

Culture and Environment in Africa Series 1

Goodman Gwasira

**A Rare Combination of Engravings
and Paintings in the Dome Gorge,
Daureb/Brandberg**

A potential core element for
World Heritage Status

Cologne 2011



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Preface

The thesis of Goodman Gwasira is the remarkable result of the very first student of the Master studies into Culture and Environment in Africa (CEA) at the University of Cologne. Neither the quality of this thesis nor the context in which it evolved are a matter of chance: they are the cogent consequences of personal aptitude, a well established research setting and long standing cooperation. The research setting used to be most visibly manifested in the interdisciplinary ACACIA research program that lasted from 1995 to 2007, until CEA was launched, combining those subjects that feed the CEA studies. In itself this research cluster originated, inter alia, from cooperation between the institutes of African Studies, Ethnology and Prehistoric Archaeology back in the early 1960s – instigating systematic research into Namibian rock art. With the material presented in his thesis, Goodman Gwasira reaches back towards this early beginning, yet propelling research with new approaches into the 21st century. The second critical success factor besides his personal aptitude, the long standing cooperation, was something that had been shaped by G.Gwasira himself when he worked for the National Museum of Namibia and the University of Namibia in the past 14 years. Several smaller projects and the permanent rock art exhibition in the National Museum as well as the international conference "A Homecoming of Rock Art" in Windhoek in 2005, were the most visible and applauded results of the close and unanimous cooperation between G.Gwasira and the writer of these lines.

With his thesis Goodman Gwasira presents a fine specimen of empirical research, including personal painstaking documentation in the field, that on the basis of rich data advances towards solid and testable interpretations. It is thus a study that in an exemplary way meets the ideals of research that has been dubbed "Cologne School" by David Lewis-Williams. With it G.Gwasira falls in line with researchers before him like E.R.Scherz and H.Pager, whose works achieved timeless validity due to their documentary character.

In appreciating the merits of this thesis, it should not go unmentioned that the University of Cologne not only ensured a unique array of subjects for the CEA studies, but with its foundation "Jutta Vogel Stiftung" it also provided financial support that enabled G.Gwasira to carry out field research for his thesis.

Having closely followed the career and advancements of G.Gwasira, the writer cannot but express his content about this thesis which is a veritable flagship for Namibian archaeology as well as the Master studies of Culture and Environment in Africa.

In Memory of Oma Lenssen

The Owl visited our camp in the Dome Gorge...

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Euch allen bin ich zu tiefem Dank verpflichtet.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Dâureb, Namibia's highest mountain, is one of the most extensively documented rock art regions in the world. Presently, six volumes on the rock paintings of the upper Dâureb have been published by the Heinrich-Barth-Institute at the University of Cologne; more than 900 sites comprised of almost 50,000 individual images have been recorded in the Dâureb area. However, the rock engravings¹ found in the lower Dome Gorge, on the south-western part of the mountain, remain relatively un-researched. The Dome Gorge (variably referred to as the Grosse Dom Schlucht), is located on the south-western edge of the Dâureb at the inter-face of the Namib Desert and the semi-arid plains of western Namibia. It is found between the Numas and Amis Gorges. The lower Dome Gorge is mainly characterised by dolerite boulders which are suitable for executing engravings, compared to the upper reaches of the mountain which are predominantly composed of granite boulders (MacCalman 1964/65; Ouzman 2002; Diehl 1990 as cited in Lenssen-Erz 2001). According to Lenssen-Erz, the absence of engravings in the upper Dâureb cannot be explained by the argument that there exists a lack of suitable rocks to engrave on, but rather that the “general contextual notion” did not allow engravings to be made there (2006:435). In addition to the rock art, the gorge also has associated archaeology which can be dated to the last 500 years and falls into the Brandberg Culture Classification (Breunig 1989). Some stone artefacts belonging to the Wilton Phase have also been identified in the gorge. Other archaeological remains that found in the Dome Gorge include grit-tempered pottery that is associated with the stone circles (Ouzman 2002), rubbing stones and few scatters of ostrich egg shell fragments. A few publications on the Dome Gorge have been made (MacCalman 1964/65; Viereck 1967; Rudner & Rudner 1970; Scherz 1975; Pager 2006; Lenssen-Erz & Gwasira 2010); however, prior to the fieldwork for this thesis, very few expeditions with the specific aim of studying the rock engravings of the Dome Gorge had been carried out. The “MacCalman Expedition of 1962” resulted in a brief publication that provides a basic description of the site. Scherz (1975:215) made a more extensive but selective documentation of the rock art of the Dome Gorge; he noted that some of the engravings resemble those from Rooiplat, which is located in the same Omaruru district as the Dâureb. According to Scherz (ibid), they also resemble engravings from Otjikoto south in north central Namibia. Scherz (ibid) made another observation that the engravings could have been made at different times. He based this

¹ In this thesis the term engravings is preferred to petroglyphs because it emphasises the technique of producing the art since it is a derivation from the verb ‘engrave’.

assumption on the fact that some of the engravings appear to be older due to heavy patination. However, patination may not be a reliable indicator of the antiquity of engravings since many climatic and environmental factors can contribute to a faster rate of patination. Scherz, however, did not give significant attention to the unique congruence of engravings and paintings in the same site and even to the superimpositioning of paintings on engravings. He did, nevertheless, note that such a phenomenon existed (Scherz 1975:215).

Ouzman (2002) investigated the Dome Gorge and observed that there are both San and Khoekhoen engravings identifiable in the same site. The distinction was mainly based on the pecking technique applied in both circumstances, with the “Bushman” (or San) peckings tending to be finer than the random peck marks associated with the Khoekhoen geometrics. This distinction made by Ouzman challenges the traditional interpretation of geometrics, which favoured viewing them as “[...] designs 'seen' by the shamans while in an altered state of consciousness” Ouzman (2002:3). Entoptic phenomena, as an interpretive framework, have been discussed in detail by Lewis-Williams and Dowson (1988). The alternative model suggested by Ouzman (2003) that attributes the authorship of geometric engravings to the Khoekhoen argued that they may be linked to other explanations such as girls' initiation, astronomy or even group identity (Smith and Ouzman 2004; Morris 1998). Since little research has been conducted on rock engravings in Namibia, this thesis will rely on research carried out on rock engravings in South Africa (Morris 1998, Dowson 1989, 1992; Smith & Ouzman 2004). It will also draw on the methods used to study the rock paintings of the upper Dâureb (Lenssen-Erz 2001) and on Scherz's (1975) pioneering work, for comparative purposes. The current study aims at describing the rock art of the Dome Gorge in general, hereby establishing statistical and stylistic distributional patterns. It will mainly focus on describing the sites where combinations of engravings and paintings occur in the same sites (mixed sites) in the Dome Gorge.

1.2 Previous rock art research in the Dâureb

The archaeology of rock art has a long tradition in southern Africa; developing from the efforts of amateur enthusiasts into a scientific discipline. Rock art researchers have tended to treat paintings and engravings separately. In so doing, the paintings have received more attention than the engravings; therefore remaining relatively less researched in comparison to paintings (Dowson 1992). However, in the case of the Dome Gorge and Twyfelfontein, rock paintings and engravings were made in the same setting. In extreme cases such as the Dome Gorge, there is even some superimpositioning of the two genres of rock art. Thus, the Dome Gorge is

of paramount importance in the sense that it provides a relative stratigraphy based on the superimposition of paintings on engravings or engravings on paintings. It also comprises settlements consisting of stone structures that formed the bases of huts, stone chambers or cairns and stone walls (MacCalman 1964; Viereck 1967; Ouzman 2004). Similar stone structures have been studied in the Hungrob Ravine, Dâureb, by Kinahan (1984, 1991) and in the wider surroundings of the Dâureb (Speich 2010). There has been a systematic study of rock art in Namibia for 47 years which has resulted in the establishment of a huge database; however, thus far it remains dominated by paintings while engravings are less addressed.

In Namibia, rock art research is intricately connected to the Institute of Prehistoric Archaeology, *Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte*, at the University of Cologne (Richter 1991; Breunig 2003; Vogels 2009). The main focus of the Cologne project was to develop a systematic inventory of Namibian archaeology. Before the inception of the rock art documentation project in 1963, rock art in Namibia was recorded by amateur enthusiasts such as colonial officials and missionaries. As early as 1877, the Reverend C. G. Büttner, who was a missionary from the *Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft* stationed at Otjimbingue in the former Damaraland, published an article in the *Standard Mail* (South Africa) on rock art in Namibia which is believed to be the first publication on Namibian rock art².

Colonial officials, Jochmann and Maack, are credited with making the first reports on the rock art of the Dâureb. Jochmann published the first rock art copies from the Dâureb (1910) while Maack is acknowledged in the history of the Dâureb rock art research for his encounter in 1918 with a frieze that was later to be known as the "White Lady"³ (Lenssen-Erz & Erz 2000). This encounter also attracted the interest of the eminent international rock art archaeologist Abbe Henri Breuil, who conducted a study of the Maack Shelter in the Tsisab Ravine that culminated in his 1955 publication of "The White Lady of the Brandberg" (Breuil 1955).

Empirical research of rock art in Namibia can be traced back to the chemist Dr. Ernst Rudolph Scherz, who began as an amateur in 1930 and was an assistant to Abbe Breuil. As early as 1937, he developed a card system for recording rock art sites. In 1963, he was contracted by

² Scherz in one of his earlier correspondence with Abbe Breuil mentions that Reverend C. G. Büttner published an article on rock art from the Erongo Mountains in the Cape monthly magazine "Standard Mail" on 30 October 1877 (PA 4 Anneliese & Ernst Rudolph Scherz, Karton Zusatz b, Basler Afrika Bibliographien).

³ The "White Lady" of the Brandberg is a misnomer for a central figure that is found in the Maack Shelter in the Tsisab Ravine of the Dâureb Mountain. It is an image of a male human figure that is part of a procession (possibly) of initiates. It is the most famous prehistoric art in Namibia. The meticulous tracing of the figure by Harald Pager showed that it has male genital organs and hence was not a female image as previously proposed by the Abbé Breuil. The Abbé Breuil has misinterpreted its slim figure and facial features such as the pointed nose to be European features. He also postulated that it was painted by Mediterranean seafarers. It is perhaps the most controversial prehistoric art figure in Namibia.

the University of Cologne to record all the rock art found in Namibia. Through a grant from the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (DFG), Scherz was to document all engravings in Namibia and create a map of them⁴. However, due to old age, Scherz could not work in the Dâureb and thus in 1977 Harald Pager was contracted to document the rock art of the Dâureb (Lenssen-Erz 2001; Lenssen-Erz & Erz 2000). After the passing away of Pager in 1985, Tilman Lenssen-Erz carried on with the work, not by recording further rock art systematically, but by publishing the Pager volumes. While all this effort was placed on systematically recording the rock art of the Dâureb, only the paintings received attention while the engravings, mainly found in the Dome Gorge, remained undocumented empirically. Partly, this was due to the fact that Pager believed that his mandate was to record the rock art of the upper reaches of the mountain while Scherz was responsible for the lower parts (Lenssen-Erz; personal communication September 2010). Despite this, Scherz visited the Dome Gorge and made some selective recordings of the paintings and engravings. In cases where engravings and paintings were combined, he recorded some selected paintings and ignored the engravings, which could have been a result of a different research agenda or interest. In addition to the efforts of the Cologne project in documenting the rock art of the Dâureb, the Dome Gorge has been described by Ouzman (2002). Ouzman (2002:3) identified four components of the rock art as “bushman rock paintings, bushman rock engravings, the gong rock and Khoekhoen rock engravings”. He suggested that the interplay of these forms of rock art in the landscape indicates a “mutual use of the landscape” (ibid: 2). Although he identified 21 “pulses”⁵, 43 sites were documented during the field work of the present author and these form the basis for the description of the Dome Gorge rock art that follows below. The research region is delineated below in Figure 1.

⁴ Scherz’s letter to Abbe Breuil 25 August 1963 (PA 4 Anneliese & Ernst Rudolph Scherz, Karton Zusatz b, Basler Afrika Bibliographien).

⁵ Ouzman prefers the term “pulse” over the term “site”. The term “site” is preferred in this thesis.

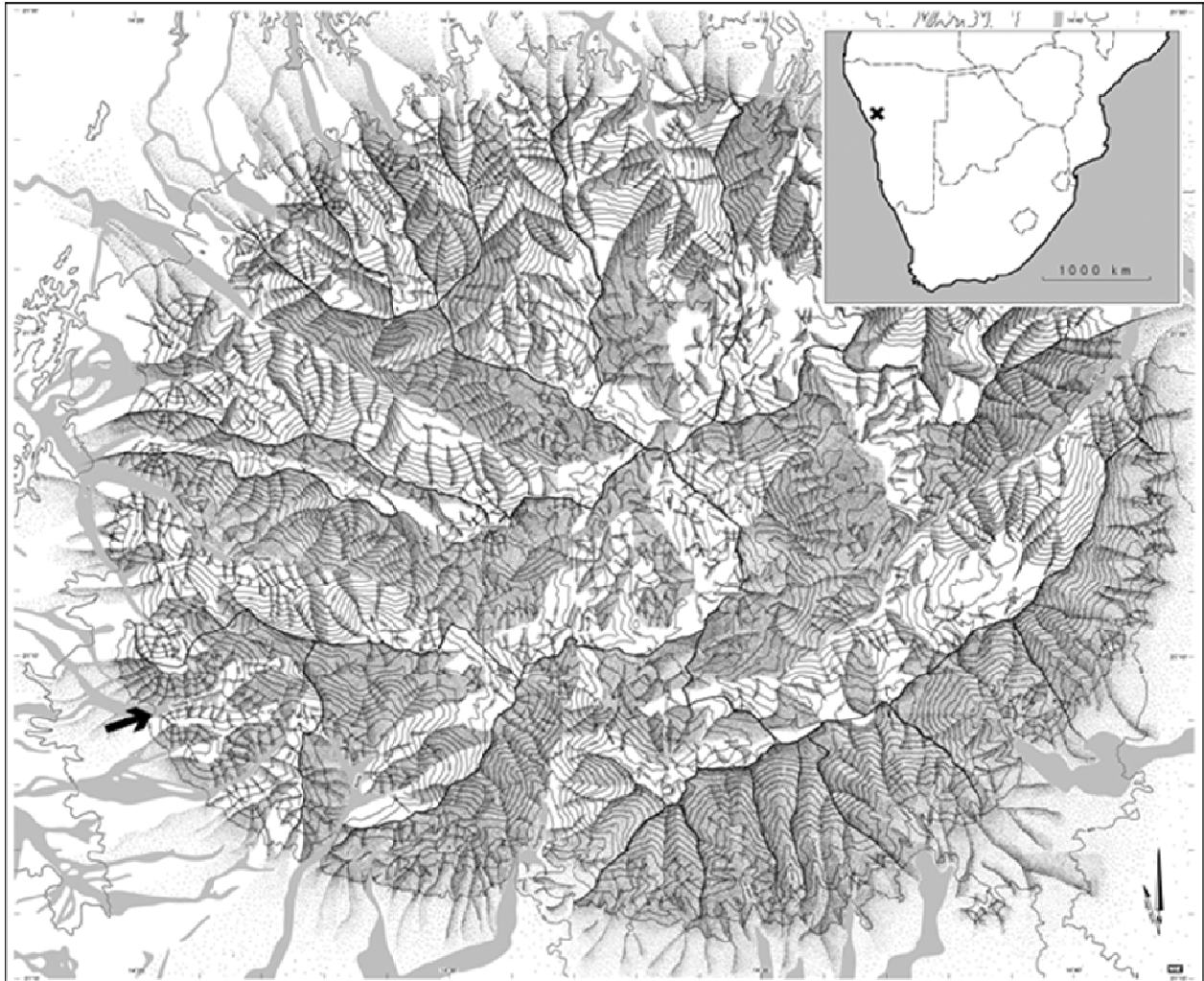


Figure 1: Location of the Dome Gorge in the Dâureb
Source: Lenssen-Erz & Gwasira 2010:216; Fig 1

2. Data Collection and Dating

2.1 Data Collection

The data presented in this thesis was collected between September and October of 2009. The fieldwork was carried out in cooperation with the University of Cologne and the University of Namibia. In addition to research staff from the respective universities, participants also included local residents of Uis and members of the Dâureb Mountain Guides (a community project for young mountain guides).

All the sites presented in this study were documented following standard field methods that were developed for the Heinrich-Barth-Institute by Lenssen-Erz (2004). The standardisation

of field practice is important in ensuring that the rock art and its setting is documented in a way that will allow common storage and retrieval of data from sites that are found in the same region in addition to ensuring that data can be compared to sites from other regions as well. It was the intention to collect as much information as possible about the sites and their contents for preservation purposes. As Loendorf (2001:55) aptly observes: “[...] if rock art is not rapidly documented and conserved, most of it will be destroyed [...]” (see also Mazel 1982).

Four main rock art recording techniques were applied in the field; site recording using four site record forms, photography, sketches and tracing. The four site record forms captured a variety of data ranging from contextual information, motifs, relief situation and some specific data relating to engravings only. The site context form recorded data about both engravings and paintings, while focusing predominantly on the setting in which the sites are located. In addition, GPS coordinates were recorded for each site using a hand-held GPS⁶. However, the coordinates are not presented in this thesis because the conditions of the research permit from the National Heritage Council of Namibia do not allow publication of site coordinates where no management plan exists.

Each site was recorded fully photographically following a standard site photography method developed by Lenssen-Erz.

Tracings were only made at the sites where superimpositions existed. The paintings were traced in pencil while the engravings were traced using a fine liner. In some cases, it was decided to trace engravings and paintings on different sheets so that the superimpositions could be clearly distinguished. Furthermore, some site sketches were made in order to later identify the position of paintings and engravings on the panels. All data was entered onto an Excel spread sheet to create an electronic database which was subsequently also analysed using Excel.

2.2 Dating Engravings in the Dome Gorge

One of the problems of dating prehistoric art, according to Butzer et al. (1979), is that it is not found within cultural stratigraphy. It is important to note here that there are different types of rock art. *Art mobilier*, or mobile art, could be found in culture stratigraphy if it was abandoned at some point in time. Classical examples of this are the Apollo 11 slabs from southern Namibia, which were dated to 25,000 BP uncal. (Wendt 1976). This site is believed to be even older as Vogelsang et al. (2010) demonstrate that calibrated dates radiocarbon date for Apollo 11 is 28,300- 30,500 years. In this case, the dates do not demonstrate the age of the

⁶ Garmin e-Trex hand-held GPS unit

art per se, but the period from which the slabs were abandoned. Other examples of datable art from Namibia are the 36 pieces of exfoliated rock art that were recovered from the *Riesenhöhle* in the Dâureb that produced a ¹⁴C age of 2,700 cal. BP (Conrad et al. 1988). Another reason why it is difficult to perform direct isotopic dating of engravings emanates from their nature; unlike paintings that contain carbon accretion, albeit in small quantities, engravings do not contain organic material that is datable (Butzer et al 1979:1201). Nevertheless, archaeologists have in the past used a range of methods of dating rock art such as stylistic typologies, sequences of superimpositioning, patination and archaeological associations. Some relatively new methods have been applied to rock engravings such as micro-erosion analysis (Bednarik 1992, 1997, 2002). Butzer et al. 1979 argue that stylistic typology is problematic because of the variations and idiosyncrasies that are encountered in motifs. For a critique of methods used in dating rock art, see Bednarik (2002). Rocks that are found in open spaces in arid environments are more prone to disintegration than those found in shaded areas. In the case of the Dome Gorge, all the sites documented during the fieldwork consist of vertical walls and /or boulders that are exposed to climatic fluctuations which in turn may affect the condition of the rock art.

The absence of contextual archaeological finds at most of the sites in the Dome Gorge makes it complicated to date the engravings by association (Lenssen-Erz & Gwasira 2010). Some assumptions have however been made by MacCalman (1964/64:92) who suggests an age of 5,500 years. It is generally accepted that hairline engravings represent the oldest technique of depicting petroglyphs (see Beaumont & Vogel 1989:73; Butzer et al 1979:1204; Morris 1998:115; Otto 2006). Some engraved portable art from the Wonderwerk Cave in South Africa has been dated to at least 10,000 years old (Thackeray et al 1981). Some almost completely patinated naturalistic hairline engravings were encountered in the Dome Gorge and based on their presence, and in some cases their similarity with their South African counterparts, it is safe to suggest that the rock engravings of the Dome Gorge may be as old as hairlines reported from other southern African rock art sites; that is, they belong to the Late Stone Age. However, there are also additional younger engravings which belong to a herder tradition as observed by Ouzman (2002:3).

3. The Rock Art and Associated Archaeology of the Dome Gorge

3.1 Associated Archaeology

The rock art from the Dome Gorge and its associated archaeology has, to some extent, been previously described by MacCalman, (1964/65); Viereck, (1967); Scherz, (1975); and Ouzman (2002). In this chapter, I present the data collected during the field work. First, I describe the study region in general, that is, presenting the entire corpus of the Dome Gorge rock art and its associated archaeology. This will be followed by a detailed description of “mixed sites” where paintings and engravings occur in the same site.

The most common archaeological features of the Dome Gorge (excluding the rock art) are some stone structures that are reminiscent of those described from the Hungrob Ravine. Stone structures, according to Jacobson (1997:73), are a wide spread occurrence in this region west of the 200 mm isohyet between the Omaruru and Kunene Rivers and generally date to between 800 and 600 BP (see also Speich 2010). They are thought to be indicative of the presence of small stock herder in the region and particularly representative of bases or remains of Damara settlements (Jacobson 1997; see also Jacobson & Vogel 1975; Carr et al. 1976; Vogel & Visser 1981; Breunig 1989; Kinahan 1991; Speich 2010). The stone structures range in size from one to two metres in diameter and are on average one meter high. In some cases, the structures were constructed in such a way that they incorporate some engraved rocks. At least in one of the stone circles, some stone artefacts, bone remains and grit-tempered pot sherds were found (see also Ouzman 2002). The stone artefacts belong to the Wilton tradition (Rudner and Rudner 1970), while the pottery belongs to the Brandberg Culture described by Breunig (1989, 2003). None of the material culture was collected during the field work since the aim of the field work was to survey and document the rock art only.

Some rock gongs and instances where flakes were intentionally removed from engraved rocks appear in the archaeology of the Dome Gorge. Altogether, seven rock gongs were recorded during the field work and a possible rock gong was recorded at site D09/36; they are all located on a steep edge of the valley (the highest being found on site D09/22 approximately 20 meters up the slope from the river bed) and this, according to Ouzman, (2002) amplifies the sound. Some tonal points can be observed on the rock gong. Ouzman (2002) reports on the tabular two-part rock gong found on site D09/08. Some five more rock gongs were recorded on this site.

The association of rock gongs with rock art has been observed in many places in Africa since the publication of the first documented rock gongs from Birnin Kudu in Nigeria by Brian Fagg (1956). Rock gongs are defined as “[...] natural rock boulders, slabs, spalls and exfoliations

[...] which vibrate with a ringing tone when struck and which also show indisputable evidence of having been used as percussion instruments” (Fagg 1956:17). A survey of literature on rock gongs reveals that since the first publication by Fagg, they have been encountered in places such as South Africa (Goodwin 1957; Rifkin 2009; Ouzman 2001; Smith & Ouzman 2004), Botswana (Rudner 1965), Zimbabwe (Robinson 1958) and Uganda (Lanning 1958, 1959). Steven J. Waller's publication 'Rock Art Acoustics in the Past, Present and Future' in 2002 lists other major world regions where rock gongs are found and, in some circumstances, in association with rock art. In Namibia, rock gongs have been known to exist in close association with rock art at sites such as Twyfelfontein (Scherz 1975), Rooipunt and Okaturua (Scherz 1970). The rock gongs of the Dome Gorge have been reported by Scherz (1975) and Ouzman (2004). However, as alluded above, more rock gongs were encountered during the field work for this study than reported before.

There are two sites where definite rock gongs occur in the Dome Gorge (D09/08 and D09/22). I will first describe the contextual setting in which they are found and then the rock gongs in particular.

Site number D09/08 where six rock gongs are found comprises of five sections (a-e). The rock gongs all lie on the surface of the rocky platform at section (b) (described in chapter four) and are tabular in shape. They were documented using consecutive numbers that were denoted by D09/08 GR A to F starting from the easternmost to the westernmost rock gong. D09/08 GR A is almost 2.5 metres long and is split down the middle; it was also reported by Ouzman (2002:3). It appears that it was used as a rock gong after it had split as evidenced by the percussion marks limited to the inner (split) sides of both pieces. D09/08 GR B is almost of the same size as the first one but its percussion marks limited to one edge. There appear to have been flake removals from one of the sides of rock gong D09/08 GR B; at least 6 removals can be determined. The other striking boulder is number D09/08 GR D which is almost oval but the “percussion” marks are inconclusive; however, it is striking in the sense that it bears some engraving of an ostrich and a male human figure on its edge. The boulder has some sounding properties but it is not immediately determinable whether or not it was used for percussion purposes. Therefore, it is treated cautiously as a rock gong. The rock gongs on this site are closely associated with rock engravings and paintings as described in chapter four.

The next rock gong is found on site D09/22. It is a lone concave dolerite boulder which is heavily patinated. It has four complex structures and one simple structure engraved on its upper surface. These geometrics are heavily patinated compared to the nine percussion marks that are distributed on the eastern and southern edges of the rock gong. There are

some relatively younger dots that are pecked on the northern side of the dolerite boulder. Very few stone artefacts were observed around the site. Its relief position is on an upper slope of the valley standing approximately 20 meters up the slope from the river bed. The rock gong is more than two meters wide. The space around it is not suitable for dwelling or even any group activity since it is composed of smaller and loose boulders. During the rainy season, there would be water in sight of the rock gong since it faces the gorge and another rivulet runs down the northern valley. Another rivulet is situated less than five meters away from the rock gong on the eastern side (See Appendix 1 for photographs of the rock gong). Researchers have occupied themselves with trying to understand the meaning and use of rock gongs for some decades. One of the main lines of interpretation was that they could have been used during rites of passage such as circumcision or initiation of girls during marriage. Fagg (1956) reports having observed brides in Birnin Kudu visiting a cave prior to their wedding ceremonies that was in the same site with rock paintings and a rock gong on the day of their weddings in the 1950s. Although there was no direct association between the observed practices, the rock art and the rock gong, Fagg assumed that there could have been some connection. Examples of rock gongs being used in secret religious ceremonies connected with initiation rites have been recorded among the pastoralists at Nok in Nigeria (Goodwin 1957). A further use as “alarms” warning people of the advancing enemy was recorded among the Nok in Nigeria by Fagg (1957). Lanning (1958) provides an account of how the “rock drum” was used during rain making ceremonies among the pastoralist Hima at Bigo bya Mugenyi in western Uganda. From all these examples, two factors are recurring: firstly, although the rock gongs are found in close association with rock art, there is no evidence of the direct association and mutual use of the two forms of artefact (except for the Bigo bya Mugenyi case); secondly, the rock gongs appear to be associated with pastoralists although there are cases such as at Koranaberg in South Africa where they are associated with the San rock art (Rifkin 2009). Ouzman (2002) suggests that the gong rocks of the Dome Gorge could have been a cultural signature of the herder community (see also Ouzman & Smith 2004). He argues further that their co-existence with the rock art points to a mutual use of the landscape by both the hunter-gatherers and the herders (Ouzman 2002:3). Dating rock gongs is as problematic as dating rock engravings because in both cases there is no datable organic material. There has been a resurgence of interest in studying them but this time the studies focus on the totality of senses in the landscape beyond just the visual sense. The new approach emphasises that rock gongs are part of a holistic system that includes rock art which, when studied together, will reveal some intricacies of the perception and use of landscape by makers and users of rock art (Waller 1989; Ouzman 2001, (see also Lenssen-

Erz 2004; Ouzman 2004; Kleinitz 2008)). More attention is still required for rock gongs in Namibia and, in particular, for those from the Dome Gorge because of the unique setting in which they are found in congruence with paintings and engravings in the same landscape.

The documentation of associated archaeology in this gorge is by no means complete; it fits a different research aim and will therefore not be considered in this study.

3.2 Context and Distribution of Sites

The following section presents a general overview of the characteristics of the rock art from the Dome Gorge. The contextual setting of the sites and the corpus of the art is presented followed by a particular focus on the sites that have both paintings and engravings.

The rock art sites are distributed along an east to west axis that covers approximately 1,000 meters. Most of the sites (44%) are located at the foot of elevation along the banks of the gorge. There are five painted-only sites and of these, three are found at the foot of elevation. The engravings are placed along the banks of the gorge, vantage points and terraces. The mixed sites (with paintings and engravings) are found in five settings: water-shaped valleys, narrow passages, exposed hill, entrance to the valley and foot of elevation⁷. Of the mixed sites, 91% are mainly found on the foot of elevation and the rest at water-shaped valley settings. Another relatively common setting for mixed sites is narrow passages. Isolated mixed sites are found at the entrance to the valley and at an exposed hill. Mixed sites account for 58% of the total number of sites while the frequency of engraved-only sites (30%) is almost double that of painted-only sites (12%). Table 1 shows the distribution of sites along the Dome Gorge according to location and genre of art:

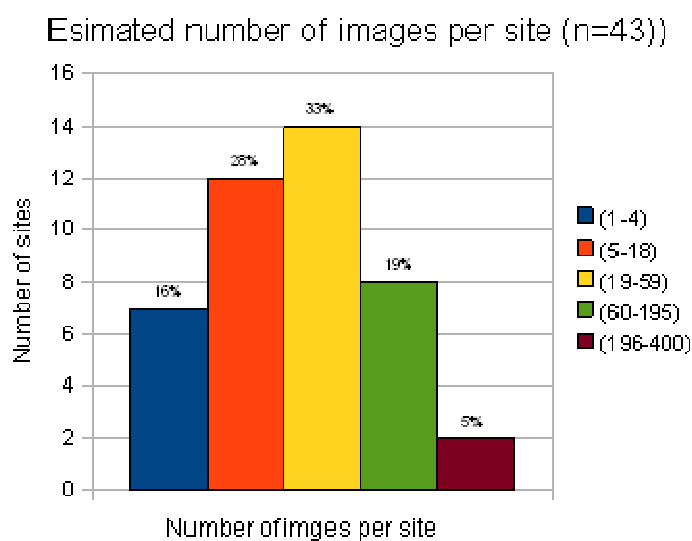
Location	Mixed	Engraved	Painted	Total
Water-shaped	7	-	-	7
Vantage Point	-	4	-	4
Narrow Passage	6	-	-	6
Terrace	-	1	-	1
Exposed Hill	1	1	-	2
Entrance to valley	2	-	-	2

⁷ The beginning of the rise of a slope.

Foot of elevation	9	7	3	19
Indeterminate	-	-	2	2
Total	25	13	5	43

Table 1: Distribution of sites according to location and genre
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

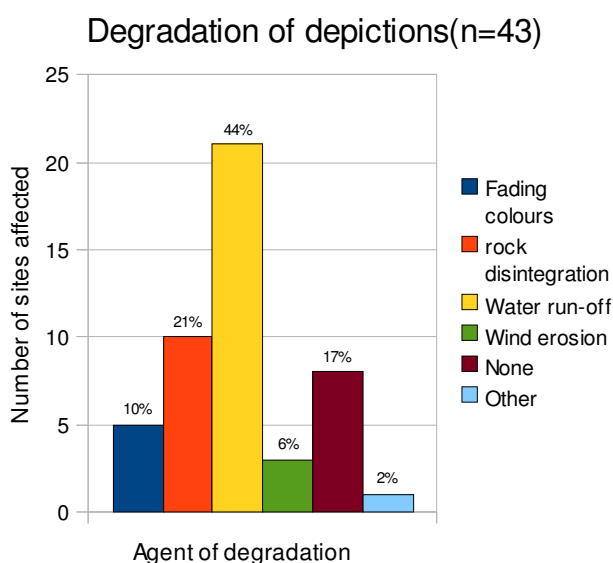
The number of images per site ranges from a single image to more than 200. All images (paintings and engravings) were identified, counted and recorded at each site in an effort to understand their density and diversity. The highest density of images (196-400 images per site) was recorded at 5% of the sites. Medium density sites (19-59 images) were more common in the Dome Gorge and they represent 33% of the sites. The lowest number of images per site was recorded at 16% of the sites. Graph 1 indicates the range of number of images per site that were recorded:



Graph 1: Range of images found per site
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

In general, the rock art of the Dome Gorge is well preserved; the isolated and rugged landscape in which they are found protects them from frequent human interaction. However, this may change in the future as there are plans to introduce tourism to the gorge which, unlike other gorges such as the Tsisab, was rarely visited until now. It was therefore important to collect data on the state of conservation of the rock art. It was observed that water runs over the painted and engraved surfaces at 44% of the sites. In some cases such as D09/09,

the water runs over some superimpositions of paintings on engravings in such a way that a difference can be observed between sections of the panel where water does not pass through and those affected. In the case of engravings, it was observed that water run-off can cause rapid patination of the engraved surfaces in such a way that some engravings end up appearing to be older than the others, as observed on site D09/09. The photograph found in Appendix 2 shows patination caused by water run-off. Another relatively prominent cause of degradation of depictions is natural disintegration of the rock. This is in the form of rocks either cracking or flaking partly due to climatic fluctuations. In some cases, the rocks are disintegrating because of falling onto each other. Natural disintegration of the rocks was observed at 21% of the sites; however, 17% of the sites are not affected at all by any of the agencies of deterioration. Other causes which were observed, but at a lower scale, are the fading of colours on painted surfaces and wind erosion. Graph 2 shows the agents of degradation of depictions and the number of sites that are affected:



Graph 2: Frequency of agents of degradation of depictions
 Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

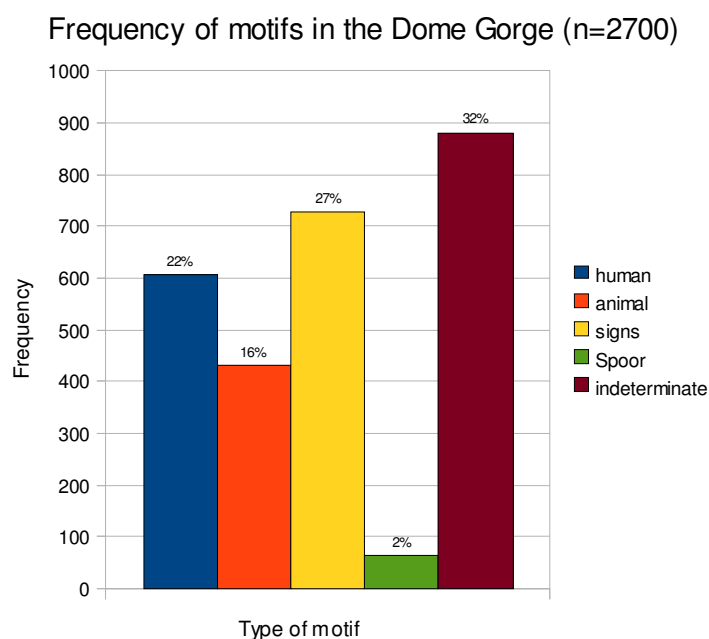
3.3 Contents

3.3.1 Motifs

The rock art of the Dome Gorge comprises eight categories of motifs which altogether represent a total of 2700 individual engraved and painted figures. Images that could not be easily determined were lumped together under the category 'indeterminate' and they have the highest frequency of 32% of the sample. The indeterminate category consists of smears, remains of figures that were once complete but now do not show a definite form, and of erratic and obscure marks. The most commonly depicted motifs after the indeterminate marks are abstract arts; they represent 27% of the total number of images. The abstract art is mainly dominated by the geometrics which belong to the southern African herder rock art according to the classification of Smith and Ouzman (2004:505). The engraved remains have a higher prevalence than that of the painted remains; the engraved form of erratic⁸ is dominant, while obscure marks⁹ were observed only among the paintings. Both painted and engraved humans figures are relatively well represented in the Dome Gorge rock art with a prevalence of 22% while animals represent 16%. The least frequency of 2% was recorded among the animal spoor (images that depict footprints of different animals). Graph 3 shows the prevalence of motif categories in the Dome Gorge. Individual categories are described in detail below. The graph shows the frequencies of engravings and paintings combined per motif:

⁸ Markings rock surfaces that do not have a fixed form but were clearly made by humans. Such marks do not depict a recognizable shape but their structure or regular pattern indicates that they were deliberately made by humans.

⁹ Obscure marks are traces of paintings that are hard to perceive because there is no recognizable regular pattern.



Graph 3: Prevalence of motif categories in the Dome Gorge
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

3.3.2 Site Properties

It is generally accepted in rock art studies that engravings are usually not found in locations where human habitation would have been possible because they are mostly placed on vertical rocks with no useful open space around. Paintings, on the other hand, are generally found in rock shelters and some of these shelters in the Dâureb such as the *Riesenhöhle*, have revealed cultural sequences that indicate human habitation during the Holocene (Pager 1989, Breunig 2003). This trend has been observed in the Dome Gorge where almost all of the art is found on vertical rocks and open air boulders. A fairly unique occurrence is the small cavern on site D09/08 which only contains paintings. The rest of the engravings and the paintings are found either on vertical rocks or on open air boulders. Open air in this case refers to locations that are on small isolated boulders or flat laying surfaces; such sites account for 13 % of the 43 sites documented in this study.

Another indicator used to investigate if rock art sites were used for dwelling is the presence or absence of the artefacts associated with the art. The observation that the rock art in the lower Dome Gorge occurs at sites that were not used for dwelling (as opposed to the upper Dâureb) is further supported by the fact that of the 43 sites recorded, 56% contained no artefacts at all. At five sites (12%), only a few scatters of stone tools that belong to the Wilton

tradition were recorded. Even in these cases the artefacts may not originate from the sites but could have been deposited via water washing down the slope as Ouzman (2004) notes. At site D09/08, the stone artefacts and the pot sherds are found inside some stone circle; however, their direct association with the rock art cannot be firmly established. It is not certain whether the stone circles were a later addition that appropriated the already existing rock engravings or whether they are remains from the same cultural authors. The rest of the sites (32%) yielded pre-modern to modern local artefacts which could have been added at a later stage. It is therefore possible that, in cases where evidence of dwelling sites were observed in the Dome Gorge, they were appropriations of rock art sites that were not originally used for dwelling. Ouzman (2004) suggests that due to the topography of the Dome Gorge and the fact that it floods sometimes after heavy rains, it is possible that traces of use of sites for dwelling could have been washed away.

Another aspect of the site context attributes that were investigated and recorded during this study is the proximity of sites to water or water courses. Rock art sites in the Dome Gorge are located along the banks of the ravine while others are along the contours of the ravine valley; therefore, a high proportion of the sites (38%) are found within a few meters from water courses while 13% of the rock art sites are found adjacent to water courses. There are, however, no natural depressions where water could collect after the rainy season and be preserved for some time as reported from the Upper Dâureb (Lenssen-Erz & Erz 2000). This could mainly be because the granite rock formation that is found in the Upper Dâureb differs from the dolerite that is most common in the Dome Gorge. The granite forms depressions and deep crevices as it weathers and thus creates natural water collecting surfaces. A significant number of rock art sites (30%) are found less than 300 metres away from water courses while only 8% of the sites are found 300 metres or more away.

3.3.3 Human Figures

There are 606 human images in the Dome Gorge rock art of which only 18 are determinable in terms of gender. The other 588 have been designated as indeterminate, meaning that the biological markers of sex were not included during the making of the images. This coincides with the general observation in southern African rock art that the majority of human figures are not identifiable in terms of sex (Dowson 2007). The seemingly genderless human figures in the upper Dâureb account for 74% of the human figures. It is, however, taken into consideration that the lack of biological markers on images does not necessarily mean the images were "genderless". There has been debate on whether or not such images were

meant to be perceived as genderless. Lenssen-Erz (2007) has argued that, to some extent in such circumstances, gender can be inferred from the cultural objects that the human figures carry or are interacting with. Bows, arrows and quiver bags are associated with the male hunters while round, bulky bags for collecting berries are associated with female gatherers. The human figures that lack explicit biological sexual markers are indeterminate or “zero marked” (Lenssen-Erz 2007:173). The debate still hinges on whether or not such binary distinctions are useful for interpreting rock art. Lenssen-Erz (1998) argues that, to some extent, a third gender is portrayed which is not marked by sexual biological features. The argument for a third gender being represented in rock art is plausible if one takes into account that there is a clear distinction between the definition of sex and that of gender. Sex refers to biological differences between male and female which are, among others attributes, are visually expressed through external organs; therefore, in some cases we can anatomically identify the sex of the human images in rock art. Gender, on the other hand, can be identified through the roles that the images express or seem to express. However, roles or behavior that is attributed to sexes is subjective because it depends on the cultural background of the viewer. Thus human images that do not show any distinguishing biological features can at least be categorized into one gender or another depending on the roles they express or seem to express.

The human figures appear in both painted and engraved forms. The generally accepted view that human figures are more frequent in paintings than in engravings is confirmed in this sample; 99% of the human figures are painted of which 96% are indeterminate. The remaining 1% represents engraved male figures. Combined engraved and painted human figures in the Dome Gorge appear at almost half of the sites (23 out of 43 sites) and the human figures in the Dome Gorge range in concentration from one figure (at site D09/20) to as many as 105 (at site D09/09). Painted female figures account for 2% and painted male figures for only 1%. Out of the 23 sites, they occur in combination with engraved humans in only four sites.

3.3.4 Animals

A total number of 430 animal figures were documented in the Dome Gorge of which 69% are engraved figures and the rest painted. A wide variety of animals such as giraffe, antelope, rhinoceros, eland, and ostrich are represented in the sample including the zebra which is found in the area today. The category of animal figures which could not be immediately

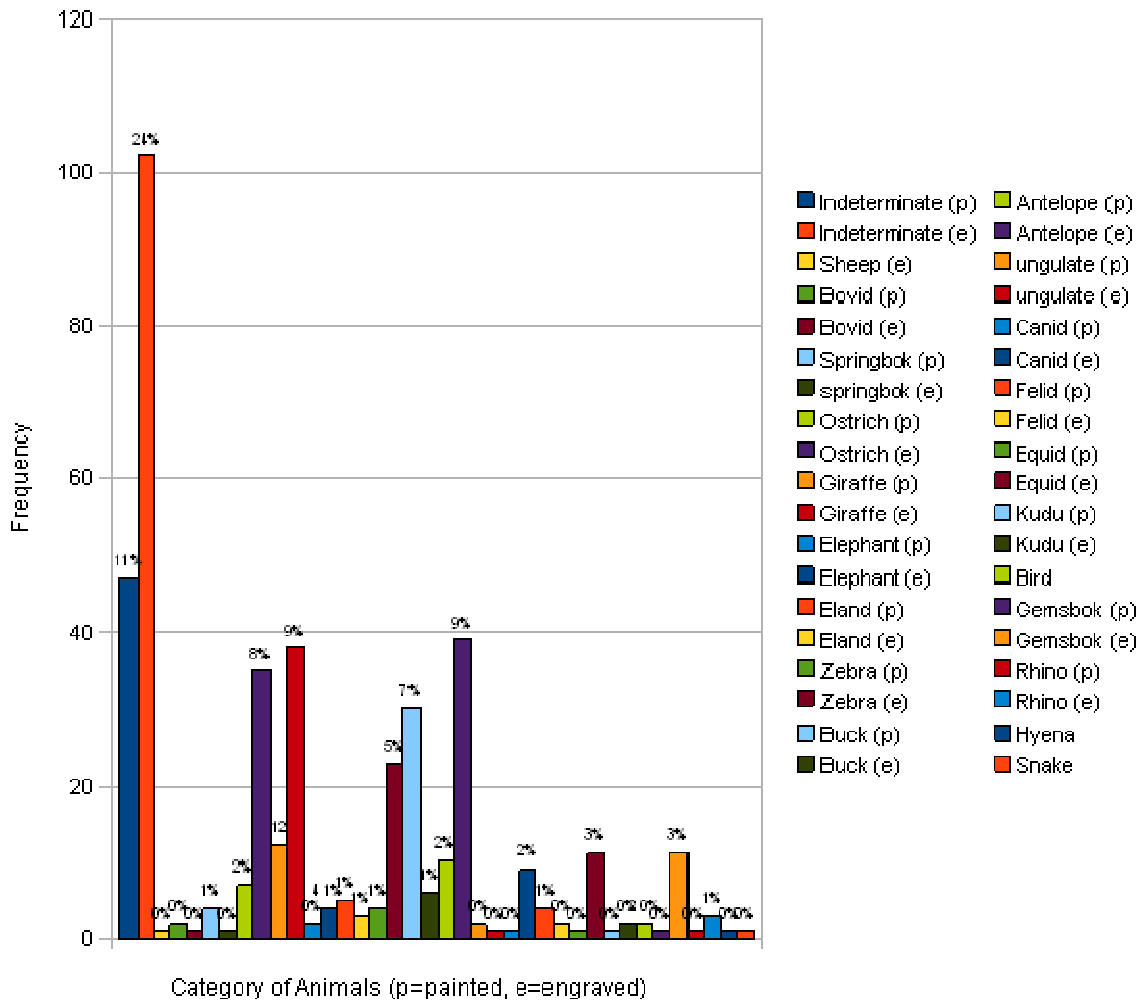
identified (indeterminate) dominates the sample. The engraved giraffe and antelope are the most commonly depicted in the category of identifiable animals. They have a frequency of 9% each and are closely followed by the engraved ostrich which has an 8% frequency.

The animal images were executed in both genres and in 18 sites (42% of the sites described in this study) only engraved animals occur. In 33% of the sites, there exists a mixture of painted and engraved animals.

At six sites (14%), the animal figures were painted-only while at the remaining five sites there were no animals depicted at all. The paintings are done in various hues of monochrome red. The mainly applied technique of animal engraving is pecking while at a few sites some were made in fine lines and some were polished such as the Kudu on site D09/43. The animal figures also appear in combination with human figures in 13 instances at eight sites.

There is no tendency to group only engraved animals together with only engraved human figures. However, what is clear is that the combination of animal figures and indeterminate human figures appears in more instances than with the other human figures whose gender could be determined (five times out of thirteen). This is closely followed by a combination of painted animal figures and painted human male figures (four times). Engraved human male figures and painted female figures appear twice each in combination with animal figures. Graph 4 shows the frequency of animals in the Dome Gorge rock art:

Frequency of Animals (n=430)



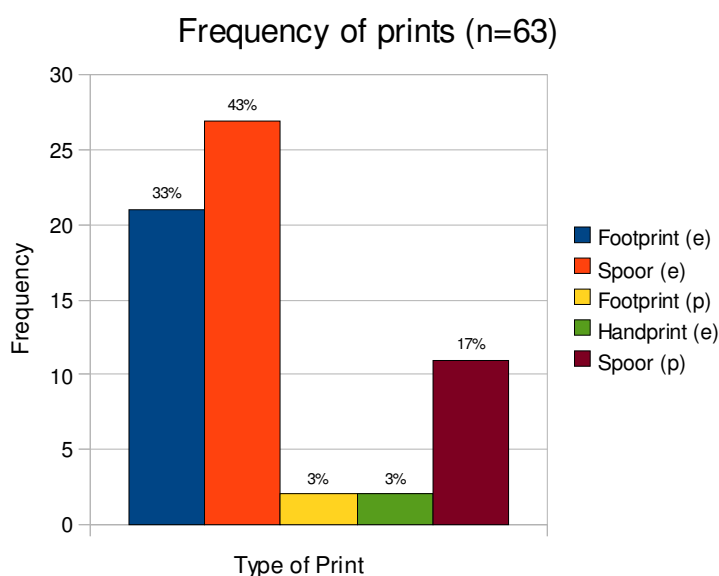
Graph 4: Frequency of animals
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

3.3.5 Footprints, Handprints and Spoor

Three types of prints are present in the Dome Gorge rock art sample: footprints, handprints and spoor. They appear in both paintings and engravings and are distributed over 33% of the 43 sites. Engravings of animal spoor have the highest frequency of 43% of the prints and are followed by engraved human footprints which account for 33%. Painted animal spoor account for 17% of the prints sample and the least represented are engraved handprints and painted animal spoor which account for 2% of the prints sample each.

There are some instances where different spoor appear together in the same locality. The most common combination is that of engraved animal spoor and engraved human footprints

which occur together twice. They then occur again together in addition to engraved human handprints. At site D09/05, engraved spoor and footprint were made on the same panel that has engravings superimposed by paintings. The rock on which the engraved hand print from Site D09/08 was executed was incorporated into the stone circle walling and is also associated with some engravings of animals, human footprints and geometrics. The last combination is that of three engraved handprints that occur in the same vicinity with an engraved footprint on Site D09/21. Graph 5 shows the frequency of prints in the Dome Gorge sample:

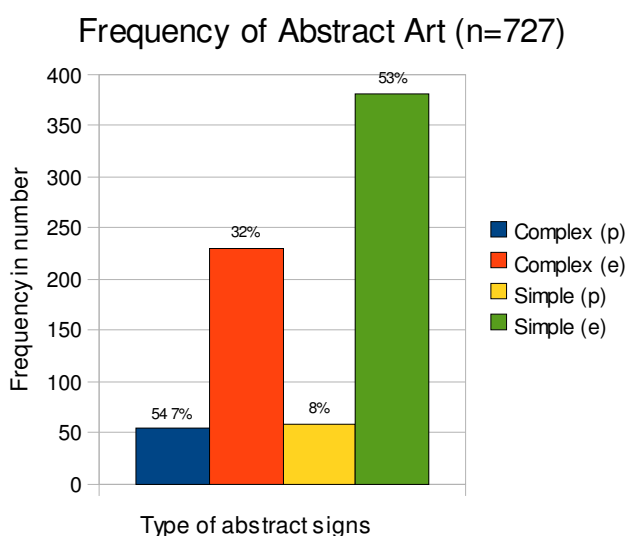


Graph 5: Frequency of prints from the Dome Gorge (e= engraved, p = painted)
 Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

3.3.6 Abstract Art

Abstract art is the second most commonly depicted motif in the Dome Gorge and occurs both in the form of engravings and paintings. In this study, abstract art was documented using two distinctions: in situations whereby a single geometric that is clearly just a single shape and occurs on its own without being joined to another form or being further divided was recorded as a simple structure; whereas any geometric that was either joined to one or more geometrics, or was divided into grids, for example, was recorded as a complex structure. The geometrics appear either as single images on isolated rocks and at times more than 100 on a single rock face. The most common method of depicting geometrics in the Dome Gorge is through engravings. The engraved geometrics dominate the sample with 85% frequency

while the remaining 15 % are composed of painted geometrics and simple structures (65%) appear more frequently than complex structures. In this simple structures category, the engraved form is dominant with a 57% overall frequency. There are some observable combinations of the complex and simple structures; at most of the sites, the engraved complex structure occurs together with the engraved simple structure and in such cases, the complex structure is more frequent than the simple structure. Out of 43 sites recorded in this study, 20 show such an occurrence. Only seven sites did not yield any geometrics, leading to the observation that the most widely depicted and distributed motif in the Dome Gorge rock art are geometrics. Another relatively common combination is that of the painted complex and simple structures appearing together in the same site but not necessarily on the same rock surface; this occurs at five of the 43 sites (12%). In the few cases where painted and engraved geometrics appear together (7%), only the painted complex structure was combined with engraved complex and simple structures. This appears only at three of the sites where paintings and engravings are combined in the form of superimposition and juxtaposition. There is no incidence where the painted form of a single structure is combined with any engraved geometric. Graph 6 shows the frequency of abstract art:



Graph 6: Frequency of abstract art
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Another observed pattern is that the geometrics appear to be combined with specific prints. As mentioned already above, the most commonly depicted combination of geometrics is that of the engraved simple and complex form. This appears to be one that is combined mostly with prints. In 13 instances, the engraved complex structure and engraved simple structure are combined with prints and of these they are mostly combined with engraved footprints.

Handprints are also combined with the engraved complex structure and engraved simple structure. However, engraved complex structure and engraved simple structure also appear in a relatively common frequency at sites where no prints exist at all (12 times). Painted geometrics are not commonly combined with engraved prints; instead, they are mainly placed together with painted spoor and painted footprint. However, painted geometrics are combined with engraved geometrics in three instances and in these cases they converge with two engraved footprints and an engraved animal spoor. Table 2 shows the relations between various combinations of types of geometrics and how they appear together with various combinations of prints:

Type of Geometric	Type of Print					
	Footprints (e)	Footprints (p)	Spoor (e)	Spoor (p)	Handprints (e)	None
Complex (e) + Simple (e)	••••••	-	••••	•	••	•••• •••• ••••
Complex (e) + Simple (e) + Complex (p)	••	-	•	-	-	•
Complex (p)	-	-	-	-	-	••
Complex (p) + Simple (p)	-	•	•••	-	-	••
Complex (e)	-	-	-	-	-	•••
Simple (e)	-	-	-	-	-	•••
None	•	-	-	-	-	

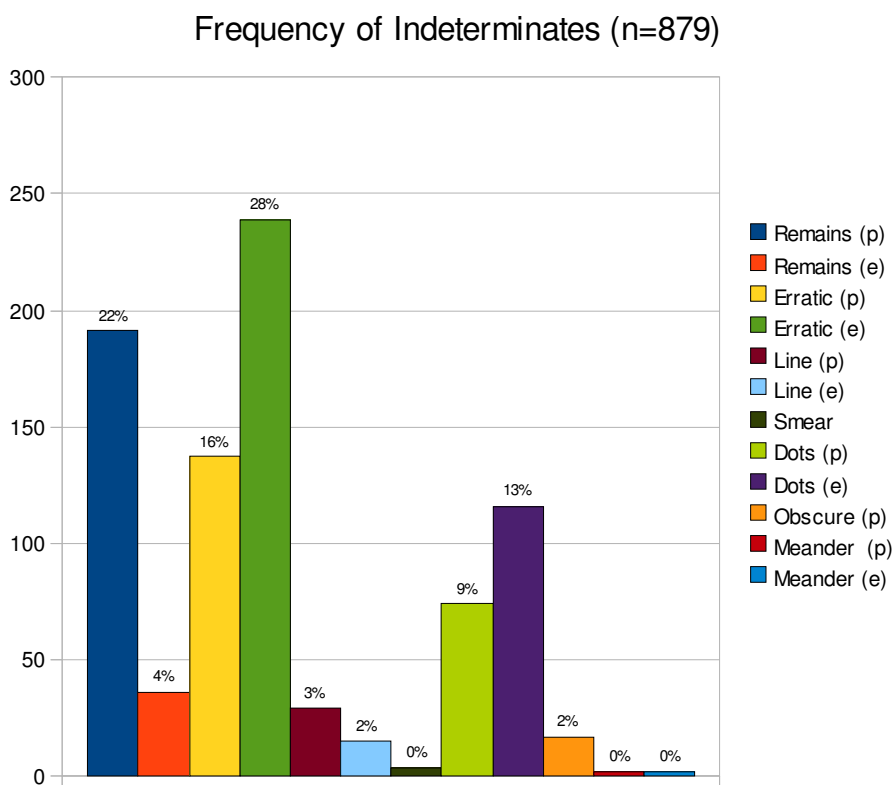
Table 2: Cross table of the number of occurrences of specific combinations of geometrics and prints. (each dot represents one occurrence)

Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

3.3.7 Indeterminate Figures

Some images that could not be immediately determined either through their form or shape were classified as either: (a) remains, as in the case where it was possible that the painting or engraving was at some point in time part of an image but a considerable part of it has since disappeared rendering it impossible to determine what image it once belonged to; (b) erratic, whereby no form or shape could be determined but it is clear that the painting or engraving was not part of an image which has faded; and (c) obscure, a case in which the painted or engraved surface could not have been a purposeful erratic shape nor some remainder of an

image. It was, however, taken under consideration while recording this category that these “images” could be part of a meaning system if read and understood as a whole with the other images on the panels. Therefore, the classification used here does not aim at separating them from the total experience of viewing panels as a whole but rather to understand how they are combined with other discernible images and also to investigate their spatial distribution. The indeterminate marks dominate the whole sample of rock art from the Dome Gorge. There are 879 indeterminate paintings and engravings and of these the engraved erratic form is predominant as it represents 28% of the sample. Painted remains are also relatively prominent with a frequency of 22%. The meander is the least represented in the sample of indeterminate figures. Graph 7 shows the frequency of indeterminate figure:



Graph 7: Frequency of indeterminate figures
 Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

4. Mixed Sites

This chapter presents the data from mixed sites – meaning paintings and engravings occur together in one site or even on one panel. There are 19 sites where combinations of paintings and engravings were found to coexist in the Dome Gorge. Four classes of combinations are discernible from the data collected: (i) superimposition: which are cases whereby paintings are layered on top of engravings or engravings on top of paintings, (ii) juxtaposition: which are cases whereby both paintings and engravings occur on the same rock face but do not contact each other, (iii) adjacent: whereby two panels face each other and each carries either paintings or engravings but where the conditions of (i) and (ii) are not present, and finally (iv) co-existence: which are case where paintings and engravings exist on different rocks in the same site. In this last class (iv), both genres of art cannot be viewed simultaneously from one viewing direction. The contexts in which each of the four classes are found and their contents are described in this chapter. The context of the sites will be described first followed by the contents. In some cases, possible combinations of different motifs that were observed from the data will be presented. Where possible, some photographs that indicate the position of engravings in relation to paintings at the sites were taken. These are reproduced in this study; however, in some cases, the location of the sites inhibited the taking of good general site photographs. Such sites are therefore only described and not illustrated by photographs below. The panels that are referred to in the text are numbered from left to right starting with the extreme left.

Site Number **D09/01**
Classification (iii) Adjacent
Context

Site D09/01 is the most southern site that was recorded during the fieldwork for this study. It is located at the foot of the elevation and it stands on the edge of the riverbed on the left bank of the gorge. It consists of vertical boulders on which the paintings and engravings exist. Its proximity to the bank of the river gorge indicates that water would be in sight during the rainy season. There is also an open field adjacent to the rock art site. The site is easily accessible since one does not need to climb high up and it is also easy to walk within it. However, it is not habitable since it consists of vertical boulders only and no form of shelter or overhang exists. The paintings are faded due to water run-off. Part of the rock art from this site was recorded and published by Scherz 1975. Photograph 1 illustrates the relationship between painted and engraved boulders at D09/01.



Photograph 1: Position of engravings and paintings (D09/01)

Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Contents

A total number of 61 human figures and seven therianthropes¹⁰ occur at D09/01. All the human figures and the therianthropes are painted in monochrome red. Engraved humans do not exist at this site. The majority of the human figures are indeterminate as far as gender is concerned while only nine are determinable (two male and seven female figures). One of the human figures is carrying a bow and an arrow. All human figures are not painted on the same boulders with the engravings and when paintings and engravings occur together, the paintings are restricted to the lower plane of the boulder. There are only nine animals that occur on this site, five of which are engraved while four are painted. The category of indeterminate animals has the most representation of three animals (two painted and one engraved). The engraved animals are placed in a central position on the site and are on boulders that are located higher than the painted boulders. There are two panels where animals were engraved. Both panels can be seen from at least 15 metres away and consist of two canids, one roan antelope and an indeterminate animal. Directly below this panel at its foot (but above the painted boulder), is a ledge that forms

¹⁰ Therianthropes in rock art studies are images that depict a combination of human and non-human features. They have been interpreted as representing either masked Shamans or those Medicine men who were in a trance and had transformed into other creatures. For a detailed study of therianthropes in the rock art of Southern Africa see Jolly (2002).

a step on which engravings of a zebra, footprint and another indeterminate animal have been made. The engravings on this step can be viewed by looking down as if one was looking at the floor. Two indeterminate animals and a giraffe are painted but they are among the painted human figures and not combined with engraved animals.

There are also geometrics on this site and they are executed on a separate single boulder located above the animal engravings. They are both complex and simple structures that fall into the category of abstract art. They resemble a honey-comb in shape and fit the description of geometrics as classified by Smith and Ouzman (2004:505). Table 3 summarises motifs from site D09/01:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate humans	52	-	52
Male	2	-	2
Female	7	-	7
Therianthropes	7	-	7
Human footprint	-	1	1
Indeterminate animals	2	1	3
Giraffe	1	-	1
Roan Antelope	-	1	1
Antelope	-	1	1
Zebra	-	1	1
Canid	-	2	2
Simple Structure	-	2	2
Complex Structure	-	1	1
Remains	26	-	26
Footprint		1	1
Obscure	1	-	1
Dots/Blots	1	-	1
Total	99	10	109

Table 3: Summary of motifs from site D09/01
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

The table above indicates that the painted figures outnumber the engraved figures by a very high margin. The indeterminate animal category is the only one that is represented in both engravings and paintings while the rest of the motifs at D09/01 appear exclusively either as

paintings or engravings. Painted human figures have the highest frequency followed by painted remains. The rest of the motifs occur less than ten times each.

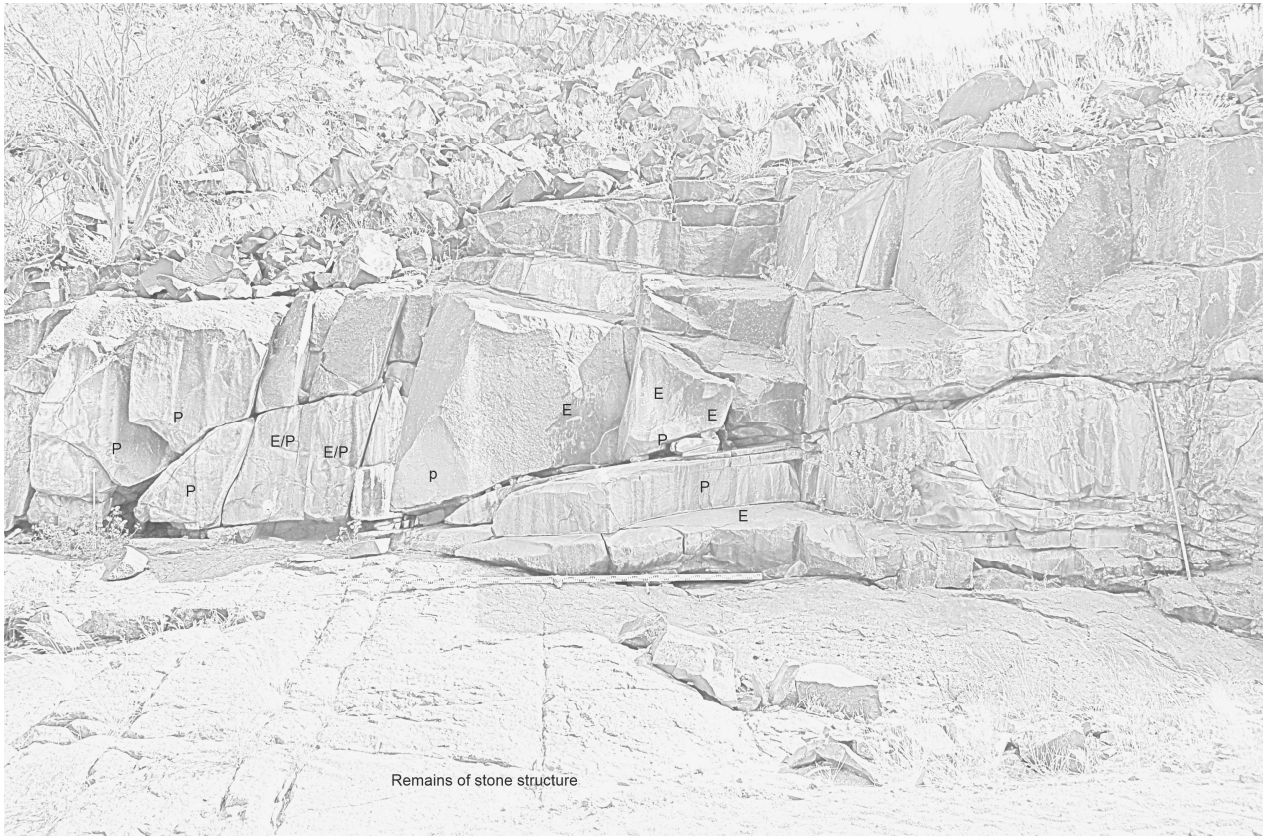
Site Number **D09/02**

Classification (i) Superimposition (*painting on engraving*), (ii) Juxtaposition, and
(iii) Adjacent

Context

This site was in part recorded and described by Scherz (1975). It is found on the right bank of the gorge near the entrance to the valley. The site stands approximately five meters from the river and it consists of a series of blocks of dolerite boulders with paintings and engravings. The main panel on which both paintings and engravings occur measures 1.35m x 2m (see site sketch) while the whole site is 24.2 metres in length. The adjacent panel that faces the main panel has a prominent engraving of what was designated as an “*Osterhase*” (Easter Bunny) by Scherz (1975:215) and some faint paintings of human figures below it (“*Osterhase*”). The paintings and engravings are all done on the vertical rock wall, suggesting that the site was not suitable for dwelling. Some engravings of an ostrich, indeterminate animal and complex structures are found on the floor of a ledge that forms a step below the adjacent panel. On the edge of this step there is a faint painting of a human figure. In cases where the paintings and engravings occur on one boulder, the paintings are restricted to the lower edge of the boulder. However, some stone structures are found in the site that may be from a later period than the rock art. There is no evidence of incorporation of painted or engraved panels into the stone structures. Watercourses are close to the rock art panel since the site is located at the foot of an elevation along the bank of the gorge. Another watercourse that runs down the mountain in a north to south direction to the river gorge is located approximately 50 metres from the site. The availability of water in the rainy season through these watercourses could have attracted the cultural authors to this site; there is also an open field in the vicinity of the site. The site can be described as a narrow passage that is comfortably accessible within the last 30 metres towards it.

The rock art in this site is in generally good condition and discernible although there are cases of considerable patination of engravings and fading of colours on some of the paintings. The art is visible from approximately 15 metres distance away from the site in the north direction. All paintings are done in monochrome red of various hues and the engravings are all pecked.



Photograph 2: Position of engravings and paintings (D09/02)
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Contents

Site D09/02 has the highest number of human figures in comparison to the other sites included in the Dome Gorge database. In total, 152 human figures were recorded and of these, only five are determinable as far as gender is concerned. All the human figures are painted and of the determinable figures four are female and one is male. All the paintings are restricted to the lower part of the boulder and do not make any contact with the engraved surface.

There are 27 animals depicted on this site of which the painted form is dominant (15 out of 27); all indeterminate animals are painted. Among the twelve identifiable animals, the giraffe is the most frequent with seven being engraved and one painted. The lowest frequency is recorded for the painted ostrich, antelope and felid which have a frequency of one respectively. Some geometrics, an engraved footprint and indeterminate motifs are also depicted. There were 21 geometrics recorded of which the engraved simple structure is dominant with a frequency of 15 out of 21. Paintings are by far more prominent than engravings at site D09/02 as Table 4 shows:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate humans	147	-	147
Man	1	-	1
Woman	4	-	4
Indeterminate animals	8	-	8
Ostrich	-	1	1
Giraffe	1	7	8
Antelope	1	2	3
Felid	1	-	1
Buck	4	-	4
Canid	-	2	2
Footprint	-	1	1
Complex structure	4	2	6
Simple structure	-	15	15
Remains	28	1	29
Erratic	-	10	10
Line	2	-	2
Smear	1	-	1
Dots	5	-	5
Total	207	41	248

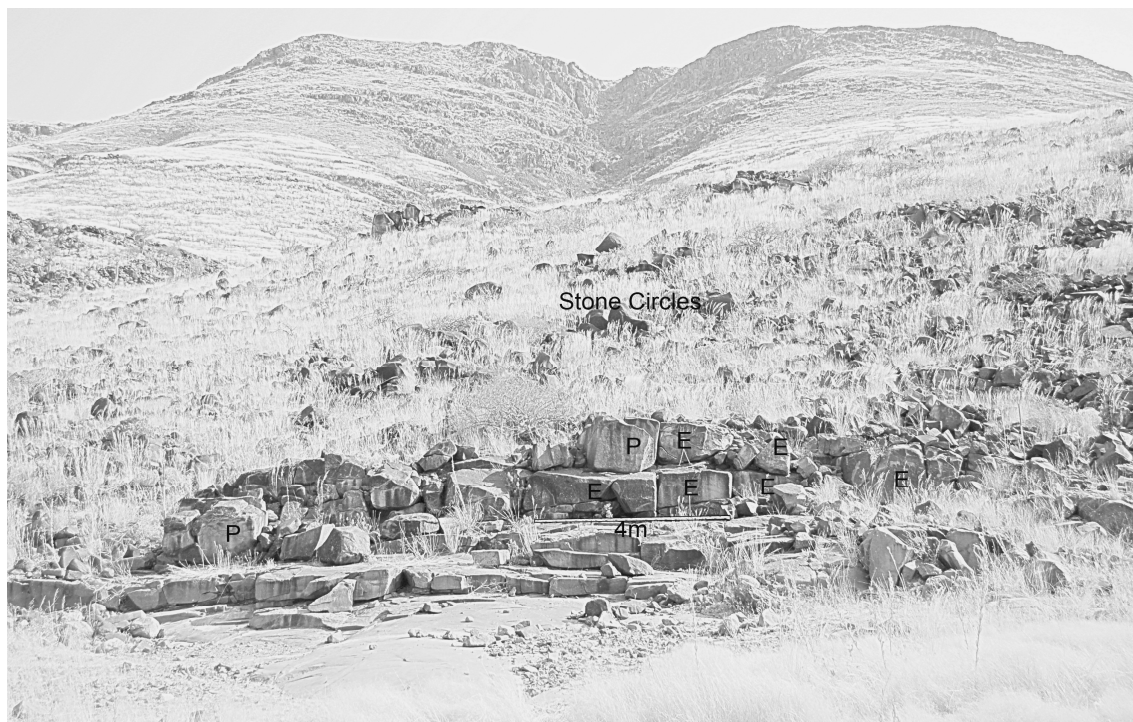
Table 4: Summary of motifs from site D09/02
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/03**
Classification (iii) Adjacent

Context

Site D09/03 is located at the foot of the valley along the river gorge; it occurs in a geo-zone that is an outlying foothill. The site is characterised by vertical boulders on which the rock art occurs and the vegetation surrounding it is mainly composed of grass, bushes and isolated trees. Traces of a zebra path are visible close to the site. There is an open field near to the site and water is in sight. However, like all the sites in the Dome Gorge, there is no permanent source of water; rather water would have been in sight during the rainy season. At site D09/03, two watercourses are visible close to the site. One is the Dome Gorge while the other is a riverbed

that runs along the eastern side of the site. The engravings on this site are visible from approximately 15 metres away but the paintings are faded and are only visible at close inspection. It is relatively easy to reach the site since the accent is a narrow passage that does not have a steep gradient. Although there is no shelter or overhang that would have made it suitable for habitation, some stone artefacts that belong to the Late Stone Age were recorded at the site. All the engravings and paintings on this site are depicted on dolerite boulders. The paintings are particularly threatened by water run-off while the engravings are threatened by rock disintegration. The site is 18 metres long but the section where engravings and paintings occur measures 1.10m x 1.55m, making it one of the smaller panels where the two genres have been combined. The main technique of engraving is pecking and there are a few depictions of hairlines, which are not deeply cut into the cortex of the rock. Some of the realistic engravings such as the zebra, gemsbok and ostrich are in a very good state of preservation (See Appendix 3 for photograph of zebra and gemsbok).



Photograph 3: Position of engravings and paintings (D09/03)
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Contents

Site D09/03 registered 75 individual paintings and engravings. A total of 21 painted human figures were recorded and all of them fall into the indeterminate category in the sense that their gender could not be discerned. This category registered the highest frequency of images at the site; they are faded but it is clear that they were made in monochrome red colour. The paintings appear on a boulder that is in the centre of the site but the boulder itself does not have any engravings. It is positioned in such a way that the engraved boulders are adjacent to it. The only engraved discernible animals that are placed near to the painted boulder are two canids. The boulder on which they are executed lies directly below that painted boulder in such a way that both genres and motifs can be viewed together from an eastern direction. The zebra is the most commonly depicted animal, appearing together with the gemsbok on a separate smaller boulder that is on the fringe of the site. The cortex of this boulder is black, and as such the engravings stand out and do not appear to be affected by patination when compared to the ones that appear on the central boulders. The engraved complex structures are made on a boulder that stands adjacent to the painted boulder. Both boulders can be viewed together from the same direction. There appears to be a closer relationship between the placement of paintings and symbols than paintings and animals. Table 5 summarises motifs from site D09/03:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate human	21	-	21
Indeterminate animal	4	-	4
Ostrich	-	2	2
Antelope	-	2	2
Canid	-	3	3
Zebra	-	4	4
Buck	-	1	1
Complex structure	1	5	6
Simple Structure	-	15	15
Remains	-	4	4
Erratic	-	12	12
Line	1	-	1
Total	27	48	75

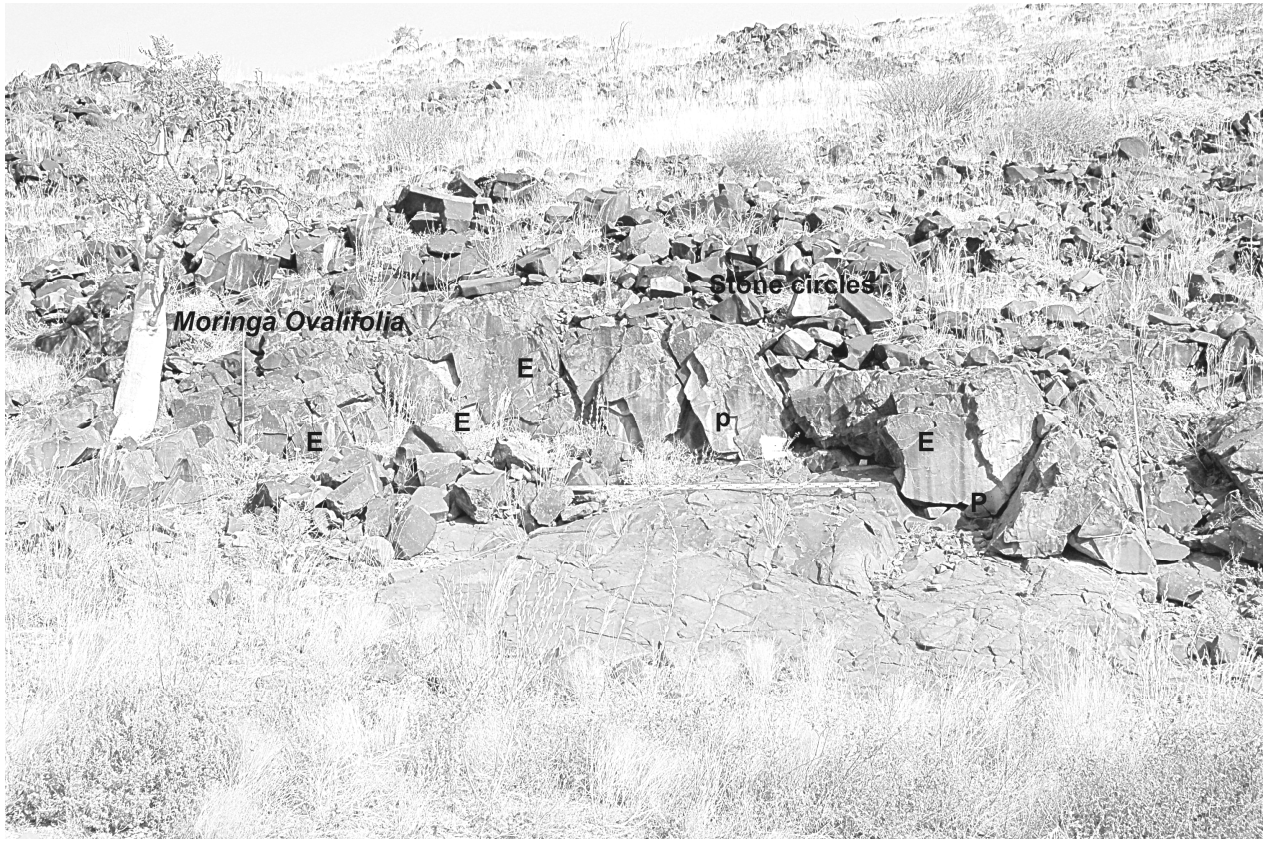
Table 5: Summary of motifs from site D09/03
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

On site D09/03 there are more engravings than paintings despite the fact that the painted human figures have the highest representation. All animal figures on this site are engraved but the highest frequency of engravings is recorded for the simple structures (in among the engraved images). There is a series of stone circles on the terrace that is directly above the rock art site. The stone circles are interconnected giving an impression of a complex “village”. However, due to the fact that the surface is overgrown with grass, no artefacts or any other evidence of human occupation of the stone circles was observed. There is no direct connection between the stone circles and the rock art at this site.

Site Number **D09/04**
Classification (ii) Juxtaposition

Context

Site D09/04 is located on the left bank approximately halfway along the Dome Gorge. It consists of vertical boulders and an open field in front of it, which is partly covered by a flat lying smooth rock surface. The vegetation around the site is mainly composed of grasses, bushes and scattered *Cammiphora Saxicola*. The most prominent floral feature of the site is a lone *Moringa Ovalifolia* that stands to the east of the painted and engraved boulders. This tree can also be seen on an earlier photograph that was taken by Scherz in 1960. On the slope above the rock art is an extensive spread of stone circles. Some remains of the bases of the stone circles are in contact with the boulders on which rock art occurs but do not incorporate the rock art into the circle; instead these stone structures are built on top of the boulders. The accent of landscape at this site is a narrow passage at the bottom of the valley. Some very few stone artefacts were observed at the site but they do not appear to originate from the site itself. The positioning of the site at the bottom of the valley and along the riverbank suggests that if material culture originated here (at the site), it would have been washed away by floods. It is therefore possible that the stone artefacts originate from the upper slope and have been deposited at the site either during floods or by tumbling down the talus. The site measures 15 metres in length but the engravings are confined to an area of 1.98m x 1.76m. The engravings are visible from a distance of approximately 15 metres while the paintings only become visible at close range because the colours have faded.



Photograph 4: Position of engravings and paintings (D09/04)
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Contents

Site D09/04 is relatively small in terms of the total amount of images that occur there. It has 64 individual engravings and paintings of which the painted humans are dominant. All human figures on this site are painted in monochrome red and fall into the indeterminate category in terms of gender identification. The human figures account for 44% of the total number of depictions on the site. The majority of the human figures are painted on the lower sections of the boulders and do not contact the engravings.

The second common category of depictions is the remains which have a frequency rate of 33%. Abstract art are the third-most represented depictions accounting for 23 %. Both simple and complex forms of abstract art are engraved but the simple structures are more dominant with a frequency of 93%. The simple structures are in the form of pecked circles. Animal figures have the lowest frequency of 6%. This category is comprised of only four depictions of which two fell into the indeterminate category. The only identifiable animal has some bovine characteristics but cannot be specifically discerned.

The engraving techniques applied on this site include outline and surface, as observed on animal depictions, and pecking as observed on the abstract art. Table 6 summarises the motifs from site D09/04:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate humans	24	-	24
Indeterminate animals	2	1	3
Bovid		1	1
Complex Structures		1	1
Simple Structures		14	14
Remains	5	5	10
Erratic	-	2	2
Obscure	-	3	3
Dots	-	5	5
Total	31	32	63

Table 6: Summary of motifs from site D09/04
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/05**

Classification (i) Superimposition (*paintings on engravings*), (iii) Adjacent

Context

Site D09/05 is located about five metres from the riverbed on the right bank of the gorge. It comprises of a series of vertical boulders and smaller low laying boulders that together give it a form of a rock outcrop. The site is set on a horizontal concave curvature while the vertical curvature is elongated. The accent of the landscape is an exposed hill that has a mild slope. A smooth rock surface forms the slope, which begins from the river bed and connects the painted boulders with the river bed. The vegetation around the site is mainly composed of sparsely distributed grasses, bushes, *Cammiphora Saxicola* and a lone *Moringa Ovalifolia*. Its location on a valley terrace near the bank of the river indicates that water would have been near to the site during the rainy season. It was observed during the fieldwork that the sand in the riverbed has the capacity to retain water for some weeks after the rains. Some spots in the riverbed, particularly in front of the site, were dug out by animals (possibly zebra since there are zebra footpaths in the vicinity) in order to access water.

There were no artefacts and no stone circles observed in the site and the site could not have been used for human habitation because there are no suitable places such as shelters or overhangs. The site is 45 metres wide but the main panel where paintings superimpose engravings (see Appendix 4 for reproduction of 'Fix R' and Appendix 5 for reproduction of 'Fix E' panels with superimposition) is 1.15m x 2.18m. The boulders on which rock art was executed in this site are hierarchically distributed, that is, there is the main panel (Fix R) as the central boulder and smaller panels distributed around it. The rock art on 'Fix R' is threatened by water run-off especially because the boulder is vertical. The site is generally accessible despite the mild slope.



Photograph 5: Position of engravings and paintings (D09/05 section a)
 Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Content

In documenting the rock art at site D09/05, the site was divided into two sections because it was too wide for practical photography. The site description that follows is thus presented in two parts and the sections of the sites have been labelled D09/05 (a) and D09/05 (b). However, the panel numbers have not been assigned to respective sections; rather they follow consecutively from

the first panel on the extreme left-hand side to the last panel on the right-hand side of the site, as viewed from the west. Altogether, 392 individual paintings and engravings were recorded at D09/05, of which the engravings represent 76% of the site's documented rock art.

The paintings are restricted to section (a) of the site. The painted motifs include humans, animals, complex structures, remains and obscures. Human figures are the most frequently painted motifs (see table 7 for frequencies). There are four painted panels and two panels where paintings are combined with engravings. The main panel (panel eight) has paintings superimposed on engravings and will be presented separately below. The other combination, as found on 'Fix E', depicts a painting of an indeterminate animal on engravings of geometrics. Both panels are reproduced below (see Appendices 6 and 7).

Most of the paintings on this site are washed dull by run-off water and in combination with a thin dust film or sinter covering the paintings which has, over time, limited their visibility. Some paintings are visible enough for the viewer to discern their form and posture. On panel three, there is a springbok in the right upper corner. The springbok is painted in red colour and it is in a lying down position. Such positions are not uncommon in the paintings of springbok in the upper Dâureb (Lenssen-Erz 1994). On the extreme upper left corner of the same panel, there is a superimposition of a zebra over a human figure. The human figure carries a quiver and a bow that faces upwards. The zebra is superimposed just above the human figure's waist. Its head is not clearly visible due to water run-off that deposited some salts from the rock over the painting. What is particularly interesting about this image is that both depictions share the legs. It is difficult to tell whether the human figure shares the zebra's front legs or the zebra shares the human legs. However, the lines of the individual images do not connect at the point where the human waist and the zebra backline meet, which may raise the question of whether or not this is a case of superimposition or whether they are simply two different images that are located in very close proximity to one another. Both images are separated by a section where water runs down the surface of the panel. This section appears to be darker than other parts of the panel.

The most visible painting is one of a hooked-face human male figure. It is located on the extreme lower right corner of the panel. The human figure carries a quiver and a bow that faces downwards. The figure is in a walking position and its front leg (right) ends at an exfoliation in the rock surface. However the exfoliation appears to have happened after the painting was done.

The engravings on site D09/05 were created using at least four techniques: outline, outline surface, grating and pecking; the majority were pecked. There is a clear preference of engraving technique in some motifs. The animals were outlined and then either grated or pecked inside while human footprints and geometrics were only outlined. The engravings are generally in very

good condition, except for cases where water has run over them resulting in a medium patination. Most of the engravings are viewed from the south in a northern viewing direction except for the geometric that is superimposed on a painted human figure, which can be viewed from the east in a western viewing direction. They are positioned, at the highest point, two meters above the ground and, at the lowest point they contact the ground level without being executed on the floor. Another panel has an engraving of a gemsbok and a human footprint. The gemsbok faces east and has some horns that bend backwards and are engraved using the pecking technique. The hump area of the gemsbok has two distinct lines that begin at the forequarter of the body and join at the back of the head just below the bent horns. The human footprint is placed above the head of the gemsbok, has four toes and is facing downwards.

The second set of engravings is found on panel six. They consist of animals and geometrics. Among the animals are two gemsboks that also face east, an equid facing west and a giraffe that faces west. It appears that there is a pattern in the way the animals on this site were placed, i.e. either facing east or west. Only antelopes and the elephants face east. The geometrics are mainly circular and completely closed and integrated to form complex structures. A boulder with engravings of two simple structures which disintegrated from the main panel was documented as part of the main panel. There is no evidence of it having been engraved before the disintegration. On the main panel a giraffe is placed facing west. It is outlined and has a fully pecked body. The legs end at the edge of the rock, giving it an impression of either emerging out of or sinking into the rock.

'Fix R' is the most complex in the site and in the whole Dome Gorge. It occupies the central location in the hierarchical distribution of blocks. The panel measures 1.15m x 2.18m and has a painting superimposed on engravings. The right-hand section of the boulder has been defaced by water running down the side of it. A natural fault in the boulder runs from the left hand edge for nearly one meter to almost the centre of the panel. Another smaller one runs from the lower right edge for almost 30 cm. The two lines would have met if they continued. Both lines are enhanced with peckings on their edges and inside them. The first, and longer line, ends with some remains of red pigment.

The second section of site D09/05 consists only of three engraved panels. It is located on the far right of site D09/05 (a) and all the three panels can be viewed in a south to north direction. These panels are a bit lower than the ones found at D09/05 (a) and are all close to the riverbed. The first is located closest to the riverbed; such that in case of the river overflowing, the panel would be completely submerged in water. It consists of a single image of an equid that is outlined and its body is closely and finely pecked to give an impression of a grated engraving. The neck of the equid is not proportional since it is wider. The legs are also disproportionately

long; of particular interest is the front leg which resembles that of a giraffe. The second engraving is an eland that is also outlined and the body is fully pecked. Its backline from the hump to the hindquarter is deeply engraved. The horns are straight and located on the edge of the rock. A crack in the rock runs from the lower right-hand edge of the rock to almost its center. The fore leg is engraved in such a way that the upper leg (femur) ends at the top of the crack and the lower leg (tibia) begins below the crack. The hind leg is also divided by a larger crack in the rock but this could have happened after the engraving because, unlike the fore leg, the hind leg is “broken” by the crack. Some peck marks are above the eland and in front of its face. The legs end a few millimetres before the edge of the rock. Table 7 summarises motifs from site D09/05:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate humans	52	1	53
Man	1	-	1
Indeterminate animals	4	12	16
Bovid	1	-	1
Springbok	1	-	1
Ostrich	1	6	7
Giraffe	-	2	2
Eland	-	1	1
Zebra	1	-	1
Antelope	1	5	6
Buck	1	-	1
Canid	-	1	1
Kudu	1	1	2
Gemsbok	1	5	6
Bird	1	-	1
Elephant		2	2
Complex Structure	3	49	52
Simple Structure	-	125	125
Spoor	-	2	2
Footprint	-	2	2
Remains	28	-	28
Erratic	-	76	76

Obscure	4	-	4
Dots	3	20	23
Line	20	-	20
Smear	2	-	2
Total	126	310	436

Table 7: Summary of motifs from site D09/05
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/06**
Classification (ii) Juxtaposition

Context

Site D09/06 consists of four vertical standing boulders that have a combined length of almost three metres. It is located approximately two metres from the present riverbed on the left bank of the gorge. It is set in a depression composed mainly of the bedrock at the bottom of the valley.



Photograph 6: Position of engravings and paintings (D09/06)
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

The vertical curvature is concave and down it runs a watercourse that meets the ravine at approximately eight metres away from the site, meaning that in times of rain there is water in sight. The vegetation surrounding it is mainly composed of grasses and a few scattered *Acacia Montis-Usti*, also known as the *Brandberg Acacia*. The site could not have provided a suitable dwelling location and no artefacts were observed around it.

Content

The site is relatively small and has only 55 individual depictions that are distributed on three panels. The painted images are more prevalent than the engraved ones with the most commonly depicted motif as the indeterminate human figure. All animals and symbols on this site are engraved. Two animal spoor were recorded and they represent that of a large antelope and possibly a giraffe. The large antelope spoor is engraved on panel one and is found among geometrics, mainly complex structures. It is deeply engraved, which makes it stand out among some engravings that look dull due to the yellow colour of the boulder on which they are executed. The second spoor of a giraffe is also the most visible engraving. The other engravings on this panel consist mainly of erratic figures. The spoor is placed on a plane above the painted human figures. The paintings are also faded and are only visible from a close range. Some hairline engraving of an indiscernible form occurs on panel three. It appears to be an incomplete figure of an animal whose hind-quarter was scratched into the rock face. Table 8 below provides a summary of the motifs from site D09/06:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate human	24	-	24
Woman	2	-	2
Giraffe	-	1	1
Complex structure	-	6	6
Simple structure	-	5	5
Animal spoor	-	2	2
Human footprint	-	5	5
Remains	2	-	2
Erratic	-	4	4
Dots		4	
Total	28	27	55

Table 8: Summary of motifs from site D09/06
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number D09/07
Classification (i) Superimposition (*engraving on painting*)

Context

Site D09/07 is relatively small in the sense that it comprised of a few images which are distributed over a length of 19.5 metres. It is located on the right side on the bank of the gorge and has smooth bedrock that stretches in front of the site into the riverbed. The site is characterised by some vertical boulders on which the engravings and the paintings occur and rubble of small boulders that makes walking in the site difficult. The slope below the site is negligible while the slope above the site is steep. The overall slope is composed of a vertically convex curvature and a horizontally concave curvature. A watercourse runs down the slope on



Photograph 7: Position of engravings and paintings (D09/07)
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

the left hand side of the site and meets the ravine approximately six metres away from the site; meaning that in times of rain there is water in sight. The vegetation surrounding it is mainly composed of grasses and a few scattered *Cammiphora Saxicola*. The site could not have provided a suitable dwelling location although a few scatters of artefacts were observed around it. The rock art on this site is generally in good condition although it is threatened by water run-off. There are some stone structures on the terrace that is above the site.

Content

Altogether the site has 39 individual depictions that are executed on six panels. With a frequency of 89%, the engravings outnumber the paintings. The most commonly depicted motif is abstract art and in this category, the complex structure is represented more than the simple structure. Panel two consists of some grid geometrics that have a shape of a leaf. They are depicted together with an antelope, an engraved human figure and an ostrich. All the engravings on this panel are only outlined. A few random peckings are on the body of the antelope. Below the antelope there is an outline engraving of two rhinoceroses. The second rhino's head disappears or blends into the hind-quarter of the larger rhino in front of it. This gives an impression of two rhinos walking side-by-side with one slightly behind the other. On the second rhino, only the spine and hind-quarter are depicted. The back leg of the rhino in front is engraved in such a manner that it appears to be the front leg of the rhino behind it in a walking posture.

A different type of superimposition where an engraving of a complex structure superimposes a painted human figure is depicted on site D09/07. The superimposition is mainly on the back of the human figure just above the waist. The head of the painted human figure is no longer visible due to some peck marks of a complex structure that is comprised of five integrated circular shapes. It is very rare for engravings to superimpose paintings and this may point to the fact that while there are some very old engravings in the Dome Gorge, there are also some that are relatively recent. In addition to the paintings and engravings on this panel (which is isolated from the cluster of panels at D09/07), a stone structure encircles the panel and incorporates the panel as part of the wall. The superimposed panel is reproduced in Appendix 6. This is found on a boulder that has a big complex geometric structure that measures 20cm x 15cm and depicts a honey comb. Table 9 summarises the motifs from site D09/07:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate animal	-	2	2
Indeterminate human	1	1	2
Ostrich	-	2	2
Antelope	-	1	1
Rhino	-	2	2
Complex Structure	-	9	9
Simple Structure	-	7	7
Remains	1		1
Erratic	-	9	9
Obscure	2	-	2
Dots		2	2
Total	4	35	39

Table 9: Summary of motifs from site D09/07
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/08**

Classification (i) Superimposition, (engraving on engraving), (ii) Juxtaposition,
(iii) Adjacent, (iv) Co-existence

Context

Altogether 187 paintings, 94 engravings and six rock gongs were recorded on the site. The rock gongs are found on a rocky platform in front of the vertical wall such that the smooth surface of the wall would have produced some echoes when hit with another stone. The vertical wall could not have provided shelter, which suggests that it was not used as a dwelling place but could as well have served as an important place for communal activities. However, the cliff side of the platform has some rocks that are arranged in the same way as other stone circles found in the Dome Gorge. The section is located adjacent to the riverbed which means during the rainy season water would be in sight. Some artefacts, including a lone ostrich eggshell bead and Late Stone Age stone artefacts, were observed on the section but they appear to have tumbled down the talus from the cavern above. At the lower end (western side) of the platform are some boulders on which only paintings exist which include 50 finger dots. These boulders have been incorporated into stone circles.

The mixture of paintings, engravings, stone artefacts, rock gongs and stone circles in site D09/08 makes it the culturally most diverse site in the Dome Gorge and suggests that perhaps it was a focal point for communal activities.

Contents

The site was divided into three sections for practical photography reasons. The following description is presented in three parts following the consecutive numbering of the three sections of the site (a-c) as they were recorded. A total number of 271 individual depictions were documented at D09/08. A total of 69% of the images are painted. Human figures are more prevalent than any other motifs, and among them the indeterminate humans are dominant. In addition to humans, animals, abstract art and some painted finger dots occur in the site as well.

Site D09/08: section (a)

Most of the paintings from the whole site D09/08 are found on section (a), which is located at the foot of the elevation and consists of an almost three metre vertical wall which is 40 metres long. It also comprises of some outlying boulders, some of which were incorporated into stone circles. This section (a) is on the bank of the gorge and the panels that have rock art are approximately three metres from the riverbed. In front of the vertical wall there is a rocky platform on which the rock gongs are found as described above. The first set of paintings depicts a scene of at least twelve identifiable human figures. The panel measures approximately 3m x 1.5m. The first human figure faces west and is superimposed by hairline engravings of lines. The lines are lightly scratched into the rock surface and begin a few centimetres above the head of the painted human figure. They form a "grid" geometric from which stripes of lines run down to the human figure. The lines do not superimpose the painted figure. Only a few of them run parallel to its spine. The second set of paintings is separated from the human figure by a section in the rock where water runs down the surface. These paintings form a scene of more than ten individual figures. The first two figures are located in the right-hand section of the scene. One of them is carrying a quiver bag and holds a large bow above its head that faces downwards. The other has out-stretched arms. Both figures are facing west. The central figure is bending forwards and holds some indiscernible object that looks like a stick with a bulge on one end. Immediately behind this figure is another one that is also carrying a quiver bag and holding a large bow above its head. These paintings are also juxtaposed to some engravings of animals that are placed on the far right-hand section of the panel. This comprises of a set of five animals of which four appear in two sets of silhouettes. The first set is of a male eland with a large dew lap. The body of the eland is fully pecked. Only the back line, tail, skullcap and horns of the

silhouette of the eland are outlined. Some lightly engraved hairlines were superimposed on both animals. The lines resemble those that are superimposed on the painted human figure that is in the right-hand section of the panel. The second set of silhouette comprises of an antelope that also has a fully pecked body. Its silhouette also depicts the back line, the skull-cap and the horns. The fifth animal is an equid that is placed above the silhouettes. All the animals on this panel are facing east and are in a walking posture.

Site D09/08: section (b)

The second section (b) of the site is comprised of a vertical wall which stands on a platform above section (a). The platform provides a natural stage on which the rock gongs are found. The paintings on this wall are distributed over six panels and are very faint, owing mainly to a thin film of perhaps dust that has mixed with water and is layered on the paintings or sinter.

The engravings from the section are varied in motifs but the geometrics dominate. There is also a human figure on a rock gong. Some hairline engravings of geometrics are evidently older than the pecked engravings that appear on the same section of the site. The hairlines form different geometric shapes such as half concentric circles and “grids” as they criss-cross the panel. They are heavily patinated while the pecked engravings are still comparably fresh. The hairlines disappear under the pecked engravings where they contact each other. For example, some three concentric half circles protrude from the back of the ostrich engraving to the front of its neck. Where the lines meet the ostrich's neck they disappear and only reappear on the other side of the neck. There is also an old line that was pecked when the outline of the ostrich was engraved but part of the line can be found on the body of the ostrich where now peck marks occur.

Site D09/08: section (c)

The third section (c) of site D09/08 consists of a scatter of boulders that are found on the far right-hand side of section (a). Only one boulder has paintings of human figures and finger dots, which are painted on the lower plane. These are the only painted finger dots that were documented in the Dome Gorge. The boulder was once incorporated into a stone structure but that structure is now largely destroyed and only a few rocks are evidence of it.

Site D09/08: section (d)

The fourth section (d) of site D09/08 is directly above the vertical rock wall and stands approximately 25 meters from the riverbed on a mild slope. It consists of a single small cavern that measures 157cm in depth, 160cm in width at the entrance and has a height of 154cm at the entrance. It has an enclosure of a stone circle in front of it in which some Late Stone Age artefacts are found. This could possibly be the origin of the stone artefacts that tumbled down the talus to the first spot below it. Inside the cavern four flat rocks are in the centre and one of them appears to have some remains of red ochre. The cavern has paintings only on its inside walls and the images are all done in monochrome red and depict five humans, one zebra, two springboks, one antelope, two indeterminate animals, one obscure and six remains. This spot commands a very good view of the Dome Gorge; especially the eastern and northern parts.

Site D09/08: section (e)

The fifth section (e) is located on a terrace directly above the cavern. It also commands a vantage view of the gorge. It is made up of stone circles which measure on average two metres wide and 76cm high that are subdivided into four chambers / rooms. Some boulders with engravings of a geometric, a hand print and an antelope are incorporated into the stone structure. Only engravings occur in this section, of which two are particularly important in terms of providing some relative chronology of the engravings in section (d). One boulder has a handprint that is relatively younger than the antelope that appears on the same boulder. The handprint is made through deep scrapping of the cortex of the rock and is still white in colour which indicates that it is not very old. The antelope on the other hand is polished and is easy to miss because it is heavily patinated such that its colour blends with the cortex of the boulder. The second case of relative stratigraphy is encountered on the boulder where a heavily patinated, polished antelope is superimposed by a relatively younger image of a footprint. The footprint is engraved on top of the back leg of the antelope. A further footprint is engraved above the tails of the antelope but does not superimpose it. While the antelope was outlined and has its body smoothed by polishing, the outlines of both footprints were done by random pecking. In this case we have three different engraving techniques that may be suggestive of three different phases of engraving at the same site. If patination is to be taken as a reliable indicator of relative age of engravings, then it would be safe to suggest that the polished antelopes are the oldest, followed by the footprints and then the hand print is the youngest engraving on section (d). There is also a heavily patinated engraving of a complex structure. This particular geometric is located approximately 2.5 metres from the handprint. It has a beetle-like shape with five lines extending from its "head". The body is divided into a grid of 33 sections. The spot also yielded

some stone artefacts, bone remains and grit-tempered pot sherds in one of the chambers. Table 10 summarises the motifs from site D09/08:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate human	81	5	86
Man	-	1	1
Indeterminate animals	5	10	15
Ostrich	-	5	5
Antelope	-	6	6
Buck	4	-	4
Equid	-	1	1
Felid	3	1	4
Zebra	1	1	2
Eland	3	-	3
Springbok	2	-	2
Giraffe	8	-	8
Complex structure	-	15	15
Simple structure	-	12	12
Spoor	-	1	1
Human footprint	-	1	1
Handprint	-	2	2
Erratic	-	14	14
Obscure	1	-	1
Meander	1	-	1
Remains	23	-	23
Hairlines		2	2
Dots	58	-	58
Gong rocks	-	6	6
Total	189	85	274

Table 10: Summary of motifs from site D09/08

Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/12**
Classification (iii) Adjacent

Context

Site D09/12 is located along the bank of the river and consists of vertical boulders that stretch over seven metres in length. Only four of the boulders have rock art on them and of these four only one has paintings. Water in the rainy season would be a few metres to reach since it is located on a ridge along the bank and also a ravine runs a few metres away from the site. The site has a concave vertical curvature while its horizontal curvature is elongated. The accent of the landscape is an entrance of a valley. The site is accessible, navigable and habitable. There are some hut circles in the open field between the site and the ravine. A few stone artefacts were observed but they may not have originated from the site. It is possible that they were deposited from elsewhere during the rainy season. The vegetation around the site is composed mainly of grasses and scattered shrubs and trees.

Content

Altogether there are a total of 27 individual paintings and engravings on site D09/12, paintings are more predominant than the engravings even though only one panel has paintings. The paintings are of humans and animals but only one human is still clearly visible; all the other paintings are faded. They are depicted on a lower plane than the engravings found on the same panel. This panel is adjacent to one which has only engravings of mainly complex structures and two simple structures. There is a small vertical boulder on which a "sitting" giraffe is engraved. The indeterminate animal that is depicted above the giraffe is engraved in a linear separating technique while the giraffe is pecked. There is a zebra rubbing stone in the site near engravings of symbols and a bird spoor. Table 11 summarises the motifs from site D09/12:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate human	5	-	5
Indeterminate animal	1	-	1
Giraffe	-	2	2
Complex structure	-	1	1
Simple structure	-	4	4
Bird spoor	-	1	1
Remains	8	-	8
Erratic	-	2	2
Line	2	1	3
Total	16	11	27

Table 11: Summary of motifs from site D09/12
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/13**
Classification (ii) Juxtaposition



Photograph 8: Position of engravings and paintings (D09/13)
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Context

Site D09/13 is located about seven metres from the present bank of the Dome Gorge at a mid slope of the valley. It has a mild slope that is formed mostly of bedrock and rubble from a watercourse that runs through the site to the gorge. Its vertical and horizontal curvatures are both concave. The accent of the landscape is water shaped. The vegetation around this site is mainly composed of grass and shrubs of which the *Cammiphora Saxicola* is most prominent. The site consists of a series of vertical boulders that stretch for ten metres in length. It is accessible and navigable but no artefacts were observed to suggest that it was used for purposes other than painting and engraving. The engravings on this site are in a relative good condition while the paintings are faded mainly due to water run-off.

Contents

A total of 85 individual depictions of paintings and engravings were documented on site D09/13. A total of 88% of the rock art at this site are engravings of which the simple structure is the most prevalent motif. All animals are engraved except for one buck. The majority of the animal depictions were assigned to the indeterminate category. Three panels have combinations of engravings and paintings but there is no single case of superimposition of the two genres. On one of the boulders the paintings and engravings appear on different sections of the rock and are very faint. There is also an engraving that has a mushroom shape that is fully pecked. On the other panel the paintings are faded but at least some human figures could still be discerned. The last combination occurs in an overhang; one of the images in the overhang is a male figure who is carrying a hunting bag and is in a running posture. The other paintings on this panel are only remains. Table 12 summarises motifs from site D09/13:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate human	3	-	3
Indeterminate animal	3	12	15
Ostrich	-	4	4
Giraffe	-	2	2
Zebra	-	3	3
Buck	1	-	1
Complex Structure	-	4	4
Simple Structure	-	22	22

Remains	-	5	5
Erratic	-	18	18
Obscure	3	-	3
Dots		5	5
Total	10	75	85

Table 12: Summary of motifs from site D09/13
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/14**
Classification (iii) Adjacent

Context

D09/14 is a small site comprising of only three boulders. It is located on the right bank of the Dome Gorge and stands on small bedrock that protrudes from the ravine. The site is approximately three metres higher than the riverbed and has an open field nearby. The accent of



Photograph 9: Position of engravings and paintings (D09/14)
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

the landscape is water-shaped while both its vertical and horizontal curvatures are elongated. The site is accessible and suitable for habitation and some stone structures were recorded around it. The vegetation around it is composed mainly of grasses, shrubs and a few scattered trees.

Content

The paintings at site D09/14 are placed adjacent to a panel that bears a pecked engraving of a zebra. The paintings are very faded but some human figures and indeterminate animals can still be discerned. All the engravings are pecked while the paintings are made in red pigment. Altogether only 14 images occur on this site. The painted images are placed slightly lower than the engravings. Table 13 summarises motifs from site D09/14:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate humans	4	-	4
Indeterminate animals	-	3	3
Zebra	-	1	1
Erratic	-	3	3
Remains	2	-	2
Obscure	1	-	1
Total	7	7	14

Table 13: Summary of motifs from site D09/14

Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/16**

Classification (i) Superimposition (*paintings only*), (iii) Adjacent

Context

D09/16 is a small site consisting of only three boulders and is located on the right bank of the ravine, approximately seven metres west of site D09/05. Two boulders bear paintings while the third one has engravings only. The site is characterised by a heap of rubble resulting from river deposition. Although the site appears suitable for habitation no artefacts were observed. The accent of the landscape is a narrow passage. The vertical curvature is elongated while the horizontal curvature is concave. The vegetation around the site is mainly composed of grasses, shrubs and scattered trees. The depictions are degraded by water run-off.

Content

A total number of 30 images were documented at this site. Paintings account for the largest amount, namely 86%. Humans are the most common depictions among the paintings, followed by the buck that is depicted four times in total. The paintings occur at two of the three panels in the site. On the first panel the paintings are placed on the bottom plane of the boulder. Although they are faded, a buck in a walking posture (according to the posture of its fore legs) can be discerned. The fore legs are thick and resemble human legs but the hind legs are very faded. On the second panel are some paintings of remains and on the lower plane of the boulder two groups of human figures are depicted that are in a single file. They are reminiscent of the girls "initiation" from Amis 12 (Pager 1989: 150-1). Some smaller figures are depicted with their arms stretched out. There is a superimposition of some two bucks over what appears to be remains of a human figure. This superimposition is found on a triangular piece of rock that is at the bottom right hand plane of the panel. Table 14 summarises the motifs from site D09/16:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate humans	13	-	13
Buck	4	-	4
Complex structure	-	1	1
Remains	7	-	7
Erratic	-	2	1
Obscure	-	2	2
Dots	1	-	1
Total	25	5	30

Table 14: Summary of motifs from site D09/16
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/17**
Classification (iv) Co-existence

Context

D09/17 is located on the slope above site D09/16 and consists of three panels. The paintings are clearly separated from the engravings which places the site in the Co-existence category. The engravings occur on two small boulders that are located on the lower slope on the sides of the site. The site is generally habitable and a few traces of stone artefacts were observed. The accent of the landscape is water-shaped while both the horizontal and vertical curvatures are

elongated with the horizontal curvature tending to be flat. The vegetation in the site is similar to that found on site D09/16 - mainly grasses, bushes and scattered trees. The paintings are degraded due to water run-off.



Photograph 10: Position of engravings and paintings (D09/17)
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Content

Altogether 20 individual figures were documented on site D09/17, of which the painted are more dominant. The paintings are placed on the most prominent feature of the site which is a small vertical wall. A crack in the rock surface is conspicuous especially because one of the human figures is painted in such a way that it appears to be running along the crack. The other paintings that occur in the site include one buck and one antelope. The paintings are small and faded. The engravings on the other hand are done on some inconspicuous rocks. The engraving technique applied is rough pecking. On one of the panels, an indeterminate human figure and a

buck are depicted while on the next a buck is displayed. Table 15 summarises motifs from site D09/17:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate humans	3	1	4
Antelope	1	-	1
Buck	1	2	3
Remains	7	-	7
Erratic	-	3	3
Dots	2	-	2
Total	14	6	20

Table 15: Summary of motifs from site D09/17
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/29**
Classification (iv) Co-existence

Context

D09/29 is situated on a foot of elevation on the right bank of the Dome ravine. It consists of vertical boulders that stand at a lower slope on a bedrock that extends to the riverbed; its horizontal and vertical curvatures are both convex shaped. The site is habitable and there is a watercourse and an open field nearby. There is evidence of human occupation of the site in the form of a few stone artefacts, ostrich egg shell fragments and bone remains in addition to some hut circles. The vegetation around the site is composed of grass. The paintings are faded owing to water run-off, while the engravings are threatened by rock disintegration.

Content

A total of 94% of the images at D09/29 are engraved of which the most common motif is the simple structure. The only animal painted is an ostrich and the most commonly depicted painted motif is the indeterminate human. The indeterminate animal is the most commonly depicted among animals. The engravings were done using four techniques: outline, polished, pecked and hairlines but most of them are pecked. The display surface of the engravings is predominantly at a 45° angle on vertical boulders but some of them are displayed at eye level. Most of the

geometric engravings are depicted on the floor. Table 16 summarises the motifs from site D09/29:

Motif	Paintings	Engravings	Total
Indeterminate human	10	-	10
Indeterminate animal	-	18	18
Springbok	-	1	1
Ostrich	2	8	10
Giraffe	-	6	6
Zebra	-	2	2
Buck	-	3	3
Antelope	-	4	4
Equid	-	2	2
Gemsbok	-	1	1
Complex structure	-	45	45
Simple structure	-	50	50
Spoor	-	11	11
Footprint	-	3	3
Remains	2	2	4
Erratic	-	35	35
Dots	25	-	25
Meander	1	-	1
Total	40	191	231

Table 16: Summary of motifs from site D09/29
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/30**
Classification (iv) Co-existence

Context

Site D09/30 is located on a cliff about five metres away from the riverbed on the right bank. It is not suitable for habitation; the rock art on this site is executed on vertical boulders. The accent of the landscape can be described as the foot of an elevation and the slope has a convex vertical curvature and an elongated horizontal curvature. No other traces of human occupation of the

site were observed except for stone structures. The paintings are degraded due to water run-off. The vegetation around the site is composed of bushes and grass.



Photograph 11: Position of engravings and paintings (D09/30)

Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Content

The site consists of eight panels on which a total of 40 individual images are executed. The painted indeterminate human motif has the highest representation. The paintings are generally blurred owing to water run-off and a film of accretion over the painted surface; however some motifs could still be discerned, for example, human figures on panel three. All the paintings are done on a vertical wall that faces the riverbed. Engravings on the other hand are made on small open- air boulders. They are mainly pecked, except for panel eight on which an engraving of an indeterminate animal was made by repeatedly scratching some lines in the rock surface. The engraved boulders are distributed in such a way that they form a semi-circle behind the painted wall. Table 17 summarises motifs from site D09/30:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate human	14	-	14
Indeterminate animal	3	1	4
Ostrich	-	1	1
Giraffe	1	-	1
Antelope	1	1	2
Canid	-	1	1
Buck	1	-	1
Ungulate	-	1	1
Remains	10	-	10
Erratic	-	3	3
Complex structure	2	-	2
Total	32	8	40

Table 17: Summary of motifs from site D09/30
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/36**
Classification (iii) Adjacent, (iv) Co-existence

Context

Site D09/36 is situated on the left bank of the Dome Gorge and resembles site D09/02 in the manner in which the boulders are arranged and the way in which the painted and engraved panels are distributed. The painted panels are located on a lower slope, while most of the engraved panels are distributed on the slope above the paintings. The site also has a similarity to site D09/02 in the fact that there is a case where two boulders, on which paintings are adjacent to engravings, occur in an inverted V-shape. A further striking similarity between site D09/36 and D09/02 is the existence of a flaked boulder that has some geometric engravings. The boulder on D09/02 is described by Ouzman (2002). The location of the boulders is strikingly similar as well, since both occur in the flat open field on the riverbed. Although the site is navigable and accessible, it is not suitable for habitation. The upper slope of the site is characterised by rubble from boulders tumbling down the slope while the landscape itself is relatively even with the foot of elevation and the slope has a convex vertical curvature. A few ostrich eggshell fragments that are not modified were the only traces of artefacts recorded on the site. The vegetation around it is mainly composed of grasses and a few trees.

Content

A total of 74 individual figures were documented at site D09/36 out of which the engraved figures are represented more than the painted figures. Among the engravings, the complex structure is the most commonly depicted motif. All animals, except the buck and the ostrich, are engraved and the indeterminate animals are depicted most. Among the paintings, the remains are depicted most while only seven indeterminate human figures were painted. Some of the human figures are elongated. Some engravings are done on the floor for example a pecked rhino and some incised complex structures. There is some resemblance between one of the panels from this site and one from site D09/02 as mentioned above. It has some painted small human figures on the left wall, while the right wall has some engraved animals such as a hyena and a giraffe. Some of the engravings are located on the lower edge of the wall such that they contact the ground. A boulder that has complex geometrics at Site D09/36 resembles one at site D09/02. It is one metre high and polycentric and has an almost triangular side that is covered with a honey-comb motif. Part of the rock has been broken, possibly by human action. There are several flake marks on the rock which suggest that humans deliberately removed parts of the rock. The patination on the flake marks suggests that they were flaked a long time ago. Part of the rock is polished which indicates that zebras use it as a rubbing stone. Table 18 summarises the motifs from site D09/36:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate human	7	-	7
Indeterminate animal	2	6	8
Ostrich	1	-	1
Giraffe	-	2	2
Elephant	-	1	1
Buck	2	-	2
Antelope	-	4	4
Rhino	-	1	1
Hyena	-	1	1
Complex structure	-	14	14
Simple structure	-	10	10
Remains	13	-	13
Erratic		10	10
Total	25	49	74

Table 18: Summary of motifs from site D09/36
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number	D09/37
Classification	(i) Superimposition (<i>painting on engraving</i>), (ii) Juxtaposition, (iii) Adjacent, (iv) Co-existence

Context

D09/37 is the most south-eastern site in the Dome Gorge. It is an exposed hill that is located in the channel of the ravine. The water in the ravine would run past some of the small boulders that have rock art on them during the rainy season. The site is characterised mainly by small and vertical boulders that make it form a kopje. It is visible from about 300 metres away. It is accessible, navigable and habitable. Some pot sherds and a whole ostrich egg shell were documented in the site. The vegetation is composed of trees, shrubs and grass. The engravings and the paintings in the site are affected by water run-off.

Content

The site was divided into ten transects (A-J) to facilitate systematic documentation of the rock art and its associated archaeology. In this section only two transects, A and D, are described in detail. The rest of the site is described in general. A total of 363 individual images were documented in the site of which 98% of the images are engravings. The simple structure is the most commonly depicted motif. Only three human figures and a snake are painted, whereby one of the human figures superimposes an engraved elephant. The most commonly depicted animal is the antelope.

The paintings were found in transect D which is located on the north-western part of the kopje. Transect D is characterised by a steppe in the back of the gorge that forms a ridge of vertical boulders. One of the boulders, on which the paintings occur, has some exfoliated sections. It is evident that the rock exfoliated before the paintings were made, because one of the human figures and the snake are both partly painted in the exfoliated sections. There is an acacia tree to the east of the boulder and the ground in front of the ridge is covered by some bedrock on which smaller boulders stand. There are some paintings on the central boulder. On the far left there are some paintings of human figures that are faint, owing to water run-off and a film of dust. A few centimetres from the section of the rock where water runs off is an engraving of what appears to be an elephant that faces west. A painted human figure in a running posture is superimposed on the head of the elephant. The elephant's body is fully covered by peck marks. Some more erratic peck marks are located in front of the elephant's head. A few centimetres from the head of the elephant is another exfoliated section of the panel. A snake with ears is

painted partly in this exfoliated section. It is executed in monochrome red pigment. Above the snake painting there are some engraved simple structures but they do not contact the painting. The other boulders in transect D are engraved with complex and simple structures. Mostly the engravings are heavily patinated except for a few, mainly simple structures that are not patinated. There is also a possible rock gong that bears some engravings of complex structures. Some hairline engravings were recorded in transect D and they are the first known naturalistic hairlines from this region of Namibia. The hairlines are of an eland and a gemsbok and have since been published (Lenssen-Erz & Gwasira 2010). They occur on small boulders and are produced with a “[...] single movement of the hand [...]” (ibid: 215). They are heavily patinated such that they are difficult to detect and it is impossible to make a good photograph of them. The eland is a male that faces left and has a big dewlap. The eland has some similar features to the one found in Magaliesberg in South Africa (Steel 1984; Lewis-Williams & Dowson 1989; Woodhouse 1999) and these include the emphasised dewlap, a triangular shaped feature extending between the mandible and the neck and the frontal depiction of the horns. Table 19 summarises motifs from site D09/37:

Motifs	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate human	3	-	3
Indeterminate animal	-	5	5
Ostrich	-	3	3
Eland	-	2	2
Zebra	-	1	1
Buck	-	1	1
Ungulate	-	2	2
Antelope	-	5	5
Bird	-	1	1
Rhino	-	1	1
Snake	1	-	1
Giraffe	-	6	6
Canid	-	1	1
Complex	-	49	49
Simple structure	-	145	145
Spoor	-	3	3
Footprint	-	2	2

Remains	-	1	1
Erratic	-	101	101
Dots	-	30	30
Total	4	359	363

Table 19: Summary of motifs from site D09/37

Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/39**
Classification (iii) Adjacent

Context

Site D09/39 is located on the left bank of the ravine, approximately 60 metres above the riverbed on a slope that has many loose boulders. The lower slope of the site is difficult to climb owing to the loose boulders and because it is steep as well. The upper slope is composed of a very smooth boulder surface. The accent of the landscape is water shaped while both horizontal and vertical curvatures are concave shaped. The site is habitable because it has an overhang. Some possible ash was observed on the floor inside the overhang. A few stone artefacts and some hut circles were also recorded in the site. The paintings are extremely faded such that no good photograph could be taken. The degradation is caused by both water run-off and wind erosion. The site is sparsely vegetated by some grass and scattered trees.

Content

The site is relatively small and consists of only 24 images of which 74% are engraved. The symbols (complex and simple structures) are the predominant motif. However, the symbols occur on small boulders in the site but not in close association with the paintings. The paintings are found on a panel which is adjacent to the engraved wall. A faint human figure is the only image that is discernible among the paintings. Remains are likely to be more common among the paintings because of the poor state of conservation at the site.

The most visible figure in the site is an engraving of an indeterminate animal that can be seen from about 50 metres distance. It is outlined and polished and has a tail that is disproportionately long. The left foreleg is folded at the knee and its "hoof" connects with the right foreleg, which gives it a walking posture. Table 20 summarises motifs from site D09/39:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate human	1	-	1
Indeterminate animal	-	2	2
Ostrich	-	1	1
Complex structure	-	3	3
Simple structure	-	4	4
Remains	7	-	7
Erratic	-	4	4
Obscure	-	3	3
Total	8	17	25

Table 20: Summary of motifs from site D09/39
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Site Number **D09/40**
Classification (iv) Co-existence

Context

Site D09/40 was the last mixed site that was documented during this fieldwork study. It is located on the left bank of the gorge, approximately 40 metres up the slope from the river bed. The site is characterised by some engraved vertical boulders that are located on the banks of a rivulet that runs down the slope to the Dome Gorge. The engraved walls have a combined length of seven metres and the highest point is 1.45 metres. The second part of the site is comprised of a boulder with a low overhang that has paintings on it. The boulder is situated approximately three metres to the west of the engraved panels. There are some stone circles in and around the site but no further artefacts were observed. The horizontal and vertical curvatures of the slope are convex-shaped. The rock art in the site is in a very good conservation condition. The vegetation is composed of trees, bushes and grass.

Content

A total of 33 images were documented at D09/40 of which the engravings (82%) are more than the paintings. The symbols, both simple and complex structures, are the predominant motif. Only three paintings are represented (indeterminate animal, buck and springbok). The painted images appear on the walls of a low overhang that is opposite the engraved blocks of dolerite. The overhang is four metres wide and 1.5 metres high and has a depth of about 50 centimetres. The

springbok is the central figure among the painted animals. It is located between a buck and an indeterminate animal. The buck faces away from the springbok and it is a bit faint compared to the other paintings in the overhang. There are remains of paintings on the plane, both above and below the springbok. The engravings are done on some red coloured boulders. They are all produced by the pecking technique and they are not patinated. The whitish colour of the engravings contrasts very well with the cortex of the rocks on which they are made such that the engravings are visible from about 20 metres. The abstract art (both complex and simple structures) are more dominant than any other engraving. The animal engravings are also all outlined using the pecking technique, but the bodies do not bear peck marks. Of particular interest are three animals standing in a line (an equid between two antelopes). The equid's head is superimposed on the tail of the antelope in front of it, and the antelope behind the equid has its head also superimposed on the tail of the equid. The back legs of the antelope that is behind the equid are not shown. Rather the back of the antelope ends in some random peckings. The front legs of the equid are disproportionately longer than its back legs. Table 21 summarises motifs from site D09/40:

Motif	Painted	Engraved	Total
Indeterminate animal	1	2	3
Springbok	1	-	1
Buck	1		1
Felid	-	1	1
Antelope	-	3	3
Equid	-	1	1
Complex Structure	-	3	3
Simple Structure	-	12	12
Remains	3	-	3
Erratic	-	1	1
Obscure	-	3	3
Dots	-	1	1
Total	6	27	33

Table 21: Summary of motifs from site D09/40
Source: Field Research, Gwasira (2010)

Combinations

There are 20 sites where paintings and engravings are mixed in the Dome Gorge. The combinations have been classified as superimposition, juxtaposition, adjacent and co-existence in this study. The category of engravings being placed adjacent to paintings is the most common occurrence among the mixed sites. Some instances had more than one classification of mixed sites. The case in which all four classifications occur in the same site is more frequent, while the least frequent is that of adjacent and co-existence.

There are ten panels that have superimpositions which are distributed over eight sites in the Dome Gorge. Four categories were observed in these cases; engraving on painting, painting on engraving, engraving on engraving and painting on painting. The cases involving engravings being superimposed on engravings are more frequent as they appear four times. This is followed by the painting on engraving which appears three times. There is one case of an engraving being superimposed on a painting. Cases involving engravings on paintings occur two times, and finally paintings on paintings appear one time.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Discussion of the data and findings will focus on four main areas; namely spatial distribution of sites, temporal aspects of the rock art, social context of the rock art and the symbolic meaning that can be drawn from the data.

The spatial distribution of the rock art sites in the Dome Gorge indicates that there was a tendency to locate particular sites in specific geo-zones. The majority of the sites are found along the banks of the river within 5 -20 metres from the river bed. This appears to have been an act of marking the landscape because the rock art sites indicate the end of one particular topological feature and the beginning of the other. They mark the end of margins of the river and the commencement of slopes. Mixed sites in particular were mainly located along water-shaped narrow passages that are found at the foot of elevation. Engraved only sites on the other hand were more widely distributed although there was a tendency to favour the foot of elevation instead water-shaped narrow passages. Considering that narrow passages connect two valleys or valley sections (Lenssen-Erz 2004) it appears from the spatial distribution of the mixed sites that they also functioned to demonstrate the beginning or end of one valley.

In addition to the foot of elevation, the engravers placed their art on vantage points whereas the painters did not (with the exception of the cavern at site D09/08). It has been suggested that some of the rock engravings in the Dome Gorge belong to the herder tradition (Ouzman 2002). It is therefore plausible to postulate that the herders saw the need for using locations that were at vantage points as this would offer them a good view of the surroundings while looking after their herds. Vantage points provide security in the sense that approaching danger is noticed from a distance. The engravings that are found at vantage points are closely associated with stone structures that have been identified as belonging to the Brandberg Culture (Breunig 2003) and could also be remains of huts of the Damara people who used the mountain in the recent historical times (Jacobson 1997).

The fact that 91% of the sites are distributed near to the water courses, either being right on the bank of the river or less than 100 metres from the river bed suggests that the rock art sites in the Dome Gorge functioned as places where communal social and economic activities took place, especially considering that the river bed forms a convenient flat area. This assumption is further strengthened by the fact that the majority of the sites are within a short distance from other open fields. The data in this study shows that the sites were not habitable, except for cases where remains of hut circles are present but none of the engraved or painted boulders could have

provided ample space for habitation since they are mostly vertical walls and low lying boulders. Therefore, it can be argued that the spatial distribution of sites in the Dome Gorge indicates that the sites did not function as places where the artists lived for a long period of time but rather functioned as important markers within the landscape that indicated the temporal availability of water and as markers of passes for navigation within the landscape as is suggested by the fact that most sites are located in narrow passes.

On the other hand the sites are condensed in the narrowest part of the gorge. They become fewer and isolated as the gorge widens. The narrowest part of the gorge would be ideal for dwelling for a short period of time as it would shelter the artists from the winds in particular the harsh westerly wind from the desert. The rocks in the narrow part of the gorge would store heat during the day which would keep the place warm at night. Therefore the narrow part of the Dome Gorge would have been an ideal place for social interaction as it possesses a range of properties that are conducive for social life. These include the proximity to the river and other water courses, vantage points and natural “shelter” from wind as well as the acoustics produced by echoes bouncing on the walls of the boulders. The relationship between the stone circles and the rock art still needs to be properly documented. However a pattern that has emerged from the data points to a closer connection between engraved only sites and the stone structures. The frequency of stone structures that are found at painted only sites and mixed sites is lesser than that of engraved only sites. The cultural authors of the stone circles, who came after the painters, tended to avoid painted only sites unless if the painted sites occurred together with engravings (co-existence) in which case the stone circles were associated with engraved panels. This inclination towards older engravings is amplified by the fact that in most cases the engravings that were incorporated in the stone circles were pecked in circular forms. Identifying the engraving techniques that occur at engraved only sites that also have stone structures and comparing them to other techniques that appear in the Dome Gorge engravings would shed more light on the kind of relationship they may have. This study did not address that specific aspect.

The data demonstrates that there are at least three distinct periods of rock art tradition in the Dome Gorge. The earliest rock art is represented by fine line and polished engravings such as the hairlines presented above. This is followed by part of the pecked engravings which are the most commonly depicted and then some paintings, which are in some cases superimposed on the engravings. A possible fourth period, which may be younger than the paintings, is suggested by an engraving that is superimposed on a painted human figure. The presence of such a case suggests that some engravings belong to the settlement phase of the Brandberg Culture that is

postulated by Breunig (2003). However this is only suggestive since it is the only example. An analysis of the techniques used in the production of the engravings would be useful in creating a chronology for engravings which will in turn be useful in determining if this particular engraving is indeed younger than the painting or it was just an exception of the rule that paintings in the Dome Gorge superimpose engravings.

The occurrence of rock paintings and engravings in the same research region or site is known from other rock art regions such as Twyfelfontein in Namibia (Dowson 1992; Molin 2006; Scherz 1970). However these rock art regions do not present cases of direct contact between paintings and engravings as the Dome Gorge does rather the two genre are known to co-exist. The data contained in this study shows that sites with a mixture of engravings and paintings are a common feature in the Dome Gorge. Out of the 43 sites documented during the field work 44% (19 sites) had both engravings and paintings. It appears that the act of mixing paintings and engravings in the same site or even superimposing them on one another was not coincidental in the Dome Gorge but rather a common practice. The painters, who clearly came after the engravers, purposefully searched for sites where they could add their painting to existing engravings perhaps either as a way of emphasising direct confrontation of the two genres or as a way of appropriating the engravings.

Some patterns have been observed in the data that suggest that the placement of engravings and paintings was not randomly done. One example is the placing of paintings on the same panel with engravings without superimposing them (juxtaposition). At most sites where paintings were placed on the same panel with engravings the paintings are always placed lower than the engravings. This was the case even at sites such as D09/02 where there is ample space next to an engraved "*Osterhase*" (Scherz 1975:215) and yet the human paintings were placed on a lower plane of the same panel (see Appendix 7). The exception was at sites with superimpositions which have some paintings that are not superimposed which were placed almost on the same level with the engravings. But in juxtaposed situations the same 'rule' of engravings on a higher plane of the rock than paintings was applied. Site D09/37 is a good example (see Appendix 8). The painted two human figures are placed at almost the same height with the engraving of an animal that appears to be an elephant or a distorted giraffe that is superimposed by a third painted human figure. On the other hand the painted snake is placed lower than the engravings. The fact that the paintings were mostly placed on lower planes of the boulders than the engravings indicates some operational gesture of the painters. They mainly painted while squatting while the engravers mostly executed their art while standing.

Superimpositions are relatively frequent as they appear at nine sites out of the 19 mixed sites. All together four different cases of superimpositions were observed in the data: engraving over painting, painting over engraving, painting over painting and engraving over engraving. The most common superimposition is that of engraving on engraving. There appears to be no preferred form of superimpositions. Such a variety of types of superimpositions presents an opportunity for investigating the chronology of the rock art in the Dome Gorge, at least as far as the engravings are concerned. Distinguishing the techniques used in producing the engravings could be a starting point since particular techniques are associated with particular ages, starting with the fine line engravings as the oldest to large geometric pecks as the youngest (Otto 2006). Site number D09/08 provides an example where some fine line engraving is superimposed by a pecked outline of an ostrich at section (a) while at section (d) some heavily patinated polished antelope is superimposed by a relatively fresh incised outline of a human footprint. A relative general stratigraphy of the rock art can therefore be constructed by analysing the techniques used in the superimposed engravings.

The study also empirically confirmed some known observations about rock art in the Dâureb and other sites in southern Africa especially concerning the composition of motifs. Abstract art (both complex and simple structures), for instance, represent the most dominant motif among rock engravings in general both in Namibia and South Africa (Scherz 1970; Fock & Fock 1984, 1989 as cited in Otto 2006).

From the data presented above it is demonstrated that the archaeological sequence of the Dome Gorge is composed of material that ranges from the Late Stone Age to the Herder Period which indicates a continuous use of the landscape over a long period of time (from the Late Stone Age to the historical period) and this, according to Ouzman (2002), suggests a mutual use of the landscape by hunter-gatherers and herders. The superimposition of different rock art genres and the incorporation of engraved panels into walls of hut circles attest to this mutual use of the landscape. There are assumptions that some of the stone structures could have resulted from the Damara people and such assumptions stretch the occupation of the Dome Gorge to recent historical times.

The concept of a "mutual use of the landscape" needs further probing since it may be misconstrued to mean that the hunter-gatherers and the herders shared the landscape contemporaneously; the stratification of paintings over engravings suggests that this was not a case of collective use of the landscape but rather a common use at different temporary scales. This argument is further supported by the fact that different genres and themes of rock art were placed at the same sites and at times at the same panels (see the classification of mixed sites above) but they maintained the different signatures of the cultural authors. What was common

were perceptions and use of specific loci within the Dome Gorge - the narrowest part of the gorge. This could have been influenced by the fact that this part of the gorge provides resources for the social and economic wellbeing of the engravers, painters and herders such as proximity to water, acoustic properties, vantage points and rocks to paint and engrave (for more resources, use potential and basic needs in landscape archaeology see Lenssen-Erz 2004; Lenssen-Erz & Lindstädter 2009). This led to an intensive mutual use of a particular geozone in the gorge in which the different social groups maintained their idiosyncrasies. The painters for instance maintained their group identity by juxtaposing their paintings below the engravings or by superimposing them on the engravings.

The Dome Gorge is a complex rock art region that cannot be thoroughly understood from a study of this scope. There remain several issues that require further and in-depth study which include research that focuses on determining the chronology of the rock art, a study of the non-visual aspects of rock art such as rock gongs and rubbing stones as well as other archaeological features. The study has demonstrated that the Dome Gorge has a potential for providing a relative chronology of the rock art based on the superimpositions. The relationship between the stone structures and the rock art still needs to be attended to as well as the concept of the mutual landscape needs to be revisited so that the social and symbolic aspects of the rock art can be teased out. This study, however, has contributed to the general knowledge of the rock art corpus of the lower Dome Gorge through an empirical documentation of the rock art and its associated archaeology as a first step.

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7. Glossary

Adjacent:	A case whereby two panels face each other and each one carries either paintings or engravings. In this case there is no mixture of paintings and engravings on the same rock face.
Co-existence:	A case whereby paintings and engravings occur on different boulders in the same site but not in close relationship such as described in the case of Adjacent.
Complex Structure:	A combination of more than two geometric forms. This includes single geometric forms that are divided into grids.
Dâureb:	The local <i>Khoekhoegowab</i> name for the Brandberg, which is preferred in this thesis.
Erratic:	1.) Markings on rock surfaces that do not have a fixed form but were clearly made by humans; 2.) A situation whereby the form or shape of the paint or engraved marks could not be determined but it is clear that the painting or engraving was not part of an image which has faded.
Indeterminate:	This term is used in the thesis to refer to images that could not be easily classified due to lack of identifiable biological features, shape or form.
Juxtaposition:	A case whereby both paintings and engravings occur on the same rock face but do not contact each other. They are clearly separated although they appear on the same rock face.
Meander:	A curved line engraved or painted onto a rock surface. It can have many curves or can be a combination of curved line that a woven together.
Obscure:	A case in which the painted or engraved surface could not have been a purposefully erratic shape or some remainder of an image.
Panel:	Boulders on which the art can be viewed as one unit from one direction.
Polished:	An engraved imaged in which the cortex of the rock was scraped and then rubbed smooth.
Remains:	A case where it was possible that the painting or engraving was at some point in time part of a definite image but a considerable part of it has since disappeared rendering it impossible to determine what image it once belonged to.

Simple Structure: Single geometric forms that are not further divided.

Site: As a general rule the 30 m radius definition that was used by Pager (1989) in the Dâureb was adopted for this study. Where the distribution of boulders that form a coherent unit was larger, it was documented as a site. This is mentioned in the thesis and the dimensions of such sites are quoted.

Superimposition: A case whereby one genre of art is layered on top of the other.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1

Photograph of the Rock Gong (D09/22)



Appendix 2

Patinated Engravings



Appendix 3

Photograph of Zebra and Gemsbok (D09/03)



Appendix 4

Superimposition: paintings on engravings (D09/05 'Fix R')

Scale: The complete human figure in the center is 35cm

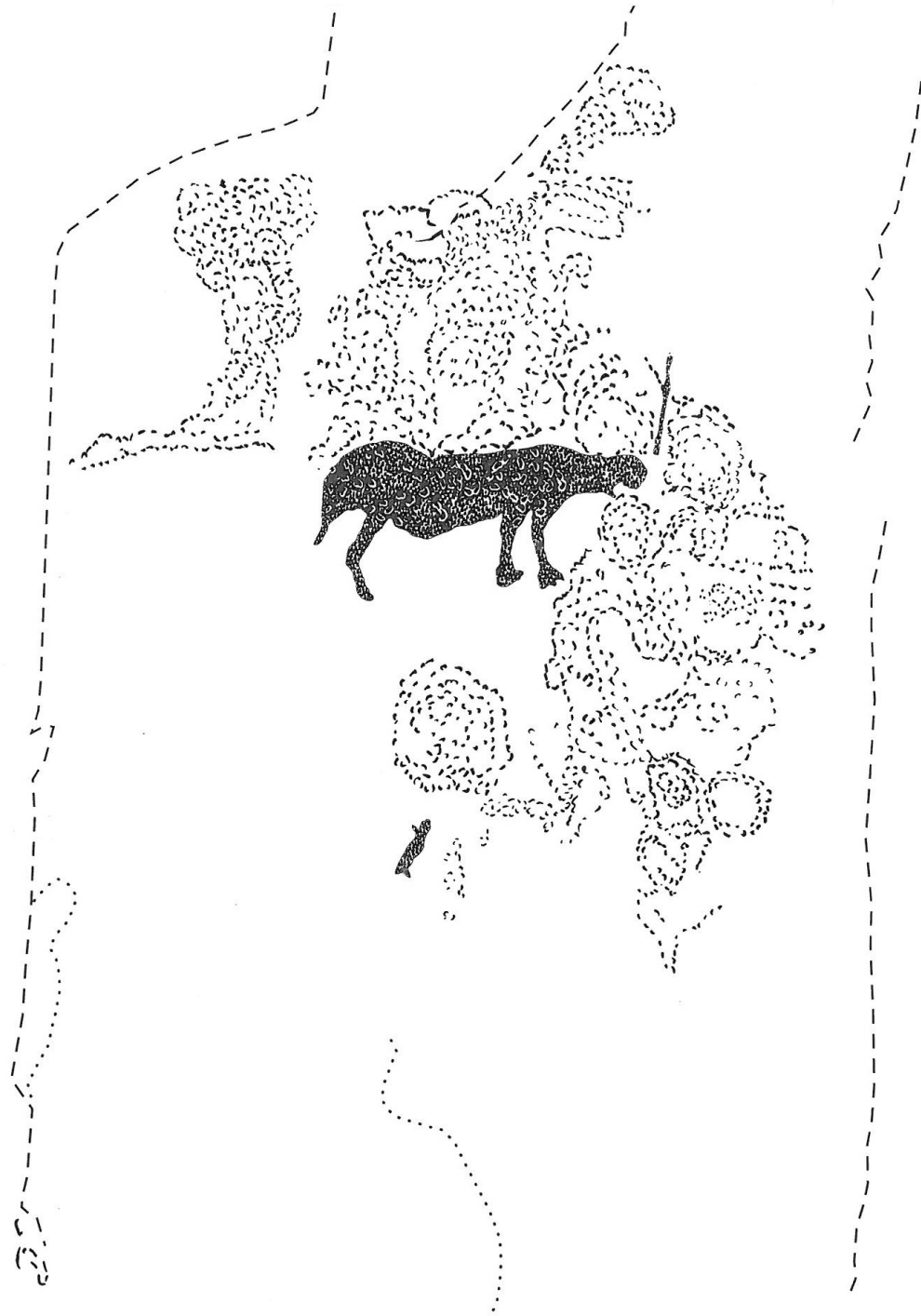
All paintings are in red color; for the exact representation of the color hue, please see Pager (1989).

In all tracings in this thesis:

Dashed lines mark rock edges

Appendix 5

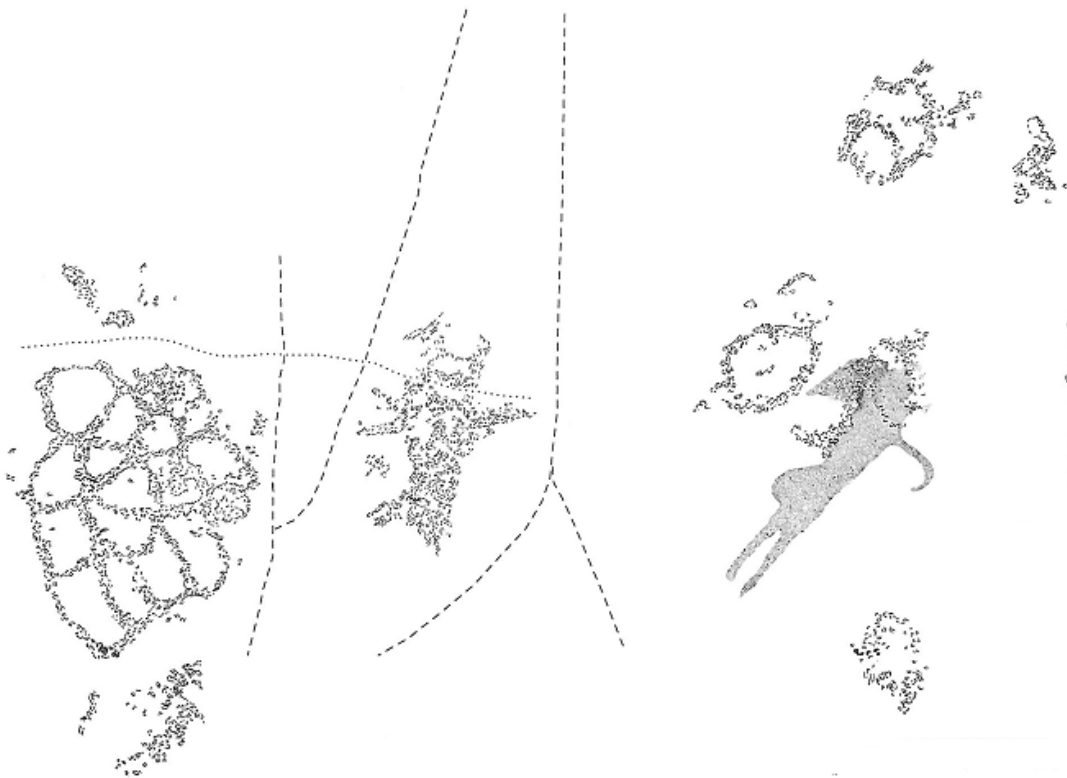
Superimposition: paintings on geometrics (D09/05 'Fix E')
Scale: Animal figure is 20cm



Appendix 6

Superimposition: engravings on a painting (D09/07)

Scale: The human figure is 20cm.



Appendix 7

Juxtaposition: (D09/02) "Osterhase"

Scale: The "Osterhase" is 40cm



Appendix 8

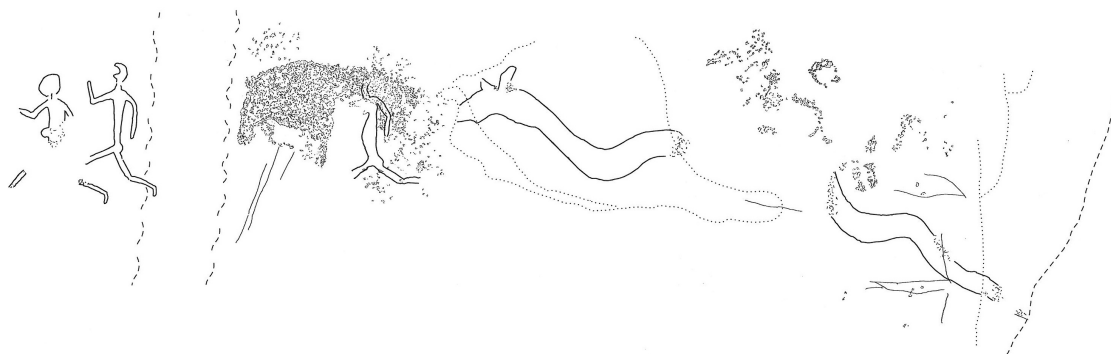
Superimposition: painting on engraving (D09/37)

Full line images are paintings (red).

'Dots' on the snake where the full line breaks indicates the fading of colors.

Peck marks are engravings.

Scale: The hooked faced human figure is 20cm



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Issue 1

Goodman Gwasira 2011

A Rare Combination of Engravings and Paintings in the Dome Gorge,
Daureb/Brandberg. A potential core element for World Heritage Status.