

In search of an idea. What is 'community' in 'community-based management'

and how to improve our understanding of it for the sake of sustainable management? !Xun, Khwe and Wildebeest Kuil rock art site

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Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Tourism Centre



Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Centre

Several objectives: to highlight the country's neglected heritage and inform, educate and inspire South Africans about it; to create jobs through tourism at rock art sites; and to protect rock art sites through responsible development.

Jointly managed by a trust in collaboration with the !Xun and Khwe. The project aims to make the rock art and painful yet fascinating history of the !Xun and Khwe accessible to tourists.

"The fact that the Center is located in Platfontein - where the !Xun and Khwe communities will soon be settling - will make it one of the province's main tourist attractions." Manne Dipico, provincial PM

Extract from a local newspaper, December 6, 2001

NEWS *Wildebeest Kuil* DIAMOND FIELDS ADVERTISER
THURSDAY 6 DECEMBER 2001 5

A TASTE OF HISTORY KIMBERLEY SITE

Rock art on your doorstep

The Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Centre is set to open its doors to the public on Tuesday just outside Kimberley. News Editor **Patsy Beangstrom** has the details.

CHERYL Carolus, the SA Tourism Chief Executive and former SA High Commissioner in London, will officially open the Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Centre outside Kimberley on Tuesday.

Wildebeest Kuil is situated about 15 km from Kimberley on a farm belonging to the !Xun and Khwe San refugees from the Apartheid and Namibian wars.

The rock art centre, which has been funded by the Rock Art Research Institute (KARI) at the University of Witwatersrand, will be jointly opened by Carolus and Manne Dipico.

KARI identified two locations for sites to be developed for rock art tourism in this pilot project: a painting site in the Drakensberg Kimberley area.

The project has several aims, including redressing the country's neglected heritage for the benefit of all South Africans and to inform, educate and inspire South Africans about this heritage, creating jobs through tourism to rock art sites, and protecting rock art sites by developing them responsibly.

Kimberley co-ordinator for Wits University Tara Turkington said yesterday that of the three sites chosen in the Kimberley area, only one, the Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Centre, was currently being developed due to financial constraints.

A new centre, which will be open to the public from Tuesday, will be managed jointly by a trust set up this year for developing rock art tourism, called the Northern Cape Rock Art Trust, in conjunction with the !Xun and Khwe CPAs.

"The project has focused on making both the rock art and the painful, yet fascinating, story of the !Xun and Khwe accessible to tourists."

Here visitors will be able to see a display and watch a 20-minute film as an introduction to a walk back in time to the engravings, thought to have been made by the Later Stone Age ancestors of the !Xun, between about 1 000 and 2 000 years ago, Turkington said.

The engravings are on a low ridge of ancient andesite rock.

Visitors will follow a circular route of about 800 m with the assistance of an audio tour and a boardwalk to the best of over 400 images on the hill.

Eland, elephant, rhino, wildebeest, hartbeest, ostrich and dancing human figures can be seen.

A tea room and shop run by the !Xun and Khwe also form part of the visitors' centre.

The art and crafts of the !Xun and Khwe are evident everywhere in the centre, from the central floor mosaic made out of chipped tiles and incorporating images such as snakes and concentric circles, to the striking prints on the walls.

According to Turkington, the project is aimed at benefiting all the people of Kimberley and its surrounds as well as the Northern Cape and South Africa in general.

"It will also conserve the precious and non-renewable resource of rock art and aims to take advantage of an already existent worldwide interest in the San," she said.

"Most importantly, though, the project aims to create jobs."

The aim is to create about 30 new permanent jobs, mostly for people from the impoverished !Xun and Khwe communities.

Most of the 32 people who are already working in the !Xun and Khwe Communal Property Association's textile and ceramics projects, which will be using the shops, are women.

Her project aims to grow this pool substantially in order to help these women gain self-confidence and economic independence, and regain their dignity, stolen from them by history.

The admission fee at the site is R15 for adults and R10 for children R10 extra per audio tour.

It will be open every day from 9.30 a until 6 pm.

Aims to preserve rock art as a precious, non-renewable resource and to take advantage of the existing worldwide interest in the San.

The aim is to create around 30 new permanent jobs, mainly for members of the impoverished !Xun and Khwe communities.

Conflicts

Absences

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Evictions

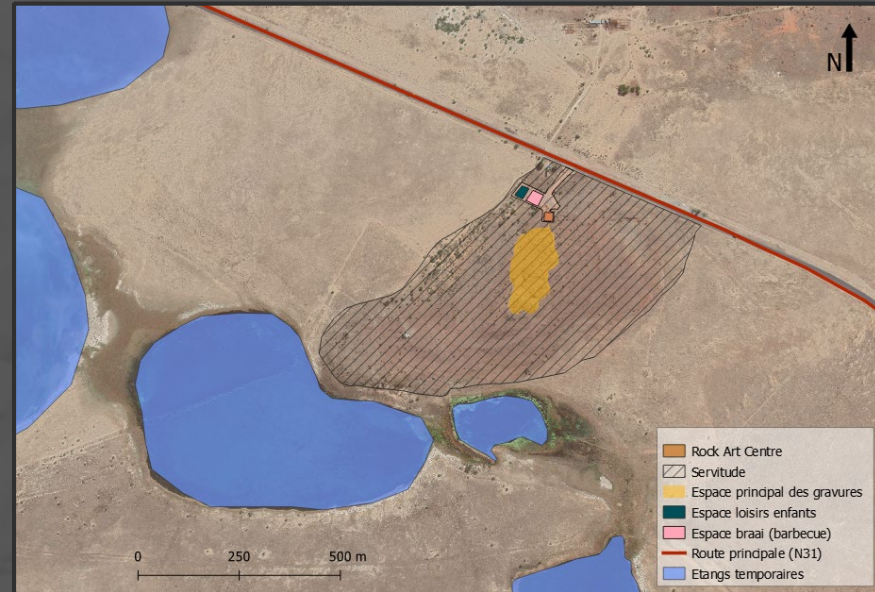
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Restrictions

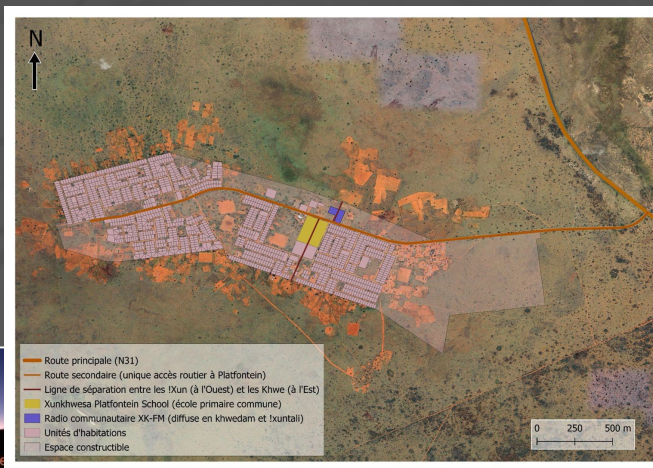
"Trying to keep this site in good condition has been a real nightmare... Now that we have this [second] electric fence, I touch wood. I don't wake up every monday morning wondering "what was stolen from Wildebeest Kuil?"

"Meryl-Joy Wildschut said on behalf of the South African San Institute (SASI) that the Wildebeest Kuil rock art site represents the culture of the entire San people and that if the current staff do not do justice to the site and contribute to the community, the Trust has no obligation to employ them. Decisions taken by the Trust must be for the improvement of the site. A clear message must be sent to staff regarding the unacceptability of absenteeism and theft."

Minutes, NCRAT, 2006



“Community” : a homogenized representation



SASI
South African San Institute

in partnership with the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture
invites you to

a Story-telling Evening

Artists include the individuals from the !Xun and Khwe community, Mr Louis Mallett, Mr Niek van Zyl and Thabo Mothabi

at Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Centre

16km on R31 (road to Barkly West)

Date: 24th September 2015
Time: 16:00 for 16:30
Refreshments will be available
Donations to the Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Centre will be welcomed

For information please contact: Caitlin on 072 3785 763 or caitlin@sasi.org.za

Department of Sport, Arts and Culture | McGregor Museum

« People should appreciate the sacredness of rock art in South Africa. And wherever you go to a rock art site, people should realize that they're standing at a site that is sacred, and [that is] part of the sacred heritage of the San, and therefore the Khoisan. »

Khoisan representative - from the Wildebeest Kuil movie



“The public archeology aspects to it were at the full fund for me, but we were willing to... you know, work with the Khoisan leaders so they could also use this site for their purposes as well”.

- This project was carried out from assumptions of shared facts simulating cultural affinity.
- Thus, the community was an 'imaginary' form, when several thousand people were gathered under the idealised banner of a single expectation.

“Community” : a legitimizing representation

“From early on there were people stealing equipment and that kind of stuff. It’s impossible to consult a whole community. The communities were kept informed all the way through...” (Ben Smith, interview, 2022)


- The “community” – though it was the means, the goal and the justification for a project – found itself forced to participate in the shadow of representatives
- While it is impossible to consult an entire community, it would still be possible to speak on its behalf to justify a decision.

Benjamin Smith	Archaeologist, Rock Art Research Institute
David Morris	Archaeologist, McGregor Museum
Barend van Wyk	National Khoisan Consultative Conference
Adele Wildschut	South African San Institute
Nikolaas Tenda	South African San Council
Rennie Mishe	!Xun and Khwe Communal Property Association
Jason Marenda	!Xun and Khwe Communal Property Association
Janette Deacon	Archaeologist, SAHRA Council Member
Ann Pretorius	Director, William Humphreys Art Gallery
Colin Fortune	Director, McGregor Museum
Andrew Hall	Director, Dpt Sports Arts and Culture Northern Cape
Sharron Lewis	Northern Cape Tourism Authority
Mario Mahongo	Platfontein !Xun traditional leader

“Community” : a frame of recognizability

*“While ancestors of the !Xun and Khwe are unlikely to have been the makers of the engravings at Wildebeest Kuil (they had come from Angola), **these communities being San leads them** to recognise a general cultural affinity with the engravings. Other Khoe-San **groups and organisations** in the area have claimed similar affinities” (Wildebeest Kuil Management Plan, 2008)*

- At Wildebeest Kuil, the selection of the !Xun and Khwe ultimately resulted in the side-lining of individuals living in the vicinity of the site (they had claimed an affinity with the site).
- Segmenting a whole and referencing it as a community is already being able to recognise it as a whole that can be referenced under the term community.



Unlike the !Xun and Khwe, the presumed descendants of the engravers were not recognizable as a community.

Which conception of the “community” should we choose ?

It depends what we want to study...

Anthropological
(cultural)

Juridical
(political)

Pragmatical
(critical)

... but we should not think that these different conceptions share common traits

Recommendations : In these times where the anthropological becomes juridical... better being pragmatic !

Claims for rights

1. a) Recognition of an indigenous status for the Khoi and San *communities*.
2. b) Recognition of distincts heritage practices of the Khoi and San *communities*.
3. c) Government to give the land back to the actual owners who are the KhoiSan *communities*

Memorandum for
the Traditional Khoi-
San Leadership Act,
3 of 2019

2003 : Hoodia



Intellectual property claims

2008 : Zembrin®



2019 : Rooibos



Territorial and cultural claims

1st method: Land claims



2nd method: Activism

Chief Aútshumao! Francisco MacKenzie protests against Amazon's plan to locate its headquarters in Cape Town.

SESSION 13: Heritage Resource Management and the evolution of Heritage Resources Management in SADC

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