

**'Weaving the Past with Threads of Memory': Narratives and  
Commemorations of the colonial war in southern Namibia**



A dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History, University of the Western Cape, November 2012

Supervisor: Prof. Ciraj Rassool

## DECLARATION

I, Memory Biwa, declare that '**Weaving the Past with Threads of Memory: Narratives and Commemorations of the colonial war in southern Namibia**', is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Memory Biwa  
November 2012





## **Abstract**

This study seeks to contribute to the literature on the colonial war, genocide and memory studies in Namibia. I review the way in which communities in southern Namibia have developed practices in which to recall and re-enact the colonial war by focusing on narrative genres and public commemorations. I also document how these practices in southern Namibia and the Northern Cape, South Africa symbolically connect and cut across colonial and national borders. I have used the idea of re-constructed and sensorial memory practices within which to view the various narrative genres which display a range of performance repertoire projected onto persons, monuments and land. The study also focuses on the ways in which these memory practices are engaged in order to develop strategies within which to historicise practices of freedom. These have been inserted in the dialogue on national reconciliation through the debates on reparations and the repatriation of human bodies exported to Europe during the colonial war. I argue that these practices depart from a conventional way in which to view an archive and history, and that these memory practices point to the ways in which the logic and acts of the colonial war and genocide were diametrically opposed through acts of humanisation.

## Table of Contents

Page

**Acknowledgements**

iii

**Introduction**

1

A measure of the past through the persistence of dreams

**Chapter One**

Error! Bookmark not defined.

“Carrying the sun on your back”: Review of narratives of war

**Chapter Two**

Error! Bookmark not defined.

The Afterlives of Genocide: an interpretation of colonial war in Namibia

**Chapter Three**

Error! Bookmark not defined.

Stories of the Patchwork Quilt: Recalling transnational narratives of war

**Chapter Four**

Error! Bookmark not defined.

Dancing Horses and Graves: Rituals of history in southern Namibia

**Chapter Five**

Error! Bookmark not defined.

'If the skulls are buried, our history will be buried':  
Repossession of human bodies from Berlin

**Afterword**

Error! Bookmark not defined.

Sore Maya Archive: An act of humanisation



**Appendices**

Error! Bookmark not defined.

**After-Images I**

Error! Bookmark not defined.

Images of Memory and Commemoration

**After-Images II**

Error! Bookmark not defined.

Images of Return and Repossession

**Bibliography**

Error! Bookmark not defined.



## Acknowledgements

This work is in honour of my grandparents, Sanna and Karel Swartbooi, Willem and Elsie Biwa, my parents, Tira and Zacharias Biwa, Marlon, Joan, Saddam, extended family and the beautiful ones not yet born.

This work is also a tribute to my other family, Monwabisi Xhakwe, Philisa Zibi, Norelle Louw, Ingrid Masondo, Thobekile Mbanda, Tamen /Ui≠Useb, Haruka Ueda, Bathabile Molefe, Khadijah Shariff, Herta Lukileni, Lelethu Godongwana, Zinzi Voyiya, Oddveig Sarmiento, Bradley van Sitters, Kurt Orderson, Prune Martinez, Carlos Rey-Moreno, Alaa Hourani, Louise Westerhout, Julia Raynham and Liepollo Rantekoa.

Thank you also to Napandulwe Shiweda, Phaniel Kapaama, Heidi Grunebaum, Riedwaan Moosage and Jeremy Silvester. I am eternally grateful to Yvette Abrahams for inspiring my work and to Yoko Nagahara, Maki Momoka, Akiyo Aminaka and Sayaka Kono for an enriching Symposium in Japan.

I am grateful for funding from the Volkswagen Stiftung and to colleagues from Namibia and Angola of the 'Reconciliation and social conflict in the aftermath of large-scale violence in Southern Africa' Project, the Arnold Bergstraesser Institute and especially Reinhart Kössler, Andre du Pisani and Bill Lindeke. I also thank the Centre for Humanities Research at the University of the Western Cape for generous funding. The Anthony Bagues lectures and seminars at the Centre for African Studies, UCT in 2012 have enriched my work also. To my supervisor Ciraj Rassool for his encouragement and meticulous editing and design skills and Patricia Hayes for giving us pieces of Namibia to warm our home.

To the late Gaob Hendrik Witbooi and all the participants in the research process in southern Namibia and Northern Cape, and their communities, 'Toa tama !khams ge...dans /guisan nira !khambasa...//aes tsi !huba ra //guibase.'



## Introduction

### A measure of the past through the persistence of dreams

The title of this dissertation, 'Weaving the Past with Threads of Memory', was inspired by a verse in a song by Nina Simone.<sup>1</sup>

The incessant recall of the colonial war and genocide as re-enacted by communities in central and southern Namibia at particular interstices may be viewed as a 'prolonged wake'.<sup>2</sup> At the wake, the death event is historicised through the polyphonic narrative range of a reading of the deceased's personal history in biographical form, prayers and all night hymns before the burial.<sup>3</sup> It is in the wake that mourning, the intimate collective work on the afterlives of the event, commences. The prolonged wake in the sense of memorial practice is an ongoing engagement with the past punctuated by the way in which the past continues to recur in the present. Mourning is a critical interpretation and reflection on the presence of the past in socio-political realities while simultaneously attending to the reinvention of new life.<sup>4</sup> Dreaming presents parallel codes in which the work of mourning is structured as these processes re-order and construct alternative temporalities.<sup>5</sup> The past and future are made present, and interpreted through the 'wake'. Dreaming as a historicising practice offers a

---

<sup>1</sup> The song by Nina Simone, 'God, God, God', was recorded at Ronnie Scott's Club, London, 1984. The verse adapted from a poem written by Paramahansa Yogananda reads, "When my mind weaves dreams, With threads of memories, Then on that magic cloth will I emboss, God! God! God!"

<sup>2</sup> Oddveig Sarmiento used this term in our conversation on our parallel research work.

<sup>3</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, *The Last Word: Women, Death and Divination in Inner Mani*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1991, 225.

<sup>4</sup> Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 2001, 70.

<sup>5</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, *The Last Word*, 227-8.

structure and context for symbolic re-vision and may influence socio-political practices such as the claims to artefacts, resources, land and bodies.<sup>6</sup>

My research approach was informed by my experiences at annual festivals in Gibeon, southern Namibia, by later research on the literature of the colonial war in Namibia and by interviews conducted during the centennial commemorations in southern Namibia. Following on from my previous archival research, I draw attention to the aspects of the colonial war imparted through oral history in its widest sense and memorial events in communities in southern Namibia and the Northern Cape in South Africa.<sup>7</sup> I conducted interviews in villages where festivals were held in southern Namibia. I carried out more interviews at places where refugees had migrated to more than a century before during the war such as Pella, Steinkopf, Matjieskloof and the Richtersveld in the Northern Cape, South Africa. I also participated in and documented how mnemonic productions which depicted the war, were brought together at festivals in Warmbad, Vaalgras, Lüderitz, Gibeon, Goamus and Hoachanas in southern Namibia. The 'lines drawn on maps'<sup>8</sup> were connected and traversed not only physically through land use and migratory practices which pre-dated the war and as refuge territories

---

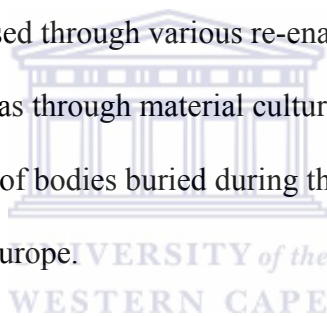
<sup>6</sup> Dag Henrichsen, 'Claiming Space and Power in Pre-Colonial Central Namibia: The Relevance of Herero Praise Songs', Basler Afrika Bibliographien Working Paper No. 1, 1999, presented at the African Studies Association Annual Meeting in Chicago, 30 October 1998; For more discussion on 'ejuru' and the idea of visioning and idealising land after the war see Gesine Krüger and Dag Henrichsen, 'We Have Been Captives Long Enough, We Want to be Free: Land, uniforms and politics in the history of the Herero in the interwar period', in Patricia Hayes, Jeremy Silvester, Marion Wallace and Wolfram Hartmann (eds.), *Namibia under South African Rule: Mobility and containment*, James Currey, Oxford, 1998, 153-61.

<sup>7</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge': Remembering the War in Namakhoeland, 1903-1908', Unpublished MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 2006

<sup>8</sup> This is a phrase from a statement, 'people across the water drawing lines on their maps' made by Gaob Simon Kooper during the war in response to harassment from German and British officials when he fled with the !Khara-khoen community to Botswana. National Archives of South Africa, Prime Minister's Office (PMO) 214, Letter to the Resident Commissioner, Mafikeng, from the Assistent Resident Magistrate, Reitfontein, 10 February 1908.

during the war but through continuous symbolic memory practices in the afterlives of the war.<sup>9</sup>

Most authors of the colonial war in Namibia have been careful to study the events of the war- 'this happened and then that'- and have largely omitted the perspectives on the war and the historical productions of communities in southern Namibia. These include the experiences and re-production in communities, both civilians and soldiers who had fled across the border between Namibia and South Africa during German colonisation, war and genocide. My approach was to study the ways in which the experiences of the colonial war were framed in these communities using specific knowledge technologies to remember the past. These community histories were expressed through various re-enactments such as narratives, theatre, dances and songs as well as through material culture, rituals, monuments, historic sites and through the reclamation of bodies buried during the war in other parts of the country, and bodies exported to Europe.



The culmination of these productions was seen at community festivals and memorial events such as the annual Heroes Day Festival held in Gibeon. It is through these productions of memory that communities demonstrated complex perceptions and experiences over a period of time. These sites of re-enactment were spaces where the histories of these communities were continuously reframed in relation to the past. These commemorations were also used to forge community cohesion through identification with a specific tradition of anti-colonial resistance. However while presenting experiences of the war, many aspects of the historical

---

<sup>9</sup> Martin Legassick, 'The Peopling of Riemvasmaak and the Marengo Rebellion', Institute for Historical Research, South African and Contemporary History Seminar, University of the Western Cape, 25 August 1998; Dwight Conquergood, 'Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research', *TDR*, Vol. 46, No. 2, 2000, 145-146.



events as remembered in these communities may not be transferrable through these various representations. Articulations and silences in the process and production of historical knowledge occur at particular stages in the re-enactment of the event, and thus have to be focused on in specific ways.<sup>10</sup> This means taking seriously the various re-enactments through oral history, dances, songs and material culture related to the colonial war specifically and the performance traditions of these communities in general. Coming to terms with these expressions and omissions invariably also means looking at the ways in which the re-enactments of the war have been produced in multiple locations, as well as the power that bears on the knowledge circulated.<sup>11</sup>

The war has been represented through various frames which I describe in Chapters One and Two, where I locate the debates, entanglements and departures that inform the succeeding themes in the dissertation. In Chapter Three I present narratives and suggest an alternative historical production through a performance repertoire which mobilises material culture such as quilts and shawls to produce conscious and unconscious memory regimes in which to view and understand historical re-enactments that stitch the territories of southern Namibia and the Northern Cape. Chapter Four traces the genealogy of public memorial events in southern Namibia, and how these communities have constructed history through reconstituted cultural practices using various insignia related to the war.

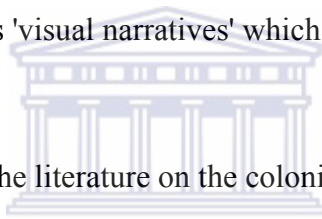
The symbolic force of these memorial practices is bound up with the way in which these communities enact practices of freedom from which ongoing socio-political engagements

---

<sup>10</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1995, 27.

<sup>11</sup> David William Cohen, *The Combing of History*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1994, 247; Sumit Guha, 'Speaking Historically: The Changing Voices of Historical Narration in Western India, 1400-1900', *American Historical Review*, 109, 4 (October 2004), 1085.

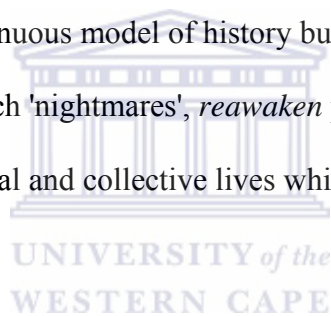
take their cue. For over the years these communities have continuously held memorial events of the colonial war, sanctioned various organs nationally and internationally and demanded reparations for war crimes, in most cases without the support of the national government. The 2011 repatriation of 'human remains' that had been exported to Germany during the war was also demanded by communities and specific Genocide Committees representing these communities. How these communities have remapped their own paths while interrogating the discourse of national reconciliation in Namibia, and have placed themselves squarely in the postcolonial memorial complex in the country is described in Chapter Five. At the end of my dissertation, I will add two collections of images as After-Image I and After-Image II as a way for the reader to be visually oriented to the concerns of the dissertation. These are not meant as visual illustrations but as 'visual narratives' which stand on their own.



This study seeks to contribute to the literature on the colonial war, genocide and memory studies in Namibia. I review the way in which communities in southern Namibia have developed practices in which to recall and re-enact the colonial war by focusing on narrative genres and public commemorations. I also document how these practices in southern Namibia and the Northern Cape, South Africa symbolically connect and cut across colonial and national borders. I have used the idea of re-constructed and sensorial memory practices within which to view the various narrative genres which display a range of performance repertoire projected onto persons, monuments and land. The study also focuses on the ways in which these memory practices are engaged in order to develop strategies within which to historicise practices of freedom. These have been inserted in the dialogue on national reconciliation through the debates on reparations and the repatriation of human bodies exported to Europe during the colonial war. I argue that these practices depart from a conventional way in which to view an archive and history, and that these memory practices

point to the ways in which the logic and acts of the colonial war and genocide were diametrically opposed through acts of humanisation.

Ben Okri suggests that we view the African past in a cyclical manner in which the present time parallels a past and future re-imagined and designed through the persistence of dreams. In this cyclical timeline, parallel points complement each other and the present time is marked by visionary dreams of the future instead of a linear and continuous temporality between past and present. A measure of such a timeline may create a political vigour in which communities constantly define the types of socio-political and economic development that remain vigilant to their visionary imaginings.<sup>12</sup> The measure of the past in dreams not only departs from the linear continuous model of history but also speaks to the unsettling notion of historical events in which 'nightmares', *reawaken* persons to return to a particular event and moment in their personal and collective lives which warrant a re-address.



---

<sup>12</sup> Ben Okri, 'Biko and the Tough Alchemy of Africa', 13th Annual Steve Biko Memorial Lecture, University of Cape Town, Jameson Hall, 12 September 2012.

## Chapter One

### “Carrying the sun on your back”: Review of narratives of war

‘Surrendering yourself over to government by another, by White people,...will become to you like carrying the sun on your back.’<sup>1</sup>

The events of the colonial war in Namibia have been described by various authors, heritage activists and traditional authorities along specific themes. The various themes focused on included German colonisation, anti-colonial resistance, the war and genocide policies, the limited realm of German invasion and revision of the genocide analysis, as well as the trauma of the war and the reconstruction of communities through war commemorations and reparations.<sup>2</sup> This chapter reviews the various representations of the war that reassess the history in southern Namibia in the late 1800s and early 1900s. I also evaluate specific themes and paradigms through which the war has been understood and how these have created silences in the retelling of these histories.<sup>3</sup> German colonisation and genocide in Namibia are often presented as forgotten history, yet these are some of the most commemorated historical processes in Namibia by various communities both after the genocide itself, during the liberation struggle and after independence in 1990.

Authors who wrote, especially from the 1960s, about colonialism in Namibia have framed the grand narrative of the war according to a specific discourse pursued and/or debated in

---

<sup>1</sup> Hendrik Witbooi to Maharero, Hoornkrans, 30 May 1890, in Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (transl.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995, 52.

<sup>2</sup> Helmut Bley, *South West Africa Under German Rule 1894-1914*, Heinemann Educational Books, London, 1971, Introduction; Jan-Bart Gewald, *Herero Heroes: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia, 1890-1923*, James Currey Ltd., London, 1999, 2-9; Brian T. Mokopagosi, 'Conflict and Collaboration in South-Eastern Namibia: Missionaries, Concessionaires and the Nama's War against German Imperialism, 1880-1908', in J.F. Ade Ajayi, J.D.Y. Peel (eds), *People and Empires in African History: Essays in memory of Michael Crowder*, Longman, London, 1992, 185.

<sup>3</sup> Jacques Depelchin, *Silences in African History: Between the Syndromes of Discovery and Abolition*, Mkuki na Nyota Publishers, Dar es Salaam, 2005, 15-6.

successive narrations. Historical discourse here refers to the objects of study, the procedures used to signify these objects and ways of speaking about these objects.<sup>4</sup> These representations often belie the fact that there are, as David William Cohen states, 'multiple locations of historical knowledge' and therefore various discourses. Some aspects of these grand narratives have the effect of historical erasure and various complex aspects of the war were cast into oblivion. This is referred to by Anthony Bogues as a double erasure, ontological and of the episteme.<sup>5</sup> While these authors of colonisation reveal a part of colonial history in Namibia, they also silence other parts of this history. The focus on a particular aspect, event, or community involved in the colonial war is a consequence of what authors deemed relevant or more important to represent in the pursuit of specific aims.

Trouillot questions whether a history of an event is able to be faithfully documented when it is 'unthinkable' to its contemporaries.<sup>6</sup> This question associates the process of witnessing an event and narrating it thereafter to the silences that occur during its reproduction. He says that silences in history occur at several stages in production. He also notes that these silences may not be addressed in the same way because they are created in specific contexts, for different reasons and through diverse operations.<sup>7</sup> This analysis looks at the debates and interpretations of an event through what Cohen terms, the 'production of history'.<sup>8</sup> The power structure inherent in the production of knowledge has influenced the way in which the past is viewed in the present.<sup>9</sup> Depelchin frames these processes as the 'syndromes of discovery and

---

<sup>4</sup> Hayden White, Foreword: Rancière's Revisionism, in Jacques Rancière, *The Names of History: On the poetics of knowledge*, vii.

<sup>5</sup> Anthony Bogues and Geri Augusto, 'Africana Thought and Africana Intellectual history: Notes for a Discussion', Paper presented at the Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, 8 December 2004, 1.

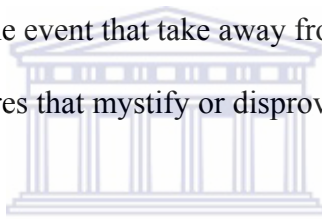
<sup>6</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1995, 70-107.

<sup>7</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 51-2.

<sup>8</sup> David William Cohen, *The Combing of History*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1994, 4.

<sup>9</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 51-8; David William Cohen, *The Combing of History*, 74.

abolition'.<sup>10</sup> These are a twin set of processes where authors document an event as if for the first time revealing specific truths about it, and at the same time advocate that their work corrects former misrepresentations. In both these procedures, Depelchin notes, silences are reproduced.<sup>11</sup> Trouillot states that the Haitian revolution was represented by contemporaries and subsequent authors with 'formulas of silence'. He notes that these 'formulas' are used to deny events such as the Haitian revolution and its impact on world history.<sup>12</sup> Trouillot notes that a Haitian revolution was 'unthinkable' in western discourse and that there are two tropes in which this type of history is written. The one is the 'formulas of erasure', which erase the fact of a revolution. Such formulas speak of the impossibility of the revolution, and thus write about it in an acceptable worldview. And the other is the 'formula of banalization', which seeks to explain other details of the event that take away from its impact. These 'formulae' usually include statistics and figures that mystify or disprove the magnitude of the event.<sup>13</sup>



Various authors also document that resistance in Namibia during the war in the early 1900s was unimaginable and that the Germans were surprised and underestimated Nama soldiers in southern Namibia. As a result anti-colonial resistance was packaged in various terms such as 'uprising', 'insurrection', 'rebellion' and 'revolt', never a full-scale war because it was never conceded as such by German officials. This is not just a case of semantics, as these names of the resistance show a specific ontological and epistemic discourse which operated in that era and was rendered as fact by subsequent authors. Furthermore the resistance in southern Namibia was often blamed on external forces. These ideas normalised colonialism, i.e. communities in Namibia were content with the status quo. It further trivialised the resistance

---

<sup>10</sup> Jacques Depelchin, *Silences in African History*, 12-4.

<sup>11</sup> Jacques Depelchin, *Silences in African History*, 12-4.

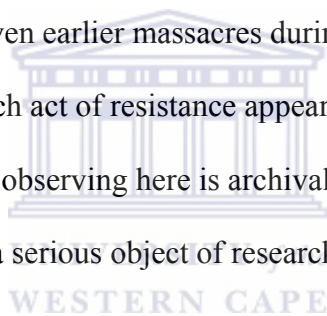
<sup>12</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 95-7.

<sup>13</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 95-7.

intent of communities in Namibia, and placed the motivation for resistance outside the realm and capabilities of these communities.<sup>14</sup>

The colonial war is divided into periods which is another procedure of silencing history as noted by Depelchin. The war is often framed as the 'Herero-German war', which lasted between the years 1904-1908.<sup>15</sup> In some cases what has been narrated subsequently has distorted the events of the war, such as when the various wars during German colonisation have been separated according to specific categories. Some of the categories used are the 'uprising of !Gamiñun in 1903'<sup>16</sup>, the 'Nama-German war of 1904- 1908' and the 'war of national resistance'. As fixed in the official archive and disseminated by successive authors the effect is that certain battles, even earlier massacres during German colonisation seem insignificant and in such cases each act of resistance appears unrelated to the next.<sup>17</sup>

Trouillot wrote that, 'what we are observing here is archival power at its strongest, the power to define what is and what is not a serious object of research and, therefore of mention'.<sup>18</sup> A



---

<sup>14</sup> On the Haitian case see Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 103-104.

<sup>15</sup> To see texts that mainly discuss the Herero-German war see Helmut Bley, *South West Africa Under German Rule 1894-1914*, xix; Karla Poewe, *The Namibian Herero: A history of their psychosocial disintegration and survival*, Lewiston and Queenston, 1985; Brigitte Lau, 'Uncertain Certainties: The Herero-German War of 1904' in Annemarie Heywood (ed.), *History and Historiography: 4 Essays in Reprint*, Discourse/MSORP, Windhoek, 1995; Tilman Dederig, 'The German-Herero War of 1904: Revisionism of Genocide or Imaginary Historiography?', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol.19, No. 1, Special Issue: Namibia: Africa's Youngest Nation (March 1993), 80-88; Jan-Bart, *Herero Heroes: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia, 1890-1923*, James Currey Ltd, London; Jan-Bart Gewald, 'Herero genocide in the twentieth century: Politics and memory' in J. Abbink, M. De Bruijn and K. Van Walraven (eds.) *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History*, Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden, 2003; Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia, 1915-1966*, P. Schlettwein Publishing, Switzerland, 1999, p.; Henrik Lundofte, "I believe that the nation as such must be annihilated...The Radicalisation of the German Suppression of the Herero Rising in 1904" in S. Jensen (ed.) *Genocide: Cases, Comparisons and Contemporary Debates*, The Danish Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Copenhagen, 2003. To see texts that review the engagement of other communities in the war such as the Nama see Brian T. Mokopakgosi, 'Conflict and Collaboration in South-Eastern Namibia: Missionaries, Concessionaires and the Nama's War against German Imperialism, 1880-1908'; John Masson, *Jakob Marengo: An Early Resistance Hero of Namibia*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2001.

<sup>16</sup> The main leaders of the !Gamiñun resistance such as Jakob Marenga and Abraham Morris did not sign the peace treaty in 1904, and fled to South Africa to regroup and returned to fight the war in alliance with other Nama clans in 1904.

<sup>17</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 83, 99; Jacques Depelchin, *Silences in African History*, 15, 34.

<sup>18</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 99.



striking consequence of 'formulas of silence' was that the national centennial commemoration of the war was carried out in 2004 and only officially conducted at Ohamakari in central Namibia.<sup>19</sup> Many communities' histories were neglected, whether consciously or not, at the national centennial commemoration of the war. However this was paralleled by the smaller and 'unofficial' centennial commemorations of the war which took place in southern Namibia, such as at Gibeon in 2005 and on Shark Island in 2007.

The knowledge constructed of the colonial war framed in particular discourses of power informed colonial policies and influenced apartheid technologies.<sup>20</sup> The effects of these writing procedures based on ontological and epistemic discourses, relates to the various modes that have supported the ongoing cycles of silence in historical production. These procedures continue to mystify and deny certain aspects of the histories of colonialism and the parallels that may be drawn from lived historical experience that would rupture the very systems on which the continued silences are based. On the other hand the ways in which communities framed the past also shaped the ways in which they organised a view of themselves in everyday life, cultural programmes and resistance strategies. Furthermore these productions, when used as resistance material, played a significant role in the liberation struggle, and continue to form an important legitimating base of the postcolonial state. They continue to be actively recalled and memorialised in monuments, commemorations and national holidays. This reveals the innate power in 'the cyclical relationship between the past, as constituted in historical 'texts', the present and future'.<sup>21</sup> The memorial space in which

---

<sup>19</sup> Henning Melber, 'How to Come to Terms with the Past: Re-Visiting the German Colonial Genocide in Namibia', *Africa Spectrum*, Vol. 40. No. 1 (2005), 141.

<sup>20</sup> Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992, 75.

<sup>21</sup> David William Cohen, *The Combing of History*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1994, 74.



recollections of the past are conducted reveals the ways in which various representations of the past intersect with, interweave with and depart from one another.<sup>22</sup>

The hierarchy and dichotomy constructed between 'texts' found in national archives and those in the community are ambiguous, contentious and false precisely because neither one can be held to be more authoritative than the other, as both, when 'written in', are already interpretations of the events as they happened.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand these 'texts' are distinguished by their temporal relationship to the colonial war, the modes in which they have been represented and the contexts of power in which they have been used to convey historical consciousness. The reproductions of the past are thus already framed in a specific discourse.<sup>24</sup> It is however important to note that these discourses were reproduced in specific colonial contexts and often have the effect of reproducing colonial power relations. Also these historical 'texts' have in some cases informed each other, to the extent that there is a multi-directional use of the colonial and the communal archives and even beyond these repositories. This is not a case of relativism, for there are specific rules and procedures within which these historical reproductions are created.<sup>25</sup> Focusing on the past in this way also points to the agency of individuals and communities in the production of their own knowledge and charting the course of their destinies.<sup>26</sup>

This chapter reviews the 'this happened and then that' as a way of framing the knowledge on which the historical and memory discourse of the colonial war in southern Namibia is based.

---

<sup>22</sup> Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space and the Dialectics of Memory*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1999, 109.

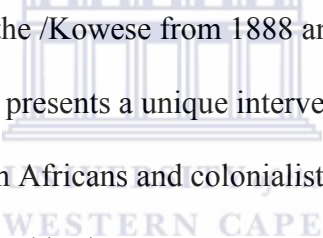
<sup>23</sup> Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces*, 28.

<sup>24</sup> Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces*, 28.

<sup>25</sup> Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 1994, 18.

<sup>26</sup> Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces*, 33.

Because the history of the war and aftermath in southern Namibia is not given equal representation in the discipline I decisively summarise a chronology of the war, and aspects of the history of southern Namibia which have a particular impact on the ways in which the war is remembered in socially constructed contexts in public discourse and private retellings of the war. I also pay attention to specific themes and procedures indicative of procedures of silence in historical production. Through a view of this literature taken together with successive chapters I will analyse how these layered productions of the past created in various spaces reveal hegemony, creation and erasure of historical knowledge, struggles over interpretations and sites of the war, and the ways in which these productions were dynamically interwoven.<sup>27</sup>



Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, leader of the /Kowese from 1888 and self-proclaimed 'Hoofd Kapitein' of 'Noord Namaqualand' presents a unique intervention in colonial discourse, a perception of the relations between Africans and colonialists, in his letters from his diaries.<sup>28</sup> These diaries are presently registered in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register.<sup>29</sup> It is in his letters that one reads about the relations between the various 'red chiefs' who mostly inhabited southern Namibia.<sup>30</sup> There are also accounts between Herero leaders and statements about war motives between these communities. Furthermore the accounts clearly give

---

<sup>27</sup> On these issues see Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 1994, 15; David William Cohen, *The Combing of History*, 245.

<sup>28</sup> Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (trans.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995; Brigitte Lau, 'Concerning the Hendrik Witbooi Papers', in Brigitte Lau, *History and Historiography: 4 Essays in reprint*, Discourse/Msorp, Windhoek, 1995, 17-37.

<sup>29</sup> UNESCO Memory of the World Register, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/memory-of-the-world/register/full-list-of-registered-heritage/registered-heritage-page-5/letter-journals-of-hendrik-witbooi/>, accessed 21 September 2012.

<sup>30</sup> Record of the Meeting between Witbooi and Curt von Francois, Hoornkrans, 9 June 1892, in Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (trans.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995, 84-88.

evidence of the relations between German officials, settlers and Gaob Witbooi, a massacre at Hornkranz perpetrated by the Germans and an explanation of the origins of the war in 1904.<sup>31</sup>

There are several instances where Gaob Witbooi describes the character of early German colonial policies and practices as menacing, incomprehensible and ultimately burdensome for the inhabitants if established as law of the country.<sup>32</sup> In his letter from Hornkranz to Maharero in May 1890 he quoted from a tale, 'the Jackal and the Sun'. The letter was sent during rivalries between these communities; however the Germans were also recognised as a threat in the country.<sup>33</sup> Although the jackal is usually considered a trickster in the folklore of Nama-speaking people, in this tale, the Jackal is outwitted by the Sun.<sup>34</sup> In the tale the Jackal sees the pretty girl, Sun, and asks her if he could carry her on his back. As they walk on, the Jackal realises that he cannot do anything with the sun on his back. The Jackal feels his back burn and he becomes powerless. He wants to put the Sun down but she replies that she will not get down because it was the Jackal who wanted to carry her. The Jackal replies that he thought the Sun was pretty but now realised something else about her and wanted to put her down.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (trans.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995.

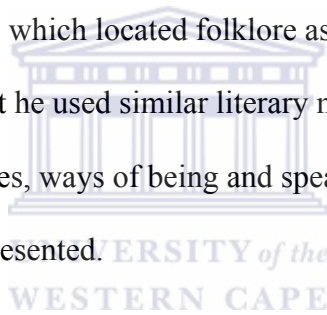
<sup>32</sup> Hendrik Witbooi to Josef Fredericks, Hoornkrans, 27 June 1892, in Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (trans.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995, 89-91.

<sup>33</sup> Hendrik Witbooi to Maharero, Hoornkrans, 30 May 1890, Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (trans.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995, 50-3. This is following on from Brigitte Lau's annotation; Werner Hillebrecht, 'The Nama and the war in the south', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (eds.), E.J. Neather trans., *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The colonial war of 1904-1908 and its aftermath*, The Merlin Press Ltd., Monmouth, Wales, 2008.

<sup>34</sup> Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls: African folktales - texts and discussions*, Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, Köln, 2001, 241; Anette Hoffmann, *What We See: Reconsidering an anthropometrical collection from southern Namibia: Images, Voices and Versioning*, Basler Afrika Bibliographien, Basel, 2009, 107.

<sup>35</sup> This story was also read by Haneb who was from Vaalgras during Lichtenecker's collection of sounds in the 1930s. The transcription and translation were written by Levi Namaseb, a Khoekhoegowab lecturer at the University of Namibia. Anette Hoffmann, *What We See*, 107.

Gaob Hendrik Witbooi used a tale familiar in his oral tradition to express his sentiments about the present political situation in the country. It is a tale from a primeval era where animals had human attributes and vice versa. Furthermore as Sigrid Schmidt notes, 'the primeval world was imagined just like the people remember the country of their forefathers before colonial contact'.<sup>36</sup> The primeval resembled another time and that through a specific act the course of the world was changed and subverted.<sup>37</sup> Gaob Witbooi used primeval stories to capture a feeling of a world before the potential dangers of foreign invaders. This he described as a world that will be indefinitely marred if enticed by the niceties of colonialism only to be burdened with it thereafter. The shift in temporality between the primeval and present day usage of the tale captured the worldview expressed in oral tradition.<sup>38</sup> It also exemplified a particular discourse which located folklore as part of historical representation. Although there is no evidence that he used similar literary motifs in other letters. It certainly gives one a hint to other procedures, ways of being and speaking, in which specific historical processes were imagined and represented.



In this context Gaob Witbooi used this story as a cautionary or moralising tale.<sup>39</sup> Schmidt argues that there are not many explicit moralising tales amongst Nama-speaking people, however individuals may frame specific tales as such.<sup>40</sup> Often these morals are indirectly addressed to the speaker in the guise of animal tales, something that may not be directly stated. However Gaob Hendrik Witbooi states the matter quite explicitly in his letter stating that Maharero will bear the burden and regret an alliance with the Germans. Drechsler also notes that it is at this moment that the communities in Namibia began to realise that their

---

<sup>36</sup> Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls*, 207.

<sup>37</sup> Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters, and Clever Girls*, 195-7.

<sup>38</sup> Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls*, 195-7.

<sup>39</sup> Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (trans.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, Brigitte Lau's annotation, 52.

<sup>40</sup> Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls*, 285-8.

foremost enemy were the Germans.<sup>41</sup> In the first unedited version of the Blue Book the author O'Reilly also quotes this letter at length. In the following paragraph, which were excluded from the published versions, he describes the 'true feeling' of the Nama towards the Germans by stating that, 'their recollection of slavery and oppression under the rule of the white man at the Cape prior to 1835 had been transmitted from father to son and thers (sic) was no burning desire among any of them to risk a repetition'.<sup>42</sup>

Two more years elapsed before the Herero and Nama communities ended their wars. After peace was signed, the letters in Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's diary indicate that the Nama leader was anxious about German presence in the country and attempted to unite with the Herero leaders to oust the Germans from the country. He writes after attacks on his community at Hornkranz that, 'this war will not end here. It is a portent of the purpose, hidden behind it, of subjugating the nations of this country and subjugating us to slavery, and of appropriating our African land'.<sup>43</sup> Although there was collaboration between the Germans and the /Kowese and other communities in the country for a decade,<sup>44</sup> this burden of colonialism and its legacies represented in Gaob Wibooi's reference to the story of the jackal carrying the sun on his back, is again reiterated when he writes to other leaders in southern Namibia to join him in the war against the Germans in 1904.<sup>45</sup> In a letter to the leaders of the /Kai-khauan and the !Aman, Gaob Christian Goliath and Gaob Paul Frederiks, he writes, 'my sons...I have for a long time now been living under the law and according to the law in all meekness...I have borne the

---

<sup>41</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting, The Struggle of the Herero and Nama against German Imperialism (1884-1915)*, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, 1966, 6.

<sup>42</sup> Dierk Schmidt, *The Division of the Earth: Tableaux on the legal synopsis of the Berlin Africa Conference*, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne, 2010, 238.

<sup>43</sup> Hendrik Witbooi to Zacharias Zeraua, 15 October 1893?, in Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (trans.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995, 140.

<sup>44</sup> Christian Bochert, *The Witboois and the Germans in South West Africa: A study of their interaction between 1863 and 1905*, MA, University of Natal, Durban, 1980, 159.

<sup>45</sup> Witbooi to Hermanus van Wyk, Rietmond, 1 October 1904; Hendrik Witbooi to Christian Goliath and Paul Frederiks, in Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (trans.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995, 189-90, 190.

burden peacefully and patiently...I have stopped being a subordinate, and shall send a letter to the Major saying that I have wearied of walking behind him'.<sup>46</sup>

In early 1904, Maharero addressed a letter to Gaob Hendrik Witbooi where he states, 'let us die fighting'. This call to war against Germany was the title of a seminal work by Horst Drechsler.<sup>47</sup> The full title of the book, *The Struggle of the Herero and Nama against German Imperialism*, further suggested that Drechsler narrated a colonial history from the perspective of the communities who had resisted German occupation.<sup>48</sup> Some aspects of Drechsler's narrative created the idea that if the Herero and Nama had been able to cease hostilities and unite sooner that the Germans may have been defeated at an earlier stage and that genocide would not have occurred.<sup>49</sup> However this view was developed through hindsight and cannot be used as a prime structure of a narrative about colonialism in Namibia. Inter and intra-ethnic relations and the deals with traders and businessmen and German officials in Namibia were far more intricate in the late 1880s and early 1890s, as exemplified in Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's diary.

Drechsler's main sources, the files of the Imperial Colonial Office housed in Potsdam made available in 1956, presented a rare opportunity for him to engage with an archive to assess the designs of the German colonial project.<sup>50</sup> Drechsler wrote that although there were numerous books on the colonial history of Namibia, all these were written from the perspective of the

---

<sup>46</sup> Hendrik Witbooi to Christian Goliath and Paul Frederiks, in Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (trans.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995, 190.

<sup>47</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*. Authors who have used his work extensively are John Masson, *Jakob Marengo: An Early Resistance Hero of Namibia*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2001.

<sup>48</sup> The title of the book was taken from a letter by Samuel Maharero to Gaob Hendrik Witbooi which requested a united army, with the Hereros, against the German forces in the country. The full title of the book also suggests that Drechsler wishes to emphasise African resistance.

<sup>49</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 'Explanation of title'.

<sup>50</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 11.

colonisers, and were often biased bourgeois attempts at justifying the colonial enterprise.<sup>51</sup> Drechsler states that it is possible to write a history that gave evidence of the African viewpoint of the colony such as in the *Report on the Natives of South West Africa and Their Treatment by Germany*,<sup>52</sup> which was put into disrepute and banned in 1926.<sup>53</sup> Drechsler complemented the colonial archive with the eye-witness accounts of people quoted in the Blue Book.<sup>54</sup> Although Drechsler used this book in his descriptions on the perspectives of indigenous communities during the war, more has been said about the bias and propaganda of this book by subsequent authors than the actual narratives of the indigenous speakers.<sup>55</sup>

Silvester and Gewalt state that the Blue Book should be viewed as part of colonial discourse. Instead of the Blue Book being seen as a propaganda tool by the likes of authors such as Lau, they argue the testimonies should be carefully evaluated. Reinart Kössler notes that instead of 'romanticising' the fact that these were testimonies of Africans, readers should take into consideration a whole host of issues when evaluating the testimonies. These relate generally to the ways in which the knowledge was produced for example the context in which the testimonies were gathered. The way in which memories were represented should be considered too as the testimonies were collected a decade after the war in a specific socio-political context.<sup>56</sup> The testimonies in the Blue Book are useful in several ways however.

---

<sup>51</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 184.

<sup>52</sup> *Report on the Natives of South West Africa and Their Treatment by Germany*, His Majesty's Stationary Office, London, 1915.

<sup>53</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 10.

<sup>54</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 157-8.

<sup>55</sup> Brigitte Lau, *History and Historiography: Four essays in reprint*, a Discourse/Msorp publication, Windhoek, 1995, 46; Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewalt, *Words Cannot Be Found: German colonial rule in Namibia, an Annotated Reprint of the 1918 Blue Book*, Koninklijke Brill NV, The Netherlands, 2003, xxi-xxiv; Werner Hillebrecht, "Certain Uncertainties" or Venturing Progressively into Colonial Apologetics', *Journal of Namibian Studies*, 1 (2007), 11-6.

<sup>56</sup> Reinhart Kössler, 'Sjambok or Cane: Reading the Blue Book', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 30, No. 3, September 2004, 706; Mohamed Adhikari, 'Streams of blood and streams of money': New perspectives on the annihilation of the Herero and Nama peoples of Namibia, 1904-1908', *Kronos*, No. 34, November, 308.



They may, upon evaluation, correspond with oral testimonies collected even several decades later, and confront official histories of the war. And they also correspond to a point to the ways in which the testimonies represent the processes involved in remembering colonial violence.<sup>57</sup> The testimonies may therefore be used to review knowledge of the war as produced and debated/represented by successive authors and various communities.

Drechsler states that capitalist and imperialist interests of German businessmen and the colonial policy of the government led to the proclamation of Namibia as a protectorate in 1884. His analysis shows the socio-economically determined structures of power relations between German/British businessmen, the colonial government and traditional leaders of indigenous communities. He therefore detailed the activities in Namibia through stages of pre-imperialist and imperialist colonial expansion.<sup>58</sup> Brian Mokopakgosi was concerned with extending Drechsler analysis of socio-economic formation to southern Namibia. He wrote that land concession companies had opened up the commercial potential of the country. These land companies such as the South West Africa Company under the directorship of figures such as Cecil John Rhodes, backed by bankers like Rothschild and other companies such as Kharaskhoma Syndicate established by Theophilus Hahn, had exploited these land contracts and as a result gained immense land rights in southern Namibia.<sup>59</sup> To enforce these land rights the companies ensured that the contracts were ratified by the German government. In return these companies persuaded their co-signers who were also paid subsidies and had shares in these companies, i.e. traditional leaders to sign protection treaties with the German government. However the German military presence also proved to be sufficient for these

---

<sup>57</sup> Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found*, xxxii.

<sup>58</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 2-6.

<sup>59</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 47, 48-9, 53.



communities to sign protection treaties.<sup>60</sup> This caused constant conflict over land, grazing and water rights between traditional leaders, communities, land companies and the German administration especially in south-east Namibia.<sup>61</sup> These perspectives of relations between land concessionaires and traditional leaders do not however describe the views of traditional leaders and conflicts within these communities concerning their trade relations with foreigners.

Drechsler's wrote that the German businessmen and German government were ruthless in their plans to sign protection treaties with indigenous communities. Drechsler shows that the acquisition of land and cattle in these years becomes increasingly more fraudulent.<sup>62</sup> And that these fraudulent practices not only applied to traders, land companies and settlers but that it became official policy of the German administration in the country.<sup>63</sup> He states however that communities in Namibia did not realise the real threat of the German government between 1884 and 1890, and that German officials such as Leutwein were able to pit communities against each other. He states that the tragedy was that various communities were dealt heavy blows in the early stages of expropriation after 1892. The massacres of the Afrikaners, /Khaus, Ovambanderu and the /Khowese are cited as examples.<sup>64</sup> As the narrative proceeds, Drechsler shows that the genocidal policies enacted during the early 1900s were not an aberration, and that the destruction of indigenous communities had been part of the colonial method of subjugating communities.<sup>65</sup> However because engagements of resistance from communities were set apart from each other in the narrative, the fact that there were wars in the country almost every year since German occupation, and the impact thereof, was lost to

---

<sup>60</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 48.

<sup>61</sup> Brian T. Mokopakgosi, 'Conflict and Collaboration in South-Eastern Namibia', 191-4.

<sup>62</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 111.

<sup>63</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 111.

<sup>64</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 82, 93-4, 99-100.

<sup>65</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 82, 93-4, 100.

the reader.<sup>66</sup> Drechsler, and writers after him set the war between '1904 and 1907', distinguishing it from earlier resistance. This mystifies the sequence of resistance during colonialism. However during interviews and public memorial events, descendants of the war survivors reaffirmed that resistance to colonialism had several precursors, including the massacres of the /Khowese community in 1893 and the public execution of King Kahimemua in 1896.

This forms the backdrop for the impetus for resistance by communities in Namibia again in the early 1900s. Drechsler wrote that the German government was surprised by these later wars in central and in southern Namibia.<sup>67</sup> The reasons for the war in southern Namibia were altered by people who were writing about the war at that time, and that subsequent authors followed this narrative.<sup>68</sup> He said that various German accounts gave secondary reasons for the war in central and southern Namibia.<sup>69</sup> In southern Namibia missionary reports abound with news that Shepherd Stuurman of the Ethiopian Church had instigated the war. However Helmut Bley and later Jan-Bart Gewald argue that land expropriation was not the foremost reason for the 'revolt', as documented by most authors.<sup>70</sup> The war escalated in various places in central Namibia and the 'Battle in the Waterberg' in August 1904 is described as the last stand-off between Herero and German forces.<sup>71</sup> Although the Herero suffered immeasurable losses at this battle, Drechsler is cautious to mention that the Herero were not destroyed in this battle, but rather because of the effects of the Herero escape into the desert to

---

<sup>66</sup> Klaus Dierks, 'Wars in the history of Namibia', [http://www.klausdierks.com/Chronology/index\\_wars.htm](http://www.klausdierks.com/Chronology/index_wars.htm), 11 January 2008.

<sup>67</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 176.

<sup>68</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 184.

<sup>69</sup> Horst Drechsler, 'The Conquest of Colonies: the Establishment and Extension of German Colonial Rule', 'South West Africa 1885-1907', in Helmuth Stoecker (eds.), *German Imperialism in Africa: From the Beginnings until the Second World War*, C. Hurst and Company, London, 1986, 53.

<sup>70</sup> Helmut Bley, *South West Africa Under German Rule 1894-1914*, 132-4, 143, 157; Jan-Bart Gewald, *Herero Heroes*, 142.

<sup>71</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 155.

Botswana.<sup>72</sup> Drechsler notes that even at an early phase of the war the annihilation of the Herero was being discussed in official quarters.<sup>73</sup> In fact early assertions that the resistors should be sentenced to death, prisoners of war be hired out to companies and leading families deported to other colonies, were followed through at a later stage during the war.<sup>74</sup>

During Von Trotha's phase in the war he distributed a proclamation order that stated that the intention of the German government was to exterminate Herero communities in central Namibia. This proclamation order was a piece of evidence not printed in the official or in subsequent publications of the war.<sup>75</sup> Von Trotha and his troops carried on the war which ended in genocide. Drechsler states that 'German imperialism crushed the Herero uprising by committing genocide'.<sup>76</sup> The impact that destroying these communities would have on the labour situation in the country prompted the government to encourage the Herero to surrender. A new proclamation was thus sent out, although this did not alleviate the shooting of Herero, and with the assistance of German missionaries concentration camps were set up.<sup>77</sup> Although Drechsler's use of the concept genocide was not developed in his book, it is from this framework of the war and aftermath as genocidal, that successive authors have developed and debated the war events.

A similar extermination order was distributed in 1905 from Gibeon in southern Namibia, which put a price on the head of leaders of the war and also threatened annihilation of communities that were involved in the war if they did not surrender. The war was waged for

---

<sup>72</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 156.

<sup>73</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 145.

<sup>74</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 145.

<sup>75</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 156-7; For authors who use the proclamation as evidence that a genocide was committed by Germany in Namibia during the war see for example, Jan-Bart Gewald, 'Imperial Germany and the Herero of southern Africa: Genocide and the quest for Recompense', 61.

<sup>76</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 167.

<sup>77</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 165.

several months before this order was sent out. In 1903 the !Gami≠nun resisted German 'protection' after their leader, Gaob Jan Abraham Christian was gunned down by a German Lieutenant Jobst. Drechsler merely wrote that 'the year 1903 saw the revolt of the Bondelswarts, which led up to the great rebellions of the Herero and Nama in 1904'. And that 'the war against the Bondelswarts was taking place only on paper'.<sup>78</sup> In reality several clashes were recorded in the district including one in detail which were the engagements in December 1903 between Jakob Marenga's army and German forces at Hartbeesmund on the !Garib river.<sup>79</sup> Although various authors of the war do not regard the significance of this moment, the event and ensuing military engagements actually changed the nature of resistance in this community and in the region. John Masson in his study on Jakob Marenga states that the resistance in 1903 was a turning point in the resistance history in southern Namibia.<sup>80</sup> Masson describes in greater depth the events between Marenga's army and the German forces from 1903 to 1907. A hasty peace treaty was signed between some of the !Gami≠nun and the Germans in 1904 at Kalkfontein, present day Karasburg. However several leaders such as Jakob Marenga and Abraham Morris did not sign peace and the resistance in this region, affecting southern Namibia and the Northern Cape, continued for several years later.<sup>81</sup>

During this time the German forces proved inadequate for the tactics that Marenga and his troops employed in the Karas Mountain region. In the oral history it was retold that the war in southern Namibia began with the attacks launched by Jakob Marenga, Abraham Morris and

---

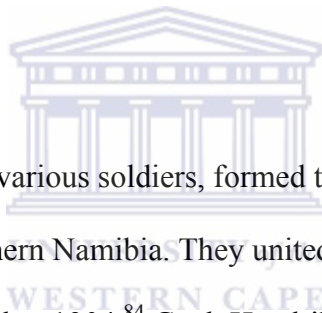
<sup>78</sup>Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 109.

<sup>79</sup> John Masson, *Jakob Marengo: An Early Resistance Hero of Namibia*, 20; Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 67-8.

<sup>80</sup> John Masson, *Jakob Marengo: An Early Resistance Hero of Namibia*, 17; Brian T. Mokopakgosi, 'Conflict and Collaboration in South-Eastern Namibia: Missionaries', 185;

<sup>81</sup> John Masson, *Jakob Marengo: An Early Resistance Hero of Namibia*, 27; Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge': Remembering the War in Namakhoeland, 1903-1908', Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Cape Town, 2006, 70.

several !Gami≠nun soldiers in a vast area until late 1904, when they were joined by a network of the Nama soldiers.<sup>82</sup> In a letter dated the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1904 Jakob Marenga wrote to the Magistrate of Upington and said, ‘I had hoped to come to Upington but my wife and children are at Karasburg so I did not come. Be so good as to assist me (in obtaining) ammunition for Mauser guns and bullets for Metford and Martini rifles. I have commenced the war three times but have had no losses, by God’s mercy, so I seek assistance from you’.<sup>83</sup> Marenga perhaps hoped that the English authorities would assist during the war. This was however not normal practice at this time, although there were several English traders such as Robert Duncan who profited from gun trade in these communities. However the British had diplomatic relations with the German government and assisted with supplies for the war campaign.



Gaob Hendrik Witbooi joined by various soldiers, formed the !Urikam military allegiance with several communities in southern Namibia. They united with Jakob Marenga in the war against the German forces in October 1904.<sup>84</sup> Gaob Hendrik Witbooi was joined by a part of the !Aman under Cornelius Fredericks, Gaob Simon Kooper’s !Khara-khoen community, Kai-//Khauan led by Gaob Manasse !Noreseb and the //Hawoben commanded by Hans Hendrik.<sup>85</sup> As soon as Witbooi joined the resistance 119 of his men who were still in the German military camps were imprisoned and first deported to Togo then to Cameroon.<sup>86</sup> The German forces engaged in a war with Nama soldiers for more than 200 battles. Drechsler wrote that although ill-equipped, these Nama soldiers were able to prolong a war for several

---

<sup>82</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 180; John Masson, *Jakob Marengo: An Early Resistance Hero of Namibia*, 27-31.

<sup>83</sup> Memory Biwa, ‘Toa Tama !Khams Ge’, 76-7.

<sup>84</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 183; Klaus Dierks, //Khauxa!nas: The Great Namibian Settlement, Longman, Namibia/CASS Namibia Project, Windhoek, 1992, 69.

<sup>85</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 184, Memory Biwa, ‘Toa Tama !Khams Ge’, 80-1.

<sup>86</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 185-6.

years with one of the world's most powerful armies at that time.<sup>87</sup> This he says was because the Nama forces had an unparalleled knowledge of the terrain and were also 'masters at guerrilla warfare'.<sup>88</sup> This was a source of bewilderment for German forces as they often could not locate the Nama units. Just as quickly as the Nama soldiers would appear attack and take supplies, they would disappear without a trace and settle in various parts of the region whether in the Kalahari or across the !Garib river in the Northern Cape.<sup>89</sup>

After the proclamation was issued the Nama soldiers continued the war in earnest. The /Khomase community operated between Gibeon and Berseba, and also in the Kalahari in January 1905.<sup>90</sup> Moving between the regions of present-day Botswana and Namibia, these Nama communities continued to trade for military supplies and foraged for water, food and shelter until the end of the war. There were several successes against the German army such as the reversal of Gaob Witbooi's troops on the German army commanded by Lothar von Trotha in September 1905, where they captured 1000 head of cattle on the Swartrand in southern Namibia.<sup>91</sup> However in an attack on German supplies near Vaalgras, Gaob Hendrik Witbooi was wounded and died as a result.<sup>92</sup> This was considered a victory by the German government, as one of their key opponents had left a void in the indigenous war effort. The /Khomase and //Hawoban community, discouraged by the loss of their leader and the constant problems of supplies for soldiers, women and children surrendered at Berseba under Samuel Isaack and Hans Hendrik.<sup>93</sup> Isaack Witbooi coaxed by Samuel Isaack also surrendered later with several community members under the terms of an agreement, where these communities

---

<sup>87</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 186.

<sup>88</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 186.

<sup>89</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 189.

<sup>90</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Kham Ge', 90.

<sup>91</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Kham Ge', 93.

<sup>92</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 190.

<sup>93</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 190; Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Kham Ge', 98.

were to be supervised by German forces, labour for food and live on part of their traditional lands.<sup>94</sup> The German government did not honour this agreement and these communities were sent to Karibib and Windhoek as prisoners of war where they had to labour on public works. Some of these prisoners were later relocated to the notorious concentration camp of Shark Island in Lüderitz.<sup>95</sup>

After a series of defeats in mid 1905 Gaob Cornelius Fredericks, who operated in the north and north-west of Bethanie, fled to the a more southerly direction along the !Garib river, probably to deliver women and children to the Cape Colony. After being rerouted again by German forces, Gaob Cornelius Fredericks and his men fought alongside Jakob Marenga in the Karas Mountains. However with the increase in German troops in southern Namibia in August 1905, even these hideouts in the mountains became real targets of these forces.<sup>96</sup> In February of the following year, the Germans reported that it became difficult to use the road to Keetmanshoop as Fredericks' army were attacking supply lines in this region.<sup>97</sup> Owing to several losses and setbacks in the field, Fredericks finally surrendered in February 1906. Gaob Cornelius Fredericks together with several members of the !Aman community were sent to the concentration camp on Shark Island by the end of November 1906.<sup>98</sup>

However there were some of his men still on the battlefield under the command of Fielding. Several battles also ensued between Jakob Marenga's forces and German soldiers, pushing the battle lines further towards the border regions so that crossing the border lines was always imminent. Drechsler describes the conduct of the German forces as being inhumane in these

---

<sup>94</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 191.

<sup>95</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 191.

<sup>96</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge, 92-3

<sup>97</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge, 101; Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 192.

<sup>98</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 102



engagements as well. The Germans shot fifty women and thirty-eight children near Hartbeestmond in 1905. The author states that although the policy to shoot the enemy on sight had been reverted by this time, there were still instances where German soldiers took matters into their own hands.<sup>99</sup> The leaders of the !Gami=nun community therefore commented, when they were at first denied passage of women and children into the Cape Colony, that the authorities were not aware that their women and children were being shot at by German soldiers.<sup>100</sup> In a letter to the Resident Magistrate at Port Nolloth in 1905, the !Aman leader Cornelius Fredericks sent a letter stating,

I am obliged to write you this letter respecting my people and nation – all from Bethanie. As the Germans murder women and children to a very large extent, and shoot down young people without taking them prisoners, I do not see my way clear to live with old men, women and children consequently I am sending across the Orange River, this the 19<sup>th</sup> day of July 1905, this my people and nation to the British Government...<sup>101</sup>

Many people from various Nama communities crossed the !Garib river during the war and were housed by the mission stations,<sup>102</sup> farms and mines in the region most notably in the Gordonia district, Steinkopf, Springbok and the Richtersveld.<sup>103</sup>

According to Drechsler several border violations occurred and incidences where German troops attacked Nama soldiers after they crossed into the Cape Colony.<sup>104</sup> On the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 1906, Marenga crossed into the Cape colony, three days later several Nama soldiers were killed and several wounded in this region, including Marenga, in a battle with German

---

<sup>99</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 193.

<sup>100</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 145.

<sup>101</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 144.

<sup>102</sup> Bishop John Marie Simon, *Bishop for the Hottentots: African Memories, 1882-1909*, Benziger Brothers, New York, 1959. There was a network of especially Catholic mission stations at Heirachabis, Pella, Matjeskloof and Port Nolloth just to name a few that were situated close to the border regions. And as a result were visited by both German and Nama soldiers and refugees in need of assistance during the war.

<sup>103</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 146-7.

<sup>104</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 194-5, 199. Again Drechsler notes that border violations occurred in the German engagements against Simon Kooper in Botswana, 203.



troops.<sup>105</sup> Drechsler states that with these border infringements it was clear that the German and British governments cooperated to suppress indigenous resistance.<sup>106</sup> In fact in cases where German soldiers crossed into British territory, they would be assisted and their confiscated weapons would merely be returned to them upon their return to the battlefield. Supplies for German soldiers were also frequently sent from the British side making the war quite profitable for the Cape government.<sup>107</sup> There were three points of entry for supplies to the German forces at Ramansdrift, Scuitdrift and Rietfontein.<sup>108</sup> In a *Cape Argus* article, towards the end of the war, it was noted that ‘there will be an immediate lessening of the large sums which have been spent by the German authorities in this Colony in regard to such matters as the purchase of stock, mules, horses, wagons, produce, harness and so on’.<sup>109</sup>

Tilman Dederling however comments that the analysis for Anglo-German relations as presented by Drechsler was general.<sup>110</sup> Dederling states that the border relations between these colonial countries were ambiguous at times, for even though the British government were supplying the German war effort they would often close the border, making it difficult for the German forces to get supplies. He says that the transport of arms and ammunition across the border was banned.<sup>111</sup> Furthermore the British allowed Nama refugees to settle in the region, and at times did not extradite Nama soldiers on request of the German administration.<sup>112</sup>

However the assistance granted to indigenous communities was not based on humanitarian

---

<sup>105</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 194.

<sup>106</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 194-5.

<sup>107</sup> Memory Biwa, ‘Toa Tama !Khams Ge, 121-25; Tilman Dederling, ‘War and Mobility in the Borderlands of South-Western Africa in the Early Twentieth Century’, *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 2, (2006), 280-1.

<sup>108</sup> Memory Biwa, ‘Toa Tama !Khams Ge’, 124.

<sup>109</sup> Memory Biwa, ‘Toa Tama !Khams Ge’, 124; D.IV.M.2 Vol. 3, *Cape Argus*, ‘The German Operations’, 6 December 1906.

<sup>110</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 194-5; Tilman Dederling, ‘War and Mobility in the Borderlands of South-Western Africa in the Early Twentieth Century’, 283.

<sup>111</sup> Tilman Dederling, ‘War and Mobility in the Borderlands of South-Western Africa in the Early Twentieth Century’, 282.

<sup>112</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 200.

concerns but because the British could not effectively manage the border regions. They also did not want to threaten the familial ties between these border communities.<sup>113</sup> Although the border regions were closed at times there were other ways in which the various government departments were able to transport large quantities of supplies such as horses, mules, arms and ammunition and water across the border.<sup>114</sup> Also there were many South Africans earning wages as transport riders and mercenaries in the German army. As a result of economic gains made by the Cape Colony during the war, some Nama pastoralists in Namaqualand were also able to charge for livestock, grazing rights and transport and scouting services.<sup>115</sup>

Marenga, and several men were taken into custody at Prieska after he was wounded on the 7<sup>th</sup> of May 1906, and he was incarcerated for more than a year at Tokai Prison in Cape Town.<sup>116</sup> Other !Gami≠nun leaders, Abraham Morris, Petrus Marenga and Johannes Christian, carried on the war effort. Fielding who had commanded alongside Gaob Cornelius Fredericks also continued the war with !Aman men who had not surrendered. It was reported that the Nama guerrillas broke off into smaller units and prolonged a 'swift battle to end the war'.<sup>117</sup>

However by now the German tactics had evolved too, so that smaller German units were staged to attack Nama forces in a combined sequence.<sup>118</sup> Upon his release in June 1907, Marenga was again sighted near the border regions and caused distress in the German government quarters.<sup>119</sup> There were attempts to meet between Marenga and the English authorities, such as Major Elliot, especially after the surrender of several factions of the

---

<sup>113</sup> Tilman Dederling, 'War and Mobility in the Borderlands of South-Western Africa in the Early Twentieth Century', 278-80, 292-3; Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 120-1.

<sup>114</sup> Tilman Dederling, 'War and Mobility in the Borderlands of South-Western Africa in the Early Twentieth Century', 283.

<sup>115</sup> Tilman Dederling, 'War and Mobility in the Borderlands of South-Western Africa in the Early Twentieth Century', 279, 284-6.

<sup>116</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 195; John Masson, *Jakob Marengo: An Early Resistance Hero of Namibia*, 40.

<sup>117</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 103.

<sup>118</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 195.

<sup>119</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 201.

!Gami≠nun community under Johannes Christian. Nevertheless Marenga was not willing to surrender at all. It was thus decided that he had contravened his conditions of release and the German and British government came to an agreement that he would be pursued to his death. A hundred Cape Mounted Police and Mounted Rifle men followed Marenga and his group into the Kalahari. Near Eensamheidspan north of Upington on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September 1907 these British officers killed the group, firing 5000 rounds at Marenga, soldiers and women.<sup>120</sup>

In the previous year members of the !Gami≠nun community under the leadership of Johannes Christian negotiated and signed a peace agreement.<sup>121</sup> In this agreement they were allowed to settle on part of their traditional lands, they were given money for clothes and livestock. In turn they had to quit the war and hand in their rifles and ammunition. This treaty was also extended to the !Gami≠nun who had fled into the Cape Colony.<sup>122</sup> According to Drechsler these refugees lived in a dire condition. At a mission station Matjeskloof at Springbok, there were refugees who had been transported from Kinderly (Steinkopf) and Port Nolloth. A settler living at the O'okiep mine reported that the refugees were living in a miserable condition and were dying from insufficient clothing, starvation and scurvy.<sup>123</sup> Dr. Cowan, the resident doctor, commented that only when the refugees moved to Matjeskloof were they fed better rations by the government, and had they not been relocated more people would have died as a result.<sup>124</sup> Abraham Morris and Joseph Christian were the leaders who represented the refugee community at the meetings in Ramansdrift and Springbok in January 1907. When the state of war was lifted in March 1907, some of these refugees were repatriated by the

---

<sup>120</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 202; John Masson, *Jakob Marengo: An Early Resistance Hero of Namibia*, 44-53.

<sup>121</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 196-7; Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 102-3.

<sup>122</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 197; Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 103.

<sup>123</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 147.

<sup>124</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 148.

Cape government.<sup>125</sup> Many refugees did return because of the dismal conditions in the colony but what awaited them in the German colony was not more promising. Countless community members preferred to stay in the Cape colony than in a colony administered by Germany, of which they had firsthand experience.

The war was declared over while there were still Nama held captive in the country. Also several other communities still continued the war in earnest and there were Nama fighters in the field until about 1908/1909. Simon Kooper still fought with one of the last units in the field at this time.<sup>126</sup> This community operated between the Auob river near !Gochas and the Nossob River, crossing the borders into the Gordonia district in South Africa and Botswana. In those days the community did not consider this as crossing borders as this region was part of their traditional lands.<sup>127</sup> In fact on occasion Gaob Simon Kooper stated that he did not understand how people from across the seas were drawing lines on the map, and distinguishing which portions belonged to whom.<sup>128</sup> The fact that this border region became a military base concerned both the German and British governments. The Germans determined to rid the area of the !Khara-khoen intended for white settlement and embarked on what is considered the 'final battle of the Nama war'.<sup>129</sup> These !Khara-khoen soldiers still sabotaged German supplies in the area, and in early 1908 German forces under Von Erckert were sent to the Kalahari with a camel patrol to 'round them up'. They crossed what was declared the border and attacked the Nama soldiers in Botswana. Captain von Erckert fell in the battle that ensued and there were also many casualties on the Nama side including women. Gaob Simon

---

<sup>125</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 198-9; Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 148-152.

<sup>126</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 203.

<sup>127</sup> Wulf D. Haacke, 'The Kalahari Expedition March 1908: The Forgotten Story of the Final Battle of the Nama War', *Botswana Notes and Records*, Vol. 24, 1992, 2.

<sup>128</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 134.

<sup>129</sup> Wulf D. Haacke, 'The Kalahari Expedition March 1908', .

Kooper was able to escape the day before the battle.<sup>130</sup> The German forces chose to negotiate terms with Gaob Simon Kooper because another expedition against these Nama soldiers who lived in one of most inhospitable regions was not feasible. The Germans also wanted an end to the fighting because the war proved to be too expensive and the prestige of the German army floundered as the war dragged on for far too long. Just as in the case with Marenga, the Germans and British cooperated to bring to a close the resistance. The British administration suggested that they allow Gaob Simon Kooper to settle in Botswana if he agreed not to cross the border and open hostilities with the German forces. In return he would be paid an annual stipend by the German government.<sup>131</sup> Kooper died at Lokwabe in 1913, and a Nama community could still be located there.<sup>132</sup>

Drechsler writes that at a later stage the Herero were induced to return to the country and serve as labourers, and that in contrast the German plan was to rid the country of the Nama.<sup>133</sup> Ritter-Peterson also noted that the Nama were not considered as good labourers, and their 'extinction' was thought of as inevitable and were thus neglected as prisoners of war.<sup>134</sup> Colonel F. Trench, British attaché to the German army, noted and referred to Nama prisoners at the concentration camp in Lüderitz that, 'I think that there is a general hope that they will soon die out'. He also said that, 'the Hottentots are to be 'permitted' to die out, but the Hereros and Damaras, who are good labourers and herdsmen, are to be retained, in a semi-servile state, as farm labourers...'<sup>135</sup> There was a general neglect of prisoners of war whether Nama or Herero however and although the plans may have been to encourage Herero

---

<sup>130</sup> Wulf D. Haacke, 'The Kalahari Expedition March 1908', 2, 10.

<sup>131</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 204-6.

<sup>132</sup> The Nama community could still be located there at the time Wulf D. Haacke wrote his paper on the final battle. Wulf D. Haacke, 'The Kalahari Expedition March 1908', 16.

<sup>133</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 210.

<sup>134</sup> Helgine Gertrud Ritter-Petersen, 'The Herrenvolk Mentality in German South West Africa, 1884-1914', PhD Thesis, University of South Africa, November 1991, 231-2.

<sup>135</sup> Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', 114-5.

to become labourers, they too were dying at an alarming rate in concentration camps in Swakopmund, Karibib, Windhoek and Shark Island at Lüderitz as well due to violence and neglect from German soldiers.<sup>136</sup> It is further noted also that the Nama women, children and men served as railway workers and in other military and domestic enterprises not only in the country but in other German colonies also.<sup>137</sup>

It was the policy and practice during the war to send warring soldiers and women and children to islands or other German colonies as a form of imprisonment often as labourers, and for preventing further insurrection.<sup>138</sup> Furthermore the Germans attempted to destroy the Nama through deportations of part of the communities to Samoa or Togo and Cameroon, especially after the first deportations when it was known that it was detrimental to the deportees.<sup>139</sup> The authorities reckoned that the relocation of these prisoners would lessen the threat of insurrection. Drechsler explained that ‘the files of the Imperial Colonial Office show beyond any doubt that these plans to deport and destroy the Nama were no figments of the imagination of a handful of ‘maniacs’, but the official policy of the German Government’.<sup>140</sup> Several authors also note that it was the intention to destroy these communities as it was known by the colonial government that the deportations to West Africa were detrimental to the welfare of the individuals sent there.<sup>141</sup> The people died on account of malnutrition, severe climate conditions added to intense working conditions. Although the deporting of communities to other colonies was considered expensive, still several members of the

---

<sup>136</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 211; Jan-Bart Gewalt, *Herero Heroes*, 188; Dominik J. Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide: Colonial Rule in German Southwest Africa and German East Africa', in Dirk A. Moses (ed.), *Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, Bergham Books, New York, 2008, 297-8.

<sup>137</sup> Jan-Bart Gewalt, *Herero Heroes*, 187.

<sup>138</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 210; Helgine Gertrud Ritter-Petersen, 'The Herrenvolk Mentality in German South West Africa', 231-3.

<sup>139</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 210; Helgine Gertrud Ritter-Petersen, 'The Herrenvolk Mentality in German South West Africa', 232-3.

<sup>140</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 210.

<sup>141</sup> Helgine Gertrud Ritter-Petersen, 'The Herrenvolk Mentality in German South West Africa', 232.

/Khowese, //Hawoben, Stuurman, !Aman and !Khara-khoen communities were shipped off to these colonies from 1904 and as late as 1910 and 1913, many years after the war had been declared over.<sup>142</sup> In some cases prisoners of war were kept in camps such as on Shark Island instead of being sent to other colonies, which was considered costly, because it was observed that there were high mortality rates in these camps.<sup>143</sup>

Bley and Gewalt compared the figures of the deaths of people during the war and wrote that the destruction of Nama communities as compared to the Herero took place on a 'smaller scale' or to a 'lesser extent'.<sup>144</sup> Bley wrote that 'it looks then as if three years of guerrilla war had cost the Nama 35-50 per cent of their tribe, as compared with 75-80 per cent of the Herero in one year of war...In general terms the smaller proportion of casualties among the Nama reflects a disparate involvement in the revolt, and the Nama's greater power of physical endurance'.<sup>145</sup> Bley's statement about Nama 'physical endurance' harks back to colonial discourse about the survival expectations and abilities of colonial subjects.<sup>146</sup> It was the practice during the war to keep registers of individuals who were deemed fit or unfit for work, or if dead which illnesses or other reasons they had succumbed to.<sup>147</sup> To some extent these individuals in concentration camps, deportees and refugees were considered merely as body count to German officials who documented the war. In the extreme case of objectifying prisoners of war, many bodies and parts thereof were counted and exported to institutions in

---

<sup>142</sup> Helgine Gertrud Ritter-Petersen, 'The Herrenvolk Mentality in German South West Africa', 224-9; Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 241-3.

<sup>143</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 211.

<sup>144</sup> Helmut Bley, *South West Africa under German Rule 1894-1914*, 151; Jan-Bart Gewalt, 'Herero genocide in the twentieth century: Politics and memory', in Klaas van Walraven et al (eds.), *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History*, Koninklijke Brill nv, Leiden, The Netherlands, 2003, p.

<sup>145</sup> Helmut Bley, *South West Africa under German Rule 1894-1914*, 151. It is debatable whether these figures can be considered in this way, and that they have anything to do with the physical endurance of the Nama as opposed to that of the Herero.

<sup>146</sup> Helgine Gertrud Ritter-Petersen, 'The Herrenvolk Mentality in German South West Africa', 232.

<sup>147</sup> Jan-Bart Gewalt, *Herero Heroes*, 189



the region and abroad.<sup>148</sup> This methodology and concept, whether unconsciously or not, has been reproduced by subsequent writers of this history. The figures are important to understand the assessment of the impact of the war in these communities. However quoting these figures and debating about whether the amounts are accurate or not obscures the experiences of war of these communities.

Although Drechsler conducts thorough archival research and opens up a debate on the war that attempts to situate indigenous communities at the centre of the narrative, there are various aspects of the war that need further interrogation. These include the different motivations and conflicts in communities concerning their conduct in the war. It should be noted that groups during the war that hailed from various settlements in southern Namibia had different motivations, while their acts constituted in essence an anti-colonial struggle, in their resistance against German colonisation. Also specific events unique in these communities occurred at that time to spur on the action to war. In the testimonies of some of the soldiers that were involved in the war in southern Namibia, for example there is a tendency to distance themselves from the actions of the beginning of the war. Although this can be explained as distancing themselves from the resistance because of interrogation, it should also be noted that the motivations to join the resistance did not occur all at once. For certain groups it may have grown out of the activities that were taking place in southern Namibia as the war was in progress.<sup>149</sup> Often silenced in these narratives of war are the ways in which these communities conducted their everyday life during the war. Specific experiences of civilian women and children in camps as prisoners, railway workers working for specific firms in isolated locations in the country and refugees of the war living in other

---

<sup>148</sup> See footnotes in Jan-Bart Gewald, *Herero Heroes*, 190.

<sup>149</sup> Klaas van Walraven et al (eds.), *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History*, 27.



parts of the region is missing. It is these specific motivations and experiences that show a more composite image of the war than is often presented.

Drechsler noted that East German historians were particularly helpful to Africans in their struggle because they gave Africans a sense of their history, denied to them by their colonisers.<sup>150</sup> This position was accepted by Hon. Sam Nujoma in the preface to the book. Nujoma agreed that the book was important because patriots were not able to write their own versions of the country's history because they were occupied on the battlefield.<sup>151</sup> More importantly, he stated, that the study showed that there was a long period of resistance to colonialism in the country.<sup>152</sup> This paradigm of anti-colonial resistance sets the tone for especially subsequent nationalist writers. While it is important to note that at that time it was rare to have access to the Potsdam archive, Drechsler's remark reveals a fundamental erasure in the historiography of the war. Indeed, there were other arenas in which histories were produced such as in communities in central and southern Namibia where for decades the colonial war was remembered and memorialised in various forms.

***Their blood waters our freedom: linkages between anti-colonial resistance and the liberation struggle***

Some Namibians today feel that they are part of the direct line of resistance to colonial rule. They remember the stories of the wars fought by their parents and grandparents against the Germans and South Africans, and are inspired by them. Nevertheless, they acknowledge that Namibians failed to defeat the colonial powers in the past 'because they fought as a single tribe or single clan or single group'. The lesson learned from Namibia's history is, therefore that there must be a unified involvement of all different communities, and both men and women to overcome South African rule.<sup>153</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 2.

<sup>151</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, vii.

<sup>152</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*. Some of the translated versions of this book have printed on the cover the famous image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi seated holding a rifle in his hand.

<sup>153</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance in Namibia*, Unesco Press, Paris, 1988, 91.

Writers who characterised colonial war as a precursor to the movement of national liberation, attempted to chronicle resistance strategies of communities in central and southern Namibia during colonialism as part of a long tradition of resistance against colonisation, relying heavily on sources in the colonial archive. Some of the Namibian authors also used the oral tradition of the war in their communities and presented aspects of the marginalised perspectives of the war and aftermath, drawing on information from unofficial archives, interlocutors and commemorations. The works of two authors, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, by Zedekia Ngravirue, and *A History of Resistance in Namibia*, by Peter Katjavivi, which were adaptations of their doctoral theses, capture the mode of nationalist narration at a particular historical apex motivated by political mobilisation in the country. These two authors were at the forefront of the national resistance to apartheid in southern Africa and the international mobilisation for the decolonisation of African nations.<sup>154</sup> Their perspectives were grounded in a specific faction of the nationalists grown from educational struggle and privilege inside and outside Namibia. This context greatly influenced the frames of the nationalist movement in Namibia and also gave an insight into the political activities of these nationalist stalwarts and their contemporaries.<sup>155</sup> These works were thus produced through a specific historical framework, based on the nature of the political context in which these authors lived, and their particular political responses.<sup>156</sup>

Ngavirue's study was based on the origins and ideas of interest groups and political parties in Namibia up to the 1960s. His work also foregrounded the ethnic and national influences in

---

<sup>154</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia): A Study of a Plural Society*, 1972, P. Schlettwein Publishing, Switzerland, 1997; Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*; Mburumba Kerina, *Namibia: The making of a nation*, Books in Focus Inc., New York, 1981; Klaus Dierks, //Khaxa!nas: The Great Namibian Settlement, ; Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia, 1915-1966*, P. Schlettwein, Switzerland, 290.

<sup>155</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia, 1915-1966*, 288.

<sup>156</sup> Partha Chaterjee, 'Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivate Discourse?', Zed Books Ltd., United Nations University, Japan, 1986, 41-2.

the political and economic struggles in alliances and organisations of both the indigenous and settler communities. And he used oral tradition, which was to some extent expressed in the pre-colonial and colonial discussions in his book. As an active member of the nationalist movement, he had an intricate knowledge of political developments as well as access to the archives of his peers.<sup>157</sup> Katjavivi traced the links between anti-colonial resistance strategies and African nationalism up to the height of the armed liberation struggle by the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) and the influence of international affairs in the country's path to independence.<sup>158</sup>

Although nationalist narration was a direct confrontation with the colonial archive, these documents were principally dependent on this archive to refute some of its findings. It is in this sense that these documents were critiqued for working within the colonial framework or a body of knowledge which it attempted to contest.<sup>159</sup> However these histories sought to offer an alternative representation on the histories of the people subjected in the colonial archive by chronicling the resistance history of the country often from the pre-colonial era up to the liberation struggle in its bid to trade colonialism with a lengthy trajectory of a people's glorious past, resistance to colonialism and nationalism.<sup>160</sup> The authors of Namibian nationalist history thus often offer the translations and thus accessibility to the colonial archive, albeit with a different reading. These writers also document orations of indigenous actors and descendants, a correction and full description of indigenous names, knowledge of

---

<sup>157</sup> Peter Katjavivi, 'The Development of Anti-Colonial Forces in Namibia', in Brian Wood (ed.), *Namibia 1884-1984: Readings on Namibia's History and Society*, Namibia Support Committee in co-operation with the United Nations Institute for Namibia, 1988, 565.

<sup>158</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*; Partha Chatterjee writes that this polemic tone in nationalist writings is the tone taken for the purposes of stating a strong and moral argument against colonial discourse. He writes that, 'the polemical content of nationalist ideology is its politics'. Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivate Discourse?*, 40.

<sup>159</sup> Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivate Discourse?*, 38, 41-2.

<sup>160</sup> Partha Chatterjee, 'Transferring a Political Theory: Early Nationalist Thought in India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 21, No. 3(18 January 1986), 122.

kin and kingship, brief biographies of key actors, resistance glories, images of indigenous communities during the colonial war and patterns of social regeneration after the war.<sup>161</sup>

Authors also show that indigenous social, cultural and political organisations were being run along modern lines, and that ultimately African communities were able to govern themselves as they had done before colonisation. These authors show that nationalism is not merely a struggle against colonisation but essentially the foundation for a new political order, thus it was shown that political organisations possessed the capabilities for a transition to open up social, political and economic prospects.<sup>162</sup>

The nationalist response to colonisation, which was a policy that rallied a people who shared a history and culture and resided in a specific location who desired to advance and protect their interests, was written into the narrative of past, present and future Namibian history.<sup>163</sup>

Katjavivi wrote that nationalism may be seen as a rallying point for various communities who do not share a common heritage, language and even have different experiences with colonial regimes, to unite because of the common cause against colonisation.<sup>164</sup> In his doctoral thesis, Katjavivi stated that, 'if the desire to be free of European domination is at the heart of African nationalism, then the knowledge of former past independent societies and attempts to preserve them must be part of the process'.<sup>165</sup> Similarly in a conference paper presented in 1965 in Dar es Salaam, Davidson stressed that it was difficult to understand the nature of the

---

<sup>161</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*; Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*; Mburumba Kerina, *Namibia: The Making of a Nation*.

<sup>162</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia, 1915-1966*, 29, 291; Partha Chatterjee, 'Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivate Discourse?', 40-2.

<sup>163</sup> Peter Katjavivi, 'The Rise of Nationalism in Namibia and its International Dimensions', PhD Thesis, University of Oxford, 1986, 17.

<sup>164</sup> Peter Katjavivi, 'The Rise of Nationalism in Namibia and its International Dimensions', 21, Peter Katjavivi, 'The Development of Anti-Colonial Forces in Namibia', 558.

<sup>165</sup> Peter Katjavivi, 'The Rise of Nationalism in Namibia and its International Dimensions', 24, Peter Katjavivi, 'The Development of Anti-Colonial Forces in Namibia', 557.

liberation struggle without a thorough study of prior resistance strategies to colonialism.<sup>166</sup>

Terence Ranger in his study on Central and East African 'primary resistance' states that 'the 'historic connexions' between prophets and preachers, trade-union leaders and rural radicals, the founders of the Native and Welfare Associations and the organizers of mass nationalism, are now beginning to emerge ....'<sup>167</sup> A particular kind of nationalism drawn on the legacies of anti-colonial resistance, evidenced in both Africa and Asia, is thus developed by these writers albeit using various periods and an emphasis on different political organisation to show the continuity between early resistance strategies, the anti-colonial resistance and the liberation struggle.

The colonial history of Namibia, and the early resistance against German colonisation was seen as a prior trajectory on which later resistance strategies against the South African regime was suggested to have followed.<sup>168</sup> It was in light of this connection that Hon. Andimba Toivo ja Toivo opened an international conference in London in 1984, with a statement that, 'the 100 years of colonialism in Namibia which we are here to mark today has in large measure its origin in the infamous gathering of the powers of imperialism in Berlin in 1884-1885 .... the same forces are today supporting colonialism and participating in the continued oppression and exploitation of the Namibian people.'<sup>169</sup> In the preface of Drechsler's book, Hon. Sam Nujoma wrote that, 'the social order which the Namibian people are fighting to overthrow is a product of a century of brutal colonial oppression and exploitation. It is

---

<sup>166</sup> A.B. Davidson, 'African Resistance and Rebellion Against the Imposition of Colonial Rule', in T.O. Ranger (ed.), *Emerging Themes of African History: Proceedings of the International Congress of African Historians* held at University College, Dar es Salaam, October 1965, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1968, 177.

<sup>167</sup> Terence O. Ranger, 'Connexions between 'Primary Resistance' Movements and Modern Mass Nationalism in East and Central Africa- Part 1', *The Journal of African History*, No. 9, Vol. 3, (1968), 437.

<sup>168</sup> Klaus Dierks, //Khaxa!nas: The Great Namibian Settlement, 66, 78-9.

<sup>169</sup> Gavin Williams, 'Summary: Report of the Conference', in Brian Wood (ed.), *Namibia 1884-1984: Readings on Namibia's History and Society*, Namibia Support Committee in co-operation with the United Nations Institute for Namibia, 1988, 741.

essential, therefore, that those who are seeking to bring about a fundamentally new social order in Namibia should understand fully the events which helped, in the late hundred years or so, to shape the present social order in that country'. Also that 'this original approach will help Namibian patriots to identify who among the past and present leaders of our people may enter the list of Namibia's national heroes. This is an important matter in fostering a sense of Namibian national history among our people'.<sup>170</sup> That the work of Horst Drechsler was framed in this way and gave a particular credence to the ideas developed by the nationalists was evident in the many references to his work by Ngavirue and Katjavivi.<sup>171</sup>

Ngavirue's access to the colonial archive in Potsdam enabled the author to analyse colonial policies and relay that the resistance of these communities in Namibia was a direct response to these principles. Ngavirue wrote that during the pre-colonial and colonial period the various ethnic groups could not unite owing to rivalry for power from explorers, traders and missionaries, but also from internal competition over land and resources. Ngavirue emphasised that socio-political interests were mainly expressed through ethnic or racial allegiances and although the structures of these communities were transformed at various eras in the country's history, say with the arrival of communities from the Cape to southern and central Namibia, they essentially maintained this ethnic distinction. Ngavirue at length reviewed the 'cleavages' between the Herero and Nama even up to the early militarisation of the country by German soldiers. He stated that during the 1904-1907 war this rivalry was used by both African and German parties for an upper hand in military strategem. Ngavirue says that that situation did not allow for these communities to form a unified movement

---

<sup>170</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, Preface; Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Khams Ge', p. See also themes for commemorations in southern Namibia especially of the /Khowese community. In 1988 the theme for a commemoration held in Gibeon was titled, '100 Jare van Volkstryd teen Koloniale Magte', which shows the connections made between resistance against German colonisation and the struggle against South African occupation.

<sup>171</sup> Jan-Bart Gewald, 'Herero genocide in the twentieth century: Politics and memory', 294.

against the colonisers ‘which is considered to have undermined the South West African wars of resistance’. He notes that there were traces of early nationalist ideas during incidences in the colonial period, for example where Herero and Nama soldiers fought simultaneously against the German soldiers.<sup>172</sup>

Katjavivi upholds this connection as well and wrote that ‘efforts were made to bring the Nama and Rehobothers into the uprising as well... The Namas did join in October 1904’.<sup>173</sup> He also stated that most of the communities in central and southern Namibia joined forces against the German army. Although the author states this argument quite differently in another chapter of the book the intent to show that there was a semblance of unity of various communities who transcend ethnic affiliations is clear.<sup>174</sup> In an earlier publication by Katjavivi titled, ‘The development of anti-colonial forces in Namibia’, this description of anti-colonial resistance is current as well.<sup>175</sup> In *The Making of a Nation*, Kerina stated that ‘the southern front was of vital significance to the success of the Herero war. While German military leaders assumed that the major theatre of war would be concentrated in the central part of the territory, the Herero generals decided that the success of their action depended on engaging the enemy on many fronts...the serious issue was resolved with the appointment of Jacob Marenga’.<sup>176</sup> In this account the reader is to accept that the Herero leadership appointed Marenga to fight the war in southern Namibia, which however is not corroborated with evidence. The author attempts to show that there was an extent to which the nationalist position was taken up by several leaders in various regions of the country during the colonial war.

---

<sup>172</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 123.

<sup>173</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, 8-9.

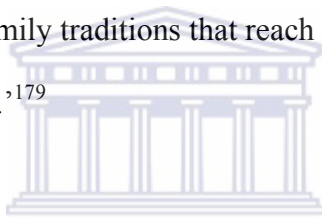
<sup>174</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, 91.

<sup>175</sup> Peter Katjavivi, ‘The Development of Anti-Colonial Forces in Namibia’, 559-60.

<sup>176</sup> Mburumba Kerina, *Namibia: The Making of a Nation*, 65-6.



Ngavirue also showed how there were continuities between families and organisations that fought during German colonisation and later resisted South African occupation from both the Nama and Herero communities.<sup>177</sup> He for example links the religious breakaway movement orchestrated by the Namaland Evangelist and Teachers Association led by Rev. Petrus Jod, with the resistance of his father, Petrus Jod Snr, a magistrate in Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's council, against German forces.<sup>178</sup> Neville Alexander in the same vein pointed to this 'inherited resistance' and stated, 'of course, the 'great war' had also become a source of inspiration for the conduct of the war of national liberation'. He stated that 'people such as the communities at Gibeon and at Hoachanas...are mostly firm supporters of SWAPO and the liberation struggle'. There can be no doubt that as far as the leadership of these communities is concerned, the uninterrupted family traditions that reach back deep into pre-colonial times are a major source of inspiration...'<sup>179</sup>



There is evidence that there were early sentiments of unity especially in terms of the protection of the land belonging to both the Nama and the Herero communities for example as expressed in Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's diary. And even during various wars there was mutual assistance between these communities. However these actions were not always consistent during colonisation, and resistance during this era can hardly be referred to as a nationalist. There is a whole gap in the account in Katjavivi's rendition, between January and October, concerning the military allegiance of the Nama and Rehobothers to the Germans against the Hereros for example. Also the fact that other communities did not take up arms against German forces is hardly interrogated, although it is conceded that most of the

---

<sup>177</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 279.

<sup>178</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 202-3, 205.

<sup>179</sup> Neville Alexander, 'The Namibian war of anti-colonial resistance, 1904-7', in Brian Wood (ed.), *Namibia 1884-1984: Readings on Namibia's History and Society*, Namibia Support Committee in co-operation with the United Nations Institute for Namibia, 1988, 201; Jan-Bart Gewald, 'Herero Genocide in the Twentieth Century: Politics and memory', 279.



communities did indeed take part in the war. In some cases there is an overemphasis and in other examples there are exclusions in the accounts that have a tendency to distort the narrative of resistance. This critique of nationalist narration of resistance in Africa has been taken up by various authors noting that nationalist versions of resistance history either totally omitted collaboration narratives or downplayed these entirely because it hinders the 'national unity against colonialism' narrative.<sup>180</sup>

In 'The Enigma of the Khowesin', Alexander states that 'national liberation movements in their search for evidence with which to document the exploits of the heroes and heroines of earlier resistance movements were subject to the temptations of reckless mythmaking. The tendency to falsify the historical record (usually by omission or understatement of unpalatable facts) springs from the understandable importance attached within a nationalist framework to the establishment of some connection between the contemporary struggles for national liberation or national independence and the so-called primary resistance movements of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries'.<sup>181</sup> Alexander further explained that historians often romanticised about anti-colonial resistance as these early strategies were construed as a struggle against oppressors for 'national independence'.<sup>182</sup> Alexander states that in the Namibian case one has to observe communities to see what aims their responses to colonisation were based on. And he states that various military leaders in the country at the time of the war clearly show that their specific responses to colonisation showed a nationalist sentiment on which later nationalist movements were developed. He writes 'I believe that a thorough study of the great uprising of 1904-1907 and the role of men such as Marengo,

---

<sup>180</sup> Neville Alexander, 'The Enigma of the Khowesin, 1885-1905', *Perspectives on Namibia: Past and Present*, Occasional papers, No. 4, (1983), *Centre for African Studies*, University of Cape Town, 45, 48-9, 59.

<sup>181</sup> Neville Alexander, 'The Enigma of the Khowesin', 45.

<sup>182</sup> Neville Alexander, 'Jakob Marengo and Namibian History', *Social Dynamics*, Vol. 7, No. 1, (June 1981), 3.

Abraham Morris, Frederick Maharero, Simon Kopper and others will demonstrate that in this instance we can indeed speak in terms of a proto-nationalism'.<sup>183</sup>

Jakob Marenga, leader of the militants from the !Gami≠nun community, was said to be one of the leaders in the anti-colonial resistance who had a vision of a nationalist struggle, because he was a descendant of both Nama and Herero parentage, and he rallied Nama and Herero soldiers against German forces.<sup>184</sup> Marenga's Nama/Herero parentage was not particularly unique even at the time and especially in the south-east region of the country where he hailed from. Furthermore Dierks noted that 'Marengo was not primarily concerned with a return to the status quo ante'.<sup>185</sup> Alexander therefore notes that 'he was desirous of exchanging German rule for British rule as he expected justice and fair play from Britain'.<sup>186</sup> In another article Alexander also wrote, 'the fact, of course, is that there was at the time no Namibian nation and no sense of Namibian nationhood'.<sup>187</sup>

However this discourse was firmly taken up by political activists at rallies and memorial events. In the SWAPO publication, *The Combatant*, for example, one sees a great deal of emphasis placed between resistance epochs in the history of the country. The covers of several editions of, *The Combatant*, had the image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi juxtaposed with that of Tobias Hainyeko. This supports a link between the anti-colonial hero with the hero of the armed liberation struggle and therefore their aims in resistance movements.<sup>188</sup> There were

---

<sup>183</sup> Neville Alexander, 'Jakob Marengo and Namibian History', 3.

<sup>184</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 2, 123, Mburumba Kerina, *Namibia: The Making of a Nation*, 66, Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*. I am not convinced by the argument that his genetic heritage contributed to his nationalist feelings as his genetic heritage is not and there is no clear evidence that he had a nationalist agenda because of this.

<sup>185</sup> Klaus Dierks, //Khauxa!nas: The Great Namibian Settlement, 66.

<sup>186</sup> Neville Alexander, 'Jakob Marengo and Namibian History', 6

<sup>187</sup> Neville Alexander, 'The Enigma of the Khowesin', 60.

<sup>188</sup> *The Combatant*, Vol. 4, No. 3, October 1982, Front page.

also a series of articles written especially in 1985 specifically on the heroes of the anti-colonial resistance struggle as a means of education for young combatants and activists in general about the lessons of yesteryear.<sup>189</sup> The persistent theme of anti-colonial resistance in the writings of nationalists was significant for two reasons. Firstly the resistance of communities in Namibia against German colonisation was linked with later opposition to colonisation, and was used as a tool to mobilise and inspire people during political organisation throughout the struggle against the South African occupation of the country. Secondly this theme recurs also in various frameworks throughout activities such as national commemorations used to actuate public memory in the communities in Namibia, and is evidence of the relation between nationalist discourse and post-independence memorialisation.<sup>190</sup> That this context shapes national public culture is evident in where and which kinds of monuments have been built after Independence and the way in which national holidays are staged in the country.



There was an evolutionary path with which these writers analysed the development of nationalism in Namibia.<sup>191</sup> Although anti-colonial resistance was seen as an earlier form of resistance which did not have the necessary progressive attributes, of forming modern social and political organisation on the model of a nation-state, these resistance phases were still seen as similar because they both aimed to oust colonialism. Their work was based on a model that examined socio-political change following from a traditional form to a more progressive modern state, placing 'a higher value on one end of the scale of evolution than

---

<sup>189</sup> *The Combatant*, Vol. 6, No. 6, January 1985, 9-13; *The Combatant*, Vol. 6, No. 7, February 1985, 9-12; *The Combatant*, Vol. 6, No. 8, March 1985, 6-7; *The Combatant*, Vol. 6, No. 9, April 1985, 13-6.

<sup>190</sup> Partha Chatterjee, 'Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivate Discourse?', 40.

<sup>191</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia, 1915-1966*, p.

the other'.<sup>192</sup> Their work was also framed as continuity between primary and secondary resistance models.

There are thus two points of development in the resistance history of Namibia that are extracted by nationalist writers that are specific to our analysis. The first was the idea that various communities resisted colonisation beyond parochial interests. Although this point was made by various writers to show continuity, more often there is an overemphasis of this unity specifically during the colonial war. The second point closely related to the first, is the idea that this type of resistance evidenced during German colonisation continued also through the South African occupation. The links between resistance aspirations during German colonisation and South African occupation were seen as a natural progression of resistance strategies, although it is debatable that the context of anti-colonial resistance and the liberation struggle were similar, and that all resistance was necessarily nationalist in character.<sup>193</sup> However national resistance was seen to be more progressive and befitting specific aims of the political organisations in Namibia. The fact that nationalism was viewed in this evolutionary model driven largely by external stimuli also served to lessen the complexities and discontinuities which occurred during resistance strategies, and internal influences that produced a particular nationalist discourse in the country.<sup>194</sup>

The 'continuity' discourse does not reveal the definitive nature of all responses to colonisation. That there was abstention from resistance or collaboration at various times during German colonisation of indigenous troops to German forces does not fit neatly into

---

<sup>192</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia, 1915-1966*, 27; Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 123, 129.

<sup>193</sup> Klaus Dierks, //Khauxa!nas: The Great Namibian Settlement, 66, 78-9; Neville Alexander, 'Jakob Marengo and Namibian History', *Social Dynamics*, Vol. 7, No. 1, (June 1981), 2-3.

<sup>194</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 28-9.

this paradigm. Brian Mokopakgosi stated that these responses of cooperation are seen too often as submissiveness instead of as possible ways in which these communities politically manoeuvred to maintain autonomy, to set themselves apart from other communities or to gain supremacy over other communities.<sup>195</sup> The reason for ‘collaboration’ and ‘resistance’ in the face of German forces during colonisation in the country should be treated in a detailed manner by authors to show how various communities negotiated colonialism at particular times, in order to reveal the complex nature of responses to colonisation, so that they cannot all be construed to constitute proto-nationalism as espoused by nationalist writers. The actions of passivity and cooperation also came to shape the political development of the country during the liberation struggle, which is not taken into consideration as well.<sup>196</sup>

Furthermore, other responses to colonisation during the war expanded transnational identities. These temporal relations over vast trans-border regions reveal the complex nature of resistance strategies between families and clans, and the wider networks of migration that existed in this region. These alliances created for example between the Ethiopian churches in the figure of Shepherd Stuurman from the Cape and Hendrik Witbooi and Abraham Morris and !Gami=nun descendants in the Northern Cape strongly point to multidirectional resistance strategies and composite identities that went beyond the boundaries framed by nationalist authors. Although authors attempted to link anti-colonial resistance with the liberation struggle in a nationalist framework, there is for example a clear indication that these Khoe communities formed various alliances based on familial/clan, political and economic interests beyond these interpretations. Also although there were attempts made by

---

<sup>195</sup> Brian T. Mokopakgosi, ‘Imperialism and War: Examining the First Phase of German Rule in Namibia 1884-1894’, *Modern European Seminar*, 21 April 1983, 13-4, 47.

<sup>196</sup> Terence O. Ranger, ‘Connexions between ‘Primary Resistance’ Movements and Modern Mass Nationalism in East and Central Africa- Part 1’, 440.

leaders to forge such a united resistance against German forces because of the immediate threat of war, it was not because of a vision of a new national political order that excluded other spheres of interest.<sup>197</sup> These communities did not only resist German colonisation because of a vision of a country beyond ethnic affiliations and interests, for ethnic affiliations remained persistent during colonisation, in the aftermath and in present-day politics.<sup>198</sup> Perhaps we should not speak strictly of periods when nationalism emerges but to rather present different responses to colonisation working in a continuous flux, parochial interests, ethnic-nationalism and trans-nationalism as well.<sup>199</sup>

Various authors have challenged the view of a dominant colonial enterprise in the aftermath of the war and a picture of the survival and resistance mechanisms of Africans is instead documented.<sup>200</sup> It was declared that following the war years there was a clear disintegration of indigenous rights, as the colonial policies were aimed at consolidating German rule. It was argued that communities in central and southern Namibia embarked on a process of socio-economic and political reconstruction in spite of the draconian German colonial laws in the aftermath of the war.<sup>201</sup> Ngavirue wrote that owing to the destruction of traditional organisation, political movements along ethnic lines were limited to recovery after the effects of the colonial and post war policies of the German army. These organisations were concerned with religious fervour and revivalism, which Ngavirue interestingly lends to

---

<sup>197</sup> Neville Alexander, 'Jakob Marengo and Namibian History', 5.

<sup>198</sup> Neville Alexander, 'Jakob Marengo and Namibian History', 3; Neville Alexander, 'The Enigma of the Khowsin', 60.

<sup>199</sup> A.B. Davidson, 'African Resistance and Rebellion against the Imposition of Colonial Rule', 179, 180.

<sup>200</sup> Jan-Bart Gewald, *Herero Heroes*, 192-3, Chapter 6; Patricia Hayes, Jeremy Silvester, Marion Wallace, Wolfram Hartmann (eds.), *Namibia under South African Rule: Mobility and Containment, 1915-46*, Out of Africa, Windhoek, 1995; Tilman Dederer, 'War and Mobility in the Borderlands of South Western Africa in the Early Twentieth Century', 276, 290.

<sup>201</sup> Jan-Bart Gewald, *Towards Redemption: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia between 1890-1923*, 7.

‘natural healing processes’, which was often viewed suspiciously by the German settlers.<sup>202</sup> After the First World War considering the South African takeover to be in their favour, these communities attempted to gain land concessions, educational facilities and basic amenities, but not on a grand scale.<sup>203</sup> The reserve policy emanating from the 1920s had a lengthy and contradictory development. The way in which this policy was established, and its consequences in the various reserves varied but in some cases it lent stability as communities resettled on land provided.<sup>204</sup> At times in its development communities were able to take advantage of the lack of real administrative control and hampers in bureaucratic mechanisms. It was in this context that reconstruction and communal ties were regenerated.<sup>205</sup>

Jeremy Silvester wrote that although there was a decree issued in August 1907 to ban indigenous people from land ownership, that not all the land had been alienated in southern Namibia. Parts of specific communities stayed loyal to the German administration and were able to keep their land such as in Rehoboth, Berseba and parts of the Warmbad district.<sup>206</sup> These lands therefore provided space where these communities could continue with raising livestock. Silvester wrote that the German administration was incapable of patrolling all the land thus pastoralists were able to manoeuvre, maintain livestock and there was a period of relative ‘pastoral recovery’ in the aftermath of the war.<sup>207</sup> There were increasing desertions of farm labourers from farms owned by German settlers in exchange for their own land and

---

<sup>202</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 184.

<sup>203</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 183.

<sup>204</sup> Christian A. Williams, ‘Student Political Consciousness: Lessons from a Namibian Mission School’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 3, (September 2004), 548.

<sup>205</sup> Reinhart Kössler, ‘From Reserve to Homeland: Local Identities and South African Policy in Southern Namibia’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3, (September 2000), 447; Reinhart Kössler, ‘Traditional Communities and the State in Southern Africa’, *Africa Spectrum*, Vol. 33, No. 1, (1998), 24.

<sup>206</sup> Jeremy Silvester, ‘Beasts, Boundaries and Buildings’, in Patricia Hayes et al (eds.), *Namibia under South African Rule: Mobility and Containment, 1915-46*, Out of Africa, Windhoek, 1995, 98.

<sup>207</sup> Jeremy Silvester, ‘Beasts, Boundaries and Buildings’, 99.



flocks. Control over indigenous labour only effectively took place during the 1930s.<sup>208</sup> There were pockets of land that were recognised as indigenous land such as Berseba, Rehoboth and the !Gami≠nun reserve, during this transition from German to South African administration. These areas considered safe havens became settlements for pastoralists who attempted to increase their livestock, and secure land.<sup>209</sup> However as Kössler argues overall the war aftermath had a detrimental impact on rights and mobility on land and livelihood, traditional socio-political organisation and economic development.<sup>210</sup> And with the influx of settlers from the Cape, and the establishment of a land settlement program the situation where African pastoralists gained land and livestock was reduced.<sup>211</sup> The drought years in southern Namibia from 1926 to 1933 caused greater competition for grazing pastures and markets between African and settler pastoralists to the detriment of the former.<sup>212</sup>

Ngavirue stated that even though there was resistance such as in 1922 amongst the !Gami≠nun, these incidences did not have a national organisation thus once they were quelled by the colonial regime, they did not have an impact on further resistance. He noted that after these attempts of insurrection, communities adapted and laid claims for land and rights within the confines of the ethnically segregated land system.<sup>213</sup> Emmet described this period as the early phase of nationalism in the country.<sup>214</sup> This description referred to the widespread political activities that were not only based in a particular part of the country but also transcended parochial alliances such as the activities of the Universal Negro Improvement

---

<sup>208</sup> Jeremy Silvester, 'Beasts, Boundaries and Buildings: 'The Survival and Creation of Pastoral Economies in Southern Namibia, 1915-35'', 97, 103.

<sup>209</sup> Jeremy Silvester, 'Beasts, Boundaries and Buildings', 98, 100.

<sup>210</sup> Reinhart Kössler, 'From Reserve to Homeland: Local Identities and South African Policy in Southern Namibia', 454-62.

<sup>211</sup> Jeremy Silvester, 'Beasts, Boundaries and Buildings', 104-111.

<sup>212</sup> Jeremy Silvester, 'Beasts, Boundaries and Buildings', 112-6.

<sup>213</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 191.

<sup>214</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 26, 29



Association (UNIA). According to Katjavivi this organisation's appeal in Namibia lay in the fact that it gave an alternative identity and impetus to the struggle for liberation.<sup>215</sup>

Furthermore the resistance of the !Gami≠nun and Rehoboth communities in 1922 and 1923 was associated with a resistance of combined ethnic communities against the stringent laws introduced by the South African administration. The resistance in the Warmbad and Rehoboth districts were against the laws established to control land, livestock and labour in the form of the reserves policy and the various taxation laws that were enacted to induce labour at settler farms or in the mining industry.<sup>216</sup>

After the waning of political organisations that unified ethnic communities such as the Garvey movement (UNIA) and the severe quelling of the !Gami≠nun and Rehoboth resistance with military force from the South African administration<sup>217</sup>, traditional authorities played a major role in the political mobilisation of communities.<sup>218</sup> In central Namibia, *otjiserandu*, took central stage not only in the Ovaherero community but it was said to have had a striking influence in the covert mobilisation strategies of other communities in the country. Ngavirue stated that the revivalist impetus occurred at the funeral of Chief Samuel Maharero on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1923. Emmet, Krüger and Henrichsen however stated that the genesis of the *otjiserandu* occurred much earlier than Maharero's funerary commemoration at Okahandja in 1923, and that the first military movements were reported in

---

<sup>215</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, 25, Peter Katjavivi, 'The Development of Anti-Colonial Forces in Namibia', in Brian Wood (ed.), *Namibia 1884-1984: Readings on Namibia's History and Society*, Namibia Support Committee in co-operation with the United Nations Institute for Namibia, 1988, 564, Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 29, 141-2.

<sup>216</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 29, 88-9, 93-4, 100, 103-5.

<sup>217</sup> For an in-depth discussion on the resistance of the !Gami≠nun and Rehobothers and the military suppression of the resistance by the South African government see Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 111-124, 155-163.

<sup>218</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 235.

the aftermath of the colonial war.<sup>219</sup> Both authors agree that later symbols displayed in the Damara, Nama and Ovambo cultural symbols and troop organisations ‘were largely derivative of those of the Herero’.<sup>220</sup> Ngavirue says that the commemorative movement was so popular that even the Nama ‘!Urikam’ (Witkamskap) allegiance was revitalised. The figure of /Khobese clan member David Booi as ‘Koning’ at the *otjiserandu* may also lend weight to this assertion.<sup>221</sup> The *otjiserandu* thus signals early attempts at reconstruction after the war. The assertion however that this movement influenced the revivalism of cultural symbols in other communities has to be considered closely.

Emmet wrote that the troop movement was an imitative adjustment to the trauma of the colonial war. He compares his analysis to the work conducted on the social behaviour and psychological responses of prisoners in Nazi concentration camps and members of oppressed communities.<sup>222</sup> Emmet has argued the idea that the ‘Hereros suffered more severely than any other group during the 1904-1907 wars’, and his idea that it their instigation of the troop movement is an erroneous assertion.<sup>223</sup> What specific scientific instruments may be used to compare the impact of the war on one community than another? Also the comparative analysis of the concentration camp theory generalises responses of people who have experienced violence. However the troop movement was certainly a reaction and reconstruction of an alternative form of authority in response to colonialism and particularly the war.

---

<sup>219</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 236, 246; Gesine Krüger and Dag Henrichsen, ‘We have been Captives Long Enough. We Want to be Free’, in Patricia Hayes et al (eds.), *Namibia under South African Rule: Mobility and Containment, 1915-46*, 150, 163.

<sup>220</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 212.

<sup>221</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, p.; Gesine Krüger and Dag Henrichsen, ‘We have been Captives Long Enough’, 166.

<sup>222</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 245, 246.

<sup>223</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 148, 246.

Emmet also stated that the functions of the various troop movements in Namibia differed from one community to the next and over time they held different functions. The troop movement is said to have functioned through the use of theatre or play, welfare service for troop members, an alternative ethnic allegiance for the purposes of unity and protection and a covert resistance movement at a time when stringent laws prevented overt military activities.<sup>224</sup> The troop movement in various communities sought to combine a military character with traditional symbols harking back to a time of glorious resistance and traditional socio-political and religious organisation.<sup>225</sup> Gesine Krüger and Dag Henrichsen state that the idea that the Herero imitate their aggressors or display trauma of the war does not take into consideration other aspects of the troop movements such as their pre-war roots, and that over time the meaning of the troop movement continually evolved.<sup>226</sup>

While *otjiserandu* had strong revivalist impacts in central Namibia there were other socio-political movements that were more instrumental in asserting political claims albeit still along ethnic lines in southern Namibia. The religious breakaway movements were an example of such mobilisation. In southern Namibia this movement was organised because of discontent of the attempt by the Rhenish Mission to substitute their administration of the church with that of the Dutch Reformed Church. This was considered as a vote of no confidence in the abilities of the Nama evangelists. Another grievance was that the Churches had not provided adequate education which was often only offered until standard three. The Nama evangelists soon formed alliances with the African Methodist Episcopal Church of South Africa (which was affiliated with the Ethiopian churches), and in this way established their own

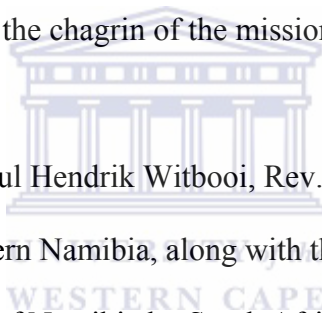
---

<sup>224</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 247.

<sup>225</sup> Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 24; Various authors have indicated that these commemorations were held as part of the continuity in the resistance history of communities; Reinhart Kossler, *In Search of Survival and Dignity: Two traditional communities in southern Namibia under South African rule*, Gamsberg Macmillan, 2005, 247, 251.

<sup>226</sup> Gesine Krüger and Dag Henrichsen, 'We have been Captives Long Enough', 162.

independent church in Namibia. These churches, said to be the best organised in the country, attracted a following from all ethnic groups in the country. Ngavirue noted that these churches symbolised the earliest form of nationalist sentiment in the country as associations based on different ethnic lines who jointly agitated for an institution that was not controlled by Europeans. He also connects this specific independent church movement with a historical trajectory of self-determination through religious movements in southern Namibia such as Jonker Afrikaner's expulsion of the RMS from his settlement during the migration and settlement of Khoe communities from the Cape.<sup>227</sup> Other examples were the establishment of a church in Rietmond by Gaob Hendrik Witbooi without the support of missionaries, and the relations between the Ethiopian movement's prophet Stuurman and Gaob Hendrik Witbooi during the colonial wars, much to the chagrin of the missionaries.



Gaob David Witbooi, Gaob Sameul Hendrik Witbooi, Rev. Markus Kooper, supporters of these church movements in southern Namibia, along with the Herero Chiefs Council, petitioned against the annexation of Namibia by South Africa in the 1950s.<sup>228</sup> According to Ngavirue the main issue concerning national political agitation was independence from the South African regime mainly because of the effects of the annexation in the form of separate development which resulted in the further loss of land and poor working conditions of labourers in the country.<sup>229</sup> Demonstrations and petitions to the UN were based on these forced removals in the urban locations and policies of land reserves for various ethnic groups.<sup>230</sup> When these demonstrations turned violent in the urban areas such as the relocation of Old Location residents to Katutura on the outskirts of the city, the national political

---

<sup>227</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 208.

<sup>228</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 211; For an example of the petition sent to the United Nations by Gaob Hendrik Samuel Witbooi on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 1956 see Reinhart Kossler, *In Search of Survival and Dignity*, 237.

<sup>229</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 239.

<sup>230</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 225.

organisations emerged to mobilise the populace. The South West African National Union (SWANU) and the Ovamboland People's Congress (OPC), established in Cape Town in the late 1950s, were concerned with the working conditions of migrant labourers from northern Namibia.

While Ngavirue explained the inner workings of SWANU and relations between this organisation and SWAPO until the 1960s, Katjavivi documented the activities of SWAPO such as the important demonstrations of workers in Namibia in the early 1970s, the launching of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) and the increasing militarisation of the country by South African forces.<sup>231</sup> The administration raised the spectre of resistance in the country with the establishment of draconian laws, arrests and violent detentions of activists. These events also led to a mass exodus of people from the country to join the liberation activities in exile. Katjavivi also wrote about internal affairs such as the Turnhalle Conference in 1975 which established a constitution for the country. The delegates who participated in the conference were however elected by the South African government, and several political parties, such as SWAPO, were not allowed to participate.<sup>232</sup> He wrote that the Turnhalle Conference was based on the Odendaal Plan, which was a piece of legislation introduced in the early 1960s, where different African reserves were supposed to be based on the idea of self-government and developed along ethnic lines on the principle of separate development.<sup>233</sup> There was agitation against these colonial policies by traditional authorities at 'tribal' meetings and later in national political organisations.<sup>234</sup> Katjavivi said that the Turnhalle Conference was not accepted by several political organisations not only on the

---

<sup>231</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, 59, 67-71, 88-9.

<sup>232</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, 94-9.

<sup>233</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, 72-3.

<sup>234</sup> These annual Nama Tribal Meetings are mentioned in Reinhart Kossler, 'From Reserve to Homeland: Local Identities and South African Policy in Southern Namibia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3, (September 2000), 455-6. Also see Reinhart Kossler, *In Search of Survival and Dignity*, 235, 238-41.

basis of exclusion to the talks, but also because of the imposition of the South African government in the independence plan.<sup>235</sup> Some of these organisations such as The Namibia African People's Democratic Organisation (NAPDO) which operated in southern Namibia under the leadership of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi and the Rehoboth Volksparty joined SWAPO in large numbers in 1976-7 against the implementation of the Namaland Proclamation. This move gave the nationalist movement a revived impetus in the country.<sup>236</sup>

There were silences and an over-emphasis of certain aspects of German colonial history not adequately addressed by these nationalist scholars. Both authors, Ngavirue and Katjavivi for example, did not write about 1903 as commencement of the war in southern Namibia where Jakob Marenga and other militants such as Abraham Morris resisted German intrusion in local affairs, although they mention that the Governor, Leutwein, and most of the German army were in southern Namibia, when the first attacks of the Herero were reported in central Namibia. There was an emphasis on the Herero-German war in the descriptions of the colonial war in their texts as well. This reproduction of the war may stem from the archive, and the way in which the war has been produced later, which lends serious attention to what these records actually imply. These representations have the dubious effect of producing a narrative such as 'only the Herero-speaking people rose up against the German rulers', or only the Herero community were severely affected by the war.<sup>237</sup> Furthermore the lack of detail with which the war in southern Namibia is dealt with by nationalist authors further contributes to an explicit concentration on the attempted extermination of only the Ovaherero in Namibia, and lack of analysis of the colonial war in southern Namibia and its contribution

---

<sup>235</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, 99.

<sup>236</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, 99, Peter Katjavivi, 'The Development of Anti-Colonial Forces in Namibia', 575; Reinhart Kossler, *In Search of Survival and Dignity*, 241; Reinhart Kossler, 'Traditional Communities and the State in Southern Africa', *Africa Spectrum*, Vol. 33, No. 1, (1998), p. 27-8.

<sup>237</sup> Neville Alexander, 'The Namibian war of anti-colonial resistance, 1904-7', 194, Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*, 9-10.

to the resistance history of the country. Ngavirue even states that ‘although there was no official extermination policy against the Namas, they were reduced by about one half’.<sup>238</sup> However, as I have pointed out elsewhere there actually was an extermination order sent to Nama communities participating in the war from Gibeon to the rest of southern Namibia on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 1905. Such a policy included the experiences in labour, concentration camps and deportations to West Africa during the war years.<sup>239</sup>

Also the ways in which the South African dispensation affected the socio-economic and political situation and the perspective of the communities in southern Namibia on these issues is missing in these nationalist accounts. The history of resistance in southern Namibia and particularly political organisation in this region during the occupation of South Africa was also not attended to in detail by these authors. One gets a general sense of what was occurring in the country, except the different strategies of mobilisation, various organisations established and centres where political consciousness was taking place that may give an understanding of the political situation in southern Namibia.<sup>240</sup> There was also no indication of how the various organisations had been established, who the leaders of these organisations were, who their support base was, how they agitated for change and the kinds of issues that they were concerned and how this fit into a nationalist framework. The general narrative of socio-political consciousness in southern Namibia has been made to seem as if it appeared from obscurity onto the political scene with the inhabitants from southern Namibia joining SWAPO in the late 1970s.

---

<sup>238</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 22, 129, Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, p.

<sup>239</sup> Memory Biwa, ‘Toa Tama !Khams Ge’, 85-6.

<sup>240</sup> Christian A. Williams, ‘Student Political Consciousness: Lessons from a Namibian Mission School’, 557.



Traditional authorities were said to be at the forefront of an emerging nationalism in Namibia.<sup>241</sup> Traditional communities continuously agitated for the restitution of their rights in land and resources, and the right to self-determination. These interests were of course tied to the specific objectives that these traditional communities wanted to attain. Although traditional authorities united with other ethnic communities during the liberation struggle essentially these communities were at the same time forming ethnic nationalisms, which was not always construed as contradictory to the aims of the nationalist movement.<sup>242</sup> Ngavirue notes that one of the ambiguities during nationalist struggle was that there was a ‘persistent ethnic factor’, a particular tendency of parochial interests that also appeared in the political organisations in the country.<sup>243</sup> Katjavivi wrote that these ethnic cleavages existed during the liberation struggle and may appear even more so after the independence of the country. He shows that political alliances formed during the early 1970s stemmed from ethnically based organisations who wanted to maintain a semblance of a united struggle against apartheid.<sup>244</sup>

Although SWAPO had an overwhelming countrywide support base by the late 1970s, the organisations that joined the party at that time were from ethnically based political organisations.<sup>245</sup> There were also various ethnically based organisations who also opposed the South African regime.<sup>246</sup> It is suggested that ethnic communities were uniting for political change but were at the same time fostering strong ethnic group identities through which they

---

<sup>241</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 32; Peter Katjavivi, ‘The Development of Anti-Colonial Forces in Namibia’, 562.

<sup>242</sup> These ethnic nationalisms were a product of unifying processes as well as the consequences of colonial administrative social engineering. Although there are arguments against ethnic categories said to have been created by the colonial administration processes, communities on the other hand did forge ethnic alliances and do identify with specific ethnicities based on origin, language and historical legacies of resistance. For an introductory discussion regarding traditional allegiances in Namibia see Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia*; Reinhart Kössler, ‘Traditional Communities and the State in Southern Africa’, 22, 32.

<sup>243</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia)*, 252.

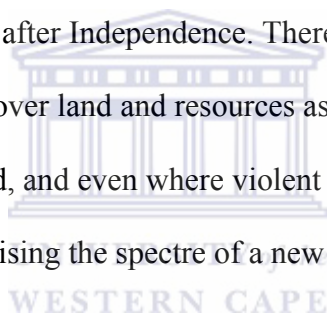
<sup>244</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, 92-4.

<sup>245</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, 99-100.

<sup>246</sup> Peter Katjavivi, ‘The Development of Anti-Colonial Forces in Namibia’, 575, 577.



were struggling for self determination.<sup>247</sup> That various fault lines appeared during the nationalist struggle is evidence of ethnically based interests not specifically addressed by the nationalist framework of major political organisations in the country. That these ethnic communities had various identities and traditional interests to which they ascribed during the liberation struggle that do not necessarily coincide with all the policies of nationalism is clear. Katjavivi notes that the ideologies and strategies projected during the liberation struggle such as nationalism do not necessarily determine that communities will have access to their rights in land and resources after independence.<sup>248</sup> The ways in which nationalism develops does not automatically eradicate the inherent legacies of colonialism nor does it always include all the objectives that these traditional communities envisaged would restore their rights in land and livelihood after Independence. There have been several instances after Independence where jurisdiction over land and resources as claimed by specific ethnic communities has not been realised, and even where violent conflicts have occurred because of the policies of the new state, raising the spectre of a new colonialism built on a prior colonial relationship.



---

<sup>247</sup> Reinhart Kossler, 'Traditional Communities and the State in Southern Africa', 32.

<sup>248</sup> Peter Katjavivi, 'The Development of Anti-Colonial Forces in Namibia', 558-9; Fanon wrote that, 'history teaches us clearly that the battle against colonialism does not run straight away along the lines of nationalism'. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Penguin Books, London, 1990, 119-165.

## Chapter Two

### The Afterlives of Genocide: an interpretation of colonial war in Namibia

The resurgence of the debate on colonial genocide in Namibia after independence acknowledged and described gross human rights violations during the colonial war. The Nama word !gam $\neq$ ui<sup>1</sup> was used in memorials by leaders such as Gaob Dawid Fredericks of the !Aman. Although !gam $\neq$ ui is an old word that means exterminate, it has been used interchangeably to describe genocide, a new term for the old crime.<sup>2</sup> Some of the deliberations, in light of the centennial commemorations, also argued that the Namibian and German government's should take responsibility to open up the dialogue on reparations for war crimes committed by Germany during the colonial war.<sup>3</sup> In the academy writers have contested whether the colonial war should be described as genocide and also detailed the memorial processes in communities in the aftermath of the war. This chapter trails the resurgence of this contentious debate of the colonial war in Namibia which in the academy was largely based on the extension of the empirical base, i.e. the scrutiny of overlooked archival material and the refining of concepts and interpretation of genocide. I also look at the way in which archival material such as postcards and photographs were used in visual media, films and exhibitions to re-image dialogue on colonial genocide of various communities in Namibia and South Africa. These debates on genocide have had a multidirectional impact on local politics, public discourse and memorials in Namibia as evidenced in discussions on the

---

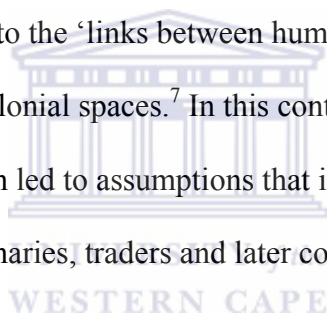
<sup>1</sup> Wilfrid Haacke and Eliphaz Eiseb, *A Khoekhoegowab Dictionary: with and English-Khoekhoegowab Index*, Gamsberg Macmillan, Windhoek, 2002, 309, 518

<sup>2</sup> For the uses of the term genocide see Leo Kuper, 'Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century', 48. Sore Maya Archive, research notes, discussions at repatriation of human bodies, Berlin, September 2011. I have incorporated research notes, documents and other paraphernalia in an archive collection, the Sore Maya Archive, which will form the basis of an archive of southern Namibia as one of the possible outcomes of this research project. See Conclusion for a description of the Sore Maya Archive.

<sup>3</sup> SMA, Ida Hoffmann, 'The Genesis of the Namibian Struggle for War Reparations', Windhoek, June 2011; Usutuaije Maamberua, 'Unfinished Business of Ovaherero Reparation Claim', *New Era*, 16 February 2007, 12.

court case instituted by the Herero against Germany for the crime of genocide in 2001.<sup>4</sup> Also the UN Convention on Genocide was recurrently referred to in discussions on the colonial war in parliament, public dialogue, amongst Genocide Committees in Namibia and in the repatriation of human bodies from Berlin in September 2011.<sup>5</sup>

Scholars of genocide have described the processes of radicalisation through which the crime may occur. They note that the course of action that leads to genocide is usually gradual. During German colonisation and especially the war of 1903-1908 in Namibia, the colonial officials argued that the land and resources of indigenous communities should be confiscated and the communal union of people dealt a death blow in order for white settlement to succeed.<sup>6</sup> These statements point to the 'links between human catastrophes and the meta-narrative of human progress in colonial spaces.'<sup>7</sup> In this context these ideas of progress, civilisation or modernisation often led to assumptions that indigenous communities were opposed to real progress.<sup>8</sup> Missionaries, traders and later colonial officials laboured through



---

<sup>4</sup> Cons Karamata, 'Reasons to claim for reparations from Germany in front of a U.S. Court', in Dierk Schmidt, *The Division of the Earth: Tableaux on the legal synopses of the Berlin-Africa conference*, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne, 2010, 50.

<sup>5</sup> SMA, research notes, Repatriation of human bodies from Berlin to Windhoek, Panel discussion, Berlin, 28 September 2011.

<sup>6</sup> Alexander Laban Hinton, 'The Dark Side of Modernity: Toward an anthropology of genocide', in Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide*, University of California Press, 2002, 10.

<sup>7</sup> Alexander Laban Hinton, 'The Dark Side of Modernity', 11; Dirk A. Moses, 'Empire, Colony, Genocide: Keywords and the Philosophy of History', in Dirk A. Moses, *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, Bergham Books, New York, 2008, 4-5; Dominik J. Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide: Colonial Rule in German Southwest Africa and German East Africa', in Dirk A. Moses (ed.), *Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, Bergham Books, New York, 2008, 307; Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide: The Herero and Nama War (1904-8) in German South West Africa and Its Significance', in Dan Stone (ed.), *The Historiography of Genocide*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008, 329.

<sup>8</sup> Frantz Fanon, Constance Farrington (trans.), *The Wretched of the Earth*, Penguin Books, London, 1990, 170; Udo Krautwurst, 'The Joy of Looking: Early German Anthropology, Photography and Audience Formation', in Anette Hoffmann (ed.), *What We See: Reconsidering an Anthropometrical Collection from Southern Africa: Images, Voices and Versioning*, Basler Afrika Bibliographien, Basel, 2009, 148-180; Udo Krautwurst identifies two strands/movements along which Enlightenment thought developed in Germany in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. The first strand developed along Darwinian model of classifying race according to a specific hierarchy whereas the pro-modern movement that came to be associated with The Berlin Society for

the logic of these 'civilising' projects to instil ethics, progress and civilisation.<sup>9</sup> The descriptions, photographs, maps and research projects of spaces, cultures and indigenous peoples bodies by missionaries, explorers, anthropologists and colonial officials led to the essentialised descriptions of race, language, culture and environment.<sup>10</sup> A containment of knowledge ensued in which difference was often negatively inscribed.<sup>11</sup> Couched in a scientific theory such as racial classification and evolution these assumptions took on sinister policies and actions.<sup>12</sup> In a war context these ideas manifested in extreme cases where the body of an indigenous person, the enemy, was projected as savage and war-like. The body became the site of social engineering, containment, control and disposal.<sup>13</sup> Through these operations of dehumanisation, violations against people's bodies were justified.<sup>14</sup>

Leo Kuper argued that a major cause of the genocide of indigenous people was colonisation.<sup>15</sup> However not all the wars in the colonial context resulted in genocide.<sup>16</sup> Various scholars argue that each historical process should be analysed on a case by case basis. And although a range of colonial wars are analogous to some of the processes of genocide such as socio-economic upheaval, polarised divisions, structural change, ideological manipulation and mass murder they cannot be considered as such because these policies did

---

Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory sought to show that various races were not homogenous. The ideas of the latter movement because of its exclusive membership did not have popular audiences however.

<sup>9</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 32, 169; Alexander Laban Hinton, 'Genocide and Anthropology', in Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Genocide: An anthropological reader*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., Malden, Massachusetts, 2002, 7-8.

<sup>10</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 168-9; Alexander Laban Hinton, 'The Dark Side of Modernity', 12-3; Patricia Hayes et al, "'Picturing the Past" in Namibia: The Visual Archive and its Energies', in Carolyn Hamilton et al (eds.), *Refiguring the Archive*, David Phillip, Cape Town, 2002, 106-7.

<sup>11</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 169-70; Frantz Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, Grove Press, New York, 121; Alexander Laban Hinton, 'Introduction: Genocide and Anthropology', 9-10.

<sup>12</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 32-3, 190.

<sup>13</sup> Alexander Laban Hinton, 'The Dark Side of Modernity', 25.

<sup>14</sup> Alexander Laban Hinton, 'The Dark Side of Modernity', 13-5, 18.

<sup>15</sup> Ann Curthoys and John Docker, 'Defining Genocide', in Dan Stone (ed.), *The Historiography of Genocide*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008, 24. Sartre and Lemkin also argued that genocide took place during colonisation.

<sup>16</sup> Dirk A. Moses, 'Empire, Colony, Genocide', 11, 25.

not lead to the deliberate and continued annihilation of specific communities. It may be argued that ideological manipulations resulting in racial policies, cultural disarray and the violation of traditional kin networks which still have a far reaching impact in this century can be considered an extreme manifestation of violence, and even genocide.

Dominik Schaller wrote that German colonisation was not innately genocidal, and that the German authorities envisioned a colony where they could settle on land and use labour to build their enterprise. He wrote that ‘the bloody suppression of indigenous resistance in GSWA and GEA 1904-08 was an unfortunate episode’.<sup>17</sup> The reasons put forward for the extreme violence during the war in Namibia as in other colonial spaces apparently range from German ideas of race and culture superiority, fears of indigenous resistance which would result in the loss of the colonial enterprise, tropical frenzy and frustration of inexperienced soldiers, the fear of a loss of prestige and thus the intensification of tactics to suppress the resistance, introduction of a ruthless governor or military commander into the equation; and drastic measures occurred according to the course of the war.

Schaller frames the colonial contradiction thus, ‘the mass murder of the Africans was in principle inconsistent with the superior aims of the coloniser...Lothar von Trotha, for example was first ordered to repeal his genocide order...but that did not mean Germans had abandoned genocidal intentions’.<sup>18</sup> Krüger pointed to this inconsistency when the Ovaherero community sued companies for genocide who she said actually depended on the labour of these

---

<sup>17</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer writes that a popular myth is that German colonisation was not as violent as that of the British, Spanish and the French. Jürgen Zimmerer, ‘Colonial Genocide’, 329. Dominik Schaller seems to go even further and states that ‘Europeans normally did not envisage exterminating or expelling the African population’. As if what occurred in Tasmania and Namibia were aberrations of ‘normal’ colonial practice. Dominik J. Schaller, ‘From Conquest to Genocide’, 297.

<sup>18</sup> Dominik J. Schaller, ‘From Conquest to Genocide’, 312.

communities.<sup>19</sup> However the intent of these companies has to be viewed according to their practices specifically during the colonial war.<sup>20</sup> It is useful to view genocide within a process of radicalisation to indicate that although it may have been the intention of the colonial enterprises to use people for their labour, their policies and actions dramatically changed during periods of extreme violence.<sup>21</sup> Schaller explained the structural process of violence from the beginnings of the colony to wars, and said that during these stages the policy of maintaining labour went awry and was later replaced by policies to exterminate populations in Namibia. The policies and results of German colonisation in Namibia however show that these were not mere ‘unfortunate episodes’ or aberrations.<sup>22</sup>

Drechsler stated in his narrative of the war in Namibia that there were already exterminatory intentions in the conflicts between German forces and several communities even before the war in the early 1900s. Zimmerer however states that these previous massacres in the colonial history of Namibia were not necessarily genocidal.<sup>23</sup> Zimmerer indicates that although these wars were related they were considered ‘single events as opposed to a systematic policy of extermination’.<sup>24</sup> Zimmerer states that the colonial war in Namibia is a very significant event in the history of violence in colonial encounters.<sup>25</sup> The war from 1903-1908 is viewed as a genocide because of the intention of the German government to annihilate whole

---

<sup>19</sup> Gesine Krüger, 'Coming to terms with the past', *GHI Bulletin*, No. 37, Fall 2005, 46.

<sup>20</sup> See Adhikari for an explanation of how he sees genocide being carried out in practise against the Cape San even though the British government had plans to protect the San. Mohamed Adhikari, *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide: The extermination of the Cape San peoples*, University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town, 2010, 89

<sup>21</sup> Dominik J. Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide', 310.

<sup>22</sup> Dominik J. Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide', 310.

<sup>23</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 326.

<sup>24</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 326.

<sup>25</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'War, Concentration Camps and Genocide in South-West Africa: The first German genocide', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (eds.), *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War of 1904-1908 and its Aftermath*, Merlin Press Ltd., Monmouth, 2008, 60.

communities.<sup>26</sup> He states that although the event is relegated to a minor event in international debates on mass violence and genocide, the event gains its importance as the first genocide of the last century.<sup>27</sup>

Early genocide analyses by writers such as Drechsler were dispelled by Poewe and Lau because they argued that the interpretations of the colonial war were inaccurate. Lau stated that the theory was a myth and referred to the gaps in Drechsler's founding arguments.<sup>28</sup> Lau also stressed the impossibility of knowing the events as they happened based on the archival documents because most of these sources were destroyed.<sup>29</sup> However these writers did not define the concept of genocide on which their arguments were established and instead argued over the meaning of the proclamation order at the time of war and the numbers of the people who died during the war and fled out of the country.<sup>30</sup> Tilman Dederling notes however that the German plan to annihilate the Herero was explicitly discussed in colonial circles and documented in their official documents. He uses evidence from the publication on the war by the General Staff and Major Estorff reminisces, books accessible to Lau, to show that the official German version in fact documented how they attempted to annihilate the Herero by forcing them to flee into the desert after the battle at Ohamakari.<sup>31</sup> He also states that

---

<sup>26</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 326.

<sup>27</sup> Henning Melber, 'How to Come to Terms with the Past: Re-Visiting the German Colonial Genocide in Namibia', *Africa Spectrum*, 40: 1, 2005, 140.

<sup>28</sup> Brigitte Lau, 'Uncertain Certainties: The Herero-German War of 1904', in Brigitte Lau, Annemarie Heywood (ed.), *History and Historiography*, Discourse/Msorp, Windhoek, 1995, 42.

<sup>29</sup> Karla Poewe, *The Namibian Herero: A history of their psycho-social disintegration and survival*, The Edwin Miller Press, New York, 1985, 75-6; Brigitte Lau, 'Uncertain Certainties' 40-1.

<sup>30</sup> Karla Poewe, *The Namibian Herero*, 55-75; Brigitte Lau, 'Uncertain Certainties', 39-51.

<sup>31</sup> Tilman Dederling, 'The German-Herero War of 1904: Revisionism of Genocide or Imaginary Historiography', 84-5.



Drechsler carefully conducted archival research and was able to convincingly argue that genocide was committed in Namibia.<sup>32</sup>

Zimmerer describes in more detail the concept of genocide and sets himself apart from the work of Drechsler and Bley.<sup>33</sup> He states that although Drechsler was one of the first writers to state that the colonial war resulted in genocide, he did not enhance the understanding of this term.<sup>34</sup> He also writes that revisionists have seized on the descriptions of Drechsler and Bley of the war, such as that the Herero attacked the German settlers first, as evidence that they were in fact responsible for their own demise, even though this may not have been the writers' intention.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore Zimmerer contends that Drechsler's limited view of the German community in the country and the description of an all encompassing mighty German army that set to destroy Africans from the very beginning of the colonial encounter have marred his work to some extent. In agreement with Lau, Zimmerer stated that because of this interpretation of the colonial encounter all Africans are viewed as victims, and their actions are seen as only in response to colonial manipulations.<sup>36</sup>

### ***Re-presenting colonial genocide: extension of the empirical base and conceptual analysis***

Zimmerer referred the framework of the United Nations Convention on Genocide, established after the Second World War, to describe the historical context of the particular policies and actions of German officials and soldiers in Namibia. He writes that 'the debate about the

---

<sup>32</sup> Tilman Dederig, 'The German-Herero War of 1904: Revisionism of Genocide or Imaginary Historiography', 83, 87; Werner Hillebrecht, 'Certain uncertainties, or Venturing progressively into colonial apologetics', *Journal of Namibian Studies*, No. 1, 2007, 73-95.

<sup>33</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 329; Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller(eds.),Edward Neather (trans.), *Genocide in German South West Africa*. The book was first published in German by Ch. Links Verlag, Berlin and is a translation of Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (Hg.), *Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika: Der Kolonialkrieg (1904-1908) in Namibia und seine Folgen*, Christoph Links Verlag, Berlin, 2004.

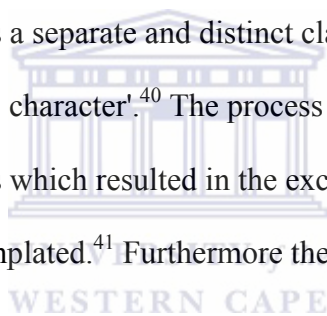
<sup>34</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 329-330.

<sup>35</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 331-2.

<sup>36</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 330. This seems to be the point Brigitte Lau was making in her writing on the war.



justification of labelling this colonial conflict as a war of annihilation and/or genocide has now more or less been settled'.<sup>37</sup> The Convention formulated by the United Nations General Assembly on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 1948 and titled the 'Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide', states that genocide is committed if there is intent to destroy a national, ethnical, racial or religious group by killing members of the group, causing serious bodily and mental damage, planned physical demise of a group through various conditions and enforcing methods deliberately impeding the birth rate of a specific group.<sup>38</sup> It seems that although there is a clear legal definition of genocide, there are still some socio-political and economic implications of the definition that were debated.<sup>39</sup> The United Nations Committee established the Convention on Genocide because, 'it was felt necessary to establish genocide as a separate and distinct class of such crimes in order to emphasise its particularly heinous character'.<sup>40</sup> The process of establishing the Convention however was a negotiated process which resulted in the exclusion of some of the aspects which the original drafters contemplated.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore the final wording and interpretation



---

<sup>37</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 334; Jürgen Zimmerer, 'War, Concentration Camps and Genocide in South-West Africa', 50.

<sup>38</sup> Ann Curthoys and John Docker, 'Defining Genocide', 13-4; Article II, 1948, United Nations Genocide Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide: In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group

<sup>39</sup> Samuel Totten, William S. Parsons and Robert K. Hitchcock, 'Confronting Genocide and Ethnocide of Indigenous Peoples: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Definition, Intervention, prevention and Advocacy', in Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2002, 66; Leo Kuper, 'Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century', in Alexander Laban Hinton (eds.), *Genocide: an Anthropological Reader*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., Maldern, Massachusetts, 2002, 48-67; Alexander Laban Hinton, 'Introduction: Genocide and Anthropology', 4-6; Ann Curthoys and John Docker, 'Defining Genocide', 9.

<sup>40</sup> Christian Tomuschat, 'Prosecuting Denials of Past Alleged Genocides', in Paola Gaeta (ed.), *The UN Genocide Convention: A Commentary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009, 513.

<sup>41</sup> Ann Curthoys and John Docker, 'Defining Genocide', 13-4.

of the Convention was defined according to the views and opinions of the parties that later became signatories to the agreement.<sup>42</sup>

Some scholars have stated that the Convention has various limitations owing to a narrow interpretation of the legal concept.<sup>43</sup> For example although the definition was first drafted by the ad hoc Committee of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations ironically a closed list of categories related only to national, racial, ethnical and religious groups exist in the convention. Anthropologists have argued that these closed lists of categories are constructed and not universal groupings, which may exclude people who identify with emic groupings, multiple categories or those not included within the definition.<sup>44</sup> Other scholars employ the term 'ethnocide' to describe cultural genocide, a fundamental issue in Lemkin's assessment of genocide, which was also not explicitly mentioned in the Convention.<sup>45</sup> However some scholars state that the culture of groups is protected by a wide reading of the term 'ethnical group' in the clause of the Convention.<sup>46</sup> Other analyses with a narrow reading of the concept of genocide state however that genocide should solely relate to physical destruction of a group and not their 'mental or material goods'.<sup>47</sup> It was noted by some scholars that a wider reading of genocide refers to mass killings and also to the livelihood of communities, which essentially includes social, political, economic and cultural aspects of their way of life as well.<sup>48</sup> Some signatories have broadened their definitions of the

---

<sup>42</sup> Samuel Totten et al, 'Confronting Genocide and Ethnocide of Indigenous People', 59.

<sup>43</sup> Leo Kuper, 'Genocide: its Political Use in the Twentieth Century', 56-60; William A. Schabas, *Genocide in International Law: The Crime of Crimes*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009, 8.

<sup>44</sup> Alexander Laban Hinton, 'Introduction: Genocide and Anthropology', 5.

<sup>45</sup> Robert van Krieken, 'Cultural Genocide in Australia', in Dan Stone (ed.), *The Historiography of Genocide*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008 ; Dirk A. Moses, 'Empire, Colony, Genocide', 11-6; Ann Curthoys and John Docker, 'Defining Genocide', 14.

<sup>46</sup> Ann Curthoys and John Docker, 'Defining Genocide', 14.

<sup>47</sup> Ann Curthoys and John Docker, 'Defining Genocide', 22.

<sup>48</sup> Dirk A. Moses, 'Empire, Colony, Genocide', 13.

Convention to include political, economic and social groups, however the enforcement of these categories may not be sanctioned by the courts.<sup>49</sup>

A distinction is also established amongst genocide scholars concerning genocide committed in the colonial context, and other extermination plots beyond this era.<sup>50</sup> Dirk Moses thus queries 'whether colonial wars of conquest and counterinsurgency are qualitatively different to genocides in Europe. He questions whether 'colonial genocide' or 'indigenocide' should be a subcategory of analysis distinct from genocide proper'. Dirk Moses concludes however that there are striking similarities and that the Shoah like specific cases of colonial genocide can indeed be considered as 'subaltern genocide'.<sup>51</sup> Other typologies identified to conceptualise genocide in our society are terms such as 'genocidal massacres'.<sup>52</sup> Scholars use 'genocidal massacres' to describe the mass violence during colonisation for example.<sup>53</sup> These are explained as processes, such as the spreading of the smallpox epidemic in the Cape colony, which led to mass death although it may not have been the intention of the Europeans to cause the destruction of the indigenous communities.<sup>54</sup> The example of the Hornkranz massacre against the /Khomani in 1893, would also presumably fall under this definition as well. The lines between genocidal massacre and genocide proper according to these definitions however get blurred and problematic during further perusal by references such as 'in terms of sheer numbers, the Congo genocide takes second place only to the loss of

---

<sup>49</sup> William A. Schabas, *Genocide in International Law: The Crime of Crimes*, 6; Christian Tomuschat, 'Prosecuting Denials of Past Alleged Genocides', 513.

<sup>50</sup> Dominik J. Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide', 316-7; Dirk A. Moses, 'Empire, Colony, Genocide', 37.

<sup>51</sup> Dirk A. Moses, 'Empire, Colony, Genocide', 37. This idea is based on Lemkin's description of Nazism in Germany as colonial. Dominik J. Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide', 298.

<sup>52</sup> Samuel Totten et al, 'Confronting Genocide and Ethnocide of Indigenous Peoples', 61.

<sup>53</sup> Samuel Totten et al, 'Confronting Genocide and Ethnocide of Indigenous Peoples', 58.

<sup>54</sup> David Maybury-Lewis, 'Genocide against Indigenous Peoples', in Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2002, 45.

African life occasioned by the slave trade.’<sup>55</sup> Another example is that the war in Tanzania between the Maji-Maji and German soldiers is not considered genocide by most scholars because there was no documented intent to physically destroy the population.<sup>56</sup>

Much of the debate on genocide in Namibia has been centred around figures of deaths on the battlefield, in the desert, the actual number of German soldiers in the country or the death toll of prisoners in concentration camps.<sup>57</sup> These 'facts and figures' as Dederling writes are important to understand the impact of the war policies and effects.<sup>58</sup> However these figures have often been used by various writers to obscure the evidence of the war actions.<sup>59</sup> The numbers dispute in the case of genocide in Namibia has often obscured the discussion. Kössler and Melber have argued that the numbers often quoted by writers to show that genocide did not take place in Namibia is a 'pseudo-debate' precisely because, according to the UN Convention on Genocide, it is not only the numbers that count but rather the intent of the perpetrators of the crime.<sup>60</sup> However if the figures are not debated then it is the intent of the German government, soldiers or the army general that is argued. Krüger for example stated that 'one can hardly talk about an *intentional* plan to exterminate the African population backed by the German government and conducted by the Schutztruppe'.<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> David Maybury-Lewis, 'Genocide against Indigenous Peoples', 47. Similarly the case, *We Charge Genocide: The Crime of Government Against the Negro People*, presented to the UN Secretariat in New York in December 1951 by African-American activists such as Paul Robeson and William Patterson against the United States for genocide committed against these communities was not adopted by the United Nations. Even Raphael Lemkin one of the main protagonists of the Genocide Convention stated that African-Americans had not suffered 'destruction, death, annihilation'. Ann Curthoys and John Docker, 'Defining Genocide', 15-20; Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates Jr. (eds.), *Africana: The Encyclopaedia of the African and African American Experience*, Civitas Books, New York, 1999, 1504, 1625-6.

<sup>56</sup> Dominik J. Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide', 309-10.

<sup>57</sup> Brigitte Lau, 'Uncertain Certainties', 43-9.

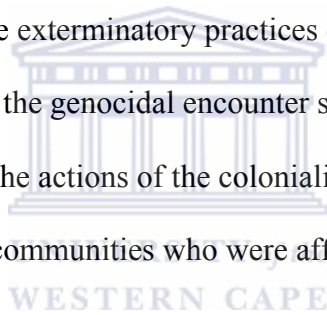
<sup>58</sup> Tilman Dederling, 'The German-Herero War of 1904', 88.

<sup>59</sup> Brigitte Lau, 'Uncertain Certainties', 43-50.

<sup>60</sup> Reinhart Kössler and Hening Melber, 'The Colonial Genocide in Namibia: Consequences for a Memory Culture Today from a German Perspective', *Ufahamu: Journal of African Studies*, Volume xxx, Numbers 2-3, 2004, 21.

<sup>61</sup> Gesine Krüger, 'Coming to terms with the Past', 46.

Kuper notes that the inclusion of intent in the UN Convention definition may cause problems however because if one person were killed and although intent to annihilate a people was expressed or shown, the Convention would surely not convict the perpetrators of a crime. The intent to commit genocide is thus linked with the figures of people that were killed in war.<sup>62</sup> Kuper also stated that to show intent, unless explicit, would always be a difficult subjective task, where questions would arise as to on whom the responsibility and onus rests to decide intent of the crime.<sup>63</sup> Adhikari states that the intent to commit genocide does not have to be explicit, it may be inferred in the actions, in the consequences of the coordinated plans of the colonialist. Referring to the genocide of the Cape San Adhikari states, 'in order to establish intent, one does not need an unequivocal or formal statement of resolve to annihilate a group on the part of the perpetrators...the exterminatory practices of the commandos, are sufficient to establish intent'.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore the genocidal encounter should be viewed as a whole system, and the consequences of the actions of the colonialist should also be determined from the opinions and evidence of the communities who were affected by genocide.



Jürgen Zimmerer states that from the very beginnings of European settlement in Namibia there were bound to be conflicts as these settlers expressed racist sentiments and, as Ritter-Peterson also argues in her thesis, a 'herrenvolk' or master race mentality.<sup>65</sup> He argued that when the war started the settlers and certain officials spoke of annihilating the Ovaherero. As the war progressed the German army persisted with practices to annihilate Ovaherero regardless of protests from some colonial quarters. Zimmerer wrote that the German soldiers were aware when they pursued the Herero into the desert that it would lead to their

---

<sup>62</sup> Leo Kuper, 'Genocide', 61.

<sup>63</sup> Leo Kuper, 'Genocide', 62-4.

<sup>64</sup> Mohamed Adhikari: *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide*, 88.

<sup>65</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 325-7.

destruction.<sup>66</sup> There was also a proclamation to destroy Herero, which established intent to commit genocide. He states that although this proclamation was later rescinded this did not change and the extreme brutalities continued unabated. The collection camps set up with the assistance of missionaries were followed up with concentration camps used also as labour reservoirs. There were alarming abuses by colonial officials and high mortality rates of prisoners in these concentration camps.

Zimmerer wrote that a similar genocidal policy was pursued against the Nama where German soldiers would also control supplies and watering holes, which resulted in the Nama combatants, women and children dying of hunger and thirst.<sup>67</sup> An order warning the Nama to surrender if they did not want to meet the same fate as the Herero was also sent out.<sup>68</sup>

Although Nama communities surrendered according to amicable peace treaties they too were forced into camps, where their demise was foreseen as their death rates were staggering. The prisoners of war also laboured on railway lines and other constructions, even as deportees in other colonies in West Africa. Zimmerer wrote that this policy was meant to destroy whole communities for not only combatants were captured but women, children and the aged as well. These prisoners of war also had to work as labourers for public and private companies and in their weakened state could not perform these duties, often resulting in their collapse to death.<sup>69</sup>

Joachim Zeller stated that although there was little evidence of the concentration camp in Swakopmund in journals, memorials or monuments in Namibia, that it was 'one of the

---

<sup>66</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 328; Tilman Dederer, 'The German-Herero War of 1904', 84-5; Jürgen Zimmerer, 'War, Concentration Camps and Genocide in South-West Africa', 50.

<sup>67</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 328.

<sup>68</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'War, Concentration Camps and Genocide in South-West Africa', 51-2.

<sup>69</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'War, Concentration Camps and Genocide in South-West Africa', 78.

biggest in the colony' during the war.<sup>70</sup> He states that there were other camps set up in the country during the war such as at Lüderitz, Keetmanshoop, Okahandja, Omaruru, Karibib, and in Windhoek. He wrote that there were several camps set up in Swakopmund according to the labour exigency of the administration, businessmen and ordinary settlers. These were set up for private homes, private firms related to railway and road construction, the military and mines in the area.<sup>71</sup> According to Zeller the majority of the prisoners in these camps were Herero, whereas the majority on Shark Island, Lüderitz were Nama prisoners.<sup>72</sup> Zeller wrote that the state of the prisoners in these camps was appalling owing to poor food rations, lack of adequate clothing, shelter, intensity of the labour, and the violence the prisoners had to endure from German soldiers.<sup>73</sup> The mortality rate as a result of diseases, ill treatment and neglect was thus high, only at times relieved by the assistance of clothes, medical facilities and improved food rations from missionaries.<sup>74</sup> From the few examples on the perceptions of people in these camps he quotes what was told to a mission inspector who said that 'they find it painful to be kept like oxen behind barbed wire fences'.<sup>75</sup> Several prisoners however escaped their internment in these concentration camps. Some of the prisoners fled to the nearby port of Walvis Bay which was administered by the British. From here these individuals requested to be sent to work in mines in South Africa.<sup>76</sup>

Casper Erichsen presents a detailed study of these concentration camps by focusing on the camp on Shark Island set up in the country in 1905. While previous authors had only slightly

---

<sup>70</sup> Joachim Zeller, 'Ombepera i koza – the cold is killing me': Notes toward a history of the concentration camp at Swakopmund, (1904-1908)', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (eds.), *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War of 1904-1908 and its Aftermath*, Merlin Press Ltd., Monmouth, 2008, 65, 79-80.

<sup>71</sup> Joachim Zeller, 'Ombepera i koza – the cold is killing me', 66.

<sup>72</sup> Joachim Zeller, 'Ombepera i koza – the cold is killing me', 66.

<sup>73</sup> Joachim Zeller, 'Ombepera i koza – the cold is killing me', 66-74.

<sup>74</sup> Joachim Zeller, 'Ombepera i koza – the cold is killing me', 66-70.

<sup>75</sup> Joachim Zeller, 'Ombepera i koza – the cold is killing me', 76.

<sup>76</sup> Joachim Zeller, 'Ombepera i koza – the cold is killing me', 73-4.



referred to the concentration camps and others speculated whether there was information on these camps at all, Erichsen's analysis showed that there really was a wealth of information in the national archives on the concentration camps set up during the war years.<sup>77</sup> In a quirk of fate the very archival documents used to refute the actions of German soldiers were used to identify ways in which genocide was perpetrated in Namibia. Erichsen employed archival documents such as letters and diaries of high ranking German officials and missionaries, often the only people that were allowed to enter these secret detention camps, to explicate the reasons for the setting up of these camps, the opinions and deeds of German officials, the daily grind of the prisoners of war, and the activities in the harbour town of Lüderitz in general.

Drechsler also relayed that the more disturbing intention for the establishment of these concentration camps, and especially since the authorities had knowledge about the conditions in these camps, was to reduce the number of prisoners by sending them to these camps. Erichsen documents statements by officials invoking these sentiments such as, 'the Hottentots are poor labourers, though troublesome guerrilla warriors, and I think that there is a general hope that they will soon die out'. These same reports were made by Colonel Trench, British attaché to the German army, and also by Lindequist who thought that the Nama should be sent to Shark Island first to reduce their numbers, than to West Africa on account of the expenses that would be incurred by deporting such a large group. The Nama prisoners that had survived this harrowing ordeal were sent back to Swakopmund while others were sent north into the interior only to be released during 1915.<sup>78</sup>

---

<sup>77</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 211-3; Helgine Gertrud Ritter-Petersen, 'The Herrenvolk Mentality in German South West Africa', 234-39; Brigitte Lau, 'Uncertain Certainties', 44-5.

<sup>78</sup> Casper W. Erichsen, *"The Angel of Death Has Descended Violently Among Them"*, *Concentration Camps and Prisoners-of-war in Namibia, 1904-1908*, African Studies Centre, Leiden, 2005, 120-158.



*From !Gam#ui to the Shoah: continuities between extermination and catastrophe in Namibia and Germany*

Linkages have been drawn of personages, institutions and processes between colonialism and later mass violence perpetrated against the Jews by Germany.<sup>79</sup> Clemens Kapuuo remarking on the German community's commemoration of the colonial war in Namibia in 1964 stated that 'to our minds there is little difference between the extermination order of General von Trotha and the extermination of the Jews by Adolf Hitler'.<sup>80</sup> Aimé Césaire's treatise titled, 'Discourse on colonialism', discusses the continuities between the atrocities that occurs during colonial conquest and their later manifestations in the Shoah.<sup>81</sup> He wrote that

each time a Madagascan is tortured and in France they accept the fact, civilization acquires another dead weight, a universal regression takes place, a gangrene sets in, a center of infection begins to spread...a poison has been instilled into the veins of Europe and, slowly but surely, the continent proceeds toward savagery. And then one fine day the bourgeoisie is awakened by a terrific reverse shock:...that it is Nazism, yes, but that before they were its victims, they were accomplices; that they tolerated that Nazism before it was inflicted on them. That they absolved it, shut their eyes to it, legitimized it, because, until then, it had been applied only to non-European peoples...<sup>82</sup>

This now popular trope of the boomerang effect was espoused by scholars such as W.E.B. du Bois, Frantz Fanon and Mahmood Mamdani in relation to the violent expansionism against indigenous communities during colonisation, and its later manifestations in the metropole.<sup>83</sup>

Dirk Moses contributes these analyses of colonialism and later violent tragedies to the competing of victimhood or 'trauma competition' often present in communities that have

---

<sup>79</sup>Henning Melber, 'How to Come to Terms with the Past', 144-5; Jurgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 334-7.

<sup>80</sup>Jan-Bart Gewald. 'Herero genocide in the twentieth century: Politics and memory', in John Abbink, Mirjam de Bruijn and Klaas van Walveren (eds.), *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History*, Koninklijke Brill nv, Leiden, 2003, 293.

<sup>81</sup>Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, Joan Pinkham (trans.), Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1972; Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates Jr., *Africana*, 403.

<sup>82</sup>Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, 13-4.

<sup>83</sup>David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust: Germany's Forgotten Genocide and the Colonial Roots of Nazism*, Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 2010, 346.

undergone mass violence or genocide.<sup>84</sup> He states that although these are apt sentiments that it 'is not particularly helpful for understanding complex historical processes'. Although Moses' argument is acceptable, this does not exclude the case that there are certainly various similarities/continuities that can be drawn from these complex historical processes.<sup>85</sup>

To support the thesis on continuities between the genocides, Klaus Dierks wrote about the continuities between personages such as Eugen Fischer who were engaged in the colonial racial science and the Nazi state apparatus that murdered and attempted to annihilate Jewish, Roma and other communities that were considered to be racially or physically inferior.<sup>86</sup> He stated that Fischer was a physical anthropologist and race biologist of the University of Freiburg who worked in Namibia during the colonial war. His studies were based on racial theories observed from the miscegenation between settlers and indigenous people. Dierks writes that Fischer supported concentration camps during the war, and in fact used the heads of numerous inmates including that of Gaob Cornelius Fredericks who died on Shark Island for research purposes. He conducted further studies amongst the Rehoboth community in 1908 and from his studies he drew conclusions about on the racial superiority of the Germans.<sup>87</sup> The research was later used by Adolf Hitler to justify his policy against Blacks, Jews and Roma. Fischer also published several books on the racial history of the Jews and

---

<sup>84</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 334.

<sup>85</sup> Dirk A. Moses, 'Empire, Colony, Genocide', 35.

<sup>86</sup> Klaus Dierks, 'Eugen Fischer: The link from the German genocide in Namibia to the German holocaust in Europe', in Klaus Dierks, *Handbook of Namibian Biographies*, Data Base, Windhoek, [www.klausdierks.com/Biographies/Biographies\\_F.htm](http://www.klausdierks.com/Biographies/Biographies_F.htm), 2003-2004, 11 January 2008, 1; Alexander Laban Hinton, 'The Dark Side of Modernity', 16-7. Another contemporary figure linked to genocide in Namibia and Nazism is Paul Rohrbach. See Cathi Carmichael, *Genocide before the Holocaust*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2009, 64-9. In Dominik Schaller's article Paul Rohrbach is quoted as saying 'Only the necessity of losing their free national barbarianism and of becoming a class of servants for the whites provides the natives – historically seen – with an internal right of existence...the idea that the Bantus would have the right to live and die according to their own fashion is absurd'. Dominik Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide', 311; Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard: South African museums and trade in human remains, 1907-1917*, South African Museum and McGregor Museum, Cape Town and Kimberley, 2000, 12.

<sup>87</sup> Klaus Dierks, 'Eugen Fischer', 1.

was charged with training Nazi doctors who experimented on prisoners in concentration camps. In 1952, regardless of his pseudoscientific research and its complicity in two racial wars, he was appointed as the Honorary President of the German Anthropological Society in West Germany.<sup>88</sup>

Zimmerer wrote that although the continuity theory is shunned by certain sectors of the German speaking communities, there are specific similarities between the colonial war and the mass murders in Germany during the 1940s that one can point to.<sup>89</sup> As the Shoah is considered an incomparable event it is often seen as erroneous to establish continuities with other events of mass violence such as the genocide in Namibia.<sup>90</sup> Kössler, Melber and Zimmerer state that the racial ideology, which created an image of communities of other races as inferior, and soldiers descriptions of murderous acts were similar to later Nazi practices.<sup>91</sup> Also Kössler notes that the openness of the murderous acts, the military strategy of a 'final solution' point to a trajectory of public discourse in Germany that is evident of linkages between the two events.<sup>92</sup> Kössler and Melber also note that, 'the experience of the colonial genocide in Namibia, therefore, eventually fed into Nazi ideology and propaganda'.<sup>93</sup> Zimmerer describes the genocide in Namibia in the logic of settler colonialism and compares these processes with other colonial spaces where genocide was perpetrated as well.<sup>94</sup> He writes that although the state system that was used in the colonial

---

<sup>88</sup> Klaus Dierks, 'Eugen Fischer', 3; Alexander Laban Hinton, 'The Dark Side of Modernity', 17.

<sup>89</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'War, Concentration Camps and Genocide in South-West Africa', 58-9.

<sup>90</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'War, Concentration Camps and Genocide in South-West Africa', 59; Reinhart Kössler and Henning Melber, 'The Colonial Genocide in Namibia', 26.

Robert van Krieken, 'Cultural Genocide in Australia', 129; Ann Curthoys and John Docker, 'Defining Genocide', 23.

<sup>91</sup> Reinhart Kössler and Henning Melber, 'The Colonial Genocide in Namibia', 24, 26. Henning Melber, 'How to Come to Terms with the Past', 145; Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial genocide', 336.

<sup>92</sup> Reinhart Kössler, 'From Genocide to Holocaust', 313-15.

<sup>93</sup> Reinhart Kössler and Henning Melber, 'The Colonial Genocide in Namibia', 24.

<sup>94</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial genocide', 336; Reinhart Kössler, 'Genocide in Namibia, the Holocaust and the issue of colonialism', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 38:1, 2012, 235-7.

space and later during the attempts to exterminate Jewish communities, and the form the mass murder took in these cases is not comparable, the premise that there was an intent to annihilate whole communities remains the same.<sup>95</sup>

Olusoga and Erichsen state that it is ‘surprising’ that the connections between colonial violence and Nazism have not been analysed.<sup>96</sup> They detail how the policies that were used in the colonies influenced the ideologies and activities of the National Socialist Movement in Germany, such as the nationalist propaganda campaigns.<sup>97</sup> The authors also contribute to the evidence by presenting ties between German military personages, nationalists and racial scientists of colonial violence as well as Nazism. The authors show the ways in which ex-colonial veterans lead and influence militants of the Nationalist Socialist Party, and state that ‘the critical role of the colonial soldiers of the Second Reich in the birth of the Third has been almost completely forgotten’.<sup>98</sup> Also the ideas of racial hygiene and *lebensraum* expressed in Social Darwinism are advanced in the rise of the Nazi Party by scientists who link the colonial world with the very apparatuses used to experiment on human beings and their remains, and later develop mechanisms to exterminate communities.<sup>99</sup> In this way they accept the hypotheses of previous writers on this specific aspect of a continuum between the genocides.<sup>100</sup> However the authors admit that, ‘there is however no direct ‘causal thread’ linking the Herero and Nama genocides to the crimes of the Third Reich. No unstoppable historical force carried Germany from Waterberg to Nuremberg’.<sup>101</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, ‘War, Concentration Camps and Genocide in South-West Africa’, 59-60.

<sup>96</sup> David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser’s Holocaust*, 329.

<sup>97</sup> David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser’s Holocaust*, 328.

<sup>98</sup> David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser’s Holocaust*, 290.

<sup>99</sup> David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser’s Holocaust*, 245-51, 294-6, 300-10, 322.

<sup>100</sup> Birthe Kundrus, ‘From the Herero to the Holocaust? Some remarks on the current debate’, *Afrika Spectrum*, 40:2, 2005, 299, 301.

<sup>101</sup> David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser’s Holocaust*, 361.

The uniqueness of the Shoah is argued in the debates on the responsibility for colonial genocide. Some commentators have argued that the same international recognition should be accorded to the atrocities and the descendants of the genocide in Namibia, as they are to the survivors of the Shoah. The extensive analyses of the historical linkages between the two genocides are critical for an understanding of the context and the processes by which genocidal violence is perpetrated. The fact that both these genocides were perpetrated by the German government seems to also present a strong case for comparative analysis. However Kössler argues that authors such as Zimmerer in fact provide a greater scope in which genocide continuities may be argued by detailing processes such as settler colonialism that led to genocide instead of an emphasis on 'German peculiarity'.<sup>102</sup> The emphasis on continuities although significant may however digress from the focus on the colonial genocide in Namibia. The analysis should show that colonial genocide in Namibia has to be compared with the Shoah in order for the colonial war to be regarded as a significant event.<sup>103</sup> However the importance of the genocide in Namibia is not only to be seen in the fact that it may be compared to the Shoah.<sup>104</sup>

### ***Visualising genocide through an exploration of images***

Zeller with an array of photographs, postcards and illustrations collected for his article represented scenes of the war such as starved children in the camps, prisoners transported to concentration camps, women gathered for a sermon, men chained together wearing sackcloth, chained men burying the dead and German soldiers packing skulls of prisoners en route to

---

<sup>102</sup> Reinhart Kössler, Genocide in Namibia, the Holocaust and the issue of colonialism, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 38:1, 2012, 235-7.

<sup>103</sup> Birthe Kundrus, 'From the Herero to the Holocaust?', 300; Mohamed Adhikari, *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide*, 92.

<sup>104</sup> David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 352.

Europe.<sup>105</sup> Zeller said that images of prisoners working on railways, carrying wooden carts or pulling goods on a narrow gauge rail were not always related to concentration camps but states that they were part of this context.<sup>106</sup> Images documented were disseminated through various channels to audiences from the diaries and memoirs of soldiers, photographic plates and sketches of artists. During the war the images were disseminated in the colony, and also in Germany in books, periodicals, newspapers and postcards. Zimmerer writes that although there were a large body of images disseminated during and after the war ‘there was not as yet any systematic pictorial propaganda’.<sup>107</sup> Other photographs were documented for the private use of soldiers or for a much smaller circulation.<sup>108</sup> In some of the images circulated during the war there were also photographs and postcards of naked African women, evidence of sexual violations and degradation that women had to endure at the hands of these soldiers in these prisoner of war camps.<sup>109</sup> Also these images were taken to legitimise the war effort and influence the sentiments of the populace in the metropole. In an article Zeller wrote that these images of the prisoners fit into a specific category of images of the war that attempted to convey the submission of indigenous people to the power of the German army.<sup>110</sup> He noted that, ‘the Herero appear in the photo documents collected here as a conquered people at the mercy of a pitiless German colonial power. Here again the impression of a Herero society

---

<sup>105</sup> Joachim Zeller, ‘Ombepera i koza – the cold is killing me’, 67-9, 71,73,75,77-8.

<sup>106</sup> Joachim Zeller, ‘Images of the South West African War’: Reflections of the 1904-1907 colonial war in contemporary photo reportage and book illustration’, in Wolfram Hartmann (ed.), *Hues between black and white: Historical photography from colonial Namibia, 1860s to 1915*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2004, 318; Casper W. Erichsen, *The Angel of Death Has Descended Violently Among Them: Concentration camps and prisoners of war in Namibia*, 83; Casper Wulff Erichsen, ‘Forced Labour in the Concentration Camp on Shark Island’, in Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller(eds.), *Genocide in German South West Africa: The Colonial War of 1904-1908 and its Aftermath*, The Merlin Press Ltd., Wales, 2008, 86.

<sup>107</sup> Joachim Zeller, ‘Images of the South West African War’, 323; John Phillip Short, ‘Novelty and repetition: Photographs of South West Africa in German visual culture, 1890-1914’, in Wolfram Hartmann (ed.), *Hues between black and white: Historical photography from colonial Namibia, 1860s to 1915*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2004, 215-220.

<sup>108</sup> Casper W. Erichsen, ‘*The Angel of Death Has Descended Violently Among Them*’, 89.

<sup>109</sup> Casper W. Erichsen, ‘*The Angel of Death Has Descended Violently Among Them*’, 85-7, 94.

<sup>110</sup> Joachim Zeller, ‘Images of the South West African War’, 312, 315-6.

destroyed to its very foundations is reinforced'.<sup>111</sup> A perusal at the photographs from the von Düring album shows photographs of prisoners guarded by German soldiers for example.<sup>112</sup> Erichsen noted that 'ironically such 'power photos' now form an integral part in the reconstruction of a largely repressed history'.<sup>113</sup>

Although Zeller writes that there were European audiences who were shocked by the images, this certainly was not always the case since some of the gruesome imagery were printed on postcards for example and sent to family members with cordial greetings.<sup>114</sup> The creators of the postcards, the senders, the people at the sorting and distribution points and the receivers of the imagery constituted a network of complicity with the horror, people who did not share sympathy with the people against whom these acts were perpetrated. Kössler and Melber also note that the 'open publicity demonstrated an almost relishing by the perpetrators...these postcards still show an appalling disregard for human suffering'.<sup>115</sup> Zeller writes that in contrast to these images of indigenous casualties, German soldiers were not publically shown as being wounded or dead on the battlefield, instead there are series of images of courageous German soldiers on camelback, soldiers rolling machinery across the sand, posing with canons or in pursuit on horseback.<sup>116</sup>

In Zimmerer's text there are photographs inserted to give evidence of the situation in the concentration camps. The photographs are a tormenting visualisation of the conditions of

---

<sup>111</sup> Joachim Zeller, 'Ombepera i koza – the cold is killing me', 79.

<sup>112</sup> Casper W. Erichsen, "*The Angel of death has Descended Violently Among Them*", 88-90.

<sup>113</sup> Casper W. Erichsen, "*The Angel of Death Has Descended Violently Among Them*", 94.

<sup>114</sup> Joachim Zeller, "Images of the South West African War", 317;

Werner Hillebrecht, 'The Nama and the war in the south', in Jorgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller(eds.), *Genocide in German South West Africa: The Colonial War of 1904-1908 and its Aftermath*, The Merlin Press Ltd., Wales, 2008, 152.

<sup>115</sup> Reinhart Kössler and Henning Melber, 'The Colonial Genocide in Namibia', 23.

<sup>116</sup> Joachim Zeller, "Images of the South West African War", 311-12, 316.



imprisonment, violence, forced labour and deportation of people during the war. Zimmerer wrote that these camps were only closed in 1908, which is the cut-off date he uses as the end of the war.<sup>117</sup> However various Nama communities were still in the throes of war and many were deported as prisoners to West Africa long after this date. There are postcards and photographs of Nama imprisoned in Togo and Cameroon. There is for instance one hand-coloured postcard used by several scholars found in a newspaper article in the collections at the Basler Afrika Bibliographien (BAB) which shows a group of /Khowese prisoners in Asanjamle, Cameroon. Another image from BAB depicts !Uri-kam soldiers with their signatory hats in an area where they were held as prisoners in Lome, Togo.<sup>118</sup>

Zeller refers to a specific iconic image of the genocide<sup>119</sup> which was of Herero surrendering during the war, and states that ‘the Nama-German conflict is marked by less poignant or perhaps simply less well-known photographs’.<sup>120</sup> In the reprint of the ‘Report on the Natives of South West Africa and their Treatment by Germany’, the photograph of the Herero was captioned as ‘Condition of Herero on surrender after having been driven into the desert’.<sup>121</sup> This photograph certainly is popular, and was even later reprinted in history text books in the country.<sup>122</sup> However the photographs of the Nama-German war are not less distressing, in fact such a comparison cannot be held up. However in this case I would like to present

---

<sup>117</sup> Jurgen Zimmerer, ‘War, Concentration Camps and Genocide in South-West Africa, 52-8.

<sup>118</sup> The image of Isaac Witbooi and other men, women and children at Asanjamle may also be located at the National Archives of Namibia. The second image discussed is of Witbooi men in Lome. These images were found with the help of Dag Henrichsen at BAB, who I thank for his persistence and support. I also thank Giorgio Miescher and Lorenna Rizzo for their support in Basel, Switzerland. See John Short for a discussion on visual modes of representing colonial people and spaces including a note on hand-coloured postcards and photographs. John Phillip Short, ‘Novelty and repetition: Photographs of South West Africa in German visual culture, 1890-1914’, 225.

<sup>119</sup> Wolfram Hartman, ‘Photo(historio)graphy in south-western Africa: An introductory and explorative photo essay’, in Wolfram Hartmann (ed.), *Hues between black and white: Historical photography from colonial Namibia, 1860s to 1915*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2004, 56-68, 90-1.

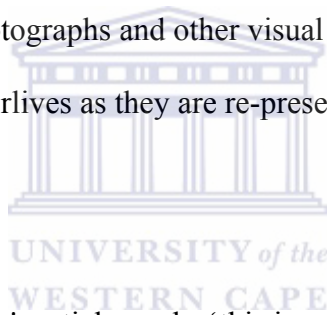
<sup>120</sup> Joachim Zeller, ‘Images of the South West African War’, 319.

<sup>121</sup> Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found*, 176.

<sup>122</sup> Joachim Zeller, ‘Images of the South West African War’, 320.



images also used by Zeller such as an image of six Nama men hanged from a tree surrounded by German soldiers which are iconic images of the war in southern Namibia as used by several authors.<sup>123</sup> I refer to images of Nama that are duplicated in books, films and exhibitions, one is of the severed heads of Nama, and the other are of men hung on trees such as the one printed in the article by Zeller.<sup>124</sup> Zeller wrote that the context of many captions on postcards and photographs in recent distribution changed owing to popular circulation of these images.<sup>125</sup> This is the case with several of these photographs taken of Nama during the war. That some of the images of Nama or perhaps of San are actually popularised even in recent publication, exhibitions and films albeit with various readings according to the authors' context, perhaps a reason why they were considered 'less well-known' as images of Nama during the war. As such these photographs and other visual material associated with the colonial war in Namibia have afterlives as they are re-presented and re-interpreted in multilayered ways.<sup>126</sup>



The caption of this image in Zeller's article reads, 'this image shows the execution of so-called rebels, most probably Nama, c. 1905'.<sup>127</sup> Three photographs of hanged men, one of which I refer to, are actually printed in the Blue Book as part of the evidence of 'natives hanged by Germans'.<sup>128</sup> In the Blue Book, the caption reads, 'method of executing a number of natives', whereas Zeller and Hillebrecht's versions add, 'probably Nama'.<sup>129</sup> Jeremy Sarkins presents the hangings of men also depicted in the Blue Book in his book on the Ovaherero

---

<sup>123</sup> NAN 07579; Joachim Zeller, "Images of the South West African War", 317; Werner Hillebrecht, 'The Nama and the war in the south', 152.

<sup>124</sup> Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found*, 118, 334.

<sup>125</sup> Joachim Zeller, "Images of the South West African War", 311.

<sup>126</sup> Jeremy Silvester, 'Portraits of power and the panoramas of persuasion: The palgrave album at the National Archives of Namibia', in Wolfram Hartmann (ed.), *Hues between black and white: Historical photography from colonial Namibia, 1860s to 1915*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2004, 132, 159.

<sup>127</sup> Joachim Zeller, "Images of the South West African War", 317.

<sup>128</sup> NAN 07579, 20138, 20139; Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found*, 5, 118, 334

<sup>129</sup> Joachim Zeller, "Images of the South West African War", 317; Werner Hillebrecht, 'The Nama and the war in the south', 152.

reparations case. Although the caption in the Blue Book reads, 'natives hanged by Germans, the title of the images of hangings in Sarkin's book refers to Ovaherero men.<sup>130</sup> Charcoal drawings by William Kentridge exhibited in 2005 in an art installation known as *Black Box/Chambre Noire* were inserted in the book to lend another layer of the interpretation of photographs accessed at the National Archives of Namibia, although Sarkin does not contextualise or comment on these drawings.<sup>131</sup> The exhibition was ironically sponsored by Deutsche Guggenheim and the Deutsche Bank, which was sued along with Orenstein and Kuppel, Deutsche-Afrika- Linien and the German government by the Herero in a case in 2001 for pursuing financial interests which resulted in genocidal practices.<sup>132</sup>

Several drawings sketched by Kentridge for his exhibition were used in the book. Kentridge referred to the German colonisation in Namibia and used the theme of how people were marched into progress from the dark ages by bringing them to the light, enlightenment and the violence embedded in these processes.<sup>133</sup> The Black Box represented, amongst other ideas, a projection of characters and shadows and interrogating what comes to light through working with shadows.<sup>134</sup> In *Black Box/Chambre Noire*, Kentridge also drew and projected one of the heads from a study of 'severed heads of Nama' for example. The series of images depicted in Sarkin's book were drawn from photographs of the Waterberg with a tree in the foreground and the other of men hanged in a tree. The images are inverted next to each other. The first image is of the tree. The next is of the Waterberg and tree in the foreground. In the

---

<sup>130</sup> Jeremy Sarkin, *Colonial Genocide and Reparations Claims in the 21st Century: The socio-legal context of claims under international law by the Herero against Germany for Genocide in Namibia, 1904-1908*, Greenwood Publishing Group, 2009, Westport, Connecticut, 6.

<sup>131</sup> William Kentridge, *Black Box/Chambre Noire*, Deutsche Guggenheim, 29 October 2005-15 January 2006, Berlin.

<sup>132</sup> 'The Herero People's Reparations Corporation', Court Case Summary, Prozess klageschrift genocide case, pdf; [www.baerfilm.de/PDF/prozess%20klageschrift.pdf](http://www.baerfilm.de/PDF/prozess%20klageschrift.pdf).

<sup>133</sup> William Kentridge, *Black Box/Chambre Noire*, Deutsche Guggenheim, 29 October 2005-15 January 2006, Berlin, 43-51.

<sup>134</sup> William Kentridge, *Black Box/Chambre Noire*, Deutsche Guggenheim, 29 October 2005-15 January 2006, Berlin, 51.

following row is the drawing of the men hanged in the tree, with faded lines depicting measurements. The parallel image has the tree, measuring lines with the word, 'calibration' written in cursive.<sup>135</sup> In another image Kentridge drew a skull wearing a !Urikam hat which alludes to the Nama soldiers and also to trophy heads.<sup>136</sup>

In Klaus Dierks' short biography of Eugen Fischer, an image of a decapitated head of a Nama woman is accompanied by the caption, '*Rassenanatom. Untersuchungen an 17 Hottentottenkopfen*'.<sup>137</sup> These images are taken from an article by Christian Fetzter who studied the decapitated heads of seventeen Nama women, men and children who died during the colonial war in Namibia.<sup>138</sup> In '*Miscast: Negotiating the presence of the Bushmen*' an exhibition by Pippa Skotnes which sought to represent visual productions of the Bushmen at the South African National Gallery in 1996, photographs from the 'seventeen severed heads' were used as well. One of these was of a woman presented in a glass case below the photograph of a man who is also decapitated.<sup>139</sup> In an accompanying catalogue the head was captioned as a trophy head from around 1914.<sup>140</sup> There is no accompanying context to explain where this head was photographed, for whom and under what circumstances, except the surname, Fetzter, which relates to the scientist who at one time studied these heads in Germany. Also the floor of the second room of the Miscast exhibition was covered by

---

<sup>135</sup> Jeremy Sarkin, *Colonial Genocide and Reparations Claims in the 21st Century*, 2.

<sup>136</sup> Jeremy Sarkin, *Colonial Genocide and Reparations Claims in the 21st Century*, 117.

<sup>137</sup> Klaus Dierks, Namibian Biographies, [www.klausdierks.com/FrontpageMain.html](http://www.klausdierks.com/FrontpageMain.html), Eugen Fischer-The link from the German genocide in Namibia to the German holocaust in Europe, 2; Also see 'severed head of a Nama man' in illustration inserts in Chapter 13 of David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust: Germany's Forgotten Genocide and the Colonial Roots of Nazism*, Faber & Faber Ltd., London, 2010.

<sup>138</sup> Christian Fetzter, *Rassenanatomische Untersuchungen an 17 Hottentotten Kopfen*, *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Anthropologie* 16, 1913-14, 95-156; Patricia Hayes et al, "Picturing the Past" in Namibia', 103.

<sup>139</sup> Pippa Skotnes, 'Introduction', in Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town, 1996; Pippa Skotnes, 'The Legacy of Bleek and Lloyd', in Pippa Skotnes, *Claim to the Country: The Archive of Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd*, Jacana, Johannesburg and Cape Town, 2007, 71.

<sup>140</sup> Pippa Skotnes, 'Introduction', in Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast*, 18.

photographs of 'Bushmen' on linoleum covered tiles. In multiple sections on the floor a photograph from the 'seventeen severed heads' was also reproduced.<sup>141</sup> The photograph of the hanged men also appears in this catalogue on the adjacent page with a text titled as, 'Undated photograph (probably taken around 1914) of Bushmen executions'.<sup>142</sup> These images are reproduced in the Skotnes' exhibition and are used as a reference to the genocide of the San in South Africa.<sup>143</sup>

There are several films produced that have screened photographs which relate to German colonisation and particularly of the genocide.<sup>144</sup> Most of these films have been produced to describe the genocide of Herero/Nama communities in Namibia and San in South Africa. In a film by David Olusogo, 'Namibia: Germany and the Second Reich', which represented the genocide in Namibia as a precursor to the Holocaust, a trophy head from the images of the 'seventeen severed heads of Nama' were projected larger than life on buildings in Berlin, Germany.<sup>145</sup> Also in a documentary film which showcased the commercial exploits of the Hoodia plant in South Africa titled, 'Bushman's Secret', a head from the series of images from the 'seventeen Nama heads' and photographs of hanging men appear as a 'cut-away'

---

<sup>141</sup> Pippa Skotnes, The Politics of Bushman Representation, in Paul S. Landau and Deborah D. Kaspin (eds.). *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2002, 267.

<sup>142</sup> Pippa Skotnes, 'Introduction', Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast*, 18-9.

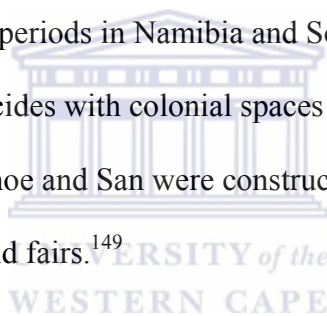
<sup>143</sup> Pippa Skotnes, Introduction, in Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast*, 17-20. For an extensive reading of the genocide on the Cape San see Mohamed Adhikari, *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide*.

<sup>144</sup> Richard Wicksteed, 'Death of a Bushmen' (film), Uhuru Productions, One Time Films, South African broadcasting Corporation (SABC), 2004; David Olusogo, 'Namibia: Germany and the Second Reich' (film), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), London, 2005; Rehad Desai, 'Bushman's Secret' (film), Uhuru Productions in cooperation with ZDF Sabine, Johannesburg, 2006; David Okuefuna and David Olusoga, *Racism: a History* (film), Episode 2: Fatal Impacts, Harlow, Essex, BBC Active, 2007.

<sup>145</sup> David Olusogo, 'Namibia: Germany and the Second Reich' (film), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), London, 2005.

while van der Westhuizen, a herbal doctor, narrates the attempted annihilation of his people in South Africa.<sup>146</sup>

These photographs also compel the audience to register and imagine the mass violence perpetrated against specific communities in the region. Going beyond empiricist and identity claims on the captions of the photographs, these re-presentations in various visual mediums may be read as a testament to the processes of mass violence and genocide that were not documented, and often overlooked in historiography, of Khoen and San communities in the region.<sup>147</sup> The arguments put forward by authors of exhibitions and films also contextualise scientific racism and museum practices of the collection of human bodies conducted during and in the aftermath of genocidal periods in Namibia and South Africa.<sup>148</sup> The genealogy of this practice stems from and coincides with colonial spaces in which the visualisation of indigenous people, such as the Khoen and San were constructed in exhibitions at universities, zoos, circuses, museums and world fairs.<sup>149</sup>



These communities were considered to be amongst the world's dying races. There was thus the prevalent discourse in the sciences to speak of 'dying races', languages, culture and this continues even at present.<sup>150</sup> These ideas resulted in the 'salvage' and collection of the bodies,

---

<sup>146</sup> Rehad Desai, *Bushman's Secret* (film), Uhuru Productions in cooperation with ZDF Sabine, Johannesburg, 2006.

<sup>147</sup> Mohamed Adhikari, *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide*, 78, footnotes; Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier*, 5,9.

<sup>148</sup> The genocide of the Cape San occurred over a period of almost two centuries from the late 1700s to 1800s, referred by Adhikari as an 'incremental genocide'. The genocide in Namibia commenced in the early 1900s until the end of the war. Adhikari, *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide*, 91; Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 1-13.

<sup>149</sup> Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 5; Raymond Corbey, 'Ethnographic showcases, 1870-1930, in Jan Nederveen Pieterse and Bhikhu Parekh (eds), *The Decolonisation of the Imagination: Culture, Knowledge and Power*, Zed Books Ltd., London and New Jersey, 1995, 57-80.

<sup>150</sup> Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt, Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland: The Anthropological Field Diaries of Winifred Hoernle*, Centre for African Studies, No. 14/1987, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 1987. 'But when I first began reading it...hardly anyone had heard of it...the extinction of the first people of

languages and culture of indigenous communities.<sup>151</sup> Indigenous people were considered to be 'dying out' precisely because of the mass violence and genocide that was perpetrated against them.<sup>152</sup> A practice which had already been widely conducted amongst indigenous communities around the world was given impetus at a conference of the British Association for the Advancement of Science for the collection of bodies of San and Khoe in 1905 in South Africa, at the time the colonial war was being waged in Namibia.<sup>153</sup> Later a thriving trade and market amongst scholars and educational institutions, which often involved the desecration of graves, between Europe and Southern Africa was established.<sup>154</sup> Although there was legislation, the Bushmen Relics Act of 1911 for example, which was enacted to curb activities related to the trade in human remains, these practices peaked in the 1920s.<sup>155</sup> The fact that legislation was enacted at that time confirms the severity of these practices. These activities however also point to practices in other parts of the world where collections

---

southern Africa'. Pippa Skotnes, 'The Legacy of Bleek and Lloyd', in Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Claim to the Country: The Archive of Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd*, Jacana, Johannesburg and Cape Town, 2007, 61. However the author somewhat retracts from these statements on page 73. Nigel Penn, 'Civilising' the San: the First Mission to the Cape San, 1791-1806', in Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Claim to the Country: The Archive of Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd*, Jacana, Johannesburg and Cape Town, 2007, 113 'By 1861 it was estimated that there were only 500 San left alive in Bushmanland and by the end of the century the /Xam language had become extinct'.; Anthony Trail, '!Khwa-ka Hhouiten Hhouiten, 'The Rush of the Storm': The Linguistic Death of /Xam', in Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Claim to the Country: The Archive of Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd*, Jacana, Johannesburg and Cape Town, 2007, 130. 'By the 1870s...the critical stage of language death must have been reached...transmission of the language ceased. The progeny of the surviving /Xam shifted to what was a form of Afrikaans and, silently, /Xam ceased to be spoken'.

It is however the case that people, languages and culture declared extinct have in fact survived through various complex structures such as intermarriage, material culture, other languages, rituals and medicinal knowledge. Substituting Dirk Moses' words with San I concur that 'only white perceptions that 'real' San must be 'pure' prevented Europeans seeing that 'Sanness' was retained even while San adapted their culture and intermarried with others'. Dirk A. Moses, 'Empire, Colony, Genocide', 17; For more discussion on this issue see Patrick Brantlinger, 'Dying Races': rationalizing genocide in the nineteenth century, in Jan Nederveen Pieterse and Bhikhu Parekh (eds), *The Decolonisation of the Imagination: Culture, Knowledge and Power*, Zed Books Ltd., London and New Jersey, 1995, 49, 54.

<sup>151</sup> Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 5-10; Patrick Brantlinger, 'Dying Races', 45.

<sup>152</sup> Patrick Brantlinger, 'Dying Races', 44.

<sup>153</sup> Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 3-5.

<sup>154</sup> Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 1-12. Besides the South African Museum and the McGregor Museum in South Africa other institutions such as the National Museum of Namibia, Museum of Natural History, Museum für Volkekunde, Phonogramme Archives at the Academy of Sciences, Institute of Human Biology at the University of Vienna, Austria and the University of Freiburg, Germany house samples of body parts, material culture and recordings of language of Khoe and San people.

<sup>155</sup> Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 6.



of bodies and scientific researches of these bodies took place after genocide was perpetrated, and in that sense there are common processes which may be viewed.<sup>156</sup>

The genocide in Namibia did not happen as an aberration because the violence between settlers, the German army and indigenous communities was already insidious and that it could lead to intentional mass violence was evident in their relations prior to the colonial war in the early 1900s. Also there was a precursor to the genocide, in South Africa against the Cape San, and there were indications that this might have been the case with other Khoe communities in South Africa in the late 1700s and early 1800s.<sup>157</sup> The mass violence resulted in the mass migration of Khoe and San communities from the Western Cape northwards.<sup>158</sup>

Some of the Khoe and San descendents settled in the Northern Cape. After settling there Khoe descendents migrated further northwards into southern Namibia in the middle of the 19th century. Furthermore survivors of the genocide from central and southern Namibia perpetrated by Germany in Namibia fled to the Northern Cape in the early 20th century.

These processes are often disassociated from each other, possibly because more research has to be conducted on genocide perpetrated in South Africa in the 1700s and 1800s. Also their connections with the collection of human bodies in the region are still to be ascertained.

However some preliminary remarks may be made based on the patterns and processes of genocide and the collection of human bodies. One would therefore query whether it is a coincidence that an extensive number of human bodies of Khoe and San people from

---

<sup>156</sup> Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 3.

<sup>157</sup> See a discussion of genocide of the Cape San by Mohamed Adhikhari. Although more research has to be conducted regarding the intention to annihilate Khoe communities in South Africa, there are indications that colonial policies may have resulted in genocide. See Mohamed Adhikhari, *Anatomy of a South African Genocide*, 78. Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*, David Philip, Cape Town, 2001, 78,81-3.

<sup>158</sup> Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier: Colonist & Khoisan on the Cape's Northern Frontier in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, Double Storey Books, Cape Town, 2005, 285.

Namibia and South Africa were exported and studied in South Africa and Europe during and in the aftermath of genocide perpetrated against these communities.

In various interviews conducted in southern Namibia there were countless references to people hanged by German settlers, officials and soldiers. In Bethanie for example a tree identified as the tree where people were hanged was removed from its original site and is presently located in the yard where the national monument, Gaob Fredericks's house is situated. This tree thus symbolises similar executions in southern Namibia during German colonisation.<sup>159</sup> Also in the Warmbad district there is a river named Ortman's tree, translated as Ortman's tree. The river is named after a man that was hanged on a tree in this region during German occupation and is registered in the oral tradition of the region.<sup>160</sup>

This persistent theme of the heads of indigenous people and especially of leaders, whether taken as 'trophies' during the war or hanged by rope as seen in these images is constantly circulated in the imagery of the war. It appears in the war proclamations of the *headmen* wanted dead or alive by the German authorities. Gaob Hendrik Witbooi for example in a letter to Karl Schmidt referred to the proclamation order and stated, 'You also mention the price on my head, so now I am an outlaw'.<sup>161</sup> Heads were also depicted in the photographs and postcards of heads packed for export to Germany for scientific experiments during the war. Trophy skulls also appear in various exhibitions and other visual media related to colonial violence and genocide in Namibia and South Africa. Elderly women and men retell these stories of the hunting of people, especially for their heads. And finally the heads of

---

<sup>159</sup> I saw the tree there and Gaos Fredericks explained the significance of the tree to the !Ama during oral history research conducted in Bethanie in July 2005.

<sup>160</sup> This story was told to me by my father in who grew up in this region of southern Namibia. SMA, Conversation with Mr. Z. Biwa, Windhoek, October 2010.

<sup>161</sup> Hendrik Witbooi to Karl Schmidt, Tsumis, 26 July 1905, in Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (transl.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995, 195.



leaders are printed on the cloth tied around traditional hats and on the headscarves and dresses of women to commemorate their war heroes, on bank notes, t-shirts, memorial banners, programmes, monuments and sculptures. The continued circulation of leaders' heads and faces as part of postcolonial narratives and commemorations of war represents some kind of continuity along this narrative of genocide and on the other hand was a very influential way in which bodies were reclaimed by these communities.<sup>162</sup>

The literature on genocide studies in general mainly presents a dialogue on how genocide is possible and the ways in which this spectacular crime against humanity may be prevented in the future. The interpretation of genocide should however also emphasise the psycho-social, political and economic experiences of the people and their communities during the war and the influence of this past on the descendants of the survivors.<sup>163</sup> Such a reading of genocide would recognise the effects of genocide on the experiences of descendants of survivors in the present.<sup>164</sup> The emergent discussion in Namibia on genocide has thus been framed mainly on issues of accountability and responsibility.<sup>165</sup> Using this framework lets address a problematic of the definition of genocide relied on in the emerging discussion, the first issue is that in order to prove that genocide was perpetrated one needs to show that there was intent to do so on a specific people. The responsibility therefore lies on the victims, and their supporters to prove intent although the perpetrators were responsible for defining the parameters of the crime. This burden was taken up by several historians, to mine for this intent of the colonisers

---

<sup>162</sup> For a more in-depth discussion on persistent aesthetic of the head and skulls on commemoration paraphernalia see Chapter Four and Five in this dissertation.

<sup>163</sup> Helgard K. Patemann and Manfred O. Hinz, 'Okupiona Omaha - Wiping the Tears: Anthropological and Legal Anthropological Remarks', in Manfred O. Hinz and Helgard K. Patemann (eds.), *The Shade of New Leaves: Governance in Traditional Authority: a Southern African perspective*, Lit Verlag, Berlin, 2006, 480.

<sup>164</sup> Reinhart Kossler and Henning Melber, 'The Colonial Genocide in Namibia', 17.

<sup>165</sup> Helgard K. Patemann and Manfred O. Hinz, 'Okupiona Omaha - Wiping the Tears: Anthropological and Legal Anthropological Remarks', in Manfred O. Hinz and Helgard K. Patemann (eds.), *The Shade of New Leaves: Governance in Traditional Authority: a Southern African perspective*, Lit Verlag, Berlin, 2006.

to perpetrate genocide, in documents created by the perpetrators, in the archives. Drechsler and successive authors therefore located extermination policies, one for the Herero, and a later published one for the Nama. That the discussion of genocide has largely excluded the San and Damara, communities who lived in central and southern Namibia at the time and were involved in the war demonstrate the problematic of this type of empiricism and interpretation.

In the same way successive writers have thus relied on these texts to refute, based on the language of these texts that the Germans did not intend to annihilate communities in Namibia. Based on these texts they concluded that genocide was a Eurocentric invention of prior historians.<sup>166</sup> They however did not base this argument on intent, but on an accounting of figures of people who died in the war, the figures of the army and the impossibilities that the army could have committed such a mass crime. Other authors have used the UN Convention explicitly to refute the debates about the figures of actual people that were killed in the war. These authors have also looked at policies and practices such as, imprisonment on concentration camps, to show that there was intent by the German government to annihilate communities in central and southern Namibia. What is striking is that although these authors follow the precepts of the UN Convention, they too are still bogged down with the actual figures, rates of mortality of people during the war to show that genocide was the intent of the German government. The development of the genocide debate therefore walks a tight rope between intent and practice and this frames the primary discourse on genocide in Namibia.

Can the discourse on violence and genocide restore and recuperate the humanness of those who experienced genocide and their descendants? Yes, if the aim is to account, not just in

---

<sup>166</sup> See Brigitte Lau, 'Uncertain Certainties', 43-9, for more on this discussion.

figures, but to acknowledge the violent excesses, to understand its particular nature and the effects it had on the survivors and their descendents. Also such an understanding may generate an acknowledgement and responsibility from the perpetrators as part of a reconciliatory practise. The aim of genocidal violence was to strip humans of their humanness. In this sense the body was made into an object that was violated through technologies of power during colonialism and especially during the war. During the war experience the violence was indiscriminate, however in the context of genocide there was an intentionality towards the annihilation of specific communities and this overwhelmingly tipped the scales of power and although the policies were directed from the metropole, the killing was conducted by individuals everyday on the battlefield, at execution blocks and in concentration camps whether physically or as a result of neglect. In the analysis of genocide the body of the indigenous person is at the heart of the matter. In this sense the body is described in its dual sense, that of the biological being and also signifying the collective. On both these levels in the context of genocide a deep wound, trauma, was engaged with through the body. If we are to take into cognisance the effects of genocide on people we need to focus on such an analysis. However far from advocating a specific universal discourse of psychoanalysis, we need to also review how the individual and social body propose their understanding of genocide, trauma and reconstruction in their lives, and in the lives of their ancestors and descendents.

## Chapter Three

### Stories of the Patchwork Quilt: Recalling transnational narratives of war

....Weaving throughout the centuries has always been experienced by women as a "resting moment"....she will halt, step back and begin to weave dreams, desires, musings into cloth. Women never embroider one piece or one design. They embroider series and sequences that cohere into a visual tactile story...it is their form of writing which, spread on cloths, ornaments and names people and spaces, within and beyond the household.<sup>1</sup>

.... Memory is a selection of images  
Some elusive, others printed indelibly on the brain  
Each image is a thread  
Each thread woven together to make a tapestry of intricate texture  
And the tapestry tells a story  
And the story is our past.<sup>2</sup>

To be haunted is also to lay to rest any hope of detecting the traces of an uninterrupted narrative, in restoring to the surface of the text the repressed and buried reality of a fundamental history.<sup>3</sup>

During the recording of interviews in southern Namibia the women would usually go to their rooms and return dressed in traditional apparel. I noticed it first with Alwina Petersen in Gibeon who disappeared into her house and came back wearing an elaborately beaded necklace, patchwork dress and matching shawl, similar to the design of a quilt often sewn to cover beds. Alwina Petersen spoke to us while wearing her patchwork shawl or *!khons*.<sup>4</sup> In Warmbad Rosina Rooi also changed into dress, apron and patchwork shawl and we

---

<sup>1</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Memory of the Senses, Part 1: Marks of the Transitory', in Nadia Seremetakis (ed), *The senses still: perception and memory as material culture in modernity*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1994, 15.

<sup>2</sup> This is a quote from the film *Eve's Bayou* by Kasi Lemmons, 1997. In a Julie Dash film, *Daughters of the Dust*, Geechee Girls, 1991, the African-American tradition of quilting was presented in the film through patchwork quilts which were used as a language between women. Quilts were signboards that directed the routes in which slaves would escape from plantations.

<sup>3</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a history of the vanishing present*, Harvard University Press, London, 1999, 208.

<sup>4</sup> The spelling of words in Nama (Khoekhoegowab) is referenced from Wilfrid Haacke, Eliphaz Eiseb, *A Khoekhoegowab Dictionary: with a English-Khoekhoegowab Index*, Gamsberg Macmillan, Windhoek, 2002.

interviewed her in the space where she sewed traditional clothes.<sup>5</sup> Martha and Monica Basson would not be interviewed without proper head wraps which they later incorporated in their narrative description.<sup>6</sup> Maria Vries gave me a scarf in Steinkopf after we interviewed her.<sup>7</sup> Even in Pella where I did not use a video-camera, the way in which the women 'a-dress-ed' us, articulated a specific way of seeing, feeling and being their historical narratives.<sup>8</sup> Only when clothed with these material features, a sign of their history and identity, could they authenticate the events of the past.<sup>9</sup>

These traditional garments were worn by women during rituals of the community such as at funerals, weddings and festivals. These material artefacts such as quilts, shawls and dresses were mnemonic features through which historical, cultural, gender identification and narratives were re-enacted.<sup>10</sup> These quilts, shawls and aprons were created in spaces where women reflected, during 'moments of rest' and 'stillness', and shared ideas about the designs of their lives, of womanhood and culture. These pieces of cloth were thus the entangled writings of the imaginings, dreams and experiences of these women.<sup>11</sup> I traced the trajectory of women in these communities who wore some of the items, such as shawls, and the way in which these had been transformed over the decades, thereby the altering of sensory memory

---

<sup>5</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Rosina Rooi, OHP, Warmbad, 23 June 2007.

<sup>6</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Martha and Monica Basson, OHP 2, Warmbad, 24 June 2007.

<sup>7</sup> Sore Maya Archive (SMA), Maria Vries, Northern Cape Interviews, Steinkopf, 19 August 2009.

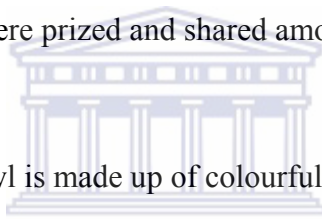
<sup>8</sup> SMA, Magriet April, Sarah April, Sophie Basson, Northern Cape Interviews, Pella, 28 July 2010.

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion on how material objects form part of an archive see Carolyn Hamilton, 'Living by Fluidity': Oral Histories, Material Custodies and the Politics of Archiving', in Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Jane Talyor et al (eds.), *Refiguring the Archive*, David Philip, Cape Town, 2002, 221; For a brief discussion on identity and the definition of identification see Stuart Hall, 'Introduction: Who Needs 'Identity'', in Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, Sage Publications, London, 1996, 3-6.

<sup>10</sup> Changing trends in fashions and materials traded have had an influence on the types of shawls that were worn over the years. During the centennial commemoration in Gibeon in 2005, some women donned white shawls bearing the image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi (!Nanseb) seated on a chair holding a rifle. In 2007 at the Shark Island commemoration several !Aman women had printed the image of Gaob Cornelius Fredericks' head on their dresses. Some !Ama women also had light blue shawls wrapped over their pink dresses. These are the two colours worn to symbolise the !Ama clan. At a commemoration in Warmbad in 2008, some Kai//Khauan women wore red shawls with an image of a hat typically worn by a soldier during the war. The patchwork shawl however still remains a strong feature of everyday life and rituals as well.

<sup>11</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 15.

regimes also.<sup>12</sup> The shawl was already recorded in 17th century drawings of Khoe women at the Cape.<sup>13</sup> Then they were made of sheepskin. In popular writings the skirt that the women would wear known as a *kaross*, which actually refers to the skin with which the skirt, shawl and other household items were designed. Through various historical periods the shawl was transformed to the patchwork variety worn at present. From photographs of the colonial war we notice that women also wore these patchwork shawls and as such these items were passed on to later generations representing an aspect of the war not linguistically narrativised.<sup>14</sup> These items would be passed on to girl-children who would also learn the art of quilting. As such these material objects were important for inheritance from grandmother to granddaughter. It was not unfamiliar in our community that when a woman passed on that her head scarves, quilts and shawls were prized and shared amongst the womenfolk in her family.



WESTERN CAPE

A patchwork quilt, dress and shawl is made up of colourful material cut into various geometric shapes such as triangles and squares and sewn together to make a sizeable cloth. It is much like fragmented stories of the colonial war that were pieced together to create a more comprehensive representation of the past. These designs were transformed over various historical periods, and as such the patchwork, represented a fragmented narrative of these experiences. Stories were inherited through the patchwork quilt and passed on from generation to the next. The weaving together of these patchwork quilts was evidence of other forms of historical representation. It is in these cultural materials that the multivocality of histories was evidenced. Entangled fragmented material of knowledge is what constitutes the structures in which communities pieced together their historical narratives in very complex

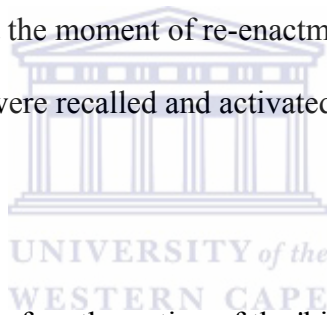
---

<sup>12</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 7-8.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew Smith, *The Khoikhoi at the Cape of Good Hope: Seventeenth-century drawings in the South African Library*, South African Library Series no. 19, Cape Town, 1993, 27, 29, 33, 41.

<sup>14</sup> Basler Afrika Bibliographien (BAB), postcard of prisoners of war with Isaac Witbooi reproduced here courtesy of Dag Henrichsen. See photograph insert attached to this Chapter to see the coloured in postcard.

processes of performance. These re-enactments through cloth were evidence of an alternative regime of historical knowledge. Aesthetics of a sense of feeling or emotion through materiality, was represented as historical memory. Memory may not be separated from the sensory perceptions of everyday life and historical representation. To remember may also be an involuntary process which is embedded in the body and projected externally in artefacts. It is thus not coincidental that the women whom we interviewed re-produced artefacts which they wrapped around their bodies before they began to deliver entangled forms of narrating the war. When the embodied artefacts were activated in this specific manner it opened up previous sensory and knowledge regimes. As much as these artefacts represented the content of the historical narratives of past sensory experience, they also presented new meanings to the women and to the perceiver at the moment of re-enactment. This was the moment of performance where the artefacts were recalled and activated as a representation of a particular narrative.<sup>15</sup>



Sensory memory also brings to the fore the notion of the 'historical unconscious'.<sup>16</sup> These unconscious perceptions, inner states, were not often articulated linguistically. How are these to be measured if these perceptions were received, transformed and passed on in an imperceptible manner? As Nadia Seremetakis points out these perceptions which seem to have gone underground and been lost, remain in the body and await to be named. She also writes that, 'what was previously imperceptible and now become 'real' was in fact always there as an element of the material culture of the unconscious'.<sup>17</sup> Some of these perceptions may have been passed on through artefacts which were embedded with sensory meanings. These extra-linguistic sensory perceptions of material experience display a double enactment

---

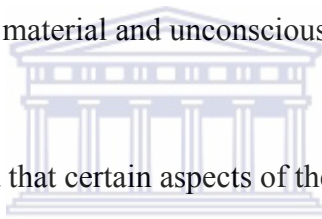
<sup>15</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 1-12.

<sup>16</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 4.

<sup>17</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 12-3.



where material objects were sensed and sensed with. These sensory perceptions presented during performances are what I refer to as 'threads' of material experiences embedded in the very fabric of historical re-enactment. In performance they were used along with gestures to confirm, support or silence specific historical narratives. Also they were used as a means to communicate unconscious and known historical experience. In another sense they were used during performance to open up ways in which to explore unreconciled historical narratives between the bearer and the perceiver. These performances replete with artefacts and gestures were used as self-reflexive instruments to interrogate unreconciled narratives. The sensory meanings of these material objects can however not be literally read off from their functional use in the present as over several decades they have been represented in a complex array of embodied, silenced and redefined material and unconscious experiences.<sup>18</sup>



In the preceding chapters I argued that certain aspects of the history of the colonial war and genocide perpetrated were largely silenced in the official historiography of the war until certain writers revised various interpretations of the colonial period and specifically the war.<sup>19</sup> These silences occur in uneven ways during the selection of texts that describe a particular historical event. On the other hand sensory memory, both as conscious and unconscious embodied histories alert us that there were other knowledge regimes by which historical narratives became known and represented that were not necessarily recorded in official histories. Although the colonial war and genocide were silenced in official historiography, there were other forums in which the war was not silenced. During 'moments of rest', 'stillness', such as during communal events in these communities, the resistance of ancestors to colonialism was recalled through various embedded and embodied mediums

---

<sup>18</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 6-11.

<sup>19</sup> See Chapter One and Two for an in-depth discussion on the historiography of the colonial war.

employed to narrate material and unconscious experiences of the war. These sensory memory regimes, which would be defined by observers as a loss or an absence, were often structured during these memorial events in narratives and re-enactments as an 'absent presence' of the past.<sup>20</sup> Tarshia L. Stanley described that in the film *Eve's Bayou*, this position was located in the portrayal of the conjurer women or women of recall. The ways in which these narratives were embodied by these women recalled their histories as significant linkages with their communities concerning their political and spiritual lives expressed through a particular intertextual matrix of historical representation read as the 'ancestral presence'.<sup>21</sup>

An old Nama seer and clairvoyant woman, named !Oas in !Kosis in the Northern Cape identified an inadequacy in the structure through which Peter Carstens conducted his research amongst the Nama in the Northern Cape in the 1950s. Ouma !Oas therefore organised several symposiums for him. In one of these gatherings Carstens presented his archival research on the Nama before the missionaries arrived in the region. After the anthropologist spoke Ouma !Oas told him that even though they, the descendants could not tell him stories about the time before the missionaries arrived in the region that, 'die gevoel van daardie tyd bly saam met ons'.<sup>22</sup> She further commented, 'so if you tell us what is in those books, we will tell you how to feel out the meaning and the truth'.<sup>23</sup> Ouma !Oas was pointing here to a profound intervention, to a regime of sensory knowledge which she suggests was passed on from one generation to the next. This particular kind of 'presence' ('bly saam met ons'), of the past recalled in the present informed alternative notions of time, narrative, representation and

---

<sup>20</sup> Tarshia L. Stanley, 'The Three Faces in Eve's Bayou: Recalling the Conjure Woman in Contemporary Black Cinema', in Sharon R. Sherman and Mikal J. Koven (eds), *Folklore/Cinema: Popular Film as Vernacular Culture*, All USU Press Publication, Logan, Utah, 1 January 2007, [http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/usupress\\_pubs/34](http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/usupress_pubs/34), 150-4.

<sup>21</sup> Tarshia L. Stanley, 'The Three Faces in Eve's Bayou', 152.

<sup>22</sup> The feeling or sense of that time remains with us (in our bodies - my emphasis) .

<sup>23</sup> Peter Carstens, *Always Here Even Tomorrow: The Enduring Spirit of the South African Nama in the Modern World*, Xlibris Corporation, Bloomington, Indiana, 2007, 115, 189.

performance. This structure through the various media in which the war was represented for example, ruptures official historiography as it interrupts and shifts the regimes of historical knowledge constructed, a knowledge reflected and reconstructed in other spaces. What was often considered a loss and absence in conventional research and archives was rendered through embodied media, and often with other objects during recall, imagination and revision as a 'presence', albeit through various forms, displaying diverse patterns of linguistic and extra-linguistic processes of historical re-presentation.

### ***On the pattern of interviewing for an oral history project***

In 2005 during the centenary of the war commemorated by the /Khowese community, a colleague and I interviewed Alwina and Hans Petersen in Gibeon, southern Namibia.<sup>24</sup>

Alwina Petersen said that it was good that we wanted to hear the history of her people from the 'horse's mouth'. Petersen also stated that although she could retell some of the history, her version was one amongst many versions, and that other people had a different part of the story to tell. She further stated that after we collect these fragments of the stories, we could compare them with the texts at the 'agrief' (archive).<sup>25</sup> Petersen's interview demonstrated the processes involved in the representation and reflection on historical events.<sup>26</sup> Her reference to other speakers and ultimately versions of history creates a space to acknowledge the position of various speakers and forms of historical production.<sup>27</sup> It also breaks with the notion of an authoritative representation of the war. However in her reference to the national *agrief* she recognised that versions of history were constructed within hierarchies and that her version would probably be verified accordingly. Her embodiment of performances, which relates to a

---

<sup>24</sup> SMA, Interview with Alwina and Hans Petersen conducted by author and Casper Erichsen, Gibeon, 2005. Ouma Alwina Petersen is a great granddaughter of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi.

<sup>25</sup> SMA, Interview with Alwina and Hans Petersen conducted by author and Casper Erichsen, Gibeon, 2005.

<sup>26</sup> Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space and the Dialectics of Memory*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1999, 81.

<sup>27</sup> Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces*, 109-10, 115-19, 121-3.

specific historical representation such as the patchwork dress and shawl apparel, and a praise song she sang composed by her father, signposted other ways in which an individual and community history may be re-enacted and re-invented.

In mid-2007, I was part of a team of researchers who conducted interviews concerning the colonial war for the Oral History Project (OHP). The Project compiled interviews of people from communities who were affected by the colonial war. This national project was embarked on by the Namibia Institute for Democracy (NID) in co-operation with the Namibia-German Foundation and was funded by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the framework of the Cultural Preservation Fund. An ambitious project such as this had not yet been conducted in the country yet. These interviews were conducted in the context of the national status of war commemorations during 2004, and the debates on reparations and reconciliation in the aftermath of colonial war. The project culminated in a discussion forum about the war at the German cultural resource centre, Goethe Institute, in Windhoek, Namibia, using the information gathered, edited and transcribed as reference. A book was also compiled by the project leader titled, *What the Elders Used to Say: Namibian Perspectives on the Last Decade of German Colonial Rule*.<sup>28</sup> The sixty-six interviews conducted in total were handed to the Minister of Education at the forum for safe-keeping at the Archives of Anti-Colonial Resistance and the Liberation Struggle Project (AACRLS)

---

<sup>28</sup> Casper Erichsen, *What the Elders Used to Say: Namibian Perspectives on the Last Decade of German Colonial Rule*, Namibia Institute for Democracy, the Namibian-German Foundation, Windhoek, 2008. In a discussion which took place at a conference, 'Frontiers and Passages' held in Basel, Switzerland in May 2008., Giorgio Miescher criticized the way in which the narratives in this book were divided according to the various ethnic communities, such as 'Nama', 'Damara', 'San', and 'Herero'. Miescher stated that the identities of communities in Namibia were more fluid and overlapping than these categories allow us to conceptualise. Although I agree that identities in Namibia are multi-ethnic, homogenous ethnic categories have been reproduced by these communities as rallying points for solidarity and resistance for example. A term created by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'strategic essentialism' may describe some of the process exemplified in various arenas such as at communal commemorations where identity is used as a rallying point for group solidarity. This however does not exclude the contestations inherent in such identity re-enactments.

housed at the National Archives of Namibia.<sup>29</sup> I presume that some of the short term projects established by the Special Initiative for Reconciliation of May 2005 were influenced by these interviews as well as consultative meetings with traditional leaders of the various communities during this period.<sup>30</sup>

During the Oral History Project we attempted to record and document indigenous views on the war overlooked by the official war historiography. Through the method of recording narratives of the war, the project attempted to position the interviewees as the subjects of their history.<sup>31</sup> The main purpose of the project was to ascertain the effects of the colonial war, to open up a dialogue on the war amongst and between communities and to enquire about the developmental needs of these communities in relation to reparations and reconciliation in the aftermath of genocide. The questionnaire was set up by the project leader, which was used for all the interviews in the different regions of the country. In southern Namibia the interviews were conducted in three towns namely Gibeon, Bethanie and Warmbad, where communities lived who were involved in the war and who conducted public communal memorial ritual. We made the interviewees aware of the context of our research and conducted all the interviews in Nama (khoekhoegowab) from a flexible translation of the English questionnaire. Casper Erichsen documented the interviews with a video-camera. The fourteen informants in southern Namibia were not contacted beforehand. Some of the people we spoke to were community historians. We attempted to speak to an equal number of women and men. We also interviewed young people to determine whether an oral tradition of the war was continuously transmitted.

---

<sup>29</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196.

<sup>30</sup> Brigitte Weidlich, 'German reconciliation drive finally starts', *The Namibian*, [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=34538&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34538&no_cache=1).

<sup>31</sup> Hayden White, 'Introduction', in Jacques Ranciere, *The Names of History: On the poetics of knowledge*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1994, xi.

I was familiar with some of the interviewees because of my family relations in the region. I have also participated in the 'Gaogu Gei-Tses' memorial events hosted by the /Khowese community in Gibeon and had a general knowledge of commemorative activities to which we referred in the interview process. Some interviewees were adamant that they wanted to protect their knowledge. Others were doubtful that the research would accrue any material benefits for them. These interviews were conducted for a specific research aim, which was to ascertain how forums for dialogue on the war and structures for reparations for communities affected by the war should be developed. In some cases the interviewees expressly stated that many researchers had conducted interviews, but that after the interview process they never heard back from the researchers and much of the knowledge of the community that was published was always kept in inaccessible libraries and institutions. They stated that the material was never used for educational purposes in the communities where the knowledge was mined. There were thus specific outcomes that the interviewees expected from the interview process. And even if the reparations aspect was excluded from the interview context there were in most cases expectations that arose. Expectations of the interviewees were thus expressed from the onset, with doubts about the suitability of the style of inquiry for the desired outcome, and ethical questions about my position as an insider. Eighty-six year old Klaas Swartbooi in Bethanie for example stated before we started the interview that, 'what I am going to say will probably not help me anymore'. He understood that he could potentially gain from such an exchange, perhaps relief of some kind. He rescinded the notion even before the interview, and at the close of the interview he mentioned that he did 'not trust these things that are being done (development projects after independence/reparations for war). These things that are being done do not always benefit us they only benefit others. But I

am grateful that you are asking me these questions. And that I am able to say things as I heard them'.<sup>32</sup>

I conducted another set of interviews in 2009 and 2010 in the Northern Cape, South Africa.<sup>33</sup>

Anthropologists such as Winifred Hoernlé and Peter Carstens had documented references to the war and other insurrections in southern Namibia such as the resistance of the !Gamiñun against South African forces in 1922 from survivors of these events.<sup>34</sup> Interviewees particularly in the Oral History Project in Bethanie and Warmbad, referred to their relatives who had fled to the Northern Cape during the war. Some of these refugees had returned to Namibia after the war, however many had remained in South Africa.<sup>35</sup> The first sets of interviews were conducted in Steinkopf, Matjieskloof, Springbok and Richtersveld with researcher, Bradley van Sitters, who recorded the interviews on video-camera. The second sets of interviews were conducted in Pella.<sup>36</sup> Because the war was never memorialised at public events in the Northern Cape, over the years an exodus of several people who sought to participate in public commemorations in southern Namibia took place. When I began the research process I was only aware of a few places where descendents of the survivors could possibly still live, but interviewees said that the descendants of the survivors of the colonial war lived in numerous places such as Rooiberg, Vredendal, Onseepkans and Concordia. One interviewee remarked, '*die nageslaagte is versprei dwaars oor Namakwaland*',<sup>37</sup> and even further south in the Western Cape. What was clear from these interviews was that the war

---

<sup>32</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Klaas Swartbooi, Oral History Project (OHP) 06, 22 June 2007, (my translation)

<sup>33</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Steinkopf, Matjieskloof, !Kuboes, Pella, August 2009, July 2010.

<sup>34</sup> Winifred Hoernlé, 'The Social Organisation of the Nama', in Peter Carstens (ed.) *The Social Organisation of the Nama and Other Essays*, Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1985; Peter Carstens, *Always Here, Even Tomorrow*.

<sup>35</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, 2007.

<sup>36</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Steinkopf, Matjieskloof, !Kuboes, Pella, August 2009, July 2010.

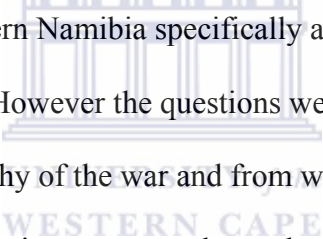
<sup>37</sup> 'The descendents settled all over Namaqualand'. SMA, Abraham Balie, Northern Cape Interviews, Steinkopf, 20 August 2009; Frans Jano, Northern Cape Interviews, Matjieskloof, 16 August 2009; Petrus Gertjie, Northern Cape Interviews, Pella, 28 July 2010.



against Germany was recalled especially in specific families who continuously nurtured their ties through the recalling of narratives to Namibia. The war narrative was referenced among people who identified with a Nama ethnicity. This also led to ideas on how specific historical narratives had been silenced through race classification and the ban on the use of language and discriminatory practices which stigmatised the use of Nama and other indigenous languages in the Northern Cape especially during apartheid. Furthermore this influenced how a specific oral performance tradition was curtailed through the suppression of an identity and language. In the Northern Cape it was clear that distinctive cultural identification and representation had been violently suppressed in the past. Yet it was evident that threads of narratives and performances existed in Nama in places where the language was still spoken such as !Kuboes, Steinkopf and Pella. In other places where the use of Afrikaans became prominent, the language was interspersed with Nama words and phrasing which produced a unique representation of language use that characterised narratives in the region. The use of the Nama language through the interview process and anecdotes about the use of the language in the region pointed to another level of a coded narrative discourse between adults who still spoke the language or those who remembered songs in Nama.

Memories of the war were also made tangible through references to the location of graves of Nama, Herero and German soldiers who fought in southern Namibia. Several informants pointed out that these graves were situated along and in close proximity to the !Garib River. Other grave sites had been located several distances from where interviewees lived such as at Kinderle near Steinkopf and Matjieskloof. In one of the first interviews Calitz Cloete spoke about the floral diversity of the Steinkopf region. He explained that the *Pachypodium Namaquanum* was a plant that was also named the *halfmens*. The name derived from oral stories passed on about ancestors who had migrated southwards from Namibia, who on their

way northwards longingly turned to look back in the direction of their home. These people were transformed into plants as punishment for turning back, and until this day the top of the plant faces northwards.<sup>38</sup> This story carries various historical narrative motifs such as the migration of Khoe communities southward during the colonial war in the early 1900s, and other violent events thereafter. It also shows the specific belief systems in this region, and the way in which Christianity was re-coded in an already existing symbolic narrative structure.<sup>39</sup> The story was also evident of a different type of structure in which historical narratives were represented through plants and other objects in the landscape. This reiterates the notion that historical narratives and the archive of historical experiences in the region comprise a complex representation of history through artefacts and landscape.



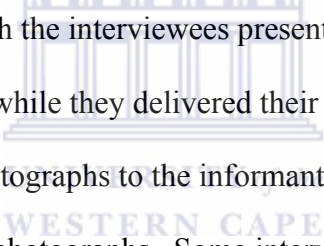
The Oral History Project in southern Namibia specifically attempted to write the indigenous people back into the war history. However the questions we probed were along the same framework as official historiography of the war and from which other writers of the war found their cue. A linear questionnaire set up to take us through colonial war, resistance, genocide and ultimately to the questions of reparations and reconciliation in the interviews, upon reflection, neglected to open the dialogue to other ways of framing the narrative of the war and aftermath. Although we were aware that communal memorial events had been held by various communities in southern Namibia, individual memories of the war had not yet been recorded for the purposes of representing these narratives as part of official historiography. The communal memorial events where these narratives were expressed were the points of entry to the various nuances of narrative expression and re-enactment of the war.

---

<sup>38</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Interview with Calitz Cloete conducted by Bradley van Sitters, Steinkopf, 18 August 2009.

<sup>39</sup> Louis van Heerde, *'n Seleksie uit Oom Piet Van Heerder se Namakwalandse Fotoversameling, 1926-1979*, Fontcept Graphix, Springbok, 2001, 89; Interview with historian Robert Farris Thompson in 'Daughters of the Dust' (film), Julie Dash, Geechee Girls, USA, 1991.

A colleague for example noted that there weren't many stories and praise poems from southern Namibia that were popularly known. This statement made before we embarked on the Oral History Project informed the ways in which I thought through the transmission of oral narratives of the war during the interview process in southern Namibia and its representation in the official presentation of the historiography of the war in general. During the research process I focused on the ways specific to these communities in which narratives of war were recalled. I reflected on the ways in which people remember violence, and how these narratives were silenced through historical processes or in subsequent retellings. And I also considered how some of the narratives were silenced and what can be made of these silences.



I carefully noted the ways in which the interviewees presented themselves, especially the women, through their adornment while they delivered their narratives. In the Northern Cape interviews I presented a set of photographs to the informants and in some cases the interviewees presented their own photographs. Some interviews also reminded me of the ways in which folktales were presented, where narrators used a specific timing of the passages of the story, intonation, sounds to describe actions and the re-enactments of the stories through the use of the body through various gestures. I noted the similarities and differences in the styles of expression in the two memorial contexts in which narratives were usually presented from the re-enactments during memorial events. In the official reports of the research process for OHP most of the interviews were valued for their disembodied voices. The interviews were analysed for their narratives of the war and the ways in which they supplemented and/or contrasted with the official archive. I queried whether the reasons why most researchers had overlooked the aesthetics and performance motifs during the narration of stories was tied to the ways in which evidence is sought mainly through

language.<sup>40</sup> The report excluded knowledge on the specific oral and performance traditions in which these oral narratives had been embedded.<sup>41</sup>

The stories presented had been constructed over a lengthy process of transmission between generations, and had also been influenced by various forms of retelling of the war events. The narrators' reminiscences replete with nostalgia, hearsay and present day framings of these recollections were later re-presented and re-interpreted within the interview process. The technologies used in the interview only captured a fragment of the information transmitted by earlier generations, and through the editing process a translated version of the narratives was presented. Later this information was re-interpreted by the oral historian, and some of this was communicated to the reader/audience.<sup>42</sup> These memories, embedded in the private and public lives of individuals and also influenced by the interview process, with its own methodological and intellectual framings, were precisely the type of interweaving production of historical representation, to which I refer in this chapter. These oral narratives form part of the oral tradition of the war, some of which were expressed and re-enacted at public memorial events as well. However some of the references to the war in the interviews were hardly discussed in the public arena, or were only rehearsed at specific times in the trajectory of communal memorial events and as such have a wide frame in which they were circulated.

---

<sup>40</sup> Isabel Hofmeyr, *"We Spend Our Years as a Tale that is Told": Oral historical narrative in a South African chieftdom*, Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1993, 1-2.

<sup>41</sup> Casper Erichsen, *What the Elders Used to Say*.

<sup>42</sup> A quote by Louis Gottschalk in Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*: Twayne's Oral History Series No. 15, Twayne Publishers, New York, 1995, illustrates this point. Gottschalk wrote that, 'most human affairs happen without leaving vestiges or records of any kind behind them. The past, having happened, has perished with only occasional traces. To begin with, although the absolute number of historical writings is staggering, only a small part of what happened in the past was ever observed...and only a part of what happened in the past was remembered by those who observed it, only a part of what was remembered was recorded; only a part of what was recorded has survived, only a part of what has survived has come to the historians' attention; only a part of what has come to their attention is credible; only a part of what is credible has been grasped; and only a part of what has been grasped can be expounded or narrated by the historian'.

The centenaries of the war were being commemorated when we conducted interviews for the OHP, and lively debates took place on radio, television, newspapers and at conferences which re-invigorated the narratives that were being remembered during the interview process. These oral narratives were also influenced by written accounts, visual and audio-visual material, usually inserted during public memorials. In some cases the interviewees had written down the account, as memory aide, and rehearsed it during the interview so as to remember the chronology of events.<sup>43</sup> However some of the narratives had been passed on through oral narratives of the colonial war, where interviewees would not necessarily have had access to external literature and/or media on the war. The fact that these interviews were conducted more than a hundred years after the event raised specific questions of the validity and veracity of the knowledge expressed particularly from an empiricist point of view, where value of these narratives was reckoned from their ability to uphold external evidence, facts or specific structures of knowledge. However my interest was to view how experiences of war were framed by informants in light of their own personal experiences of intergenerational recall and participation in public memorials replete with myths, nostalgia and pointers to ways in which alternative discourses on the war were framed.

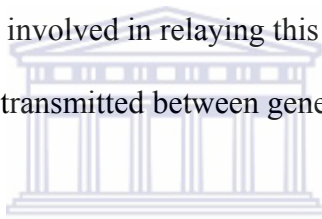
### ***Oral tradition and historical threads***

Historical narratives were embedded in the oral tradition of the Nama (Khoekhoegowab) speakers in a region. Also the knowledge tradition in which these narratives are often expressed is fundamental to understanding the complexities of the technologies of expression and silences in the memories of the war. The narratives were often based on the cultural

---

<sup>43</sup> Abraham Balie who we interviewed in Steinkopf in 2009 wrote down a few notes that he referred to during the interview. Balie has also written a short document on the war among the !Gami=nun (Bondelswarts) which is titled, 'Abraham Morris, Verbanne leier van sy volk: 'n Bondige lewensskets van a merwaardige man, 1872-1922'. NAN, PB/2870.

resources in the performance tradition of these communities. In other words what shapes the narratives of the speaker in these interviews was based on the particular methods of oral performance specific to their community. These narratives were also transmitted through extra-linguistic processes, embodied acts and objects which reaffirmed or contrasted with what was passed on through language in the community or in other spheres.<sup>44</sup> These embodied acts and objects as bearers of historical processes were imbued with different meanings over various periods. These sensory performances and material culture were used as tools in which historical processes represented in specific ways also rendered new meanings, thereby being a part of memory-making themselves.<sup>45</sup> Reviewing the different narratives, embodied acts, objects and spaces where these memories were reproduced may be a way to understand the processes involved in relaying this information and the different forms and meanings of narratives transmitted between generations.



WESTERN CAPE

Although many interviews were certainly valuable in the frame of widening the empirical context, I was also interested in the meanings that were ascribed by individuals to the colonial war and how these narratives became part of the practices in public memorial events in general at a national and international level.<sup>46</sup> To be invested in collecting narratives for the sake of knowledge about a certain historical figure and/or event is not sufficient to understand how memory is activated in oral history. The emotional and moral underpinnings and motivations of individuals and their collective, the meanings attached to specific histories, were also necessary elements of these processes. An analysis of the way in which historical

---

<sup>44</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 6.

<sup>45</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 7; Steven Robins, 'Silence in my father's house: Memory, Nationalism and Narratives of the Body', in Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee, *Negotiating the Past: The making of memory in South Africa*, Oxford University Press, London, 1998.

<sup>46</sup> Isabel Hofmeyr, 'We Spend Our Years as a Tale that is Told', 9; Ciraj Rassool and Gary Minkley, 'Orality, Memory and Social History', in Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee, *Negotiating the Past: The making of memory in South Africa*, Oxford University Press, London, 1998.

narratives are transformed according to the various changes in the individuals' lives is pertinent in such a study. However there were limitations to understanding the narrative form and meaning which had possibly changed several times over a hundred year period, in respect of which I only accessed interviews at a specific moment in that history. I therefore focused on contemporary issues related in the narratives at the commemoration events, and where these did not occur in places such as the Northern Cape, South Africa, then I focused on the specific narrative forms and meanings expressed in the interview event and the ways in which the patterns and structures of the narratives correlated or not between places and subjectivities which had significantly different historical trajectories.

Historical narratives were the process by which the past experiences of a people were plotted according to a specific sequence with the use of verbal and other techniques. Narratives were influenced by the way in which an event was understood, and by the experiences of the individual and the social construction of the historical period. This process relies on the way in which individuals utilised and transmitted their senses and reflections concerning particular events, objects and spaces. The events of the war as they occurred may have been perceived in different ways and thus the languages used to name and describe the war in the archives and interviews may vary.<sup>47</sup> The way in which the events were perceived in turn affects the multiple layers of expression and silence in subsequent narration.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore the layered silences in these histories were caused by the violent nature of these events. These silences are a reality of a long period of physical, psychological and structural violence during colonialism and apartheid. Individuals and communities that undergo violence such as a colonial war and genocide experience trauma. There are thus perceptions, meanings and

---

<sup>47</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 73.

<sup>48</sup> Jacques Depelchin, *Silences in African History*, 42, 46.



silences of specific historical events that were not entirely constructs of a public memorial initiative and academic structure but rather accrue to other historical courses, i.e. trauma is an integral part of sensory processes associated with violent historical events.<sup>49</sup>

The spaces in which historical memory was reproduced such as festivals and commemorations influenced the types of narratives retold, even though personal memories of the war distinct from public reproduction were also evident during the research process. The review of the 'social process of producing knowledge',<sup>50</sup> shows how communities uniquely performed, preserved, adapted and represented a historical record of colonialism and especially of war through oral stories, marking historical sites and festivals during particular contexts in communities in southern Namibia and the Northern Cape. These activities were conscious recollections of the communities' pasts relayed in the various traditions. The analysis of these specific productions of the communities' history may be framed according to the concept of collective memory.<sup>51</sup> The concept was developed on the notion that communities, although composed of individuals and particular family units, shared a past as part of a network of kinship relations that were often recalled at public festivities, commemorations or other such communal gatherings. Although individuals were comprised of various family groups there were certain spaces and times set out in which these individuals cooperated in their daily activities according to a certain communal calendar.<sup>52</sup>

According to the concept of collective memory, for individuals to have a certain perception of various objects, dates and events of the past, this information already needs to be shared

---

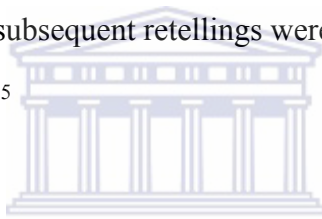
<sup>49</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 6-7.

<sup>50</sup> Jacques Depelchin, *Silences in African History*, footnote 12, 23.

<sup>51</sup> Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, Lewis A. Coser (ed. and trans.), The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992, 53; Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces*, 26.

<sup>52</sup> Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 67.

through memorial activity within the community. This knowledge was often complemented by shared family memories that intersected with communal memory, and was confronted and/or reinforced by successive communal events.<sup>53</sup> However this did not preclude the idea that individuals were able to transmit and preserve memories of their own. When we interviewed a prominent traditional leader of one of the communities in southern Namibia about the war he described at length the popular narrative of how their leader died on the battlefield. When we queried about his own family history in the war, he was surprised that we had asked him the question. He stated that he had never been asked about his family history before. He then spoke about the experiences of a woman ancestor who had been a prisoner of war on Shark Island.<sup>54</sup> While the story of the war as experienced by the individual was framed in a specific context, subsequent retellings were influenced by their own specific 'temporal frameworks of history'.<sup>55</sup>



By virtue of the constructed nature of narratives with their emplotments and the emphases on certain aspects, there was often a part of the story that was excluded. The reason why certain events and people were excluded from historical 'texts' was as a result of selection and reproduction in the narrative process.<sup>56</sup> People also remembered what they deemed was significant and as Trouillot argues, 'uneven historical power obtains even before any work of classification by non-participants'.<sup>57</sup> This was the case even if this historical power through narration was marked as uneven by the experience of violence and/or the threat of violence or as a result of retelling. Enlarging the empirical base framed within a particular narrative, archive or public memorial structure did not necessarily lead to new ways in which the event

---

<sup>53</sup> For a discussion on the way in which individual memory intersects with communal memory see Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 172.

<sup>54</sup> SMA, Interview conducted by author and Casper Erichsen with Onderkaptein Christian Rooi, Gibeon, 2005.

<sup>55</sup> Premesh Lalu, *Deaths of Hintsa*, 125.

<sup>56</sup> Ralph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 49.

<sup>57</sup> Ralph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 51.

and/or people of the past could be understood.<sup>58</sup> Through the collection of narratives one cannot say that there is a recuperation of the people or the event as it happened.<sup>59</sup> The narration was instead heard as a 'discontinuous interruption', a trace and/fragment rather than a continuous transferred reality of the past.<sup>60</sup> Spivak therefore speaks of there being no direct access, through a perfect seam to a person and/or event of the past, but rather through seamless threads.<sup>61</sup>

It has been argued that an archive is not just a storehouse of information, but is a space where information is selected and represented according to specific procedures.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore the information in official archives was organised according to certain legislation which determined the conditions of storage, access to information and gave the material the value of authority. Issues concerning who produced the knowledge, for what purposes and for which audiences may reveal the reasons for dominant narrations and silences about specific events of the past.<sup>63</sup> To create an archive, retrieve and reproduce information has far reaching consequences in light of how archives have been used to reproduce and propagate colonial and apartheid ideologies and specific historical narratives. It was lamented by Brigitte Lau for example that some German colonial documents of Namibia were missing from the archive, because it was assumed that an uninterrupted truth of the past events could be found in specific archives, and if documents were missing the whole truth of the colonial war could

---

<sup>58</sup> Ralph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 49; Premesh Lalu, *The Deaths of Hintsa*, 57.

<sup>59</sup> Premesh Lalu, *The Deaths of Hintsa*, 62-3, 132-3, 146.

<sup>60</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a history of the vanishing present*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, London, 1999, 208.

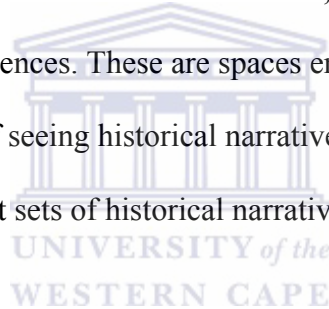
<sup>61</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, 208.

<sup>62</sup> Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris and Jane Taylor et al (eds.), *Refiguring the Archive*, David Philip, Cape Town, 2002.

<sup>63</sup> Jacques Depelchin who raises issues on the silences in African history wrote, '...how does one go about uncovering all silences...is it just a question of reading more archives, looking at more data and so on, or is it a question of acknowledging the existence of voices which, up to now, have been ignored?' Jacques Depelchin, *Silences in African History*, 13.

not be fully known.<sup>64</sup> Another issue raised in the academy was the selective reading of the available sources in the archive.<sup>65</sup> However even before documents in the archive were consulted, the initial selection process by researchers and archivists determined what we know about the past.<sup>66</sup>

In some instances an intervention may be observed in the narrations in the archive concerning certain historical personages and events. Here I refer to narrations of voices and events in the archive which often interrupt the normal flow of the dominant narrative and alert the reader to the silences and ways in which a specific event was represented in the archive. I refer to these interventions as 'threads' that alert the reader to other narratives, other spaces in which histories were represented and created in different contexts, albeit structured by their own sets of norms of representation and silences. These are spaces entangled by threads of dominant narratives and alternative ways of seeing historical narratives, yet another possibility to imagine, create and view different sets of historical narratives and practices.



I selected texts in the archives of two colonial administrations, that of Germany and Britain, through which the war experiences of the communities in southern Namibia may be gleaned. One was a series of documents which consist of 107 pages of the interrogation of prisoners of war in Windhoek in 1906 who fought as soldiers in southern Namibia. These documents were

---

<sup>64</sup> Brigitte Lau wrote that historians who have written about the colonial war in Namibia do not show that the information is 'appallingly incomplete' because many documents concerning the war have been destroyed over the years. Brigitte Lau, 'Uncertain Certainties: The Herero-German War of 1904', 40-41.

<sup>65</sup> On the other hand at a panel discussion at a conference, 'Frontiers and Passages' held in Basel, Switzerland in May 2008, Dag Henrichsen mentioned that some of the issues dealt with in the archive in Namibia concerning German colonisation and especially the colonial war had been largely overlooked by researchers of this period of history in Namibia. During this discussion another historian, Helmut Bley said that he would be willing to support a researcher to learn the old German script as a way of conducting further research in these archives and covering work that up to now has been under-researched.

<sup>66</sup> See Ralph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 26-7, 48-9, for a discussion on how historical narratives were silenced through the production of an archive.

located in the National Archives of Namibia.<sup>67</sup> The other documents were letters written by various leaders to specific colonial authorities during the war found in the Cape Town Repository on Roeland Street.<sup>68</sup> I have selected these texts to illustrate how historical narratives and silences were chronicled in official archives and how historical representations were created in different contexts. Thus different procedures have to be utilised to read the narratives, silences and their historical power.<sup>69</sup> These narratives also form the foreground on which the interviews and other performances related to the war which I have selected may be juxtaposed, revealing narratives that were drawn from and silenced in these representations through the oral tradition of various temporalities.

These sets of texts were compiled during the war and consist mainly of the testimonies of men. The soldiers probably relayed these events in Nama and Afrikaans whereupon they were translated and written up in German and English respectively. The testimonies were relayed by prisoners of war under threatening and violent circumstances in which the narratives could implicate them and result in punishment, torture and death. These circumstances have to be taken into consideration when reviewing these statements. However the statements contain testimonies that describe the experiences of the war albeit at the time of interrogation. These statements of soldiers describe their ages, brief genealogies and in some cases the Nama clans to which they belonged. From this information one can see the status of the people that was questioned and their kin ties. Also these soldiers describe Nama,

---

<sup>67</sup> NAN, Records of the Colonial Office, Imperial Government of German South West Africa, ZBU 461, D.IV.M.2, Vol. 2, 3, Aufstand in Sudentenfeldzug.

<sup>68</sup> National Archives and Record Service of South Africa, Native Affairs 647, Letter to the Secretary to the Law Department, Cape Town from Percy Wright, Resident Magistrate of Upington, 18 October 1904. Letter to Resident Magistrate of Upington from Jacob Marenga, 1 October 1904; Government House 35/147, Letter to the Resident Magistrate, Port Nolloth from Cornelius Fredericks, 19 July 1905; Government House 35/138, Telegram to the Commissioner Commanding the Cape Mounted Patrol from Sub-Inspector Geary, Springbokfontein, 25 October 1905; Prime Minister's Office 214, Letter to the Resident Commissioner, Mafikeng, from the Assistant Resident Magistrate, Rietfontein, 10 February 1908.

<sup>69</sup> Ralph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 26-7.

Herero, Damara and San people who were also involved in the war in various capacities as soldiers, non-combatants, servants, trackers and patrols for German soldiers.<sup>70</sup> They describe a multi-ethnic composition of war actors as opposed to the dominant 'Herero-German' or 'Nama-German' ethnic dichotomies in official historiography.

Through the narratives retold one gets a sense that these relationships towards the 'enemy' were also complex so that even a servant, 'bambuse', of a German soldier would show Nama soldiers where the camps of the German forces were located.<sup>71</sup> The interrogations also presented detailed descriptions of lootings of settler farms and military supply lines and battles against German soldiers.<sup>72</sup> The statements also explain the misery of the communities which fled between settlements in search of water, tamma and provisions. The prisoners of war also described how they surrendered with their communities.<sup>73</sup> Many of these statements did not describe the period after their surrender to the German government which means that these accounts were given before the prisoners of war were relocated to various parts of the country in concentration camps.

The leaders who wrote letters to colonial officials in South Africa found in the Cape Archives assumed that the Cape government would be lenient towards them considering their relations with certain leaders in southern Namibia and because the Cape government was not directly involved in the war. These letters expressed shock that the German government did not discriminate between combatants and non-combatant women, children and the elderly in war.

---

<sup>70</sup> NAN, ZBU 461, D.IV.M.2, Vol. 2, 'Vernehmung des Witboi - hottentotten Gorub'; ZBU 461, D.IV.M.2, Vol. 3, 'Vernehmung des ehemaligen Witboi - Kapitaens Isaak Witboi'; ZBU 461, D.IV.M.2, Vol. 3, 'Vernehmung des ehemaligen Unterkapitäns der Witboois Samuel Isaack'.

<sup>71</sup> NAN, ZBU 461, D.IV.M.2, Vol. 3, 'Vernehmung des ehemaligen Unterkapitäns der Witboois Samuel Isaack'.

<sup>72</sup> Records of the Colonial Office, Imperial Government of German South West Africa, ZBU 461, D.IV.M.2, Vol. 2, 3, Aufstand in Suden Feldzug.

<sup>73</sup> NAN, ZBU 461, D.IV.M.2, Vol. 3, 'Vernehmung des ehemaligen Witboi - Kapitaens Isaak Witboi'.

The combatants in southern Namibia were also surprised that the British government did not take action when they were aware of the crimes that were committed against non-combatants during the war. The leaders stated that they could not safeguard women, children and the elderly since the German soldiers were mercilessly shooting them and that they had to send these people across the border into the Cape Colony and Botswana.<sup>74</sup>

Women, children and the elderly were sent across the !Garib River, at different points, with these letters and a leader who would take care of the safe passage of the refugees. Jacob Marenga for example also urged the Cape government to accept women and children that he sent across the border and questioned the government for its hesitancy on the matter, while they provided food and military supplies to the German government.<sup>75</sup> In one of the letters Gaob Simon Kooper wrote that he did not understand how people 'from across the water were drawing lines on maps'. He expressed the sentiment that it was unfathomable how borders were being drawn in their country by foreigners who lived overseas. This response was tied to the fact that the German and British governments attempted to prevent this community and others from fleeing and settling in territories which they considered as extensions of their communal land and which were proclaimed as colonial territories and borders during the war.<sup>76</sup>

The fieldwork diaries of Winifred Hoernlé, who undertook anthropological studies in the Northern Cape and Namibia after the colonial war exposes the significance of the moment of

---

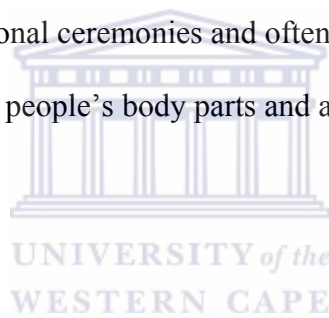
<sup>74</sup> National Archives of South Africa, Government House 35/147, Letter to the Resident Magistrate, Port Nolloth from Cornelius Fredericks, 19 July 1905.

<sup>75</sup> National Archives of South Africa, Native Affairs 647, Letter to the Secretary to the Law Department, Cape Town from Percy Wright, Resident Magistrate of Upington, 18 October 1904. Letter to Resident Magistrate of Upington from Jacob Marenga, 1 October 1904.

<sup>76</sup> National Archives of South Africa, Prime Minister's Office 214, Letter to the Resident Commissioner, Mafikeng, from the Assistant Resident Magistrate, Rietfontein, 10 February 1908.



research, selected information and interests of the researcher which then frames the results of fieldwork research and the knowledge archived and re-circulated in the academy.<sup>77</sup> Hoernlé rarely recorded her informants' views on the German war and its aftermath although she observed and recorded an extensive body of oral performances during a period when there was a violent cataclysm in the region.<sup>78</sup> In her diaries compiled while she conducted fieldwork research amongst the Nama in the Northern Cape and Namibia from 1912-13, and in Namibia from 1922-23 few instances were included about the people's perspectives on colonialism, the German war, and South African military occupation and massacre in south-east Namibia. During these trips Hoernlé took notes on flora and fauna and took photographs of the landscape and people. Using a phonograph she recorded the folktales and music of her informants. She also noted traditional ceremonies and often requested the re-enactments of these rituals.<sup>79</sup> She also measured people's body parts and accumulated artefacts and skeletons.<sup>80</sup>



---

<sup>77</sup> Winifred Hoernlé frequently commented that the people she spoke to during her fieldwork research in the Northern Cape presented her with inadequate information. She stated that they were not very intelligent and in some cases said they were stupid or could not concentrate long enough to have a proper conversation with her. Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt and Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland: The Anthropological Diaries of Winifred Hoernlé*, Centre for African Studies, No. 14, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 1987.

<sup>78</sup> It is important to note that the research for the 'Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany' was conducted in 1917, after Hoernlé had conducted her first fieldwork expedition in the region. In fact Hoernlé was aware of the research being conducted for the 1918 Blue Book. She mentions in her field notes during her second expedition that the diary of Hendrik Witbooi that she could not locate in the National Archives was probably stolen by O'Reilly, who conducted research for the Blue Book. Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt and Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland*, 131. The Blue Book is the only document to date that has explicitly included the perspectives of the survivors of the war. It is said to be a controversial source of evidence because it was created by the British intelligence to campaign against Germany retaining South West Africa as a colony. Does this mean that the testimonies by the various informants are false because the British authorities framed the book as a propaganda piece? Or are these testimonies false because the informants corroborated with the British authorities? So what do we say about the other evidence in the book such as the photographs of gross human violations by the German military authorities. Are these sources also false because they are framed as evidence in this book? This certainly cannot be a valid line of argument and each source should be consulted, examined, given merit or cast aside as evidence. For this debate see Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewald, 'Footsteps and Tears: An Introduction to the Construction and Context of the 1918 'Blue Book'', in Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewald, *Words Cannot be Found*, xiii-xxxvii.

<sup>79</sup> Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt and Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland*, 117, 121.

<sup>80</sup> Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt and Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland*, 32, 38-9, 48, 56, 66-7, 68, 120.

In her field diary she maintained the anthropological theme of a 'dying race' and wrote about external influences that have deteriorated the Nama culture as she observed it. She mentioned the influence of the missionaries as being particularly detrimental to their culture. Also she wrote about the negative impact and influences on the traditional life of the Nama by communities who trekked across the !Garib River to settle in Namibia.<sup>81</sup> She compared German and South African legal and administrative structures based on their influences on the indigenous people but hardly spoke about the genocidal policies and rarely spoke about their views on these issues. She mentioned that the people in the locations of Windhoek and Keetmanshoop lived an impoverished life as a result of being prisoners of war during the German occupation. Hoernlé mentioned that the plans to relocate the Nama after the war, and the land and provisions allocated, were insufficient for the needs of the people.<sup>82</sup> One of the only records, where she noted her informants' concerns about the German occupation of the country, was in a letter addressed to the Secretary for South West Africa. She wrote that 'a very fine old man of the Red nation, Old Jeremias, said to me the day I was leaving, that he would like to ask me something, now that I had done questioning him: "I was born living well and eating well," he said, "Under the Germans I suffered much, and I would like to ask when I am going to live well again"'.<sup>83</sup>

Old Jeremias' intervention showed that, even though he answered her questions there were other issues such as suffering under German occupation that were more urgent, concerns which Hoernlé did not officially attend to in her research. Also her note on an interview with one of the popular soldiers of the war in southern Namibia, Abraham Morris, who was exiled in the Northern Cape, supports this contention. Hoernlé wrote that, 'Morris (on the other

---

<sup>81</sup> Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt and Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland*

<sup>82</sup> Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt and Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland*

<sup>83</sup> Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt and Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland*, 177.

hand) could tell me a great deal about the war, but he is young and never took much interest in the old lore of the tribe'.<sup>84</sup> Morris was one of the military leaders of the !Gamiñun community who had fought against the German forces and was a leader of the refugees in the Northern Cape. He also was prominent in the resistance against South African forces which led to the air bombardments of the !Gamiñun by the South African military in 1922, creating a stream of refugees into the Northern Cape. None of what Morris told her about the war against Germany and presumably South Africa was documented in her field diary.

In her later analyses of social anthropology it is clear that her fieldwork was influenced by her view that it was essential to analyse how cultures function in the present, as representations of a 'dying culture', rather than studying the historical processes that may have caused the dramatic changes in the culture of communities, as if these matters can be separated as such.<sup>85</sup> Although it can be said that her focus was not to extensively document colonial war and the military occupation of the German and South African governments in Namibia, this was however vital information on the impact of these government policies on the social life of the people whom she represented in her anthropological work.<sup>86</sup>

Peter Carstens' work, parallels that of Hoernlé, and documented several instances where he spoke to refugees from Namibia who had fled to the Northern Cape during the colonial war and other insurrections such as the war in south-east Namibia in 1922.<sup>87</sup> His research context and content were dramatically altered by his relationship to the people he interviewed and a chance meeting with an old Nama woman, !Oas who organised several meetings with participants in !Kosis, Lekkersing and !Kuboes in the Northern Cape, where he shared his

---

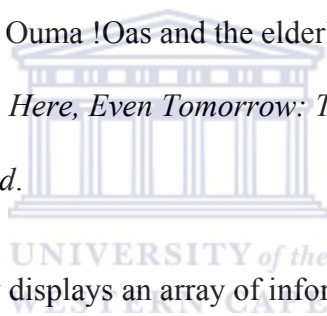
<sup>84</sup> Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt, Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland*, 4.

<sup>85</sup> Winifred Hoernlé, 'The Social Organisation of the Nama', 9-14.

<sup>86</sup> Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt, Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland*, iv.

<sup>87</sup> Peter Carstens, *Always Here, Even Tomorrow*, 32, 35, 37, 38.

archival and doctoral thesis research. The participants told stories about their life experiences and at the end of the meetings, the old woman, !Oas told him that, 'to say that authentic Nama no longer exist, which is what you, my dear man, felt you ought to believe when you first set foot amongst us, is very wrongheaded. And I wonder whether this is what they teach you in your school, as a way of believing that all the Nama and the Khoi ceased to exist by a certain date because they were not the same as they were before the terrible battles with the first duismanne at the Cape. On the other hand would you deny that we no longer exist because we are different now from what we used to be?'<sup>88</sup> This statement by Ouma !Oas breaks with the root understanding of anthropological and other scientific researchers in the region, who still have a profound impact on academic research and representation at present. Carstens in response to the question posed by Ouma !Oas and the elderly participants of the symposia, called his last publication, *Always Here, Even Tomorrow: The enduring spirit of the South African Nama in the modern world*.



The oral tradition of a community displays an array of information about the historical experiences of individuals, as well as how they perceive and understand the world. These traditions showcase the customs, language and performance legacies of a community. They display ways in which people have preserved and reinvented knowledge i.e. the processes through which memory practices were developed. For over four decades Sigrid Schmidt recorded various performances of the folktales of Nama, Damara and Hai//Om speakers.<sup>89</sup> Schmidt's work was unique because it was a collection of the variations of stories, the way in which they were presented, and the various paths and influences that contributed to these transmissions across three communities with different historical trajectories who spoke

---

<sup>88</sup> Peter Carstens, *Always Here, Even Tomorrow*, 169.

<sup>89</sup> Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls: African Folktales – Texts and Discussions*, Rudiger Köppe Verlag, Köln, 2001; Sigrid Schmidt, *Children Born From Eggs: African Magic Tales – Texts and Discussions*, Rudiger Köppe Verlag, Köln, 2007.

Khoekhoegowab.<sup>90</sup> Schmidt wrote that old collections of folktales in southern and central Namibia of Nama speakers were extensive and that many tales were not recorded. She states that some of the early recordings by missionaries and anthropologists were dubious in their description and interpretation.<sup>91</sup> Few magic tales were recorded because the collectors were men, and may not always have consulted women who in Schmidt's opinion were the bearers of magic tales.<sup>92</sup> After the folktale survey she remarked that 'the Nama-speaking peoples have a unique treasure: they foster a precious store of originally Asian and European tales, many of them oral tradition, which once were brought to the Cape but have been forgotten by those groups who imported them'.<sup>93</sup> She alluded to the complex history of these communities that would inform the kinds of stories that were retold. These were the histories of contact and conflict with other clans and ethnic communities through migration, alliances and conflict. This included the influence of European expansion and contact with African and Asian communities forced into slavery and transported with their oral performance traditions to the Cape Colony.<sup>94</sup>



There were various genres in which folktales were categorised by Schmidt and even within these genres further subdivisions exist. These typologies of oral tradition were broadly

---

<sup>90</sup> There have been public debates about whether the Nama or Damara were the original speakers of the language. I attended a lecture by Isaac Gowaseb at the Franco-Namibian Cultural Centre in Windhoek in 2006 where the audience raised concerns about this debate. For a brief synopsis of the discussions see, Wonder Guchu, 'Nama Debate: More questions than answers', *New Era*, 20 September 2006. For an in depth discussion on this issue see, Wilfrid Heinrich Gerhard Haacke, 'Linguistic Hypotheses on the Origin of Namibian Khoekhoe speakers', *Southern African Humanities*, Vol. 20, Pietermaritzburg, December 2008, 163-177. Some people I have spoken to do not use the term Khoekhoe or Khoekhoegowab to refer to their identity and language and prefer to use the term Nama to designate both these categories. Also although the Hai//Om speak Khoekhoegowab, there is the Hai//Om language spoken by this community and Khoekhoegowab is the language in which these communities received their school education.

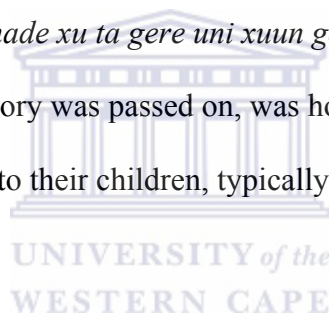
<sup>91</sup> Schmidt in her interpretations also relies on older collections of folktales such as Hahn's but cautions that these should be carefully examined. Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls*, 203.

<sup>92</sup> Sigrid Schmidt, *Children Born From Eggs*, 192. Isabel Hofmeyr concluded along similar lines in her study of women and their role in the storytelling enterprise in, Isabel Hofmeyr, *"We Spend Our Years as a Tale that is Told": Oral historical narrative in a South African chieftdom*, Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1993.

<sup>93</sup> Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls*, 333-4.

<sup>94</sup> Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls*, 333-4.

arranged by folklorists into myths, legends, magic tales, comical anecdotes and life histories. A myth was seen as ‘a sacred tale which in a prescientific way explains the basic ideas about a world order...it tells about creations and foundations’.<sup>95</sup> The definitions of genres of narratives had implications for which narratives were considered historical information. Yet genres of narratives were not only defined by the people who interpreted them, they existed in the classificatory systems of communities such as /garube, ≠goan and //gae≠hoas. However unlike /garuben defined as folktales or tall tales, //gae≠hoan is more loosely defined as narrative which could oscillate between fiction and non-fiction. The meaning of //gae refers to mimicry or repetition, re-enactment and retelling. It is interesting to note that the meaning of //gae also referred to chewing. This reminds me of a specific expression where an interviewee said, ‘gai khoen am!nade xu ta gere uni xuun ge ne na’.<sup>96</sup> Another example, from Seremetakis of how sensory memory was passed on, was how mothers chewed the food in their mouths before passing it on to their children, typically also how stories were often retold and passed on.<sup>97</sup>



The emphasis on bounded, structured and specific genres could precisely be the reason why certain oral performances such as historical narratives may have been excluded from collection and analysis. Isabel Hofmeyer also noted that historical narratives in her study were particularly not part of a performance repertoire and that historical narratives were loosely structured and thereby excluded in analyses of oral performance in southern Africa.<sup>98</sup> Historical narratives, in this case, may be understood as coming out of a specific context where there are points at which they strongly converge and intersect with other oral

---

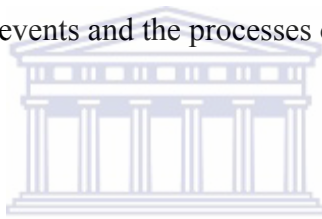
<sup>95</sup> Sigrid Schmidt, *Children Born From Eggs*, 194.

<sup>96</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Lukas Afrikaner, OHP 04, Gibeon, 20 June 2007.

<sup>97</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part II: Still Acts', in Nadia Seremetakis, *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1994, 26-9.

<sup>98</sup> Isabel Hofmeyer, "We Spend Our Years as a Tale that is Told", 3.

performances. Historical narratives may be viewed as more fluid, encompassing and influenced by other genres of oral performance.<sup>99</sup> I would further argue that other genres are embedded within historical narratives also, albeit in various complex forms. I suggest that instead of strict typologies, the oral historian should be aware that these genres may overlap in some cases whether with reference to a specific story or the type of language used between genres or the ways in which these stories were stylised through gestures and song. The organising logic of myths were present in other oral performances such as historical narratives. The first four !Gami≠nun leaders had cosmological names such as Earth, Wind, Rain and Fire.<sup>100</sup> This story which describes clan leaders cannot be dismissed from the genre of legends or life histories because it has mythological elements. These stories reveal real events or beliefs held about these events and the processes of passing on knowledge in communities.<sup>101</sup>



Schmidt who collected oral stories said that historical legends were scarce amongst Khoekhoegowab speakers. Schmidt stated that historical narratives in southern Namibia were negligible, and that she only collected one such narrative in her studies.<sup>102</sup> During her four decades of study, she only collected the story of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi.<sup>103</sup> This was perhaps because when Schmidt conducted her research this story was retold at public occasions, and was popularly circulated in southern Namibia. She claimed that there were hardly any historical narratives transmitted because Khoe and San people did not have ancestor cults

---

<sup>99</sup> Isabel Hofmeyr, *We Spend Our Years as a Tale that is Told*, 4.

<sup>100</sup> Sigrig Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls*, 194.

<sup>101</sup> Bethwell A. Ogot, 'The Construction of Luo Identity and History', in David William Cohen, Stephan F. Miescher and Luise White (eds.), *African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 2001, 32.

<sup>102</sup> Sigrig Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls*, 313

<sup>103</sup> Sigrig Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls*, 313.



‘which may stimulate interest in earlier days’.<sup>104</sup> However Gaob Hendrik Wibooi was precisely an ancestor to which these narratives that she heard were directed. The reason given by Schmidt for the scarcity in historical is not convincing. If the oral tradition had such depth and there were so many varieties of stories that had been transmitted, collected and preserved in the oral tradition, even those of European and Asian communities in southern Africa, why did the record of historical experiences appear deficient? Could the answer not appear in the kinds of questions Schmidt asked her narrators that led to her selected reading of the storytelling history in Namibia or did the problem lie in the genres created by folklorists who seemingly excluded stories that did not fit their specific structures? Or did the narrators hide historical narratives within these other genres of narration?<sup>105</sup>

### *Weaving oral narratives*

Oral transmissions of indigenous people concerning the war against Germany in southern Namibia have been under-represented as a source of historical processes in official historiography. These sources have been trivialised or merely represented to compliment the written archive. As much as this point has been belaboured by scholars over several decades, and some scholars might even state that this argument is dated, there still has not been a conscientious effort to re-present indigenous voices as perspectives of what happened in the war in official historiography. At most, the official archive was set as the standard of ‘truth’ even if the oral record begged to differ and/or interrupted official narrative forms. Also fewer scholars have been concerned with the meanings given to the war by indigenous people, the confirmed impact of the war in Namibia and how these concerns have been identified and represented even through their silences by the communities that are affected by these issues.

---

<sup>104</sup>Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls*, 313.

<sup>105</sup> Isabel Hofmeyr, *"We Spend Our Years as a Tale that is Told"*, 5.

Even though there were practices which documented and interpreted historical narratives concerning the war in the academy, these same structures existed 'on the ground, among Africans'.<sup>106</sup> In southern Namibia survivors of the war and their descendants have imparted, privately and/or publicly stories retold at commemorations of the various clan-based Nama and other multi-ethnic communities in southern Namibia, some even for several decades. The !Aman, !Gami=nun, Gai//Khaun, /Khowesen and the Vaalgras communities held annual held ceremonies which developed a highly stylised structure of oral transmissions and performances with sophisticated mnemonic codes symbolised in the various traditions at memorial events. These oral transmissions and performances of the war were often popular renditions of what survivors of the war had passed on to generations. These oral transmissions were more than speech modes of communication, they encompassed a whole range of forms of orality and performance such as praise songs, hymns, prayers, folksongs, dramatisation, playing of musical instruments and dancing (nama-stap and lang-arm). It was at these public memorials where war events were primarily recalled and re-enacted. Also in selected spaces markers of the war in the form of placards, plaques, monuments and gravestones were erected by these communities. In the Northern Cape these oral transmissions have occurred, in the absence of public commemorations, between members of families and communities. The overlapping and layering of these productions of the past reveal colonial hegemony and communal continuity, silences of the past and also the ways in which these performances were dynamically interwoven to generate knowledge re-presented.

There were various socio-historical phases which had an influence not only on the types of narratives spread but also on the ways in which these were retold. The narratives were not

---

<sup>106</sup> David William Cohen, Stephan F. Miescher and Luise White (eds.), *African Words, African Voices*, 16.

pure renderings of previous information. Each narrator had already analysed, reflected on and interpreted the information that was available to her/him before passing it on.<sup>107</sup> This however should not be an obstacle for the oral historian because it shows the multifaceted processes by and for which purposes these narratives were produced in these communities. In the interview with Alwina Petersen we asked her to recall a song or praise poem. She sang a popular praise song about Gaob Hendrik Witbooi adapted from a praise poem composed by her father, the Reverend Markus Witbooi.<sup>108</sup> She sang !Nansetse /gabe /oatse, ≠khari ≠kotse !garu !omtse, !awus ats !garu !oms !na häse, hâb ai ≠noase kha-khoeb !huri, !anib /ginate ge tsom //gamrotse.<sup>109</sup> The praise song sung at every memorial event of the /Khowese community and even at other public functions of the A.M.E. Church describes Witbooi's specific heroic qualities. Peterson also explained that the song speaks about the mothers of the German soldiers who cried because their sons died in the war.<sup>110</sup> The personages and events of the war were often structured through poems and songs such as these. There are several more examples of these type of narratives sung and performed at memorial events, some which related directly to the colonial war and others which tie themes of struggle, racism and discrimination during apartheid with ideas of liberation through religious sentiments.<sup>111</sup>

In Gibeon Councillor Lukas Afrikaner described how he had heard the stories of the war from his relatives. Afrikaner who said that he 'used to break-off these narratives from the

---

<sup>107</sup> Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 23-4.

<sup>108</sup> SMA, 'Heroes Day Festival Programme', 90th Anniversary, Gibeon, 3-5 November 1995, '/Khowese Heroes Day Festival Programme', 103rd Anniversary, Gibeon, 31 October - 2 November 2008, 40-1.

<sup>109</sup> SMA, Interview with Alwina and Hans Petersen conducted by Memory Biwa and Casper Erichsen, Gibeon, 2005.

<sup>110</sup> SMA, Interview with Alwina and Hans Petersen conducted by Memory Biwa and Casper Erichsen, Gibeon, 2005.

<sup>111</sup> SMA, '/Khowese Heroes Day Festival Programme', 103rd Anniversary, Gibeon, 31 October - 2 November 2008, 35-42.

mouths of elders', also heard about the war from elders in other communities such as Maltahöhe in southern Namibia. Afrikaner is an exceptional storyteller who used gestures, re-enactments and a variety of sounds to draw his listeners into his stories. He explained that you had to have a hardened heart to have lived through the German times. Being an artisan himself, he described anecdotes of how people were treated by German farmers when they worked for them. This story was told with a few German sentences exchanged in the conversation between farmer and labourer. He then explained that the same treatment was meted out to labourers by Boers. He also stated that the Boers may have learnt their treatment of labourers from the German farmers.<sup>112</sup>

Martha and Monica Basson said that they heard stories of the war from Martha Basson's father, Willem Basson who had been born in 1922 and named 'Ou Torob', which means 'old war'. Names in the oral tradition were a mnemonic device and were often given to individuals in order to remember the times they were born in.<sup>113</sup> They were also told stories by their great-grandfather Christian Basson, who had made a claim for compensation against Germany during the war. The other source of information was their great-grandmother who had been raised in the Christiaan royal house. In the interview they stated that several members of their family were affected by the war. Their interview was unique in the detail that they recalled. The fact that their relatives had close encounters, firstly with the royal family and that their great-grandfather had been involved in a dispute with German soldiers may be a strong reason for this. Their interview was also distinctive in the OHP because they were the only narrators in the southern Namibian section of the project who sat together and relayed events of the past. They supported each other during the presentation, sometimes they

---

<sup>112</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Lukas Afrikaner, OHP 04, Gibeon, 20 June 2007.

<sup>113</sup> Martha Basson's father was born in the year that the South African military launched the air bombings of Warmbad.

disagreed, interjected and coaxed each other to reveal information. In this way we listened to the ways in which they assisted each other in the narration, and to their different approaches of storytelling as well as their reflection on the events. Also the linguistic turns between Afrikaans and Khoekhoegowab, which I would hear again in the interviews in the Northern Cape, was unique and distinct to the speech traditions of these communities closest to the !Garib River.

Most of the narratives of the war as retold in the Northern Cape were also transmitted by relatives. Some of the informants stated that there were only specific relatives who retold these stories and as such they often also heard about the war from neighbours or other people in the community. Frans Jano a prominent community activist who we interviewed in Matjieskloof had been born in Pella.<sup>114</sup> His parents were born in southern Namibia and his relatives moved to South Africa because of employment on the mines in the Northern Cape. He stated that his great-grandfather had been a soldier and horseman during the war, and that his great grandmother told him stories of the war when he was a teenager. He said that she was very old at the time and could not recall many events. When he moved to Matjieskloof he was aware of a woman named Ouma Damas who progressively became blind as a result of the war. He stated that Ouma Damas became blind because of the things that she had seen during the war and 'omdat die oorlog 'n vrees in die mense geboesem het'. He recalled that

---

<sup>114</sup> I inquired about people to interview in Matjieskloof and was directed to Frans Jano by officials at the Surplus People Project. The Surplus People Project is an NGO based in Cape Town that works for the restitution and equitable distribution of land and also engages in policies on agrarian reform in communities in the Western and Northern Cape, South Africa. See Zohra Bibi Dawood, 'Between the Church and the State: No salvation for Matjieskloof: A report on the history of Matjieskloof, a former Roman Catholic mission station in Namaqualand', Surplus People Project, Cape Town, 1992, for a brief history on the settlement and land struggles.

she was a tough woman and lived alone without a partner, a fact that he ascribed to how the war had hardened individuals.<sup>115</sup>

In Steinkopf, Abraham Balie stated that Abraham Morris was his grandmother's brother. He relayed that his parents and grandmother always told him stories of the war. He also read books about the history of the various wars with the !Gami=nun and said that some of the books were in line with what his elders had told him about their history.<sup>116</sup> He also stated that at one time he attempted to commemorate the war in Steinkopf as he regarded Abraham Morris as a father of the nation. He said that Abraham Morris had crossed the river with about 600 people, of which their descendents lived throughout Namaqualand. Balie also said that the Smuts government had portrayed Abraham Morris as a criminal and as a result people over the years did not publically commemorate their own history. The community of Steinkopf did not support his attempts to honour Morris.<sup>117</sup> Petrus Gertjie interviewed in Pella recalled how one of his relatives, a woman who could not see well, retold the stories of the war so vividly 'as if it happened yesterday'. He had also recorded these narratives on a tape cassette on a Sunday during one of her sessions. When he worked at the Rosh Pinah mine he would listen to the tape with his co-workers. He said that his co-workers enjoyed these stories so much that he suspects that they stole the tape when they left the mine several years ago.<sup>118</sup>

### ***Toa Tama !Khams Ge***<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>115</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Frans Jano, Matjieskloof, 16 August 2009.

<sup>116</sup> Balie mentioned a book by Richard Freislich, *The Last Tribal War: a history of the Bondel-swart uprising which took place in 1922*, Struik, Cape Town, 1964, as a book that was close to the oral rendition of the war narrative.

<sup>117</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Abraham Balie, Steinkopf, 20 August 2009.

<sup>118</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Petrus Gertjie, Pella, 28 July 2010.

<sup>119</sup> The heading is taken from a song sung during annual Heroes Day events in Gibeon, and means 'the war, struggle continues'.

A different temporality and reference to several wars were presented in the narratives and representations of the war against Germany in communities in southern Namibia and the Northern Cape. When I asked interviewees to narrate the war against Germany several responses referred not to the early 1900s but to the late 1890s. In Gibeon some informants recalled the Hornkranz massacre of 1893, as their first point of reference. Alwina Petersen told us that as a child she remembered a woman who survived the massacre and whose leg had been amputated and who had a prosthetic leg made of wood as a result of injuries during the massacre.<sup>120</sup> Gaob Hendrik Witbooi insisted in his interview in Windhoek that the attack on the /Khowese at Hornkranz was included in the commemoration of the war because the war with Germany did not commence in 1904 but had an earlier trajectory.<sup>121</sup> This was also evident in the representations of grave stones at commemorations in Gibeon where the symbolic graves of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi and Gaob Isaac Witbooi were placed next to the grave of people who had died during the massacre at Hornkranz.<sup>122</sup>

In Warmbad Timotheus Morris retold that his grandfather Abraham Morris and Jakob Marenga had been outlawed in the 1890s because of the wars which had waged between the Namas and the Germans during that period.<sup>123</sup> In Steinkopf Abraham Balie recounted the various war events between the !Gamiñun and colonial authorities. He also stated that his father always insisted that the first war between German forces and the !Gamiñun had taken place in 1896. He also spoke about the incident of the goat which led to the death of Gaob Jan Abraham Christian in 1903 as being the second phase of the war against German colonialism. He stated that this was the second time in which soldiers crossed the River into the Northern

---

<sup>120</sup> SMA, Interviews conducted by author and Casper Erichsen with Alwina and Hans Petersen, Gibeon, June 2005.

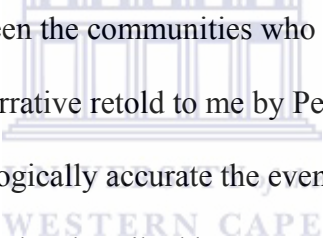
<sup>121</sup> SMA, Interview conducted by author with Gaob Rev. Hendrik Witbooi, Windhoek, August 2004.

<sup>122</sup> See Chapter Four for a discussion on these graves memorialized at the Heroes Day held annually in Gibeon, southern Namibia.

<sup>123</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Timotheus Morris, OHP, Warmbad, 24 June 2007.



Cape and re-crossed to fight again in southern Namibia. During the early 1900s in the war campaigns refugees were driven over the border by the Germans. Balie explained that the reason why the refugees fled to the Northern Cape was because the Germans were ' 'n wrede nasie' and violently expelled women, children and the elderly across the River. The refugees were relocated at Kinderle near Steinkopf. When nearly a hundred refugees died because of the climate and lack of provisions, the Catholic missionaries assisted and accommodated them at Matjieskloof near Springbok. Balie also described how the refugees worked on copper mines in the region. He also recalled the involvement of the community in the war in 1915 and their resistance in 1922. As such he expressed an understanding of violence in the region as a continuum.<sup>124</sup>



The various periods of wars between the communities who lived in southern Namibia and the Germans was confirmed by the narrative retold to me by Petrus Gertjies in Pella. Although the dates were not always chronologically accurate the events that he described were paralleled by Balie's narrative. He also described how Morris and Marenga were the popular leaders of the revolt in Namibia against the Germans. He said that during battle Morris usually plundered all the German patrols whereas Marenga always allowed a witness to go back to the German troop to tell them his whereabouts and that he was still fighting. He also stated that the Germans could not believe that a small army of men could fight them and that the soldiers from southern Namibia knew the terrain and were adept at guerrilla warfare. He stated that during the war a Catholic pastor was charged to negotiate peace with the soldiers. He was probably referring to Father Malinowski who was charged by the German army to negotiate peace terms with Marenga. When the war was over, eighty rifles were handed in, however some of the soldiers were not convinced by the peace terms where only they had to

---

<sup>124</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Abraham Balie, 20 August 2009.

hand in their rifles. In light of this Morris and Marenga, with some of their soldiers and several people in tow, fled over the !Garib River. Morris' people headed towards Steinkopf and Marenga's people moved to Riemvasmaak.<sup>125</sup> Gertjies said that other families such as the Swartboois, Cloetes, Booyens and Botes moved from Pella to Concordia. Soon after peace was signed, the Germans broke the treaty agreements whereupon the leaders were placed in kraals and prisons. The Germans continued with the war, and the leaders could not retaliate because they were imprisoned. Gertjies briefly described that his ancestors were Herero, and were often described as Damara,<sup>126</sup> who were enslaved by Jonker Afrikaner during the wars in central Namibia, and that they had ended up in the Cape Colony as a result of these wars. His description of the war events also gave evidence of a multi-ethnic war in southern Namibia.<sup>127</sup>



Maria Augus who was born along the !Garib River said that she heard that many German troops came up from the River into Namibia during the war. The Nama soldiers were aware of the positions of these troops and waylaid them. She said that besides Marenga and Morris who were brave soldiers there were other soldiers such as Oupa Leilab and //Aisab who were well known in the narratives of the war in the region. These soldiers fought in places such as Devenishputs, Warmbad, Ramansdrift, Sandfontein and Daberas. Many graves of German

---

<sup>125</sup> See Martin Legassick, 'The Peopling of Riemvasmaak and the Marengo Rebellion', Institute for Historical Research, South African and Contemporary History Seminar, University of the Western Cape, 25 August 1998, for a discussion on the history of the Riemvasmaak community.

<sup>126</sup> In southern Namibia, descendants of Herero who migrated there during wars between the Nama and Herero for example were/are named Oorlam Damara. Also in 'Terms used in the text' in a booklet, *Land Claims in Namaqualand*, Surplus People Project, Cape Town, 1995, 108, 'Damara' who live in the Northern Cape are defined as 'People of Herero, Khoikhoi and San extraction who lived in Namibia. Some fled south across the Orange River and found refuge at mission stations. Also see Gerald Philip Klinghardt, 'Missions and social identities in the lower Orange River basin, 1760-1998', PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, 2005, 204-13 for definitions and uses of the identity 'Damara' in the Northern Cape; and *Thirstland Epic: Heroic Struggle of Pioneer Missionaries in Namaqualand*, Trans Oranje Drukkers, Upington, 11 for similar usage in the narrative. For oral history of the war in south-east Namibia see John J. Katzao, 'The Armed Response to the German attack at Köes, 1904: The armed response by the Katzao and Rukamba in collaboration with the Veldschoendraers and Plaatjie people and others', African Studies Collection, University of Cape Town, 2005.

<sup>127</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Petrus Gertjies, Pella, 28 July 2010.

and Nama soldiers which she saw were located along the !Garib River.<sup>128</sup> Gertjies also spoke of the many graves that he had seen and those of Nama soldiers which were located close to his garden. He stated that in the war history of the region only the Boers and Germans were mentioned in books written by the church administration.<sup>129</sup> When the !Gami≠nun and other communities were mentioned in history books, they were only referred to as criminals, murderers and heathens.<sup>130</sup> A paragraph from a widely read booklet funded by the Springbok Lodge and Restaurant, titled *Thirstland Epic*, demonstrates his argument. The first paragraph of the booklet reads,

Pella was originally founded in 1814 by Christian Hottentots driven out of Warmbad in South West Africa by the activities of the notorious Jager Afrikaner. The London Missionary Society named the place after the ancient town in Palestine...Although the London Missionary Society could not endure the sufferings and privations of the barren wilderness for long, others came. But the Bushmen of a generation ago were a fierce people and they did not suffer the missionaries to stay at Pella unmolested...Unrestrained the savages now ran wild and Pella was plundered.<sup>131</sup>

Martha and Monica Basson retold the details of the battles which occurred in the area and named the Nama and German Generals and Commandants of the war as well. Some of the names of these leaders do not appear in the official war record. They named the leaders as Jakob Marenga, Abraham Morris, Jacobus Christian, Eduard Morris, /Amideb, !Oasab, Jan Berend, Simon Kooper, Willem //Aiseb and Xurob. They recalled in detail the incidents of the war such as the war of the goat which led to the !Gami≠nun resistance to German colonialism in 1903. Martha Basson at first hesitated because she could not remember the name of the woman and son who had travelled with the goat into Warmbad. This was a

---

<sup>128</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Maria Augus, OHP, Warmbad, 24 June 2007.

<sup>129</sup> In several interviews in the Northern Cape the narrators referred to a book written about the Pella Mission and the region titled, *Thirstland Epic: Heroic Struggle of Pioneer Missionaries in Namaqualand*, Trans Oranje Drukkers, Upington.

<sup>130</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Petrus Gertjies, Pella, 28 July 2010.

<sup>131</sup> *Thirstland Epic: Heroic Struggle of Pioneer Missionaries in Namaqualand*, Trans Oranje Drukkers, Upington, 1. See pages 11-2 for a short description of the colonial war.

remarkable example of recall and showed that even they knew these names but could not summon them at the time of the interview.

There was a mythological characteristic in the details of the narration about the incident that sparked a Nama-German engagement in south-east Namibia. They said that ‘when the Germans approached the Gaob, the Nama women took the lids of pots to defend themselves and the guards aimed to shoot but the guns did not fire. The Gaob then asked them why they attempted to shoot. They answered that they were fighting to protect the Gaob. The Gaob said that “only if I am shot will you have a reason to fight”. After the German soldier shot the Gaob, the rifles that did not want to fire suddenly shot the German soldiers.’<sup>132</sup> Their narration of this incident of the war corresponds with the narrative of the same incident told to me by Rev. Willem Konjore in 2004 and retold by Councillor Rooi at a public commemoration at Warmbad in 2008.<sup>133</sup> The written account by Horst Drechsler in, *Let Us Die Fighting*, lacks the detail that these informants reveal in their stories. The incident is recalled in the same pattern in the Blue Book as well which contrasts with the written record by Drechsler.<sup>134</sup>

In the Lichtenecker recordings conducted in 1930, one of the informants stated that he had suffered, *'Duits //aeba xu Buri //aeb //a'*, ‘from the German time until the time of the

---

<sup>132</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Martha and Monica Basson, OHP, Warmbad, 24 June, 2007.

<sup>133</sup> SMA, Interview conducted by author with Rev. Willem Konjore, Windhoek, August 2004; SMA, fieldwork notes, ‘Centenary event in remembrance of the late Captain Jan Abraham Christian and the unveiling of the sepulchral stone in honour of Commandant Jakob Marenga’, 25 October 2008.

<sup>134</sup> Rev. Willem Konjore, interviewed in August 2004 for my MA thesis, ‘Toa Tama !Gams Ge’, 62-4. Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 107. Also the account of Jantje Izaak in *Words Cannot be Found: German Colonial rule in Namibia*, (Report of the Natives of South West Africa and their Treatment by Germany), compliments oral accounts that were conducted many years later, 161-2. See also John Masson’s comments in *Jakob Marengo: An Early Resistance Hero of Namibia*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2001, 19.

Boers'.<sup>135</sup> This continuum of violence, what Anthony Bogues refers to as the 'long duree of historical catastrophe', was also relayed in several interviews in southern Namibia.

Informants recalled German colonialism and in the same breadth retold some of their experiences during apartheid. As such, war against German colonialism and genocide was not fixed to a specific period or, an event, but was interwoven into the experiences, narratives and representations of later violent experiences. Furthermore various colonial governments were involved in the wars simultaneously and at different periods as described by interviewees, which also complicated the narratives of war. Balie for example narrated that !Gami≠nun refugees had fled to the northern Cape in 1896, and had been sent back over the border by the English government. Some of these refugees were tortured and others died at the hands of German forces. During the Smuts government, Abraham Morris led some forces as a scout against the Germans, after he had been promised that the !Gami≠nun would be given their land back that had been confiscated by the Germans. After the war was won by the Union government, the officials told Morris that they could not give his community their land back as they had already negotiated with the Germans. This apparently turned Morris into their worst enemy and led to the bitter resistance of his community during 1922 where two planes were sent to air bomb the community.<sup>136</sup> Balie states that there were stories that one of the planes had been shot down by Morris and another man by the name of Laberloth. There were many secrets during war and as a result this narrative is never told. The plane wreckage was apparently only removed in 1956, and he said that Namibians would be able to tell if the story

---

<sup>135</sup> The Lichtenecker recordings which I listened to and translated for Annette Hoffmann was documented in a transcript as 'Berliner Phonogramm Archiv, Lichtenecker Gotha, Cylinder 32, Topnaar Hottentott, Jan Roy, ca. 80 J. erzählt von alten Zeiten'.

<sup>136</sup> In a newspaper *Negro World* by the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), an article appeared which reported on the bombings on Warmbad by the South African government. The UNIA attempted to petition the League of Nations to take over the administration of the colonies from the German government. 'Christian Boers of South Africa use Aeroplanes to Bomb Hottentots', *Negro World*, 17 June 1922, 1, in Robert A. Hill (ed.), *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers: African for Africans, June 1921-December 1922*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1995, 605.

was true or not. He also stated that Morris was shot by a man named Prinsloo and was wounded in this battle. Morris told Jakobus Christiaan to shoot him dead so that the English and the Germans would not catch him alive. He however died before this was done. Balie said that Morris' last words, '*julle weet watter lot vir julle wag, so die oorlog gaan voort*', 'the struggle continues' were still the sentiments and words used by the ANC today.<sup>137</sup>

### ***Historical catastrophe***

.... I think of the old people who were killed even though they were begging them to spare their lives....<sup>138</sup>

The statement above by Klaas Swartbooi refers to reflection on traumatic events of the war and the way in which people who lived during these experiences may have felt when they were confronted with death. In the above statement Klaas Swartbooi imagines and reflects on the moment of violence during the war and empathises with the helpless elders. His inability to comprehend why people would do this to helpless people, other human beings is at the heart of the ways in which people attempt to understand traumatic experiences.<sup>139</sup> According to classic psychoanalysis, trauma is described as a deep wound inflicted on a person whose life was threatened. The person feels an overwhelming sense of helplessness during the act of violence and in its long term involuntary effects on the body.<sup>140</sup> The traumatic narratives as described through various interviews were of individuals who perceived the war in a specific way. These narratives were retold, or not, to later generations who themselves underwent a specific type of violence associated with the afterlives of colonialism and apartheid. The way

---

<sup>137</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Abraham Balie, Steinkopf, 20 August 2009.

<sup>138</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Klaas Swartbooi, OHP 06, Bethanie, 22 June 2007.

<sup>139</sup> Susan J. Brison, 'Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self', in Mieke Bal, Jonathan V. Crewe, Leo Spitzer (eds), *Acts of Memory: cultural recall in the present*, University Press of New England, Hanover, New Hampshire, 1999, 40;

<sup>140</sup> Carolyn Yoder, *The Little Book of Trauma Healing: When violence strikes and community security is threatened*, Good Books, Intercourse, Pennsylvania, 2005, 10; Susan J. Brison, 'Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self', 40; Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 2001, 41.

in which trauma is expressed by later generations is termed trans-generational trauma, a mode of transference of the deep wound of the traumatic event.<sup>141</sup> Yoder suggests that historical/culture trauma may be passed on even in the case where narratives were not transmitted.<sup>142</sup> Her analysis also describes the way in which trauma is passed on through sensorial forms in the body. This presents a way in which the persistence of the past is represented by descendants and communities of actors of the colonial war and locates the subjects of trauma in their socio-historical context.<sup>143</sup> What are the mechanisms through which this transference takes place and how does it manifest in later generations? How does this shape the narratives and other ways of representing the past, warrants further research.

Most of the trauma literature focuses on the responses of individuals to a specific event.<sup>144</sup> Classical psychoanalysis descriptions of trauma also present debilitating responses to violence in the process of narrating, such as that the persons who experienced trauma could not perceive the event as it took place because it was beyond their cognitive boundaries.<sup>145</sup> Also the traumatic event is described as being repressed by the persons who experienced the trauma. Furthermore the persons come to terms with trauma by either 'acting out' or 'working through', but in a manner that escapes the event from being transcended. These seem to be universal tropes of trauma which do not describe alternative responses to historical catastrophes. Brison states that the study of trauma shows that humans are 'relational',

---

<sup>141</sup> Carolyn Yoder, *The Little Book of Trauma Healing*, 13-4.

<sup>142</sup> Carolyn Yoder, *The Little Book of Trauma Healing*, 13-4

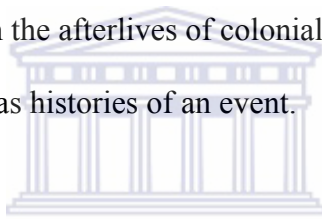
<sup>143</sup> Carolyn Yoder, *The Little Book of Trauma Healing*, 13-4; Brinton Lykes, 'A critical re-reading of post-traumatic stress disorder from a cross-cultural/community perspective', in Derek Hook and Lillian Eagle (eds.), *Psychopathology and Social Prejudice*, UCT Press, Landsdowne, 2002, 95.

<sup>144</sup> Susan J. Brison, 'Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self', 41; Brinton Lykes, 'A critical re-reading of post-traumatic stress disorder from a cross-cultural/community perspective', 93.

<sup>145</sup> Dori Laub, 'Bearing Witness or the Vicissitudes of Listening', in Shoshona Felman and Dori Laub (eds), *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*, Routledge, New York, 1992, 84-5.



because trauma was inflicted through persons.<sup>146</sup> Also individuals who are able to narrate these experiences do so through the empathic participation with other human beings. Brison also suggests that trauma narratives are a way in which persons are able to reconstruct their lives, although she states that she does not imply that the mastering of the self is possible through narratives but that ultimately these are attempts at reconstructing the self and community. Sylvia Wynter also notes drawing from the work of Fanon, that human beings are essentially 'sociogenic'.<sup>147</sup> Brinton Lykes also draws parallels in her Guatemalan and South African studies with the notion of a psychosocial reading of trauma. This analysis also describes how trauma can be better analysed through a critical engagement with the socio-political and historical contexts which characterise the violence.<sup>148</sup> However the everyday physical and structural violence in the afterlives of colonialism and apartheid has not been analysed with the same vigilance as histories of an event.



Following Bogue I use the notion of 'historical catastrophe' to problematise descriptions of historical events as bounded and that present narrow psychoanalytic responses to trauma.

Bogue writes that a historical catastrophe 'is not a singular one that we mark off with periodisation boundaries, including a prelude and an aftermath. Rather, a historically catastrophic event is one in which wounds are repeated over and over again'.<sup>149</sup> In this sense although colonialism, genocide and apartheid may be marked off through time these historical events, because of the nature of the violence, become lodged or embedded in the

---

<sup>146</sup> Susan J. Brison, 'Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self', 40; Brinton Lykes, 'A critical re-reading of post-traumatic stress disorder from a cross-cultural/community perspective', 94.

<sup>147</sup> Sylvia Wynter, '1492: A New World View', in Vera Lawrence Hyatt and Rex Nettleford (eds.), *Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas: A New World View*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington D.C. and London, 1995, 45.

<sup>148</sup> Brinton Lykes, 'A critical re-reading of post-traumatic stress disorder from a cross-cultural/community perspective', 93, 95-6.

<sup>149</sup> Anthony Bogue, *Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom*, University Press of New England, Lebanon, New Hampshire, 2010, 40.

present. It has also been described that narratives are used by people to explain their traumatic experiences and that these procedures of testimony and commemoration are aimed at redemption. Although I am inclined to accept that these narratives 'aim to liberate the silenced past', I argue that these narratives are instead retold as a testament to an unreconcilable past which is persistently located in the present. Although people are burdened by the recurring unsettlement they, in some cases, re-present traumatic events precisely because of the unreconciled nature and unconscious persistence of traumatic events.<sup>150</sup>

These narratives are often presented as a long duration of catastrophes that are unspeakable but that are spoken. Historical temporalities were therefore collapsed in the interviews. In several interviews the dates and timeline of wars and violent insurrections would be jumbled, which I was tempted to read as incorrect information but this spoke more about the many wars that had taken place over a lengthy period of time. It was not so important whether people were able chronologically to narrate the events of the war, but that the narrative structure was jumbled precisely re-presents the collapsing and overlapping of temporalities according to the recurrence of violent events. The complex and layered web of trauma through temporalities proves to be difficult to disentangle in a systematic way, also because individuals and groups respond to historical catastrophe in different ways which would affect narration. This places storytelling as an act of memory that recalls these historical catastrophes. Furthermore if we are to carefully follow Seremetakis' narrative concerning sensory perceptions and Bogue's argument about trauma as a wound inflicted 'upon and in the flesh' of human beings and therefore located in the body, the representation of historical

---

<sup>150</sup>Susan J. Brison, 'Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self', 39; Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory: legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe*, Berg, Oxford, 1999, 39-40.

narrative would therefore be situated in the gestures, adornment and re-enactments through the body.<sup>151</sup> This is a wider frame in which to view narratives, not only as analysis of language, although this is important, but where other forms of knowledge are presented through the body as storytelling. I also assert that narrative and commemoration are but one of the pathways towards an understanding of how historical trauma was re-enacted in Northern Cape and southern Namibia.

In Warmbad Monica Basson asked my colleague to switch off the camera before she recalled a story about a woman named Sara Snewe of Warmbad. She hesitated and told me that she felt that some events of the war were too awful to speak about on camera. Martha Basson, who assisted in the narration, told her not to hide the information because it was part of history. Monica briefly paused and told us about Sara Snewe, who was pregnant and lived with German soldiers during the war. Monica said,

.... she fled from them back to her people. As revenge they... She had two scarves on. Yellow and black were important to us. She had a black scarf underneath and a yellow tied around the edges of the head. And while running the top scarf fell, and the other people told her, "Sara leave your scarf, Sara come, don't go back". And the people told us, that while she bent down, in that moment when she bent down, the soldiers were near and they caught her. Martha Basson interjected, 'she was impregnated by the Germans!'. 'Then they caught her and said that she left them and that she was a spy. Then they shot her and then they made sure'. Martha Basson interrupted and exclaimed, 'they cut her stomach open!'... they operated her to make sure it was their baby, that it was a German baby that she was carrying. They buried the child and left her there. Are you recording this?!<sup>152</sup>

Monica Basson hesitated to tell us this incident but Martha Basson insisted that the story had historical significance. She conceded but before she spoke tears welled-up in her eyes. She felt it was a particularly harsh story to retell in an interview setting. The narrative event

---

<sup>151</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 1-17; Anthony Bogues, *Empire of Liberty*, 39-40, Susan J. Brison, 'Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self', 39-49; Carol A. Kidron, 'Sensorial Memory: Embodied Legacies of Genocide', in Frances E. Mascia-Lees (ed.), *A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., West Sussex, United Kingdom, 2011.

<sup>152</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Martha and Monica Basson, OHP 2, Warmbad, 24 June 2007.

shows that people deal with trauma in different ways. Whereas Monica Basson was hesitant and used language that was sensitive, Martha Basson often blurted out the stories using direct descriptions. Although the incident had happened more than a hundred years ago, the way in which the narrators retold the events was as if they had happened yesterday. They pointed towards the positions where the incident had occurred and even explained where the graves of the woman and the baby were located.

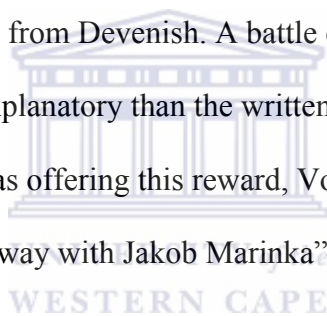
The interview situation showed that people were wary of revealing these types of stories of the war especially because of the nature of these incidents. The narrators also may have felt too vulnerable when they disclosed certain information because they did not really know us and did not know what other uses of the information they transmitted. It may have been the case that Monica had heard the story with her family or had only told it in private with family members who were there to protect her and had not relayed it to a public audience before the interview. In their particular interview it was easier for them to speak about battle formations, fighting sequences and sites of war. This may have been easier because these were the types of narratives also usually relayed in public at war memorials in Warmbad.

One of the recurring traumatic story motifs during the research in both southern Namibia and the Northern Cape was that of grave robbing and the exporting of heads to Germany by German officials and soldiers during the war.<sup>153</sup> It was retold in interviews that the burial ritual of specific leaders was conducted in a way so as to safeguard their bodies from pillage and so that they could be considered good deaths during the war. The story of how Gaob Hendrik Witbooi was buried was elaborately detailed by Hans #Eichab, and also performed

---

<sup>153</sup> For more discussion on these themes at commemorations in southern Namibia and at the 'Repossession ceremony' in Berlin in September 2011 see Chapter Four and Five.

at public memorials of the /Khowese in Gibeon on several Heroes Day events. In 2008 a similar story motif was retold by Rev. Konjore. However this time the burial was that of Commandant Jakob Marenga and his wife who died in South Africa. A story which conveyed that the German officials in cooperation with local farmers attempted to capture Jakob Marenga and place his head in a glass jar was described by the Bassons in Warmbad. Martha Basson also spoke about the cruelties of the war such as when a farmer by the name of Christian Devenish was paid £150 to bring the heads of Abraham Morris, Jacob Marenga and Jacobus Christian to German officials for shipping to Germany. According to Basson ‘he had glass containers. If these soldiers were found alive they would be sent overseas but if dead their heads were to be exported to Germany in these glass containers. When Jacob Marenga heard about this he took 300 oxen from Devenish. A battle ensued after this incident’.<sup>154</sup> The account of this episode is more explanatory than the written account. In Drechsler’s version he merely writes that, ‘...as well as offering this reward, Von Burgsdorff managed to find “an enterprising Boer who...will do away with Jakob Marinka”’.<sup>155</sup>



In Pella the April women also recalled how officials wanted to collect the head of Jakob Marenga.<sup>156</sup> Gertjies, who I interviewed with the Pella women, also recalled that when Abraham Morris died his grave was ridden over by goats so that officials would not know the whereabouts of his grave.<sup>157</sup> On the other hand Balie relayed in Steinkopf that Morris died after the resistance of 1922 and was buried in the Steinkopf area. After some of the men had been captured, they were forced to show the English soldiers Morris' grave. Balie said that the elders reported that they took away his head.<sup>158</sup> Amongst the !Ama a story is retold about

---

<sup>154</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Martha and Monica Basson, OHP 2, 24 June 2007

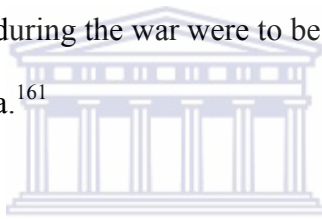
<sup>155</sup> Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 179. He quotes a letter from Von Burgsdorff to Leutwein.

<sup>156</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Magriet April. Sarah April and Sophie Basson, Pella, 28 July 2010.

<sup>157</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Petrus Gertjies, Pella, 28 July 2010.

<sup>158</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Abraham Balie, Steinkopf, 20 August 2009.

the beheading of Gaob Cornelius Fredericks.<sup>159</sup> More importantly this narrative was placed alongside others in historical narratives of communities and was a significant symbolic narrative of the war. The beheading of people and exporting of body parts resurfaces in the oral history in different sites at specific temporalities. Gaob Manasse !Noreseb of the Kai//Khaun was also wounded in the only battle fought between his forces and the Germans in eastern Namibia near Aminuis in 1905. His body on internment was said to be without a head, described by interviewees to probably have been removed by German authorities.<sup>160</sup> That the two traditional leaders of the !Aman and Kai//khaun had anticipated the identification and repatriation of the heads of leaders, of their communities during the colonial war, was retold in 2011 in a bus in Berlin en route to Charitè Hospital where the heads of Nama and Herero taken during the war were to be officially handed over to the delegates to take home to Namibia.<sup>161</sup>



Some interviewees described incidents of terror, and in the same breath explained how benevolent German settlers were as well. Klaas Swartbooi in his interview spoke about the harsh treatment of the Germans towards Nama people in the region, but also said that the Germans supplied people with food.<sup>162</sup> At first I thought this was extraordinary to say that the Germans used to terrorise people but also provided food. In a diary entry Winifred Hoernlé described a trip with a German doctor Karle in 1922 who compared the German and South African administration of the country. He stated that the indigenous people were given food and clothes during German occupation and that they were poorer during the South African

---

<sup>159</sup> SMA, Shark Island address by Chief Dawid Frederick, 'Statement on 100th Commemoration of Chief Cornelius Frederick, traditional Chief of the !Aman clan who was beheaded by the German colonial forces', 16 February 2007, 2, 3.

<sup>160</sup> NAN, AACRLRS 065, Interview conducted by Markus J. Kooper with Abraham Jager at Hoachanas, September 2004.

<sup>161</sup> Anne Poiret, 'Namibia: The Second Reich's Genocide' (film), Quark Productions, France, 2011.

<sup>162</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Klaas Swartbooi, OHP 06, 22 June 2007

era because they were given money which they had no use for.<sup>163</sup> Even though both accounts of German practices in southern Namibia are factual, the juxtaposition of these details was obscure. The statements in Hoernlé's diary were paternalistic, however they described the various practices of colonialism that at first sight may appear to be benevolent but have to be read in the context of colonial domination. Although Swartbooi did not say which period he was referring to I reflected on the idea of how small stock farmers received food rations or money from settlers. These were stories which recalled not the benevolence of farmers per se but the power relations and Swartbooi addressed these issues also.

Lukas Afrikaner also spoke about German atrocities and then stated that Germans brought the church to the people. His narration was then followed by an episode where the missionaries conspired with German soldiers. An old man from Maltahöhe told him about an incident where people in a church were shot by German soldiers while praying.<sup>164</sup> These double narrations were perhaps ways in which these informants made sense of events during colonialism. Through the process of narration the narrator explores and reflects on various aspects of the past so the narrators do not only view the violence of the war but also relate the experiences of the afterlives of violence, when Germans had settled in Namibia and when their grandparents had worked for Germans. These unreconciled narratives through the different periods in colonial history were presented by narrators when they spoke about heinous crimes perpetrated by German soldiers and then explained how German artisans taught them various skills.<sup>165</sup> The issues raised were probably an interpretation, 'a making sense' of colonial violence amidst everyday life.

---

<sup>163</sup> Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt, Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland*, 124.

<sup>164</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Lukas Afrikaner, OHP 09, 20 June 2007.

<sup>165</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Alwina and Hans Petersen, OHP, Gibeon, 20 June 2007.



*'Namas praat nie uit nie': Silences in the afterlives of violence*<sup>166</sup>

Although war narratives were recalled through interviews and commemorations there were also stories that were excluded. These silences in narration may be attributed to a range of circumstances. I have already indicated that the survivors of the war may not have been able to transmit their experiences to subsequent generations through narratives because of the trauma associated with their experiences. Besides the vicissitudes of recalling a traumatic event there were structural processes that may have affected/prevented what could be conveyed after an event. Silences in oral historical narratives were also attributed to repressive state machinery such as in the afterlives of colonial wars and apartheid. Practices of genocide, torture and terror were instituted during German colonisation and the South African occupation, which resulted in complex layers of silences. A dominant discourse in the community about the war may also have caused other stories often untold to be considered less important for narration. Also the current framing of the national reconciliation discourse in Namibia, reconciliation without any interrogation, debate and redress for the heinous crimes committed during colonisation and apartheid, engendered silence.

One of the interviewees in the OHP told us that we should speak to an old woman whom she pointed out was sitting in the sun at her house. Upon reaching her house my aunt, who was present, went inside the house and spoke to the old woman. She refused to speak to us and my aunt stated that people were suspicious and afraid of speaking out because in the past the South African army, police and intelligence were often deployed to the region and people still

---

<sup>166</sup> The title is a quote from Calitz Cloete who we interviewed in Steinkopf in August 2009. The title is also adapted from a quote from Jacques Depelchin who wrote that 'Among those who have suffered enslavement, cultural asphyxiation, religious persecution, gender, race and class discrimination and political repression, silences should be seen as facts. A matter of psychoanalysis, this statement would horrify historians who worship concrete tangible facts'. Jacques Depelchin, *Silences in African History*, 3.

felt that they would be persecuted.<sup>167</sup> Another potential interviewee in Gibeon agreed to speak to us about the war but later informed us that he would only speak to us if we gave him reasons why the !Gami≠nun were forcefully relocated to the Gibeon district during the reserve policy, and whether they could get their land back. This person's family had probably been relocated to the Gibeon area from south-east Namibia during the Odendaal Plan. Seeing us as potential intermediaries to an unresolved event in the past he refused to speak about the colonial war without referring to a process which he experienced during apartheid which for him paralleled the experience of German colonialism.

Willem Boois, whose grandparents had fled to the Northern Cape during the war, also mentioned that the elders did not have the freedom to openly narrate the war because they lived under the tyranny of the South African government. He says that they did not want to tell the children for fear that they, in turn would talk about these things to other people and say, 'My grandmother, or grandfather told me this and that'.<sup>168</sup> This sentiment was echoed on several occasions during the interviews in the Northern Cape also. Calitz Cloete of Steinkopf mentioned several times that some of the knowledge of the war had died with the old people because, '*die Namas praat nie uit nie*' or the 'Namas do not speak out'.<sup>169</sup> In the interview with his uncle, Abraham Balie, this point was described as being the result of persecutions by officials. Balie stated that while he was young he could not mention that he was related to Abraham Morris because officials terrorised them because they suspected that another leader would carry on the war from amongst them.<sup>170</sup> Timotheus Morris of Warmbad, a grandson of Abraham Morris, said that when he was a child, they would hear about the war when they

---

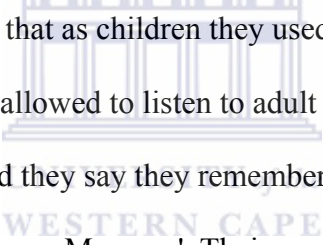
<sup>167</sup> The fact that there was an intense military presence in Gibeon during apartheid was confirmed in another interview with Oupa Hans Petersen, NAN, AACRLS 196, OHP 03, 20 June 2007.

<sup>168</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Willem Boois, OHP 09, 22 June 2007.

<sup>169</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, comment made by Calitz Cloete, Steinkopf, 19 August 2009.

<sup>170</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Abraham Balie, Steinkopf, 20 August 2009.

played close to elders but were never told stories of the war. He also relayed that when he was a teenager, he used to dance and sing for tourists near the coaches in Karasburg. One day a stranger asked him what his name was. When he told the man his surname, he left the coach and attempted to follow him. Morris ran to where his father worked and told his father what had happened. His father beat him and told him never to mention his surname to strangers because the English government still searched for his grandfather's head. He asked his father about the war but was told that that these kinds of stories were not fit for children to hear and that when he got older, there would be other elders who would tell him the story. Morris also realised that his father did not know much about the war because he was also a child during the war.<sup>171</sup>



In Pella the April mothers told me that as children they used to hear their elders speak about the war but that children were not allowed to listen to adult conversations. They would however pick up certain names and they say they remembered the name 'Marenga'. They would play games and call out, 'we are Marenga'. Their parents admonished them when they heard the game that they played and told them never to say the name 'Marenga' again because they would be in trouble if the authorities heard them. They never understood the full extent of the war narrative but it was instilled in them that it was a forbidden topic.<sup>172</sup>

In interviews and conversation with people in the Northern Cape, a deep violence was subtly expressed. These were tied up with the use of Nama as a language in everyday use. Frans Jano said that because hardly anyone spoke Nama in Matjieskloof he often spoke to the rocks

---

<sup>171</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Timotheus Morris, OHP, Warmbad, 24 June 2007.

<sup>172</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, April, Pella, July 2010.

when he took his walks in the veld.<sup>173</sup> Other interviewees stated that they were discouraged from speaking Nama when they attended school and that this was a trend in the towns where they lived as it was considered an inferior language. In some cases their parents did not teach them Nama for fear that their children would be taunted at school. Although in language use, a unique mixture of Nama and Afrikaans was evident during the interviews and in conversations, it was evident that some interviewees were hesitant to express themselves in Nama, whereas others said that they had forgotten the language which they had spoken when they were younger.<sup>174</sup> How does one transmit narratives of the past in a society that continuously discriminates against you because of the language you speak? What is the cumulative impact of this deep violence on the structures of narration and how does this affect the way in which we think about the forms in which traumatic historical narratives were transmitted? These examples point to ways which silence is continuously engendered in narration, which continues to have profound effects. It explains how people adapted their narratives in second languages and also expressed their history in multiple forms which included extra-linguistic structures.<sup>175</sup>

### ***Linking the legacies of loss, oppression and an attempted annihilation of a people***

The oral narratives of the colonial war in southern Namibia and the Northern Cape, South Africa ultimately showcased how knowledge became embedded in the description of

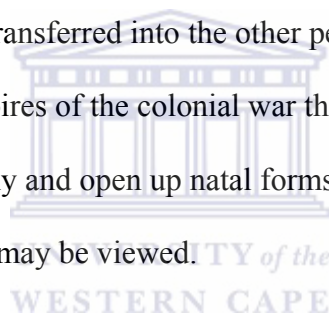
---

<sup>173</sup> SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Frans Jano, Matjieskloof, 16 August 2009.

<sup>174</sup> Over the past several years through community initiative and with the support of the Department of Education Nama (Khoekhoegowab) is being taught in the primary schools in the Northern Cape mainly by Nama teachers from southern Namibia. During the research process in the region we visited two schools, Ferdinand Brecher Primary School in Steinkopf and the Pella Roman Catholic Primary School where we sat in and listened to Nama lessons as they were being conducted by teachers from Namibia. See SMA, Northern Cape Photographs and Video Footage, Steinkopf, August 2009, Pella, July 2010. See Tara Turkington, 'Resurrecting the Nama Tongue', *Mail and Guardian*, 13 May 2005, <http://mg.co.za/print/2005-05-13-resurrecting-the-nama-tongue>, accessed on 17 September 2012.

<sup>175</sup> See SMA, interview with Paul Swartbooi, Northern Cape Interviews, Steinkopf, 20 August 2009 for a unique poetic expression of loss of heritage in Northern Cape Afrikaans. Also see *Eland Nuus*, 'Borrelende Fontein van Kruikennis', 6-20 March 2009, in which Swartbooi presents knowledge of medicinal herbs as other forms in which historical narratives were passed on.

historical processes in the region. These traditions of narration were in turn affected by defining events in these specific communities. So although we can speak of a transnational experience and narration of the colonial war which ultimately breaks with the notion of bounded communities and nation-states, there were still particular historical trajectories that created unique ways in which these historical processes were understood in each of these small communities, clans and families in the region. The impact of these on the types of narratives recalled would have to be carefully assessed. It is important to note that these oral narratives did not only relate to storytelling but also to other performance repertoires which created unique ways of preserving, reinventing, reinvigorating histories and the present. This was dynamically argued by Abdullah Ibrahim when he stated that the oral storytelling tradition in southern Africa was transferred into the other performance repertoires.<sup>176</sup> It is in these myriad performance repertoires of the colonial war that may shift the framework of the war in conventional historiography and open up natal forms in which this turning point in the colonial history and its afterlives may be viewed.



Aspects of the recollections of individuals were often showcased at festivals where these communities not only re-enacted and created identities around heroism and victories but also around struggle and persecution. In general these histories were preserved by communities to attempt to understand the colonial past, for dialogue and a strengthening of social cohesion. It was at these festivals where a culmination of the re-enactments of identification, also represented in the everyday life of these individuals, was publically re-presented. These forms of identification which have shifted over the different historical trajectories in the region, southern Namibia and Northern Cape, often formed an overarching frame through

---

<sup>176</sup> Abdullah Ibrahim, Chris Austin, Gill Bond, Abdullah Ibrahim: 'A Brother with Perfect Timing' (film), Maverick Film Works, London, 1987.

which these narratives were recalled.<sup>177</sup> In southern Namibia and Northern Cape identities entangled with a particular historical trajectory have been framed and re-enacted over several decades. These identities are indeed complex, and have been shaped by internal and as well as external political, economic and violent forces.<sup>178</sup> Stuart Hall reminds us that, 'precisely because identities are constructed within, not outside discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies'.<sup>179</sup> The historical genealogy of some of the ethnicities that were identified with in southern Namibia were characterised by the migration and settlement patterns of various ethnic communities. Many writers have suggested that these are colonial categories and that communities in southern Namibia were in fact shifting and reconstructed according to various exigencies. Yet even though this may be so, various communities identified and actively constructed specific ethnicities such as 'Nama' and 'Baster'. Some of the communities that are presently described as Nama migrated from the Northern Cape, what was known as Little Namaqua, from the late 18th Century and mid-19th Century. Other communities such as the /Hoa/ara and /Hai/khauan migrated from further south in the Western Cape in the 19th Century. In the early 18th century these communities from the Western Cape did not refer to themselves as Nama, but may have claimed other Khoe clan (!Hoas) allegiances.<sup>180</sup> Furthermore within the broad Nama ethnic framework, individuals identify with specific clan and family groups such as the Kai//khauan and

---

<sup>177</sup> Stuart Hall, 'Who needs 'identity'?', in P. du Gay, J. Evans, P. Redman (eds.), *Identity: A reader*, Sage Publications Inc., 2000, 15-30.

<sup>178</sup> See Martin Legassick, *The Politics of a South African Frontier: The Griqua, the Sotho-Tswana and the Missionaries, 1780-1840*, Basler Afrika Bibliographien, Basle, Switzerland, 2010, 1-60, for an in depth discussion on the constructions of multi-ethnic communities in the Northern Cape based on research conducted in missionary archives. Legassick refers to various communities such as the Griqua(≠Garikhoehoe), but also the Nama and Kora (!Korana), and their multi-ethnic compositions in the 18th Century. He also writes about the Sotho-Tswana formations and their interactions, trade, intermarriage and conflict with Khoe communities in the Northern Cape.

<sup>179</sup> Stuart Hall, 'Who needs 'identity'?', 7.

<sup>180</sup> National Museum of Namibia in collaboration with Wilfred H.G. Haacke, 'The Nama of Namibia: A Guide to an Exhibition', Windhoek, 2006/2007.

!Gami≠nun. The same is the case for the ethnicities mentioned above. Nama as an ethnic category was highly contested during apartheid social engineering in Namibia.<sup>181</sup> There were several cases in southern Namibia where traditional authorities demanded to be named 'Nama' and not 'Coloured'.<sup>182</sup> Ethnic identification was as much embedded in previous traces, frames and constructions of ethnicity as it was based on the re-enactment of new socio-political and economic allegiances and reconstitutions.

Several writers have stated that there was a revival of a KhoeSan and/or Nama identity in South Africa during the 1990s, and that these movements were based on earlier 19th and 20th century ethnic re-emergence.<sup>183</sup> There were various paths in which this revivalism has progressed. On the one hand the revivalism was seen as an impetus of the democratically held elections in South Africa in the early 1990s. Other reconstructions were seen as narrowly framed in colonial discourse of a third racial category, while other movements were more inclusive of other ethnicities and challenged colonial racial hierarchies, categories and were grounded in an African centred identification.<sup>184</sup> 'Nama' revivalism was seen by some writers who wrote about the re-emergence of ethnic identity in the Richtersveld as a 'carefully

---

<sup>181</sup> Reinhart Kössler, *In Search of Survival and Dignity: Two traditional communities in southern Namibia under South African rule*, 86-91.

<sup>182</sup> Reinhart Kössler, *In Search of Survival and Dignity: Two traditional communities in southern Namibia under South African rule*, 90-1.

<sup>183</sup> Henry C. Jatti Bredekamp, 'Defining Khoisan Identities in Contemporary South Africa: A Question of Self-Identity?', Department of History and Institute for Historical Research of the University of the Western Cape, South African and Contemporary History Seminar, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, 9 May 2000, 1-15. Bredekamp writes that the scientific term Khoisan was appropriated for self-identity by various individuals in South Africa. It is interesting to note that no individual in Namibia, who claims 'Khoie' or 'San' ancestry claims or identifies with this composite term. For a discussion the theoretical implications of identity formation and Khoisan revivalism see, Michael Besten, 'Khoisan Revivalism and the Limits of Theory: A Preliminary Assessment', South African and Contemporary History Seminar, 3 October 2000, 1-17. Also see Peter Carstens, *Always Here, Even Tomorrow*, for the legal framework on the racial categories as enacted by the South African government which affected communities in the Northern Cape. Although the apartheid legal framework from 1910 up until 1950 attempted to reframe identities as 'Coloured' within the matrix of various ethnic categories, internal social differentiation was broadly based on the ethnic categories of Nama, Griqua, Koranna, Damara, Herero, Baster and San identities. Carstens' work also looks at the perspectives of individuals on ethnic categories and their everyday responses to these delineations.

<sup>184</sup> Pumla Dineo Gqola, *What is slavery to me?: Postcolonial/Slave Memory in Post-apartheid South Africa*, Wits University Press, Johannesburg, 2010, 21-58.



controlled performance' of an identity enacted for the purposes of reclaiming some form of political clout in the policies on land redistribution in the Namaqualand region.<sup>185</sup>

It is however erroneous to state that these re-enactments of Nama ethnicity were staged in a manipulative sense and only re-emerged in the 1980s and 1990s. Steven Robins convincingly states that these re-enactments were articulations of a silenced memory and seemed ambiguous and belated precisely because of the violent nature in which these memories have lived.<sup>186</sup> Furthermore these enactments of specific ethnicities were based on constructions of identity inextricably linked to broad reclamation strategies which were embedded through various every day memory processes. I would also argue that the form in which these silences on ethnic identification were submerged and transformed through various individual and collective memory processes would precisely elicit a performative re-enactment. These performances were constructed through bodies and objects that project layers of historical depth which were reinvigorated at various spaces and temporalities. What seemed to be lost, resisted to be forgotten and was enacted at specific temporalities, as 'poesis, the making of something out of that which was previously experientially and culturally unmarked'.<sup>187</sup> These re-enactments were an antithesis to the notion of an annihilated people precisely because they represented serious attempts at reconstitution of livelihoods.<sup>188</sup>

---

<sup>185</sup> John Sharp and Emile Boonzaier, 'Ethnic Identity as Performance: Lessons From Namaqualand', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 20, Number 3, September 1994, 405-414.

<sup>186</sup> Steven Robins, 'Transgressing the Borderlands of Tradition and Modernity: Identity, Cultural Hybridity and Land Struggles in Namaqualand, 1980-94', in *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1, January 1997; Steven Robins, 'Silence in my father's house: memory, nationalism, and narratives of the body', in Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee, *Negotiating the Past: The making of memory in South Africa*, Oxford University Press, 1998, 128-9.

<sup>187</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 7.

<sup>188</sup> Pumla Dineo Gqola, *What is slavery to me?: Postcolonial/Slave Memory in Post-apartheid South Africa*, Wits University Press, Johannesburg, 2010, 40-9.

Gaos Anna Frederick described how the land that she lived in had been declared a reserve and that land expropriation was accompanied by a deterioration of cultural mores of communities during the South African era. She remarked that people should not only demand that the German government pay reparations but that the South African government should also be held responsible for further degenerating the socio-political and economic situation which had developed during German colonisation. Fredericks explained that,

.... the youth have been raised without education from generation to generation. The children should be given education. The people became very poor...It is necessary that these people help us because they damaged us so much...We do not have water, even to plant gardens that we can live off. We buy water so how can we plant like this. We need a way of containing the water in the river. Water is life. We also do not have proper houses that we can live in.<sup>189</sup>

When I asked about the form reparations should take in one interview the partner of the narrator interjected seeing that the interviewee was hesitant to answer, and stated that the bags, blankets and clothes that people lost during the war should be compensated. It may seem that he was listing plain examples for reparations but his list actually showed the magnitude of the loss of the people during the war and the near impossibility to list and recover the losses. Martha and Monica Basson retold how their great grandfather's cows had been taken by German soldiers for food supplies during the war. Their grandfather who lived on the South African side of the !Garib river, informed Bishop Simon of the Catholic mission at Pella about this incident. Bishop Simon apparently acted as if these cows belonged to him and sent their great-grandfather with a letter to the nearest German patrol station. The German soldiers took the notice and sent the request off to Germany. Their grandfather was later compensated for the cows taken. Martha Basson mentioned under her breath that those cows could still be bearing calves if the Germans had not taken them during the war. She

---

<sup>189</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Anna Frederick, OHP 05, June 2007.

repeated this statement again and Monica Basson warned her that she should not say this as she was being recorded.<sup>190</sup>

Rosina Rooi of Warmbad commented that monetary reparations would enable people in her community to develop themselves. She said that,

.... they can buy goats, sheep and cows. They can buy these things because they are poor! They have nothing and...If the Germans give the money then the leaders of the country should share it amongst the people that were affected by the war...If the people feel that they want to repair damages then I cannot stand against that. I will appreciate it...my longing is that if they want to do something good for the people affected by the war then they can give us livestock so that we can in that way develop ourselves. Or money so that we can buy electric power because we are living without electricity, we live in darkness here. As you came here you saw that the electricity is only available on one side of the village...my desire is that we get electricity so that we can live better here ....<sup>191</sup>

In another interview Lukas Afrikaner said that if he had the opportunity to sit and talk to Germans he would ask them why they came and took the land away from his people. He also said that he participated in discussions with a German government representative about compensation for the war framed under the rubric of a 'Special Initiative'. He described 'the meeting held in Gibeon in the old A.M.E. Church building with a representative of the German government from Windhoek which I also attended.'<sup>192</sup> In this meeting they spoke about the support that the German government through the 'Special Initiative' would give to communities which were affected by the war through funding for commemorations and other developmental programmes which were in the pipeline.<sup>193</sup> Karl Ahlers who represented the

---

<sup>190</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Martha and Monica Basson, OHP 02, 24 June 2007.

<sup>191</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Rosina Rooi, OHP 02, June 2007

<sup>192</sup> The German representative for the Namibian-German Initiative on Reconciliation and Development (IRD) was Mr. Karl Ahlers, whom I drove with from Windhoek to Gibeon to attend part of this meeting as a representative of the Museums Association of Namibia.

<sup>193</sup> Also concerted action based on redressing past injustice scarcely took place although some communities in central and southern Namibia have consistently demanded such redress especially after independence. The Ovaherero community, especially after the independence of the country, agitated the German government to acknowledge genocide perpetrated during the war and demanded reparations for war crimes. In light of these

'Special Initiative', stated that if money was given only to the groups affected by the war it would cause conflict with other communities in the country, thus all the communities in Namibia should benefit from the money paid by the German government. They compiled a list of necessities of the community but a decision was taken that all the Nama leaders would be consulted and would comment on this issue to compile a document before money was given to these communities. However it was said that the money would not be directly transferred to these communities but that the national government would be responsible to transfer these funds. 'That money has been sent or is still being sent.' He also added that,

We gathered here and said that we would build a monument on the foundations of Gaob !Nanseb's house. Close to the old police station we planned to build houses and plant grass for a soccer field. We decided to move Heroes Day that is normally held at the Gaob's house to this venue. This is what we discussed would happen when the money arrives. This discussion is quiet today. The Hereros received some benefits... The Under-Captain saw the place that was built for the Hereros... So we do not know how many times they will benefit and what are the benefits of these people that died in the war also. And we hear everybody on Damara/ Nama radio claiming that they were affected by the war also. So we do not know what is going to happen with this issue. And why are the Nama-speaking people standing back?... we were told that the money would come in 2005, but it is 2007 and the money has not arrived yet. Where do we begin? What do we do? Do we begin the deliberations afresh? ....<sup>194</sup>

To probe the question of material reparations a bit more, I asked the narrator whether money could really compensate for the events of the war, at which he answered:

Money is just money... death is another issue. Everybody may not benefit from the money once received. Maybe the benefit will only affect two or three communities, and all the communities that feel they were affected by the war will quest the German government for what they feel is necessary. The German

---

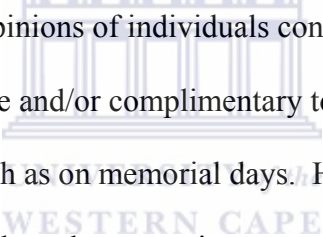
debates the German Minister, Wiezerick-Zeul apologised for the genocide committed by Germany at the commemoration in 2004. Following on from this apology, the Minister announced that Germany would establish a special initiative to pay affected communities and aid with cultural development over a certain number of years. This Initiative for Reconciliation and Development (IRD), also known as the 'Special Initiative', had presumptuously issued a statement that they would give communities affected by the war a package of N\$160 million.<sup>193</sup> When they realized that they had erred in their diplomacy, the organization hastily convened meetings with various traditional leaders such as at a consultation workshop in 2005 where Nama leaders came together in Keetmanshoop with German representatives of the IRD.<sup>193</sup>

<sup>194</sup>NAN, AACRLS 196, Lukas Afrikaner, OHP 04, Gibeon, June 2007

government may not be able to pay this amount as it will be too high. But that is their problem. They will have to comment on that from their side. But the money should come, or we should hear how much money it is and how this should be shared amongst the communities affected ....<sup>195</sup>

Klaas Swartbooi pointed at his surroundings and said,

We are still poor until today. We are supposed to be Independent... These houses were built during the time of the Boers... If you see in other places new houses have been built but not here... we do not receive the good things that other people receive really. I want to ask if you give these things (reparations) how will you give it? When the government distributes things we do not benefit, only certain places receive things and we later hear that the things were stolen. The poor people do not receive anything. We do not receive the things that the government distributes. How will you distribute these things (reparations) so that poor people can also benefit. What you should do is that if you want to give us poor people something deliver it where we stay, but once you entrust our leaders or our government to distribute, we do not receive anything. These are the things that we are used to.<sup>196</sup>



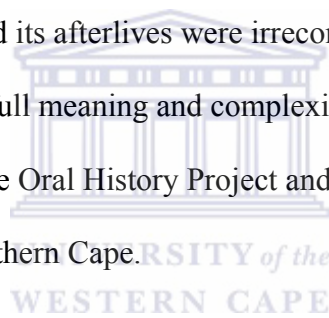
In the interviews the values and opinions of individuals concerning the colonial wars were recalled, and were often alternative and/or complimentary to the dominant narratives espoused in the public domain such as on memorial days. However some narratives were disjointed, fragmented and even silent about certain events of the war. This was the nature of narration that had been passed on in tumultuous histories which characterised this region. The burgeoning question in these narratives was how one addresses many years of devastating violence. All the interviewees shared memories of German colonisation and they all lived through apartheid, although these may have had different consequences and responses in southern Namibia and the Northern Cape respectively, thus the persistent comparison and reflection of these periods in their conversations.

---

<sup>195</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Lukas Afrikaner, OHP 04, Gibeon, June 2007.

<sup>196</sup> NAN, AACRLS 196, Klaas Swartbooi, OHP 06, June 2007.

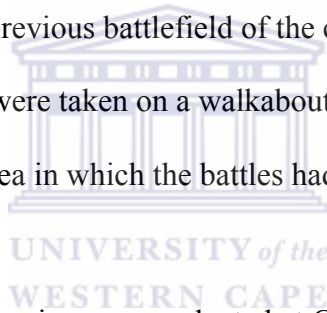
The term genocide as understood in its context of jurisprudence does not allow for an understanding of the attempted destruction of culture: language, arts, ritual, social, political and economic structures and the impact thereof in the afterlives of the generations thereafter. Narrow definitions of genocide followed by the linear narratives of reparations and reconciliation disengage much broader, complex descriptions and deep interrogations of colonial violence and its afterlives. It is clear from these interviews that violences of colonisation and apartheid were not strictly periodised, especially because many forms of violence during colonisation were embedded in the memory of these individuals. There were also re-enactments of this violence in their own lived experiences and this is evident from conversations about their own colonial experiences in the region. It was clear that even a century after, the colonial war and its afterlives were irreconcilable events and that it was difficult for people to narrate its full meaning and complexity in a forum such as the one which we were proposing with the Oral History Project and in subsequent interviews during short research projects in the Northern Cape.



## Chapter Four

### Dancing Horses and Graves: Rituals of history in southern Namibia

It was a summer morning in southern Namibia, the year was 2004. This was the 99<sup>th</sup> memorial year of the colonial war commemorated by the /Khowese community.<sup>1</sup> The stage was set below one of the mountain ridges in the area on a farm 49 kilometres north-east of Gibeon. The farm is known as Goamus, and it is said that Gaob Hendrik Witbooi had a base here during the war against the German military in the early 1900s. This was also a battlefield where Nama and German military had fought during the war in 1905. It was one of the few times that participants attended the annual commemorations outside of Gibeon, and indeed the first for many on this previous battlefield of the colonial war.<sup>2</sup> During the commemoration the participants were taken on a walkabout of the camp where Gaob Hendrik Witbooi used to reside, and the area in which the battles had taken place.



The year in which the memorial service was conducted at Goamus was commemorated as the centenary of the colonial war, signalling the beginning of the war in 1904. There were events held in places such as Ohamakari in central Namibia.<sup>3</sup> There were also public events that took place at particular times in various communities in Namibia that were not officiated by the government. These events were however included in the national memorial calendar beyond their regional localities. These events were paralleled by exhibitions in different towns in

---

<sup>1</sup> SMA, /Khowesen Heroes Day Programme, '99<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, /, 5-7 November 2004, Goamus, Gibeon District'.

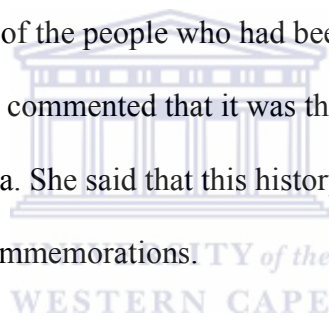
<sup>2</sup> The /Khowese community held a Heroes Day commemoration at Hornkranz in 1998.

<sup>3</sup> A conference was organised by the History Department of the University of Namibia titled, '1904-2004 - Decontaminating the Namibian Past' with paper presentations from descendants of the survivors of the colonial war and international scholars on the war, or topics closely related to colonialism and genocide.



Germany.<sup>4</sup> The national and international media attention also brought these activities from their local centres to the centre of the wider public heritage discourse.

One of the highlights at the memorial event in Goamus was a drama performance where several women relayed stories of the 'Khowesen Prisoners of War'.<sup>5</sup> This performance followed the battle scenes re-enacted by !Uri-kam horse riders and 'German' soldiers, in the open valley a short walking distance from the place where the participants had camped. At this stage several women were huddled together on the ground at the homestead, near a reconstructed traditional Nama mat hut. The women relayed, through speech acts using a microphone, how women, men and children had been deported to Togo and Cameroon. One of the women read out the names of the people who had been deported to West Africa. A participant who stood close to me commented that it was the first time that she had heard about the deportees to West Africa. She said that this history was not mentioned in all the years that she had attended the commemorations.



The public staging of the stories of women, children and men who had been deported to West Africa has seldom been relayed at these public commemorations. Many participants may have been told these stories by relatives, and for others, like the participant who spoke to me, this may have been the first time to hear of these events. At Goamus, the commemorative organisers not only emphasised the heroic struggles of the community, they also stressed the victims of war, which at this event were most strongly portrayed by women who spoke about

---

<sup>4</sup> An exhibition, 'Germany and Namibia: Memories of a Violent Past', was held at Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum für Völkerkunde in Cologne from the 7<sup>th</sup> of March to the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2004; and at the Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, Germany from the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2004 – 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2005. Another exhibition was opened at the National Art Gallery in Windhoek titled, 'Remember Namibia! Mission, Colonialism and the Struggle for Liberation', The United Evangelical Mission and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia, Archive and Museum Foundation, Wuppertal, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> SMA, 'Khowesen Heroes Day Program, 99th Anniversary', '(Part C): At the Festival Site – Historical Background: "Khowesen Prisoners of War", Goamus, 5-7 November 2004.

members of the /Khowese community who had been deported as prisoners of war. This emphasis served to include the colonial victimisation of this specific community within the rituals of national commemoration.

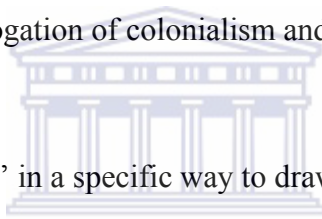
The actors who staged the performance in Goamus were a group of women from Gibeon, who had rehearsed the play before the commemorative event. The play was directed by an organiser, and negotiated and rehearsed between the actors. The play was supposed to represent the torturous events of the colonial war. During the rehearsals there were possibly sensory shifts during the various speech acts, as the experiences of the prisoners of the war were made real through the speech and actions of these women. While the play was enacted at Goamus at the public memorial, the participants were supposed to look at the actors as the 'survivors' of the war that were retelling their fate during the war, or at least as the bearers of the residues of this historical event. The participants were expected to empathise and imagine the ordeal of the prisoners of war. In this way the actors through their embodied performance provided a reflexive testimony to the deportations of prisoners of war as they acted this out in front of the participants. They were thus acting as witnesses to the harrowing ordeal of the people who experienced the war in this way.

I refer to these types of re-enactments during commemorations as 'rituals of history' because they produce re-enactments which draw on the symbolic resources and processes, albeit complex and ambiguous, in a community's history.<sup>6</sup> The performances represent the perspectives of the war as expressed by the play director and actresses/actors as recollected from their narratives of war. It also speaks to a sensory language through speech, song, bodily

---

<sup>6</sup> Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California, 1995, Part One; Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, PAJ Publications, New York, 1986, 75.

movement and dress of both the actors and the participants.<sup>7</sup> The performance presents a perspective, and is simultaneously a reflexive act, where the actors and audience are encouraged to remember and reflect on their collective past through the use of various symbolic embodiments.<sup>8</sup> It is these rituals that often resist presenting a master narrative of the war and these become sites where participants convey complex and ambiguous aspects of colonialism, resistance and the war events.<sup>9</sup> During some of these performances specific structures, ceremonies, are utilised to realise the ritual process.<sup>10</sup> Some of these ritual performances attempt to address the community's issues, conflicts and endeavour to alter these experiences of the participants, during and especially after the performance has been re-enacted.<sup>11</sup> This is not to say that this is a conclusive process but one that opens the opportunity for an ongoing interrogation of colonialism and its violence.



The commemoration was 'framed' in a specific way to draw attention to the genocidal aspects of the colonial war, to the extent that a participant commented that it was the first time she had heard about the deportations of prisoners of war at a commemoration. Because there were competing narratives of involvement in the colonial war of various communities during the national centennial commemorations, there was an attempt to bring to the fore the experiences of communities that had never before been attended to, in public. However beyond interpreting the theatrical display as a strategy to influence participants, the process also corresponds to the idea that various memories may be drawn from at specific occasions to suit present circumstances. Thus within the framework of the colonial war, various

---

<sup>7</sup> Nadia Seremetakis (eds.), *The Senses Still: Perception and memory as material culture in modernity*, Chicago University Press, 1994, 7.

<sup>8</sup> Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, PAJ Publications, New York, 1986, 81,94.

<sup>9</sup> Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, 28-9.

<sup>10</sup> Malidoma Patrice Somé, *Ritual: Power, Healing and Community*, Swan, Raven and Company, Portland, Oregon, 1993, 50.

<sup>11</sup> Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, 94; Malidoma Patrice Somé, *Ritual: Power, Healing and Community*, 43.

memories of the war may be recollected and represented in public at different times and spaces.<sup>12</sup>

The guest speaker at the event, the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Namibia, Dr. Wolfgang Massing, addressed the participants directly after the re-enactment of the battle scenes of the war by young men on horseback and the 'prisoners of war' demonstration by women at the Goamus event. Massing's statement was directed at the cooperation between the German government and communities that were affected by war, however not explicitly in the context of reparations in the aftermath of genocide. At the commemoration at Goamus community leaders such as Gaob Hendrik Witbooi also stressed cooperation with the German government to purchase and develop Goamus, and other places of shared historical significance and as sites of future commemoration of the colonial war. It was described that there was a potential to exploit the underground water and land of the area at Goamus for the benefit of surrounding communities.<sup>13</sup> This was mentioned in spite of the fact that this land was part of a privately owned farm. The memorial day on this farm can thus be seen as a symbolic precursor to attempts to reclaim land which formed part of communal land claimed by the /Khowese community in the early 1900s.<sup>14</sup>

### ***Ceremony and communal commemoration: performing anti-colonial resistance***

The public re-enactments of the events of the past in specific communities provide the framework on which knowledge of the histories of these communities has been represented for participants, by participants and gradually over the years for a wider public. There are

---

<sup>12</sup> Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, Lewis A. Coser (ed. trans), The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 50, 52; Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 1994, 5.

<sup>13</sup> Luqman Cloete, '99<sup>th</sup> Heroes Day Marked in the South', *The Namibian*, 9 November 2004.

<sup>14</sup> Reinhart Kössler, 'Political Intervention and the Image of History: Communal Memory Events in Central and Southern Namibia', in André du Pisani et al (eds.), *The Long Aftermath of War*, 386-8.

various resources that the community draws from and employs to recollect past events in public spaces ranging from burial rituals, horse riding guerrilla ambush techniques, hymns sung in German melodies framed in anti-colonial resistance undertones, battle sites of the colonial war, aesthetics of traditional costumes and material objects used in the homestead.<sup>15</sup> These commemorations are spaces where the narratives of the colonial war are performed and where socio-political and economic mobilisation is staged. Participants also recollect their migration routes, roles of the traditional leadership, kinship obligations, spiritual/religious mores and the various roles of men and women in the community.

The past is often recollected in this way if it is felt that there has been a break or rupture in the community, and if there have been moments of forgetting or silence. Relaying the events of the past is thus an attempt at bringing together aspects of the individual or community's past that is felt to be traumatic, fragmented, in disarray and muted. It is often the case that the communal events maintain broad narratives of the war over several years, these are often absorbed by individuals and households as memories of their community. Recalling the past in this sense is also about identity constructions of individuals in a community.<sup>16</sup>

Remembering is shaped through a strong investment of emotional feeling about a community's history. These recollections are the popularised narratives of the war, where specific leaders who are remembered represent their contemporary masses as well. Also specific spaces where memorials take place represent other settlements where the community used to reside. Graves that are tended to during these memorials represent other burial sites that have not been visited, and battlefields dramatically reproduced refer to those that are unknown. The various stages in the development of the community are seen through the

---

<sup>15</sup> Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance*, 4.

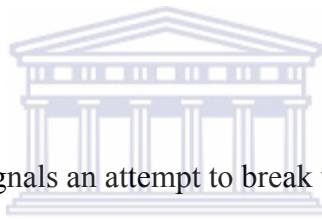
<sup>16</sup> Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance*, 9.

continuity of unity of purpose, preservation of culture and kinship ties, reverence of traditional kingship, religious fervour and anti-colonial resistance. These ceremonies are about the specific investments these communities have in traditional authority governance, the cohesion of the community, and the rights in land and resources.

Remembering the past, to re-emphasise, is a conscious process which at the same time of recalling involves a selective reading of the past according to present exigencies. Therefore only a particular narrative of the history of the community is presented. At different times there are particular parts of the narrative that are prominent, and inevitably others are silenced. There are thus specific political and ideological foundations in the specific themes emphasised, and those aspects of the past not revealed. The themes represented publically are largely organised by traditional leaders and certain prominent members of the community such as councillors of the traditional authorities who represent their communities' at most official ceremonies. As these individuals are vested with authority, and at times also finance the commemorations, they wield power in terms of the representations of the past at these public re-enactments. There are particular aspects which the leaders, councillors and other organisers of the festival emphasise, although there may also be conflict about which aspects of the past to portray, which reinforces and legitimises the status quo. Also the members of the community participating in these commemorations also share certain perspectives with the organisers, or derive their own meanings from the events.

However the stories and related investments about a certain event already have to be present and relevant for the community to collectively prepare and accept its narrative renderings. These images and information of the past that are used for these commemorative occasions have to be recognised by organisers and participants as 'authentic representations' of what is

considered their traditions. The knowledge presented is a negotiated merger of what particular organisers and participants deem is necessary to portray at a particular time in the growth of the community. Some of the aspects of the past presented are thought to be those that would unite the community. It is often the case that during the processes of organising and participating in these ceremonies, the cleavages around such concerns as local and national governance, economic development and religious affiliation are accentuated. It is exactly at these historical interstices that the vested interest of communities in the presentation of a particular history is evident. The cleavages are signs that point to much deeper issues at hand. The way in which the issues are presented in public is symbolic of other issues that may have been discussed for a long time, and the event is utilised to address these issues.<sup>17</sup>



Employing the past in this way signals an attempt to break with a linear progression of the community's history. It is to create a rupture and use the very elements of the communities' history of colonisation, through collaboration, violent rupture and resistance, and imagine a very different present and future.<sup>18</sup> It is an attempt by participants in the specific events to have an effect on the past by participating in ways that redirect the emotions, perspectives and intentions on the present in a retrospective manner. To hold public commemorations, erect monuments, plaques and symbolic tombstones, maintain the graves of ancestors and re-enact scenes of the past represent reorientations of the community's history in order to reinvigorate present struggles. By publically remembering the origins, traditional leadership lineage and activism in anti-colonial resistance and the liberation struggle is also to intervene in and emphasise the glossed over aspects of a community's past in order to effect recognition

---

<sup>17</sup> Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance*, 9.

<sup>18</sup> Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces*, 31



of its achievements. This is a way in which the community can constantly use the past to emphasise many beginnings and invent an array of possible destinies. Apart from stating that they are assembling fragmented aspects of their histories that are in disarray, these communities are also emphasising the continuities of specific aspects in the structures of their communities that have allowed for constructive, re-invigorating strategies of education, resistance and empowerment.<sup>19</sup>

The communal commemorations consist of ceremonies that recall various pasts of the community with an emphasis on the colonial resistance to German occupation in the late 1800s and genocidal war in the early 1900s. There is thus a particular practice of commemorating the colonial war in southern Namibia that is presented in highly stylised ceremonial performances. These ceremonies are formal gatherings where knowledge of the communities' past is enacted on various stages. Communal rituals are reproduced within these ceremonies. These rituals are a re-enactment of symbolic processes at significant moments for the purposes of reinforcing cohesion and stability of the community often during or after a calamity.<sup>20</sup> These rituals also re-produce and legitimate traditional authority, social positions and wield power in specific contexts. Commemorative ritual is not used to control and manipulate participants as such. The ritual activity in its very essence confers power of action on its participants and this power is argued for through various actions.<sup>21</sup> As such rituals narrate, order, argue, negotiate and transform contexts in the community.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, *The Last Word*, 2; Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance*, 7.

<sup>20</sup> S.J. Tambiah, 'A Performative Approach to Ritual', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, Volume LXV, 1979, Oxford University Press, London, 1981, 133; Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992, 118.

<sup>21</sup> S.J. Tambiah, 'A Performative Approach to Ritual', 150-4; Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 193-5.

<sup>22</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 108-9.

Community processions, horse riding and theatres of war have ritual significance. Each performance carries a specific resonance. The reverence of ancestors in the form of a service at a graveyard is one of the main rituals at the commemorations. That the commemorations take place at the time of the death of a traditional leader is testimony to the importance bestowed on this specific burial rite. Its physical referent, the grave site is thus an important focal point during the memorials. At no other time except for a formal family burial do communities collectively gather at a graveyard, sites where there are mass graves and/or places where people have passed on during the war. These places stand as sites where the ancestors may be communed with.

The participants dress, act and engage in specific ways outside of daily activities that evoke various sacred moments in the communities history concerning specific individuals, events and spaces. These presentations are filled with incantations that are addressed to a deity, ancestors and participants and are often repeated every year at a specific time and in a space designated as sacrosanct. The ceremonies are often reproduced faithfully, with various additions according to the present conditions of the community. A rich symbolism written into the very fabric of these communities is portrayed throughout these ceremonies drawn from historical sources of the community. There are various symbols in the form of images and objects worn by the participants at different occasions during a commemoration. There are also markers in the landscape where people lived, where battles of the war occurred, places where people were tortured and sites where they died during the war in the form of monuments, old buildings, specific trees and plants, tombstones and stones on graves. Also there are temporary markers used at ceremonies such as flags, ceremonial banners and posters.

In the system of insignia at these ceremonies one artefact denotes a series of narratives about a specific historical place, person or event. The material sign thus symbolises a narrative constructed onto the particular person, artefact and landscape.<sup>23</sup> These symbols used at particular times during the ceremony are major pointers to intangible information being portrayed by the participants. These symbols provide contexts/meanings to the rituals that are being enacted.<sup>24</sup> Some of these symbols that are represented at these occasions even predate the colonial war. These signs drawn from an existing symbolic language is used and recognised by participants as signifying particular pasts of the community. These symbols are passed on over generations through the processes of memory and are often inscribed on the material worn by individuals or on objects. However these symbols are not just easily readable by participants or are even accepted as such but are the result of negotiation between participants and is given force precisely through the ritual process. At times these symbols are creatively altered to support new signs and present novel ideas and processes within the communities. As such these processes are not merely the reproductions of old custom but in essence their ongoing transformations as well. To perform ritual and represent specific symbols is a result of a process of intense and complex negotiations, organisation and the selective merging of various social processes in these communities. These symbols are represented to not only show community cohesion however, but also to showcase the differentiation of gender, hierarchy and clans as well.<sup>25</sup>

In 2008 Councillor Josef Rooi, one of the key organisers of the commemoration at Warmbad wore a patchwork shirt with pieces of red and blue material with white polka dots. In his

---

<sup>23</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, *The Last Word*, 3.

<sup>24</sup> Masao Yamaguchi, 'The Poetics of Exhibition in Japanese Culture', in Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (eds.), *Exhibiting Cultures: The poetics and politics of museum display*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 63.

<sup>25</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 121-2

presentation at the commemoration he said that a woman had asked him why he had red pieces of material in his shirt. She recognised that the blue with white polka dots represented the !Gami≠nun clan, but she was puzzled by the red material. He explained, as he had to the woman, that the red represented the colour of the Kai//khaun, considered the oldest Nama clan in Namibia which he stated the !Gami≠nun were an offshoot of. By merging these two colours in his shirt he explained a part of the origin narrative of the community, and the way in which the various Nama clans in the country were related to each other.<sup>26</sup> This example shows that without prior knowledge of the symbolic language the reading of the Councillor's shirt would be difficult. It also shows how new symbolic languages were created based on known symbols of these communities.

Several writers have described how classical theorists of ritual have overemphasised the sacred and symbolic aspects of ritual, and state that in fact all ritual is political. These authors explore the ways in which ritual is essentially a creative contestation of power through historical production.<sup>27</sup> Sacred should not only be viewed in religious terms, and may also refer to aspects in a specific society's worldview that is deemed to have similar importance to other aspects of their culture.<sup>28</sup> In many cases the communities of memory in southern Namibia have a sacred investment in the past that is being remembered, thus there is a commitment to care for ancestors at the memorials, for the places in which they fought, died

---

<sup>26</sup> SMA, research notes, Councillor Josef Rooi, Warmbad, October 2008.

<sup>27</sup> Jean and John Comaroff (eds.), *Modernity and its Malcontents: ritual and power in postcolonial Africa*, University of Chicago Press, 1993, xvi; Rakesh H. Solomon, 'Culture, Imperialism, and Nationalist Resistance: Performance in Colonial India', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 3, October 1994, 323-347.

<sup>28</sup> S.J. Tambiah, 'A Performative Approach to Ritual', 120-1.

and were buried. There is an engagement with a different form of power, symbolic power, which communities interact with through specific ceremonies.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, these processes are not to be interpreted as either sacred or secular because they are not dichotomised by the participants in this way.<sup>30</sup> There is also a lengthy historical trajectory of political and spiritual/religious entanglement that gives rise to a particular character of these communities in southern Namibia.<sup>31</sup> These are marked by key moments such as the establishment of missionary settlements,<sup>32</sup> the role of independent churches initiated by leaders such as Gaob !Nanseb at Hornkranz,<sup>33</sup> the influence of the Ethiopian church movement during anti-colonial resistance,<sup>34</sup> the formation of the A.M.E Church in southern Namibia in protest of the segregation policies of the Rhenish Mission Church and the offices held by several leaders as both elected traditional leaders and clergymen.<sup>35</sup> These movements, broadly known as ‘independent church movements’ were initiated to maintain the religious character of these communities while reinforcing autonomous social, political



---

<sup>29</sup> Comaroff also speaks about the power in ritual practice as shown in the symbolic languages of dance and song for example. Jean Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance: the culture and history of a South African people*, The University of Chicago, Chicago, 1985, 262.

<sup>30</sup> Jack Goody cites the work of Evans-Pritchard on the Azande where he shows that the Azande do not make a clear distinction between religious and rational practice. Jack Goody, *Myth, Ritual and the Oral*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010, 24, 25, 30-1.

<sup>31</sup> Tilman Dederling, 'Khoikhoi and missionaries in early nineteenth-century southern Namibia: social change in a frontier zone', *Kleio* XXII, 1990, 41.

<sup>32</sup> Brigitte Lau, *Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1987, 25-6. Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier: Colonist and Khoisan on the Cape's Northern Frontier in the 18th Century*, Double Storey Books, Cape Town, 2005, 280-5; Tilman Dederling, 'Khoikhoi and missionaries in early nineteenth-century southern Namibia', 27-8, 31-3, 37-40.

<sup>33</sup> Tilman Dederling, 'Khoikhoi and missionaries in early nineteenth-century southern Namibia', 40; Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier*, 284.

<sup>34</sup> Tilman Dederling, 'The Prophet's 'War Against Whites': Shepherd Stuurman/Hendrik Bekeer in Namibia and South Africa, 1904-1907', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 40, No. 1, 1999.

<sup>35</sup> SMA, /Khowese Heroes Day Festival Programme, 103rd Anniversary, Gibeon, 31 October - 2 November 2008, Rev. Willem Simon Hanse, 'A Tribute to Captain Rev. Dr. Hendrik Witbooi: A Marriage of Faith and Politics', 29-34; Reinhart Kössler, 'The Persistent Theme of the Great Rising: Witbooi Leaders and Rhenish Missionaries', *Namibia Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft*, Journal 47, Windhoek, 20, 26-7.

and economic institutions even as they were products of the very systems which were being resisted.<sup>36</sup>

The commemorations should thus be seen as an intricate weaving of the experiences of the participants' historical trajectory which are performed at these memorial services, calling forth sacred, political, social and economic concerns in their existence.<sup>37</sup> These performances are referred to as 'rituals of history', as specific knowledge systems produced at these commemorations by participants as a way to recollect, retell and embody their histories. These memorials are a vital communal space where participants convey potent socio-political and religious symbols. These rituals are in themselves an argument for or against specific socio-political and economic circumstances. In the past these ceremonies were for example held parallel, and in opposition to, the apartheid engineering of traditional authorities, property rights of communities and cultural and linguistic identity. These performances are particularly potent as community members rally and publically use these resources of performance in order to leave an indelible mark on the course of the production of historical knowledge to impact generations to follow.<sup>38</sup>

### ***Ceremony and communal commemoration***

The commemorations that I refer to in this dissertation which are often referred to as 'Gaogu Gei-tses', and 'Fees' have been staged for decades amongst the /Khowese, Kai//khaun and !Gami≠nun communities in southern Namibia. The ceremonies have been held annually in specific historical settings usually over a weekend on or near the date when a prominent

---

<sup>36</sup> Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, 51; Jean Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance*, 255.

<sup>37</sup> S.J. Tambiah, 'A Performative Approach to Ritual', 158.

<sup>38</sup> Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory*, University of California, London, 1999, 151.

leader of the community passed on during the colonial war. The memory of the community especially during anti-colonial resistance is viewed through the actions and achievements of specific charismatic leaders. The image of these resistors who were known as rogues, even though given a certain amount of paternalistic recognition for their military skills by colonial authorities, is inverted and instead their prowess is celebrated by these communities. These leaders are depicted to have fought with skill and bravery for their clan and descendants. The courageous resistance of individuals and communities against colonialism and apartheid is thus the strongest framework through which the commemorations were organised.

The /Khowese commemorations were referred to as ‘/Khowesen Gao-aob Hendrik Witbooib di //o-tses di ≠ei-≠eisens di Tses’.<sup>39</sup> This refers to the events main association which is the memorial of the day on which Gaob Hendrik Witbooi passed on. However these occasions have over the years been utilised to commemorate various heroes/heroines and struggles of these communities in general. The first commemorations amongst the /Khowese took place in 1906, a year after the death of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi on the battlefield.<sup>40</sup> A resurgence of these memorials was observed in the Krantplatz reserve in the 1930s, and again in the late 1970s until the present day in Gibeon.<sup>41</sup> Amongst the /Khowese an elaborate replay of battles against the Germans, and the death and burial of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi by local horse riders is also performed at their memorial events. This practice of drilling horse riders is played out to recollect the days when soldiers were commanded by legendary leaders. For many years the battle scenes were re-enacted in Gibeon near the old house and church of Gaob Hendrik

---

<sup>39</sup> ‘The memorial day of the death of /Khowesen Gaob Hendrik Witbooi’; K.F.R.H. Budack, ‘n Volkekundige Studie van die Tses Reserwaat (Distrik Keetmanshoop, Suidwes Afrika) met besonder verwysing na die geskiedenis en die inter-etniese verhouding van die bewoners’, MA, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, November 1965, 76.

<sup>40</sup> Connie Zondagh, *Martelaarsbloed sal nooit verdroog*, John Meinert, Windhoek, 1991, 165.

<sup>41</sup> K.F.R.H. Budack, ‘n Volkekundige Studie van die Tses Reserwaat (Distrik Keetmanshoop, Suidwes Afrika), 76.



Witbooi, situated in the valley near the Fish River bed.<sup>42</sup> These memorials of the colonial war have had the longest tradition in southern Namibia amongst the /Khowese community. These commemorations have further influenced the style and resurgence of various commemorative traditions amongst other Nama communities in the region.

The day on which Gaob Manasse !Noreseb of the Kai//khaun fell on the battlefield in 1905 was marked as the 99<sup>th</sup> commemoration of the war in Hoachanas in 2004. A photograph of Gaob Manasse !Noreseb and his councillors at Hoachanas was attached to the front page of the commemoration program.<sup>43</sup> Although one leader is portrayed throughout the commemorations, the leader also represents his contemporaries, who are also considered heroines and heroes. Thus one of the banners at the Kai//khaun 99<sup>th</sup> commemoration read, 'Heroes Day', with images of two men, one swinging a rifle over his shoulder and the other leaning on the rifle nestled on the ground.<sup>44</sup> The other banner which had the coat of arms of the community, and the photograph of Gaob Manasse !Noreseb and councillors printed on it in colour reads '99<sup>th</sup> Commemoration in Remembrance of Late Capt. Manasse !Noreseb (Gameb) and all the Fallen Heroes and Heroines'.<sup>45</sup>

Over the podium, where the guests of honour were presented, hung a red cloth with the image of the African continent in black and a hat tied with red cloth sown on top of it. The !Aman have memorialised the day on which Gaob Cornelius Fredericks died on Shark Island. An

---

<sup>42</sup> SMA, Heroes Day Festival Programme, 83rd Anniversary, Gibeon, 29-30 October 1988, 'Feesgangers beweeg na Ou Kaptein se Woonperseel – Demonstrasies: - Terwyl Blaas Orkes speel- Duitse aanval en onteiening – Perderuiters', 9; Connie Zondagh, *Martelaarsbloed sal nooit verdroog*, 69; The participants at a workshop held by the Museums Association of Namibia to initiate a Gibeon Museum in 2005 were shown the sites where Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's house and church were located before they were blown up by the Germans, during a tour of historical places in Gibeon by !Nagama-gaob (Onderkaptein) Christian Rooi.

<sup>43</sup> SMA, 'Kai//Khaun Traditional Festival Programme', 99th Commemoration, Hoachanas, 3-5 December 2004.

<sup>44</sup> SMA, photograph of red banner hung on a gate taken by author, Kai-//Khaun Traditional Festival, 5 December 2004.

<sup>45</sup> SMA, photograph of festival banner taken by author, Kai-//Khaun Traditional Festival, 5 December 2004.

image of Gaob Cornelius Fredericks is depicted on the tombstone mounted at Shark Island, on a large rock facing the seaboard. This image is of Gaob Cornelius Fredericks wearing a hat, and holding a smoking rifle. The number of the men, women and children who also died on Shark Island is engraved on the tombstone.<sup>46</sup> Although these memorials are a recent occurrence they have left an indelible mark on the colonial memorial processes in southern Namibia.

The !Gami≠nun commemorate the day of the shooting of Gaob Jan Abraham Christian and the beginning of the war between the !Gami≠nun and German military in 1903. A large white boulder is positioned at the scene where the shooting took place in Warmbad. Also at a commemorative event in 2008, a traditional Nama hut was built which symbolises the hut which the Gaob was dragged out of during the shooting incident.<sup>47</sup> A monument of Commandant Jakob Marenga was erected in 2008 in front of the Commonwealth graves in Warmbad. This monument is made up of a bust of Jakob Marenga wearing a hat, and below is an installation of a rifle that was apparently given by a farmer in the region as a copy of the type of guns that were used by these soldiers during the colonial war.<sup>48</sup> The !Gami≠nun events have had a transnational influence as descendent families of refugees who fled to the northern Cape, South Africa during the war, have also occasionally attended these commemorations.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> SMA, film footage by author, 'We Commemorate Genocide', Shark Island, Lüderitz, 16-7 February 2007.

<sup>47</sup> SMA, photograph by author of boulder painted in white with adjacent Nama traditional hut, Warmbad, 25 October 2008.

<sup>48</sup> SMA, research notes, 'Centenary Event in Remembrance of the late Captain Jan Abraham Christian and the Unveiling of the Sepulchral Stone in Honour of Commandant Jakob Marenga', Warmbad, 25 October 2008.

<sup>49</sup> In Steinkopf an interviewee showed me photographs of a commemoration that she attended in Warmbad in the 90s. I also spoke to people from !Kuboes, Richtersveld and Steinkopf at commemorations in Warmbad in 2008. At a meeting of the Witbooi Family at a house in Goodwood, Cape Town two family members relayed stories of the time when they attended a commemoration in Gibeon. Delegates of the Khoe and San Active Awareness Group from Cape Town attended the commemoration at Gibeon in 2008.

*'Water from an ancient well': The rallying point of the community*<sup>50</sup>

At these commemorations there are often narratives retold of where the community originated from and how they settled in the regions where they presently live. One of the prominent features of these narratives is the founding of settlements near a /aus or fountain, which is considered the inheritance from the forbearers.<sup>51</sup> Although the migrations of these communities are marked by the settling of these communities at various waterholes, at some point these communities settled more permanently in a particular village. This was especially evident of communities that settled with missionaries, although this did not preclude further migration into the interior of the country.<sup>52</sup> It is relayed that these fountains where communities decided to settle were 'discovered' by leaders where wild animals used to roam. These fountains were usually found by a group of people that were accompanied by dogs.<sup>53</sup> There is thus an image of a dog on the coat of arms and staff of the traditional authorities of the /Kai//khaun, representing the dogs that sniffed out the water of the fountain.<sup>54</sup> This fountain is often referred to as 'Arigu /Aus', 'Fountain of the Dogs', where the community settled.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> 'Water from an ancient well' is a poem performed by Abdullah Ibrahim, Chris Austin and Gill Bond, 'Abdullah Ibrahim: A Brother with Perfect Timing' (film), Indigo Productions for Recorded Releasing, BBC TV and WDR, Africa Film Library, 1987.

<sup>51</sup> National Archives of Namibia (NAN), AACRLS 065, Interviews with Frans and Martha !Nakhom conducted by Mr. Markus Kooper, Hoachanas, September 2003, translated from Nama to English by the author in April 2004; Timotheus Dausab, Tape B0371, Hoachanas, September 2003.

<sup>52</sup> Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp. *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995, 43.

<sup>53</sup> NAN, AACRLS 065, Interviews with Rev. Sameul /Howeseb and Johanna /Howeses conducted by Mr. Markus Kooper, Hoachanas, September 2003, translated from Nama to English by the author in April 2004; Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls: African Folktales – Texts and Discussions*, Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, Cologne, 2001, 312.

<sup>54</sup> SMA, Photographs taken by the author of the Coat of Arms on the Festival Banner and Traditional Sceptre at the procession of traditional authorities to the main Festival site, Kai-//Khaun Traditional Festival, 3-5 November 2004.

<sup>55</sup> NAN, AACRLS 065, Interviews with Rev. Sameul /Howeseb and Johanna /Howeses conducted by Mr. Markus Kooper, Hoachanas, September 2003, translated from Nama to English by the author in April 2004.

At times these places are even named to describe the scenes around the fountain as in /Ui#nandes, the indigenous name of Bethanie, which refers to the fountain that was covered by large stones. Another is !Koregu-ra-abes, one of the original names for Gibeon, signifying that Zebras, and other animals, were found there drinking from the fountain. The migration of these Khoe communities, often referred to as ‘Oorlams’ resulted in intense hostilities and conflict in the region for natural resources such as livestock, watering holes and land between Khoe clans, different communities such as the Ovaherero, traders, trekboers and missionaries. The migration of these groups also contributed to the process of rapid acculturation in central and southern Namibia.

These origin narratives are also developed with biblical overtones of a people destined towards a promised land. At a commemoration in Kransplatz in October 1988 Pastor W.M. Jod compared the sojourns of the community led by their traditional leaders to the history of the Israelites.<sup>56</sup> Some of these narratives are relayed as the great migrations of the community, the nomadic spans of the first people from the Cape Colony. These treks usually emphasise the communities sojourns on both sides of the !Garib river. It is evident from the historical record that the groups of people who moved across the !Garib river mainly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had a lengthy history of migration already. Some of these communities’ origins were as far as present day Western Cape. Some of these had trekked north and were living amongst other Khoe and San communities.<sup>57</sup> While some remained free others were serfs in the employ of ‘trekboers’ in what is now known as the Northern Cape. These communities

---

<sup>56</sup> Da’oud Vries, ‘Niks kan die land se onafhanklikheid stuit. Almal moet help – Witbooi’, *The Namibian Focus*, 4 November 1988, 3.

<sup>57</sup> Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier*, 163.

were thus a union of various Khoe clans and descendants of Khoe and Slave/ European ancestry.<sup>58</sup>

By the time that they crossed the river, their livelihood had been partly adapted to:

Christianity, European commodities, Dutch language, a military political system, through a process that was often very violent.<sup>59</sup> However these were all adaptations that still had their

pastoralist way of life, kin-based leadership and lineage as their reference. These

communities usually settled with a missionary and the settlements often given a biblical

name, such as Berseba, Bethanie and Gibeon, were developed as mission stations. Usually

the main buildings of the mission were situated near the /aus or fountain of the settlement.

The /aus is thus also an indication of where the oldest settlement in the village may have been

situated. It is also the pastoralist livelihood that necessitated the settlement around particular

fountains and water sources. And it is these fountains and water places that have often been

the site of violent clashes between communities. /Aus may be metaphorically used as

‘source’ and denote in its wider meaning that these fountains and water sources are key

landmarks that have featured as ‘sources’ of the communities settlement pattern and claim to

the land on which they live.

All through the years the fountains and other water sources have witnessed the many changes

and various land owners that have settled in these places. Although there have been many

adaptations in these communities and many things have ceased to exist in a physical sense,

and sometimes the fountains have been clogged up or the instruments to draw the water have

been vandalised, the water is however ever flowing. This potent metaphor that represents the

---

<sup>58</sup> Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier*, 164.

<sup>59</sup> Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier*, Chapter 4, 5.

community and clan is not missed by members and leaders of these communities, and is an integral symbolism of continuity at the commemorations. It is in this light that the /aus is considered a historical source for various themes in the communities narrative and therefore some of the services of the commemoration are held near the fountains of these settlements.<sup>60</sup>

In 2004 the Kai//khaun memorial was held near the fountain. The grave of Gaob Manasse !Noreseb, of which the tombstone was officially unveiled at this service is also located near the fountain.<sup>61</sup> The commemorations that took place at Gibeon had an elaborate service at the fountain. The fountain was one of the first meeting points before the festivities of the weekend commenced. In 2008 I described it thus: About fifty horse riders are on both sides of the tarred road that leads visitors into the village, the Namibian Defence Force (NDF) marching band is either on foot or in a big blue bus. Gaob Hendrik Witbooi is driven in front led by the Commandant of the horse riders. At the church on the hill they turn right and descend down and turn left to the fountain. Participants in cars and on foot like bees swarmed from various places in the village towards the first ceremony of the weekend.<sup>62</sup>

The ceremony commenced at the fountain near the old Post Office Building in Gibeon. There is a cement stage that covers the area where the fountain is located, and the place where you can draw water is covered as well. Near the fountain is a wall with a mural of the animals that were seen drinking at the watering hole when the /Khowese clan first settled here. The place was thus named, a place where the zebras drink, or ‘!Goregu-ra-abes’. There is also a small plaque erected, which reads, ‘!Gamemab !A//ib, In Honour of the Founding Fathers of this

---

<sup>60</sup> Connie Zondagh, *Martelaarsbloed sal nooit verdroog*, 166.

<sup>61</sup> SMA, 'Kai-//Khaun Traditional Festival Programme', 99th Commemoration, 1888-2004, 3 - 5 December 2004, Saturday, item 10, 'Historical discovery of fountain'.

<sup>62</sup> SMA, research notes, Heroes Day Festival, Gibeon, 2008.

Fountain – Discovered in 1860 by Captain Cupido Witbooi - !Gamemab !A//ib, Plaque Unveiled on this day Oct 30, !Goregu-Ra-Abes by Capt. Rev. Dr. H. Witbooi and Clan’.

As the din of the NDF marching band came to a halt, the local brass band tuned into a selection and the participants sang the first hymn of the day. Gaob Hendrik Witbooi welcomed all the participants, especially those who had arrived from far destinations. Hans Peterson gave a short prayer, and thereafter Alwina Peterson, of the Fountain Caretaker Group gave a historical overview of the fountain, and the early settlement of the /Khowese at Khaxatsus (Gibeon). Alwina Petersen also stated that the community should at all times be aware of vandalism and that they should rigorously protect the fountain, the plaque and monument. Acting-Captain Christian Rooi gave a brief statement as well. Afterwards the children were treated to a drink from the fountain. Several children and some adults were given a glass of water to drink to symbolise the sacredness of the fountain. In this way the beginning of the festival was sealed with the drinking of the water from the fountain.<sup>63</sup> It is these experiences either on the north or south end of the ‘Great’ river and its various tributaries and water sources which have been settled around that particularly characterise the various ethnicities emphasised at specific times in the history of these communities. It is this fluid and multilayered identity that often causes a disjuncture in the plain narrative of only identifying with a particular clan or nation state. It is this past that cannot fix memory to the boundaries of land, clan and nation, to which the communities prescribe at present.

---

<sup>63</sup> Accompanied by numerous horse riders on the side of the road and cars Gaob Hendrik Witbooi’s funeral procession drove on the tarred road and made the same journey to the fountain where a short prayer was held at the fountain in his honour. The significance of the fountain as a historical landmark in the geographical landscape of this community of memory is evidenced in leading the funeral procession first to the fountain in Gibeon.



***Flag bearers and hat-wearers: construction of communal memorials through symbolic objects***

The horsemen, rifles and hats portrayed at these commemorations were an important socio-political and economic feature of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Khoe communities in the region. Hat-wearing, rifle, horse trade mastery and conquest are features of the commando system adopted by Khoe military strategists that were the masters of the country after crossing the !Garib river in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>64</sup> The leader of the clan and also the head of the army was dubbed the 'Kaptein', a term still reserved for a traditional leader of communities in southern Namibia at present. The 'Kaptein' was advised by a council or 'raad', of which consisted men also in charge of policing duties, such as the 'magistraat', 'korporaals' and 'veldkornets'.<sup>65</sup> These commando men were described as hat-wearing by the Nama in southern Namibia.<sup>66</sup> Some of these commandos often made up of both trekboers and Khoe labourers were involved in early raiding, bartering and hunting activity in Little Namaqualand but also crossed the river at times and raided from communities in Namibia. Even before their arrival, Nama leaders became aware and feared these commando units, which were often involved in raiding cattle of neighbouring communities. The trekboer commandos were later eclipsed by Khoe regiments who themselves came to dominate across the !Garib river.<sup>67</sup>

---

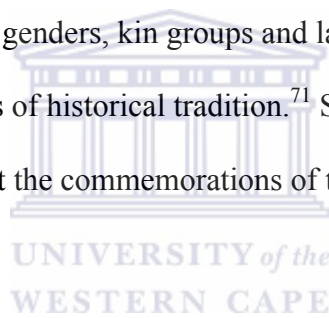
<sup>64</sup> Alvin Kienetz, 'The Key Role of the Orlam Migrations in the Early Europeanization of South-West Africa (Namibia)', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 10, 4, 1977, 553-72; Brigitte Lau, *Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time*, 19, 28, 29, 31; Tilman Dederling, 'Khoikhoi and missionaries in early nineteenth-century southern Namibia: social change in a frontier zone', 41.

<sup>65</sup> Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp, *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, 63-4; Brigitte Lau, *Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time*, 46; K.F.R.H. Budack, ' 'n Volkekundige Studie van die Tses Reserwaat (Distrik Keetmanshoop, Suidwes Afrika), 145, 152.

<sup>66</sup> Brigitte Lau, *Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time*, 24, 26; See also photograph of Jan Jonker Afrikaner and his councillors with their hats in the Palgrave Collection. E.L.P. Stals (eds.), *The Commissions of W.C. Palgrave: Special emissary to South West Africa, 1876-1885*, Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1990.

<sup>67</sup> Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier*, 173-8, 180-3, 285.

These communities were associated around leading families consisting of these military units. These communities in the Cape Colony through a complex process of acculturation, migration, trade and warfare already consisted of multi-ethnic identities before crossing the !Garib River. The interactions between Khoe commandos from the Cape and communities in southern Namibia resulted in oscillations between competition, alliance and violent conflict.<sup>68</sup> This commando or military system was later one of the dominant political systems in the country. These commandos often had access to specific commodities such as ox-wagons, horses and guns.<sup>69</sup> The trade for hats, rifles, livestock and hunting was maintained through and for the commodity networks with the Cape Colony.<sup>70</sup> Apart from these material symbols being connected with trade networks of acculturation, these commodities gradually symbolised the relations between genders, kin groups and larger communities. They came to be identified with specific notions of historical tradition.<sup>71</sup> Some of these traditions developed over generations are showcased at the commemorations of the colonial war in very specific ways.



Hat insignia, a coloured cloth tied around a hat, was documented in photographs taken as early as 1876. That the style of wearing a cloth around a hat came to be associated with fighting men is relayed in early oral stories of war between the Nama and Herero. At a later stage different colours were adopted by warring factions, notably red for Herero and white for Nama, to create a distinction between these communities.<sup>72</sup> At the commemorations in

---

<sup>68</sup> Brigitte Lau, *Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time*, 24-31. E.L.P. Stals (ed.), *The Commissions of W.C. Palgrave*, 127; Tilman Dederling, 'Khoikhoi and missionaries in early nineteenth-century southern Namibia: social change in a frontier zone', 34.

<sup>69</sup> Brigitte Lau, *Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time*, 46, 49, 50.

<sup>70</sup> Brigitte Lau, *Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time*, 41, 45.

<sup>71</sup> Hildi Hendrickson, *Bodies and Flags: The representation of Herero Identity in Colonial Namibia*, in Hildi Hendrickson (eds.), *Clothing and Difference: Embodied identities in colonial and post-colonial Africa*, Duke University Press, Durham and London, 1996, 214-5.

<sup>72</sup> Hildi Hendrickson, *Bodies and Flags*, 227-33.

Okahandja a certain Nama elder, David Roos who was known as the ‘Kaiser’ wore a hat covered with a red cloth with white polka dots.<sup>73</sup> However, even among the Nama these same colours, red and white, were later used to distinguish between different communities, the //Aixa//aes and /Khowese respectively.<sup>74</sup> Red hatbands are now associated with the Gai//khaun (Red nation). The blue, pink and white with the !Aman, yellow with the !Kharakhoen and grey and yellow are the colours of the /Hai/khauan. And the blue with white polka dots are the clan colours of the !Gami≠nun, whereas the Vaalgras community colours wear black with white polka dots.<sup>75</sup> Apparently the black with white polka dots were the colours of the !Gami≠nun clan as well, but there was a division as indicated in the clan colours after the !Gami≠nun community signed a peace treaty with the German authorities in 1904.<sup>76</sup>

Military insignia usually associated with a specific clan would also be worn across clan boundaries showing that military training could be conducted beyond the confines of the clan system. Individuals or groups based on a military structure were in this sense able to maintain allegiance with new groups or form smaller groups of their own.<sup>77</sup> The ‘Urikam’ or ‘Witkamskap’ who wore white cloths around their hats were tied to the /Khowese leadership, was one such military alliance.<sup>78</sup> What these hatbands came to mean can also be gleaned from

<sup>73</sup> Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia): A Study of a Plural Society, 1972*, Schlettwein Publishing, Switzerland, 1997; Gesine Krüger and Dag Henrichsen, 'We have been captives long enough'.

<sup>74</sup> Isaac Schapera, *Khoisan Peoples of South Africa: Bushman and Hottentots*, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, London, 1951, 404-5.

<sup>75</sup> SMA, research notes, observations at various commemorations such as at the ‘Kai-//Khaun Traditional Festival’, Hoachanas, 3-5 December 2004; ‘Centennial Heroes Day Celebrations’, Gibeon, 24-30 October 2005, ‘We Commemorate Genocide’, 16-17 February 2007, Shark Island – First Lagoon, Lüderitz and the ‘Centenary Event in Remembrance of the late Captain Jan Abraham Christian and the Unveiling of the Sepulchral Stone in Honour of Commandant Jakob Marenga’, Warmbad, 25 October 2008.

<sup>76</sup> SMA, research notes, 'Centenary Event in Remembrance of the late Captain Jan Abraham Christian and the Unveiling of the Sepulchral Stone in Honour of Commandant Jakob Marenga', Warmbad, 25 October 2008.

<sup>77</sup> Brigitte Lau, *Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time*: 47.

<sup>78</sup> Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp, *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, 29-30, 142, 146 (footnotes). Gaob Cornelius Fredericks of the !Aman and Didrik Izaak a contending leader of the /Hai/Khauan were both members of the Witkamskap.

colonial war records, where German soldiers identified and documented specific horse riders belonging to a specific clan according to the colour scarf around their hats. A caption of a photograph taken in the 1940s reads, Dawid Slaander, met die kenmerkende wit doek van die Witboois (witkams) om sy hoed...' showed the elder at a tombstone ceremony of evangelist Hein in !Kuboes, Richtersveld. The white cloth tied around his hat associated him with the Witkamskap military organisation.<sup>79</sup>

During the 1930s at the commemorations of the /Khowese the horse riders wore white head bands on their hats and performed drilling sequences.<sup>80</sup> These scarves worn during the festivities were usually sewn by women. These scarves were carefully pinned, by women, to the hats of horse riders. The hats were not only worn by the men on horseback but also ceremonially worn by almost every male participant during the commemoration to signify allegiance and unity amongst the male participants. In the old days they were considered able bodied men suitable for training as part of the clan army. Also during various ceremonies, not only exclusive to war commemorations, the wearing on hats of certain coloured bands to represent specific clans in southern Namibia was emphasised. The horse riders wore sashes, over the right shoulder to the left hip, to distinguish themselves as military men and indicated the various ranks of the horse riders. In photographs taken during the German period, coloured bands are tied by military leaders on the left arm. It is uncertain which colours these bands were and their meaning, although a certain continuity in the colonial traditions of wearing coloured bands on the bodies of military men is recognised.<sup>81</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup> Louis van Heerde, *'n Seleksie uit Oom Piet van Heerde se Namakwalandse Fotoversameling, 1926-1979*, Fontcept Graphix, Garsfontein-Oos, 2001, 137.

<sup>80</sup> K.F.R.H. Budack, 'n Volkekundige Studie van die Tses Reserwaat (Distrik Keetmanshoop, Suidwes Afrika), 76.

<sup>81</sup> National Archives of Namibia, A20219. Photograph where Simon Kooper, Hendrik Witbooi and Samuel Isaak are wearing what appears to be German flag colours on their left arms.

A flag, usually denoting clan colours flown on a pole, worn on a hat or in the designs of dresses for women acquired significance and was a tradition carried out at commemorations. At the /Khowese events at the very beginning of the occasion a black flag, with a white !Urikam hat printed in the middle, was raised. This service, which took place in the morning of the first day of the memorial event, concluded with gun salutes while the horse riders lead the procession out of the main festival site to end the opening of the commemoration. After the black flag was lowered, a white flag depicting Gaob Hendrik Witbooi with rifle was raised at the centre of the commemorative space. I was told that in the old days an elderly man, Oupa Kahambea, would sit near the pole where the flag was raised at the beginning of the ceremony as guard until the flag was lowered at the end of the commemoration weekend. Oupa Kahambea is said to come from the generation that understood the military significance of the commemorations and therefore maintained a strict conduct and reverence for specific services such as the flag pole ceremony.<sup>82</sup> At memorials held after Independence in 1990, this flag would be raised alongside the National and OAU flags as the clan, national anthem and OAU anthem would be sung respectively.

Often commemorative banners and t-shirts also depicted resistance insignia. The most prevalent was that of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi wearing the symbolic banded hat, sitting on a stool holding a rifle. The commemorative banner which was usually raised at the memorial events has the symbolic image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi printed on it as well and has a specific festival theme printed alongside. The theme changed at every event and was supposed to inspire participants at the occasion. In 2004 at the 99th Anniversary of the /Khowesen Heroes Day the theme was 'Towards 100 Years of Struggle, Sacrifice and Victory, in 2008 the banner read, '/Haobahe ni se i xun !na ta /guri ma' and in 2010 the theme

---

<sup>82</sup> Conversation with P.R. Tiras Biwa, Cape Town, June 2011.

was: '!Khutse hui ida /hoaba Sida /umisa'.<sup>83</sup> T-shirts, badges, hats, memorial programs and posters with the image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi were usually printed as well. As the memorials took on a national dimension, other heroes such as Samuel Maharero and Mandume Ya Ndemufayo were printed on large pieces of white material and hung at the entrance of the main festival grounds as well.

Women bought various materials to sew dresses, quilts and headscarves, which were oftentimes sold to other community members as well.<sup>84</sup> Women at various memorial events were usually draped in elaborate material which identified their ethnic and clan allegiance. There were women at the commemorations who were fitted with traditional Nama patchwork dresses, headscarves and shawls. These outfits resemble dresses as seen in photographs taken in the 1950s.<sup>85</sup> In these photographs one sees women wear European styled high-waist dresses, tied with silver-buckled belts, with head wraps and blanket shawls around their shoulders.<sup>86</sup> The dresses worn nowadays have a similar design but were made of patchwork patterns, which probably was a later adaption based on shortages of material.<sup>87</sup> These patchwork outfits were usually worn everyday, for housework, and are now replaced by the latest designs of traditional dresses.<sup>88</sup> The women who wore the patchwork dress and apron at memorials were usually adorned with a coloured headscarf or one made of traditional Swazi

---

<sup>83</sup> SMA, 'Heroes Day Celebrations Programme', 105th Anniversary, Gibeon, 29th -31st October 2010.

<sup>84</sup> I witnessed my mother sew quilts and headscarves for the centennial commemoration at Gibeon in 2005. These items had the image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi printed on them. These images were printed at a local printer in the capital city, Windhoek. Some of these items were sold to other women that attended the commemoration as well. My mother also printed the headscarves with the image of the late Gaob Hendrik Witbooi printed on them to be worn by the horse riders at the annual commemoration in October 2010. SMA, headscarf with image, '//Gawamuma /Onob, Gao-oab Rev. Dr. Hendrik Witbooi, 1978-2009'.

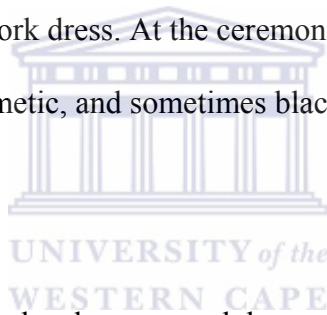
<sup>85</sup> Katesa Schlosser, *Markus Witbooi in Gibeon 1953: Historische Farbphotographien aus Süd-Namibia*, Museum für Völkerkunde der Universität, Kiel, Germany, 2008.

<sup>86</sup> Katesa Schlosser, *Markus Witbooi in Gibeon 1953*, 15, Tafel 34, Tafel 39.

<sup>87</sup> Da'oud Vries, 'Niks kan die land se onafhanklikheid stuit. Almal moet help – Witbooi', *The Namibian Focus*, 4 November 1988, 1, 3.

<sup>88</sup> Daniel Hartman et al, 'Words Unwritten: A History of Maltahöhe', Appendix E, Interview with Sabina Garises, Maltahöhe, BSc, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 28 March 2010, 64, 96-7.

material. This material, acquired through trade, was said to have been worn by women as head wraps for decades, and was known as ani-!aeb. The name derives from the fact that popularly traded scarves usually had a rooster printed on it.<sup>89</sup> I was also told that in the old days the women used to wear a shawl known as a ‘German *kyali*’.<sup>90</sup> This was a blanket shawl which had blocks of coloured material crossing over each other. There were also competitions held at commemorations, to showcase the best dressed woman at the occasion, and the winner would receive a ‘German’ shawl or *kyali* as her prize.<sup>91</sup> Over the years the women also designed the now popular patchwork shawl. The women also wore accessories with these dresses such as earrings, glass-bead necklaces, anklets and bracelets. Also worn was a tortoise shell containing scent, an aluminium cup, calabash and a small leather bag on a waistband tied around the patchwork dress. At the ceremonies some women smear their faces with red or yellow ochre as a cosmetic, and sometimes black soot to showcase traditional adornment.<sup>92</sup>



Women also decorate their shawls, headscarves and dresses with the images of their leaders during the colonial war. Women in the /Khowese community were amongst the first that I witnessed wearing shawls, headscarves and dresses with a specific print image. In 2005 at the commemoration in Gibeon, /Khowese women designed a plain white dress with the image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi printed on the sleeve and near the hem of the dress. Also some

---

<sup>89</sup> Conversation with P.R.T. Biwa, June 2011, Cape Town, South Africa.

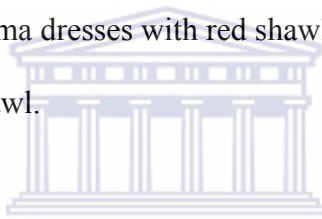
<sup>90</sup> This word is spelt ‘tjalie’ in A.E. Cloete et al, *Etimologie Woordeboek van Afrikaans*, Buro van die WAT, Stellenbosch, 2003, 487. Tjalie was used in Dutch colonies in East India and refers to a square piece of material worn by women over the shoulders. The Dutch are said to have borrowed the word and clothing from the English ‘shawl’ spelt ‘sjaal’ by the Dutch. A ‘keli’ is for example requested by Anna Dausas in a letter to Onder Kaptein Timoteus Snewe in 1891 which shows how far back the use of these items are in these communities. Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp, *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, 80.

<sup>91</sup> Conversation with P.R.T. Biwa, June 2011, Cape Town, South Africa.

<sup>92</sup> SMA, photographs, Gaogu Gei Tses 2005, Gibeon. 17th century writers noted that the Khoekhoe at the Cape smeared red and yellow ochre onto hair and skin. Women and men are also said to have rubbed charcoal on their faces. Andrew B. Smith and Roy H. Pfeiffer, *The Khoikhoi at the Cape of Good Hope: Seventeenth-century drawings in the South African Library*, South African Library, Cape Town, 1993, 12.



women wore dresses according to clan colours. Some women wore with the image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi printed on the back of their shawls. This specific design was emulated by women from the !Aman clan who wore similar white dresses at Shark Island, however these had the image of 'Chief Cornelius Fredericks, 1893-1907', printed on the sleeves and all around near the hem of the dress. In 2008 a white headscarf donning the image of Gaob Cornelius Fredericks was also worn with a pink Nama dress and blue quilt according to clan colours by a !Aman woman who attended the /Khowese commemoration. At a memorial event in Warmbad in 2008, the !Gamiñun women wore dresses made of material coloured blue with the white dots shaped in a typical Nama design, with matching headscarf covered by another coloured cloth tied around the edge. The Kai//khaun women who participated at this event wore red traditional Nama dresses with red shawls and a typical cloth-banded hat was printed on the back of the shawl.



As Hildi Hendrickson has described, these materials donned on the bodies of participants at festivals were the flags which indicated their particular ethnic, clan and political allegiance.<sup>93</sup> In other words, the material culture and artefacts represented at memorials and festivals flag the perceptions and biographies of participants, and their ancestors, in various historical periods.<sup>94</sup> The material culture was an indication of complex processes undergone by individuals in these communities. Seremetakis notes that, 'these diverse acts of embodiment carry with them an inheritance of the senses that we have not yet come to terms with'.<sup>95</sup> The material worn whether on a hat or around the shoulders has been shaped by various colonial relations such as the adoption of others' cultural material, negotiations between participants concerning which materials to represent, adaptations of material culture and the creative

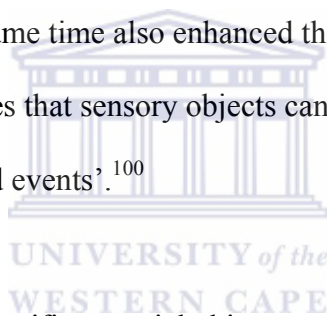
---

<sup>93</sup> Hildi Hendrickson, 'Bodies and Flags', 214-6.

<sup>94</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Implications', in Nadia Seremetakis (ed.), *The Senses Still*, 128, 129.

<sup>95</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Implications', 128, 130.

engineering of identities through this material culture in these communities.<sup>96</sup> It is women who are at the centre of making outfits, headscarves and other paraphernalia in everyday life and at commemorative events. As such it is women who hold a distinctive role in establishing how the life of the community is to be re-produced aesthetically.<sup>97</sup> The material culture was created during periods of joy, hope, mourning and trauma. And over the years there are different meanings ascribed to the material being worn out of the lived experiences of individuals in these communities. These materials were designed to bind the participants to their ancestors and make specific historical claims at these commemorative events.<sup>98</sup> These objects at various times oscillate between being used as tools of the communities' memory, for cohesion and resistance strategies.<sup>99</sup> These sensory stories and meanings were passed on to younger kinsfolk, who at the same time also enhanced the material with the experiences of their generation. Seremetakis notes that sensory objects can be seen as, 'both a memory and reinvention of earlier imagery and events'.<sup>100</sup>



The consequence of preserving specific material objects and their sensory meanings may be the displacement and forgetting of other objects, other meanings, and historical periods/contexts in which these materials were created.<sup>101</sup> An example was how European dresses were re-designed as a result of shortages of material by sewing different colour material onto the torn spaces, which was the possible genesis of the patchwork design that is considered traditional Nama wear.<sup>102</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup> Nadia Seremetakis 'Implications', 127, 133.

<sup>97</sup> Annette B. Weiner and Jane Schneider (eds.), *Cloth and human experience*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 1989, 3-4.

<sup>98</sup> Annette B. Weiner and Jane Schneider (eds.), *Cloth and human experience*, 3,6.

<sup>99</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Implications', 129, 136.

<sup>100</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Implications', 129, 136.

<sup>101</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Implications', 128, 134-6.

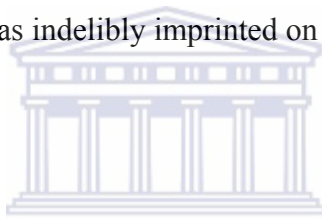
<sup>102</sup> Da'oud Vries, 'Niks kan die land se onafhanklikheid stuit. Almal moet help – Witbooi', *The Namibian Focus*, 4 November 1988, 1, 3.

Through the action of patching a torn part of the material, one is effectively erasing the tear. The memory of the experience remains albeit replaced by new material, and the interplay of old and new sensory meanings. Later after the dress has been passed on to younger women, the story of how the dress was torn or the shortages of material at a particular time in the community's history may have been passed on or not. They may later accept the patch design as part of their culture and continue the process of patchwork designs. The process of covering over a historical process may be gauged in the action of covering a torn piece of cloth with another cloth in a patchwork motif, thereby creating a new historical experiences and sensory meanings.

Another example is the way in which huts that were constructed with reeds, were later designed with sack cloth. This sack cloth was carefully patched together in the same way that the women would patch reeds onto a large frame made of branches. Later European style houses were designed with differently sized pieces of zinc, at times in a patchwork motif as well. How does one account for the meanings that were attached by women to the multi-directional flow of commodities during colonisation, and the shifts created to their identities through these material objects such as dresses and homesteads? What and how are the processes recuperated and lost into oblivion, and not only in the historical and material contexts, but also in the perceptions and meanings of these processes? This has particular salience for the ways in which these processes were re-produced in homesteads and at public memorials.

### *Dancing horses and graves*

The commemorations held by the /Khowese were often known as ‘Gaugu !Gapis’. To ‘!gapi’ literally means ‘to ride’, which points towards the significance of the presence of horse riding at the commemorative occasions. The horse riders accompany dignitaries and participants as they perform grand entrances and marchers to memorial sites. Horse riders were present at most of the commemorations in other communities as well. There was for example a horse riding procession on Shark Island in 2007. These horse riders arrived at the ceremonies on the former concentration camp and accompanied the participants as they marched through the streets of Lüderitz to the outskirts at First Lagoon. Here the horse riders stood in a circle around the mass graves where a memorial service was conducted by the participants. The performance of the horse riders was indelibly imprinted on the minds of participants at these commemorations.



The structure, style and elaborate performances of the horse riders during the memorials symbolise a dance. This was a patterned, rhythmic sound and movement re-enacted by the horse riders during processions, battle formations and rapid encircling movements around graveyards.<sup>103</sup> This dance movement of the horse riders at every stage of the memorials were only paralleled by the gliding and quick-stepping bodies during nama-stap. The bending, side-stepping, heels lifting from the ground, polyrhythmic gyration is shadowed the graceful twist and gallop of the horse legs and shoes jutting into the dusty stage. The Nama-stap dancing was usually accompanied by music, which was used to re-echo the sound of objects in motion. The dancing was styled elaborately to mimic animals, hunting scenes and war formations often while playing musical instruments such as the bow or reed pipes to a

---

<sup>103</sup> S.J. Tambiah, 'A Performative Approach to Ritual', 113-4, 123.

particular rhythm.<sup>104</sup> Dancing and music accompaniment were the mediums used to re-enact various events experienced by people. These events would be conveyed through the gestures in their bodies, which was thus a form in which peoples historical consciousness was performed.

Isaac Schapera described a war scene which re-enacted the death of Jan Jonker Afrikaner performed by dancers who represented the /Khomese and //Aixa//Ain adversaries through the white and red bands worn on their hats.<sup>105</sup> This elaborate dance sequence reminds me of the both the horse routines and Nama-stap at memorial events, a tradition from which they both derive. At various intervals in the /Khomese memorial programme the specific dancing known as nama-stap was performed to portray mimicking of specific scenes such as the movement of animals in the gestures of the hands, hips and feet. The horse riding shares a similar rhythm and motion with Nama-stap dancing but is also a medium where the historical events of the war were re-enacted. The horse riding at these memorials was based on this classic performance tradition.

Usually before the commencement of the commemoration there is a call made by the traditional leaders of the community on national radio for horse riders to assemble in preparation for the memorial.<sup>106</sup> The horse riders were considered part of an 'army', and there were special preparations made for them during the commemoration. Before the commencement of the commemoration they were called in separately and instructed by the 'Kaptein', concerning their conduct during the commemoration.<sup>107</sup> The 'army' also had a

---

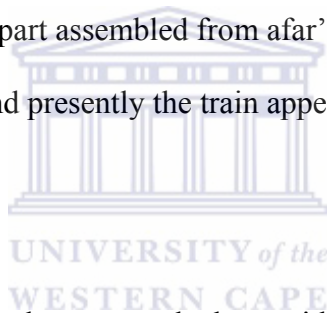
<sup>104</sup> Isaac Schapera, *Khoisan Peoples of South Africa*, 401-5.

<sup>105</sup> Isaac Shapera, *Khoisan Peoples of South Africa*, 404.

<sup>106</sup> In conversation with Tamen /Ui-#Useb, Gibeon, October 2008

<sup>107</sup> In conversation with Tamen /Ui-#Useb, Gibeon, October 2008

separate camp during the festivities and a separate kitchen is set out for them on the grounds of the festival site.<sup>108</sup> The horse riders usually assembled at the commemoration number about fifty men. Several processions to festival sites were led by the horse riders often in twos on opposite sides of the road. At the /Khowese commemoration in October 2010 the ‘horse parade’ was led by councillor ≠Ouseb, who was described as a ‘Commandant’, an office denoted for the Head of Military Operations, which related to the still pervading military nature of the horse parades.<sup>109</sup> These resemble and symbolise the way in which horse riders would enter villages during the late 1800s and early 1900s, when wars were fought in central and southern Namibia. During the reign of Gaob Moses Witbooi the missionaries described it thus, ‘...On Monday morning Captain Moses Witbooi rode into the station with an escort of 50 men, for the most part assembled from afar’, and in another letter, ‘...Hendrik and his men were approaching, and presently the train appeared, 63 horsemen riding in twos’.<sup>110</sup>



At a specific time during the festival program, the horse riders, women and children demonstrate battle scenes of the colonial war through a set of drama performances. These art forms are well-practised tools of linguistic and extra-linguistic performances in these communities.<sup>111</sup> During the performance the horse riders and women narrate that Gaob Hendrik Witbooi sent out letters and appeals to various leaders of other Nama communities to

---

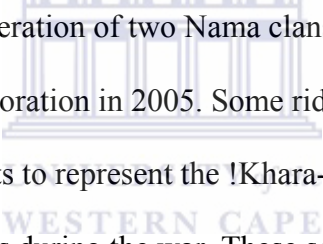
<sup>108</sup> SMA, research notes, ‘Gaugu Gei-Tses’, Gibeon 2005.

<sup>109</sup> Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (trans.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, 125.

<sup>110</sup> Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (trans.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, 199-200.

<sup>111</sup> The public memorials of the colonial war is however not the only arena where performances are used to illustrate historical events of the community. At other ceremonial events held in these communities, performances where the actors embody narratives of certain events such as in Sunday school plays and Christmas *spreeks* and plays in the form of a drama, poem, hymn or nama-stap routine is considered an important and effective way of relaying information. Other arenas where I have observed various drama performances are held at annual Christmas celebrations at the A.M.E. church in Gibeon. A play of the birth of Jesus Christ would be performed outside the church. During Christmas children and adults would perform verses from the bible in Nama, Herero, German, Afrikaans and English; Alex Mavrocordatos, Development Theatre and the Process of Re-empowerment: The Gibeon Story, *Development in Practice*, Vol. 8, No. 1, February 1998, 10, 15.

join him in his war against the German military.<sup>112</sup> Also extracts of letters from Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's diary with the Imperial German Commissioner, Captain von Francois, from 1892 were included in the commemoration programs for participants to read.<sup>113</sup> A translated section of the extracts states, 'This part of Africa is the realm of us Red Chiefs. If danger threatens one of us which he feels he cannot meet on his own, then he can call on a brother or brothers among the Red chiefs, saying: 'Come, brothers, let us together oppose this danger which threatens to invade our Africa, for we are one in colour and custom, and this Africa is ours'.<sup>114</sup> These extracts, as demonstrated in the performances, corroborate that Gaob Hendrik Witbooi did indeed intend to unite with leaders in the country in opposition to the colonial threat.



A scene which portrayed the cooperation of two Nama clans during the war was performed in Gibeon at the centennial commemoration in 2005. Some riders wore !Urikam hats, and others wore yellow cloth around their hats to represent the !Kħara-khoen soldiers that were led by Gaob Simon Kooper from !Gochas during the war. These soldiers often fought simultaneously during the war, and even as far as present day Botswana. At the commemoration the soldiers who wore the different coloured hats demonstrated how the soldiers of the two Nama clans used to discuss military strategies and simultaneously plan attacks on German positions. Other scenes enacted were of the horse riders accompanying the women and children, and how they would take them to safety during the war. The women usually dressed in patchwork dresses, similar to those worn by the audience, would seek shelter under camel thorn trees with their children as they probably would have done during

---

<sup>112</sup> SMA, Interview conducted by author and Casper Erichsen with Alwina Petersen and Hans Petersen, Gibeon, July, 2005.

<sup>113</sup> SMA, 'Heroes Day Programme', 82nd Anniversary, 6-8 November 1987, 1-4; Heroes Day program, 29-30 October 1988, 3-6.

<sup>114</sup> Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (transl.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, 86.



the war. The men would gallop on horseback and escort the camp to safety. It was shown how elderly women and children would often fall while attempting to run alongside the horsemen. The hardships of war felt by the women and children running fearfully and hiding near bushes and trees was depicted in these performances.

The most popular scenes were undoubtedly the ambushes of the Germans by Nama soldiers.<sup>115</sup> There were at times about fifty horse riders who performed the battle scenes. The horse riders usually congregated in an area designated as the battlefield. Usually this would be in a valley, so that the participants could view the play from a vantage point. The horse riders directed by a Commandant placed their hats tied with white cloth on several bushes. This was done to hoodwink the enemy (German soldiers) into thinking that they were hiding in the bushes. Several horse riders hid behind some trees, flanked on both sides of where the hats were placed. As the German soldiers approached (also played by Nama participants on horseback) the bushes with their guns (long sticks held in the hand as if they were rifles) ready to shoot the Nama soldiers supposedly hiding in the bushes. The Nama horse riders that had been waiting behind the trees for the German soldiers to approach the bushes then charged from both flanks. The German soldiers were caught by surprise and attempted to escape the ambush. The Nama soldiers charged towards the German soldiers and began shooting. The German soldiers who were apparently wounded were then placed on the back of the horses led by Nama soldiers. In the meantime other Nama soldiers confiscated the rifles and swelled the number of their horses with those from the German soldiers.<sup>116</sup>

---

<sup>115</sup> Connie Zondagh, *Martelaarsbloed sal nooit verdroog*, 166; SMA, research notes 'Gaogu Gei-Tses', Goamus, October 2004; SMA, research notes, 'Gaogu Gei-Tses', Gibeon Cemetery, 30 October 2010.

<sup>116</sup> SMA, research notes, Heroes Day Festival. Gibeon, 2010.

At the unveiling of the Jakob Marenga's monument in Warmbad, Mr. Josef Rooi gave an account of the battles against the Germans in 1903 in the Warmbad district. Mr. Rooi said that the battle at Sandfontein was one of the important battles because the warriors were able to ambush the Germans, a popular guerrilla war tactic as performed at the /Khowese memorials as well. He also said that this was the reason for many German graves in Sandfontein. He regretted that the horse riders could not display how the battle at Sandfontein was fought owing to time constraints during the ceremony. In his address he also humbly requested that Gaob Jan Abraham Christiaan and Abraham Morris be mentioned alongside Commandant Jakob Marenga's name at public memorials.<sup>117</sup> He connected the leaders that were being commemorated on that day by recounting the incident with the goat that led to the shooting of Gaob Jan Abraham Christiaan. According to Rooi, Gaob Christiaan mentioned on that fateful day that Jakob Marenga should take over as Commander of the army if anything was to happen to him, sensing that there would be mounting tension between German officials and the !Gami≠nun traditional authority. Abraham Morris was also a leader of one of the regiments that fought alongside Jakob Marenga.

Another popularly narrated battle scene dramatised by the horse riders was the incident that took place on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 1905 near Vaalgras, where Gaob Hendrik Witbooi overtook a German convoy, was wounded and died on the battlefield.<sup>118</sup> It was relayed that he was buried by his soldiers on the battlefield. It was shown through the plays that when Gaob Hendrik Witbooi was wounded, the horse riders carried him on horseback and lay his body in the ground on the battlefield. According to oral history, at the moment that the Kaptein was

---

<sup>117</sup> SMA, research notes, 'Centenary Event in Remembrance of the late Captain Jan Abraham Christian and the Unveiling of the Sepulchral Stone in Honour of Commandant Jakob Marenga', Warmbad, 25 October 2007.

<sup>118</sup> K.F.R.H. Budack, 'n Volkekundige Studie van die Tses Resevaat (Distrik Keetmanshoop, Suidwes Afrika), 74.

buried there were huge rain clouds that suddenly gathered in the sky. After the Gaob was buried near Vaalgras the horse riders rode over his grave, so that the German authorities could not get a hold of his body.<sup>119</sup> At the centennial commemorations in 2005 the program was suspended due to the sudden wind storm and rain clouds that had gathered in the sky. Some participants commented that this phenomenon was not common at that time of year and that it was probably due to the memorial on that specific date.

According to oral history the soldiers never revealed the whereabouts of Witbooi's body for fear that the German soldiers would take his human remains from the grave. There was after all a price of 5000 Mk on the head of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, and other leaders in southern Namibia, ordered through a proclamation by General Von Trotha which was received in Gibeon on the 22nd of April 1905.<sup>120</sup> Furthermore exporting bodies to Germany was a regular practise conducted by the German officers and scientists during and after the colonial war.<sup>121</sup> The burial of Gaob Witbooi was elaborately performed by the horse riders as witnessed by the participants in 2010 in front of the Gibeon communal graveyard where the symbolic grave of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi is located.<sup>122</sup> In a scene that was performed at a traditional hut by several soldiers and women during the commemorations it was shown that after Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's burial the soldiers took his hat, which was a hat covered with white cloth, not only on the top, but around the brim of the hat as well, to the homestead where the wife of the Gaob stayed. The hat was given to her as a token because his body could not be brought back from the battlefield.<sup>123</sup>

---

<sup>119</sup> K.F.R.H. Budack, 'n Volkekundige Studie van die Tses Reserwaat (Distrik Keetmanshoop, Suidwes Afrika), 75.

<sup>120</sup> Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (transl.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, 220.

<sup>121</sup> See Chapter Five in this dissertation for more information on the trade in human bodies from Namibia to Germany during the war.

<sup>122</sup> SMA, research notes, 'Gaogu Gei-Tses', Gibeon Cemetery, 30 October 2010.

<sup>123</sup> SMA, research notes, 'Gaogu Gei-Tses', Gibeon, memorial theatre site, October 2005.

There was a symbolic grave/monument erected in Vaalgras where Gaob Hendrik Witbooi is believed to have been shot and buried. Participants were led to this monument at the *fees* held in Vaalgras in May 2007.<sup>124</sup> At the ceremony Rev. Konjore noted that all of Vaalgras was considered holy ground as the specific site of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's grave is unknown. The *fees* commemorated the history of the families, Tjikuirire (Stephanus), Kakahito (Apollus) and so on, that settled at Vaalgras.<sup>125</sup> Some of these families were said to have fled to southern Namibia during drought and the Nama-Herero wars to the south of the !Garib river. Here these families worked on farms and especially in the copper mines such as at O'kiep in the Northern Cape.<sup>126</sup> According to Ouma Getruida Stephanus the families who lived in the northern Cape were told by their ancestors to return to Hereroland, where they originally came from, when the Namas and Hereros reconciled.<sup>127</sup> After their sojourn some settled at Warmbad and Kalkfontein (Karasburg). According to Stephanus half of the members of the community assisted the Germans with ox wagons as transport riders while the building of the railway lines from Lüderitz to Windhoek during the war. Some of the vulnerable members of the community were located 80km away in Keetmanshoop. The farm Vaalgras was given to these families as payment for their services during the war. Other groups formed close allies

---

<sup>124</sup> Sarafina Biwa, 'The History of the Vaalgras People of Namibia, Conference paper at 'Public History: Forgotten History', University of Namibia, Windhoek, 22-25 August 2000; Reinhart Kössler, 'Vaalgras 6 May', in Evelyn Annus (eds.), *Stagings made in Namibia: Postkoloniale fotografie*, b\_books Verlag, Berlin, 2009, 234-8; Reinhart Kössler, 'Political Intervention and the Image of History: Communal Memory Events in Central and Southern Namibia', in André du Pisani et al (eds.), *The Long Aftermath of War*, 393-9.

<sup>125</sup> National Archives of Namibia, A. 577, Interview with Ouma Gertruida Stephanus conducted by Jean Lombard, transcription by Dr. J.J. Fourie, Department of Afrikaans, University of Namibia, Gibeon, 14 May 1992. According to Ouma Stephanus, Tjikurihe (Tjikuirire) and Kakahito were the chiefly surnames amongst the Vaalgras community.

<sup>126</sup> National Archives of Namibia, A. 577, Interview with Ouma Gertruida Stephanus conducted by Jean Lombard, transcription by Dr. J.J. Fourie, Department of Afrikaans, University of Namibia, Gibeon, 14 May 1992, 5-6.

<sup>127</sup> National Archives of Namibia, A. 577, Interview with Ouma Gertruida Stephanus conducted by Jean Lombard, 6.

with Nama communities in the area that fought against Germany. These are the complex histories attested to during the annual commemorations at Vaalgras.<sup>128</sup>

The *fees* also portrays the active involvement of the Vaalgras community in the liberation struggle. The *fees* thus displays a colourful, layered history of the historical trajectory of this community. It represented the late 1800s violent clashes between migrating Khoe families from the Northern Cape with the Herero, their displacement to the Northern Cape and acculturation in the market economy of the Cape Colony. Their history also showcased their negotiation with colonialists in Namibia and their cooperation/resistance during the apartheid reserve administration. Through their linguistic and cultural heritage they depict familial ties with Nama and Herero communities in central, south-east Namibia and the Northern Cape, South Africa. By holding faithfully the symbols of a nation state during memorials they reveal their continued strive for unification and self-development after Independence. These sentiments of resistance, courage and perseverance were focused at the grave of Gaob Elias Stephanus, and the symbolic grave/monument of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi.

In Vaalgras the participants were met with horse riders from Vaalgras and *Oturupa* from Aminuis dressed in their khaki and red drilling at the symbolic grave/monument of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi. There was a service at the monument where Rev. Konjore gave a short historical account of the movement of the /Khowese soldiers in the region from the east, the battle that led to Gaob Witbooi's death and how the soldiers buried their leader on that day. Both the /Khowese and Vaalgras community clan songs were sung at the occasion. At the end of the service, Councillor Martin Biwa read the proclamation sent to the Namas by Von

---

<sup>128</sup> Reinhart Kössler, 'Political Intervention and the Image of History: Communal Memory Events in Central and Southern Namibia', 399.

Trotha from John Masson's book, *Jakob Marengo*. The proclamation was translated into khoekhoegowab by Rev. Willem Konjore.<sup>129</sup>

During the unveiling of Jakob Marenga's bust, Rev. Konjore described the last stand of Jakob Marenga in the dunes at Eensamheidspan.<sup>130</sup> The narrative told was similar to the events surrounding the burial of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi. Konjore stated that when Jakob Marenga and his wife were shot by the British mounted riflemen, their relatives buried them and also concealed their graves. This was done so that their bodies would not be tampered with by people.<sup>131</sup> That the colonial authorities were capable of exporting his body was mentioned in several interviews that we conducted in the region. Several informants said that the price set on Jakob Marenga's head, stated in the proclamation order, was in fact a literal assertion.<sup>132</sup>

Ms. Basson who lives in Warmbad imparts how a farmer, Devenish, was commissioned to kill Marenga, and then place his head in a glass container.<sup>133</sup> In *Skeletons in the Cupboard* there was reference to a Scottie Smith who attempted to trade the human remains of Jakob Marenga to scientists that wanted to export human remains to Europe.<sup>134</sup> Although Scottie Smith knew the whereabouts of the graves of Jakob Marenga and his wife, when he arrived there, he noted that the graves had already been disturbed and the heads of Marenga and his wife had been removed.<sup>135</sup> What really happened to the bodies of Jakob Marenga and his wife remains a mystery and lies at the heart of the offensive manner in which human bodies of

---

<sup>129</sup> John Masson, *Jakob Marengo: An early resistance hero of Namibia*, 21.

<sup>130</sup> SMA, research notes, Commemoration, Warmbad, October, 2008.

<sup>131</sup> SMA, research notes, Commemoration, Warmbad, October, 2008.

<sup>132</sup> National Archives of Namibia, AACRLS 196, OHP, Interview conducted by author and Casper Erichsen with Ms. Martha and Monica Basson, Warmbad, 2005; SMA, Interviews conducted by author with Magriet April, Sarah April and Sophie Basson, Pella, 28 July 2010.

<sup>133</sup> National Archives of Namibia, AACRLS 196, OHP, Interviews conducted by author and Casper Erichsen with Ms. Martha and Monica Basson, Warmbad, June 2005.

<sup>134</sup> Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*,

<sup>135</sup> John Masson, *Jakob Marengo: An Early Resistance Hero of Namibia*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, Namibia, 53.

people from central and southern Namibia and indeed the Northern Cape, South Africa were treated as objects and material culture, traded and exported during German colonisation.<sup>136</sup>

To perform/dramatise/ act out battle scenes of the colonial war was an act of representing historical knowledge with the aim to transmit it to an audience. However these performances were not only expressions as such but have a reflexive aspect as well. The actors evaluated the specific historical experience through their performance. Simultaneously the audience participated through their own perceptions of the performance.<sup>137</sup> By using specific historical sequences the director and actors portrayed a particular version of the colonial war. It was also an act that served to apply the imagination to oral narratives in the present time. Far from only accounting for losses and disaster during the war, the directors of the play and the soldiers decided to act out victories. This included the ambushes where Nama soldiers through their wit claimed a victory on the battlefield, burying their leader, Gaob Hendrik Witbooi. It also depicted the successful concealment of his grave because they knew the German soldiers would remove his body. These show various successes during the colonial war that were emphasised in the oral tradition and demonstrated during the commemorations. This myth surrounding the dead heroes implied that there were other victories and losses, often unrecorded by official recollections, which the participants signify through their performances. The fact that these specific battle scenes have been performed numerous times over the years, shows that this was a preferred version of the war battles, at least by the organisers and participants of the plays. These positions between death and victory upheld by the mystery of these performances allude to the ambivalence of the war.<sup>138</sup>

---

<sup>136</sup> See Chapter Five for an in depth discussion on export and repatriation of human bodies from Germany.

<sup>137</sup> Victor Turner (ed.), *The Anthropology of Performance*, 22, 24.

<sup>138</sup> Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, 29.



The repetitions of these performances every year, albeit with variations while performers were in the 'act,' also reflected the processes of ritual. These performances were set apart and were structured at specific sites at particular times of the year to confirm and at times transform the actors and audience's ideas on their culture, historical events and everyday life.<sup>139</sup> The actors displayed a historical event externally by following the relevant historically accepted narrative, however through the performance the actors were themselves involuntarily motivated by the emotions the play of tragedy, loss and victory portrayed. The audience apart from merely viewing the performance were expected, through the theatrical language employed, to be moved by the events portrayed in the various scenes, and work through the performance within specific sensory vocabularies.<sup>140</sup> At every occasion when the narrative was enacted it became more familiar to the participants, and the meaning of the events was incorporated in the sensory body of the participants and audience.<sup>141</sup> Furthermore as Tambiah had noted the sequences in these ritual acts perform a specific spatio-temporal technique where the actors projected the present into the past, thereby communing with a mythical past.<sup>142</sup>

### ***Gao-haib (sceptre) and black power fists: the re-politicisation of communal memory***

There was a re-emergence of commemorative activity led by traditional leaders among the /Khowese during the South African dispensation. During the reign of Gaob Dawid Witbooi (Outa /Huwuob), who was a traditional leader from 1928-1955 these memorials were organised at Kranzplatz. Later Gaob Hendrik Samuel Witbooi moved the memorial site closer to Gibeon where the community participated in various services paying tribute to

---

<sup>139</sup> Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, 24-5.

<sup>140</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'The Memory of the Senses' Part 1, 'The Memory of the Senses, Part 2: Still Acts', in Nadia Seremetakis (eds.), *The Senses Still*, 1- 43.

<sup>141</sup> Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, xv.

<sup>142</sup> S.J. Tambiah, 'A Performative Approach to Ritual', 123.

predecessors at the community graveyard.<sup>143</sup> At these commemorations one would possibly have heard speeches which related to the struggles with the present administration such as the reserve policy. It was during the reign of the latter Kaptein, and secretarial office of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, that the South African administration attempted to implement the Odendaal plan and the 'Namaland' policy.<sup>144</sup> This policy attempted to develop separately distinct ethnic groups in specific 'traditional' locations/ homelands.

Large tracts of land on which people had resided were designated as government land and specific reserves, Soromas, Tses, Kranzplatz and Neuhoof, were demarcated for communities to reside. Some of these communities were forcibly removed, so as to produce a homeland for communities in this region. The land on which they had previously lived was designed for white farmers from the Cape Colony. This apartheid-style geopolitical engineering resulted in a haphazard and disastrous situation in which communities were to strictly be classified as 'Nama', 'Damara', 'Herero' and 'Coloured' for example. This resulted in many communities who had previously lived on land in southern Namibia being relocated to other parts of the country where they properly 'belonged'. This formed a precarious position for several communities who did not fit into the notion of 'Nama', in the reserves created on specific ethnic lines. However the situation was the same for those that fit into this ethnic category, 'Nama' but lived on land that was desired as farmland for whites, such as some of the !Gamiñun who were relocated to the Gibeon district. During the Namaland dispensation some of the reserves such as Tses however became a catchment area for people described as belonging to various ethnic groups. The allocation of land to these communities and the

---

<sup>143</sup> SMA, Interview conducted by author and Casper Erichsen with Alwina Petersen and Hans Petersen, Gibeon, 2005.

<sup>144</sup> Reinhart Kössler, *In Search of survival and dignity*, 27.

specific areas in which these reserves were located was to serve as labour reservoirs to adjacent farms owned by white farmers.

Traditional leadership structures were often a basis of conflict with the various colonial administrations.<sup>145</sup> Some of these traditional leaders and their communities often resisted forced removals, ethnic engineering and apartheid strategies in general. The South African administration especially after the 1960s attempted to control traditional community structures to have power over land and resources in central and southern Namibia.<sup>146</sup> The administration stipulated that although the political office of headmen was not abolished that it was not a reversion to the old political institution where the traditional leaders had rights and decision-making powers over extensive land and resources in the region.

Reinhart Kössler cautions that the offices of the headmen should not be viewed through the frame of 'indirect rule', as in many colonial countries, as these headmen had very limited adjudicating power and the administration did not rule the communities through their headmen.<sup>147</sup> After the implementation of the homelands strategy, provisions were allowed for placing more authority in the hands of the traditional leaders. These rights and privileges were however marred by a racist, hierarchical and ambiguous administrative and development plan. There were several instances where headmen elected by the administration were not traditional leaders as recognised in these communities.<sup>148</sup> This however did not deter specific communities in southern Namibia from electing headmen from families that were

---

<sup>145</sup> Reinhart Kössler, *In Search of survival and dignity*, 52, 56, 232.

<sup>146</sup> Reinhart Kössler, *In Search of survival and dignity*, 98-9, 103-4.

<sup>147</sup> Reinhart Kössler, *In Search of survival and dignity*, 55-8.

<sup>148</sup> K.F.R.H. Budack, 'n Volkekundige Studie van die Tses Reservaat', 149-51; Reinhart Kössler, *In Search of survival and dignity*, 56-7.

recognised as heirs through customary law.<sup>149</sup> At annual meetings held by members of these communities, and especially after the 1950s it is clear that the support and agitation towards the re-instatement of traditional leadership and thus the recognition of communities rights to land and resources was one of the main foci of these meetings.<sup>150</sup>

By the end of the 1960s there was a culmination of the protest activities that were ongoing in local communities in central and southern Namibia from the late 1920s and early 1930s. Also labour movements in the region had an impetus on political organisation such as the emergence of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), spurred on by dockworkers from West Africa and the Cape Colony at Lüderitz. These international political ideas had a mass reception in central and southern Namibia. There was also a highly mobilised labour and trade union consciousness which emerged that was brought home by migrant labourers. The intensification of apartheid policies in the late 1960s especially seen with migrant labour, forced relocations in the rural and urban areas, the unenviable economic situation of communities and the racial ideological basis of the administration in general, caused the escalation of political activity in the country. It is in this context that various leaders agitated for the reinstatement of traditional leadership.

Later through further mobilisation spearheaded by traditional and church leaders, petitions were sent to the United Nations against the South African mandate system. These traditional leaders were later proponents of mass political movements. At this moment certain traditional leaders were associated with nationalist politics and were affiliated to specific political parties. The institution of traditional leadership was reflected and reinforced at the

---

<sup>149</sup> Reinhart Kössler, *In Search of survival and dignit*, 55.

<sup>150</sup> K.F.R.H. Budack, 'n Volkekundige Studie van die Tses Reservaat', 149-51; Reinhart Kössler, *In Search of survival and dignity*, 56, 90, 96, 98-9.

commemorations held in these communities. Traditional leadership was also symbolically showcased at these commemorations as a means to reassert what was considered a vital institution in these communities.<sup>151</sup>

Several ceremonies at the commemorations are thus concerned with the representation of certain aspects of this political institution. These communities support the institution of traditional leadership through the remembrance of their 'Kapteins'. In the late 1980s the commemorations of the /Khowese for example were also known as the 'Kapteinshedenkingsfees'.<sup>152</sup> So although the leader who commanded the community during the colonial war was remembered on the day, the predecessors were also acknowledged by various ceremonies as was the political structure of the community. In 1988 at the memorial in the old reserve, Kransplatz, the horse riders were instructed to ride in a circle around the site in honour of where the festival used to be organised by predecessors. Gaob Hendrik Witbooi told the assembled crowd that this was the place where the petitions to the United Nations Organisation were first drafted by the traditional leadership and other communities' leaders such as Hosea Kutako.<sup>153</sup>

Gaob Hendrik Witbooi arrested on several occasions by security police, was elected as 'Kaptein' while in solitary confinement in 1978. In 1987 the police under the aegis of Section 6 of the Terrorism Act imprisoned him with other activists at Osire.<sup>154</sup> At a commemorative

---

<sup>151</sup> The institution of traditional leadership is pertinent to the struggles for recognition of identity and self-reliance and have recently re-emerged in post-independent Namibia. In southern Namibia these struggles in Traditional Authorities were evident amongst the /Hei/Khaun, !Kharo-!oan and the Vaalgras community.

<sup>152</sup> SMA, Heroes Day Festival Programme, 82nd Anniversary, Gibeon, 6-7 November 1987.

<sup>153</sup> Da'oud Vries, 'Niks kan die land se onafhanklikheid stuit. Almal moet help – Witbooi', *The Namibian Focus*, 4 November 1988, 1, 3.

<sup>154</sup> SMA, Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, 'A Narrative Overview of the Chieftancy of Hon. Rev. Dr. Hendrik Witbooi, Captain of the /Khowese People: 1978-2008', '/Khowese Heroes Day Programme', 103rd Anniversary, 31 October - 2 November 2008, 16.

occasion in 2008, Gaob Hendrik Witbooi narrated near the Gibeon train station how during the confrontation upon his arrest the police told Gaob Hendrik Witbooi that he was not a 'Kaptein'. He replied that he was not a traditional leader according to the South African regime, but that he was the traditional leader of the community, through their election. A song composed by Gaob Hendrik Witbooi while in prison at Osire was sung at several occasions during commemorations. At the memorial in 2008 members of the community choir sang the composition that plays on the Nama meaning of 'O si re'. The community choir stood up in the graveyard and some members from recently written lyrics on paper sang, ...'Satsan #gan-am //kha, xawe !noras o se. !Noras !nas xasa. O si re !Khub t'wa'.<sup>155</sup>

One of the features during the commemorations of the /Khowese and the Kai//khaun was a procession of the 'Kaptein', in full regalia, with the 'Kaptein's hat, which was a 'symbol of authority'.<sup>156</sup> A hat was worn with a knot tied on top and the specific colour cloth covered the brim of the hat as well. One of the early images of this style of hat-wearing by a traditional leader was seen on the head of Gaob Hendrik (/Gamab !Nanseb) Witbooi.<sup>157</sup> A similar hat was worn by Gaob Hendrik Samuel Witbooi during official events such as the annual commemorations.<sup>158</sup> Gaob Hendrik Witbooi also wore a hat styled in this way usually with a

---

Gaob Hendrik Witbooi was also arrested and imprisoned at Osire along with other political activists such as Nico Bessinger, Anton Lubowski, Dan Tjongarero, John Pandeni and Ben Ulenga under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act in August 1987. The specific Act in question was repealed in South Africa fifteen years prior to the arrest of these activists. Activists believed that the country-wide search and detention mission was also in expectation of 'Namibia Day', the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of SWAPO's armed struggle. Rajah Munamava, Police Swoop on Swapo, *The Namibian*, 21 August 1987, 5; Staff reporter, 'Bessinger speaks before his arrest', *The Namibian*, 21 August 1987, 5; Staff reporter, 'Historic Section 6 Release', *The Namibian*, 18 September 1987, 14.

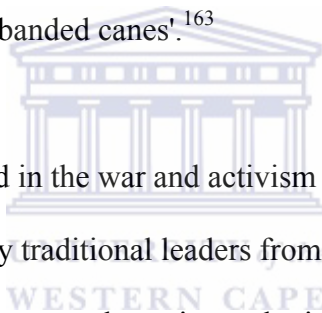
<sup>155</sup> SMA, 'O si re', 'Heroes Day Celebrations Programme', 105th Anniversary, 29 -31 October 2010, 8, 9. This song was composed by Gaob Hendrik Witbooi while in solitary confinement at Osire in 1987.

<sup>156</sup>SMA, Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, 'A Narrative Overview of the Chieftancy of Hon. Rev. Dr. Hendrik Witbooi, Captain of the /Khowese People: 1978-2008', 103<sup>rd</sup> Annual /Khowese Heroes Day program, 16.

<sup>157</sup> National Archives of Namibia, NAN 41, This popularly represented image of HendrikWitbooi shows him wearing the style of hat.

<sup>158</sup> National Archives of Namibia, NAN 20284.

golden star sown on to the front part of the hat.<sup>159</sup> The Gaob is followed in procession by his councillors; one of the councillors carries the Gao-heib, a sceptre representing traditional leadership, also supporting social hierarchy and hegemony.<sup>160</sup> A sceptre was also given to traditional leaders by the colonial governments of the Cape Colony to acknowledge them as office bearers.<sup>161</sup> *Kaptein* Klaas Afrikaner was given a sceptre or ‘staff of office’ by the government of the Cape in recognition of his status as a traditional leader. It was often the case that the traditional leaders who accepted these sceptres to some extent cooperated with settlers and the colonial government.<sup>162</sup> Peter Carstens wrote that many of the political insignia were influenced by the Dutch and that it was difficult to ascertain which was merely renamed from old custom or which was influenced by the Dutch. He also noted that the Dutch handed the leaders ‘copper banded canes’.<sup>163</sup>



The anti-colonial fighters involved in the war and activism against the early South African mandate system which were led by traditional leaders from various communities in Namibia were valorised as having begun the struggle against colonialism proper, which the liberation struggle continued. The participants who attended these memorials who were also fighting against the racist apartheid regime of South Africa thus had a vested interest in acknowledging the resistance of their ancestors against colonisation. Local politics thus began to merge with national politics as various traditional leaders and communities’ consciousness of a protracted struggle began to emerge. A wider reach of political mobilisation was evident in various villages and towns in southern Namibia during the late

---

<sup>159</sup> UWC - Robben Island Mayibuye Archives, Eric Miller, ‘Gaogu Gei-Tses’ (photographs), Gibeon, 1987.

<sup>160</sup> K.F.R.H. Budack, ‘n Volkekundige Studie van die Tses Reservaat (Distrik Keetmanshoop, Suidwes Afrika), 148; Nadia Seremetakis, ‘Implications’, 136.

<sup>161</sup> Tilman Dederling, ‘Khoikhoi and missionaries in early nineteenth-century southern Namibia’, 36-7.

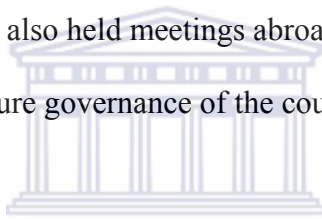
<sup>162</sup> Martin Chatfield Legassick, *The Politics of a South African Frontier*, 70; Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier*, 193.

<sup>163</sup> Peter Carstens, *Always Here, Even Tomorrow*, 102.



1970s and 80s.<sup>164</sup> Nationalist movements portrayed the resistance during the colonial era as part of a trajectory of resistance which they emulated.

One of the landmark events that catalysed political consciousness in the region for example was the protest against the Turnhalle conference.<sup>165</sup> Also the Nama teachers strike held in Gibeon in 1976 and 1977 garnered mass support.<sup>166</sup> At this meeting various communities in southern Namibia were able to discuss and contest racial prejudice in education and other regulations as stipulated by the administration in general.<sup>167</sup> Some of the political leaders from southern Namibia who also campaigned in other parts of the country, attended the public funerals of political activists. In some cases they were detained and tortured by the security police.<sup>168</sup> Some activists also held meetings abroad with international organisations to negotiate and determine the future governance of the country.



Southern Africa became heavily militarised during this period and the struggle in Namibia was drawn into the international dimension of the Cold war. Northern Namibia was invaded by South African troops who made further incursions into southern Angola. The invasions of Northern and southern Angola by Portuguese and South African troops were supported by the United States of America. These also drew in forces from Guinea, Congo and Cuba.<sup>169</sup> Many

---

<sup>164</sup> Christian A. Williams, 'Student Political Consciousness: Lessons from a Namibian Mission School', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 3, 2004, 549.

<sup>165</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance*, 94-9.

<sup>166</sup> SMA, 'Funeral Worship Programme of Elder Johannes Isaaks', March 2010; Siegfried Groth, *Namibia: The Wall of Silence*, 36.

<sup>167</sup> Reinhart Kössler, *In Search of Survival and Dignity*, 90; Christian A. Williams, 'Exile History: An Ethnography of the SWAPO Camps and the Namibian Nation', PhD Thesis, University of Michigan, 2009, 244.

<sup>168</sup> SMA, 'Funeral Worship Programme of Elder Johannes Isaaks'. Mr Johannes Isaaks, an activist under the leadership of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi actively participated in a SWAPO political mass rally in Ondangwa, northern Namibia in 1977.

<sup>169</sup> Interview with Jorge Risquet, 'Defeating the South Africans in Angola was decisive for Africa', in David Deutschmann (eds.), *Changing the history of Africa: Angola and Namibia*, Ocean Press, Melbourne, Australia, 1989, 1-40; Interview with Fidel Castro, 'All Africa hates apartheid', in David Deutschmann (eds.), *Changing the history of Africa*, 92-100.

of the exiles from southern Namibia were students who were influenced by the mass student protests taking place in the region during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Some of these students were at universities in South Africa. From exile students formed alliances with student movements that were also mobilised against the South African apartheid regime for example. During this period, from 1980 onwards, many young men from southern Namibia were recruited to join the South West African Territorial Forces (SWATF), an organ of the South African administration in the Namibia.<sup>170</sup> Other activists went instead into exile to train for military combat against South African military forces as part of the Peoples Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN); and some were also able to further their studies on the continent and abroad.<sup>171</sup> However during the struggle for liberation many of the students from southern Namibia, accused of being South African spies, were later imprisoned, by SWAPO in detention camps such as in Lubango, southern Angola.<sup>172</sup> The experiences and reports of gross human rights violations perpetrated by the security police, South African military and the counter insurgency unit – Koevoet, and SWAPO would be brought back to the home villages for further information and mobilisation.

The memorials held during the liberation struggle for example were shaped by political mobilisation against excessive violence of the apartheid regime in the country and region.<sup>173</sup>

During the 1980s these commemorations especially in Gibeon also doubled up as specific

---

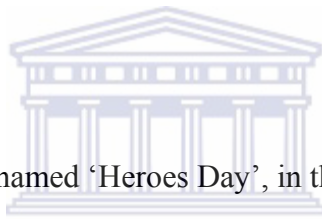
<sup>170</sup> Christian A. Williams, 'Exile History: An Ethnography of the SWAPO Camps and the Namibian Nation', 140-3.

<sup>171</sup> Siegfried Groth, *Namibia: The Wall of Silence*, 36-7; Christian A. Williams, 'Exile History: An Ethnography of the SWAPO Camps and the Namibian Nation', 244.

<sup>172</sup> Siegfried Groth, *Namibia: The Wall of Silence*, 99-129; Christian A. Williams, 'Exile History: An Ethnography of the SWAPO Camps and the Namibian Nation', 140-6. Some relatives that went into exile are still missing persons at present. No official government investigations have been launched to find the whereabouts of these people. The news of these activities by a political organisation that was popularly supported in southern Namibia brought sorrow, distrust and conflict between relatives, especially during the arrivals of the ex-detainees just before the democratic elections and Independence in 1990.

<sup>173</sup> Political organisations were themselves marred, by conspiracy, distrust and violence within their own ranks. An example of this is what is known as the 'Spy Drama' within SWAPO.

sites of political education and mobilisation. These commemorations were seen as public meetings of the community and where activists from various parts of the country were allowed to conduct meetings. The messages relayed at these gatherings were of unification in spite of ethnic diversity against the racist, violent South African regime.<sup>174</sup> The military resistance of guerrilla fighters headed by Commando leaders during German colonisation influenced the spirit of these resistance movements. It was reiterated that anti-colonial resistance was fought by various ethnic communities, and that the liberation struggle should emulate their resistance strategy. That the narratives of the anti-colonial resistors were used in the service of the liberation struggle was evidenced in the various ways in which information about anti-colonial resistance was juxtaposed with present struggles of the community, and the nation at large.<sup>175</sup>



In 1980 the 'Witbooi fees' was renamed 'Heroes Day', in the spirit of a national resistance against colonialism.<sup>176</sup> In a photograph taken at a commemoration in Gibeon in 1982, a calendar page was held by women waving their clenched fists in the air while Gaob Hendrik Witbooi spoke over a loud speaker. This calendar page printed by the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) of September/October 1977 portrayed images of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi on his veldstoel holding his rifle. Another image was an insert of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi and his soldiers sitting on horseback. These images were printed alongside the photographs of nationalists during the liberation struggle.<sup>177</sup> Also in the magazine about the military wing of SWAPO titled, 'The Combatant', the image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi was printed on the covers of the journal alongside PLAN Commander, Tobias Hanyeko.

---

<sup>174</sup> SMA, Summary of Interview conducted with Rev. Willem Hanse, Cape Town, February 2012.

<sup>175</sup> Da'Oud Vries, 'Witbooi tells of his fighting spirit at Gibeon rally', *The Namibian*, 30 October 1989, 4.

<sup>176</sup> Staff reporter, 'Picturing the past and celebrating fallen heroes', *The Namibian*, 25 October 1985, 9.

<sup>177</sup> NAN Poster Collection. The famous image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi and an insert of him sitting on horseback surrounded by his councillors was placed alongside images of Chief Hosea Kutako, Hon. Andimba Toivo ya Toivo and Hon. Sam Nujoma.

Gaob Witbooi was featured in several articles on anti-colonial resistance. Gaob Witbooi had at least one publication dedicated to his legacy.<sup>178</sup> Gaob Hendrik Witbooi who held a prominent position in local memorial politics, at public commemorations in Gibeon, was thus also being portrayed in the nationalist memorial complex. Gaob Witbooi was reinserted back into the local arena using a national frame through the use of a Namibia Day calendar for example, which in independent Namibia marks National Heroes Day.

These memorial sites served as places where links were narrated from different communities in southern Namibia about origin and colonial war narratives in light of the present colonial struggles. Bishop Zephania Kameeta, at a commemoration in Gibeon in 1986, remarked that during Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's resistance, the Germans claimed that they wanted to protect communities in Namibia. He then compared that to their present situation where the illegal occupation of Namibia was considered as protection by South Africa as well.<sup>179</sup> He also noted that, 'The wound of October 25, 1945, which caused the death of Hendrik Witbooi senior, was still bleeding and would not stop until Namibia became independent'.<sup>180</sup>

It seems that these commemorations were not abolished by the administration seemingly because their religious context was emphasised and they were portrayed as merely 'traditional'. In 1985 during the era where mass meetings were banned by law, Gaob Hendrik

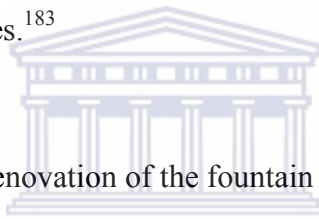
---

<sup>178</sup> *The Combatant*, Vol. 4, No. 3, October 1982, Front page; *The Combatant*, Vol. 6, No. 6, January 1985, 9-13; *The Combatant*, Vol. 6, No. 7, February 1985, 9-12; *The Combatant* Vol. 6, No. 8, March 1985, 6-7; *The Combatant*, Vol. 6, No. 9, April 1985, 13-6. It is noteworthy that Mr. Hans Pieters, from southern Namibia was the political editor of 'The Combatant' in the early 1980s. Christian A. Williams, 'Exile History: An Ethnography of the SWAPO Camps and the Namibian Nation', 146.

<sup>179</sup> A note in a letter by Gaob Hendrik Witbooi in 1892 strikingly corresponds with Bishop Kameeta's statement. In a letter to Sir Henry Loch, the Governor at the Cape, Gaob Hendrik Witbooi writes, '...And now it appears that the Germans themselves want to make war. They claimed they had come in peace, but that is not true. I now see bloodshed at their hands, for they are fully prepared for war. They claimed they would protect us from the Boers who wanted to take over our land; but now they themselves have invited the Boers into our country, and have given them land without the consent of our country's chiefs.' Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (transl.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, 119.

<sup>180</sup> Esau Nowaseb, 'Heroes Day', *The Namibian*, 7 November 1986, 5.

Witbooi was asked whether the commemorations in Gibeon would be allowed to proceed. He replied that he saw no reason why the event would be banned because the memorial was traditional, historic and therefore not political in nature. Gaob Hendrik Witbooi could obviously not reveal the other nature of the meetings for security reasons.<sup>181</sup> The graveyard for example was a space in which people could congregate at will, and could be used strategically during the bans on political congregation. This was certainly the case at a memorial in 1987, where some participants were seen in the graveyard in Gibeon brandishing black power salutes which symbolised support for SWAPO.<sup>182</sup> The unveiling of the graves in 1987 was for example initiated by Gaob Hendrik Witbooi after his release from solitary confinement at Osire. This was conducted to uplift the revolutionary spirit of the people through the remembering of heroes.<sup>183</sup>



The unveiling of the plaque and renovation of the fountain in Gibeon was an occasion where Gaob Cupido Witbooi, who had seniority status of Little Namaqualand before crossing the river to Namibia,<sup>184</sup> was honoured for the founding of the fountain at Gibeon. As his father, teacher and evangelist Markus Witbooi had done, Gaob Hendrik Witbooi too planted trees in the graveyard and maintained the graves of predecessors.<sup>185</sup> At the commemoration in 1987 there was an unveiling of the grave stones of the first and second ‘Kapteins’ of the /Khowese

---

<sup>181</sup> Staff reporter, 'Picturing the past and celebrating fallen heroes', *The Namibian*, 25 October 1985, 9.

<sup>182</sup> UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Archives, Eric Miller, Gaogu Gei-Tses (photographs), November 1987.

<sup>183</sup> SMA, Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, 'A Narrative Overview of the Chieftaincy of Hon. Rev. Dr. Hendrik Witbooi', 19.

<sup>184</sup> Ursula Trüper, *The Invisible Woman: Zara Schmelen, African Mission Assistant at the Cape and in Namaland*, Basler Afrika Bibliographien, Basel, Switzerland, 2006. 67-8.

<sup>185</sup> Photograph of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi holding a 'mannelie' badge, official logo of SWAPO for the first electoral campaign, at the commemoration in Gibeon in 1989 taken by Da'oud Vries, *The Namibian*, 30 October 1989, 1. In the background is a councillor holding the staff of office. The logo for SWAPO during the election campaign was represented by the 'mannelie', which is the image of a man brandishing a clenched fist in the air. The clenched fist is a symbol of SWAPO and is also a popular symbol of the liberation struggle in South Africa. It is also associated with the liberation movements amongst the African-Americans and is known as the 'black power salute' amongst black-consciousness movements such as the Black Panther Movement. SMA, Rev. Willem Simon Hanse, 'A Tribute to Captain Rev. Dr. Hendrik Witbooi, A Marriage of Faith and Politics', /Khowese Heroes Day Programme, 103rd Anniversary, 31.

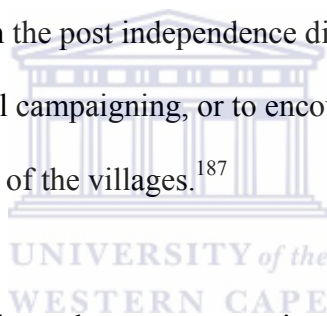
community that settled at !Goregu ra abes (Gibeon). The grave of 'Kaptein Izak Witbooi' was symbolically inscribed with the name of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, whose grave is unknown. It was often at this grave that the participants encircled to conduct services at the graveyard. Next to this grave were reburied human remains of people that were massacred at Hornkranz by German soldiers led by Curt von Francois. These human remains were reinterred from their original site on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1957.

In 1988 the community commemorated '100 years of heroic struggle', based on the time span from the commencement of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's reign in 1888. One of the banners on the podium at the memorial site read, '10<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary, Not Yet Uhuru'. The 10 years referred to the reign of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi since 1978, and 'uhuru' in Kiswahili means freedom, the slogan thus refers to the fact that Namibia, according to the majority of the populace, was not yet independent. The Cassinga massacre was also commemorated during this year. At the ceremony the participants were informed about political matters such as UN Security Council resolution 435, pronounced in 1978. The Resolution spelt out a peace plan for Namibia as coordinated by the United Nations Organisation, where there would be a military ceasefire and Namibians would be able to vote for a government during a free and fair election process. An annexure in the memorial program showed a timeline of action for various stakeholders, such as the South African government, SWAPO and the United Nations, on the implementation of a peace plan. According to this plan Namibia should have been independent 'by 31 December 1978 at the latest'.<sup>186</sup> Gaob Hendrik Witbooi encouraged participants by noting that although the South African government was stalling these peace plans, that the independence of the country was imminent.

---

<sup>186</sup> SMA, 'Heroes Day Festival Programme', 83rd Anniversary, Gibeon, 29-30 October 1988.

After independence in the 1990 these spaces were used as a discussion of the communities' contribution to the anti-colonial and liberation struggle, and also the present socio-political and economic difficulties and successes. Several participants of local commemorations from the !Ama community reported that staging commemorations during the South African administration of the country was difficult because people agitated for the end of the apartheid government through demonstrations and other activities. The commemorations thus did not occur on the scale that it has in recent times. These memorials may therefore be one of the only venues where various leaders in southern Namibia have met to discuss matters concerning their region collectively through the framework of their heritage and resistance to colonisation and apartheid. These sites were also used to merge the various community and national symbols of the country in the post independence dispensation. At times individuals also used these spaces for political campaigning, or to encourage different political factions to work together in the development of the villages.<sup>187</sup>



Acting Gaob Josef Christiaan spoke at the commemoration held in Warmbad in 2007 about the brutalities of German colonisation in the region. He spoke about the !Gami≠nun leaders that were imprisoned in jails in Warmbad during the colonial war. These derelict buildings are still there at present. The prison has actually been converted to a museum with the assistance of the Museums Association of Namibia (MAN), and Nacobta, and the anti-colonial resistance is a major theme in the museum. Acting Gaob Christiaan stated that the prisons where Nama were imprisoned at Warmbad during the war were akin to the jailhouses of Robben Island in Cape Town, South Africa. He stated that the region bore the physical testimony of the hardships of the !Gami≠nun community, because it was in this area that the heroes of the resistance against German invasion was fought and also where community

---

<sup>187</sup> SMA, research notes, 'Gaogu Gei-Tses', October 2008.



members were bombed by South African military aircraft soldiers from 1921-3. He recalled that the community was also forcibly removed to Gibeon, Berseba, Otavi and Fransfontein during the 1960s as part of the Odendaal Plan to create ethnic reserves. Gaob Josef Christiaan in light of this history requested for the restitution of the community's land, also free access to the 'objects of their history such as the graves on private lands, and old trails that their forefathers used to traverse in the area'.<sup>188</sup>

At the commemoration in Warmbad Rev. Willem Konjore also recalled that our ancestors fought 'gallantly and confronted the might of the German army'.<sup>189</sup> He said that the graves dotted all over the region were a testament that they were 'worthy occupiers of land and opponents to any intruding forces'.<sup>190</sup> He further noted that the narration that he was delivering was part of the collective memory of the community that was passed on from one generation to the next. He also relayed an anecdote about a dialogue between his great grandfather, Jakob Marenga and Pader Maliknowski of the Heirachabis Catholic mission station. Pader Maliknowski was asked to negotiate on behalf of the German army general, Von Trotha. Commandant Jakob Marenga answered the call to surrender by stating that he had no precedent of the sincerity of Von Trotha's negotiations and that he would thus not comply with his wishes.<sup>191</sup>

Rev. Konjore stated that although the heroes of anti-colonial resistance were not as well equipped as their German counterparts, they guarded and protected their land because they

---

<sup>188</sup> SMA, research notes, 'Centenary event in remembrance of the late Captain Jan Abraham Christian and the unveiling of the sepulchral stone in honour of Commandant Jakob Marenga', 25 October 2008.

<sup>189</sup> SMA, 'Brief narration by Rev. W. Konjore, MP at the occasion of the Bondelswartz traditional community commemorating the heroic act of resistance against foreign domination', 25 October 2008, 4.

<sup>190</sup> SMA, 'Brief narration by Rev. W. Konjore, MP at the occasion of the Bondelswartz traditional community commemorating the heroic act of resistance against foreign domination', 25 October 2008, 4.

<sup>191</sup> SMA, 'Brief narration by Rev. W. Konjore, MP at the occasion of the Bondelswartz traditional community commemorating the heroic act of resistance against foreign domination', 25 October 2008, 6.

upheld their responsibility towards their descendants.<sup>192</sup> He also stated that he was disappointed by the generations who have not upheld the strong character of their communities.<sup>193</sup> He further noted that it was not acknowledged that while the South African regime fought militarily in the north, in the south the same regime dealt psychological blows to communities during apartheid. He further said that because of that even today the people in the south lack a sense of self-worth and dignity. Rev. Konjore said that the communities need psychological and philosophical rehabilitation to heal from the trauma of the war.<sup>194</sup>

At a commemoration in May 2007 at Vaalgras, as part of the ceremony an elder who was an ardent activist and who underwent military training in exile during the liberation struggle stood up and took a green, white and black flag. He proclaimed that he could trace his lineage to the Ovambanderu. He proudly marched with the green, white and black flag to the end of the stage, raised it and saluted it. This rendition spoke of Ovambanderu origins symbolised by the Green flag, drilling traditions of the Ovambanderu troops after the colonial war and military activities in exile during the liberation struggle. That this elder was embodying these traditions through the drilling performance not only for himself but all the women and men of his generation that were involved in similar activities was evident from its public portrayal and sanction. Taken further it also intervened in the silences about the military actions of activists in and other roles of these communities in southern Namibia during the liberation struggle. These were the local spaces symbolically used to portray such histories. These events and performances plotted different paths along which the histories of the community were known.

---

<sup>192</sup> SMA, 'Brief narration by Rev. W. Konjore, MP at the occasion of the Bondelswartz traditional community commemorating the heroic act of resistance against foreign domination', 25 October 2008, 6-7.

<sup>193</sup> SMA, 'Brief narration by Rev. W. Konjore, MP at the occasion of the Bondelswartz traditional community commemorating the heroic act of resistance against foreign domination', 25 October 2008, 5.

<sup>194</sup> SMA, research notes, comments made during the 'Brief narration by Rev. W. Konjore, MP', Warmbad, 25 October 2008.

### *The Graves are Alive: re(member)ing the dead*

Remember to call at my grave, when freedom finally walks the land,  
That I may rise to tread familiar paths, to see broken chains,  
Fallen prejudice, forgotten injury, pardoned pains.<sup>195</sup>

One of the main features of the commemorations held in honour of anti-colonial resistance in southern Namibia takes place at the site of a graveyard. At all the memorials whether they were called Fees (Festival) or Gaogu Gei Tses (Heroes' Day) there was a service allocated in the program where the memorial participants gathered at the communal graveyard. I refer to these performances as 'burial ceremonies' that took place at specific places and were enacted either because some people were not buried, others were buried in unmarked graves and others were dismembered and their body parts exported to other countries. At these memorials participants acknowledged those who died in the war and who were buried at specific places. In some cases the communities searched for bodies and their parts and reinterred these at the local graveyard. It is believed that the body parts have to be reunited with its parts and in accessible sites in order to honour and bring the dead back to life in the memory of the community in the process of re(member)ing.<sup>196</sup> Both the grave yard and sacred sites marked by specific monuments for the war dead were maintained for people to identify a place where they can perform various ceremonies to persons who fought during colonisation and the liberation struggle.

Some of the personalities, especially the leaders during the war that were commemorated were tied up with the identity of the community. These ceremonies were concerned with the acknowledgment of these people who passed on during the war, their peaceful passage into

---

<sup>195</sup> Don Mattera, 'Remember', *Azanian Love Songs*, African Perspectives Publishing, 2007, 52.

<sup>196</sup> SMA, Shark Island address by Chief Dawid Frederick, 'Statement on 100th Commemoration of Chief Cornelius Frederick, traditional Chief of the !Aman clan who was beheaded by the German colonial forces', 16 February 2007, 2, 3.

the hereafter and the coherence of the community in the aftermath of war. As such these burial ceremonies drew on cultural resources associated with burial rituals held when individuals died and were buried by their kinfolk.<sup>197</sup>

Research on the religious life of 'Khoe' communities by Schapera suggested that these communities did not have a tradition of ancestral worship as elaborate as the 'Bantu'.<sup>198</sup> The folklorist Schmidt also erroneously stated that historical legends were scarce amongst Nama-speaking peoples because they did not memorialise the graves and no rituals were accorded to their ancestors. This comparative ethnological framework between 'Khoe/San' and 'Bantu' ancestral observances seems to suggest that rituals for ancestors among the Nama were less structured or non-existent. Theophilus Hahn however in his treatise on Nama deities described how several interviewees and people who he observed in southern Namibia had reverence for specific deities who were considered ancestors by the 'Khoe'.<sup>199</sup> These observances specifically referred to the ideas surrounding life and death in these communities and were represented by deities such Tsui//goab and Heitsi-eibeb and other mythological figures.

Heitsi-eibeb for example was recognised by the constructing of specific monuments/graves in the landscape where passersby would throw stones and twigs in reverence. Research presentations by Alan Morris from the !Garib River Valley also show burials where cairns were constructed.<sup>200</sup> Furthermore Hahn also noted that various people communed with their

---

<sup>197</sup> For a documentation of oral narratives describing death rituals in Namaqualand see Peter Carstens, *Always Here, Even Tomorrow*, 148-51.

<sup>198</sup> Isaac Schapera, *Khoisan Peoples of South Africa*, 395.

<sup>199</sup> Theophilus Hahn, *Tsuni//Goam: The supreme being of the Khoi-khoi*, Trübner and Co., Ludgate Hill, 1881.

<sup>200</sup> Alan G. Morris, *The Skeletons of Contact: A study of protohistoric burials from the lower Orange River Valley*, South Africa, Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1992, 19-22;38-54;54-60;65-71. Most of

fore-parents at grave sites. This was still observed during and in the aftermath of funerary rites and also on memorial days albeit in other forms. David Bunn noted that these burial monuments where people would throw a stone or twig as they passed formed part of the 'performative inscription' on the landscape.<sup>201</sup>

Burials and the performances conducted at grave sites at memorials show that these communities do in fact honour their ancestors in highly structured services. The services associated with the burial of ancestors who died during the colonial war may be viewed as communities conducting rituals that were based on a symbiosis and re-coding of pre-Christian and Christian belief systems. There were various historical processes which have affected which sacred processes fall away where others are preserved and dramatically adapted. The specific historical processes which these communities have undergone and their reorganising and reactionary activities may be an indication to how, which and why certain processes have been preserved in the way that they have. The institutions and structures such as the present church where sacred ceremonies were performed were indicators to the various guises in which old and new ceremonies, pre-Christian and Christian were constantly reworked. The distinction may be ambiguous because both systems that of Nama cosmology and the theology of early Christian missionaries were both systems that were constantly undergoing alteration as they were being exposed to each other. These societies were developed in quite multifaceted ways under gruelling circumstances and various historical processes had strong transforming forces. However there were traces of these religious systems relayed in memories as represented also at public memorials in language, mythology,

---

the 'data' of Morris's research on burials in the Northern Cape and western Orange Free State were obtained from field notes and reports on grave excavations.

<sup>201</sup> David Bunn, 'Sleep of the Brave: Graves as Sites and Signs in the Colonial Eastern Cape', in Paul S. Landau and Deborah D. Kaspin (eds.), *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2002,

reverence to specific landmarks and ritual, although these were continuously revised.<sup>202</sup>

These belief systems regarding the dead were represented at public memorials by the care taken to reconstruct monuments for the dead, repatriation and burial of human bodies and the elaborate services conducted at the commemoration and specifically at the graveyard or other designated sacred sites.

In earlier commemorations in Gibeon, the memorial at the graveyard was the main theme of the meeting which was elaborated on to include performances, marches and other activities.

Graves of prominent community leaders were re-visited during the commemoration. In Gibeon there were ceremonies held to unveil the tombstones of prominent leaders of the community. Also symbolic tombstones and monuments have been erected where people died even though there are no human bodies interred at the site. That the memorial complex in Namibia is intricately tied to burials of heroes and heroines of the 'war of national resistance' and the liberation struggle was seen in the fact that the grandest heritage monument in the country, Heroes Acre in Windhoek, is a site where heroes are honoured with symbolic graves or are buried at this site. The anti-colonial heroes of southern Namibia are represented at Heroes Acre in the figures of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi and Commandant Jakob Marenga.

Recently elder Marcus Kooper an erstwhile leader who fought against forced removals of the Kai//khaun to Itsawises and petitioned the United Nations Organisations in New York to end the illegal occupation of Namibia by the South African apartheid regime, was also buried at Heroes Acre. It was also suggested that Gaob Hendrik Witbooi be buried at Heroes Acre however the national honours were conducted in October 2009 at the graveyard in Gibeon where he had conducted a public memorial in the previous year. This burial in Gibeon also complemented the idea that most of the traditional leaders of the /Khowese community were

---

<sup>202</sup> Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier*, 248.

buried in one graveyard. This tradition supports the idea of a continuous genealogy of leaders while the graveyard becomes a space where annual visits were upheld on the clan memorial calendar.

In 2010 at the annual commemoration in Gibeon H.E. President Hifikipunye Pohamba presided at the service after the graveyard ceremony which usually consisted of lighting candles for traditional leaders who had passed on. This occasion was considered the end of the mourning period for Gaob Hendrik Witbooi. At this ceremony the proper traditional names of the leaders were called out, whereupon several participants at the commemorations whose traditional names were also mentioned were chosen to light and switch off the bulbs designated to a specific leader. In 2010 H.E. President Hifikipunye Pohamba switched off the light that was assigned to Gaob Hendrik Witbooi. The cemetery at Gibeon was the site for a ceremony usually on the last day of the memorial event. Participants walked and drove in a procession from the main festival site at the Gaob's house towards the cemetery. At the graveyard participants gathered around specific graves for the ceremony.

In 2008, participants sat around the grave of Gaob Samuel Hendrik Witbooi. At this occasion the people who attended were asked to stand and observe a moment of silence for the heroes and heroines of the community, whilst a hymn was played on a keyboard. After the hymn, Bishop Hendrik Fredericks gave a short prayer. Rev. Eric Biwa welcomed the participants by stating that there are many people that would be present but could not as they had passed on and appealed to the participants to take cognisance of this and attend these ceremonies. This point was reiterated by Rev. Isak Fredericks who said that he had seen members of the community attend church services at the Lutheran Church instead of



participating at the memorial event.<sup>203</sup> Rev. Isak Fredericks delivered the ‘Festival Sermon’, citing 1<sup>st</sup> Joshua verse 9, which recounts how the Lord promised to protect the children of Israel wherever they went. He framed the history of the community as pre-destined and stated that God was with the community from tragedy to unity. Rev. Frederick paralleled the journey of the /Khowese from Pella to Gibeon to the journey of the Israelites. He stated that God knew that the community would settle at Gibeon, and therefore the /Khowese should have faith in God.<sup>204</sup> This was said in the context of migration from the Northern Cape, the various wars that the community had been involved in and the liberation struggle. Rev. Fredericks stated that the centennial commemorations in 2003 at Warmbad, 2005 in Gibeon and 2007 at Shark Island were a significant expressions of the unity being forged amongst and between these communities.



Heritage activists who formed a delegation from the Western Cape also participated at the ceremony. These delegates were members of the Khoe and San Active Awareness Group, (KSAAG), and had brought soil from the Northern Cape which they intended to symbolically place on the graves of the /Khowese ancestors. Gaob Hendrik Witbooi introduced the delegates Bradley van Sitters and Jill Williams to the assembled participants, and they were given the platform to introduce themselves to the community. Once the delegates had stated their intention, the various leaders of other Nama clans were instructed to move towards the symbolic grave of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi and place the soil from the Northern Cape on the grave as a way to join the Khoe communities of the Northern Cape with those of southern Namibia at the graves of their predecessors.<sup>205</sup>

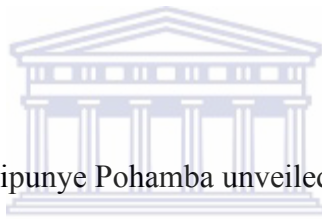
---

<sup>203</sup> SMA, research notes, Heroes Day Festival, Gibeon, 2010.

<sup>204</sup> Gibeon is named from the Book of Joshua in the Holy Bible.

<sup>205</sup> SMA, research notes, Heroes Day Festival, Gibeon, 2008.

This symbolic grave has over the years been at the centre of the ceremonies that took place at the cemetery. As the circumstances under which commemorations took place change so too were the events which were conducted around this symbolic grave. In this case the traditional leaders explained the significance of the grave. The delegates were also shown the grave next to this one, and were told that the bodies of the people who died at the Hornkranz massacre were buried there. The delegates received soil from Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's symbolic grave to place at a sacred place on their return to the Western Cape. In this way the various 'Khoe' communities were being linked through these soils and their physical and spiritual representations. A ceremony was conducted on their return to the Western Cape, where the soil was placed at Oude Molen. It is said that Gaob Gogosoa of the Goringhaikhoë was buried here.<sup>206</sup>



At Warmbad H.E. President Hifikipunye Pohamba unveiled a monument in honour of Commandant Jakob Marenga. This monument was unveiled at the Commonwealth Graves in Warmbad where German and other colonial officers and soldiers were buried, although his grave was unknown and was most probably situated several kilometres from Upington. In some cases there were mass graves found near towns where battles occurred or where prisoners of war were interred. There were many places where no ceremonies were conducted at sites, objects and mass graves that were known by community members as places where people died during the war. Other sites such as mass graves have only been discovered in the last five years and even others more recently. And only certain sites have been officially recognised by communities through commemoration practices such as the case in Bethanie where the tree was placed in the centre of the village as a monument. When I visited

---

<sup>206</sup> SMA, research notes, Khoe San Active Awareness Group (KSAAG) Oude Molen reburial ceremony, Cape Town, 2009.

Aminuis, several people took us to sites where there were red mounds of desert sand with large white boulders placed on top. These were known by the people living in this district as the mass graves of Nama that were buried during the colonial war. Some members of the Kai//khaun community reported that the community fought and fled to eastern Namibia around places such as !Gu!Oms, south-east of Aminuis during the war, and that the body of their leader who died on the battlefield was repatriated from this region. Other interviewees that we spoke to in the area confirmed that these were graves of Nama.<sup>207</sup> There were often two or three mass graves next to each other followed by more graves several kilometres apart.

There were at least three other Nama clans namely the /Kai/Khaun, !Khara-khoen and /Khowese that fought in eastern Namibia during the war, and even as far as present day Botswana. Some members of the community relayed that when the body of Gaob Manasse !Noreseb was exhumed, the human body was found without a head.<sup>208</sup> Abraham Jager stated that he was at the exhumation of Gaob Manasse !Noreseb's body at !Gu!oms near Aminuis in eastern Namibia in 1998. The body was located by a Herero man who lived in the area, who probably had been told the location of the graves. This was incredible because these bodies were buried there in 1905. Two bodies were exhumed one of Moses Pienaar and the other of Gaob !Noreseb. Jager states that, 'Moses Pienaar's skull bone was there when we exhumed his remains,...in the grave of Chief Manasse !Noreseb we only found the back part of the skull. There was no skull, so I agree with the fact that his head was cut off'.<sup>209</sup> The rest of his body was however repatriated and buried near the fountain at !Hoaxa!nas. At the 99<sup>th</sup>

---

<sup>207</sup> After a paper presentation at a conference hosted by the National Archives of Namibia titled, 'Moments, Monuments and Memories: Tracing the Footprints to Independence', in Windhoek in December 2009, I was again informed of these graves by a heritage activist who lives in Aminuis.

<sup>208</sup> NAN, AACRLRS 065, Interview conducted by Markus J. Kooper with Abraham Jager at Hoachanas, September 2004.

<sup>209</sup> NAN, AACRLRS 065, Interview conducted by Markus J. Kooper with Abraham Jager at Hoachanas, September 2004.

commemoration of the colonial war amongst the Kai//Khaun at !Hoaxa!nas the last part of the service was conducted at the grave of Gaob Manasse !Noreseb. The grave was covered with a cage made of white iron. A black tombstone with the names of the traditional leaders of the Kai//Khaun written in succession and engraved on marble stone in white letters was unveiled by two women. They were dressed in red traditional dresses and black head scarves. While they pulled up the white cloth that covered the tombstone, Gaob P.S.M. Kooper read out aloud the names of the traditional leaders on the tombstone.<sup>210</sup>

In other cases where human bodies cannot be located, trees where people were hanged during German colonisation or specific battle sites are memorialised in the oral tradition of these communities. In the yard where Gaob Josef Fredericks' house is situated in Bethanie, a camel thorn tree was put in the ground. This tree has no leaves, and bears no fruit. I was told on my visit there in 2005 that the tree was removed from its original place and located there as a monument because it was used by Germans to hang people who lived in the area. Also community members used to gather around this tree in remembrance of the people who died because of heinous acts committed during German colonisation.<sup>211</sup> It is noteworthy that the tree was placed here years after this specific site was declared a national monument. It was in this stone house that the infamous treaty selling the south-western coastline between Gaob Josef Fredericks and merchants, Vogelsang representing Lüderitz was signed.<sup>212</sup> It is thus a presentation of the types of histories, perhaps the consequences of signing treaties with Germany, which members in this community acknowledge and represent alongside other histories of the community. The street where this house is situated was named after the war

---

<sup>210</sup>SMA, research notes, Kai//khaun Traditional Festival, 99th Commemoration, Hoachanas, 3-5 December 2004.

<sup>211</sup> Conversation with Horst Kleinschmidt, Cape Town, August 2011.

<sup>212</sup> Casper Erichsen, 'The Fate of a Namibian People', *The Namibian*, 25 January 2007.

leader, Gaob Cornelius Fredericks. Another example was found in south-east Namibia near Warmbad where there is a river named Ortman's tree, which literally means 'Ortman's tree'. Near this river is a tree where a man by the name of Ortman was hung by German officers during the colonial war.<sup>213</sup> This was a regular occurrence during German colonisation as retold in oral stories and evidenced in photographs of the time in central and southern Namibia.

***'We Commemorate Genocide': Shark Island as a watershed in reconciliation politics in Namibia***

Various mass graves were located near Lüderitz where prisoners of war were encamped and worked on public works such as the railway line during the colonial war. There was speculation that the bodies found in the desert near Charlottental were those of prisoners of war, however there were many debates about the verification of the bodies.<sup>214</sup> Some graves have also been found in 2012 near these railway lines.<sup>215</sup> The Shark Island commemoration provided an occasion where one of these mass graves also became a site where communities gathered to conduct services for ancestors who died during the war.<sup>216</sup> These sites were important and symbolic because there were no traces of the bodies of the people who died on Shark Island even though there was evidence that the mortality rate in the concentration camp was high. A meeting was held to discuss plans to hold a mass commemoration on Shark

---

<sup>213</sup> Conversation with Mr. Z. Biwa, Cape Town, July 2011.

<sup>214</sup> In a documentary on the local broadcaster, Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), produced by Peter Denk, an archaeologist Goodman Gwasira speculated that the mass grave discovered in 2006 may have been of prisoners from Shark Island that were buried during the colonial war. Also see Surihe Gaomas, 'Who are the Dead', *New Era*, 16 October 2006.

<sup>215</sup> Conversation with Reinhart Kössler and photographs from his research trip in Lüderitz in March 2012. SMA, photographs taken by Reinhart Kössler at Shark Island, Lüderitz, March 2012.

<sup>216</sup> The Shark Island Commemoration is an event that marked the memorial of prisoners of war who were encamped on a concentration camp in Lüderitz.

Island in the Marino Room of the Kalahari Sands Hotel in Windhoek on the 23rd of November 2006.<sup>217</sup>

The meeting was attended by leaders and community members of the !Aman, several /Khowese community members and a few academics involved mainly with the National Archives and the Museums Association of Namibia. At the meeting the participants discussed that the national centennial commemoration on genocide was unsatisfactory as it did not include participants from other communities such as the Nama who were also involved in the war. The participants wanted to organise an event that was inclusive of communities such as the Nama, San and Damara. It was also expected that at least 1700 people from South Africa would attend the event. The commemoration was to attend to the issue of the mass graves that were discovered in the area, and perhaps a monument would be erected near the graves at the First Lagoon a few metres outside Lüderitz. The new !Aman History book was to be launched at the event also and a communal dialogue forum was to be established concerning developmental and economic concerns in Bethanie. The participants suggested that funds for the commemoration should be sought from the German Embassy and Namdeb. The Chairperson of the 'Committee for the Recognition and Commemoration of the Nama and Herero Concentration Camp Victims', Bishop Frederick also stated that they approached the German Embassy for the repatriation of the seventeen heads of Nama on which studies were conducted after they were sent to Germany during the colonial war.<sup>218</sup> They also wanted to

---

<sup>217</sup> SMA, notes on discussion in preparation of commemoration on Shark Island, Marino Room, Kalahari Sands Hotel, 23 November 2006.

<sup>218</sup> SMA, Presentation by Bishop Dr. H. Frederick notes on discussion in preparation of commemoration on Shark Island, Marino Room, Kalahari Sands Hotel, 23 November 2006.

liaise with the National Monuments Council for contribution towards the monument to be erected at First Lagoon in honour of the prisoners of war who died on Shark Island.<sup>219</sup>

Accordingly a pertinent theme during the commemoration of the war at the former concentration camp on Shark Island in February 2007, was that of the material and metaphysical bodies of people who had died on the island. In the leaflets handed out days before the commemoration, Pastor Izak Fredericks was quoted as saying that, ‘the victims of Shark Island were not given a proper funeral. Many of our people still lie unburied in the desert dunes beyond Lüderitz.’<sup>220</sup> We hope to use the 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2007 to pray for these people and to lay their spirits to rest’.<sup>221</sup> The plight of the prisoners of war was elaborated in the historical overview read by Pastor Izak Fredericks at the memorial. Fredericks stated that many people died on the island every night, and every morning the prisoners carried and buried these bodies in a mass grave on the outskirts of the town.<sup>222</sup>

The commemoration on Shark Island took place over a two day period. All the communities affected by the war were invited to the commemoration. The title on the program thus read, ‘Nama-Damara- Ovaherero and San (Bushman) Genocide 1904 -1908’.<sup>223</sup> The main organisers which were church and traditional leaders of the !Aman community felt that previous commemorations excluded many communities that were involved in the war, and thus wanted their program to be more inclusive.<sup>224</sup> Present at the occasion were Chief

---

<sup>219</sup> SMA, notes on discussion in preparation of commemoration on Shark Island, Marino Room, Kalahari Sands Hotel, 23 November 2006.

<sup>220</sup> See Surihe Gaomas, ‘Who are the Dead’, *New Era*, 16 October 2006.

<sup>221</sup> SMA, leaflet with message by Pastor Izak Fredericks. On the flipside is a printed map of Shark Island by Casper Erichsen, February 2007.

<sup>222</sup> SMA, video record of Pastor Isak Fredericks speech by author, Shark Island, February 2007.

<sup>223</sup> SMA, ‘We Commemorate Genocide Programme’, Shark Island, February 2007.

<sup>224</sup> SMA, notes on discussion in preparation of commemoration on Shark Island, Marino Room, Kalahari Sands Hotel, 22 November 2006.



Kuaima Riruako, Paramount Chief of the Ovaherero, Gaob Joel Stephanus of Vaalgras, Gaob Hendrik Witbooi of the /Khowese, some councillors of the !Gamiñun, !Khara-khoen community members and the Deputy Prime Minister Hon. Libertine Amadhila, guest speaker at the event.

A service was held on the island on Saturday and a march from the island through the town of Lüderitz took place on the Sunday. The event culminated in a service at the mass graves on the outskirts of the town at First Lagoon. The island consists of various memorial plaques around and near a boulder several metres from the lighthouse. These plaques were erected for 'pioneers' and explorers, Vogelsang, Lüderitz, Klink, and soldiers who died during the war.<sup>225</sup>

Various leaders from central and southern Namibia were seated on a large rectangular table.

The participants were seated in the semi-circle enclosure on either side of the palm trees.

Names of European soldiers who died during the colonial war were inscribed on the inner wall of the semi-circle.<sup>226</sup> Many participants primarily women sat on the wall of this semi-circle dangling their legs against the wall, hiding these plaques from sight.<sup>227</sup> At the

memorial the communities were focused on a specific monument, a symbolic tombstone erected for the !Aman community who died on the concentration camp. The tombstone reads,

‘We Commemorate our Heroes, Captain Cornelius Fredericks, 1864 – 1907, 107 Men, 97

Women, 66 Children, Sons, Daughters and Children of !Ama Community, Bethanie,

Namibia’.

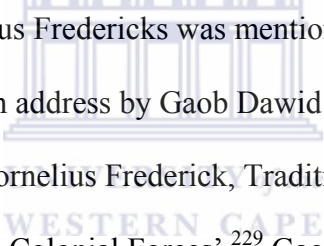
---

<sup>225</sup> SMA, photographs taken by Reinhart Kössler at Shark Island, Lüderitz, March 2012.

<sup>226</sup> Jeremy Silvester, ‘Sleep with a Southwester’: Monuments and Settler Identity in Namibia, in Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen (eds.), *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century: Projects, Practices, Legacies*, Routledge Taylor and France Group, New York, 2005, 282-3.

<sup>227</sup> SMA, research notes on the Shark Island commemoration, February 2007.

Towards the end of the programme on Saturday several young people of the !Aman community re-enacted the fate of these prisoners of war and especially Gaob Cornelius Fredericks' death on Shark Island. These young people who up until that moment had been spectators of the deliberations at the memorial took centre stage on the raised circular platform. The youths re-enacted popularly narrated everyday life experiences of prisoners of war on the concentration camp. They showed how the prisoners were captured and brought to the island. They also demonstrated how the prisoners were fed poisoned food and how some died because of malnourishment. The youths further showed how upon their death some prisoners' bodies were thrown into the ocean, as food for the sharks. The climax of the re-enactment was that of Fredericks' death and his beheading by German soldiers.<sup>228</sup>



The beheading of Captain Cornelius Fredericks was mentioned in several speeches at the event and was reiterated later in an address by Gaob Dawid Fredericks titled, 'Statement on 100<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of Chief Cornelius Frederick, Traditional Chief of the !Aman clan who was beheaded by the German Colonial Forces'.<sup>229</sup> Gaob Frederick stated that, 'he had been buried without his head'. And he asked, 'Where is his head? When will his head return, so that his body could be reunited with his head? What happened to his head? Who will give us answers to these questions?'<sup>230</sup> He also demanded the swift repatriation of Gaob Fredericks' head which he said was exported to Germany after he died on the island.<sup>231</sup>

Although it was not ascertained where Gaob Fredericks was buried, it was suspected that the

---

<sup>228</sup> SMA, research notes on the Shark Island commemoration, February 2007.

<sup>229</sup> SMA, Speech by Gaob Dawid Fredericks, 'Statement on the 100th Commemoration of Chief Cornelius Frederick, Traditional Chief of the !Aman clan who was beheaded by the German Colonial Forces', delivered on the 16th of February 2007.

<sup>230</sup> SMA, Speech by Gaob Dawid Fredericks, 'Statement on the 100th Commemoration of Chief Cornelius Frederick, Traditional Chief of the !Aman clan who was beheaded by the German Colonial Forces', delivered on the 16th of February 2007, 2.

<sup>231</sup> SMA, Speech by Gaob Dawid Fredericks, 'Statement on the 100th Commemoration of Chief Cornelius Frederick, Traditional Chief of the !Aman clan who was beheaded by the German Colonial Forces', delivered on the 16th of February 2007.

many scattered human bodies in the desert dunes near Lüderitz, possibly belonged to those prisoners that were buried in mass graves. Gaob Dawid Fredericks stated that he was breaking the silence and that other communities affected by the colonial war, such as his, also expected reparations from the German government.<sup>232</sup> The return of human bodies, at this historical juncture in southern Namibia, thus became the quintessential focus on which genocide in Namibia and the issues of repatriation and reparation were being debated and negotiated.<sup>233</sup>

The oral tradition amongst the !Aman reproduced the narrative that Gaob Fredericks was beheaded and that his head was exported to Germany. This was officially sanctioned in this community and presented in public at Shark Island in February 2007. Some historians who base their work on the official archives question whether Gaob Fredericks' was actually beheaded during the war. According to them there is no evidence in the archive to prove that this actually happened.<sup>234</sup> Kössler therefore writes that heads were exported to Germany but that, 'the oral tradition of his beheading contradicts starkly the historical record which is invoked by professional historians'.<sup>235</sup> He also notes that the German government should be responsible for providing evidence and verify the identities of the bodies that were exported to Germany during the colonial war.

On the contrary at least two articles have been written that unambiguously state that Gaob Fredericks had been beheaded during the war, an article by Klaus Dierks and another by

---

<sup>232</sup> SMA, Speech by Gaob Dawid Fredericks, 'Statement on the 100th Commemoration of Chief Cornelius Frederick, Traditional Chief of the !Aman clan who was beheaded by the German Colonial Forces', delivered on the 16th of February 2007.

<sup>233</sup> Reinhart Kössler, 'Reparation, Restitution and Decency: Postcolonial Practice a Century on – Namibia and Germany', North-Eastern Workshop on Southern Africa, Burlington, Vermont, 9-11 April 2010.

<sup>234</sup> Conversation with Casper Erichsen, February 2007.

<sup>235</sup> Reinhart Kössler, 'Reparation, Restitution and Decency: Postcolonial Practice a Century on – Namibia and Germany', North-Eastern Workshop on Southern Africa, Burlington, Vermont, 9-11 April 2010.

Patricia Hayes et al.<sup>236</sup> These articles do not give information from where this evidence was sourced. Furthermore the fact that there was no written evidence in the archive does not mean that the incident did not occur. To dismiss the oral history version of the events was to present the official archive or professional historians as the autonomous sources on the history of the war and was a foreclosure on possible links that could lead to more information such as the location of Gaob Fredericks' head. And besides, this story has particular historical resonance, because there was a price on the heads of specific leaders such as Gaob Cornelius Fredericks during the war, and there were many people that were beheaded on Shark Island whose body parts were exported to Germany.<sup>237</sup> Furthermore the onus of indentifying persons who were beheaded and exported to Germany should not only be the responsibility of the German government. If there is information in the communities where the oral history has been passed on, then these sources should be used to investigate the records of the holdings where bodies were sent to and located in Germany. These debates also signal a moment where oral history leads the motivations of a specific community to initiate an inter-ethnic and national debate on the colonial war and opens up a new avenue in the processes to redress and reconciliation.<sup>238</sup>

The First Lagoon on the outskirts of Lüderitz was identified as a place where a mass grave is located. On the second day of the commemoration participants marched from the main site towards the mass grave.<sup>239</sup> In the morning there was an Ovaherero marching band, both the Red and Green Flags were represented by soldiers flying the flags high, marching back and

---

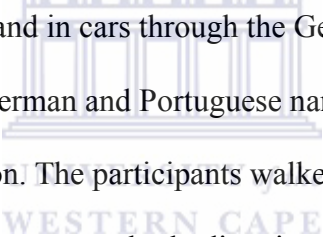
<sup>236</sup> Klaus Dierks, 'Eugen Fischer: The link from the German genocide in Namibia to the German holocaust in Europe', in Klaus Dierks, *Handbook of Namibian Biographies*, Data Base, Windhoek, 2004, 1; Patricia Hayes et al, 'Picturing the Past' in Namibia: The Visual Archive and its Energies', in Carolyn Hamilton et al (eds.), *Refiguring the Archive*, David Philip, Cape Town, 2002, 103.

<sup>237</sup> For more discussion on this aspect of colonial history see Chapter 5 in this dissertation.

<sup>238</sup> SMA, Presentation by Bishop Dr. H. Frederick notes on discussion in preparation of commemoration on Shark Island, Marino Room, Kalahari Sands Hotel, 23 November 2006.

<sup>239</sup> SMA, research notes on the Shark Island commemoration, February 2007.

forth in military sequence. The participants looked on and cheered as several women marched in rows wearing brightly coloured traditional gowns and horn-shaped head dresses behind the soldiers. The Nama communities were each dressed in their clan colours, the !Ama in pink and blue. Some men wore blue coats or pink t-shirts with the image of Gaob Cornelius Fredericks and Shark Island. The women wore pink dresses with blue head wraps and the patchwork shawls were prominent as well. After the AU, !Ama clan and Namibian flags were raised, there were a few statements read out by the master of ceremonies. About twenty horse riders from Vaalgras led the procession followed by traditional leaders and dignitaries. Behind them was the brass band from the Bethanie district who blew popular church hymns on the back of a bakkie.<sup>240</sup>



The participants were led on foot and in cars through the German-named streets of Lüderitz. They passed businesses bearing German and Portuguese names. People came out of the shops and homes to look at the procession. The participants walked past the entrance sign that read, ‘Welcome to Lüderitz’, towards a more southerly direction where the mass grave was located. We walked past several railway sleepers on the way to the First Lagoon.<sup>241</sup> The horse riders surrounded the huge mass grave in a circular formation as the participants stood around at the memorial proceedings. The site was dotted with huge mounds. These mounds were covered with red and green succulents, and on some were placed huge stones as markers of the graves. The participants on foot, even elderly women and men were positioned on one side of the mass grave. The traditional leaders led by Gaob Dawid Frederick and the then Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Libertine Amadhila and Hon. Willem Konjore stood in the front

---

<sup>240</sup> SMA, research notes on the Shark Island commemoration, February 2007.

<sup>241</sup> A mass grave was discovered in 2011 near the old railway line on the outskirts of Lüderitz. This mass grave was indicated by rocks on the mounds and larger rocks as tombstones. SMA, photographs taken by Reinhart Kössler, Lüderitz, March 2012.

of the crowd. The brass band was also positioned in the front of the crowd and signalled the beginning of the solemn occasion when they loudly sang through their wind instruments, 'In the Jungle, the Mighty Jungle, the Lion Sleeps Tonight (Time has come, Sleep, Sleep well)'. The last part of the song, 'time has come, sleep, sleep well', perhaps referred to the dead to rest peacefully in their graves. The significance of the mass grave was reiterated to the participants who then joined in a prayer and hymns. It was the very first occasion where the prisoners of war who died in Lüderitz were honoured in this way by members of various affected communities.

Shark Island has still not been nationally recognised as a site of historical significance six years after the 'national' commemoration on the site. This was the aim of the 'Committee for the Recognition and Commemoration of the Nama and Herero Concentration Camp Victims' as stated by its chairperson Bishop Frederick for the event in 2007. They were however not supported by public and private institutions such as Namdeb. At the commemoration the mayor of Lüderitz, Emilia Amupewa promised that the site would be designated a national monument however it still has not been established as a national monument. Furthermore the state has been involved in the research with affected communities, safe-keeping and burial of human bodies that were discovered in the country related to the colonial war. The first national Heroes Day held in southern Namibia in August 2010 was conducted after several findings of mass graves in Lüderitz. The state claimed that these may have been bodies belonging to people who died after imprisonment during anti-colonial resistance or may have even been PLAN fighters buried in secret by the South African government. In one specific case in September 2011, the state was also involved in the negotiations and support for the repatriation of human bodies exported to Germany.

Although there were various monuments on Shark Island such as the one which honours the !Ama Nama, Lüderitz and Vogelsang and was a testament to the horrific violence during the colonial war, the island still remains a camping site visited by tourists from around the world that barely have knowledge of the gruesome events that transpired on the concentration camp more than a hundred years ago. Over the years the inscription on the monument to Cornelius Fredericks and the !Aman who died on the island has slowly faded. The descriptions of how many children, women and men who died on the island from the !Aman community was hardly recognisable owing to the sun and fierce windy conditions on this rocky escarpment.<sup>242</sup> The only traces will be the white grave and tombstone monument, the faded black inscription, commemoration anecdotes and private retellings of the stories of the concentration camps.



The rituals confirm an annual spatial-temporal procession towards the graveyards in these communities. Burial rituals were conducted so that the living may continue to address the deceased, as a means of support and regeneration. The rituals also allow for the sustaining of kin and clan relations. It was in these spaces where the political and cultural antagonisms and tensions in the community were negotiated. The communion at the grave of clan leaders in public reinforced and paralleled the 'ancestral cult' often performed privately by individuals at the grave of their own kin ancestors. Often one will see that after the public ceremony some participants may choose to visit the graves of family members as well. The deceased are adorned with grave stones and other material objects which represent the sentiment, emotions and identity of the deceased and the living kin. This was similar to the adornments on the participants at the commemoration in general. These grave stones and monuments at the sites where people were buried may enable generations thereafter to return to these sites

---

<sup>242</sup> SMA, photographs taken by Reinhart Kössler. Lüderitz, March 2012.



and remember their ancestors. These monuments bear testimony to the lives of the deceased and are a tangible witness to the experiences of the war.



## Chapter Five

### 'If the skulls are buried, our history will be buried':

#### Repossession of human bodies from Berlin

'If the skulls are buried, our history will be buried.'<sup>1</sup>

'When they came, they built themselves glittering, glittering, glittering palaces on the skeletons of our people.'<sup>2</sup>

'Our Ancestors bones have returned to their right places, shame on those who think that God have (sic) chosen them amongst others.'<sup>3</sup>

In the previous chapter I referred to rituals of history in which I describe the memorial events where the past was re-interpreted and re-enacted in various forms in southern Namibia.

Rituals of history a term used by Joan Dayan in her description of vodun rituals in Haiti, explains a set of emancipatory practices in which history is foreground in various symbolic re-enactments.<sup>4</sup> The re-enactments refer to history as an act of 'repossession', a term used by Anthony Bogues which explains a set of practices through which a specific past is recalled and reclaimed.<sup>5</sup> I use 'repossession' as a concept to describe a set of practices which took

---

<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from a comment by Ida Hoffmann on the issue of burying or exhibiting the heads returned to Namibia in a museum. The quote is from a paper presented by Reinhart Kössler. See Reinhart Kössler, 'Reparation, Restitution and Decency: Postcolonial Practice a Century on – Namibia and Germany', North-Eastern Workshop on Southern Africa, Burlington, Vermont, 9-11 April 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Lyrics from Jackson Kaujeua's song 'Their Days are Numbered', from the album 'Freedom Songs' recorded by International Defence and Aid Fund's (IDAF - Southern Africa) 'Action Namibia' in 1976 and re-mastered by the musician in 2001. The lyrics speak about how the colonisers even disregarded the sacred sites where human bodies were buried when they settled in Namibia. It also symbolises a century long silence by collectors and institutions about the human bodies exported from Namibia to Germany. And about how the prestige of these institutions was based on the atrocious acts committed against people during the war. At the memorial service held at St. Matthew Church in Berlin on the 29 September 2011, the Memorial Ensemble played a composition by Jackson Kaujeua.

<sup>3</sup> Utakamisa, YouTube comment, 'Namibia Deutscher Völkermord', AFROTAKTVcyberNomads, 1 October 2011. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqHK11EV2U&feature=BFa&list=PL94F1A1C9686D3C4F&lf=resul ts\\_main](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqHK11EV2U&feature=BFa&list=PL94F1A1C9686D3C4F&lf=resul ts_main), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1995; Jacques Depelchin, 'History of Africa/Humanity at a Crossroad: Between Reconciliation and Healing', Paper presented at the University of the Western Cape, CHR Visiting Fellow, July-August 2009, 15.

<sup>5</sup> Anthony Bogues, Public Lecture with Edouard Duval Carrié, 'The Arts of the Imagination: Freedom and story of Haitian art in the times Quake and Cholera', 31 July 2012, ISAN Annex Gallery; 'Black Intellectuals, Theory,

place in Berlin and Windhoek in September and October 2011. This approach is understood in at least three forms which informed my interpretation of events described in this chapter. It explains the practices in which communities recall the colonial war, and how they engage with the process of colonial inheritance as well as the afterlives of genocide. It also relates to a set of practices which includes a repertoire of performances at commemorations to recall histories of/for liberation. Repossession also refers to the reclaiming of history through the return of bodies in Berlin and Windhoek.

Communities in central and southern Namibia demanded the return of human remains from Germany, especially after independence. This concern over the bodies of people who died during the war arose as a result of information passed on over generations through oral stories and at commemorations about the export of those bodies to Germany.<sup>6</sup> At the commemorations in central and southern Namibia, rituals conducted at graves, form a central part of memorialising the war. A request was made on Shark Island in 2007 for the return of human bodies. At the memorial, Gaob Dawid Fredericks appealed to the German government to return the head of his great grandfather who had died on Shark Island during the war. This was a significant moment where a community leader in southern Namibia publically addressed the German government to demand the immediate repatriation of a human body.

The demand for the return of human bodies dramatically escalated in 2008 when a film by Markus Frentzel of ARD Television was shown on a news magazine program FACT in Germany. The film revealed that the Charité Medical University in Berlin and Freiburg

---

Archive', Seminar Room, Centre for African Studies, UCT, 8 August 2012; 'The Black Radical Tradition and the Politics of the Human: musings on a radical politics of our time', CHR Seminar Room, UWC, 15 August 2012.

<sup>6</sup> See Chapter Three and Four in this dissertation.

University possessed collections of human bodies, heads, that had been taken from Namibia during the colonial war.<sup>7</sup> The film also featured the historian and former Ambassador to Germany, Dr. Peter Katjavivi. It was this public television broadcast and subsequent media attention that foreground the tangible legacies of German colonialism in Namibia, and which set off diplomatic negotiations for the return of human bodies.<sup>8</sup> Citing a UNESCO Convention Katjavivi requested negotiations between the two governments for the repatriation of these heads.<sup>9</sup>

In 2008 it was announced on the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) news that the government negotiated for the repatriation of human bodies exported to Germany during the war. The report also stated that on their return, these human bodies would be buried at Heroes Acre on the outskirts of Windhoek.<sup>10</sup> The day after this announcement was made on national television, I drove with several colleagues and then Namibian cabinet member, Ida Hoffmann past Heroes Acre towards Warmbad in south-east Namibia.<sup>11</sup> We were on our way to a memorial event at Warmbad where a plaque to commemorate Commandant Jakob Marenga

---

<sup>7</sup> Stefan Fischer, 'Skulls Back to Namibia', *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 24 July 2008, [www.az.com.na/lokales/schdel-zurck-nach-namibia.70453.php](http://www.az.com.na/lokales/schdel-zurck-nach-namibia.70453.php), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>8</sup> Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi: 'The significance of the repatriation of Namibian human skulls'. <http://www.africavenir.org/news-archive/newsdetails/datum/2011/09/23/prof-peter-h-katjavivi-the-significance-of-the-repatriation-namibian-human-skulls.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Brigitte Weidlich, 'Katjavivi demands Herero skulls from Germany', *The Namibian*, 24 July 2008. Stefan Fischer, 'Skull Back to Namibia', *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 24 July 2008, [www.az.com.na/lokales/schdel-zurck-nach-namibia.70453.php](http://www.az.com.na/lokales/schdel-zurck-nach-namibia.70453.php), accessed 29 October 2011; 'Namibia demands return of 'genocide' skulls', *Mail and Guardian*, 22 July 2008. <http://mg.co.za/article/2008-07-22-namibia-demands-return-of-genocide-skulls>, accessed 29 October 2011. Katjavivi was citing the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property 1970. This convention is not retroactive and does not necessarily provide protection for human bodies illicitly traded before 1970.

<sup>10</sup> See 'African Monuments to the North Korean Renaissance', 18-24 May 2008, *Chimurenga* Vol. 16, *The Chimurenga Chronic*, October 2011, 12-3 for information on monuments and sculptures built in African countries by a North Korean art organisation. To date this organisation has built major heritage buildings in Independent Namibia such as Heroes Acre, the Military Museum, the Presidential Palace and the Independence Memorial Museum which is under construction.

<sup>11</sup> Hoffmann is a political activist who made her mark during the heyday of the liberation movement in southern Namibia.

was to be unveiled by the President.<sup>12</sup> From 1992 Hoffmann engaged in dialogue with organisations in Windhoek and in southern Namibia, about German colonial legacies and the consequences of South Africa's apartheid policies. Her main aim was to discuss the issue of reparations with German and South African government officials and civil society organisations.<sup>13</sup> Hoffmann was also one of the few women in parliament who voted on the motion for reparations from the German government, which was unanimously passed by the Namibian parliament on 26 October 2006.

As we drove past Heroes Acre, we discussed the issue of the burial of human bodies from Germany and Ida Hoffmann commented that the government could not make a decision without consulting affected communities. She stated that these communities should decide where to bury their ancestors. In the next few years, several activists such as Ida Hoffmann, who later became the Chairperson of the Nama Technical Committee on the 1904 Genocide, and Ester Utjiua Muinjangu, Chairperson of the Herero Genocide Committee, appealed to traditional leaders to demand participation in the repatriation and reparations process.<sup>14</sup> As a result, various traditional leaders headed by the chairperson of the Nama Traditional Chiefs Council, Chief Dawid Frederick and Paramount Chief of the Ovaherero, Kauima Riruako, petitioned the national government in February 2009.<sup>15</sup> They wanted to actively engage in the repatriation process as the traditional custodians of communities who were affected by

---

<sup>12</sup> SMA, research notes, 'Centenary Event in Remembrance of the late Captain Jan Abraham Christian and the Unveiling of the Sepulchral Stone in Honour of Commandant Jakob Marenga', Warmbad, 25 October 2008.

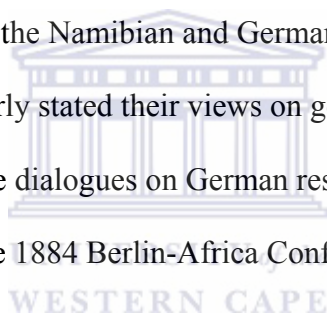
<sup>13</sup> SMA, Ida Hoffmann, 'The Genesis of the Namibian Struggle for War Reparations', June 2011.

<sup>14</sup> Esther Utjiua Muinjangu presented a paper titled, '100 years of silence. The case of the Ovaherero Genocide', which was hosted by Freiburg Postkolonial and Arnold-Bergstraesser Institut, Evangelische Hochschule Freiburg, 17 June 2010, Freiburg, Germany. <http://www.freiburg-postkolonial.de/mp3/2010-06-16-Esther%20Mujangu-Herero.mp3>, accessed 29 October 2011; 'We want to be informed': BZ interview with Esther Utjiua Muinjangu, Chairperson of the Herero Genocide Committee, *Badische Zeitung*, 1 November 2011, <http://www.badische-zeitung.de/freiburg/wir-wollen-informiert-sein--32263647.html>, <http://www.wdr5.de/sendungen/politikum/s/d/27.09.2011-19.05/b/die-uneinsichtige-kolonialmacht.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Irene !Hoaës, 'Skulls' to go on display', *New Era*, 2 October 2009, 1, 2; Brigitte Weidlich, 'Herero and Nama petition Govt for return of ancestral skulls', *The Namibian*, 2 October 2009, 5.

genocide. The petition also emphasised that the communities would decide how to take care of the human bodies once they were repatriated.

The action by a small delegation of Nama and Herero traditional leaders and activists to petition the government for the repatriation of human bodies from Germany was an ongoing intervention accentuated by various processes to reclaim specific histories. As a result, organisations were strengthened and new structures were formed to deal with repatriation and reparations. At commemorations traditional leaders on numerous occasions requested the Namibian government to negotiate for reparations for the war crimes committed by the German government. The repatriation of human remains was seen as part of the reparations plight. A joint paper submitted to the Namibian and German parliaments in 2007 by Herero and Nama traditional leaders clearly stated their views on genocide and reparations. They compared their exclusion from the dialogues on German responsibility towards Namibia to the exclusion of Africans from the 1884 Berlin-Africa Conference.<sup>16</sup>



The committees resolved that the repatriated human bodies would not be buried, but instead would be displayed at the new Independence Memorial Museum in Windhoek. In a press statement by the Namibian Cabinet in 2010, it was reiterated that the Traditional Authorities, ‘proposed that the remains (skulls) be stored in a museum in Namibia for reference purposes and also to serve as material evidence in the on-going case of genocide compensation’.<sup>17</sup> It

---

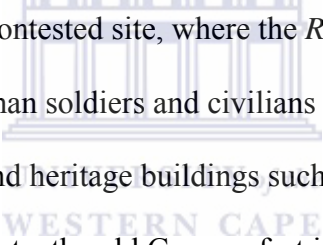
<sup>16</sup> This was similar to the opinion of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi on this Conference when the Germans encroached on their land in 1892.

The Nama and Ovaherero Traditional Leaders, 'Joint position paper from the Nama and the Ovaherero people on the issue of genocide and reparation', 14 December 2007. <http://www.africavenir.org/project-cooperations/restitution-namibian-skulls.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture, Media Release from Cabinet Chambers, ‘Report on the implementation of the Cabinet decision no. 18<sup>th</sup>/30.09.08/003 (Repatriation of the Remains (Skulls) of Namibians who were victims of the German war of extermination’, 18 November 2010.

[www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/RestitutionNamibia/Ministry\\_Youth\\_Media\\_release\\_from\\_Cabinet](http://www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/RestitutionNamibia/Ministry_Youth_Media_release_from_Cabinet)

came to light however that the destination of the human bodies once repatriated was still under debate.<sup>18</sup> Pastor Izak Fredericks said that a meeting was convened by several !Ama leaders in February 2010 concerning the return of human bodies. These leaders decided that the bodies, especially the head of the Gaob Cornelius Fredericks, once repatriated would not be stored and displayed in the Independence Memorial Museum, but would be buried in a location decided upon by this community.<sup>19</sup> This was an intervention by community leaders to claim specific human bodies and incorporate them into funerary rites as part of their burial practices. In this case it seems as if precise knowledge of who the deceased were, or their specific ethnicity justified the option of reburial, as opposed to those unidentified whose bodies might be displayed in the museum.



The new museum was built on a contested site, where the *Reiterdenkmal* (Equestrian monument), dedicated to the German soldiers and civilians who died during the colonial war, was situated. These monuments and heritage buildings such as the Independence Museum, Equestrian monument and Alte Feste, the old German fort in front of which the horse rider monument now stands, were located on and near what used to be a concentration camp for prisoners during the colonial war. As such the ground on which these monuments and buildings stand could be regarded as sacred and of heritage value, not only because of the German buildings and monuments but because this site had served as a labour and prison camp, where Namibians were interrogated, tortured and died.

---

[Chambers\\_18.11.2010.pdf](#), accessed 29 October 2011. Brigitte Weidlich, 'Herero and Nama skulls to be preserved, not buried', *The Namibian*, 6 May 2010. Also at the panel discussion on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2011 in Berlin, Mr. Ueriuka Festus Tjikuua confirmed that the delegates wanted the 'bones to speak for themselves' in a Museum.

<sup>18</sup> Irene !Hoaës, 'Nama, Ovaherero Chiefs to Meet over Skulls', *New Era*, 30 July 2009.

[www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/Restitution/Irene\\_Hoaes\\_Man\\_Chiefs\\_to\\_Meet\\_over\\_skulls\\_30.06.2009.pdf](http://www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/Restitution/Irene_Hoaes_Man_Chiefs_to_Meet_over_skulls_30.06.2009.pdf), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>19</sup> SMA, Interview conducted with Pastor Izak Fredericks, Windhoek, Namibia, October 2010.



### *Human bodies and contests of national history*

the archaeological and the archaic were used to blur the modern origins of both states in order to fabricate a chronological legitimacy that reached back beyond modernity into antiquity. Here archaeological remains became crucial components of the material culture of the state.<sup>20</sup>

This statement by Seremetakis refers to the ways in which modern states often build their legitimacy on material culture, to reclaim their foundations in older cultural remnants.

Although Seremetakis specifically refers to material culture, her example may also refer to the ways in which nation states attempt to re-appropriate human bodies to bolster their political legitimacy. In Namibia two specific cases of repatriation and burial of human bodies, signalled moments when the state took responsibility for reinterring the human bodies of people who had died during colonialism. At least a decade ago a mass grave of human bodies was discovered in the south-east of Lüderitz in the surrounding desert at a place named Charlottenthal. Another find in 2006 of human bodies in Lüderitz also speculatively linked these bodies to prisoners of war on Shark Island.<sup>21</sup> Bodies were also unearthed in 2009 by employees of the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication along the route of the railway lines that were constructed by prisoners during the colonial war. Pastor Izak Fredericks made a statement about this discovery of human remains at a conference organised by the National Archives. In his presentation he stated that communities in the region believed that these human remains were those of prisoners of war specifically from Shark Island.<sup>22</sup> These bodies were discovered in Lüderitz underneath the inland railway line

---

<sup>20</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Implications', 138.

<sup>21</sup> Surihe Gaomas, 'Namibia: Who are the dead', *New Era*, 16 October 2006. <http://allafrica.com/stories/200610160597.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Pastor Izak Fredericks, 'Overview of "Repatriation of Human Remains", Moments, Monuments and Memories: Tracing the footprints to Independence, Auditorium of Government Office Park, Archives of Anti-colonial Resistance and the Liberation Struggle (AACRLS), Project, Windhoek, Namibia, 7-9 December 2009.

that ran between Keetmanshoop and Lüderitz. Other bodies were also discovered along the railway line between Kolmanskop and Lüderitz.<sup>23</sup>

Fredericks suggested that the human bodies discovered at Charlottenthal may be those of people who died during the colonial war, but he was not sure. The government intended to bury the human remains from Charlottenthal on Shark Island as it was believed that the bodies were those of prisoners of war. Fredericks advised the government researchers that the human remains should be buried in another location because they may be the human remains of miners and not necessarily those of Shark Island prisoners. Researchers also suggested that these were possibly also the bodies of soldiers of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN).<sup>24</sup> Eventually it was decided that the bones should not lie in the desert sand without care, and that these bodies should be appropriately buried with full honours at an event such as the national Heroes Day. By 2011, the bones discovered by employees of the Ministry of Works had not been buried and they were stored in ten sacks in a container at the Lüderitz police station. Community leaders such as Fredericks have since advised that these bones be buried on Shark Island as they would more properly be associated with prisoners of war who worked on the railway lines.<sup>25</sup>

In August 2010 the main event of the National Heroes Day was organised at Lüderitz where 474 human bodies discovered at Charlottenthal were buried at a national funeral.<sup>26</sup> This occasion was the first time that a National Heroes Day commemoration was held in southern

---

<sup>23</sup> SMA, Interview conducted with Pastor Isak Fredericks, Windhoek, Namibia, October 2010.

<sup>24</sup> Fifi Rhodes, 'Namibia: Struggle remains to be reburied', *New Era*, 25 August 2010.

<sup>25</sup> SMA, Interview conducted with Pastor Isak Fredericks, Windhoek, Namibia, October 2010

<sup>26</sup> Ellen Nanuses, 'Human remains discovered outside of Lüderitz about 11 years ago to be reburied during Heroes Day commemoration', 16 August 2010, *NBC News*,

[www.nbc.com/news/health/2010/08/16/human-remains-discovered-outside-of-luderitz-about-11-years-ago-to-be-reburied-during-heroes-day-commemoration-2807](http://www.nbc.com/news/health/2010/08/16/human-remains-discovered-outside-of-luderitz-about-11-years-ago-to-be-reburied-during-heroes-day-commemoration-2807), accessed 29 October 2011.

Namibia. Usually this national holiday marks the first bullet fired by PLAN fighters against South African military forces at Omgulu-Gumbashe. Justice Minister Pendukeni Iivula-Ithana noted that the specific national holiday in Lüderitz would commemorate the people who had been massacred during German colonialism in southern Namibia.<sup>27</sup> Simon Afrikaner of The Federal Indigenous Nama Rights Council (FINRiC) argued that the event had been hastily organised without the due participation of communities who were affected, especially since these were considered to be the bodies of Nama and Herero. In an official press statement FINRiC stated that it was,

deeply saddened by the happenings as they unfolded on the 26 August 2010 at Lüderitz. As the NAMA People of Namibia, we were made to believe that the bones of our ancestors would be buried on this day. To our utter shock, this day was enveloped in confusion. Those of us who attended the event were left with a host of questions – was it a day for the customary commemoration of the fallen heroes, or a day for the campaign for the SWAPO party or as we were made to believe, the day of the burial of bones of those brutally massacred by the enemy of the native people.<sup>28</sup>

It was moreover argued that these human remains should have been buried by these communities with the appropriate rites. Furthermore anti-colonial resistance was again used by communities to bolster claims that they had also sacrificed their lives in the liberation struggle, and that this should be publically acknowledged by the government.<sup>29</sup> It can be argued that the government indeed honoured these communities by awarding honorary medals at the Heroes Day event to individuals from southern Namibia who significantly contributed to the liberation of the country. However it was argued that this gesture was a little too late. The conflicts that arose from the burial ceremony held in Lüderitz relate to the tensions in the formation of a nation where specific ethnicities have varying claims to

---

<sup>27</sup> Staff reporter, 'Lüderitz chosen as venue for Heroes' Day commemorations', *Windhoek Observer*, 12 October 2011. <http://www.observer.com.na/archives/118-luederitz-chosen-as-venue-for-heroes-day-commemorations>, accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>28</sup> Press statement on the events of 26 August 2010 at Lüderitz, 1 September 2010.

[www.nshr.org.na/index.php?module=News&func=display&sid=1414](http://www.nshr.org.na/index.php?module=News&func=display&sid=1414), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>29</sup> Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory*, 75-6.

historical processes which were unacknowledged. Communities argue that these exclusionary processes by the government reinforced perceptions of lack of attention to development policies geared towards the alleviation of poverty in these regions.

Communities have been recalling this past through various systems of knowledge production. Over the decades they were able to unite, organise and mobilise for action through a set of practices based on sentiments already 'agreed' to through commemorative activity.<sup>30</sup> The petitions to the government were significant ways in which community members intervened in the processes of national memorialisation. The demand to monumentalise human bodies in the National Museum addressed a recurring anxiety that the sites and events of national memorialisation such as the museum only portray the struggles of the past decades, the liberation struggle of specific constituencies and exclude specific practices of freedom enacted by communities in central and southern Namibia during colonialism and apartheid. When the government assumed the role of the 'national mourner', and claimed the human remains for burial from Germany, buried human remains at Heroes Day in Lüderitz, and attempted to exclude the demands of these communities for compensation for colonial crimes, the community representatives feared that their histories would be silenced and that there would be no redress for the crimes committed during colonialism.<sup>31</sup>

### ***Science, grave digging and the collection of human bodies***

After lengthy negotiations between branches of the two governments, traditional leaders and with the support of researcher-activists in Germany, Charité Hospital attempted to transform its public image and embarked on the repatriation of human bodies. As such a Charité Human

---

<sup>30</sup> Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory*, 67.

<sup>31</sup> Reinhart Kössler, 'Reparation, Restitution and Decency: Postcolonial Practice a Century on – Namibia and Germany', North-Eastern Workshop on Southern Africa, Burlington, Vermont, 9-11 April 2010, 18.

Remains Project (CHRP) financed by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (German Research Foundation) was established in 2010.<sup>32</sup> The CHRP was established because of official requests for the repatriation of human remains from both Australia and Namibia.<sup>33</sup> A team consisting of an anatomist, anthropologist, ethnologist, historian and the head of the Berlin Museum for Medical History, Prof. Thomas Schnalke, was given the task to identify human bodies exported from Namibia for the purposes of official repatriation. The findings of their research were presented to the Namibian delegation at a familiarisation visit conducted on 27 September 2011 at the Charité Medical University in Berlin.

Charité identified forty-seven human remains from Namibia from their collection of heads and other body parts of people from other African countries, Australia, Asia and Europe. Only twenty human bodies, nine Herero and eleven Nama heads were earmarked to be returned to Namibia, after investigations were conducted and certainty was obtained concerning the provenance of these heads. Eighteen of the heads had been exported to Berlin from Shark Island. The heads had been decapitated after the prisoners had died on the Island. The heads had been opened up and the brains were removed by the head surgeon at the concentration camp, Dr. Hugo Bofinger. The brains were also sent to Berlin, although it was reported during the visit that Charité no longer possessed these body parts and the CHRP researchers could not explain what had happened to them.<sup>34</sup>

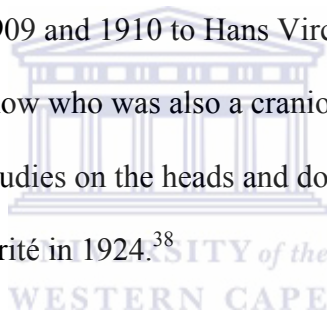
---

<sup>32</sup> SMA, Interview with Holger Stoecker, historian for the Charité Human Remains Project, 3 October 2011, Berlin, Germany; Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, 'Documentation recording the results of examination carried out on the twenty skulls from Namibia (nine Herero, eleven Nama) to determine their provenance', Provenance analysis, Specimen A 787 (Nama).

<sup>33</sup> Kirsten Grieshaber, 'German museum returning Namibian skulls', *Associated Press*, 30 September 2011, [www.thestate.com/2011/09/30/1992139/german-museum-to-return-namibian.html](http://www.thestate.com/2011/09/30/1992139/german-museum-to-return-namibian.html), accessed 29 October 2011..

<sup>34</sup> Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, 'Documentation recording the results of examination carried out on the twenty skulls from Namibia (nine Herero, eleven Nama) to determine their provenance', Provenance analysis, Specimen A 787 (Nama), 'the brain cannot be found in the collection today'; 'the fate of the specimen remains unknown', 7.

On arrival in Germany the heads had been sent to Dr. Paul Bartels who worked with two doctoral students at the Institute of Anatomy at the Charité Hospital.<sup>35</sup> Between 1905 and 1908 the heads had been transported to Charité intact in canisters containing formalin for preservation between 1905 and 1908. One of Bartels' students, Zeidler, conducted studies on five Herero heads before maceration. He also made plaster casts of the heads which were also not traceable at Charité.<sup>36</sup> Eleven of the Nama heads were identified as being part of a group of seventeen decapitated heads which were studied by Christian Fetzer.<sup>37</sup> Holger Stoecker, the CHRP historian, stated that he was not sure where and how two of the twenty heads earmarked for repatriation came to Germany. He said that they had been in possession of a German collector and former head of the Deutsche bank, Arthur von Gwinner. Von Gwinner had donated the heads between 1909 and 1910 to Hans Virchow, an anatomist at Charité and son of the physician Rudolf Virchow who was also a craniometrist. Virchow conducted anatomical and anthropological studies on the heads and donated these heads from his private collection to the collection at Charité in 1924.<sup>38</sup>



Stoecker described how body parts had been sent to Berlin and studied by men such as Heinrich Wilhelm Waldeyer, the head of the Institute of Anatomy at Charité, who had also

---

<sup>35</sup> Paul Bartels, 'Histologisch-anthropologische Untersuchungen der Plica semilunaris bei Herero und Hottentotten sowie bei einigen Anthropoiden', in *Archiv für mikroskopische Anatomie* 78, 1911, 529-564; Heinrich Zeidler, 'Beiträge zur Anthropologie der Herero', in *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Anthropologie* 17, 1914/15, 185-246 [=Phil. Diss. Berlin 1914]. Bartels was a student of both Virchow and Waldeyer. Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Documentation recording the results of examination carried out on the twenty skulls from Namibia(nine Herero, eleven Nama) to determine their provenance, Provenance analysis, Specimen A 834 (Herero), 13.

<sup>36</sup> Heinrich F.B Zeidler, 'Beiträge zur Anthropologie der Herero', in: *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Anthropologie* 17, 1914/15, 185-246; Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Documentation recording the results of examination carried out on the twenty skulls from Namibia(nine Herero, eleven Nama) to determine their provenance, Provenance analysis, Specimen A 834 (Herero), 7.

<sup>37</sup> Christian Fetzer, 'Rassenanatomische Untersuchungen an 17 Hottentotten Köpfen', *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Anthropologie* 16 (1913-1914), 95-156; Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Documentation recording the results of examination carried out on the twenty skulls from Namibia(nine Herero, eleven Nama) to determine their provenance, Provenance analysis, Specimen A 787 (Nama).

<sup>38</sup> SMA, Interview conducted by author with Holger Stoecker, historian for the Charité Human Remains Project, 3 October 2011, Berlin, Germany; Hans Virchow, 'Zahnverstümmelung der Herero' in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 40, 1908, 930-93.

ordered that the human brains of prisoners of war be sent by Schutztruppe in 1906. A study done by Werner Grabert in 1913/14 described numerous laryngeal prominences of Nama and Herero from the collection at Charité.<sup>39</sup> Stoecker stated that these body parts could also not been recovered at Charité. He recalled that over the years the collections of human remains moved between several institutions such as the Museum of Ethnology, Humboldt University, The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Anthropology, Museum of Natural History and they ultimately ended up at the Charité Medical University. Charité intended to rescind its ‘collections’ owing to financial constraints and the human remains would again be moved to a different institution, the Museum for Pre-History which formed part of the Prussian Foundation.<sup>40</sup>

All these different institutions in Berlin were linked through their shared collections and studies on human bodies, and their final destination in the store rooms of the Charité Medical University. Not all the body parts taken from the colonies had been stored in institutions but sometimes remained in the hands of private collectors. The human bodies were collected as trophies and for studies in race research. These race studies were steeped in Darwin's evolutionary theory which classified human races according to a specific hierarchy of the ‘favoured’ and ‘savage’ races. Even before the publication of his work there was a long tradition in Europe where the ‘favoured races’ were defined as the European race.<sup>41</sup> Later Galton’s ideas on the improvement of the genetic composition of a population were used by scientists such as Eugen Fischer who conducted fieldwork in Rehoboth, Namibia in 1908.

Through measurements of types Fischer studied the descendants of mixed ancestry and

---

<sup>39</sup> Werner Grabert, ‘Anthropologische Untersuchungen an Herero- und Hottentotten-Kehlköpfen’, in *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Anthropologie*, vol. 16, 1913/14, 65-94.

<sup>40</sup> SMA, Interview conducted by author with Holger Stoecker, historian for the Charité Human Remains Project, 3 October 2011, Berlin.

<sup>41</sup> Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, 24 November 1858.



formulated ideas long held in Europe which implied that mixed parentage produced ‘impure’ progeny.<sup>42</sup>

Fischer was also the first director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Heredity and Eugenics and was a founding member of the Society for Race Hygiene in Freiburg, Germany. The influence of Namibia on the studies on Jews in Europe which led to the extermination policies in the concentration camps has already been documented. Fischer’s work was to inspire physical anthropologists such as Christian Fetzner who also studied the seventeen heads of Nama from the Bartels collection at Charité. Stoecker stated that the scientists who conducted research on the heads usually conducted tests on the facial muscles to compare these with the facial muscles of Europeans.<sup>43</sup> Fetzner concluded from his studies of the facial muscles that there were similarities between the heads of the Nama and apes.<sup>44</sup> Stoecker observed that the research on the heads showed that the findings were not representative as the number of heads used for research could not have been an accurate indication of the traits of a whole community. Furthermore while the research attempted to prove superiority of Europeans, the findings were inconclusive.<sup>45</sup>

Nevertheless the studies on human body parts continued. Rudolf Virchow of Charité donated his collection of human remains to the Berlin Society of Anthropology, Ethnology and Pre-History. And Felix von Luschan the Austrian doctor and anthropologist, notorious for transporting human bodies from Namibia was influential in various institutions associated

---

<sup>42</sup> After his research work in Rehoboth Fischer published a book titled, *Die Rehobother Bastards und das Bastardierungsproblem beim Menschen, Anthropologie und Ethnographie Studien am Rehobother Bastardvolk in Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, Jena, Germany, 1913

<sup>43</sup> SMA, Interview with Holger Stoecker, historian for the Charité Human Remains Project, 3 October 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>44</sup> David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser’s Holocaust*, 225.

<sup>45</sup> SMA, Interview conducted by author with Holger Stoecker, historian for the Charité Human Remains Project, 3 October 2011, Berlin, Germany

with human remains collections in Berlin.<sup>46</sup> He was an assistant to the Director of the Museum of Ethnology in 1886. In 1909 he became professor of Anthropology at the Friedrich Wilhelms Universität (Humboldt University at Berlin). The Austrian Dr. Rudolf Pöch, a student of von Luschan conducted anthropometric and language studies on prisoners of war in Namibia during the colonial war.<sup>47</sup> Pöch also robbed graves during this expedition in South Africa.<sup>48</sup>

As part of the repatriation negotiations the Namibian delegation requested that Charité present a provenance analysis of each head. The provenance analysis was an account of the how the individuals died, where they died and how they were exported to Germany including reports, articles and publications of studies conducted on the body parts.<sup>49</sup> At the delegates familiarisation visit and in press statements the scientists at Charité reported that some of the individuals had died of disease, and that the cause of death of other individuals was inconclusive. The scientists remarked further that there were no signs of violence found on the heads.<sup>50</sup> Notwithstanding this finding, Holger Stoecker, the historian of the CHRP noted

---

<sup>46</sup> David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 224; Ciraj Rassool, 'Bone memory and the disciplines of the dead: human remains, transitional justice and heritage transformation in South Africa, CHR Seminar, University of the Western Cape, 22.

<sup>47</sup> Ciraj Rassool, 'Bone memory and the disciplines of the dead', 22.

<sup>48</sup> Ciraj Rassool, 'Bone memory and the disciplines of the dead', 22. On the 12th of August 2012, the bodies of Trooi and Klaas Pienaar were reburied in Kuruman in the Northern Cape after their bodies were dug up on the instructions by Pöch in 1909 and exported to Vienna Austria. See 'Reburial of Mr Klaas and Mrs Trooi Pienaar, Province of the Northern Cape, [http://www.northerncape.gov.za/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=769:reburial-of-mr-and-mrs-klaas-and-trooi-pienaar&catid=44:speeches&Itemid=54](http://www.northerncape.gov.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=769:reburial-of-mr-and-mrs-klaas-and-trooi-pienaar&catid=44:speeches&Itemid=54).

<sup>49</sup> Charité Universitätsmedizin, 'Documentation recording the results of examinations carried out on the twenty skulls from Namibia (nine Herero, eleven Nama) to determine their provenance', Provenance analysis, Specimen A. 787 (Nama).

<sup>50</sup> SMA, Embassy of the Republic of Namibia, Draft program, 'Visit to Berlin of the Namibian delegation to receive 20 skulls of Namibian origin of the victims of German colonial rule over Namibia and its peoples', 26 September to 3 October 2011, Familiarisation visit to Charité, Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2011; Charité Universitätsmedizin, Documentation recording the results of examination carried out on the twenty skulls from Namibia(nine Herero, eleven Nama) to determine their provenance, Provenance analysis, Specimen A 787 (Nama).

that the circumstances, under which the people had died were certainly as a result of violence in a war situation.

Questions thus arise about when it might be considered that there were signs of violence on the heads. Were human beings not violated when they were placed in concentration camps? When their heads were severed from the bodies? When the brains were removed from the heads? Or, when the heads were transported to Germany? When they were studied in Germany? When the skin, hair, muscles and interior parts of the heads were removed? Or, finally when the scientists could not locate and tell the delegation where all these body parts were?<sup>51</sup> Moreover these bodies were of individuals whose bond with families and clans were violently severed. The names of the people who died were unknown, and were merely presented with a number, labelled 'specimen' and identified according to a specific ethnicity. Most importantly who can account and take responsibility for the deaths of these individuals, and the multiple desecrations of their bodies? It was evident through these discussions at the familiarisation visit to Charité and at press conferences in Berlin in September/October 2011 that there were different conceptions of the human being, the body and what constituted violence and historical narratives of the war which had a direct consequence on the types of practices of repossession which took place.

The bodies exported from Namibia to Germany was not an isolated case, because these anthropologists also exported bodies from the rest of the region. Competing with these scientists were the institutions in southern Africa, such as the museums and universities who also collected human bodies. There was a growing scientific interest in the region from the

---

<sup>51</sup> Also see comments made by Chief Rirauko in his presentation at the official handing over ceremony at Charité on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

early 1900s especially in bodies of people that were classified as 'Khoe' and 'San'.<sup>52</sup> These studies were analogous with various kinds of exhibits of humans, their body parts and artefacts collected during field research which continued well into the 20th Century.<sup>53</sup> The collection of human bodies was linked to other anthropological studies of anthropometry, language and customs. It was believed that 'Khoe' and 'San' people would become extinct and that their bodies and artefacts should be preserved for posterity.<sup>54</sup>

These studies on bodies conducted by Bartels, Fischer, Virchow, von Luschan and Pöch were from those exported to Europe during colonialism, where war and extermination policies were being undertaken. These genocide conditions further contributed to the illicit trade in human bodies in the colonies.<sup>55</sup> The research on and export of the human bodies were conducted during an era where communities were not able to monitor and defend these practices. The legacy of the violation of human bodies, desecration of graves, sorcery and necrophilia was what the careers of these 'esteemed' scientists and the reputation that their institutions were built on. As such the ownership of collections in institutions of body parts and artefacts collected in war time and in an illicit manner cannot be ethically defended.

Furthermore the consequences of this type of research during colonialism had far reaching

---

<sup>52</sup> Marin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 1-8; Martin L. Engelbrecht, The connection between archaeological treasures and the Khoisan people, in Cressida Fforde et al (eds.), *The Dead and their Possessions: Repatriation in principle, policy and practice*, Routledge, London, 2002, 242.

<sup>53</sup> Raymond Corbey, 'Ethnographic Showcases', 1870-1930, *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 8, No. 3, August 1993, 338-369; Leslie Witz, *Apartheid's Festival: Contesting South Africa's National Pasts*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2003, 186-202; Ciraj Rassool and Patricia Hayes, 'Science and the Spectacle: /Khanako's South Africa, 1936-1937', in Wendy Woodward, Patricia Hayes and Gary Minkley (eds.), *Deep Histories: Gender and Colonialism in Africa*, Rodopi, Amsterdam, 2002, 125-6; Rob Gordon, Ciraj Rassool and Leslie Witz, 'Fashioning the Bushmen in Van Riebeeck's Cape Town, 1952 and 1993', in Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 1996, 259.

<sup>54</sup> Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 10; Alan G. Morris, 'Trophy Skulls, Museums and the San', in Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 1996, 68; Alan G. Morris, *The Skeleton of Contact, A study of protohistoric burials from the lower Orange River Valley*, South Africa, Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1992, 78.

<sup>55</sup> David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 224. Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 5-13. These men are connected through the collections of human remains that they shared during their studies. Pöch was in fact a student of both Virchow and Luschan.

consequences as these studies also influenced the eugenicist movement during Nazi Germany and resulted in tests on concentration camp prisoners and the extermination of Afro-Germans, homosexuals, Roma and Jews. The eugenics movement has had wider implications for policies of population control in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>56</sup>

***'The ancestors are not dead': performing the possession of bodies to Namibia***

The Namibian Cabinet gave a directive to the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to organise the return of human bodies in collaboration with affected Traditional Authorities. The delegation received the human bodies in Berlin, Germany at the end of May 2011. A delegation of traditional leaders and healers performed specific rituals at various ceremonies in Berlin.<sup>57</sup> However the trip to Berlin was initially postponed due to conflicts within the delegation about the unequal treatment of traditional leaders and the number of representatives that would travel to Berlin.<sup>58</sup> There were also complications between the Namibian government and the delegation about whether the issue of reparations for genocide would be linked with the repatriation process.<sup>59</sup> In the end the delegation consisted of three separate bodies, the Ovaherero Genocide Committee (OGC), the Ovaherero/Ovambanderu Council for the

---

<sup>56</sup> Mark Crutcher, 'Maafa 21: 'Black Genocide in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century America' (film), Life Dynamics, USA, 2009.

<sup>57</sup> Magreth Nunuhe, 'Cabinet approves return of skulls', *New Era*, 25 March 2011. [http://www.newera.com.na/article.php?title=Cabinet\\_approves\\_return\\_of\\_skulls&articleid=37977](http://www.newera.com.na/article.php?title=Cabinet_approves_return_of_skulls&articleid=37977), accessed 29 October 2011; Staff reporter, 'Hereros to join Kazenambo on Germany 'skull trip'', *The Namibian*, 18 April 2011.

<sup>58</sup> Theo Gurirab, 'The Battle of the Skulls', *Namibian Sun*, 12 May 2011. <http://mobi.sun.com.na/node/8309>, accessed 29 October 2011; Magreth Nunuhe, 'Politics Dragged Into Skulls Trip Row', *New Era*, 16 May 2011. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201105161605.html>, accessed 29 October 2011; Magreth Nunuhe, 'Skulls trip to Germany shelved', 16 May 2011, *New Era*, [www.newera.com.na/article.php?title=Skulls\\_trip\\_to\\_Germany\\_shelved&articleid=38734](http://www.newera.com.na/article.php?title=Skulls_trip_to_Germany_shelved&articleid=38734), accessed 29 October 2011; Denver Kisting, 'Government slammed for handling of skulls', *The Namibian*, 13 May 2011.

<sup>59</sup> Denver Kisting, 'Government slammed for handling of skulls', *The Namibian*, 13 May 2011. Jan Poolman, 'Who are the Germans to tell us what to say?', *The Namibian Sun*, 13 May 2011. <http://www.namibiansun.com/node/8347>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Dialogue on the 1904 Genocide (OCD) and the Nama Traditional Leadership Association (NTLA) linked to the Nama Technical Committee on the 1904 Genocide.<sup>60</sup>

About sixty members of various Genocide Committees, activists, journalists and the Minister of Culture eventually departed from Hosea Kutako International Airport in Windhoek on Sunday, 25 September 2011.<sup>61</sup> On Tuesday the 27 September, the delegation met privately with some of the staff of Charité Hospital in Berlin at the familiarisation event. When the delegation arrived at Charité they assembled outside the doors of the building. Members of the delegation were dressed in traditional outfits, similar gear worn at commemorations in Namibia and repossessed the space as they assembled outside Charité. It had rained slightly in Berlin that morning which the delegates considered a good omen. Most of the delegates knelt down on the wet ground at the entrance of the building.<sup>62</sup> The Herero delegation announced themselves to the ancestors. The ritual facilitators addressed the deceased in Charité and stated that they had come to take them home, and that their passage home was going to be peaceful. Gaob Petrus Kooper represented the Nama delegates by praying at the occasion. He recognised the momentous event and said that none of them had envisaged that they would come to Germany, but that it had finally happened after so many years.<sup>63</sup>

On Thursday the 29<sup>th</sup> of September, the delegates held a Memorial Service which was hosted by the Namibian Embassy in Germany. The ‘Memorial Service on the Occasion of the Repatriation of Human Skulls of Namibian Origin from the Period of German Colonial Rule

---

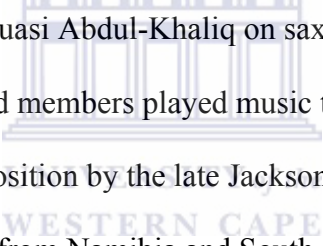
<sup>60</sup> Lorraine Kazondovi, ‘Genocide Council and Culture Minister to return skulls’, *Namibian Sun*, 18 April 2011, [www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/Restitution\\_Namibia/Lorraine\\_Kazondovi\\_Genocide\\_Council\\_and\\_Culture\\_Minister\\_to\\_return\\_skulls18.04.2011.pdf](http://www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/Restitution_Namibia/Lorraine_Kazondovi_Genocide_Council_and_Culture_Minister_to_return_skulls18.04.2011.pdf), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>61</sup> SMA, ‘Final list of the delegates’, courtesy of Ms. Elize Petersen who was a member of the Nama delegation, 1 October 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>62</sup> It had slightly rained in Berlin that morning, which according to our culture is a good omen.

<sup>63</sup> I arrived in Berlin in the late morning and missed the opportunity to witness this occasion at Charité Hospital, however I had a conversation with Dr. Larissa Förster and listened to her recordings of the event.

to Namibia', was held in the St. Matthew's Church.<sup>64</sup> The church was small and had an organ on the second level, which also served as a balcony. On the wall of the church were several paintings, some of which were of skulls of cows in a wooden crate and another of a human skull with a candle burning alongside. The benches were filled mostly with Namibian delegates, Namibians living in Berlin, Charité employees and members of civil society organisations. Two heads in separate glass cases were displayed in the front of the church. The heads were of male Herero ('Specimen A 834') and Nama ('Specimen A 787') persons. Behind these heads were eighteen grey boxes containing heads which were draped in the Namibian flag. Below the displayed heads lay a wreath with white and purple flowers. Identical wreaths were also adorned all around the grey boxes draped in the flag.<sup>65</sup>



The 'Memorial Ensemble', with Fuasi Abdul-Khaliq on saxophone and Eric Vaughn on the drums, accompanied by other band members played music throughout the ceremony. During the interludes they played a composition by the late Jackson Kaujeua and Jonas Gwangwa in solidarity with the struggle music from Namibia and South Africa. The speakers in the church stood behind the displayed human remains. After the welcome address by H.E. Ambassador Neville Gertze there were brief remarks from Chief Kuaima Riruako, Chief Dawid Fredericks and Chief Alfons Maharero, representing the three-pronged delegation. Although some of the remarks were couched in a Judeo-Christian language of reconciliation many of the speakers spoke about the practices which result in reconciliation. One of the speakers from OCD for example remarked that the process of reconciliation happened as a result of negotiations between two parties and that the process needed to confront the truth and reality. He said that

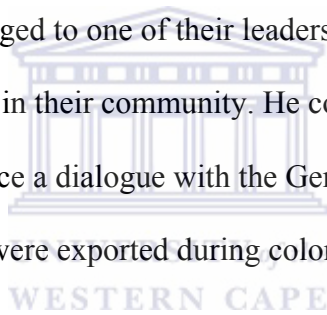
---

<sup>64</sup> SMA, Programme for the Memorial Service on the Occasion of the Repatriation of Human Skulls of Namibian Origin from the Period of German Colonial Rule to Namibia, 29 September 2001 at St. Matthew Church, Berlin.

<sup>65</sup> SMA, research notes, 27 - 30 September 2011, Berlin, Germany.



this policy had not been engaged yet and that it was disappointing that the German government had failed to officially acknowledge the process of repatriation in Berlin. Besides this controversy, the delegates recognised that there were parties such as civil society organisations, film makers and activists in Germany that supported the historical occasion. The Namibian hosts also recognised the presence of Minister Wieczorek-Zeul at the memorial who had apologised for German war crimes in Namibia in 2004. An appeal was also made to civil society and the churches in particular to spread the message of reconciliation in Germany.<sup>66</sup> The OCD representative further remarked that the return of the heads was not sufficient. Human beings who had been treated in this manner had assets which should also be returned. He spoke about a particular belt that had been stolen during German colonisation which belonged to one of their leaders. This belt was said to have had spiritual and cultural significance in their community. He concluded by saying that the communities had to also commence a dialogue with the German government on issues such as the return of the artefacts that were exported during colonialism.



Before the remarks by Gaob Dawid Fredericks, the delegates from southern Namibia assembled at the front of the church and sang a hymn in front of the displayed heads. Gaob Fredericks said that they had mixed feelings upon their arrival in Berlin. He said that they felt anger, sorrow, pain, and a sense of satisfaction and appreciation that they had come to Germany to take the bodies of their people. He said that the people who had suffered during the war wanted their descendents to come and fetch them, and that they had indeed finally come. He said that the role of women on various fronts during the war should be acknowledged as well. He said that the women prayed in concentration camps as they saw the

---

<sup>66</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

numbers of their people dwindling. They were also made to clean the skin off the heads of their relatives before they were exported to Germany.<sup>67</sup>

The sermon was led by Bishop Zephania Kameeta of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Namibia (ELCIN). Kameeta said that people did not grasp the enormity of the occasion. He said that the present generation was chosen by God to come to Germany to repatriate the human remains of their ancestors. He said that, 'God is removing the filthy cloth of shame that our ancestors and descendants were forced to wear and giving us the clothes of dignity. We have started the funeral of people who were thrown away like dogs. We are part of a historic and divine occasion...this is a life changing event, this is just the beginning'. Kameeta also stated that 'God did not allow these bones to be left here forever'<sup>68</sup> He said, 'take the sandals of tribal and political division off for the honour of the ancestors. They are not dead they are witnessing this event, that is why it is holy'. Speak with one voice, join with harmony, for the sake of progress in Namibia, our unity is the gift'. To the German society he said, 'take off your sandals of indifference, insensitivity and denial of the events, take moral and ethical responsibility for what happened. Speak and act unambiguously. This will be liberating and healing for Germans and Namibians'.<sup>69</sup>

The Namibian delegation conducted the beginning of a funeral in a church reinforcing the spiritual aspect of the repossession process. The human bodies were removed from the scientific institution into a context where the Namibian delegation could reclaim the bodies through sacred ceremony. Through the ceremony they emphasised the repossession of dignity and honour. However it was not a ordinary funeral because of the circumstances in which the

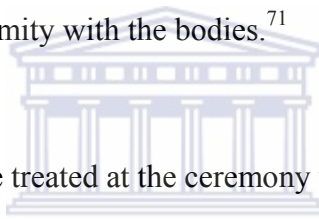
---

<sup>67</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>68</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>69</sup> SMA, research notes, 27 - 30 September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

ceremony took place. This was a long overdue rite which the people who had died and were exported to Germany had been robbed of. However there were similarities with ordinary funerals such as the church ceremony before the burial at a grave yard. The church ceremony is the last place where the viewing of the body of the deceased takes place before being placed in the ground. The placing of the heads in boxes draped with the Namibian flag fitted into an aspect of such a ceremony. After the Lord's prayer and hymn the delegates and the rest of the church walked around and engaged with the displayed heads, as well as with those in the grey boxes marked with their collection number and ethnic identity.<sup>70</sup> During the march around the bodies, some of the delegates wailed as the atmosphere during the 'funeral' was particularly heightened. It was the first time that some of the delegates and the participants came into close proximity with the bodies.<sup>71</sup>



The way in which the bodies were treated at the ceremony was different from their habitation at the various institutions in Berlin. Here at the St. Matthews church the bodies were treated as bodies that were honoured with appropriate rites after death. Also the draping of the national flags on the bodies symbolised that these bodies were no longer considered those of 'primitive' people treated with disregard, but of people that were considered heroes and honourable citizens of an independent State. These bodies which were secretly exported as prisoners of war to Germany were being presented with full honours as free citizens to the entire world. These were not merely 'remains', but the bodies of people now constituted as citizens, heroes and ancestors through the repossession process.

---

<sup>70</sup> Wiczorek-Zeul who was present at the memorial service also used the Lord's Prayer in her apology at centennial commemoration of the war at Ohamakari in 2004.

<sup>71</sup> SMA, research notes, 27 - 30 September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

However the viewing of the heads in the glass cases also felt eerie because it resembled an ethnographic exhibit. The heads were kept in separate glass cases and grey boxes which designated different ethnicities. The word, 'hottentoten' was still visible in blue ink on the left side of the one of the heads displayed in the glass cases thus the bodies still carried marks/traces of violence. The delegation did not know the names, ages and even how the people had died. Moreover the family (delegation) and church elders did not prepare the bodies for viewing as it would take place at an ordinary funeral. It was the Charité employees were responsible for packing and displaying the heads. And after the memorial service the heads were again returned to the Charité Hospital.

***‘What have we done to the Germans?’: recalling colonial violence in Berlin***

The official handing over ceremony took place on Friday the 30<sup>th</sup> of September at the *Großer Hörsaal Bettenhochhaus* at the Charité Hospital. On the evening before it transpired the delegation held an urgent meeting at the Hotel. The delegates reflected on the week’s events and expressed disappointed at the absence of high ranking officials of the German government. The delegates had expected that they would be welcomed and accompanied at various ceremonies by German government officials, at least this was the impression that they had upon departing from Namibia. Some of the participants decided that the delegation should leave Berlin in protest without the human bodies.<sup>72</sup> This, it was hoped, would send a clear diplomatic message to the German government that they had to take responsibility for the human bodies who had been exported to their country, to apologise and to acknowledge that a genocide had taken place during the colonial war. This political tactic was eventually not realised. Some of the deliberations also concerned the signing of an agreement by

---

<sup>72</sup> Lorraine Kazondovi, 'Bitter return - without the skulls?', *Namibian Sun*, 30 September 2011. <http://www.namibiansun.com/content/local-news/bitter-return-without-skulls>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Minister Kazenambo for the transfer of human bodies to Namibia. The delegates decided that because a high ranking German government representative was not going to sign the agreement, instead an official from the National Heritage Council would represent Namibia in this capacity. Ms. Moombolah-/Goagoses, head of the National Museum of Namibia and member of the National Heritage Council would represent the delegation as the signatory at the ceremony at Charité.<sup>73</sup>

During the week of the events in Berlin, holy fires were kept burning in Katutura in the capital city of Namibia. Meanwhile activists and members of the various Genocide committees in Windhoek were informed about the process which was unfolding in Germany. They were angered by the cold reception that the delegation received from the German government in Berlin. The activists marched to the German Embassy in Windhoek on Friday, 30 September, the day of the official handing over ceremony in Berlin. Wearing traditional attire, carrying placards, shouting demands and singing, the petitioners marched along Independence Avenue. Lazarus Kairabeb of the Nama Traditional Leaders Association read the petition in the presence of the German Deputy Ambassador, Andre Scholz. Kairabeb demanded that the Namibian delegation be treated as equal partners in the repatriation process, and that their request for reparations be met by the German government. The petition also stated that the behaviour of the German government impeded reconciliation.<sup>74</sup>

The following morning on the way to Charité the women began to sing in the bus, as they did everyday. This time they sang in anticipation of the ceremony at Charité. One of the women who sang, Johanna Kahatjipara had presented a paper on the 'Role of women during the

---

<sup>73</sup> SMA, research notes, 27 - 30 September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>74</sup> Lorraine Kazondovi and Nampa, 'Protestors demand reparations', *Namibian Sun*, 3 October 2011. <http://www.sun.com.na/content/local-news/protesters-demand-reparations>, accessed 29 October 2011. Alvine Kapitako, 'Namibia: German hostility triggers demo', *New Era*, 3 October 2011. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110030806.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

German-Herero War' at the Ohamakari centennial commemoration in Okakarara on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 2004.<sup>75</sup> The main points of her address in 2004 had been that women cheered on the men by singing battle cries during the war. She was one of the few women delegates during the repossession process in Berlin.<sup>76</sup> During a brief conversation with her at the panel discussion in Berlin she pulled out a white ribbon hidden in her blouse which she had worn from the time she boarded the plane in Windhoek. At the end of the ribbon hung a golden disk that her grandmother had worn around her neck during her imprisonment at a concentration camp in Karibib during the war. Kahatjipara has been an ardent activist and oral historian of the colonial war. Kahatjipara has particularly focused on the oral tradition as passed on by the women in her family who experienced colonisation, war and genocide.<sup>77</sup> During the reparations process I noted how Kahatjipara was intimately involved in the dissemination of information to the German media through documentary film recorded on location, and radio interviews in German and English.<sup>78</sup> These testimonies highlighted the plight and activism of the delegation on the reparations issue and particularly informed the German public about the return of human bodies underway at that time.<sup>79</sup>

On the bus to Charité the women sang the famous struggle song adapted from the South African version, 'Senzeni Na?' This song was popularly sung at rallies, mass meetings and

---

<sup>75</sup> Program, 'Commemoration', Ohamakari Battle, 11 August 1904, <http://ovaherero-genocide-association-usa.org/images/Document%20pdfs/Ohamakari%20Program%201904-2004.pdf>, accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>76</sup> SMA, 'Presseanmeldung, Witnesses of the German Genocide, Event to recognise the restitution of human remains from the Charité back to Namibia, Panel discussion with representatives of the Herero and Nama, the German government and the parliamentary opposition'. The Panel discussion was hosted by various civil society organisations such as AfricAvenir International, Afrotak TV cyberNomads, Berliner Entwicklungspolitischer Ratschlag (BER), Berlin Postkolonial, Deutsch-Afrikanische Gesellschaft (DAFRIG) Berlin, Global Afrikan Congress (GAC), Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland (ISD-Bund), Solidaritätsdienst International (SODI).

<sup>77</sup> John Yeld, 'Bones of Contention could heal old hurts', *Cape Argus*, 5 July 2011, 11.

<sup>78</sup> For interviews conducted with Johanna Kahatjipara in Berlin see <http://www.dradio.de/dkultur/sendungen/thema/1565059/>; <http://www.podcast.de/episode/2772278/Streitfall+Herero-Sch%C3%A4del/>, accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>79</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

funerals during the liberation struggle, and was translated into various Namibian languages.<sup>80</sup> It was a mourning song which asked the Gods, and the government, what they had done to deserve the cruelty of being tortured and killed. In the next refrain of the original version of the song the lyrics state that the only sin was to be born black.<sup>81</sup> In the bus to Charité, the women asked what the communities had done to the Germans for their ancestors to be killed, beheaded, transported and studied in Germany. During the bus trip the phrase, 'What have we done to the Germans?' was sung in English, Otjiherero, Nama and German. These women sang the songs that they would perform at the steps of Charité in a ceremony that mourned and honoured the ancestors who died during the war.<sup>82</sup> As we exited the bus at Charité the women continued to sing, 'What have we done to the Germans' on the stairs of the hospital.<sup>83</sup> Also battle cries and sounds of ululation were chanted throughout the ceremony as the women and men performed rites that resembled those that their ancestors would have enacted during the colonial war. Here the battle cries, marchers, prayers and chants of the ancestors were colliding through space and time with the songs and re-enactments of their descendents.<sup>84</sup>

On the steps of Charité the various communities of memory performed rituals that were usually conducted at specific ceremonies which commemorated the colonial war in central and southern Namibia. While the women were singing, some of the other Herero women joined and formed the rear guard of the marching troops who were directed by Alex Kaputu. Kaputu officiated some of the ritual re-enactments in his capacity as the Ceremonial Chief

---

<sup>80</sup> The Xhosa/Zulu original translates as 'What have we done?, Our sin is that we are black?, Our sin is the truth, They are killing us, Let Africa return. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senzeni\\_Na%3F](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senzeni_Na%3F), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>81</sup> The Xhosa/Zulu original translates as 'What have we done?, Our sin is that we are black?, Our sin is the truth, They are killing us, Let Africa return. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senzeni\\_Na%3F](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senzeni_Na%3F), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>82</sup> SMA, research notes, 27- 30 September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>83</sup> SMA, research notes, 'Repatriation is a must', September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>84</sup> Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, 263.



Priest of the Holy Fire and Lieutenant General of the Red Flag.<sup>85</sup> The marching soldiers drilled up and down between the bus and the stairs of the hospital led by Kaputu in call and response. These soldiers were later joined by Ovaherero women in the rearguard. Usually these performances were termed 'truppenspieler' or playing soldiers. Many writers have stated that these were imitations of German uniforms and drilling activities. Kaputu's description relayed a system that exemplified psycho-spiritual methods of overcoming warfare and strengthening the resolve of communities precisely through mimicry.<sup>86</sup> Kaputu also explained that the Herero wore military uniforms to show that they were victorious over the Germans through a repossession of their uniforms. This would also explain the way in which the attire worn by women and men was a re-coding of an existing symbolic system onto colonial aesthetics. This represented aesthetics of reclaiming a specific history elided by the use of mimicry and similar designs, not as copy and storage but as recall, re-invention and re-invigoration of a specific historical trajectory. So potent is their symbolic performance that their practices revealed that their ancestors who had undergone immense violence were not only present but that they had orchestrated a repossession.

Some of the delegates stood in a long row facing the hospital while the media scrambled in the front taking photographs and video clips of the marching troops. The Nama delegation led by Ida Hoffman in song, sang a church hymn. Minister Kazenambo then hastily announced that the rituals should be performed before the delegation entered the hospital building. At that moment Kaputu came to the front with Chief Tjipene Kea and Bishop Ngeke Katjangua, Chief Priest of the Omuhinaruzo Holy Fire. Some of the delegates kneeled down and removed their hats. At this point we quietly listened as Chief Kea and Bishop Katjangua

---

<sup>85</sup> SMA, electronic mail correspondence with Mr. Alex Kaputu, 9 November 2011.

<sup>86</sup> Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, 251, 256.

began the incantation in Otjiherero, and the delegates addressed the ancestors.<sup>87</sup> 'The words used were as follows: Ancestors we thank you for bringing us to Germany with no problems. We asking your spirits to unite with the almighty God, and give us strength to repatriate the skulls of our ancestors.'<sup>88</sup>

Thereafter, the Nama delegates also communed with the ancestors. Ms. Martha Theresia Stephanus read out a praise poem and Gaob Petrus Kooper translated the words into English. The poem spoke about how the people who were oppressed in the past had claimed a victory on this occasion, as the injustice of colonialism was revealed through the discovery of the human bodies. She said that finally the bodies of these people would return to their motherland. Although the heads were without flesh, it was their intelligence and pride that even paved the way for the repatriation process. Stephanus said that their foreparents had left them with such a huge responsibility that they had to fulfil on this occasion. She said, 'the bones of my bones, our bones, the bones of Namibians', would finally return home. She also said that the young and old who were born in a land of warriors would be joyous forever because of this occasion. She said that blood was shed for this country, and our ancestors sacrificed their lives. And the heads would return to a land filled with fat, milk and honey. Stephanus also said that the 'Lord our Creator is holy, and because we were blessed with this opportunity, so we should receive the bones with open hearts'. Ida Hoffmann led a hymn which was echoed in chorus by the delegates. After the ceremony on the steps of Charité, the delegates slowly moved up the stairs into the Great Hall.<sup>89</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> SMA, electronic mail correspondence with Mr. Alex Kaputu, 9 November 2011.

<sup>88</sup> SMA, electronic mail correspondence with Mr. Alex Kaputu, 9 November 2011

<sup>89</sup> SMA, research notes, 27- 30 September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

Inside the hall two human heads were again displayed in glass cases on a table covered with white cloth. Eighteen grey boxes stood on rectangular tables draped in the Namibian flag directly behind and on the sides of these glass cases. Two delegates in military regalia who earlier marched outside the building holding Ovaherero and Ovambanderu flags positioned themselves with their flags at ends of the last boxes on the stage. Most of the delegates were seated right in the front, while the few Germans in attendance were seated right at the back. Some of the audience members stood in the aisles, and I noticed that these were members of the various civil society organisations. Before we even settled in our places, Prof. Dr. Karl Max Einhäupl, CEO of *Charité Universitätsmedizin* invited Ms. Esther Moombolah-Goagoses of the National Heritage Council to the stage and they sat down at a table where documents were ready to be signed. They hastily signed the official handing over documents, shook hands and waited for the media to record the moment. Einhäupl presented a welcoming speech in which he spoke about how the short term of German colonisation had produced such immense cruelty. He apologised on behalf of the institution for exporting and collecting human remains, and for the role that it had played in the genocide. He requested a minute of silence for the people who died during the genocide.<sup>90</sup>

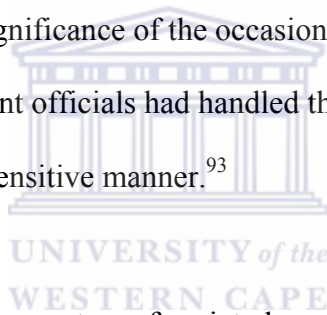
The Minister of State in the Department of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Cornelia Pieper took to the podium. During her speech some of the audience standing in the aisles who were holding white pieces of paper with, '*Entschuldigung sofort*' and 'Reparation Now' dramatically interrupted her speech, and asked her to apologise to the Namibian communities for genocide committed during colonisation.<sup>91</sup> Pieper exclaimed that this was a free country and that the

---

<sup>90</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>91</sup> 'Entschuldigung sofort' means 'apologise now'. These placards were held up by members of a coalition of NGOs during the official handing over ceremony at Charité in solidarity with the Namibian delegation and their communities.

audience members were open to comment, but that they should wait for her to continue her speech because she addressed these issues in it. As she continued the dissatisfied audience members continued to harangue Pieper. Another audience member shouted at Pieper and asked how the German government could have conducted the ‘brutal killing of innocent people’. She then addressed the delegation and demanded that they stand up for their rights! She felt exasperated and began to sob loudly. Pieper did not return to her seat after her presentation, and was escorted outside, through the back entrance by the staff members of Charité.<sup>92</sup> Unlike Einhäupl who named the genocide and apologised on behalf of Charité, Pieper's presentation fell short on both counts. The manner in which Pieper unceremoniously left the building was also disturbing. The delegation was astonished by her actions and felt that Pieper had disregarded the significance of the occasion. It gave further impetus to the notion that the German government officials had handled the repatriation process in a disconcerting, ambiguous and insensitive manner.<sup>93</sup>



Jan-Bart Gewald writes that various sectors of society have used the genocide perpetrated by Germany for their own ends.<sup>94</sup> In an article on the contestations of human remains in museums, Tiffany Jenkins writes in a similar vein about the strategic use of human remains by communities in cultural, political and ethical debates.<sup>95</sup> Instead of placing the delegation, representatives and their practices ahead of the human bodies, which actually silences the bodies and relegates them as objects, I suggest that instead we sensitively situate the bodies at

---

<sup>92</sup> SMA, research notes, 27- 30 September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>93</sup> SMA, research notes, 27 - 30 September 2011, Berlin Germany; Henning Hintze, 'German minister walks out of skull ceremony'. *The Namibian*, 3 October 2011, [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews[tt_news]), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>94</sup> Jan-Bart Gewald, 'Herero genocide in the twentieth century: Politics and memory' in J. Abbink, M. De Bruijn and K. Van Walraven (eds.) *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History*, Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden, 2003.

<sup>95</sup> Tiffany Jenkins, 'Contesting Human Remains in Museum Collections: the Contribution of a crisis in cultural authority', [http://blogs.nyu.edu/projects/materialworld/2011/01/contesting\\_human\\_remains\\_in\\_mu\\_1.html](http://blogs.nyu.edu/projects/materialworld/2011/01/contesting_human_remains_in_mu_1.html), accessed 29 October 2011.

the centre in our conversations, in dialogue with the delegates and their representative communities. The agitation for the return of bodies from Germany should be seen as a process in which the descendants reflect and reclaim this past and where the ancestral bodies, reassert themselves from the past onto the present through a mutual, multi-directional and temporal process of repossession. The reason for the persistent theme of the colonial war is precisely because the past is constantly being re-interrogated through various practices. In some ways their unresolved transitional status grants the bodies an agency that produces responsibilities for their descendants and generates desire for engagement and recovery.

This is a significant reorientation of the repatriation of human bodies because it shows the different views on the human body. The descendants' view is that these bodies are not lifeless material objects but human bodies that animate for a redress through their descendants for circumstances which arose a century ago during war. The process in Berlin and Windhoek was one of humanisation in which the various communities and government officials asserted the human dignity of the people whose body parts were exported to Germany. There was thus an importance placed on rituals and ceremonies performed during the process as a way of communing with the human bodies in the church and hospital in Berlin. The delegates spoke directly to their ancestors, the human bodies in Charité on their arrival in Berlin, and told them that they were there to take them back home. Also in the memorial service Bishop Kameeta stated that the ancestors were witnesses to the repatriation proceedings. The Nama delegates in the praise poem read by Stephanus stated that the ancestors had orchestrated their return to Namibia, and that they, the descendants, had been given the mandate to proceed with the various undertakings. Through the process of repossession the ancestors were mediators in their return home.

### ***'Entschuldigung sofort, Reparations Now': A renewed struggle for reparations***

The return of human bodies, 'of Namibians who were victims of the German war of extermination', was kept as a separate matter from the issue of compensation for genocide.<sup>96</sup> Although anti-colonial resistance was viewed as the foundation for the liberation struggle, and was constantly opined at public commemorations, the government's refusal to insist on justice for crimes committed in the past suggests an ambiguous stance on this matter.<sup>97</sup> After independence the Namibian government constantly frustrated dialogue on these issues as they suspected that ethnic claims for reparations might derail the process of nation-building.<sup>98</sup> The demand for reparations was thus seen as a threat to the policy of national reconciliation. Bilateral negotiations on development strategies between Namibia and Germany for all communities in Namibia were planned instead. This position was upheld by the Namibian government in spite of the fact that various communities have demanded the support of the Namibian government on the issue of war reparations for decades, and the motion to support war reparations was passed in parliament in October 2006.<sup>99</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup>Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture, Media Release from Cabinet Chambers, 'Report on the implementation of the Cabinet decision no. 18<sup>th</sup>/30.09.08/003 (Repatriation of the Remains (Skulls) of Namibians who were victims of the German war of extermination', 18 November 2010. [www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/RestitutionNamibia/Ministry\\_Youth\\_Media\\_release\\_from\\_Cabinet\\_Chambers\\_18.11.2010.pdf](http://www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/RestitutionNamibia/Ministry_Youth_Media_release_from_Cabinet_Chambers_18.11.2010.pdf), accessed 29 October 2011; Denver Kisting, 'Government slammed for handling of skulls', *The Namibian*, 13 May 2011.

<sup>97</sup> Henning Melber, 'How to Come to Terms with the Past: Re-Visiting the German Colonial Genocide in Namibia', *Africa Spectrum*, Vol. 40, No. 1, 2005, 142; Kuvée Kanguéehi, 'Genocide claims get huge support in parly', 5 October 2006, *New Era*, <http://www.newera.com.na/article.php?articleid=13388&title=>, accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>98</sup> Henning Melber, 'How to Come to Terms with the Past: Re-Visiting the German Colonial Genocide in Namibia', 143.

<sup>99</sup> Brigitte Weidlich, 'Riruako wants answers on 1904 genocide motion', *The Namibian*, 30 September 2010, [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=73067&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=73067&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011; Lorraine Kazondovi, 'Govt position on reparations still unclear', *Namibian Sun*, 7 October 2011. <http://mobi.namibiansun.com/content/national-news/govt-position-reparations-still-unclear>, 29 October 2011.

The Namibian government has been cautious to probe the issue of reparations for human rights violations because of a policy of national reconciliation adopted at independence and enshrined in the preamble of the National Constitution where communities were to build a non-racial egalitarian nation in spite of atrocities committed in the past. This was the compromise reached at independence to allow for the development of a democratic nation.<sup>100</sup> This compromise was an important policy to ensure a cessation of violence and to legitimise the state. However after the adoption of the policy there were no programmes or institutions put in place to develop this policy in more detail. A truth commission or inquiry into the victims and perpetrators of colonialism and apartheid was not established, and such requests were vehemently rejected saying that it would interfere in the peace process.<sup>101</sup> It was argued by proponents of the Namibian style of national reconciliation that public debates about human rights violations during colonialism and apartheid would hinder the democracy process and stifle future progress.<sup>102</sup> The discourse on humanisation, a component important in a transition from colonialism, apartheid to independence has been neglected and instead a reign of silence on human rights violations has marked the political culture in the country.<sup>103</sup> Because of this the psycho-social, political and economic effects of the long afterlives of war have not been duly acknowledged and dealt with in Namibia. However the collective memory

---

<sup>100</sup> André du Pisani, 'The Discursive Limits of SWAPO's Dominant Discourses on Anti-colonial Nationalism in Postcolonial Namibia - a First Exploration', in André du Pisani et al, *The Long Aftermath of War: Reconciliation and Transition in Namibia*, Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute, Freiburg, Germany, 2010, 28-31; Gerhard Töttemeyer, 'The Role of the Church in Namibia: Fostering a Discourse on Reconciliation', in André du Pisani et al, *The Long Aftermath of War: Reconciliation and Transition in Namibia*, Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute, Freiburg, Germany, 2010, 117-8.

<sup>101</sup> Brigitte Weidlich, 'Don't force our hand: Govt', *The Namibian*, 12 September 2007. [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=41505&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=41505&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>102</sup> Brigitte Weidlich, 'Don't force our hand: Govt', *The Namibian*, 12 September 2007. [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=41505&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=41505&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>103</sup> André du Pisani, 'The Discursive Limits of SWAPO's Dominant Discourses on Anti-colonial Nationalism in Postcolonial Namibia', 8.



of violence perpetrated one hundred years ago, and even during the liberation struggle persists in the bodies of people in our communities, such as in the bodies discovered in the country and abroad.<sup>104</sup>

The German government also stated that they would not negotiate with specific ethnic communities concerning reparations for crimes committed during colonialism.<sup>105</sup> It was also argued that German development aid paid to Namibia contributed to addressing their 'special responsibility' for colonialism.<sup>106</sup> However in a turnabout in 2004, the German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Heidemarie Wiecek-Zeul apologised for genocide crimes at a commemoration in 2004, and announced a N\$160 million reconciliation package. Communities in Namibia were affronted that they were not involved in the negotiations, and this was retracted for a 'Special Initiative' that was also negotiated with communities in 2005, and later signed by the Namibian government in 2007.<sup>107</sup> Communities however further insist on reparations stating that the development money from the Initiative have not reached their communities. During the repatriation negotiations the German government sent a memorandum to Namibia's Foreign Ministry to state that reparations would not be discussed during the process in Germany.

---

<sup>104</sup> Justine Hunter, 'Dealing with the Past in Namibia: Getting the balance right between justice and sustainable peace?', André du Pisani et al (eds.), *The Long Aftermath of War - Reconciliation and Transition in Namibia*, Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institut, Freiburg, Germany, 2010, 404, 410, 423, 425, 431.

<sup>105</sup> Henning Melber, 'How to Come to Terms with the Past: Re-Visiting the German Colonial Genocide in Namibia', 143.

<sup>106</sup> Brigitte Weidlich, 'German politician accuses Berlin of 'avoiding' Herero demands', *The Namibian*, 1 September 2008. [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=30101&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=30101&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011. This point was reiterated by a German parliamentarian at a panel discussion held at the House of Cultures in Berlin on the 28th of September 2011.

<sup>107</sup> Reinhart Kössler, 'Genocide and Reparations: Dilemmas and Exigencies in Namibian-German Relations', in André du Pisani et al, *The Long Aftermath of War: Reconciliation and Transition in Namibia*, Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute, Freiburg, Germany, 2010; Henning Melber, 'In the Shadow of Genocide: German-Namibian reconciliation a century later', <http://www.freiburg-postkolonial.de/Seiten/melber-reconciliation2006.htm>, accessed 29 October 2011.

In spite of this, various communities in Namibia regard the return of human remains from Germany as a part of the reconciliation process, which does not exclude other forms of reparations such as compensation to redress past injustices.<sup>108</sup> The traditional leaders of the Nama and Ovaherero communities finally united and jointly drafted proposals for dialogue between the Namibian and German governments and various affected communities. The traditional leaders stated that, 'the Governments of the two countries should realize that we are not asking for a confrontation with the Government of the Federal Republic or people at all; we are, however, seeking redress for the wrongs of the past in order for the wounds to heal and for resultant genuine reconciliation and peaceful co-existence...'<sup>109</sup> After the discovery of the human bodies collection in Berlin, Namibian activists redoubled their efforts to demand that Germany took responsibility for their colonial past. The communities demanded that Germany acknowledge and apologise for the genocide committed during the colonial war, and compensate affected communities as a consequence of the genocide perpetrated by Germany. These were the concerns and matters that the delegation discussed at several public events before and during the week in Berlin. It was evident during Berlin that the solidarity amongst the Namibian delegation was enhanced, and that the revival of the demand of reparations was heightened by this process.

On Wednesday, 28 September 2011, during an interview for ScienceMedia, a film production company in Berlin, Ida Hoffmann spoke about the many years of activism of the delegation

---

<sup>108</sup> Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi, 'The Significance of the Repatriation of Namibian Human skulls'. <http://www.africavenir.org/news-archive/newsdetails/browse/1/datum/2011/09/23/prof-peter-h-katjavivi-the-significance-of-the-repatriation-of-namibian-human-skulls>, accessed 29 October 2011. Peter Katjavivi, 'From Colonialism to Bilaterality: Challenges of the Namibian-German relationship', in Dierk Schmidt et al (eds.), *The Division of the Earth: Tableaux on the legal synopsis of the Berlin-Africa conference*, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne, Germany, 2010, 91.

<sup>109</sup> The Nama and Ovaherero Traditional Leaders, 'Joint position paper from the Nama and the Ovaherero people on the issue of genocide and reparation', 14 December 2007. <http://www.africavenir.org/project-cooperations/restitution-namibian-skulls.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

on the reparations issue. Hoffmann hoped that their presence in Germany, and especially the return of human bodies to Namibia would once again highlight the plight of the Namibian communities who were demanding reparations. She stated that the 'Special Initiative' of €20 million offered by the German government did not reach communities and demanded a renewed negotiation for reparations. We also attended a panel discussion where the colonial legacy between Germany and Namibia was publically discussed. The event was organised by various civil society organisations such as AfricAvenir International at the House of World Cultures Auditorium (Haus der Kulturen der Welt Theatersaal) in Berlin. The Panel discussion was titled, 'Witnesses of the German Genocide – on the occasion of the restitution of human remains from Charité back to Namibia'.<sup>110</sup>

The opening address by Reinhart Kössler briefly described the circumstances in which the human bodies were exported to Germany and the activism of communities in Namibia to repatriate these human bodies.<sup>111</sup> Kössler also stated that the participation of the delegation, the descendants of the people who resisted colonial rule, was a significant witnessing to these events. He said that this occasion symbolised how these traditional communities were able to reconstitute their communities after genocide, and participate in an event where they returned the human bodies of people who had died during the war. The panellists representing the three committees from Namibia were Ueriuka Festus Tjikua, Hewat Beukes and Katutire Kaura. During the question and answer session other Namibian delegates made presentations

---

<sup>110</sup> SMA, 'Presseinladung, Witnesses of the German Genocide, Event to recognise the restitution of human remains from the Charité back to Namibia, Panel discussion with representatives of the Herero and Nama, the German government and the parliamentary opposition'. The Panel discussion was hosted by various civil society organisations such as AfricAvenir International, Afrotak TV cyberNomads, Berliner Entwicklungspolitische Ratschlag (BER), Berlin Postkolonial, Deutsch-Afrikanische Gesellschaft (DAFRIG) Berlin, Global Afrikan Congress (GAC), Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland (ISD-Bund), Solidaritätsdienst International (SODI).

<sup>111</sup> Reinhart Kössler, 'The returning of skulls and the redress of past wrongs – some indispensable context', Opening statement at panel discussion, „Zeugen des deutschen Völkermords“. Veranstaltung aus Anlass der Rückführung menschlicher Gebeine aus der Charité nach Namibia“. Berlin, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 28 September 2011.

on the reparations issue as well. Three members from the opposition parties in the German parliament were also present, who mainly commented on the presentations by the Namibian delegates. Tjikuua, Secretary of the OCD referred to the various international instruments that could be used to litigate a case against the German government. He read the Genocide Convention in detail and stated that although the convention was one of these instruments, it did not have to necessarily be used in the case against Germany. He said that a special treaty was signed between Jewish survivors and the German government for compensation for war crimes during the Shoah, and that the Namibian communities and German government may also negotiate such an agreement.<sup>112</sup>

Hewat Beukes, a member of the Nama Technical Committee, was asked how the apology for genocide delivered by Wiczorek-Zeul in 2004 was received in Namibia. Beukes tied the apology by Wiczorek-Zeul, to the issue of colonial responsibility and the present socio-economic situation in Namibia. He spoke about the psychological and human rights impact on communities in Namibia, which was a consequence of German colonialism. He said that the repatriation of human bodies was directly related to the issue of human dignity of the descendants of people that experienced genocide. Beukes stated that the reparations were not only requested for the past extermination policies of the German state, but that the German government continued to negatively affect the development of various communities through its foreign policy in Namibia. He stated that the German government formed a buffer between German settlers and the rest of the Namibian society by supporting the German community to the exclusion of other communities. The German state also interfered in the judiciary and financial institutions in Namibia. He further said that the German government has a bilateral agreement with the Namibian government, 'and refuse to have a bilateral

---

<sup>112</sup> SMA, video recording by author, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

relationship with the people that they have exterminated'. He noted that when Germany colonised Namibia they signed treaties with various communities and today the German state refuses to dialogue with these communities. In conclusion, Hewat noted that the apology made by Wiczorek -Zeul was not sincere given the present context of the relations between Namibia and Germany.<sup>113</sup>

Katuutire Kaura was asked what form of symbolic gesture the German government could give to the Namibian people after genocide. Hon Kaura stated that because of colonialism the land of various communities had been expropriated by the German state. He said that the biggest symbolic gesture would be the restoration of land by the German government. He stated that genocide continues today, 'because if one travels in Namibia most of the commercial farms are still owned by the children whose forefathers exterminated our forefathers'. He further said that the Namibian Constitution had a policy of 'willing-seller, willing-buyer', but that many people were not able to buy farms. He also added that Chancellor Helmut Kohl visited German schools during his trip to Namibia but did not visit any other schools. He stated that the irony is that the German government subsidises German schools in Namibia, but will not subsidise schools where Nama, Herero or Mbanderu children attend. He added that 'they feel comfortable to subsidise their own children, the descendents of the people who exterminated our forefathers, they still subsidise those schools, and they insist that German must be taught in Namibian schools'.<sup>114</sup>

A statement delivered by Gaob Petrus Kooper at the panel discussion set the tone for future dialogue between communities in southern Namibia and the Namibian and German

---

<sup>113</sup> SMA, video recording by author, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>114</sup> SMA, video recording by author, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

government. Gaob Kooper stated that ‘today the offspring of the Nama warriors are malnourished and they are the poorest of the poor’. He expressly mentioned that the Special Initiative between Namibia and Germany did not improve and support the development of communities in southern Namibia. Several years after its implementation the communities realised that the development program was actually not forthcoming, and could not be viewed in the framework of reparations. He stated that the Special Initiative only benefitted communities who were not affected by the extermination orders during the colonial war. Gaob Kooper reiterated that the two governments should open up a dialogue on the reparations proper.<sup>115</sup>

The Namibian delegates were presented with a ‘Book of Condolences in memory of the victims of the German Genocide in Namibia, 1904-1908’, by Ms. Judith Strohm, the Director of Africavenir.<sup>116</sup> The opening page of the book online read, ‘Between 1904 and 1908 German troops waged an unimaginably cruel and atrocious war of extermination against the Herero, Nama and Damara peoples, aiming to break anti-colonial resistance within the former German colony “Deutsch-Südwestafrika”. We mourn the victims of this genocide and our thoughts are with them. We shall remember’. The statement was accompanied by the infamous photograph of a soldier loading heads into a container, while other soldiers look on. The caption in the book reads, ‘German soldiers loading skulls of massacred Herero into a casket for shipping to Germany’. The Book of Condolences ‘expressing the mourning and thoughts of people from all over the world’ was again presented by Strohm at the handing-over of the human bodies ceremony at Charité on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September.<sup>117</sup>

---

<sup>115</sup> SMA, video recording by author, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>116</sup> To see messages in the ‘Book of Condolences’ see <http://namibia.menschen-gedenken.de/Main.aspx>, accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>117</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

Taking responsibility for colonial crimes was reiterated at the official handing over ceremony at Charité. In his speech at the event Gaob Fredericks stated that human bodies were discovered near Lüderitz in August while excavations for the construction of a train track were conducted. Fredericks said that it was clear that the bones belonged to the victims of the extermination campaign and that necessary arrangements for the safe storage of the human bodies were made by the people of Bethanie who assisted the Namibian police to collect the bones and placed them in twenty-four bags. Fredericks stated that this situation paralleled with the repatriation of human bodies from Germany. Fredericks bemoaned the reception of the German government and said that the government 'has no interest in the Namibian people's skulls affair from the day we have arrived in this country'. Fredericks noted that Gaob Manasse !Noreseb and Gaob Cornelius Fredericks from southern Namibia were both beheaded during the war, and that their heads were exported to Germany. It is in this context that the delegation was deeply disturbed by the refusal of the German state to admit the inhuman deeds during the war, and still refused to take responsibility of the heads during the repatriation process.<sup>118</sup>

The main thrust of Chief Alfons Maharero's speech commented on the issue of restorative justice. He noted that the German government hid behind development aid to Namibia instead of entering open dialogue on just compensation for genocide. Chief Maharero also stated that the German government did not acknowledge the colonial war as genocide and had not formally apologised, which hindered the process of reconciliation. He stated that during the week the delegation observed, 'the mysterious absence of the German government from the official memorial service, the refusal to attend the panel discussion, the last minute withdrawal of the German government to sign the repatriation agreement and the strategy of

---

<sup>118</sup> SMA, video recording by author, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.



the German government to give a low profile to the occasion'. In conclusion Chief Maharero stated that all these attempts to thwart the significance of the repatriation process would not deter the cause for dialogue on reparations.<sup>119</sup>

The resurgence for dialogue on reparations between the affected parties was also restated by Chief Riruako at the handing over ceremony. Chief Riruako commented on the repatriation process by saying that on the eve of their departure from Windhoek he was informed that the German government would fund the travel of three delegates if the repatriation was seen in the light of reconciliation but would not fund the repatriation process if the deliberations were couched in the context of atrocities committed during the colonial war.<sup>120</sup> He further commented on the week's programme by noting that the heads exported to Germany were from people who were hanged and beheaded although the scientists had said in the press statements that they could not detect any violence on the skulls themselves. He also said that the delegation could not just come to Berlin, collect the skulls and go home, and that they demanded a just compensation and reparation. Chief Riruako also stated that because Namibia used to be a German colony, there were possibilities of suing for reparations in German courts.<sup>121</sup>

### ***Re-mapping Africa in Berlin***

The afternoon I arrived in Berlin, we waited to meet the delegation at the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin. We sat on the memorial slabs on Hannah Arendt street. When we noticed the white chartered bus in which the delegation travelled we approached them and I

---

<sup>119</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>120</sup> Denver Kisting, 'Government slammed for handling of skulls', *The Namibian*, 13 May 2012; Jan Poolman, 'Who are the Germans to tell us what to say?', *The Namibian Sun*, 13 May 2011.

<sup>121</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

recognised some leaders from southern Namibia such as Ida Hoffmann, Gaob Joel Stephanus, Gaob Dawid Fredericks, Onder-Kaptein Christian Rooi and Gaob Petrus Kooper. I also met delegates from the other Genocide Committees such as Johanna Kahatjipara, Ester Muinjangu, Esther Moombolah-/Goagoses and Alex Kaputu.<sup>122</sup>

I greeted the delegates as they emerged from the underground place of information where names of Jewish Holocaust victims were written. Some of the delegates were seated on the grey concrete slabs with full traditional regalia. Some of the Herero women wore their huge gowns and cow-horned head dresses while the men wore lapelled and buttoned military uniforms from the German colonial era. I noticed that some of the Herero women were wearing badges which depicted skulls. The Nama delegates were dressed in suits with their clan colours displayed on their hats. One Nama women wore a patchwork dress and the other two had colourful frocks, shawls and *veldskoene*. I noticed throughout the week wherever the delegation assembled, whether they were seated in front of their hotel, kneeling at the entrance of Charité or reading plaques on monuments, that they attracted many curious onlookers and media attention. These men and women over several days, dressed in memorial attire repossessed specific memory spaces in Berlin. At these sites, they embodied and reminded the world about the forgotten and denied history of colonialism in Namibia.<sup>123</sup>

On Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup> of September, I accompanied Ida Hoffmann, Johanna Kahatjipara, Barbara Kahatjipara, Gaob Petrus Kooper and Reinhart Kössler, who were all featured in a short documentary film directed by Ursula Biermann for ScienceMedia.<sup>124</sup> We visited several

---

<sup>122</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>123</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>124</sup> For information on the interviews conducted by ScienceMedia with Johanna Kahatjipara, Ida Hoffmann and Gaob Simon Kooper see Ursula Biermann, 'Relikte der Vorfahren: Berliner Charité gibt Herero-Schädel zurück' <http://www.3sat.de/kulturzeit/themen/157261/index.html>, accessed 13 November 2011.

historical sites such as a Military Cemetery in Neukolln where a memorial plaque had been placed in honour of the Namibian victims of the colonial war on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2009.<sup>125</sup> At the Topography of Terror open-air museum more interviews were conducted. We also viewed an exhibition of the Holocaust near remnants of the Berlin Wall in the city. Kössler described why these sites were constructed, their significance, and how they had been contested and commemorated in the past. We also compared historical events that occurred in both Namibia and Germany. The delegation noted how various parts of the city were proliferated with monuments and plaques of the holocaust and how there were no physical reminders of colonialism and the genocide that took place in Namibia.<sup>126</sup>

On Saturday the 31<sup>st</sup> of September, a few of the delegates toured the historical places related to Africa in Berlin. The tour was conducted by Kwesi Aikens, Dierk Schmidt and Joachim Zeller. At 'Mohrenstrasse' or 'Moors Street' in Berlin, Kwesi Aikens spoke about a project that he was working on, where they suggested name changes for streets in Berlin named in honour of colonial agents such as Lüderitz and Von Trotha. These street names were being contested and other names of African anti-colonial fighters and activists were presented instead. Kwesi described that 'Mohrenstrasse' was named after the slaves that were brought from West Africa to Berlin. These slaves usually worked in the houses of the upper classes in Berlin. He said that 'Mohren' or 'Moor' is a derogatory word which describes the supposed feeble-mindedness of Africans. He stated that there was a policy in Berlin where communities and organisations could suggest names, and that the names of women were especially enlisted since there was a dominance of male street names. Kwesi gave an example of a street name of a German slave trader, Groeben, that was successfully changed to honour May Ayim, who

---

<sup>125</sup>Joachim Zeller, 'Inauguration of the Namibian memorial stone in Berlin', [http://www.berlin-postkolonial.de/aktuelle\\_themen/Namibia-Gedenkstein.html](http://www.berlin-postkolonial.de/aktuelle_themen/Namibia-Gedenkstein.html), accessed 29 October 2011

<sup>126</sup>SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

was an Afro-German activist, educator and poet.<sup>127</sup> He asked the delegation for suggestions of historical figures, for renaming some of the streets in Berlin. He also showed a photograph of how activists had designed stickers and changed the names of streets to names such as ‘Witbooi’ during their campaigns in the city.<sup>128</sup>

At the ‘Hererostein’ in a military cemetery named the Columbia Cemetery in Berlin-Neukölln, Joachim Zeller described the monuments history to the delegation. He said that ‘The Africa Stone’, also known as the ‘Hererostein’ was inaugurated in 1907 for German soldiers who died during the war campaign against the Herero and Nama communities. A new plaque was installed in 2009, which was a design of the geographical outline of Namibia and was the third colonial monument in Berlin. It reads as follows, ‘This plaque is dedicated to the memory of the victims of German colonialism in Namibia 1884-1915, particularly the colonial war of 1904-1907, the district council and the district of Neukölln in Berlin, only those who know the past have a future (Wilhelm von Humboldt)’. Zeller explained that the original wording on the plaque which was dedicated to ‘the victims of the German genocide’ was contested by the German Foreign Ministry and the words, ‘victims of German colonialism’ were used instead.<sup>129</sup> This rewording of the monument is significant because it shows the views of certain officials in the German government and the contestations of this specific historical event.

---

<sup>127</sup> David Crossland, 'Berlin faces street battles over 'racist' road names', *The National*, 16 March 2010. <http://www.thenational.ae/news/worldwide/europe/berlin-faces-street-battles-over-racist-road-names>, accessed 29 October 2011; Cinnamon Nippard, 'Renaming streets to highlight impact of German colonial history', *Development in Globalised World*, <http://www.dw.de/dw/episode/0,,5288978,00.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>128</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>129</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

Kwesi Aikins further explained that contestations in this memory space were regular incidences. In 2002 on the day of National Mourning in Germany, unknown people poured paint over the 'Hererostein'. Days later other people cleaned the paint and laid a wreath near the stone with an image of the Deutsche Bund. He also described that people have painted images on the stone over the years and as such serves as a site of memorial contestation. On the left was an image of a hat that the German soldiers used to wear in the colonial war campaigns. An emblem for the German soldiers that fought in Africa in World War II was depicted on the right. These images were often refreshed with new paint. He stated that the Namibian plaque was coated with specific material to prevent damage and vandalism. At the conclusion of the tour presentations, Strohm from Africavenir laid a wreath at the stone in the name of several civil society organisations. The inscription on the ribbons of the wreath reads 'for the victims of the German genocide'. She stated that the laying of the wreath in the presence of the delegation was a counter-memorial that acknowledged Namibian communities, and stated that genocide was committed during the colonial war in Namibia as opposed to the inscriptions on the two stones that were installed there.<sup>130</sup>

During the picture-taking session after the laying of the wreath, I noticed that one of the delegates Ms Geraldine Ndjoze was holding up an image of a woman. As we walked away from the 'Africa Stone', I briefly spoke to her while we made our way out of the cemetery. She lifted her wide-brimmed Herero dress as she walked to avoid the sand on the path. I asked her about the image that she had held up at the 'Africa Stone'. In between heavy breaths and wiping her forehead, she retold that it was an image of her sister in law, whose mother's husband was killed by a German settler. The German settler later had children with

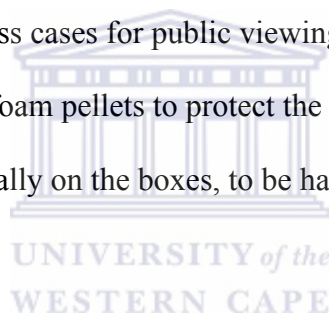
---

<sup>130</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

her mother and the woman in the picture was the offspring of this union. Ndjoze also told me that as a result of this union there were generations of Herero-German people in her family.<sup>131</sup>

### *Ancestors return to Namibia*

After the official handing over ceremony in Berlin Minister Kazenambo requested three representatives from the delegation to oversee the packing of the heads for transport back to Namibia. Ms. Moombolah /Goagoses assisted in the packing process while the CHRP researchers packed the heads in two big brown boxes. The heads were packed according to ethnicity, Nama and Herero, in separate boxes. The heads, Nama A. 787 and Herero A. 834, were placed in separate grey boxes and packed on the top of the other boxes, because they were to be displayed again in glass cases for public viewing in Namibia. The Charité employees packed in green styrofoam pellets to protect the boxes. And specific diplomatic cargo stickers were placed externally on the boxes, to be handled in a special way during transit on the planes.



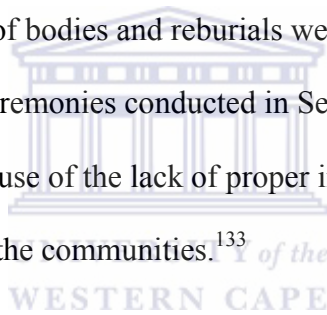
The delegates received a spectacular welcome at Hosea Kutako International Airport in Windhoek. Various community representatives met the delegation who arrived from Germany in the early hours on Tuesday the 4th of October 2011. The participants drilled, chanted, sang and prayed when the delegation accompanying the human bodies descended from the plane. The carton boxes were covered in the Namibian flag, and were received by the National Defence Force as it descended from the plane. The human bodies were transported to the Parliament Gardens where they were viewed by the public in a similar way as conducted at the memorial service at the church in Berlin. A memorial service was held at Heroes Acre on Wednesday the 5th of October 2011. The Namibian government and German

---

<sup>131</sup> SMA, research notes, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

officials were however criticised by some community leaders for not addressing the issue of reparations at the official ceremonies for the human bodies in Namibia.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2011 it was announced on the news in Namibia that the workers of the Ministry of Roads, Transport and Communication had again discovered bones on the old railway line near Lüderitz. It is concerning that these broadcasts are announced on national television without more information about the progress of the findings until an imminent burial is declared. Furthermore the sudden announcement and organisation of burials of discovered human bodies is incomprehensible with ideals of communities that seek to understand the situation in which people died in the past. Also it negatively impacts the healing process which the return of bodies and reburials were a significant part of.<sup>132</sup> Many people wanted to be part of the ceremonies conducted in September/October 2011 in Berlin and Windhoek but could not because of the lack of proper information between government, traditional leaders and the rest of the communities.<sup>133</sup>



On their return to Namibia from Germany the delegation faced criticism about the cost of the repatriation process.<sup>134</sup> A cabinet document was leaked to the media about the over-spending of the budget for the entire process. It was also recommended that a smaller delegation would travel for future repatriation of human bodies, and that instead the rituals for the repatriation process would be conducted in Namibia. A month later a financing and cooperation agreement worth N\$660 was signed between Namibia and Germany. At the occasion the

---

<sup>132</sup> Jacques Depelchin, 'History of Africa/Humanity at a Crossroad: Between Reconciliation and Healing', Paper presented at the University of the Western Cape, CHRVisiting Fellow, July-August 2009, 3-4.

<sup>133</sup> Telephonic conversation with family members in Namibia, 7 October 2011.

<sup>134</sup> Jan Poolman, 'Skulls repatriation mission costly', *Namibian Sun*, 11 November 2011.

<http://www.namibiansun.com/content/national-news/skulls-repatriation-mission-costly>, accessed 29 November 2011; 'Kazenambo fumes at Namibian Sun', youtube video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PM4gCx9zfV4>, accessed 16 November 2011.



German ambassador to Namibia, Egon Konchanke stated that the delegation that went to Germany to collect the human bodies had a 'hidden agenda', which had negatively impacted bilateral relations.<sup>135</sup>

At the handing-over ceremony in Berlin Minister Kazenambo defended the policy of national reconciliation by noting that the policy was established in Namibia because people 'did not want to throw Germans living in Namibia into the ocean'. He stated that the Namibian policy of national reconciliation, the olive branch, was welcomed by the German government with denial and legal instruments. Kazenambo explained that legal instruments do not bring about peace and that openness, accepting your past and dialogue on that past 'will consolidate lasting peace'.<sup>136</sup> A month later Kazenambo constructed the policy of national reconciliation in a virulent manner in response to a newspaper article written by the editor of the 'Namibian Sun' who wrote about the delegations expensive trip to Germany.<sup>137</sup> Kazenambo held a press conference in which he stated that the article was 'the highest order of white arrogance'. He also said that although the delegation had exceeded the budget, the amount of money spent was not an issue considering that it was the return of human remains of genocide. He stated that the reporter and some white people in Namibia have an arrogant mentality as they were only concerned about the amount of money that was utilised during the trip. He stated that if the white people in Namibia disregarded the policy of national reconciliation by their insensitivity, then people in Namibia would certainly take steps to grab land that was

---

<sup>135</sup> Nampa, 'Collectors of skulls had hidden agenda - German Ambassador', *The Namibian*, 17 November 2011. [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=90164&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=90164&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>136</sup> SMA, video recording, September 2011, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>137</sup> Jan Poolman, 'Skulls repatriation mission costly', *Namibian Sun*, 11 November 2011.

<http://www.namibiansun.com/content/national-news/skulls-repatriation-mission-costly>, accessed 29 November 2011. 'Kazenambo fumes at Namibian Sun', video, *Namibian Sun*, 16 November 2011. See also <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PM4gCx9zfV4>, accessed 29 November 2011.

previously the property of their ancestors.<sup>138</sup> Instead of just criticising Kazenambo's reaction to the media we should review the logic and consequences of the policy of national reconciliation to which his ambiguous and polemic excesses point.

These debates illuminated the practical and symbolic ways indeed opened up a process of reconciliation. One of the issues concerns who should be financially responsible for the repatriation process for example. The return of human remains from Germany to Namibia was mainly funded by the Namibian government. Should the German government not have been responsible for most of the funding, since it was their predecessors who had exported the human bodies in the first place? And if the German government would have taken the initiative to support, financially and by other more continuous and long terms strategies, through the process of returning the human bodies, it would have indicated to the Namibian people that Germany was taking responsibility for past wrongs. Others believe the money used for repatriation should instead have been used for housing, education and health for communities in Namibia. Moreover as Depelchin has argued, 'how will one ever cost that which cannot be measured? Or reconcile with a history that is denied?'<sup>139</sup> Some people consider the ritual aspect conducted during the return of human remains to be more important in spite of the costs involved in the logistics. These are the types of discussions that I argue are continuously grappled with through these ritual practices conducted at commemorative events. These events point to practices of freedom which continuously reconsider the notions of humanity through interrogating the colonial past especially if we consider the role of these memorial events during various historical trajectories in central and southern Namibia.

---

<sup>138</sup> Land grabbing as part of a solution for access to land has been raised for several years now. See Petros Kuteeue, 'Germany mulls remedy other than reparations', *The Namibian*, 6 August 2004. [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=5271&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=5271&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011.

<sup>139</sup> Jacques Depelchin, 'History of Africa/Humanity at a Crossroad: Between Reconciliation and Healing', Paper presented at the University of the Western Cape, CHR Visiting Fellow, July-August 2009, 15.

A critical aperture was presented through the first return of human bodies to Namibia, where various stakeholders could have constructively initiated a process where they dialogue the effects of the afterlives of genocide, commit to the responsibility of the past and chart a way forward on a national level. The policy of national reconciliation was a decision made by the representatives of the Namibian people at a specific historical moment during the negotiations for independence and the setting up of a democratic government; another moment was presented through the processes of the return of human bodies exported during colonialism in which significant decisions should have been taken in order to transform the practices of reconciliation into continuous healing processes. The communities in which colonialism was recalled in contested and negotiated processes at commemorations in central and southern Namibia may constitute what is referred to by Gerri Augusto as, 'epistemologies of practice',<sup>140</sup> in which the questions and notions of redress and healing processes may be opened up through practices which continuously engage with what is known about colonialism, genocide and its afterlives. It is these practices of healing evinced during the return of human bodies in Berlin and Windhoek where communities continuously interrogate violence through a repeated possession of the past which departs from the way in which the policy of national reconciliation has been constructed in Namibia. It will be the responsibility of affected families/ communities supported by researchers and institutions such as the National Heritage Council informed by these practices of remembering as re-enacted in these communities to map out and design programmes and procedures in which the human bodies of people who died during violent circumstances will be returned, cared for and memorialised in the future, for this is just the beginning.

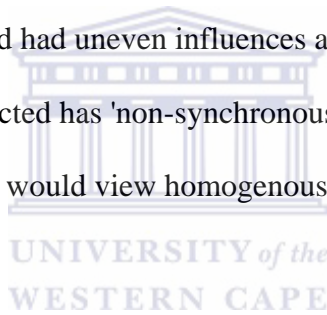
---

<sup>140</sup> Anthony Bogue and Gerri Augusto, 'Africana Thought and Africana Intellectual History', Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, Paper presented on 8 December 2004.

## Afterword

### Sore Maya Archive: An act of humanisation

My research on what has been silenced, surveyed and discarded in the historiography of the war has led to an exploration of how German colonialism and the colonial war in particular have been framed in various arenas. This approach was informed by narrative practices and commemorations which reference interrelated and entangled histories. As Trouillot has indicated these silences in spaces where histories were created and reproduced, such as archives, were created unevenly. Seremetakis also points out the unevenness in which modernity influences the practices of communities.<sup>1</sup> If the milieu in which these histories were enacted were devastating and had uneven influences and consequently the spaces in which these practices were re-enacted has 'non-synchronous'<sup>2</sup> articulations and silences then we should forego the idea that we would view homogenous, linear and unreflected memorial practices that can be reconciled.



The question is not whether we should incorporate these histories in official history, or transcend the colonial and apartheid archive within its own logic, but that there should be an overhaul of the power relations implicit in the knowledge preserved and represented in these institutions. Instead of a transformation strategy in official archives and national heritage institutions which maintain hegemonic purviews that choke desired pathways from the vestiges and traces of an agonising past, there is a need to pay attention to and support memorial practices in other arenas that have always existed. The memorial practices to which I refer were less concerned with how to fill gaps and re-enacted practices that reframed

---

<sup>1</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 12.

<sup>2</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 12.

colonial aesthetics, criss-crossed territories, plotted and reinvented new historical pathways through storytelling and commemoration. However within the limitations of these strategies constructive dialogue and development projects attuned to existing memorial practices should be sustained so that these processes embedded in these communities invigorate practices of freedom regionally and trans-nationally.

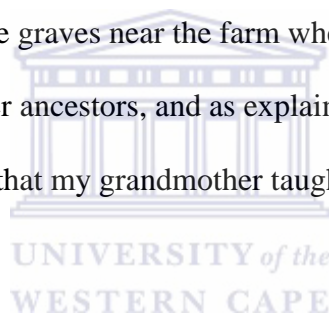
I offer stories to introduce the lineages of the archive that I have developed throughout the research process. On our way home from a tombstone unveiling of my paternal grandparents in Vaalgras we took a detour to Gibeon and adjacent farms of Rietkuil and Kameelhaar.<sup>3</sup> In the car we drove passed paths and landscapes familiar to my mother and she recalled two stories. She pointed to some farmhouses we saw in the distance and said that they lived on one of these farms when she was a child. The farm was owned by a German family. As we drove passed several farms she told us the names of German farm owners, which families occupied the farms during the forced resettlement established by the Odendaal Commission and who the new owners were as part of the national resettlement plan after independence. Here she described three different historical periods in which the farms were occupied by various families.

They lived on a farm where my maternal grandmother may have worked as a domestic worker. My mother recalled that they would walk home barefoot from school. She said that

---

<sup>3</sup> Both these farms have been noted in literature on the war. A testimony in the Blue Book indicates that attachments, men from South Africa who help the military efforts of the German army may have lived on the farm. See Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found*, 171-2. Also see Records of the Colonial Office, Imperial Government of German South West Africa, ZBU 461, D.IV.M.2, Vol. 2, 3, *Aufstand in Suden Feldzug* where Nama prisoners of war describe the war and Kameelhaar is described in some of their narratives as places traversed during the war.

we were fortunate because we had worn school shoes whereas they used to cross the Fish River barefoot from Vrystaat on their way to school. She remembered that a German farmer they called, 'Hogmann' (Hoffmann), owned the farm Rietkuil at that time and would drive by them in his green car.<sup>4</sup> She said that he owned one of the only cars in the area. They would sing a song, which she sang at that moment, which would praise this green car. One of these days when they were headed home 'Hogmann' drove by them and although he was headed in the same direction he did not bother to pick them up. She says that they did not think about this as children and explained that they were naive and ignorant and used to sing the song because they were particularly excited about the green car that the farmer drove. She also pointed to a plot on the side of the farm where there was a graveyard and said that her mother used to take her on occasion to the graves near the farm where her relatives were buried. Here my grandmother would call on her ancestors, and as explained by my mother 'in the way in which Herero often do'. She said that my grandmother taught her how to perform these rituals.



I know that if we were not in this position, driving passed these specific farm houses and sites, my mother would not have told us this story or would not have told us this story so vividly. Being in these spaces triggered these memories of her childhood. These were historical narratives which she spontaneously relayed to us. Months later I still ponder on these visits to the graves of relatives where my grandmother, mother and other relatives would engage with ancestors through a specific recall and response. Also because my mother referred to them as the ways in which Herero perform these rituals, made me aware of the multi-ethnic heritage in my family and wondered about the way in which these different

---

<sup>4</sup> Katesa Schlosser published photographs of Hoffmann in her book, Katesa Schlosser, *Markus Witbooi in Gibeon 1953*.

traditions engaged with each other. It also related to the ways in which the dead were commemorated in public and the practices that I had witnessed in Berlin at the 'repossession of human bodies' in 2011.

These stories were about the way in which some practices were silenced and how others were carried through albeit in nuanced forms and our later interpretations of these practices. How in some spaces a specific ethnicity would be presented and again in another space the other or both at one time and how people were able to inhabit multiple subjectivities and understood that these were authentic engagements with themselves and their ancestors in ways that was/is beyond the scope of academic musings on such matters. I was feeling through these questions while my mother retold her story and connected it to the newspaper articles and a badge designed for the repossession process, with images of skulls, leaders of the anti-colonial resistance and delegates of the genocide committees, which I was carrying. My father had bought the badge at the repatriation event at the Parliament Gardens in October 2011 where a small ceremony took place and the heads were displayed for public viewing.

I recollect histories rooted in the storytelling explorations and objects of family members and participants of public memorial events, into an unbounded and experiential archive titled 'Sore Maya'. The name 'Sore', derives from my traditional Nama name, which also references and recalls the people who have come before me in both my paternal and maternal ancestry. Traditional names were presented in a registry of names of participants at memorial events in Gibeon at the annual 'Gaogu Gei Tses' for example. This registry contains the names of participants of Heroes Day events in Gibeon for the past decades. Because the traditional name registers your presence and those of your ancestors, through the act of writing the traditional name it registers the participant in co-presence with their ancestral line at the



memorial event. The registry is a form of reclamation of the use of traditional family name and also forms part of the communal archive of memorial events. It is also located at a different historical registry and is a significant alternative record repository from the national and church birth and death registration records, which never document the traditional names of people in the country. Sore Maya points to exactly these layered inscriptions. The archive essentially speaks about how bodies, places and spaces were inscribed with histories, in the sense of writing as weaving.

The Sore Maya Archive references shawls, flags, trees, photographs, drawings, audio-visual material, conversations, landscape, monuments, festivals, praise poetry, speeches, hymns, dances, prayers, laughter and laments. These myriad locations and re-enactments which bespeak German colonialism and its everyday life are located onto bodies and specific spaces in the way that my mother inscribed her narrative onto the farmsteads and graveyard, the dense topographies, of the lives of families which she pointed out through storytelling, laughter, sighs and song. Instead of a repository the Sore Maya Archive is developed through an understanding of an experiential and transitory knowledge embedded in oral history and other performances at commemorative events. The way in which the material could be used is informed by these performance practices, where instead of an priori knowledge through the material, the participant is invited to make meaning at the moment of re-enactment thereby contributing to an interpretation of the past that reinvigorates these themes in the present.

SMA is an archive that points to alternative ways in which to think through an archive of colonial violence and genocide. The archive seeks to point to re-enactments of a particular historical period that escapes linear temporal emplotments thereby continuously referencing and juxtaposing different historical trajectories alongside each other. These historical

trajectories re-emerge, subsume and are reinvigorated at various temporalities and through various performance repertoires. The archive therefore also points to a multi-directional knowledge process, 'that brings the past onto the present as a natal event'.<sup>5</sup> The re-enactments which the archive points to are not mere representations or re-enactments of an already well known repertoire. Instead, new knowledge is being produced in every moment of the performance which is embedded in a prior experience. Thus I refer to the archive as an experiential process, a continuous reciprocal interrogation of the past with existing memorial practices.

The process of recall through the archive is informed by how communities refer their memorial practices to histories which essentially sought to reframe and challenge the dominant episteme on humanness. These memorial processes in themselves were practices of freedom that sought to reframe their own conceptions of being human during violent and tumultuous colonial experiences, through what Bogue refers to as 'acts of humanisation'.<sup>6</sup> These practices were enacted to reinvent new ways in which to live. These practices often enacted during stillness were moments from which life worlds were born.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 7.

<sup>6</sup> Anthony Bogue, *Empire of Liberty*, 119.

<sup>7</sup> Nadia Seremetakis, 'Memory of the Senses, Part 1', 10.

## Appendices

### After-Images I

#### Images of Memory and Commemoration



Prisoners of war. Note the shawls on the women and the patchwork variety on women standing second and fourth from right.

**Source:** Basler Afrika Bibliographien (BAB).



Women re-enact war scenes near a hut and under the tree in background at the centennial commemoration in Gibeon.

**Source:** Sore Maya Archive (SMA), Gaogu Gei-Tses, Gibeon, southern Namibia, October 2005, author.





In Steinkopf Calitz Cloete described the Halfmens, *Pachypodium Namaquanum* as people who were turned into plants when they faced northward towards Namibia.

**Source:** Piet van Heerde, 'n Seleksie uit Oom Piet van Heerde se Namakwalandse Fotoversameling'.



Municipal name for the region on a board in front of Municipal Offices at Steinkopf.

**Source:** SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, author.



Present day Matjieskloof Mission settlement outside Springbok where refugees from southern Namibia were relocated during the colonial war.

**Source:** SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, author.



Farm post of Zacharias Christiaans near !Kuboes, Richtersveld.

**Source:** SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Bradley van Sitters.





Recording the names of Magriet April, Sarah April and Sophie Basson in Pella.  
**Source:** SMA, Northern Cape Interviews, Pella, July 2010, author.



Opening of memorial event in Gibeon.  
**Source:** NAN 08407.





Gibeon community choir with my grandmother Sanna Swartbooi wearing a cotton T-shirt with a Gaob Hendrik Witbooi emblem.

**Source:** Eric Miller, University of the Western Cape Robben Island Mayibuye Archive.

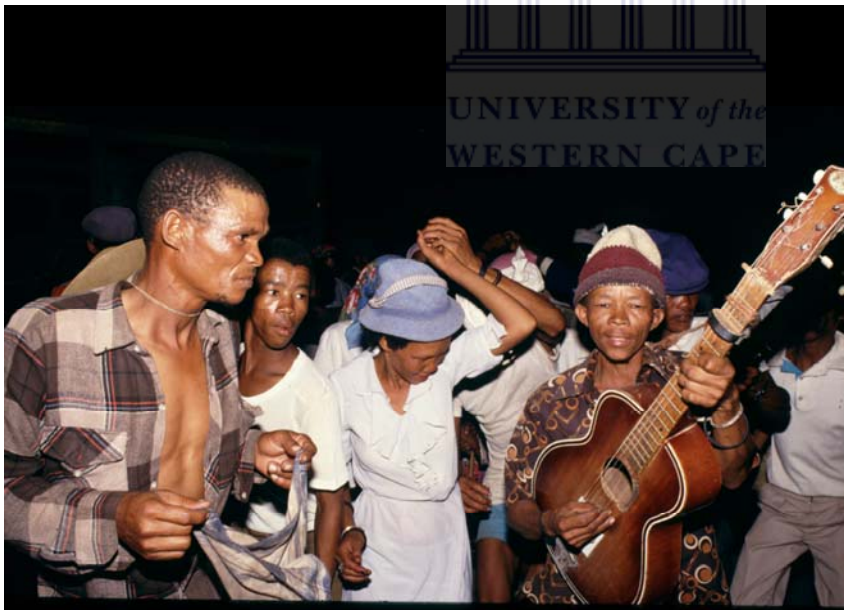


Gibeon Community Choir at the Centennial Heroes Day Commemoration.

**Source:** SMA, author.



Brass instrument players at Heroes Day in Gibeon.  
**Source:** Eric Miller, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archive.



Players of instruments and dancers at Gibeon Heroes Day Festivities.  
**Source:** Eric Miller, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archive.



Woman playing harmonica while dancing at Centennial Heroes Day Festivities in Gibeon.  
**Source:** Christiana Flamingo.



Children from Willem Moses Jod Primary School dancing Nama stap at Heroes Day in Gibeon.  
**Source:** SMA, author.





Gaob's traditional hat with golden star in front held by two women at Gaogu Gei-tses.  
**Source:** Eric Miller, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archive.



/Khowesen prisoners of war, 99th Annual Heroes Day, Gaogu Gei Tses, Goamus, southern Namibia, October 2004.  
**Source:** SMA, author.



Walking to the fountain, Gibeon, Gaugu Gei-Tses, Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, Gaob Justus //Garoeb and /Khobese traditional authority councillors.

**Source:** The Namibian.



Funeral procession of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi with !Urikam horseriders and NDF marching band moving towards the historic fountain site in Gibeon.

**Source:** SMA, author.





Alex Kaputu recording for Herero radio, Councillor Tamen /Ui-#Useb, Gaob Hendrik Witbooi and Onder-Kaptein Christian Rooi at the fountain, 2005, Gibeon.  
**Source:** Hans Pieters.



Onderkaptein Christian Rooi draws water from 'ancient well' at fountain, Gibeon.  
**Source:** SMA, author.



Monument at the fountain in Gibeon.

Source: SMA, author.



Mosaic of participants at the fountain. Children are given a ceremonial taste of the water from the fountain, Gibeon, 2008.

Source: SMA, author.





Commemoration banner, 83rd Gaogu Gei-Tses memorial event, Gibeon.  
**Source:** The Namibian.



Centennial Anniversary, /Gamab !Nanseb, Hendrik Witbooi, 1905-2005, All Namibians are herewith invited to this landmark event from 28 to 30 October 2005 at Gibeon, Hardap region.  
**Source:** Reinhart Kössler.



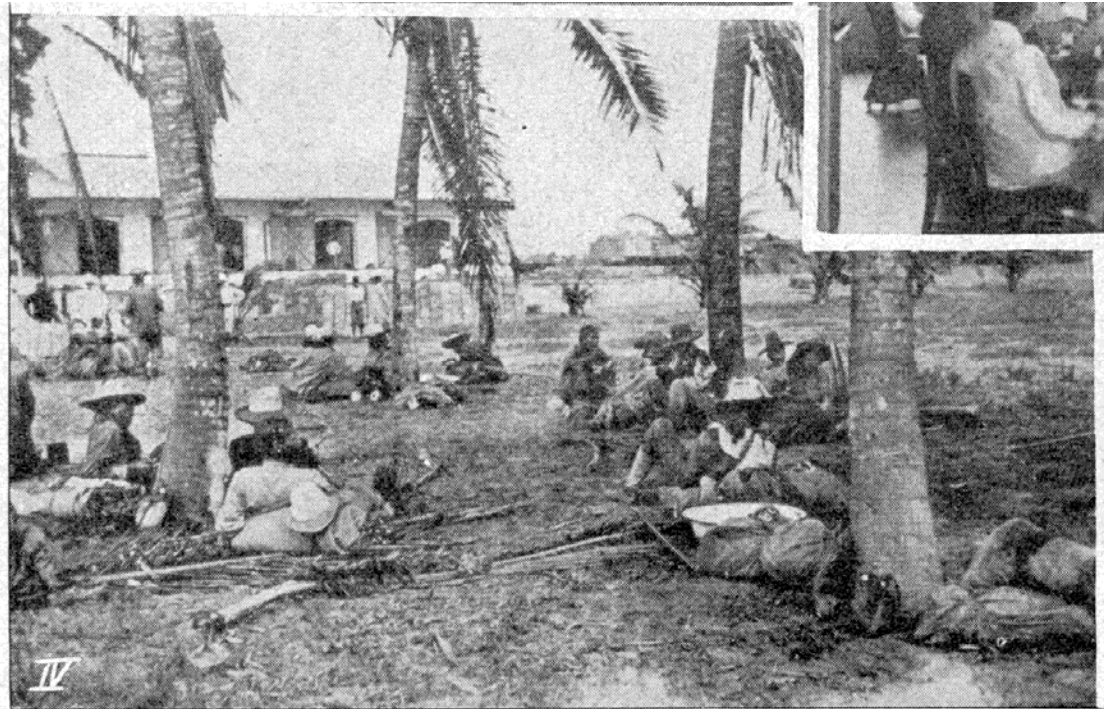
Three rifles used for 'gun salutes' are placed at the Auta !Nanseb (Gaob Hendrik Witbooi) flag memorial, Gibeon.

**Source:** Hans Pieters.



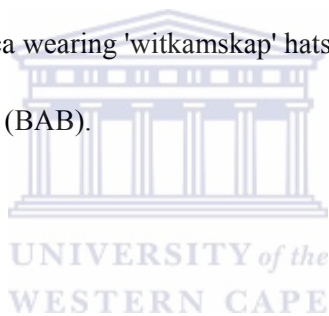
Raising of Flag at the Auta !Nanseb flag monument at Heroes Day Festival, Gibeon.

**Source:** Hans Pieters.



Prisoners of war in Togo, West Africa wearing 'witkamskap' hats, original caption reads 'Gefangne Witboi in Lome'.

**Source:** Basler Afrika Bibliographien (BAB).



Gaob Joel Stephanus of Vaalgras on far left, Gai-/khauan councillor and Councillor Josef Rooi of the !Gami=nun traditional authority. Note the sashes and cloth-banned hats.

**Source:** NAN 26358.





The three gentlemen representing the kai//khauan at the /Khowese Heroes Day Festival, Gibeon 2005.  
**Source:** Hans Pieters.

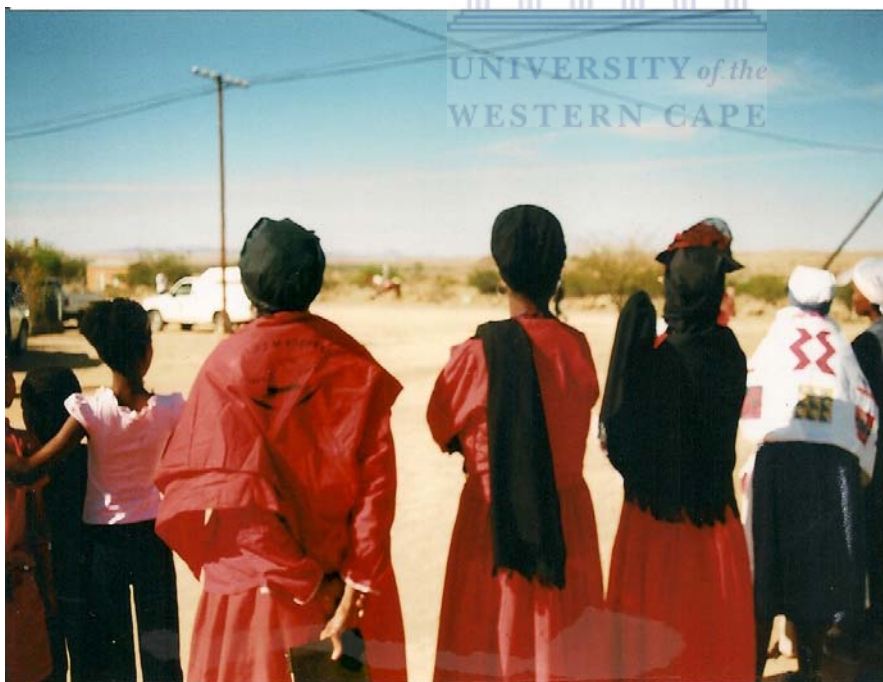


Kai//Khaun Heroes Day, Hoachanas, December 2004.  
**Source:** SMA, author.



Gaob P.S.M. Kooper at the Heroes Day at Hoachanas, December 2004. Note the staff of office carried by a councillor in the background.

**Source:** SMA, author.



Kai//khaun women in red at the memorial day in Warmbad, October 2008. Note the hat printed on the shawl of the woman on the left.

**Source:** SMA, author.





Shark Island commemoration. Note the images of Gaob Cornelius Fredericks worn by the !Aman women printed on the sleeves and hems of their dresses.

**Source:** NAN.



Gaob Dawid Fredericks in his regalia flanked by !Aman women wearing pink dresses and headwraps.

**Source:** NAN.



Participants at the main site, Vaalgras Fees, May 2007.

**Source:** SMA, author.



Participants of the memorial day event and unveiling of the Jakob Marenga sepulchre in Warmbad, October 2008.

**Source:** SMA, author.





Woman wearing ochre on her face at the official site of the war re-enactment.  
**Source:** Hans Pieters.



!Noman, cultural organisation standing and seated at the German monument of Hornkranz at Windhoek's Zoo Park.  
**Source:** Tamen /Ui≠useb.



March to the battlefield, starting at Cornelius //Oaseb Secondary School, Gibeon, 29 October 2005.  
**Source:** Hans Pieters.



Witbooi-Hottentotten auf dem Marsche im Feldzuge 1896  
 (auf deutscher Seite).

/Khowese soldiers on horseback during German colonisation 1896, Gross Generalstab.  
**Source:** NAN.





Re-enactment of war, Gibeon 1987.

**Source:** Eric Miller, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archive.



Wounded soldiers carried on horse back during re-enactment of battle scenes., Gibeon 1987.

**Source:** Eric Miller, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archive.



Staged burial of Gaob Hendrick Witbooi at Heroes Day Festival, Gibeon, 2010.  
**Source:** author.



Dancing horses cover the grave of Gaob Hendrick Witbooi in a performance in front of the graveyard, Gibeon, 2010.  
**Source:** SMA, author.





Performance of women, children and horseriders at centennial Heroes Day, Gibeon, 2005.  
**Source:** Hans Pieters.



Woman falls as women, children and horseriders flee during the war, centennial Heroes Day, Gibeon 2005.  
**Source:** Hans Pieters.





Re-enactment of war strategies between the !Khara-khoen (yellow rimmed hat) and /Khowese (white rimmed hats) Commandants and soldiers at centennial Heroes Day, Gibeon, 2005.

**Source:** Hans Pieters.

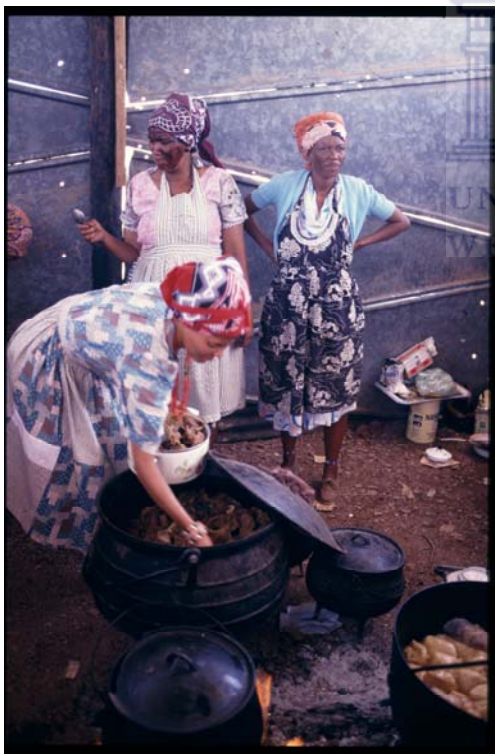


Participants watching re-enactment of battle scenes and horse routines.

**Source:** Hans Pieters.



Goats for slaughter, AME Church in the background, Gibeon, Heroes Day Festival, 1987.  
**Source:** Eric Miller, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archive.



Kitchen at Heroes Day Festival.  
**Source:** Eric Miller, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archive.



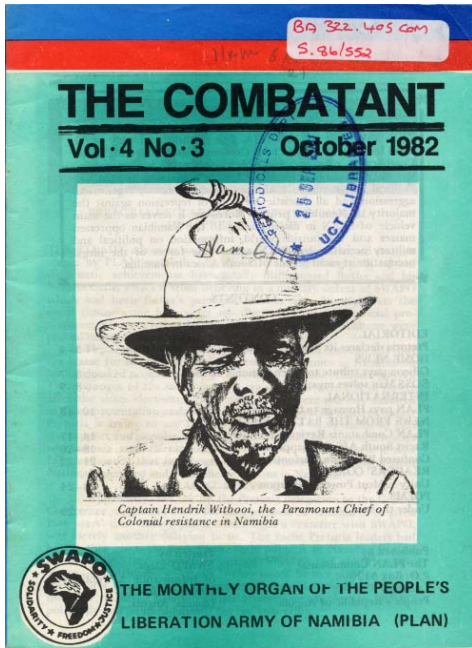


Image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, The Combatant.  
**Source:** African Studies Library, University of Cape Town.

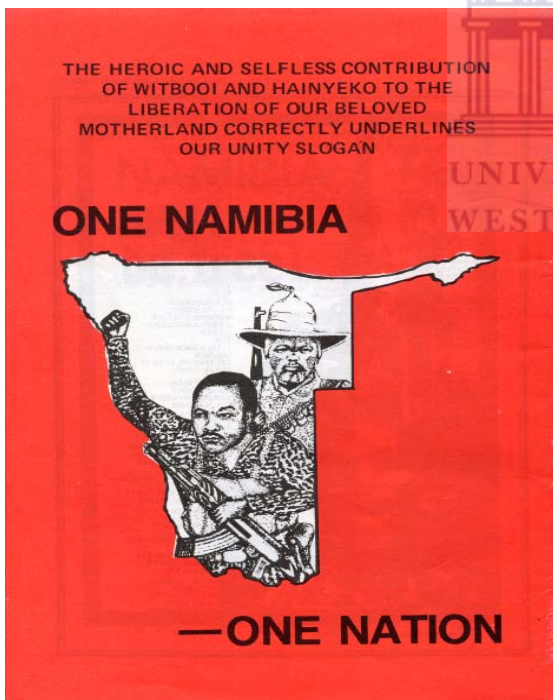


Illustration of Tobias Hainyeko and Gaob Hendrik Witbooi on back page of The Combatant, African Studies Library.  
**Source:** African Studies Library, University of Cape Town.



Mannetje badge held high in Witbooi's hand, SWAPO symbol at the national elections.

**Source:** The Namibian.



*Hendrik Witbooi, Enkel des berühmten Widerstandskämpfers gegen die deutsche Kolonialmacht Hendrik Witbooi, bei den Feierlichkeiten in Gibeon. Hendrik Witbooi ist Vizepräsident der SWAPO und lebt in Gibeon. Er ist Pastor und Leiter einer unabhängigen kirchlichen Schule. Seine politische Arbeit, die in der Tradition des namibischen Unabhängigkeitskampfes und für den ungebrochenen Widerstandswillen gegen Fremdherrschaft und Unterdrückung steht, wird von der südafrikanischen Besatzungsmacht scharf kontrolliert und immer wieder zu behindern versucht.*

SWAPO poster with an enlarged image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, traditional leader of the /Khomase during the war against Germany held by women activists in Gibeon with their clenched fists in the air. Note that Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, with microphone wears an identical hat to the leader in the poster.

**Source:** Helgard Patemann, 'Lernbuch Namibia: Ein Lese - und Arbeitsbuch. Deutsche Kolonie 1884-1915'.



Ms Paulina /Garises and her son Bona /Gariseb, Gibeon graveyard.  
**Source:** Eric Miller, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archive.



Vote SWAPO, 'Swapo is the people', slogan, Gaogu Gei-Tses, Gibeon.  
**Source:** NAN 15846.

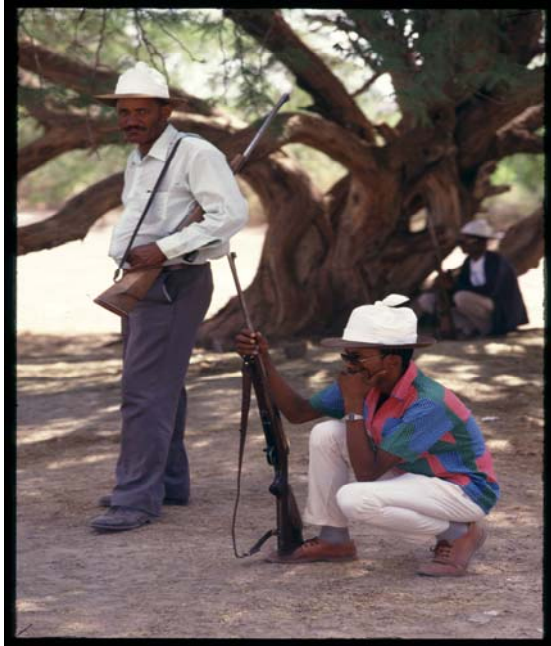




Grave of Kaptein Isak Witbooi and symbolic grave of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi.  
**Source:** NAN.



Gaob Hendrik Witbooi standing on grave mound of Kaptein Isak Witbooi and symbolic grave stone of Gaob !Nanseb Hendrik Witbooi, Grave ceremony, Gibeon.  
**Source:** The Namibian.



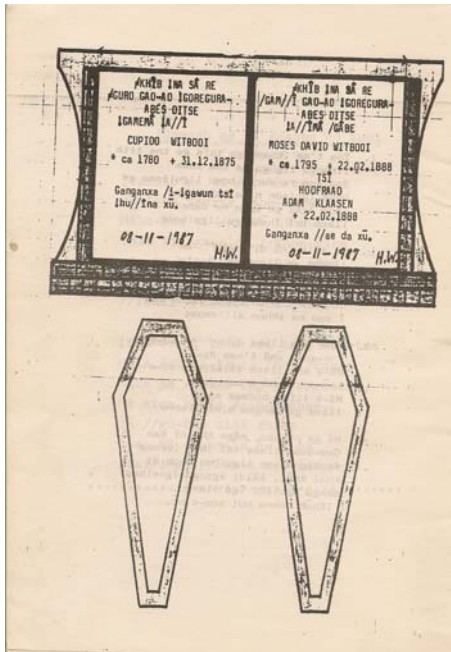
Three men holding rifles under the shade of a tree. These men will shoot for gun salute at the graveyard, Gibeon, memorial day.

**Source:** Eric Miller, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archive.



Grave stone that reads 'In Gedagtenis van Witbooi-gesneuweldes in Duitse aanval of 12 April 1893 te Hoornkranz', Gibeon.

**Source:** Reinhart Kössler.



Heroes Day Festival Programme, November 1987.

Source: SMA.



Ancestral graves of Gaob, Gibeon.

Source: Reinhart Kössler.





Repatriation of Gaob Goliath from Hoachanas to Berseba.  
**Source:** NAN h0080.



Unveiling of the grave stone with traditional leaders names at the grave of Gaob Mannasse !Noreseb,  
99th Commemoration of the Kai//Khaun at Hoachanas.  
**Source:** SMA, author.



Stone painted white where Gaob Jan Abraham Christian was shot and mat-house where he was dragged out of, Commemoration at Warmbad, 2008.

**Source:** SMA, author.



Grave of Gaob Jan Abraham Christiaan at Warmbad.

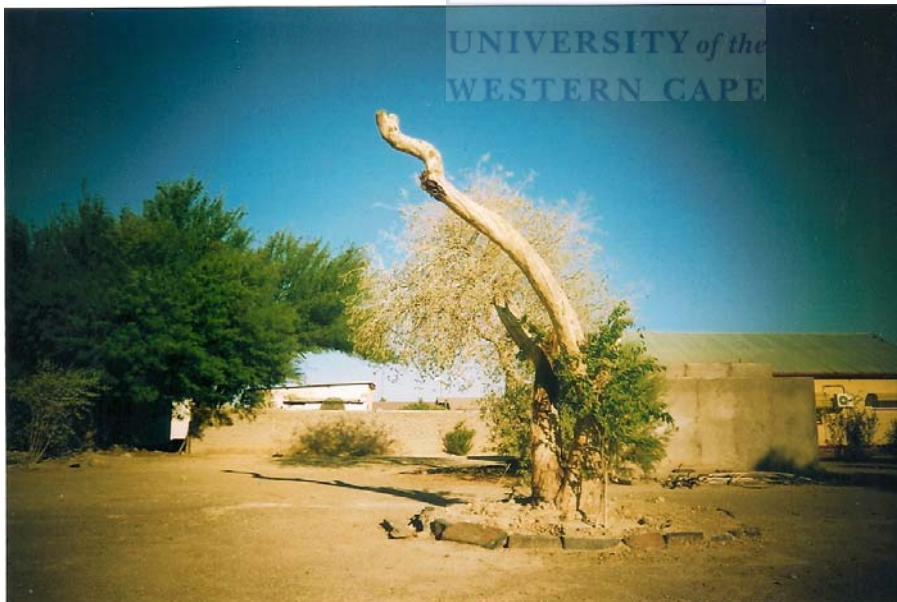
**Source:** NAN.





Sepulchral stone of Jakob Marenga in front of Commonwealth grave.

**Source:** SMA, author.



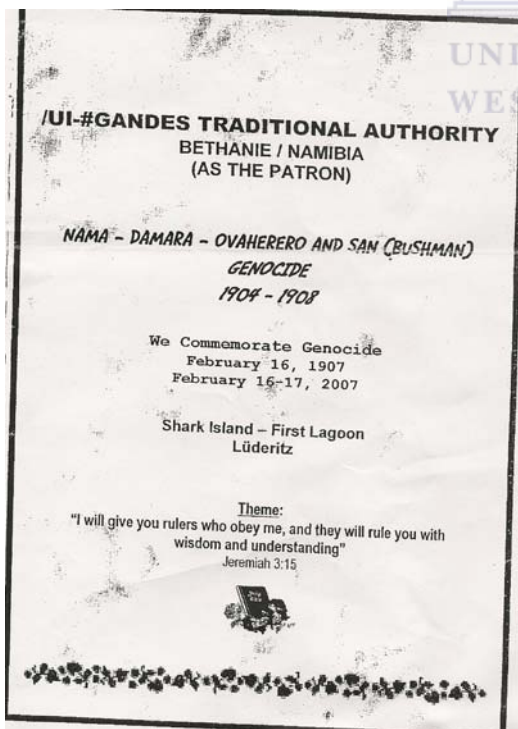
Tree where people were hanged in the Bethanie district which is now placed in the yard of the Josef Fredericks house which is a national monument.

**Source:** SMA, author.



Memorial stone of !Ama community on Shark Island.

Source: Wilkinsonsworld.com, 2010.



Shark Island Commemoration Programme, February 2007.

Source: SMA.







Mass grave of prisoner of war at First Lagoon on the outskirts of Luderitz with horseriders in the background, Shark Island commemoration, February 2007.

**Source:** NAN.

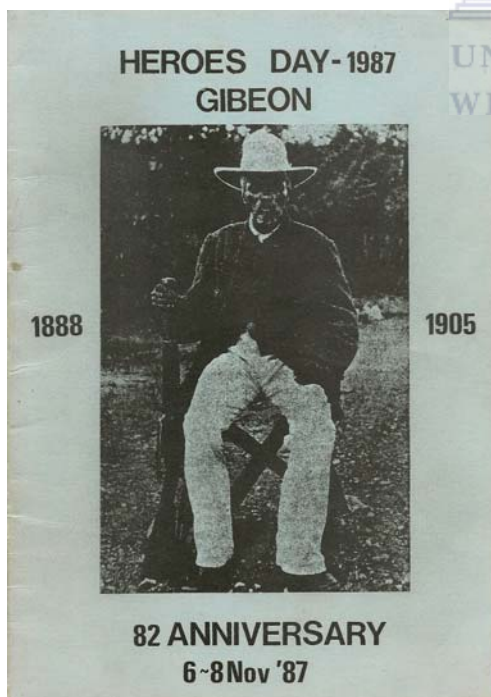


!Ama youth re-enact the treatment of prisoners of war on Shark Island, February 2007.

**Source:**NAN.

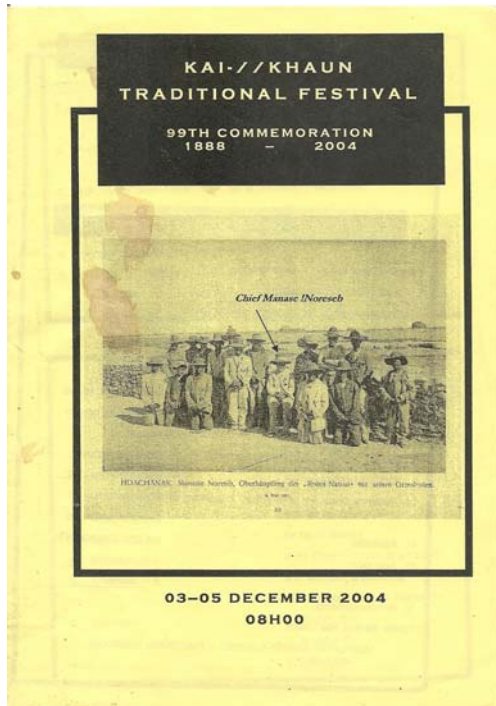


!Ama women and men dancing at the commemoration on Shark Island, February 2007.  
Source: NAN.



/Khowese Heroes Day Programme, November 1987.  
Source: SMA.





Kai//khaun Festival Programme, December 2004.  
**Source:** SMA.



## After-Images II

### Images of Return and Repossession



Independence Memorial Museum, Alte Feste and Equestrian monument in Windhoek, Namibia.

**Source:** SMA, author, September 2010.



Grave of human remains buried at the National Heroes Day in Lüderitz, Namibia.

**Source:** Godwin Kornes, August 2010.



Charité Medical University main entrance, Berlin, Germany.

**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.



Two heads ready for transport back to Namibia at the official handing-over ceremony at Charite Hospital. Identified by Charité as A.787 Nama (left) and A.834 Herero (right). These were the heads that were displayed in glass cases during the ceremonies held in Berlin and Windhoek.

**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.



The Nama delegates sing and pray at the memorial service in St. Matthew Church, Berlin, Germany.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 29 September 2011.



The congregation walks around the bodies in St Matthew's church in Berlin. Some touch and salute the deceased. Bishop Kameeta (in white) and Minister Wieczorek- Zeul (far left) look on.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 29 September 2011.





Nama traditional leaders read over speeches and converse outside their hotel before the official handing-over ceremony at Charite Hospital.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.



Delegates on the steps of Charité Hospital after disembarking from the bus (in the background). Both the Red and Green Flags were represented in the attire of the women and men. Chief Kuaima Riruako stands in the centre flanked by Queen Aletta Karikondua Nguvauva of the Ovambanderu on the left.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.



Delegation at Charité minutes before the rituals were performed on the steps of Charite Hospital.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.



Ms. Peterson, Hon. Ida Hoffmann, Chairperson the Nama Genocide Technical Committee and Ms. Theresia Stephanus, the three women representing southern Namibia.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.





Delegates marching in front of Charité Hospital, flanked by a woman marching on the side.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.



The army (Komando No.4) flag for Windhoek was raised in front of the building of Charite Hospital.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.



Minister Kazenambo addressing the ritual facilitators, Mr. Alex Kaputu, Bishop Ngeke Katjangua and Chief Tjipene Kea.

**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.



Ms. Theresia Stephanus reads the praise poem/statement of the Nama, while Gaob P.S.M. Kooper (wearing the red Gaob's hat) assists with the translation.

**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.





Mr. Max Einhäupl, CEO of *Charité Universitätsmedizin* and Ms. Esther Moombolah-/Goagoses of the National Heritage Council hold up the signed repatriation Agreement.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.



Delegates supervising the packing up of the bodies with the flag bearers. Note the grey boxes covered with Namibian flags and two heads in glass cases.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.



Mr. Kwesi Aikins holds up the 'Reparations now' placard at the official ceremony at Charité Hospital.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.



Members of Ovaherero and Nama communities march on Independence Avenue in Windhoek (previous Kaiser street) to protest the treatment of the delegation by the German government in Berlin during the repatriation process.  
**Source:** The Namibian Sun.



Protesters demanded an official handing over of bodies by the German government in front of the German Embassy in Windhoek.

**Source:**The Namibian Sun.



Dr. Reinhart Kössler delivering the opening address at the Panel Discussion organised by civil society organisations on the left is a photograph of Shark Island prisoner of war camp and on the right a poster with descriptions of the execution of King Kahimemua by German soldiers at the House of Cultures in Berlin.

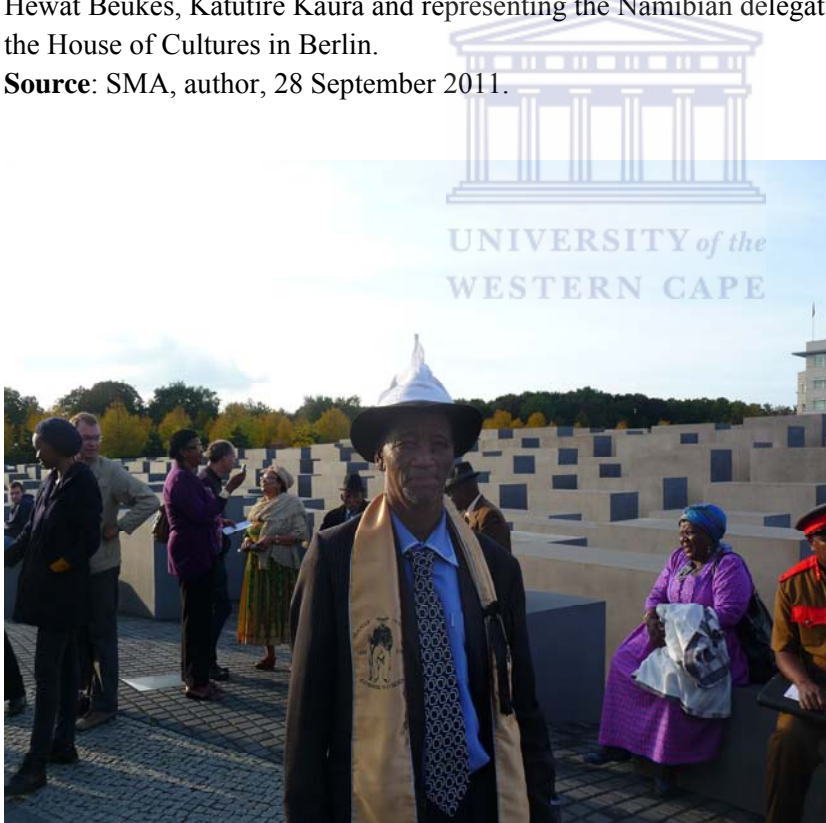
**Source:** SMA, author, 28 September 2011.





Hewat Beukes, Katutire Kaura and representing the Namibian delegation at the Panel Discussion at the House of Cultures in Berlin.

**Source:** SMA, author, 28 September 2011.



!Gaga-ma Gaob Christian Rooi and delegates at the Holocaust Memorial, Berlin.

**Source:** Reinhart Kössler, 27 September 2011.





Queen Aletta Karikondua Nguvauva of the Ovambanderu and OCD delegate at the Holocaust Memorial wearing a green badge with an image of skulls.  
**Source:** Reinhart Kössler, 27 September 2011.



Hon. Ida Hoffmann sitting next to the plaque for Namibian victims of the genocide on the left, The Africa stone ('Hererostein') is positioned behind.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 28 September 2011.



Gaob P.S.M. Kooper, Hon. Ida Hoffmann, Ms. Johanna Kahatjipara, Dr. Reinhart Kössler and Ms. Barbara Kahatjipara at *Topographie des Torres* outdoor museum in Berlin.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 28 September 2011.



Delegation touring African monuments in Berlin.  
**Source:** SMA, author, 1 October 2011.





Kwesi Aikins describes the genealogy of Mohrenstrasse to the delegation during the anti-colonial tour of Berlin.

**Source:** SMA, author, 1 October 2011.



Ms. Judith Strohm of AfricAvenir placing the flower wreath for victims of the German genocide at the Africa Stone and Namibian plaque in Berlin.

**Source:** SMA, author, 1 October 2011.



Ms. Geraldine Ndjoze holding up a photo of her sister in law at the Africa Stone with Gaob Dawid Fredericks on the right in Berlin.

**Source:** SMA, author, 1 October 2011.



Namibian delegates supervise officials from Charité Human Remains Project who pack heads for repatriation to Namibia.

**Source:** SMA, author, 30 September 2011.





Namibians receive bodies at Hosea Kutako International Airport in Windhoek, Namibia.  
**Source:** Schalk van Zuydam, AP (The Associated Press) Archive, [http://www.methinksmedia.net/2011\\_10\\_04\\_archive.html](http://www.methinksmedia.net/2011_10_04_archive.html).



Viewing of bodies at Parliament Gardens in Windhoek, Namibia.  
**Source:** Schalk van Zuydam, AP Archive, [http://www.methinksmedia.net/2011\\_10\\_04\\_archive.html](http://www.methinksmedia.net/2011_10_04_archive.html).

## Bibliography

### 1. NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF NAMIBIA

#### A. Interviews:

A. 577

Ouma Getruida Stephanus (nee Biwa), Gibeon, 14 May 1992, Jean Lombard.

Archives of Anti-Colonial Resistance and the Liberation Struggle Project (AACRLS). 065

Magdalena Kooper, Hoachanas, September 2003, Markus Kooper.

Frans and Martha !Nakhom, Hoachanas, September 2003.

Rev. Sameul and Johanna /Howeseb, Hoachanas, September 2003.

Abraham Jager, Hoachanas, September 2003.

Timotheus Dausab, Hoachanas, September 2003.

Magdalena Kooper, Hoachanas, September 2003.

AACRLS. 196

Alwina and Hans Petersen, Gibeon, 2007, Memory Biwa and Casper Erichsen.

Jerermias Rooi, Gibeon, June 2007.

Maria ≠Aikus, Gibeon, June 2007.

Klaas Swartbooi, Bethanie, June 2007.

David Eben Muzorongondo, Bethanie, June 2007.

Fredericks, Bethanie, June 2007.

Willem Boois, !Kosis, June 2007.

Martha and Monica Basson, Warmbad, June 2007.

Timotheus Morris, Warmbad, June 2007.

#### B. Documents:

Records of the Colonial Office, Imperial Government of German South West Africa, ZBU 461, D.IV.M.2, Vol. 2, 3, Aufstand in Suden Feldzug.

### 2. NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF SOUTH AFRICA

Native Affairs (NA) 647, Letter to the Secretary to the Law Department, Cape Town from Percy Wright, Resident Magistrate of Upington, 18 October 1904. Letter to Resident Magistrate of Upington from Jacob Marenga, 1 October 1904.

Government House (GH) 35/147, Letter to the Resident Magistrate, Port Nolloth from Cornelius Fredericks, 19 July 1905; Government House 35/138, Telegram to the



Commissioner Commanding the Cape Mounted Patrol from Sub-Inspector Geary, Springbokfontein, 25 October 1905.

Prime Minister's Office (PMO) 214, Letter to the Resident Commissioner, Mafikeng, from the Assistant Resident Magistrate, Rietfontein, 10 February 1908.

### **3. UWC MAYIBUYE ROBBEN ISLAND ARCHIVES**

#### **A. Photographs:**

Eric Miller, Gaogu Gei-Tses (Gibeon Heroes Day), 1987.

### **4. SORE MAYA ARCHIVE**

#### **A. Interviews and Communications:**

Rev. Kaptein Hendrik Witbooi, Windhoek, August 2004.  
Onder-Kaptein Christian Rooi, Gibeon, 26 June 2004 and 27 July 2005.  
Rev. Willem Konjore, Windhoek, August 2004.  
Mr. Hans ≠Eichab, Windhoek, August 2004.  
Mr. Tamen /Ui≠Useb, Gibeon, October 2005.  
Frans Jano, Matjieskloof, 21 August 2009.  
Albert Bock, Steinkopf, 19 August 2009.  
Abraham Balie, Steinkopf, 19 August 2009.  
Anna Elizabeth Cloete, Steinkopf, 19 August 2009.  
Maria Vries, Steinkopf, 19 August 2009.  
Paul Swartbooi, Steinkopf, 20 August 2009.  
Zacharias Christiaans, !Khubus, Richtersveld, 22 August 2009.  
Maria Johanna Farmer, Kuboes, Richtersveld, 22 August 2009.  
Magriet April, Sarah April and Sophie Basson, Pella, 28 July 2010.  
Lukas Witbooi, Pella, 28 July 2010.  
Paul Waterboer, Pella, 28 July 2010.  
Petrus Gertjies, Pella, 28 July 2010.  
Rev. Isak Fredericks, Windhoek, 2010.  
Ms. P.R.T. Biwa, Cape Town, August 2011.  
Herr Horst Kleinschmidt, Cape Town, August 2011.  
Mr Alex Kaputu, via electronic mail, October 2011.  
Holger Stoecker, Historian, Charite Human Remains Project, Berlin, Germany, 3 October 2011.  
Rev. Willem Mannetjie Simon Hanse, Cape Town, 27 February 2012.

Interviews conducted by Dr. Annette Hoffmann with Rev. Hendrik Witbooi, Mr Salamon Isaacks and Councilor Moses Jacobs.

## **B. Photographs:**

'Gaogu Gei-Tses', 2005.  
'Gaogu Gei-Tses', 2008.  
'Unveiling of the Sepulchral Stone of Commandant Jakob Marenga Memorial Event', Warmbad, October 2008.  
Gaob Hendrik Witbooi's Funeral, October 2009.  
Northern Cape Oral Interviews, Steinkopf, Matjeskloof, Springbok, Richtersveld, August, 2009.  
'Gaogu Gei-Tses', 2010.  
Khoesan March, Heritage Month, Cape Town, September 2010.  
Northern Cape Oral Interviews, August 2009, July 2010.  
'Repossession of human bodies', Berlin, September-October, 2011.  
'Shark Island Commemoration', February, 2007.  
'!Noman Cultural Group', 2009, 2010.  
'Gaogu Gei-Tses', 2005, Hans Pieters.  
'Gaogu Gei-Tses', 2008, Cristiana Flamingo.  
'NID/NAS Oral Histories Project', 2007, Casper Erichsen.  
Shark Island, Lüderitz, March 2012, Reinhart Kössler.

## **C. Festival Programmes, Exhibition pamphlets, brochures, artifacts:**

'Heroes Day Festival Programme', 82nd Anniversary, Gibeon, 6-8 November 1987.  
'Heroes Day Festival Programme', 83rd Anniversary, Gibeon, 29-30 October 1988.  
'Heroes Day Festival Programme', 86th Anniversary, Gibeon, 1-3 November 1991.  
'Heroes Day Festival Programme', 90th Anniversary, Gibeon, 3-5 November 1995.  
'/Khowesen Heroes Day Programme', 99th Anniversary, Goamus, 5-7 November 2004.  
'Kai//Khaun Traditional Festival Programme', 99th Commemoration, Hoachanas, 3-5 December 2004.  
'Centennial Heroes Day Celebrations Programme', 100th Anniversary, Gibeon, 24-30 October 2005.  
'We Commemorate Genocide Programme', Shark Island – First Lagoon, Lüderitz, 16-17 February 2007.  
'/Khowese Heroes Day Festival Programme', 103rd Anniversary, Gibeon, 31 October - 2 November 2008.  
'Heroes Day Celebrations Programme', 105th Anniversary, Gibeon, 29th -31st October 2010.  
'/Gamab !Nanseb: the Life and Times of Hendrik Witbooi and His People' by Gibeon Museum Initiative, Museums Association of Namibia, Archives of Anti-Colonial

Resistance and the Liberation Struggle Project (AACRLS), 29 October 2005

Nambia-Germany: Memories of a Violent Past (Namibia - Deutschland: Eine Geteilte Geschichte), Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, 25 November 2004 - 13 März 2005

Remember Namibia! Mission, Colonialism and the Struggle for Liberation (Erinnert Namibia! Mission, Kolonialismus und Freiheitskampf) - a travelling exhibition, The United Evangelical Mission and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia, Archive and Museum Foundation, Wuppertal, 2004

'Black Box, Chambre Noire' by William Kentridge, Deutsche Bank, Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin, 29 October 2005 - 15 January 2006.

'Stagings made in Namibia: Postkoloniale Fotografie', Curated by Evelyn Annus, National Art Gallery of Namibia, Windhoek, 25 August 2009.

Photograph Exhibition at 'Gaogu Gei Tses', by Tamen /Ui-≠Nuseb and Memory Biwa, Gibeon, October 2010.

'The Callings', by Oddveig Sarmiento, Tasniem Fentzel and Memory Biwa in collaboration with Jethro Louw, Lucille Campbell, Tracey Rose, Bradley van Sitters, Ferdinand, Ala Hourani, Monwabisi Xhakwe, Dani Swai, Mawande Zenzile and Toni Stuart, The Exuberance Project, Gordon Institute for the Performance and Creative Arts, Centre for African Studies and Michaelis Galleries, Cape Town, 11-13 May 2012.

'Ceremonial Handing over', Programme, Charité Medical University, Grosser Hörsaal Bettenhochhaus, Berlin, 30 September 2011.

Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Charité Human Remains Project, 'Documentation recording the results of examination carried out on the twenty skulls from Namibia (nine Herero, eleven Nama) to determine their provenance', October 2011.

Embassy of the Republic of Namibia, Draft program, 'Visit to Berlin of the Namibian delegation to receive 20 skulls of Namibian origin of the victims of German colonial rule over Namibia and its peoples', 26 September to 3 October 2011, Familiarisation visit to Charité, Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2011.

'In gedenken an die zeugen des Deutschen genozids in Namibia', Jessika Bazouzi singt, "Lift Every Voice", Afrotak TV Cybernomads, Berlin, 28 September 2011.

'Memorial Service Programme', 'For the memorial service on the occasion of the repatriation of human skulls', St Matthew Church, Berlin, 29 September 2011.

'Namibian Skulls Finding Their Way Home', pamphlet, Ovaherero/Ovambanderu Council for Dialogue on the 1904 Genocide, 25 September 2011 - 4 October 2011.

'Presseinladung, Witnesses of the German Genocide, Event to recognise the restitution of human remains from the Charité back to Namibia, Panel discussion with representatives of the Herero and Nama, the German government and the parliamentary opposition'. The Panel

discussion was hosted by various civil society organisations such as AfricAvenir International, Afrotak TV cyberNomads, Berliner Entwicklungspolitischer Ratschlag (BER), Berlin Postkolonial, Deutsch-Afrikanische Gesellschaft (DAFRIG) Berlin, Global Afrikan Congress (GAC), Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland (ISD-Bund), Solidaritätsdienst International (SODI).

'Return of Herero and Nama Skulls: Their Blood Waters our Freedom', Name Tag, 25 September - 4 October 2011.

'Repatriation of the mortal remains of victims of German colonial crimes in Namibia', Answer of the Federal Government in the minor interpellation tabled by the Members of the German Bundestag and the Left Party parliamentary group, answers given by Cornelia Pieper, Minister of state in the German Foreign Ministry on 17 August 2011.

Shawl with image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi printed on the back, 2005

2 Patchwork Shawls, 2008

Head scarf with image of Gaob Hendrik Witbooi, 2009.

## **5. DISSERTATIONS, THESES AND CONFERENCE PAPERS:**

Andrew Bank, 'A Great Protégé of Dr. Haddon': Winifred Tucker, Alfred Haddon and the Beginnings of Professional Fieldwork in South African Anthropology, Seminar paper, History Department, University of the Western Cape, 2008.

Memory Biwa, 'Toa Tama !Gams Ge': Remembering the War in Namakhoeland, 1903-1908, Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Cape Town, 2006.

Memory Biwa, 'Narratives, Rituals and Sacred Sites of the Nama-German War in Southern Namibia'. The paper forms part of the work carried out within the Project 'Reconciliation and Social Conflict in the Aftermath of large-scale violence in Southern Africa: the cases of Angola and Namibia', presented at meeting for Volkswagen Foundation grantees, 'Knowledge for Tomorrow: Cooperative Research Projects in Sub-Saharan Africa, Bamako, Mali, 25-27 November 2007.

Memory Biwa, 'Paths of Healing: Commemoration on Shark Island 2007'. The paper forms part of the work carried out within the Project, 'Reconciliation and Social Conflict in the Aftermath of large-scale violence in Southern Africa: the cases of Angola and Namibia', 'Frontiers and Passages' on panel: Memory Practices in the Aftermath of Mass Violence, War and Genocide, hosted by the Arnold Bergstraesser Institute, Freiburg, Germany (African Studies Association in Germany) and Centre for African Studies, Basel, Switzerland (Swiss Society for African Studies), 14- 17 May 2008.

Memory Biwa, 'Stories of the Patchwork quilt: an Oral Histories Project of the Nama-German war in southern Namibia'. The paper forms part of the work carried out within the Project, 'Reconciliation and Social Conflict in the Aftermath of large-scale violence in

Southern Africa: the cases of Angola and Namibia', Grantees Symposium, 'Knowledge for Tomorrow - Cooperative Research Projects in Sub-Saharan Africa', of the Volkswagen Stiftung, Institut für Afrikastudien, Universität Bayreuth, Bayreuth, Germany, 17-20 February 2010.

Memory Biwa, 'Sara Baartman, Human Exhibitions, Collections and Genocide: Collective memory and the politics of repatriation'. The paper was presented at an International Symposium, 'The Plunder and the Return of Artifacts and Human Remains: After Colonialism', Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Tokyo, Japan, 12 December 2010.

Memory Biwa, "If the skulls are buried, our history will be buried": The first return of human bodies from Germany to Namibia'. 'Thinking Africa and the African Diaspora Differently: Theories, Practices, Imaginaries', Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, 13-15 December 2011.

Memory Biwa and Oddveig Sarmiento, 'The Callings: a detour of silenced history in key sites in the city centre including video installations and performances', 'The Exuberance Project', GIPCA, Centre for African Studies, UCT, Michaelis Galleries, Cape Town, 12 May 2012.

Memory Biwa, "If the skulls are buried, our history will be buried": Repossession of human bodies from Berlin to Windhoek'. The paper was presented forms part of the work carried out within the Project, 'Reconciliation and Social Conflict in the Aftermath of large-scale violence in Southern Africa: the cases of Angola and Namibia', Final Conference, Windhoek, 14-19 October 2012.

Sarafina Biwa, 'The History of the Vaalgras People of Namibia, Conference paper at 'Public History: Forgotten History', University of Namibia, Windhoek, 22-25 August 2000.

Christian Bochert, 'The Witboois and the Germans in South West Africa: A study of their interaction between 1863 and 1905', MA, University of Natal, Durban, 1980.

Anthony Bogues and Geri Augusto, 'Africana Thought and Africana Intellectual history: Notes for a Discussion', Paper presented at the Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, 8 December 2004.

Henry C. Jatti Bredekamp, 'Defining Khoisan Identities in Contemporary South Africa: A Question of Self-Identity?', Department of History and Institute for Historical Research of the University of the Western Cape, South African and Contemporary History Seminar, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, 9 May 2000.

Jacques Depelchin, 'History of Africa/Humanity at a Crossroad: Between Reconciliation and Healing', Paper presented at the University of the Western Cape, CHR Visiting Fellow, July-August 2009.

Pastor Izak Fredericks, 'Overview of "Repatriation of Human Remains", Moments, Monuments and Memories: Tracing the footprints to Independence, Auditorium of Government Office Park, Archives of Anti-colonial Resistance and the Liberation Struggle (AACRLS), Project, Windhoek, Namibia, 7-9 December 2009.

Heidi Grunebaum, 'Spectres of the Untold: Memory and History in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission', PhD thesis, University of the Western Cape, December 2006.

Daniel Hartman et al, 'Words Unwritten: A History of Maltahöhe', Appendix E, Interview with Sabina Garises, 28 March 2010, Maltahöhe, BSc, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 64, 96-7.

Rev. Willem Simon Hanse, 'A Tribute to Captain Rev. Dr. Hendrik Witbooi: A Marriage of Faith and Politics', 'Heroes Day Festival Programme', 103<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary, Gibeon, 31 October - 2 November 2008, 29-37.

Peter Katjavivi, 'The Rise of Nationalism in Namibia and its International Dimensions', PhD thesis, University of Oxford, 1986.

Reinhart Kössler, 'Reparation, Restitution and Decency: Postcolonial Practice a Century on – Namibia and Germany', North-Eastern Workshop on Southern Africa, Burlington, Vermont, 9-11 April 2010.

Reinhart Kössler, 'The returning of skulls and the redress of past wrongs – some indispensable context', Opening statement at panel discussion, „Zeugen des deutschen Völkermords“. Veranstaltung aus Anlass der Rückführung menschlicher Gebeine aus der Charité nach Namibia“. Berlin, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 28 September 2011.

Martin Legassick, 'The Peopling of Riemvasmaak and the Marengo Rebellion', Institute for Historical Research, South African and Contemporary History Seminar, University of the Western Cape, 25 August 1998.

Brian T. Mokopakgosi, 'Imperialism and War: Examining the First Phase of German Rule in Namibia 1884-1894', *Modern European Seminar*, 21 April 1983.

The Nama and Ovaherero Traditional Leaders, 'Joint position paper from the Nama and the Ovaherero people on the issue of genocide and reparation', 14 December 2007.  
<http://www.africavenir.org/project-cooperations/restitution-namibian-skulls.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Ciraj Rassool, 'The Individual, Autobiography and History in South Africa', PhD thesis, University of the Western Cape, May 2004.

Helgine Gertrud Ritter-Petersen, 'The Herrenvolk Mentality in German South West Africa, 1884-1914', PhD Thesis, University of South Africa, November 1991.

Hendrik Witbooi, 'A Narrative Overview of the Chieftancy of Hon. Rev. Dr. Hendrik Witbooi, Captain of the /Khowese People: 1978-2008', Heroes Day Festival Programme, 103<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary, Gibeon, 31 October - 2 November 2008, 14-23.

## **6. NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, JOURNALS AND INTERNET SOURCES:**

Ursula Biermann, 'Relikte der Vorfahren: Berliner Charité gibt Herero-Schädel zurück'  
<http://www.3sat.de/kulturzeit/themen/157261/index.html>, accessed 13 November 2011.



'Book of Condolences' see <http://namibia.menschen-gedenken.de/Main.aspx>, accessed 13 November 2011.

David Crossland, 'Berlin faces street battles over 'racist' road names', *The National*, 16 March 2010. <http://www.thenational.ae/news/worldwide/europe/berlin-faces-street-battles-over-racist-road-names>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Stefan Fischer, 'Skulls Back to Namibia', *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 24 July 2008, [www.az.com.na/lokales/schdel-zurck-nach-namibia.70453.php](http://www.az.com.na/lokales/schdel-zurck-nach-namibia.70453.php), accessed 29 October 2011.

Surihe Gaomas, 'Namibia: Who are the dead', *New Era*, 16 October 2006 <http://allafrica.com/stories/200610160597.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Kirsten Grieshaber, 'German museum returning Namibian skulls', *Associated Press*, 30 September 2011, [www.thestate.com/20011/09/30/1992139/german-museum-to-return-namibian.html](http://www.thestate.com/20011/09/30/1992139/german-museum-to-return-namibian.html), accessed 29 October 2011.

Theo Gurirab, 'The Battle of the Skulls', *Namibian Sun*, 12 May 2011 <http://mobi.sun.com.na/node/8309>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Henning Hintze, 'German minister walks out of skull ceremony'. *The Namibian*, 3 October 2011, [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews[tt_news]), accessed 29 October 2011.

Irene !Hoaës, 'Nama, Ovaherero Chiefs to Meet over Skulls', *New Era*, 30 July 2009 [www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/Restitution/Irene\\_Hoaes\\_Mana\\_Chiefs\\_to\\_Meet\\_over\\_skulls\\_30.06.2009.pdf](http://www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/Restitution/Irene_Hoaes_Mana_Chiefs_to_Meet_over_skulls_30.06.2009.pdf), accessed 29 October 2011.

Kuvee Kanguëhi, 'Genocide claims get huge support in parly', 5 October 2006, *New Era*, <http://www.newera.com.na/article.php?articleid=13388&title=>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Alvine Kapitako, 'Namibia: German hostility triggers demo', *New Era*, 3 October 2011 <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110030806.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi, 'The Significance of the Repatriation of Namibian Human skulls'. <http://www.africavenir.org/news-archive/newsdetails/browse/1/datum/2011/09/23/prof-peter-h-katjavivi-the-significance-of-the-repatriation-of-namibian-human-skulls>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Lorraine Kazondovi, 'Genocide Council and Culture Minister to return skulls', *Namibian Sun*, 18 April 2011, [www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/Restitution\\_Namibia/Lorraine\\_Kazondovi\\_Genocide\\_Council\\_and\\_Culture\\_Minister\\_to\\_return\\_skulls18.04.2011.pdf](http://www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/Restitution_Namibia/Lorraine_Kazondovi_Genocide_Council_and_Culture_Minister_to_return_skulls18.04.2011.pdf), accessed 29 October 2011.

Lorraine Kazondovi, 'Bitter return - without the skulls?', *Namibian Sun*, 30 September 2011 <http://www.namibiansun.com/content/local-news/bitter-return-without-skulls>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Lorraine Kazondovi, 'Govt position on reparations still unclear', *Namibian Sun*, 7 October 2011, <http://mobi.namibiansun.com/content/national-news/govt-position-reparations-still-unclear>, 29 October 2011.

Denver Kisting, 'Government slammed for handling of skulls', *The Namibian*, 13 May 2011, [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=81642&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=81642&no_cache=1).

Petros Kuteeue, 'Germany mulls remedy other than reparations', *The Namibian*, 6 August 2004, [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=5271&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=5271&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011.

Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture, Media Release from Cabinet Chambers, 'Report on the implementation of the Cabinet decision no. 18<sup>th</sup>/30.09.08/003 (Repatriation of the Remains (Skulls) of Namibians who were victims of the German war of extermination', 18 November 2010, [www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/RestitutionNamibia/Ministry\\_Youth\\_Media\\_release\\_from\\_Cabinet\\_Chambers\\_18.11.2010.pdf](http://www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/downloads/RestitutionNamibia/Ministry_Youth_Media_release_from_Cabinet_Chambers_18.11.2010.pdf), accessed 29 October 2011.

The Nama and Ovaherero Traditional Leaders, 'Joint position paper from the Nama and the Ovaherero people on the issue of genocide and reparation', 14 December 2007, <http://www.africavenir.org/project-cooperations/restitution-namibian-skulls.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

'Namibia demands return of 'genocide' skulls', *Mail and Guardian*, 22 July 2008, <http://mg.co.za/article/2008-07-22-namibia-demands-return-of-genocide-skulls>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Magreth Nunuhe, 'Cabinet approves return of skulls', *New Era*, 25 March 2011, [http://www.newera.com.na/article.php?title=Cabinet\\_approves\\_return\\_of\\_skulls&articleid=37977](http://www.newera.com.na/article.php?title=Cabinet_approves_return_of_skulls&articleid=37977), accessed 29 October 2011

Magreth Nunuhe, 'Politics Dragged Into Skulls Trip Row', *New Era*, 16 May 2011, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201105161605.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Magreth Nunuhe, 'Skulls trip to Germany shelved', 16 May 2011, *New Era*, [www.newera.com.na/article.php?title=Skulls\\_trip\\_to\\_Germany\\_shelved&articleid=38734](http://www.newera.com.na/article.php?title=Skulls_trip_to_Germany_shelved&articleid=38734), accessed 29 October 2011.

Jan Poolman, 'Who are the Germans to tell us what to say?', *The Namibian Sun*, 13 May 2011. <http://www.namibiansun.com/node/8347>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Jan Poolman, 'Skulls repatriation mission costly', *Namibian Sun*, 11 November 2011, <http://www.namibiansun.com/content/national-news/skulls-repatriation-mission-costly>, accessed 29 November 2011.

Fifi Rhodes, 'Namibia: Struggle remains to be reburied', *New Era*, 25 August 2010.

Staff reporter, 'Hereros to join Kazenambo on Germany 'skull trip'', *The Namibian*, 18 April 2011.

'We want to be informed': BZ interview with Esther Utjiua Muinjangué, Chairperson of the Herero Genocide Committee, *Badische Zeitung*, 1 November 2011, <http://www.badische-zeitung.de/freiburg/wir-wollen-informiert-sein--32263647.html>, <http://www.wdr5.de/sendungen/politikum/s/d/27.09.2011-19.05/b/die-uneinsichtige-kolonialmacht.html>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Brigitte Weidlich, 'German reconciliation drive finally starts', *The Namibian*, [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=34538&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34538&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011.

Brigitte Weidlich, 'Katjavivi demands Herero skulls from Germany', *The Namibian*, 24 July 2008, [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=46498&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=46498&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011.

Brigitte Weidlich, 'Riruako wants answers on 1904 genocide motion', *The Namibian*, 30 September 2010, [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=73067&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=73067&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011.

Brigitte Weidlich, 'Don't force our hand: Govt', *The Namibian*, 12 September 2007, [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=41505&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=41505&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011.

Brigitte Weidlich, 'German politician accuses Berlin of 'avoiding' Herero demands', *The Namibian*, 1 September 2008, [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=30101&no\\_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=30101&no_cache=1), accessed 29 October 2011.

John Yeld, 'Bones of Contention could heal old hurts', *Cape Argus*, 5 July 2011, *The Namibian*, 'Independence is coming!', 1985-1990, 11.

*The Combatant*: The Monthly Organ of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, Vol. 4, No. 3, October 1982, the Plan Commissariat, Lubango, Angola, Front cover

*The Combatant*: The Monthly Organ of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, Vol. 6, No. 6, January 1985, 9-13; *The Combatant*, Vol. 6, No. 7, February 1985, the Plan Commissariat, Lubango, Angola, 9-12.

*The Combatant*: The Monthly Organ of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, Vol. 6, No. 8, March 1985, the Plan Commissariat, Lubango, Angola, 6-7.

*The Combatant*: The Monthly Organ of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, Vol. 6, No. 9, April 1985, the Plan Commissariat, Lubango, Angola, 13-6.

'African Monuments to the North Korean Renaissance', 18-24 May 2008, *Chimurenga* Vol. 16, *The Chimurenga Chronic*, October 2011, 12-3.

## 7. AUDIO AND AUDIO-VISUAL SOURCES

Esther Utjiua Muinjangu, '100 years of silence. The case of the Ovaherero Genocide', which was hosted by Freiburg Postkolonial and Arnold-Bergstraesser Institut, Evangelische Hochschule Freiburg, 17 June 2010, Freiburg, Germany. <http://www.freiburg-postkolonial.de/mp3/2010-06-16-Esther%20Muinjangu-Herero.mp3>.

Chris Austin and Gill Bond, 'Abdullah Ibrahim: A Brother with Perfect Timing', Indigo Productions for Recorded Releasing, BBC TV and WDR, Africa Film Library, 1987.

Mark Crutcher, 'Maafa 21: Black Genocide in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century America', Life Dynamics, 2009.

Julie Dash, 'Daughters of the Dust', Geechee Girls, USA, 1991.

Rehad Desai, 'Bushmen's Secret', Uhuru Productions in cooperation with ZDF Sabine, Johannesburg, 2006.

Haile Gerima, 'Sankofa', Mypheduh Films, USA, 2003.

Haile Gerima, 'Adwa: An African Victory', Mypheduh Films, Ethiopia, 1999.

Lauryn Flynn and Gavin McFaydin, 'Diamond Empires: History of De Beers Family', Frontline, USA, 1994.

Zola Maseko, 'The Life and Times of Sara Baartman', Dominant 7, Curios Pictures, 1998.

Zola Maseko, 'The Return of Sara Baartman', Black Roots Pictures, First Run/Icarus Films, Brooklyn, New York, 2003.

Kimeshree Munsamy, *Open Mines*, Surplus People Project (SPP), Cape Town, 2010.

Halfdan Muurholm and Casper Erichsen, 'One Hundred Years of Silence', Filmmakers Library, New York, NY, 2006.

David Okuefuna, 'Racism: A History', British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Films, Episode 1-3, London, 2007.

David Olusoga, 'Genocide and the Second Reich', British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Films, London, 2005.

One Africa Television, 'Kazenambo fumes at Namibian Sun', Youtube video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PM4gCx9zfV4>, accessed 16 November 2011.

S. Pearl Sharp, 'The Healing Passage: Voices from the water', A Sharp Show, USA, 2004.

Richard Wicksteed and Stet Snel, 'Death of a Bushmen', Uhuru Productions, One Time Films for SABC, 2004.

Weeam Williams and Nafia Kocks, 'A Khoe Story Part 1: Reclaiming the mother tongue', Shamanic Organic Productions, Cape Town, 2011.

## 8. JOURNAL ARTICLES

Mohamed Adhikari, 'Streams of blood and streams of money': New perspectives on the annihilation of the Herero and Nama peoples of Namibia, 1904-1908', *Kronos*, No. 34, November, 2008.

Neville Alexander, 'Jakob Marengo and Namibian History', *Social Dynamics*, Vol. 7, No. 1, June 1981.

Neville Alexander, 'The Enigma of the Khowesin, 1885-1905', Perspectives on Namibia: Past and Present, Occasional papers, No. 4, (1983), *Centre for African Studies*, University of Cape Town, 1983.

Neville Alexander, 'The Namibian war of anti-colonial resistance, 1904-7', in Brian Wood (ed.), *Namibia 1884-1984: Readings on Namibia's History and Society*, Namibia Support Committee in co-operation with the United Nations Institute for Namibia, 1988.

Tilman Dederling, 'Khoikhoi and missionaries in early nineteenth-century southern Namibia: social change in a frontier zone', *Kleio XXII*, 1990, 24-41.

Dwight Conquergood, 'Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research', *TDR*, Vol. 46, No. 2, 2000, 145-146 .

Tilman Dederling, The Prophet's 'War Against Whites': Shepherd Stuurman/Hendrik Bekeer in Namibia and South Africa, 1904-1907, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 40, No. 14, 1999, 1-19.

Tilman Dederling, 'The German-Herero War of 1904: Revisionism of Genocide or Imaginary Historiography?', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol.19, No. 1, Special Issue: Namibia: Africa's Youngest Nation, March 1993, 80-8.

Tilman Dederling, 'War and Mobility in the Borderlands of South-Western Africa in the Early Twentieth Century', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 2, 2006, 275-94.

Klaus Dierks, 'Eugen Fischer: The link from the German genocide in Namibia to the German holocaust in Europe', in Klaus Dierks, *Handbook of Namibian Biographies*, Data Base, Windhoek, [www.klausdierks.com/Biographies/Biographies\\_F.htm](http://www.klausdierks.com/Biographies/Biographies_F.htm), 2003-2004.

Wulf D. Haacke, 'The Kalahari Expedition March 1908: The Forgotten Story of the Final Battle of the Nama War', *Botswana Notes and Records*, Vol. 24, 1992, 1-18.

Alvin Kienetz, The Key Role of the Orlam Migrations in the Early Europeanization of South-West Africa (Namibia), *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 1977, 553-572.

Werner Hillebrecht, 'Certain Uncertainties' or Venturing Progressively into Colonial Apologetics', *Journal of Namibian Studies*, 1, 2007, 73-95.

Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi, 'The Significance of the Repatriation of Namibian Human skulls'. <http://www.africavenir.org/news-archive/newsdetails/browse/1/datum/2011/09/23/prof-peter-h-katjavivi-the-significance-of-the-repatriation-of-namibian-human-skulls>, accessed 29 October 2011.

Reinhart Kössler, 'The Persistent Theme of the Great Rising: Witbooi Leaders and Rhenish Missionaries', *Namibia Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft*, Journal 47, Windhoek, 19-37.

Reinhart Kössler, 'Traditional Communities and the State in Southern Africa', *Africa Spectrum*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 1998, 19-37.

Reinhart Kössler, 'From Reserve to Homeland: Local Identities and South African Policy in Southern Namibia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3, September 2000, 447-62.

Reinhart Kössler and Henning Melber, 'The Colonial Genocide in Namibia: Consequences for a Memory Culture Today from a German Perspective', *Ufhamu: Journal of African Studies*, Volume xxx, Numbers 2-3, 2004.

Reinhart Kössler, 'Sjambok or Cane: Reading the Blue Book', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 30, No. 3, September 2004, 703-8.

Reinhart Kössler, 'Genocide in Namibia, the Holocaust and issue of colonialism', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 2012, 233-238.

Birthe Kundrus, 'From the Herero to the Holocaust? Some remarks on the current debate', *Afrika Spectrum*, 40:2, 2005, 299-308.

Gesine Krüger, 'Coming to terms with the past', *GHI Bulletin*, No. 37, Fall 2005, 45-9.

Henning Melber, 'How to Come to Terms with the Past: Re-Visiting the German Colonial Genocide in Namibia', *Africa Spectrum*, Vol. 40. No. 1, 2005.

Terence O. Ranger, 'Connexions between 'Primary Resistance' Movements and Modern Mass Nationalism in East and Central Africa- Part 1', *The Journal of African History*, No. 9, Vol. 3, 1968, 437-53.

Steven Robins, 'Transgressing the Borderlands of Tradition and Modernity: Identity, Cultural Hybridity and Land Struggles in Namaqualand, 1980-94', in *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1, January 1997, 23-43.

John Sharp and Emile Boonzaier, 'Ethnic Identity as Performance: Lessons From Namaqualand', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 20, Number 3, September 1994, 405-415.

Rakesh H. Solomon, 'Culture, Imperialism, and Nationalist Resistance: Performance in Colonial India', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 3, October 1994, 323-347.



Christian A. Williams, 'Student Political Consciousness: Lessons from a Namibian Mission School', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 3, September 2004, 539-57.

## 9. PUBLISHED BOOKS, BOOKLETS AND ARTICLES IN BOOKS

Yvette Abrahams, 'My Tongue Softens on the Other Name': Poetry, People and the Plants in Sarah Baartman's Natural World', in Natasha Gordon-Chipembere (ed.), *Representation and Black Womanhood: The Legacy of Sarah Baartman*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011

Mohamed Adhikari: *The Anatomy of a South African Genocid: The extermination of the Cape San peoples*, University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town, 2010.

Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates Jr. (eds.), *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience*, Civitas Books, New York, 1999.

M. Ashby and K. Ashby (ed.) *Egyptian Yoga: The Philosophy of Enlightenment*, Vol. 1, Cruzian Mystic Books, Miami, 1995.

Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992.

Helmut Bley, *South West Africa Under German Rule 1894-1914*, Heinemann Educational Books, London, 1971.

Anthony Bogues, *Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom*, University Press of New England, Lebanon, New Hampshire, 2010.

Patrick Brantlinger, 'Dying Races': rationalizing genocide in the nineteenth century', in Jan Nederveen Pieterse and Bhikhu Parekh (eds), *The Decolonisation of the Imagination: Culture, Knowledge and Power*, Zed Books Ltd. , London and New Jersey, 1995.

Susan J. Brison, 'Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self', in Mieke Bal, Jonathan V. Crewe, Leo Spitzer (eds), *Acts of Memory: cultural recall in the present*, University Press of New England, Hanover , New Hampshire, 1999.

Cathi Carmichael, *Genocide before the Holocaust*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2009.

Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt, Martin West (eds.), *Trails in the Thirstland: The Anthropological Field Diaries of Winifred Hoernle*, Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, 1987.

Peter Carstens (ed.), W. Hoernle, *The Social Organisation of the Nama and Other Essays*, Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1985.

Peter Carstens, *Always Here, Even Tomorrow: The enduring spirit of the South African Nama in the modern world*, Xlibris Corporation, Bloomington Indiana, 2007.

Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, Joan Pinkham (trans.), Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1972.

Partha Chatterjee, 'Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivate Discourse?', Zed Books Ltd., United Nations University, Japan, 1986.

A.E. Cloete et al, *Etimologie Woordeboek van Afrikaans*, Buro van die WAT, Stellenbosch, 2003.

David William Cohen, *The Combing of History*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1994.

David William Cohen, S. F. Miescher and L. White, *African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2001.

Jean Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance: The culture and history of a South African people*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1985.

Jean and John Comaroff (eds.), *Modernity and its Malcontents: ritual and power in postcolonial Africa*, University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Raymond Corbey, 'Ethnographic showcases, 1870-1930, in Jan Nederveen Pieterse and Bhikhu Parekh (eds), *The Decolonisation of the Imagination: Culture, Knowledge and Power*, Zed Books Ltd. , London and New Jersey, 1995.

Ann Curthoys and John Docker, 'Defining Genocide', in Dan Stone (ed.), *The Historiography of Genocide*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008.

Zohra Bibi Dawood, 'Between the Church and the State: No salvation for Matjieskloof: A report on the history of Matjieskloof, a former Roman Catholic mission station in Namaqualand', Surplus People Project, Cape Town, 1992.

A.B. Davidson, 'African Resistance and Rebellion Against the Imposition of Colonial Rule', in T.O. Ranger (ed.), *Emerging Themes of African History: Proceedings of the International Congress of African Historians held at University College, Dar es Salaam, October 1965*, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1968.

Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California, 1995.

Jacques Depelchin, *Silences in African History: Between the Syndromes of Discovery and Abolition*, Mkuki na Nyota Publishers, Dar es Salaam, 2005.

David Deutschmann (eds.), *Changing the history of Africa: Angola and Namibia*, Ocean Press, Melbourne, Australia, 1989.

Klaus Dierks, *//Khauxa!nas: The Great Namibian Settlement*, Longman Namibia/CASS Namibia Project, Windhoek, 1992.

Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting: The Struggle of the Herero and Nama against German Imperialism (1884-1915)*, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, 1986.

Horst Drechsler, 'The Conquest of Colonies: the Establishment and Extension of German Colonial Rule', 'South West Africa 1885-1907', in Helmuth Stoecker (eds.), *German Imperialism in Africa: From the Beginnings until the Second World War*, C. Hurst and Company, London, 1986.

Tony Emmet, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia, 1915-1966*, P. Schlettwein Publishing, Switzerland, 1999.

Casper W. Erichsen, "'The Angel of Death has Descended Violently Amongst Them": Concentration Camps and Prisoners-of-war in Namibia 1904-1908', African Studies Centre, Leiden, 2005.

Casper Wulff Erichsen, 'Forced Labour in the Concentration Camp on Shark Island', in Jurgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller(eds.), *Genocide in German South West Africa: The Colonial War of 1904-1908 and its Aftermath*, The Merlin Press Ltd., Wales, 2008.

Casper W. Erichsen, "What the Elders Used to Say": *Namibian Perspectives on the Last Decade of German Colonial Rule*, Namibia Institute for Democracy & Namibian-German Foundation, Windhoek, 2008.

Clarissa Pinkola Estes, *Women who run with the Wolves: Contacting the Power of the Wild Woman*, Rider, London, 1992.

T. Falola (ed.), *African Historiography: Essays in Honour of Jacob Ade Ajayi*, Longman Group Ltd, England, 1993.

Frantz Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1965.

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Penguin Books, London, 1990.

Cressida Fforde et al (eds.), *The Dead and their Possessions: Repatriation in principle, policy and practice*, Routledge, London, 2002.

Richard Freislich, *The Last Tribal War: a history of the Bondel-swart uprising which took place in 1922*, Struik, Cape Town, 1964.

Jack Goody, *Myth, Ritual and the Oral*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010.

Jan-Bart Gewald, *Towards Redemption: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia between 1890-1923*, CNWS Publication, Leiden, 1996.

Jan-Bart Gewald, *Herero Heroes: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia, 1890-1923*, James Currey Ltd., London, 1999.

Jan-Bart Gewald, 'Herero genocide in the twentieth century: Politics and memory' in J. Abbink, M. De Bruijn and K. Van Walraven (eds.) *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History*, Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden, 2003.

Pumla Dineo Gqola, *What is slavery to me?: Postcolonial/Slave Memory in Post-apartheid South Africa*, Wits University Press, Johannesburg, 2010.

Wilfrid Haacke and Eliphaz Eiseb, *A Khoekhoegowab Dictionary: with a English-Khoekhoegowab Index*, Gamsberg Macmillan, 2002.

Theophilus Hahn, *Tsuni-//Goam: The Supreme Being of the Khoi-khoi*, Trubner and Co., Ludgate Hill, 1881.

Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, Lewis A. Coser (ed. and transl.), The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992.

Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, Sage Publications, London, 1996.

Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Jane Taylor, Michele Pickover, Graeme Reid & Razia Saleh (eds.), *Refiguring the Archive*, David Philip, Cape Town, 2002.

Wolfram Hartman, Photo(historio)graphy in south-western Africa: An introductory and explorative photo essay, in Wolfram Hartmann (ed.), *Hues between black and white: Historical photography from colonial Namibia, 1860s to 1915*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2004.

Patricia Hayes, Jeremy Silvester, Marion Wallace, Wolfram Hartmann (eds.), *Namibia under South African Rule: Mobility and Containment, 1915-46*, Out of Africa, Windhoek, 1995.

Patricia Hayes, Jeremy Silvester, Wolfram Hartmann, "'Picturing the Past" in Namibia: The Visual Archive and its Energies', in Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Jane Taylor, Michele Pickover, Graeme Reid & Razia Saleh (eds.), *Refiguring the Archive*, David Philip, Cape Town, 2002.

Louis van Heerde, *'n Seleksie uit Oom Piet van Heerde se Namakwalandse Fotoversameling, 1926-1979*, Fontcept Graphix, Garsfontein-Oos, 2001.

Hildi Hendrickson, 'Bodies and Flags: The representation of Herero Identity in Colonial Namibia', in Hildi Hendrickson (eds.), *Clothing and Difference: Embodied identities in colonial and post-colonial Africa*, Duke University Press, Durham and London, 1996.

Annemarie Heywood and Eben Maasdorp (transl.), *The Hendrik Witbooi Papers*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1995.

Robert A. Hill (ed.), *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers: African for Africans, June 1921-December 1922*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1995.

Werner Hillebrecht, 'The Nama and the war in the south', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (eds.), E.J. Neather trans., *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The colonial war of 1904-1908 and its aftermath*, The Merlin Press Ltd., Monmouth, Wales, 2008.

Alexander Laban Hinton, 'The Dark Side of Modernity: Toward an anthropology of genocide', in Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide*, University of California Press, 2002.

Alexander Laban Hinton, 'Genocide and Anthropology', in Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Genocide: An anthropological reader*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., Malden, Massachusetts, 2002.

Anette Hoffmann (ed.), *What We See: Reconsidering an Anthropometrical Collection from Southern Africa: Images, Voices and Versioning*, Basler Afrika Bibliographien: Namibia Resource Centre and Southern Africa Library, Basel, 2009.

Isabel Hofmeyr, *"We Spend Our Years as a Tale that is Told": Oral historical narrative in a South African chiefdom*, Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1993.

Justine Hunter, 'Dealing with the Past in Namibia: Getting the balance right between justice and sustainable peace?', André du Pisani et al (eds.), *The Long Aftermath of War - Reconciliation and Transition in Namibia*, Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institut, Freiburg, Germany, 2010.

Cons Karamata, 'Reasons to claim for reparations from Germany in front of a U.S. Court', in Dierk Schmidt, *The Division of the Earth: Tableaux on the legal synopses of the Berlin-Africa conference*, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne, 2010.

Peter Katjavivi, 'The Development of Anti-Colonial Forces in Namibia', in Brian Wood (ed.), *Namibia 1884-1984: Readings on Namibia's History and Society*, Namibia Support Committee in co-operation with the United Nations Institute for Namibia, 1988.

Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance in Namibia*, Unesco Press, Paris, 1988.

Peter Katjavivi, 'From Colonialism to Bilaterality: Challenges of the Namibian-German relationship', in Dierk Schmidt et al (eds.), *The Division of the Earth: Tableaux on the legal synopsis of the Berlin-Africa conference*, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne, Germany, 2010.

William Kentridge, *Black Box/Chambre Noire*, Deutsche Guggenheim, 29 October 2005-15 January 2006, Berlin, 2005.

Mburumba Kerina, *Namibia: The making of a nation*, Books in Focus Inc., New York, 1981.

Carol A. Kidron, 'Sensorial Memory: Embodied Legacies of Genocide', in Frances E. Mascia-Lees (ed.), *A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., West Sussex, United Kingdom, 2011.

Reinhart Kössler, *In Search of Survival and Dignity: Two traditional communities in southern Namibia under South African rule*, Gamsberg Macmillan, 2005.

Reinhart Kössler, 'Vaalgras 6 May', in Evelyn Annus (eds.), *Stagings made in Namibia: Postkoloniale fotografie*, b\_books Verlag, Berlin, 2009.



Reinhart Kössler, 'Genocide and Reparations: Dilemmas and Exigencies in Namibian-German Relations', in André du Pisani, Reinhart Kössler and Bill Lindeke, *The Long Aftermath of War: Reconciliation and Transition in Namibia*, Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute, Freiburg, Germany, 2010.

Reinhart Kössler, 'Political Intervention and the Image of History: Communal Memory Events in Central and Southern Namibia', in André du Pisani, Reinhart Kössler and Bill Lindeke (eds.), *The Long Aftermath of War: Reconciliation and Transition in Namibia*, Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute, Freiburg, Germany, 2010, 386-8.

Udo Krautwurst, 'The Joy of Looking: Early German Anthropology, Photography and Audience Formation', in Anette Hoffmann (ed.), *What We See: Reconsidering an Anthropometrical Collection from Southern Africa: Images, Voices and Versioning*, Basler Afrika Bibliographien, Basel, 2009.

Robert van Krieken, 'Cultural Genocide in Australia', in Dan Stone (ed.), *The Historiography of Genocide*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008.

Gesine Krüger and Dag Henrichsen, "'We have been captives long enough. We want to be free": Land, uniforms and politics in the history of the Herero in the interwar period', in Patricia Hayes, Jeremy Silvester, Marion Wallace, Wolfram Hartmann (eds.), *Namibia under South African Rule: Mobility and Containment, 1915-46*, Out of Africa, Windhoek, 1995.

Leo Kuper, 'Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century', in Alexander Laban Hinton (eds.), *Genocide: an Anthropological Reader*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., Maldern, Massachusetts, 2002.

Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 2001.

Brigitte Lau, *Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time*, National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1987.

Brigitte Lau, 'Concerning the Hendrik Witbooi Papers', in Brigitte Lau, *History and Historiography: 4 Essays in reprint*, Discourse/Msorp, Windhoek, 1995.

Brigitte Lau, 'Uncertain Certainties: The Herero-German War of 1904' in Annemarie Heywood (ed.), *History and Historiography: 4 Essays in Reprint*, Discourse/MSORP, Windhoek, 1995.

Dori Laub, 'Bearing Witness or the Vicissitudes of Listening', in Shoshona Felman and Dori Laub (eds), *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*, Routledge, New York, 1992.

Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard: South African museums and trade in human remains, 1907-1917*, South African Museum and McGregor Museum, Cape Town and Kimberley, 2000.

Martin Legassick, *The Politics of a South African Frontier: The Griqua, the Sotho-Tswana and the Missionaries, 1780-1840*, Basler Afrika Bibliographien, Basle, Switzerland, 2010.



David Maybury-Lewis, 'Genocide against Indigenous Peoples', in Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide*, University of California Press, 2002.

Henrik Lundofte, "I believe that the nation as such must be annihilated"...The Radicalisation of the German Suppression of the Herero Rising in 1904' in S. Jensen (ed.) *Genocide: Cases, Comparisons and Contemporary Debates*, The Danish Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Copenhagen, 2003.

Brinton Lykes, 'A critical re-reading of post-traumatic stress disorder from a cross-cultural/community perspective', in Derek Hook and Lillian Eagle (eds.), *Psychopathology and Social Prejudice*, UCT Press, Landsdowne, 2002.

Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*, David Philip, Cape Town, 2001.

John Masson, *Jakob Marengo: An Early Resistance Hero of Namibia*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2001.

Don Mattera, 'Remember', *Azanian Love Songs*, African Perspectives Publishing/African Morning Star Publications, Johannesburg and Florida, 2007.

Alex Mavrocordatos, 'Development Theatre and the Process of Re-empowerment: The Gibeon Story', *Development in Practice*, Vol. 8, No. 1, February 1998.

Achille Mbembe 'The power of the archive and its limits' in Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Jane Taylor, Michele Pickover, Graeme Reid & Razia Saleh (eds) *Refiguring the archive*, David Philip, Cape Town, 2002.

Brian T. Mokopakgosi, 'Conflict and Collaboration in South-Eastern Namibia: Missionaries, Concessionaires and the Nama's War against German Imperialism, 1880-1908', in J.F. Ade Ajayi, J.D.Y. Peel (eds), *People and Empires in African History: Essays in memory of Michael Crowder*, Longman, London, 1992.

Alan G. Morris, *The Skeletons of Contact: A study of protohistoric burials from the lower Orange River Valley*, South Africa, Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1992.

Dirk A. Moses, 'Empire, Colony, Genocide: Keywords and the Philosophy of History', in Dirk A. Moses (ed.), *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, Berham Books, New York, 2008.

Zedekia Ngavirue, *Political Parties and Interest Groups in South West Africa (Namibia): A Study of a Plural Society, 1972*, P. Schlettwein Publishing, Switzerland, 1997.

Bethwell A. Ogot, 'The Construction of Luo Identity and History', in David William Cohen, Stephan F. Miescher and Luise White (eds.), *African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 2001.

David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust: Germany's Forgotten Genocide and the Colonial Roots of Nazism*, Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 2010.

Helgard Patemann, *Lernbuch Namibia: Ein Lese - und Arbeitsbuch: Deutsch Kolonie, 1884-1915*, Peter Hammer, Wuppertal, 1984.

Helgard K. Patemann and Manfred O. Hinz, 'Okupiona Omahaoze - Wiping the Tears: Anthropological and Legal Anthropological Remarks', in Manfred O. Hinz and Helgard K. Patemann (eds.), *The Shade of New Leaves: Governance in Traditional Authority: a Southern African perspective*, Lit Verlag, Berlin, 2006.

Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier: Colonist & Khoisan on the Cape's Northern Frontier in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, Double Storey Books, Cape Town, 2005.

Nigel Penn, "'Civilising" the San: the First Mission to the Cape San, 1791-1806', in Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Claim to the Country: The Archive of Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd*, Jacana, Johannesburg and Cape Town, 2007.

André du Pisani, 'The Discursive Limits of SWAPO's Dominant Discourses on Anti-colonial Nationalism in Postcolonial Namibia - a First Exploration', in André du Pisani et al, *The Long Aftermath of War: Reconciliation and Transition in Namibia*, Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute, Freiburg, Germany, 2010.

Karla Poewe, *The Namibian Herero: A history of their psychosocial disintegration and survival*, E Mellen Press, Lewiston, New York, 1985.

Jacques Rancière, *The Names of History: on the poetics of knowledge*, University of Minnesota press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1994.

Ciraj Rassool and Gary Minkley, 'Orality, Memory and Social History', in Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee, *Negotiating the Past: The making of memory in South Africa*, Oxford University Press, London, 1998.

Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: Twayne's Oral History Series No. 15*, Twayne Publishers, New York, 1995.

Steven Robins, 'Silence in my father's house: memory, nationalism, and narratives of the body', in Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee, *Negotiating the Past: The making of memory in South Africa*, Oxford University Press, 1998.

Jeremy Sarkin, *Colonial Genocide and Reparations Claims in the 21st Century: The socio-legal context of claims under international law by the Herero against Germany for Genocide in Namibia, 1904-1908*, Praeger Security International, Westport, Connecticut, 2009.

Dominik J. Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide: Colonial Rule in German Southwest Africa and German East Africa', in Dirk A. Moses (ed.), *Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, Bergham Books, New York, 2008.

Isaac Schapera, *Khoisan Peoples of South Africa: Bushman and Hottentots*, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, London, 1951.

Katesa Schlosser, *Markus Witbooi in Gibeon 1953: Historische Farbphotographien aus Süd-Namibia*, Museum für Völkerkunde der Universität, Kiel, Germany, 2008.

Dierk Schmidt, *The Division of the Earth: Tableaux on the legal synopsis of the Berlin Africa Conference*, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne, 2010.

Sigrid Schmidt, *Tricksters, Monsters and Clever Girls: African Folktales – Texts and Discussions*, Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, Köln, 2001.

Sigrid Schmidt, *Children Born from Eggs, African Magic Tales – Texts and Discussions*, Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, Köln, 2007.

Nadia Seremetakis, *The Last Word: Women, Death, Divination in Inner Mani*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1991.

Nadia Seremetakis (ed.), *The Senses Still: Perception and memory as material culture in modernity*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1994.

John Phillip Short, 'Novelty and repetition: Photographs of South West Africa in German visual culture, 1890-1914', in Wolfram Hartmann (ed.), *Hues between black and white: Historical photography from colonial Namibia, 1860s to 1915*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2004.

Jeremy Silvester, 'Beasts, Boundaries and Buildings', in Patricia Hayes et al (eds.), *Namibia under South African Rule: Mobility and Containment, 1915-46*, Out of Africa, Windhoek, 1995.

Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found: German colonial rule in Namibia, an Annotated Reprint of the 1918 Blue Book*, Koninklijke Brill NV, The Netherlands, 2003.

Jeremy Silvester, 'Portraits of power and the panoramas of persuasion: The palgrave album at the National Archives of Namibia', in Wolfram Hartmann (ed.), *Hues between black and white: Historical photography from colonial Namibia, 1860s to 1915*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2004.

Jeremy Silvester, 'Sleep with a Southwester': Monuments and Settler Identity in Namibia, in Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen (eds.), *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century: Projects, Practices, Legacies*, Routledge Taylor and France Group, New York, 2005.

Bishop John Marie Simon, *Bishop for the Hottentots: African Memories, 1882-1909*, Angeline Bouchard (trans.), Benziger Brothers, New York, 1959.

Pippa Skotnes, 'Introduction', Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town, 1996.

Pippa Skotnes, The Politics of Bushman Representation, in Paul S. Landau and Deborah D. Kaspin (eds.). *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2002.

Pippa Skotnes, 'The Legacy of Bleek and Lloyd', in Pippa Skotnes, *Claim to the Country: The Archive of Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd*, Jacana, Johannesburg and Cape Town, 2007.

Andrew B. Smith and Roy H. Pheiffer, *The Khoikhoi at the Cape of Good Hope: Seventeenth-century drawings in the South African Library*, South African Library, Cape Town, 1993.

Malidoma Patrice Somé, *Ritual: Power, Healing and Community*, Swan, Raven and Company, Portland, Oregon, 1993.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a history of the vanishing present*, Harvard University Press, London, 1999.

E.L.P. Stals (eds.), *The Commissions of W.C. Palgrave: Special emissary to South West Africa, 1876-1885*, Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1990.

S.J. Tambiah, A Performative Approach to Ritual, Proceedings of the British Academy, Volume LXV, 1979, Oxford University Press, London, 1981.

Tarshia L. Stanley, 'The Three Faces in Eve's Bayou: Recalling the Conjure Woman in Contemporary Black Cinema', in Sharon R. Sherman and Mikal J. Koven (eds), *Folklore/Cinema: Popular Film as Vernacular Culture*, All USU Press Publication, Logan, Utah, 1 January 2007, [http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/usupress\\_pubs/34](http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/usupress_pubs/34), 150-4.

Surplus People Project, *Land Claims in Namaqualand*, Cape Town, 1995.

*Thirstland Epic: Heroic Struggle of Pioneer Missionaries in Namaqualand*, Trans Oranje Drukkers, Upington,

Christian Tomuschat, 'Prosecuting Denials of Past Alleged Genocides', in Paola Gaeta (ed.), *The UN Genocide Convention: A Commentary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009.

Gerhard Töttemeyer, 'The Role of the Church in Namibia: Fostering a Discourse on Reconciliation', in André du Pisani et al, *The Long Aftermath of War: Reconciliation and Transition in Namibia*, Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute, Freiburg, Germany, 2010.

Samuel Totten, William S. Parsons and Robert K. Hitchcock, 'Confronting Genocide and Ethnocide of Indigenous Peoples: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Definition, Intervention, prevention and Advocacy', in Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2002.

Anthony Trail, '!Khwa-ka Hhouiten Hhouiten, 'The Rush of the Storm': The Linguistic Death of /Xam', in Pippa Skotnes (ed.), *Claim to the Country: The Archive of Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd*, Jacana, Johannesburg and Cape Town, 2007.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1995.

U. Truper, *The Invisible Woman: Zara Schmelen, African Mission Assistant at the Cape and in Namaland*, Basler Afrika Bibliographien: Namibia Resource Centre and Southern Africa Library, Basel, 2006.

Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, PAJ Publications, New York, 1986.

Annette B. Weiner and Jane Schneider (eds.), *Cloth and human experience*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 1989.

Gavin Williams, 'Summary: Report of the Conference', in Brian Wood (ed.), *Namibia 1884-1984: Readings on Namibia's History and Society*, Namibia Support Committee in co-operation with the United Nations Institute for Namibia, 1988.

Leslie Witz, *Apartheid's Festival: Contesting South Africa's National Pasts*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2003.

Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory: legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe*, Berg, Oxford, 1999.

Wendy Woodward, Patricia Hayes and Gary Minkley, *Deep Histories: Gender and Colonialism in Southern Africa*, Rodopi, 2002.

Masao Yamaguchi, 'The Poetics of Exhibition in Japanese Culture', in Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (eds.), *Exhibiting Cultures: The poetics and politics of museum display*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 1991.

Carolyn Yoder, *The Little Book of Trauma Healing: When violence strikes and community security is threatened*, Good Books, Intercourse, Pennsylvania, 2005.

Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces, Time, Space and the Dialectics of Memory*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1999.

Iwona Irwin Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 1994.

Joachim Zeller, 'Ombepera i koza – the cold is killing me': Notes toward a history of the concentration camp at Swakopmund, (1904-1908)', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (eds.), *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War of 1904-1908 and its Aftermath*, Merlin Press Ltd., Monmouth, 2008.

Joachim Zeller, 'Images of the South West African War': Reflections of the 1904-1907 colonial war in contemporary photo reportage and book illustration', in Wolfram Hartmann (ed.), *Hues between black and white: Historical photography from colonial Namibia, 1860s to 1915*, Out of Africa Publishers, Windhoek, 2004.

Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide: The Herero and Nama War (1904-8) in German South West Africa and Its Significance, in Dan Stone (ed.), *The Historiography of Genocide*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008.

Jürgen Zimmerer, 'War, Concentration Camps and Genocide in South-West Africa: The first German genocide', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (eds.), *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War of 1904-1908 and its Aftermath*, Merlin Press Ltd., Monmouth, 2008.

Connie Zondagh, *ḽ Martelaars Bloed sal nooit Verdroog*, John Meinert, Windhoek, 1991.

