



**INTERNATIONAL ERASMUS MUNDUS MASTER IN QUATERNARY AND
PREHISTORY**

**Understanding the management of rock art sites and
stakeholders engagements in South Africa and Namibia:
Wildebeest kuil, Kimberley and Spitzkope Namibia**

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DECLARATION

I, Shanty Joy Fisher, hereby declare that the final Masters dissertation for the international Masters Program in Quarternary and Prehistory, submitted by me, has not been previously submitted for examination at this or another university. I declare that this is my own work in design and execution and that all the references and materials presented in this dissertation have been carefully acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation assesses the engagement of stakeholders in the management of rock art sites in Southern Africa, through an analytical comparative study of the different site management plans of two relevant prehistoric rock art sites: Wildebeest Kuil rock art site in the Northern Cape, South Africa and the Spitzkope rock art at the Erongo Mountains, in Namibia. Thus including understanding the site management and stakeholders engagements. The dissertation analysed data from grey literature, secondary sources, field community engagements as well as site documentation through a thematic content analysis. The key discussion point of the study looked at the relevance of by the involvement of the community for the various dimensions of the management of these sites. These included considering the different stakeholders such as the National heritage councils, various institutions concerned with heritage and rock art sites in Southern Africa, as well as local communities. The outcomes of the research and data collection have showed that indeed the involvement marginalised and lower social status communities is important for the management of the studied sites.

Key Words: Rock art, Spitzkope, Wildebeest Kuil, Community, Stakeholders

RÉSUMÉ

Ce mémoire évalue l'engagement des parties prenantes dans la gestion des sites d'art rupestre en Afrique australe, à travers une étude analytique comparative des plans de gestion de deux sites d'art rupestre préhistorique pertinents : le site d'art rupestre de Wildebeest Kuil dans la région du Cap Nord, en Afrique du Sud et les sites rupestres du Spitzkope dans les montagnes d'Erongo, dans le centre-ouest de la Namibie. Ce travail se fonde sur l'analyse des données provenant de la littérature grise, de sources secondaires, sur les engagements communautaires sur le terrain ainsi que sur de la documentation sur site par le biais d'une analyse de contenu thématique. Le point-clé de discussion de l'étude a porté sur la pertinence de l'implication des communautés sur les différentes dimensions de gestion de ces sites. Il s'agissait notamment de prendre en compte les différentes parties prenantes telles

que les conseils nationaux du patrimoine, les diverses institutions concernées par le patrimoine et les sites d'art rupestre en Afrique australe, ainsi que les communautés locales. Les résultats de cette étude et de la collecte de données ont montré qu'en effet, l'implication des communautés marginalisées et de statut social inférieur est importante pour la gestion des sites étudiés.

Mots-clés : Art rupestre, Spitzkope, Wildebeest Kuil, Communauté, Parties prenantes

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INTRODUCTION

The study of rock art provides valuable insights into the cultural and historical practices of ancient societies. Rock art, encompassing a diverse range of depictions including paintings, engravings, and carvings, serves as a visual record of the beliefs, rituals, and daily life of prehistoric communities (Louw, 2016). Spitzkope and Wildebeest Kuil are two remarkable rock art sites in Namibia and South Africa, offering a glimpse into ancient human creativity and cultural expression (Louw, 2016).

Spitzkope rock art region is made renowned for the outstanding granite peaks. The impressive geological formations served as a canvas for artistic expressions of non-literary communities since prehistory. The rock paintings at Spitzkope, are dated back between two thousand and four thousand years back which date back to thousands of years, depict a range of motifs including animals, humans, and abstract symbols (Kinahan, 1991, Gwasira, 2002, Lenssen, 2018). These artworks provide valuable insights into the lives and beliefs of the San people, who inhabited the region long ago.

The other rock art site in this study is Wildebeest kuil, located in the southern part of South Africa. It is known for its significant rock art engravings, including scenes of hunting, dancing, and symbolic representations, offering a window into the spiritual and daily life of the San people (Morris *et al* 2002).

Both Spitzkope and Wildebeest kuil are not just archaeological treasures but also stunning natural landscapes. Indeed, it was, possibly, the prominence of the natural features that attracted communities to perform ceremonies and other ritual practices there. This combination of natural and anthropic dimensions makes them must-visit destinations for anyone interested in rock art, history, and the rich cultural heritage of Southern Africa. However, this also generates greater challenges in terms of the management of the sites, not only for occasional visitors, but for local communities, for researchers and for the preservation of the art and of the landscapes.

According to Deacon (1997), the strategy for management of rock art sites includes at least three main components. Number one, public education. In this Deacon (1997) makes mention of education in terms of schools, tourists, and communities who live close to these rock art sites. Deacon (1997) infers that this will then understandably present rock art and increase the public appreciation thereof. Number two, site

conservation and management through legislation, civic education, and direct physical protection, thus minimizing the damage done by human impact. And lastly thirdly, management of information through research, site recording and databases.

This dissertation aims at assessing if the current heritage management plans of these rock art sites are adequate for sites of this nature and, particularly, if they involve the local communities and other relevant stakeholders in the management process.

This wider research question has been further detailed through some specific sub-questions:

1. Who are the stakeholders involved in the two sites? This was assessed through direct participation as well as consulting of the various documents available digitally as well as in archives repositories of these sites as well as researchers whom have conducted researches prior.
2. How are the various stakeholders involved in the management of the sites? This was done by means of standardized questionnaires.

The comparative assessment of the two sites, besides evaluating the data obtained for each of the questions, also aims to serve as basis to propose possible methods or solutions, namely drawn from each cases, to improve the management of these sites.

Following this introduction, the dissertation is structured through five chapters.

Chapter one focuses on the theoretical framework for this research. The theoretical framework of Traditional Custodianship, theories of indigenous knowledges as well as Shamism. This chapter will also take time to engage in theories that involves community engagements.

Chapter two introduces the studied sites within their contexts. It is an introduction to the two sites, their geographical setting as well as the historical significance, that sit at the basis of the research objectives and questions that drive the research.

Chapter three explains the methodology that, building from the theoretical framework and considering the specificities of the sites under study, were considered the most adequate for achieving the expected results, and how the data was collected and later analysed.

Chapter four offers an analysis of the data retrieved, comparing results obtained from different sources concerning the same site and, also, comparing data between the sites.

Chapter five offers a discussion on the performed data analysis, paving the way for a final Conclusions chapter, including some recommendations.

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I. Theories in Rock Art Research

Theoretical approaches to rock art studies encompass various perspectives that shed light on the interpretation and understanding of ancient rock art. Researchers (Lewis Williams, 1981, Pearce, 1992, Nash 2002, Mazel 2002) have explored different theories to explain the significance and meaning behind these artistic expressions. Over the past decades, rock art research studies have ranged from descriptive, interpretative to somewhat theoretical, local to worldwide in scale, focused on developing and developed societies, and directed at deep prehistory through to the present day. However, a theory that came to light was that of the art for the sake of art. In that theory Rock art studies have evolved, with early theories focusing on the decorative aspects of rock art and later theories incorporating more complex concepts such as shamanism and landscape approaches (Dobrez, 2016). When it comes to the two sites Wildebeest kuil Rock art centre and the Spitzkope rock paintings and engravings, testimony to a once pervasive hunter-gatherer presence, are found from coast to coast in thousands of diverse sites in southern Africa (Gwasira, 2002). However, these two prehistoric rock art sites are associated with indigenous people who are believed to have moved in these environments and were as well as associated with strong believe systems of shamanism (Lewis Williams, 1983). In the rock art research of Southern Africa Namibia per say the earliest mentions were made by Charles John Anderson (Vierck *et al* , 1957), and notices the different motifs and most animal figure like that of the two sites to be studied. Further, Lewis- Williams in 1983 together with Wilhem Lloyd made mentions of South African rock art made interpretative studies theoretical of this indigenous people rock art and associated with the shamanism because of the animal figures that are mainly those that are interpreted to be spirit animals for example the Eland depicted on rock art in Wildebeeskuil. However, shamanism suggests that rock art may have been used in shamanic practices by hunter-gatherer societies to communicate with the spirit world. This theory proposes that prehistoric Later stone age rock art paintings are spirit animals, not real animals (Lewis-Williams, 1983), and that composite figures represent shamans. However, critics argue that this theory is heavily based on ethnographic accounts only and tends to make it problematic.

Theories and Practices in Rock Art explores various aspects of rock art, including its definition, the importance of studying it, and an overview of the field of rock art studies (Morris *et al*, 2012). Rock art is a visual representation of the thoughts and experiences of the world's aboriginal and tribal cultures. Images are engraved, pecked, carved, or painted on natural rock surfaces, and many also incorporate the natural shapes and textures of the rock. In some areas, rock art is a rare and fragile resource (Spitzkope bushmans paradise, Wildebeest kuil rock art) that is an important part of understanding the stories and backgrounds of indigenous cultures for example the San bushman rock art in the Wildeestskuil Rock art in South Africa and the rock art in Spitzkope Erongo in Namibia. However, when it comes to rock art studies a full understanding of this material is difficult because of its non-written nature, its susceptibility to natural and cultural decay, and the simple fact that it is an artistic and thus creative medium (Pearce 1980). Scholars (Williams 1980, Nash and Mazel 1997, Lloyd and Bleek) from a wide variety of disciplines study rock art and apply a range of theories and methodological techniques to study it effectively. Anthropology, archaeology, art history and other approaches are also important to the understanding of rock art and its cultural significance.

Therefore, in this study these theoretical approaches like that of traditional custodianship, indigenous knowledges as well interpretive as well of those that are associated with shamanism can help to contextualize rock art within broader social and cultural narratives and have raised new possibilities of rock art's material and performative aspects which would be to foster or encourage the documentation and active participation of .

II. Theories In rock art research concerning community engagements

Theories about heritage and community engagement in rock art archeological sites development revolve around finding solace in attempting to find better site management of heritage sites of both intangible and tangible heritage sites archaeological rock art sites and one of the theoretical frameworks that has been attempting to champion this has been the traditional custodianship theoretical framework approach (Deacon, 1997). In conference proceedings on public history forgotten history at a Namibian rock art conference, Goodwill Gwasira, had mentioned

that the general nature of rock art site management involving the community however, also not forgetting that the rock art is different from different landscape to another and might be associated with different individuals , for an example in Namibia the rock art is associated to the pastoralist and hunter gathers also referred to as the bushmen. Therefore, understanding the social context and landscapes is very important in rock art studies more especially in the Southern African Context. Goodman Gwasira 2016 in conference paper quoted Kinahan 1994 who furthermore, enforces the importance of landscape and social context by referring to shreds of evidence of archaeological research in Namibia that shows that the hunter-gather communities have existed in Namibia during the time of rock art tradition began to disappear and gave way to pastoral nomadism in the Central Namib desert.

Traditional management systems have been part of the Southern African systems especially (Ndoro, Pwiti, Ndlovukazi 2001) as in heritage of both cultural and historical significance and survival methods in the past. This type of theory traditional custodianship management systems are full of different knowledge and it is statement sole purposes of a traditional management system is largely to promote the sustainable use of both cultural and natural resources, by the same token, safeguard the qualities and values of the site (Ndoro, 2003; Jopela 2010), therefore, in the case of my study that involves looking at the management plans of rock art sites the theory framework that will good at looking at in terms of the management of prehistoric rock art sites in Southern Africa(Spitzkope and Wildebeest kuil). This is also based on researchers who have mentioned that formal ways have been tried and tested and there has been failures here and there (Ndoro, Pwiti, Ndlovukazi 2001). However, with traditional theories management systems they have been lesser failures and have been further used (Ndoro, Pwiti, Ndlovukazi 2001).

The study of tradition has become increasingly important in management research explaining phenomena as diverse as socialization, identity, institutional maintenance, and field-level change (Gwasira, 2002). Whereas recent studies bring new insights, management scholars' conceptualization of tradition suffers from a lack of theoretical integration. Ndoro and Pwiti in their article attempts to point out the key on tradition used in the literature and propose an integrative "custodianship framework" that encourages researchers to examine stability and change in organizational traditions by considering the perspectives, interests, and power of custodians surrounding a tradition over time. Given that the two sites that are in question (Spitzkope and

Wildebeest kuil) are both communal land and have communities living and having custodianship over the heritage in the area under the management of the legislations these authorities.

In this article (Ndoro, Pwiti, Ndlovukazi 2001) the researchers have put it forward that in the future research explicitly consider the importance of place as both the rootedness and emplacement of traditions motivate the need for custodianship. This is where my research questions would assess the conduciveness of the management style that are in place.

According to UNESCO(UNESCO 2003 Conference proceedings) the normal communities and the Traditional leaders are the bearers and custodians of cultural values, traditions and customs and the traditional governance systems are critical in the preservation and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. Traditional management of heritage sites remain critical in the effective management of cultural heritage as custodians and connoisseurs of traditions. UNESCO 2003 Convention on Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, among traditional leaders and local communities is important.

However, we also have to look at the notion that points out the management of heritage in Southern African region as since been in place informally through traditional custodian management (Chirikure , Pwiti, 2008, Ndoro, Pwiti 2011).

Therefore, the theories that will be used for the study will be based on the notion that the prehistoric rock art of the two sites are associated with interpretation and shamanistic theoretical approaches of the indigenous people that have moved in those place which is likely associated with hunter gathers, San Bushmen, Khoekhoes, as well as pastoralist (Kinahan 1990,1993, Lewis Williams, Gunther 1991).

CHAPTER 2: THE STUDIED SITES AND THEIR CONTEXTS

The study will be looking at aspects of analysing management plans by attempting to answer the questions relating to aspects involving the community aspect more. As per mentioned in the introduction rock art management and the involvement of the various stakeholders in line remains at the most still to be understood. Heritage management of different heritage sites in Southern Africa has always been and will always be the essence in protecting and conserving heritage sites (Ndlovu, 2011). The role of the communities in these Prehistoric rock art sites is very crucial and could be very vital in the documentation of the site and the safeguarding of the rock art sites. According to the preamble of the South African National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999), heritage practitioners should promote new and previous rock art sites. According to the National Heritage act of 2024 from the Namibian governmental gazette, heritage is of importance and should as such be protected through the development of heritage management and conservation plans. These acts further foster and encourage the protection, conservation and preservation of prehistoric rock art in Southern Africa in these two regions as paramount to facilitating indigenous healing practices and material and symbolic restitution in the nation (Williams 1984, Morris et al 2000). By engaging with the communities from both the Spitzkope rock art and the community from Wildebeest kuilPlatfontein they have shown paintings on their sites from an example the Golden Snake at Spitzkope and the Eland antelope at wildebeeskuil, the community and tour guides explained that they are symbolic if their healing from different sickness that relates through their spiritual being.

For instance, issues such as vandalism, theft, and natural hazards as wildfires have been concerns at Wildebeest Kuil rock art site (Morris, 2023, Gwasira 2002) as well as some sites Erongo mountains Spitzkope bushmen paradise, small bushmen paradise and the Golden snake rock art shelter . However, not only are there different threats but also the dynamics and challenges pertaining the active community engagement as well as the co management of the rock art sites. The two open air rock art sites to be looked are sites which play an important role in understanding the human origins and the evolution of humans.

I. What drives the study of the two areas:

The two remain as research interest to the academic communities and in the public spheres therefore, management of these sites would mean the prolonged and long life of the sites and one of the ways would be revising and constructing of integrated management plan of that uses methods of active participation of the communities who live in close proximities as well a hand in hand connection with many other stakeholders. Research also indicates that the Studies that pertains rock art of Southern African rock art habitually comprise of in most cases that historical ethnological evidences (Bleek and Lloyd 1911; Rudner 1982, 1983), stylistic analyses (Nankela, 2015 Richter, 2002 Richter and Vogelsan, 2008), and interpretation studies (Lewis-Williams 1980, 1981; Vinnicombe 1972, 1976; Willcox 1978). The study will, therefore, focus on the various literatures and documentations that are in place to attempt to analyse and compare heritage management plans as well as the stakeholder engagements of these two prehistoric rock art site. This is being completed by interrogating these plans, visitations to the sites archives, as well as various interviews participants. Therefore, the findings of this analytical study will attempt to contribute to filling this gap in our neglected heritage as well as to preserve the heritage management of the knowledge and information that accompanies the Wildebeest kuil Rock Art Centre and the Spitzkope rock art sites.

This would involved communities and different stakeholders to attempt to revise and revitalise the management and conservation of the sites in question as well as better protection. Rock art is one of the most attractive heritage resources (Nankela, 2017). Yet, some of these sites are either closed from the public or were never officially opened in the first place. Based on them being inaccessible to the public, various replicas have been built to allow tourists to still see their images. While these sites are inaccessible to the general public, they are not spared from natural and human-induced damage. The genuiene community involvement can result in a greater awareness of rock art that could possibly create an increase in economic ventures as well as a higher quality exposure and understanding for the visitors going to theses sites (Shiningayamwe, 2023). Therefore, also by looking at those issues in this paper, I will explore the ideas of how these sites are managed by interrogating their management plans, looking at the stakeholder engagements involved the public communities as well involved.

II. Wildebeest kuil Rock art

1. Context

The Wildebeest kuil rock art centre is prehistoric rock art archaeological site which situated in the Northern Cape South Africa. The site is approximately a 15 kilometres away from the inner city of Kimberley which is the capital city of the province (Figure 1, Morris 2012). The first recordings of this prehistoric rock art site dates back to the with over 400 rock art engravings recorded to date. The site it holds traces on and around the site from later Stone Age times in the region in revealing changing human use and transformation of the landscape (Morris, 2012). The site also serves as a form of a cultural landscape it is of high regional significance. The aims and objects of the site has been those of promoting archaeology, history and Heritage of the Northern Cape. Furthermore, Provide archaeological excavation skills and experience to learners, Research the neglected archaeology of farm workers, Research, understand and interpret the archaeology/heritage of the as well as for Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Site in its entirety and establish its relation to other sites. Provide material and information for a display on the archaeology of twentieth century farm worker life at Wildebeest Kuil.



Figure 1: location of Wildebeest kuilrock art screen print extracted from Morris 2012

The site is also near the Platfontein community which is made up of indigenous people of South Africa, the Xun and the Khwe. It is a declared Provincial Heritage Site managed by the Northern Cape Rock Art Trust in association with the McGregor Museum (Morris, 2003, 2012,). The engravings exemplify one of the forms often referred to as 'Bushman rock art or Khoe-San rock art. The site is in a semi arid desertic area in between the nama karoo and Namib. Since 1996 the farm of Wildebeest Kuil has been owned by the !Xun and Khwe communities (Morris, 2012). These two San groups, speaking distinct Khoe-San languages and having different histories, had been caught up in political turmoil in Angola in the 1960s and 1970s, and subsequently in Namibia (Van Wyk, 2014). In 1990, at the time of Namibia's independence, some 4000 of them (men then employed by the South African Defence Force together with their families) were flown to a tent-town at Schmidtsdrift, west of Kimberley (Van Wyk, 2014). This area was subsequently awarded to its former Tswana owners in a land claim, forcing the !Xun and Khwe to move again. Having purchased Wildebeest Kuil and adjoining farms, resettlement from the Schmidtsdrift tent towns to a new housing scheme at Platfontein on the outskirts of Kimberley took place in 2003-5. The site was formally opened as a rock art site in the year 2001 by the city mayor of the time Manne Dipico, in conjunction with Department of Sports, Arts and Culture in the Northern Cape as well as the McGregor Museum.

2. Documentation of the Site

In the regard of the Wildebeestskuil Rock art site a number of pioneering researchers like the Focks, George Stow from the 1870s. In the year 1880s the two slabs stones from the site were transported to a exhibition in London where they are still housed (Fock, 1970 Morris, 2004). These researchers or rather rock art researchers (Stow, Focks), had took it upon themselves to conduct different rock art documenting techniques (Figure 2, Figure 3) on the site such as rubbings and tracings. This gave record of the documentation of site since the discovery of the site. However, there has been recorded over 300 rock art painting when it was discovered (Morris, 2012) but at present a rock art researcher by the name of Julien Monney in 2023 had conducted a rock art GIS survey of the site and have recorded a huge amount of engravings which is yet not officially documented. The results of this GIS Julien had conducted has not been made available in the public domain. Currently the site remains under field wild fires and it is prone to the further deterioration and damage.



Figure 2: Rubbing of a rock panel from Wildebeest kuil dated around the 1960s extracted from Mc Gregor Museum Collections



Figure 3: recent picture of an animal figure at Wildebeest kuil taken by researcher student 2024

III. Spitzkope rock art

1. Context

Spitzkope is an area filled many archaeological evidence that dates back from the 1950s long even before (Kinahan 1990). It is situated on the interior fringe of the Namib desert on the Erongo Mountains between Usakos and Swakamond (Figure 4, Kinahan 1990). Spitzkope forms part of very impeccable geological formations in Namibia with a domed granite inselbergen that is almost the only remarkable topographic feature that is on a landscape that is on a very low rolling hills covered by a thornhill shrubs. The area of Spitzkope is currently a communal land. The region is also full of beautiful rock art art paintings with the famous Bushmans Paradise also known as the Boesman Paradys which has gained a huge amount of research attention (Kinahan 1989, Rudner 1957). However, there has not been any systematic order or survey of the rock art.

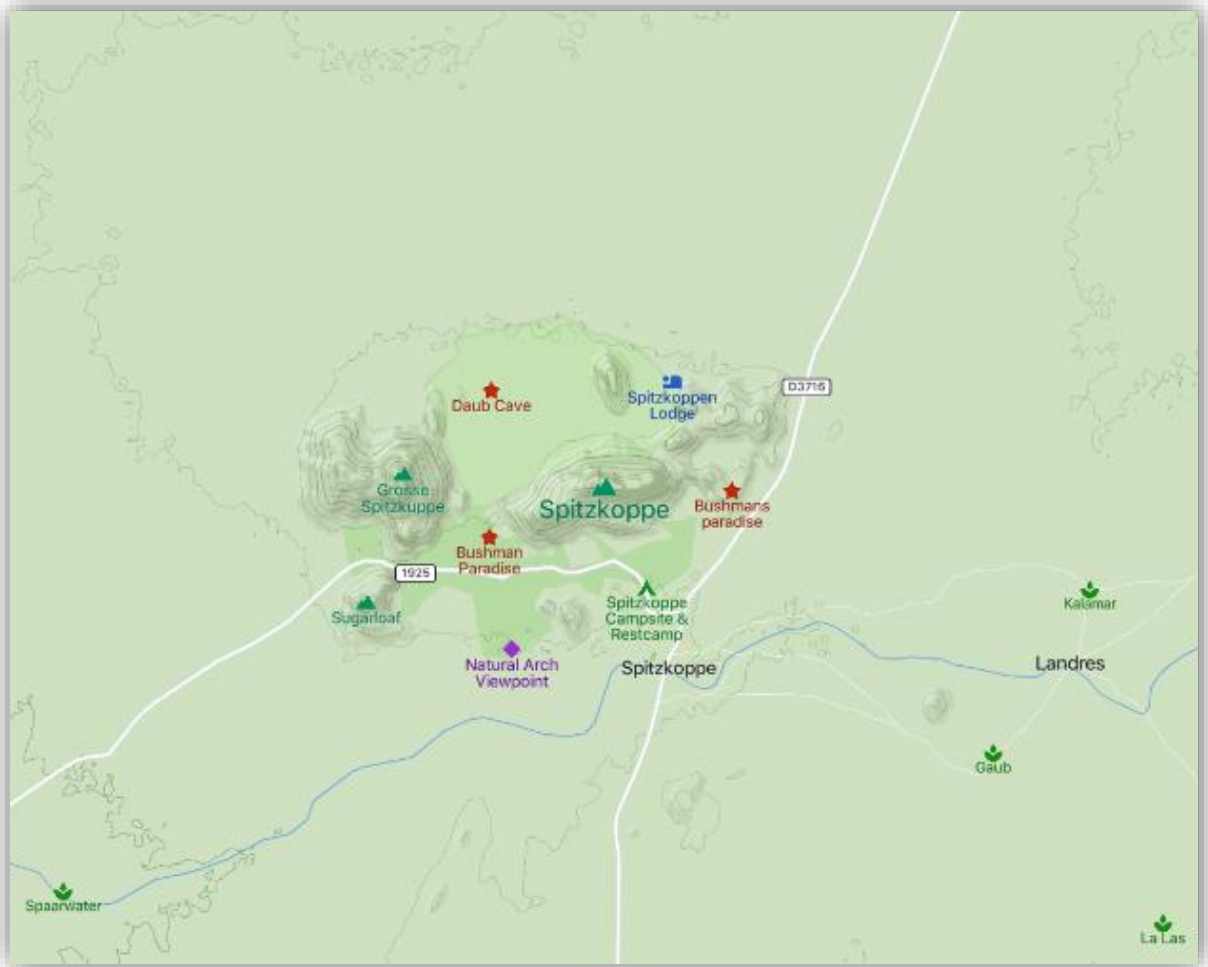


Figure 4: location of Spitzkope on the map. Extracted from Mapcart (<https://mapcarta.com/Spitzkope>)

It is mentioned and documented Namibia is home to over thousand rock art sites countrywide (Nankela, 2017). Most of these sites appear to correspond with the hunter-gatherer art tradition found throughout southern Africa, with certain specific regional features. Erongo is one of the fourteen regions of Namibia, located in the western part of the country. It is named after the Erongo mountain, a well-known landmark in Namibia and the location of a prominent circular mountain range. Here are some key aspects of Erongo, Namibia. The region is characterized by a variety of landscapes, including desert, mountainous areas, and coastal plains. The climate is generally arid, with sparse rainfall and high temperatures, especially in the desert areas.

2. Documentation of the site

In the regard of the documentation of the site, there has been more documentation of a specific site on the land which is the Bushmen Paradise (Figure 5, Gwasira, 2016). The site has been documented since the 1950s (Vogt 2006) and the most documented. However, there is no much official documentation published on the site. A paper has been published however, by Gwasira an archaeologist who did an impact assessment on the Bushmens Paradise (see pictures) which is the site that has many rock art paintings. That paper documented the site in sections however, showing the conservation of the site. However, in the archives of the National heritage council upon vistration in 2024 April, many ancient documents of the inception of the site started to resurface.



Figure 5: : Map of the rock art on site provided by tour guides on site 2024



Figure 6: Images from Small bushman 2024 taken by student

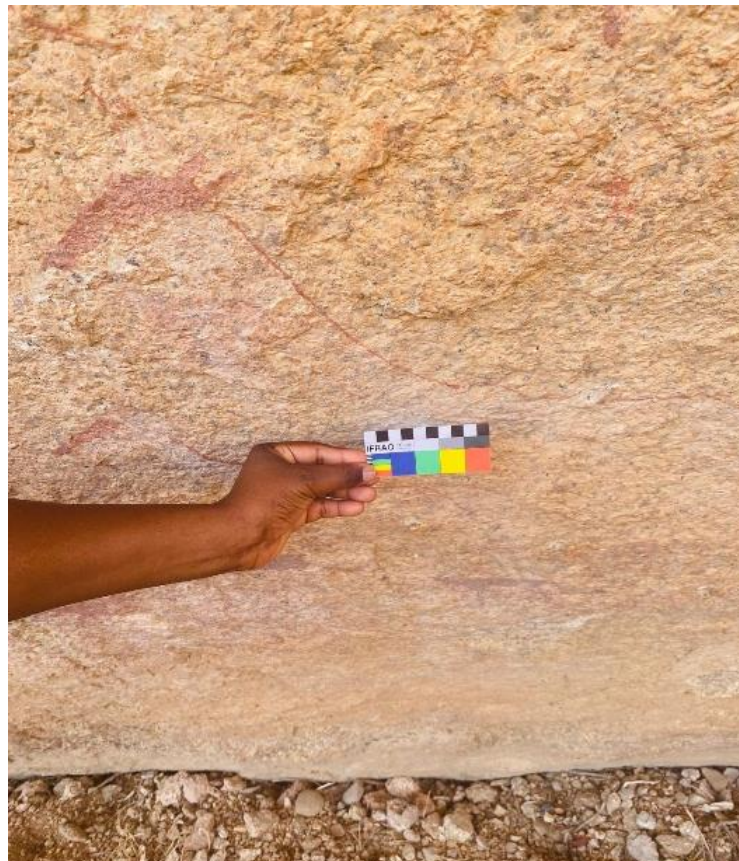


Figure 7: Images from Bushman Paradise 2024 taken by student



Figure 8: Images from Golden Snake Rock shelter2024 taken by student

Upon my arrival to the site I managed to be in a position to to make my own documentation (Figure 6, Figure 7, Figure 8). I made documents and captured images from all three rock shelters which are the famous Bushman Paradise paintings, the small bushmen paradise, and the golden snake. The physical documentation of the site in the public domain remains very low and the site is slowly becoming undocumentable because various issues that include the weather conditions threatening the rock art paintings (Figure 8, Figure 9).

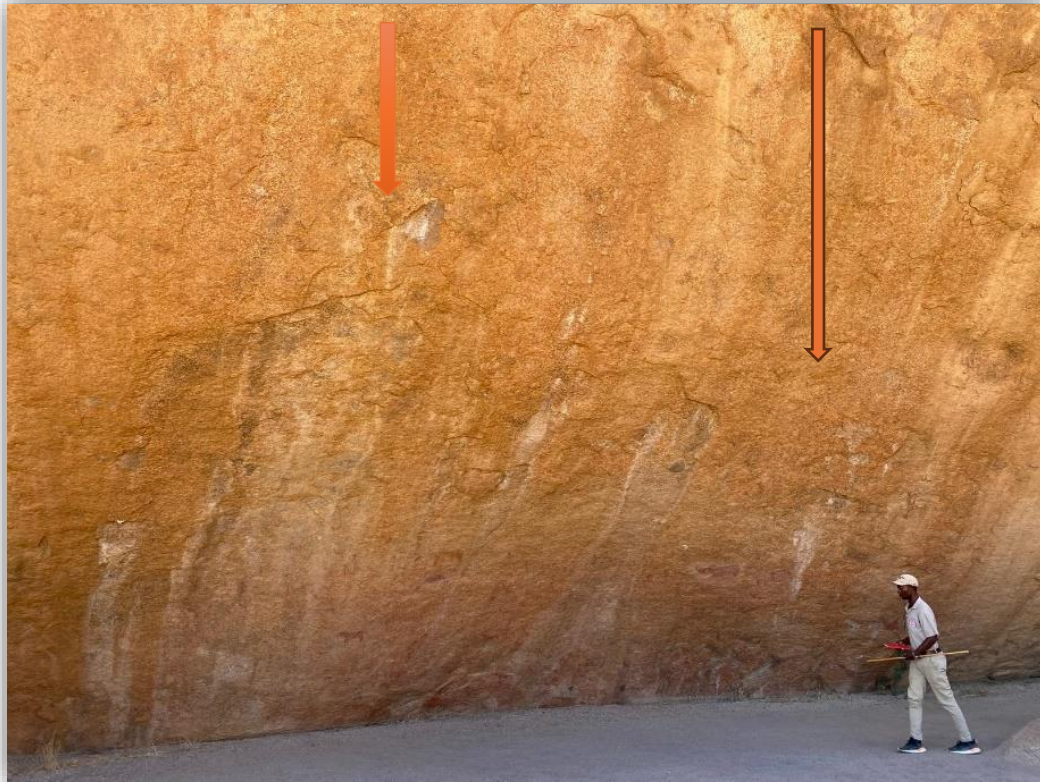


Figure 9: Images of the weather conditions affecting paintings at Small Bushmen Paradise captured by student 2024



Figure 10: Images of grass growing above paintings captured by student 2024

IV. Literature Review Broader context

Researchers, in Namibia (Nankela 2015, Pleurdeau 2012, , Gwasira 2002, 2016), and in South Africa (Morris 2014, 2012, 2020) have conducted various researches in the areas in question . There has been great research interest in these areas, and this ranges from documentation of the sites to looking at aspects of tourism to moving to the involvement of the communities. Researchers like Quiem (2022), Bianca Barnabas (2014) have spent time there and have had several engagements with the communities in Wildebeest kuil(Platfontein) as well as several rock art. The research they conducted varied from the heritage , tourism , to community based practices together with these two communities. Therefore this chapter will then point out all the work research wise conducted on the two prehistoric rock art sites. Throughout the research paper, I have made direct reference to the literature that resonates with the management and community engagement in these prehistoric rock art sites by the above-mentioned researchers.

The South African rock art is unique in the contemporary world in that it uses indigenous rock art images in its major national symbols. However, like that it is represented in the coat of arms of the (Figure 11). However, The Management of prehistoric rock art sites in Southern African has been that of a try and trail. When looking in depth different rock art sites from the Maloti-Drakensberg to the Tweyfelfontein sites, the management of these sites. It is noticeable that the work done in its full swing pertaining rock art has to be that of rock art heritage and tourism which has in a excess. For example the Drakensberg rock art. However, taking a look at the perspective of of the European context. Western Cultural approach has been followed by which a paper has been published by Duval et al 2021, the paper sought to look at the hertage making and the community involvement of the communities in site in France and Spain. The perspective of this paper revealed how people or rather those in management of these sites are naggingng in terms of trying to look between the conservation and long standing the sites. These sitees are large scale sites listed on Worldl Heritage sites. In terms of Southern Africa that is still a long way to go in. This is in terms of getting the local communities involved from at examples of sites like uKhamhlaba Rock art,Maloti and Tweyfylfontein.



Figure 11: South African Coat of arms showing San rock art two human figures adapted from NHRC 2024

Pertaining the Wildebeest kuil Rock art site a research by Shanade Bianca Barnabas in 2014 was conducted on the site with regards to tourism aspect related to the rock art heritage and the community. In this study Barnabas looked at the aspects of heritage making of the two communities grouping that reside there, this study found many challenges including that of challenges at Wildebeest Kuil were found to be indicative of socio-political concerns in the South African heritage sector (Barnabas, 2014). This study was mainly based on the heritage making with rock art and not the involvement of the communities actively. Another undertaken by Quiem in 2022 also in the community however, it was also based on heritage and tourism. This has caused a gap in research pertaining to looking at the active participation in the rock art sites management per say. In the year 2022 researchers Hugo, Melanie Duva, David Morris and Lorenzo Pinto had written a jointed article paper about the exploring multiple

conditions of participation on community-based heritage management. The study in terms of rock art heritage management looked at the different community based organisations and the role they contribute towards the rock art site wildebeeskul. The study had found that the community and rock art site still have a long way to go also in terms of the site management of the site(Duval et al 2022). There the study I have conducted will try and rule out and see how the site management of the site could be looked at and reworked by looking at the aspect of community involvement of the site.



Figure 12: Entrance to Spitzkops site picture captured by student upon arrival 2023



Figure 13: Entrance to Camp where rock art is situated captured by student 2024

Now looking at the Spitzkoppe mountains that has rock art paintings on one campsite which is the community rest camp (Figure 12, Figure 13). This where the community is actively involved as most guides are from within the community people limits. Gwasira 2002, had written a paper that has looked at one of the rock shelters in Spitzkoppe mountains which is the bushmen paradise. In this study Gwasira had done a condition assessment on the state of the rock art shelter, Gwasira study had found that the site is deteriorating because of issues relate to antropogenic and related to the weather conditions(Gwasira, 2002). The archaeological remains that inclusive of about thirty seven rock art sites in the anamibia region shows a pattern of huntergathers inhabitations, as well as well pastoralist subsistence has existed in the Spitzkoppe region (Kinahan 1990, Nankela 2017). In todays day and age the Spitzkoppe region is a communal land with a school, clinic as wel as stores, a lodge that is nationally renowned and not forgetting the small local business that are run by the locals at the villages. However, in terms of community involvement in the site management not much has been conducted. Therefore, this study analysed the aspects of community engagement in the site management.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS



Figure 14: Data collection process at Wildebeest skuil with Former head of Archaeology at Mc Gregor Museum and Engagements with tour guides at Spitzkope and National Archives

I. Methodology

Data collection for the study will be done through means of a qualitative desktop study collectively with work on the field involving the different stakeholders (Figure 14). This type of research design is referred to as an analytical way of gathering information. For my research project questions I will make use of the qualitative research design method of gathering information (van Wyk, 2012). This type of research design is referred to as an analytical way of gathering information. However, it is not designed to produce finalised answers and solutions but offer knowledge and insight to problems and situations. However, because the study will encompass people, communities as the main stakeholder will be looked in the process of this analytical and comparative study I will infuse it with Action Participatory research method. This type of research method is not far fetched from all qualitative studies. It is defined as a research design that involves action research highlighting participation and action by members of communities affected by that research (Van Wyk, 2015). It seeks to understand the world by trying to change it, collaboratively and following reflection. The Participatory Action Research process development communities of inquiry and action evolve and address questions and issues that are significant for those who participate as co-researchers. This is also on basis the research I am conducting with will be looking at the community and different stakeholder engagements which seeks to look at how site management of heritage. Through this method I will also formulate research interviews forms and questionnaires that are group as well as individual structured to try and answer questions I as the researcher is trying to answer for the study. Below is the Diagram that explains this research and how it will be put to use in the research. How the community and other stakeholders see the site, interact, experience would play a vital role in the contribution of the constructing site management. In terms of the sampling for the site, I worked on a group interviews sessions of stakeholders of a number of ten participants. These participants would include both young and older participants, as well as institutions of governance that is included in the sites, later on the researchers whom have done work on the sites more especially in connection with the site management and the involvement of the different stakeholders with the community as the main character.

I was be reliant on both primary as well secondary sources, however, depending on the nature of the documentation I also had to have interviews from the field. The secondary sources and references, which are accessible, are located in the McGregor

Museum archives. The McGregor Museum has information on the history of the Wildebeest kuil Rock art Centre community, different stakeholders and management plans that are involved namely the indigenous San grouping of Southern Africa. The information gathered at the museum will assist the study by offering insights on the different methods of heritage management and conservation plans that has taken place on the site. The Rock Art Centre and the museum have worked hand in hand with each other because the Museum has been in communication with one of the major stakeholders which is the community that has been also actively involved in the site. As part of consulting with secondary sources I will consult with researchers who have conducted research in these two-rock art sites namely the Wildebeest kuil and Spitzkope. I will review and analyse unpublished work (unpublished thesis, past interviews, video recordings) of researchers who have conducted, and made available. In terms of the Spitzkope rock art in Namibia I had visited the National Archives repository for secondary documentations of the Spitzkope area.

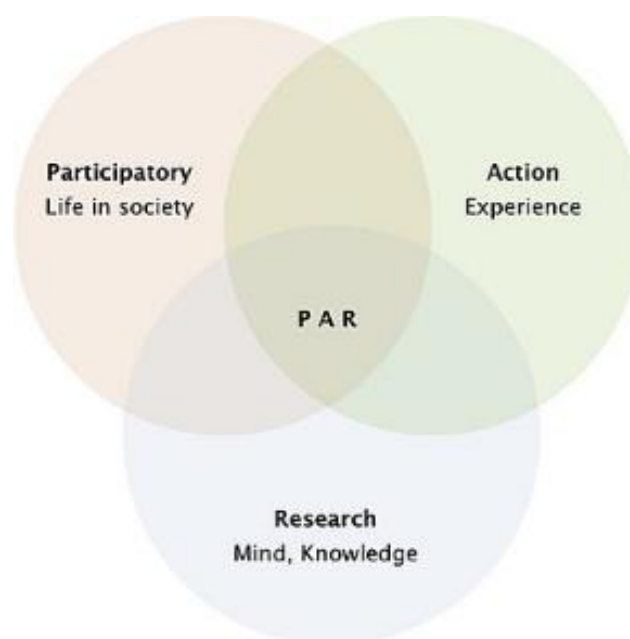


Figure 15: Diagram of Participatory Action Research extracted from Lenette 2022

For my research methodology, I used a qualitative research design. This type of research design included an exploratory method of gathering information (Van Wyk, 2012). The qualitative research design is referred to as an analytical way of gathering information. This type of research design involves many different practical and applied

works such as participatory methods of collecting data (Figure 15), which means that the researcher would be collecting the information and data by having engagements with people or parties (in this project, mostly researchers, different stakeholders, community members) involved in the study and analysing the data (Neuman , 2014).

As part of the data collected and methodology approach I used existing interview recordings conducted by researchers, with the permission of the interviewee's researchers, photographs taken at Platfontein and a visit to the Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Centre. Photographs help give the reader context and a physical look of the area. I used the McGregor Museum to gather information on the San people, the rock art pictures as well as archived drawings and tracings and I consulted with the San Code of Research Ethics booklet published by the South African San Institute (2017) as a guide to be able to conduct safe and harmless research and a fruitful investigation.

As part of the data collected and the methodological approach in terms of Spitzkope I made use of the archives repository in Namibia, interviews with the major stakeholders and the staff members of the National Heritage Council of Namibia who are responsible for all heritage thus inclusive of prehistoric rock art of Spitzkope. Furthermore, an official archaeological heritage research permit was granted by the National Heritage Council of Namibia which ensured that the research process of the site was done with due regard to the site and no harm was done.

II. Collect of data

Below is the listed data collected from both Primary and Secondary

1. Interviews

- A workshop on rock art and community tourism and exhibition done during the course 2022 till to date by the RAHMSA cosmopolitan rock art project in the Southern with the indigenous Communities in Platfontein. In the program participants were given cameras to photograph in Platfontein that are of heritage and not even one picture depicted the rock art site. A Workshop was conducted in the form of a stakeholder engagement in the year 2023 July and the participants of the workshop were asked questions pertaining to their involvement to the rock art site.

- Communications with researchers that have made research in the regions.
- Interviews with staff members responsible heritage rock art sites National Heritage council of Namibia
- Interviews with community members and guides at the Spitzkope
- Interviews with community members and NGOs at the Wildebeest kuil Rock art Centre

2. Questionnaires

- I had compiled questions to ask the different stakeholders that are responsible for rock art in the Spitzkope rock art management Namibia and at the Wildebeest kuil rock art
- I had also compiled a separate questionnaire for the communities that live in the vicinity of these rock art sites (Wildebeest kuil and Spitzkope).

3. Published Papers

- A paper titled Exploring multiple conditions of participation on community-based heritage management : a case study of Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Tourism Centre, South Africa Quemini Hugo, Duval Mélanie, Morris David et Pinto Lourenço
- A paper The dynamics of heritage at the Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Tourism Centre, Kimberley, Northern Cape: a critical analysis. By Shanade Bianca Barnabas.
- A paper by A condition assessment of the prehistoric art from the Bushman Paradise Cave, Große Spitzkope, Namibia by Goodman Gwasira and Georgine Katjuongua University of Namibia in 2016
- Gazes on heritagity. The tourism construction of a rock art site in the Kimberley region (South Africa): genesis, issues and limits of a community-based approach to management and reflections on the socio-political issues of archaeology by Hugo Quemini in 2022
- A Phd paper by Emma Imalwa titled Analysis of the Management of Twyfelfontein World Heritage Site, Namibia in 2016

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter provides an analysis and brief interpretation of the data collected. During the data analysis process, I conducted a thematic content analysis, and the results of the analysis are represented in this chapter. The specific themes that have been identified in the collected data were then broken down in the discussion chapter of this dissertation

For analysing the data for my research, as indicated, I used a thematic content analysis approach (Van Zyl , 2015). The thematic content analysis approach refers to the process of observing and discovering various ideas, concepts, themes, recurring subject matter, or content within the specific texts (Van Zyl , 2015). The study analysed the site management of prehistoric rock art sites involving the different communities in the Wildebeestkuil and the Spitzkops. Therefore, my study was based on exploring and analysing the community aspect in the prehistoric rock art sites in South Africa

The study I conducted was both a desktop study that relied on research that other researchers have conducted on Wildebeestkuil and the Spitzkops looking at what research they have done relating to the area of my study, which was looking at the aspects of community active involvement. The data presented in this chapter were grouped and placed in accordance with the various themes that were discussed during the interviews the researchers conducted, as well as the responses that the participants have given. However, I had an opportunity to directly engage people who grew up in the sites in questions. I used informal group conversation methods of engaging with the people. As well as by means of mini research questionnaires.

I. Data Analyses Extracted from Spitzkope



Figure 16: Picture taken of the entrance of the tented camp where Community is residing and rock art is situated taken by researcher 2024

Data analysed from Spitzkope had embarked on fieldwork and I had 10 participants from the Spitzkope rest Camp (Figure 16). The participants were given questionnaires in which they were asked questionnaires pertaining to the rock art and their involvement in the management. Below is a table 1 that shows the results of the questionnaires. However, the questionnaires results (Table 1, Table 2) .

Table 1: Data Extracted from Spitzkope questionnaires 2024

Number of Participants and occupation	Ages	The results from the questionnaires
Participant 1 Tour guide and community member	36-50	The participant is aware of the site but feels the community is partially involved whoever a need for more improvement with the tour guides and more programmes to advance the site
Participant 2 Community member	20-30	This participant mentioned the need for the community to be given fully control and the site has potential and the community should be put more in the front line

Participant 3 Community member	40-50	The participant mentioned they know of the site and they want the community to be more involved
Participant 4 Manager on site	40-50	The participant is a manager of the bushman camp site where most the paintings are and feel that the management of the site is okay and that the community shows interest as well as the visitations from the Heritage council gives them hope
Participant 5 Tour Guide	30-35	The participant is happy with the management of the site as it allows them to provide for their families
Participant 6 School learner	18-20	The participant spoke of the site as a place of their forefathers and heritage that has been left by their ancestors, the participant mentioned that they do not know much about the management of the site but hopes to know and be involved
Participant 7 Community member and local seller	30-35	The participant wants the management of the site to involve the improvement of the local business
Participant 8 Community member and local seller	30-35	
Participant 9 Community member	30-35	The participant feels that the management or those involved should give reigns to the younger ones and teach them
Participant 10 Community Member	30-35	The participant spoke of how beautiful the site is and that many things could

Many of my interactions was with both the workers, guides, and community members whom were of very assistance and most did not permit of the taking of photography however, did agree that to helping out with the Questionnaires. I believe that the 10 Participants I had interviewed, have given me a clear indication of the management of the site, how they are involved and how they would desire to be involved.

The interviews were based on the individual and small group setting in which the participants were asked questions pertaining to manner in which they relate to the rock art as well as the management of the site (Figure 17, Figure 18, Figure 19) Most individuals were either staying in the community or working on the site as tour guides. The tour guide John who has worked on the site for years have mentioned that he is happy with the management of the site that even after his illness he

could come back the site and work with much lesser workload and also that they are allowed to take tips from the tourist which also adds to their earnings. The tour guide explained the significance of the site at the Bushmens Paradise and the Golden snake as it is related to their knowledges of the Shamanism and indigenous knowledges related to the folkstore of the history of the indigenous people of the san people in Namibia.



Figure 17: Guides work Station captured by student on site 2024 taken by researcher student



Figure 18: Meeting with tour guides on site picture taken by researcher student 2024



Figure 19: Meeting with tour guides on site captured by other tour guide

II. Data Extracted from the Stakeholders and Management of the Spitzkope

As part of the data collection I had an opportunity to meet staff from the Namibian Heritage Council as part of the stakeholder that is responsible for the up keeping and upholding of the site.

Agnes a manager at the Namibian Heritage council mentioned that the challenges in managing the site would be issues of vandalism, mining issues as well land accessibility. The participant also mentioned that one of the key challenges in the upholding and up keep of the site would be the community involvement as well as the issues related to the environment and climate that makes it very difficult to manage. The participant mentione that the site is in the hands of the private hands however, the council does make in a point to make roll out programes related to heritage education about the sites and to emphasis on the conservation and protection of of the site. However, they believe that it could still be strengthened with all the stakeholders involved with the community at centre of the discussions.

III. Data extracted from Wildebeest kuil Platfontein (Table 2)

The existence of the rock art centre (Figure 20) was based on the purpose of creating a space for San people, providing a space to preserve and encourage participation of indigenous San people based in the Northern Cape. Thus, allowing them to have a sense of belonging and still being able to practice their indigeneity. The tour guide Petrus Wilson explained the San people that created the rock art (|Xam speakers) had a connection with the environment, as well as a strong connection with animals, which were depicted on rock art engravings. For example, there are engravings of animals like the eland and the animal signified the connection they had with animals transitioning into trance (Lewis Williams, 1981). The San rock art has been linked to healing dance performances according to David Lewis-Williams & David Pearce (2015).



Figure 20: Photograph at the entrance of Wildebeest kuil taken by David Morris 2012

Table 2: Data Extracted from Wildebeest kuil questionnaires 2024

Number of Participants and occupation	Ages	Data Extracted
Participant 1 Community member and student	20-30	This participant is a student a college level and feels that the Rock art site is not made evenly accessible to the community and that could be improved by including the local school and teachers at the school

Participant 2 Community member Xun	20-30	The participant had said that the site should involve the community and collaborate with researchers and the museum and as well the san Council more often
Participant 3 Community Member and leader of the Khwe	45-50	The participant knows very well of the site and wishes the whole community could know about and that the mcgregor museum could really involve the community especially school kids at the rock art site
Participant 4 Tour Guide		The tour guide is happy with the management of the site however, wishe that the community were to be more active
Participant 5 Community Traditional leader	60-70	The leaders loves the site as it bring forth the history of the san people indigenous through the rock art
Participant 6 Tour guide	30-35	The tour is happy with the management of the site
Participant 7 Tour Guide	30-35	The tour guides feel the community members should be trained to work at the site
Participant 8 Community Member	20-30	The participant said the only heard of the site but has never been their and they would like to be involved when an opportunity is presented to them
Participant 9 C ommunity Member	20-30	The community members knows of the site and what it signifies however, feels that both the xun and the khwe should be actively involved
Participant 10 School Teacher	30-40	The participant feels that the community especially the school learner should be taught about the site and more excursions for the school learners

In the case of the Wildebeest kuil and the Platfontein Community, the site remain unknown fully to them. The engagements with the community members on the premises of one of the community Non Profitable Organisations SASDO. Mr Moshe had explained that they do know about the site however, a selected few are involved in the site which is almost next to nothing of the community that are involved. Mr Moshe further explained that the community especially the young people are less interested and that if more community engagements between them and the Museum could take place the communitys excitement to the place could be revived.

IV. Synthesis of the collected data

The data analyses of the data extracted from both the sites and communities involved showcases the different dynamics of the sites and the management of the sites of which will be discussed in the upcoming chapter.

Therefore, in terms of Spitzkope it was found that:

1. The community in this is well aware of the rock art and is actively involved in some activities pertaining to the site
2. Heritage institutions like the Heritage Council is effortly working with the site and having continuous site visitations to the conduct site assessments
3. Compliance of the site in terms of management plans are still weaken

In terms of Wildebeest skuil it was found that:

1. The community and the community organisations are showing interest in the site.
2. The site has a very outdated management that dates back to 2012 and in terms of the management legislation a management plan should be revised every 5 years
3. The site has been prone to wild fires ruining walkways to most of the rock art engraving
4. The site has been prone to vandalism and constant robberies that is causing the to close and not allowing vistors

V. Limitations

The study focused on two sites in two different countries therefore, the limiation in terms of one site which is the Spitzkope one in Namibia was the process of obtaining a research permit as the process took an ample amount of time. Another limitation was engaging site managers in these site as they were mostly not in a position to

assist especially at Spitzkope. Another limitation was engaging with the community at Platfontein was the language barrier, as much as I was fluent in Afrikaans most of the community members especially the elderly their Afrikaans was barely understandable. A limitation in terms of the Spitzkope site it does not have detailed management that was made available at my disposal which made the understanding and the comparing of the two site much more complicate than expected.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The following chapter will take into account all the data that was collected and analysed. The following discussion will derive from the data analysed through this comparative research by looking at two sites following the engagement I as the researcher have engaged with as well as the different stakeholders involved in. In the data analysed various theme or rather notions of the same wording that came out were that of community empowerment, more education to the community about the sites, more formal training to community working on the sites, the community tourism aspect to be tapped in to more. All of these themes relates back to the study on heritage management of rock art studies that has been conducted by Deacon 1997 which is centered around looking at different aspects of management thus looking at the management involving the community trough educational purposes and tour guiding training from these centers of prehistoric rock art sites. Now when looking the Wildebeest kuil rock art site since its inception there has been tour guiding budget allocated by training the guides however, due to the financial constraints and the site not generating a suitable income to maintain the up keep of the site the tour guiding expenses had to be cut.

Heritage institutions, policies, and legislations in southern Africa and in the world at large have different guidelines on how heritage about rock art sites should be approached. For example, the Burra Charter, International Council On Monuments And Sites, National Heritage Resources Act of South Africa, and Namibian Heritage Council have guidelines on how rock art sites should and can be managed (Deacon 1997, Kinahan 1991, Ndlovu, 2011). However, the question would be if these guidelines are still really working models looking at the management of rock art sites, thus including stakeholders engagement between the general public and heritage institutions as well as for both old and new rock art sites. However, the two sites to be research both form part of countries that have one of the largest collection rock art paintings and engraving in the Southern Africa (Mauran 2019 et al, Nankela, 2017, 2015) therefore, they are of very much significance and importance in understanding the history of humans in the African continent through rock art.

As per researchers, Deacon 1997 and others the management of rock art sites in Southern Africa remains one of the key issues that needs to be looked at especially to

include the active participation of the general public which is the communities in the rock art sites. Both the sites in question use legislations to govern and manage these sites. For example in South Africa, the legal inclusion of communities in the organisation of a heritage site is enforced by the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 (NHRA, 1999) (Ndlovu 2011). It establishes the rights of South African communities to heritage resources and their dispositions "to be consulted and to participate in their management" since "heritage resources form an important part of the history and beliefs of communities and must be managed in a way that acknowledges the right of affected communities" (Section 5:4, NHRA, 1999). There is thus a legal imperative to include communities in the running of the sites, not only in carrying out daily work tasks and events, but also in sharing governance with other institutions.

However, the management of these sites has always been explored, but the community involvement aspect and the liaison between different stakeholders has been an ongoing misunderstanding, miscommunication as well as they sites are constantly vandalised. The aspect of the community participation in heritage and where rock art is concerned still need to be explored in depth (Duval et al, 2023). For example looking at both sites Spitzkope and Wildbeeskuil are both communal land and have communities living in those areas (Kinahan 1990, Morris, 2014). Therefore, there communities that should be involved in the decision making as well as the management of the sites.

In the global context of rock art research Archaeologists are at the center of these competing discourses and, along with their fellow stakeholders, can manage them effectively by bringing divergent discourses into meaningful articulation. Archaeological research and its management in the Namibian region over the last decades has been on pertaining rock art and the rock art that happens to be in communal areas (Nankela, 2017). In South Africa and Namibia the rock art sites are as well situated in communal areas that of those that are in close proximities to the local indigenous people (Gwasira, 2002, Morris, 2012). In Several institutions have had either open air spaces, cave enclosed. However, in the sites that are researched the rock art are in open air sites (Wildebeest kuil) and in enclosed area (Spitzkope).

I. Wildebeest kuil Rock art site

1. Community Engagement

The community that lives in the vicinity of Wildebeest kuil rock art site is the community of Platfontein. As part of the data collection interviews were conducted at Platfontein. It was explained that the site has always been the place that community could use for their own use however, that has changed according to the residents of Platfontein. A good example of a rock art site that is open to the public is the Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Centre which is about fifteen minutes outside of Kimberley in the Northern Cape Province. The site has one of the finest rock engravings sites open to the public in South Africa. The rock art at Wildebeest kuil consists of engravings also known as petroglyphs rather than paintings, of which is a characteristic feature of many sites in the Northern Cape region (Morris, et al 2002, Morris, 2012, Barnandes, 2014). These engravings include depictions of animals, humans, and abstract or geometric designs. The symbolism of these artworks is deeply connected to the San people's spiritual beliefs, hunting practices, and social structures (Lewis). For example the engravings that are depicting the Eland figure which is regarded as a spiritual animal related to the San community and fosters a bridge between the spiritual world and the earthly (Winberg 2015) this is stated in a paper research by Winberg in conversations with one of the oldest San healer Meneputo.

In terms of legislative frameworks, over the years, a general interest or a legal mandate for heritage management in RSA. These are the South African National Society (1905–1934), the Historical Monuments Commission (1934–1969), and the National Monuments Council (1969–1999). Since the promulgation of the NHRA, heritage management has been restructured along the national, provincial, and local levels. The South African Heritage Resources Agency (2000–present) is currently tasked with the management of Grade I sites, while the Provincial Heritage Resources Authorities and Local Heritage Resource Authorities are responsible for Grade II and Grade III heritage sites, respectively. Historical accounts from these institutions highlight the events that shaped the selection, presentation, and representation of cultural heritage, some of which is the process of Community Involvement. Involve local communities in the management and decision-making processes related to heritage

sites (Deacon, 1997, 1993). This can empower communities to take an active role in preserving and interpreting their own cultural heritage. The Wildebeest kuil Rock art site in terms of the management and grading it is protected under the provincial grading. The site since its inception it has been on a provincial grading because of the type heritage which is the rock art that is on it (Figure 21).

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The Head of Department
Mr AF Joemat

DECLARATION OF WILDEBEEST KUIL AS A PROVINCIAL HERITAGE SITE

By direction, please find the attached correspondence for your information.

Regards



.....
CARMEN PIENAAR
APPOINTMENTS SECRETARY

DATE: 09.10.2008

DEPT. SPORT, ARTS & CULTURE
NORTHERN CAPE

13 OCT 2008

Figure 21: Letter of declaration of the Wildebeest skuil as a Provincial heritage site provided by Mc Gregor Museum

Looking at a study and research paper by researchers, Pinto, Duval, Morris Quiem 2022/23 explored the factor of the Community Property Association in the heritage of the community which is also inclusive of the rock art centre Wildebeeskul. The paper revealed the that the community based approach explored in the Wildebeest kuilhas

had flaws and challenges. Thus also exploring the participatory method approach One of the reasons for that is that since the inception of the site or rather declaration of the site, the site was under a Trust which was under the custodianship of the McGregor Museum. The Trust that is inclusive of the different leaders of the two groupings the Xun and Khwe. This resulted in only specific leadership part of the decision of the site and the management of it. This has caused many confusion with regards to the site as the message relayed comes from the different sources. This has also been communicated during an interview with one of the community leaders Ntate Moshe he has explained that community has the attitude of not feeling inclusive and therefore, show less interest in the site even less in the management of the site (Figure 22). This has been a concern and a flaw to the community based approach remaining a trial and error narrative. With the Wildebeest kuil Rock art site being a site belonging to the San community which is inclusive of two different indigenous people groupings namely the Xun and the Khwe. They have chief and traditional leaders of which the traditional custodianship method of management approach could be explored to look at ensure a more sufficient involvement and participatory approach in the management of the site.



Figure 22: Engagement with Ntate Moshe one of NGO leaders of the community in Platfontein captured by SASDO member 2024

The issues arising from this prehistoric rock art center are those as well of risks of veld fires and vandalism from those suspected to be from the city and the community nearby. Recent months leading up to this research a veld fire broke out (Figure 23) that affected as well damaged the walk way that leads up to the rock art engraving that on a hill. This prohibited the centre from being fully operational and therefore, less tours and the community having access to it.



Figure 23: Fire on Wildebeest kuilrock art captured by Mc Gregor museum staff 2023

2. Site Management

Wildebeest skuil is management The management of the site since 2008 has been that The Provincial Department of Sport Arts and Culture employs a full-time Site Manager/guide who reports to the head of archaeology at the McGregor Museum. The McGregor Museum employs (on contract) an additional guide. And that South African San Institute employs one or two shop assistant/s for the N|jaoh Djao Shop which operates from the Centre and they assist with guiding duties. However, this has been since its inception and 2008 when funding was still available. Currently the site is managed by the Mc gregor Museum fully as well as staff members from there altenating. However, there is an available tour Guide Petrus whom works at the site everyday and also takes tour guides upon request on weekends.

II. Spitzkope Rock art sites

1. Community Engagement

With data analysed at the Spitzkope rock art site one occurring challenge and theme that has been showcasing in excess is that of the stakeholder engagements with the communities living specifically on the side at which the three different rock shelters are situated on the site. The site are as mentioned the Bushmans Paradise, Small bushman Paradise as well as the Goldern Snake Paradise. All these rock art shelter are guided by the locals who stay on the site. The site that has the meentioHowever, with Namibia having over 1200 rock art varying from the Tweyfyfontein area, to Erongo Mountains to the Brandberg areas (Kinahan 1990, Nankela, 2015, 2017). Amongst the mentioned sites have the element of heritage significance, as well as tourism and have the communities actively involved from tour guiding other aspects (Imalwa, 2016). With the specific Spitzkope that falls under the Namibian Conservancy of which according to the word on the community that it soon to be entering into a joint Venture with the private sector. This caused the community to also have many questions as to where their future is on the site. Namibia has over 1200 rock art across the country, Spitzkope rock art only fall as one of the rock art. This site has many eyes to it with many touristic, economic benefits to it that could possibly be involving the community. The site has tour guides from the community that has been working there for over five years to date. Many of them mentioned that they have been offered well training to be tour guides and it also gives them an opportunity to engage with tourist all around the world that visits the site. However, speaking to the younger generation part of the community of Spitzkope they feel that the management of the site should be overtaken or rather be inclusive of the community as they are the ones that knows the site and have intergenerational knowledge of the site. Therefore, the long standing of the site could be increase if and when the community is involved.

Namibian rock art management and the community has been researched as well with a few examples like that of the Brandberg, Twefyfontein, Erongo Mountains where the rock art is in communal areas or rather communities are in vicinities (Figure 24, Gwasira, 2003). In these sites there has been constant engagements with the communities in understanding their heritage which in the cases are rock art related. The traditional custodian theory suggests that traditional systems of management has been trial and tested has worked in sites in African countries like Zimbabwe. Where

Unesco has held meetings and sitting with the traditional leaders in looking at how management of heritage sites could be done through traditional systems.

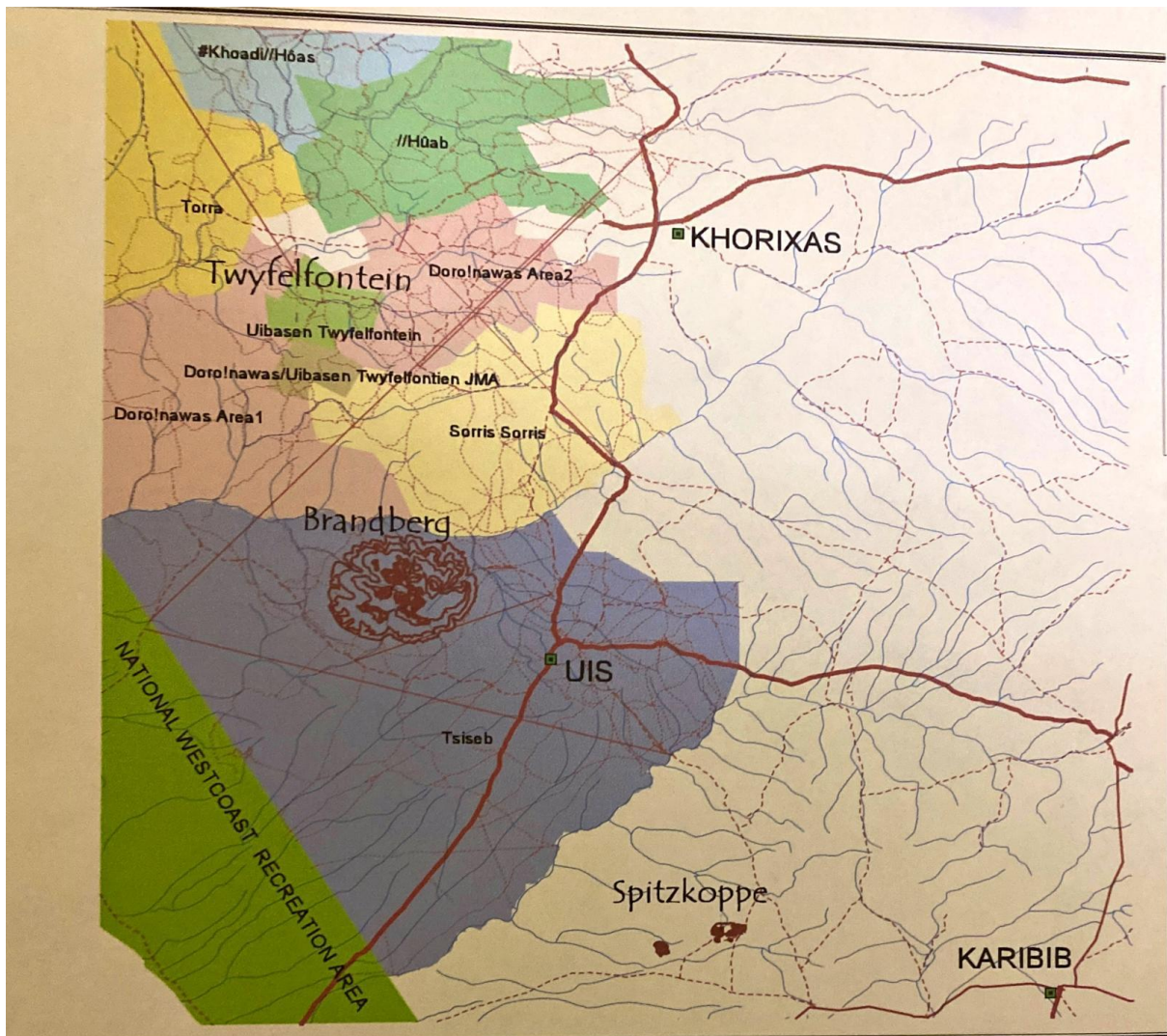


Figure 24: picture extracted from the Namibian Heritage Council Archives Listing of the rock art in the region 2024

Furthermore, because many of the rock art in Namibia is found in communal areas and is therefore more threatened than on private farms. Some of the art is damaged by local communities who advertise its existence because they have realised the potential financial value from growing culture tourism. However, they damage it by ignorant and less community interest.

2. Site Management

Spitzkope as a site is managed by the legislation under the National Heritage Act of 2004. However, the National Heritage Council is only responsible for the heritage resources that are there with the help of the management on site. According to the manager or head at the Heritage Council of Namibia Ms Agnes, it is standard practice that all declared heritage sites be in constant compliance with the council reporting on the state of the site and comply with the various stipulations of the heritage council. But in terms of the Spitzkope site the council can only do that and conduct regular site visitations. According to the council during the time I had visited the site they had as well visited the site to check upon the site and its state, that is when they also learned that the site is undergoing joint ventures. Now this would then call for various stakeholders engagements that is inclusive of the community as their livelihoods are dependant on the site as such. The manager on site where the rock art is located was contacted during my stay on site however, could not gather sufficient time to engage with me or rather answer my questions. This has showcased the aspects of practice on site.

CONCLUSIONS

The study that I have conducted aimed at comparing, looking at the different dynamics of management of the two prehistoric rock art sites. The observations derived from the data collected on the management of rock art sites in Southern African would remain key priority. As these sites play a vital role in understanding a part or portion rather of human existence in the southern Africa regions. With references to the Maloti Drakensberg in South Africa and the Twefylfontein in Namibia the management of the sites have been in public and could be used as examples as to how the challenges and impacts of management could be looked at. The communities and the management of the sites has been a trial and error. Therefore, by looking at the data in terms of the management of rock art in South Africa at Wildbeest kuil it requires a coordinated and multi-disciplinary approach that involves legal protection, scientific research, sustainable tourism practices as well as community engagements. Through these efforts, Wildbeest kuil rock art centre needs to preserve its rich rock art heritage for future generations while allowing current generations to appreciate and learn from these ancient artworks. Also in terms of Spitzkope rock art in Namibia, The effectiveness management of rock art in Spitzkope Namibia requires a multi-faceted approach that combines legal protection, conservation efforts, with as well as the community involvement at the centre, and sustainable tourism practices. By addressing these challenges, Spitzkope can continue to protect its invaluable rock art heritage for future generations.

Recommendations

Therefore a sustainable rock art management model strategy would be proposed that would be anchored by the following basis educational, research, touristic, digitization. Also a renewal or amendment of heritage management plans in accordance with the current and contemporary status quos. This would be proposed to be done with reference to Deacon (1997) of which outlines or rather project on management strategies aluted in the aims of this research which is, public education. In this Deacon (1997) makes mention of education in terms of schools, tourists, and communities who live close to these rock art sites. Deacon (1997) infers that this will

then understandably present rock art and increase the public appreciation thereof, site conservation and management through legislation, civic education, and direct physical protection, thus minimizing the damage done by human impact. As well as, management of information through research, site recording and databases. Therefore to attempt to complement the main componential aspects Deacon is speaking of it would also be great to be spearheaded programmes of continuous stakeholder engagement, community educational programmes, site documentations, impact assessments, site condition assessment in a regular basis. However, while this proposed recommendation does not dispute the notion that management approaches and styles of rock art centres are not linear or in an orderly manner but in accordance to the different nature of heritage to be managed, and the type of resources available or in place.

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