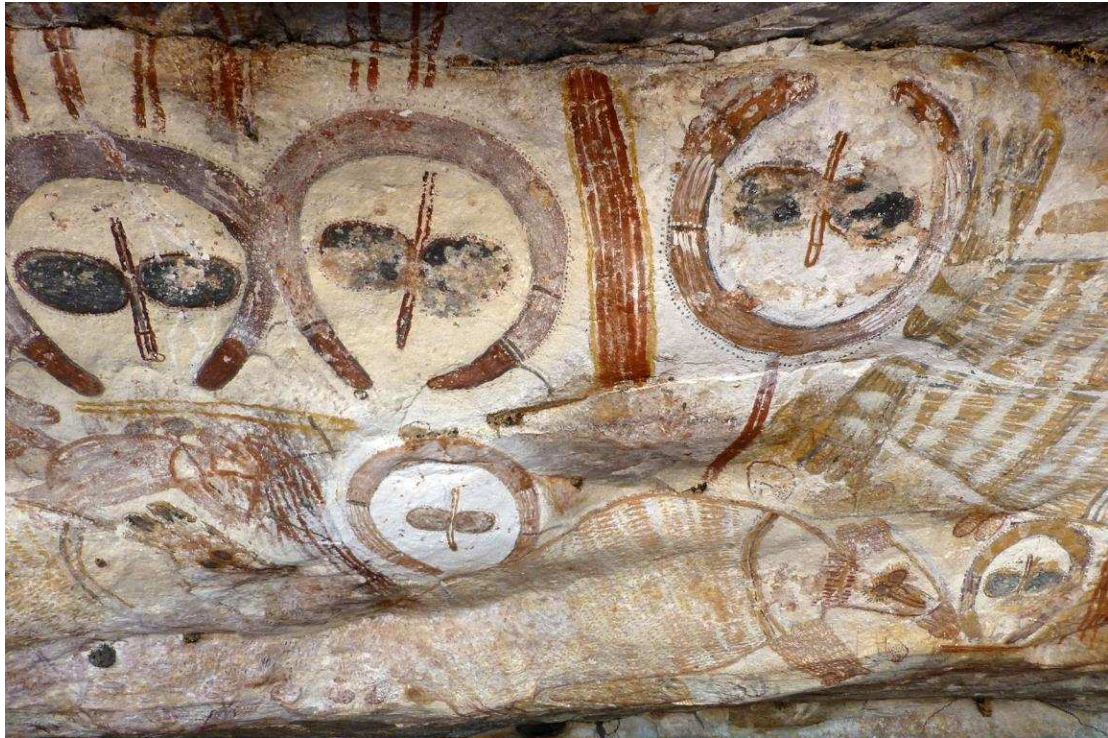


Dating the spectacular aboriginal rock art sequence in the Kimberley region of northwestern Australia



The remote Kimberley region in northwestern Australia is home to one of the greatest repertoires of indigenous rock art to be found anywhere on Earth. An extraordinary abundance of spectacular rock art sites are found preserved in rock shelters and shallow caves developed in flat-lying sandstones of the Paleoproterozoic Kimberley Basin. Remarkably little is known of the antiquity of most of these sites, although a well-documented succession of different rock art styles has been documented, in a clear progression through time. The lack of a robust chronology for the rock art styles makes them difficult to integrate into the emerging archaeological record of aboriginal settlement and environmental change in northern Australia. This study aims to produce a well-calibrated time scale for the rock art sequence, through understanding the dynamic processes operating on the host rock surfaces, and applying a battery of advanced dating techniques.