

In the session on **MATERIAL CULTURE**

**Material Culture and Meaning.**

**Inferring Social Intent from Stone Technologies: a Case Study from Rose Cottage Cave.** *Ronette Engela & Mike Grant*

Although post-structuralist archaeology has provided exciting new theoretical perspectives in the discipline, little work has been done on the impact of these perspectives for the methodology of archaeology. By exploring the active constitutive role of material culture the false dichotomy between cultural form and functional expediency is resolved; cultural representation (meaning) and production (social strategy) can now be seen to function concurrently. The implications of this approach is illustrated for four consecutive (early Holocene) levels at Rose Cottage Cave. Through a correspondence analysis of the non formal stone material, previously unrecognised patterns are detected. These patterns are presented and an explanation, linked to identity processes, is proposed.

In the session on **SYMBOLIC CULTURAL INTERACTION**

**Remembered Landscapes: Oral-History and Archaeology in the Study of PreColonial Society.**

*Ronette Engela*

Archaeology can make a powerful contribution to the field of precolonial studies, once we have disentangled ourselves from the subordinate position of 'handmaiden' to the oral-historical record. In order to fruitfully engage with other disciplines it is necessary to recognise the differences in the knowledge construction of each discipline, and then use precisely these differences to elicit a set of questions for the sister-disciplines. In this way, issues that the codification processes of each discipline might have prevented one from recognising, become visible.

As an illustration of the above approach, I discuss recent research on the Ndwandwe precolonial kingdom in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Ndwandwe identity is constructed in currently-contemporaneous and strongly spatialised terms. For archaeologists, the challenge lies in recognising, and incorporating into our academic discourse, these conceptualisations of the past. Indeed, we will not be able to adequately understand the creation of the archaeological record without these indigenous perspectives (Lane 1994, 1995). The construction and use of Ndwandwe cultural identity through non-verbal means requires the unique archaeological perspective on the cognitive codes of materiality and space. The inter-disciplinary nature of this study ultimately allows the interrogation of two of the most basic notions in the western epistemology - Space and Time.

LANE, P. 1994. The Temporal Structuring of Settlement Space among the Dogon of Mali: an Ethnoarchaeological Study. *in* M.P. Pearson & C. Richards (eds.) *Architecture and Order. Approaches to Social Space*. London and New York: Routledge. pp.196-216.

LANE, P. 1995. The Use and Abuse of Ethnography in Iron Age Studies of Southern Africa. *Azania* 29(30):\*\*