Thyspunt: Khoisan Heritage

With support from the Changing the Story Mobility Fund the team from Ilizwi Lenyaniso Lomhlaba made the 4-hour journey down to the coast to meet with a Khoe (or Khoisan) community that has been fighting against a nuclear development on the Eastern Cape coast.

This film presents key moments in that journey: starting the journey, being welcomed at Thyspunt, and listening to the heartbreaking stories of colonisation and loss that the people of Thyspunt told. After having discussed the history in the meeting house, the team went down to the Philip Irrigation Tunnel, one of the first large public works for irrigation in South Africa (1842-44) implemented by the son of the famous missionary James Philip. This tunnel was built with Khoe labour, but even to this day the achievement is presented as being the work of famous white men, and the Khoe labour that went into the tunnel, and its historic connections to the land and to shelter, is not acknowledged. The tunnel has become a site of pilgrimage for the local Khoe community.

This film is released as part of series created by Ilizwi Lenyaniso Lomhlaba, the "true voice of the land", based in Graaff-Reinet in the Karoo. Ilizwi Lenyaniso Lomhlaba is a collaborative project established between the Support Centre for Land Change and Youth-in-Power in Graaff Reinet, and academic partners at the Wits Centre for Diversity Studies in Johannesburg, and the University of Leeds, United Kingdom.

You can read more about the project here.

The Changing the Story (CTS) Mobility Fund is open to existing CTS grantees who are currently based in the Global South. It is designed to enhance the mobility and professional development of CTS grantees by providing financial support of up to £1000 per application to support travel, subsistence and conference fee costs. Find out how you can apply here.