

Vaal Triangle Campus

THE PRIMORDIAL CIRCLE
**THE PREHISTORIC ROCK ENGRAVINGS OF REDAN,
VEREENIGING**

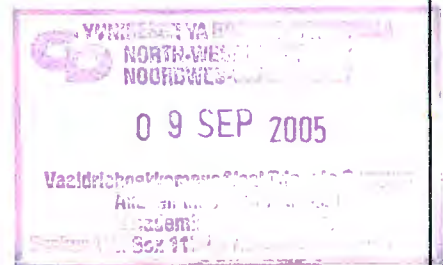
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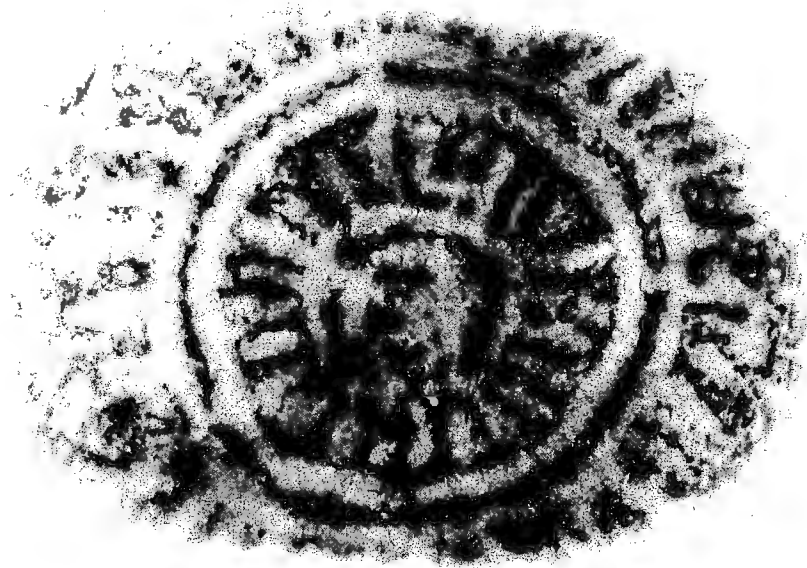
Thesis submitted for the degree Philosophiae Doctor in the subject group History,
School of Basic Sciences, Vaal Triangle Faculty, North-West University.

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The image of the sphere may serve as an example. It has been used through the ages to depict physical, biological, and philosophical phenomena. Here again one can observe how such a conception develops from simple beginnings to more refined conceptions. Roundness is chosen spontaneously and universally to represent something that has no shape, no definite shape, or all shapes.

Rudolph Arnheim, 1970

From the beginning the centre represents to man what is known in contrast to the unknown and frightening world around. The places are goals or foci where we experience the meaningful events of our existence, but they are also points of departure from which we orient ourselves and take possession of the environment... The limited size of known places naturally goes together with a centralized form. A place, therefore, is basically round.

Christian Norberg-Schulz, 1975

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SUMMARY

Redan in the Vereeniging area is the only major rock engraving site in Gauteng. On the rock face of an isolated sandstone outcrop, 273 enigmatic images have been engraved. A few of these images represent animals; however, the vast majority are totally non-representational. They are geometrically constructed and are predominantly circular in shape. No two images are identical. The age of the engravings is not known and no archaeological research or scientific dating has ever been undertaken at the site. Similar sites further north in the Kimberley area have been dated and are believed to be between 150 and 8400 years old. In order to establish a historic-cultural context for the engravings, it was necessary to review the entire prehistory and history of the area. This was a daunting task as the area is relatively under-researched and resources are limited. During this vast time-span, the southern Highveld was sporadically inhabited by a succession of indigenous peoples. In 1823 and during the *Difaqane*, the area across the Vaal River, the transVaal, was penetrated for the first time by missionaries. At least 10 different ethnic and cultural groups were encountered, including a substantial number of Korana (a division of the Khoekhoen).

The site has a long and chequered history, varying from the enthusiastic efforts of a few concerned individuals, to the apathy and disinterest of the official bodies concerned. Relevant facts have been included in the study. In spite of its status as a declared national monument, the site has become progressively more neglected. Sandstone is extremely friable and this, together with the heavy industrial pollution of the area, is causing the rock surface to exfoliate at an alarming rate. A grave cause for concern is the possibility that the engravings will eventually be completely obliterated. This concern was the initial motivation for the present study; to record these enigmatic images as effectively and expediently as possible in order to have a permanent record that will continue to give access to the information present in the engravings, long after their extinction. Each of the 273 images was subsequently photographed, electronically scanned and recorded on CD Rom for reproduction and archival purposes. These CDs are available on request.

The traditional belief in a San hunter-gatherer authorship for both rock paintings and rock engravings, is currently being contested. Recent research is pointing increasingly to a Khoekhoen herder origin for the rock engravings of southern Africa. As the present study progressed and on closer inspection of the engravings, it indeed appeared that the rock engravings of Redan were in all probability of Khoekhoe origin. The next logical step was to attempt to determine the meaning of these enigmatic images. The probable origin of the engravings, and the wide-spread occurrence of predominantly circular imagery, dictated that an inclusive and holistic interpretative approach be adopted. The principles embodied in Arnheim's (1956, 1970, 1986, 1988) theory of 'visual thinking' and the phenomenological approach of Norberg-Schulz (1971, 1975, 1979) proved to be the most fruitful. Finally, the study is an attempt towards a further understanding of the burgeoning human capacity to express an idea or experience in pictorial form, and the primacy of the circle in 'early art'.

OPSOMMING

Redan in die Vereeniging omgewing is die mees beduidende rotsgravure-terrein in Gauteng. Op die rotswand van 'n geïsoleerde sandsteenrif is 273 enigmatiese beeldmotiewe uitgegrawe. Enkele van die beeldmotiewe stel diere voor; die oorgrote meerderheid is egter geheel en al nie-voorstellend. Hulle is geometries saamgestel en is oorwegend sirkelvormig. Elke beeldmotief is uniek. Die ouderdom van die gravures is onbekend en geen argeologiese navorsing of wetenskaplike datering is nog ooit by die terrein gedoen nie. Soortgelyke terreine verder noord in die Kimberley omgewing is egter gedateer en is vermoedelik tussen 150 en 8400 jaar oud. Ten einde die gravures binne 'n histories-kulturele konteks te plaas, was dit nodig om die hele voorgeskiedenis en geskiedenis van die gebied te verken. Die taak was besonder veeleisend aangesien daar relatief min navorsing oor die gebied gedoen is en bronne dus beperk is. Gedurende dié ontsagtelike tydsbestek, is die Hoëveld sporadies bewoon deur opeenvolgende groepe inheemse volkere. In 1823 en ten tye van die *Difaqane*, het sendelinge die gebied oorkant die Vaalrivier, die transVaal, vir die eerste keer binnegedring. Minstens 10 verskillende etniese en kulturele groepe, en 'n groot aantal Korana ('n afdeling van die Khoekhoen), is aangetref.

Die terrein het 'n lang en geskakeerde geskiedenis wat varieer van die geesdriftige pogings van 'n aantal besorgde persone tot die apatie en belangeloosheid van die betrokke amptelike instellings. Feite wat betrekking het, is in die studie ingesluit. Ten spyte van die feit dat die terrein die status geniet van 'n verklaarde nasionale monument, word dit progressief meer verwaarloos. Sandsteen is uitermate brokkelrig en hierdie toestand, gekoppel met die swaar industriële besoedeling wat die omgewing kenmerk, is besig om te veroorsaak dat die rotsoppervlakte ontstellend vinnig verskilfer. 'n Ernstige bron van kommer is die moontlikheid dat die gravures uiteindelik heeltemal uitgewis sal word. Hierdie kommer was die aanvanklike motivering vir die onderhawige studie; om hierdie enigmatiese beelde so effektief en doelmatig as moontlik te dokumenteer ten einde 'n permanente rekord te hê wat konsekwent toegang sal gee tot inligting wat in die gravures bevat is, lank nadat hulle nie meer bestaan nie. Elk van die 273 beeldmotiewe is vervolgens gefotografeer, elektronies geskandeer en op CD Rom vasgelê vir reproduksie en argivale doeleindes. Hierdie CDs is op versoek verkrygbaar.

Die tradisionele opvatting dat beide die rotsskilderye en die rotsgravures aan San jagter-versamelaars toegedig kan word, word huidiglik betwis. Resente navorsing dui toenemend op 'n Khoekhoe herder oorsprong vir die rotsgravures van suidelike Afrika. Namate die huidige studie gevorder het, en by nadere ondersoek van die gravures, het dit inderdaad geblyk dat die rotsgravures van Redan na alle waarskynlikheid, van Khoekhoe oorsprong is. Die volgende logiese stap was om te poog om die betekenis van die enigmatiese beeldmotiewe te bepaal. Die waarskynlike oorsprong van die gravures, asook die wydverspreide voorkoms van oorwegend sirkelvormige beeldmotiewe, het 'n inklusiewe en holistiese interpretatiewe benadering, vereis. Die beginsels wat vervat is, in Arnheim (1956, 1990, 1986, 1988) se teorie van 'visuele denke' en die fenomenologiese benadering van Norberg-Schulz (1971, 1975, 1979) het geblyk besonder vrugbaar te wees. Laastens is die studie 'n poging om die volgende beter te verstaan: die ontlukende menslike vermoë om idees en ervarings pikturaal te verbeeld, en die primêre gebruik van die sirkel in 'vroë kuns'.

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THE PRIMORDIAL CIRCLE

THE PREHISTORIC ROCK ENGRAVINGS OF REDAN, VEREENIGING

INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION

Rock engravings or petroglyphs, as they are also called, occur principally in the inland semi-arid plateau of southern Africa. Unlike paintings, they are not found on the walls of caves and shelters, but on isolated rocks, on free-standing boulders, on the andesite glacial pavements of river beds and on rocky outcrops. The greatest number of sites occur on andesite basement pavements and on Karoo dolerites. Sites are also found on dolemite, granite, gneiss and occasionally on sandstone. Most of the sites occur in the Karoo, in Namibia, in the Orange-Vaal basin and in the Limpopo and upper Vaal basins. Only one major site occurs in Gauteng (previously the Transvaal): Redan near Vereeniging in the Vaal triangle. Before the re-zoning of the provinces in South Africa, the Bosworth site near Klerksdorp and Doornspruit in the Magaliesberg, were also 'Transvaal' sites. These three sites occur in a radius of 120 km. Redan is situated in the Klip River valley, approximately six km north of Vereeniging at the Redan interchange of the R59. Approximately one km north of the Redan post office there is a large, isolated outcrop of Ecca sandstone; on the uneven surface of this outcrop a total of 273 enigmatic images have been incised into the rock face. A small number of these images are recognisable as representing living creatures; these will be referred to as *representational* images. The majority of the engravings do not however appear to represent any recognisable object or creature from the natural world; they are geometrically constructed and are predominantly circular in shape. They will be referred to as *non-representational* images (see TERMINOLOGY). A second lesser

known and much smaller site is situated on a small island on the farm Leeukuil, north of the Ascot Bridge. Before the construction of a barrage in the area, the site would have consisted of a low sandstone outcrop in close proximity to the main flow of the Vaal River. The seasonal flooding of the Vaal has dislodged and partly submerged entire boulders and consequently the terrain is presently extremely uneven and difficult to access. In the course of the present research a few images could be identified as representing animals; no non-representational images could be traced.

Although both sites were already known in the nineteenth century and were probably visited by G.W. Stow in 1872, the engravings elicited little interest and remained relatively obscure. The non-representational engravings are mentioned in a number of written reports dating from the early twentieth century (Pösch 1908; Johnson 1910; Leslie 1926), invariably in disparaging terms. In the early 1920s the rock engraving sites of Vereeniging were brought to the attention of C. Van Riet Lowe; Van Riet Lowe became a major influence in the promulgation of rock art in South Africa. Due to his efforts Redan became a protected site in the 1950s and was eventually declared a national monument in 1971. In spite of these developments, the engravings at Redan aroused very little public interest. This may have been due to the inexplicable nature of the non-representational images. In the eyes of the public these images compared poorly with engravings and paintings in which animals and people are portrayed in a life-like manner. The site was situated on council grounds but was administered by the Historical Monuments Commission (HMC) which was responsible for costs incurred. In the ensuing years the maintenance and control of the site was intermittently discussed and negotiated by the Vereeniging Town Council (VTC) and the HMC, but no single body was either prepared or in a position to take full responsibility. Redan became progressively neglected and forgotten. After 1995 both the official plaque and the fence

enclosing the engravings disappeared and all efforts to exercise control over the site were abandoned. Since its inception in 1985, the local municipal museum, the Vaal Teknorama, had played an active part in controlling visits to the site. In an unpublished report issued by the museum in 1998, the Eurocentric perceptions and museum practices of the past were severely criticised and a number of far-reaching policy decisions were made. In future the museum would ensure that 'all collections, research, exhibitions and public programmes are made accessible to South Africans of all racial, ethnic, social, economic and educational backgrounds' (Vaal Teknorama Archives Depot. Vaal Teknorama report: personnel 1998:2-4). A resolution was passed that the community should take full ownership of all projects and that the museum would strive to be a 'museum of the people by the people' and 'involve individuals as active participants...'. This resolution was particularly applicable to rock art sites such as Redan as these were generally perceived as being 'owned' by a few select institutions and organisations.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

A first step in this direction was made in 1998 when the museum joined forces with the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (Vaal Triangle Campus) (PU for CHE (VTC)) (now North-West University) in a one-day conference that included an introduction to the engravings of Redan. The entire exercise was repeated in September 2000; a conference entitled 'Conservation and the Community' was presented at the museum in conjunction with ROCUSTOS (a society for custodians of rock art), the Outreach Programme of the National Cultural Museum in Pretoria and the PU for CHE (VTC). A decision was taken that the entire community should strive to nurture, promote and *conserve the rich historic and prehistoric heritage of the Vaal Triangle*

(emphasis added). The conference elicited renewed interest in Redan and a meeting took place between the Rock Art Research Institute of the University of the Witwatersrand (RARI), the South African Heritage and Resources Agency (SAHRA), and the museum. Subsequently a management plan was drawn up by RARI and made available to the new landowner of the farm on which Redan is situated (SAHRA File No. 9/2/277/17 F). To date this plan has not been implemented (chapter 2). Independent of the above, Prof. J. Tempelhoff of the PU for CHE (VTC) arranged a meeting to address these concerns. A cause for immediate concern was the extreme exfoliation that was taking place on the rock surface and the possibility that some of the engravings had already disappeared. The writer agreed to draw up a brief report to serve as an introduction to Redan and as a basis for further research. This initial report served as a catalyst and motivation for the present research. In the light of the unsatisfactory record of response from officials in the past, it was decided to dispel with protracted requests for intervention and assistance, and to commence immediately with the recording of the engravings. Almost 40 years have elapsed since the rock engravings of Redan were recorded by Willcox and Pager (1967). Copy methods have since advanced to a remarkable degree and a second more comprehensive and accurate survey was expedient.

APPROACH

Although this report and the present study are informed by the same concerns and share similar premises, a number of new insights have been gained during the course of this research. Rock art research in South Africa has become the exclusive domain of archaeology, and the majority of researchers work within the confines of the shamanistic approach and its concomitant neuropsychological model (chapter 6).

Dissenting voices are rare. An awareness of form (as distinct from iconography and context) is largely absent in this approach. Formalism is not concerned with narrative and verisimilitude but seeks meaning in the analysis of form. It is especially useful where no historical or cultural context can be positively identified. The non-San (and probable Khoekhoe) origin of the rock engravings, also precluded the use of a model based on the exclusive trance experience of the San shaman. A more inclusive and integrative approach was indicated. It was apparent that a range of disciplines would have to be consulted, including those more closely aligned to the humanities, namely history of art and the allied fields of psychology of art, philosophy of art, and art *praxis*. Adherence to only one area of research would impose a homogeneity on the study and restrict interpretation.

METHODOLOGY

A significant dimension was added to the understanding of the formal properties of art by Rudolph Arnheim (1956, 1970, 1986, 1988). Arnheim applies the principles of *gestalt* psychology to explain the nature of art, the purpose of art and its significance. He refers to prehistoric art infrequently; his overriding concern is with the mind's cognitive dealings with the external (and internal world), and the role of art in this endeavour. The basic tenet of his thesis is that the mind is equipped with two cognitive procedures, intuitive perception and intellectual analysis. The co-operation between these two procedures is demonstrated during art *praxis*. Following the *gestalt* law of striving towards the most regular and symmetrical shape, the resulting image will probably be a simple geometric shape, frequently a circular shape. This is especially true of the visual expression of preliterate and prehistoric societies, and young children. Art, like science, begins not with attempts to duplicate nature, but with highly abstract

principles. In the arts these principles take the form of elementary shapes. Geometric configurations in 'early art', are elementary concepts of how the world is perceived and understood. An intimate knowledge of the natural environment is essential for orientation, and ultimately also for survival (chapter 7).

The formalist principles developed by Arnheim are reinforced and augmented by the deeply spiritual insights of Christian Norberg-Schulz (1971, 1975, 1979). His central thesis is that the geographical phenomena and spatial characteristics of a region, and how they are perceived and articulated in the built environment, give meaning to life (chapter 8). His existentialist philosophy and Arnheim's theory of 'visual thinking' show remarkable congruencies. Both are concerned with the environment and its role in shaping human cognition. Both thinkers emphasise the role of art *praxis*, and the primacy of the circle in 'early art'. Their combined research offered a critical (and as yet unexplored) framework for the analysis and understanding of geometric form in the non-representational rock engravings of Redan.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the present study is two-fold:

- (i) to record the prehistoric rock engravings of Redan as effectively as possible in order to have a record that will continue to give access to the information present in them, long after their extinction; contextualise the history and neglect of this valuable heritage site over a period of time, investigate the personalities and events that were involved, and establish a socio-cultural context for their origin;

- (ii) to explore the interpretative potential of the non-representational imagery in these engravings: determine the nature of visual perception and visual expression, and reveal the *raison d'être* of the predominance of geometric form in 'early' visual expression.
- G.W. Stow's role as discoverer of the coal deposits that would lead to the establishment of Vereeniging, and his pioneering contribution as a pioneer of rock art conservation in South Africa, which has received scant attention in the literature, is acknowledged in chapter 1 and serves as an introduction to the events that followed in the Vereeniging area.
 - In order to contextualise the neglect and deterioration of Redan over an extended period of time, it was necessary to include a historical overview of the debate and negotiations surrounding the conservation and maintenance of Redan and of the contribution of a few concerned individuals. It was inevitable that this overview would have to include the other two prehistoric sites in the area, the Kliprivier and Van Riet Lowe Archaeological Reserves; both these sites have become completely obliterated. This history is examined in chapter 2.
 - Every artefact (including rock art) is an expression of a particular culture, situated in a specific time and place. It has always been maintained that rock engravings originated approximately 20 000 years ago, but that the vast majority were produced much more recently, probably during the past 2 000 years. With the exception of the research undertaken by Mason (1962; 1986; 1989), Maggs (1995) the entire southern Highveld, including the Vaal-Klip valley has been largely under-researched in the period under examination. This applies to the archaeological, ethnographic and historical records. In order to establish a plausible socio-cultural

context for the rock engravings of Redan, it was therefore necessary to review the prehistory of the southern Highveld against the backdrop of the Stone and Iron Ages in South Africa. Every available source was examined; a synthesis of this information appears in chapters 3 and 4. The problem of authorship is exacerbated by the fact that a number of different ethnic and cultural groups cohabited on the southern Highveld during this period. However, the historical record (Cope (ed.) 1977) points to a predominantly Korana-Khoekhoe presence on the southern Highveld during the 1800s. This probable Khoekhoe authorship of the rock engravings of southern Africa (and by implication Redan) was further confirmed by the recent research of Smith and Ouzman (2004).

- Copy and recording methods do not develop independently, but within a particular historical and ideological framework. Chapter 5 reviews this progress from early beginnings in the nineteenth century, to the advanced copy methods of the twenty-first century. The contribution of Willcox and Pager is gratefully acknowledged and has proved indispensable, particularly as regards the location of individual engravings. A description of the site and a photographic survey of a representative number of the engravings is included. The services of a skilled professional lecturer/photographer were acquired and, in the course of his detailed and meticulous work, a substantial number of new engravings were discovered; a new and more comprehensive map of the site was also drawn up.
- Interpretative issues are addressed in chapter 6. This includes a discussion of the extreme bias and lack of understanding with which non-representational imagery in rock art has been perceived historically and a critical examination of prevalent models and their applicability to the rock engravings of Redan. The majority of these models have been developed within an archaeological and anthropological

framework, and rely heavily on factual data obtained from ethnographic studies of San communities far removed both spatially and temporally from the Vaal-Klip valley. Alternative approaches more closely aligned to the various humanities are explored in chapter 7. This chapter also surveys emerging interpretative trends in South Africa. The final chapter attempts to interpret the rock engravings of Redan by applying the principles of 'visual thinking', as developed by Arnheim (1956; 1966; 1970; 1986; 1988), and augmented by the phenomenological approach (Norberg-Schulz 1971; 1975; 1979).

TERMINOLOGY

Early travellers and researchers were at a loss how to correctly describe the incised and pecked images they encountered on the rocks and boulders in southern Africa. Clearly these were the work of a 'primitive' race and therefore European nomenclature would have been inappropriate. G.W. Stow, travelling in South Africa in the late nineteenth century, referred to *rock chippings* and *Bushman chippings* and became an ardent spokesman for their preservation. Lucy Lloyd, renowned scholar of the Bushman language, and correspondent of Stow preferred the term *Bushman etching* (Schoeman 1997:109). E. Holub devised a more cumbersome name, *eingemeisselte Buschmannzeichnungen* - roughly translated as 'chiselled Bushman engravings' (cited in Van der Walt 1987:48). At the turn of the century, with the advent of the influential French cleric the Abbé Henri Breuil, the study of rock art became a respectable occupation. Breuil introduced the nomenclature of European art history and gave preference to the term *rock engraving*. In South Africa the first legislation affording protection to prehistoric artefacts was promulgated in 1911 and the generic term *Bushman relics* was used to describe artefacts including rock art. The term *petroglyph*

was introduced in South Africa as early as 1910 by the enterprising British geologist J.P. Johnson (1910) and was subsequently preferred by a succession of South African researchers until the late 1970s (Goodwin 1936; Willcox 1963; Schoonraad 1987). The term is derived from the word *petro* meaning rock or stone, and *glyph* meaning an incision. The older term *engraving* refers to the process of carving, cutting or etching, without stipulating the material. Van Riet Lowe argued that the term *petroglyph* was a more suitable term as 'the vast majority are pecked or chipped out of the rock with no semblance of incised or engraved work in the technique.' (Van Riet Lowe 1937:254). In spite of the fact that the term *petroglyph* is more descriptive of the technique and material involved, the majority of South African researchers continue to give preference to the term *engraving* (Wilman (1933) 1968; Van Riet Lowe 1937; Dowson 1992; Fock & Fock 1984; Morris 1988; Butzer 1989; Deacon & Deacon 1999; Ouzman 1995).

Within the broad area of engraving sites occurring in the Orange-Vaal basin, two categories of imagery can be identified: images that are unrecognisable and do not appear to relate to the natural world, and images that are immediately recognisable as animals, people and objects. The first category has proved problematic as far as nomenclature is concerned; the second category has presented few problems. The term *naturalistic* is widely used by a range of disciplines including archaeology and art history, to describe images that imitate the appearance of the natural world (Schoonraad 1987; Combrich (1979) 1984; Davis 1990). In art *praxis* the term *naturalism* has had various meanings since its introduction as an art term in 1436, but by the nineteenth century the term had taken its current meaning of referring to art that is 'both representational, and associated by analogy with the empirical procedures of science. This naturalism refers to the rendering of appearances through minute observation of the natural world' (Duro & Greenhalgh 1992:201). The term *figurative* is also used

by researchers when referring to images that are clearly mimetic (Bahn 1998:224). However, this term can lead to confusion as it is also associated with the depiction of the human form. More obscure terms such as *iconic images* (Lewis-Williams 1988:13) have proved less popular; the term is derived from the Latin *icon* and Greek *eikon*, meaning that it resembles that which it designates. However, because of its association with the representation of a sacred Christian personage its ambiguity is problematic. The most straightforward and unambiguous term used to describe the naturalistic representation of animals, people and objects from the natural world, is the term *representational*. The term is instantly understood and is used by both art historians and archaeologists (Willcox 1963; Read 1955; Balla 1969; Duro & Greenhalgh 1992; Van Rijssen 1994; Guenther 1994; Whitley & Annegarn 1994).

The first category of images, namely those that do not relate to the natural world and do not appear to have any mimetic function, is more problematic. Such images can have a pronounced geometric and symmetric structure, or be irregular and indeterminate in structure (both these sub-divisions are found at Redan). In the literature a vast array of terms has been devised to describe such images. A number of researchers use terms that describe only the more geometric images such as *geometric designs* (Johnson 1910); *geometrical patterns* (Wilman (1933) 1968); *schematic designs* (Fock 1979); *geometric motifs* (Campbell *et al.* 1994). The term *amorphous* was introduced by Willcox (1984) to describe the indeterminate images, and although it is an acceptable term, it has never been widely used. A number of terms already contain an *a priori* heuristic content and cannot be used for obvious reasons, such as *mystic symbols* and *Bushman emblems* (Stow (1905) 1964), *cosmic signs* and *ideographs* (Slack 1962), *entoptics* (Lewis-Williams & Dowson 1989), *mandalas* (Krüger 1995), and *entoptic abstractions* (Smith 1994). More obscure terms such as *sematographs* (Van Rijssen

1994) have been introduced recently, showing quite clearly that researchers have not reached consensus regarding the choice of a term to describe images in rock art that are clearly not representational. After some deliberation it seemed obvious that the term *non-representational* most clearly and succinctly describes these enigmatic and inexplicable images. Not only does the term encompass both geometric and indeterminate images, it is also sufficiently objective to allow for wide application. Throughout this text the two terms *representational* and *non-representational* are juxtaposed; this reinforces the antithetical visual appearance of the two categories of images that are found at Redan.

For several hundred years the indigenous hunter-gatherer and herding people of South Africa were described by the early colonists of the Cape of Good Hope respectively as the Bushmen (or Bossiemans) and the Hottentots. Both these names gradually gained negative connotations and their continued use was seriously questioned. Whereas the hunter-gatherers have no word in their language to describe themselves, the herding people of South Africa refer to their hunter-gatherer neighbours as the *San* – meaning people who do not own stock, are foragers, and are, by implication, inferior and of a lower status. The name *San* therefore has more negative connotations than the word *Bushman*. In the current literature both these names are used; according to Smith *et al.* (2000) the people themselves prefer to be called Bushmen. As opposed to the perceived inferior status of the San, the herding people considered themselves the 'real people' - the *Khoekhoen*, although they used their various clan names when referring to themselves. The word *Khoisan* was coined as a generic term to describe these two indigenous races who are biologically similar and both speak click languages, and to distinguish them from their black neighbours (Deacon & Deacon 1999:129-130; Boonzaaier *et al.* 1996:1-2; Smith *et al.* 2000:2-3).