

GDR Rift online Webinar

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<https://umontpellier-fr.zoom.us/j/99022996568>

Presentation of the RAHMSA IRN project : Rock Art Heritage Management in Southern Africa

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Involving researchers in five countries (South Africa, Botswana, France, Namibia, Zimbabwe), the IRN RAHMSA project aims to structure research and training activities on the challenges of preserving and promoting rock art sites in southern Africa. As in other post-colonial contexts, these issues are exacerbated here by the encounter and hybridization between several ontologies and a wide diversity of uses associated with rock art sites. Although initiatives aimed at taking this diversity into account within integrated approaches have developed over the last ten years, they have come up against 1/ the difficulty of apprehending values that are at once multiple, contextual, evolving and sometimes conflicting, and 2/ the absence of a solid holistic and integrated methodological framework for doing so. The IRN RAHMSA project proposes to remedy this methodological shortcoming by bringing together the expertise and comparing the viewpoints and practices of heritage researchers and practitioners from diverse backgrounds to identify intercultural points of interest, using a cosmopolitan approach.

In this, the RAHMSA project both builds on and reinforces an existing ANR project: COSMO-ART (2022-2025). This program proposes the cosmopolitical approach as a tool for tackling the challenges facing the sustainable management of rock art sites, by reconciling different uses, perceptions and development issues. While COSMO-ART focuses on research activities in South Africa and Namibia, the IRN RAHMSA project aims to structure research and training activities on a regional scale in southern Africa, involving two other southern African countries, Botswana and Zimbabwe. To achieve this, RAHMSA proposes to organize 5 training workshops, one in each partner country, and associated public events, such as conference cycles, round tables and exhibitions.

As a geographer, Mélanie Duval's research focuses on the analysis of heritage processes and the issues involved in the tourism of archaeological sites (rock art sites, lacustrine remains - also known as "palafittic sites"). She is interested in the values attributed/mobilized and the interplay of actors in the construction and operation of heritage rhetoric, as well as in management and tourism methods.

