

CaSEs seminars

Transdisciplinary approaches to human culture

Thursday, January 21st
17.00-18.00
Room 24.023
Building Mercè Rodoreda 24
Pompeu Fabra University (Ciutadella Campus)

Wider than taller: an archaeological exploration of Tswana stone walled structures as megastructures in Southern Africa

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The Tswana occupation of the landscapes of Southern Africa is associated with the presence of extensive stonewalled sites dating to the late second millennium AD. Whilst early investigations of such structures concentrated on issues of origins and ethnic identity of the builders, more recently alternative approaches to the study of these structures have been proposed, that take into consideration the paradigm of historical ecology.

With a focus on selected excavated sites, this paper attempts to argue for a more comprehensive approach to stone walled sites as an intensive domestication exercise that brought about important changes in the landscape of Southern Africa. In this sense, seeing the stone walls as extensive megastructures can assist in examining the variation and complexity of landscape management at different scales of resolution and provide insights into domestic, polity and territorial dynamics before during and after the occupation of these sites.