seventeen painting phases. Considering both stylistic and content variation, he believed hunter-gatherer rock art to have evolved from earlier "degenerate" to later "elaborate" forms. Following this effort, in the 1950s, Alex Willcox worked on sequence in the Drakensberg but he was largely unsuccessful in recognising clear-cut phases. Nevertheless, like Breuil, he claimed to have found a linear stylistic and technical development in the rock art; one that moved from monochromes to bichromes, then unshaded polychromes and topmost in the sequence were all shaded polychromes (Willcox 1956: 61). Although his monochromatic red figures were earliest, Willcox found them to be "peppered" throughout the painting stratigraphy. In another similar study beyond the Limpopo River in Zimbabwe, Cooke (1969: 45) was explicit in asserting that change in painting activity and development was discernible in this long-spanning hunter-gatherer tradition. He believed, like all others before his study, that because the artists had placed images upon other images, it was possible to gauge relative chronology fairly easily. He distinguished six styles and, and like Willcox, he believed that rock art developed from inferior to superior forms and then back to decadence in the final stages (Cooke 1969: 45–50). Two years later, Harald Pager (1971a: 353–356), who had been working in the Drakensberg, published his results from an analysis of sequence that concentrated on the eland paintings. He found seven phases involving unshaded bichrome eland, with red and white technique in the second phase. Eland shading appeared in his third phase, although red and white continued as reused colours; black pigment made its first appearance in the production of human figures. The technical use of black became more complex as colours and image sizes increased in the fourth and fifth phases. In the end, within phases six and seven, as Pager concluded, there was a clear graphic regression in what he explained as resulting from the "waxing and waning confidence of the painters" (Pager 1971a: 356).

A little after these studies, in the Underberg region, Patricia Vinnicombe (1976: 137) analysed superimpositions from seventy-seven shelters, 51% of her total number of study sites. While distinguishing four phases, she cautioned against thinking that all earlier images in the sequence were dark red to maroon monochromes. Although these monochromes were recognisably common in her initial phase, it became clear that shaded polychromes increased in her third phase but later become less frequent in the fourth phase. Vinnicombe (1976: 141) believed that in contrast to the human element in the art, which increased in the later phases, animal depictions became progressively less common in later phases. Whereas the range of subject matter increased as well with time, including contact-period imagery, the palette seemed to have also diversified to include black, yellow and bright vermillion or orange at the expense of earlier dark reds. Earlier, Pager (1971a: 354) had noticed a similar colour scheme in his styles/phases six and seven of the Cathedral Peak area sample; he speculated as to whether this bright colour became darker due to decay over time. As for Vinnicombe's (1976: 139) observations, she despaired and in her own admission such studies "proved disappointing in many respects", as did Willcox's similar admission from his earlier experience elsewhere. As one of the researchers who attempted working on superimpositions and chronological sequences, Lewis-Williams (1974b, 1977: 58) had however found some of Vinnicombe's conclusions to concur with his own work on the Barkly East rock art sample. Also in agreement with Vinnicombe's studies are the recent conclusions of later workers who employed Harris matrices to analyse superimpositions in the central Drakensberg, particularly at Main Caves, in Giant's Castle (Russell 1997, 2000). Later, Joan Swart (2004) worked in the northern and southern Drakensberg where she analysed Eland Cave and Ngwangwane 8 sites and then favourably compared her results with Thembi Russell's results, all of which generally concur with Vinnicombe's (1976) earlier studies in the Underberg region. Mazel, who has spent several decades working on the chronology of the Drakensberg rock paintings and archaeology, has endorsed these studies (Mazel 2009: 88-89)

Considering these earlier studies of rock art superimpositions, it is clear that the problems we encounter today are the same ones that others observed previously. Although she was not a rock art specialist, D.F. Bleek was the first writer to repudiate as quite subjective all Breuil's chronological phases that were based on painting colour schemes. She pointed out that her own observations from eighty-eight shelters did not bear out the impression of sequence of pigment colours, each being used by a different generation (Bleek 1932: 78), and that any variation would have been expected for a painting tradition spanning centuries. Later still, D.F. Bleek made another important methodological observation on the Western Cape rock art: "Superpositions are few, and where they occur, two layers are visible with a few exceptions" (see van der Riet *et al*. 1940: p. x). Her approach, like that of Breuil who worked before her, was not restricted to complete overpainting of one image by another, but she also included overlapping imagery as useful indicators of sequence. This is in contrast to Lewis-Williams's (1972, 1974b) scheme in the early 1970s, which considered superimpositioning to be limited to cases of one image directly over another and disregarded partial overlapping of images. These problems are still fundamental, but in this study partial overlays are as important as complete superimpositions in the deduction of sequence.

In contrast to D.F. Bleek, however, some writers have noted abundant superimpositions more recently after

they completed a "close examination of *numerous* superpositionings of handprints with detailed representational images" (Yates *et al*. 1993: 61, added emphasis) in the Western Cape. From observations made in this study, it appears that these writers' earlier viewpoint that in this region "superpositioning would seem to be less common than in the Drakensberg" (Yates & Manhire 1991: 3) is a more accurate conclusion. If superimpositions are a rare phenomenon, there is a problem of sampling reliability for those analyses that formulate regional chronologies based on such overlays alone. It is against this background that this study questions the effectiveness of unaided use of superimpositions as good chronological parameters, although superimpositions and the rather uncommon but repetitive use of similar painting subject matter and themes (what is later called "graphic mimicry") over time indicate the dialectic intertwining of earlier-to-later image-making actions and contexts. While image overlays are not always easily discernible, they remain an elementary analytical avenue for sequencing rock art. In this study, integrating rock art chronology and interpretation, the benefit of using superimpositions is realised only when they are employed in tandem with the archival approach.

The scarcity of direct image overlays has presented an opportunity to investigate other methods, such as the archival approach, for the analysis of painted stratigraphic sequences. It must be accepted that inconsistencies will be inevitable in any chronological sequence study because of the fragmentary and residual nature of the painting record. Under the circumstances of good preservation and availability of overpainted sites, superimpositions can be useful in building a basic chronological outline of painting traditions and their succession in any given area. In assessing chronology and graphic change over time, it is therefore useful to think of specific image types, categories, themes and their relevant traditions not as entirely distinct graphic entities but as open-ended artistic classifications. The fragmentary boundaries between traditions are blurred within a complexly multilayered cultural continuum of image creation over time. This view recognises the conception that the occurrence of individual images and their relationships in respect of earlier and later traditions or periods can best be characterised as osmotic, rather than static, but with coherent variation over time. The placement of images by artists in one cultural group or another did not happen in a vacuum. Artists operated consciously in direct reference to what already existed on their chosen surfaces in rock shelters. This point has, for example, long been noted by some researchers working on rock art dating in the Laura region of Australia. These researchers observed that over long periods some later artists often imitated earlier images and themes, which is a feature that complicated these researchers' attempts to correlate dated rock art sequences and other archaeological materials (Cole & Watchman 2005). It should be accepted that successive generations of artists worked within a diverse graphic milieu that would have—perhaps in diverse ways that we do not yet fully understand—influenced their customary production of their own culture-specific artworks. Such relative artistic choices by individual artists affect the manner in which we create analytical classifications of imagery to use in the formulations of chronological sequences.

2.7. USING SUPERIMPOSITIONS FOR CHRONOLOGY FORMULATION

In formulating painting chronologies, analyses start with individual images that contain vital clues for stratigraphic sequence. In themselves, however, as single analytical units these individual images are less than conclusive. Single images are less informative than the sum of their total relationships on shelter walls. This point introduces methodological issues concerning analytical techniques for deciphering chronological clues for image sequencing. Single images only begin to gain explanatory power in deducing chronological sequences when they are appraised in unison with other analytical categories such as subject matter, colour schemes, recognisable postures, actions (some of which are shared between images), and various other formal attributes observed within and between panels at given sites and across several sites. This approach is also true for stratified archaeological materials where excavators work from single lenses to larger strata at a site and then correlate these data across multiple other excavated sites. Archaeologists may speak of a regional sequence from appraising an amalgam of singular sequences derived from a series of sites. Single images can, however, be used effectively in mapping out a logical structure, starting with them as small entities, unit by unit, and moving to broader, cluster-by-cluster relationships within and beyond single sites. This analytical conception is further developed later as a crucial element in deducing stratigraphy using superimposition units to generate a regional chronology.

Resolving image stratigraphy is not as straightforward as it might at first seem. This is a long-standing problem. Reviewing D.F. Bleek's co-authored 1930 book *Rock Paintings in South Africa*, which assembled her commentaries alongside rock painting copies made nearly 60 years earlier by George W. Stow, Burkitt confidently asserted: "It is a pity, perhaps, that it was not found possible in the limits of time and space to include an account of the various superpositions of styles of paintings which occur, but these *can be easily worked out from the plates* by students" (Burkitt 1932: 29, added emphasis). Burkitt hoped that "when they have done so, and isolated the various styles, they will have learnt considerably more about the matter" (*ibid*.) He may not, however, have realised that his assertions, ensuing from his own landmark book *South Africa's past in stone and paint* (Burkitt 1928) four years earlier, had initiated a protracted preoccupation with rock art sequence and chronology in southern Africa. Moreover, the idea and application of "style" (which, as shown later, is regarded as too problematic a notion for rock art analysis in the region), as central in this activity has proven difficult to dislodge even today. His views above were problematic, as were assertions in his book. It can be recalled that Burkitt advocated the sequencing of rock art superimpositions in similar ways to those in which archaeologists sequence stratified deposits. The seeds of the problem at hand were sown as early as his propositions therein (Burkitt 1928). Painting sequences are not, however, a straightforward

parallel of archaeological strata or vice versa. For accepted reasons, no researcher today would send students off on their own to deduce a painting sequence, least of all from reproductions and not at the actual sites. The copy plates upon which Burkitt commented were made by Stow in challenging circumstances and contingencies, therefore they have problems that we all now appreciate (see Lewis-Williams & Challis 2011: 40–42). In all, deduction of image superimpositions is a complex empirical undertaking that requires observations to be made directly in the field.

Sustained fieldwork allows one to deal with a series of such chronological problems first hand; primarily, the images are often faded due to the ravages of time and weathering (Vinnicombe 1976: 139). Largely, as some argued in the 1970s: "Traditional methods of dating have relied on: … stylistic typologies, commonly based on paradigms of art evolution from 'primitive' to sophisticated and ultimately 'degenerate' forms" (Butzer *et al*. 1979: 1201). Previous studies using this approach to chronology assumed, albeit implicitly, a proxy Darwinian evolutionary process in the developmental stages of human life and culture. Cultural phenomena, like history and aesthetics as noted by Hamilton (1996: 12), "… are concerned with events which are particular and individual rather than instances of the application of a scientific law." Hence, although image layers or phases might have been recognised correctly, the resulting analyses did not allow for a balanced assessment of the social, political, cultural, economic and other factors that caused the identified deviations where colour-based chronological sequences contradicted each other. To label the putative final rock art category as degenerate assumes a "disappearing" custom as dictated by its natural evolutionary course. This change was not, as we now know, a natural course of events from initial innovation that was followed by decadence and then, finally, the demise of the artistic tradition. Hunter-gatherer artists lost their culture and its entire associated mores due to the fatal interference and contestations by other social, political and cultural formations that took root in their former homelands and painting landscapes. The differences in the overall character of the imagery seem to be a result of the abrupt changes in social, cultural and historical contexts in the lives of former artists and their communities, which was a truncated process and not an evolutionary or natural progression. As Lewis-Williams (1992: 27) lamented the disappearance of San art as a living tradition, he noted, "All complex panels must have had a beginning, but, had history not intervened so decisively, they may never have had an end." If the evolutionary perspectives are discarded, new appreciations of complex processes which culminated in the accumulation of painting assemblages emerge that may allow the formulation of historicised chronological sequences. Nonetheless, the hunter-gatherer complex of mores, of which paintings formed the most vivid and ubiquitous fragment, cannot be construed today as having been static conceptual and material entities. These mores were always in a continuous state of flux, as the former hunter-gatherer artists reimagined and reimaged their own equally shifty social circumstances when they encountered and interacted with other societies through time. The role of images largely concerned hunter-gatherer belief systems, religious thought, world views and ritual practice contextualised within the ever mutable social and historical circumstances.

Given that different cultural entities (or a complex fusion of these entities) produced the varied Western Cape painting traditions, it is conceivable that diverse people would have dealt with shifting social and historical circumstances in different ways. The artistic record may indicate such variability, which needs recognition through contextuality and historicity. What are these rock art traditions? On the surface, a definition of a rock art tradition may not be what it seems nor can it be a definitive matter. While it is difficult to observe differences within single rock art traditions that are recognised customarily, we cannot accept at face value one tradition or the other as being a constant graphic monolith with redoubtable qualities of uniform character and form through time. To regard rock art traditions as such is reductionist and ahistorical, given the number of observable overlaps in subject matter, themes (or content), and sometimes aspects of form across traditions. Recognisable general forms of rock art have largely become essentialised classifications, which most writers normally accepted at face value. However, as some have reminded us (e.g. Battiss 1948; Skotnes 1996b), what is accepted on formal qualities alone as an unquestionably invariant San rock art tradition over time might in fact be an amalgam of several graphic traditions or their sub-traditions, a point that is explored later in the analysis of temporal sequences in the study area. Even when dealing with a single rock art tradition, intractable complexities are unavoidable. These rock art traditions are generally inferred from collations of distinctive graphic traits of individual images and relationships between groups of imagery. While these graphic delineations are based largely, but not exclusively, on observations and classifications of researchers, the reality is a complex mixture of the general character of imagery, social and historical contexts pertaining to their time of creation. For example, drawing from his long-term work and familiarity with the Arnhem Land scenario and Australia in general, George Chaloupka succinctly cautions that rock art:

> [I]s a complex construct of a human mind, a conscious selection of elements out of artistic experience, imagination and emotions, and not just a utilitarian object. Consequently, a rock painting is more than a motif or pattern which can be reduced by simple typological classification to basic form and studied by such diagnostic means. Chaloupka (1985: 270)

This caution alerts any researcher to the classification problem in the derivation of rock art traditions from a simple analysis of imagery. What constitutes a presumed coherent image category? How do we delineate image groupings that are to be contrasted with other groupings from numerous assemblages accumulated over long periods at diverse sites? Chaloupka critiqued the basis of several rock art classifications as having drawn heavily from early ideas on cultural evolution, such as briefly alluded to above and therefore not quite suited to this problem of formulating relative chronology.

One has to consider first the depicted subject matter as an informative source in its own terms in relation to verifiable relevant sources, such as archaeology, history and ethnography among others.

To understand such subject matter, the archival approach goes beyond just relative sequence towards conflating painting interpretation with a form of historical and ethnographic analysis in tandem with perspectives on social interaction. Certain details in the imagery—i.e. their manners of depiction, contextual associations and so on—will have emerged in particular periods and locations and served varied but specific purposes that shifted the locus of their symbolism through time. Painting chronology is fundamentally historical, since the artistic production and change are both constituted and manifested in moments over and through time by the active agency of individuals and their communities. This understanding resonates with the views of Austrian Aloïs Riegl (1888, 1889), regarded as the father of modern art history, who believed that "artworks were temporal as well as spatial…and illuminated the passage of time by visually re-representing the perceptual world of past eras" (reviewed and cited in Gubser 2005: 451). For Riegl, the investigation of art was an exploration of our perceptual relationship with the external world, itself temporally and historically constituted (*ibid*.: 456). He identified two distinct notions of time: one as a historical construct and another as a phenomenon embedded in artefacts (*ibid*.: 458). The painting sequence is a formulation that traces relative temporal clues of historical image shifts, since "[a]rtistic forms were themselves historically significant in that they exemplified the formal, perceptual tendencies from the past; artistic value was therefore a historical category" (*ibid*.: 459). The recursive link between iconographic, historical and ethnographic analysis provides insights into the artistic change through time and allied symbolic features identified in the images. Economic, social and political spheres of the frontier (see chapter four) are important in understanding image change over time. The archival approach augments superimpositional analyses and image classifications. The next section describes this study's formulation of analytical categories and how the archival approach can rectify issues of image classification.

2.8. Analytical Considerations and Image Delineation

In working out relative chronologies, observable formal features of images need to be established for evaluating and resolving their graphic stratigraphies into a temporal sequence. The extrapolation of sequence from images is relevant and definable for discerning relative chronology, even in minimally painted site contexts or clusters where there are no obvious superimpositions. Likewise, hypothetically it should be possible to predict a sequential order of images that are not themselves primarily involved in superimpositions. This ancillary sequential placement of images is based on their established graphic features and where these formal attributes are found to cohere in terms of the aggregate stratigraphies from several regional sites. Creating a summative set of relationships of selected images is important in this approach, as it covers image associations and their inter- and intra-site interrelationships. Some images or their classes are related to others both inside and outside the superimposition occurrences. Reliable chronological entities depend on these relationships – not just on those images found in directly superimposed strata but also those found to be consistent with images in superimpositions. Indeed, the archival approach can create linkages by providing conceptual reference points for organising image relations beyond superimpositions. Although empirical observation is a necessity, analysis of painting sequences cannot be positivistic, as there are no absolutes in cultural material patterning. Cultural objects, including paintings, are manmade and so they are not predisposed to neutral laws such as those governing natural phenomena, for instance predictable laws of geological stratification.

Within the archival perspective, there is a fundamental recognition of *process* over *product* in dealing with past materials. Rather than focusing on the existence of a cultural record, the goal is to appraise its informational value in relation to other records. It is therefore less crucial that at one site some graphic features appear in one layer and then become reversed or contradicted at another site, but rather that these features observed at different sites belong in a well-defined and largely autonomous category. In their true chronological continuum, the creation and development of these image categories and their distinctive features may have taken protracted periods, which might have covered one or more cultural contexts. Manners of depiction, graphic principles and conventions developed at various moments over time, but the actual placement of images in the shelters was achieved feasibly as repeated short-term and long-term artistic actions. Although the accummulation of painting assemblages was a long (and perhaps slow) cultural process, the archival analysis allows for a continuous projection of subject matter and themes over different image clusters within a site and across different sites as an aggregated view of creative processes in the entire stratigraphic sequence. It is necessary therefore to observe image attributes as contextualised and correlated with the types of sites and localities reflecting relationships and comparable graphic patterns. Each image might then fit into a schema of defined specific attributes. If these images are linked to dated archaeological contexts at sites whose occupation histories are known then there is a basis for inferring their exact time-lapse moments of creation and when certain image classes trended in a locality. A consideration of formal patterning of images across several sites may reflect uniformity or its absence in subject repertoire and themes across space and time.

Formulating parameters for analysing painting chronologies requires conceptual and methodological tools that transcend the simple superimposition analyses. One complementary source in this process are the ethnographic and ethnohistoric records, as they can within limits confirm or invalidate formulations made from superimposition analyses and excavation data. Chronology

may not be preserved anywhere beyond individual sites, but rather within the sites reflecting multilayered graphic repartee, some of which might appear to be in superficial contradiction. In the end, relative chronology markers may lie in image categories across several sites in a region rather than just within image clusters at single sites. Indeed, one of the problems from previous approaches is that focusing solely on the correspondence of features could limit the discernment of meaningful dissimilarities. It is useful to analyse various graphic relationships from diverse sites to evaluate their artistic patterns. This multi-component approach encompasses rock art, known aspects of hunter-gatherer and herder archaeology, historical and other ethnographical-anthropological evidence. The ideal is to integrate material on the cultural context of the rock art and its relative chronology with absolute dates for specific imagery. Because rock art dating is problematic, it is crucial to incorporate where possible painting sequences with stratified material cultural remains in archaeological deposits. Below is a description of the three main Western Cape categories of painting, which are the basis of the characterisation of the rock art archive assemblages.

2.9. CATEGORIES OF IMAGES & DEFINITIONS

Although "rock art" as a term has a fairly short history of usage (possibly less than a century of use), its origins are vague. As noted, the topic in the South Africa has enchanted writers since the mid-1700s, with the earliest being Beutler's published observations in the Eastern Cape and later several others in the Western Cape and other regions (e.g. Van Reenen in 1790 [Kirby 1958]; Wikar in 1779 [Mossop 1935]; Gordon in 1777 [Raper & Boucher 1988]; Rudner 1989; Theal 1897: 133). In all early writings, these ancient images are generally referred to as "Bushman paintings". However, in the introduction to the jointly authored Bushman Art, Hugo Obermaier might have introduced the term "rock art" into southern African archaeological terminology (Obermaier & Kühn 1930: 1–11). However, the term only gained common usage several decades later in the 1950s (Allison & King 2005: 248; Clark 1958: 74) along with its less commonly used alternative hyphenated form "rock-art" (Johnson 1958: 67). Recently, some writers have advocated the use of this hyphenated portmanteau, which Chippindale and Taçon (1998: 6) explain and define as "human-made marks on natural, non-portable rocky surfaces". Admittedly, ideas of what rock art may or may not be vary with different regions of the world. Generally, most definitions have overlaps between various image categories or traditions, but overall the distinguishing trait of most of these ancient images on rocks is the engraved or pigment or crayon line or stroke made with some object or applicator and on some rock art forms the finger as the direct instrument of application.

Indeed, a stroke or line is the elementary unit of most rock art forms. It is certainly the foundation of visual graphic phenomena. Line drawing is observable in most painting and engraving traditions in southern Africa. Generally, the artists appear to have employed sharp and delicate edges as the basis of the depicted image forms. True outlines were also usually drawn in this manner and then filled in or shaded with other pigment colours. This graphic technique is essentially the defining feature of San rock art, whose classic images are mainly finely detailed. It is not clear though when San rock art first became technically defined as "fine-line". In the early 1950s, however, Clarence van Riet Lowe (1952: 5) used this term in his description of engravings, of which some writers call "hairline". It is apparent that his conception and use of the expression was in terms of technical aspects of producing engravings. The term "fine-line" as applied to the paintings appears in the literature slightly later in the context of descriptions of rock art in Central Africa (Clark 1958: 72–73). I now describe the customary categories of painting in the Cape.

FINE-LINES: In southern Africa, rock art assemblages customarily known as "fine-line" appear to have been first described as such by van Riet Lowe in the 1950s although he did not define the term or use it in specific reference to the paintings. Finely detailed images, as the term implies, were created using refined applicators or slender instruments such as brushes of various kinds, feathers, quills and so forth. Because of the greater control of the paint medium, this method produced well-defined outlines; single strokes are sometimes as thin as a fraction of a millimetre. Frequently, detail features on imagery are the size of a pinhead. With such miniscule rendering of form and detail, depicted shapes are often very clear and delicately executed so as to delineate the edges of painted subject matter and their essential features. This rock art is usually extremely elaborate and sophisticated in the use of colour schemes and shading techniques. These colours and techniques usually include a range of ochreous hues of red, brown and maroon, then yellow to orange, as well as black and white, all used singly or in multiple combinations and blending. As these colours do not preserve the same way, with white and black being pigments that disappear rapidly, it is unsurprising that very few colours from the ancient palette are visible today (Vinnicombe 1976: 141, 164; Wilson *et al*. 1990: 209; Yates *et al*. 1985: 70). Generally, ochreous pigments last longer; often visible are residual stains on the rock surfaces due to weathering and decay.

Detail and complexity of imagery varies in different regions: for example, elaborate shading techniques are commonly found in the southeastern mountains and less frequently elsewhere. Although rare, exquisitely shaded examples have been found in the Western Cape as well. Such high-quality form is not amenable to large images. Some fine paintings of large elephant images from the Western Cape (Yates *et al*. 1994: 38) to Namibia and Zimbabwe (Cooke 1969: 50) measure a metre or more in size. Yet a closer inspection shows that a different method of pigment application was used in producing these images. A fine outline might have been drawn with an instrument or crayon, and then subsequently shaded or filled, probably with a sponge or some swab-like applicator. In some examples, such as in the Matopo Hills, the palm of the hand may have been used to smear paint to create shaded areas of large images. Often the fine-line images are naturalistic, mainly depicting people, animals and sometimes non-identifiable creatures, but rarely plants, and a small range of geometric forms as well as material culture items which are

largely, but not always, easily identifiable (e.g. see Johnson & Maggs 1979; Johnson *et al*. 1959b; Manhire 1998; Yates *et al*. 1993, 1994). This painting tradition displays a typically huge variety of forms and subject matter and themes whose conceptual and creative significance is chiefly metaphoric and symbolic of hunter-gatherer world view and belief systems (Lewis-Williams 1981).

The view in the Western Cape that the hunter-gatherer fine-line images pre-date most other rock art traditions emanates from the observed absence of other image forms and categories overlain by fine-lines. This rock art tradition, also known as the detailed representational paintings (Yates *et al*. 1993), is set apart from the other traditions due to its finely detailed manner of execution. Its time depth is inconclusive, but it may plausibly be as old as 30,000 years (i.e. judging by Apollo 11 Cave *art mobilier* dates [Wendt 1976]) and as recent as a few centuries ago (as reflected by colonial material culture depicted in fine-lines across various parts of South Africa). Based on observations, this study refined finely detailed imagery by subdividing it into two categories—*fine fine-line* and *coarse fine-line*. The former may be regarded as the "classic" hunter-gatherer tradition found in many parts of southern Africa while the latter occurs in circumscribed regional settings. The images in the fine fine-line category tend to reflect the customary finesse in their delicate delineation of subjects and realistic proportions, and in most cases complex shading is involved using a thin consistency of pigment mixtures. Where various colours are used—as is true for the diverse palette typical of this rock art tradition—the blending is often uniform, as the colours grade smoothly into each other. Course fine-lines are different; while their subject matter and themes (content) overlaps with the former category, the formal characterisation diverges. However, some observers have defined this painting category as smaller free-style paintings with content that is more diverse, and conventions are discarded "as anything and everything of interest is grist to the mill" (Sampson 1968: 194). The palette is limited to one or two pigment colours, but principally red ochre is dominant. Sometimes the pigment has an appearance of bleeding as if the binding agents used were of inferior quality. The delineation of subjects is often uneven although the artists used some form of instrument, albeit coarse, as applicator. Yet this category is clearly distinct from the finger painting tradition. As "[t]his phase of our rock paintings is perhaps the most distinct from the others" (*ibid*.: 194), it cannot be confused with the finger paintings in form, content and pigment qualities.

FINGER PAINTINGS: In contrast to what will henceforth be referred to as fine fine-line and course fine-line images, finger paintings are outwardly unrefined, at times being akin to daubing. This reduced quality comes from using the finger(s) to make the images, although it is also possible that thickly made brushes were used. The thematic content is both figurative and geometric in nature. In the Western Cape, the finger painting tradition is also referred to as the "historical" or "colonial-period/era" paintings due to its focus on introduced European material culture items. Subject matter includes European farmers, horses and mules, clothing items (e.g. high-heeled shoes, crinoline dresses, wide-brimmed hats), guns, smoking pipes, and land- or sea-bound vessels (e.g. animal drawn wagons, coaches and ships) and so forth. Pigments used in this painting tradition are shades of red, brick and chalky red, often crumbly and lacking the standard lustre of pigment colours used in the fine fine-line painting tradition. Although the content is predominantly colonial, this is by no means the rule, as there are known cases of this painting tradition lacking colonial material culture. Residual images of this category include simple geometrics of crosses, circles (sometimes internally gridded), single vertical lines, ladder designs, other types of human and animal forms and others. Could this be an earlier form of finger-painted images from which the colonial corpus is derived? Similarly, there are examples of colonial subject matter that was occasionally brush-painted in the usual manner of fine fine-lines or in some instances as if the creative product was in emulation of earlier fine fine-lines. Since this tradition captured less attention from early researchers, some writers fittingly note, "The distribution of colonial period rock art in southern Africa as a whole is not particularly well documented" (Yates *et al*. 1993: 59).

HANDPRINTS, FINGERPRINTS AND DOTS: These image categories are self-explanatory, as their content or subject matter is tied to their production technique. Handprints are subdivided into plain and decorated types, which are described later in the discussion. Fingerprints were created by dipping the finger, possibly the index finger and the thumb, in the paint and pressing the tip on the rock face to make a mark in the form of a dot. Some fingerprints are short strokes and slash marks, which are technically extensions of dots (Manhire 1998). Use of brushes or similar kinds of instruments was another method to create various dot types. Finally, the problem of categorising these dots is that some belong with fine fine-lines (Dowson 1989) which are mostly brush painted rather than imprinted, whereas others are clearly associated with finger paintings and mostly imprinted. Technically, the former are true paintings in the fine fine-line manner, while the latter are actually imprints in the finger painting tradition. We will return to this point specifically when dealing with this category's occurrence in the chronological sequence. Painting traditions in fine fine-line and finger painting manners as well as coarse fine-lines, colonial era paintings, handprints, fingerprints and dots occur in the study area. They all play a major role in the chronological sequence formulation.

The discussion covered broad painting traditions in the Western Cape. However, subject matter in the fine-line tradition, which is subdivided into fine and coarse forms, is fairly consistent in both assemblages with only the manner of depiction varying. Superimpositions also show the two to succeed each other chronologically although there are still some mutual overlaps. In the final analysis, various subject matter which span these assemblages is examined in order to show shifting emphasis in their symbolism and significance, perhaps due to the changing social, cultural and historical circumstances affecting those early communities. The next chapter focuses on the ecological and archaeological context of the landscape of the artists and their societies.

CHAPTER THREE

Ecological and Archaeological Context

In order to understand the effect of changing and unchanging factors on our prehistoric cultures… the archaeologist needs to work closely…with the geologist…and palaeobotanist…(Allison & King 2005: 15)

3.1. BIOGEOGRAPHICAL ENVIRONMENT

The previous sections introduced the central notion of the Western Cape rock painters as active archivists purposefully creating painting assemblages and even artefacts in their lived in shelters. Because of its characteristic of accumulation over lengthy periods, this archive can be used to study chronological sequences and historical contexts in particular ecological settings. This chapter describes the Western Cape environment encompassing study sites. While there may be superficial ecological similarities in various regions of South Africa and southern Africa, such as wooded environs along drainage systems, each one is made up of unique series of habitats and climatic conditions within which rock art and archaeological archives accumulated in distinct ways over many millennia. The first section describes the physical setting of study sites. The second section discusses relevant palaeoenvironmental evidence as seen archaeologically. There is also a description of two contrasting ecological zones—sandveld and mountains—within which study sites are located. This background explores germane characteristics of the study area as necessary ecological context(s) underlying the human creation combined with the natural "archiving" of the archaeological and painting assemblages over long periods.

Archaeological evidence, comprising abundant Acheulean hand axes in some parts of the region, indicates that the Western Cape environment has supported human occupation from the Early Stone Age, over a million years ago (Sealy *et al*. 1986: 136). Although the physical setting underwrote conditions which partly ensured the survivability of the archaeological record through many millennia (e.g. see Parkington *et al*. 2009: 104, 105, 113), it is also useful in explaining Late Holocene hunter-gatherer and herder occupation histories, local resource choices, and the possible potentials and limitations that might have predisposed earlier patterns of subsistence, land use, settlement and exchange networks. Without being environmentally deterministic, it is acceptable that ecological details were in part involved in conditioning human responses and associated visible distribution of material culture. Ecological background is thus useful in understanding these circumstances and the degree of biogeography alteration from long-term human action and interactions since early times through to the terminal Holocene, marked by 17th-century European settler expansion.

3.2. GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

The study area (Map 1.1 in chapter one), where the bulk of the rock art shelters are located, is a typically rugged mountainous region between the Berg River at its southern margin and the Gifberg range at its northernmost edge. The area is a portion of the southwestern extent of the great escarpment. Because of the high elevation ranges, the escarpment's western perimeter is largely precipitous, but it gets progressively gentler towards the lower coastal plain adjoining the Atlantic Ocean. Moving in the opposite direction, from the ocean in the west to east towards these inland mountains, the topography rises from just a few metres above sea level in between abrupt cliffs, headlands and rocky shorelines. From here the coastal foreland stretches eastwards through the dune and sandy flats, known as the Sandveld. Farther inland the escarpment attains high elevation with its rim reaching altitudes from 1,000 m to 2,300 m above sea level along a series of elevated landforms overlooking the interior Karoo plateau.

Painted shelters are found mainly along the drainage systems of three main rivers flowing westwards and northwards. Apart from the Berg, these major watercourses are the west flowing Verlorenvlei River and other nearby parallel drainages and marshlands in the west, the central Olifants River and the Doring (or Doorn) River on the northeastern margin, both flowing northwards and then jointly westwards into the Atlantic Ocean. Cederberg ranges, a major feature of the local physiography, are sandwiched in the west by the Olifants valley and the Tanqua-Doring drainage basin eastwards (Van Rooyen *et al*. 1999: 11). These rivers and their tributaries have deeply dissected the perimeter of the interior scarp, etching out narrow gorges and ravines called kloofs, which are generally densely vegetated. Streams and rivers provide fresh water, the amount depending on local conditions, specific ecologies and seasonality. Rock painting and other archaeological site types occur in low to moderate relief within close proximity to perennial or intermittent water sources along these drainages (Parkington 2003: 18–19; Parkington & Manhire 2003: 32). Writers have noted that these defiles might also have served as access routes between the flatter coastal topography and the rugged mountain terrain for both hunter-gatherers and herders in pre-colonial times (Parkington 2003: 18; Van Rijssen 1994: 167). To appreciate the Cederberg landscape, let us now

examine briefly its underlying geological structure, which is characterised predominantly by the Cape Fold Belt (CFB) sedimentary rocks.

3.3. GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Reaching a maximum elevation of 2,325 m, the Cape Fold Mountains were formed from a Palaeozoic Supergroup sediment system that accumulated in the shallow inland Agulhas Sea (McCarthy & Rubidge 2005: 188–193). Their continental marginal range, comprising the Devonian marine sandstones and shales from 400–340 million years ago, formed through folding which produced linear north-and-south sub-parallel ridges. In their topographic expanse these rocks are variable in vertical stratification, while horizontally they maintain some degree of homogeneity. Vertically, these layers are comprised of sandstones, conglomerates, siltstones, slates, shales, mudstones, tillites and other rocks, depending on the different modes and regimes of deposition associated with their particular periods and environments of formation. Around 250 million years ago, the Permian continental collision produced the north-to-south tectonic compression that uplifted what was then a low-lying land mass sandwiched by higher ranges northwards and southwards into a high relief of folded formations. These series of uplifted crustal ridges were successively reduced by lengthy cycles of erosion and weathering processes that created the existing mountains, valleys and an undulating peneplain to the west. Structurally, the CFB has three formations: directly above the older Cape Granite Suite basement rocks is the basal Table Mountain Group, overlain by the Bokkeveld Group and finally the Witteberg Group, in decreasing order of age. All three, with a total composite thickness of over 6,000 m, were deposited in an east-to-west striking basin. From the processes of consolidation and metamorphosis, this sediment mass formed silicified sandstones and quartzites due to pressure and heat associated with their immense weight. Rock units of these strata were subjected to physical deformation from various fold and fault structures, resulting in widespread contortion, fracturing and jointing. Chemically, the increased temperatures during folding caused the re-crystallisation of quartz and other minerals to form very hard crystalline rocks. These resistant quartzitic sandstones are externally visible as prominent angular ridges with sheer faces, sometimes showing contorted bedding on exposures along the rocky plateaus of the Cederberg ranges.

Table Mountain Group is the most visible and prominent system of these ranges. It contains four formations: Goudini, Cederberg, Pakhuis and Peninsula (collectively called the Nardouw subgroup) in descending stratigraphic order. Inside this group, fine muds (or diamictite sediments), shales and siltstones are usually associated with the Cederberg formation (Van Rooyen *et al*. 1999: 15). The distinctly reddish and maroon discolourations visible on most cliff faces and exposures are generally from mudstones characteristic of the Nardouw subgroup. However, the extensive Ordovician and Silurian glacial period, 440–420 million years ago, allowed the deposition of tillites in glacial lakes, which although being a thin layer are a distinctive feature of both the Pakhuis and Cederberg formations. The thickly deposited hard quartzites of the Peninsula formation, which has a total thickness of 2,000 m, form the bulk of the CFB, with peaks and sheer cliffs being very hard and erosion resistant quartzitic sandstones (also known as Table Mountain Sandstone). While sandstones dominate the CFB, the softer shales and mudstones are a prominent feature of the Bokkeveld Group (overlying Table Mountain Group), which have been eroded down to form valley floors of the region.

The different constituent portions of the CFB Supergroup provided hunter-gatherers with a range of rock materials for stone artefact making and other cultural uses, such as sources of ochreous, clayey and other pigment materials. The commonly encountered rock types used in making tools include sandstones, quartzites, quartz and fine-grained siliceous rocks, including jaspers, hornfels, cherts, silcrete (Mackay 2006: 181–182; Orton 2006), chalcedony and indurated shale (Parkington & Poggenpoel 1971: 11). Ochre, which was used in the manufacture of pigments, also occurs in the area. These materials are abundant in the debitage found on surface scatters around sites. Due to specific geological patterns of faulting, rock fracture and subsequent systems of weathering and erosion, the CFB's metamorphosed sandstones often have upright, smooth and fairly stable surfaces to paint on. The majority of shelters are located on these bands, where cycles of erosion, fluvial and aeolian weathering over the last 65 million years have sculpted out outcrops and overhangs alongside ravines and gorges (Figure 3.1). These rocks variously display pale white, but at times cream to pink discolouration (Parkington 2003: 32) possibly from the siliceous surface deposits associated with the sandstones. The artists favoured rock surfaces covered in these durable physico-chemical precipitates because they created smooth surfaces and perhaps a striking contrast for the images, which are largely based on ochreous pigments. Such mineral skins, sometimes transparent enough to show through what lies underneath, continue to accumulate over surfaces with rock paintings (Jerardino 1999: 64; Van Rijssen 1987: 6–7), often obliterating the imagery when such deposits are viscous.

3.4. SOILS AND VEGETATION

These rock groups formed important lithospheric substrates on which certain soil regimes developed and in turn supported various vegetation biomes and their associated ecological components. Closely related to the underlying lithosphere, geology and topography, the soils and vegetation in this area typify a dry arid area. Because the CFB rocks are largely siliceous, they give rise to immature, litholic sandy soils that are mostly poor in nutrients. These soils are largely a product of sandy sediments associated with Table Mountain and Witteberg Groups. In the mountains there is a mix of sands of aeolian origin ranging in colour from off-white to yellow-brown. The Bokkeveld Group, however, consists largely of shales and mudstones, which weathered fairly rapidly to form valleys rather than mountains. Accordingly, and unlike the mountains, these valleys today abound with fertile, loamy-clayey soils (McCarthy & Rubidge 2005:

Figure 3.1: The rugged northern Cederberg scenery contains large and small ravines where painted and habitation shelters are found which must have been good protection from adverse weather and predators for both people and animals. It is also in these shelters that the archaeological and painting assemblages were 'archived' over several millennia.

192). In the mountains, rubble and debris occur in numerous places at the foot of the cliffs, mountain pediments and along small streams and rivulets that flow down hillsides after heavy rain.

The inland mountains, reflecting the varying levels of effective precipitation and the general lithological composition, feature two biomes: the fynbos and the succulent Karoo, with their related components (Van Rooyen *et al*. 1999: 16). With high species diversity, the fynbos comprises the *restioid, ericoid* and *proteoid* components, occurring as low scrubby brush with few grasses or trees on well-leached and typically sterile, coarse-grained, sandstone-derived soils. The *iridaceae* geophytes abound in the mountains, although also occurring in the coastal plain. Many of them produce edible corms that were an important seasonal addition to hunter-gatherer diet (Parkington 1976a, 1976b). The renosterveld, another fynbos element, is a small-leaved grassy shrubland. It is very rich in geophyte flora (Cowling 1990; Johnson 1992), dominated by the daisy, iris, lily and orchid families. The common food staple might have been *Hypoxis villosa.* There are also some grasses on seasonally wet, fine-grained silts and moderately fertile lowland clays derived from shales (Hoffman 1997; Van Rooyen *et al*. 1999: 18–19; Vlok & Coetzee 1997: 16). Most fynbos communities are variously adapted to fire and varied herbivory by large and small mammals. While the fynbos is mostly well adapted to fire, the renosterveld is actually fire prone (Low & Rebelo 1996). Another vegetation type mainly confined in areas of alluvium along ravines and gorges is the closed afromontane forest taxa as part of the mesic mountain fynbos. As shown below, these woodland species have not always been what they are today in diversity and habitat preference. They include *Podocarpus elongetus, Metrosideros angustifolia, Heeria argentea, Maytenus oleoiedes, Brabejum stellatifolium* and others. Their distinct mountain habitats provide a moderately balanced supply of moisture from rainwater and occasional springs. Unlike the typical fynbos, these riparian species are fire sensitive, so the ravines in which they flourish provide protection. Finally, succulent Karoo occurs in the northern fringes of the study area, in areas with low winter rainfall and very dry summers. The biome is dominated by dwarf, succulent shrubs of the Mesembryathemaceae, Asteraceae and Crassulaceae elements, without any of the fynbos grasses common farther south.

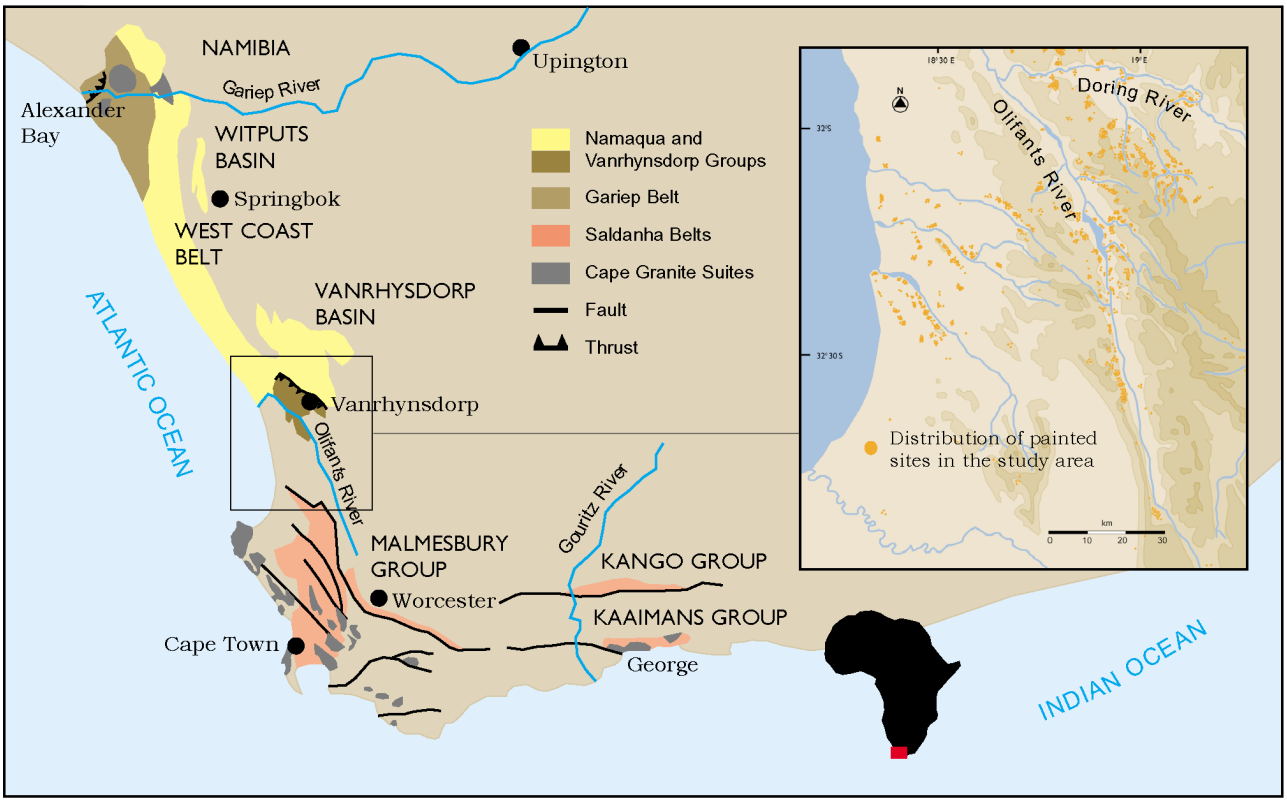
The low-lying Sandveld, in contrast, is characterised by recent fine aeolian pale sandy soils, in parts underlain by yellow-brown sands of both fluvial and marine origin. The vegetation comprises coastal fynbos, a dune thicket mosaic, and limestone fynbos on the calcretes and finally *proteoid* fynbos on deeper sandy soils. Quaternary sediments lie on top of the Skurweberg formation, which consists of light-grey quartzitic sandstone with subordinate shale layers that weathered from wave action to form shallow caves along the Cape coastline. Overlaying older shelly sediments, calcrete forms a crust of yellow- to grey-coloured deposits that vary in thickness from a few centimetres to nearly a metre. The sub-dominant Hopefield type with a mix of the rare Langebaan, Sandveld and Sonneblom types dominate these lime-rich soils. Isolated portions from Elandsbaai to Redelinghuys are classified largely as rock and undifferentiated lithosols. They support a proteoid fynbos described as a secondary habitat resulting from disturbance and breakdown of a mosaic of original habitats. This might be due to too frequent fires. Coastal thicket occurs in the valleys, on the coastal dunes and on the steep sea-fronting

cliffs, where it is normally stunted. Within this setting the Verlorenvlei wetland is noticeably flanked by strips of alluvium that are mostly black and rich in plant material and other organics. The soil stratum includes peaty clay and sand, conglomeratic phosphorite overlain by multiple aeolianite phases (Rogers 1980). Its wetland flora occupies a transitional status between the Karroid and fynbos biomes. The region, however, reflects a high diversity typical of an ecotone, covering various vegetation types: seaward dune strandveld, shrubby strandveld, *restioid* strandveld, saltpan vegetation, lowland fynbos, dry mountain fynbos, mountain fynbos, Karroid scrubland and marsh vegetation (*ibid*.).

3.5. LOCAL CLIMATE

The study area is within a winter rainfall region with a combination of marine, geological and topographical conditions that give rise to a great climatic variability in temperatures, rainfall and general surface water retention and availability. Generally, the coastal zone experiences moderate winter mean daily temperature minima of 6–8°C due to the circumpolar westerly winds that bring moist, cold air from the southern oceans from June to August. Cold Benguela currents affect the western shoreline, resulting in the lowest average minimum of 7.5°C for July,[7] while January has a highest average temperature of 24°C. These ocean currents bring cold and moist air onto the coastal plain. In the mountains, daily temperatures vary seasonally and according to localised altitudinal variations. Mean daily temperatures range between 22°–30°C; recorded annual temperature minima and maxima are 12.2° and 26.8°C respectively (Ferreira 2005: 34). Winter temperatures drop steeply at night, sometimes causing frosting in higher altitudes of ranges such as Sneeuberg, Sneeukop and others. In summer, by contrast, daily temperatures may soar to 40°C, a trend that escalates sharply from October to February, the driest period of the year in this arid region (Vlok & Coetzee 1997: 35).

Rainfall patterns are generally determined by the location and orientation of mountains. The prevailing coastal mild-to-warm temperate Mediterranean climate is partly due to the influence of regional sea-surface temperatures. Winters are cold and wet while summers are normally hot and dry. The CFB physical barrier collects most of the orographic winter rainfall while drier conditions obtain within the interior rain shadows. A gradient of declining levels of annual precipitation occurs around Clanwilliam and Agter-Pakhuis, revealing meagre average monthly rainfall levels of 11.5 mm in summer and 31.9 mm during the wet winter months (Ferreira 2005: 34). The main wet season, from April to September, often accounts for more than 80% of total annual rainfall. In these extremes, moisture deficits are experienced widely in the majority of years. In sharp contrast, some localised elevated ranges reveal rainfall patterns with an annual average precipitation in the 600–1,000 mm range, with some mountain ravines reaching even 1,270 mm (Van Rooyen *et al*. 1999: 14). These very strong rainfall gradients reflect a mean annual rainfall that can rise above 1,000 mm over distances of 1–2 km in places. On the other hand, seashore environs reflect an average annual rainfall of 275 mm, of which, as in the mountains, an average of 70% falls in the winter half-year from April to September. The region's physiographic characteristics cause these pronounced differences in mean annual rainfall. Because rainfall is scarce in the arid north, prevailing



Map 3.1: A simplified geological map of the region that encompasses the study area, covering major rocks in the Western Cape Province, including the Saldania belt.

conditions for plant growth are limited to spring. In well-watered portions, lasting surface water tends to be confined to a few perennial ravines and seasonal springs in mountain recesses. The uncertainty of rainfall is best expressed by the coefficient of variation in annual rainfall, with the low rainfall regions having the highest variation. Annual rainfall distribution is skewed such that there are more below average than above average rainfall years, and the median is thus more meaningful than the mean. The high seasonal variations are accompanied by high spatial variability, and the annual potential evapotranspiration may exceed annual precipitation by ratios of up to 20:1, which are quite high, hence drought conditions are a common phenomenon of this region (Schulze 1997).

There are other major sources of water in the Western Cape, such as springs. Hydrologically, groundwater availability, soil-moisture replenishment and surface drainage are largely dictated by the varied dynamics from elevated inland mountainous plateau to the lowland coastal platform topography. During wet seasons the former areas form the catchment zone, collecting and feeding surface drainage towards the shore where the latter areas occur, such as the Verlorenvlei environs, some perennial streams and floodplains. The area is covered by a generally thin sandy soil ranging in thickness from 0.1 m to 3.3 m. This layer is underlain by a calcrete horizon across some parts. A sporadically developed perched water table exists in the near-surface soils, with the water level varying from 1.0 m to 1.75 m below the surface. The calcrete layer forms an impermeable base to the soils, which limits downward movement of groundwater. A particularly important feature of the mountains, especially in the Agter-Pakhuis locality, however, is that of many fountains and springs. Some may not be active any more due to biogeographical alterations from mainly farming or agricultural land use in recent centuries. As some studies show for regions farther north of the study area, in the past fountains were important utilitarian points of focus for both the hunter-gatherer and pastoral communities (Humphreys & Thackeray 1983: 20). The same is true for the Western Cape, where there is a prevalence of aquifers that sustain several riverine ecosystems (Clark & Ractliffe 2007: 7) and springs (Schwarz 1906). Later travellers to the Orange River in the 1800s frequently heard from inhabitants who had earlier emigrated from the Olifants River of land filled with springs farther south of which the Khoe people had been dispossessed (Legassick 2010: 53, citing J. Campbell, B. Shaw and J. Barrow). While some of these environmental features might have changed or expired in recent centuries, there is re-constructible archaeological evidence suggesting medium-term to long-term ecological changes that occurred in prehistoric times.

3.6. PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL SKETCH OF THE WESTERN CAPE

The archaeological record is an invaluable source in reconstructing the pre-colonial and early colonial environmental history of the Western Cape. Generally, the environmental conditions discussed above were favourable for the preservation of stratified deposits that have ensured the "archiving" of a long and ancient record of human occupation in region's well-preserved geological substrates. Although for many years research on global climates focused on the Glacial Maximum (Deacon 1995: 123), in the last few decades the Western Cape has attracted improved reconstructions of the late Quaternary palaeoenvironments from a variety of archaeological and environmental studies. These include sediment studies covering techniques for radiocarbon dating, pollen analysis, and geochemistry (Meadows *et al*. 1996) and archaeological analyses of ancient fauna and wood charcoal from ancient flora (Avery *et al*. 2008; Cartwright & Parkington 1997; Cowling *et al*. 2003; Klein 1974, 1991). Indeed, as some writers have observed, the Cape has become a well-documented and intensively researched archaeological region (Anderson 1996: 63; Kinahan 1989: 11; Porraz *et al*. 2008: 106) and continues to enjoy scholarly attention (Alexander MacKay, pers. comm. 2011). Fortuitously, this record, even if fragmentary, retains relevant information for the pre-colonial to colonial periods (Yates *et al*. 1993: 59). This multiple layered prehistoric and early historic archive forms part of the reconstruction of rock art timelines and associated cultural sequence. Research projects have focused on the wealth of sites, which range from open surface artefact and large deflated stone scatters, shell middens, a late Pottery Period campsite, cave and shelter deposits and, principally, the rock art sites (Jerardino 2003: 53; Mackay 2006: 182). Generally, the Cape coastal forelands' archaeological record is rich mainly cave and shelter deposit contexts as well as open deposits older than a million years, but most of these sites fall roughly between over 200,000 and 2,000 years ago (Sealy 2006). Human presence and occupation are attested in several rich, well-stratified sites that are preserved in the outstanding geological record (Klein 1986), which is also similarly rich in the evidence of long-term sea level, environmental and climatic change.

World climates underwent drastic shifts over the last 20,000 years, first with the Last Glacial Maximum around 18,000 years ago when temperatures were between 5º and 10ºC lower than today (Deacon 1984a: 31). The relevant time slice concerns climatic changes in the transition from the last Pleistocene glacial to the Holocene interglacial periods, around 15,000 and 10,000 years ago. From around 10,000 years conditions ameliorated after these intervening periods to reach climates that are closer to the present. In the Cape, the relatively humid climates in the past were conducive to the accumulation of organic sediments that preserve fossil pollen. Some environmental data show that substantial environmental shifts in the last 15,000 years in the region influenced human settlement and subsistence patterns (Manhire *et al*. 1983: 29). The terminal Pleistocene climates were much wetter than in the later Holocene, but generally they have been comparably more favourable for human settlement in the last 5,000 years than at any time since the Last Interglacial (Deacon 1995: 123).

7 South African Wetlands Conservation Programme: Verlorenvlei. Information sheet for the site designated to the List of Wetlands of International Importance in terms of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. http://www.ngo.gri.no/soesa/nsoer/resource/wetland/verlorenvlei.htm

Around 8,000 to 4,000 BP the sea levels became higher and rainfall lower, making the coastal zone relatively inhospitable. Studies at Elands Bay Cave (EBC) show that hunter-gatherer occupation and use of this site lingered after 13,000 years when the shoreline was 25 km away until 8,000 years when it edged the cave (Parkington 2006: 76–78). After this time, there was a hiatus that lasted until 4,000 years ago. Hence, human populations were persuaded to move seasonally into the mountains as an adaptation to available plant and animal resources there. This view appears to be corroborated by pollen studies from sediment sequences taken from the Verlorenvlei and adjacent marshland areas that show a detailed environmental history over several periods in the last 5,500 years (Meadows *et al*. 1996). Some cores examined for pollen confirm a mid-Holocene higher sea level, with an accompanying present coastline that was established around 6,500 BP (Miller *et al*. 1995). This evidence suggests that the nearby areas at that time may have been drier than today. After this period conditions improved, coinciding with the disappearance of the marine conditions at the vlei around 4,000 BP (Meadows *et al*. 1996). Farther south, but still within the broader Cape confines, some writers used a variety of indicators, including faunal analysis, to suggest that even though it was still a winter occurrence, "rainfall was greater or more effective" in the early Holocene than presently (Avery *et al*. 2008: 74–76; Klein 1991). For example, the EBC charcoal assemblages reflect a similar picture to the mesic fynbos species between 8,000 and 13,600 BP (Cartwright & Parkington 1997; Parkington *et al*. 2000). Writers have noted that the lacustrine conditions prevailed, accompanied by greater moisture availability in the Verlorenvlei River catchment around the time of colonial occupation a few centuries ago. It was, however, also during the colonial period that increased levels of human disturbance in the Verlorenvlei become evident in pollen sequences (Meadows *et al*. 1996). Some writers conclude that colonial farming dramatically altered regional vegetation (Klein & Cruz-Uribe 1989: 82), which has affected other ecological variables. Being aware of the presence of these alterations allows appropriate correlations to be made from the present times to the past in the analyses of available data as we compare the sandveld and mountain ecologies.

3.7. SANDVELD AND INLAND MOUNTAIN ECOLOGIES CONTRASTED

The study area, as already shown, reflects two major geographical divisions that manifest in their topography, climate, vegetation and archaeology (Yates *et al*. 1994: 31). The east-to-west spatial and seasonality differentiation provides a marked contrast between the wetter and cooler coastal zone and the rugged interior, which reflects mostly drier and warmer regimes. The following is a brief description of the human interactions with the ecological settings of, first, the coastal forelands of both the coastal plain and the sandveld (Manhire *et al*. 1983; Parkington 1976a) and, second, the interior mountain zone. The ecological zone marked by less than 5 km distance from the coastline is designated the coastal plain; it consists of a series of long, soft, sandy shores broken by small rocky hillocks (Jerardino & Swanepoel 1999: 544; Parkington 1976a: 127) that stand out irregularly in the area. There are relatively few archaeological sites on this coastal strip and they are generally poorly preserved, although dominated by deflation hollows, some of which have abundant artefact associations, then shell middens and megamiddens (Jerardino 1998; Jerardino & Yates 1997; Manhire 1987a, 1987b; Parkington 2006; Parkington & Hall 1987). The area between the 5 km distance from the coastline to around 25 km inland is called the interior sandveld. Comparatively, the frequency of occurrence of sites in the interior sandveld is higher and they are better preserved than those of the coastal hinterland (Jerardino & Swanepoel 1999: 543, 546). For the present analysis, it is of little value to draw much from this distinction. Generally, this region reflects a semi-arid environment with the driest period of the year being October to March. Moisture and water supply generally become adequate during the April–September period due to main winter rains and rivers being active. This biome covers strandveld shrubland and arid coastal fynbos with a dominance of Iridaceae, fruits, berries and others. Shrubs prevail heavily over grasses, becoming much more abundant during April–September months (Klein & Cruz-Uribe 1989: 82). This environmental factor was important for the pastoralist transhumance patterns in the region between the coastal plains and inland mountains. Given that fresh grass and shrub growth are attractive to herbivores, this area would have supported a relatively abundant seasonal animal biomass of small and large antelope. Although smaller domestic stock, such as sheep and goats, could be reared successfully, the area is nevertheless not suitable for large grazing animals like cattle due to the inferior nutrient status of the ecology (Smith 1992). It would seem, therefore, that the past hunter-gatherer and herder societies were accustomed to this seasonal fluctuation of good-quality pasture. Historically, vegetation in this zone supported ungulates of mainly the small browsers or mixed feeders, such as steenbok, grey duiker and, less commonly, grysbok. Of the large ungulates, there were grazers or mixed feeders, including Cape hartebeest, eland and mega-herbivores like elephant and black rhinoceros. There are many other species in the animal biomass—carnivores, smaller non-carnivorous mammals, tortoises, marine mammals, birds, fish, shellfish and so forth—that were exploited by prehistoric communities.

Inland mountains, on the eastern side of the Olifants River, are a contrasting ecozone. The Cape Fold Belt ranges are the sources of streams and river valleys that were preferred habitats in pre-colonial and colonial times (Parkington & Manhire 2003: 32). While its vegetation comprised nutrient-poor and dry mountain fynbos as well as the abundant Iridaceae (and, in the north-eastern parts, the Karroid shrubland), the zone supported a variety of animal biomass, including small and large bovids. This is particularly true in winter and spring when water is plentiful. Because of the many protected shelters and cliff faces with ideal, smooth surfaces, painted sites are more prolific in the mountain area than on the coastal plains and the sandveld (Yates *et al*. 1994: 31). This scarcity of painted sites adjacent the sea is thought to be a result of poor preservation due to the influence of

the ocean (Jerardino 1999; Jerardino & Swanepoel 1999). There is a correlation between painted and domestic sites, some of which contain substantial occupation deposits (Parkington & Manhire 2003: 34–35). The various sites within the two ecozones and their comparability in terms of archaeological and artistic elements suggests that people in pre-colonial and colonial periods moved regularly between the sectors to the west and east of the Olifants River. The two ecotypes reveal cultural differences in the choice of site types, their sequences and the painted subjects. The present Western Cape landscape and its associated ecologies thus reflect a relatively low carrying capacity for either human or animal populations. This *status quo* may have obtained in the late and terminal Holocene periods, where fairly reasonable formulations on rock art and archaeological chronologies may be expected. Such interpretations may be verified against recently established ecological evidence, occupation sequences and past human contributions to these past archival assemblages. With the general patterning of archaeological site locations across different sectors, particularly the mountains in the east and the coastal plains in the west, the landscape offers possibilities to investigate painting assemblages that exhibit a variety of traditions and content. In the following chapters, the variability in the relative chronology of painting will be contextualised alongside archaeological and ecological backgrounds. The social context of the artists may be derived from these patterns of variability in imagery sequences. Until more direct rock art dates are established widely, however, the suggested sequence and regional painting chronology will remain provisional. Even though the regional settlement sequence by former inhabitants may be less refined, it is possible to improve our knowledge using an approach that consistently extrapolates painted images and archaeological, anthropological and historical syntheses.

3.8. PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC INTERFACE IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Western Cape has generally been thoroughly researched over several decades and so the published information on the settlement and cultural sequence of the region can corroborate historical narratives. Even then, we should be mindful of what some writers have cautioned: Antonieta Jerardino has argued that "the local cultural sequence is incomplete and may be biased in terms of settlement chronology and the use of the local coastline", largely because campsites along the western shore were inadvertently ignored in earlier sampling efforts (Jerardino 2003: 53). Moreover, as John Kinahan (1996: 106) argued in respect of the incompleteness of knowledge on the relations between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists, the uncertainty results from practical difficulties of finding stratified and reliably dated assemblages with which to define the analytical units of comparison. This problem is illustrated by the observations from early travellers who noted ephemeral hunter-gatherer settlements of abandoned windbreaks, often in the open veld along the Olifants River. These structures were described as "shabby low huts made of brunches…many [are] huts of Soaquas [hunter-fisher-gatherers] which they inhabit on and off" (Thom 1952: 299–300, 347). Researchers now note that if these archaeological features were the most "typical" of sites in the region then they would remain undocumented systematically, as are the herder settlements if they were occasioned largely by pasture considerations without conditions to accumulate occupation debris in any one location (Parkington 1976a: 128–129). Imprecise descriptions of the social, economic and ethnic affiliations of early societies exacerbate the complexities of building fine-grained archaeological and cultural sequences.

Hunter-gatherers are known to have inhabited the Cape's coastal and adjacent interior escarpment for a long time and their incessantly nomadic lifestyle is traceable well beyond the Middle Stone Age, a period of over 200,000 years (Manhire 1984; Parkington 1972b), into the Early Stone Age. Farther afield, hunter-gatherers had for at least the past 25,000 years until about the 1870s occupied most of the southern African interior (Eastwood & Eastwood 2006; Rudner 1989), that is, the entire subcontinental region south of the Zambezi and Kunene rivers (Willcox 1984: 127–133). Rock art and other site types attest to their widespread presence on the landscape. Archaeological information, which is relevant to this study, comes from the lower Holocene period under 5,000 years ago. Hunter-gatherers comprised various groups, all culturally (and probably genetically or even ancestrally) affiliated to the people known historically and today as San or Bushmen. In the Cape, the |Xam San are the most well-known group in historical times although there were other groups scattered in the region. From the early 1660s plentiful travellers' reports emerged which mentioned indigenous peoples and their social relationships to each other. The recurrent appellation for hunter-gatherers along the Olifants River was Soaqua, sometimes written as Somqua (Mossop 1931), who were said to be "a poverty stricken band of tiny people" (Thom 1952: 299) who "maintain themselves by robbing and stealing from other Hottentots, having no cattle at all or anything else on which to live" (Waterhouse 1932: 115). Populations are unconfirmed in the records, although the smaller numbers encountered of between 2 and 40 individuals (e.g. in Thom 1954: 315, 318, 319, 345–346, 348–349, 381–382; Waterhouse 1932: 117, 118, 148) suggest they were thinly but continuously spread in the area (Parkington 1977: 152). Their presence in the landscape is also attested by burials found in several shelters with a large number dating between 3,500 and 2,000 BP (Sealy & Van der Merwe 1988). At the time of colonial encounters these indigenous people may have retained shared aspects of the pan-San ancestry, but were by now probably intermixed with the neighbouring Khoekhoen, the pastoralists who herded the first domesticates into the region. Although the constant shifts concerning group composition are one of the five key features characterising hunter-gatherers, based on anthropological studies of the Kalahari San (Lee & DeVore 1968), it is unknown to what extent these former groups intermingled in this way. It is possible, however, that those groups inhabiting areas along the Olifants River during dry months "ranged west into the sandveld and east into the Karoo in wetter months" (Parkington 1977: 156) and so may have maintained social and exchange networks for resource sharing with resident groups in those areas. From

the early colonial records it appears that the hunter-gatherer economy involved clientship with cattle- and sheep-herding pastoralists. As will be shown shortly, some evidence for such exchanges is borne out by the archaeological record.

Archaeological reconstructions from decades of excavations in the coastal areas and the interior mountains suggest variability in hunter-gatherer settlement patterns and resource exploitation in the last 8,000 to 2,000 years ago. As others have argued, this period saw "changes in settlement strategies resulting in intermittent occupations of caves and shelters, changes in raw material usages…and changes in the frequencies of stone tool types scheduled for use at particular sites" (Parkington 1977: 81). Although early Holocene settlements were restricted to the wetter intermontane valleys in the CFB mountains, generally they were not permanent, as groups maintained seasonal transhumance strategies onto and off the escarpment. At this time, little foraging occurred as far as the arid sandveld near the coast (Manhire *et al*. 1983: 29). One excavated shelter in the mountain zone, De Hangen (Parkington & Poggenpoel 1971), revealed some aspects of the hunting and gathering subsistence and material culture in the terminal Stone Age. Important dietary resources included various geophyte corms, especially members of the Iridaceae family, rock hyraxes, tortoises, small antelope such as klipspringer, steenbok and springbok and other terrestrial species. Freshwater fish were also identified, as were marine foods such as various kinds of shellfish. Black mussels, perlemoen and others were sourced from the coast less than 80 km west, either through scheduled activities there or exchange networks. Some of these molluscan shell remains, several with perforations, appear to have been brought in as raw materials for making pendant ornaments (*ibid*.: 13). Ostrich eggshell is found in abundance at many sites and was used for beads, but one decorated fragment at De Hangen suggests it might have been a water container. Such artefacts and their variations have come to light from other sites and all contribute to illuminating the hunter-gatherer way of life in the Western Cape.

As discussed in later chapters, of much interest in this study was the discovery of domestic animals, sheep and cattle at De Hangen (Parkington & Poggenpoel 1971: 22–23). Some early travellers noted various vegetable and animal food items used by the Soaqua (Thom 1954: 315, 381–382; Waterhouse 1932: 117–118), as well as domestic stock (Thom 1958: 305; Waterhouse 1932: 117, 118). Their various artefacts are also noted, such as bows, arrows and assegais, bags and also ivory and animal skins used for barter trade (Mossop 1931: 85; Thom 1954: 315, 381; Waterhouse 1932: 128). Among the artefacts from De Hangen were the link shaft of a composite arrow, a possible quiver, digging sticks, fire drills and two ivory objects, one being a flat ivory plate "ground into this shape and then decorated with a geometric arrangement of drilled pits" (Parkington & Poggenpoel 1971: 13). There were also animal hides and a range of stone tools and pottery. Evidence from mountain shelters suggests that the timing and patterns of settlement of these people followed environmental fluctuations and the availability of resources, particularly geophytes, water and freshwater fish (Parkington 1977). Early records suggest that encounters with these people in and around the Olifants River took place in the dry season (*ibid*.: 152), but part of this concentration at this time served a "social purpose: that of promoting the exchange of goods and the interchange of personnel" (*ibid*.: 156). It is also during such aggregations that ritual intensified and rock art was produced. At the coast, particularly during the 3,500 to 2,000 BP period, the hunter-gatherer population increased as groups probably visited more sites and for relatively longer periods than before or after (Jerardino *et al*. 2000: 44). One site, which we will get back to later regarding paintings, Steenbokfontein Cave, shows an intensity of occupation between 3,600 and 2,400 BP (*ibid*.). While in the mid-to-late Holocene seasonal mobility might have prevailed in the Cape (Parkington 1972a, 1977, 2001), in other regions such as the southern Cape, hunter-gatherers during this period appear to have led a sedentary way of life, living in demarcated territories with clearly defined boundaries (Sealy 2006: 582).

The rock art archives they produced signal the relevance of archaeological evidence. For example, women's paraphernalia including stone-weighted digging sticks, skin cloaks or karosses and various types of bags suggests their subsistence role as food collectors, while men's hunting gear features light bows and arrows, sticks, near-cylindrical hunting bags and quivers. Pottery, which is frequent in the excavated deposits, is not easily identified in the paintings although the author has come across a few images of curious rounded objects with open tops that appear to be some sort of pottery vessel. But these images could also be bags. Although there is obvious selectivity in subject matter and as we all now know that the rock art was not concerned with documenting people's diets, some species from the animal biomass known in the study area and found in the deposits are clearly featured in the paintings. For instance, the imagery of sheep and cattle, both the kinds of animals that have been found at some sites, indicates their presence and significance in the social life of the artists. What emerges is corroboration of information from the paintings, archaeology and historical sources, which will become useful in later chapters that deal with the interpretation of certain images occurring in the successive levels of the region's rock art sequence. It is evident that, despite numerous observations of the last hunter-gatherers in the historical era, no evidence of active painters has ever been mentioned in this region. It has been argued that the earlier hunter-gatherer painting tradition ceased to exist over a thousand years ago and perhaps earlier at the coast, where contact was greatest and pervasive, than in the mountains (Yates *et al*. 1994: 54, 57). One of the proposed reasons for this demise is the substantial cultural and/or economic impact of pastoralism on hunter-gatherer way of life (*ibid*.). It is tempting to believe that the craftsmanship of painting itself may not have ceased but instead transformed as a result of this putative cultural and economic change resulting in what this study defines as the coarse fine-line category of painting. So, who were these pastoralists?

Around 2,000 years ago, the Western Cape hinterland witnessed the advent of herding, a hitherto inimitable addition of a new cultural and economic way of life (Klein 1986).

Archaeological evidence for this pastoral nomadic lifestyle includes pottery and sheep remains in shelter deposits. Since their first excavation and dating on the South African southern seaboard over 30 years ago (Schweitzer 1974), similar finds have been made and carbon dated over a wide subcontinental area (Deacon 1984a: 349–351; Sealy & Yates 1996). These herders may also have introduced goats, although this is more likely to have been the case farther north in the Northern Cape (Elphick 1985: 57–58), dogs and then, a few centuries later, cattle as well. Prior to herding, the Western Cape does not have evidence of domestic animals or their wild relatives (Deacon 1984b; Klein 1986). The appearance of domesticates and pottery, previously absent in the region, suggests that these animals originated elsewhere (Ehret 1982, 1998; Sadr & Smith 1991; Smith 1990), perhaps farther afield on the subcontinent's northern regions, from where they initially embarked on a southerly pastoral migration centuries prior to 2,000 years ago. Cranmer Cooke (1965) might have been first in the 1960s to suggest that sheep paintings correlated with the migration routes of these herders groups in the region. Subsequent writers, however, have challenged his conclusions on the basis that his rock art evidence was incomplete and that his views have limited support from the archaeological record (Manhire *et al*. 1986). The cultural affiliation and exact origin of early herders is still uncertain prior to their first use of domestic animals and subsequent dispersal. As Richard Lee (2006: 462) notes: "Sometime in the first millennium BCE, some of these people obtained sheep, goats and later cattle while others continued to hunt and gather, the origin of the distinction between pastoral Khoi and the foraging San."

Expanding on previous propositions (Elphick 1985), Christopher Ehret suggested that these herders, originally hunter-gatherer outgrowths who became proto-Khoekhoen, first adopted a herding lifestyle through contact with their northern Bantu-speaking farming neighbours in south-central Africa (Ehret 1998), perhaps in the Zambezi environs (Elphick 1985; Smith 1992). Some writers suggest Botswana (Elphick 1985: 13) and western Zambia on the Zambezi escarpment as the source area (Hodder 2003; Klein 1986) of pastoralism. These early herders migrated from the north and finally introduced herding, which later became pastoralism, on the Western Cape coast and other southerly sites (Klein 1986: 7; Stow 1905; Vital 2005; Wells 2005) around 2,000 BP, as evidenced principally by fat-tailed sheep and pottery in the archaeological record (Henshilwood 1996). Historians and linguists alike have elaborated this idea using comparative and historical linguistics, principally the glottochronological evidence for the southwards drift of Khoe languages (Ehret 1982, 1998; Köhler 1966; Westphal 1963). The glottochronology method, widely used by Köhler and others afterwards, is now considered suspect in favour of a "cultural-historical" method (Heine & König 2008: 241). Like the hunter-gatherers, herders are also click-speakers and the name "Hottentot" is said to have originated from the Dutch description of consonants in their language. Numerous records exist in the historical era about the pastoralists. In the early 1660s, Jan Danckaert, on one of the earliest journeys to the Olifants River, mentioned people he called Namaqua (sometimes called the Amaquas—see Waterhouse 1932) and Chariguriqua (Thom 1952). Unlike the hunter-gatherers, these itinerant stockbreeding people were found in large aggregations with large numbers of cattle and sheep in the region.

These roaming herds-people may never have settled on the plateau, although it is possible that they occasionally moved across the plains searching for pasture, hunting and collecting medicines. Andrew Smith has developed a model to explain their mobility and seasonal transhumance in the Western Cape between the coastal and inland zones (Sadr *et al*. 2003; Smith 1986, 1992). He explains their cycle as scheduled around marine resources and pastures for their animals. The winter rains and good pasture conditions between April and September would have attracted pastoralists to the coastal zone. Marine resources of shellfish and seals would have been their primary foods, including abundant milk from their animals and supplementary hunting. By October, as resources diminished, they would move inland to better riparian pastures and water supply there from the Berg River (Smith 1992: 14). Wild plant foods, underground Iridaceae and animals would have been abundant too. These pastoral groups may be responsible for making stone cairns, pottery and other similarly introduced material culture. It is probably during this period that the last hunter-gatherer groups were assimilated or entirely moved off the plateau. Archaeological evidence reveals that hunter-gatherer stone tool industries discontinue at this time. Rock art sites featuring mainly finger-painted images and handprints are fewer in this area compared to the mountains. The finger-painted images are also characteristically geometric in repertoire, although there are figurative representations as well. This painting evidence, which some writers argue to be a distinctive southern African geometric tradition, might have originated from an ancient hunter-gatherer geometric rock art in the central African region (B.W. Smith, pers. comm. 2011). It is argued that during the first millennium CE, the makers of this rock art migrated southward, finally reaching the Western Cape along with this geometric painting tradition (Smith & Ouzman 2004: 512). This may have followed what Richard Elphick (1985: 14–15) suggested to be a "migratory drift" of small numbers of herders with domestic stock, and finally settling in the Western Cape, which was already occupied by hunter-gatherers.

Nevertheless, some authors question the notion of wholesale "migration" to the Western Cape (Sadr 1998). Karim Sadr (2008) argues for a diffusionist view that innovation might have occurred instead, following pre-existing exchange networks. As he argues: "Perhaps the spread of new ideas and technologies was indeed occasionally aided by long and short distance migrations of larger or smaller groups of people here and there" (Sadr 2003: 208). Parkington and colleagues (1994: 59) have argued that "there must have been some migration into southern Africa", culminating in the appearance of what they call the "pastoral frontier". Subsequently, however, these writers stated that "not wishing to imply, as we did earlier…that the changes we have documented were compelled from outside the locally established population" (Yates *et al*. 1994: 58–59), and went on to question whether the spread of pastoralism involved significant population movement(s). They appear

to grant, however, that there was the possibility of input from local innovation in addition to some "trickling" of new incoming pastoral groups, as opposed to an entirely new population movement into the region. In this incursion, rock art is argued to have proliferated as ritual intensified for the hunter-gatherer societies under stress of interaction with new groups of people. In response, they relocated residence to small shelter sites in the mountains (Manhire *et al*. 1986; Parkington *et al*. 1986). These views bear on our understanding of the temporal variability of the Western Cape painting sequences. The introduction of domesticates initiated a subsistence economic way of life that altered the outlook of the cultural landscape, long-established hunter-gatherer land use and settlement patterns. Several centuries of sustained contact between these early societies and their different economic ways of life resulted in complexities that gave this region its diverse historical and cultural sequence.

This multilayered hunter-gatherer and herder contact history and interaction is sometimes characterised in terms of displacement of the former by the latter. It may never be possible to infer the extent of this displacement if we accept that such situations inevitably also involved aspects of absorption and acculturation. Nevertheless, it is often not clarified whether the displacement was of real people, former hunter-gatherers themselves, a physical phenomenon. Or, whether it was their way of life that was displaced, something that is more abstracted. Either way, displacement as a physical notion may not be an entirely appropriate characterisation of the Western Cape regarding former hunter-gatherer and herder communities. In this study it is argued that, although the relations between these groups may not have been cordial all the time—for example, the Ubiqua hunter-gatherers retained "a fearsome reputation as stealers of livestock amongst Khoikhoi pastoralists long before the Dutch arrived at the Cape" (Penn 2005a: 32–33)—their general social interactions may be characterised as social interpenetration rather than as social avoidance, resulting in this region's mixture of pre-colonial and colonial heritages.

Ernest Westphal's view is that since the Western Cape herders were stockbreeders, it can be assumed that they had the same relationships with San generally as the later Bantu and European stockmen had in other parts of the country. Though there might have been a marked difference between the relations the San had with black farmers (Manhire *et al*. 1986: 29), Westphal (1963: 252) further suggested that their relations were generally harmonious, especially in the face of the colonial frontier wars after the mid-1700s. Others have argued for an increasingly hierarchical social and political structure obtaining for the hunter-gatherer-herder relationships in the Western Cape after 2,000 BP, when hunter-gatherers living among pastoral societies became marginalised and subordinated (Smith 1996). With the advent of strongly contested colonial frontier zones, this stratification was augmented, later producing an economic underclass in the Western Cape (Penn 1989, 1996, 2005a). This interpretation is illuminated by definitions advanced by Richard Lee (2006) in his discussion of the notion of indigenism in anthropological studies. Even with such an emerging historical sketch of the Western Cape, it is a challenge for historians to build a detailed and coherent narrative because of the fragmentary nature of the colonial archives. From this purview, some rock art researchers have attempted to use rock painting evidence and even the associated archaeological materials in writing the social history for specific regions (Dowson 1993, 1994, 2000; Mazel 1989, 1992). As an important part of this study, we shall return to this historical aspect in final chapters seven and eight in the discussion of how some phases of historical change might be reconstructed from the study of painting chronological sequences.

CHAPTER FOUR

Cape Historical Setting

Given the brevity and frequent bias of the early colonial written records…it is the archaeological record that must provide details of indigenous life-ways immediately before European contact. (Jerardino *et al.* 2009: 75)

4.1. SCALE, PATTERN AND PROCESS OF HISTORICAL CHANGE

This chapter gives a historical outline of the Western Cape from the perspective of the colonial period. The rationale is to reflect on why the colonial archive has pitfalls that researchers need to wade through as they attempt to understand the past of this region. While colonial archives are useful in understanding the period during which they were made, they have their own problems. Principally, there is a dearth of recorded oral traditions, which was directly related to the rapid decline of autonomous KhoeSan societies in the Cape (Elphick 1985: 3). These problems compel us to study colonial sources alongside other records from anthropology, archaeology and rock art assemblages (see epigraph). Archaeological studies, particularly the appraisal of material culture, as some argue, provide "[a]n alternative perspective from the textual and visual sources at our disposal … Texts … are, for the most part, explicit representations produced by the elite, by those in power, while … artefacts are the implicit articulations of everyone in society – although equally inflected by networks of power" (Lucas 2006: 17). Southern Africa is fortunate to have other valuable assemblages with their associated records, such as the 19th- and 20th-century ethnographies and ethno-historical accounts (Parkington & Manhire 2003: 33). As shown overleaf in Map 4.1, these materials come from various regions of the subcontinent where the KhoeSan are found today or where they have lived in the recent past. Prehistoric population distributions are surmised from archaeological evidence. The various available archives help to illuminate the multifarious historical processes within which diverse social and cultural formations of the former Western Cape indigenous dwellers were entwined from around 2,000 years ago until recent centuries when they came into contact with the European settler communities.

In the last two millennia, the painted archive reflects varying complex processes of continuity and change within, first, the earlier hunter-gatherer and herder phase of interaction from around 2,000 years ago, and second, the colonial-period contact phase between these indigenes with European settler communities from the middle of the 1600s onwards. However, by the 18th and 19th centuries the former Cape indigenous peoples had largely transformed to become the underclasses in frontier zones (Smith *et al*. 2000: 1; Yates *et al*. 1994: 59). After this initial social-cum-economic transformation these indigenous people completely disappeared as cultural and ethnic entities from this region. While on the surface these familiar prehistoric and historic hunter-gatherer and pastoralist polities may have reflected isolated group identity formations, we need interpretative models to understand the complexities of the socio-political interfaces of cultural coexistence. To contextualise former hunter-gatherers and herders in their mutable cultural and rock art landscapes, this chapter traces their recent past—partly from the colonial accounts, aided by their footprint in the painted record and, where possible, excavated deposits. In this vein, some writers argue that the Western Cape is confronted with "[a] n abundance of both visual and artefactual material in association with some fragmentary historical and more substantial, but more tangential, ethnographic records from throughout southern Africa" (Parkington & Manhire 2003: 33). Even then, the use of archaeological evidence, ethno-history, ethnography and historical records in rock art studies has not been uniformly successful in different research periods and regions across the country. However, the types of evidence presented by these sources vary widely in different regions.

The unevenness of research success is partly, if not largely, due to the absence of a robust dating framework for rock art. There is a common acceptance of the penecontemporaneity for the bulk of rock art as hunter-gatherer (recognised as San or Bushmen) authored. This artificial description confounds studies of chronology. While there might be consensus on the authorship of earlier rock art traditions in the region, it has not been equally easy to identify the artists of other rock arts, such as coarse or finger-painted traditions. Hesitation exists even though various Western Cape inhabitants in recent history are known. Some of these indigenous people were Khoekhoen,[8] who included, among other formations, two large peninsular groups who called themselves Goringhaiqua and Gorachoqua; then the inland Cochoqua whose territory stretched from the Cape Flats and as far north as the Olifants River; and the

8 The early Dutch settlers gave the Cape pastoralists the pejorative name "Hottentots" based on their click-based languages; later they were called "Khoikhoi". Consensus nowadays is that these Khoe-speaking herders should be called "Khoekhoen" followingas the preferred modern-day Nama orthography, a term which means "the real people or men" (Boonzaier *et al.* 1996: 1–2, 59). Preferred usages in the academia are *"Khoekhoen"* (n.) and *"Khoekhoe" (adj.)* (Deacon 1994b: 7).

Grigriqua, whose region ranged between the sandveld and Piketberg and the Berg River and Knersvlakte on the south–north axis (Penn 2005a: 31–34). Another documented group was made up of hunter-gatherers called the Ubiqua who lived in the high mountains east of the Berg; they were infamous for their aggressive thievery exploits against both the Khoe-speaking pastoralists and European farmers. There were other, perhaps less well documented, groups that lived in smaller circumscribed portions of the region. The overall difficulty in accepting the material and graphic evidence of these people as authors of the rock art is that none were observed making paintings. It is debatable whether this disparity is a real case of rock art making having disappeared completely during the colonial period, or whether it was an innocent omission by early observers and writers. Nevertheless, there are early writers on rock art in other parts of the country who sometimes implied its connection with the San communities who still occupied varied remote parts of the country.

It is a historical paradox that the whole sub-region abounds with diverse rock arts, yet little was ever written in historical times about the producers. The earliest known mention of paintings together with assumed San authorship was in Beutler's 1752 account of his party's expedition to the Great Kei River in the Eastern Cape (Forbes 1965: 7–24; Theal 1897: 133). He did not, however, witness any direct painting. Decades after his account, Colonel Robert J. Gordon and his party (particularly his draughtsman Johannes Schumacher) observed and copied paintings in the north-eastern Cape between 1777 and 1778 (Raper & Boucher 1988: 131). Their local informants referred to the San of that area as Sun èi (*ibid*.: 89), some of whose freshly abandoned encampments were observed close to painted sites on the foothills. Some years later, in 1790, as part of the expedition that sought survivors of the Grosvenor, Jacob van Reenen reported paintings in the south-eastern Cape in what is now the Cathcart District (Kirby 1953, 1958). A few years later, in 1797, the traveller John Barrow (1801) reported paintings and San near the Sneeuberg. At the time, it had been observed that no frontier trekboer (Afrikaner) farmers were permanently settled in this area, largely due to the continuous attacks from the resident San (Neville *et al*. 1994: 66). More reports of rock art appeared in later decades (Alexander 1840; Arbousset & Daumas 1846; Burchell 1822; Sparrman 1785), although no European in all these writings and observations actually witnessed indigenous painters or engravers making the images.

Nevertheless, in the late 1800s one of the |Xam informants, Dia!kwain, gave a tantalising account of his father Xatin (also Xattin), whom he said had engraved animal images at a place in the Karoo called |Kann (Bleek & Lloyd 1911: xiv). Because he was recollecting this story from his childhood memories, this account makes the time of the last engravers in the Karoo around 50 or so years before his dialogue with Lucy Lloyd in Cape Town. Although Lloyd was never able to trace this "trail" back to |Kann, in recent decades Janette Deacon made revealing researches

Map 4.1: Rock art distributions (mainly paintings, but also engravings in the interior) in southern Africa, including the vast Kalahari Desert region where KhoeSan peoples are found today, with the dense concentrations shown by the stars on the map (from Mguni 2015).

which led her to conclude that |Kann might have been the pan at a place called Kans, near present-day Brandvlei (Deacon 1988). Apart from this near-direct evidence for San image making, colonial administrator Joseph M. Orpen recounted another informative contemporary account from his exploration of some portions of the south-eastern mountains. He was on a military expedition pursuing the Hlubi leader, Chief Langalibalele, up the mountain recesses of the Drakensberg when he sought the services of a local guide called Qing, a San man who recollected specific knowledge of local San paintings and associated mythology (Challis 2008; Orpen 1874). This remains the only known testimony by a San person familiar with the paintings and connected lore. There are other several testimonies of |Xam San interpretations of some rock art images that were copied by Stow (see Lewis-Williams & Challis 2011). These |Xam men appear to have been familiar with the graphic metaphors in the paintings, which made it possible for them to superimpose their own cultural understandings with ease. Other useful, if tangential, accounts are from the usually imprecise surmises of either San people or others who knew aspects of San culture in providing testimonies to colonials about the San traditions (How 1962; Stow 1874, 1905).

As the early Europeans explored the Cape there were still residual rock painters in confined mountainous regions who simultaneously observed and even painted some aspects of the new colonial lifestyle as it advanced into these territories (Hall & Mazel 2005; Yates *et al*. 1993). None of the activities of these protagonists, however, intersected in ways that would inform future rock art research. Paintings of colonial material culture are in themselves a testimony to the presence of painters as late as the mid-19th century. While colonial sources (e.g. see the compilation of accounts in Raven-Hart 1967, 1971a, 1971b) are problematic, an understanding of that period might emerge from a counterbalance from the archaeology and rock art records. The Bleek and Lloyd archive on the 19th century |Xam San offers a glimpse into the San pre-colonial way of life as well as their colonial encounters in the Karoo with the northern frontier (Bank 2006; Penn 2005a). Furthermore, reconstructions of pre-colonial and colonial social histories of hunter-gatherers and pastoralists in the region may benefit from anthropological perspectives and insights derived from studies of the 20th-century Kalahari San. Although these northern San populations were also affected by change through contact with other groups of people and even some political aspects of colonialism, it is widely accepted that perhaps until the early second half of the 20th century these people had by and large retained a millennia old hunting and gathering way of life.

4.2. TRANSITORY ARCHIVAL FRAGMENTS FROM COLONIAL SOURCES

The colonial period heralded written records coinciding with the first cultural intercourse between European seafarers and the Cape indigenes from the 15th century onwards. Later European exploration into the Cape interior ensured a moderately sizeable body of accounts concerning aspects of the life and history of the peoples beyond the Cape of Good Hope. Colonial archives consist of collections of varying quality and quantity that afford us glimpses of pre-colonial and colonial life styles of indigenous peoples (Raven-Hart 1967, 1971b). Although early European writings about the Cape and its peoples emerged from their initial interaction in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, the archive is generally sparse in its fidelity, objectivity and thoroughness (Klein 1986: 6) regarding those aspects which are germane to anthropological, archaeological and historical analyses. As Judith Sealy (2006: 569) puts it, "although recent (ethno-historic) accounts of hunting and gathering people are undoubtedly valuable as sources of insight into this way of life, our documentary record is partial and skewed". Because these sources alone cannot be used conclusively to resolve the complex pre-colonial cultural sequence in the Cape region, the archaeological and recent anthropological sources can be used to reinforce pre-colonial and colonial analyses.

Several factors account for the inadequacy of early written records on the Cape interior's peoples. Various accounts were often not first-hand (Fauvelle-Aymar 2008: 80) or empirical observations (some travellers relied too much on hearsay, e.g. see Raven-Hart 1967: 47), as logistical impracticalities meant less exploration far beyond the seashores. The rugged topography described in the previous chapter was also a hindrance (Theal 1964: 258). Early travellers, explorers, hunters and others were discouraged from journeying ashore by the impassable physical nature of these mountains (Davis 1906; Smalberger 1975) in whose vastness and hidden corners, according to widespread myths, there were also man-eaters. This myth of cannibals, too, must have discouraged exploration (Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 8–10, 58). To be sure, the fierce reprisals that some Khoekhoen groups meted out against transgressing Portuguese and Spanish callers[9] from the early 1500s were sufficient to persuade later sailors to bypass the Cape anchorages for nearly a century (Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 58, 60; Raven-Hart 1967: 9–11). As a consequence, there was a hiatus of written records until the 1590s onwards, when the English and Dutch fleets started to call. They too were swayed by the plethora of wild legends about the putative cannibalistic and corpse-scavenging races of the Cape interior (Raven-Hart 1967: 111). The myth about the bloodthirsty and militant indigenous wild men, in fact, was for centuries a well-established antiquated alien theme among early seafarers (Bartra 1994; Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 8–10; Elphick 1985: 72–73). The enduring negative influence of this teratology (a theme dating back to the 14th century; see Mandeville 1983), not only among the roving mariners or Cape settlers from 1600s onwards, but also the book-reading middle classes of most European countries, abounds in most early writings. Hence, even though the early Portuguese and later the Dutch and English seafarers were aware from the 1500s of the vastness of the Cape, it

9 On the Cape's western shores, Portuguese Admiral Antonio de Saldanha was shot and wounded in 1503 by local Khoekhoen following a skirmish and later, in 1510, a similar confrontation saw Fransesco d'Almeida, who was the Viceroy of Portuguese India, killed alongside 65 members of his crew.

was only in 1652 that the first European settlement was established there (Elphick 1985: 73). The encumbrances changed as growing European influence extended farther into the southwestern and northwestern Cape from 1700s onwards. While these difficulties were logistical in nature or limited to the capacity to forge inland, European attitudes during that period also contributed to skewing the colonial archive.

4.3. ANTIPATHY TOWARDS THE CAPE INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

To some degree, the deficiency of the colonial archive is hardly surprising given the deep European antipathy towards the KhoeSan, their customs and languages (Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 58–59; Penn 2005a: 241–243; Traill 1996: 183). Documents, mainly textual but also pictorial records, concerning indigenous encounters were originally produced from perspectives largely tempered with negative European attitudes, "heartless distortions" (Penn 2005a: 243) and biases, and untenable beliefs emanating from the Middle Ages (Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 8–10). It was routine to lump the varied Cape indigenous inhabitants with their unique linguistic, cultural and economic lifestyles together under generic categories or appellations such as "vagrants", "beasts", "thieves", "robbers", "savages", "scavengers", "natives" or "blacks" (*ibid*.: 58). By stripping away these people's own cultural markers and without other auxiliary sources beyond the colonial literature, these crude stereotypes of this type of "lumper position" (see Parkington 2006: 18–19), as with any other similar generalisation (Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 34–35) on pre-colonial and early colonial indigenes, were clearly inaccurate and inappropriate. As a consequence, scholars today still argue on issues of true ethnic identities of various groups mentioned in colonial records: were some of the appellations used in historical accounts referring to San hunter-gatherers, Khoe pastoralists, mixed destitute groups or any combination of these people?

The sum of these indigenous communities in the Western Cape included hunters and gatherers, pastoralists and their contemporary category of coastal dwellers (also known as fisher people) whom the Dutch called *strandlopers* (Deacon & Deacon 1999: 150, 152) or beachcombers – the latter probably formerly belonged to one or the other of the earlier groups. The reality of the social and cultural context of this diversity was complex: various groups intermixed often, as also noted by early European observers. The inevitable interpenetration of groups living adjacent to one another might have resulted in cultural elements reflecting intra-group networks of cultural links or social bonds, as well as cooperation or even conflict, through space and time. However, acute nondescript ethnic conflation became a prominent feature of the 1860s onwards during the colonial incarceration of KhoeSan resisters through the use of settler commando operations. In the Northern Cape, the misclassification of |Xam prisoners as "Hottentots" was routine (Bank 2006: 152–153). Meanwhile, these groups had their own self-referential labels (see Parkington 1977), though at times unflattering, in this cultural phenomenon of designating neighbours (e.g. see brief etymology of "San" in "Explanatory notes"). |Xam-language speakers used ecological labels to distinguish themselves as, for example, River or Berg Bushmen and, in the Karoo, Flat Bushmen (‖Kabbo, |Hanŋ≠kass'o and |A!kunta) and Grass Bushmen (Dia!kwain, ≠Kasin and !Kweiten ta ‖ken) (Deacon 1996: 245–246). It is evident that they perceived themselves as different from one another, sometimes seeing others with disdain (see Bank 2006: 287), although in all the crucial reference was the people's connection to landscape or countryside.

It has not helped that anthropologists, archaeologists, historians and linguists have spent a great deal of time debating the make-up of hunter-gatherer and pastoralist or herder identities, without actually starting by problematising these ethno-economic appellations. The artificiality of the terminology confounds the studies of rock art chronology in respect of culturally defining painting traditions and sub-traditions. This study seeks to defragment some of the graphic divisions in ways that economise and better illuminate the painting sequence. It is commonplace to take these artistic categories as a given where putative difference rather than similarity, though not stated explicitly, is essentialised. A view of the past under such confined analytical optics obscures rather than elucidates the complexity of pre-colonial and colonial encounters where convergence and divergence, exchange and avoidance would have precipitated a fluidity of cultural identities and socio-economic boundaries over time among indigenous populations. In recent years, however, there has been a gradual intervention from research projects in various regions that are inspired by cultural studies theories, which are now shifting the outlook of these debates on identity and ethnicity to allow that due to interaction there was far more diversity in pre-colonial and colonial cultural contexts than previously accepted. As will be clear in later chapters, this study straddles various theoretical predilections and uses some aspects of post-colonial theory to unshackle the limiting cultural categories created by existing terminologies that the discipline has inherited, often unquestioningly, from early scholarly writings.

Early scholarly writings on indigenous peoples were quite uneven prior to the 1900s. Even though the mid-1800s saw a great intellectual efflorescence with researchers such as Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd, F.W. Kolbe and others pioneering systematic studies of languages, mythology and religious systems of various South African peoples, the great majority of contemporary writers were untrained observers, adventurists and amateur scientists. A few of these writers, however, could be credited with reasonably accurate scientific accounts on indigenous people and their cultures. Of these writers, Robert J. Gordon's observations are said to "rank amongst the most important of their kind" (Wilson & Klinghardt 1989: 49), while the missionary Samuel S. Dornan (1925: 42) argues that the early 1800s German traveller Heinrich Lichtenstein "was a thoroughly scientific and capable observer", as were Otto Mentzel (Lucas 2006: 11), Anders Sparrman and William J. Burchell

(Beinart 1998: 779–780), among a few. Whereas the 1860s and 1870s are argued to have witnessed important developments in the formation of scientific knowledge that later culminated in African Studies (Dubow 2004: 107), the first real anthropological analyses on the KhoeSan in the Cape and surrounding regions were to emerge only later in the early 1900s through the work of Agnes Winifred Hoernlé on the Namaqualand Khoekhoe pastoralists (some of her research was published, e.g. 1913, 1918, 1922, 1923, 1925). These studies rank among the first professional anthropological writings in southern Africa.

Part of the reason for this slow development of scientific interest on KhoeSan people was due to the widely held belief that they lacked religion (Raven-Hart 1967: 57, 60, 101, 128). Accordingly, their implied savage bellicose nature meant that they were unworthy of scholarly consideration. Even their artistic traditions were deemed unattractive to any serious study as early writers contented themselves with only literal readings (Lewis-Williams 2006: 349). Illustrating such invidiousness, one influential writer in Europe, Peter Heylen (1677 [1621]: 64), lamented about the former Cape inhabitants that it was a "pity that so beautiful and rich a country should be inhabited by so barbarous and rude a people". In other regions, such as in North America, early encounters reveal that there were similar European perceptions entertained about Native American peoples and the negative impact of these scholarly treatment patterns on written accounts is obvious (Trigger 1986: 255). There, too, scientific attention was as a result hindered until much later periods. Prospects for creating enduring and accurate records were thus squandered. Another viewpoint on such negative scholarly attitudes, however, is couched in the general scientific atmosphere of the time. According to some writers, the growing discipline of natural history exploration marginalised scientific interest in indigenous peoples (Pratt 1992: 51–52). While early travellers wrote of the fauna and flora in the Cape as components of a pristine environment where humanity was not supposed to have existed, they created an artificial hiatus characterised by an asocial and ahistorical landscape. Whereas the sparseness of colonial archives is in the lack of fidelity, there was also the real problem of hiatuses, sometimes lengthy, when nothing was documented due to difficulties associated with armed conflicts of the early colonial period.

Documentation practices that had taken root in the previous centuries now started to encounter bottlenecks from hiatuses caused by ongoing and accelerated frontier wars after the mid 1600s. Some writing started to flourish in the initial advance of the northern frontier in the late 1600s and early 1700s. But then, as the first frontier wars were set forth in earnest from the late 1600s, this trend was disrupted. A major hiatus occurred around the 1730s when, due to the practicalities of rapid transmission in the midst of flaring wars, verbal reports became a preferred medium to written reports that were an integral part of communication previously. The impermanent nature of this medium, as a consequence, entailed very little writing on the changing cultural landscape during this warring period (Penn 2005a: 60; see also a note on p. 42 on the inadequacy of the records around early 1700s regarding the outbreak and impact of the smallpox endemic). Due to the late 1700s wars, very low settler populations (as people with literal skills at the time to document history) on the northern frontier also explain the paucity of detailed facts on the cultural groups of the frontier zones (Penn 2005a: 81). The low ebb of colonial advance was restored after this initial conflictive period among groups of people.

4.4. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE COLONIAL FRONTIER

The 1700s saw a renewed vigorous European expansion into the Cape's interior rugged landscape. Knowledge of the inland topography had improved while the settler population was swelling and so hunting, especially for ivory, increasing significantly alongside the pursuit of mineral and other resources beyond the Cape of Good Hope (Smalberger 1975). There was also a huge quest for farmland, coupled with the need for indigenous KhoeSan labour and their livestock (Elphick & Malherbe 1989: 11; Lucas 2006: 70; Penn 1996: 36, 83), which was a major beef supply to the expanding Cape community. In the background of these developments was a vast demand for a variety of supplies by the Dutch East India Company (VOC or Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie), which was ever increasing (Penn 2005a). Political considerations were important too. At this time, the establishment and protection of frontiers became particularly crucial for the colonial administrative organisation. As far as the VOC was concerned, the creation of frontier zones was the main objective in strengthening the Cape economically and strategically. A huge part of the VOC strategy involved increasing the numbers of colonial farmers in these frontier zones (Lucas 2006: 67) and hence the increased need for farmland and indigenous labour, but all these developments needed to be protected militarily.

The northern frontier compelled the establishment of chains of military posts to secure the European advance (Penn 2005a: 27–55), for their protection and, by extension, the expansion of the colonial political and economic interests (Lucas 2006: 67). In the frontier zone this advance can partly be quantified in terms of the demography of burgeoning settler communities. In the Western Cape the farmer population increased gradually to an estimated 7,000 or more around the late 1700s (Penn 2005a: 3). While the land available to settlers in the hinterland multiplied tenfold from the 1740s to 1770, their population densities expanded at a much slower rate due to the incessant frontier wars during that period. However, throughout the colony there were only 225 stockholders in 1746, increasing to 600 in 1770 (*ibid*.: 81). Although the population density of the frontier farmers was quite low, its adverse effect on the original peopling of the region was the ruination of residual populations of hunter-gatherers and pastoralists who were domiciled in the Western Cape (*ibid*.: 32). Their numbers dwindled very rapidly as European advance escalated and their final cultural and physical extermination, or genocide (as some argue, e.g.

Penn 1996: 89), largely due to the commando system, was completed around the late 1800s (Dornan 1925: 42–43; Elphick 1977; Hewitt 1986: 22, 43, 45, 2002: 36, 52; Lee 2006: 462, 465; Traill 1996: 183) across the whole Cape region where these people formerly existed.

These developments were heralded by a series of wars of dispossession lasting lengthy periods before the indigenous residents were finally subjugated. Various KhoeSan groups had mounted fierce, though sporadic, resistance to colonial expansion (Elphick 1977; Marais 1957; Theal 1888–93, 1915–26; Wright 1971), slowing down the frontier advance into almost a state of social, political and economic attrition. In what was the prelude to their ultimate conquest, the first military skirmish between the Dutch and the Cape indigenes was fought over cattle in 1688 (Dornan 1925: 43). The first of the major frontier wars, however, took place several decades later, in 1739, covering in extent both the sandveld and the Bokkeveld. The outcome was that the KhoeSan resistance was momentarily crushed. This victory emboldened the settler community, causing rapid colonial expansion deeper into the interior (Penn 2005a: 20, 77, 81). This thrust was truncated and slowed due to periods of sustained turmoil that were experienced prior to this war, then during the decades immediately afterwards and well into the 1800s. These upheavals culminated in evacuations and settler retreat from vast swathes of land to safer zones following incessant KhoeSan attacks and livestock raids on the farms (Penn 1996, 2007) as retaliatory resistance (Penn: 2005a: 31). The outright demise of the Cape indigenes was completed in the late 1800s. In the course of a mere century of these vicissitudes, ranging from the political, military, genocide, epidemic, and later colonial evangelical pressures (Penn 2007), the region witnessed the permanent disappearance of the Cape KhoeSan culture, its concomitant customs and traditions. Both the former hunter-gatherer and pastoral communities had vanished as indigenous cultures of the Western Cape. From this overview, let us now take a scenario that, although admittedly sketchy, provides some understanding of the social and political dynamics in which the latter-day rock painters in the region were engaged. There is no direct evidence *per se* to link specific paintings and specific people or cultural groups, but the events of the time created an atmosphere which should help to unravel what might have been the possible social and historical context(s) of the production of the rock paintings.

As some historians have argued, the Western Cape in the historical era, principally from the late 1600s to the 1800s, became the hinterland of intense colonial and indigenous human interactions, particularly during the advance of the colonial frontier, its wars and the aftermath. The region concerned is generally between the north of the Berg River and across the Olifants River into the Cape Fold Belt mountains and the Doring-Tanqua drainage system in the northern and eastern portions of the Cederberg. Yet this region was not an isolated island of social disturbances, but fell under the influence of political and economic activities that extended far beyond into the western fringes of the Karoo and over into the Orange River in the north. For instance, by the late 1700s, the adjacent Hantam district had become a trade zone of strategic importance between Namaqualand and the rest of the colony to the south, feeding principally into the "production and exchange networks which linked Cape Town to the pastoralists of the interior" (Penn 2005a: 170). In between lay the fold belt mountain ranges, where most of the painted sites are located. Rather than this rugged topography being a physical screen between zones, it facilitated and channelled other forms of activity across the landscape, with both the colonial and indigenous polities—particularly the pastoral communities—interspersed in their areas of control between distinctive geographic zones.

People and goods moved within and beyond these zones, through designated access routes. Trade items included ivory, skins, cattle, sheep, firearms and ammunition, beads, tobacco and a range of other colonial articles, which moved between Cape Town, Namaqualand and the Orange River (Penn 2005a: 166), where human populations were burgeoning. Some historians speak of trade networks "which had extended from the southern Nguni and the Sotho-Tswana through the Khoi to the Western Cape" (Legassick 2010: 41) in earlier times being replaced in the 1700s by "the new trade system oriented towards the Cape Town market" (*ibid*.). Inevitably the movement of trade items and people entailed circulation of ideas and particularly military and raider ideologies that were far-reaching across the vast expanse of regions which form today the Western Cape, Northern Cape and some parts of the North West province. Cultural alliances and other forms of human connections were also formed as part of the new socio-political circumstances precipitated by the colonial frontier expansion and the attendant conflictive polities. Some writers have noted that in the course of the frontier wars and the consequent commando system in the mid to late 1700s, there was marked cooperation and exchange of information between the residual San hunter-gatherers and the Khoekhoen pastoralists against colonial invasion (Penn 2005a: 129, 135, 235). This view is true of the general frontier relations between some indigenes and certain elements among the colonists, as is the general nature of frontiers. There are cases of frontier white settlers who integrated into Khoe societies, who behaved and even dressed like the indigenes (Legassick 2010: 43–44). Importantly, these human social relations were not a new development, but they were essentially a deep-rooted legacy of the pastoralist and hunter-gatherer "cycles of cultural assimilation" that went back to the arrival of immigrant Khoe pastoralists who herded the first domesticates in the region (Elphick 1985: 30–31). What had changed in the colonial frontiers times were the economic and political circumstances brought about by the northern frontier and the overbearing influence from Cape Town.

By the time of the northern frontier wars the residual San groups in this region no longer lived on their own or led an entirely hunter-gatherer existence. They now formed part of shared social networks and interactions with several other groups of people who populated the landscape. These

human connections were to be observed even in the mostly inhospitable Karoo wastelands to the east of the Cape Fold Belt mountains. For example, although by the 1800s it is unclear how and to what extent the |Xam San maintained relationships with their neighbours, they were certainly not the only people living in the region. Nineteenth-century travellers' accounts mention the presence of other groups that included the Nama and Korana (Khoekhoen), Basters and white stock farmers (trekboers) south of the Orange River, and the Tswana-speaking groups north of the river. Some of the |Xam people worked for white farmers for certain periods and most could even converse to some degree in Dutch. Those who were informants in the Bleek and Lloyd archive from the mid-1800s mention sheep, cattle, dogs, metal, guns and horses in their narratives (Bank 2006: 214–218; Deacon 1996: 247), which attests to their familiarity with the complex and mixed colonial world in which they lived. The regions between the Cape, Karoo and Orange River had now become a melting pot of varied ethnicities involving San, Khoekhoen, Bantu-speaking Tswana and Xhosa groups. The Tswana polities had been there longer while the Xhosa people entered this region in the late 1790s after a man called Zonie or Danster led a Xhosa group fleeing military clashes in the Eastern Cape and settled around present-day Carnarvon on the Orange River (Kallaway 1982, cited in Deacon 1996: 247; Legassick 2010: 122, 123; Penn 2005a: 211–212). These Xhosa people amalgamated with varied other smaller and destitute local groups, mostly outcasts from the colony, to form a formidable marauding entity. This was the same Xhosa group whose parent formation was the party which one traveller, Anders Sparrman, had encountered earlier near the Fish River and described as a "dauntingly dominant presence" (Beinart 1998: 778). Although their leader Danster had at some point entered the service of colonists in the Roggeveld district, his group generally eked out a living by keeping stock, hunting and raiding (Penn 2005a: 212). This was a time of broad-spectrum turmoil within the frontier, where groups violently raided one another for survival in the face of accelerated interaction exacerbated by frontier wars in the east and the north. All frontiers are by their nature characterised by violence, as a constant at all times (*ibid*.: 13), although some scholars dispute that this is a specific condition for all frontiers (Legassick 2010). Nonetheless, such turmoil and various forms of exchanges were far-reaching, from the Orange River down to Cape Town in the south. This historical background is relevant for the study area, since it fell well within these political and economic spheres of influence and so from a general standpoint some level of analysis should encompass the social and cultural dynamics of the region at the time.

By the 1800s the Orange River had become sanctuary to a multiplicity of linguistic, social and cultural formations. There were mixed-descent groups who in the late 1700s trekked for their freedom beyond the borders of the Cape colony and settled among other diverse local indigenous groups. These generally Dutch-speaking people were known in the Cape as "Bastaards" and "Bastaard-Hottentots"—either Khoekhoen-European or Khoekhoen-slave born individuals who had assimilated into the colonial culture—and organised themselves into small runaway groups of kinsfolk called "droster gangs" (Penn 1990, 1999). The larger and more successful of these cultural formations were called the Oorlams. However, the first drosters (fugitives) and proto-Oorlams (or creole people) were formed very early in the 1800s in the Sandveld and the Drakenstein mountains as part of the KhoeSan resistance to colonial expansion beyond the Cape peninsula and the incipient commando system (Penn 2005a: 13). Their violent excesses of repeated acts of robbery and murder in their northward drive are well documented (Hall & Mazel 2005: 133; Penn 2005b). These drosters and Oorlams, in comparison with other indigenous groups—largely the remnatic San, Khoekhoen, Nama, Kora and so forth—whom they encountered and interacted with outside the colonial reach, had advantages acquired from living with the technologically more advanced colonial society from farther south, since they possessed horses, wagons and guns (Legassick 2010: 65, 87; Wannenburgh 1980: 50–51). Hence the Namaqua people in the north were afraid of "hat-wearers", as they referred to these robbers and murderers who shot them and robbed them of their cattle (Legassick 2010: 72). Pillaging and stock theft became a way of life for these groups outside the colonial boundaries. Such wide-ranging conflict might have impinged on the daily lives of all those who lived in the affected regions, including the last rock painters.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to ascertain the nature and extent of the influences of these aggressive interactions and allied acculturative processes on the rock artists in the Cederberg ranges and Olifants River valley. Yet it is not unreasonable to expect that the residual rock painters were also entangled culturally in these dynamic circumstances, as some of the drosters and their activities are documented in areas around the Doorn and Olifants rivers (e.g. Penn 2005b; Ross 1994). From this postulation, chapter eight attempts to interpret a selection of images from the sequence in the context of contact dynamics, first from the advent of herding economies in the second millennium AD and later the colonial period, attended by the inception and expansion of the northern frontier with its wars of dispossession. The chapter also examines how during that era the putative undercurrents of incessant conflict and concomitant raiding ideologies might have influenced the artistic change in successive phases of painting. Unfortunately, there is no direct evidence to allow the connections between specific people or groups and the paintings, although it is possible to hypothesise with caution some influences from interaction. These interpretations are based on the observations of images and their contextual associations as well as the analysis of several historical, ethno-historical and ethnographic sources.

4.5. COLONIAL TERMINATION OF "ANCIENT" CULTURAL TRADITIONS

The burst of colonial penetration from the early 1700s (Smalberger 1975: 53–63) had far-reaching disruptive effects on the social-cultural matrix of indigenous societies

in frontier zones, causing the rapid fragmentation of their social, economic and political foundations (*ibid*.: 62). Not only were the Western Cape indigenes adversely affected by the military and commando excursions of genocidal proportions, but the availability of traditional resources of water and land, foraging territories and grazing pastures also dwindled due to wholesale colonial land usurpation (Legassick 2010: 41; Lucas 2006: 70; Penn 2005a: 172). Accelerating the disintegration of pre-colonial indigenous ways of life was also the full force of the unfamiliar disease epidemics: the smallpox outbreak of 1713 wiped out extensive numbers of residual KhoeSan societies (Elphick 1985: xvii; Elphick & Malherbe 1989: 21; Lucas 2006: 71). Its lethal impact, as was the case with other serial disease episodes including typhoid, measles and influenza, was exacerbated by the indigenous lack of immunological resistance (Penn 2005a: 42–43). In the end, the combined effect of diseases, military defeat, genocide, and political and economic subjugation spanning over 250 years of colonial contact led successively to the degeneration of the Western Cape KhoeSan societies' spiritual, psychological, economic, social and political fabric and to their final annihilation (Elphick 1977; Klein 1986: 5). Thereafter, in the closing decades of the 19th century, the cultural and economic lifestyles of the hunter-gatherer and herder peoples, whatever their former ethnicities, were all completely disappeared from the living traditions and collective Cape historical memory (e.g. Lucas 2006: 151). Those KhoeSan who survived became a landless underclass of subservient minions of the Dutch and other colonial communities such as the free burghers (Deacon 1996: 250; Elphick & Malherbe 1989: 17; Lucas 2006: 71; Yates *et al*. 1994: 59) in the frontier zone and small urbanised areas or dorps that developed in its wake (Ross 1976: 66, 69). Against this terminal historical epigrammatic backdrop, chapter eight pieces together rock art evidence "archived" in the chronological sequence established in chapters six and seven in order to understand imagery change through time following a distinctive regional setting of social and historical circumstances.

To understand the pre-colonial history and the nature of interactions between indigenous people before the colonial period, it is therefore crucial to probe the extent to which the congeries of cultural admixture and integration of traditions of these indigenes are revealed in the painting and other records. Although these groups organised themselves in different ways socially, politically and economically, it is hard to imagine that their prolonged interaction did not occasion a mixture of these facets of life. Indeed, one approach to understand the vexatious aspects of such dynamic connections is to examine rock art chronologies and cultural sequences in localised regions in the light of post-colonial theory in order to probe creatively the colonial archive. Bearing these thoughts in mind, this study explores a number of explanatory perspectives, each with its own theoretical positions and commitments, from literary and cultural to archaeological studies. Whereas some writers have lamented the unbridled proliferation of theories, each with different presuppositions, specific objectives, a limited scope, and often in opposition (Iser 2006: 6–7), it is more useful to focus on their convergences, shared questions and claims than to dwell on their presumed divergences. There is no more suitable context for the use of a number of approaches to unravel the many-sided interactions amongst small- and broad-scale social group formations than the Western Cape during the pre-colonial and colonial periods. The study builds a rock art narrative using a methodology that assembles patterns of specific image categories, site histories, depth of painting chronology and cultural sequences and complexities from local to regional scales of analysis. Fine-grained interpretations of painted subject matter and themes might be expected from the use of colonial historical and ethno-historical sources and investigations of imagery relationships and their placement in the overall regional sequence. Such analyses may in turn reveal aspects of the pre-colonial lifestyles, social, economic and political organisation of the rock artists' communities alongside their belief systems and cosmologies. This work is important not only for the resolution of problems specific to rock art chronology and cultural sequence, but also as a body of information which can be used to answer more specific questions about the operation of prehistoric societies and historical contact processes, culture differentiation, change and continuity.

CHAPTER FIVE

Theory, Method and Methodology

> *The archive is not potentially made up of* everything, *as is human memory; and it is not the fathomless and timeless place in which nothing goes away that is the unconscious. The archive is made from selected and consciously chosen documentation from the past and also from the mad fragments that no one intended to preserve and that just ended up there.* (Steedman 2001: 68, original emphasis)

5.1. RESIDUES OF TEMPORALITY IN ROCK ART

The importance of theory in rock art interpretation has long been acknowledged. Theory lends explanatory anchorage to the imagery. This chapter articulates the Theory, Method and Methodology pursued in this study, which is principally a worked-out illustration of the archival approach in the organisation and arrangement of images in overpainted sites in order to formulate a Western Cape regional sequence. This approach allows for the refinement of interpretations of subject matter and themes to demonstrate image change through time and historicity. With the use of multiple theoretical and methodological perspectives, the study charts an analytical scheme for interpretative applications that transcend the commonplace over-reliance on image superimpositions alone in deducing and elucidating image and historical change over time. From describing aspects of theory and the structure of argument followed in the study (method), the discussion proceeds to the long-standing problem of decoding the structural configuration, if any exists, of graphic relationships between images, their contexts and associations in the Western Cape overpainted rock art surfaces (methodology). This methodology signals that over-reliance on superimpositions—rather than analysing the overall character of defined images, categories of subject matter and themes in tandem with various sources of information—may not be sufficient for fine-grained interpretations and the understanding of conceptual interrelationships of images in painting sequences. Students of rock art need to move away from the constraints of unaided (i.e., only in the sense that any analysis of superimpositions needs to be part of a suite of other techniques rather than an end in themselves) superimposition analyses, which only emphasise physical overlays or overlaps of imagery, and appeal instead to the archival approach, which relies on its theoretical archetype of logical connections between and amongst a variety of fragments of information. In this context, the present study critiques and broadens the accepted norms of theoretical and methodological approaches and general practice to interpretative and chronology studies on the basis of the possibility that they are either over-simplified or somewhat insufficiently accurate for analysing painting sequences in regions such as the Western Cape (several others occur across southern Africa) where multiple painting traditions exist in the same shelters.

Building on chapters one and two, this discussion accepts that theory is a framing mechanism for explanations while method and methodology provide the rationale in evaluating and validating premises and models around which rock art materials are organised, interrogated and elucidated. Defining theory is problematic; however, it is necessary to understand how theory is envisaged in this study. As an extension of a brief discussion in chapter one, theory can be construed generally as a "support framework" for ideas to give them explanatory power, longevity and authority in our interpretations of the past (e.g. Douglas 1989: 857) or a "necessary structure to focus analytical attention to specific research-oriented questions" (Vinnicombe 2010: 248). Although types of theories vary, some scholars (Iser 2006: 5-6) believe that theories are generally subdivisible into two: first, data-free theories, as used in physical sciences, which aim to generate predictive laws on the nature of things and which can be rigorously tested, adopted or discarded if they are not supported by external evidence; and second, those theories formulated from the observations of data and they in turn become explanatory frameworks for those observations. Mary Douglas's view on anthropology is aligned to the latter instance while Vinnicombe's archaeological predilection bears the first instance. Generally archaeological theories oscillate, to varying degrees, between these two versions. While inductive theory generalisations are now generally eschewed in favour of formulations based on deduction, the issue in rock art studies, and indeed archaeology in general, is that theories of explanation are not testable (or amenable to proof) in the true sense of the word as applied in physical sciences. Therefore, as Wolfgang Iser (2006: 7) has noted, there is a tendency in social sciences for an accumulation of a multiplicity of theories since there is less rigour in the testing (or none at all) and therefore they are not easily discarded. However, as discussed below, there are ways in rock art studies of adjudicating between theoretical explanations, confirming the ones that are closer to the body of evidence we have built so far and discarding those that are not. This way, in venturing our interpretations of the past we have an antidote against a relapse into an 'anything goes' approach whereby every theory of explanation is accorded equal status.

Theories over the past century of rock art writing have been strongly aligned to historical periods of their formulation. It is therefore axiomatic that ordinarily theories have a quality of flux; they arise within particular historical, ideological, social and political contexts. Often, when these milieus shift, theories will also change. Some theories are short-lived while others have the capacity for longevity, transcending periods of their original formulation—for instance, in natural history Charles Darwin's theory of evolution through natural selection propounded over a century ago has stood the test of time. Although this is a natural science example, there is no real reason why a social science theory cannot attain longevity if it offers powerful explanatory frameworks. In this study, appropriate examples can be drawn from the history of southern African rock art studies (e.g. see Lewis-Williams 2006). Various theories, methods and techniques in rock art research have thrived and waned since the early 1900s (Lewis-Williams 1995a, 1995c). Arguably, in southern Africa intellectual fluxes have been more pronounced since the mid-1960s onwards than in any preceding period as paradigms shifted in archaeology, following trends in the social sciences broadly (e.g. see O'Brien, M.J. & Holland 1995: 193). These intellectual foundations and the generated bodies of knowledge along with their tensions, partialities and historical circumstances are all inevitably bound in the theoretical frames of their periods and vice-versa. Because theories—particularly social science theories—are constrained by an amalgam of influences and circumstances (at times whimsical) of their time, all of which are tied to their formulation, some writers claim that such theories are accordingly subjective in outlook (Shanks & Tilley 1987a: 212–213). In this view it is conceivable that, given their mixed milieus, theories cannot, by and of themselves, be independent objective transmitters of facts in terms of positivist epistemologies of so-called hard sciences.

The contingency of theories has long been debated, particularly how scientific theories operate and what amounts to properly scientific practice in archaeology and the social sciences in general. On contingency and the polemics of science and theory in all endeavours of interpreting the past (e.g. Kosso 1991; Schiffer 1996; Shanks & Tilley 1987b), philosopher of science Alison Wylie surmised that it is a false notion that sciences are "uniquely non-parochial in scope…[or] that they share a body of investigative practices capable of establishing knowledge that decisively transcends the contexts of its production" (Wylie 2000: 228). In this vein and specifically for archaeology, Lewis Binford (1987: 393, original emphasis) noted that "all archaeological data are generated by us in our terms" as archaeologists in studying contemporary data, which we generate in the act of observing the archaeological record. This point has been made clearly in respect of historicism—another of the theoretical focal points of this book—by Paul Hamilton who argued that our interpretive decisions are "based on a judgement between different possibilities of the time; and the history of interpretations shows such adjudications to be abundantly and primarily expressive of their own periods of utterance (Hamilton 1996: 16). Just as there are those scholars who accept the unavoidability of political bias in theory and interpretation (Johnson 2006: 443) or that techniques and data are "theory-laden" (Johnson 1999: 176–177; Wylie 2000: 232), Wylie endorses a more prosaic, if deflationary, view that science is inherently a "human, social and political enterprise, diverse in form, contingent and evolving" (Wylie 2000: 228). And the same goes for theoretical applications in rock art studies.

Overall, the very character of the ever-evolving paradigms in research environments fosters intellectual creativity. In consequence, the epistemic creativity in the humanities and social sciences often results in a proliferation of theories (sometimes in rivalry with one another), which, as Iser (2006: 6, 7) argues, are explained by "changing interests and fashions". Contrasting this view, Jonathan Culler (2009: 3) believes that treating variety in theory "as a set of competing approaches or methods of interpretation misses much of its interest and force". Culler views the multiplicity of theories not simply as one epistemological position opposed to another, but as the basic value of the interrelatedness of the bodies of knowledge they generate. In the end, we all might agree that it is the collation of explanations and facts that the theories generate from data analyses that matters. In Frederick Cooper's perspective, "Most important is to learn to profit from the tensions intrinsic to intellectual inquiry, not resolving them under the hegemonic umbrella of a grand theory" (Cooper 2000: 317). In the long run, however, it is fair to say that not all explanatory theories of rock art will justify equal status. At the level of method, as shall be shown, some scholars have argued for various criteria as a means of validating rock art interpretations (Lewis-Williams & Loubser 1986: 281). In this purview, an approach to argumentation that Wylie (1989) devised appears to be eminently suitable for archaeology and rock art studies in particular. Known largely by the metaphors "cabling" and "tacking", this method was advocated and first used in rock art studies by Lewis-Williams in the mid-1990s; it is pivotal to this study.

Drawing on Richard Bernstein (1983), Wylie promoted the building of interpretative arguments using the "cabling" and "tacking" method involving the movement back and forth between theory and data (Wylie 1989). This metaphor was first used earlier by Charles Saunders Peirce (1934: 157) and later expanded by Bernstein to characterise scientific argumentation as more like "chains", but now reformulated by Wylie as typically cable-like, particularly in archaeology. In this formulation, Wylie (1999, 2000) also observes the "disunity of science" which, as she argues, archaeologists have employed to their advantage by way of, first, its characteristic of "vertical independence" and, second, "horizontal independence". The first concerns a priori assumptions in formulating hypotheses, and is theoretically autonomous of evidence that is presented in their support; the second relates to the independence of different lines of evidence used to support any interpretation or hypothesis that is being advanced. Regarding the latter,

if diverse forms of mutually reinforcing evidence, based on various archaeological data and explanations from various theoretical perspectives, unite in supporting a particular explanatory standpoint about the past, then the credibility lent these claims by the assembled evidence is enhanced (Wylie 2000: 232, 2002). The evaluation of the closeness of the fit between the evidence and the explanation is not always a straightforward process.

In rock art studies, Lewis-Williams (1981: 131) has advocated a two-way mutual illumination process between theory and imagery. The two are mutually dependent, without one superseding the other. He further argues that depending on the type of reasoning or logic and argumentation (method), there would be interpretations that are true, some less true and those that are simply wrong. Hence, some explanatory hypotheses can be demonstrated to be superior to competing hypotheses (Lewis-Williams & Loubser 1986: 283). Discriminating between the various explanations involves assessing how well the embedded theory articulates with evidence (Lewis-Williams 1998: 95). Because of the shifting historical, academic and political currents in rock art studies, lately he has spoken less of this valuation platform. Earlier Lewis-Williams proposed several criteria for validating the explanatory potential of hypotheses in rock art studies: (a) Compatibility with the well-supported theory and relevant ethnography; (b) internal consistency; (c) quantity of data explained; (d) diversity of data explained; (e) verifiability; and (e) heuristic potential (Lewis-Williams 1984: 59–60, 1985: 49–50; Lewis-Williams & Loubser 1986: 280-283). While these criteria are not explicit in any process of assessing the reliability of explanations, they remain at the core of the logic of hypothesis evaluation. This idea was not transformed into a framework for selecting credible explanations but emphasises those using multiple strands of evidence; however, as has been highlighted, the lines of evidence must be independent of each other (Tilley 1989; Wylie 1986, 1989). Within the "cabling" and "tacking" process, which Wylie adjures, the independence of sources "ensures that the strands of the resulting cables are not just mutually reinforcing but are also, and crucially, mutually constraining" (Wylie 1989: 16).

With theory and evidence interwoven in this fashion, researchers are able to reach rationally decisive arguments (Wylie 2002: 163). Furthermore, it is the explicit arguments attended by a thoroughgoing theoretical and methodological framework that enable the possibility of adjudication of competing interpretations. Against this backdrop I use the archive perspective as a supplementary approach to other explanatory perspectives that have been used previously in studies of relative chronology and interpretation of painted subject matter and themes. My advocacy of the archival approach is consequently not simply to add a new theoretical vocabulary in rock art studies, but a quest for expanded epistemic foundations for elucidating long-standing and hitherto unresolved rock art issues of relative chronology and interpretation. So, in contrast to a previous, rather misplaced, charge that chronology studies are archaeologically biased and immaterial in rock art studies (see comments on this matter in Blundell 2004: 68; Dowson 1993), most researchers now agree that attempts to refine chronology and historicity for rock art interpretation ought not to be taken lightly or categorically dismissed. This book deals with the archival approach as an intellectual and practical operative framework for construing and refining relative chronology and rock art interpretations. It offers rock painting analysis that combines to varying degrees a selected mix of methodological approaches and theoretical perspectives from previous studies. It is therefore as much a theoretical contribution as it is a methodological one. This approach is eminently appropriate for this study, since relative chronology deduction is largely a descriptive process that relies on the documentation of empirical observations and establishment of the structure, content and context of rock paintings.

5.2. AN EXPANDED DISCUSSION OF THE ARCHIVAL FRAMEWORK

Over three decades ago, Frank Burke (1981) in his quest for setting the foundation for new directions of archival studies, asked whether there could be an archive theory without first defining the term itself. He was correct in this view, since as discussed in chapter one, the phrases "archive theory" and "archive practice" are often conflated in everyday usage, partly because of the conceptual complexities, ideological and social milieus in which the archival world and its related institutions emerged long before Burke's time. As Heather MacNeil opines, noting Hugh Taylor's 1987 observation of the paradigm shift in archival studies, "archival methods seem to be moving toward a closer alignment with archival theory" (MacNeil 2007: 517). Despite this growing "reconciliation of theory and practice" (*ibid*.: 518), the definition and understanding of "archive/s" have largely remained varied—and understandably most archaeology scholars with a traditional bias of what archives ought to be might struggle to relate to the new notions of archive theory that allow its applicability to rock art studies. This book seeks to allay those misunderstandings, following the cue that "we have to change the way we think about the nature of archives before we can change the way we act in relation to that nature" (MacNeil 2007: 519). Bearing in mind the non-uniformity of archival terminology (Sickinger 1999: 5), on the one hand the conventional understanding tends to emphasise, among other things, mainly the custodial and public service functions whereby a state building or records office [or the "archival institution" in Schellenberg (1965: 11)] keeps documents, or collections of non-current records (historical), and even organisational repositories and oversees the continuance of the long-term value of "records" for posterity (see Eastwood 1994: 126; Sickinger 1999: 5–6).

On the other hand, the definition is philosophical, with direct emphasis placed on archival memory and meaning values for communities (Craig 2002: 281, 287–289; Menne-Haritz 2001: 59). To most contemporary writers,

an archive is therefore characterised as an "imaginative site" whose boundaries are fluid (Voss & Werner 1999: i). This archive-memory-meaning relation is metaphysically construed in terms of Elaine Freedgood's (2006: 10–17) literary-historical formulation, which calls for a "strong metonymic reading" by which the archive has the ability to authorise abstract movement, in both directions, from things to their histories. These histories reside in the contents and contexts of the records and it is these aspects which the archivist must protect to retain the integrity of evidence therein. In this purview, archives thus play both a historical and also a custodial record storage role (Craven 2008: 7). As will be seen shortly, the record storage view of archives has been a subject of much conjuncture in recent decades and it is fast losing ground in contemporary archival theory.

Most contemporary archival scholars (e.g. Cook 1993, 1996) now eschew the customary focus on the custodial role of archives. As some of them argue, the term "archive" as a noun—not as a verb, as in "to archive"—captures a variety of ideas that represent "an abstraction of a very complex set of institutional, conceptual, and political issues" (Blouin 1999: 108–109). Alluding to the term thus conjures "a wide variety of associations such as, for example, the past, pasts, documents, retention, recollection, management, technology, memory, visual experience, building, process, rules, etc." (*ibid.*). Archives are made up of records placed there in a non-random manner that has particular biases (Cooper 2000: 308, also as argued in the above epigraph). Even with such expansive selectivity, the archive retains its status as a metaphorical and physical site of meaning production, informing, among other things, social, political, historical and other discourses. From this standpoint, the current notions of archive symbolise the new ways in which the interpretation, construction and organisation of history or histories is realised through analysis of a myriad of archival records. In general terms archives recall institutional "records", but only in a narrow sense (Steedman 2001: ix); this partial reflection must be understood in relation to the central formulation of this study. "Record" as a term requires unpacking. The import of this term is expandable, depending on usage contexts and therefore our understanding of it for the purposes of this study entails first evaluating its nature, content and constitution.

The established view of archive "records" is generally that of documents and ones whose reliability can be authenticated. It is from this understanding that the belief stems that archives are sacrosanct repositories of sources. Historians, who routinely use archival sources, refer to these sources as "records of past events" in similar senses that archaeologists speak of the "archaeological or rock art records". To what extent can documents, artefacts or paintings, for example, be said to constitute records (see the sense in which archaeology is a "record" in Binford 1987)? To answer this question, it is important to realise that the fidelity and authenticity of archival sources are fundamental to the notion of "record". Traditionally, the quality of "recordness" is accorded to things that can be transcribed as evidence of something (e.g. see Michie & Warhol 2010: 430). This view foregrounds the "script medium" over other information tropes or even various other kinds of media. As the archival discipline has evolved over time, this idea has clearly become outmoded, as it excludes material objects, artefacts, oral histories, bodily and intangible heritage and so on, which are outside the domain of textual entities. This study subscribes to Alfred Gell's idea of the resonance of memory in material culture: rock art carries cultural memory of past events, as all other material objects do in their physical form (Gell 1998: 233). In light of such views, the recent proliferation of archive studies has dislodged the viewpoint from its original philosophies that past memories reside only in written records or documents. For archaeologists, as scholars who work with the physical material culture, this seemingly obvious fact has always been accepted even though it has not been stated as such. Ideas on the nature of records have also changed along with the rise of new ways of dealing with archives. For instance, advances of the information age, associated technologies and their influence on archival studies have all invigorated the reassessment of earlier notions of "archive records" and the premises on which they were founded. Terry Cook, one of the leading critics of the records-centric notion of the archives, situates the debate on the concept of "recordness" within the current electronic milieu, where the idea of a record being something physically belonging to one place or even in one specific system is rapidly disintegrating. He argues for recognition of the production-manipulation relation of records and then advances that within the new paradigm:

> "[C]reatorship" is a more fluid process of manipulating information from many sources in a myriad of ways, or applications, rather than something leading to a static, fixed, *physical* product…understanding of the conceptual or virtual interrelationships between creating structures, their animating functions, paradigms, and activities, the information systems, and the resulting records. (Cook 1994: 310, original emphasis)

The revision of the notion of the "physical record" has implications for archaeology, and specifically rock art in this study, as the focus has shifted to the idea of creatorship, which is developed in later sections. Indeed creatorship is a central notion in the newly emerging epistemological awareness of the nature of archival records as being more of the embedded information than their constituent physical entities. Furthermore, and importantly for this present rock art analysis, the notion of creatorship is conceived alongside the characterisation of the nature of the interrelationship(s) between the creator and the record, something which MacNeil, echoing Eastwood's archival characteristics, specifies as follows:

> Archives provide evidence of their creator because they are interrelated as to meaning: each archival document is contingent on its functional relations to other documents both within and outside the fonds of which it forms a part, and its understanding depends, therefore, on knowledge of those relations; authentic as to procedure –meaning that archives are capable of

> bearing "authentic testimony of the actions, processes, and procedures which brought them into being"; and impartial as to creation-meaning that archives are created as a "means of carrying out activities and not as ends in themselves, and therefore [are] inherently … capable of revealing the truth about those activities." (MacNeil 2007: 522–523, original emphasis)

These and several other points making up the rethinking of the archive theory in recent years have been so fundamental that many writers have characterised it as a paradigm shift (e.g. Cook 1997). Ideas of what is regarded as the new archival paradigm transcend the physical attributes (e.g. actual buildings, documents or records) of archives to include those concepts that establish their metaphysical constitution (e.g. information, abstraction of memory and so on) as well. As will be shown, indeed the informational value underscores Theodore Schellenberg's definition of archival records (1965: 16). It is the emphasis on the essence of that which defines the "recordness" of archives that has fundamentally shifted their conception rather than a nullification of the importance of archival physical materiality. In terms of actual physical materials, such as the tangible sources preserved in the archives, this approach accords with the manner in which rock paintings are featured in varied contexts as their specific social and physical landscapes. These contexts contain clues for social meaning, memory and the history of the landscape.

The paintings in their original settings are enduring repositories of tangible (i.e. visible graphic forms, their contextual attributes, landscape, etc.) and intangible allusions to historical aspects of the artists' social, political and cultural contexts. These images thus exemplify the archival "recordness" in its expanded formulation. The notion of landscape in this perspective is much more nuanced than just a physical and metaphysical entity. Evoking landscape ideas from narratives, Barbara Bender (2001: 76) argues, "Landscapes are no longer to be separated from human experience or seen as purely visual, and instead they are part of a world of movement, relationships, memories and histories." Using similar thoughts, though with an effort to distinguish between what is termed genealogical and mythical history as opposed to western history, Chris Gosden and Gary Lock (1998: 6) have argued that sites and landscape features "can be seen as engines for the creation of time, through the repetition at them of ritualized acts". Drawing on Alan Rumsey's (1994: 127–128) work in Aboriginal Australia, they see the landscape as the main locus of social memory, with both myth and history inscribed in it—physically and metaphysically. Further, the ritual and ceremonial performances such as stories, songs, dance and paintings are then means of retrieving social memories and meanings from the landscape. Thus time and social memory are key factors of historical narrative as they are also elements of the archive perspective espoused in this study. As we have seen, archives and rock art could be construed as components of history practice. By its very nature historical narrative is anchored on chronology as a fundamental constituent of change through the record of past human activities: change occurs in historical time.

In order to comprehend the notion of "recordness" and its informational value, let us now look at the expanded understanding of Terence Eastwood's (1994) archival characteristics listed in chapter two, which he argued to be rooted in the definition of archive theory. It must be noted that first John Roberts (1987: 68) views the main components in the definition—those of organisation, categorisation and retrieval, which are practical tools in archival science—as outside the domain of archive theory. In contrast, other writers have argued that the very roots of the archive theory are in the development of classification systems and therefore "organization and categorization are at the heart of theory construction for any discipline" (Stielow 1991: 17). Yet others still prefer to separate theory and methodology: for instance, Luciana Duranti (1994: 330) argues that the archive theory is "the whole of what archival material is, whereas archival methodology is the whole of the ideas about how to treat it". In accord, other scholars view this dynamic as one that can be characterised as a continuum, with theory on one side, then methodology positioned in the middle and on the other end, practice with its focal point being the "outcome of the application of methodology in particular circumstances" (MacNeil 2007: 519). Taken together, these latter insights, which this book observes, sustain Eastwood's emphasis on the archive theory and practice as being at the core of explanation and meaning of the past and history. Archival theory is therefore a "codification of rational and systematic thinking, the conscious development of general principles or guides to explain or analyse" (Stielow 1991: 17). Or simply, archival theory "is the analysis of ideas about the nature of archives" (MacNeil 2007: 519). In all, this outline presages context and reconstruction, some of the important notions of this rock art analysis which are now clarified in relation to Eastwood's archival characteristics

Archival context (Nesmith 2005), on the one hand, interlaces with Eastwood's characteristic of naturalness: the specific purposes for which the records were created and the needs for which they were then preserved. Creation is indubitably linked to provenance (a notion that will be discussed later in the discussion), which some have argued is now indistinguishable from the notion of context (Douglas 2010: 37). Archival context therefore concerns the historical background of the record. Reconstruction, on the other hand, is elaborated in historical inquiry as a supplementary (or even principal, arguably) technique for creating information or memory when explanations or the meanings of phenomena are needed. Reconstruction takes the opposite direction, but at the same time provides a counterbalance, to storage, a concept mentioned earlier in the book. It registers exclusively the past (ended time, process, and thus fixed), while storage goes beyond to focus on the future. Nevertheless, as the argument proceeds, focusing on what has passed in interpretations may be secure because past records exist, in contrast to the future, which is uncertain. In principle, therefore, the past may not be alterable (of course, bearing in mind that due to taphonomy processes and other factors, archaeologists and historians of long-term human past periods largely work with altered "records". Past remains may be destroyed

entirely under extreme conditions). Reconstruction starts in the present and looks to the past: it offers salvage for archivists if memory fails in certain circumstances. Yet rock art hints at that past-present-future relational link if we accept that, "Painters devised…variations in accordance with what, in specific panels, they wished to achieve and convey to their viewers and, importantly, to later participant painters" (Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2009: 43). This far-sighted anticipation of the involvement of future artists by their predecessors may clarify the archival perspective espoused in this book. To operationalise these concepts, the centre of analysis is information: those fragments of meaning which interpretations seek to resurrect and preserve. The kinds of information that may arise from archival records are diverse. Therefore. how is this information to be perceived?

Although the inspiration for the information notion was first recognised in Schellenberg's (1965) articulation that the informational value of records is in their symbolic content, it was Frank Burke (1981) who later advocated the significance of the actual information quality of archives. He succeeded in shifting the primary concern of archives with their physical constitution, record and storage, to the emphasis on metaphysical aspects. In his formulation, information, as an authenticated and verified body of evidence about the past, no longer resided in a single document or record, but in a multiplicity of sources that may be found in an archive repository or even several repositories in space and time. This statement is the force behind the rock art as archive notion. When transposed to rock art analysis, this perspective shows that a copious number of images in different categories or traditions and with their various relationships might in this sense similarly be stores of useful information continuum for reconstructing painting sequences and associated social histories involved in their production through space and time. This viewpoint holds true for Eastwood's archival characteristics of interrelatedness, which is the relationship of records as interdependent of meanings and evidence of the past, and uniqueness, which concerns the unique place of each record in the archival structure in relationship with other accumulated past records or information. As in Wylie's articulation of the "cabling" and "tacking" analogy, which is the basis of the argument structure of the present analysis, each unique record is a strand in its own right, which reinforces other interrelated strands.

As some writers have argued, "Each of the thousands of panels that have come down to us is therefore simultaneously unique and – cumulatively – meaningful" (Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2009: 43). Even in their uniqueness, the images form a chronological and informational continuum. The uniqueness of a single or group of figures is an aspect of time and falls within a contextual history of political and social dynamics involved in the production of imagery. Each painting event cannot be the same as any other, even by the same artist(s), and so contains a unique historical context of production. Therefore, bearing in mind Eastwood's characteristic of uniqueness, and although each painting record (or painting assemblage) is unique in its production, the general content and meaning in each may or may not be equally unique. In searching for meaning, a multiplicity of sources is essential to reconstructing the past using a range of theoretical perspectives in ways that manipulate various mutually constraining strands of evidence. This book uses archaeology, rock paintings, colonial/historical sources, ethno-history and ethnography as evidential strands.

Since any view of the past is inevitably interpretation, this archival analysis offers a continuous dialectical reading of images from several sites and allows their correlation in spatial and chronological terms. Overlapping layers of information and superimpositions of images permit the interpretation of rock art meaning(s) and creation of historicised narratives. In terms of the archival characteristics, such historicised interpretations resonate with Eastwood's archival traits of impartiality, which concerns the relationship of facts with interpretation, and authenticity, as something contingent on facts, maintenance and custody. Authenticity relies on identity and integrity (MacNeil 2005: 265). This outline concerns the central theoretical and methodological aspects of the archival approach in this book, which frames a different perspective for rock art interpretation and chronology studies. Sequencing painted images in various categories involves interpreting their original order as an internal original arrangement through time. A methodology of archival arrangement and descriptive practice, the concept of archival fonds, shows primarily how the archival system can be dovetailed with the formulation of stratigraphic sequences and interpretations of images. This application does not replace other relative chronology methodologies such as those based purely on, for example, stylistic analyses that have been shown to be better suited to some regions and not others, but it allows for a greater recognition of interpretative links between painting traditions, particularly in regions with evidence of contact. In some regions, several traditions occur in the same shelters as they overlap spatially and chronologically. The fonds concept permits correlations to be made between imagery themes that occur through different chronological levels and traditions in the sequence. In these cross-referencing endeavours, the importance of the concept of archival fonds is in its concern with the descriptive categorisation and ordering systems as espoused in archival theory and descriptive activity. Something that becomes clear in later chapters on image interpretations, the concept provides "insights into archives as unique expressions of socio-historical value" (MacNeil 2007: 518). In order to appreciate the applicability of archival fonds notion in rock art analysis, we need to first understand its origins and underlying operational principles.

5.3. *Respect des fonds* as a useful analytical conceptual tool

The concept of archival fonds (or fonds d'archives) originates from the 19th-century French principle of respect des fonds, or respect for the origin of documents, which was largely based on the work of French archivist

and historian Natalis de Wailly (Barr 1987: 163). Following the French Revolution in the early 1800s, the new government grappled with all manner of documents of pre- or post-revolutionary origin in their archives. It took several decades to produce a formalised approach to integrate and manage contemporary records with those of the former monarchical regime and all other that dated back to medieval times. As head of the Administrative Section of the Archives Nationales, de Wailly authored the first circular titled "Instructions pour la mise en ordre et le classement des archives departementales", which the French Ministry of the Interior issued on April 24, 1841 (Bartlett 1992: 107). In the circular (Circular No. 14)—an instruction to French archivists—he stated the central purpose and principle of archival classification as follows:

> It is fitting to formulate…the principle and the elements of the method to follow in classification and to define the results which one is seeking: [in part] to assemble the different documents by fonds, that is to say, to form a collection of all the documents which originate from a body, an organization, a family, or an individual, and to arrange the different fonds according to a certain order. (cited in Bartlett 1992: 107)

This statement laid the foundation of the fonds concept in the archival world, and since then the fonds notion has been adopted widely, first in Europe in the late 1800s, and then several decades into the 1900s the USA, Canada, Australia, and other countries. This archival approach was an attempt to avoid the traditional, largely library-influenced arrangement of documents based on classifications solely relying on items such as theme, subject, medium, place or date/time and so on. Instead, the new system foregrounded describing documents in terms of "a contextual, organic, natural relationship to their creator and to the acts of creation" (Cook 1993: 26). But what are the fonds? As the leading fonds theoretician Michel Duchein (1983: 64) noted, the notion is not easily defined. In the early 1980s, the Working Group on Archival Descriptive Standards (Bureau of Canadian Archivists, Ottawa) formally defined fonds as:

> [The] whole of the documents, regardless of form or medium, automatically created and/or accumulated and used by a particular individual, family, or corporate body in the course of that creator's activities or functions. (cited in Millar 2002: 4)

While lacking in the earlier definition, the Bureau of Canadian Archivists in its Rules for Archival Description (RAD) had now amplified their definition by emphasising creation (Cook 1993: 27). This characteristic of creatorship, according to Cook, became central to the fonds approach. Records from a creator are thus organised and kept together in their original order as an organic unit, itself defined by its provenance (Millar 2002: 4). Therefore, individuals or institutions, "whether they actually originate the records, receive the records or share and manipulate information that is in or could become records…create an aggregate of documentary material, in whatever form or medium, which reflects their juridical status as records creators" (Cook 1993: 27, original emphasis). This natural or organic aggregation of records constitutes the fonds. Yet it is clear that it assumes a whole.

There is dissension, however, among archival scholars and practitioners on the designation of fonds. For Laura Millar (2002: 6), the main issue is that the notion implies "a wholeness, a completeness, a totality"—which is not true of the reality of any archive(s). A body of records can result from many creators or a single creator can leave records in several physical locations. As Millar proceeds, records are destroyed, lost, transferred or changed before they get to the archives (*ibid*.). This problem is often the case with the archaeological or painting assemblages discussed in this study. Her argument, which this study agrees with, is that the fragmentary or residual nature of materials left for archiving should be acknowledged. Yet, as we shall see, Cook actually dealt satisfactorily with the main issues—i.e. multiplicity of creators or physical dispersal of a single creator's records in multiple locations—in his advocating for the use of the fonds concept. The main problem that Cook identified is that fonds can be perceived to operate at two levels: as an abstraction or a logical (an arrangement process) and a physical (a concrete product or records) reality. This tension, he argues, is in fact derivative from the discipline's theoretical foundations, which envisaged a dichotomy between both levels: as an aspect of record creation and archival arrangement (Cook 1993: 25, 27). This implicit contradiction in archival theory concerns the fact that the original respect des fonds had two dimensions. One was external, keeping records clearly segregated in creation and accumulation (each group organised into a single fonds), and another internal, filing the records in their original order (the latter was initially passive). The objective, Cook proceeds, was the pursuit of the "essential unit" of categorisation, at the core of archival studies since the seminal 1898 Dutch Manual for archival arrangement by S. Muller, J.A. Feith and R. Fruin (*ibid*.: 24). Maintaining the fonds as a physical entity, as de Wailly did earlier, Duchein defines it as meaning:

> [To] group, without mixing them with others, the archives (documents of every kind) created by or coming from an administration, establishment, person, or corporate body. This grouping is called the fonds… (Duchein 1983: 64)

In this designation records, if they are from the same source, should be grouped physically and conceptually by assigning them to only one fonds. Following de Wailly, this framework is envisaged and reworded as, "[To] gather together by fonds…[is]…to unite all the…[records]… which come from a body, an establishment, a family, or an individual, and to arrange the different fonds according to a certain order" (Duchein 1983: 66). However, as Debra Barr (1987: 164) contended, this system compromises contextual provenance (i.e. the complex history of the records). Conceivably, her critique concerning provenance affects earlier approaches, which routinely allowed rearrangement of files within separate fonds and thus affected the records' integrity. Yet the external dimension

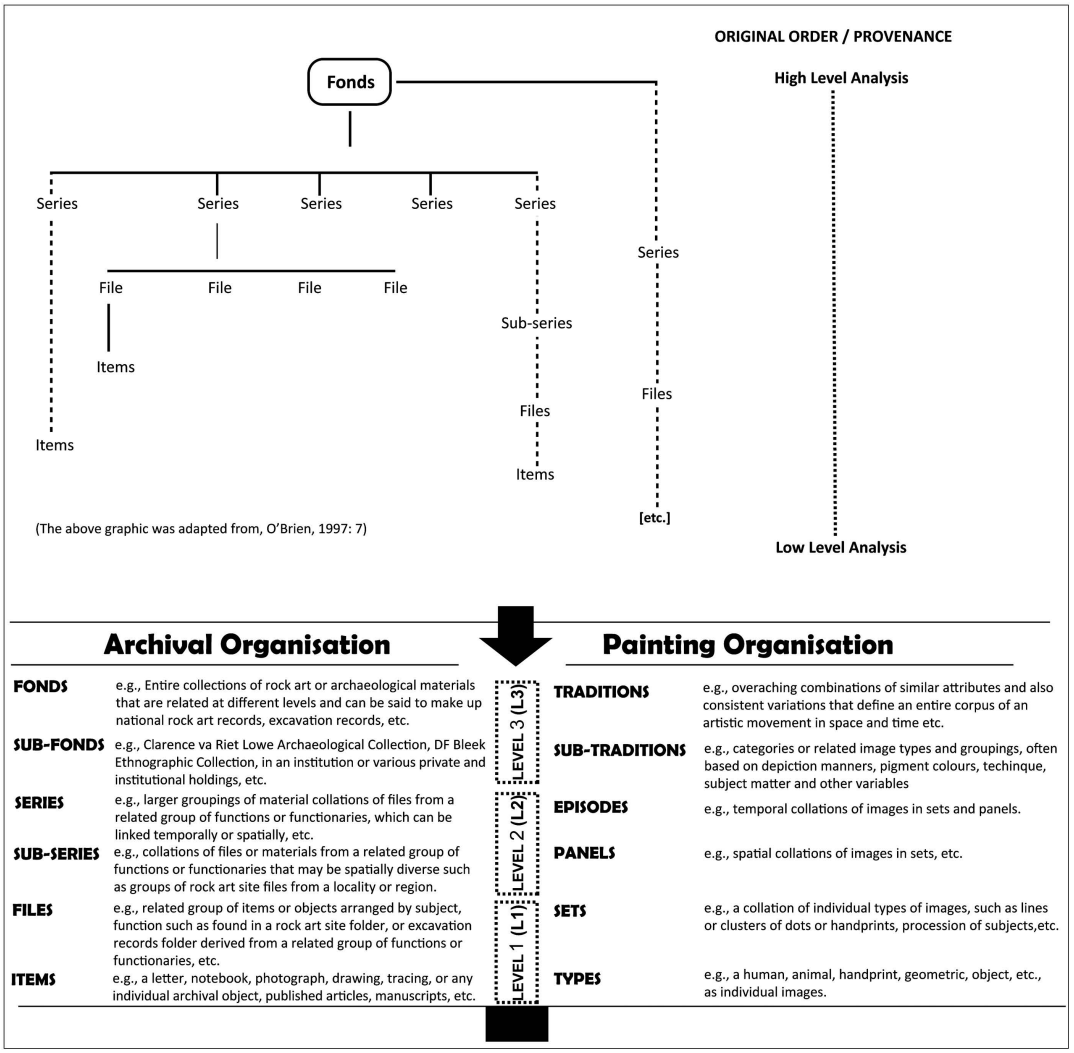


Figure 5.1: Corresponding links between the organising ideas of archival records and the adaptation to the painted images, with the principles of 'provenance' and 'original order' that are central to the fonds concept.

of which Cook spoke was later rectified to maintain the integrity of the records of each creator as distinct from those of all other creators (Cook 1993: 25). This alteration in approach resulted in the idea of archival provenance. Later still, the internal dimension was revised and articulated as the sanctity of original order. This system of ordering focused on preserving the logical structure and internal arrangement of the records of each creator(s) (*ibid*.).

The crux of the problem in operationalising this concept, as noted by Cook, is delimiting a fonds, which involves defining creatorship. Indeed, understanding the provenance and boundary of the fonds is central to defining creatorship, a notion that we have already encountered above. In sum, Cook argues against viewing fonds as the totality of the physical records of a single creator (Cook 1993: 30). Further, rather than viewing fonds exclusively as a physical object, Cook advocates the conceptual dimension; a principle linking provenance with creatorship (*ibid*.: 31). Creatorship is therefore "a fluid process of manipulating information from many sources in a myriad of ways, rather than an action leading to a static, physical product" (Cook 1993: 30, original emphasis). As a central component of fonds, creation (reflecting provenance) is a concrete product, an artefact, a record, whereas the logical arrangement (reflecting their original order) is a function, a process and a dynamic activity (*ibid*.: 25–27). Eastwood (1992: 4–12) characterised this duality of structure and function as important in archival analysis, whereupon the former comprises the external (provenance) and internal (original order) dimensions. Fonds is thus a concept or principle that defines a system of organisation based on the original order by the creator(s) and not that of the archivist or researcher. In this study, such an arrangement not only precedes but is also the basis of the interpretation of images that may hold clues of change through time. For rock art, the image superimpositions and other graphic and spatial interrelationships are empirical observations aligned to the former, while the image stratigraphic sequence—or the ordering of imagery, as an analytical construct—and the emergent relative chronology belong to the latter scenario. Painting chronology is thus an abstraction of sequential order interpreted and expressed through observing the physical phenomena of image overlays. It is the putative indexical qualities of images, such as manners of depiction and overlays, which attest to their temporality and origination that make this archival formulation attractive as an added perspective over other approaches to relative chronology. Sequence is not self-evident; we must discover through

appraisal the provenance and original order of images as left behind by the creator(s) (see Figure 5.1).

From the above archival formulation, the fonds are an analytical construct (i.e. a theoretical group which is the sum total of all the records from a single creating agency) that, in this study, will allow the recognition of coherent painting assemblages. These assemblages may or may not ultimately define broader painting traditions (i.e., San hunter-gatherer art, Khoekhoen pastoralist art, Bantu farmer art, as the main traditions), which are individually clearly distinguishable. However, distinct rock art traditions can be observed at single sites or several other sites in many regions of southern Africa. A single site therefore, as a physical "repository" of these image assemblages, can also be viewed as a location where a single or several fonds can be identified. For instance, in archival practice the physical dispersal of records of an individual or institution (i.e. if they reflect the conceptual reality of creation rather than the physical reality of arrangement—Cook 1993: 29) in four separate repositories (sites or locations) does not constitute four fonds but one, if they are demonstrated to be from the same creator(s). While the painting assemblages may be distinct in creation and form, as deriving from individual artists in different cultural groups, their contextual provenance is the same; that is, they share a complex history and often feature—sometimes superimposed upon each other—at the same site or series of sites in a locality.

This archival approach modifies the customary essentialised cultural pigeonholing approach to the sequencing of images, whereby individual images (themselves seen as not having influenced or been influenced by images of other traditions) are irrevocably "fixed" in their spatial and temporal dimensions. This book's approach anticipates the participation of diverse individuals from different generations and even cultural groups (whether or not they were themselves actual makers of specific art traditions) as being potential makers, users or manipulators of existing painting contexts and thus the resulting site histories as evidenced by the painted imagery and/or archaeological remains in the shelters. For rock painting interpretation purposes, as shown in later chapters, the archival approach allows an interpretative thread to be sewn through different assemblages of imagery as shown in Appendix 1 Figure 4. An interpretation of a subject or theme is no longer confined within the bounds of a single art tradition but can extend across and beyond traditions spatially and temporally. Common practice in rock art studies is that images are interpreted within the realm of their broader traditions, even in regions such as the Cape where sustained contact occurred between or among various groups who made the paintings over long periods of time. It follows then that aspects of image change through time are thought of in terms of intra, rather than also inter, rock painting traditions. Although there are distinct art traditions which might be chronologically verifiable, observable overlaps also exist that should alert the researcher to the potential fluidity of aspects of history, symbolism and therefore image interpretations. Formal variation of images is clearly observable, but that graphic outlook alone should not discount the possibilities of interconnection between a number of context/meaning tropes, or at least as regards certain themes and their metaphorical underpinnings, across the painting traditions.

As the sketchy early colonial record shows, the groups of people inhabiting the Cape in the historical period were quite diverse even among the same broad cultural polities—a situation that appears from the archaeological record (see chapter four) to have obtained as far back as just under two millennia ago. It is a situation that was brought into sharp relief during the opening, advance and closing of the northern frontier (this topic is discussed later alongside the interpretation of a selection of image themes). It is hard to believe that this was not the scenario for many centuries before the colonial era and well into the periods when the practice of rock painting was still active. Therefore, of fundamental importance to this study concerning cultural diversity was the fluidity and the contexts that created and characterised the ethnic, social and political formations of the later periods. The assumption is that the rich cultural tapestry of the Cape as observed in the colonial records must have taken a long time, perhaps in the order of centuries, to materialise. Later, the discussion of the regional sequence will touch on the fluid nature of artistic change over time that might have been prefigured by social and cultural dynamics of interaction of various groups in the Cape. For instance, as evidence of artistic intersections, apart from the continuity of various subject matter and their related graphic contexts across the art traditions there seems to be an aspect of active replication of certain themes through the sequence in different painting traditions. It is tempting to visualise a context where some rock artists created their own imagery based on what already existed on the walls of the shelters which they, like their predecessors and contemporaries, also used or, in most cases, inhabited.

Reverting back to the archival approach and using a hypothetical scenario, we shall see now the important analytical elements of the respect des fonds formulation and how these dovetail with rock painting analysis. In archival practice, the archivist will analyse fonds to determine whether its elements combine to form meaningful levels of arrangement. Let us assume that a repository received from a source a group of materials created by Clarence van Riet Lowe, one of the founding fathers of South African archaeology. It is determined that these materials are comprised of his personal and professional letters, published papers, unpublished manuscripts, an assortment of photographic materials, rock art tracings and other forms of recordings and so forth, all of which were produced between 1945 and 1955. This whole assemblage, at a conceptual level, is defined as a single fonds upon which the archivist must identify levels of arrangement and temporality. At the core of this organisation is the "analysis of the various contexts of documents' creation in order to better reveal their relation to one another" (MacNeil 2007: 517). The archivist thus identifies files or items and the cross-relationships involved. But each file

or item cannot be defined as a Clarence van Riet Lowe fonds, in our hypothetical scenario. Fonds or series may consist of files or items but cannot be arranged at the file or item level, in the same way a painting tradition cannot be defined at the level of an individual image or a single site. Fonds can be arranged at series level. So the archivist must identify and ascertain that the unitary elements of fonds—the files and items—indeed constitute aggregate levels of arrangement. But we must be aware that fonds, files and items are levels of description only, not levels of arrangement. It is the series that operates at both the levels of arrangement and description. The fonds is the subject of archival arrangement; files and items are the elements which combine to establish levels of arrangement, not the levels themselves. The archivist then identifies files and items that make up a series in order to arrange them at series level. Files and items are parts of the series, which in turn can make up sub-fonds and the fonds at a higher level. A series can be understood as an amalgamation of records which were accumulated and used together for a specific purpose, during a distinct period, by a creator (as defined above) and so forth. And in a series, these records are usually arranged in a particular order. For some archival systems, particularly in the USA where there are several groups of series, these larger units or aggregations are designated as Records Group, a notion that is replaced in the post-custodial era by fonds (MacNeil 2007: 517). In archival practice, the rules of multi-level description stipulate that the archivist works from the general to the specific (O'Brien 1997: 7). In some ways, rock art researchers also start from considering the contents of any given site from its totality and gradually scale down to the specific images.

Expanding this hypothetical scenario, let us now assume that more similar material groups are donated to the same rock art repository. The archivist discovers that they were created by some of Clarence van Riet Lowe's contemporaries, including John Goodwin, Dorothea Bleek and Henri Breuil, all of whom at one stage or another between 1945 and 1955 communicated extensively with one other on rock art and archaeological matters. Are these collections justified to be separate fonds? In answering that question, yes they are, as discrete assemblages based on their creatorship. If it turns out that any one of these research pioneers has several of their other records kept in other repositories, such material fragments belong to one fonds relating to the same creator(s). As is well known, these early pioneers often hired skilled personnel for specific functions, such as site-based recording of paintings or compiling stratigraphies in complex excavations, and therefore such files and items are subsumed under the overarching fonds, or they may be designated as sub-fonds. The archivist will then go through the same procedure of archival description and arrangement. Because he or she will respect or conform to the principles of original order and provenance, a letter found in Clarence van Riet Lowe's fonds which Dorothea Bleek wrote to him disapproving of Henri Breuil's Orange Free State painting sequences is not removed and placed in Dorothea Bleek's fonds. This item, the letter (and the archivist might find more such cross-communication), becomes a contextual link between these two fonds. The importance of such interconnections becomes obvious when one considers in this scenario a researcher who is writing a historiography of the contribution of Henri Breuil in the development of archaeology in South Africa. This researcher may be interested in an individual, but this individual's fonds alone does not provide the whole narrative about his archaeological activities in South Africa. Therefore, this historiographer must look at other contextual linkages (such as correspondence, which leads to other archival bodies of information) to piece together that holistic historical narrative. In rock art analysis, such fonds might be envisaged as image assemblages within a single painting tradition or they may indeed be separate traditions, but of importance is the recognition of the possibilities of constructing interpretative threads that can be sewn through these various analytical units rather than constraining analysis to only one unit. Central to this analytical issue is the identification and description of the essential entities in the process of categorising and ordering relationships between individual images of recognisable subject matter, themes within and beyond individual sites and ultimately traditions on a regional scale.

The archival fonds concept plays a central role in the rock painting analysis in this book by providing possibilities for meaningful organisation and arrangement practice in the sequencing of images, as shown in Figure 5.1 overleaf. As shown in chapter eight, for interpretation purposes the fonds notion allows multiple informational connections to be made at different levels of arrangement, unlike in customary rock art studies where this is done within single strata of imagery or traditions. The diagram in Figure 5.1 attempts as best as possible to translate the idea of archival fonds into an equivalent organisational structure for painted imagery. The structure is hierarchical and so each lower level forms part of the one above; record descriptions at each level include reference to the levels above or below. This is as much a conceptual organisation as it is a definition of a painting tradition. As an example, a thread through the hierarchy may start with a human figure or handprint at the bottom. The human or handprint, as an image type, might also form a collection or assemblage such as a procession or group scene or, in the case of handprints, a grouping of decorated or undecorated types to become a set on shelter wall. This analysis borrows from Lewis-Williams's (1992: 9) formulation in deciding image relationships: he considers panels to be spatially defined by separate painted areas as ideal; in reality there are often no empty spaces between image clusters. Episodes are groups of paintings temporally defined from superimpositions; they do not, however, imply a single artist or complete entities. Instead, they are conceived of as segments in a series of images created within a certain period and end when the next episode begins across the rock face. Episodes are therefore conceptual categories for understanding the temporal structure of the paintings. Finally, sets are likewise conceptual entities that Lewis-Williams defined from five criteria (which are by no means exhaustive): shared action (e.g. people walking in a line

or running or crouched in a group); linking action (e.g. an archer aiming his weapons towards an animal, or a human holding an eland tail); similar pigment colours; similar "style" (manner of depiction); and similar subject matter (e.g. a herd of elephants or sheep) (Lewis-Williams 1992: 8–9) and on this list might be added; substrate context (e.g. images created to fill a depression on the rock face form a set, and images or fragments thereof created as entering and emerging from various cracks across a site also form a set). As Lewis-Williams pointed out, one or more of these criteria, but not necessarily all, need to be present (although the more of them present the better) for the outlining of the integrity of a set as a coherent group. There is thus some unity in these kinds of collections of image types. Although he used this schema for a single tradition, San rock art, it holds for other traditions too.

Above this level, various kinds of animal and human processions or battle groups or individual figures and so forth can then be grouped to form categories. We shall see later in the analysis of the key study sites how the various examples of categories, such as fine fine-line red + yellow-, black + red-, dark red- or yellow-kaross figures and so on are outlined. Furthermore, using Lewis-Williams's categorisation, a spatial chain of sets of various image types will constitute a panel or several panels. Although not definitive, panels are generally formed of coherent image clusters that should ideally be delimited by unpainted spaces of rock surface. An entire site might be formed of a single panel or several of them, made up of a mix of image types and sets thereof. It is at this level—the equivalent of archival series—that episodes in Lewis-Williams's schema can be realised as temporal designations. In a region, one can speak of the generality of the images of bags or handprints and their graphic contexts, for example, as categories of painting. Categories, in this context, are formed of collations or a totality of particular image types and their formal contextual concomitants. In this book, they are regarded as strong thematic tropes to be differentiated conceptually from the analytical units of panels, episodes and sets, which are less far-reaching groupings in a regional situation. Finally, all these other levels, as also reflected in Figure 5.1, contribute to form painting traditions—reflecting a cohesive overall graphic structural outlook—which include numerous image types that may belong together chronologically. Fonds and series, as top-level entities in archival analysis, are therefore the broad and ultimate units of organisation. Files and items are low-level descriptive entities. On the upper levels, fonds may invoke painting traditions and then series connoting categories respectively, as the overarching conceptual entities of rock painting organisation. The structure, which can feature in small localities to larger regional contexts, is configured from top down through the broad intellectual unit of fonds, series, files and items.

This defined scheme may not be all-inclusive, but it is useful when linking painted imagery within and between rock art sites to formulate a regional sequence in situations where subject matter and themes need to be interpreted across traditions simultaneously to achieve historicity. It is also useful in reminding the researcher that any image type might emerge and disappear from any given level in this organisational structure without diminishing the veracity of the general order of painting assemblages. Fonds is thus a conceptual principle for expressing a complex organisational unity (the organic manifestation of the archive) directed at the unique relationship between each record's creator and creators (in this analysis, the rock painters) and the ensuing records (which are their individual as well as clusters of paintings and related materials), and between and among interrelated series or groupings of records (categories and traditions). This scheme reflects aspects of the provenance/creation of imagery in terms of the aspects of their physical form in space that can be subjected to sequential organisation in time. In sum, this idea surpasses (though without attempting to replace) the acknowledged limitation of style, briefly to be discussed shortly, as an analytical concept in the context of southern Africa. Rock art as archive is used in tandem with other customary methodologies such as Harris matrices in building image relationships within and between sites in the study area. These matrices are a diagrammatic visualisation of imagery sequence, itself formulated using principles of organisation and arrangement from archival theory defined in the preceding discussion.

5.4. SOME ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH USING ROCK ART SUPERPOSITIONS

It has long been standard practice for rock art researchers to consider painting superimpositions in a routine sequence-and-chronology methodological perspective. In this purview, superimpositions have been used in attempts to understand evolution of "style" in rock art and more recently in relative dating efforts, as discussed in previous chapters. To date, the only studies to employ superimpositions with an interpretative goal in mind were those by Lewis-Williams in the early 1970s when he analysed San paintings in Barkley East and Giant's Castle areas (Lewis-Williams 1972, 1974b). The present study analyses overlays to formulate the stratigraphic sequence of images in order to achieve a bigger goal of interpreting images across space and understanding shifts and continuities in the symbolic meaning of imagery through time. On theoretical grounds, studying several sites is essentially a diachronic analysis of painting sequences which is carried out alongside other pertinent observations in the region. The cultural sequence was formulated from archaeological syntheses using colonial/historical accounts, ethno-historical, ethnographic and anthropological records. Specifying the context of broader phases and sub-phases for painting assemblages is an attempt to account for graphic change, variation and continuities over time. Chronologically, these analyses further question whether the observed superimpositions hold temporal significance beyond individual site contexts. For instance, are the observed overlays restricted only to particular painted clusters at specific sites? If no such specific image pattern within a site exists, then how far and widespread are the observable overlay patterns from

particular sites? If certain patterns are found to emerge from several site localities in a region, such occurrences are therefore compelling to suggest a regional chronology.

In reality the various painted stratigraphic contexts are far more complex than this sketch. Individual images, as time- and material-bound entities, are unique cultural analytical units. The production of a single image or a cluster of images may have involved multiple actions by an individual or a group of people using a variety of materials over a period. Some paintings would have been products of single events by individuals or groups. So the problem of painting sequence variability requires the elaboration of the technique of superimposition itself and the types of image relationships on which this notion depends. There may be doubts in assigning aspects of sequence to images that are not in direct superimpositions, but linkages in spatial and temporal terms can still be created through careful fonds analysis. It has been shown, as discussed earlier in the book, that in reality very few images are found in recognisable and direct overlays (i.e., in many instances painted images are plastered in timeless palimpsests that accumulated over long periods to an extent that it is impossible today to make out their overlay relationships). The archival perspective therefore offers a possibility to assign cautious stratigraphic connections between the images spatially and stratigraphically based on other accumulated evidence from those few images that occur in superimpositions. Well-observed image relationships may place single images in broader contextual associations with defined chronological phases. Although superimpositions are necessary in deducing relative time relationships, it is useful to understand their inherent deficiencies in the southern African situation. The stacking of images directly one upon the other is not as prevalent as generally accepted. It is often difficult to discern overlays beyond two or three layers in densely painted panels due to weathering or fading or smudging; visible remains of paintings are residual portions of what were enduring and extensive artistic traditions in the sub-region. Poor preservation, smudging, fading and mineral accretions on paintings all contribute fundamentally to the incompleteness of the entire artistic record. Other reasons for overlays are cultural. It has long been noted that some superimpositions are in many ways a product of cultural beliefs rather than time (e.g. Lewis-Williams 1972, 1974b). They may also result from other human factors not necessarily related to belief or worldview and so should generally be treated cautiously.

5.5. CREATING CLASSIFICATIONS FOR ROCK ART SEQUENCING PURPOSES

Sequencing images to infer relative chronology concerns recognising coherent image types and ordering them into observable categories. In this way, a researcher is able to systematise variability between the categories. Rock paintings in the Cape have generally been classified in descriptive terms, as in many other studies in various world rock art regions. The defined categories are largely qualitative definitions of image details and features. While the derivative categories generally work, they also have inherent limitations. The first and perhaps the most obvious problem is that none of the descriptive terminologies has any basis on the indigenous nomenclature or indeed the painters' own classification notions of their artistic categories. In southern Africa it is difficult to reconstruct residues of ancient categorising ideas from the existing populations and their oral testimonies. Some parlances that may have nomenclatorial relevance to rock art traditions could, however, be inferred from general classificatory notions entertained by the extant indigenous populations about those kinds of subject matter that were the central focus of artistic expressions of their long gone forebears. That kind of study has never been attempted. We saw in chapter four that, although early colonial records exist, they contain very little insight into the Cape indigenous KhoeSan artists. Even the recent Kalahari San hunter-gatherers are not particularly useful in this regard since they, in the most part, have no tradition of rock art making (We all need to beware of assuming the incorrect academic cliché that Kalahari hunter-gatherers never made rock art since there are no places on which rock art would have been produced. The truth is there are portions of this semi-desert region, both in Namibia and Botswana, where rock paintings and rock engravings exist in customary KhoeSan areas, evidently the artistic legacy produced by their ancestors). Consequently, categories used in rock art studies are etic in nature and, once defined, they are largely presumed to be self-explanatory. Classifications are defined principally on the basis of two related concepts: *technique* and *style*. Every so often, technique and style are conflated notions. As central analytical terms, they require some explanation, theoretically and methodologically, in order to comprehend their usefulness and limitations in rock art chronology studies.

In its definition, technique is concerned with the practical means of image production the method by which marks and strokes are put on a rock surface, aspects which Lesley Maynard says should be separated from design elements (Maynard 1977: 391). Among others, design dwells on issues such as the description of the shape, size and texture of the marks, and is determined by the tools and selected materials used (*ibid*.). Technique has two principal divisions: one is an applicative process that involves placing pigment on a substrate to make a painting; the other is an extractive process which involves removal of rock surface layers to make an engraving (see discussion in Layton 1992: 183–211). In producing the paintings, artists used the most obvious and common technique comprising powdered pigments mixed with liquid substances to produce paints for making the image. The actual act of producing a painting included free-hand application using an instrument such as a brush, quill or stick or the finger or even the entire hand to plaster pigment on large areas. Produced images were painted or imprinted on a surface. A less common procedure, in between painting and engraving, is that of using a solid object such as a crayon of ochre, charcoal or other similar material, which is scratched on the rock surface to make the image. Many

sites in southern Africa reflect a similar approach whereby a sharp solid instrument was used to notch outlines of images. This manner may not be considered a true extractive process used for engravings, since the pointed object basically scores very lightly the rock substrate to produce the image: these are rock drawings. They are basically representations of subjects by means of lines, which delineate their forms without reference to colour such as in paintings. And then for extractive procedures used in making engravings, a pointed object was used to score deeply into the rock surface to make an image. Variations of engraving production may include pecking, abrasion, incision, scratching, pounding and boring in a diversity of substrate contexts. In all, the instruments, types and qualities of the various materials used to produce rock art and the diverse substrates chosen by the artists would precipitate into a variety of recognisable formal characteristics of the painted or engraved images. Whilst the range of materials and production processes of images falls in the domain of technique, there are also some processes that are partly in overlap with the domain of style.

Style is a notion that is more commonly used in art history than in archaeology. However, the notion and uses of style in rock art and archaeological studies have been debated widely over the decades, particularly in North America, Europe and Australia (e.g. see Conkey & Hastorf 1990; Lorblanchet & Bahn 1993; Schaafsma 1985). Robert Layton (1992: 184) views the style as covering the "overall qualities of form and organisation that characterise the corpus". Style is thus in the domain of design, as suggested by Maynard (1977: 391), and leans towards the abstract notions of formal characterisation of images. In this perspective, style consists of form elements or motive, form relationships and the qualities present, including an overall quality that may be called expression. Furthermore, definitions of style may include to varying degrees aspects of technique, subject matter and material, but all these are not as peculiar to the art of a period as are its formal qualitative attributes (Shapiro 1953: 287–289).

Regarding style definition there are, however, differing viewpoints, particularly from a conventional archaeological typological standpoint (Burkitt 1928: 111), as well as the largely functionalist view developed later by James Sackett (1982, 1984) in his studies of Stone Age lithic technologies. Defining style as pervasive in all formal variation, Sackett (1990) devised the isochrestism model, which sees style occurring as two main forms that are culturally and unconsciously predetermined. On the one hand, his active style is iconic with ethnic messages built in within surface decoration; on the other hand, in its passive form, style expresses function. Rather than these being self-contained dimensions, they complement each other (Sackett 1990: 34). Stylistic and functional variability flow from isochrestic choices that people make, based on familiar traditions in "which they have been enculturated as members of the social groups that delineate their ethnicity" (*ibid*.: 33). Such choices are specific and consistent within groups at any time, though they may be affected by changes in the group's patterns of social interaction. This kind of isochrestic variation is diagnostic of ethnicity and it is what can be perceived as style (*ibid*.). Style, then, consists of "a consistent set of preferences for certain forms and modes with a range of permissible variation" (Sackett 1977: 370). This range of variation is "determined by the society, and the artists of that society at any time operate within those limits" (Sackett 1990: 33). Importantly for other analytical studies that use style in formulating chronology, Sackett (1977: 370) nailed the central pivots of this concept as resting on two observations: first, as concerning a highly specific manner of doing something; and second, that this manner is always peculiar to a specific time and place.

Rock art studies apply these axioms, though often implicitly, to organise images with similar formal characteristics into defined periods. Much criticism of the use of the style concept in rock art chronology studies has been based on this fundamental time and space relationship. Using North American rock art corpus to draw examples, Polly Schaafsma noted critically why style is a difficult notion:

> If one is unable to identify discrete styles, that is, what consistently goes together, then one's efforts from that point are curtailed or made difficult. Resulting problems include relating rock art to particular cultural manifestations or time periods, understanding the evolution of styles or traditions that may indicate culture-historical relationships, or identifying the visual information or symbol systems that are the product of given ideologies. Understanding function based on such things as superimpositions and locational information may also be confused. (Schaafsma 1985: 247)

This critique touches on the core of the significance of contextual analysis. In a similar vein, Andree Rosenfeld and Claire Smith argued that "A valid criticism is that stylistic methods of dating do not consider context sufficiently" (Rosenfeld & Smith 1997: 407). Drawing from Rosenfeld's earlier co-publication, they argue that several styles in the case of each and all Upper Palaeolithic cultures may have coexisted, with different styles possibly used for different purposes and functions. Citing Smith's own previous work in the Barunga region of northern Australia, they further argue that artistic systems "encompass a range of styles according to the specific nexus between material context and the social strategies pursued by both the individual and the group" (*ibid*.: 408). Overall, "The documented confirmation that style may differ with context and, further, may emerge out of particular contexts has serious implications for stylistic methods of dating, challenging the assumption that differences in style principally relate to differences in time or space" (Rosenfeld & Smith 1997: 408). In respect of Levantine Upper Palaeolithic rock art, Margaret Conkey (1980: 615) argued that style might be "a set of structural principles, from a repertoire of individual designs". Although this view might imply the existence of discoverable rules or laws within which those structural principles are embedded, problems arise when one attempts to unravel these laws.

For a long time in southern Africa there was an implicit belief that such laws existed, and that the analytical details regarding interrelationships and regularities within and between individual images and larger image groupings would define strong traditions (and their relative chronologies) based on the implied structural principles. Instead, mere descriptions became a norm and often these efforts were complicated by the commonplace phenomenon of inconsistent image superimpositions within sequences at individual sites and across different sites. Nevertheless, others have argued that in some regions, such as in some parts of western Europe and Arnhem Land in northern Australia, "variation in style is in part a function of time, but only in part" (Chippindale 2001: 251, original emphasis). Christopher Chippindale allows that stylistic studies are "effective for bodies of material culture whose rationale is well understood, so variability due to other causes … can be distinguished from those social signals that style is seen as expressing" (*ibid*.). Yet, as is well known, studies of rock art in southern Africa, unlike in Australia, are confounded by the absence of instances where the original artists were documented practising their artisanship in their original cultural and social contexts of production. Furthermore, it can be argued that in the Australian context rock art is a product of a broad Aboriginal culture over a long period whereupon observable internal variability can be related to specific space-time contexts. By contrast, rock art in southern Africa is a product of a multiplicity of indigenous cultures over several millennia and so observed variability is possibly more to do with social-cultural-historical dynamics than space-time differences. Such situational differences have implications on the applicability of style in these diverse regional contexts.

In one of the studies where style was applied to a body of material culture whose rationale or social context is well understood was Polly Wiessner's (1983, 1984) anthropological analysis of projectile points among some Kalahari San hunter-gatherers. It is important to note that resulting formulations were based on a hunter-gatherer cultural setting and with analyses not compounding their material culture with that of vicinal Khoekhoen pastoralists or Bantu-speaking farmers. Wiessner defined style within the domain of information theory as "formal variation in material culture that transmits information about personal and social identity" (Wiessner 1983: 256). This information may confer an adaptive advantage on its users. In this behavioural purview, style has two aspects: emblematic and assertive styles. Emblematic styles carry generalised associations whereas assertive styles are specific. Style thus reflects both individual and group identity. And while style is selective, the inherent formal variability can include ethnic messaging that stems from several behavioural sources. She argued that stylistic variation depends on understanding the behaviour that generates it (*ibid*.) and in this case these behaviours pertained to various hunter-gatherer bands. Whereas many studies use style in this behavioural framework to analyse social behaviour in archaeological materials, others have regarded it as insufficient in defining the social domain (e.g. Boast 1997). One study of engravings in the Sydney region of Australia by Jo McDonald (1999) used these formulations to understand the regional patterning of themes and stylistic variability of imagery in that region. Although this region lacks ethno-historic materials with which to understand how the rock art functioned in realising social strategy and group affiliation, McDonald's analysis of the design elements of images offered clues for generic social group identity messaging (McDonald 1999: 148). Being a contextual study that focused on specific localities, this rock art analysis was carried out based on broad-scale patterning down to local group-level manifestations of particular design themes. Stylistic messaging was found to be "discontinuous and discretely clumped" (*ibid*.), reflecting what could be perceived as bounding information. Further, the compositional detail of engraved images across localised clusters of sites in the region reflected intergroup social contact between the Guringai, Darkingung and Darug language-group areas. It appears that using a stylistic framework to analyse rock art imagery here revealed aspects of the social dynamics of the people in this area that were not attainable from other sources. It is fair to say that, as Chippindale pronounced above, there are regions of the world where the style concept augurs well with the available archaeological data. Australia is perhaps a case in point.

Generally, in most studies it is the outward formal elements of discrete images within rock art assemblages that provide the basis for defining style. Within an assemblage, a repertoire of elements from single images can define an art tradition, or subdivision thereof, constituting a stylistic system. Technique is applicable to single graphic entities while style covers their overarching repertoires. In relation to Saharan rock art studies, writers have over many decades used descriptive terms such as "classical", "geometric", "schematic", "naturalistic" and so forth as stylistic categories. There is nothing inherent—as to space-time or culture-historical manifestations—in these designations, since they are essentially arbitrary. Farther south, early classifications such as those by Desmond Clark (1959) resulted in an entire central and eastern African region labelled the Schematic Zone, to designate a largely geometric art tradition encompassing both painted and engraved forms. This form of rock art has now been thoroughly studied and nowadays the preferred label is Geometric Tradition because, as other recent writers argue, the term distinguishes this form from other rock arts in that region which contain schematic human and animal depictions (Smith 1995, 1997).

As mere terms, "schematic" is too broad and "geometric" is an improved designation, although it is deprived by its restriction, perhaps inappropriately so, to Euclidean and Cartesian formal characterisations. Indeed, the represented forms range widely beyond those images that bear some resemblance to true geometric patterns. Regrettably, there is no recourse without the benefit of original artists, as emic designations for those graphic forms have been lost in time. Researchers should not shy away from using geographical designations to define observed strong regional patterns in rock art image form and content.

However, distinguished from typical naturalistic rock arts of southern and East Africa, the Sahara and North and West Africa, the typical imagery defined as geometric includes a variety of dot forms variously arranged on the rock surface, circles, circles filled with dots and other shapes, concentric circles, rayed circles, ovals and their variations, parallel and vertical lines, lozenge forms, boat-like shapes, comb shapes, ladder-like designs and multiple complex forms which combine several of these single designs. These are painted in mostly red, but also white paints or a combination of these colours, in various regions. Although by no means exhaustive, some of these forms are more typical of Khoekhoen pastoralist rock art than other traditions south of the Zambezi River and they also appear as engraved designs in some parts of the region (Eastwood & Smith 2005; Morris 1988, 2003, 2010; Smith & Ouzman 2004).

Reverting back to style and technique discussion, characterisations for both also include consideration of colour schemes. Images are designated as silhouetted, filled in or solid, outlined, and single or multiple-coloured. Some images were also complexly shaded using various pigment colours to produce subtle transitions between hues or they may have simply been blocked by smearing or whitewashing. Apart from regional/cultural choices, a reflection of variability in the application of specific formal graphic attributes may have also depended on the depicted subject matter; for instance, the artists may have selected a preferred set of their characteristic morphological and behavioural traits. In Layton's definition, these "qualities and organisation" are in fact related to Dorothy Washburn's (1983: 1) analytical view that "while art forms in a given culture may, in one sense, be specifically iconographic or functional or decorative, on a more basic level, they share fundamental similarities which are structural in nature". Correctly or otherwise, such stylistic characterisations were previously widely used to define rock art traditions precisely with putative cultural and ethnic overtones (e.g. several studies in sub-Saharan Africa illustrate this view: Fosbrooke 1980: 293, 296; Fozzard 1966: 61; Masao 1979: 225; Van Rijssen 1984, 1985, 1994). In as much as the derivation of ethnicity from ceramics in Iron Age studies is now considered problematic, it is equally controversial to assert ethnic affiliation to rock art on the basis of form alone. There ought to be an amalgam of other forms of evidence, such as ethnography, ethno-history and archaeology, in addition to how subject matter is graphically associated and structured, before one can arrive at the ethnic designations. Likewise, it is now a fairly straightforward case that formal similarity alone or commonality of structural principles may not be enough to define the integrity of a rock art tradition. In sum, most researchers today would agree that former rock art tradition-to-ethnicity or artistic-cultural correlations were fallacious.

Some writers, while recognising problems with the style concept, advocate for the recognition of the useful aspects of the notion, such as it being an economical lexicon (Chaloupka 1993). Similarly, while accepting the problems with the concept, Rosenfeld and Smith (1997: 408) argued that a stylistic analysis for the purposes of chronology requires the isolation of specific traits that can be given temporal value though it is difficult to differentiate temporal or geographic factors from those pertaining to the influences of social and cultural context. In some scenarios, such as in north Australia, George Chaloupka defined style in Arnhem Land as "a combination of objective, descriptive aspects of constant form and elements, and a subjective evaluation of qualities and expressions, as the most important factors in its analysis" (Chaloupka 1985: 270). As a contextual approach, these ideas contributed to a detailed account of seven artistic traditions within the pre-estuarine period: object prints; large naturalistic style; dynamic figures; post-dynamic figures; simple figures with boomerangs; Mountford figures; and yam figures (Chaloupka 1993). Chaloupka also argued that, "It is by identifying individual styles and by arranging them in a chronological sequence that a meaningful division in a body of art can be achieved, and it is only then that other forms of analysis can be used" (*ibid*.: 270). These image categories were seen to be coherent spatially and temporally, but such an analysis is not always so straightforward in other regional situations, such as southern Africa.

In southern Africa, the characterisation of image types into coherent groupings that are temporally distinct has always been a challenge, although broad manners of painting or engraving have been used to identify general rock art traditions. As some writers found in respect of San hunter-gatherer rock art tradition, there is often a repeated phenomenon of contradictory superimpositions and therefore sequencing imagery within a single tradition remains elusive. Some years ago, Lewis-Williams (1987a: 96) argued that, "If precise definition of individual styles is difficult, the establishment of stylistic sequences by super[im]positions is more so" in San rock art. In recent decades, other writers have argued that style is all too often ill-defined and highly subjective (Garlake 1995: 26; Lewis-Williams 1987a: 95–99). Style needs to be defined explicitly and contextually to account even for those capricious variables that are often not internally consistent temporally, spatially and culturally. Some writers, while calling for a "post-stylistic era" (e.g. Bednarik 1995; Lorblanchet & Bahn 1993), have generally called for its neglect in rock art studies.

In order to circumvent such difficulties associated with the notion of style, Lewis-Williams (1992) grouped images into coherent spatial and temporal categories by formulating three definitional entities, discussed above: panels, episodes and sets. This present study incorporates these organising principles in the overall methodology in order to examine and define images, relations between individual images and subject categories and, ultimately, the ordering of these images and categories into a chronological sequence. Adding the archival principle of respect des fonds, as outlined above, a selection of certain subject matter across various sites and strata are subjected to an iconographic interpretation using ethnography and historical sources. Whereas the use of the style concept

as an organisational device is a means by which rock art can be ordered and placed in its temporal and spatial contexts (Schaafsma 1985: 249), in this book the fonds are used as a means to historicise interpretations of painting themes spanning different levels of the sequence. After the categorisation of images, it is possible to move on to the translation of the resulting structure using Harris matrices.

Accurate definitions in respect of notions embodied in terminologies—such as "style", "panels", "episodes" and "sets", as well as "rock art", "traditions" and so forth—define their conceptual associations and assists in their practical deployment. Even as this naming is crucial in indicating the referent or signified associations, the burden of confusion from denotations that comes with most borrowed or adapted terminologies complicates rock art data analyses. It is the same problem that is encountered in dealing with notions, theories and techniques that were first developed for application in geological sciences, then borrowed in archaeological studies of stratification and now applied to rock art superimpositions. By the same token, Harris matrices are a technique that was formulated for use with archaeological stratification, but now it is routinely employed in the analysis of rock art image layers. As shall be seen, some of the issues affecting the use of Harris matrices in rock art studies are more conceptual in nature (as related to the original application of this methodology in archaeology) than real, and result from their transplantation from one research situation for which they were developed to another for which they were subsequently adapted.

5.6. How Chronology? Harris Matrices in Sequencing Imagery

The importance of relative chronology cannot be overemphasised given the dearth of absolute dates and doubtful datable contexts in southern Africa. In their absence, relative dating evidence remains a source for creating rock art chronologies in some regions. But relative chronologies also have their own difficulties. Generally, researchers have in the past 25 years studied rock art superimpositions and used Harris matrices to then map out overlays into sequential strata and thus relative chronology (Chippindale & Taçon 1993; Loubser 1997; Mguni 1997; Russell 1997, 2000). These studies have, however, encountered varying degrees of success in their specific areas and rock art traditions where the central methodology of Harris matrices was applied (see critique in Pearce 2010). We will return to aspects of these studies, but first let us consider the basic principles of the Harris matrix system, since it is a tool used alongside the archival perspective in resolving the Cape painting chronology.

Edward Harris (1975, 1979a, 1989), after whom the matrix methodology is named developed it in the 1970s while wrestling with multifaceted urban site stratigraphies in Britain, as a graphic system of expressing the complex excavated depositional units of stratification. However, as Harris himself maintains, the matrix diagrams are not simply a "picture" of a vertical cross-section of a site, but go further to interpret the relationships between all stratigraphic units using the Law of Stratigraphical Succession (Harris 1975, 1977, 1979a, 1989). The layers of deposit are what Harris described as the smallest units of archaeological identification. These layers carry both the spatial and time dimensions; so the matrix system describes the time relationships between layers. In the end, the matrices are "… schematic diagrams capable of showing all the details of the stratigraphic sequence" (Harris 1979b: 87). Harris matrices are in fact not mathematical matrices; rather, they are lattices or partially ordered sets (Orton 1980: 67). Nevertheless, this study retains the term "matrices", as Harris and others who use the system call these diagrams (see Loubser 1997). As far back as the 1800s, archaeologists have applied stratigraphic theories in their analyses of excavation data. Until Harris's formulations, most of these applications employed a selection of adapted geological concepts for stratigraphical interpretation of the excavated sites. The principal concept was the Law of Superposition, derived from the mid-19th-century geological formulations of the English geologist Charles Lyell (1865, 1875). For a long time archaeologists used this axiom "despite the great differences between the consolidated, sedimentary strata investigated in geology and the unconsolidated layers of the archaeological site" (Harris 1989: 13). Its weaknesses prompted Harris to amend the Law of Superposition, using the key clause "originally deposited". The revised axiom establishes the temporal relations between archaeological strata. Relatively straightforward, this law is central to sequencing and the matrix construction since:

> In a series of layers and interfacial features as originally created, the upper units of stratification are younger and the lower are older, for each must have been deposited on, or created by the removal of, a pre-existing mass of archaeological stratification. (Harris 1989: 30)

It must be noted that "archaeological stratification may exist without artefacts, [as] this law may be applied to archaeological stratification without regard for its artefactual content" (*ibid*.: 39). Because the law does not cover the overall stratigraphic relationships of a site, these artefacts and features as well as other observed phenomena have to be later related to the deposits and units of stratification. For this reason, Harris and Richard Reece (1979) then proposed the Law of Stratigraphic Succession, as:

> [A]ny given unit of archaeological stratification takes its place in the stratigraphic sequence of a site from its position between the undermost of all units which lie above it and the uppermost of all those units which lie below it and with which it has a physical contact, all other superpositional relationships being regarded as redundant. (Harris 1979b: 113).

Two relations ensue from this law and the lattice nature of the matrices: transitive and asymmetric relations (Orton 1980: 67), which are essential in the construction of matrices:

• Transitive relationship: if 1 is later than 2 and 2 later than 3, then 1 is later than 3.
• Antisymmetric relationship: if 1 is later than 2 and 2 later than 1, then 1 and 2 are contemporary.

In light of the laws and axioms stated above, Figure 5.2 illustrates the central relationships between two hypothetical stratification layers, **A** and **B**, which are applied in the construction of matrices as an abstract, diagrammatic interpretation of the sequence of a site (Harris 1975, 1977, 1979a, 1979b). This design matches the schema of stratified archaeological deposits that the Law of Superposition predicts, but there are exceptions. It is important that actual superimposition relationships are confirmed by supplementary observations. In sequencing the relations and presenting them as a Harris matrix, the different units of stratification are converted into single values and then linked to other units according to these key types of relationships that are defined between them. The practical construction of the matrices is a straightforward process where stratigraphic units are represented as numbered boxes, while the successive relations linking them are drawn as vertical and horizontal lines describing the positions and types of relations of the connected boxes. Redundant relations, those that are already implicitly formed by other relations, are then eliminated as unnecessary once a sequence is constructed. Aside from the structural difficulties, there are also conceptual disjunctions that researchers need to understand in the application of this methodology to rock art analysis.

These principles are better suited to archaeological deposits, and thus need modification for application to rock art sequencing. So the interfaces, which are a crucial concept of archaeological deposits, become less tangible in rock art analysis. However, as an abstraction it is possible to think of spaces separating (if any exist) panels or episodes in Lewis-Williams's formulation as some kind of notional interfaces. But they are not easily encoded in the matrix diagram. Even the images themselves, as cultural artefacts, are not well suited for this methodology. In reality, while the Harris matrix boxes represent stratification layers in archaeological analysis, they become conceptual entities in rock art analysis. Each entity is formulated through observing imagery relationships and so each image (i.e. each box) becomes a proxy for a notional unit of stratification. When Chippindale and Paul Taçon first applied this tool in their analysis of the Kungurrul and Brockman rock art panels in Arnhem Land (North-western Australia), they argued: "This examination of a set of stratigraphic relationships, is of sufficient complexity that we used the method of Harris matrices…to resolve them into a single successive order" (Chippindale & Taçon 1993: 35). In another context, where the tool was next applied but this time in the South African situation, Johannes Loubser considered Harris matrices (or lattices as he called them) as "an aid to interpretation" while emphasising the importance of intensive field observations: "Instead of being an end in itself, a Harris Diagram is a systematic means to clarify stratigraphic relationships at a site and therefore challenge

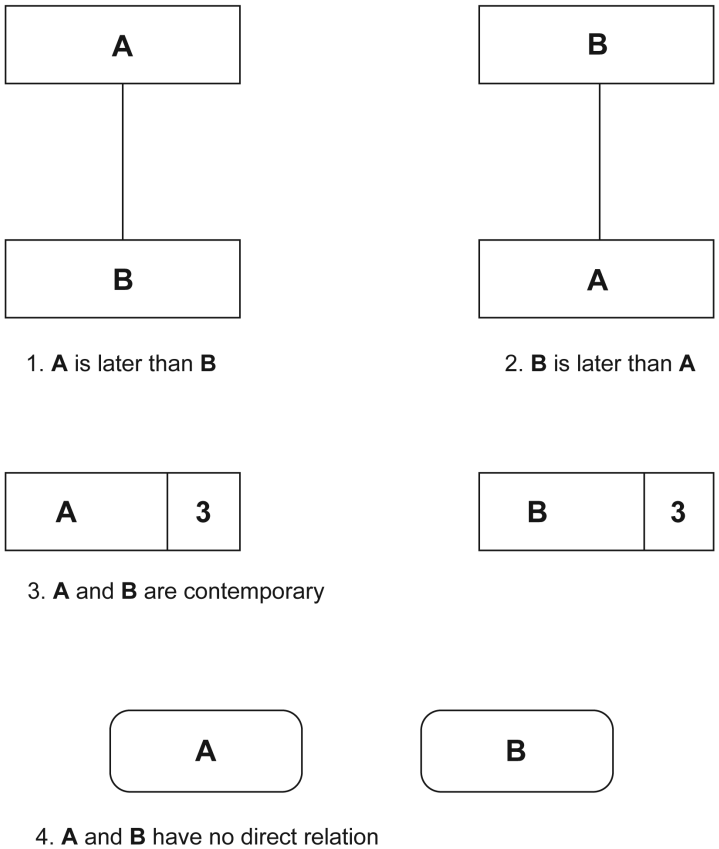


Figure 5.2: Key types of superimposition relationships in stratified deposits, which have some relevance for rock art sequencing.

our assumptions about composition, preservation, and relative age" (Loubser 1997: 14–21).

Another relative chronology study at a site called Diepkloof Kraal Shelter (or DKS) (Mguni 1997), which is updated in chapter six, was the first in the Western Cape to adopt the Haris matrix system for a comprehensive rock art site analysis. In this scheme each individual image is characterised using four central graphic traits: the manner of depiction (substituting the notion of "style"), technique, pigment colours and subject matter. The single image is thus an elementary unit of analysis in this scheme. These graphic traits were chosen as diagnostic features that facilitate the grouping of discrete images into distinctive arrays or clusters (panels) that could, but don't always, reveal useful temporal patterns (i.e. episodes, as discussed above) in the stratigraphic sequence (Yates *et al.* 1993, 1994). At the site DKS, "The use of Harris matrices… will not only permit the integration and interrogation of different genres or assemblages of images, but will also allow for the details of sequence of the panorama to be presented graphically" (Mguni 1997: 3). However, according to Harris, "In the simplest of terms, but dealing with that most complicated of ideas namely, time, the matrix is a new type of calendar…to see the stratigraphic sequences of complex sites…it must be translated to a diagrammatic form to be understood as a schedule or sequence" (*ibid*.). Governed and structured by a set of principles and conventions formulated using laws and theories of stratification, the Harris matrix system renders superimposition relationships of images in overlays. In its original formulation it designates superimposition contexts based on the idea of "interfaces" and "deposits" (but not artefacts), although in the system's adaptation to rock paintings these conceptions are converted to abstractions that have little or no force in determining the final sequence structure. Rock art images themselves are the artefacts (excluded in original formulation) in the study of sequence. Correspondences between archaeological and rock art phenomena still hold and warrant the continued application of the system in rock art studies.

To understand these correspondences, the Law of Original Continuity is useful in assessing aspects of image continuity. In the same way that some images may be discontinuous over painted surfaces—as a result of original creation, weathering over time or both—the archaeology deposits may also be non-contiguous, but still remain part of the same episode of occupation. This is true, for example, of the bedding and ash lenses and other similar archaeological features from excavated sites. Several patches of ash deposits may have formed a contemporary unit of occupation without necessarily overlapping spatially, just as a set of discrete paintings might on rock surfaces. So, as quoted in earlier chapters, Miles Burkitt (1928) in some ways might not, after all, have been far off the mark in arguing for the appreciation of similarities between archaeological stratigraphy and painting sequences. Harris, on the other hand, pointed out that the fundamental fact of the matrix system is discerning time in terms of the ordered deposits within which objects of material culture may be embedded. It appears that the depositional action of archaeological strata is akin to image placement on the rock face. Therefore, as defined above under the archival fonds formulation image sets, classes, panels and categories of imagery become a proxy for deposition strata and their interfaces. Conceptual disjunctions between the various forms of materiality from the past are important to understand, but an awareness of these pitfalls must not deter cautious use of the methodology. This study applies these principles in the formulation and production of the matrix diagrams to show image superimpositions from selected sites.

5.7. SITE AND GRAPHIC TRAITS FOR SEQUENCING ROCK ART

The rationale for using the Harris matrix system is to examine and sort the distinctive individual painted figures into coherent groupings that may then be sequenced into a temporal order within overpainted rock shelters. Such groupings should be identifiable through the observable graphic features of their constituent images. The crucial aspect of sequencing imagery is detecting superimposition in the form of image overlaps but the images need to be sorted first into arrays or groupings in order for them to be useful in the formulation of relative chronology. Below is a list of parameters, following Chippindale and Taçon (1993) and subsequently Mguni (1997), used in this present study to classify images into coherent and self-contained categories and distinguish their stratigraphic positions in the chronological sequence. These formal parameters are used since they are straightforward and sufficient for the purpose at hand. Because it does not carry varying connotations (Chippindale & Taçon 1993: 39), this study uses Chippindale and Taçon's suggested term "manner of depiction" for those attributes of images that border on form and technique.

Manner of depiction: These are recognisable features of the outward form of images. The essential formal appearance of an image may render it to cohere with other images, thus necessitating correlation with similar images. Images might appear in fine fine-line manner (a delicate and finely detailed execution), while others within this broader category may be defined as coarse fine-line. Other observable manners include the offset print manner (imprinting), which accounts for nearly all the handprints in the study area, and the crude finger-painting manner typical of the colonial-period rock art. In association with this latter manner of depiction are smears, smudges and distinctive pigment patches. There are other nondescript image forms, though uncommon, which use a cruder form of this manner. These images have been studied in other parts of southern Africa under the general rubric "Late White" tradition, on account of them always appearing in white pigment and painted in recent centuries. There is a small component of, for want of a better word, "doodling" made with crayon lines or simply by scratching the rock with hard pointed objects. It is also common in the Cape to find writings of various kinds some of which may not

fit the designation of graffiti (see Mguni 1997), and then imitative drawings and other indeterminate forms in charcoal and ochre at various sites. However crude, these are recognisable image types in their own right; it is useful tentatively to define their manner as drawing. Overall, this parameter addresses formal appearance of imagery.

Technique: In the making of images, the instruments and materials available or chosen determined this parameter (Maynard 1977: 391). Recognisable techniques used in creating images include painting (an applicative process using the finger or an instrument) or engraving (a subtractive process using hard or pointed instruments). Other techniques include drawing, where a solid, possibly pointed, object was used to scratch outlines in making images or creating images using charcoal and ochre crayons; and writing, such as seen in scripts associated with the modern phase of people's names and signatures (i.e. graffiti), where creators used crayons of charcoal and ochreous materials. Regular grids and cross-hatching and similar forms as well as imitative representational images appear largely in the latter technique. In another form, in more recent times, commercial crayons and pencils were scratched or rubbed on the rock wall to make the images, names, signatures and other forms of writing. Finally, there is the offset printing (with wet paint), used in making handprints and even finger dots and strokes. These categories are not necessarily exhaustive, but are a general guide to the commonplace in the Cape. This parameter addresses the practical side of image making, the how of painting or engraving.

Pigment/colours: Red ochre is the most common pigment, appearing in various shades or hues for rock paintings. However, there were other pigment colours, including brown, maroon, white, black, yellow, orange and variants of these pigments. The definition of colours or pigmentation of images is a difficult process, particularly when preservation is poor, as is invariably the case with many sites. Even the Munsell Colour Chart, which was initially used in the present study, proved not to be objective enough since people may perceive colours differently under different observation conditions and depending on the light at the time of recording. The chart was abandoned since in the Cape sites reflect a remarkable consistency in the types and range of colours used for rock art images.

Subject matter: The depicted content varies within and between painting categories and traditions. The subject matter ranges from animal and human to geometric designs and many other forms that are often not easily identifiable. In some cases, there are unusual implements associated with human figures, such as tufted or leaf-shaped images mentioned in chapter two. In the classification of imagery into analytical groups, classes and categories, such objects became useful in associating similar kinds of images.

Datums: Image datums were first mentioned in an earlier study in the Cape (Mguni 1997: 33), but the notion had never been fully recognised in analysing painting sequences. The Concise Oxford Dictionary (9th edition) defines datum as: (1) a thing known or granted; an assumption or premise from which inferences may be drawn. And (2) a fixed starting point of a scale, etc. This study uses the first sense (with a little of the second) in defining this concept and its usefulness in identifying sites for building chronologies. It is essential to select those sites with broad and spatially structured images and which form datums because they cover large spaces of painted rock face. Ordinarily, images have only one or two relations of sequence with other images. Yet large figures or those forming chains or serial repetitions so that their spatial arrangement and extent covers wide areas of the rock face tend to be involved in many superimposition relations. Therefore, these serially arranged images over wide areas of rock are a good basis as reference points for sequencing image relationships. Datums are useful in ascertaining the archival arrangement notions, image context and respect des fonds, and the organising principles of sets and episodes.

These parameters allow for an understanding of the organisation of imagery across rock surfaces and in constructing their sequential relationships. Several large sites usually contain these image datums as autonomous arrays spanning large sections of painted surfaces. In the Cape, these datums are generally in the form of single or multiple lines of handprints, long processions of human figures or animals, or even the actual painted linear images stretching horizontally several metres across panels, and some types of dots that spread across large surfaces as a series of rows or lines or simply as fields covering large areas. These image datums may also be in the form of extraordinarily large depictions that overlap with many other images. One datum is a "group scene" at Fallen Rock Shelter in Bushmans Kloof, probably the largest of its kind in the Cape, and another case is that of the procession of large elephants plastered in yellow in one of the sites at Salmanslaagte, a valley area on an adjacent farm. These large elephants are a common feature in the Agter-Pakhuis area (see comment in Slingsby 1997: 36) and farther north in the Gifberg region (Yates *et al.* 1994: 38) (Figure 5.3). Interpretations and the relevance of the occurrence of elephants in the various levels of the sequence are discussed in chapter eight. There is also an investigation of the consistency of particular themes in various painting categories—for instance, the question of whether all finger dots, handprints and even some elements of the diverse fine fine-line category cohere as chronological units within the regional sequence or they populate multiple temporal levels without a strong regional pattern. In terms of the manner in which the various image categories are painted and defined, this analysis also reassesses the conventional rock art approach in the region that has allowed a further subdivision of categories into subcategories resulting in a fine-tuned chronology. This combined emphasis allows the contextualisation of the established rock art sequence within observed regional patterns and in the future will enable corroboration with direct dates, whenever they become available. Relative chronologies thus create the framework and an organising model for direct

Figure 5.3: Large yellow-to-orange clay-plastered elephants are fairly common in the Cederberg ranges where they are almost always over fine fine-lines if they are in superpositions. The bottom right picture shows that some later forms of elands found painted above other fine fine-lines are treated in this manner of depiction.

dates by providing a graphic frame within which direct dates can be positioned to to understand the history of artistic production. Direct dates thus become meaningful when deployed against a contextualised cultural-artistic sequence. In the end, a demonstrable regional painting relative chronology, which can be integrated with the cultural sequence modelled from the archaeological and documented sources, can make compelling historicised explanations of the interface between pre-colonial and colonial rock art production.

CHAPTER SIX

Key Sites and Their Constellations

> *Methods may need to be adjusted accordingly with much more detailed consideration—and a more precise comparison—of artefactual material at different rock art sites, the deployment of motifs within a site and the situation of sites in the landscape.* (Rosenfeld & Smith 1997: 408)

6.1. DEMONSTRATING THE WESTERN CAPE CHRONOLOGY

The relevance of relative chronologies might be questioned in some quarters based on their general imprecision and the simple fact that they are not absolute dates. This concern is understandable; the necessity for absolute rock art dates is incontrovertible even though these too are largely inexact. Conversely, on their own, and however numerous, direct chronometric dates remain less informative if they cannot be related to other pertinent aspects of cultural, social and artistic change. As Ray Inskeep (1971: 101) once noted, "[W]e must also realise that to know the age of a painting or engraving means nothing, unless that knowledge can be put to work with other data to tell us something more important." In this vein, some researchers in the Drakensberg were able to link absolute AMS radiocarbon dates with relative sequences (Mazel & Watchman 1997, 2003). Aron Mazel reported recently that an image of an eland, dated between 2,900 and 2,760 years ago, belongs to the second oldest layer at Main Caves North in the central Drakensberg (Mazel 2009), which was earlier identified by the Harris matrix analysis (see Russell 1997, 2000). However, there are lamentably still very few direct dates; in their absence, it is vital to search for discernible artistic divisions that could be ordered sequentially into meaningful chronological phases and sub-phases in space and time dimensions.

Painting sequences are customarily deduced from image superimpositions as an aid to relative time determination and correlation. Because this process involves direct field observation, superimposition analysis is both an empirical and interpretative procedure. As with most kinds of archaeological rationales, the main problem with this approach to chronology concerns the applicability of results at various analytical scales: from panel, site and locality to regional levels. Although most archaeological frameworks are generally useful at broad analytical and interpretative scales, when tested against finely detailed analyses at site or locality levels their results often become imprecise. While the reverse is also true, generalities are not necessarily wrong, but they fail to account for the minute heterogeneity of phenomena reflected from small scales of analysis. Spatially, archaeological interpretative models should start from small site and local levels, and move towards larger regional scales of analysis. A locality might reveal a unique variation of phenomena, which often risks being eclipsed by large-scale explanations. The homogenising effect of overarching explanations obscures markers of change and the details that a small-scale analytical level might reveal. To chart the progression of imagery in time, this study focuses largely on three key sites, which are discussed in this chapter, to build a relative painting chronological sequence in the Western Cape.

In order to envisage history and associated change from In order to envisage history and associated change from painting chronology, this chapter begins from the view that "history begins with bodies and artefacts … the moment of fact creation is continually carried over in the very bodies of the individuals who partake in that transmission. The source is alive" (Trouillot 1995: 29). Although they are not easy to isolate, individual makers of past records are therefore the cornerstones of understanding the evolution of painting histories. Similarly, rock art interpretative models must have the ability to account for phenomena at individual sites and build upon them through analysing further sites and ultimately achieving large-scale interpretations. That way, it is recognised that individuals in their societies are implicated in the social and cultural processes of their historical milieux in those space and time contexts. Taking a hypothetical scenario, it is obvious that two distinct historical events would arise when one individual painter creates a squatting figure or an elephant group at a densely painted site while another artist simultaneously paints a file of men elsewhere at the site. Each of their image creations is thus as unique in its particular time and space "history" as all other images and forms of material phenomena within and between sites. In this line of thought, some writers have argued, "Each image and each set of juxtaposed images in a panel of paintings is unique. Each has something to reveal about content" (Garlake 1994: 347) or, as others have said, "the painting of each panel was a specific event that was tied to its own ritual context, purpose, needs and motivations" (Hall & Mazel 2005: 124). Important observations thus follow: first, to distinguish these two paintings and their histories chronologically is impractical even though they were produced at the same time. The chain of artistic events involved is essentially historical—in the sense of being as situated in their own time. Second, as an artistic product

from specific temporal actions of individual painters, the squatting figure, the elephant group or the men in a procession at this site are not identical to similar subjects on other surfaces at this site or other vicinal sites. This applies even when the same two artists painted these other images at different sites. However, in spite of the details of their history, temporal and spatial dissimilarities, they also all belong firmly in the same localised thematic categories—the "content" of which Garlake speaks. Contemplated from the archival trait of uniqueness discussed previously, it can safely be said that no two images are formally exactly the same although their content or meaning may not necessarily be unique in time and space. However, as the analysis of sequence based on the three selected sites shows, these thematic categories do indeed have a tendency to fall within broader chronological boundaries, something that is elaborated in this and the next chapter. Although the traditional approach to painting sequences misses the value of this heterogeneity, the archival perspective does in fact recognise these unique but also related images as significant for building relative sequences and chronology.

This analysis uses some functional concepts from the archival perspective, which are highlight shortly, in order to define image categories for sequencing rock paintings. These concepts are used to evaluate whether the stratigraphy of images is intelligible spatially and chronologically. The procedure inspired by archival concepts involves building sequences from small scale (specific image superimpositions) to large scale (multiple image relationships within and beyond individual sites) graphic situations. This approach is in direct contrast to previous Harris matrix studies that have analysed superimpositions from single sites (Loubser 1997; Mguni 1997; Russell 1997). There has therefore been little attempt to correlate the results with other broader regional clusters. While several sites were analysed in the earlier studies in various rock art regions of southern Africa, some of these studies proceeded to look for repetitions of one sequence structure onto others in several other sites. In nearly all, the common frustration was the lack of replication of sequence from one site to the next, but what appears to be an obvious explanation is that these studies focussed on single traditions. Even then, there has been no attempt to examine the possibility of the presence of sub-traditions within the broader hunter-gatherer tradition.

By contrast to those early efforts, and more importantly, the archival perspective allows for the building of master sequences within which smaller sequences can be placed. Relational patterns between image categories and across traditions are mapped out onto a single template to provide the overall regional sequence. There is a crucial duality of images that the archival approach recognises: on the one hand, the images are "unique and single entities" and on the other, they are identifiable "entities enmeshed in multiple themes" across several sites and traditions. Image relationships primarily have chronology implications as observed from superimpositions and, secondarily, from those stratigraphic sequences that are implied by the artistic associations and contexts that are arrived at beyond the use of superimposed images alone.

The archival perspective makes it possible to account for observations made at different spatial scales to be integrated into a unified regional chronology. Understanding chronological complexities at different scales of enquiry might permit a fine-tuned analysis of historical, archaeological and anthropological sources to explain recursively both homogeneity and heterogeneity in the painting sequence. This archival approach uses three scalar levels of analysis: it works from a small, site-level scale using stratigraphic sequencing of individual images and clusters. The second tier is the medium, local-site scale, which involves observing inter-site relationships of images, categories and their consistent attendant associations. Finally, at the large, regional scale, it considers the spatial and temporal patterns and variations beyond site and local levels. This framework of multi-scalar levels of analysis is suitable for constructing history, chronology and interpretation of the painting record.

6.2. Analysis of Painting Sequence in the Study Area

Presented observations pertain to a survey of 200 sites in the Agter-Pakhuis locality, south of the Gifberg range, the Olifants River and the sandveld defined as the study area in chapter three. Out of this number, two key sites were selected from the Boontjieskloof River in the Agter-Pakhuis: Fallen Rock Shelter and Maidens Pool Shelter. None of these sites was ever analysed in detail in terms of stratigraphic painting sequence. A third sequence emerged from the re-evaluation of the Diepkloof Kraal Shelter (DKS) sequence (Mguni 1997). The emerging stratigraphic patterns were then equated in the quest to provide a detailed painting sequence of the region. The selection of study sites followed some basic criteria: first, taken into account was the pre-existing general physiographic divisions noted in chapter three: the mountains and the sandveld. This separation follows an earlier observation that different human and settlement activities were associated with these areas over time, with the view that the painting histories also follow this spatial patterning (e.g. Manhire 1981; Manhire et al. 1983; Parkington et al. 1986; Van Rijssen 1984, 1985, 1994; Yates et al. 1994). The discussion also refers to other sites in the region to illustrate convergences and divergences in the emergent sequence. While the two shelters and a few satellite sites in the discussion are from the mountains, only DKS is located in the sandveld. The selection of these sites was based on the following three arbitrary criteria: a) Large shelters (approximately 20 m2 and more) were selected. It is common in many parts of the subcontinent that large sites have extensive occupation deposit attesting to their use over long time frames. Furthermore, they also tend to contain numerous paintings (often several traditions too) with observable superimpositions. b) Recognisable superimpositions with density of coverage approximately 75% or more of the painted surfaces. This is subjective, but a cursory assessment might indicate that a site has potential for studying sequence when dense overpainting is observed. c) The presence of image datums: as discussed in the

Figure 6.1: Fallen Rock Shelter's well-preserved main panels with sequence in the middle of the site, while the peripheral panels are either too smudged, faded or both to be of much utility in the deduction of sequence.

previous chapter, this graphic aspect is very important for the analysis of superimposition relationships across large areas of painting. The concept of datum applies to large images or series of images that form a coherent entity across an extensive stretch of rock face. A line of handprints and another of eland antelope at DKS are examples of image datums. Another example is that of large elephant paintings that in some cases, such as at Salmanslaagte, cover several other images (see Figure 5.3 in chapter five). Lines or fields of dots, long processions of various subject matter, actual linear images of various kinds and other similarly structured images also fall within this characterisation. The advantage of these image datums is that they temporally constitute single episodes of painting covering quite wide areas. As a consequence, the various types of sequential relationships they hold with one type of image or the other will also form a good basis for extrapolating further relations across the painted surfaces, even where there is no evidence of actual or direct superimposition between imagery. Regarding this field study there were several practical aids. In addition to the usual equipment and logistics, there was use of a magnifying glass and in some cases a portable field microscope. In examining a series of colour photographs obtained for this analysis there were several handy image-processing software: first to be used was D-Stretch, an ImageJ plug-in, and then Adobe Photoshop CS4, and finally, for the Fallen Rock Shelter analysis, the CPED Toolset developed and deployed by Kevin Crause. Previously, it would have been difficult to discern superimpositions where fading and smudging is prevalent (as is often the case), but these image-processing techniques make such analyses practicable and less time-consuming.

6.3. KEY CHRONOLOGY SITES IN THE AGTER-PAKHUIS AREA

6.3.1. Painting sequence of Fallen Rock Shelter

Fallen Rock Shelter is located on the edge of the Boontjies River on Boontjieskloof Farm (Division 176). It is a fairly large shelter of approximately 16 m wide, 4 m high and less than 3 m deep from the drip line (Figure 6.1). A few large free-standing boulders interspaced with vegetation form the façade of the shelter, leaving a narrow entrance. Inside the shelter and on the far left, one slab detached from the wall (hence the name of the site) (Yates et al. 1994: 41) and fell onto other rocks on the floor, which now keep it in suspension. Underneath the slab, the few visible residual red images were certainly originally part of the parietal paintings that covered a large portion of the site. There are no conventional representational paintings on the scar where the slab detached, although there has been a subsequent placement of a single row of less than 30 small finger dots—although they might have originally been red they are black today which might be related to the water seeping through this section of the rock face. There could have been more images in the scarred area, although it is also possible there was not much subsequent painting activity in the intervening periods after this collapse.

The site's sandy and rocky deposit is eroded in most parts. The excavation in the late 1980s (Anthony Manhire, pers. comm. 2005) found that the uppermost ash and bedding layers of 10–20 cm deep, dating to around 400 BP, attest to later ephemeral human occupation at the site. Below these levels, and after some hiatus, the ashy and gravel units around 50 cm deep were dated to around 2,090 BP

(Yates *et al.* 1994: 45). It was concluded that occupation was more substantial then than in later periods. From the lowermost layer came ochreous nodules as well as a piece of stone covered in ochre. It seems therefore that most of the paintings are generally correlated with this earlier occupation history of this site. On the basis of this work, though regrettably not fully published, it was concluded in respect of the fine fine-line images that "[a]t this site at least, they appear to predate the advent of pastoralism in the southwestern Cape" (*ibid*.). These paintings rank among some of the most visually striking in the area, with human figures generally much larger than the usual small sized figures in the region (*ibid*.). Colours too are more varied than is the usual at most other sites. Various hues of red, maroon, yellows, white and black (sometimes in combination) dominate, covering a variety of subject matter. Human figures are the largest category, a maze of faded finger dots, then a clearer single row of larger dots and a range of hunter-gatherer material culture (e.g. various types of bags, hunting equipment, dancing sticks) (Mguni 2007). Human figures are either single or in pairs or small groups, but mostly appearing in files of a few or many individuals, generally facing right although some also face left.

There is a large "group scene" (Yates *et al.* 1994: 45), perhaps the largest of its kind in the Cape with 23 visible individual human figures. Although generally outsized, compared to the rest of the images at this site, these figures vary in dimensions with the largest being around a metre, or over, tall. These types of human groups are a relatively common theme in this locality of the Cape fold ranges, but they are seldom found farther afield in other parts of southern Africa. As mentioned earlier, these groups comprise individuals in positions of either sitting or crouching, and often in a more or less half-circular formation in a manner akin to people clustered around a fire or inside a hut or shelter. Their paraphernalia are often depicted overhead and on the periphery of the group. There are also ochre crayon markings, a few ladder-like or gridded designs, finger smears and stroke marks. An intriguing image, but probably an incomplete impression of something that was larger, is a crenellated form in red, orange and a bit of white forming a thin outline on the edge of the crenellations. In total, the site has over 800 images, making it one of the most densely painted shelters in the area. While this number includes different image types from one side to the other of the shelter, some writers estimated it to have at least 189 fine fine-line images (*ibid*.), referring perhaps to the most visible and larger depictions.

Summary of Fallen Rock Shelter painting sequence

The analysis of Fallen Rock Shelter sequence involved 226 images mainly in the central section of the site, which has an extensive and visible density of overlays. The key summary results of the sequence shown in Figures 6.1 and 6.3 represent the condensed main components

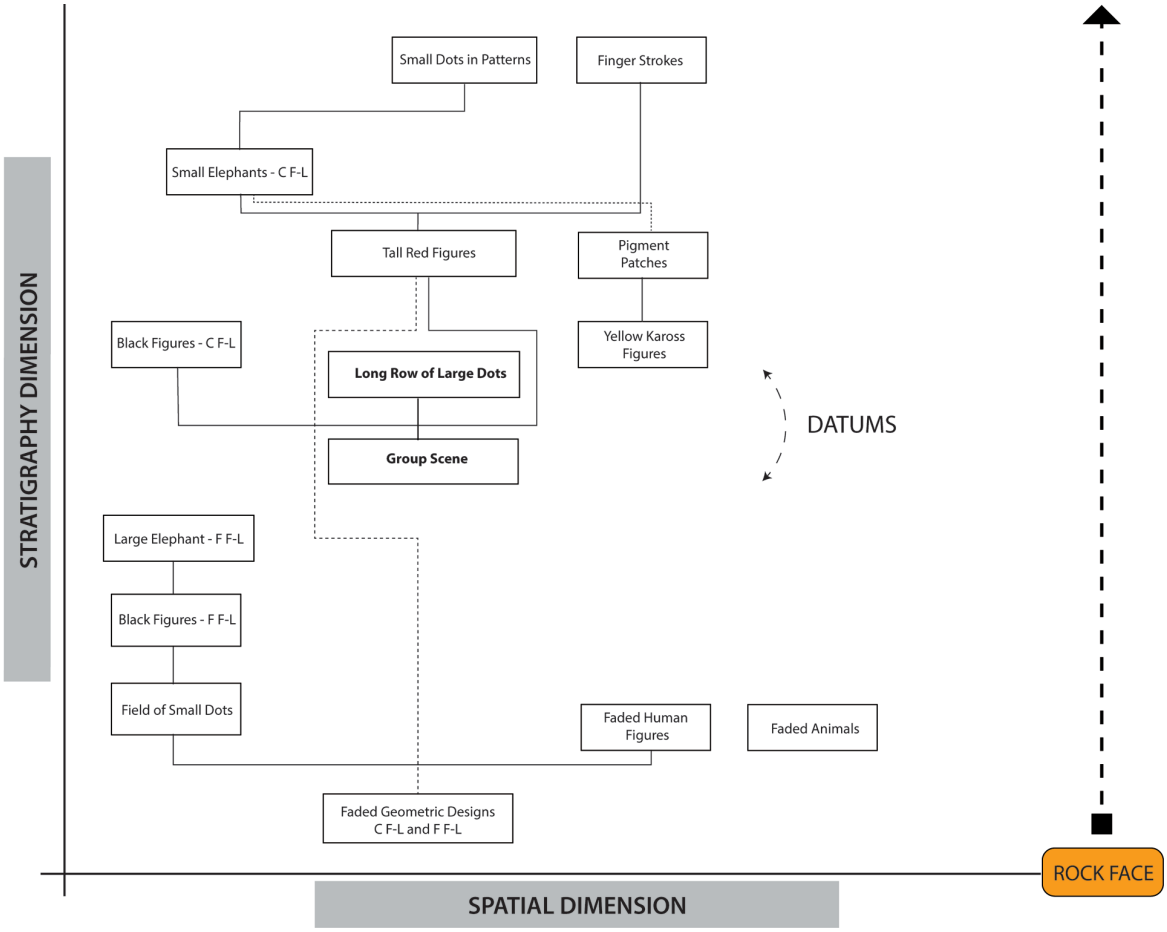


Figure 6.2: A summary of the rock art sequence of Fallen Rock Shelter worked out from the well-preserved main clusters of painting in the middle of the shelter (FF-L = fine fine-lines, CF-L = coarse fine-lines).

of the interpretation of this site's Harris matrices. Of these images, 121 (53.5%) are directly involved in superimposition relations and 105 (46.4%) in equivalence relations (Appendix 1 Tables 1, 3 and 5). Although 100 (44.2%) contemporaneous relations were observed, they are not crucial in reconstructing relative chronology (Mguni 1997: 31). Numerous other images were not included in the analysis, since they are floating across the rock face and not involved in any relation of sequence with other images. It is plausible that the observed dense overlays occur largely in the middle of the shelter, probably because the floor in front of the smooth surfaces is (and was) flatter and free of impeding features such as boulders. There is very little image sequence to the far left (northern section) and closer to the slab that detached from the rock surface, with about two layers comprising tall, red, coarse fine-line humans overlain by ochre crayon lines and in parts finger strokes. Other sections of the shelter, particularly to the far right (southern section), were not included in the analysis because of considerable smudging, fading or both, which makes it difficult to observe image stratigraphic relationships. What follows is a description of the stratigraphy from the residual images at the bottom of the sequence to the clear figures in the uppermost levels. The faint images at the bottom of the sequence comprise human figures in rows, small groups and as single images, a few scattered animals (possibly eland, judging by the heavy hindquarters and dewlaps) and a large field of faded dots spread in the middle of the site. This field of dots and a few other images lie immediately above what is now largely invisible, but has been revealed to be three gridded designs. Grids and similar imagery are the lowest of the images in the sequence. Along with these grids are several finger slashes and smears.

This lowermost group is now nearly invisible, but it was brought to light and made clear through the use of D-Stretch. The CPED image-processing toolkit was used later and it confirmed this surprising occurrence (Figure 6.4). One of these images is a gridded design in coarse fine-line (or it was produced with the finger), overlain by one tall human figure and some finger dots nearby. The position of this coarse fine-line grid is surprising since it is of the kind often associated with finger paintings such as those at DKS, which are aligned with the historical period. This design is thus anomalous underneath any kind of fine fine-line imagery because this manner of depiction and design are thought to have arisen some time after the fine fine-line imagery had long ceased to be painted. As noted, some writers postulated that on the basis of the occupation history of the site, the fine fine-line tradition is associated with earlier deposits, implying that they pre-date the advent of pastoralism. Faint finger strokes (one of which appears partially under the large solitary elephant) nearby in the same layer as the invisible grids, however, suggest that this occurrence is no accidental stratigraphy, as we shall see in the following chapter under the discussion of the implications of this sequence. Another of these images

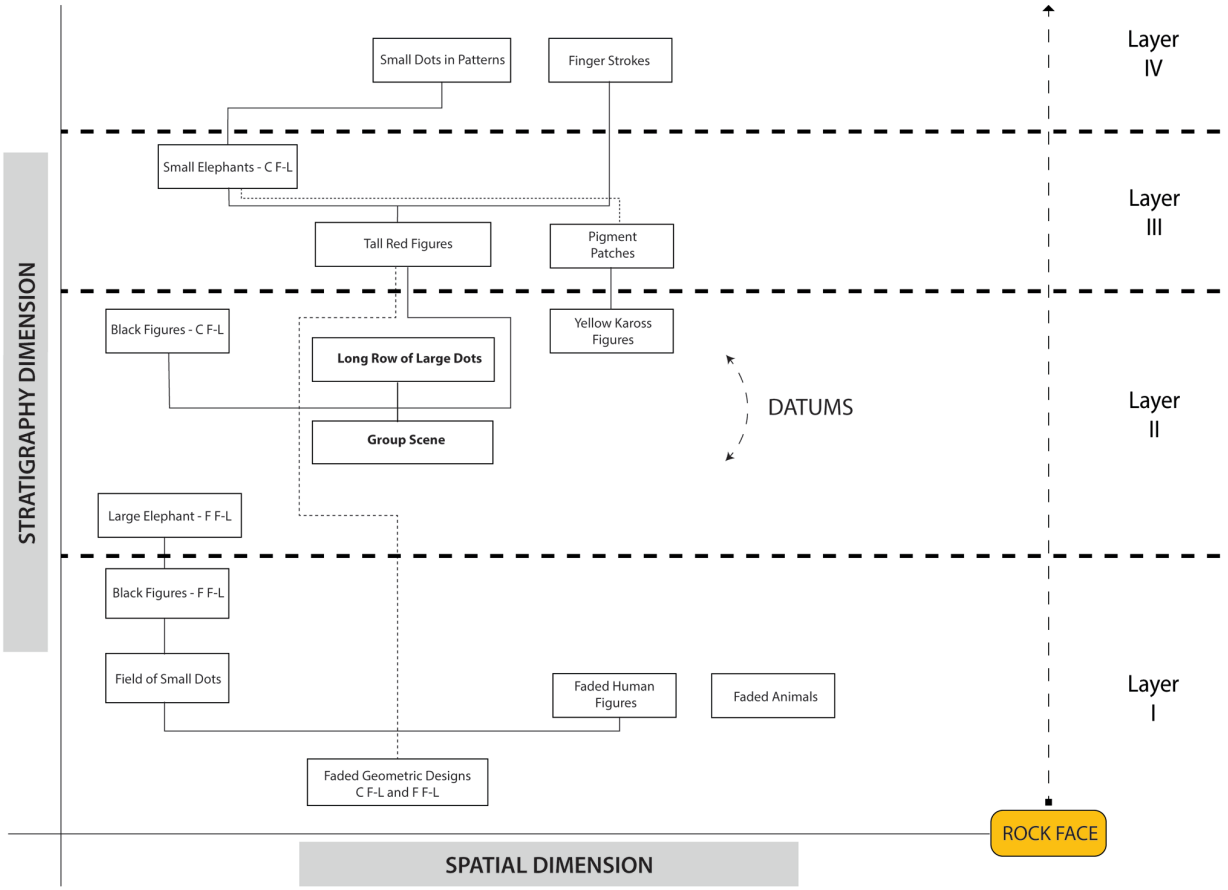


Figure 6.3: A summary of the Fallen Rock Shelter painting sequence showing the different layers or levels into which different imagery falls.

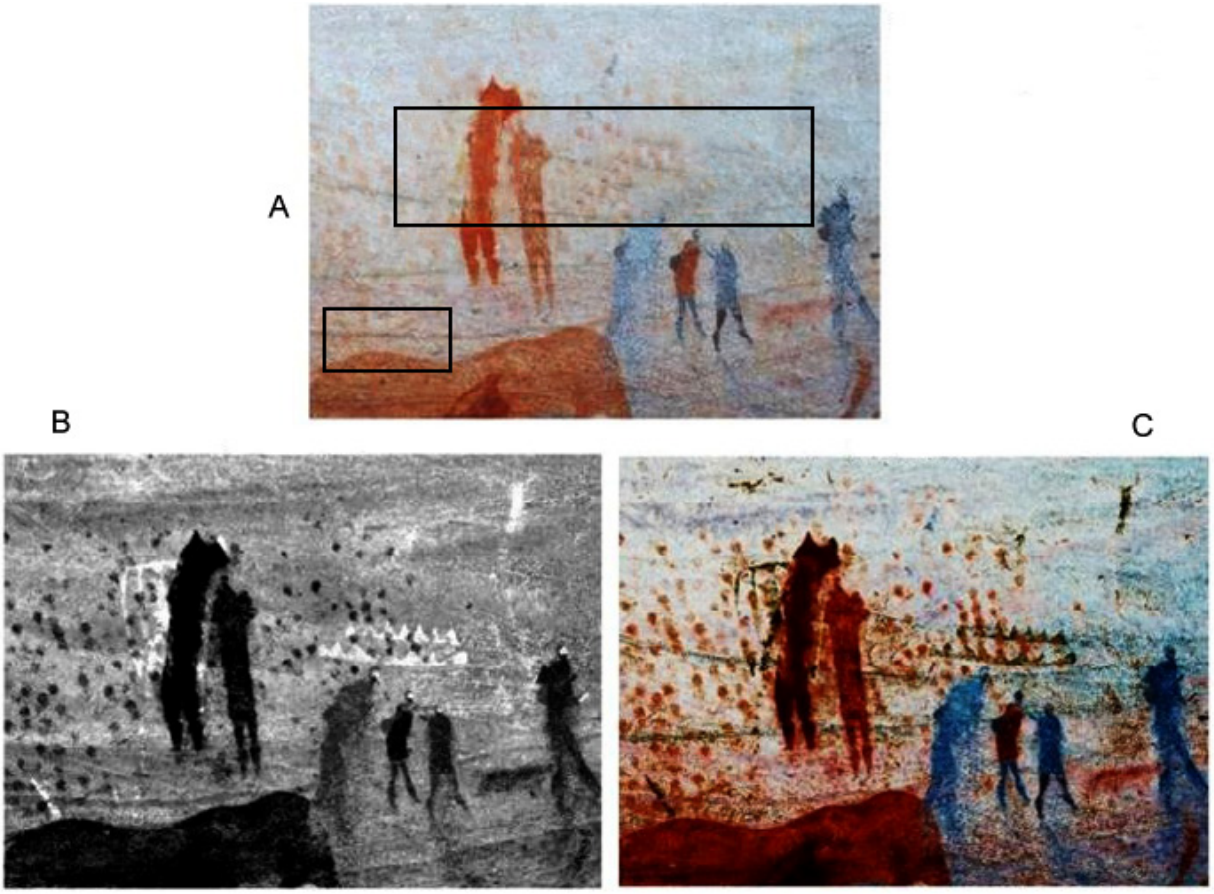


Figure 6.4: In the analysis of image associations and superpositions, this study made use of image-processing techniques such as ImageJ (D-Stretch Plug-in) and CPED toolkit which usefully revealed an invisible layer of geometrics at Fallen Rock Shelter. (A) Areas where faded images in superpositions were revealed through image processing; (B) Enhanced grayscale image; (C) Enhanced colour image.

is a double row comprising a series of crenellated patterns in fine fine-line manner overlain by several dots. The crenellated form is similar to the indeterminate (probably incomplete) image to the right on the same panel as well as other similarly unusual images from Salmanslaagte and other sites in the general locality.

There is a large solitary elephant from the earlier image strata in the fine fine-line manner of depiction. There does not seem to be any equivalent image to this elephant in this layer. There are two other smaller elephants, although they feature in later layers of the sequence. A group scene, including some bags that are part of this group of images, overlies the large elephant. The group scene is nearly 2 m across and just over 80 cm high. Overlying the group scene directly is a row of large dots with an average diameter of 1.5 cm. Their size and arrangement distinguishes them from the earlier field of faint dots that are much smaller, with a general diameter of around 1 cm. This horizontal line of large dots (or they can be more acccurately described as thumbprints) and the large group scene form two strong image datums which occupying a large part of the panel in the central section of the site. All other noted stratigraphic relationships of various images can be securely validated against these two datums. There is a layer of fine fine-line human figures in black pigment and several yellow-pigmented kaross-clad figures across the panel; one of the figures in black paint overlies the solitary elephant, while some of the yellow kaross-clad figures directly overlie earlier faded images at the bottom of the sequence.

Applying the concept of archival fonds, these black and yellow human figures, which share their manners of depiction and scale, can be related and grouped as belonging to the same stratum in the stratigraphy, although they differ in colour pigments. They would have ordinarily been regarded as chronologically unrelated because of their different colour schemes. They may or may not have been painted at exactly the same time or by the same artist or group of artists, but they belong together in terms of their original order in the sequence and the general artistic field. It is their relative order in the chronological sequence that is important in this study. Altogether this order at Fallen Rock Shelter can then be tested at the other sites with the expectation that the spatial and stratigraphic relationships of the various image categories will be consistent and coherent in their association. If this sequence is confirmed within and beyond individual sites, it is possible to realise a regional chronological sequence. This is where archival fonds and the Harris matrix system can support each other in correlating imagery that may at first appear unrelated based on the scattered appearance they have across the rock face and thus the positions they occupy in the sequence.

There is further consistency in the other sets of images that do not belong in the same artistic field or category:

Figure 6.5: Two coarse fine-line elephants painted over faint fine fine-line figures (unfortunately the majority of images on this panel are covered in soot). This particular set of elephants appears, however, to be executed in a manner of application that straddles the earlier detailed form and the later finger painted forms.

all the pigment patches, red, yellow/orange and the large red coarse fine-line figures appear to be in the same level. Some black and red pigment patches overlie the large dots and the black- and yellow-cloaked human figures, but not the large red figures. These tall red figures feature above all the other images discussed so far in the sequence. By extension, and using the archival fonds concept, these red figures occupy the same level as the pigment patches appearing in various other colours. Both these varied image types may therefore belong together in terms of the original order in the sequence. Two small coarse fine-line elephants appear directly above the group scene, but not directly superimposed on the tall human figures that are also on top of the group scene. In their manner of depiction, both the small elephants and the tall figures are in coarse fine-line and might therefore be contemporaneous. A similar superimposition case shows an elephant group in coarse fine-line manner overlying earlier detailed fine fine-line figures (Figure 6.5). In all, the archival fonds concept permits these elephants, tall red human figures and patches of pigment to be grouped under a single stratum. These relationships have been tested against similar imagery categories at other sites using the archival perspective.

Finally, above this cluster of images there are linear and cross-like patterns of small finger dots, ochre crayon lines and finger stroke marks nearby, making them the uppermost set in the sequence (Figure 6.4). Apart from the few places where these smears and slash marks are in direct superimposition with other images, they populate the periphery of the main painting clusters. In sum, Fallen Rock Shelter reveals at least seven painting episodes or periodic image placement events comprising fine fine-line images, coarse fine-line images, pigment patches, finger dots, large thumbprint-like dots, finger slashes or stroke marks and crayon markings. In terms of the artistic classes aligned to the painting episodes, there are four broad stratigraphic tiers, the bottom three of which have been further subdivided in the sequence, as shown in Figure 6.3. The image range and art categories at Fallen Rock Shelter are similar to those at other sites in the locality, although their stratigraphic relationships have not been confirmed. This manifestation necessitates the cross-referencing of image sequences in several sites. The second such densely painted site is Maidens Pool Shelter, which is downstream in the same river valley as Fallen Rock Shelter.

6.3.2. Painting sequence of Maidens Pool Shelter

Maidens Pool Shelter (also on Boontjieskloof Farm 176) is a large shelter measuring 18 m wide, 3 m high and around 3.5 m deep from the drip line (Figure 6.6). It is situated on the sheer slopes of a vast sandstone cliff running south-east/north-west along the northern edge of the Boontjies River (also called the Brandewyn especially on this segment of its course). There are other large overhangs

Figure 6.6: Maidens Pool Shelter as viewed from downstream on the Boontjies River in the eastern direction.

along this cliff, which stretches downstream to edge with the hilly-systems that are home to the Sevilla Trail sites on the next farm division westwards. Stone flakes and sometimes cores of various materials, including quartzite, quartz and predominantly silcrete, are scattered on the extensive surface slope down to the river below and as well as on the ashy shallow deposit inside the site. There are charred bones, pottery sherds, charcoal as well as recent German-type pottery pieces (John Parkington, pers. comm. 2005), porcelain and glass bottle fragments. The site appears to have previously been densely painted, judging by the pigment remnants and partial images across the entire expanse of the rock surface. There are approximately 1,000 individual images in three main clusters across the rock face: left section, middle section and far right (southern) section. The shelter is dominated by fine fine-line images of various types, including antelope (a group of eland on the left and also on the far right and then possibly bontebok in a long line across a large part of the shelter), elephants and a few other animal species, human figures in small clusters and processions and a small group scene comprising five individuals. Other image types include an entoptic form, or what has previously been called "corrugated motifs" (Yates *et al*. 1994: 35), with crenellations similar to those on the incomplete image at Fallen Rock Shelter and also the well-known forms at Salmanslaagte that were once described as "elephants in boxes" (Maggs & Sealy 1983). Coarse fine-line animal and human figures are abundant in this shelter but, unlike at Fallen Rock Shelter, some of these images gravitate towards the miniaturised image forms that are prevalent in the locality.

The central portion of the shelter is dominated by finger-daubed images in ashy-white pigment. These depict a range of subject matter, including indeterminate animals, ostriches, human figures and smears. Farther to the right of this section is a cluster of small finger dots in horizontal and vertical rows, finger strokes and slash marks scattered around the shelter. There are also finger-painted images of human beings in black pigment and several graffiti-like charcoal drawings imitating other earlier subject matter. Written graffiti of names, signatures and dates appears in various parts, often directly on top of other images. Most of this graffiti (generally in charcoal, lead pencil and ink) is associated with the single date of 10 October 1880, although some of it in commercial crayon may be more recent. These writings add a dimension to the stratigraphic history of the site. However, they are regarded as redundant and were excluded from the analysis since their position in the sequence is obvious. The dense overlays of imagery occur on the left of the shelter and in the middle section. Once again, similar to Fallen Rock Shelter, it is plausible that this feature is due to the topography of the shelter floor, which is relatively even in these two sections, and also the morphology of the shelter walls in front, which are fairly smooth.

Summary of Maidens Pool Shelter painting sequence

The Maidens Pool Shelter analysis of sequence involved 240 individual images. While this site has more images than Fallen Rock Shelter, it has fewer superimpositions between the various distinct figures. From this assemblage (Appendix 1 Tables 2, 4 and 6), 52 (21.6%) images

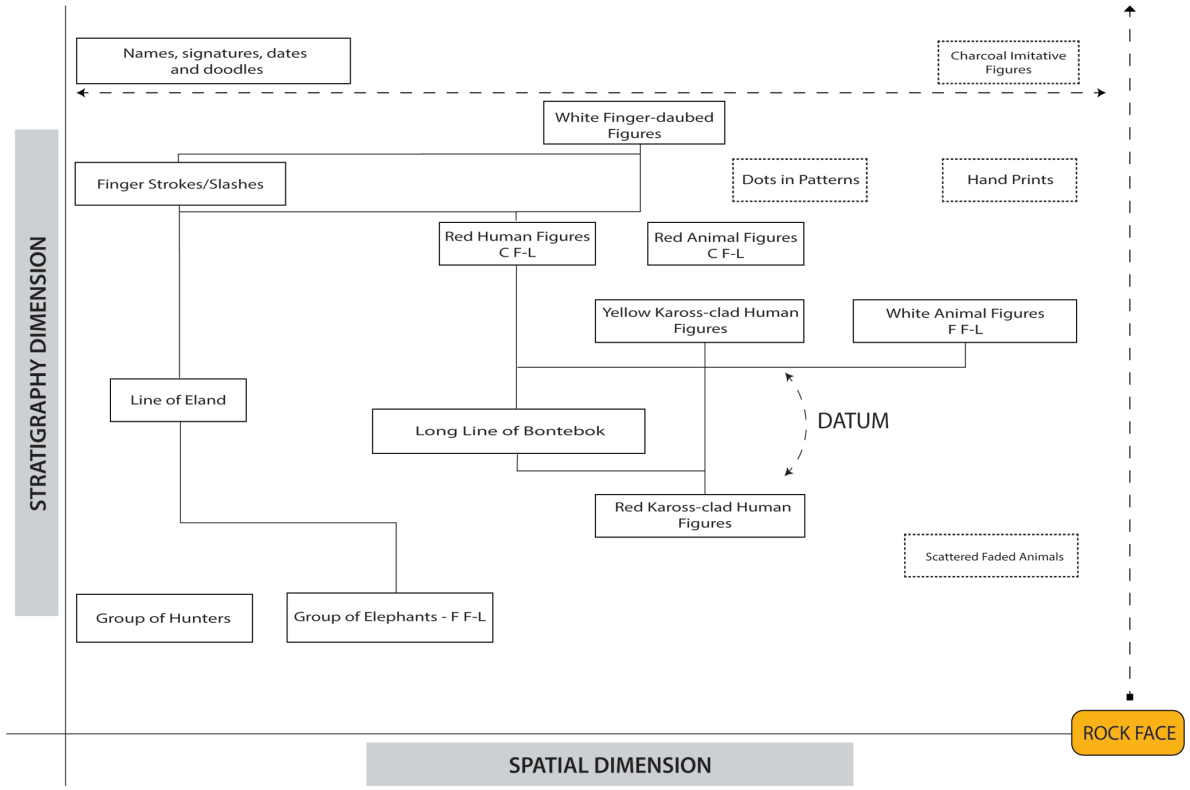


Figure 6.7: The Maidens Pool Shelter sequence of paintings worked out from the well-preserved clusters of imagery with dense overlays on the left and middle sections of the site. The dotted boxes are images scattered or far removed from the main overpainted surfaces of the site.

are directly involved in superimposition relations and 65 (27%) images are in equivalence relations. This sequence (Figure 6.7) is now described as interpreted and summarised from the Harris matrix diagram (Appendix 1 Figure 1). At the bottom of the sequence are faded images, some of the palest ones being visible only when the light conditions inside the shelter are optimal particularly in the the morning. Most of the images at this site bear evidence of extensive weathering and erosion, perhaps an indicator of long periods of painting. A group of hunters in brick-red pigment to the far left (western section) appears to attack an elephant calf and to the right of this cluster are three large, or adult, elephants in the same colour as the calf and hunters. One of the elephants, which appears to be in a rescue charge to save the calf, has turned back to face the pursuing hunters who have the calf in their focus. This group of human figures hunting the elephants is the lowest in terms of superimposition. After this layer is a group of five red kaross-clad human figures, and these figures are directly overlain by various bontebok antelope that appear in a long line across the shelter wall. These antelopes walk directly on a thin black line, which—although weathered in parts—is continuous across a large measure of the shelter wall (see redrawing in Appendix 1 Figure 6). The line and antelope above it are a coherent set forming a good image datum—a useful datum as it is a continuous line—running nearly side to side across a huge portion of the painted area of the site. Serving a similar analytical purpose to the line of large dots and the large group scene at Fallen Rock Shelter, and even a long line of handprints and that of elands at DKS, all other imagery in the sequence is either above or below the datum or equivalent to it. Directly above the elephant group there is a line of four elands, including an eland calf at the back of the line, all of which are facing rightwards. This "group-mother-calf" association is important to note as it is a strong theme in the locality; we shall return to it later.

In the next level there are yellow kaross-clad human figures alongside several animal figures in white pigment. So far, all these images are in the fine fine-line manner that is typical of the bulk of the paintings in the region. A noteworthy observation concerning yellow kaross-clad figures is that, on closer inspection, they seem to have been added later or tucked into the weathered spaces between the earlier and faded processional red kaross-clad figures. It is a phenomenon that has been observed at other sites in the Clanwilliam district, such as at Procession Shelter on the edge of the Jan Dissels River (John Parkington, pers. comm. 2006; also author's own observation). The same principle of tucking images into spaces provided by the weathering of older imagery has been noted in this region, particularly between the images of handprints and a large yellow-clay elephant as well as a large red eland torso, in the Gifberg area and at some of the coastal sites respectively (Yates *et al.* 1994: 38). Farther up the sequence there are scattered finger strokes, human and animal figures in coarse fine-line manner and, towards the far right, some series of patterned grids formed by small finger dots which overlie two faint red eland torsos.

10 Note that two tiers of the modern phase of graffiti and earlier scattered faint images were excluded from the Harris matrix diagram.

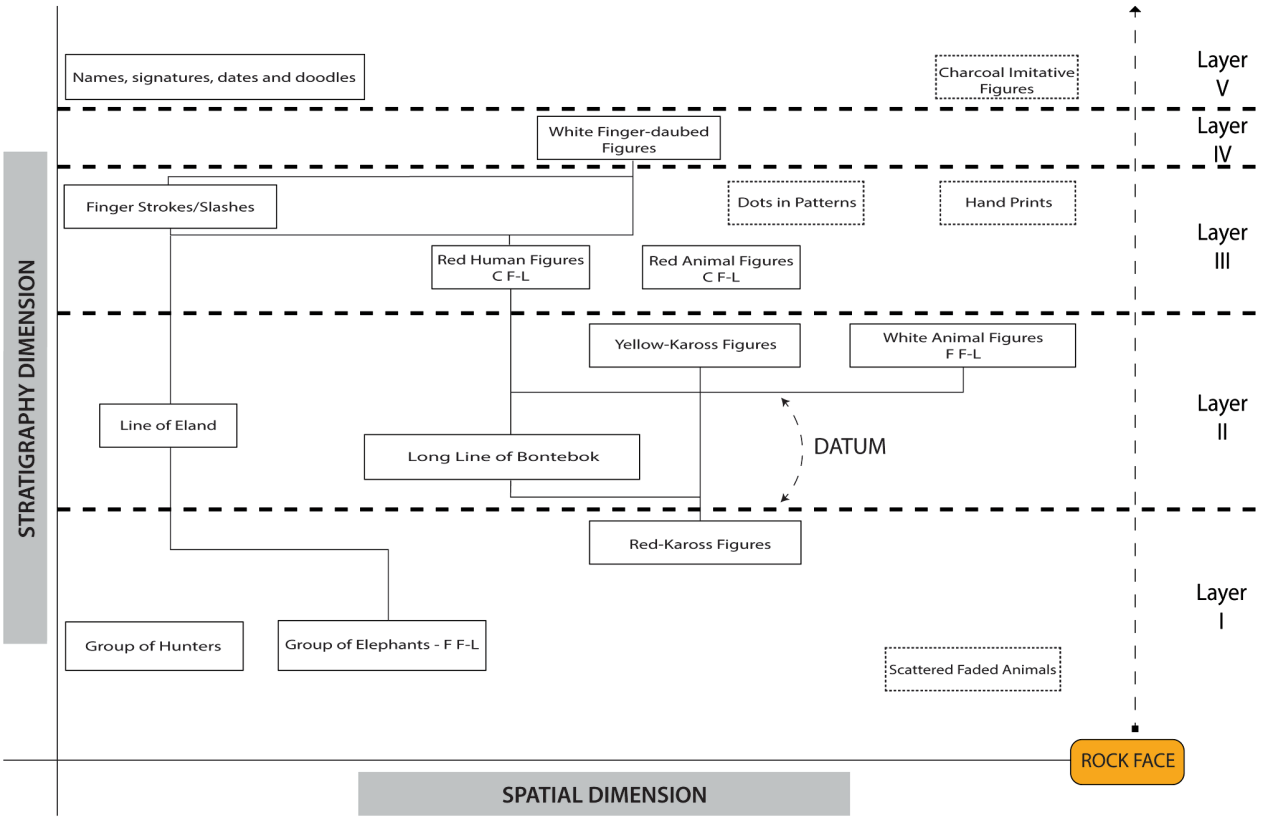


Figure 6.8: A summary of the Maidens Pool Shelter painting sequence showing the different layers or levels into which different imagery falls.

While handprints and pigment patches are not part of this matrix diagram, there are a few of them that occur as floating images. They may belong in this level of the sequence. This tier is then followed by finger-daubed imagery in ashy-white pigment. Judging by their visible state of preservation, these coarsely painted images may be recent though perhaps in the order of no less than a century. This deduction comes from the fact that the names and signatures dating to October 1880 overlie some ashy-white figures. Scattered in parts of the site are imitative figures drawn in charcoal crayons; they include humans and animals. Names, signatures and dates as well as other forms of doodling are the most recent layer in the sequence, dating to October 1880. Although this graffiti is quite old, some of the examples may have been done in recent decades. This graffiti is similar to the forms documented in my earlier study of sequence at DKS (Mguni 1997) and seem to occur within the same broad regional phase. Overall, the Maidens Pool sequence comprises five broad strata or tiers of imagery although some image sets appear in the sequence as subdivisions of the broad image categories 10.

These subdivisions are grouped into strata within the sequence: the two lowermost layers are the fine fine-line category, followed by coarse fine-lines which, although earlier, are partially related to the finger-produced imagery of strokes or slashes and patterns of finger dots (Figure 6.8). At some shelters, this finger-produced image category includes representational images that also extend into the colonial-era period in terms of their subject matter. Two residual handprints (no. 97 and no. 102 in the analysis sheets in Appendix 1) appear to feature in this association, although by themselves they are not involved in any stratigraphic relationship with other images. As floating prints, they too were not included in the Harris matrices. It is observable from this succession of imagery that fine fine-line images appear to be succeeded largely by coarse fine-line images and that while the latter were still being produced, there was at that juncture an inception of finger marking and other similarly produced later imagery. This finger marking and similar imagery are perhaps the precursors to forms that later became the finger paintings, which finally culminated in the colonial-era images.

Farther up the sequence is a cluster of ashy-white finger-daubed images of the kind known as the "Late-White tradition" rock art (see examples in Moodley 2004, 2008; Namono 2004; Namono & Eastwood 2005; Smith & van Schalkwyk 2002) found in northern parts of South Africa. Various charcoal imitative designs, names, signatures, dates and doodling occur at the top of the sequence as the most recent additions at this site. Unlike Fallen Rock Shelter, which does not have a modern phase of drawn or written parietal forms, the Maidens Pool Shelter contains a modern layer at its uppermost phase which is remarkably similar to the uppermost tier from a sequence that was observed at DKS over a decade ago (Mguni 1997) and whose sequence was recently re-evaluated as part of the current study. Because DKS is located in the sandveld ecozone, discussed in chapter three, it is worth comparing its painting sequence with the two sequences from the CFB ecozone. In this investigative manner, these stratigraphic

analyses and correlations will represent the cross-regional perspective required to build a Cape painting chronology.

Let us now consider a brief cross-referencing summary of DKS. First, consistent with the two key sites discussed above, the DKS sequence features four layers of imagery (Appendix 1 Figure 3); the two top tiers are collapsible to one since they comprise a single broad modern phase in the use of rock art shelters. It is also observed that the tentative principles of shelter wall morphology and floor topography apply at DKS as they do at Fallen Rock and Maidens Pool Shelter. From the western section of the shelter, a rocky shelf slopes in an easterly direction and suddenly opens into a flat, open and earthy area; it is here that the deposit of this site occurs. Farther east (or left) from this area, the floor space becomes rocky until the edge of the shelter (Figure 6.9). Moving along the parietal condition of this site from this eastern section towards the right, it is clear that the imagery is thinly spread at the beginning, but progressively becomes much denser with the greatest overlays in the central part in front of the flat, open, earthy area. A large measure of this wall is also fairly smooth, compared with the sections on either side. From here the imagery gradually thins out again farther west towards the rocky shelf. Tentatively, therefore, there appears to be a cross-regional conformity in the apparent arrangement of imagery and the position of dense overlays in relation to the shelter configuration of walls and floor spaces as well as physical features in these spaces. This and other already observed similarities create a good foundation for comparisons of imagery types/categories and their relative stratigraphies in order to build a Cape chronological sequence. From the latest layers (topmost) downwards to the earliest (bottom most) layers, the Diepkloof Kraal Shelter sequence comprises (as shown in Figure 6.12 and in Appendix 1 Figure 3):

- Signatures, names, dates, crayon lines and charcoal drawings.
- Colonial-era images comprising human figures, animals and geometric designs. These are mostly in crude finger-painting manner, but some are now revised to be actually coarse fine-line.
- Smudges and smears in the same red ochre pigment as that used for handprints. Although these finger-produced images may be allied with handprints and finger dots (Yates *et al*. 1994: 37), they appear above in this temporal sequence.

Figure 6.9: Diepkloof Kraal Shelter topography is an arrangement of rocks and boulders in front of several painted sections along the shelter. The insert on the bottom picture shows the view out from the shelter into the surrounding lower marshlands.

Figure 6.10: Decorated and plain handprints are a common feature of the Cape, often found as part of large over-painted shelters. Varying in size, they generally appear in varying shades of red, but also rarely in white and black pigments.

Figure 6.11: Various types of finger dots and finger strokes are found with a variety of paintings in the Cape. The top left black dots are over red ones although the significance of this type of sequence is not clear. On the rightmost, these white finger dots are overlain by a kaross-clad fine fine-line human figure at De Hangen Shelter, in an association that reveals that finger dots are not always (as previously thought) later than the detailed imagery in the Cape..

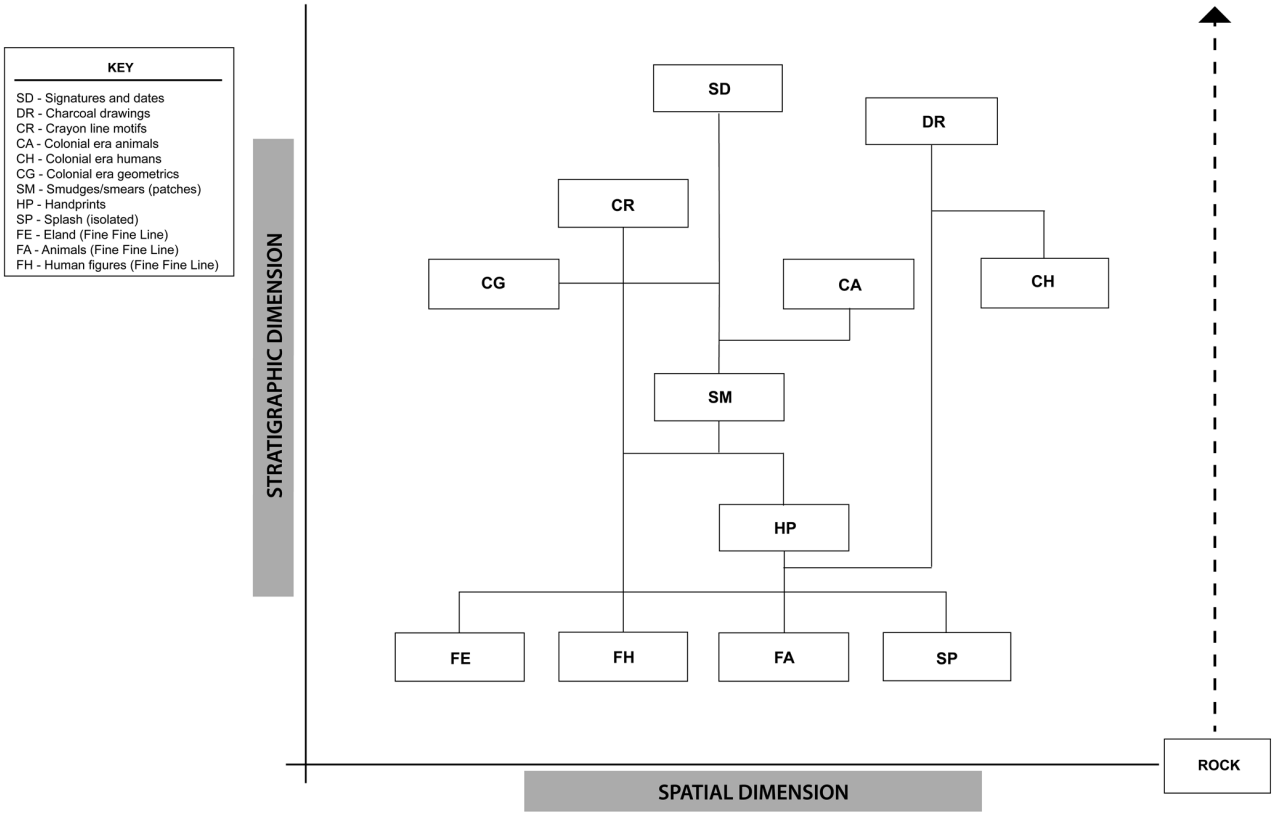


Figure 6.12: A summary of the Diepkloof Kraal Shelter painting sequence showing the different layers or levels into which different imagery falls.

- Handprints of both the decorated and undecorated type.
- And, finally, the fine fine-line imagery as the earliest layer.

Taken together, these three key sites reflect a unified temporal sequence into which several distinct image types and categories can be built as coherent categories that satisfy the archival sanctity of the original order, couched in the fonds notion. As predicted in the earlier DKS study in the sandveld, "There is a probability of the existence of sub-sequences within these distinctive image sets defined above" (Mguni 1997: 33). Using the two Agter-Pakhuis sites in the mountains has now confirmed the presence of subdivisions within the finely detailed hunter-gatherer image tradition. A significant conclusion from this observation is that, contrary to the long-held belief that the deduction of temporal sequence in a single tradition is problematic (Pearce 2010: 149), there are scenarios in some regions where a relative order of imagery might reveal the existence of distinct artistic sub-traditions or categories within what is customarily regarded as a single tradition. The three sites are observed to contain intelligible stratigraphic relations of largely the two-element type of superimpositions, where a one-to-one sequence relation occurs (i.e. one image above or below another).

Although very few, there are instances of multiple-element superimpositions where one image overlaps with two or more other figures. This phenomenon occurs where there are large figures covering wider areas and so interacting with a range of other imagery. This can be expected since, as noted earlier, direct and clear-cut superimpositions are a rare graphic phenomenon. Multiple superimpositions occur in densely overpainted panels or where composite numbers of images exist in a restricted or small area, but smudging and fading often make it difficult to deduce any meaningful sequence. At Fallen Rock Shelter there are 46 (37%) multi-element sequence relations out of 121 direct above/below relations, while 15 (19%) such relations out of 79 were observed at Maidens Pool Shelter. Although DKS has these multiple-element relations, there are only 9 instances (14%), confirming the rarity of this phenomenon at a regional scale. This methodology, combining the use of Harris matrices and the archival perspective, allows analysis which has the capability to contrast or relate diverse image types and sort them into distinct sets and categories by virtue of their superimpositions and thereby deduce relative chronology.

6.4. CONSOLIDATED DISCUSSION OF SEQUENCE RESULTS

Some time ago researchers in the Cape wrote: "We suspect that handprints are linked to finger dots, but we as yet lack a good understanding of the distribution of the latter. Also perhaps related to the handprints and finger dots in terms of application are finger paintings" (Yates *et al*. 1994: 37). One of these writers, Anthony Manhire (1981), had earlier found the occurrence of handprints (Figure 6.10) to co-vary with finger paintings. These conclusions prefigure the close association of these three types of imagery, all

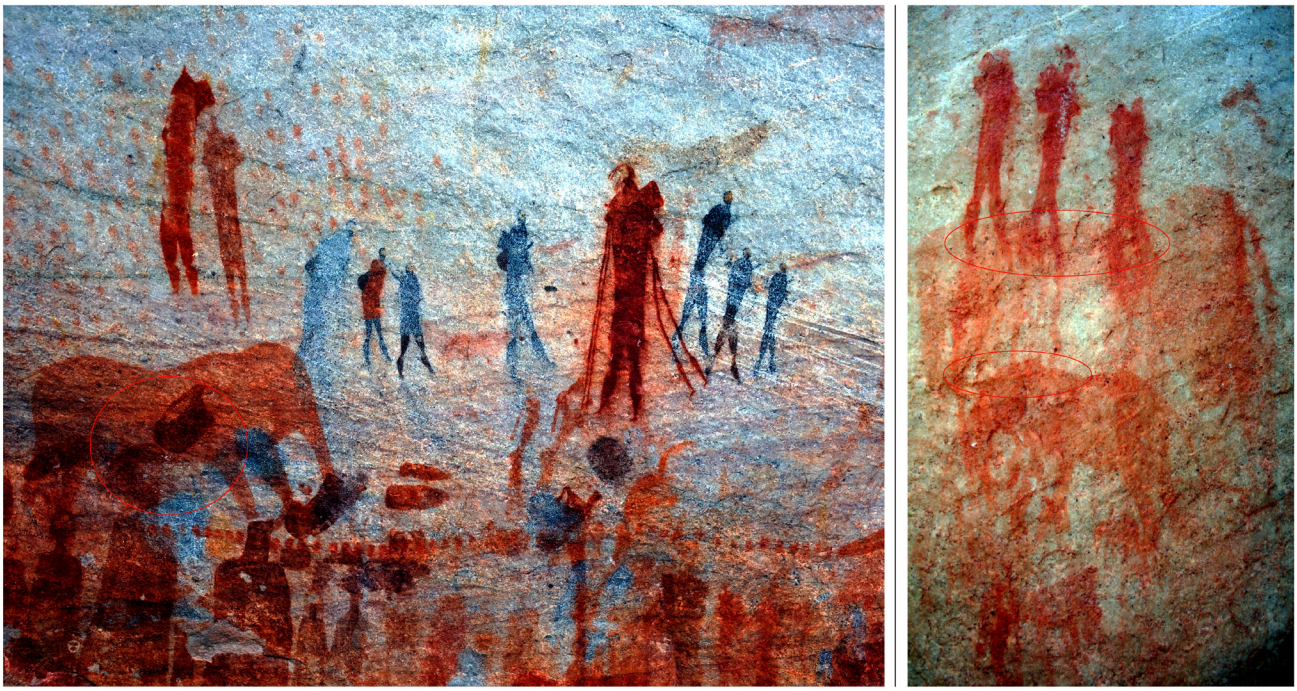


Figure 6.13: Finely detailed images, or fine fine-lines, within most shelters that contain dense image overlays reveal superpositions and associations that make it possible to discern changes and continuities in the sequence of painting even within the same art traditions. These panels show fine fine-line elephants in superposition with human figures.

Figure 6.14: In some shelters there are depictions of coarse fine-line elephants and fat-tailed sheep. Their form is contrasted in this illustration with the finger painting of an indeterminate animal on the bottom right.

of which involve directly the hand or the finger in their application on rock faces and they generally appear later than the detailed images in the sequence. There is commonly a sound basis for this conclusion, but judging by the temporal sequences presented so far in the current study, it is highly plausible that finger dots are of various types rather than them being a single or homogeneous category (Figure 6.11). First, there are those that appear early in the sequence alongside fine fine-line images; second, those that feature later together with coarse fine-line images and, third, then those that are broadly associated with the finger-painted imagery. Finger dots are a type of image that runs through the sequence from earlier to later phases in the painting histories of not only the Cape region, but also many other parts of southern Africa.

Fallen Rock Shelter reflects such an analysis: first there are faint finger dots that are part of the image arrays that lie at the bottom of the sequence. In the middle level of the sequence is a large set of dots; these were likely made with the thumb rather than the fingertip. Finally, in conjunction with later imagery at the top of the sequence is a series of patterned finger dots that are much smaller than the earlier faint dots scattered over a wider area of the rock surface. The two earlier finger dot sets are in a similar red pigment that is also used with the other detailed representational paintings. In contrast, the later patterned dot sets are produced in a rather pale brick-red pigment similar to other finger-painted imagery. Although the first set of finger dots at Fallen Rock Shelter overlies very faint human figures and gridded patterns, they are themselves overlain by clear human figures in red and black as well as a solitary large elephant in the fine fine-line category and other red human figures in coarse fine-line manner. This sequence is repeated in what is a fine fine-line red human figure over a field of white dots at De Hangen Shelter (Figure 6.11), which is another site in the mountains featuring a range of imagery similar to that at the three key sites discussed.

There are similar dot images in dark red and black pigment at DKS featured as small fields or clusters inside the western shelter, though they are not in any sequence. Although the size variations of these dots may not mean much, it is when such sizes are considered along with the arrangement patterns on rock surfaces that possible dissimilarity is observed. The finger dots that are often associated with the fine fine-line images are generally small, ranging from 1.0 cm to 1.5 cm in diameter, and tend to occur as ill-defined clusters or amorphous fields that vary in size numbers and extent across the rock surface. On the other hand, those dots associated with finger paintings are much smaller, at around 1.0 cm or less in diameter generally. Other finger dot forms (sometimes not even dots per se but strokes) are not finger produced. These uncommon dot types appear to have been painted with some kind of instrument and in scale they may be as small as 0.5 cm wide and 2 cm long. In the Agter-Pakhuis locality, the largest known examples are in the range of 2.0 cm to 5.0 cm in diameter, although these are not common. While these observations have been made from the 200 sites studies in the study area and are noted for sequence purposes, this current study is not a holistic analysis of these dot images. Dots are varied and in their own right require a sustained research project beyond previous attempts that only focused on the interpretation of certain type of dot (Dowson 1989; Garlake 1990). Recognising that these dot themes may in fact belong within different rock art traditions will avoid the commonplace "lumper position" approach in their definition and interpretation, and in turn will allow the use of appropriate ethnographies or ethno-historical sources for the interpretation of each category.

Apart from the finger dots, there are other image classes that appear to range throughout the sequence from earlier to later phases at most sites. One such category is that of human figures in karosses, which appear in varied forms, scales and colours. In both the Fallen Rock and Maidens Pool Shelters, the bichrome red/yellow kaross-clad human figures feature in later tiers of the sequence as directly superimposed on monochrome red kaross-clad human figures. While they are in the same tradition or category of fine fine-line images, they are distinct in their temporal positions in the sequence. Although all the kaross-type human figures in processions tend to be male, largely attended by their hunting gear, there are some processions of naked men as well. Other processions are of naked female figures that appear in both the fine fine-line manner and, slightly more frequently, the coarse fine-line manner. Then the depictions of elephants and fat-tailed sheep are also categories that are represented throughout the various tiers of the painting stratigraphic sequences at various sites in the study area. As reflected at Fallen Rock and Maidens Pool Shelters and other sites, there are earlier elephant images in the fine fine-line manner (e.g. Figure 6.13) and then later ones in the coarse fine-line manner which supersede each other in that order in the stratigraphic sequence. Another site on the Boontjies River, called Elephant Hunt Shelter, also features several elephant representations in both these manners of depiction, although in this case they do not appear in any sequence. One set includes an elephant cow and a calf in fine fine-line manner and, juxtaposed to their right, another small group that includes adult elephants and calves but this time in coarse fine-line manner (Figure 6.14). The differences in their manners of depiction might indicate that they are temporally distinct as well, although both groups share similar red colour and pigment strength. Placed in the context of the "image tucking" phenomenon discussed above, it is also plausible that the coarse fine-line elephant group was added at a later time, inspired by the pre-existing fine fine-line cow-calf graphic composition. While this temporal relationship may be difficult to prove since these images are not in sequence at this site, it can generally confirmed through stratigraphic sequences at the two other Agter-Pakhuis sites discussed. Let us expand on this artistic feature of other imagery appearing to have drawn inspiration from pre-existing imagery, since this phenomenon is prevalent and it has implications for relative sequence.

The conception of artistic inspiration from earlier fine fine-line imagery by later artists of the coarse fine-line images

Figure 6.15: This study revealed that some of the images commonly subsumed under the general rubric of detailed representational paintings are in fact transitional or intermediate between fine fine-lines and finger paintings and are here labelled coarse fine-lines. Such intermediary artistic forms have been found in several shelters to replicate imagery from the fine fine-line category. This finding has implications for the formulation of image classifications and site painting histories in the Cederberg.

is strongly represented at various sites in the Agter-Pakhuis locality, where it features in some instances as outright simulation between the two manners of depiction. This simulation sometimes occurs at single sites or at different sites within short distances of each other. In nearly all observed cases, the coarse fine-line image or sets of images appear to be superimposed on earlier fine fine-line images that they simulate. A definitive example of this phenomenon comes from the well-known site BSK 06, also called Charlie Brown Shelter, on the Boontjies River, where a line of large women holding sticks in fine fine-line manner is replicated by another similar line of women in coarse fine-line manner a few centimetres at a lower ledge to the far right (or west) of the main panel (Figure 6.15 and see redrawing in Appendix 1 Figure 5). Farther upstream, on one of the tributaries of Boontjies River, about 5 km eastwards, there are five women in a line holding sticks that are also thickly painted in coarse fine-line manner. In their their number, posture and direction, there is little doubt that this group is a simulation of BSK 06. This phenomenon was observed at 16 (11.2%) out of 142 sites recorded in the area and there is no doubt that more of these have gone unrecorded. Yet for those images in sequential relations this phenomenon was observed to feature only in 5 (29.4%) instances of coarse fine-line images over fine fine-line images (or above other nearby related fine fine-line images), which they mirrored. This occurrence, however statistically significant or otherwise, is an indication of the operation and historical evolution of site processes that created the rock art as a through-time archive whereby newer additions—even as different categories or artistic traditions—draw their content, external forms, and even contextual associations from the pre-existing image assemblages. The meaning and motivation may not of course be expected to have remained static or replicated from the earlier to later mirrored imagery through the sequence and over time, even as some aspects of content and meaning may have been echoed throughout the sequence.

These artistic or representational complexities and their temporal implications require some explanation and further examination. The next two chapters will discuss aspects of change in order to gain some insights into why these observable graphic variations occurred as they did in the painting sequences presented above. Overall, various ideas arise from the analyses of sequence at these three key study sites and their constellations of sites. First, the study observes that true superimposition is not a common graphic phenomenon in relation to the existing density, extent and quantity of rock paintings at these major sites. This view may be due to our inability to discern these superimpositions because of the loss of images through fading, smudging and weathering over time. It is also difficult to observe with certainty those images that are directly or completely overlain by other images. Although there are many cases of images having contradictory superimposition relationships, the archival approach allows the discernment of broader inter-tradition patterns and intra-tradition sequences in order to formulate something that moves closer to the original order of their placement on rock faces. Such is the case with the bulk of the painted imagery customarily defined as the hunter-gatherer fine-line tradition. A closer analysis afforded by the Agter-Pakhuis assemblages shows that this hunter-gatherer tradition (also commonly regarded as San/Bushman) in fact comprises the fine fine-line and coarse fine-line phases, which

may be two distinct artistic traditions in their own right. On the basis of these observations, it was possible to compare the results of the sequences from two CFB sites and that from DKS, one site in the sandveld where sequence has been well-documented. It was also possible to extrapolate the emergent sequence relationships from the three main sites to other sites with similar ranges of rock art imagery in the study area. To make such relative order correlations, the Harris matrices and the archival perspective analyses must necessarily move beyond just the use of superimposition habitually to include other systematic aspects of examination, such as the graphic repertoire of imagery including technique, image type, similarity of image, continuity of themes, and attitudes used for creating images, sets, panels and episodes and so forth. The practicality of observing the paintings as a through-time archive is that it permits not only those extrapolations that use the existence of physical superimposition, but also those which place value on the socio-historical production contexts of a a variety of image types and themes.

As discussed in chapters one and five, the archival qualities of naturalness, interrelatedness and uniqueness apply with similar force to the rock paintings. Because imagery arose from specific contexts and purposes, the relationships between the images and their specific production contexts render them interdependent of meanings. Each distinct image occupies a unique place in the temporal sequence as evidence of a past activity in relationship with other accumulated images, although the content or information in each image or category may or may not necessarily be equally unique. Thus, in the ultimate analysis, a broader range of painted sites could be linked on the basis of implied stratigraphic sequential correlations drawn from observed image similarities within established graphic repertoires or fields from specific sites. This multi-stranded approach has helped in the formulation of a regional painting sequence, a theme that is covered in the next chapter. What follows therefore is a discussion of the Western Cape regional sequence with a highlight of central temporal sigh-posts alongside image categories and themes which populate the various levels of this sequence. The next chapter lays the ground for understanding the rationale and significance of a selection of image categories or themes that are explored interpretatively to assay their temporal and symbolic evolution through time as reflected by this sequence.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Western Cape Chronology

Even if the rather crude paintings of wagons and the like do represent a final appearance of the long-standing representational tradition, the finer, and far older, techniques of painting had clearly disappeared some time ago. (Yates *et al.* 1994: 55)

7.1. INSIDE-OUT PERSPECTIVE OF ROCK PAINTING ARCHIVES

The sequencing and chronology of rock art have prevailed more in the southeastern mountains, particularly the Free State and Drakensberg regions of South Africa, than in any other part of southern Africa. This bias might in part have been due to the preponderance of a variety of imagery featuring shaded polychromes along with visible superimpositions in those regions, all attracting researchers. Moreover, in attempting to periodise rock paintings, most past researchers tended to focus on colour schemes as a defining feature of temporality and change. And so the predisposition has been towards those areas with more polychromous paintings than the Cape, for instance, a region which is dominated by ochreous monochromes. Hence, in the Cape the emphasis on painting sequences has attracted insufficient attention. Nevertheless, as a few previous studies have revealed in the past three decades, a tentative painting chronology in localised areas can be reconstructed from certain sites (e.g. see Anderson 1996; Mguni 1997; Yates *et al.* 1993, 1994).

This tentative chronology presented in this section was established largely on the basis of identifiable rock art traditions and their dominant image categories, distinctive subject matter and where possible the analysis of superimpositions between the various distinct imagery. One of the main concerns of this present study is registering other dimensions of the painting sequence in order to ascertain whether there is indeed a Cape regional painting sequence. This sequence would be inferable from the stratigraphic coherence of various image categories within the existing rock art traditions. Furthermore, such coherence in part arises from the clarification of some image categories that have featured in previous chronology studies. As discussed in the previous chapter, one of these uncertain categories is that of finger dots: are these dots indeed a coherent image group which, like the finger-painting tradition or handprints, always appears above the fine fine-line tradition? If this view is shown to be the case, then finger dots are indeed a coherent category in the Cape painting sequence. Handprints are a related, but different, type of image; a case for regional chronology can be made when the handprint category is also demonstrated to be consistently above and below particular types of imagery within various painting traditions. These two categories are unique in form and production technique and are generally good benchmarking indicators of painting sequence as shown at DKS (Mguni 1997). This assertion is not always true, however, as shown at Stompiesfontein Shelter in the Koue Bokkeveld area of the CFB ranges, where handprints are not consistently above any rock art tradition, but are contemporaneous with colonial-era finger paintings (Yates *et al.* 1993: 66).

It is crucial to remember that the archival perspective, combined with Harris matrices, is the foundation for exploring the Cape temporal sequence presented in this study. This section centres as much on explaining the phenomena of the sequence of imagery as it does on examining basic assumptions and premises assumed in previous chronology studies. In this approach, the analytical methodologies derived from the archival perspective and Harris matrices might reduce complex assemblages of artistic and cultural "records" to simple and intelligible relative sequential relationships. These structural relationships are then interlinked with anthropological and historical analyses, which are explored subsequently as means to derive interpretations of image change through time in the painting sequence. In assessing historical and cultural change, this study offers avenues of interpreting chronology and the associated temporal seriation of graphic-artistic features. Since image change and relative chronology are the main theme, the discussion emphasises the manner in which transformations of imagery and meaning may be conceptualised from painting stratigraphies.

On the surface, however, examination of the painting imagery's chronological sequence makes it seem as though this study is entirely empirical through the observation of stratigraphic relations between different images. On the contrary the arrangement of the relative order of painted images is only the beginning in terms of the essentials in the advancement of interpretations that seek to foreground the past social events and political contexts as signposts through historical time. There seems to be some basis for change in painting categories shown in the temporal sequences of some sites as described in the previous chapter and now in the regional sequence summary. Some image categories, as noted earlier, persisted through time while at the same time they seem to have had shifts in their symbolic focus through time in the sequence.

7.2. VISUALISING CHANGE OVER TIME IN THE SEQUENCE

Superposition histories of painted sites are worked out from the analysis of layers of imagery. However, the resulting image layers in the final sequence may reflect contradictory ordering within single painting traditions. It appears that a major problem that most writers pointed out in the previous sequence studies was that of superimposition contradictions. It is a problem that a recent critique posits as very complex in terms of detecting "a sequence of temporal episodes within a single tradition" (Pearce 2010: 149, original emphasis). Further, various image categories may exist simultaneously over time, sometimes with certain of their elements being selectively blended from one layer or episode to another. It may be observed, for example, that certain types of kaross-clad human figures as a category appear in both the fine fine-line and coarse fine-line manners. The same is true of certain types of animals, such as elephants and the distinctive fat-tailed sheep. Conversely, certain image types do not occur in other manners of depiction beyond those that define their artistic traditions. For instance, while the historical-period images appear in both the coarse fine-line and finger-painting manners, they are never in the fine fine-line manner, an earlier strata of image making in the Cape. As predicted in the epigraph above, the reason for this is that colonial material culture assumed its place in the painting history of the area well after the fine fine-line tradition ceased to exist (e.g. see Parkington 2003: 121). There are also some animals, such as eland, which are archetypes of earlier traditions in fine fine-line manner but less so of the later coarse fine-line manner. However, an earlier observer argued that there are large and earlier elands which, like elephants, occupy prominent positions in shelters (Sampson 1968: 193). Their observed trait was a "marked deterioration in the drawing of elands as they become smaller and occupy humbler positions on the sites" (*ibid.*). While elands are registered in two manners of depiction, they have not been observed in the finger-painting manner in this study or in another broad site survey in the Agter-Pakhuis (Mguni 2007). Artistic change may be discerned from varied manners of depiction; it may not be evident within a single tradition.

Assessing image change inside a single tradition may be done on the basis of associations of image categories. The uniquely grouped human types and their contexts called "group scenes" or types of elephant depictions may be associated with a range of other paintings in particular ways that are temporally significant. As socio-cultural contexts of meaning shifted, so too were the graphic associational contexts of imagery. Their meaning might have changed in time following ways steeped in socio-economic shifts among the various people who made these paintings. Even if the image categories are not themselves in superimposition, it might still be possible to establish whether they are chronologically later or earlier that other categories based on some of their established interrelationships within and between various other image classes from different sites. This statement might at first seem contentious, but this analysis introduced the fonds concept to relate images through their various unique graphic characteristics and associations. In this approach, the Harris matrices attend only to those images that are clearly in superimposition (i.e. above or below relationships) as a complementary analytical tool. The sequential relations so established are essential in the construction of relative chronology. Images belonging together in one stratum are represented at the same level within the final diagrammatic layout of sequence. The technique attends to discrete images as units of stratification. Beyond the matrices, linking these imagery sequences in spatial terms across disparate panels within a single site or across several sites requires conceptualising the image interrelationships in terms of archival fonds.

7.3. THE MAIN CHRONOLOGY PHASES

This study worked from the premise that generally the fine fine-line images are earliest followed by course fine-line images, then handprints and finger dotting along with finger painting appearing even later in the sequence. Whether or not finger dots and handprints emerged when the fine fine-line images had ceased completely is a concern already discussed and will be expanded a little later in this chapter. This summary of an integrated regional sequence of the Cape, particularly in the Agter-Pakhuis, reveals some noteworthy ordering which has ramifications for understanding graphic change in this region. This observation is from an analysis that uses recursive relationships between the selected painting categories, ethnography and archaeological and historical sources in unravelling the overall layered structure of image making. What follows now is a description of the resulting unified painting sequence and an explanation for the occurrence of these image categories in those levels where they occur. This study developed five broad chronological divisions into which image types (small scale), panels (medium scale) and categories (large scale) are built in stratigraphically. Thus, in the final analysis, the emerging defining labels are useful in so far as they are indicative of the succession of imagery in the area. They are informed by and characterised through observing the form and content of accumulated imagery assemblages. This sequence pertains to the study area and has not been tested against other localities outside this region, but some of the levels might stand up to further evaluation.

Broad stratigraphic divisions (Figure 7.1) from the bottom-most to the uppermost, encompass what will henceforth be called the Pre-Contact Phase, Early Contact Phase, Later Contact Phase, Post-Contact Phase and the Modern Phase, each of which is described below. There is a rationale in using such broad, but useful, descriptive sequential designations: the available information on the cultural sequence, direct authorship and absolute dating is still largely insufficient and so being any more specific than these divisions is at best specious. Some of the dates on the far right of the diagram come from archaeological evidence and a few radiocarbon dates of the paintings

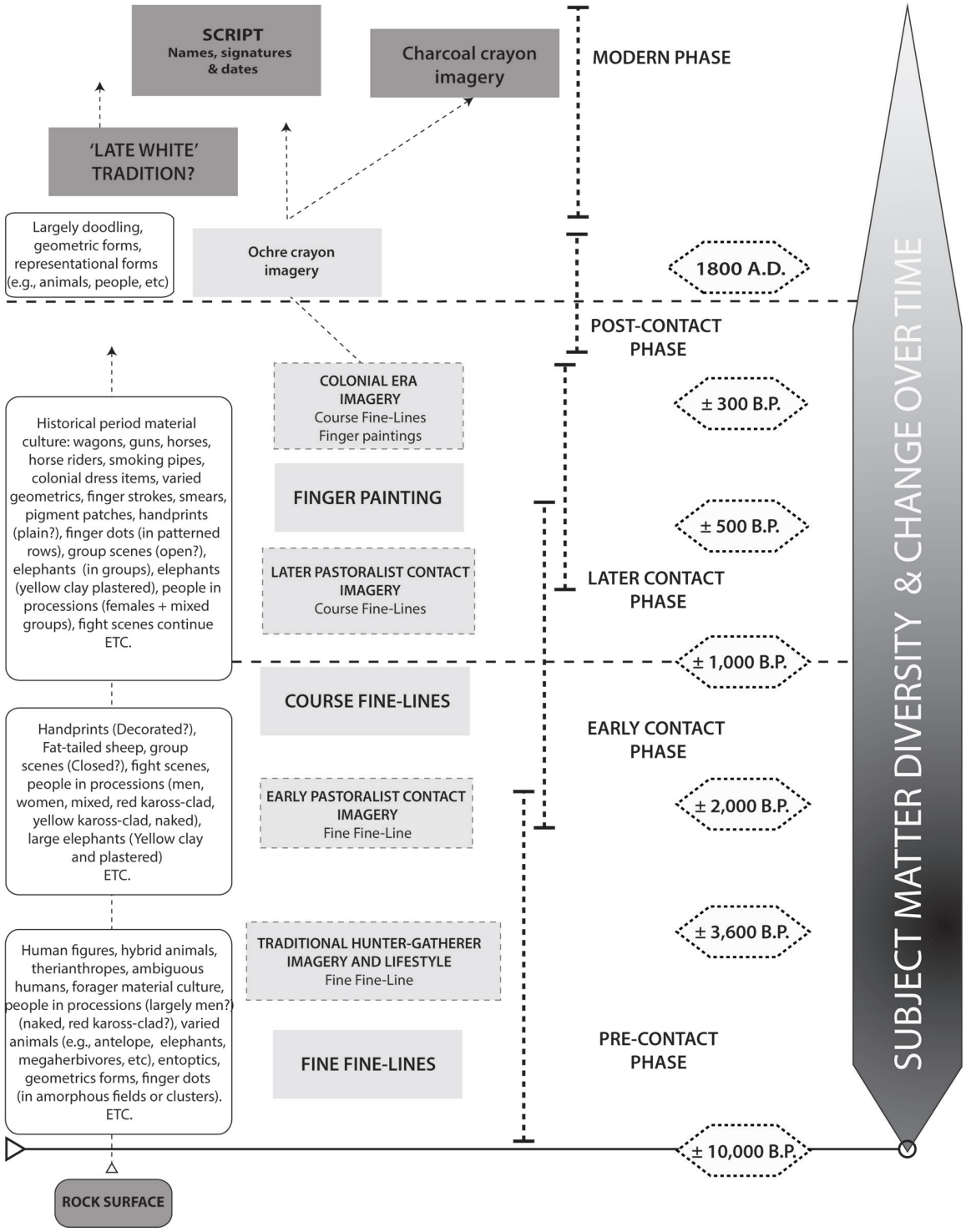


Figure 7.1: A summary diagrammatic representation of the regional sequence of rock paintings in the Cape.

(Jerardino & Swanepoel 1999; van der Merwe *et al*. 1987; Yates *et al*. 1994). These few dates at least provide some idea of the chronological interrelationships between certain archaeological materials and image types and categories in terms of their relative positions in the Cape temporal sequence. Generally, while there are clear discontinuities of imagery through time there also appear to be some continuities of subject matter from the earlier to later painting traditions.

The lowest level in the sequence is the Pre-Contact Phase (Pr-CP), the oldest and perhaps longest-spanning division. Since the paintings are generally undated, it is safe to adopt an age range in the order of ± 1,500–10,000 years old (see Parkington 2003: 121). Some dating evidence comes from the sandveld area where researchers unearthed collapsed rock slabs, one of which is painted with a line of seven finely detailed human figures (Jerardino & Swanepoel 1999). Radiocarbon dates from associated marine shells revealed a minimum age of 3,635 ± 30 BP for the slabs, while a sample immediately above them gave an age of 3,510 ± 50 BP (Jerardino & Swanepoel 1999: 544). Another sandwiching sample retrieved from one of the bottom-most layers below that of the slabs gave a date of 3,640 ±

60 BP. On this evidence, these researchers concluded that "[p]arietal rock art at Steenbokfontein Cave thus dates to at least 3,600 years ago, the oldest yet known for southern Africa" (*ibid*.). The time when the slabs fell off the shelter wall suggests that the fine fine-line tradition in the Cape might be around 4,000 or more years old, as a minimum age. However, based on the residual white pigment (a fugitive colour) on the slab, the researchers argued that the images were probably made not long before the slab detached (Jerardino & Swanepoel 1999: 545). Since weathering is intense along the coastal zone (Jerardino 1999: 65), some of the extant faded human and animal figures might belong in the same period as the buried slab images, which preserved better due to their dry and stable burial context in the deposit (Jerardino *et al.* 2000: 47). Further similarities are suggested by the presence on the slab of a kaross-clad human figure and there being several human figures in the procession, features which become more common in the better preserved corpus in the interior mountains. The relative scarcity of these features in the coastal belt, the researchers argue, might be due to harsher environmental conditions associated with the wet marine climates than in the drier interior mountains (Jerardino & Swanepoel 1999: 547).

The more visible and dominant images in the shelter (mainly handprints, finger paintings of dots and grids, and faded human figures) are not similar to the images reflected on this slab, suggesting that these may have been a later addition to the sequence. This is true for the reported fat-tailed sheep and a nearby smear of pigment, yet these images are consistent with the general Cape painting tradition (Jerardino & Swanepoel 1999: 64). While sheep paintings are rarely found in the coastal zone, these researchers argue that they might not have been uncommon previously and that they have been lost due to

Figure 7.2: An example of Pre-Contact Phase fine fine-lines extracted from large clusters: the top figures are from Boontjies River and the bottom figures are from one of the valleys near the Brandewyn River.

acute weathering. Other key finds from this site include an human infant burial, which has been identified as hunter-gatherer due to the cultural burial context and associated materials, such as vegetal materials interred with the corpse (Jerardino *et al.* 2000). Occupation histories from several dated shelters with paintings attest to the long-term use of these sites by hunters and gatherers. It is incontrovertible that any such site use may also have involved the making of rock art in these shelters. In terms of the manner of depiction, this phase comprises what is defined as fine fine-line imagery (Figure 7.2): this early phase epitomises an elaborate and definitive formal finesse of the southern African hunter-gatherer painting tradition.

The colour schemes used in the fine fine-line tradition are as varied as the shading techniques, though in the Cape shading is not widely distributed across space (Parkington & Manhire 2003: 31). The subject matter was also diverse, but generally included animals, human figures and material culture (Yates *et al.* 1994). Even with this variety, there seems to be a limited range of those themes on which the finesse of conventional techniques and manners was used. For instance, the eland especially, as well as other medium to large antelope and some types of human figures appear to have been depicted using a diversified colour palette and technical repertoire. On other painted subjects, a monochromatic treatment sufficed, principally in ochreous pigments. It is therefore possible that the range of subject matter was fairly limited in the earlier periods of painting production and progressively increased with time. While there is an obvious diversity of image types and categories, it is difficult in many other shelters in the area to discern any meaningful superimpositions between various categories of painting due to limited direct overlays and weathering over time causing smudging and fading.

It is important to note that these chronological divisions are not impermeable as some of the image categories are spread across more than a few levels of the sequence. This scenario is to be expected since the painters did not operate in watertight "pigeon-holed" temporal and spatial dimensions in their existence. The fine fine-line manner of depiction used for the bulk of the paintings in the Pr-CP period is extended to the early contact image category. For instance, eland depictions appear in both the earlier fine fine-line manner and the coarse fine-line manner that is generally a graphic feature of the early to later contact phases. Another subject matter is that of fat-tailed sheep, whose early presence in the Cape is established from the archaeological record (e.g. see Sealy & Yates 1996) to appear around 2,000 BP. This date therefore becomes the terminus ante quem of these images in the early contact era between herders and hunter-gatherers. The early manner of depiction used in depicting this initial contact subject matter is fine fine-line (Jerardino 1999; Manhire *et al.* 1986; Van Rijssen 1984); however, some sheep examples also appear in the coarse fine-line (e.g. the probable sheep painting—Image 173—which was initially eroneously defined as fine fine-line at DKS; see Mguni 1997: 36, 55). The latter type of sheep examples is thus assumed to be later than their finely detailed counterparts. Some sheep are even painted with the finger (Parkington 2003: 115), suggesting the continuity of this theme into the later colonial contact phase.

This kind of graphic transformation along three levels of the sequence, however, does not constitute evidence for the devolution of painting traditions over time. On the contrary, it could suggest cross-cultural influences and recycling of imagery between the various makers of the paintings, with the preferred subject matter equally shifting their symbolic focus and meaning. Such formal shifts in fat-tailed sheep depictions are not unique to this domestic animal. A graphic shift similar to that of sheep is noticeable with elephant depictions as well. Elephants generally appear in the fine fine-line manner that is earlier and within the Pr-CP period. They also occur throughout the sequence, changing noticeably from the earlier detailed forms to coarse fine-line manners in later phases. In various cases, the earlier image forms of various subject matter are overlain by large elephant depictions of predominantly indelicately applied clayish pigments of yellow, orange, white and infrequently red. Some writers have correctly observed that large elephants are a common feature in the Cape (Sampson 1968: 192; Slingsby 1997: 36). Although E.W. Sampson suggested in the 1960s that these large elephants are earlier in the sequence, this study found them to populate the middle to higher stratigraphic levels in the chronology. These elephants appear mostly above all other images in the broader fine fine-line and coarse fine-line groupings, confirming their relatively later occurrence in the sequence. Sampson's observation that they tend to occupy central positions in the shelters is however confirmable.

Elephants and sheep in general might therefore carry temporal implications: their shifts in formal attributes, and probably also in meaning, throughout the sequence resulted from changes related to the early and later contact periods. Furthermore, other categories, such as some types of "group scenes" and "fight scenes" appearing in association with early contact imagery, do indeed seem to proliferate—like the coarse fine-line yellow-ochre plastered elephants—during early contact between former hunter-gatherers and early herding groups. They successively continue until the most recent levels of the sequence. At least two sites on one of the main valleys of the Boontjies River reveal images of domestic sheep alongside elephants in the same fine fine-line manner and red monochrome pigment colours. In both cases, these images are unified in chronological and, as it can be argued, probably conceptual and graphic contexts: in one case a cow-calf association appears for both sheep and elephant depictions (Figure 7.3). At another site, a file of nine weathered elephants is mirrored slightly below by another file of equally weathered fat-tailed sheep, of which just three are now only partially visible (there may have been more) (Figure 7.4). Some subject matter, such as the human figure, appear throughout the chronological spectrum, although their differences in manner of depiction may not suggest evident change over time in meaning. Although one must be cautious in overgeneralising, such images should not be expected to have held timeless symbolic focus. Their meaning must have changed with time as different social and cultural circumstances shifted

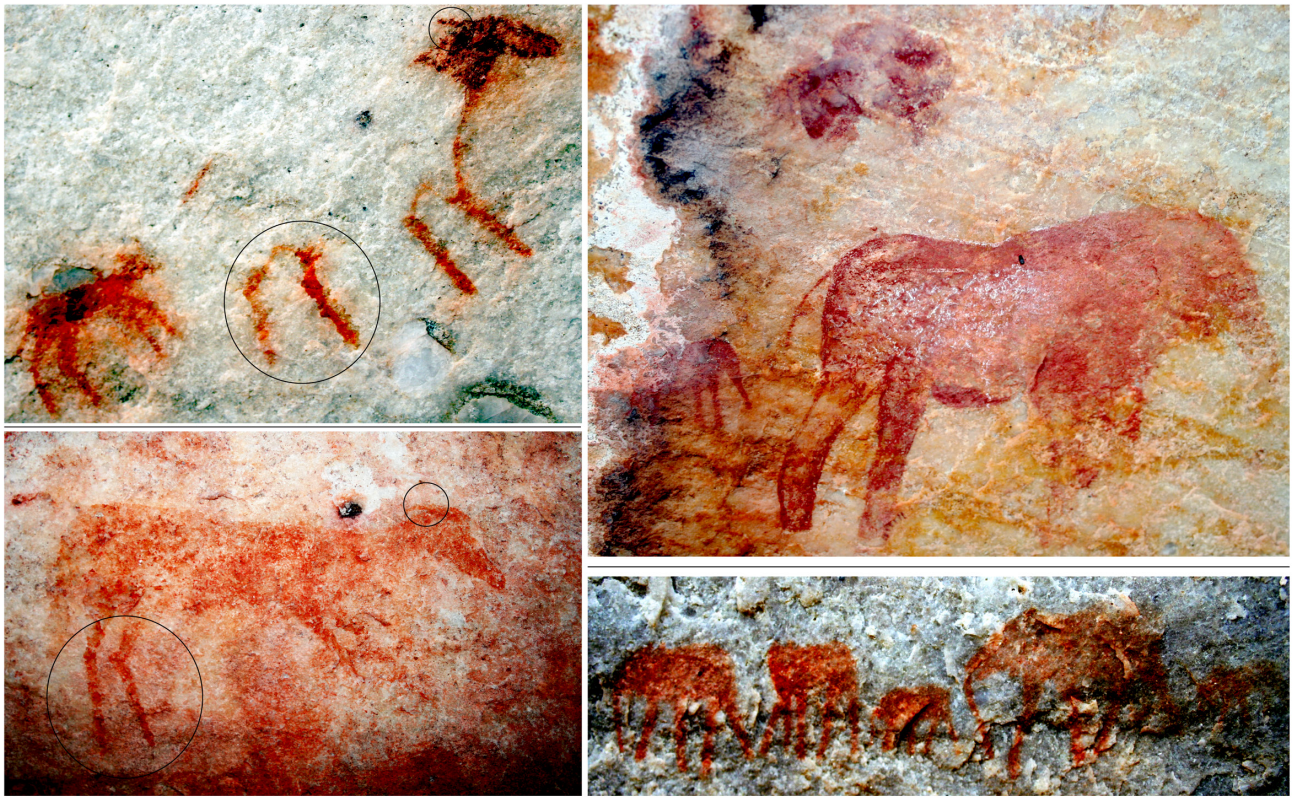


Figure 7.3: Ewe and lamb (top left) and elephants with calves (right top and bottom). The left bottom fat-tailed sheep, showing their distinctive features in the Cape, is found in a cluster alongside a procession of elephants (see Figure 7.4) which is a strong association that needs to be understood in the light of the significance of both these animal categories in the social and political world of the tripartite hunter-gatherer/herder/colonial encounters in the Cape.

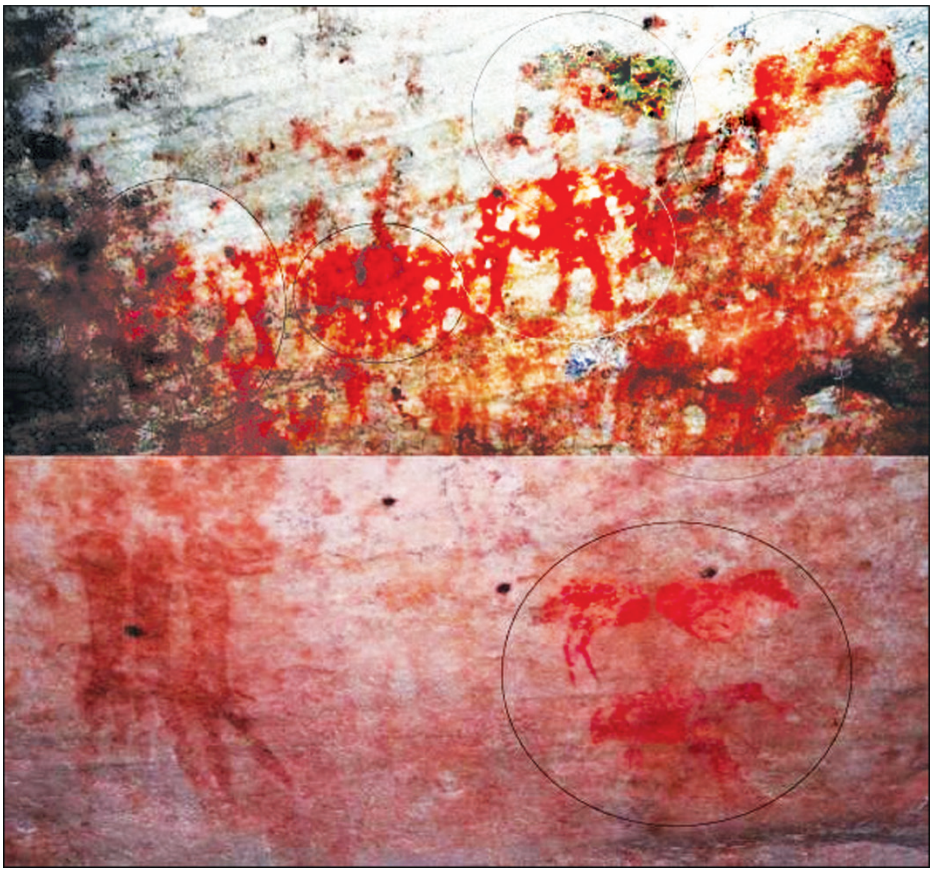


Figure 7.4: Two fat-tailed sheep juxtaposed with a line of elephants. These images are directly above each other, separated by just under 18 cm of space and they all face towards the right. The elephant herd has at least nine clear individuals including calves and sub-adults, while two fat-tailed sheep are clearly depicted one above the other and a possible further three to the right are very faint and badly weathered.

and as varied groups of past artists actively placed their own imagery in the shelters in the context of existing strata of imagery. This change may in part be accounted for through the analysis of archaeological, historical and anthropological clues about the past human settlement of this region.

The second level is the Early Contact Phase (ECP), comprising the fine fine-line manner featuring early contact imagery. Some of the defining subject matter are fat-tailed sheep, which also appear in coarse fine-line manner in later levels. It is possible that some traditional fine fine-line content, such as transformed or hybrid creatures, also features in early coarse fine-line manner (Figure 7.5). Although this latter manner of depiction may comprise a tradition in its own right, it might also have been an intermediate phase between the earlier fine fine-line and later finger traditions stronger in form and content. To all intents and purposes, some of the later image types which are carried over from the earlier Pr-CP to the succeeding ECP are potentially a replication or impressionistic remodelling of a selection of earlier subject matter by later artists (Appendix 1 Figure 4). Handprints, too, appear in the ECP division although, as already shown, they also proliferate into the next phases. Handprints do not seem to be a single coherent category in one phase and there is not enough evidence to discount the possibility of various groups having produced them at different periods.

A multicultural source for handprints is intimated by some writers (Parkington 2003: 110–111) or even possibly by intra-group age and gender categories (e.g. see Manhire 1998; Meister 2003). Others have found handprints and finger dots to reflect continuity from the second millennium AD to the colonial period (Hall & Mazel 2005). Generally, while still contentious, handprints have been variously associated with Khoe-speaking pastoralists (i.e. now accepted as Khoekhoen) (Anderson 1996; Van Rijssen 1994). For Gavin Anderson, handprints were probably a product of Khoe female initiations. Similarly, Royden Yates and co-workers had suggested even earlier than Anderson a circumstantial link between handprints and pastoralism (Yates *et al*. 1993, 1994). Their view was mainly informed by higher frequencies of handprints in the coastal areas and sites adjacent to the Olifants valley, where evidence of pastoralism appeared early, was most intensive and had a greater impact than in the mountains. However, recent observations show that the frequency and distribution of handprint sites is in almost equal proportions on the coastal belt and in the mountains (Anthony Manhire, pers. comm. 2005), although the decorated type clearly dominates only in the sandveld and coastal areas (Manhire 1998: 99; Yates *et al*. 1994) where pastoralism was a prevailing lifestyle after 2,000 BP in the Cape. On the west coast, a "low-lying shelter with its ceiling covered by decorated handprints" (Jerardino & Maggs 2007: 105) lies adjacent to one of the excavated pastoral encampment sites called Simon Se Klip. This may be coincidental, but the authors mention that such themes are "known to be contemporary with domestic stock and ceramics in the last 2000 years" (*ibid*.: 105).

Manhire (pers. comm. 2006) has in recent times avoided assigning outright authorship for handprints because of insufficient historical evidence, although he accepts that pastoralists may have done the decorated varieties in coastal areas. As a corollary, the plain handprints found often in sites with fine fine-line images in the mountains were probably made by remnants of hunter-gatherers (Meister 2003), as part of rites of passage or similar ritual ceremonies. What is not explained in most studies that argue this image category to be a product of one group

Figure 7.5: Coarse fine-line images: the bottom right therianthropic figures and the line of disproportionate antelope are possibly an earlier form of this manner as they contain formal elements and content that is closer to the true fine fine-lines while the rest of the images may be later and are closer to the finger painting manner of depiction.

Figure 7.6: Images of indeterminate animals, weighted digging sticks and patches of pigment in coarse fine-line manner (left), and a mixture of coarse fine-lines and finger paintings (right) from two different sites on the Boontjies River.

Figure 7.7: A collage of imagery from Stompiesfontein showing a variety of content—largely colonial material culture and animals—and form, mostly in coarse fine-line and fine painting manners.

or the other, is how two culturally different populations in two nearly distinct ecozones appear to use the same image type for possibly similar ritual practices. Considering that although these are diverse people they had been in contact for several centuries after 2,000 years ago. It is therefore possible that ritual practice and accompanying handprinting (and also painting in general) was a product of the existential dynamics of social interaction, with ideas moving across and between systems of belief and worldviews. This is the interpretation that some scholars appear to support for handprints (Parkington 2003: 110). In this purview, it is possible to agree with those who avoid the strict "Khoikhoi/San dichotomy" as "unproductive and…limit[ing] the range of interpretation within historical stereotypes" (Jerardino & Maggs 2007: 111). Instead, these writers chose the term "Khoe-San herders" in describing a pastoralist campsite on the west coast (*ibid*.). It might be even more attractive to ask whether the decorated handprints are themselves earlier than their plain equivalents. The assumption is that the putative association of pastoralism and decorated handprints starts in the sandveld and coastal zones before moving into the mountains at a later stage. There, as the thinking goes, they influence the residual hunter-gatherers (or an admixture of hunter-gatherers with herders) to then make plain handprints whatever their symbolic associations.

In terms of superimpositions between images within the ECP, it is also evident that some categories such as elephants appear above and below or as contemporaneous with "group scenes". It has also been observed that "group scenes" appear above some fine fine-line images of eland and human figures. This sequence is manifested in one of the key sites of this study, Fallen Rock Shelter, where one large fine fine-line elephant is below a "group scene", while at the same time the same "group scene" is overlain by two other smaller elephants which appear in coarse fine-line manner. In another superimposed case at a different site, a small "group scene" overlaps an earlier polychrome-shaded eland, whose fine fine-line manner of depiction in this schema places it in the Pr-CP division. This eland is part of a now faded procession on the left of the "group scene", which is itself much better preserved.

There are also certain types of finger dots and variously coloured pigment patches (which were earlier called "palettes" on account of this use being viewed as their purpose) in this level. Furthermore, there are several stimulating manifestations in this ECP: first, there are cases of imitative imagery that appear to derive from the earlier fine fine-line images. These imitative images are sometimes immediately next to those they imitate, or they may feature elsewhere in the same shelter or even at different sites altogether. Second, there is a common aspect of miniaturising the images in the ECP division, with these "condensed" images appearing in coarse fine-line manner. Most images in the coarse fine-line manner are in fact generally painted much smaller than their earlier ECP counterparts of the fine fine-line category. Third, in some instances the coarse fine-line images occur sequentially above the fine fine-line images where they appear in superimposition. This miniaturisation feature was first observed in the 1960s as a painting category that is most distinct from the others:

> Conventions are discarded wholesale and drawing becomes active and original. Sombre classical shapes are left behind and anything and everything of interest is grist to the mill. People are shown in all attitudes, even in wild melees…Freakish figures are drawn with spidery limbs. In fact the whole scene becomes as unbridled as it was solemn and conventional in the early stages…There can be no doubt of the recent origin of this phase. It often overlies all the others and is nearly always in the lowest position on a painted surface, as if it had been added after the desirable space had been used up…The figures are nearly all small, from an inch to four inches in length, and are in red monochrome except for a few recent ones, e.g., of a kettle in yellow (clay?). The quality of the paint is poor. It can be rubbed off with a dry cloth and is easily dissolved if wetted. (Sampson 1968: 194)

It was also observed that in this phase of miniatures there are no large animals of the earlier periods, such as elephants and elands, but rather a proliferation of small antelope and baboons. This description is consistent with the coarse fine-line category. Still further up in the sequence comes the Later Contact Phase (LCP). Coarse fine-line images (Figure 7.6) are still found in this chronological division although they become less frequent upwards. The finger-painting manner proliferates from this level upwards. Although this observation has not been clarified previously, the historical period themes appear in both the finger-painting and coarse fine-line manners of depiction. For example, some writers observed at Stompiesfontein Shelter, a site in the Koue Bokkeveld (Figure 7.7), that many "paintings [here] are in fact not finger paintings and the relatively fine detail in the horse and wagon paintings indicates that the pigment was applied by some form of 'brush'" (Hall & Mazel 2005: 135). Even earlier, other writers had noted at this site that some finer details of the imagery were made with an instrument rather than a finger, although they differ appreciably from the widespread detailed representational assemblage (the fine fine-line imagery), and that they generally lack the realistic form (Yates *et al*. 1993: 67). These are what have now been designated the coarse fine-line images. Image types that feature strongly in this division are finger dots, finger strokes or slash marks, pigment smears and also handprints (probably the plain type). The defining feature of this division is the colonial material culture depicted at some of the sites in the study area and more frequently farther south of the Cederberg. Some writers argued that, "The distribution of colonial period rock art in southern Africa is…apparently widespread, both as engravings and paintings" (*ibid*.: 59).

The colonial era depictions include muskets/rifles, mules and horses and sometimes horse riders as well, animal-drawn vehicles (wagons, coaches, etc.) (see Hall & Mazel 2005), sailing ships (e.g. with the well-known examples found in Noordbron or Heidedal near Porterville and another two from the farm Lonacres near Stompiesfontein

Figure 7.8: Processions and groups of people and animals from Zuurvlakte, in the Koue Bokkeveld, showing juxtapositions and overlaps of coarse fine-lines and finger paintings.

[Johnson 1960]), dresses, hats of various kinds particularly the wide-brimmed type, smoking pipes, human figures in arms akimbo and other postures distinctive of this tradition (Figure 7.8), basic ladder-like and gridded images and then several other introduced and indeterminate subject matter. The ochreous colours used in this division are generally distinct from the earlier divisions; they usually gravitate towards brick-red or powdery bright-red pigments. While the earlier pigment colours and their effect on the rock face give the impression of stable mixtures with a distinctive smooth finish that came from glossy and gluey binders, the latter versions reflect a crumbly or chalky finish due to their watery binders and tend to come off easily when rubbed. The colour pigments are restricted, as are the localities where these subject matter are found. A few years ago, researchers working along the Caledon River Valley observed that the paintings they studied encompassing domestic animals, shields and alien material culture introduced from the outside appeared later in the sequence, preceded by the shaded polychrome images of the traditional fine fine-line assemblage (Loubser & Laurens 1994). As for the manners of depiction, these researchers observed marked differences too, the later images appearing largely in blocked colour in contrast to the traditional shaded polychromes, which they rarely superimposed directly (Loubser & Laurens 1994: 89). Importantly, the manner of depiction, technique, colour schemes and subject matter may together precipitate a chronological place for a category of paintings without it necessarily being in superimpositions with other images.

Further up the sequence, the succeeding level is the Post-Contact Phase (Pt-CP). Very little is known about the content of this division. Many sites in the Cape contain numerous lines scratched on the rock surfaces using ochreous crayons. At first, they appear to be random defilements of earlier painting panels, but on closer inspection they seem to have a certain consistency of form. Some writers found these lines in common association with finger-painted women and colonial-era paintings, finger dots, handprints and finger smears (Anderson 1997: 34). It is believed that these lines are rarely found with finely detailed earlier paintings. However, from the Bushmans Kloof Reserve sample of about 150 sites, a total of 19 sites (12.7%) featured these lines scratched over the finger-painted imagery or nearby images in fine fine-line and coarse fine-line manners, without any recognisable pattern of association with other image types. They are generally regular and linear in character: ladder-like shapes; herringbone patterns; wavy lines or various circular forms, some of which are variously infilled with grids; and square and rectangular shapes, sometimes also infilled with grids. In some cases, though uncommon, these crayon lines are actually drawings of subject matter that often mimic earlier painted representational imagery on the same panels. While they are almost invariably ochreous in nature, several examples of these lines observed in some localities appear in charcoal as well. It is doubtful that this theme belongs to the era of modern writing since none are scripts or numerals or any form of lettering. We therefore can only agree with some observers who have noted that "these images are too consistent to be labelled graffiti. These charcoal images are thus not idle scratching, but part of a painting tradition" (Anderson 1996: 71). As to which that tradition is remains to be demonstrated. Because of their constant structured character, scratched images in this category can be called "ochre crayon markings" rather than doodles, which are often amorphous.

Although observed only at five sites, the ochre crayon-marking category chronologically appears alongside the so-called "Late White" paintings, which are not that well documented in the Cape. Desmond Clark (1958: 72) may have been the first to apply the term "Late White" in his work north of the Zambezi River, to mean images that are late in the sequence and invariably appearing in ashy-white pigments. In most areas a common form is that of spread-eagled designs, crosses, people with

arms (often legs as well) outstretched, animals, various figurative forms and indeterminate shapes. This tradition is generally localised in the northern parts of South Africa and becomes relatively rare farther south. Whilst this has become a recognised painting tradition associated with the early Bantu-language-speaking farming communities throughout sub-Saharan Africa, the Cape appears to be anomalous since there is no evidence of early farmers in the archaeological record of the region (John Parkington, pers. comm. 2006). In superimpositions, these finger-daubed white images overlie all else where they are found. They may represent the true final representational category in the Cape, although they appear at a very small number of sites. Although this painting assemblage is widespread in the northern regions, it tends to vary in content and density within shelters in different regions. In the Cape these images are found in small patches of rock faces. Each region, and the people who made these paintings, has a particular cultural context, history and symbolism, and so the Cape situation may not be comparable to other parts of the sub-region. As shall be seen, it is possible that the Cape examples are a product of the small later-day Bantu-speakers who became incorporated into various mixed groups of the frontier period.

While some regions have historical and ethnographic sources to inform understandings of the "Late White" painting tradition, others such as the Cape have no known informative sources to unravel this artistic form. One way to understand this anomaly in the Cape is to assess the history of long-distance raiding which was commonplace in the latter half of the 1800s as frontier wars escalated. As some writers have noted, the marauding mixed-identity parties from the Orange River, covered enormous distances in raiding expeditions even heading as far south as the areas sandwiched by both the Olifants and Berg rivers. Some of these diverse parties included Bantu-speaking peoples of Sotho–Tswana origin, the same cultural group who are attributed to have authored this art tradition in the northern regions of South Africa. It is also possible that in addition to the "Late White" paintings, other artistic forms such as the Khoekhoen herder images are actually from this layer of history in the region. Being late in the sequence is, however, consistent with the known fact that Bantu-speaking farmers were not present in various parts of the Cape region until very recently (e.g. regarding the eastern parts of the Cape region, see Hall 1994).

Right at the top of the sequence, the Modern Phase (MP) supersedes the Pt-CP division. With only a few exceptions, it is also noteworthy that the sites with this kind of late material are fairly accessible as they are near to the roads, pathways or built-up areas and farmlands. This division comprises scripts encompassing names, signatures, dates and other forms of lettering which are clearly modern. This random writing (and in some cases doodling as well) is probably often the work of children or adolescents in recent times. Some of these scripts, however, are dates going back to the late 1800s; in most such cases, it is doubtful that children were authors. For instance, such a scenario is postulated for Maidens Pool Shelter where (judging by the commonplace Welsh names and the cursive script of that period used in those names and signatures), there appears to be corroborative archival evidence that a team of English land surveyors worked in that Clanwilliam area in the 1880s pegging farmland (John Parkington, pers. comm. 2005). For most of these scripts, the materials used are also modern, comprising commercial crayons, ink, lead pencil and synthetic paints of various colours.

The stratified image categories that are defined and described above denote relative temporal segments in the production of paintings throughout this master sequence of the Cape. Although it is emerging that some long-held ideas about this sequence are still relevant, based on the review of the image stratigraphies from several sites in the region, it is also clear that this sequence is much more complex than allowed in previous studies. The earlier tradition of painting which is customarily defined as detailed fine-line is in this study divided into two assemblages: first, the fine fine-line, which is earlier and oldest, and second, the succeeding coarse fine-line tradition of painting. Rather than there being an abrupt and radical disjunction from one tradition to the other, it appears that the two corpuses formally grade into each other. The latter also shares elements with the former, particularly in terms of some common subject matter, the consistency of pigment colour choices and the use of brush-like applicators in its production. Nevertheless, the coarse fine-line images also deviate from the fine fine-line images in their general rudimentary finish and tendency towards miniaturisation of subject matter. Such differences and parallels in this painting sequence were not adequately explored in previous studies. The implication therefore is that such heterogeneity may need to be understood from an appraisal of available historical, anthropological and other sources. The finger-painted imagery, on the other hand, appears to be a coherent category, and the handprints may in general be divided into two classes—the decorated and plain types—with potentially temporal and spatial implications for the regional sequence. Generally, the image types and their categories featured in this study do indeed appear to form distinctive artistic entities with temporal coherence throughout the sequence.

7.4. IMPLICATIONS FOR HISTORY AND ROCK ART INTERPRETATION

This study follows several perspectives in arguing for the importance of understanding the increasingly complex ways in which rock art chronology could reveal something about the socio-cultural circumstances that interconnected people and groups on the landscape in the past. Concern with such cultural interconnections is significant for the purposes of understanding painting change over time and permutations of various artistic traditions identified in the sequence. It is an analysis that eschews a vision of a landscape divided into impermeable ethnic compartments, but urges one in which human action through time is many-sided and complexly intertwined. As some have argued before, "The connection between embodied social reality

and social structures is not an extrinsic one, expressed in theories of determination, but is an intrinsic one where impersonal forces shape, in a subtle and often indirect fashion, the felt necessities of daily life" (McNay 2008: 9). The manifestation of these "necessities of daily life", as seen from the lens of a multidimensional past such as that observed in the Cape, is expected to feature, however minimally or otherwise, in the rock art record. This record reveals noteworthy variation through the entire sequence of painting. The significance of such variation is difficult to elucidate fully, although it can be accepted that differences of narrative traditions and practices of the various hunter-gatherer peoples and other groups in different times and places raise the convincing possibility that such cultural and historical variances also pertain to the rock art record. On visual grounds, the known South African artist Walter Battiss (1948) and, more recently, Pippa Skotnes (1996b) have suggested that the customary San rock art may in fact comprise several different graphic arts. While some might disagree with this view, it is an acceptable proposition that there exists sub-traditions within the broad San artistic assemblage.

Engravings and paintings, characterised by different techniques, distributions and, to some degree, subject matter, are an example of the different artistic traditions within the broader hunter-gatherer corpus. But within these two divisions are further subdivisions that manifest differentially in certain regions and not in others. The differences between them may be more than just graphic or technical characteristics and may be "rooted in a cultural, regional and historical variety that is often underestimated" (Solomon 2007: 158–159). This is essentially the kind of concern that the archival formulation is intended to understand in the Cape, alongside the above-defined regional painting sequence. It is argued that the above painting sequence reveals the existence of one hitherto undefined sub-tradition within the broader San rock art corpus in the region. This genre is defined as the coarse fine-line assemblage in the revised painting sequence. This distinction has never been formally observed, as the two main divisions are generally considered to be the "[f] inely applied representational compositions, cruder finger paintings" (Yates *et al*. 1994: 32). In this view, everything that is not painted with the finger is then subsumed under the fine-line tradition, which has now been define as fine fine-line to contrast it with the coarse fine-line body of painting.

In its formulation, the revised sequence has important components that have a bearing on rock art interpretation. Social, cultural and symbolic elements of artistic production are possible to read from the sequence structure and chronology. Chronological patterns at various sites in this landscape may indicate cultural continuities and discontinuities over time in terms of site use and artistic production. The reassessment of sequence provides, first, a means to verify and refine the long-observed painting traditions. Second, these refinements help unravel previously undefined anomalies of imagery, such as the now defined coarse fine-line tradition. This perspective may also sharpen ideas about contact between the hunter-gatherers and other later immigrant communities. The notion and authority of the element of superimposition as the only feature that is a reliable marker of chronological and artistic change in rock art has also been reviewed and complemented with the archival approach in an attempt to refine interpretations based on those sequential imagery assemblages. This revision of sequence in part stems from the fact that in certain regional scenarios the phenomenon of stacking images upon other images was influenced by reasons other than the passage of time (e.g. see Lewis-Williams 1972, 1974a). Superimpositions are too negligible a component of the whole body of rock painting to be a sole reliable marker of sequence. Apart from it being too difficult to discern painted elements that are directly superimposed by other images, in most cases smudging, fading and weathering obliterate any chance of resolving painting stratigraphy, as has already been pointed out a few times.

Using archival fonds is thus a convenient approach to unravel aspects of image change over time. As an organisational notion, this approach clarifies groupings of images spatially and temporally. While the archival perspective allows re-evaluation of the conceptions upon which most previous analyses were based, it also opens up an avenue for interrogating the historical intricacies of socio-political interaction within and among pre-colonial inhabitants of the Cape prior to and after the first European expansion. Rather than for researchers to seek sharp cultural and epochal boundaries between rock art traditions and their proliferation through time, it is necessary to consider features and processes of internal variability observable within defined painting assemblages. Cultural innovations and continuities in the context of the social and political intercourse of coexisting groups could have culminated in changes that affected social organisation and subsistence economic activities, ritual practice and attendant cultural materiality. Discernible temporal and spatial changes in the rock painting record might now be subjected to historical and interpretative analysis.

It is improbable that the production of the colonial-era paintings emerged as a tradition precipitously with the advent of colonialism in the Cape. There appears to have been an established artistic sub-tradition, perhaps an off-shoot of the terminal stages of the previous painting tradition, whose form took a different turn as the circumstances of colonialism and frontier wars prevailed. The socio-political phenomenon of inter-group interaction did not occur in a cultural vacuum, but evolved within a context of established customs and practices, however fractional those cultural mores might have been. As shown earlier, early travellers in the Cape mention the abundant presence of indigenous people in this landscape, although "[b]y 1740 AD free and economically self-sufficient indigenous people…were seldom found west of the Roggeveld Mountains and south of Namaqualand" (Yates *et al*. 1993: 59). Even a century later, there were still small residual San or Bushmen groups, who called themselves *Naevii Ukaas*, living in the northern portions of the Cederberg

ranges, according to the May 1830 journal entry of Rev. Dr Baron Theodore von Wurmb of the Rhenish Missionary Society (Ross 1994). Whatever the merits of this diary, it is irrelevant for my present purpose whether these people were true hunter-gatherers, pastoralists or an amalgamation of both. After all, it is known that clientele relationships had existed for many centuries between the former hunter-gatherers and Khoekhoe pastoral communities in this region (Penn 2005a: 18). Most importantly, the remnants of this collective of indigenes (whose designation is accepted here as KhoeSan) represented cultural continuities from the past in the Cederberg. So the existence of cross-cultural elements from cosmologies and belief systems of both these indigenous entities will be unsurprising, and the later forms of graphic representation in the region should at least signify such continuities. As the next sections and chapter seven show, the forms of contact art, though introducing a new repertoire of subjects, also tend to use some older forms of content, albeit with new meanings and symbolism following existing customary frameworks.

7.5. ASPECTS OF CONTACT IMAGERY IN THE WESTERN CAPE

There have been several studies of contact imagery in the Western Cape (e.g. Anderson 1996, 1997; Johnson 1960; Johnson *et al*. 1959a, 1959b; Manhire *et al*. 1986; Parkington *et al*. 1986; van der Merwe 1990; Yates *et al*. 1993, 1994, among others) and other neighbouring regions (Dowson *et al*. 1992; Hall 1994; Loubser & Laurens 1994). Contact rock art proliferated during periods of interaction between the former hunter-gatherers and other groups of people, such as the herders around 2,000 BP and then later the European settler communities from the onset of the historical era onwards. Although the distinctive contact images are those of introduced animals and distinct material culture, this assemblage is relatively modest within the entire rock painting corpus in the Cape (Hall & Mazel 2005: 127). As mentioned, images of domestic sheep are numerically insignificant in the Cape, which is also true for other regions on the subcontinent (Parkington 2003: 51). While cattle images are much rarer in the Cape, they are common in the Free State and the Drakensberg. In the Cape, there are some purported depictions of cows or oxen in the Clanwilliam District (Slingsby 2006: 45), at DKS in the sandveld (Mguni 1997: 36, 50; Parkington 2003: 116–117; Yates *et al*. 1993: 63) and some "positive identifications of cattle with horns" in the Koue Bokkeveld (Anderson 1996: 71, 78).

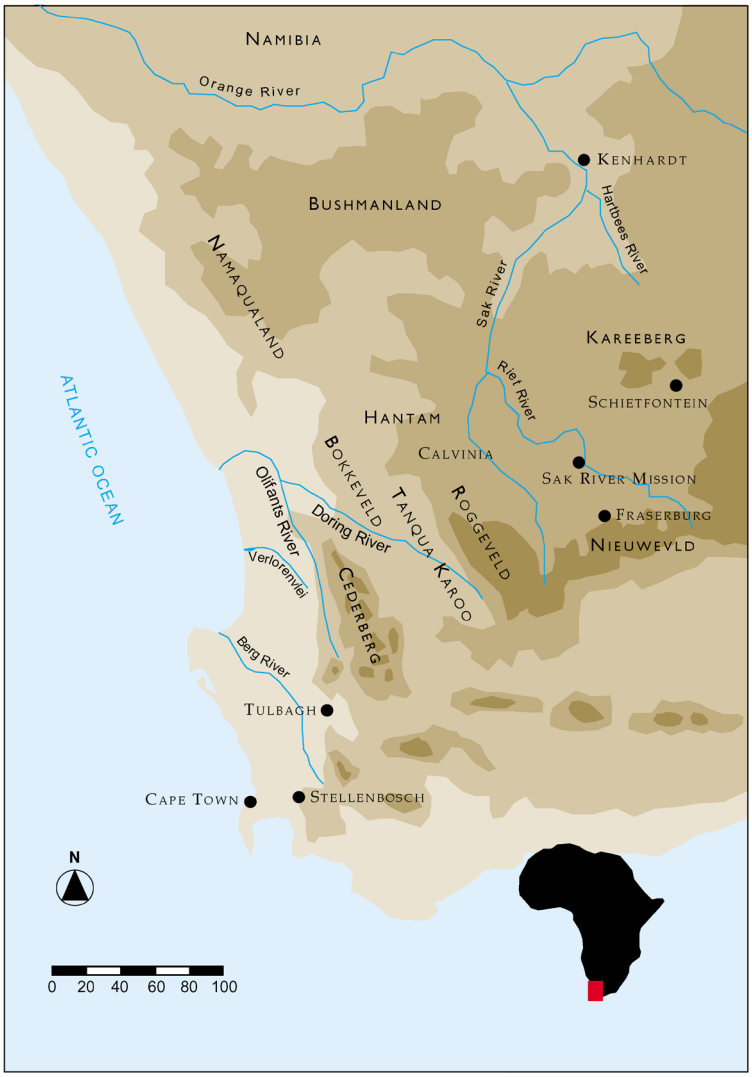
The general finger-painting manner of these cattle forms places them within the later phases of the painting sequence. However, there are obvious discrepancies in the region regarding cattle and sheep depictions: first, the meagre presence of sheep imagery and of sheep bones in the archaeological deposits is set against the background of the historically documented great preponderance of sheep (at least as observed during the colonial period) that Khoe herders bred in the region. Second, the cattle which the Khoekhoen pastoral communities also bred in their tens of thousands (again judging by historical accounts) are relatively rare in both the painting record and archaeological evidence. By comparison, the domestic animal found in profusion within a circumscribed areas in the Koue Bokkeveld and the Swartruggens, east of the Cederberg ranges, is the horse (Anderson 1996; Hall & Mazel 2005). By contrast, more than elsewhere in southern Africa paintings of cattle and horses occur in greater profusion farther afield in the Drakensberg (e.g. Campbell 1986, 1987; Challis 2008, 2009; Mazel 1981; Vinnicombe 1976), where they are argued to arise from specific social and ideological circumstances associated with colonialism and were placed in the general ritual contexts of the earlier San rock art corpus.

Some animal domesticates such as the dog (*Canis sp.*) seem to be absent in the Cape painting record, although they are mentioned frequently in San narratives in South Africa. In 1497, Vasco da Gama noted that the San groups he met at St Helena Bay had many dogs (Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 54); dogs might have been introduced into southern Africa by Bantu-speaking farmers and/or Khoekhoe pastoralists (Deacon & Deacon 1999: 177; Hall 2000: 302). Overall, the significance of domesticates featured in the Cape rock art poses the question of whether they were part of the same focus and contextual meaning as those in the south-eastern mountains, which are generally couched in frameworks that emerged from or were extensions of the long-established San ritual and symbolic contexts (Campbell 1986, 1987; Challis 2008; Vinnicombe 1976 are some examples of case studies which take this perspective). Some writers in the Cape, however, have placed the contact imagery in the shamanistic context since, as they argue, these images cannot be divorced from the general interpretative context of the entire corpus of earlier paintings (Manhire *et al*. 1986: 28). This may be true of the earlier fine fine-line contact imagery reflecting these domesticates; for example, fat-tailed sheep in particular have been seen as shamanistic in various parts of South Africa and even farther afield across the Limpopo in Zimbabwe (e.g. see Huffman 1983).

The danger with this overarching interpretative perspective is that it is predicated on the singular San hunter-gatherer cultural basis of site use, authorship and worldview for the people who made the contact imagery. Finger painted or even the coarse fine-line imagery of domesticates may not have shared the same hunter-gatherer authorship of the earlier fine fine-line assemblage and therefore the San "shamanistic context" may not be wholly applicable in their symbolic focus. Therefore, some writers recently concluded that there "is little if any formal continuity in motifs between the fine line San tradition and the colonial art" (Hall & Mazel 2005: 125), at least as observed within the Koue Bokkeveld and Swartruggens areas where they studied contact imagery. However, they note that in the Western Cape "a distinctive set of rock art imagery that is explicitly colonial in content…is the work of the descendants of Khoe pastoralists and San hunter-gatherers" (*ibid*.: 124). This conclusion was drawn earlier by other writers, that as the colonial frontier closed, the emergent

"dependent class of farm labourers of substantially indigenous descent…were most probably the painters" of the colonial-era images (Yates *et al*. 1993). It is generally accepted that at this stage these indigenous descendants were already culturally inter-mixed. In the face of the artistic record and available historical information, this is the most plausible deduction.

Whereas the question of authorship remains problematic, those studies premised on the identity of the past painters in general (e.g. Anderson 1996; Johnson *et al*. 1963; Van Rijssen 1994) have been unable to fully unfurl this issue, particularly regarding the other artistic traditions beyond the ubiquitous fine fine-line corpus. Although identity was earlier often dealt with as a straightforward inference from depicted images of introduced materials as representing outsiders and their movements (e.g. one of the earlier views being that of Cooke 1965), it is now obvious that such correlations are problematic. That is why some writers in recent decades have argued that the colonial-era paintings reflecting foreign material culture are not necessarily images of colonists (Loubser & Laurens 1994), which is in contrast to the view that in the north-western Cape colonists were the depicted subjects (van der Merwe 1990). In their study of the Caledon River Valley, Johannes Loubser and Gordon Laurens observed that paintings of cattle, horses, sheep and other introduced material culture, such as guns, shields and spears, and so forth reflect a range of characteristics of contact involving the former hunter-gatherers, herders, black farmers and colonists through various times. However, they argued that the depiction of such subject matter does not necessarily represent Europeans or other foreigners per se, but may be a graphic reflection of the painters themselves or their other related indigenous cultural formations (Loubser & Laurens 1994: 108–109; Ouzman 2005). With this caution, some images in the study area might reflect indigenous observations and conceptions of the artists themselves and their communities in terms of their participation in interactions involving diverse cultural affiliations resulting from the new social and political order(s) precipitated by the frontiers of contact. Other writers have noted that certain human depictions could be KhoeSan in colonial garb, while wagons and horses could be referents to colonists (Yates *et al*. 1993: 68). Artists might have perceived themselves in the prism of collective cultural interrelations, some of which we know from the region's colonial history. It can be admitted that some later phases in the Cape painting sequence are explicable in terms of the information gleaned from historical circumstances around the physical and ideological advance of the northern frontier.



Map 8.1: Regions inhabited by the indigenous polities

CHAPTER EIGHT

Art On The Frontier

The archive is a place where storage meets dreams, and the result is history. (Connors 1992: 21–23)

8.1. CONVERGING ROCK ART ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

The last two chapters established the temporal sequence of the Cape and revealed fascinating occurrences of certain kinds of images across the different periods. To understand the meaning and shifts in the symbolic focus of these images, this chapter moves further to articulate the social, political, ideological and other factors that might have been connected to the generation of some of the chronologically most complex painting panels in the region. From the interpretative latitude provided by the archival fonds approach, this chapter explores the possible meaning of a selection of painting themes that straddle several layers of the sequence. In this approach, the chapter also describes and attempts to interpret how image change over time (however short or long) might have been influenced by these factors in the painting sequence for certain categories of painting. In their study of colonial contact art in some portions of the Cape, Simon Hall and Aron Mazel made a statement whose didactic import forms in part the intellectual force behind the forthcoming interpretations of particular subject matter. Contrasting the obvious subject matter of later contact rock art reflecting the colonial world with early contact rock art reflecting the ancient worlds, they point out that the latter could have "framed a painted response using content, symbols and metaphors that were conventionally indigenous, and consequently, an art of initial contact could very well be there but is 'invisible' because we are not seeing it in these terms" (Hall & Mazel 2005: 130). The same point was made, in a different situation in the Drakensberg, that focusing on diagnostic contact imagery such as cattle, sheep, shields, horses and so forth might overlook the existence of a large component of subject matter in the art that is a product of interaction (Blundell 2004: 70). While these are plausible and important observations, it is argued here instead that it is possible to recognise to some degree less diagnostic images produced under situations of cultural interaction and associated graphic shifts concerning the symbolic focus for particular subject matter occurring within and between various traditions of painting in the Cape rock painting sequence.

This section attempts to interpret the images of both elephants and fat-tailed sheep which are argued to be vestiges of early to later forms of contact imagery, indicating graphic change and associated symbolic tropes in the artistic production through the painting sequence. It will compare and contrast these images to demonstrate the kind of interpretative pathways which are advocated in the archival approach. The interpretation proceeds from the premise that certain images of elephants and sheep are in some respects allied to circumstances of social interaction within the early and the late contact phases in the region. This view considers the social and political conditions and relations within frontiers of interaction and what might have been the responses and outcomes for indigenous people—some of whom appear to have been practising the rock art-making tradition, or what remained of its former florescence—to these dynamic scenarios. This approach works by analogy (where aspects of history and ethnography are foregrounded) in tandem with comparative analysis of the later frontier scenarios with likely earlier frontier scenarios of interaction between cultural groups. Both similarities and dissimilarities concerning the late contact and early contact phases bring about the force and integrity of the interpretations that are predicated on the frontier circumstances. This discussion uses the phrase "earlier pastoral frontier" (Yates *et al*. 1993: 59) in contrast to the "later colonial frontier" with reference to the historical and pre-historical contexts of the Cape region (Map 8.1). Both these frontiers spanned a combined period covering several centuries.

The notion of the frontier is important to the understanding of the colonial era, specifically the 18th and 19th centuries, and therefore prefigures the proposed interpretations of a selection of elephant and sheep images. First, the discussion covers the background of the frontier notion before delving into the description and interpretations of these paintings. Second, the discussion will show the extent of the social, economic and political context of artistic production accompanying the northern frontier zone, which is believed here to have been significant in the later artistic changes identified in the painting sequence. This discussion is invoked partly to begin an understanding of the possible dynamics pertaining to the earlier pastoral frontier and the sort of imagery that might be recognisable as indicative of symbolic traits of interaction and their artistic transformations over time prior to, and in the wake of, both the pastoral and colonial frontiers. As a start, what is the frontier notion?

In his 1969 doctoral thesis, historian Martin Legassick traced the first use of the frontier notion to the 1893 essay

by American historian Frederick J. Turner (1938, cited in Legassick 2010), who regarded "'the moving frontier of white settlement' [as] 'the wave of civilisation advancing across the continent,' its outer edge 'the meeting-point between savagery and civilisation'" (Legassick 2010: 3–4). Another scholar, Nigel Penn (1989, 2005a: 9–10) paraphrased this dictum as "a region of continuous transformation, whereby some protagonists became more savage whilst others became more civil". In his adoption of the notion, however, Legassick recognises the flaws of Turner's original formulation and those of several subsequent South African scholars of a liberal predisposition who had wrestled, albeit unsatisfactorily, with the frontier notion (e.g. he directs much of his attention to Hancock 1942; MacCrone 1965; Walker 1930); and some like Fouché (1909) were recently briefly reviewed by Penn (2005a). Other contemporary history writers saw the frontier notion in the context of South Africa as a site of conjunction, a condition precipitated by mutual dependence between the conquering European colonists and the vanquished indigenous peoples who had entered the service of colonists as labourers (De Kiewiet 1957). Conjunction, uneven as it was, certainly was one of the outcomes generally, but it is not entirely true for all regions and all times. It is for this reason that Legassick viewed Turner's understanding as a "blurring of the two analytically distinct processes" (Legassick 2010: 3-4) while assuming mistakenly that the so-called civilisation spread uniformly with white frontier settlement. He further argued that the inherent assumption of a pervasive duality of white settlement and authority ignored the existence of non-white polities with their own autonomous power (Legassick 2010: 4). These polities were often in conflict with each other, as the Dutch were to grow accustomed to in the first few decades of their settlement at the Cape (Boonzaier et al. 1996: 50–51). In the end, he recognises two central elements of the frontier as, a) the lack of a single source of legitimate authority, and b) the more dynamic "mutual acculturation" (Legassick 2010: 6). These two elements form the thread of his study and apply in the understanding of the Cape frontier zone entertained in this discussion.

In contrast to the frontier as a zone of dislocation between frontier communities and their donor societies and a place where new social systems emerge, as generally assumed by Turner and others who adopted his analysis, Legassick instead argued that it was a space of contact and inclusion where protagonists brought together elements of the social systems of their parent societies. These protagonists, as some have argued, were "either subject to different political authorities and/or engaged in different modes of production, or indeed recognising no formal authority at all, and therefore perhaps as individuals marking the precise point of articulation and change between different modes" (Marks & Atmore 1980: 9). Inside these vast "spatio-temporal areas" (Penn 1986: 62) new modes of life and institutions are evolved, to which other historians have alluded (MacCrone 1965), although also critiqued by Legassick, who believes that their emergence is through the interaction of different cultures as part of "mutual acculturation" (Legassick 2010: 6). However, the hallmarks of frontier zones are in the proliferation of interaction and change (Penn 1986: 62).

Acculturation and change occur under conditions that, as Legassick emphasised, lack legitimate authority and thus even when new changes occur they cannot be enforced. Hence the frontier zones "are temporary, unstable, fluid, and dynamic spaces. Essential to their existence is a crisis of values, cultural and political" (Legassick 2010: 7), even though frontiers themselves still possess recognisable patterns that can be analysed. In large measure, Penn (2005a: 11) applauds Legassick's work while also cautioning against his overemphasis on trading and raiding at the expense of pastoral production. Penn himself has developed this crucial aspect of the economic and political dynamics as being a strong element at the core of the northern colonial frontier. Nevertheless, despite its identified shortcomings as applied in various analyses, the frontier notion is generally accepted as a useful standard of historical analysis. At this juncture, it is appropriate to adopt the phrase that Royden Yates and his colleagues (1993) used, "earlier pastoral frontier", in similar vein to Legassick's argument that essentially the frontier concept can be regarded comparatively with the frontiers of pre-industrial polities. In essence, the frontier concept need not be applied only to the colonial period, but also to the earlier processes of interaction, although the different regions and periods obviously carried their own unique attributes. In his somewhat long-shot illustration of the frontier concept, Legassick quotes from a description by Jan Vansina of an illustrative scenario in respect of the neighbouring Central African Luba Kingdom of Kazembe and the Lozi state in the 1700s and 1800s. According to this historical account:

> [T]he structures of these states, all of which had a nucleus which was tightly controlled by the central government, and all of which had outlying provinces, where the authority and power of the central government faded away more and more the farther one went from the centre toward the boundaries. Thus boundaries between states were vague, sometimes even overlapping, and there was little conflict of power between the states, since their respective common border areas were so weak. (Vansina 1966: 155–156)

In observation Legassick believes that a frontier zone should be understood as analogous to the political situation between these two states of Vansina described. There was no single source of legitimate authority within the administrative interstices of these polities and their spheres of sway. This, Legassick argues, was the state of the South African frontier regions of white settlement in colonial times, where neither the colonial administration nor the non-white political communities which lay beyond the colony had any real authority or influence (Legassick 2010: 6). Yet it is observable that this analogy is based more on the form than on the content of the contact zone. So, while in this example the fringes of independent polities might be fluid, the content of socio-economic dimensions of those Central African states may not have been the same as those of South African polities. Moreover, the frontier perspective evokes in meaningful ways and can be refined

by the notion of "seam" developed by Noël Mostert in his book Frontiers (1992) (see discussion in De Kock 2004: 275–277). In his writings, Leon de Kock (2004: 276, 277) adopted the "seam" concept forcefully to denote the site of both convergence and divergence, where "difference and sameness are hitched together—where they are brought to self-awareness, denied, or displaced into third terms". The "seam" bears its own crisis, a paradox, since it also conjures the joining together or closing of those gaps that define it as incommensurate while simultaneously embodying attempts to repudiate social and cultural conjunction.

Furthermore, other writers have grappled differently with the frontier concept. For example, Paul Landau (2010: 3) cites American historians who, instead of using frontier, now prefer the notion of "borderlands" to define "a widening zone of negotiation and force". He notes that within the borderlands, wildlife dwindles, trade thrives and customs are violated and renewed (*ibid*.: 3). As noted, the northern colonial frontier covering the region north and east of the Cape, the Karoo and farther afield into the Orange River was in the 1700s and 1800s characterised by large-scale game hunting, especially for ivory and ostrich feathers, bartering, raiding for slaves and livestock, pillaging and so forth. Although Landau contrasts the notion of "borderlands" with that of "frontier", there does not seem to be much formal difference except in the emphasis of processes and outcomes, since frontiers too, as Legassick has showed, are spaces governed by interactive, overlapping, and incomplete authorities (Legassick 2010: 5-7). Indeed, other scholars seem to regard these concepts as interchangeable, as shown by Colin Bundy's (2004: 10) characterisation of the colonial advance in "the Eastern Cape as borderlands, as frontier" of population movements, of flux and ethnic overlap. The overall outlines and conditions grounded on the concepts of frontier, seam or borderlands are germane to the present analysis. They prefigure portions of the secluded Cederberg Mountains as social and spatial voids in the landscape that lacked authoritative power during the periods of the earlier pastoral and later colonial frontiers. As Legassick (2010: 43–44) has actually observed, "[t]he Cederberg and Outeniqualand [and] the outer fringes around the Fish and Orange Rivers" were isolated areas of the colonial frontier zone. This situation in part made it a difficult, even precarious activity, for reprisal pastoralist parties to pursue rogue foraging groups following livestock thefts in the earlier frontier times. In the later frontier times, the same held true for the colonial commando system right from its inception in the mid-1700s onwards, particularly in the "opening" phase of the frontier. This is another critical aspect of the frontiers which Penn (1986, 1987, 1989, 2005a) has discussed in his perspective on the phases of the frontier. Foregrounding Hermann Giliomee's (1981) notion of the frontier in its "open" and "closed" stages, Penn explains that in its open phase, a frontier is characterised by unbalanced competition for resources by several societies. For instance, what Cornelis Willem de Kiewiet (1957) defined as mutualism (perhaps disingenuously) was really parasitism of the dominated indigenous polities by the colonial administration. In the closed stage, a frontier falls under the sway of one of the societies, who then control resources and labour and various aspects of life in the frontier. The dominant society (in this case colonists of the northern frontier) violently exploited indigenous KhoeSan societies and thus undermined their social structure. Let us now turn our attention to the cultural and historical contexts that may be useful to the reading of the paintings of elephant and sheep. And then finally, we will consider the postulated metaphorical transposition of the two subject matter in the ideological framework of the KhoeSan artists in the Cape within the spheres of the early and later frontiers of contact.

8.2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: PEOPLE, ELEPHANTS AND SHEEP

When Portuguese sailor Vasco da Gama came across the Khoekhoen in Mossel Bay in 1497, it is chronicled that frantic barter trade ensued. It was however a tense and unpredictable encounter given that it was barely 10 years since the violent incident when his predecessor Bartholomeu Dias killed a Khoekhoen with a crossbow in combat. Such occasional contacts remained hostile for the most part following previous hostilities (Elphick 1985: 64, 74–75), even as barter occurred with increasing frequency. There is a glimpse of the goods that were bartered from Vasco da Gamma diary entry dated Friday 1 December 1497: "To those [Khoekhoen] who approached [his anchorage] he gave small bells and red caps in return for which they presented him with ivory bracelets such as they wore on their arms, for it appears that elephants are plentiful in this country. We actually found some of their droppings near the watering place where they had gone to drink" (Colvin 1912: 34). On Saturday, more people came: "They brought with them about a dozen of oxen and cows, and four or five sheep" (*ibid*.: 34–35). These sheep were of probably the variety that Englishman Sir James Lancaster wrote about in 1591: "The sheepe are very big and very good meat; they have no woll on their backs but haire and great tailes like the sheep in Syrie" (Raven-Hart 1971a: 15). Autochthonous breeds are hairy, fat-tailed and also feature in the rock art. The Blinkhaar or Ronderib Afrikaner is one of the indigenous breeds the Khoekhoen introduced (Deacon & Deacon 1999: 181) in the Cape (Campbell 1995).

From this kind of barter trade, some early authorities such as Sir Lancaster himself had by the early 1600s accumulated more livestock from the Khoekhoen than was needed for their essential supplies. The four highest-recorded numbers of bartered sheep and cattle in the first decade of the 1600s (Elphick 1985: 74) are shown in the table below. Though both mutton and beef were in high demand by the European mariners, these figures show that sheep prevailed over cattle for some period. There are reasons for this difference, though not the concern of this discussion, but it must be noted that sheep were bred in large numbers and also reproduced at faster rates than other domestic animals. Sources of supply of livestock were crucial for the colonial establishment for a long time

after the first European Cape settlement but they were not always sufficient or consistent in earlier times. Apart from livestock which provided meat, dairy and skin products, another item became increasingly important for the economy of the frontier: ivory. Ivory became so important that in a short space of time it caused a major escalation in elephant hunting, an activity that involved indigenous polities right from its inception in the Cape region.

Name of Keepers		Sheep	Cattle
Lancaster	(1601)	1000	42
Middleton	(1604)	214	12
Keeling	(1607)	450	66
Matelief	(1608)	175	29

Source: Elphick 1985

The two trade items of ivory and livestock frame the scene for the interpretative reading of some paintings of elephants and fat-tailed sheep. Aside from the mention of these items as being part of Vasco da Gama's December 1497 barter with the Khoekhoen, this combination of trade commodities emerged again much later and became an important part of the economic life on the colonial frontier. General Jan van Riebeeck's journal on 29 October 1652 reads: "bartered from the people of Saldania…one sheep and two small elephants' tusks for a little tobacco and thin copper wire" (Thom 1952: 78). Several months later, an entry on 20 April 1653 reads: "Meanwhile a tusk of an elephant or of a hippopotamus is also bartered now and then for small pieces of tobacco and copper wire" (*ibid*.: 153). Six months after his arrival at the Cape, Van Riebeeck wrote back to Holland about ivory bartering with the Khoekhoen: "Tusks per piece for a span, or 1½ pounds of tobacco according to size" (Skead 1980: 236). It is clear in these records that right from the first Dutch Cape settlement ivory was going to be a crucial trade commodity. As early as 1653, when the Dutch settlement at the Cape of Good Hope was only several months old, Johannes Jakob Merklein was direct in his projection of the significance of ivory trade for the Dutch when he wrote that, "It is hoped to introduce the trade in ivory and other wares from the mainland of Africa, the profits of which… would richly cover the costs of the Garrison" (Raven-Hart 1971b: 9). Ivory trade was thus encouraged quite early in the colonial establishment in the Cape.

Increasingly, starting from the earlier meagre quantities bartered, ivory later became a significant trade commodity between the European settlers and the Cape indigenes. This trade translated into tens of thousands of elephants slaughtered annually by both small groups of sporadic hunters (as illustrated in Figure 8.1) and, as time went by, large well-organised parties. European demand for ivory grew to staggering proportions from the mid 1600s onwards, to the extent that by the 1800s several hundred thousand tonnes were exported annually to England alone from some parts of the Cape (Skinner & Chimimba 2005: 54). As early as 1736 it had become commonplace for elephant hunters to be away from Cape Town into the interior for periods of eight or nine months "before returning with their wagons laden with ivory", although their routes and hunting grounds were not revealed or properly documented (Theal 1909: 496). As some writers have noted, the secrecy about these elephant hunting

Figure 8.1: A Charles Bell painting titled "A rainy afternoon", dated 1813–1882, showing men sheltering inside an elephant carcass (Courtesy of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa).

routes has led to large gaps in the history of ivory trade in the Cape (Skead 1980: 237). In spite of this lacuna, some historians have singled out the Portuguese long-distance trade routes of the early 19th century as crucial absorbers of large volumes of ivory, in return conveying back beads from Europe. On the west coast there was Angola as the main entrepôt and on the east coast it was Delagoa Bay (Legassick 2010: 27). Although long-distance routes account for the bulk of this trade, it is also known that ivory and beads filtered through the interior reaching various indigenous polities in the west, east and north. And not all ivory was destined for overseas markets, but it was also used by these indigenous polities (*ibid*.).

Undoubtedly, it is Vasco da Gama's 1497 roteiro (voyage log), the earliest record of the occurrence of elephants in the Cape (Skead 1980: 195), that has given us clues that indigenous people particularly in the Cape hinterland used ivory as well. Conversely, it is not recorded whether in earlier times these people would have actively hunted elephants or that they simply collected ivory from carcasses. Furthermore, other than ivory use for ornamentation, it is not clear what else they would have used ivory for. Ivory jewellery appears to have been the main use, as gleaned at least from the travellers' accounts. These ivory ornaments are chronicled by various European observers, including Nicholas Downton who in 1610 wrote: "The principall of these people [Khoekhoen] weare about the bight of there armes a thin flat ring of Ivorye being very smooth and wrought compass, nearer sixteen inches wide" (Raven-Hart 1971a: 48). Of the decorative apparel of Khoekhoen, David Tappen also reported much later in the 1680s that: "Around his arms he wears rings of white ivory" (Raven-Hart 1971a: 237, 241). Evidently, ivory had a significant ornamental value and as European settlement proliferated in the Cape it perhaps assumed an even larger barter trade value to the Khoekhoen and other indigenes with whom they maintained exchange networks before the advent of the burgeoning European demand. So, how did these indigenous people source the ivory? It is doubtful that traditionally the only source of ivory for indigenous people was from scavenging carcasses; these people appear to have actively hunted elephants long before their encounters with the Europeans.

Early travellers reported their numerous encounters with elephant herds in the Cape, but these accounts vary in their level of detail and veracity. For instance, in March 1620, Augustin de Beaulieu wrote: "And on the mountains are… elephants…and other beasts unknown to me" (Raven-Hart 1971a: 99–100). More such accounts were to become commonplace in the period prior to the Dutch settlement at the Cape and the subject of elephants and ivory was to preoccupy Van Riebeeck for some time. Although after 1652 Van Riebeeck did not report much about elephants near Cape Town, one of his men, Corporal Verburgh, who led an expedition northwards from the garrison in 1652, reported seeing an elephant herd on the west coast a short distance before Saldanha Bay (Thom 1952: 186). It was however generally from the mid-1600s onwards that frequent reports appeared in travellers' journals about their encounters with large elephant herds farther inland, with most records coming from the Clanwilliam District (Skead 1980: 204). An expedition led by Danckaert reported on 8 December 1660 a sighting of between 200 and 300 elephants near Citrusdal, an event that probably gave the Olifants (Elephants) River its name (Thom 1958: 317). More reports of elephants came from the districts of Clanwilliam, Verlorenvlei, Piketberg, Lambert's Bay, Vanrhynsdorp and as far north as Namaqualand (Skead 1980: 204–210). Despite the large numbers of elephants reported in the mid 1600s, in the 1710s and 1720s some observers were beginning to note in increasing frequency that several herds were being driven away by colonists owing to their purported damage to pastures of the Dutch East India Company (Mentzel 1787 [1944]: 76). This might have been the case, but it is incontrovertible that the unbridled large scale elephant hunting for ivory starting in those regions adjacent to Cape Town was largely responsible for their dwindling numbers and eventual decimation. It is reported that the last elephant was apparently seen near the Berg River in the south around the early to mid 1700s (Skead 1980: 204). However, between the first records of their presence in the Cape to the early 1800s, the elephants were hunted out completely and some herds were forced to migrate farther north away from the carnage and human encroachment (*ibid*.: 204, 207). European settlers were the chief hunters and traders in ivory, but they also used indigenous KhoeSan as assistants since these people were reputed to be excellent runners and hunters (Mentzel 1787, in Skead 1980: 233–234; Raven-Hart 1971a: 239).

There are some early writers who maintained that the local KhoeSan did not hunt elephants prior to the increasing demand for ivory by the settlers from the mid-1600s. Their reasoning is that these indigenes regarded these elephants as "too formidable to attack" since they could not be brought down using traditional weapons (see Thom 1954: 342). Although it is clear from their first contact with Europeans in the Cape that the indigenous people used ivory for ornamentation, it was not known then how they acquired it. They were some who thought the KhoeSan collected tusks from dead elephants and that they started to hunt these animals following the increased European demand. According to some writers, it was after many years of colonial authorities urging the Khoekhoen to hunt elephants that they finally became motivated to hunt these animals to supply the burgeoning ivory trade (see Skead 1980: 206–207). Some reports even describe the KhoeSan methods of hunting elephants, which the colonists are believed to have taught them. As a result, according to these reports, the KhoeSan were now killing elephants at will (*ibid*.). It is unlikely, however, that these indigenes only learned how to hunt elephants from the Europeans. Based on recorded observations, there is nothing culturally foreign in these methods they were seen using to fell elephants. Of course, as to be anticipated the KhoeSan started in later years to use horses and guns with special types of shot for this purpose (Skead 1980: 207). It is clear that the KhoeSan were able to hunt elephants even before they encountered Europeans, but largely as a sporadic activity until European ivory demand escalated from the

mid 1600s. Nevertheless, as Richard Elphick's (1985) "Khoekhoe-hunter cycle" explanation shows, at this time some former hunter-gatherers were already acculturated into the broad Khoekhoen society as ordinary members, hunters or soldiers, herdsmen and so on in return for protection and food (Deacon & Deacon 1999: 178–190; Smith et al. 2000: 27–28). This convergence of cultures, as discussed above, is to be expected in contact scenarios such as those that obtained during the earlier, pre-colonial frontier between the various indigenous polities.

It is appropriate to regard some of the documented methods of hunting of elephants as generally of KhoeSan repertoire rather than as a practice akin to just one or the other of these indigenous groups. In cases where the hunting methods were described, they possibly combine both hunter-gatherer and pastoralist cultural elements. For example, bows and poisoned arrows generally belonged to the San material culture, while the Khoekhoen used assegais (broad spears) that were first tipped with fire-hardened bones and then later with metal. These assegais were also used with poisoned tips, which is something the Khoekhoen borrowed from San hunting technology. If KhoeSan people were traditionally reluctant elephant hunters, what would have created the upsurge of attacks on these animals reported by some of the early explorers? François Valentyn attributed the socio-economic shift towards pervasive elephant hunting to the extreme poverty that befell the Khoekhoen, and by one account as a result of the theft of their cattle and land by the colonists (see Skead 1980: 207). The reasons may be far-reaching, including the influence of the well-established long-distance trade in iron, copper, ivory, beads, animal skins and other materials involving Bantu-speaking farmer people and other polities in the interior zones north and east of the Cape (see Legassick 2010; Ross 1976). Increased European demand therefore created the largest pull factor for the ivory supply to grow. Some writers noted of the KhoeSan people at the time that elephant hunting had become commonplace: "Their wives and children [Khoekhoen] must daily fight against the elephants and thus seek subsistence in this way with the uttermost danger to their lives" (As documented by Francois Valentyn 1726 [Edith Raidt (ed.) 1973]: 25, cited in Skead 1980: 206). Indeed, other writers in the early 1700s reported people being killed by elephants in the Cape region (Skead 1980: 204). Such deaths attributed to elephant attacks might have been due to the increased hunting pressure on these animals, which, under normal circumstances, would not have killed people.

On elephant hunting, it was Francois Valentyn (1726) who described how the Khoekhoen used Bushmen as scouts in their joint hunting excursions. However, George Stow (1905: 89, 145) goes on to mention that the Bushmen hunted elephants and other pachyderms such as hippopotamus using bows and poisoned arrows, pitfalls and harpoon traps. In these methods, once the desired animal was spotted, the party of hunters would isolate that one elephant with good tusks, and run it down while at the same time attacking it in large numbers with spears, poisoned arrows and sharp sticks (Skead 1980: 207; see also Raven-Hart 1971a: 239). Similarly, although in a faraway region, in 1987 Richard Lee conversed with Kumsa-nwhin, a 70-year-old Ju|'hoan man in the Dobe area, who gave a glimpse of elephant hunting in the Kalahari Desert. These conversations were part of a project to "elicit collective memories of their pre-colonial past, a time we could date historically to before 1870" (Lee 2002: 185). Kumsa-nwhin described what his father had told him of the early colonial encounters that his people experienced in the Kalahari, a recollection that is foregrounded in elephant hunting activities of the colonial big game hunters:

> The whites first came to !Kubi, killed the elephants and pulled their teeth [i.e. ivory]. In the old days the Ju|'hoansi also killed elephants with spears for the meat. At least fifteen men were required for a hunt. They dumped the tusks [they didn't have a use for them]. (Lee 2002: 189)

It is noteworthy that this brief account contrasts white big game hunters with the Ju|'hoansi hunters, who in the old days (before the encounters with the Europeans in this context) used spears to hunt elephants. This account could well be a clue that even in the Cape the use by KhoeSan elephant hunters of spears and poisoned arrows was entirely traditional and not something that was learned as a result of the advent colonialism and its economic demands. Given the general simplicity of these hunting methods and the highly dangerous nature of elephant hunting expeditions (Ross 1976: 71), elephant hunts later became an extremely organised activity involving multitudes of able hunters. Even the use of pitfalls required organised labour and also probably political control as well; it was usually a chief or a captain of a group who had political influence and resources to mobilise hunting parties who would undertake elephant hunting expeditions. With such organisational ability, it was possible for the Namaqualand Khoekhoen (a region north of the study area) to kill the largest bull with only their assegais, as witnessed in September 1779 by the Finnish explorer Hendrik Jacob Vikar (see Mossop 1935: 43). Vikar also described how the Khoekhoen used wild fires to drive elephant herds towards nearby narrow gorges between the rocks, into which they crowded them and curtailed their mobility. Once the elephants were trapped in the narrow spaces, the hunters would move in and kill the biggest bull by severing the leg tendons while also spearing his body (see Mossop 1935: 43).

A century before Vikar's observation there was another report by Johan Schreyer (see Raven-Hart 1971b: 122) who described in 1668 how the Khoekhoen hunted elephants in the open. He observed that they surrounded the preferred animal in great numbers and ran it down while simultaneously impaling it with spears. As mobile pastoral societies, settlements shifted frequently as dictated by the needs of their herds, but remarkably also as a result of the new dynamics of the ivory trade. Therefore, ivory trade gained an effect on the social organisation and itinerancy for these indigenous pastoral people. So, large elephant kills under these new socio-economic circumstances became a factor influencing the mobility and situation of

Khoekhoen camps. These large elephant kills provided copious amounts of meat for large numbers of people. If the site of the kill was near to drinkable water sources for livestock, the whole camp would move with all their possessions to settle at that site until the next opportunity presented itself for the group to move on. Others such as Valentyn in 1726 described this practice as occurring among the Khoekhoen who lived between the Verlorenvlei and Langvlei areas (Skead 1980: 206). Another hunting method was described in detail by Mentzel: the hunters used "a shoulder cape [kaross] to create a diversion and bluff the animal" (Mentzel 1787: 338, in Skead 1980: 231). Some further detail is provided about this gruesome elephant killing method, which is paraphrased as:

> With the karosses over their shoulders, they form a wide circle around the elephant and approach it with slow steps. In this way the circle shrinks gradually and is tightened by the men…As soon as the animal comes close enough for some of the Hottentots to reach it, ten or twelve of those nearest throw their karosses over its head [to make the animal *malkop* i.e. mad or foolish]. The elephant…blinded by them, remains standing on one spot and, since its eyes are covered and even its trunk entangled in the karosses…Then one of the most courageous Hottentots leaps up behind the elephant, seizes its tail with his left hand and clinging to it thrusts his poisoned assegai with his right hand repeatedly into its body through the rectum as far as it can go. (Mentzel 1787: 338, in Skead 1980: 231–233)

Other hunters repeated this form of attack until the wounded elephant was weakened from profuse bleeding and eventually it was slaughtered. Some writers, such as Peter Kolbe (in Skead 1980: 230; also Johan Schreyer's record of 1668 in Raven-Hart 1971b: 122), also described how the KhoeSan hunters used pitfalls to kill elephants. A hole as big as 1.8 to 2.4 m deep and 1.2 m in diameter was dug in the ground usually along predictable elephant trails. In the middle of the pit, they then fixed strong and tapering stakes that were whittled to a point that was made to level off with the top of the hole. They would then conceal the hole with small branches, leaves and grass. When an elephant herd approached, the one in front was likely to fall into this trap, whereupon the stakes pierced it in the neck or breast area or even the belly. Inside the pitfall, the unfortunate animal would struggle and bleed to death while the hunters used various weapons and missiles to finish it off. In the Kalahari too, high-yield big-game hunts for subsistence and ivory trade were achieved by digging deep multiple-chambered pitfalls about 4 m wide and 4 m deep. These pitfalls were serially placed within dry riverbeds, sometimes at the end of converging rows of stakes (to channel the animals into the areas with pitfalls) that in some cases stretched for several kilometres (Anderson 1856: 374–377). Such kinds of hunts were conducted by up to 300 experienced hunters, the organisation of which required considerable political effort and resources (Guenther 2002: 132). In later years elephant hunts became more efficient because of the new technologies that indigenous people were increasingly gaining access to and using effectively. It is known that elephant hunting intensified in the Cape once horses became available after Van Riebeeck imported them from Batavia. Horses became an asset of great utility for big-game hunters, as parties preferred their agility and the fact that they could cover long distances easily. The use of specialised ammunition improved the killing efficiency of guns (Skead 1980: 233–234; see also Ross 1976: 16), while the availability of wagons made the transportation of large quantities of ivory less difficult and more rapid. Elephant hunting thus became a major facet of the frontier economy especially in the later half of the 1600s onwards. In fact, many burghers formerly settled in the Cape found this hunting activity easily attainable and profitable, leading them to abandon other economic pursuits such as rearing livestock in order to join the frontier hunters.

From an indigenous perspective, well after the establishment of the Dutch Cape settlement, the politically powerful groups and wealthy Khoekhoen could sponsor such big-game hunts, which not only provided meat protein and fat but also the much sought after ivory and skins. As early explorers reported, some of those heavily adorned with ivory, copper and other kinds of ornamentation were wealthy men who were often chiefs or captains of their groups. It appears that ivory was a commodity which symbolised status, power and wealth, a combination that must have been augmented once European demand enhanced the value of the ivory trade. Given its importance, ivory also became a tribute item among indigenous polities, although other forms of paying such institutionalised obligations continued to exist. It is known that traditionally, smaller Khoekhoen groups paid tribute of livestock and/or their products to the powerful groups. This practice was not, however, widely enforced among the groups that lived in the Cape. But it was generally their involvement in big-game hunting that attracted tribute payments to the leaders of powerful groups in the form of small livestock—principally sheep. It was common that those Khoekhoe "subjects who had killed wild game were obligated to pay their chief a fat sheep" (Elphick 1985: 48). Among some groups a portion of the kill, and ivory if it was an elephant, from hunting had to be given to the chief, on the understanding that wild animals were part of his "herd" (Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 41). Furthermore, a sheep or goat would be slaughtered when a hunter killed a very large animal rhinoceros or hippopotamus, but especially if was an elephant, so that everyone could rejoice.

As elephant hunting and ivory trade increased, the role of cattle dropped gradually as a trade commodity. Cattle were no longer required in large numbers to feed mariners or the passing ships, but were used largely by the Cape settler population and on the northern frontier after the 1700s. At this point, sheep appear to have remained important, at least on the frontier zones particularly for their meat and wool. Of the early 1800s, it has been noted that indigenous fat-tailed sheep had long been the basis of the frontier economy. They supplied the trekboers with meat, tallow and fat and were the main source of cash for necessities such as gunpowder, iron, wagons, tea, coffee, sugar and brandy (Ross 1976: 67–68). Indigenous breeds dominated

the local socio-economic fabric as well as the colonial one until the later part of the 1700s, when settlers introduced foreign breeds such as the merino, which provided good-quality wool. Some of the introduced breeds also provided higher meat yields. It must e noted that there was also an established tradition of breeders placing value on indigenous livestock as a trade commodity. For instance, in the Northern Cape Khoekhoen pastoral communities used cattle and sheep as their main long-distance trade commodities in exchanges with various Bantu-speaking groups, who in turn provided them with iron, beads, corn and other items (Humphreys & Thackeray 1983: 297). In the Western Cape, too, the Khoekhoen of the 1650s appear to have maintained "spasmodic contact with Bantu-speakers" (Elphick 1985: 50) and so it is plausible that they would have participated in long-distance trade even before their earliest encounters with the Europeans. It is documented that some Khoekhoen groups even claimed that they cultural connections with ancient lineages of Chobona (or Coboqua), a renowned group of long-distance rulers who might have been related to some of the Xhosa lineages (Elphick 1985: 52).

For the Khoekhoen, livestock in general (cattle, sheep and goats) were bred but rarely slaughtered (see Georg Meister diary of December 1687 in Raven-Hart 1971b: 343), except during great ritual occasions or ceremonial feasts (Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 41). They were reared a symbol of wealth and power. Normally, livestock supplied milk and other products. For example, sheep fat was very important although the animals did not need to be killed for people to extract this product. The Khoekhoen occasionally cut off the tails of the ewes for use as a valued source of tasty fat, as one large tail could feed between 16 and 20 men (Georg Meister 1688, in Raven-Hart 1971a: 343). Oxen were important as pack animals as they facilitated the mobility of the camps. There were also other areas of people's social lives in which these animals were significant, such as in marriage and initiation rites. Some writers provide detailed descriptions of how the Khoekhoen used sheep in rainmaking rituals and girls' coming-of-age ceremonies (Hoernle 1918, 1922, 1923; Waldman 1989). It was customary for livestock to be passed down the generations through inheritance among the Khoekhoen. Sheep, which were given as bride wealth, provided the nucleus upon which newly established families could build their own livestock wealth. However, let us not deal with these themes in any depth since they are irrelevant to the kind of painting contexts identified in this study. This theme might be covered in sheep paintings, but there are no definitive graphic details suggesting initiation, marriage and so on that might open up a range of possibilities for their interpretation. There are records of other unusual uses of livestock which may seem absurd but serve to show their importance among the indigenous populations who reared them. In his diary, Johan Schreyer reported in 1668 that:

> Since the lions and panthers do them great damage they take great pains to exterminate them. When they see a lion has eaten himself satiate (to which end they often sacrifice an old cow to him) and has lain himself down somewhere, they surround the same with a quantity of their sheep, and little by little drive these together. Behind the sheep they set the cattle, so that the lion cannot get through, and despairs because of the terrifying shouts of the men and the lowing of cattle, and is thus killed by their many throwing spears. The sheep which are killed in such a hunt are not wasted, since the victory over the lion is celebrated with them. (Raven-Hart 1971a: 119)

Deployment of such defensive tactics (see also Elphick 1985: 59) shows the versatility of the value system the Khoekhoen afforded to their livestock, but in such circumstances they also gave their owners some social and political status in their communities. While high status was accorded to wealthier stock owners, particularly the chiefs and headmen, this aspect did not result in huge economic divides in the form of social stratification. "[T]here were social mechanisms whereby inequalities could be accommodated and poor people could acquire livestock" (Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 41). For example, impoverished people could become servants, herdsmen or hunters for wealthy families and thereby obtain free milk and/or payment in the form of calves but, more frequently, also in terms of smaller stock animals such as sheep, goats and other items. Gradually, these poor families could build up their own herds using this equitable distributive context for spreading or sharing wealth. Yet they could not effectively wield political power since it was the very wealthy who could disburse patronage and provide stock for feasts and ritual ceremonies that they hosted (Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 47). These wealthy individuals or chiefs could also assemble substantial forces who would fight to defend their groups from enemy attacks or for the purpose of mounting raids on other groups (Elphick 1985: 55–57). From this sketch, largely provided a combination of accounts by early writers about the European encounters with the Khoekhoen, it is crucial to see the linkages that this background holds with some San perspectives of interaction with a view subsequently to provide interpretative orientation on the metaphorical significance of elephant and sheep images in the rock paintings.

These passages from the early colonial records offer an illuminating conceptual equation of the wild and domestic animals, which makes our understanding of elephant and sheep associations in the paintings commensurable. The ideological and metaphorical contexts of such artistic production inform the symbolic focus of these animals at different times especially in the past 500 years after the first indigenous and colonial contact in the Cape. It is argued that the painting contexts as described in the next section show that the themes based on elephant hunting in the Cape might have metaphorically alluded to social, economic and cultural contexts of the earlier and later frontiers of interaction. The transformations that occurred from the former to the latter frontier might have also played a role in the image change over those centuries. And of course there is a putative association of fat-tailed sheep, which appear in some instances as fragments that are graphically implanted in the elephant paintings in what might well be another symbolic subtext of interaction. The Khoekhoen were not alone in the landscape when

the early European observers first met them and started writing about them. We have seen, for instance, how the Cape hunter-gatherers were also part of the indigenous groups who shared the landscape at the time of early colonial encounters, although they were largely confined in secluded areas on the periphery of the more powerful polities. Their cultural views are, however, no less significant in our understanding of the socio-economic landscape in which they too participated. And it must be recalled that it is the hunter-gatherers who have settled in the Cape region the longest and the painting assemblage of the fine fine-line manner attests to their deep antiquity and ubiquity in the region in former times before they faced the early pastoral frontier and then later the colonial frontier.

8.3. FROM EARLIER TO NEWER SYMBOLIC TROPES IN FRONTIERS OF CONTACT

The foregoing historical background contextualised the Cape KhoeSan indigenes in their landscape—their hunting grounds, livestock and the elephants that they share the landscape with and also hunted—from the lens of early European observers about the colonial/indigenous encounters. The following section explores extracts from a selection of San narratives in order to examine how hunter-gatherer voices carried in their stories resonated with aspects of their interaction with Khoekhoen herders and those elements from both these indigenous cultures were merged. Analysis of these narratives provides a template to understand how the symbolism of elephants and of sheep might have shifted in time, thus illuminating the artistic change for these subjects as identified in the painting sequence outlined in chapters six and seven. The hunter-gatherers participated as scouts and trackers for the Khoekhoen in big-game hunting and were familiar with these wild animals from before and under the frontier circumstances. They were also observed to have herded sheep for the Khoekhoen in colonial times, but they probably engaged in these relationships for longer periods in pre-colonial times. And of course in later colonial times these people also worked for the frontier farmers and some of these former hunters and gatherers even owned their own livestock. As discussed in chapter four, it is well known in the Cape that some hunter-gatherer people moved easily back and and forth between herding and foraging depending on their social and economic circumstances. But in later years of the frontier most hunter-gatherer groups, or precisely their remnants, had largely retreated to marginal localities in the rugged mountains and so still under those circumstances remained more or less autonomous and cultivated a separate identity from the Khoekhoen even after more than 1,000 years of contact with them (Deacon 1994a: 19).

Given the foregoing discussion, it is therefore unreasonable to assume that the San remnants in the Cape during the colonial period were completely unaware of the customary practices and general worldview of their pastoralist neighbours. Elphick goes so far as to reject the "belief that two completely distinct and non-overlapping peoples inhabited southern Africa" (Elphick 1985: 41–42). The perspective in this study is that the Khoekhoen/San dichotomy, particularly in the areas of belief and worldview, is superficial and misleading in light of the 2,000-year period they shared. Both the folklore and the mythology of these peoples carry commonalities (Schmidt 1989, 1996). From this contextual springboard, the use of |Xam narratives may assist in the search for further clues regarding the significance of elephants and sheep, animals that are postulated in this study to be at the core of the socio-cultural dynamics of interaction in the Cape. Two narratives which hold the key to the proposed interpretations were told by the central informants in the Bleek and Lloyd archive, specifically ||Kabbo and |Hanŋ≠kass'o in the 1870s. This first one is about an Early Race (or a !xwe ||na ssho !kui) man called !gwá–!nuntu whose grandchild was taken away by the Elephants. He later recovered her by himself. In this narrative, which is paraphrased as:

> !gwá–!nuntu's granddaughter Ttau ho was taken by an Elephant and put inside her ear. At the time !gwa !nuntu had been sleeping inside a hole while the child was left above the ground digging for food when the Elephant's party arrived. The Elephant replaced Ttau ho with a little Elephant and carried the grandchild away. When !gwá–!nuntu woke up and told his grandchild to dig, the little Elephant answered instead in a different voice and !gwá–!nuntu realised that it was not his granddaughter. He then knocked down the little Elephant with his stick and went away to follow the Elephants' footprints at daybreak. He arrived at the Elephants' houses, whereupon they soon recognised him by the ostrich-feather brush he was carrying. The Mother Elephant put the child back into her ear and the child slipped down inside the Mother Elephant's body. !gwá–!nuntu said he would enter the Mother Elephant's body in various ways but instead she threatened to kill him, but he jumped into her navel and put the child on his back and carried her out through the back of the Mother Elephant's head, taking out the Elephant's heart with him. The Hyenas were then menacing !gwá–!nuntu from below on the ground and he took the child into the clouds where they carried him home. The daughter rejoiced about the return of her child, but demanded to know why her father had slept, letting the Elephants take his granddaughter. His answer was that the approach of the strangers had made him sleepy. He had washed himself and the child because the smell of the old Elephant's stomach was unpleasant. The daughter scolded !gwá–!nuntu, although he still defended his actions. (Notebooks: L VIII – 4. 6334–6413; 5. 6414–6455)

In the second narrative, of which two versions were told, one by ||Kabbo and another by |Hanŋ≠kass'o, it is the sheep that are featured rather than elephants. In the first story the Elephants are important protagonists, while in the second story the sheep are peripheral, acting as important carriers of the Ticks, who in turn are the main protagonists. Yet there are allusions that allow one to make a metaphoric equation between elephants and sheep. In |Hanŋ≠kass'o's version:

> |Kaggen leaves his home and goes to the home of the Ticks. These people are not relatives or friends but "black people who keep sheep", and he goes not on a social visit, but with the intention of stealing their sheep. The Ticks see him coming and hide in their sheep's wool. When |Kaggen approaches they drop from their hiding places and beat him severely so that he is forced to escape by magically getting feathers and flying back to his home, his possessions flying faithfully behind him. Having soothed his wounds, he admits to |Kwammang-a where he has been, and |Kwammang-a does give him advice on how he should approach stealing their sheep if this is what he wishes to do. He tells |Kaggen that he should creep up on the Ticks' sheep, pick the Ticks one by one and drop them in the fire; then he will be free to drive the sheep away…|Kaggen sleeps overnight and at dawn goes and does just as |Kwammang-a advised. The ticks argue with him and say he has learned this method from |Kwammang-a…He then drives away the sheep and takes them back to his home. (Hewitt 2008: 187–188)

In both stories, it is possible to read two layers of interaction involving the protagonists. In the first, the Elephants are strangers and, true to being unfamiliar "people", they abduct San (of the Early Race people) man's granddaughter. Elephants in San belief are often regarded as bad neighbours among the |Xam (Bennun 2005) or aggressive antisocial in-laws among the Ju|'hoansi (Biesele 1993). Roger Hewitt (2008: 187) comes to that conclusion too in his commentary on the second story when he says, "|Kwammang-a is not acting out of character [when he advises |Kaggen how to trick the Ticks], for Ticks, like Baboons and the Elephants…are treated as different and menacing racial groups." On the other hand, ||Kabbo's version of the second story, which is much more elaborate in its twists and turns and the allusions he makes about owning stock, invokes the strangeness of outsiders – the Ticks. Of the Ticks in both ||Kabbo's and |Hanŋ≠kass'o's versions, Hewitt argues that, "[T]here can be little doubt that the 'black people who we do not visit' refers directly to the Khoekhoen. Indeed a note relating to this narrative points out that the !Korana were thought of as black because they always seemed angry and violent" (Hewitt 2008: 188).

Whereas the Elephants are strangers in the first story, the second one does not imply that the sheep are strange even though they are essentially an introduced animal along with the material culture associated with animal husbandry being foreign to the San way of life as hunters and gatherers. Yet the protagonist |Kaggen is actually engaged in stealing the sheep (not to eat them, but to own them) from the Ticks, who are themselves in this case the strangers in the eyes of the San. |Kaggen's desire to "own" something among the people who customarily did not own possessions beyond bare necessities is what others have described as a "vignette of a new set of social relations in this rapidly changing landscape" (Bank 2006: 152). Some writers also note pertinently that adaptation is a prominent characteristic of Bushman cultures, and that they change subsistence strategies constantly to suit available resources (Barnard & Taylor 2002: 244) and, by extension, changing circumstances. In the two stories, !gwá–!nuntu and |Kaggen represent the San hunter-gatherer fragment of social interaction, while the unfamiliar foreigners, Elephants and Ticks, represent the Khoekhoen (or other similar groups) polity. In both stories, however, there seems to be an element of cultural rehabilitation of some kind going both ways or conjunction—the concept we saw earlier in the discussion of frontiers—whereby the wild and angry people represented by Elephants in the first story seem to embrace San-ness by stealing their girl child through substituting her for their own calf thereby trying to trick the elders. When the San attempt to retrieve their girl, the elephants fight to hang onto her although in the end they lose the battle. In the second story, the San appear to be keen to adopt sheep—an introduced animal—although they remain themselves hostile to the bearers (the Khoekhoen) of this new item on the landscape.

These two stories provide the symbolic symmetry between their menace and docility respectively and this metaphorical symmetry extends to the antagonism of elephants and the impassiveness of sheep. Although the sheep in the story are 'things' that can be taken or domesticated they are the hosts to the menace, the parasitic Ticks, who are foreigners, and so |Kaggen must extract them one by one from their cover in the sheep wool in order to defeat them. On the other hand, !gwá–!nuntu must be parasitic to the hostile Elephant cow by entering her gut to achieve the same goal and rescue his granddaughter. While both elephants (as shall be seen shortly) and sheep contain unusually large atance the San believe to be very potent, the fat of the former may have been regarded as dangerously potent unlike the fat of the latter. As Megan Biesele showed for the Kalahari San, elephants, like carnivores among the Jʉ'hoansi, are used in expressions of the San people's fear o f the more aggressive Bantu-speaking farmer people. Therefore, in San thought, "Killing in the animal realm is thus metaphorically transposed into the human realm to express tension between groups" (Biesele 1993: 111). It can be argued further that the fight against and ultimate death of the antagonist is at the core of the symbolism of the elephants in the stories, and probably in the artistic record too. It must be recalled, too, that the defeat and death of the antagonist may be something that entails greater good for the victor, a point we shall return to shortly in the discussion. For now, let us consider some of the central San metaphors that are embedded in these two stories.

Embedded at the centre of these two stories are the traditional metaphors of "entry" into and "exit" from things, which appear to have long antiquity judging by their pervasiveness in San folklore and belief system. For instance, as Figure 8.1 above (a hunter sheltering from rain inside a dead elephant) alludes to imaginatively, San hunter-gatherers in other parts of the subcontinent proceed beyond imagining the entry into an elephant carcass and indeed achieve this in reality. This reality was illustrated by the Ju|'hoansi in the Kalahari when they told Biesele how elephant meat is categorised, as is habitually done with most other game animals. Biesele further observed that in Ju|'hoan animal lore the subject of elephants captivates

nearly everyone, storytellers and their audiences, and at the core of this pervasive interest is the strangeness of these animals. In Ju|'hoan perspective, given by various individuals in one of their conversations concerning elephants:

> Elephant meat isn't red, or black, or white…Elephants have all three…Cut an elephant open, walk inside, and you see hanging down in great sheets meat of all three colours. Black meat is there, and red meat, and white…There's human meat there, and gemsbok meat, carnivores' meat, eland meat, every kind of meat, red black, and white. It's very fat. When it's dead, an elephant smells like a dead person…Its fat hangs down all around you—there is so much fat! It has all the kinds of meat in it – eland, human – it's the father of meat. (Biesele 1993.: 149–150)

As part of this conversation, one of the conversants, |Ukxa N!a'an, said people no longer ate elephant meat since it combines people's flesh and bush-animals' flesh, all hanging down. Further, the Ju|'hoansi people use terms evocative of this ambivalence like koaqkoaq for elephants, meaning "a thing to be feared", and tci dore, meaning a "bad, strange thing" (Biesele 1993: 150). There is an emphasis on the bad odour of dead elephants (sometimes likened to the smell of a human corpse), which incidentally features in the |Xam story above, where !gwá–!nuntu bathes to get rid of the "smell of the old Elephant" which he had vanquished. So, part of the reason they do not eat elephant meat is that:

> [I]t's like a person. The female has two breasts and they are on her chest like a woman's. When she's young they stick out and when she gets old they fall. Also, her crotch is like a woman's with long labia. The males have penises like people. They have only penises and no balls. Their balls went up inside their bodies because they were afraid of lightning. They have an arse like a person's arse. When they run, their breasts flap. Their eyes are small like a tortoise' eyes. You don't use elephant hide, because it's *tci dore*, like human skin. Beside elephants have two backbones. We found a dead one once and it took five people to lift its penis. If an elephant kills you it buries you and puts logs over the top of the hole. When they run, elephants really get into the swing of it and begin to dance, just like people. (Biesele 1993: 150)

However, Biesele also noted that although people have reservations about the various types of meat they believe to be found in elephants, she found that it is the only meat that is not distributed along the usual lines of sharing (Biesele 1993: 150). According to some of her informants, "There is so much there, you just walk up and cut off what you want" (*ibid*.). If we pause momentarily to contemplate this kind of personhood accorded the elephants, amply illustrated by the above passages, we come to the realisation that in essence these animals also evoke a diversity in ideology. It seems therefore that this aspect of elephant symbolism in San thought is somewhat paradoxical, since within strangeness or foreignness is also embedded a characteristic of familiarity, essentially their personhood. Elephants are generally peaceful and sociable animals but those nursing their young can be dangerous as a defensive reaction when the herd is under threat. Furthermore, the bulls become hyper-aggressive and dangerous, particularly during musth or when they are injured or sick or when they are old and solitary (Skinner & Chimimba 2005: 56). Their highly socialised demeanour is a matriarchal-based organisation and this appears to be a significant behavioural trait in San thought and their observations of this sociality are eminently reflected in the paintings in the study area. These come in the form of elephant herds comprising various 'age sets' distinguished by size and gait and position in the procession. While they are, they can also be.

As interaction with other groups of people proliferated, the San in general, and the |Xam in this particular case, tried eking out "an independent existence in the face of growing pressures on…home territory by those variously called 'Bastaards', 'Boers', 'strangers' or, most compellingly, 'people who are different'" (Bank 2006: 150). This difference is acknowledged within a broadly unified category of personhood, but this quality also has inherent tensions between hostility and sociability. Reverting back to the painting record, it seems that groupings of elephant imagery juxtaposed with those of people as accompaniments, but importantly not necessarily hunting or slaughtering them (e.g. Figure 8.2), carry allusions of this metaphoric association. This human/elephant, hunter-gatherer/herder nexus of ideas shifts when the hunting of these animals escalates from the mid 1600s onwards. The age-old human/elephant metaphoric bonds change focus onto the new conditions within which intense interaction between cultural groups forces those interconnections to break. Andrew Bank (295–296) has noted of the |Xam conditions at the hands of Khoekhoen and later settler farmer polities that these San began to view themselves increasingly as people who had been banished to abject poverty and subservience by those more powerful polities. All said and done, some writers have suggested that:

> [T]he social upheaval associated with the influx of herders into the region 2000–1600 years ago could have led to the San moving into the mountains. Their contact with herders could also have led to a breakdown in social cohesion and an erosion of the power of the shamans. (Deacon 1994a: 34, citing Yates *et al*. 1993)

This scenario would have been true also for the later frontier conditions when the residual San hunter-gatherers in the remote parts of the Cape lost their traditional lifestyle along with rights to their lands, and lived (no doubt unwillingly) in contact with or under the servitude of settler farming communities. However, regarding the later colonial frontier interaction, it is plausible that the rock painting traditions had possibly entirely vanished, with the fine fine-line assemblage having tailed off in much earlier times before European contact, and the coarse fine-line tradition enduring slightly later into the colonial period. So it is conceivable that the earlier strata of elephant depictions—ones where therianthropes and other transformed figures and entoptics, among other distinctive imagery, are featured—might have had some

Figure 8.2: These panels show elephants and their calves in contrasting association with groups of people, in the Koue Bokkeveld and northern Cederberg.

connection with the shamanistic and other related ritual symbolism linked to trance performance and rainmaking. Several of these graphic scenes, which were first reported as "elephants in boxes" (Maggs & Sealy 1983) and whose associated "motifs" were later expanded through neuropsychological interpretations (Lewis-Williams 1995b), have now been interpreted as representing the communication systems of elephants (Paterson 2007). In this view, wavy or zigzag lines connecting various elephants from their feet, underbelly, trunks, tails, heads or backs, groins and even the throat in one case "represent the sound and/or vibrations of the elephants" (*ibid*.: 3) as they communicate over distances via the ground. While this is a tantalising proposition that touches on the earlier San symbolic tropes, the painting evidence is not so easily sustained. Nevertheless, I am tempted to recall the elephant heroine narratives of the Ju|'hoansi people collected in the early 1970s farther afield in the Kalahari, where allusions to the San system of belief and gender/sex metaphors are featured (Patricia Vinnicombe, pers. comm. 2002). In one story (with several versions), the trickster deity Pishiboro and his brother connive to murder his wife, G!kon||'amdima the elephant girl. They cut her up and eat her flesh since "[he] was married to meat and thought it was a wife" (Biesele 1993: 151). The story proceeds as follows:

> The younger brother, after eating the dead wife's breast…cuts open her uterus. The foetus walks out, accompanied by a flood of uterine fluid…Pishiboro, fearing that the fluid will go to warn the elephant girl's parents, [and] tries to catch it by digging a hole. But it flows past him and indeed continues on to alert his in-laws that their daughter has been murdered. (Biesele 1993: 151)

The symbolism of some of the said images, including cow-calf associations "ensnared" within and amongst the wavy lines and zigzags, will be found in the richly complex allusions of these narratives. In the story, the elephants mount a determined fight for vengeance and they defeat the two brothers, who end up hiding inside a termite mound. The elephant girl's life is resuscitated thereafter. Nevertheless, the artistic themes focusing on shamanistic beliefs and ritual symbolism might have changed with the shifting socio-economic and political scenarios of the earlier pastoral frontier and the later colonial frontier that gradually, but inevitably, fragmented San hunter-gatherer social cohesion and cultural fabric. Although in other contexts interaction between the San and other groups culminated in increased roles of ritual specialists (e.g. Campbell 1987), the Cape frontier circumstances appear to have been different. Here the relevance of medicine people might have shifted from a customary healing emphasis towards their importance as political leadership, particularly captaincy, among the politically conscious and belligerent San groups who ventured to subvert the influence of powerful polities that were eroding San autochthonous rights to the resources in the contested landscapes. Such groups are not difficult to find in many parts of the subcontinent where necessary conditions, such as the erosion of San rights to resources, oppression, etc., are documented. One cannot find any reason why the Cape hunter-gatherers would have lacked this capacity for political transformation. Let us briefly look at an illuminating example from the Kalahari, with similar frontier turmoil.

Mathias Guenther (2002: 131), who has worked among the Nharo (Naron) of Ghanzi, central Botswana, points out that the 19th century was a period of turmoil and change in this region. The abundance of game, particularly elephants, had drawn agropastoralists as well as white hunters and traders, who in turn later dominated most San groups as subjects from whom tribute was extracted. However, even before this contact with other people, there were rivalries amongst the San groups: around the mid-1800s the Nharo and ǂAu||eisi, a San group speaking a Ju|'hoan dialect, came into intertribal conflict when the latter group moved into the north-western Ghanzi veld and displaced the former. The ǂAu||eisi, with a reputation for military aggression and sorcery, became the dominant group. This dominance peaked under the reign of their paramount war chief ǂDukuri, who is described in oral traditions as a "mighty chief", ruthless and ruling over many San groups from whom he extracted tribute (Guenther 2002: 133). With a substantial arsenal of weapons, he could easily assemble "mounted raids against recalcitrant families, sometimes exterminating entire bands" (*ibid*.). This stimulated a political system dependent on big-game hunting as the "…basis for all social and economic conditions, all rights and laws, the entire political organization" (Guenther

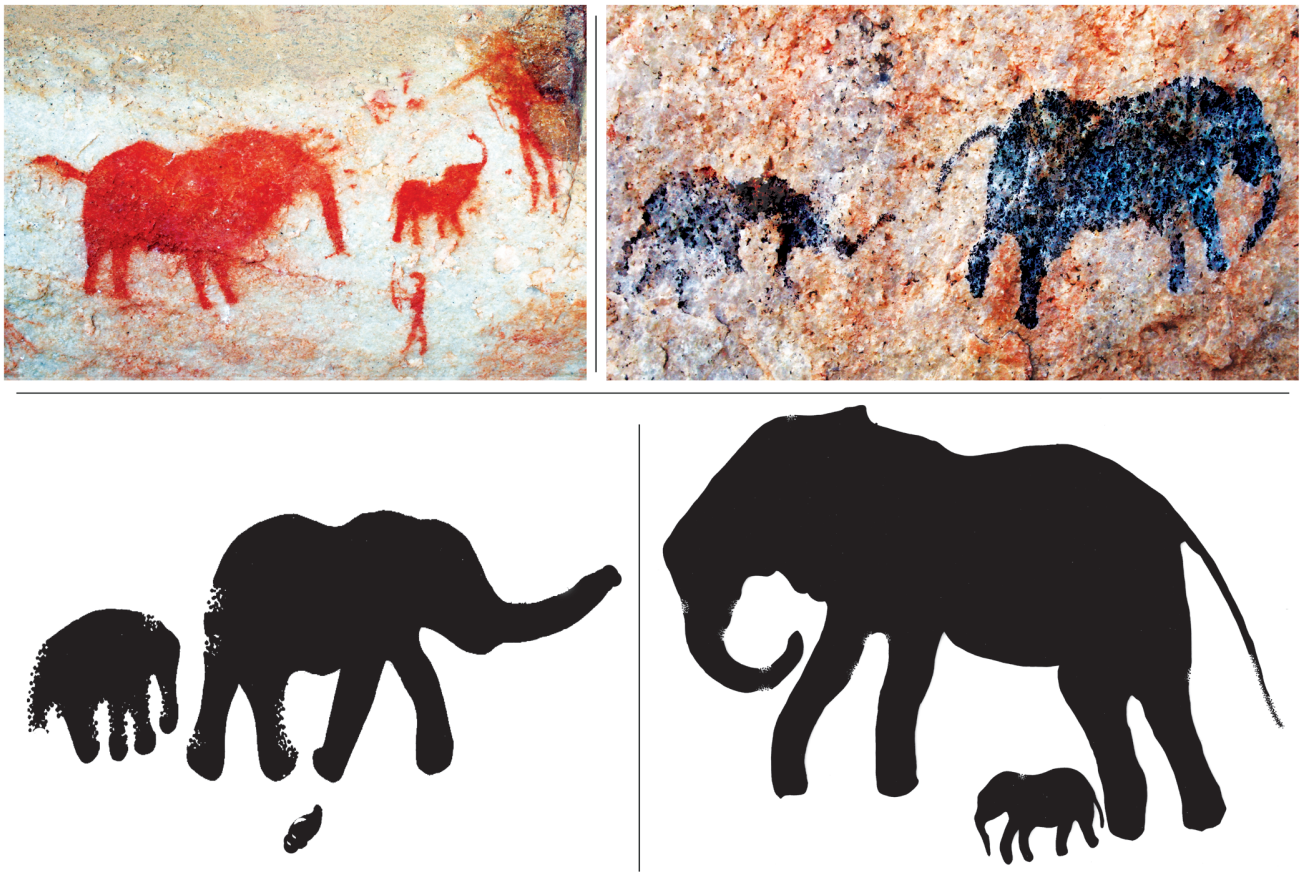


Figure 8.3: There is a common theme of elephant cows with calves in the Cederberg, where the cows appear to be protecting their young.

2002: 133, citing Passarge 1907: 81, 119). Subsistence and trade were the key reasons for these hunts, which might have also led to wealth accumulation, control and power (Guenther 2002: 132). However, Guenther argues that the organisational elaboration of leadership and politics resulted from the rivalries and hostilities among the San groups themselves. This scenario resonates with Legassick's view that in a frontier zone there tends to be no single source of legitimate authority within the administrative interstices of the polities and their spheres of sway.

From the 1840s to the late 1870s the political organisation and military prowess of the ǂAu||eisi under their chief ǂDukuri was kept at bay by several influxes into their sphere of influence by various settler groups and big-game hunters. Other formidable enemies were the Bantu-speaking agropastoralists, the Tawana from the Lake Ngami region in the north and the Oorlams (i.e. Kai/khauan) from Gobabis in the west, who advanced into the Ghanzi veld to hunt big game and raid livestock from weaker groups. With the death of ǂDukuri around the 1860s, and since his chieftaincy was hereditary, his son assumed the leadership. Unlike his father, he lacked military vigour and so his group could not mount effective resistance to invaders. Furthermore, the radical decline of game due to excessive hunting by outsiders forced his people into impoverishment. Consequently, the overall Ghanzi San resistance to outside pressure declined so much that white hunters and traders in the late 1800s went in virtually without resistance. This excerpt illustrates the political and military dynamics of contact zones, even in scenarios where there are no outsiders in the equation. As in the Cape, big-game hunting, competition for scant resources and the concomitant emergence of active political leadership and militarism among various indigenous groups fuelled the Kalahari situation.

In a similar vein, Elphick (1985: 73) describes how a group of Khoekhoen in the Cape in 1510 killed the Portuguese viceroy in India, Francisco d'Almeida, and over 50 of his men. The Portuguese had abducted Khoe children inland and, in a fierce counter-attack, the Khoekhoen drove their oxen as a defensive rampart (mentioned earlier as one method for attacking carnivores) from behind which they hurled spears and missiles. It is revealing that Elphick notes the fact that Khoekhoen were more capable of mounting concerted resistance to Europeans at this time than they were a century later. Part of the reason can be found in the ideology around war and raiding that is common among pastoralist peoples of the world, characterised by great fluidity of wealth and prestige. Khoekhoen fought many wars among themselves long before colonialism (Elphick 1985: 53–54), which resulted in their fragmentation over time. They fought over territorial disputes, raiding, ethnic fission, abductions and so on and one fierce two-week intergroup battle was witnessed in late 1661 between the numerous warlike Cochoqua and some smaller formations known as the Peninsular groups. Yet these battles

galvanised KhoeSan peoples in the face of interaction where military confrontation was found necessary. Such groupings, organised in smaller and more mobile units than before, emerged in later centuries in the Cape as the northern frontier wars intensified, as noted in historian Nigel Penn's work (e.g. Penn 1987, 1990, 1999, 2005a,b). It seems that the frontier precipitated conditions that created more militaristic groups of often mixed ethnic formations who were keen to maintain their own political power and authority and control over social and economic resources, particularly elephant hunting and the attendant ivory trade. The next section describes image contexts that might resonate with these historical and socio-cultural conditions of the Cape in the context of frontier circumstances.

8.4. A SLICE THROUGH THE PAINTING ARCHIVE: DEFINING ELEPHANTS AND SHEEP

The sections above described aspects of the history and ethnography that inform my interpretation of elephant and sheep images. To situate the utility of the archival fonds notion in my interpretations, we must return to the hypothetical scenario used in chapter five. A researcher working on the development of archaeological terminologies in southern Africa will look at all the record assemblages relating to, among others, van Riet Lowe, Goodwin and Breuil, even though each is separate fonds in the archive. He or she might consider correspondence found at item, file and series levels to build an idea of

Figure 8.4: Coarse fine-line elephants: the top example is coarser and more caricaturised than the bottom example, possibly as a sub-tradition. They all appear to show elephant hunting contexts, as are most examples of elephants with calves in the fine fine-line manner of depiction.

how, for instance, the terms Early, Middle and Later Stone Ages were formulated and used from the pioneering years. By the same token, the analytical trajectory in this study focuses on two selected image themes that span different categories of painting and traces them through the sequence. In the process it reveals how these subjects might have held different symbolic significances through time. Traditionally, this approach is difficult since each image theme has to be evaluated within its own painting tradition and separated from the others. Although the art traditions were made by different groups (or even mixed groups in some cases) of people, it is plausible that in the context of long interactions and shared socio-economic activities on the frontier landscape, some cultural elements of belief and worldview will feature as admixtures in their artistic productions. Take as an example the panel where an elephant cow and calf under attack from archers appears in the fine fine-line manner, juxtaposed on the right with another panel of a herd of several elephants (adults and sub-adults) in course fine-line (Figure 8.3, Top Left). The latter manner has been shown in the sequence to supersede the former, even though in this example these two are not superimposed. Although both panels use the same red pigment, the coarsely painted elephants are considerably more vivid, suggesting that they may have been placed later than the finely painted pair. From the archival fonds perspective, the reading is that the artists using the course fine-line group intended to add their own understanding of the theme based on the existing fine fine-line pair of elephants under attack.

There are several levels of difficulty in identifying subjects in rock art; some images are straightforward while others may be perplexing. However, anyone who has observed a

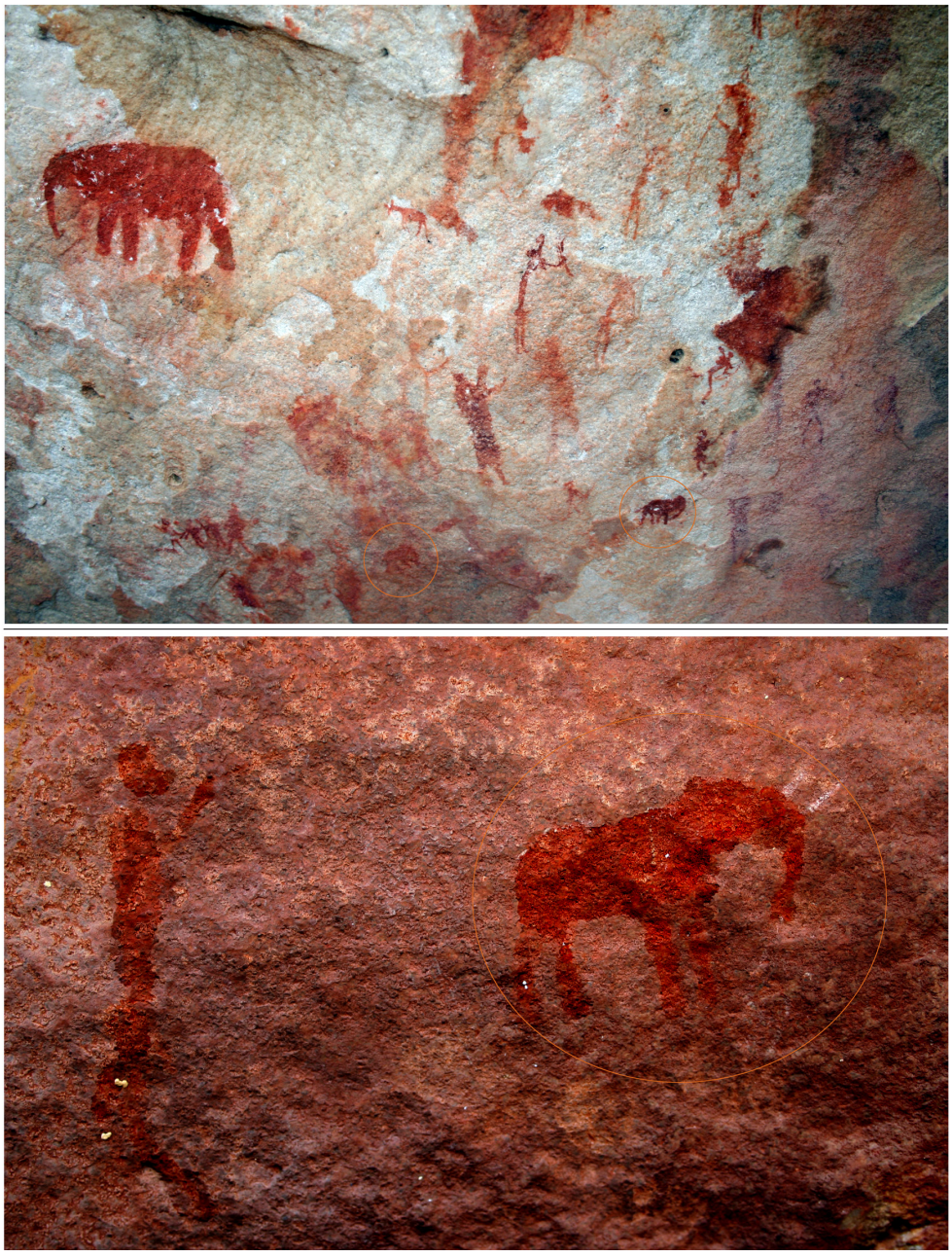


Figure 8.5: Elephants pursued by men with bows and arrows or some sort of spears are often shown alongside their young. As in the previous figure, the top cluster is coarse fine-line while the bottom panel is in fine fine-line manner of depiction.

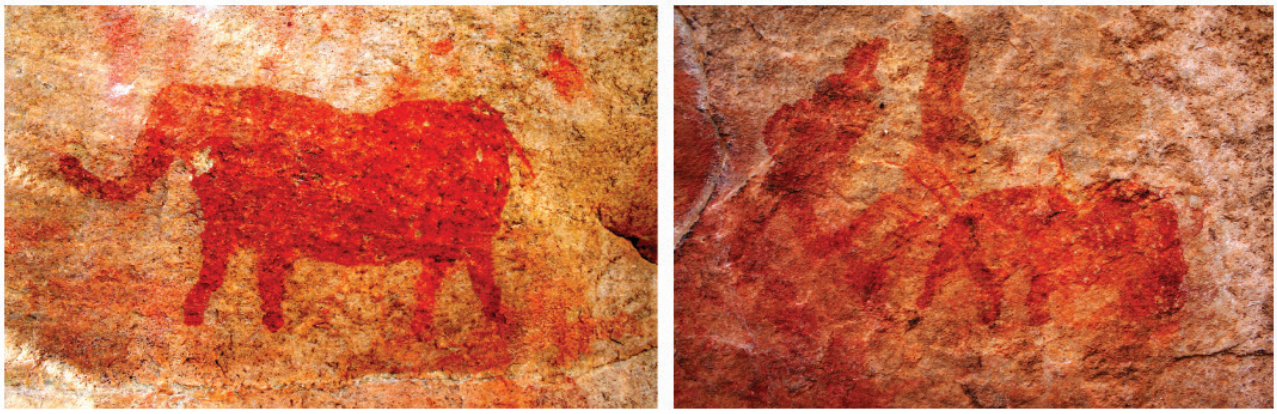


Figure 8.6: Two elephants—one possibly a calf or sub-adult—about 55 cm apart in association with human figures and other imagery in between them. The elephants facing the left appear to be part of the same painting context, with the young elephant seemingly impaled with arrows or spears while two hunters are close in attendance from the left.

real elephant or a photograph thereof can directly recognise this uniquely shaped animal in the rock art, whatever the manner of its depiction. There may be uncertainties on issues of interpretation and meaning, but not the subject's identification. Where do elephants occur in the sequence and in what graphic forms do they feature in different levels? Why do they appear where they occur and would their meaning have remained the same or changed with different periods in the past? This section describes some examples of elephants in tandem with those of fat-tailed sheep (with the emphasis on elephants) in an attempt to identify some conceptual proclivities for their symbolic framework through time.

Several studies have identified the varying frequencies of different animal species in the rock art of the Cape. Elephants were observed in the late 1960s to be the second most favoured species after eland in the Pakhuis sample. They made up 9.3% against the higher 18.6% frequency of eland depictions (Maggs 1967b; Maggs & Sealy 1983). Other studies in the same region found 11.8% elephants in the Olifants valley (Van Rijssen 1980) and 9.5% in the sandveld (Manhire 1981). In a recent Agter-Pakhuis survey, many new sites were recorded, out of which a probable 20 or more have depictions of elephants (Mguni 2007), bringing their frequency to over 10% in the area. Elephants appear in higher frequencies in the Cape when compared to other regions of South Africa, indicating that they "had some special importance for the inhabitants" of the region (Johnson & Maggs 1979: 68; Maggs & Sealy 1983: 45). As argued previously, this importance is indicated by: 1) the large number of depictions, 2) the special contexts in which some of them feature, and 3) the presence of therianthropes in the midst of some of them (Maggs & Sealy 1983: 45). These observations prefigure the shamanistic framework which establishes their association with "San trance performance" (*ibid*.: 48). In other contexts, specifically in the engravings where they also feature strongly, elephants have been interpreted in the context of rain symbolism (Deacon 1988; Morris & Beaumont 1994; Rust 2000). Some types of images associated with elephants include wavy and zigzag lines, castellated forms and transformed human figures, apparently in these scenarios not hunting them (i.e. their special contexts). They also interestingly feature a strong cow-with-calf combination where the calves are presented walking under the bellies of their mothers. The elephant depictions that I consider appear in various levels of the sequence and feature in compositional combinations that can be divided into three common types:

1) Gregarious clusters of two or more individuals,

2) Solitary or individual elephants (mostly bulls, judging by certain characteristic features) in apparent aggressive charge postures, and

3) Mother-calf combinations as pairs or part of larger groupings.

The first kind of elephant depiction already mentioned, which appears in the sequence, is that of large yellow-to-orange clayey plastered elephants disucssed in earlier chapters. These are rarely depicted individually, but are usually paired or in groups of several individuals. These elephants generally appear above the fine fine-line imagery, occasionally sandwiched between this earlier painting category underneath and handprints, finger strokes and smearing above (Anderson 1996: 78). Some examples of this temporal contextual association are found at several other Agter-Pakhuis shelters, including the major sites of Sonja's Cave Upper, Salmanslaagte and Site 7 on Sevilla Trail. This type of elephant painting is not to be confused with other yellow-painted examples, such as the fine fine-line specimens at Khabo Area Site 4 or even those at Zuurvlakte (though in the latter case, the smaller elephant—or what might be a calf?—joined by a thick line in front of the large animal is coarsely produced, as if done by different hands and perhaps at a different time). Here the pigment is not based on clay, the outline forms of the animals are painted using a fine brush and they are shaded evenly inside. There are several more examples of both types of elephant depictions in the region.

The second kind of elephant depiction is that of finely detailed red monochrome elephants, appearing either as

individuals or as groups and often interleaved between other fine fine-line imagery. One of these examples, at Fallen Rock Shelter and shown in chapter six, is a single large elephant in what is known zoologically as a faster walking gait (technically elephants do not trot or run), with the tail slightly raised. One defining feature of this elephant is the distinctively rounded forehead which, along with the fact of its solitariness, might indicate its maleness. In terms of sequence, this elephant overlies fine fine-line human figures and part of a filigree of dots, but a fine fine-line group scene in turn overlies it. The group scene is itself then overlain by two, possibly three, smaller coarse fine-line elephants. A similar sequence is repeated at Maidens Pool Shelter, where a group of finely detailed elephants, contemporaneous with some fine fine-line images at the site, is under several other types of fine fine-line images. To the left of this group, which is filing to the right, is a fleeing calf pursued by a group of hunters with bows and arrows and what appear to be sticks or lances. One elephant, possibly the mother or matriarch, has turned back and is charging leftwards in a faster walking gait as if intent on rescuing the calf. Then, a distance below this herd, there is a single smaller coarse fine-line elephant painted amidst finger strokes and smears in similar colours, which—like the Fallen Rock Shelter instance—might be later than the fine fine-line group in terms of sequence. Another case of similar combinations involves a fine fine-line cow-and-calf association, which appears among a group of elephants. The calf is actually tucked underneath, nearly touching the belly of its mother, a position seldom painted in this area where calves are frequently shown walking ahead or behind the adult animals (Figures 8.3 and 8.4). These elephants appear above earlier detailed imagery comprising several slightly faded eland and human figures. Then another set of fine fine-line human figures is painted above the eland. Due to a wash zone running through this cluster of images, the fresher and vibrant red pigment of the humans has bled down onto the mother-and-calf pair that lies spatially below. In these instances, the elephants are flanked by two different sets of finely detailed imagery. In yet another of the examples, a procession of fine fine-line elephants, including calves and sub-adults, occurs above and below finely detailed imagery of various subject matter; still visible, the earlier red images underneath are severely weathered while the few later human figures in black pigment occur above. Black fine fine-line images generally occur above other finely detailed images in various ochreous pigment colours in the Agter-Pakhuis locality.

This type of elephant association involving mother-calf pairs or groups with calves and other sub-adults directly associated with human figures is more common than recognised. Few of these particular examples are observed in any discernible sequential relationships with other imagery. They generally appear both as fine fine-line and coarse fine-line, as shown in the examples in Figures 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5 and 8.6. Whereas the hunting theme is, by and large, seldom featured in various rock art regions, it is apparent in the Cape that some reference is made to elephant hunting in these depictions, either metaphorically or otherwise. Although there is no indication of obvious killed elephants in any of these depictions, there is an unusual example of one animal appearing to have succumbed to a series of arrows or lances which are impaled in its head and body, while another—a short distance away but in the same colour, manner and level of deterioration—faces in the opposite direction as if fleeing from the carnage (Figure 8.6). The rarity of recognisable hunting scenes in the art has been noted under the caption of an illustration of a presumed dead elephant due to its supine posture and outstretched flaccid trunk from Buffelsfontein, Eastern Cape (Johnson & Maggs 1979: 41). This rarity is no indication of the diminished significance of elephant hunting; the few definitive examples are enough to argue for the interpretation presented here.

While some writers have identified trance performance and rain symbolism as central to various depictions of elephants, it is intriguing that a hunting theme involving these animals pervades in circumscribed parts of the Cape mountainous zones, such as the Agter-Pakhuis and surrounding localities. As noted above, the last of the observed elephants in the region were in these localities and in fact the most intense hunting of elephants was in the Clanwilliam and Citrusdal areas. As a prelude to the discussion of the permutations of the symbolic focus of the elephant hunting theme, it is worth noting the associated theme where fat-tailed sheep are featured as well. At EBC in the coastal zone, there is a coarse fine-line fat-tailed sheep. The head and upper body, however, appear to have been enhanced with the finger, something that attests to the overlap of these manners of application. There is a faded line of elephants a little distance above and to the left of the sheep painting in nearly the same pigment and possibly coarse fine-line manner. This may be incidental; yet a few more examples emerge farther inland, in the mountains. In the Agter-Pakhuis, a weathered fine fine-line sheep (Golson 1983: 23) with its lamb, showing the characteristic spindly legs, is painted slightly above an elephant cow-calf pair (Figures 7.3 in chapter seven, Top left of the collage). The distinctive floppy ears and back legs are clearly shown; the torso and lower neck might have been painted white, with red for extremities and the head—a feature observed in other places (Rudner & Rudner 1959: 106–107). In another association, a finely detailed line of elephants is positioned a few centimetres above another set of two (and possibly more, but now badly weathered) fat-tailed sheep images (Figure 7.4 in chapter seven). This arrangement appears to be more intentional than incidental: both clusters, which face to the right, have several human figures on the left, positioned as if to give the impression of herding or driving these animals in the direction they face. Nevertheless, it has been noted that in general "the sheep paintings are often less informative than the human figures grouped with them" (Manhire *et al*. 1986: 25), which makes their interpretation a challenge. However, the figures associated with the elephant line are carrying bows and arrows or sticks. In yet other sheep image clusters that other researchers have observed, such human figures carry bags or similar objects. The association of such material culture may indicate known milk skin bags,

which were used by Khoekhoen pastoralists. Some of the figures reflect various bodily attenuations which are argued to indicate the connection of these groupings with trance symbolism, in line with the general fine fine-line assemblage of painting (Manhire *et al*. 1986: 25; Anderson 1996: 87).

The context of their production is that of interaction and so to select one ethnographic trope as relevant and ignore another might be a counterproductive approach. Even the view that, "[N]o mention is made of the importance of sheep in San rituals and/or mythology, even by those who have adopted a Khoi language and/or (pseudo-) herding economy" (Anderson 1996: 85) is not entirely accurate. As we have already seen, sheep are in fact featured in some |Xam Early Race stories, one such being |Kaggen's fight with the Ticks who came out of their cover in sheep wool (Bennun 2005: 151–155). In a demonstration of acquired sheep husbandry knowledge, particularly of the different sheep breeds and their behaviour (Bank 2006: 296), |Hanŋ≠kass'o mentioned that the hairy fat-tailed Ronderib Afrikaner or Blinkhaar breed (*!geiten* is the |Xam name) return home to the kraal on their own when left in the wilds, unlike the Farland sheep (or *!koa* in |Xam) and others which remain where they are left (Bleek & Lloyd 1911: 111). These were former hunter-gatherers who had adopted a partial herding life and also worked for white farmers, Khoekhoe and the so-called Bastaards mentioned in earlier chapters. So the sources that might inform our understanding of contact imagery essentially come from an amalgam of ethnographies concerned with the societies involved in the interaction, thus the Khoekhoen and San nexus seems more appropriate than appraising each one in isolation from the other.

Some researchers in this region regarded finely detailed images of domestic animals as shamanistic in make-up, as precipitated by "stressful conditions brought about by the competition with immigrant groups" (Manhire *et al*. 1986: 22). However, Gavin Anderson (1996, 1997) has dealt with sheep paintings at length and revised this association of trance symbolism with domestic animal imagery in the Cape on the basis of these animals being non-San material culture. For him, sheep images are "stereotypic reproductions of San group norms in response to interaction with pastoralists" (Anderson 1996: 87). These images are salient indications of out-group material culture since interaction of pastoralists and hunter-gatherers "is not one of integration, but of different social identities" (*ibid*.: 88). He believes that in this scenario, "Male hunters had limited access to Khoe society and would need to renegotiate their gender and social identities" (Anderson 1997: 58–59). The general formal and contextual homogeneity of sheep images is argued to be evidence of this perspective on gender relations. So too are small game animals in the hunter-gatherer rock art tradition in this region. This argument, couched in a gender and identity theoretical framework, appears to have some internal inconsistencies. Other researchers placed fat-tailed sheep images within the shamanistic framework (Huffman 1983). Anderson downplays the general shamanistic perspective, with the exception of sheep images at Cannagaaitjies (Anderson 1996: 87), on the basis that linking trance metaphors with non-San material culture is problematic (*ibid*.: 86). Yet the same putative "stereotypes about out-groups" are presumably rooted in San metaphors about foreign things. And where does this leave the acknowledged finger-painted sheep (Anderson 1996: 87) or even, in the case of my sequence discussed above, the coarse fine-line examples, all of which are presumably not classically hunter-gatherer authored? Without seeking to downplay the possibility of gender relations as implicated in some sheep paintings, this study anchors its interpretation on the circumstances that are generally found in the frontier zones. We saw earlier how De Kock considered frontiers, using the analogy of the seam, to be sites of both convergence and divergence. Here, difference and sameness become aligned as they are also brought to self-awareness. This view augurs well with Legassick's understanding that frontiers are spaces of contact and inclusion, ending in various groups mixing together elements of the social systems of their parent societies. In the frontier, differing former political authorities and modes of production cease to influence people's choices as new modes of life and institutions are evolved through the mutual acculturation from interaction of different cultures.

In this purview, the view that identities between San and Khoekhoen were non-integrative cannot be presumed to have been true to all times and places where such cultural interactions took place. It is unclear why "[i]nteraction was more likely one of accentuated intergroup differences and thus salient intergroup identities" (sic) (Anderson 1996: 88). While aspects of identity and gender might be implied in the sheep imagery as argued, the implicit suggestion that an active artistic "marking" of social status and intergroup identity salience appears to be strained. In fact, some have noted that in spite of wide gaps between wealthy stock owners and those with few or no livestock, "Poor families, as measured in livestock, were looked down upon, whether they were San or Khoikhoi" (Boonzaier *et al*. 1996: 42). Even then, they also argue that social mechanisms were available to ensure some form of wealth redistribution. One problem with the identity-focused perspective is that it overemphasises difference at the expense of resemblances, itself fixed along stereotyped ethnicities. Hence the statement, "[C]ontact between Khoi and San, especially males, was not one of assimilation or acculturation" (Anderson 1996: 88). On the other hand, to then use Khoekhoe ethnography about sheep to understand hunter-gatherer fine fine-line sheep is undoing the conviction in their putative socio-economic and ideological variances.

Furthermore, it is unconvincing to discount shamanistic symbolism for sheep images, which are observed to lack any informative contextual detail, while simultaneously tying them strongly with certain Khoe female rituals (themselves not depicted). Other evidence indicates that foraging and herding signatures are similar historically and archaeologically, as "broad continuities in stone artefact traditions and in hunting-gathering patterns

before and after the introduction of stock and pottery to the Cape suggest that acculturation (diffusion) was at least as important as population movement in promoting the spread of pastoralism" (Klein 1986: 9, citing Deacon 1984b). It is incontrovertible, however, that the advent of pastoralism impacted adversely on local hunting and gathering economies by displacing them and exerting other forms of stress. Direct competition for land and other key resources led, in some instances, to confrontations and even fatalities between herders and hunter-gatherers. There are those individuals or groups who moved between herding and hunting depending on circumstances and vicissitudes, while others were completely acculturated in both directions. There are also those hunter-gatherers who did not merge with pastoralists but either entered with them into the various patron-client relationships such as are known historically or retreated into seclusion in the mountains. In the late 17th century there were still autonomous hunters and gatherers in the Cape's mountainous regions, even after over 1000 years of contact with herders (Deacon 1994b: 19).

This analysis advocates Riegl's (1888, 1889) historical perspective as it considers the imagery of elephants and fat-tailed sheep. These paintings are products of past temporalities and historical circumstances of the earlier and later frontier conditions in the Cape. For instance, how did the varying social, economic and political entities produce and use art under frontier contact as defined by various writers in the discussion above? Noting that elephants and sheep formed an important dimension of the early colonial economies, the ensuing explanation draws on Legassick's focus on trade and raiding coupled with Penn's weighing of pastoral production. To situate the imagery of these particular animals and understand their place in the painting sequence, my analysis follows two directions of the socio-economic continuum in the Cape: the earlier pastoral frontier, which dates back to around 2000 years ago, and the later colonial version that can be pegged at 1652 with the first permanent Dutch settlement at the Cape. This appeal to the social, economic and political conditions of the two frontier forms does not *per se* mean that they explain the paintings and change; instead, their consideration provides the context for understanding aspects of the imagery and change over time. Methodologically, the archival fonds approach allows the analytical movement from one level in the sequence to another or from one tradition to another in the same area where overlaps of cultural entities are known to have existed in contact scenarios. Overall, the symbolism of some elephant depictions principally, and the association of fat-tailed sheep secondarily, appears to be linked to ideologies fomented under sustained interaction conditions of the forager, pastoral and colonial frontiers through time in the Cape region. It has been argued thus far that the imagery shifts from an earlier shamanistic emphasis to later political leadership among the KhoeSan groups trying to maintain social cohesion and effect political organisation to counterbalance the polities whose burgeoning influence was undermining the traditional *status quo*. A complex series of events and conditions came together to create an atmosphere where new metaphors were shaped and projected on older and pre-existing animal symbols in a cultural context that Legassick (2010) described above as resulting from acculturation and new modes of life.

Finally, elephant images, in contrast to fat-tailed sheep, are less stereotyped and more heterogonous in their painting context, which gives them a greater range of detail that might lead to some understanding of their meaning(s). What this means is that the former are much more graphically varied than fat-tailed sheep images in their form, colour, size, posture, group characteristics and so forth. As already shown, there are several examples of fine fine-line elephants, and even more in the coarse fine-line assemblage, which appear in what could be interpreted as hunting contexts. The painting in shown in Appedinx 1, Figure 6 illustrates this point, showing a cluster of coarsely painted and miniaturised images of several people and three elephants. One elephant, on the far right, has the posture of an adult (calves are often depicted with gangling legs in what appears to be an uncoordinated neonatal gait) and appears to be in pursuit of a group of three human figures that are carrying hunting equipment. Behind this elephant is what seems to be a calf, judging by its chubby short-legged body, fleeing in the opposite direction. Still farther left and slightly higher, there is a third elephant in a cluster that includes four female figures carrying digging sticks (one of which is stone-weighted). The lower picture from another site shows an archer with a drawn bow directed at a fleeing elephant. The manner of depiction of this cluster is intermediate between coarse fine-line and finger painting. Similarly, there is a panel showing a set of coarse fine-line images which include three elephants: the larger elephant facing left features on the top left of the panel while the two smaller ones, possibly juveniles, are lower down. In between there are five human figures with bows and arrows: some appear to be pursuing the larger elephant while others attend to the two smaller ones. In the cluster, there are two female figures. Are these depictions of real hunting scenes or are they allusions to something that is embedded at a much deeper social metaphorical level?

Regarding such human-elephant interactions in the art, some researchers have noted for other regions that the lack of tusks in elephant images is evidence that rock artists were not concerned with them as sources of ivory (Rust 2000: 40). That refutation alone appears to view San rock art strictly in terms of daily realities. It must be remembered that San art is noted for its oblique reference to subjects, which is contrary to our outsiders' sense of reality. In the same breath, one cannot assume that where such tusks are depicted it means that the artists were highlighting ivory. Features of subjects were often omitted, or made to look smaller or bigger than they are in reality, in order to emphasise their significance (e.g. see Mguni 2004). It is true, however, that tusks are rarely shown in elephant imagery in the Western Cape and adjoining regions. The main reason for this absence is that tusks appear to have been painted in white, a transient pigment that easily succumbs to weathering (John Parkington, pers. comm. 2006; personal observation). Yet a few existing examples

can be recalled: the bottom picture in Figure 8.5 shows a red elephant with tusks clearly depicted in white. Another cluster in the top picture, Figure 6.14 in chapter six, shows that the two largest individuals of the five coarsely painted elephants carry tusks in the same monochrome red pigment used for the images (Golson 1983: 21). There are a few other instances in various parts of the region (Johnson & Maggs 1979: 62, 64). None of these depictions have any associated images that suggest the elephants are being hunted for ivory. It is widely accepted now that the various rock arts on the subcontinent are generally not literal depictions of reality, but are rather metaphorical in content and intent. So even if, as this study does, one identifies hunting as a theme in the artistic record, it does not necessarily imply that the artists were documenting this activity. The symbolism of these animals and what appears superficially to be "elephant hunts" lies with the historical circumstances of the artists at the time of art production. Therefore, this study searched for clues concerning the combined hunter-gatherer and herder ideologies that were formulated as a result of the new mixed economic activities focusing on elephants and domesticates such as fat-tailed sheep. In terms of the elephants, ivory had become a significant product in the changing socio-economic worlds of people living within frontiers of interaction in the Western Cape.

CHAPTER NINE

Past to Present

> *The pendulum of thought swings back and forth, as one generation solves its predecessor's problems, but thereby creates new problems for the next generation to address, with ideas having their day, being discarded, and then being revitalized in a modified form in later work.* (Cook 1997: 47)

9.1. ENVISAGING ROCK ART ARCHIVES

The study presented in this book advocates and demonstrates the utility of the archival perspective in analysing rock painting sequences and thus change over time in image production in the Western Cape. The necessary condition for applying the archival perspective involves envisaging and demonstrating that the rock painting assemblages reflect archival qualities, wherein the past artists were themselves active archivists of their own social histories and worldviews through painting. It is these social history narratives and indigenous worldviews that this study believes ought to be assayed throughout the sequence of painted images as an added dimension in approaching the issue of historical narratives based on rock art analyses that has been a subject of much debate in recent decades in southern Africa. For instance, some years ago, Aron Mazel (1993: 890) urged: "I would like to make it clear that the paintings form part of the San historical process, and that if, or more positively when, we are able to date them, they will be an important component in constructing these historical processes." The problem however revolves around the lack of datable contexts for rock art in general, which—when they become attainable—will form the central means to link the sequences from the layered paintings to the layered shelter deposits in the quest for past historical processes archived in the shelters. The dating issue is, nevertheless, gradually being rectified and the usefulness of integrating such dates with established layers of rock art sequences has been demonstrated in the Drakensberg (as reported in Mazel 2009). In one of the studies in that region, for example, a painted bichrome eland, dated by AMS radiocarbon technique to between 2900 and 2760 BP, was found to belong to the second oldest relative sequence layer identified in one of the studies to discern relative chronology of the paintings (Mazel 2009: 93). Dates alone, without being linked to particular image layers in the rock art sequence, are less than useful in the chronological interpretation of the layered paintings for deriving social history processes. Therefore, understanding sequence layers in the rock art necessarily becomes more meaningful alongside dated images for the discernment of change through time and the formulation of historical narratives based on rock art assemblages. Although Thomas Dowson argued similarly to Mazel's view above when he wrote that, "The Bushman were amongst the first producers of their history and indirectly and unknowingly they are still involved in its continued production" (Dowson 1993: 644), he believed that uncovering this history is achievable through the painted record without necessarily using the direct dates of the images, excavation archaeology, colonial and other such sources. However, as the present study advocates through through the use of archival perspectives, the rock art assemblages alone may not be enough in the study of past historical processes.

Following the customary manner in which some writers have dealt with change in the rock art of the Drakensburg, Dowson (1994) treated San paintings as collapsible into a broad period from a few centuries ago going back two millennia. In an attempt to explain San history in the rock art, Dowson (1994, 1995, 1998, 2000) used structuration theory (see discussion in Blundell 2004: 66) to map out how individual painters influenced change in San societies from some parts of the Drakensberg mountains. He rightly considered images as having played a key role in San social relations (Dowson 1994: 336). Focusing mainly on diagnostic shamanic figures, he envisaged change from the earlier undifferentiated communal shamanic groups, to later differentiated shamanic consortia and finally elaborate images of pre-eminent shamans that became commonplace during the times of contact with other groups of people. Much of what Dowson narrated about the social and economic relations based on clientship among various groups does not, however, come from the rock art but rather from the written colonial sources documenting the southeastern mountains situation in the mid- to late-1800s. Furthermore, these observed changes were not linked to specific dated images (as noted by Mitchell 2002: 407) and the putative image successions were not derived from superpositional analysis. Dowson's chronological analysis was thus not based entirely on empirical analyses of relative sequence. As others have argued, without a secure chronology within which to situate change from one painting category to another, such change as Dowson identified cannot be demonstrated (Mazel 1993: 89). In contrast to Dowson's approach, several studies in recent decades within the same region where he studied change

and history in the rock art have showed that colonial history, oral traditions, archaeology and ethnography can be combined with explicit social anthropological theoretical frameworks such as phenomenology, embodiment, post-colonial theory and so forth. Regarding post-colonial theory, studies have employed some of its explanatory perspectives such as creolisation and hybridity to advance our understanding of insider hunter-gatherer histories through the imagery in the rock paintings (e.g. Blundell 2004; Challis 2008, 2009; Mallen 2008). Even prior to these latter studies, others had earlier shown the usefulness of combining archaeology, colonial sources, oral traditions and ethnography to unravel local histories embedded in the rock art (e.g. Campbell 1986, 1987; Hall 1994; Loubser & Laurens 1994). As Mazel has consistently argued (1992, 1993, 2009), the fundamental concern around these efforts is deriving chronologies based on direct dating of images with which to formulate and organise the social histories archived in the rock paintings and archaeological deposits inside the shelters where the art occurs.

It could also be added that a methodology is required that necessitates interpretations to be made about the imagery holistically across rock art traditions. Traditionally, interpretative approaches work within single painting traditions to understand the social history of the rock art producers. That is, researchers would interpret images with hunter-gatherer art, or herder/pastoralist art, or farmer/agropastoralist art, or their sub-traditions and *not* imagery across these assemblages in tandem. There is no real reason for researchers to pigeon-hole and study these bodies of ancient rock arts—produced by indigenous populations who have in most instances lived together for several centuries and even millennia—separately especially in those regions where they appear together in the same shelters and localities? This approach limits the scope for expansive interpretations that move beyond single traditions in situations where rock art producers were entangled in social, economic and cultural relations over long periods and many regions. This present study, by contrast, formulated and attempted to use an adapted archival approach in order to bring forth a theoretical framework that allows integrative interpretations, particularly for rock art traditions produced under sustained contact situations across the sub-region. Entangled social lives of past rock painters cannot be disentangled and understood without considering the overlaps of their artworks in time and space.

These artworks are the carriers of social histories of their makers, among other forms of materiality. As some writers have hinted in respect of the south-western France cave art: "What this settlement of Paleolithic hunters gives us is a work of memory, the traces – still very much alive today – of societies that inscribed a part of their past" (Geneste *et al*. 2004: 20). That is, of course, bearing in mind that this body of ancient art might have been a manifestation of different traditions through time. The catchphrase "work of memory" captures the essence of the archive notion that is the basis of the central argument in this study. Yet such archival memory pertaining to past histories involving multiple groups of people cannot reside entirely in an assemblage produced by one group to the exclusion of others. The archival perspective allows, at least as a theoretical notion to guide practice, for the interpretation of specific images from various painting assemblages produced under contact scenarios. Using the fonds principle within the archival approach permits the creation of links between different assemblages of paintings that may be part of a single broad tradition or several traditions. This methodology works optimally when specific painted subject matter is identified that occurs within and between these assemblages—as shown for the imagery spread across various levels of the Western Cape painting sequence—in ways similar to those in which archival records of various kinds can be identified and used to build unified historical analyses. It was therefore crucial to investigate those painted images that might have held significance across cultural and artistic boundaries in similar ways that archivists and users of archives approach archival records, which are themselves often derivative from different sources and periods and in many cases also created for vastly differing purposes. As discussed in chapter five, these archival records are ordered using a particular method and then interpreted following observable systematic links between them to produce historical narratives. After developing this archival notion in chapters one and five, chapter eight took a slice through the rock painting assemblages from the study area and analysed localised imagery of elephants and fat-tailed sheep in the contexts of earlier pastoral and later colonial frontier situations in order to understand the social and economic histories associated with the imagery.

It was argued that elephants and ivory as well as domestic sheep products played a major role in the social and economic life of indigenous populations for two millennia and became even more economically important from the mid-1600s in the Cape when the European settler community created and expanded economic opportunities based on these animals. The study observed that the artistic rendition of these animals, their contexts and associations reveals graphic changes through time from the earlier fine fine-line to the coarse fine-line and then the finger-painted traditions of rock painting. Fine fine-line elephants are expected to go back in time to those assemblages pre-dating the advent of herding/pastoralism around 2,000 years ago, which is the earliest date for the introduction of fat-tailed sheep in the Cape. The paintings of sheep arrive while fine fine-line paintings are still produced, but they disappear in the several centuries that followed. The making of rock art, however, continued until some time after the advent of the colonial period. The sequence presented in this study shows that the course fine-lines might have existed prior to the termination of fine fine-lines, but they then continued and overlapped with the later finger-painted traditions. Such an overlap is confirmed by colonial-era material culture featuring in both these manners of depiction and traditions. Elephants and sheep also appear in both these manners of painting and traditions, and where they are juxtaposed graphically, the featured manners of painting are still those found within the coarse fine-line and finger-painted traditions. There appears to be a continuation of the importance of elephants and sheep as subject matter in the rock art that held relevance

through time for the social and economic interaction conditions of the earlier and later frontiers. Although no obvious new technologies are reflected in the painting clusters where these animals are seen, hunted and driven by people, it seems that the traditional hunting methods might have been used throughout most of the later frontier history as recorded in the colonial archives. It is possible that the use of existing metaphors in the rock art continued even under the new colonial frontier conditions, although the meaning might have shifted through time. Some forms of dots also appear through the sequence from earlier to later traditions, as shown by superpositions. This occurrence indicates the continuity of certain graphic elements through time and across traditions of painting, which might mean the coexistence of tropes of meaning among interacting cultural groups.

This study suggests that the meaning of elephant depictions and possibly alongside those of fat-tailed sheep shifted from what might have been an earlier strata of hunter-gatherer beliefs and rituals concerned with the spirit world to pastoral metaphorical tropes informed by the increase of political and martial leadership in the region. This leadership was prefigured through the change from customary to introduced economic scenarios experienced during the earlier and later frontiers of interaction. From earlier to later frontier scenarios, the social and economic interactions were fraught with power tensions driven by the existence of conflicting groups. Colonial archives show that most of these indigenous groups in the Cape comprised people of varying ethnic backgrounds and in the main they were also fluid through time and space in their compositions. As scholars of frontier histories point out, frontiers are characterised by the central elements of lack of a single legitimate authority and dynamic mutual acculturation between groups (Legassick 2010: 6). Under the ever fluxing social contexts of such frontiers of interaction, it is unlikely that long-standing traditions, particularly those of former hunters and gatherers, would have been maintained effectively across the entire region affected by the introduced complex social, political and economic conditions.

In this approach, the archival perspective's central methodological tool of the fonds was used to allow expansive interpretative trajectories both in the formulation of chronology and the subsequent interpretation of certain types of images of elephants and fat-tailed sheep which populate various chronological levels of the emergent painting stratigraphic sequence. The study contends that there are enough localised configurations of these images and their illuminating contextual clustering patterns to warrant new exploratory perspectives on rock art interpretation in the area. This archival perspective combines historical, archaeological and ethnographic sources in the analysis of the rock art assemblages in the study area. Rock art is envisaged to be a resource that embodies archival qualities and therefore should be engaged with as if it were a body of archival information straddling several periods and places. Instead of replacing former perspectives, this approach is promoted as an additional methodology to the social anthropological and other interpretative models that are customary in southern African rock art studies. While one of the foremost archival scholars, Terry Cook, wrote about the archival history in the above epigraph, the same is equally true for rock art studies in this region. Previous approaches emphasise interpretations within, and not across, rock art traditions and so there is little room for exploring connections between image assemblages even where it is known that the producers of the paintings were themselves implicated and involved in social interactions that spanned long periods. Such a customary approach misses some information in the rock art due to the lack of understanding of particular images that might have formed part of common cultural and economic practices between various groups who interacted under sustained contact situations. In order to understand change through time, the fonds approach allows such narratives on social histories of past painters to be formulated across the imagery sequences and even through different traditions of painting. In previous approaches, image interpretations are generally compartmentalised according to the defined rock art traditions to which they belong within emergent sequences, whereas the use of the fonds concept allows an expansive interpretation across traditions. Overall, however, the problem of the lack of absolute dates still lurks in the background in all endeavours to formulate historical narratives from rock art and archaeological materials.

In seeking to understand hunter-gatherer histories in the Drakensberg from the perspective of rock art, Mazel (1993: 891), in resonance with Parkington and colleagues (Yates *et al*. 1994: 59) in the Cape, argued for the integration of the rock art and the excavated archaeological record. This still remains the key to unlocking the problem of realising history and change through time in the rock art. Some writers have taken on Mazel's vision and argued: "It is a mix of local oral histories, local written histories, local archaeological evidence and other sources that has proven most effective when used in combination with rock art for reconstructing San histories" (Smith 2010: 356). Apart from Mazel, another excavation archaeologist working in the region bounded by the southeastern mountains, Peter Mitchell, has called for the "integration of a diverse set of data, including not only excavated materials and their laboratory-based scientific analyses, but also ethnographic and historical sources. Importantly, both also require the exchange of ideas between archaeologists whose primary interest is hunter-gatherers and those whose primary interest is farming communities. Rock art is central to the discussions of the relationship between these two populations" (Mitchell 2009: 129–130). It is a vision that this study endorses, while adding the archival perspective to the suite of possible methodological frameworks. As intimated earlier in the discussion, for such a vision to bear fruit, researchers will need to formulate projects that combine both the rock art and the archaeological deposits in the shelters (*ibid*.). It is axiomatic that direct dating should form the core of this integrated focus. As dating research gains traction in South Africa, as seen in the past few years, this appears to be the right time to resolve one of the most lingering of research lacuna in the southern African region.

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APPENDIX 1

Table 1: Fallen Rock Shelter imagery in superimpositions.

			OVER													
Image Clusters			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
UNDER	1	Human figure, Coarse Fine-Line, Yellow														
	2	Yellow-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Red + yellow														
	3	Finger stroke, Finger painted cross, Coarse daubing, Dark red, Red														
	4	Tall human, Fine Fine-Line, Light red					1			2						
	5	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, dark red														
	6	Red-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Dark red, Red												1		
	7	Human torso, Fine Fine-Line, Yellow														
	8	Geometric, Coarse Daubing, Yellow						2								
	9	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, Black,													1	
	10	Red-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Black + red						2								
	11	Human figure, Coarse Fine-Line, Red						2					1			
	12	Faded animal, Coarse Fine-Line, Red						2				1				
	13	Large elephant, Fine Fine-Line, Red														
	14	Tall human, Fine Fine-Line, Red									3		4			
	15	Group-scene human, Fine Fine Line, Red														
	16	Yellow-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Black + yellow									1					
	17	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, Red														
	18	Animal, Fine Fine Line, Red														
	19	Pigment patch, Coarse smearing, Black, Black + red, Yellow			1			1								1
	20	Bag/Quiver bag/Cone-shaped object, Red														
	21	Large finger dot, Imprint, Red														
	22	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, Black + red														
	23	Small elephant (?), Coarse Fine-Line, Red														
	24	Indeterminate object (might be a hunting bag?)														
	25	U-shaped dot line, Imprint, Red														
	26	Small finger dots, Imprint, Brick red (also in Lines)						6								
		Total numbers			1		1	15		2	4	1	5	1	1	1

Table 2: Maidens Pool Shelter imagery in superimpositions.

			OVER														
Image Clusters			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
UNDER	1	Yellow-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Red + yellow															
	2	Red-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Red						2									
	3	Red-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Dark red	2	1		1				1							
	4	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, Dark red, Red			1			1		1	1	1	3				
	5	Elephant, Fine Fine-Line, Brick red															
	6	Antelope, Fine Fine-Line, Dark red + white	1		1					1			1				
	7	Pigment patch, Coarse smearing, Dark red, Black, Black + red, Yellow															
	8	Indeterminate antelope, Fine Fine-Line, White															1
	9	Eland, Fine Fine-Line, Red + white				1											
	10	Elephant, Coarse Fine-Line, Dark red															
	11	Indeterminate animal, Crude Daubing, Ashy white															
	12	Indeterminate antelope, Fine Fine-Line, Red (+ white?)															
	13	Group-scene human, Fine Fine-Line, Red + black											1				
	14	Long thin Line, Fine Fine-Line, Black															
	15	Indeterminate animal, Coarse Fine-Line, Red															
	16	Indeterminate figure, slanting Line, Fine Fine-Line, Red								1							
	17	Human figure, Coarse Fine-Line, Dark red, Red											1				
	18	Finger slash, stroke, Coarse Daubing, Dark red, Red											1				
	19	Handprint, Imprint, Dark red															
	20	Vertical Line, Fine Fine-Line, Red															
	21	Human figure, various subjects, Crude Daubing, Ashy white															
	22	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, White															
	23	Indeterminate animal, Solid Drawing, Black charcoal											3				
	24	Smudge, Coarse Smearing, Red											1				
	25	Pigment patch, Coarse Smearing, Red, Dark red				2							7				
	26	Smudge, Coarse Smearing, Ashy white															
		Total numbers	3	1	2	4		3		4	1	1	18				1

Table 3: Fallen Rock Shelter total number of imagery in the analysis and their identifying numbers.

Image IDs	Description	No.	Clusters
1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Human figure, Coarse Fine-Line, Yellow	5	A
6, 35, 36, 37, 38, 155, 156, 157	Yellow-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Red + yellow	8	B
7, 32, 33, 34, 161, 162, 163, 164, 168	Finger stroke, Finger painted cross, Coarse daubing, Dark red, Red	10	C
8, 9, 10, 11	Tall human, Fine Fine-Line, Light red	4	D
12	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, dark red	1	E
13, 14, 22, 149	Red-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Dark red, Red	4	F
15	Human torso, Fine Fine-Line, Yellow	1	G
16, 17	Geometric, Coarse Daubing, Yellow	2	H
18, 56, 94, 95, 96	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, Black,	5	I
19, 21, 23, 24, 25	Red-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Black + red	5	J
26, 27, 28	Human figure, Coarse Fine-Line, Red	3	K
29, 30, 31	Faded animal, Coarse Fine-Line, Red	3	L
39	Large elephant, Fine Fine-Line, Red	1	M
40, 148, 220	Tall human, Fine Fine-Line, Red	3	N
41-55, 61, 62, 64, 173-175, 219	Group-scene human, Fine Fine Line, Red	22	O
57	Yellow-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Black + yellow	1	P
58-60, 63, 65, 153, 154	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, Red	7	Q
66, 67, 169, 170	Animal, Fine Fine Line, Red	4	R
68-75, 151, 152, 158-160, 167	Pigment patch, Coarse smearing, Black, Black + red, Yellow	13	S
76-92, 176, 177	Bag/Quiver bag/Cone-shaped object, Red	20	T
97-147, 172	Large finger dot, Imprint, Red	52	U
20, 150	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, Black + red	2	V
160	Small elephant (?), Coarse Fine-Line, Red	1	W
171	Indeterminate object (might be a hunting bag?)	1	X
165, 221-226	U-shaped dot line, Imprint, Red	7	Y
178-218	Small finger dots, Imprint, Red	41	Z
	Total number of images	226	

Table 4: Maidens Pool Shelter total number of imagery in the analysis and their identifying numbers.

Image IDs	Description	No.	Clusters
1, 4-8	Yellow-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Red + yellow	6	A
2, 3, 230	Red-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Red	3	B
9, 10, 71, 72, 74	Red-kaross figure, Fine Fine-Line, Dark red	5	C
11-16, 73, 75, 78, 79, 103, 228, 229	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, Dark red, Red	14	D
17-20	Elephant, Fine Fine-Line, Brick red	4	E
21, 22, 24-39, 41-48	Antelope, Fine Fine Line, Dark red + white	28	F
23	Pigment patch, Coarse smearing, Dark red Black, Black + red, Yellow	1	G
40, 49-52, 203	Indeterminate antelope, Fine Fine Line, White	6	H
53-55	Eland, Fine Fine Line, Red + white	3	I
56	Elephant, Coarse Fine-Line, Dark red	1	J
57, 58	Indeterminate animal, Crude Daubing, Ashy white	2	K
59-61	Indeterminate antelope, Fine Fine Line, Red (+ white?)	3	L
64-69	Group-scene human, Fine Fine Line, Red + black	6	M
70	Long thin Line, Fine Fine-Line, Black	1	N
77	Indeterminate animal, Coarse Fine-Line, Red	1	O
80, 81	Indeterminate figure, slanting Line, Fine Fine-Line, Red	2	P
187, 188, 217	Human figure, Coarse Fine-Line, Dark red, Red	3	Q
82-96, 98-101, 104, 189-201, 206-215	Finger slash, stroke, Coarse Daubing, Dark red, Red	43	R
97, 102	Handprint, Imprint, Dark red	2	S
105	Vertical Line, Fine Fine-Line, Red	1	T
106-110, 113-165, 167-185	Human figure, various subjects, Crude Daubing, Ashy white	78	U
113-185	Human figure, Fine Fine-Line, White	17	V
166	Indeterminate animal, Solid Drawing, Black charcoal	1	W
186, 233	Smudge, Coarse Smearing, Red	2	X
202, 204, 205, 216, 232	Pigment patch, Coarse Smearing, Red	5	Y
218, 219	Smudge, Coarse Smearing, Ashy white	2	Z
	Total number of images	240	

Table 5: Fallen Rock Shelter list of subject matter, pigment colours and depiction manners used in the analysis.

Cluster	No.	Depiction Manner	Pig-ments	Subject Matter	Superimpositions (Overlays)	Equivalence (=)	Contemporaneity (-)
A	1	Coarse Fine-Line	Yellow	Human figure	—	1=2=3=4=5	—
A	2	Coarse Fine-Line	Yellow	Human figure	—	2=1=3=4=5	—
A	3	Coarse Fine-Line	Yellow	Human figure	—	3=1=2=4=5	—
A	4	Coarse Fine-Line	Yellow	Human figure (torso)	—	4=1=2=3=5	—
A	5	Coarse Fine-Line	Yellow	Human figure	—	5=1=2=3=4	—
B	6	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow-kaross figure	—	—	6-35-36-37-38-155-156-157
C	7	Coarse Daubing	Dark red	Finger stroke	—	—	—
D	8	Fine Fine-Line	Light red	Tall human	—	8=9=10=11	—
D	9	Fine Fine-Line	Light red	Tall human	—	9=8=10=11	—
D	10	Fine Fine-Line	Light red	Tall human	10 < 12	10=8=9=11	—
D	11	Fine Fine-Line	Light red	Tall human	—	11=8=9=10	—
E	12	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red	Human figure (female)	12 > 10	—	—
F	13	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Red-kaross figure	13 > 16; 13 > 17; 13 > 185; 13 > 186; 13 > 189	—	13-14
F	14	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red	Red-kaross figure	14 > 180; 14 > 181; 14 > 187	—	14-13
G	15	Fine Fine-Line	Yellow	Human torso (very faint)	15 < 190	—	—
H	16	Coarse Daubing	Yellow	Geometric	16 < 13; 16 < 193; 16 < 194; 16 < 195	—	—
H	17	Coarse Daubing	Yellow	Geometric	17 < 13	—	—
I	18	Fine Fine-Line	Black	Human figure	18 < 39	—	18-19-20-21-23-24-25
J	19	Fine Fine-Line	Black + red	Red-kaross figure	—	—	19-18-20-21-23-24-25
V	20	Fine Fine-Line	Black + red	Human figure	—	—	20-18-19-21-23-24-25
J	21	Fine Fine-Line	Black + red	Red-kaross figure	21 > 29	—	21-18-19-20-23-24-25

F	22	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red	Red-kaross figure	22 > 23; 22 > 24; 22 > 27; 22 > 28; 22 > 31; 22 > 32	—	—
J	23	Fine Fine-Line	Black + red	Red-kaross figure	23 < 22	—	23-18-19-20-21-24-25
J	24	Fine Fine-Line	Black + red	Red-kaross figure	24 < 22	—	24-18-19-20-21-23-25
J	25	Fine Fine-Line	Black + red	Red-kaross figure	—	—	25-18-19-20-21-23-24
K	26	Coarse Fine-Line	Red	Human figure	—	26=27	—
K	27	Coarse Fine-Line	Red	Human figure	27 > 28; 27 < 22; 27 < 71	27=26	—
K	28	Coarse Fine-Line	Red	Human figure	28 < 22; 28 < 27	—	—
L	29	Coarse Fine-Line	Red	Faded animal	29 < 21	—	29-30-31-170
L	30	Coarse Fine-Line	Red	Faded animal	—	—	30-31-33-170
L	31	Coarse Fine-Line	Red	Faded animal	31 < 22	—	31-29-30-170
C	32	Coarse Daubing	Red	Finger stroke	32 < 22	—	32-33-34
C	33	Coarse Daubing	Red	Finger stroke	—	—	33-32
C	34	Coarse Daubing	Red	Finger stroke	—	—	34-32
B	35	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow-kaross figure	35 < 90	—	6-35-36-37-38-155-156-157
B	36	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow-kaross figure	—	—	6-36-35-37-38-155-156-157
B	37	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow-kaross figure	—	—	6-37-35-36-38-155-156-157
B	38	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow-kaross figure	—	—	6-38-35-36-37-155-156-157
M	39	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Large elephant (Bull?)	39 > 18; 39 < 42; 39 < 43; 39 < 44; 39 < 69; 39 < 79; 39 <80; 39 < 81	—	—
N	40	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Tall human	40 < 77; 40 < 78	—	—
O	41	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	—	41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51=52=53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	42	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	42 > 39	42=41=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51=52=53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	43	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	43 > 39; 43 < 68; 43 < 97; 43 < 98; 43 < 99; 43 < 100	43=41=42=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51=52=53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	44	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	44 > 39; 44 < 69; 44 < 107; 44 < 108; 44 < 109 (81 falsely> 44); (44 between 69/39)	44=41=42=43=45=46=47=48=49=50=51=52=53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	45	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	45 < 65	45=41=42=43=44=46=47=48=49=50=51=52=53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	46	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	46 > 177; 46 < 65	46=41=42=43=44=45=47=48=49=50=51=52=53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—

O	47	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	47 > 177; 47 < 65	47=41=42=43=44=45=46=48=49=50=51=52 =53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	48	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	48 < 65; 48 < 73	48=41=42=43=44=45=46=48=49=50=51=52 =53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	49	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	49 < 66	49=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=50=51=52 =53=54=55=61=62=64=173=175=175=219	—
O	50	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	50 > 67; 50 < 72	50=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=51=52 =53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	51	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	51 > 220	51=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=52 =53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	52	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	—	52=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51 =53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	53	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	—	53=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51 =52=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	54	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	—	54=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51 =52=53=55=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
O	55	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	—	55=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51 =52=53=54=61=62=64=173=174=175=219	—
I	56	Fine Fine-Line	Black	Human figure	56 > 219	—	—
P	57	Fine Fine-Line	Black + yel-low	Yellow-kaross figure	57 > 219	—	—
Q	58	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Human figure	58 > 67	58=59=60	—
Q	59	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Human figure	59 < 160	59=58=60	—
Q	60	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Human figure	60 < 160	60=58=59	—
O	61	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	61 < 66	61=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51 =52=53=54=55=62=173=174=175=219	—
O	62	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	62 < 66; 62 < 94	62=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51 =52=53=54=55=61=173=174=175=219	—
Q	63	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Human figure	63 < 64; 63 < 66 (64 is between 63/66); 63 < 95 63< 71, 63 < 88, 63 < 131; 63 > 176	—	—
O	64	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	64 > 63	—	—
Q	65	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Human figure	65 > 45, 46, 47, 48 (figures share base)	—	—
R	66	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Animal	66 > 49, 61, 62, 63, 64, 174 (66 straddles all)	66-160	—
R	67	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Animal	67 < 50; 67 < 58; 67 < 219	—	—
S	68	Coarse Smearing	Black	Pigment patch	68 < 98; 68 < 99; 68 < 100; 68 < 101; 68 < 102; 68 < 103	—	68-69-70-71-72-73-74
S	69	Coarse Smearing	Black	Pigment patch	69 > 39; 69 > 44	—	69-68-70-71-72-73-74

S	70	Coarse Smearing	Black	Pigment patch	70 > 81	—	70-68-69-71-72-73-74
S	71	Coarse Smearing	Black	Pigment patch	71 > 27, 71 < 63, 71 > 88; 71 < 128; 71 < 129; 71 < 130;71 < 131	—	71-68-69-70-72-73-74
S	72	Coarse Smearing	Black	Pigment patch	72 > 50	—	72-68-69-70-71-73-74
S	73	Coarse Smearing	Black	Pigment patch	73 > 48; 73 > 175	—	73-68-69-70-71-73-74
S	74	Coarse Smearing	Black + red	Pigment patch	None	—	74-68-69-70-71-72-73
S	75	Coarse Smearing	Yellow	Pigment patch	75 < 103; 75 < 104; 75 < 105	—	75-152
T	76	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Bag	—	—	76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	77	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Bag	77 > 40	—	77-76-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	78	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Cone-shaped object	78 > 40	—	78-76-77-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	79	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Cone-shaped object	79 > 39	—	79-76-77-78-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	80	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Quiver bag	80 > 39	—	80-76-77-78-79-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	81	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Quiver bag	81 > 39; 81 < 70; 81 < 111; (81 falsely > 44)	—	81-76-77-78-79-80-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	82	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Bag	82 < 110; 82 < 111	—	82-76-77-78-79-80-81-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	83	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Bag	83 < 118, 119, 120	—	83-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	84	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Cone-shaped object	—	—	84-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	85	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Cone-shaped object	—	—	85-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	86	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Cone-shaped object	86 < 113; 86 < 114; 86 < 115	—	86-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	87	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Bag	87 < 125; 87 < 126; 87 < 127	—	87-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	88	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Quiver bag	88 > 63; 88 < 71; 88 < 128, 88 < 129, 130, 131 (71 isbetween 88 /129-130)	—	88-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	89	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Cone-shaped object	—	—	89-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	90	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Quiver bag	90 > 35	—	90-76-77-78-79-80-81-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176-177
T	91	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Bag	—	—	91-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-92-93-176-177

T	92	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Bag	—	—	92-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-93-176-177
T	93	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Bag	—	—	93-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-176-177
I	94	Fine Fine-Line	Black	Human figure	94 > 62	—	—
I	95	Fine Fine-Line	Black	Human figure	95 > 63; 95 > 174	95=94	—
I	96	Fine Fine-Line	Black	Human figure	—	—	—
U	97	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	97 > 43	97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=105=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123=124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132=133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=141=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	98	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	98 > 43; 98 > 68	98=97=99=100=101=102=103=104=105=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123=124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132=133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=141=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	99	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	99 > 43; 99 > 68 (68 sandwiched)	99=97=98=100=101=102=103=104=105=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123=124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132=133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=141=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	100	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	100 > 43; 100 > 68 (68 sandwiched)	100=97=98=99=101=102=103=104=105=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123=124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132=133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=141=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	101	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	101 > 68	101=97=98=99=100=102=103=104=105=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123=124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132=133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=141=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	102	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	102 > 68	102=97=98=99=100=101=103=104=105=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123=124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132=133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=141=142=143=144=145=146=147	—

U	103	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	103 > 68; 103 > 75	103=97=98=99=100=101=102=104=105=10 6=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	104	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	104 > 75	104=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=105=10 6=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
	105				105 > 75	105=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=105=10 6=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	
U	106	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	106=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=105=10 6=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	107	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	107 > 44	107=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	108	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	108 > 44	108=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=109=110=111=112=113=114=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	109	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	109 > 44	109=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=110=111=112=113=114=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—

U	110	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	110 > 82	110=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=111=112=113=114=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	111	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	111 > 81; 111 > 82	111=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=112=113=114=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	112	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	112=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=113=114=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	113	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	113 > 86	113=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=114=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	114	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	114 > 86	114=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=1 15=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	115	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	115 > 86	115=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=1 14=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	116	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	116=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=1 14=115=117=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—

U	117	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	117=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=1 14=115=116=118=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	118	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	118 > 83	118=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=1 14=115=116=117=119=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	119	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	119 > 83	119=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=1 14=115=116=117=118=120=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	120	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	120 > 83	120=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=1 14=115=116=117=118=119=121=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	121	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	121=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=1 14=115=116=117=118=119=120=122=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	122	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	122=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=1 14=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=123= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	123	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	123=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=10 5=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=1 14=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122= 124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132 =133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=14 1=142=143=144=145=146=147	—

U	124	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	124=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=105=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132=133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=141=142=143=144=145=146=147	—
U	144	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	144=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=105=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123=124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132=133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=141=142=143=145=146=147	—
U	145	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	145=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=105=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123=124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132=133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=141=142=143=144=146=147	—
U	146	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	146=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=105=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123=124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132=133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=141=142=143=144=145=147	—
U	147	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot	—	147=97=98=99=100=101=102=103=104=105=106=107=108=109=110=111=112=113=114=115=116=117=118=119=120=121=122=123=124=125=126=127=128=129=130=131=132=133=134=135=136=137=138=139=140=141=142=143=144=145=146	—
N	148	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Tall human	148 > 159	—	—
F	149	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Red-kaross figure	149 > 152	—	—
V	150	Fine Fine-Line	Black + red	Human figure	—	—	—
S	151	Coarse Smearing	Red	Pigment patch	—	—	151-158
S	152	Coarse Smearing	Yellow	Pigment patch	152 < 149	—	152-75
Q	153	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Human figure	153 > 155	153=154	—
Q	154	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Human figure	154 > 156; 154 > 157	154=153	—
B	155	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow-kaross figure	155 < 153	—	155-156-157-35-36-37-38-6
B	156	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow-kaross figure	156 < 154	—	156-155-157-35-36-37-38-6

B	157	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow-kaross figure	157 < 154	—	157-155-156-35-36-37-38-6
S	158	Coarse Smearing	Red	Pigment patch	158 > 157	—	158-151
S	159	Coarse Smearing	Black	Pigment patch	159 < 148	—	—
W	160	Coarse Fine-Line	Red	Small elephant (?)	160 > 159; 160 > 60, 160 < 222, 223, 224	160=66	—
C	161	Coarse Daubing	Red	Finger stroke	—	161=162=163=164	—
C	162	Coarse Daubing	Red	Finger stroke	—	162=161=163=164	—
C	163	Coarse Daubing	Red	Finger stroke	—	163=161=162=164	—
C	164	Coarse Daubing	Red	Finger stroke	—	164=161=162=163	—
Y	165	Imprint	Red (pink-ish)	U-shaped Line of dots	—	165=221=222=223=224=225=226	—
C	166	Coarse Daubing	Red (pink-ish)	Finger painted cross	—	166=168	—
S	167	Coarse Smearing	Red	Pigment patch	167 < 168	—	—
C	168	Coarse Daubing	Red (pink-ish)	Finger painted cross	168 > 167	—	—
R	169	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Animal (Eland torso?)	—	—	—
R	170	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Animal	—	—	170-29-30-31
X	171	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Indeterminate image, Possibly a hunting bag	171 < 133; 171 < 134	—	171-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218
U	172	Imprint	Red	Large finger dot (isolated)	—	—	—
O	173	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	—	173=40=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51=52=53=54=61=62=64=174=175=219	—
O	174	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	174 < 66; 174 < 95	174=55=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51=52=53=54=61=62=64=173=175=219	—
O	175	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	175 < 73	175=55=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51=52=53=54=61=62=64=173=174=219	—
T	176	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Cone-shaped object	176 < 63, 176 < 132	—	176-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-177
T	177	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Cone-shaped object	177 < 46, 176 < 47	—	177-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-176

Z	178	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	171-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218
Z	179	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	180	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	180 < 14	—	“
Z	181	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	181 < 14	—	“
Z	182	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	183	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	184	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	185	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	185 < 13; 185 > 16	—	“
Z	186	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	186 < 13; 186 > 16	—	“
Z	187	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	187 < 14	—	“
Z	188	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	189	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	189 < 13	—	“
Z	190	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	190 > 15	—	“
Z	191	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	191 > 16	—	“
Z	192	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	192 > 16	—	“
Z	193	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	193 > 16	—	“
Z	194	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	194 > 16	—	“
Z	195	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	195 > 16	—	“
Z	196	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	197	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	198	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	199	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	200	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	201	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	202	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	203	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	204	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	205	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	206	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	207	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	208	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	209	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	210	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	211	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“
Z	212	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	“

Z	213	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	"
Z	214	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	"
Z	215	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	"
Z	216	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	"
Z	217	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	"
Z	218	Imprint	Red	Small finger dot	—	—	"
O	219	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Group-scene human	219 > 67; 219 < 56; 219 < 57	219=41=42=43=44=45=46=47=48=49=50=51=52=53=54=55=61=62=64=173=174=175	—
N	220	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Tall human	220 < 51	—	—
Y	221	Imprint	Brick red	Horizontal dot line	—	221=222=223=224=225=226	—
Y	222	Imprint	Brick red	Vertical dot line	222 > 160	222=221=223=224=225=226	—
Y	223	Imprint	Brick red	Vertical dot line	223 > 160	223=221=222=224=225=226	—
Y	224	Imprint	Brick red	Vertical dot line	224 > 160	224=221=222=223=225=226	—
Y	225	Imprint	Brick red	Horizontal dot line	—	225=221=222=223=224=226	—
Y	226	Imprint	Brick red	Horizontal dot line	—	226=221=222=223=224=225	—

Table 6: Maidens Pool Shelter list of subject matter, pigment colours and depiction manners used in the analysis

Context	No.	Depiction Manner	Pigments	Subject Matter	Superimpositions (Overlays)	Equivalence (=)	Contemporaneity (-)
A	1	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow kaross-figure	1 > 27	—	1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8
B	2	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Red kaross-figure	2 < 28, 2 > 71	2=3=4=4=5	1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8
B	3	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Red kaross-figure	3 < 29	3=2=4=4=5	1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8
A	4	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow kaross-figure	—	4=2=3=4=5	1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8
A	5	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow kaross-figure	—	5=2=3=4=4	1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8
A	6	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow kaross-figure	6 > 72	6=7=8	1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8
A	7	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow kaross-figure	7 > 72	7=6=8	1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8
A	8	Fine Fine-Line	Red + yellow	Yellow kaross-figure	—	8=6=7	1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8
C	9	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red	Red kaross-figure	—	—	—
C	10	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red	Red kaross-figure	10 > 34, 10 < 103	—	—
D	11	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red	Human figure	11 > 23, 11 > 24	—	—
D	12	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red	Human figure	12 < 104	—	—
D	13	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red	Human figure	—	—	—
D	14	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red	Human figure	14 < 219	—	—
D	15	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Human figure (very faint)	—	—	—
D	16	Fine Fine-Line	Red	Human figure (very faint)	16 < 53, 16 < 101	—	—
E	17	Fine Fine-Line	Brick red	Elephant calf	—	—	—
E	18	Fine Fine-Line	Brick red	Elephant	—	—	—
E	19	Fine Fine-Line	Brick red	Elephant	—	—	—
E	20	Fine Fine-Line	Brick red	Elephant	20 < 55, 20 < 85	—	—
F	21	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	21 < 57	—	—
F	22	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—
G	23	Coarse s mearing	Dark red	Pigment patch	23 > 54	—	—
F	24	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	24 < 11	—	—
F	25	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—
F	26	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—
F	27	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	27 < 1	—	—
F	28	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	28 > 2	—	—
F	29	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	29 > 3	—	—
F	30	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—
F	31	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—
F	32	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—
F	33	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—
F	34	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	34 < 10, 34 > 103	—	—
F	35	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—

F	36	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	36 < 52, 36 < 200	—	—
F	37	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—
F	38	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—
F	39	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—
H	40	Fine Fine-Line	White	Antelope (Indeterminate)	40 < 77	—	—
F	41	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—
F	42	Fine Fine-Line	Dark red + white	Antelope (Bontebok?)	—	—	—

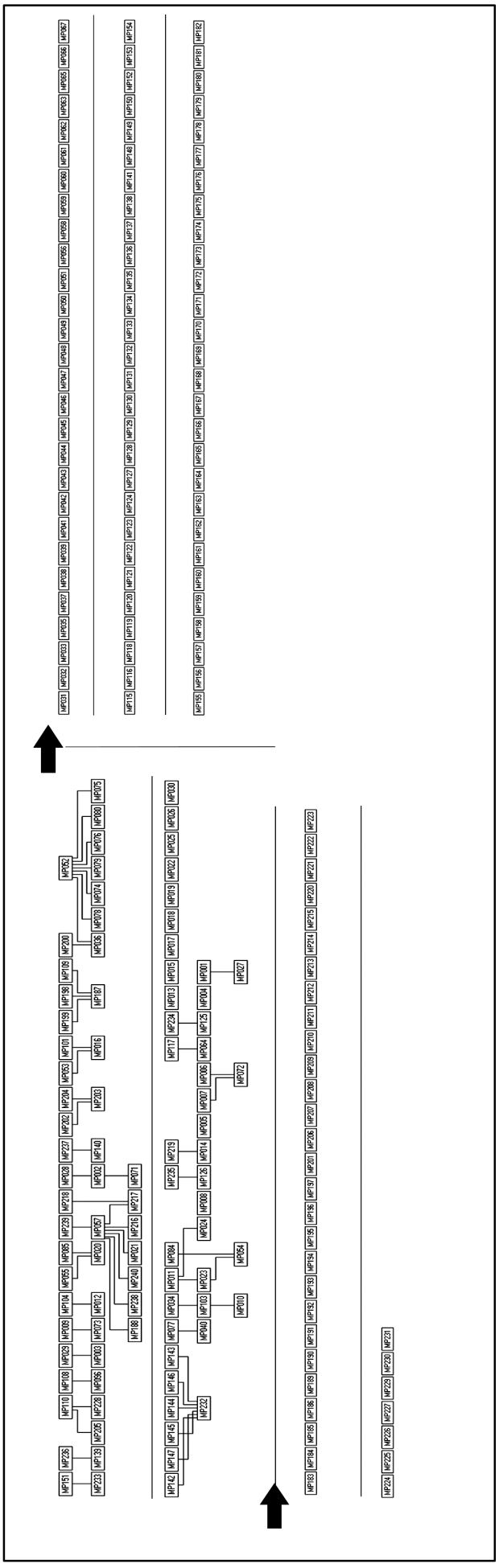

Figure 1: Maidens Pool Shelter Harris matrix diagram.

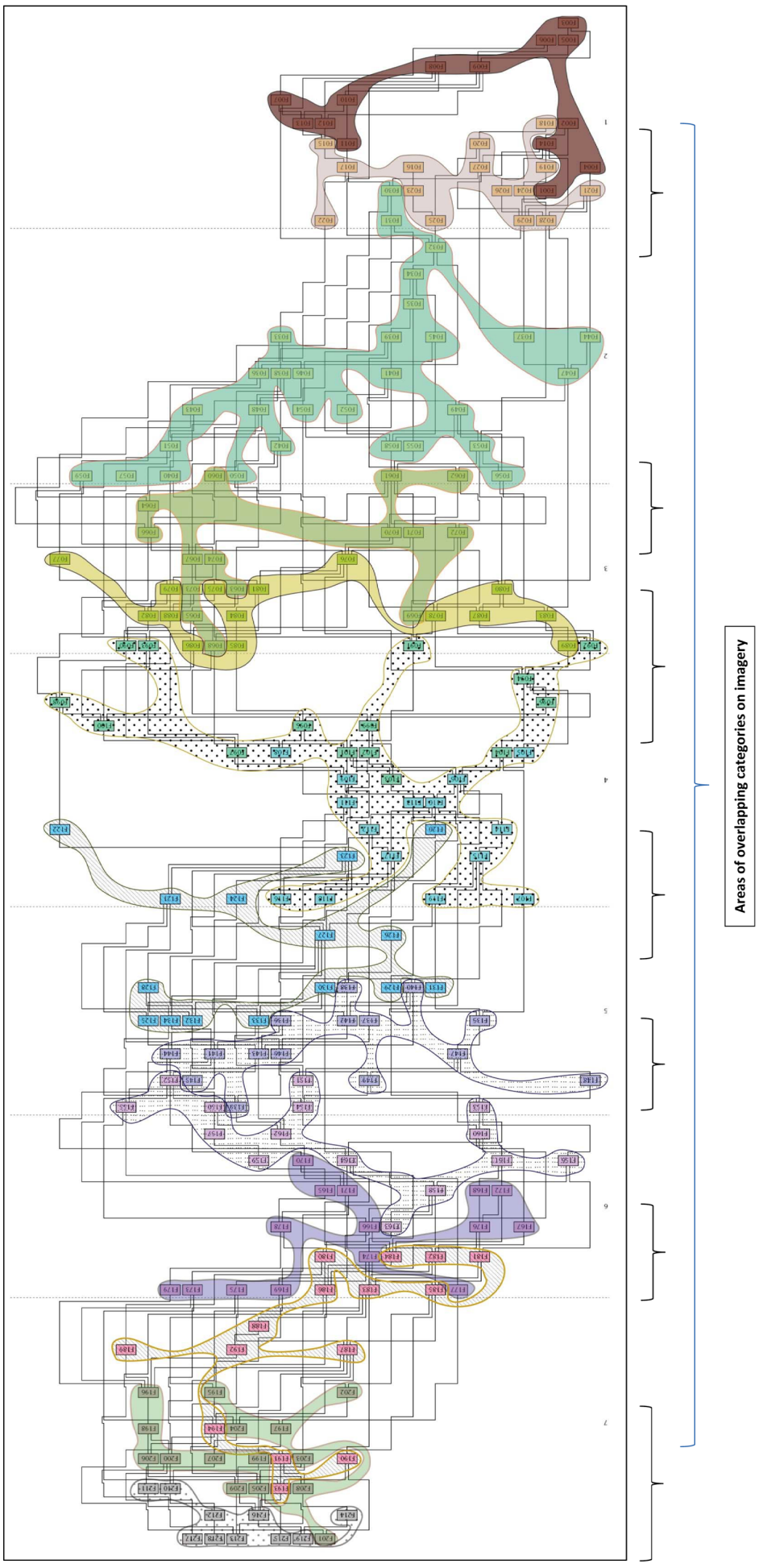

Figure 2: Fallen Rock Shelter Harris matrix diagram.

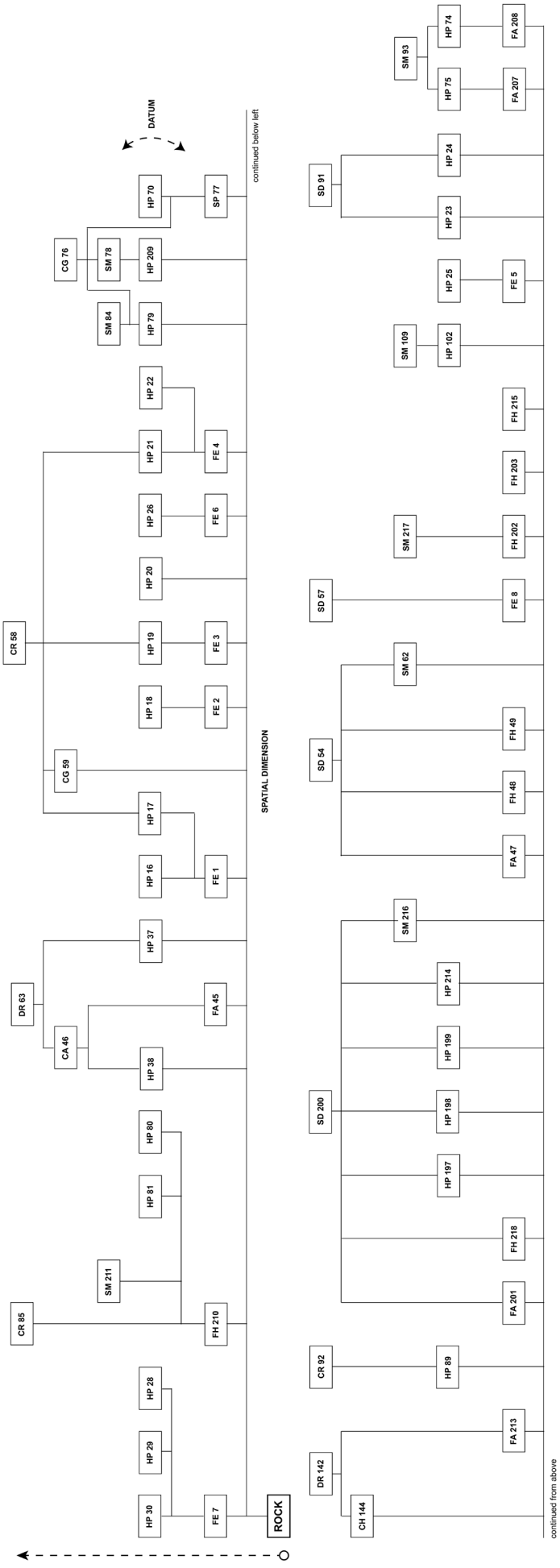

Figure 3: Diepkloof Kraal Shelter Harris matrix diagram.

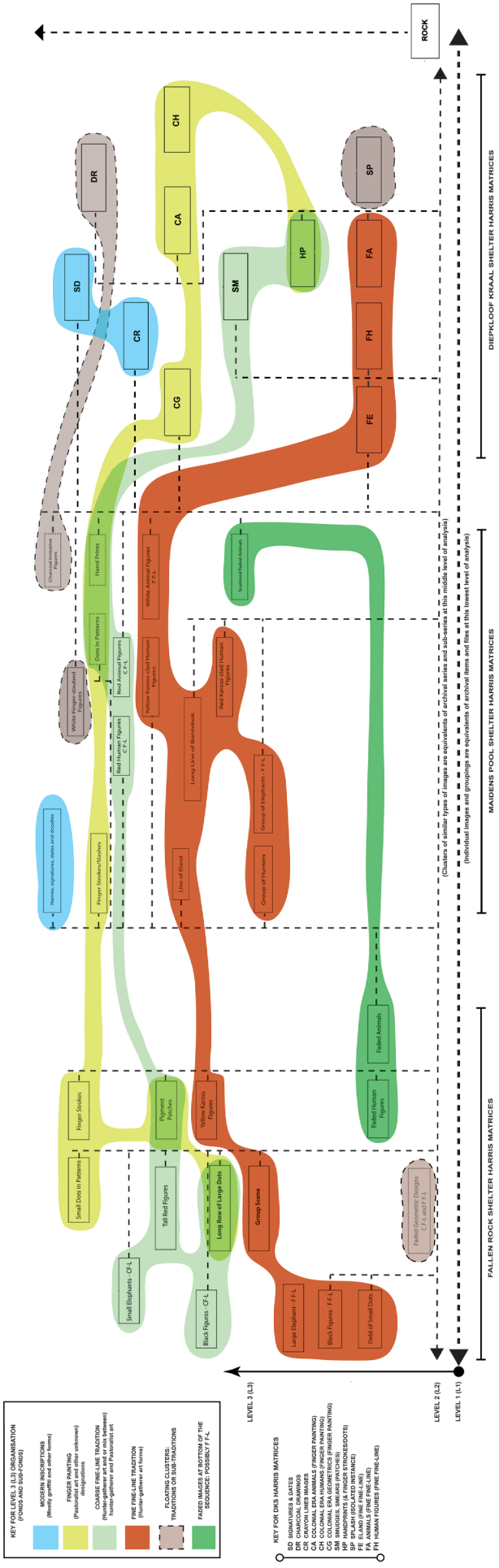

Figure 4: Archival analysis through Fallen Rock Shelter and Maidens Pool Shelter.

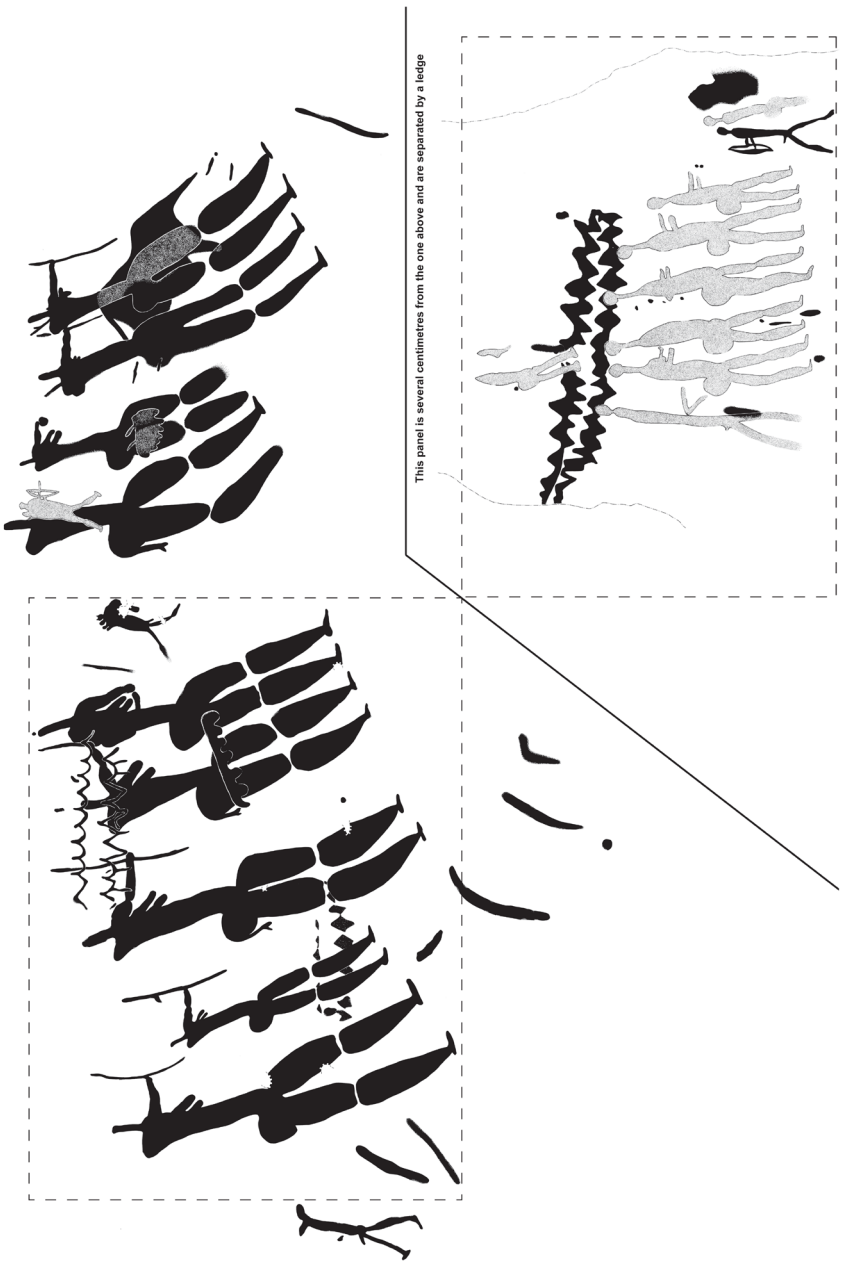

Figure 5: Impressionistic replication of imagery from fine fine-lines to coarse fine-lines.

Figure 6: A redrawing of the Maidens Pool Shelter main panel in the sequence.