

For the Khoisan revivalists of Cape Town

Cover picture: Rafael Verbuyst 2018 (original design: Rizah Potgieter)

Supervisors	Prof. dr. Berber Bevernage Vakgroep Geschiedenis (Universiteit Gent) Dr. William Ellis Department of Anthropology and Sociology (University of the Western Cape)
Co-supervisor	Dr. Hanne Cottyn Department of History (University of York)

# Khoisan Consciousness

Articulating Indigeneity in Post-apartheid Cape  
Town

Rafael Verbuyst

Proefschrift voorgelegd tot het behalen van de graad van Doctor in de Geschiedenis  
2021



*Claiming Roots*

“Claiming roots is an arduous enterprise  
not assigned to the faint of heart  
its calling comes only to those who can  
risk ridicule, scorn, quarantine

When I set out to look, to find the pieces  
of myself, parts of my architecture buried  
below the foundations, narratives excised, ancestral tongues  
cut brutally from my mouth

When I followed the four winds, to search  
for scattered histories, deliberately lost  
purposefully distorted, inexplicably strayed  
beyond the grasp, beyond my tactile reach

When I went into caves to discern the messages  
of the grand-great ones who went before  
the diligent custodians of paradise  
where the eland roamed and fynbos flourished

When I touched the earth of Robben Island  
bathed in the streams of Hoerikwaggo  
followed the shaman’s trail on !Gam //Naka  
or sat in the darkness of the torture room  
yes, it was here, at the Castle of Good Hope  
where they brought the treaties that would never be honoured  
where decrees buttressed manifest destiny

[...]

It is this blood root, this perverted crucible  
that consigned entire peoples to the boundaries

to the very edges of banishment, into a dangerous twilight  
where strip-mined, they were broken, divested of agency  
Yet, the white man did not know  
there's a stubborn resistance in feigned surrender  
there's still currency in fragments  
of tongues and the genetic block

No decree, no false deed of sale or transfer  
can carry the memories, preserved for posterity  
in blood-bound masterpieces on the rocks  
in one word, one salutation in a banished tongue

Seeking after roots, clamouring for banished pieces  
of the me I was never allowed to be  
of the heroes that were never heralded  
if the chronicles buried under other stories  
it is to this place that I came, risking the laughter  
where I suffered, the indignity of imposed labels  
where I was flung into the raging turbulence  
of a people re-birthing under pressure

[...]

Tomorrow our children will dance the riel  
with sweet abandon, and sing in revived tongues  
they will walk along the rivers and seas  
and they will know, like sunrise, that they belong.”

- Zenzile Khoisan, *There are no more Words: a collection of poems* (2018), 58-59.

## Preface

Right then and there I knew it was preface material. As I was browsing my social media feed on a lazy afternoon in early February 2019, I came across a dance performance, “COLOURED SWANS I: KhoiSwan”, that was going to take place in two weeks’ time at the arts centre *Vooruit*, located a stone’s throw from my desk at Ghent University. The show was part of a two-week festival, “Same Same But Different”, organized by *Vooruit* and partners. With a packed program of performances, the festival sought to reflect on the decolonization debate in Belgium and beyond, with a particular focus on the role of the arts and African artists. I booked my ticket in a flash, then proceeded to read a bit more about the performance itself. On the website of *Vooruit*, I was intrigued to read the following:

In ‘COLOURED SWANS’, dancer, performer and choreographer Moya Michael wonders how the various different identities that are imposed on us might influence our body and how we move, speak and sing [...] In ‘COLOURED SWANS I: KhoiSwan’ Michael teams up with visual- and performance artist Tracey Rose to explore their African roots and heritage. They investigate where they stand today as women of colour and as descendants of the Khoi peoples of southern Africa<sup>1</sup>

I am still trying to wrap my head around the stunning coincidence of encountering this performance that shared the theme of my PhD project, not in South Africa, but back at home in Belgium. It had been clear to me for some time that Khoisan identity was

---

<sup>1</sup> “Same same but different: Moya Michael – Coloured Swan 1: Khoiswan.” [https://www.vooruit.be/en/agenda/656/Coloured\\_Swans\\_1\\_amp\\_2/Moya\\_Michael/](https://www.vooruit.be/en/agenda/656/Coloured_Swans_1_amp_2/Moya_Michael/), accessed 17 March 2021.

permeating South African society at an exponential rate, but I would have never thought Khoisan revivalism extended beyond its borders. At the time of the recital, I had just come back from fieldwork in South Africa, but I was brought back straight to Cape Town as Michael moved across the stage through expressive dancing against a background flashing images and eerie music. She embodied the central theme of a woman struggling to find her way out of an identity crisis with verve. As did Michael, increasing numbers of South Africans are seeking meaning and comfort in Khoisan identity and for the past six years I have been attempting to make sense of this phenomenon. Perhaps because it was so unexpected, both in terms of timing and location, attending *KhoiSwan* caused me to reflect on the trajectory of Khoisan revivalism, but even more so on my time in Cape Town. I found myself in the most diverging of spaces and meeting the most fascinating range of people. I visited government buildings and universities. I attended book launches, protests, poetry recitals and everything in-between. Yet more than anything else, 'Cape Town' conjures up fond memories of the countless hours I spent with interlocutors in the city's townships and suburbs, chatting about all things Khoisan over coffee or rooibos tea. The more I look back, the more I realize it is a privilege and a humbling experience to write about something so close to people's hearts, yet so poorly understood in the society that they are part of. It is primarily because of their generosity and trust that this research was possible.

There are too many people to thank individually for their contributions. I would, however, like to mention some specific people, many of whom I met in the name of research, but now know as friends. I cannot begin to express my gratitude to two of the most committed Khoisan revivalists I came across: Chantal Revell and her husband Julian. You made sure a clueless Belgian somehow ended up meeting the right people and attending the relevant events. I could not have come as close to an understanding of Khoisan identity had it not been for your guidance. I have never met a community activist as determined as Basil Coetzee. Spending time with you gave me an invaluable perspective on life in the Cape Flats. Rochey Walters: you combine a unique affection for Khoisan heritage with an unwavering entrepreneurial spirit; I appreciate you taking the time to share your insights with me. I thank the fiery Tania Kleinhans-Cedras for explaining what drives her and countless other activists like her. To Mackie: thank you



for our philosophical discussions about the meaning of Khoisan identity. I also acknowledge the help I have received from Joseph Little and Aaron Messelaar; it is a privilege to have met people that are so driven. On that note, I salute Zenzile Khoisan and thank him for the many conversations. Your unrivalled passion and gifted mind have in large part made Khoisan revivalism what it is today. Finally, I mention Desmond Sampson, who generously shared copies of *Eland Nuus*. I can think of no greater compliment than to have these people find value in the pages that follow.

As Khoisan revivalism expanded, so did a sense of analytical modesty on my part. I could not give attention to every individual who has made their mark on Khoisan revivalism. I trust that the reader will find this to be no act of deliberate omission. I undoubtedly failed to detect important cues and misunderstood various issues. I take full responsibility for my choices and for any mistakes. I welcome any criticism of my work with great enthusiasm. In fact, as Khoisan revivalism grows more prominent, it will benefit from commentary from diverse perspectives. Such contributions are all the more important in light of the fact that, despite being subjected to decades of deconstruction in academia, ‘identity’ is firmly at the core of various phenomena globally. Understanding the passion that drives ever greater numbers of people towards Khoisan identity is certainly the first step of any attempt to productively deal with their grievances. I have tried to provide such a critical understanding to the best of my abilities.

I could not have done so alone. I was a historian in training when I started my MA at Leiden University, but I graduated a fieldworker. I could not have wished for a better guide than Harry Wels. Your continuous support and encouragement bear witness not only to your fine qualities as a human being, but also to your talents as an educator and academic. Generous grants and scholarships from VLIR-UOS, FWO and the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy made it possible for me to carry out my PhD research at Ghent University. Here I was blessed once again with great supervisors and wonderful colleagues, all of whom provided tremendously useful feedback. To my supervisor, Berber Bevernage: your confidence in my academic potential means a great deal. Your razor-sharp comments and eye for detail improved my texts drastically. I thank Hanne Cottyn for her co-supervision and unwavering support, despite changing institutional homes. More than anyone else,

you reminded me that my case is embedded in a global context. I also thank Felicitas Becker for carefully going through all of my drafts and coming up with invaluable input.

This project would not have been possible without my other co-supervisor, William Ellis. Your ability to think and make others think outside of the box is unparalleled. Our many conversations resonate throughout this text. Alongside many others, you have also made me feel at home at the University of the Western Cape. I thank Annelies Verdoolaege in particular for making the joint PhD with UWC a reality. Doing this PhD in collaboration with UWC reflects more than a partnership between institutions. To me, it symbolizes a recognition of the link between UWC and Khoisan revivalism. The ‘father of Khoisan revivalism’, Henry Bredekamp was a historian at UWC for decades. I had the honour of interviewing Prof. Bredekamp several times, which resulted in a veritable treasure chest of information. While she has left UWC for some time, Yvette Abrahams, in her own right ‘the mother of Khoisan revivalism’, continues to enrich the debate on Khoisan issues tremendously. There are not that many of us who study Khoisan revivalism in an academic setting. I therefore appreciate the thought-provoking conversations I have enjoyed over the years with two colleagues with whom I share this interest: Siv Øvernes at the University of Tromsø and June Bam-Hutchison at the University of Cape Town.

Last, but certainly not least, I thank Francesca Pugliese for travelling this road alongside me and my family for their continuous support.

# List of Abbreviations

African National Congress (ANC)  
Airports Company South Africa (ACSA)  
Black Consciousness Movement (BCM)  
Cape Cultural Heritage Development Council (CCHDC)  
Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Linguistic and Religious Communities (CRLC)  
Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (CONTRALESa)  
Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR)  
Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)  
International Labour Office's Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) (ILO 169)  
International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA)  
Khoisan Heritage Route (KHR)  
Khoisan Kingdom (KSK)  
Khoisan Revival Holistic Development (KRHD)  
National Council of Khoi Chiefs (NCKC)  
National Khoisan Consultative Conference (NKCC)  
National Khoisan Council (NKC)  
Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC)  
South African San Institute (SASI)  
Sovereign State of Good Hope (SSOGH)  
Status Quo Reports (SQR)  
Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

Western Cape Cultural Commission (WCCC)

Western Cape Legislative Khoisan Council (WCLKSC)

Working Group of Indigenous Minorities of Southern Africa (WIMSA)

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Bradley van Sitters (left) and Chantal Revell (right) at 2019 State of the Nation Address (Photo credit: Chantal Revell 2019).....	5
Figure 2. Resurrection Day Event, Castle of Good Hope (Author's photopgrah 2018) .....	7
Figure 3. "Approximate locations of Khoikhoi before contact with whites" (Ross 2010, 172).....	71
Figure 4. Griqua Museum Elsie's River (Author's photograph 2017) .....	208
Figure 5. Griqua Museum Elsie's River – detail (Author's photograph 2017) .....	209
Figure 6. Indigenous People's protest at Castle of Good Hope, August 2017 (Author's photograph 2017) .....	269
Figure 7. !Kwa ttu (from left to right: Lu-Ann Kearns, Francesca Pugliese, Rafael Verbuyst, Basil Coetzee) (Author's photograph 2018) .....	284
Figure 8. Taking Hip-Hop Back To Its Roots (Photo credit: Nolan Berry 2018) .....	299
Figure 9. "Tita Ge A Khoe" (Author's photograph 2018).....	300
Figure 10. "Embrace your roots – Live original" (Photo credit: Rochey Walters) .....	305
Figure 11. "Recognition + Restitution + Restoration = Dignity" (ENN 2014d, 6).....	367
Figure 12. "VF Plus – die enigste stem vir minderhede in Suid-Afrika" (ENN 2013b, 7) .....	369



# Table of Contents

<i>Preface</i> .....	<i>vii</i>
<i>List of Abbreviations</i> .....	<i>xi</i>
<i>List of Figures</i> .....	<i>xiii</i>
<i>Table of Contents</i> .....	<i>xv</i>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Khoisan revivalism: a recent phenomenon about an ancient past.....	9
Researching Khoisan revivalism: challenges and opportunities.....	12
Khoisan identity in post-apartheid South Africa: debating instrumentalism.....	12
Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town: reorienting the research agenda towards identification, emic perspectives and indigeneity .....	17
Khoisan revivalist articulations of indigeneity .....	23
Indigenous revivalism: the past in the present .....	27
Heritage as a process.....	29
Indigenous revivalism.....	32
Research questions and outline of the thesis.....	35
<b>1</b> <b>Defining a phenomenon, navigating a field: studying Khoisan                     revivalism through reflexive ethnography</b> .....	<b>41</b>
1.1   Ethnography and the interpretation of emic perspectives.....	43
1.2   Gathering data on an elusive phenomenon: heterogeneous interlocutors, reflexive methods and eclectic sources .....	47
1.2.1   Sources .....	50
1.2.2   Methods and wider implications of the research.....	56

*Part I. Lost in Categorization? The Khoisan extinction discourse and the intellectual roots  
and aspirations of Khoisan revivalism..... 63*

<b>2</b>	<b>(Re)thinking the ‘Khoisan’: the fate of a people, the career of a concept.....</b>	<b>65</b>
2.1	Dispossession, assimilation and the ‘vanishing native’: a brief overview of Khoisan history .....	70
2.1.1	Dutch colonialism settles on South African shores: frontier settlers and expendable natives (1652-1806) .....	70
2.1.2	British colonialism, assimilation and salvage ethnography (1795-1910) .....	76
2.1.3	Union, apartheid and coloured citizens (1910-1970s) .....	81
2.2	Black Consciousness, Khoisan revisionist historiography and the origins of Khoisan revivalism (1970s-1997) .....	92
2.2.1	Black Consciousness and the reinvention of Coloured identity in the anti-apartheid struggle .....	94
2.2.2	Henry Bredekamp and Khoisan revisionist historiography .....	99
2.2.3	Towards a new Khoisan agenda in the post-apartheid era.....	104
<b>3</b>	<b>The political accommodation and diversification of post-apartheid Khoisan revivalism .....</b>	<b>111</b>
3.1	Joseph Little, traditional leadership and the politicization of Khoisan identity (1997-2012) .....	116
3.1.1	From the Cape Cultural Heritage Development Council to the National Khoisan Council: traditional leadership and indigenous rights on the agenda .....	116
3.1.2	Khoisan politics in the aftermath of the 2001 National Khoisan Consultative Conference: from peak to stagnation.....	129
3.2	Khoisan revivalism in the 2010s: towards a broad-based identity movement? .....	140
3.2.1	A new cohort of Khoisan revivalists .....	140
3.2.2	Land reform, the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act and the advent of a broad-based identity movement.....	148



***Part II. Ethnographic encounters with Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town ..... 165***

<b>4</b>	<b>The Khoisan identity discourse (I): reclaiming history and remedying the ‘identity crisis’ .....</b>	<b>167</b>
4.1	‘Khoisan forever, Coloured never’: Khoisan identity as the answer to the identity crisis .....	169
4.1.1	Identities lost and found: Khoisan identity as a spiritual experience ....	173
4.1.2	An eye-opening experience: diagnosing and healing the identity crisis.....	180
4.2	Reclaiming Khoisan history: Coloured indigeneity and indigenous Colouredness .....	188
4.2.1	Khoisan revivalist perspectives on the past: exposing historical continuity .....	188
4.2.2	Rewriting the Khoisan past.....	195
4.2.3	Recuperating Khoisan heroes: the case of Krotoa .....	210
<b>5</b>	<b>The Khoisan identity discourse (II): entitlement, land claims and traditional leadership .....</b>	<b>225</b>
5.1	Empowerment, discursive land claims and the boundaries of Khoisan indigeneity .....	230
5.2	On Khoisan revivalist traditional leadership.....	245
<b>6</b>	<b>Reviving Khoisan culture: between continuity and change .....</b>	<b>261</b>
6.1	“Like stepping into a time machine” .....	268
6.1.1	Plants, rituals and inspiration from the North .....	272
6.1.2	Tourism, mending the “broken string” and reviving Khoekhoegowab.....	284
6.2	21 <sup>st</sup> century interpretations of Khoisan culture: hip-hop, jazz and fashion .....	295

***Part III. Theoretical perspectives on Khoisan revivalism..... 313***

<b>7</b>	<b>Khoisan revivalism and the therapeutics of history .....</b>	<b>315</b>
7.1	Therapeutic history, heritage and the case of Khoisan revivalism.....	320
7.2	Subverting ‘repressive authenticity’? The Khoisan revivalist guide to reclaiming history and authenticity .....	331

7.2.1	Authenticity after colonialism: repressive authenticity and the Khoisan extinction discourse .....	332
7.2.2	‘Subversive authenticity’: repressive authenticity turned inside out? .....	339
7.3	Closing reflections on the therapeutics of history .....	347
<b>Conclusion: Khoisan Consciousness and its discontents in a post-transitional South Africa .....</b>		<b>355</b>
	Indigeneity, prior occupancy and ‘belonging’: a political conflation .....	366
	Khoisan Consciousness and its discontents.....	374
	‘Listening’ to Khoisan revivalism.....	383
<b>Bibliography .....</b>		<b>387</b>
	Social media sources and websites .....	428
	Facebook (accessed 20 March 2021).....	428
	YouTube (accessed 20 March 2021) .....	428
	Vimeo (Accessed 20 March 2021) .....	429
	Websites .....	429
	Legal sources .....	433
	Interviews .....	433
	Eland Nuus (EN) .....	436
	Eerste Nasie Nuus (ENN).....	436

# Introduction

*“Everything we do is about our history. Although our ancestors were treated badly, we can still make a difference.”*

- Hillary-Jane Solomons (ENN 2013b, 2)<sup>2</sup>

“Just like our ancestors”, Chantal Revell remarked.<sup>3</sup> Braai; sitting around a crackling fire, munching on meat. A quintessentially South African experience and a fitting end to my fieldwork in Cape Town. Aside from the delicious boerewors and homemade chakalaka, I recall the wonderful company of interlocutors-turned-friends that evening towards the end of August 2019. As we sat comfortably on lawn chairs, we reflected on all things ‘Khoisan’ and looked back on my time in South Africa. Over the course of several years, I had nagged pretty much everyone present with questions about their Khoisan identity. For one last time before I flew back home to Belgium, they indulged me with their thoughts. Richard Burns joked that he was not accepted as Khoisan because of his fair skin. Roche Walters teasingly confirmed that he was “passing for White” and could not claim to be a “true” Khoisan like him. Revell and the others chuckled. In contrast to “his privileged friend”, Walters reasoned that he had earned his credentials after being bullied

---

<sup>2</sup> Author’s translation from Afrikaans: “Alles wat ons doen gaan oor ons geskiedenis. Hoewel ons voorouers sleg behandel was, kan ons nogtans ‘n verskil maak”.

<sup>3</sup> I have received explicit informed consent to use the actual names of my interlocutors as well as to use their pictures or the pictures where they feature in. In cases where I deemed the information too sensitive or controversial, I have refrained from attributing names to certain quotes. I take full responsibility for this editorial judgement (see Chapter One).

as a child for “looking like a *Boesman* [Bushman]”. Then again, “coloureds do not exist”, he added in reference to the official classification of everyone present except myself as ‘Coloured’. Indeed, “this name was given to us by your people”, Walters quipped while turning towards me and taking my Belgian nationality by way of complicity.

These jokes tackled stereotypes and taboos about race and ethnicity within the confines of the *braai*; a *de facto* South African safe space. On other occasions or among different individuals, terms such as Coloured, *Boesman* or even Khoisan might cause offense.<sup>4</sup> Before recounting what further transpired at the *braai*, I therefore need to explicate some of the ambiguous legacies of colonialism and apartheid that are embodied in contemporary forms of ethnic and racial identification — a topic I will revisit many times. As I explain in greater detail in Chapter Two, under apartheid (1948-1994), those labelled ‘Coloured’ (i.e. Khoisan, people enslaved from the East and other parts of Africa as well as so-called mixed-race descendants of unions between Africans, Asians and Europeans) received (marginally) greater societal benefits in certain respects than those classified ‘Black’ (i.e. the Bantu-speaking majority), but fewer than ‘Indians’ (i.e. descendants of migrants from the Indian subcontinent who arrived in the 20<sup>th</sup> century), and far less than those designated ‘White’ (i.e. descendants of European settlers and migrants). The more arbitrary interpretations of skin tone and descent branded someone ‘African’, the lower their place on the hierarchy; causing the African majority to occupy the lowest rung in the socioeconomic and political pecking order. Among many other facets of life, ‘race’ determined where one could live, which professions they could practice and who they could have intimate relations with. These policies were discontinued with the end of apartheid in 1994, but their legacies remain glaringly visible. Moving about in Cape Town, where stunning beaches and luxurious wine estates are often a stone’s throw from overcrowded townships lacking basic infrastructure, one quickly realizes why South Africa competes for the highest rate of economic inequality in the world (Chatterjee 2019). Despite some improvements, disparities between rich and poor

---

<sup>4</sup> As I explain in Chapter Two, the term ‘Khoisan’ was coined by the physical anthropologist Leonhard Schultze in 1928 to emphasize the similarities between what are by many still considered to be two distinct groups: the Khoi and the San (see below).

in various domains of life continue to correlate with one's racial identity (Knight 2014, 24; Francis and Webster 2019). Race is no longer registered at birth, but the post-apartheid census differentiates between "Black African", "Coloured", "Indian or Asian" and "Other"; although one is free to identify with any "population group" of their choosing (Statistics South Africa 2012, 31). At the same time, the 2003 Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act — an affirmative action policy aimed at dismantling the privileges associated with one's previous place on the apartheid racial hierarchy — stipulates that "Black people is a generic term which means Africans, Coloured and Indians" (see Chapter Five). For these reasons and many more, racial labels still resonate with people's experiences and code everyday conversations and encounters like those at the *braai* (Posel 2001, 89, 109).<sup>5</sup>

Racial labels also remain contested, however. Indeed, those at the *braai* dismissed their official classification as Coloured and identified as 'Khoisan' instead; an ethnic identifier that also merits some explanation off the bat. While 'Khoisan' was the most common way interlocutors identified and therefore my default option (cf. Le Fleur and Jansen 2013, 1; Van Wyk 2014, 18; Brown and Deumert 2017, 572; Ives 2017, 10; Øvernes 2019, 47), many of them preferred instead (or interchangeably) to identify as 'Khoi', 'Khoikhoi' or a wide range of alternative terms such as *Boesman*. To minimize the risk of causing offence, I use interlocutors' preferences, including their spelling (Barnard 2007, 1-10). Khoisan is an umbrella term that refers to various population (sub-)groups who are indigenous to Southern Africa and share numerous linguistic and cultural traits. It is common to differentiate between the 'Koranna', 'San', 'Griqua', 'Nama' and 'Cape Khoi' (Barnard 1992, 3).<sup>6</sup> In Chapter Two, I explain why a great deal is contested about the term 'Khoisan', not least its relation to specific population groups, past and present. Suffice it to say that most

---

<sup>5</sup> I capitalize the racial labels when talking about the categories themselves. When referring to the people that are and were classified as such by the South African government, I use the lowercase variant. This enables me to name highly contested social realities. It does not reflect my personal opinion on the merit of these labels. Some embrace the racial labels and others vehemently reject them.

<sup>6</sup> I elaborate on these groups in Chapter Two. However, I flag already here that there are both proponents and critics of the terms 'San' and 'Bushmen', including its Afrikaans variant *Boesmans* (see Smith 1998; Ellis 2015).

of the people I interacted with used it or any of the alternatives to name their descent from the indigenous people of the Cape, who confronted an expanding European settler population from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century onward.<sup>7</sup> The decimation, dispossession and assimilation that ensued over the course of several centuries gave rise to the widespread notion that the Khoisan have ceased being a distinct collective, particularly in urban settings. Their classification as Coloured alongside other groups was arguably most devastating, as it was accompanied by a violent suppression of Khoisan culture and identity. Not surprisingly then, the label Coloured is habitually rejected by people who are emphasising their Khoisan ancestry (as well as by various others past and present, see Chapter Two).

It is indeed not a coincidence that after our more light-hearted exchange about racial identities, Walters emphasized how their continued circulation had important consequences for people like him. “All of this land used to belong to us and we are going to claim it all back”, he proclaimed with a sense of urgency. He felt being designated Coloured disavowed his claims to the land as Khoisan. A conversation ensued about how the lack of property ownership and redress for historical injustices, such as the forced removals that took place during apartheid and uprooted countless families from their homes (see Chapter Two), is linked to present-day socio-economic ills plaguing the areas where coloureds live. We were sitting in such an area, Bellville South. While individual neighbourhoods of Cape Town can greatly differ, areas like Bellville South struggle with community violence, unemployment, sexual assault, break-ins, carjacking, organized crime, substance abuse and lack of infrastructure (Jensen 1999, 76; 2006; Pinnock 2016, 12, 101). Taken together, the area where most coloured and black Capetonians live is known as the Cape Flats – a loosely defined low-lying sand-swept and flood-prone expanse lying to the north of Table of Mountain, which separates it from the Central Business District. The Cape Flats is notorious for having one of the world’s highest per capita murder rates

---

<sup>7</sup> Looking back, while I maintain that the majority of the people I worked with used ‘Khoisan’ or any of the related alternative terms to mark their descent from the indigenous people of the Cape and I reflect on the different motivations behind preferring certain terms over others at various points in this thesis, I should have queried specific personal choices in greater detail as these cannot simply be assumed to be innocent.

(Pinnock 2016, 8-9). The government has at times resorted to deploying the army to patrol the area and quell the violence; most recently between September 2019 and March 2020 (Bernardo 2020).



Figure 1. Bradley van Sitters (left) and Chantal Revell (right) at 2019 State of the Nation Address (Photo credit: Chantal Revell 2019)

As they themselves continuously emphasize, it is against this backdrop of violence and marginalization that people like Walters, Burns and Revell are finding comfort, meaning and political leverage in Khoisan identity. As Walters explained during the *braai*, embracing this long-lost heritage not only fulfils a strong psychological need, it is also the vehicle towards political emancipation and socio-economic advancement: “They may have taken our heritage away piece by piece, but each of us are putting back those pieces

to make the puzzle whole again”. Tapping on my shoulder and touching on the history of European knowledge production about the Khoisan and the complexities of doing field research in light of this, he told me: “Even you are part of the revival, *my bru* [my brother]”. I suppose he had a point. I had suggested the *braai* in large part so that Walters and Burns, who were relatively new to the scene, could meet Revell, a more seasoned activist. And sure enough, she introduced them to the ins and outs of Khoisan politics that evening; not unlike the way she had educated me over the years. Revell had come a long way since I first met her in 2014 at her home in Bishop Lavis, one of the most violent neighbourhoods of the city. She has since moved to a slightly more stable part of Cape Town. In 2012, she had formally joined the Katz Koranna Royal House, a Khoisan traditional leadership entity based in the Northern Cape Province, but took up a position as “Princess” in 2017. Princess Chantal Revell, as she is since known, opened the 2019 State of the Nation Address alongside another well-known Khoisan activist, Bradley van Sitters. While the media focused entirely on van Sitters, who in a historical first praised President Cyril Ramaphosa in the Khoekhoegowab language, I instantly recognized Revell in the pictures in the newspapers (Etheridge 2019; see Chapter Six). Seeing her in Parliament in full regalia at the State of the Union Address that marked 25 years since end of apartheid, I reflected on her long walk and on how much more visible and assertive the Khoisan had become during the years we had known each other (see Figure 1).

Evidence of this was indeed rapidly accruing. About a month after the *braai*, on 28 September 2019, the “Khoisan Heritage Festival” took place at the Castle of Good Hope in central Cape Town. Constructed in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, the Castle was the epicentre of colonialism in Southern Africa. Organizing the celebration at the oldest surviving colonial building in South Africa was therefore highly symbolic. During the well-attended festival — Walter’s brainchild, but supported and sponsored by various others — several Khoisan artists performed music, poetry and dancing (Rochey Walters, personal communication, 03/03/2020). Items related to Khoisan culture were also on sale, ranging from tea and art, to soap and t-shirts. At the same venue, about two months earlier, I had attended the launch of *Poetry Revolution*, a poetry bundle celebrating the Khoisan past, penned by another passionate Khoi activist, Basil Coetzee (Coetzee 2019a). Further back in time still, in 2015, I regularly went to the Castle to attend Khoekhoegowab classes by the



aforementioned van Sitters. One of the main hurdles, which the teacher shared with most of his students, was commuting from the Cape Flats to the city centre. Classes were usually well attended, however; bearing testimony to people's commitment and determination to learn the language and reconnect with the Khoisan past. But perhaps no event at the Castle made me appreciate the widespread resonance (and spirituality) of



Figure 2. Resurrection Day Event, Castle of Good Hope (Author's photograph 2018)

Khoisan identity more than the “Resurrection Day” celebration I attended in April 2018 (see Figure 2). The idea for the gathering was Revell's, who organized it together with the leadership of the New Hope Church based in Retreat, where she was working as a secretary and office manager at the time. As speakers celebrated the Khoisan and stressed the historical and spiritual significance of their celebration at such a “traumatic” site, the crowd responded with resounding applause and cheers (see Chapter Four).

I found myself at the Castle on countless other occasions, but it is only one of the many settings where the Khoisan are becoming increasingly visible. I explicitly went to look for manifestations of Khoisan identity in Cape Town, but sometimes I came across Khoisan-related images, objects and ideas by coincidence. When I was walking on Long Street, one of the city's most popular streets, I spotted a sign that read "Khoisan indigenous teas / KhoiKoffee". As I chatted to the owner over a cup of *buchu* tea moments later, he explained that his shop sought to promote indigenous knowledge about plants, herbs and tea. Sadly, the business was not financially viable and had to close its doors soon after. However, sometime later I found another establishment in Long Street that also sold "indigenous teas". Going to the supermarket, I similarly came across "Khoisan Tea", not too far from the isle where "Bushman Hot Sauce" and "Khoisan Salt" were also for sale.<sup>8</sup> Khoisan-related events also regularly featured in the news. Over the years I have asked South Africans if they noticed the increased visibility of all things Khoisan and hardly anyone had not picked up on this. Many would point to the ongoing campaign to rename Cape Town International Airport after Krotoa, an indigenous Khoisan woman who interpreted for Dutch colonialists in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century (see Chapter Four). Others would refer to the protesters who have been camping outside of the Union Buildings in Pretoria on and off since 2017 to demand indigenous rights (Mitchley 2019). Yet others mentioned the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act (TKLA), which was signed into law on 28 November 2019. The TKLA stipulates the criteria for the official recognition of Khoisan traditional leadership for the first time in history. Whether seen as a positive or negative development – this is certainly widely contested among the Khoisan themselves (see Chapter Three) – the TKLA confirms the increased involvement of the political establishment in Khoisan matters, and indeed the wider phenomenon of 'Khoisan revivalism' that is at the core of this dissertation.

---

<sup>8</sup> See "Khoisan Gourmet." <http://www.khoisantea.com/>, accessed 17 March 2021; "Khoisan Hand-harvested Sea Salt." <https://khoisansalt.co.za/>, accessed 17 March 2021; "Bushman's Chilli Co." <http://www.bushmanschilli.co.za/>, accessed 17 March 2021.

## Khoisan revivalism: a recent phenomenon about an ancient past

The discussions during the *braai*, the events at the Castle and the enactment of the TKLA are merely giving a glimpse into the increased salience of all things Khoisan since the end of apartheid in 1994. As I will show, Khoisan identity is at the core of protests, celebrated at cultural events, debated on social media, contested in parliament and sold as consumables. An ever greater number of people have been challenging the assumption that the Khoisan are (virtually) extinct by self-identifying as Khoisan in the post-apartheid era. The term ‘Khoisan revival’ has been suggested to describe this phenomenon, including by the Khoisan themselves (Bredekamp 2001; Besten 2006). ‘Revival’ implies that ‘the Khoisan’ ‘died’ at one point in time, which offends those who claim to have always been aware of their Khoisan ancestry (De Wet 2006, 14-15).<sup>9</sup> When I speak of ‘revival’, I do not discount claims of continuity, but rather refer to *both* the undeniable lingering effects of the suppression of Khoisan identity during colonialism and apartheid, as well as the numerous efforts that seek its present-day reinvigoration in various spheres of South African society (see also Forte 2006, 13). This sets ‘Khoisan revivalist’ apart from one of the alternatives, “neo-Khoisan” (Besten 2006), which implies a more rigid distinction based on essence (cf. Brown and Deumert 2017, 573). Khoisan revivalists differ from ‘other’ Khoisan in relative terms, because they are arguably engaged in different activities. Indeed, as I clarify below, revivalism refers to a process rather than an essence and therefore captures that which is markedly different, both in quantity and quality, in the salience of Khoisan issues post-1994. With these caveats in mind, I suggest the following working definition of Khoisan revivalism:

---

<sup>9</sup> Some have perhaps for these reasons used other terms to denote the same phenomenon. Richard Lee (2003, 100) for instance speaks of a “Khoisan renaissance” and Siv Øvernes (Øvernes 2019, 10) wondered if “revitalisation” might not be a better alternative.

The increasing affinity towards, and politicization of, the Khoisan in post-apartheid South Africa, deriving mostly from a critical interrogation of the identity label Coloured, especially among those currently classified as such, whereby some (re)claim Khoisan identities, indigenous status and/or land and leadership titles<sup>10</sup>

This deliberately open-ended definition captures the breadth of activities that Khoisan ‘revivalists’ are engaged in, at least with regards to Cape Town, where my definition is primarily based on (see Chapter One). As my opening segment illustrates, Khoisan revivalism entails cultural performances and pleas for socio-economic justice. Many Khoisan revivalists also claim indigenous rights, traditional leadership titles and land. For reasons already mentioned, most people do not associate Cape Town with a contemporary Khoisan presence. I only made the connection myself after looking into the South African government’s stated intent to accommodate Khoisan land claims in the context of my MA thesis in 2014 (Verbuyst 2015). At that point in time I hardly knew anything about the Khoisan. The term evoked scenes set in the Kalahari Desert in the north of the country. This is where I envisioned I would carry out my fieldwork, but I still have to set foot there after all these years. From the moment I saw a newspaper article featuring a group of Khoisan protesters in Cape Town, I have focused my research on the city’s Khoisan revivalist scene. More than anything else, I was eager to find out who these people were and what was driving them. Few academics had anticipated Khoisan revivalism; a noteworthy exception being Andrew Smith (1983, 47-48), who wrote in 1983 that “[a] potential resurgence of historical tradition exists in South Africa [...] People of the Cape can look back to their ancestors in this land [...] The links with the past remain in spite of attempts to obliterate them”. Indeed, from a researcher’s point of view, Cape

---

<sup>10</sup> While not a definition, June Bam-Hutchison’s remarks are relevant here: “The overarching current contentious heritage issue for ‘contemporary’ Khoisan communities appears to be the notion of ‘identity’ and its concomitant ‘sense of belonging’. Both inform a range of contemporary campaigns: land restitution and justice; language diversity revivalism; constitutional accommodation; appropriating education and knowledge systems; occupying sacred and ancestral spaces; indigenous ‘self-identification’; and returning human remains” (Bam 2014, 123).

Town is an intriguing case study: ‘people’ thought to no longer ‘exist’ are now ‘seemingly’ and ‘suddenly’ back and seeking various forms of restitution and recognition.

While precise figures on the number of Khoisan revivalists do not exist (cf. Le Fleur and Jansen 2013, 1), nowhere is Khoisan revivalism more vibrant than in Cape Town. And yet, paradoxically, as one interlocutor is fond of saying, it is where “the bomb of colonialism fell and did most damage”.<sup>11</sup> The Khoisan at the Cape bore the brunt of colonialism, which in turn fed the myth of their supposed disappearance. To be sure, centuries of historical change complicate the link between Khoisan revivalists and their 17<sup>th</sup> century counterparts. A productive interrogation of Khoisan revivalism therefore requires being cognizant of the interplay between historical, biographical and societal contexts. This brings to mind Walters’ puzzle-metaphor I shared earlier: if Khoisan revivalism is about putting pieces of a puzzle together, what do the pieces and the end result look like? Studying this puzzle triggers all manner of reflections at the intersection of anthropology and history. What drives people like Walters or Revell? Why do people put up with hours of traffic to reach the Khoekhoegowab classes at the Castle or campaign for Cape Town International Airport to be renamed after Krotoa? When did Khoisan revivalism take off and who were its pioneers? How do you ‘revive’ a ‘culture’, let alone an ‘identity’? How do you prove that you are not ‘extinct’ and how do you leverage that survival to demand historical justice in the face of great scepticism? How has the state engaged with Khoisan revivalism? Since Khoisan revivalists speak of *both* historical and contemporary oppression, how do they relate to their fellow South Africans of different backgrounds? These are just some of the questions that have captivated me ever since I began studying Khoisan revivalism in 2014. Looking back, they can be brought back to a basic enquiry: *how and why do Khoisan revivalists engage with the past?* In the remainder of this introduction I explain how I translated my main interest into research questions and looked for theoretical inspiration accordingly. The first step, however, is to position myself vis-à-vis the existing research on Khoisan revivalism.

---

<sup>11</sup> Ngugi wa Thiongo (1986, 3) famously likened the impact of colonialism to the dropping of a “cultural bomb” along similar lines. This description of Cape Town might very well be inspired by his writings.

# **Researching Khoisan revivalism: challenges and opportunities**

## **Khoisan identity in post-apartheid South Africa: debating instrumentalism**

As I will show in greater detail in Chapter Two, early research on the Khoisan was preoccupied with features that supposedly made them ‘living fossils’: their ancient archaeological record, physical features, click languages and moribund culture. While times have changed, studies continue to be biased towards areas where the ‘remaining Khoisan’ are located, i.e. the Kalahari Desert’s reaches into Namibia, Botswana and to a lesser extent, South Africa. Scholars have consequently written mainly about the San, and to a far lesser extent the Griqua, both groups residing mostly outside Cape Town and therefore believed to evidence a greater degree of continuity with the past (see e.g. Waldman 2007a; 2007b). As the apartheid regime was on its way out, however, Khoisan identity began to be overtly mobilized in other locations and among different groups of people than academics were accustomed to. Some anthropologists did take notice and the first study on Khoisan revivalism (as I have defined it) followed suit. In their pioneering publication, South African anthropologists John Sharp and Emile Boonzaier (1994) studied the mobilization of Nama identity in the Northern Richtersveld in the Northern Cape in the 1990s. The authors wondered why the inhabitants had recently traded in their identity as Coloured for ‘Nama’, a subgroup of the Khoisan, since, “by any ‘objective’ measure of similarity to, and difference from, the culture of the pre-colonial inhabitants of the region, contemporary people are less Nama than their forebears were” (Ibid., 405). Sharp and Boonzaier (Ibid., 406-407) argued that this shift in identification was linked to debates about a recently established national park in the area. By claiming an indigenous identity, residents could bolster their claims to the land, and by extension, their rights to benefit from, and be included in, the establishment of the park. Inspired by Hobsbawn and Ranger’s (1983) famous thesis on the invention of tradition, Sharp and Boonzaier concluded that Nama identity was therefore a “controlled performance”:

It is role-playing, in many ways like acting on a stage. [They] identify strongly with the part they play [...] at the same time they are able, as good actors are, to step back, out of character, and consider their part from a distance [...] [T]hose who assert this identity do so with a conviction that is tempered by a self-conscious reflexivity (Sharp and Boonzaier 1994, 415)

It is important to note that the authors were writing in the tradition of so-called *exposé* anthropology, the strand of social anthropology that had for decades opposed *volkekunde*, the pro-apartheid branch of anthropology premised on biologically determined ethnic groups and races (Sharp 1988, 79; Dubow 1994, 361). According to *volkekundiges*, ethnicity and race — the two were often conflated — were not in themselves in need of explanation, but could explain behaviour (cf. Sharp 1981; Gordon 1988; Van der Waal 2015). The apartheid regime drew on this reasoning to promote their ideology of separate development, i.e. the belief that ethnic groups were best serviced (and exploited) by catering to their distinct ethnic needs. Academics like Sharp and Boonzaier countered such views by drawing on the currently prevailing paradigm of social-constructivism, which holds that identities, ethnicities and much else is best understood, not as self-evident, but as the result of dynamic and complex processes of social construction (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009, 24). As the name implies, *exposé* ethnography applied this critique to ‘expose’ the constructed nature of the notions ethnicity, race or tribe that apartheid was built on (Robins 1996, 16). To many, these were in fact forms of false consciousness (Wilmsen, Dubow and Sharp 1994, 347). Inspired by Marxism, critics argued that such concepts were being exploited by elites in the pursuit socioeconomic resources or domination over others. Race and ethnicity were masking what ‘really’ mattered, class (Van Wyk 2013a, 71; Sylvain 2014, 254). With a new South Africa around the corner, Sharp and Boonzaier were therefore uneasy about the mobilization of Khoisan ethnicity.<sup>12</sup> While their analysis was nuanced, they clearly intended to bring the point across that, as the

---

<sup>12</sup> The authors were not alone in expressing their concern. Most notably Robert Gordon (1992) had earlier advanced an argument that class issues among Khoisan in Namibia had been concealed by what he termed a “Bushman myth”. I should also flag that, around this time, the historical continuity of Khoisan identity was fiercely debated by archeologists and anthropologists in the so-called ‘Kalahari-debate’ (see Chapter Two).

title of their piece stated, “lessons” had to be learned from the fact that Nama ethnicity was being used as an instrument to get something else.

Reacting to their article, Steven Robins wondered if such an instrumentalist reading did not prevent taking away other important ‘lessons’. By seeing ethnicity as a performance, Sharp and Boonzaier were implying that the ‘true’ identity of the Nama was that of assimilated coloureds, thereby failing to appreciate that “cultural hybridity, fragmentation and inconsistency” was the devastating outcome of colonialism (Robins 1997, 26). To Robins, Nama identity was not “a shrewd and calculated performance of an aboriginal past while living a Westernised and modern present”, but “an act of recuperation and memory”, with meaning outside public or political settings as well. Robins (*Ibid.*, 40) was not denying that ethnicity was also being used instrumentally, but that this did not diminish the claims to the past of those involved. Instead of focusing on inconsistencies and contradictions, he pleaded for a hybrid view of Khoisan culture and identity (Jackson and Robins 1999, 92). Robins also suggested that the “controlled performance” was better understood as a form of strategic essentialism, a term coined by Gayatri Spivak (1988, 216) to highlight the self-conscious mobilization of ‘essentialisms’, i.e. (stereotypical) images and ideas that reduce reality to a singular essence in the pursuit of socioeconomic or political resources “from below” (Robins 2003b, 278; see also Phillips 2010, 48, Eide 2016, 2). For Robins (2003a, 131), this theoretical framework allowed him to avoid uncritically endorsing essentialist claims, but also deconstructing what he saw as the ‘weapons of the weak’ – a point that was also made by some of his colleagues (White 1995, 51; Lee 2006, 471). Crucially, this did not only take the agency of the Khoisan into account, but also the context in which they operate (Robins 2000, 58). Through nuanced readings of the mobilization of Khoisan identity in land claims and tourist settings, authors like Robins pointed out how Khoisan revivalism was not simply a means to an end, but an expression of a post-colonial condition.

The late historian Michael Paul Besten, whose work on Khoisan revivalism spans over a decade (2000-2011), elaborated on this hypothesis as well. Like Robins, he was unconvinced by what he called “crude instrumentalism” (i.e. Khoisan identity as a means to an end) and instead saw in Khoisan revivalism “an expression of extreme psychological, cultural or material disempowerment” (Besten 2000, 4-8), expressed



through “acts of reclamation and reaffirmation of identity and heritage” (Besten 2011b, 180). Besten showed how colonial and apartheid-era thinking affected both what Khoisan revivalism looked like and how it was viewed in South African society. In a 2011 article, he for instance explained how historians such as George McCall Theal (1837-1919) and their legacy of stereotypes and falsehoods about the Khoisan haunt contemporary thinking and research, most notably in history textbooks (Besten 2011a). While much of his work explicitly seeks to move past “crude instrumentalism”, the closing sections of his PhD thesis on Griqua identity from 1894 to 2004 seem to apply such as lens to the “antics” of non-Griqua Khoisan revivalists in Cape Town (Besten 2006, 296). These, he argues, are mostly mobilizing “coloured concerns” through the vehicle of Khoisan identity, for example in reaction to affirmative action policies. Besten seems somewhat guilty of a double standard here. While the Griqua and their engagements with Coloured identity merit closer historical scrutiny, the Cape Town-based Khoisan revivalists are somehow less complicated, less deserving of in-depth examination. I cannot fault Besten for not using first-hand encounters with Khoisan revivalists in his analysis — he mostly refers to newspaper articles when talking about them — as his PhD dissertation mainly reconstructs Griqua history. Nor are his arguments about Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town entirely unfounded. I wonder, however, how much his views would have differed had he engaged in a more in-depth way with the people he was writing about — or for that matter, why some of his other writings on the subject were more nuanced.

There is a pattern here: a commonplace scepticism towards Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town in particular, often based on little empirical research. According to critics, Khoisan revivalists are opportunistically mobilizing essentialisms, peddling inflated and inaccurate claims, and promoting retrograde traditionalism and ethnic chauvinism (see e.g. Adhikari 2005, 186; Oomen 2005, 113; Erasmus 2017, 113-114, 119; 2019, 498-499). Ciraj Rassool (2009, 115-116) for instance saw in Khoisan revivalism ominous signs of “a belated pitch for an accelerated route to ethnic formation in the name of Indigenous identity”, ironically taking place after apartheid. Others, like Besten, argued that Khoisan revivalism (in Cape Town) is to a great extent cloaked Coloured identity politics (Hendricks 2004, 123-125; Fauvelle-Aymar 2006; Ruiters 2009; Jacobs and Levenson 2018); “nothing less than a form of brown nationalism”, as one pundit put it (Kombuis 2013).

These critics tend to view the persistence of race and ethnicity as a dangerous intellectual mistake, the remaining vestiges of which still need dismantlement (Furlong 2012, 58; Winkler 2017; Rassool 2019, 365; see Conclusion). However, this unidimensional line of reasoning conflates identity constructions from below with top-down manipulations by colonialists; leaving little room for agency and foreclosing the possibility that Khoisan revivalism is about Khoisan-related issues as well. In their “unreflective deconstructionism” (Sylvain 2014: 259), such critiques seem disinterested in the contextual and postcolonial factors Robins and others highlighted. To be sure, as I will show, critics diagnose worrying trends in Khoisan revivalism, but Khoisan revivalists do not all share the same motivations or politics. Khoisan revivalism also has a role in private, non-political life. It might be embedded in several political contexts, but it is not reducible to them (see also Alcoff 2000).

In short: however useful in discerning certain aspects of Khoisan revivalism, instrumentalism’s a priori framing of ethnic identity as an invention or essentialism that is strategically mobilized to procure power and resources bespeaks a lack of curiosity in its various other meanings. These meanings might explain Khoisan revivalism’s appeal more so than explanations that solely focus on the politics of entitlement. I will give countless other examples in this thesis to make this point, but take the Khoekhoegowab classes at the Castle I mentioned earlier, for instance. These could hardly be framed as ‘cloaked Coloured identity politics’ or ethnic chauvinism. If the goal is to account for such activities in order to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of Khoisan revivalism, the analysis needs to appreciate the unique processes and motivations that are driving Khoisan revivalists. This not only entails complementing instrumentalist understandings and taking contextual factors into account, it also requires looking beyond land claims or tourist settings to more unconventional sites. As I show next, it is perhaps not surprising therefore that research on Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town is currently laying the groundwork for such an approach.

## **Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town: reorienting the research agenda towards identification, emic perspectives and indigeneity**

When Norwegian anthropologist Siv Øvernes (2019, 1, 3) began conducting fieldwork among people living on the streets of Cape Town in the late 1990s, she was surprised to find an awareness of Khoisan identity among them. As she recounts in her recent monograph, *Street KhoiSan: On belonging, recognition and survival* (Øvernes 2019) — to date the most in-depth examination of Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town — the experiences of her interlocutors resonated strongly with her own relationship to her Sami and Kven ancestry. As with Khoisan identity, the latter were for a long time suppressed in the context of assimilationist policies, but were once again widely asserted in recent decades in Sápmi, Northern Scandinavia. Throughout her book, Øvernes weaves these autoethnographic reflections into sensitive explorations of “the appearance of a people presumed dead” (see Øvernes 2002, 173). She found little evidence to back up an instrumentalist explanation of why this was occurring, so decided instead to explore how Khoisan identity provided a strong psychological sense of belonging. Rather than scrutinizing whether her interlocutors *are* ‘indigenous’ (see below), she explored *why* it was “meaningful to claim this identity in today’s Cape Town” (Ibid.). While Steven Robins and Michael Besten had previously suggested to take Khoisan belonging seriously, Øvernes’ work is ground-breaking for the extent to which it explores this argument through ethnographic fieldwork in Cape Town, where continuity with the Khoisan past is often deemed to be most problematic. She ultimately narrows down her argument about Khoisan identity among people living on the streets of Cape Town to “five dimensions”:

[A] sense of having been tricked at some early stage which has led to the current situation of powerlessness and poverty; having been reminded of this connection though stigmatising referrals and branding by others; ideas and knowledge about family connections to the people of the arid Karoo; certain values of sharing which were spoken of as 'the ways of our people'; and finally, self-naming. The latter is by far the most important. What people say about themselves should never be ignored (Øvernes 2019, 230)

As I will show, Øvernes' take on Khoisan identity is directly relevant for my own observations, particularly the links between socio-economic marginalization and identity, references to areas outside of Cape Town as embodying continuity with the Khoisan past (in her case, the Karoo), and, indeed, most of all the emphasis on "self-naming". While Øvernes leads the way in taking "what people say about themselves" seriously, researchers have looked into Khoisan revivalism in recent years with similar methods and questions. Justin Brown and Ana Deumert (2017), Shanade Barnabas and Samukelisiwe Miya (Barnabas and Miya 2019), and Heike Becker (Becker 2017) have written about language activism and the motivations behind the revival of Khoekhoegowab (in Cape Town). William Ellis (2019) has recently published an ethnographic interpretation of Khoisan traditional leadership, including among Khoisan revivalists. Aside from my own work on indigeneity and land claims (Verbuyst 2015, 2016), Chizuko Sato (2018), Duane Jethro (2017) and Katharina Schramm (2016) have also written on the subject. Scholars that openly identify as Khoisan have increasingly contributed to these debates, such as Berte van Wyk (2014) and June Bam-Hutchison (Bam 2014; Bam-Hutchison, 2016).<sup>13</sup> Bam-Hutchison's work is especially relevant, as it deals with issues of identity, belonging and social justice in the Cape Town area. This re-orientation in the research agenda is also discernible in studies that do not deal with Cape Town: for example Sarah Ives' ethnography of the Rooibos industry in the Cederberg region (2017), the popularising ethnographies of the Hessequa and Karretjie people by Michael de Jongh (2012, 2016), or Sharon Gabie's (2014, 2018) study of the aforementioned Katz-Korana Royal House in the Northern Cape and everyday Khoisan belonging. I also note the significance of Itunu Bodunrin's PhD research about !Xun<sup>14</sup> and Khwe identity in Platfontein (2018). His work pioneers the study of urban Khoisan identities outside of Cape Town, although the potential of such an approach for the study of Khoisan

---

<sup>13</sup> June Bam-Hutchison has also written a novel under the penname 'Musuva' (2010), which explores, among other things, the role of Khoisan belonging for coloureds in Cape Town during apartheid and the overall devastating legacy of colonialism. Please note that Bam and Bam-Hutchison refer to the same author.

<sup>14</sup> When using such symbols in this thesis, it merely reflects the author/interlocutor's spelling. For the pronunciation of such symbols, see Brown and Deumert 2017, 575-576.

revivalism was already noted by Piet Erasmus in 2012, who conducted research on the revival of Koranna identity in the Free State Province (Erasmus 2012).

These studies, which I engage with more thoroughly in later chapters, not only show the increased attention towards Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town and elsewhere, but also a shift from ‘identity’ to identification, in which I discern a promising research agenda. Whereas classical approaches to ethnicity/identity viewed these as bounded ‘innate’ units, the seminal work of Frederick Barth (1969) reframed them as dynamic outcomes of a complex process of social construction (see also Banks 1996, 12). The research on Khoisan revivalism I mentioned in the previous section used such a lens to study the contextual factors that make Khoisan identity politically meaningful, but the abovementioned work adds another dimension by also examining emic perspectives, i.e. what the identity means to the people themselves (see Chapter One). Various anthropologists have advocated for more research on ethnicity along these lines as instrumentalism only partially accounts for its enduring appeal (Sharp 1997; De Jongh 2007; Becker 2010). Instead of asking what ethnicity is or studying the contexts which shape it, this kind of research asks why it is meaningful for those who identify with it (see e.g. Alcoff 2000, 325; Hale 2004, 463; Jenkins 2008, 11). These emic perspectives have ‘real’ effects on what Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper (2000, 18-20) referred to as the understanding of self, groupness and the social world at large. In following Brubaker’s (2004) suggestion to avoid reducing ethnicity automatically to groups, Khoisan identity — which I use in this thesis as a synonym of Khoisan ‘identification’ for stylistic reasons only (see Jenkins 2008, 14-15) — is understood as unfolding in *both* political and existential contexts (see also Banks 1996, 182). In conforming to this reasoning, Andreas Wimmer’s (2008, 973) Weberian definition of ethnicity as “a subjectively felt sense of belonging based on the belief in shared culture and ancestry” is satisfyingly succinct. To better understand how individuals reify such ‘subjectively felt senses’, Brubaker and Cooper (2000, 2, 5) suggest going “beyond” the analytical tools of ‘identity’ or ‘ethnicity’, and explain instead how and why interlocutors themselves experience and couch various moments, people and contexts in those terms.

I take a similar approach with regards to the loaded term ‘indigenous’, which is central to Khoisan revivalism, but considered particularly controversial in the South African

context due to the many meanings that are attached to it. While my research does not evaluate whether Khoisan revivalists conform to a certain set of criteria to qualify as ‘indigenous’, I need to allocate some space to the contentious issues that this question gives rise to in a South African context, as these will unavoidably resurface throughout this thesis, and explicitly in the Conclusion.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps the biggest controversy flows from indigeneity’s connotations of prior occupancy, i.e. the question of who was the ‘first’ to settle in South Africa? There is some consensus that the San are the oldest inhabitants of Southern Africa. A 2010 publication in *Nature* even referred to the San as “the oldest known lineage of modern human” in reference to the hypothesis that their descendants from roughly 100,000 years ago gave rise to the first modern humans (Moran 2009, 4; Schuster et al. 2010, 943). The rationale for distinguishing between Khoi and San in this regard relates to contested archaeological and historical evidence that suggests different modes of subsistence: the former based on pastoralism, the latter on hunting and gathering (see Chapter Two). If one accepts this distinction, then it entails that the Khoi came from northern Botswana (some say East Africa) to inhabit the Western half of South Africa about 2000 years ago (Elphick and Malherbe 1989, 3; Lee 2006, 462; Barbieri et al. 2014, 446). Bantu-speaking populations — whose origins are also disputed — settled the Eastern half of South Africa more or less 1800 years ago (Parkington and Hall 2010, 70; Schlebusch et al. 2016, 1365). The final sizeable demographic shift occurred from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century onward, with the arrival of European settlers and African and Asian slaves. The San are the only ones who can claim prior occupancy in this chronology; everyone else settled on South African soil later in time.

Yet who are the contemporary claimants of ‘San-prior occupancy’ and on what basis? Archaeological and genetic evidence clearly suggests different migration patterns, but this does not give way to unscrupulously linking historical populations to contemporary groups with the same modern ethnic categories (Parkington and Hall 2010, 70; Erasmus 2013, 46-47; Ulrich 2015, 19). Such simple equations leapfrog centuries of (conflictual)

---

<sup>15</sup> Together with Lorenzo Veracini, I elaborated on indigeneity in South Africa from a settler-colonial studies’ perspective (Veracini and Verbuyst 2020). This theoretical framework however falls beyond the scope of my thesis. Alternate data and research questions would also better service such an enquiry.

interactions, including changes in self-identification. Various groups identify as San today, not least the many Khoisan revivalists who do not accept the distinction between Khoi and San. One could hypothetically look at certain genetic markers instead. While the genetic strain (haplogroup) associated with the Khoisan is most prevalent among coloureds (although many non-Khoisan descendants also came to be labelled as such, see Chapter Two), it also features prominently among Bantu-speaking populations, and, to a lesser extent, among Afrikaners as well (Quintana-Murci et al. 2010, 611; De Wet et al. 2010, 150; Barbieri et al. 2014, 440). The question of how ‘much’ and which genetic criteria suffice to claim descent from the ‘first’ San is clearly arbitrary. It not only flirts with notions of genetic purity (cf. Erasmus 2013), but also flies in the face of a complex historical record of migration, assimilation and change. Edward Cavanagh’s (2013) study of the Orange River valley in the Northern Cape shows this clearly. The area was originally inhabited by the San, but settled at various points in time by different populations who displaced and assimilated each other in the process, including Europeans, Sotho-Tswana peoples, but also Griqua, who are themselves largely made up of Khoisan descendants (see also Frans 2009, 108; Schlebusch et al. 2016, 1365). Cavanagh (2013, 8, 15) argues on the basis of such entangled histories that South Africa is a country with “various degrees of indigeneity”. Others have similarly suggested that “[i]ndigeneity in South Africa is in fact layered. Waves of migration and immigration, over both land and sea, have produced degrees of indigeneity” (McDonald 2016a, 76).

While these authors have stopped short of explaining what sets these ‘degrees’ or ‘layers’ apart; they clearly intend to caution against clear-cut distinctions between “indigenous” and “non-indigenous” in a South African context; particularly when tied to notions of prior occupancy and genetic descent. The case against legally defining certain groups in Africa as ‘indigenous’ is often made on this basis as well, by arguing that indigeneity as an international legal category is based on South America, whose history of migration and colonization differs significantly (Lehmann 2006; Pelican 2009; Hodgson 2010a). As I explain in later chapters, this position also underpins the South African government’s unofficial stance on indigeneity, i.e. all Africans are equally indigenous to South Africa. Academics too have rejected ‘indigenous’ as an analytical concept in part because of its connotations of prior occupancy. Adam Kuper’s polemical essay *The Return*

*of the Native* (2003) stands out in this regard. Kuper not only warned that indigeneity embodied ahistorical conceptions of identity and culture, but that it was usually embedded in an inappropriate romanticism and retrograde politics. Anthropologists were ignoring that ‘indigenous’ is a instrumentalist re-invention of the discredited term ‘native’, or ‘primitive’, and instead took arguments made by indigenous people at face value out of a sense of political correctness and default activist stance (Kuper 2006, 22). This was a dangerous mistake, Kuper (2003, 390) argued, as claims based on prior occupancy are not unlike the exclusionary rhetoric of “blood and soil” championed by certain right-wing traditionalists and secessionists.

Responding to Kuper’s article, various pundits acknowledged that the concept ‘indigenous’ might engender essentialist rhetoric on occasion, but that it had to be retained since it refers to a distinct form of marginalization related to processes of assimilation and dispossession (Asch 2004; Gausset, Kenricks and Gibb 2011). Campaigns to seek compensation for, and recognition of this history should not be automatically cast as virtuous, but also not dismissed “as racist manipulations by unscrupulous opportunists” who seek to advance exclusionary agendas (Ramos 2003, 398). While some might reduce indigeneity to prior occupancy, many relate the concept to various other factors as well. There is no internationally-agreed upon definition, but it is common to refer to the so-called Cobo-definition that informs much of the United Nation’s discourse on indigeneity to argue that being indigenous relates to the following non-exclusive criteria: occupation of a territory prior to the arrival of dominant others, the maintenance of culturally distinct practices, self-definition as indigenous, and historical and contemporary marginalization (Maybury-Lewis 2003, 324; Niezen 2003, 19; Merlan 2009, 305). Others responded to the type of criticism that Kuper put forward by pointing out that most indigenous people do not seek secession or a privileged position when they campaign for self-determination, but equal rights and reparations from the state through the recognition of their distinct historical trajectories (Niezen 2003, 204; Kenrick and Lewis 2004, 9; Zenker 2011, 65). While recognizing that the two regularly overlap in practice, many have distinguished indigeneity from “autochthony” (i.e. the type of blood-and-soil rhetoric Kuper warned about) on this basis (see e.g. Geschiere 2011, 323). As



Andrew Canessa (2014, 168) put it: “Discourses of indigeneity have as much potential to create hierarchy as to dismantle it”.

As I already noted with regards to critics of Khoisan revivalism in general, I will show how both the conflation of indigeneity and autochthony, as well as the mixture of empowerment and disempowerment is discernible among some Khoisan revivalists. My main issue with Kuper’s essay is therefore not with its observation that indigeneity can be used to advance exclusionary agendas, but that he does not acknowledge that there might be other (more important) reasons for why people identify with it. ‘Indigenous’ is not an “indigenous concept”, but to many it has come to be profoundly meaningful as an emic signifier (Canessa 2018, 316). As Ronald Niezen put it: “It has been taken control of by its living subjects — reverse engineered, rearticulated, and put to use as [...] an expression of identity, a badge worn with pride, revealing something significant and personal about its wearer’s collective attachments” (Niezen 2003, 3, 221). Studying indigeneity as an emic signifier therefore not only lays bare the varied meanings it has for Khoisan revivalists, but also the complexities that arise from its diverse ascriptions, i.e. the tensions between Khoisan revivalists, the historical Khoisan, ‘indigenous’ as a legal category and indigeneity as lived experience. In the remainder of this introduction I suggest a conceptualization of indigeneity as an analytical lens in order to explore these emic interpretations and tensions in the most productive way. I also identify further gaps in the research in the process. I begin by explaining how articulation theory helps to set up such a framework, and then argue how a specific understanding of the role of the past in processes of indigenous revivalism is necessary to proceed with my research questions, which I detail in the final section.

## **Khoisan revivalist articulations of indigeneity**

If the goal is not to validate whether Khoisan revivalists *are* indigenous, but *why* and *how* they identify as such, one needs to move away from *a priori* definitions of the term and survey a diversity of interpretations instead. These can not only differ individually, but

also depending on the context. Indigeneity might be regarded as a legal concept, in terms of prior occupancy or a distinct mode of marginalization, but also in entirely unforeseen ways. To move beyond an “abstract indigeneity” (Cowlshaw 2012, 398) and study its various localized meanings instead, I found inspiration in ‘articulation theory’, a Gramscian approach first developed in the late 1970s by Ernesto Laclau, but elaborated on by scholars such as Stuart Hall (Angus 1992, 539; Hirsch 2015, 104). I single out Hall as his work relates closely to the aforementioned literature on identification. For Hall, ‘articulation’ not only connotes the act of expressing something in language, but also that of making and unmaking connections between elements that do not necessarily ‘belong’ to one another (Grossberg 1996, 141-142). Studying articulations therefore entails unpacking the seeming “unity” within a discourse, ideology and indeed, identity: under what conditions and at which moments are different articulations made, remade and unmade? Nothing can be taken for granted or explained by only referencing political or economic contexts; the ways in which individuals articulate these concepts to make sense of the social world around them is paramount. Applying this reasoning to identity and its relation to the past, Hall made the following observations that are highly relevant for research on indigeneity as well:

Cultural identity [...] is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being' [...] Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation [...] Far from being grounded in a mere 'recovery' of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past (Hall 1990, 225)

James Clifford was one of the first to recognize the potential of articulation theory for the study of indigenous identities. To him, the biggest advantage was that it sidestepped the debate on the (in)authenticity of indigenous claims by underscoring diversity and complexity (Clifford 2013, 54). As with any other articulation, indigenous identity is a rearticulation taking place under certain conditions. It is these conditions and the creative selection of elements (from the past) that make up the articulation that Clifford and others have focused on in their research (Clifford 2003, 88-90; see also Li 2000, 169).

As Kim TallBear (2013, 512) notes, this includes “acts of borrowing, interpretation, and reconfiguration”. Whereas TallBear speaks of “indigenous articulations of indigeneity”, I prefer not to add the qualifier ‘indigenous’ since this presumes an unproblematic indigenous subject at the base of the articulation. While sensitive to the problem at hand, I do not seek to debunk or endorse claims to indigeneity. I am interested instead in why and how it is articulated, and therefore speak of Khoisan revivalist articulations of indigeneity. Tania Li (2000) too preferred to speak of articulations of indigeneity in her study of indigenous identity in Indonesia. Li’s work is interesting because, like Clifford, she uses an ethnographic approach to hone in on the agency of the people doing the articulating, which forms the basis for her broader observations about where and when indigenous identities become pronounced (Li 2000, 153). However, like many of her colleagues, Li sticks to an analysis of articulations of indigeneity in the pursuit of political and economic resources, thereby running into the limits of instrumentalism pointed out earlier.

To be sure, it makes sense to focus on articulations in such contexts as entitlement claims regularly accompany claims to indigeneity. This also accounts for why much of the research on Khoisan revivalism has focused on land claims, including my own. However, as the limits of my previous research show, applying articulation theory to less politically charged settings as well has even more potential to unravel how indigeneity is shaped by Khoisan revivalists. While I did not use articulation theory in my MA thesis, I did something similar in practice. As I noted previously, I investigated what it meant for Khoisan revivalists in Cape Town to claim land. Through ethnographic research I came to the conclusion that claiming land, whether in abstract or concrete forms, was a way for Khoisan revivalists to express a wide range of grievances, some pertaining to land in the material sense, but mostly relating to Coloured identity, indigenous rights, belonging and healing — a hypothesis I revisit later on in this thesis. These issues were tied to land in a “symbolic” way, necessitating what I in accordance labelled a “symbolical interpretation” of Khoisan activism and land claims (Verbuyst 2016). In a way, I was arguing for Khoisan land claims to be studied as articulations. I even noted that claiming land was a way of “articulating a sense of loss [...] where hopes, frustrations and histories, both contemporary and distant, become enmeshed” (ibid., 93). Despite this language of

enmeshing and articulating, I did not explore the full implications of studying Khoisan indigeneity as an articulation. During my initial fieldwork I had come across various facets of Khoisan revivalism that were not articulated in relation to land or even explicitly political in nature, which made me wonder to what extent the arguments I made about land being a ‘symbolic’ issue were relevant for Khoisan revivalism in general.

As I embarked on my PhD research with articulation theory in mind, I became convinced that Khoisan revivalism is not so much a ‘movement’ with clear boundaries and aims — my assumption in my MA thesis — as it is a multifaceted phenomenon (i.e. articulation) affecting people in different ways and often for different reasons (see Chapter One). Indigeneity is not articulated by Khoisan revivalists in a univocal manner and I aim to scrutinize the various linkages that it engenders in order to appreciate the concept’s diverse roles in Khoisan revivalism. While the potential of articulation theory to study Khoisan identity has been noted by Shanade Barnabas and Samukelisiwe Miya (2019; see also Erasmus 2017, 54), further exploration and theorizing is required. The literature on the concept of ‘indigeneity’ itself points the way forward. In line with the shift towards identification in the study of identity, and indeed echoing premises of articulation theory, scholars have moved away from bounded definitions of indigeneity. The term has instead come to be theorized as a process of becoming (Byrd and Rothberg 2011, 3). Like much else in the social world, it is articulated by diverse actors in relation to various histories and representations (De la Cadena and Starn 2007, 3). With its connotations of prior occupancy in relation to others, indigeneity is not only geographically bounded, but also relational and retrospective (Ibid., 398). For this reason it has been described as a form of historical consciousness, forward looking, but anchored in the past (Graham and Penny 2014, 2). As Andrew Canessa (2008, 358) put it, “indigeneity is best understood as a contemporary social relation articulated in terms of the past”. This leads to a rather obvious realization on the face of it, namely that the past is central to articulations of indigeneity, including those by Khoisan revivalists.

While Keyan Tomaselli (2012c, 48) and Katharina Schramm (2016, 131) have advanced past-oriented approaches to indigeneity in the context of the Khoisan, and Itunu Bodunrin (2018, 75) wondered how his interlocutors in Platfontein constructed their indigeneity in relation to the past, an in-depth investigation of the uses of the past within

Khoisan revivalism remains to be carried out. Due to the predominance of instrumentalism, the role of the past has often been reduced to a reservoir of figures and events that can be called upon to buttress socio-economic or political claims. Richard Lee already flagged the limits of this approach roughly twenty years ago, when he wrote that “the issue of San and Khoi historical memory has barely been addressed” (Lee 2003, 84) and called for an “expanded anthropology” that would be able to appreciate how Khoisan revivalism generates new ways of studying indigeneity (Lee and Hitchcock 2001, 273). To understand Khoisan revivalism’s appeal and aspirations, one needs to appreciate the various ways in which the events, figures and cultural practices of the Khoisan past inform the equally diverging discourses and practices of Khoisan revivalists. If everything is indeed about their “history”, as the interlocutor in the opening quote suggests, it is key to learn what roles that past plays in their lives. While articulation theory lays bare the ways in which indigeneity is constructed, it does not say much about why this is the case (see also Hirsch 2015, 109). Some of the authors I mentioned previously have already begun to explore this question. To assist in this exploration, I argue next why I tailored my enquiry on a conceptualization of indigenous revivalism that centres on the relationship between past and present.

## **Indigenous revivalism: the past in the present**

I introduced Khoisan revivalism earlier as ‘a recent phenomenon about an ancient past’ to suggest it is as much about the present as the past. While I get to the relevant research on indigenous revivalism below, it is important to note that the relationship between past and present has received increased attention in recent years. Historians in particular have urged their colleagues to break with conventional research agendas and pay closer attention to the various ways in which people are engaging with the past outside of academia (Rosenzweig and Thelen 1998; Paul 2015; Aurell 2018; Bevernage et al. 2019; Palmié and Stewart 2019). Sources ranging from TV series and novels, to private recollections and re-enactments, are no longer dismissed as watered-down versions of

history, but valued as objects of study in their own right (De Groot 2015, 6; Landsberg 2015, 24). Various analytical concepts have been suggested to study such sources, each aimed at a particular aspect of the relationship between past and present. Some of these, such as ‘memory’ or ‘nostalgia’ are used in everyday conversation. Others, like “popular historymaking” (Rosenzweig and Thelen 1998, 3), “historical consciousness” (Seixas 2004; Pihlainen 2014) or “presence” (Bevernage 2016, 353) are of more recent coinage. Browsing this literature, each of these concepts and approaches made me reflect on particular aspects of Khoisan revivalism. Limiting myself to only some of them felt arbitrary.

Take ‘memory’ for instance, perhaps the most obvious choice for my research at first sight. After all, some define memory studies as a transdisciplinary field that investigates how, why and when individual and collective pasts are constructed and contested (Kansteiner 2002, 180; Berliner 2005, 200; Confino 2011, 41). The field’s findings that constructions of the past are dynamic, selective and biased are directly relevant for my research (Nora 1989, 8; Argenti and Schramm 2009, 2). However, to me, memory primarily refers to lived experiences and Khoisan revivalists are also engaging with a past that extends centuries beyond their lifetime (see also Poole 2008, 150). This does not disqualify memory studies all together out of a preoccupation with semantics. On the contrary, my point is rather that I cannot commit myself to a singular approach. With Wulf Kansteiner (2002, 181-182), I see concepts such as memory as but one of the many valid and overlapping approaches making up the aforementioned research agenda looking into history beyond academia. Some authors have in response suggested more open-ended concepts. Take for example Jorn Rüsen and his definition of “historical consciousness” as the activity whereby the “past is interpreted for the sake of understanding the present and anticipating the future” (Rüsen cited in Clark and Peck 2018, 2-3). But this concept is in turn too wide in scope, making it difficult to work with as an analytical lens. Perhaps applicability in empirical research is one of the reasons why Herman Paul (2015) has called for the study of “relations to the past”, more specifically the ways of “understanding, interpreting, or experiencing the past” that differ from academic historiography. Rather than differentiating between different ‘relations’ to the past, however, I prefer Alison Landsberg’s (2015) less limiting phrasing, “engaging the past”, also because it denotes a more active process.

All the while, this type of research on everyday historical experiences seldom makes use of anthropological methods (see e.g. Classen and Kansteiner 2009, 1). John and Jean Comaroff's (1992, 48) call for "an ethnography of the historical imagination" has not gained much traction. This is surprising since, as Stephan Palmié and Charles Stewart (2019, 2) remark in a recent volume: "How and why the past can and does become palpable in our present-day experience is a genuinely anthropological question". Grasping "how history is subjectively experienced" is necessary to understand why it is "significant and often affectively charged". Such questions are at the core of what has been termed "the affective turn" in history: "historical representation characterized by conjectural interpretations of the past, the collapsing of temporalities and an emphasis on affect, individual experience and daily life rather than historical events, structures and processes" (Agnew 2007, 299). As evidenced by the anecdotes of the *braai* I shared earlier, it is indeed striking how engagements with the past by Khoisan revivalists are emotionally charged and commonly made in reference to the present. As I noted previously, I scrutinize these dynamics by drawing on several concepts and strands of literature, some of which I introduce in Chapter Seven. However, in the next section I need to single out the literature on 'heritage' as it stands out in this regard, plays an important role in the South African context and chimes well with my conceptualization of indigenous revivalism.

### **Heritage as a process**

Heritage eludes easy definition. Laurajane Smith (2006, 1), a leading author in the field of heritage studies, explains how 'heritage' is indeed all at once about the past, its material remains, and about how these are engaged with in the present. Nothing is heritage by virtue of its mere existence as a material or immaterial reference to the past. Rather, heritage is the *process* through which those references are engaged with and given meaning in the present (Ibid., 1-3). As a contemporary process, "heritageisation" is more about the present than it is about the past, and with that, open to continuous selection, contestation and redefinition by a multitude of actors (Harvey 2001, 320). Heritage can be used to contest and assert particular views of the past, as well as to bolster or discount

identities (Smith 2006, 4). It is more often than not a site of struggle, where contestations over representation, exclusion and belonging tend to crystalize. This is certainly the case in post-apartheid South Africa, where museums, tourist sites and monuments that bear the marks of apartheid and colonialism are prime sites of contestation (McGregor and Schumaker 2006, 649). At the same time, the efforts of the African National Congress (ANC)-led government have also come under fire for allegedly solely commemorating figures that delivered the country from apartheid and embodied the spirit of reconciliation (Rassool 2000, 1; Marschall 2005, 78). This has been particularly contested by various minorities, such as Khoisan revivalists, who feel left out in such narratives (Meskell 2011, 63). Yet others have argued that the decolonization of heritage does not proceed fast enough or probes as deep as it should. Perhaps the most recent example were the 'Rhodes Must Fall' protests that swept across the country's campuses and beyond in 2015. Taking the removal of the statue of quintessential colonialist Cecil John Rhodes from the campus of the University of Cape Town as a rallying point, a wide range of grievances were voiced, from the lack of African perspectives in the curriculum to poor job prospects and the steep price of enrolment fees (Holmes and Loehwing 2016, 13; Oxlund 2016; see Conclusion).

Various scholars have commented on such developments by noting how heritage is primarily about subjective interpretations of the past, thereby putting it in direct competition with academic 'history', where dispassionate critical enquiry and the reconstruction of past events is traditionally at stake. Jean Comaroff (2005, 15) argued for instance that in South Africa "history seems to have been disappearing in the academy in direct proportion to the degree to which it is being made elsewhere – as popular revolution, as media spectacle, as national pageant, as intellectual property, as recovered memory, as therapy". For Ciraj Rassool (2000, 21), however, this did not necessarily spell 'the end of history', but rather that "historians who have chosen to regard 'Heritage' as an inferior domain have not understood the changed nature of their field" since it was "the most important sphere in which contests over South African pasts have been taking place". Echoing the abovementioned debates about history outside of academia, he took issue with assumptions that academic historians held a monopoly on truth claims about the past and that those of others constituted at best primary source material, and at



worst, a bundle of falsehoods and inaccuracies (Ibid., 4). Rassool (Ibid., 5; see also Witz, Minkley and Rasool 2017, 15) instead viewed both heritage and academic history as forms of “history-making” and called for the study of the differences in “categories, codes and conventions” between them. Rassool is not alone in pleading for the study of heritage as a way of relating to the past in its own right. David Lowenthal’s work (1998, 2015) is widely accredited as some of the most in-depth explorations of the topic (Gentry and Smith 2019, 1148). While Lowenthal (2015, 3) acknowledges that his work is Eurocentric and that his impressionistic writing style and eclectic source material might leave some readers wanting, I have found his observations to be highly valuable for my case. Although it is true that he focuses on the potential of heritage to foment societal polarization, he does not simply dismiss heritage as a dangerous lesser form of history, as some of his critics claim (Gentry and Smith 2019, 1157). Like Smith, Lowenthal views heritage as a continuous process of engaging with the past to fulfil present needs and shape identities (Lowenthal 1994, 43; 1998, 192). Heritage pursues different, yet equally important needs from ‘history’, but he warns that the two can at times be conflated in political settings – a subject I revisit at great length in Chapter Seven.

What Lowenthal’s work does not do, however, is explain why which ‘pasts’ are engaged with as heritage. As Smith (2006, 45) notes, “what exactly people ‘do’ – subjectively and culturally – at heritage sites or with the concept of heritage itself, is as yet an under-theorized issue in the literature”. She pleads in particular for more research on “the networks of meaning and practice” that influence the relationship between heritage and identity under the banner of ‘critical heritage studies’ (Smith 2006, 308; Gentry and Smith 2019, 1149). The bulk of Smith’s own research has drawn on critical discourse analysis to focus on how official (inter)national discourses on heritage constitute a “authorised heritage discourse” that defines what can and cannot be considered heritage. As I am interested in how and why Khoisan indigeneity is articulated, I will take inspiration from Smith and scrutinize a similar hegemonic discourse in my context, which I will refer to as the Khoisan extinction discourse (see below). As I detail in Chapter One, I will apply this approach in concert with ethnographic methods, the potential of which for heritage studies has been recognized (Jones, Mozaffari and Jasper 2017, 2). Ethnography not only accommodates my focus on the Khoisan revivalists themselves, it also allows me to study

the affective dimensions of their engagements with the past I mentioned earlier. In her most recent work, Smith and colleagues (Smith, Wetherell and Campbell 2018, 10) have shown how emotions are central to heritage as a “practice of meaning-making” and how, in this process, individuals constantly “draw on a mix of past personal and cultural meanings to address their current circumstances and aspirations” (Smith and Campbell 2017, 616). In line with my inspiration from articulation theory, it is this type of ‘mixing’ between past and present I am interesting in accounting for. In order to round off my analytical framework with which I will undertake this enquiry, I need to relate these insights on heritage to the specific dynamics of indigenous revivalism.

## **Indigenous revivalism**

If heritage is a process, then indigenous revivalism should be viewed as a particular type of heritage-as-process. The context through which it unfolds, the motivations that guide it and the various ways in which it expresses itself make it a distinct way of engaging with the past. I previously noted how there is a widespread belief that the Khoisan no longer exist as a distinct collective. Similar views about the supposed extinction of indigenous people elsewhere foreclosed the possibility of a vibrant indigenous presence, or indeed ‘revival’, until the global indigenous rights movement began to coalesce from the 1970s onward to challenge these notions (Soguk 2007, 15; Hill 2012b, 27). Prior to this, academics did not really pay indigenous revivalism any mind. Two noteworthy exceptions are Ralph Linton and A. Irving Hallowell’s 1943 paper on “nativistic movements” and Anthony Wallace’s 1957 piece on “revitalization movements”. While these texts are outdated, as I show below, some of their arguments were remarkably ahead of their time. Wallace (1957, 265) viewed ‘revitalization’ as “a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture” and Linton and Hallowell (1943, 230-232) observed that revivalism was a calculated response that involved a transformation of elements from the past to suit present needs, where ‘authenticity’ was of little relevance. It is possible that these arguments were inspired by the anti-colonial discourses of their time, such as *Négritude*, which rallied a wide range of anti-racist poets, activists and writers under its banner from the mid-1930s onward, most notably Léopold Senghor and

Aimé Césaire. It became clear to these intellectuals that they would never be accepted as 'French' in the same way as their colonizers. Instead of further distancing themselves from their African heritage, the correct response was to take pride in it in order to cultivate a revolutionary historical "consciousness" (Césaire 2000 [1950], 92). As Albert Memmi (2003 [1957], 135, 146, 149) argued, colonized people were alienated from their own past as it had been replaced by that of the colonizer through education programs. For Memmi (Ibid., 168) and others, the turning point in the anti-colonial struggle was the rejection of assimilation, including the historical narrative it propagated. While the answers are found in the pre-colonial past, Césaire (2000 [1950], 52) warned that the aim of *Négritude* was not a fetishist repetition of the past, but a creative return to origins (see also Nielsen 2013, 448).

As colonial legacies endure, so too have variations on the theme of *Négritude*. Its relevance for the case of indigenous revivalism lies in its rejection of assimilation and concomitant embrace of roots (see e.g. Clifford 2013, 16; Coulthard 2014, 131). From an "indigenous awakening" in Latin America (Canessa 2018, 313), to the mobilization of the Sámi in Northern Scandinavia (Nyseth and Pedersen 2014) and the 'Maori Renaissance' in New Zealand (Gagné 2013, 34), indigenous people around the world have indeed been seeking to address and resolve legacies of dispossession and assimilation along the lines of *Négritude*. As is the case with Cape Town, assimilationist policies have alienated people from their indigenous ancestry in urban areas more than anywhere else. As the majority of indigenous people currently live in cities (Gagné 2013, 4; Watson 2014, 391; Peters and Andersen 2014, 1), this is also where most people take on a new identity as 'indigenous'; giving rise to a growing demographic that has been referred to as "New Identifiers" (Watt and Kowal 2019, 63) or "Reclaimers" (Jacobs and Merolla 2017, 64). Ironically, whereas cities were once seen as antithetical to indigenous presence, they are now facilitating indigenous revivalism (Sissons 2005, 39; Liu 2014, 103). And yet, there is a lack of research on urban indigeneity (Nyseth and Pedersen 2014, 133; Peters and Andersen 2014, 2) and newly identifying indigenous people (Culhane 2005, 297). As I will show, not only does the rural stereotype persevere in South Africa as it does elsewhere, the authenticity of urban indigenous identity is also disproportionately met with scepticism (Sissons 2005, 159; Gagné 2013, 39; Maddison 2013, 295).

The debate on ‘authenticity’, which I revisit at length in Chapter Seven, tends to distract from the more relevant examination of what indigenous revivalism means as a socially significant process. In this regard I am fond of Chris Andersen and Evelyn Peters’ (2014, 11) description of urban indigenous identities as “complex, highly vernacular engines of Indigenous cultural power”. In cities, indigeneity all at once “survives, adapts, and innovates” (Ibid., 2). Indigenous revivalism is indeed not about reconstructing the past as it was once, but about an active, selective and creative engagement with the past in ways that best accommodate the needs of the present (Linnekin 1983, 245; Alfred 1995, 179; Rappaport and Tavuzzi 1998, 179; Coburn 2016, 298). The debate over whether or not this constitutes ‘genuine’ or ‘spurious’ heritage has ceased to be one for decades at this point (Handler and Linnekin 1984, 287-288). Researchers have long realized that, as with heritage, identities and traditions are continuously adapted (Linnekin 1983, 241; Handler and Linnekin 1984). As Thomas Spear (2003, 4) noted in his critique of the literature on the invention of tradition, ‘traditions’ are never invented out of thin air, but are always adaptations and manipulations of historical precedents. In this sense, there is nothing distinctive about the articulation of indigenous identity in indigenous revivalism. Indeed, unlike others, I do not make an argument that there is something ‘indigenous’ about the ways in which my interlocutors engage with the past (see e.g. Rappaport and Tavuzzi 1998; Borofsky 2000; Clifford 2013, 28).

I would put it differently: there is something unique about the historical and contemporary *contexts* in which Khoisan revivalism unfolds, which in turn engender specific ways of engaging with the past. As Steven Robins pointed out (see above), the fragmentation caused by colonialism partially accounts for the fact that indigenous identities are articulated through “entangled, compromised, unexpected histories” (Clifford 2013, 183). Conversely, as Jonathan Friedman (2002, 30) remarked, if identities are couched in the language of essentialism then this should be approached as a “social phenomenon rather than shunned as a terrible mistake”. Maximilian Forte (2005, 27, 32), who places indigenous revivalism at the crossroads of “total absence and seamless continuity”, argues in this regard that the “reengineering of indigeneity” cannot be reduced to the political and economic contexts in which it is embedded. The point here is not merely that strategic essentialism is encouraged by a specific type of politics, but

that there is more to essentialism than politics. All essentialisms are also not ‘fake’. Moreover, as Stuart Hall (1990, 224) reminds us, the feeling of having rediscovered a previously lost or suppressed “essential identity” or “hidden history” is a powerful one that should not be taken for granted. My fieldwork showed that there is indeed something emotionally appealing and comforting in an essentialist view of Khoisan indigeneity, whether mobilized in a political context or not. This brings to mind Avril Bell’s (2014a, 122) suggestion to avoid looking at indigenous revivalism solely through the prism of strategic essentialism or resistance, as doing so misses the “positive politics of recovery” that underpins it — another notion I develop at great length in Chapter Seven. As Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel (2005, 611) explain, indigenous revivalism begins with individuals defining their own indigeneity and then using this self-definition to engage in “everyday acts of resurgence” in the world around them. “Being indigenous” is therefore ultimately about “thinking, speaking and acting” in accordance with one’s own articulation of indigeneity, whether in mundane or politically charged contexts (Ibid., 614). In the next section, I detail how I will examine both the mundane and the political across the several chapters that make up this thesis in order to bolster my interpretation of Cape Town-based Khoisan revivalism.

## **Research questions and outline of the thesis**

I began this introduction by illustrating how Khoisan revivalism is a growing multifaceted phenomenon in post-apartheid South Africa. I proceeded to position myself in the literature and to cultivate an analytical framework that is best suited to study its driving forces and diverse expressions. I framed indigeneity as a specific mode of identification, an individually and contextually-dependent articulation, shaped by both Khoisan revivalists and others. Crucial here is appreciating that the past is engaged with in the present in a setting of indigenous revivalism, which I described as a specific context of heritage-making. I do not want to scrutinize whether Khoisan revivalist articulations of indigeneity are ‘authentic’ or ‘accurate’, but why and how this notion is shaped in the

present, primarily by Khoisan revivalists themselves. My main research question is therefore rather broad: *how and why do Khoisan revivalists engage with the past?* I have split this up into three interrelated lines of inquiry:

- What are the historical and intellectual roots of Khoisan revivalism?
- Why and how are Khoisan revivalists making historical events, practices and figures relevant for the present and how are these embedded in diverging articulations of indigeneity?
- What does Khoisan revivalism entail for contemporary debates on the politics of indigeneity in a South African context?

I have already mentioned at various points that ethnography is my weapon of choice in grappling with these research questions, but I provide more detail on my methodological approach in Chapter One. Since arriving in Cape Town in 2014 I have essentially looked for any expression of Khoisan revivalism. I scanned social and print media for Khoisan revivalists I could contact as well as to find relevant events and sources. I stuck with ethnographic methods throughout my research, amounting to a total of more or less one and half years' worth of fieldwork (July 2014-January 2015; July 2017-October 2017; February 2018-July 2018; June 2019-August 2019). In this chapter I also review the delineation of my field site, the limitations of my approach, the various methods I deployed and the types of data I drew on to sustain my arguments and foreground emic perspectives. I have built up a considerable network of interlocutors over the years, which results in heaps of data, consisting mainly of interviews, observations, grey literature, newspaper articles and social media posts. My fieldwork approach brought me to universities, libraries and government buildings, but most of all to the aforementioned Cape Flats, where the majority of my interlocutors live and work. Across Greater Cape Town I attended book launches, protests, poetry recitals and everything in-between. In general, it is these kinds of materials that form the empirical grounds for my arguments.

After detailing my methodology, the two chapters that make up Part I, '*Lost in Categorization? The Khoisan extinction discourse and the intellectual roots and aspirations of Khoisan revivalism*', address the first research question and broach the third one by contextualizing the historical roots and political aspirations of Khoisan revivalism. In Chapter Two, instead of providing a history of the Khoisan as a people, I focus on the

historical trajectories of the ideas that have shaped, and continue to shape, (re)thinking about the Khoisan, from the early colonial encounters to the beginnings of Khoisan revivalism in the late 1990s. Inspired by the work of various scholars who have produced similar insights (Adhikari 2011, 21; Besten 2011a, 69, 77; Ellis 2012, 2, 10; Schramm 2016, 134; Parkington, Morris and de Prada-Samper 2019, 739, Øvernes 2019, 152-193), I refer to this set of ideas and stereotypes as the ‘Khoisan extinction discourse’ as its most enduring tenet is the notion that the Khoisan have ceased to be a distinct collective. The roots of Khoisan revivalism are located among those that began to reject this hypothesis in academic circles, but also among certain avant-gardists in society at large. In Chapter Three I go on to detail the trajectory of Khoisan revivalism in the post-apartheid era by discussing watershed events, legislative developments and key actors that have impacted it. Particularly relevant here are the engagements between the state and Khoisan revivalists regarding land restitution and traditional leadership. The chapter concludes with the observation that Khoisan revivalism is becoming a broad-based identity movement. The overview ends chronologically with the signing into law of the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act in 2019.

In Part II, *‘Ethnographic encounters with Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town’*, I present my fieldwork data across three chapters and continue addressing the third research question, but focus in particular on the second one. Rather than working with a series of in-depth case-studies, I arrange my data according to fieldwork-induced themes and observations. In Chapter Four and Chapter Five I discuss what I call the ‘Khoisan identity discourse’, i.e. how my interlocutors speak about their Khoisan identity and indigeneity and what it means to them. While Khoisan identity is manifestly plural, during my fieldwork I observed how Khoisan revivalists share elements of this discourse to varying degrees when identifying with or as Khoisan. In Chapter Four, I explain how the rejection of Coloured identity is linked to the notion of an ‘identity crisis’, which in turn is believed to cause the social ills in coloured communities and can only be remedied through a cathartic (spiritual/religious) embrace of Khoisan identity. As I show through countless examples, this identification is accompanied by a particular interpretation of the Khoisan past that emphasises relatability and historical continuity between the Khoisan past and personal histories and (collective) experiences of being known as Coloured. As I show in

Chapter Five, this identification is also regularly accompanied by a series of entitlement claims, which can include claiming land and traditional leadership titles, but also relate to other forms of everyday empowerment. Crucially however, these have to be understood in relation to specific contestations over who is legible to claim Khoisan indigeneity and on what basis. In Chapter Six, I shift the emphasis away from what Khoisan revivalists say to what they do. Looking at Khoisan revivalism in practice through a wide range of examples, I discerned two kinds of activities: those that seek to emulate the past as it is believed to have been at a certain point in time, and those that strive to revive Khoisan culture via the explicit introduction of novel elements; all the while acknowledging that this distinction is primarily analytical as Khoisan revivalism in practice always adapts (see above).

I provide my theoretical analysis of all this empirical material and my central research question in the sole chapter of Part III, *'Theoretical perspectives on Khoisan revivalism'*. Due to the recurrent emphasis on 'healing' in Khoisan revivalism I draw on several authors, but Ronald Niezen (2009) in particular, to focus on its ascribed 'therapeutic' qualities and how this reflects Khoisan revivalists' views of what constitutes an 'authentic' engagement with the Khoisan past. I argue that Khoisan revivalists' engagements with the past take on particular characteristics (e.g. emphasizing historical continuity, romanticizing or focusing on specific time-periods or events) as they need to first and foremost counteract histories of dispossession and assimilation and serve present needs. Defining authenticity as a subjective interpretation of the 'essence' of the past with the help of Laura Saxton (2020), I further posit that what is authentic in this setting is a result of in-group validation and takes on 'subversive' qualities in that content, source and medium are all not bound to a colonial legacy of what is regarded as 'accurate' or appropriate. Khoisan revivalists all at once replicate, disregard and appropriate these legacies as embodied in the Khoisan extinction discourse. To be sure, this type of 'subversive authenticity' in engaging with the past simultaneously poses a range of important conundrums, particularly when it forms the basis for entitlement claims.

In the conclusion I provide a summary of the main arguments of the PhD thesis and tease out the limitations of my research, which in turn allows me to make suggestions for future research. I also reflect on the societal, intellectual and political implications of how



we view and study Khoisan revivalism and revisit my third research question one last time. I do this in reference to recent developments regarding land reform in South Africa, but also by explicating the various reasons for why I chose “Khoisan Consciousness” as the title of this thesis.



# 1                      Defining a phenomenon, navigating a field: studying Khoisan revivalism through reflexive ethnography

*“Research is [...] a trans-directional revolving door or turnstile, marked by ironies, manifold negotiations, elasticity, zigzagging, disruptions, reflections, interventions, interferences, suspicions, friendships, enmities, disinterest, weeks of inactivity follow by days of feverish activity, and zones of instability where actors are always entering and exiting, exiting and entering [...] That is, where we work, the process is always already the product.”*

- Nyasha Mboti (2012, 63)

Nyasha Mboti’s description ought to resonate with anyone who is familiar with fieldwork. His turnstile metaphor captures that typical feeling during fieldwork that everything is constantly shifting and increasingly perplexing. From the moment I set foot in Cape Town, my research has felt like the exploration of a never-ending maze of identity politics, the past and the present, notions of (in)authenticity, townships and government meeting rooms, international concepts and their local appropriations, and much, much more. Like Mboti, I recall as many moments of lucidity and confidence, as episodes when I felt lost at sea. The complexities of social reality make fieldwork demanding and messy, but for those same reasons creative and rewarding. I could share various anecdotes to that effect, but in and of themselves such reflections are superfluous. Rather, following Mboti, I pay closer attention in this chapter to how ‘the process was already the product’;

to how I manoeuvred, for better *and* worse, through my ‘maze’ and what this entails for my arguments about Khoisan revivalism. This is not a triumphalist narrative of how I ultimately conquered my challenges and ended up with the most relevant sources and methods. This would be of little use to anyone, least of all those seeking to do similar fieldwork. Rather, ‘methodology’ involves examining how and why methods were selected and applied in practice (Carter 2018, 397), particularly in a context of fieldwork, where “the experiencing body and reflective consciousness of the anthropologist becomes the crucial scientific instrument” (Kapferer 2007, 82; see below).

As much of my argumentation relies on my own interpretations, it is imperative that I elucidate my positionality and role as a fieldworker and the choices that I made in this capacity; an exercise known as ‘reflexivity’ and a core value of anthropological research since the 1980s (Salzman 2002). Reflexivity is premised on the notion that no aspect of research is self-evident or unaffected by this. According to Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldbberg (2009, 8, 9), this requires researchers to be permanently aware of the “complex relationship between processes of knowledge production and the various linguistic, social, political and theoretical contexts of such processes, as well as the involvement of the knowledge producer”. Others similarly define reflexivity as a “turning back on oneself” (Davies 1999, 4), a “continual internal dialogue” (Berger 2015, 220), or a process of “constant awareness, assessment, and reassessment” (Salzman 2002, 806). The aim is to contemplate the influence, for better or worse, of personal and contextual (subconscious) biases on the research process and outcomes, from the gathering and interpretation of data, to the political aspects of the study and the ethics of authorship (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009: 11; Berger 2015, 221). It is not a matter of ticking of boxes from a list of issues to be mindful of, such as ‘biography’, ‘ethics’ or the suitability of certain ‘methods’. Although no aspect is off limits, reflexivity is productive in so far as it speaks to the specifics of the research(er) at hand (Berger 2015, 220). By their very nature, not all biases can be detected by the author, or by others for that matter; neither is reflexivity meant to be an exculpatory “audit trail” that mimics the experimental procedures of the exact sciences to bolster scientific credibility (Hammersley 2010, 29; Bell 2014b, 519; Lichterman 2017, 35). Rather, reflexivity invites readers to be on the lookout for aspects that seemingly went unnoticed, yet significantly impacted the

research. This does not necessarily make arguments more convincing, but certainly more transparent and open to contestation (Kapferer 2007, 82; Lichterman 2017, 35, 38). Ultimately, reflexivity strives towards what Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2009, 222) termed an “open text” where the distance between reader, researcher and researched is minimized.

Reflexivity is therefore hopefully apparent throughout my thesis, but this chapter in particular contributes to this effort by scrutinizing how, when and why I made choices that meaningfully impacted my research. I begin by explaining in the first subchapter why ethnography serves as my primary means of data collection. I define ethnography as a distinct analytical mind-set focused on interpreting emic perspectives, rather than a set of methods. In the second subchapter I detail how I gathered data in practice. Throughout this discussion of sources and methods, I expand on relevant aspects of research ethics. I also explain how my fieldwork was characterized by a productive tension between my research questions and fieldwork-induced definitions of Khoisan revivalism. Since fieldwork forms the empirical basis for my arguments, this realization constitutes a vital caveat.

## **1.1 Ethnography and the interpretation of emic perspectives**

As I recounted in the introduction, I have been trying to understand what drives Khoisan revivalism for over six years at the time of writing. More than anything else, I remain interested in the perspectives and experiences of the Khoisan revivalists themselves. These so-called emic perspectives (as opposed to the ‘etic’ perspectives from others) are central in qualitative enquiry across several disciplines, but they are arguably particularly so in anthropological investigations (Snape and Spencer 2003, 3-4; Kapferer 2007, 81). It is therefore not surprising that I found ethnography alluring; a term that is often mentioned in the same breath as ‘anthropology’ or ‘qualitative research’. The debate is ongoing over what exactly constitutes ethnography and how it relates to anthropology, qualitative research or the practice of fieldwork (Denzin and Lincoln 2017,

46-47). I do not want to get side-tracked here by detailing the supposed boundaries between them, but rather focus on what they have in common. Many have suggested in this spirit that ethnography is a mode of verbal description, an analytical mind-set, rather than a set of methods, and characterized by a preference for bottom-up perspectives over top-down theoretical ones (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 230; Krzyżanowski 2011, 232; Ingold 2017, 88). Ethnography engages with the theoretical depending on its ability to yield valuable explanations of the empirical, not the other way around (Kapferer 2007, 81; Schiller, Reyna and Eckert 2016, 136). I too am primarily intent on understanding the phenomenon of Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town and engaging with theoretical concepts in that order — a point I elaborate on below.

Empirically-based “thick descriptions”, as Clifford Geertz (1973, 7) referred to them, are favoured in ethnographic research because they describe not so much external factors (i.e. “thin descriptions”), but the “[thick] layers of meaning and symbolism that characterize human action and social phenomena” (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009, 130). Thick descriptions are bound to emic perspectives; they speak to anthropologists’ desire to understand how people perceive of, and act in, the world around them (Carter 2018, 398). As Geertz (1988, 16) put it, ethnographers want “[t]o discover who people think they are, what they think they are doing, and to what end they think they are doing it”. To this end ethnography requires a certain degree of open-mindedness and cultural relativism (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 230). John and Jean Comaroff (2003, 164, 166) argued that ethnography begins by seeing and listening, and appreciating the “polyphony of perceptions, valuations, means and ends” that make up social reality. Ethnographers avoid viewing things primarily through a lens of preconceptions and theories; the practice in fact encourages theoretical eclecticism and exposing the contingency of theories and models (Kapferer 2007, 88; Hammersley 2019, 579). This chimes well with my interest in indigeneity. As Dorothy Hodgson (2011, 215-216) learned from her study of Maasai identity in Tanzania, ethnography allows researchers to go beyond legal debates about the term and pay closer attention to how and why people themselves are engaging with indigeneity in everyday practices and discourses.

From theories to biases, as the classic dictum goes, ethnography is about ‘making the familiar strange, and the strange familiar’ (cf. Ybema and Kamsteeg 2009). For Geertz

(1973, 20), making the strange familiar entails “guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses”. Making those educated guesses does not require ‘becoming’ our interlocutors by ‘going native’, but rather obtaining “a working familiarity with the frames of meaning within which [people] enact their lives” (Geertz 2001, 16). Fieldwork is all about establishing this ‘working familiarity’; hence the premium placed on “detailed observation and prolonged first-hand experience” (Ingold 2017, 69) or “close-up, on-the-ground observation of people and institutions in real time and space” (Wacquant 2003, 5) in definitions of ethnography. Since each ‘field’ is unique, there is no single guide on how to carry out ethnographic fieldwork. Martyn Hammersley (2010, 36) suggested that ethnography is therefore less a matter of following procedures, but a craft based on situated decision making. All the while, he distinguishes several features of fieldwork that resonate with my own experience, particularly the need for an improvised mode of data collection (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 3; see below). I concur that the analysis is ultimately enriched by the wealth of the empirical material as a result of having “been there” in the field, rather than the meticulous application of specific methods (Geertz 1988, 3-4). The added value of ‘being there’ is not always evident to put into words, which is in turn occasionally cited to diminish ethnography as “unscientific” and anecdotal (Hammersley 2013, 1). This, however, misunderstands what ethnography aims for. Rather than laying claim to objectivity, ethnography is ultimately a reflexive “exercise in miscommunication”, inescapably confined to the specifics of the research, the researcher and the researched (Benzecry 2017, 26). Fieldwork is ‘undisciplined’ and elastic in the sense that it in fact demands the reinvention of research methods and theoretical models in line with local contexts and personal experiences; it is not a replicable experiment (Hazan and Hertog 2012, 1). A lot depends on luck and unforeseen encounters and findings (Rivoal and Salazar 2013, 178). The intricacies of doing fieldwork and interpreting data led Tim Ingold (2019) to conclude that it is more of an art than a science. Others too have found ethnography to be more impressionistic than explanatory in its ability to comment on the social world (Hammersley 2010, 29-30).

Ethnography is not an exact science, but it does not give licence to pure fabrication. Rather, as Claudio Benzecry (2017, 32) put it, one needs to realize that “[w]hat is going on

– regardless of our questions and theoretical perspectives – is not docile but resists our attempts to make sense of it, harden it into data, and make it into a fact”. As much as this impacted my definition and arguments on Khoisan revivalism (see below), it indeed does not disqualify the whole ethnographic endeavour. This observation rather prompts researchers to pay close attention to how they gather and interpret data. It is common to distinguish two methods in particular in this regard: interviewing and observation (Ingold 2017, 69, Davies 1999, 67). As the next section bears testament to, these certainly describe the most common activities of my fieldwork. However, ethnography ultimately involves gathering and utilizing whichever data that sheds light on the issues under scrutiny (see also Denzin and Lincoln 2017, 46). This, at least in my case, not out of a commitment to “triangulation”, i.e. the validation or legitimation of findings by using several methods and sources (Fielding 2012, 124), but because emic perspectives are found in various shapes and sizes. As a result, Hammersley and Paul Atkinson (2007, 3, 121) urge ethnographers to also take documentation and material objects under their purview: “[M]any of the social settings we study are self-documenting, in the sense that their members are engaged in the production and circulation of various kinds of written material”. As my thesis shows, Khoisan revivalism is definitely self-documenting.

Whether or not looking at these types of sources means that I carried out discourse analysis is a moot point, ultimately dependent on how ‘discourse’ is defined. Like ethnography, ‘discourse analysis’ is an umbrella term (Hammersley 2005, 2). Traditionally, it refers to the examination of ‘language as text’, for instance through detailed scrutiny of interview transcripts (Krzyżanowski 2011, 231, Hammersley 2005, 3). ‘Critical discourse analysis’, however, began examining discourses contextually, as ‘language in the world’ (Atkinson, Okada and Talmy 2011, 87). In this tradition, discourses refer to regimes of power that attempt to implicitly or explicitly regulate what can and cannot be said, represented and known about a subject, institution or social activity (Ashcroft 2013, 83). It is contested how much discourses exercise power and influence the behaviour of actors, *and* the other way around (Smith 2006, 14, 15). Studying discourses therefore requires an interdisciplinary approach and it is not hard to see how ethnographic data are indeed highly relevant here (Bucholtz 2001, 181; Hammersley 2005, 7-8; Atkinson, Okada and Talmy 2011, 87). Defined in this manner, I undoubtedly analysed



‘discourses’. One of my concerns is after all analysing how Khoisan revivalists make sense of their realities by contesting and drawing on a ‘Khoisan extinction discourse’. However, in keeping with my take on ethnography, I reiterate that it is not so much the distinct methods and sources *as such* that have defined my research, but my engagement with them *in practice*. To make this point more concrete, I now scrutinize my research practice in closer, reflexive detail.

## **1.2 Gathering data on an elusive phenomenon: heterogeneous interlocutors, reflexive methods and eclectic sources**

That I would carry out ethnography was one of the few things I knew for certain when I left for Cape Town to conduct my first stint of fieldwork, which lasted from July 2014 to January 2015. Little did I know at the time that I would return on multiple occasions, amounting to roughly one and a half year spent in the field (July 2017 - October 2017, February 2018 - July 2018, June 2019 - August 2019). As I noted in the Introduction, when I arrived in Cape Town I had not foreseen to stay there for my fieldwork, but instead came across Khoisan activists in the city somewhat by coincidence. In my MA thesis I describe how I established my first contacts in the field, which in turn caused me to abandon my rather naïve assumptions about Khoisan revivalism (Verbuyst 2015, 10-11). In essence, I had expected to engage with neatly bounded communities who were trying to reclaim specific plots of land. What I witnessed instead turned out to be fascinatingly more complex; a complexity that I am still trying to unravel. I remain uncertain about what Khoisan revivalism ‘is’ and whether I have the right type and amount of data to sustain my arguments. The ‘field’ is primarily an analytical construction of the researcher. As Darryl Stellmach (2020, 3) explains, not only is fieldwork contingent on a particular moment in space and time, it is also willed into being by the researcher when speaking and writing about it. When I asked my interlocutors to reflect on Khoisan identity, I possibly encouraged them to make connections that they otherwise might not have made (see below). To some extent, my definition of Khoisan revivalism is undoubtedly informed

by such feedback loops. Yet, as Stellmach (Ibid., 4) goes on to argue, this is precisely what characterizes the fieldwork process; it constitutes the researcher as much as the researcher constitutes it. Fieldwork experiences are not invalid because of this. Rather, they need to be put under detailed scrutiny with this dynamic in mind.

If anything, my research attempted to define and understand the undeniable revival of Khoisan identity in Cape Town and beyond. Is it a stretch to argue that observations relevant to Khoisan revivalism can be gleaned from this? In no way am I suggesting that this thesis is flawless or provides all the answers when it comes to Khoisan revivalism. On the contrary, I actively try to explicate my limitations. Considering where I might have failed is not to rationalize ‘mistakes’ after the facts. Contemplating failures, revisions and challenges is rather part and parcel of ethnographic fieldwork as it generates potentially revealing insights about the subject of the research itself (Cramer et al. 2016, 159). Various commentators have remarked in this regard that fieldworkers ought to be wary of feeling that they have collected sufficient data or devised a satisfying interpretation of what they observed in the field (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 90-91). Recall here the aforementioned directive to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar. For Anna Tsing, proper fieldwork entails constantly adapting research questions and reengineering methods to fit local settings (cited in Trundle 2018, 94). Much of it is figured out along the way and the result of continuous fine-tuning (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 4). More often than not, this means abandoning at least some of the goals and approaches set out in the initial research proposal (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 160). During my research I was continuously tempted to settle on a definition of Khoisan revivalism, only to be quickly frustrated by its inevitable limitations. As I came across new data that challenged my analytical deductions, I went back to the drawing board. This in turn pushed me to look for data that would fit my new mould. Ethnography is indeed “a delicate engagement of the inductive with the deductive”; a perpetual back-and-forth between data gathering and analysis (Comaroff and Comaroff 2003, 172; see also Rivoal and Salazar 2013, 180; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 235). Charlotte Davies (1999, 193) argued that analysis means “intellectual distancing from the minutiae of ethnographic observations”, but not too much, since going too far could render it “irrelevant to the lived experiences of people on the ground and neither grounded in nor answerable to ethnographic data”.

Ethnography strikes a delicate creative balance between several tensions inherent to the discipline (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 230). I already partly explained in the introduction how grappling with these tensions made me end up with a rather open-ended definition of Khoisan revivalism, which I reproduce here for ease of reference:

The increasing affinity towards, and politicization of, the Khoisan in post-apartheid South Africa, deriving mostly from a critical interrogation of the identity label Coloured, especially among those currently classified as such, whereby some (re)claim Khoisan identities, indigenous status and/or land and leadership titles

In line with the abovementioned understanding of fieldwork and ethnography, this definition makes peace with the ultimately elusive nature of Khoisan revivalism. More importantly, however, it is my way of straddling the particular and the general, a classic conundrum for ethnographers (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 233). There is a kind of fealty to the specific features of the local context that is studied, which, it is often argued, are at risk of being lost when theories are brought to bear on them. Yet, the same ethnographic data are bound to be the basis for at least some type of generalizing claim, whether explicitly theoretical or not. Having said that, the emphasis is usually on the particular and my research is no exception (Davies 1999, 93). My arguments are not necessarily representative of Khoisan revivalism as whole. Casting the net wide comes at a price. My definition clearly speaks to a wide variety of activities, too many for a single thesis to fully take into consideration.<sup>16</sup> In fact, as Part II will attest, Khoisan revivalism is branching out into ever more spheres of society, redefining itself in the process. Parts of this thesis might not age well as a result. And yet, I retain that through my study of the particular I speak to Khoisan revivalism as whole. Much of this effort hinges on the careful consideration of which type of data can be used to make claims about Khoisan revivalism in general, and which is too specific to do so. Ultimately, the degree to which readers will be convinced of my claims depends on which arguments I make based on which interpretation of which sources, i.e. the content of the following chapters. In the

---

<sup>16</sup> For a discussion of a similar methodological challenge in studying contemporary Māori identification in Auckland, New Zealand, see Gagné 2013, 50.

remainder of this chapter I look more closely at the process of data gathering itself. I begin by examining why I worked with particular sources during fieldwork and beyond, and what consequences flow from this selection. I then close with some reflections on the implications of my examination and interpretation of these sources.

### 1.2.1 Sources

My open-ended definition of Khoisan revivalism is the result of, *and* results in, working with eclectic sources and heterogeneous interlocutors. This approach expands on the network of Khoisan activists I cultivated during my MA research. Two organizations are worth mentioning as I continued interacting with them during my PhD research: the Institute for the Restoration of Aborigines of South Africa (IRASA) and the National Khoisan Council (NKC), mainly through its Western Cape representative, Chantal Revell. Particularly in my PhD research, however, I engaged with Khoisan revivalists with loose or no affiliations to groups or organizations. Others have posited that Khoisan revivalism is not so much a ‘movement’ made up several organizations, but “a profusion of groups and individuals with a variety of agendas who have claimed Khoisan identity” (Adhikari 2005, 177). I prefer speaking of a phenomenon since, to me, a collective or movement implies a degree of communality or organization which might be hard to pinpoint. While I am reluctant to clarify which kind of ‘phenomenon’ Khoisan revivalism is, I do reflect at greater length on some of its defining features in Chapter Seven. I did however constantly look for a modicum of communality while scouting for anyone who was overtly busy with Khoisan issues. This type of unstructured observation is common for ethnographic research in general, particularly during the early stages (DeWalt and DeWalt 2011, 10, 34). To increase my sample of Khoisan revivalists, I asked those whom I already engaged with to put me in touch with others (i.e. so-called snowball sampling) and I scanned various forms of offline and online media for Khoisan-related events that I could attend or people whom I could contact.

Taking a wide focus during my PhD research meant that I quickly gave up on my attempt to get a complete overview of all the actors who were busy with Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town. I cannot estimate how many Khoisan revivalists there are in the

city; an assessment that was also abandoned by Chizuko Sato (2018, 200), who carried out similar fieldwork. Even if I would make my definition more precise, such an attempt would likely remain futile. Not everyone who could be considered a Khoisan revivalist overtly self-identifies as such or joins a Khoisan-related organization (Sato 2018, 202, 206; Øvernes 2019, 11; see also Forte 2005, 15; Paradies 2006, 363). I ultimately defined people as Khoisan revivalists in my capacity as a researcher. Khoisan revivalism can be as subtle as a form of everyday identification; it does not need to be broadcasted far and wide. Some organizations and individuals regularly feature in the media, but many frequently do so with different names or titles, or disappear from the public stage seemingly from one day to the next. I was confused on more than one occasion to witness ostensibly recently ushered in Khoisan revivalists take central stage at events, official or otherwise, never to do so thereafter. Khoisan revivalism consists of a plethora of ‘chiefs’ and groups in flux who reach varying degrees of prominence (see Chapter Five). Contacting people was therefore not always easy. Websites are frequently not updated and pages on social media tend to become inactive quickly (cf. Sato 2018, 202).

This is not to say that social or print/digital media were not useful. I made extensive use of the website of the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (or PMG), an organization set up in 1995 to record public deliberations in the South African parliament (<https://pmg.org.za/>), to find and keep up with political debates on Khoisan issues. Websites of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (<http://www.cogta.gov.za/>) and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (<https://www.drdlr.gov.za/>) were similarly helpful. I also kept an eye on the main South African newspapers for relevant news, but I did not carry out an in-depth analysis of the media-reception of Khoisan revivalism as this falls outside the scope of my thesis. I did meticulously scan 24 issues of *Eerste Nasie Nuus* (hereafter ENN), an activist newspaper distributed all over South Africa (ENN 2017a, 2) and set up by prominent Khoisan revivalists Zenzile Khoisan and Debbie Hendriks in July 2013. In their words:

ENN is the media voice of the Khoi and Boesman Indigenous consciousness resurgence in South Africa. We carry public interest news and analysis directly related to the on-going fight for indigenous status recognition, specialised heritage

and history articles, writing on symbols and cultural practice and special pages dedicated to the revival of the ancient Khoi and Boesman languages (ENN 2013a, 1)

There are plans to make ENN available online, but for now only a limited amount of printed copies exist. I did not manage to get a hold of every copy as there is no clear outlet selling them. I received some from Zenzile Khoisan himself and others were donated to me by other Khoisan revivalists. While it appeared monthly for a while, it often came out whenever an issue was ready. What makes this source so invaluable is the fact that it mostly presents emic perspectives of Khoisan revivalists. This also allowed me to identify various potential interlocutors. Moreover, while explicitly activist in orientation, ENN frequently invites opposing parties to share their views. Nevertheless, it was not always clear who authored a specific contribution. Sometimes authors were mentioned, sometimes not. For consistency's sake, I therefore only mention page and date when referencing entries in ENN. ENN is in many ways the successor of a similar newspaper called *Eland Nuus*, where Zenzile Khoisan and Debbie Hendriks were also contributors. *Eland Nuus* was set up by Desmond Sampson in 2009 and had a strong focus on Khoisan issues as well, though not as exclusively as ENN. I am grateful to Sampson for sharing several copies. I will come back to these newspapers in subsequent chapters. For the sake of completion, I also mention grey literature as a valuable source under this rubric (i.e. documentation produced by my interlocutors, such as history books or political pamphlets), the details of which I will discuss as I draw on them in Part II.

Social media plays an ambiguous role in my research. As with news media, I did not focus on social media's role in Khoisan revivalism or set out to do a detailed analysis of it as a source (see e.g. Postill and Pink 2012; Mare 2017). Rather, when I began looking into Khoisan revivalism I made use of social media to contact Khoisan revivalists individually, and collectively as groups, mainly through Facebook and WhatsApp, which remain the most active platforms (cf. Sato 2018, 202).<sup>17</sup> As I got accepted into public and private chat groups, I noticed how interesting opinions and images were circulating there. Other

---

<sup>17</sup> When I began this research, other popular social media applications such as Twitter or Instagram were not widely used by Khoisan revivalists. I therefore did not follow up on these in the course of my research.

ethnographers too have picked up on peculiar dynamics between online and offline selves; something I come back to in Chapter Seven. I certainly did not enter these groups or made connections on social media with people with the intent of using any such content. Doing so without getting explicit informed consent would clearly be unethical. And yet, one could argue that where it is publicly available, it is part of the public domain. Moreover, whereas I could have disclosed my presence in the group as a researcher (which I did not do explicitly, but would have done should anyone had asked), I would have to do this at every occasion when a new user joined. With some groups consisting of hundreds of members, this is untenable. My explicit presence as a researcher would also potentially impact the nature of the discussions taking place (see below). As I was more interested in observing what was happening — I never posted anything myself. In the case of WhatsApp chat groups in particular, I was always admitted by someone who knew who I was and what my research was about. In these respects social media might form a grey zone when it comes to research ethics (Mare 2017, 659). Yet, it is more correct to err on the side of caution. If I found a particular post or image interesting, I made attempts to contact the user in order to get explicit informed consent to use the data. If this was unsuccessful, then I did not use the material. I also gave everyone the option to remain anonymous if they so wished, either by removing their name from the post, or altering what they said in a way that makes it impossible to trace quotes back to specific people (see below).

Informed consent is an opportune segue into a discussion of my networking among Khoisan revivalists at large. Every time I met a potential interlocutor, I introduced myself and disclosed my research intentions. I did so briefly and in my own words, but always mentioned how I would (not) use any potential information from our encounter. I only recorded interviews after being given explicit informed consent, which I captured in my audio recordings. I did not work with written informed consent forms. Rather than consisting of one singular act (e.g. the signing of a form), consent and research ethics are negotiated at every step of the way (Gillan and Pickerill 2012; Bell 2014b, 519; Riese 2019,

677).<sup>18</sup> Ethical aspects of the research need to be reflected on beforehand, but even more so attuned to the social cues of the fieldwork encounter. Consent forms could for instance misleadingly imply that every aspect of research ethics that is applicable to the specific encounter at hand is covered by signing a piece of paper. A signed form generates a legalistic — and in my opinion ironically so, predatory — atmosphere over what is at heart more of a social encounter. Much in the field is unpredictable and occurs in grey zones ethically speaking (Sampson 2019, 142; see above). Fieldwork is shot through with multi-directional collaborations, complicities and collusions (Trundle 2018, 107). It would be naïve to assume that interlocutors have no agency in this regard. I am not only talking here about requests for monetary compensation, which only occurred twice and I politely refused since I found it awkward to haggle over price and put pressure on our exchange as a result. I tried to be sensitive to the fact that I took up people's valuable time. I always left it entirely up to my interlocutors on when and where to meet. I often transported them with my car as many did not have one at their disposal. I always offered to pay for a meal, which felt more organic than cash. Moreover, various interlocutors also understood that, by having a car, attending various events and meeting with several people, I could be useful to them. I frequently offered lifts or shared public information with them (see below). In that sense, being an 'insider' and 'outsider' is relative depending on the specific facet of a research setting.

It is also for these reasons that I, with others, prefer to speak of facilitators rather than gatekeepers, which refers to explicit guardians of specific information who need to be negotiated with in order to gain access (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 49). The point is not that such people did not feature, but that the transactional nature of such engagements does not reflect my own experiences. Like consent, 'access' was negotiated throughout the research process and affected more than specific sets of information (Riese 2019, 671, 674). Facilitators facilitated the degree to which the research as a whole could be carried out, not least by putting me in touch with potential interlocutors or inviting me to attend certain events. As I already mentioned in the Introduction, the fact

---

<sup>18</sup> This approach was set out in the research proposal and I was given the go ahead from the ethical committee of the primary funding agency of this research, VLIR-UOS.



that I am a Caucasian European clearly had an impact. I often had the impression that I was perceived as a neutral observer of events, someone 'from the outside looking in' without a horse in the race. This reputation benefited me when approaching individuals and groups who were at odds with one another. Some even commended me for doing so, judging my efforts to contribute to the often mentioned need for unity among Khoisan revivalists (see Chapter Three). I come back to the issue of reciprocity in the next section. I wonder, however, in what ways my fieldwork would have been different had I been a white, black or coloured South African. I sense that being a white South African, which I was seldom mistaken for based on first impressions, would have probably made people more combative towards my presence, as they and their historical predecessors are often blamed for their current situation. Being Belgian and European gave me a pass in this regard; geographical distance seems to have foreclosed grounds for historical complicity. While the history of settler colonialism in South Africa is more complex, early colonialism in South Africa was tied by most of the people I engaged with principally to the Dutch. The fact that I understood Afrikaans as a Flemish native speaker was not directly linked to the history of colonialism, but seen as more of a curiosity, which in turn functioned as an excellent conversation starter (see below). Black South Africans might have had more trouble with some individuals because of racial tensions between coloureds and blacks (see Chapter Five). Lastly, being Coloured would have perhaps made me more privy to private conversations and events, but also more frequently called upon to assist and support Khoisan revivalism through my research.

I come back here to the role of facilitators, as it cannot be underestimated how much they played a role in my research. They certainly opened doors for me, but they also indirectly made me blind to other possibilities. Davies (1999, 79) stresses in this regard that it is vital to interrogate why certain people became central in our research, especially when they were instrumental in creating a network of other interlocutors. Coming back to my open-ended definition of Khoisan revivalism with this in mind, I was biased to overt forms of Khoisan revivalism and interlocutors that embodied the kind of Khoisan revivalism I was looking for. That frequently meant people who have the time, passion and means to do so. In practice these were often, though not always, intellectuals or political leaders who were explicitly and visibly promoting Khoisan revivalism. For all

these reasons, my network consists mostly of overtly political Khoisan revivalists. In consultation with my supervisors, I regularly tried to approach interlocutors for whom I suspected Khoisan revivalism might mean something different.<sup>19</sup> Despite (failed) attempts at diversifying, I undoubtedly remained stuck in certain echo chambers or social circles and my observations are inescapably informed by the Khoisan revivalists I ended up interacting with the most (see also Gagné 2013, 16). While I engaged with individuals and sources at the expense of others, I maintain that my research generated insights into Khoisan revivalism as a whole. Before moving on to the next chapter and begin making this case in more concrete terms, I need to address how these insights were gleaned from the interpretation of certain data, gathered through the application of specific methods.

### **1.2.2 Methods and wider implications of the research**

Observation is perhaps the method that is most commonly associated with ethnography and fieldwork, yet at the same time the most ambiguous. Why, how, when and what does one exactly observe? There is no shortage of literature on this subject. The method dates back to the formative years of the anthropological discipline and traditionally refers to the process of observing and participating in the daily lives of people over a considerable period of time in order to gain a better understanding of their ways of being (Kawulich 2005, 3, 26). The potential of observation lies with its ability to translate these sensory — but in practice mostly visual — experiences of shared realities into rich detailed descriptions of the people and contexts that are studied (Kawulich 2005, 2). Note here how this echoes what I wrote concerning ethnographic fieldwork and gaining a working familiarity with local contexts. In line with my take on methods in general, I see observation in terms of both intent and practice as highly dependent on the peculiarities

---

<sup>19</sup> These conversations also assisted in identifying blind spots. The most notable lacuna being the religious/spiritual dimensions of Khoisan revivalism. While I address this topic in Chapter Four, in hindsight I realized that I underestimated its importance in articulations of indigeneity. This might be because I had not envisioned that it would play such a prominent role in my research early on, and/or because I am not familiar enough with many of the references that are made in such contexts to fully appreciate their importance.

of the field at a given moment in time. In my case, looking for Khoisan revivalism meant that I spent time with people that I identified as Khoisan revivalists and attended events that were billed by interlocutors or others as dealing with Khoisan issues. Though not exclusively, I mostly spent time with interlocutors in such settings. In that sense, I did not exactly observe ‘everyday life’. My fieldwork was confined to Cape Town most of the time, but I made a couple of excursions to other parts of the country when there were interesting links to, and influences on the city’s Khoisan revivalist scene. As I already alluded to in the Introduction, I attended various types of events, from meetings with government officials to cultural functions and screenings of documentaries. Most of these took place across the Cape Flats, where the bulk of my interlocutors live, or at locations of symbolic significance in the Central Business District of Cape Town.

At these events I tried to spot and record things that overly embodied Khoisan revivalism, such as distinct dress codes or materials linked to Khoisan culture. Despite actively paying attention, observation is mostly a matter of always being on the lookout for research-relevant material with an open mind, rather than attempting to be a fly on the wall in order to get an all-encompassing view of what is going on (Kawulich 2005, 2). The latter is untenable no matter how much researchers might try to distance themselves, both physically or mentally. They always ‘participate’ at least to some extent, if only by being physically present, and this inescapably impacts the research (see above). Degrees of observing and participating are interesting to think with, but quickly become blurred in the field, at least in my experience (Kawulich 2005; DeWalt and DeWalt 2011, 34). For that matter, participating does not necessarily insure higher quality observations, but it does influence data collection (Davies 1999, 73). I have already spoken in this regard about my presence as a Caucasian European. I often stuck out of the crowd because of this. I certainly did not hide my identity as a researcher, but I did not take notes on a notepad since I felt this to be somewhat intrusive and distracting (DeWalt and DeWalt 2011, 161). If I did feel that I had to jot something down, I used my smartphone; behaviour which hardly raises heads these days. I made more comprehensive notes when the event was finished. Depending on the size of the event and whether or not people knew I was a researcher, I felt at times as if interlocutors deliberately engaged in “ethnographic self-fashioning” (Wicomb 1998, 92) by exaggerating markers of

indigeneity in order to convince me of their cultural authenticity. In anticipation of upcoming events, I was often told by interlocutors that I would get to see and experience “real culture”. I come back to where this need to emphasize authenticity comes from in Chapter Seven. I raise the issue here to flag how it might have impacted my data-collection.

A similar kind of dynamic undoubtedly occurred during interviews. While I also used interviews to reconstruct events that I could not observe myself, rendering interviewees “surrogate researchers” that could provide me with second-hand information (Hammersley 2005, 9), I mostly asked people to reflect on what Khoisan revivalism meant to them or when they began identifying as Khoisan. In this process, I explicitly made them front Khoisan-related aspects of their lives, events which they otherwise might not have cast in these terms. This turned the field into a type of ‘archive’ and even more so the other way around, as I relied on ethnographic fieldwork not just to reconstruct past events, but also to study the way they are remembered and framed in the present. If my interlocutors were at any point romanticizing or exaggerating, this did not make their accounts less relevant for my research; on the contrary, as I am primarily interested in emic perspectives (see also Field 2001, 118). Indeed, my interviews were not joint excavations of inner truths that would have remained hidden otherwise (Whitaker and Atkinson 2019, 621). Nor were they inroads into an authentic Khoisan revivalist experience. Interviews rather provoked a series of reflections on part of the interviewee to shed light on their behaviour and thoughts, which might be difficult to achieve in other ways (Hammersley 2005, 9). While a specific type of conversation, ethnographic interviews are dialogues, which means that those reflections in practice occur in both parties. Meaning is not something that I extracted by asking the ‘right’ questions. It was negotiated in concert, depending in part on how much interlocutors were willing to share (Riese 2019, 670-671; Perera 2020, 156). During interviews I tried to establish what Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2013, 474-475) has called “a relation of knowledge”, an atmosphere where it was clear that I approached interlocutors to *learn* about Khoisan identity, just as much as they might learn and theorize from our engagements. As I show, many Khoisan revivalists undertook activities that closely resemble ethnographic fieldwork; making this observation all the more relevant. I encouraged this type of co-construction of data

and interpretation by frequently theorizing alongside my interlocutors, for instance by floating certain hypotheses or asking them at the end of every interview if they had any questions for me. Posing this question almost always courted interesting discussions about research ethics and the wider impact of my work. I come back to this point shortly.

Despite encouraging co-construction, this was not an equal enterprise as I was the one most able to steer the conversations. Researchers need to take their responsibility in this regard. I for instance honed in on Khoisan revivalism at the expense of other equally or potentially more important aspects of people's lives. In this way, I might have missed crucial cues that could help explain certain experiences or behaviours (see also Bobel 2007, 148). As my thesis makes clear, Khoisan identity does not stand alone. Hence also my choice for articulations of indigeneity (see Introduction). Humans are complex beings and cannot be reduced to one aspect of their lives. I tried to be aware of this as much as possible during the writing by bouncing off ideas with other academics or interlocutors. One of the ways in which I tried to minimize seeing everything through a Khoisan lens during my research was by starting interviews with biographical questions about background, upbringing and professional history (see Arthur and Nazroo 2003, 113). When people responded to my questions by discussing things that seemingly had little to do with the Khoisan, this was in fact highly relevant as it was part of their making sense of events and experiences during that particular moment in time (Whitaker and Atkinson 2019, 622, 623). I always prepared a semi-structured interview-guide tailored to the individual I was speaking with, that is, a list of topics and questions I wanted to cover. I usually had this guide by my side to avoid missing out on the opportunity to ask questions that were particularly relevant for the person in question. In practice, however, I improvised and frequently went off-topic (see also Arthur and Nazroo 2003, 115-116). Indeed, like many ethnographers, I avoided imposing too much structure on my interactions and they tended to take a more informal character (see Davies 1999, 94). The topics that we covered were at times quite intimate and struck at people's core identities and beliefs. For this reason, I often ended up meeting the same people to conduct several interviews, making me focus on quality over quantity.

An advantage in this regard is that I can understand Afrikaans, the mother tongue of most of my interlocutors, even if people almost always switched to English when they

realized I could not speak it fluently. On some occasions, the fact that I knew a couple of words and phrases in Khoekhoegowab created rapport with interlocutors as this was celebrated as a small-scale act of Khoisan revivalism (see Chapter Seven). In an atmosphere where Khoisan identity is often ridiculed or doubted, interlocutors told me that it was refreshing, even therapeutic, to have the opportunity to speak about it openly with a non-Khoisan person. There is indeed more to ethnographic interviewing than questions and answers (Davies 1999, 95). I tried not to be intrusive but to listen, valued their opinions and did not judge, which is certainly something that encourages people to open up (DeWalt and DeWalt 2011, 163). After all, if someone is judged to be hostile, it makes little sense to share information (Berger 2015, 220). At times Khoisan revivalists also used me as a sounding board for their own ideas (see Riese 2019, 671; see above). I was happy to oblige or assist in other ways, but this does not absolve me of the responsibility of being the one who ultimately interpreted the data and subsequently wrote up the research. This inevitably means at least some form of disagreement with my interlocutors.

As many have pointed out, there is certainly something awkward about deconstructing indigenous identities with sophisticated academic tools when those very identities form the basis of their struggles (see e.g. Robins 2001; see also Chapter Seven). Conversely, as Adam Kuper (2003; see Introduction) and others are correct in pointing out, researchers should equally not accept and reproduce uncritically what they hear in the field (Gillan and Pickerill 2012, 138). Talking among other things about the ways in which ethnicity is researched and written about in the post-apartheid era, some South African anthropologists have even gestured that such conundrums have triggered an existential crisis in the discipline (Van Wyk 2013a, 71-72; Cousins and Reynolds 2016, 11). According to Andrew Spiegel (2005, 136), the prime concern being whether or not *exposé* ethnography's legacy of deconstructing ethnicity "is really what needs to come out of an ethical consciousness that is in tune with South Africa's contemporary post-apartheid situation and circumstances". While I have already explained at length in the Introduction that I do not think that it is, the balance between so-called engaged research and critical assessment is not self-evident (Hodgson 2011, 13, 15; Geertz 1988, 10). As I stated before, ethical boards have their use at the beginning of the research, but the nitty-gritty of research ethics depends on the specific dynamics of the field. To me, research

encounters are ultimately asymmetrical in that they will always benefit me more directly than them (see also Geertz 2001, 33). No Khoisan revivalist was waiting for me to write my thesis, nor will it drastically change their lives. But whether or not it will have an impact is much more difficult to say. While I had never thought any Khoisan revivalist would have been interested in my MA thesis, a handful of interlocutors read it. As is the case with this thesis, it is open access and therefore freely available to anyone with an internet connection. At the time of writing, a feedback session in South Africa is also foreseen to present the findings of my work in an accessible manner.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012, 1) famously called for “decolonizing methodologies” by validating and legitimating indigenous ways of knowing in order to break with centuries of abuse and exploitation at the hands of researchers. As I show in Chapter Two, South Africa certainly has a share in this history, not least when it comes to research on the San. However, the South African San Institute (SASI) made world news by putting out a guide for researchers in March 2017 (Callaway 2017, 475). The four page guide clarifies that the San do not reject research as such, but that they demand “respect”, a word that suffuses the text. They ask researchers to be mindful of various historical and cultural sensitivities, privacy issues, as well as the contributions of the San themselves (SASI 2017, 2). The purpose of the research needs to be transparent and it can only take place if SASI deems it to potentially improve the lives of the San (Ibid., 2, 3). The guide is a response to the fact that the region it concerns itself with, the Kalahari Desert, has been “bombarded by researchers” over the years, some of whom guilty of stealing traditional knowledge and making careers or lucrative companies on its basis, with few benefits flowing back to the San (Callaway 2017, 475, SASI 2017, 3; see Chapter Three). The guide is not the only response to these past and present practices (see e.g. Tomaselli 2012c and Ellis 2014, 20-23), but it has to be borne in mind that it speaks to an area that has a vastly different history of engagements with researchers than Cape Town, even if there is a general distrust towards academics and people speaking on their behalf there as well (ENN 2013e, 3).

I agree with the guide’s insistence on the need for respect, reciprocity and for my research to try and be useful for Khoisan revivalists themselves. However, this brings me back to the urgent, imperative, but ultimately open question of how this is best

accomplished. I made clear in the Introduction how I intend to break with most of the previous research that has been done about Khoisan revivalism, particularly studies that deconstruct Khoisan identity through an instrumentalist lens. This departure begins by taking Khoisan revivalism seriously as an intellectual and socio-political phenomenon. In what follows I suggest an interpretation of what drives people to revive Khoisan identity, since I believe that such insights are painfully lacking in both the public and academic discourse. My efforts are by no means perfect, but strive to be a productive reference point to reflect on how Khoisan revivalism can be accommodated in the post-apartheid era. Hopefully readers will judge the arguments of my thesis, to which I now in turn in the next chapters, to work towards realizing that ambition.



## Part I. Lost in Categorization? The Khoisan

extinction discourse and the intellectual roots and

aspirations of Khoisan revivalism



## 2 (Re)thinking the ‘Khoisan’: the fate of a people, the career of a concept

*“We are sick and tired of naked Brown people being exposed to the curious glances of rich whites in search of dinner table conversation. At the exhibition [...] indignity was heaped upon indignity, culminating in the centrepiece – mounted casts of Brown breasts and penises. The people of whom these casts were made are long dead. They cannot tell of the humiliation suffered, or the pain they felt at being manipulated in this way. We can. As the descendants of the Khoisan [...] we feel it daily and hourly [...] The exhibition does nothing to oppose the forces which tried, and are still trying, to conquer the Khoisan. Instead it is yet another symbol of our status as a conquered people. Where is the Khoisan view of these manipulations? Where are our representations of the people who came here to steal our land, make us slaves and deprive us of our culture and our history? [...] We will only accept the good intentions of white liberals when they strip off their own clothes in public and take pictures of themselves for a change.”*

- ‘Enough is Enough!’ Statement concerning exhibitions about the Khoisan by the !Hurikamma Cultural Movement (cited in Bregin 2001, 87-88)

“There is no escape from the politics of our knowledge, but that politics is not in the past. That politics is in the present”. Greg Denning’s observation was displayed strategically at various points during the exhibition *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, which opened in April 1996 at the South African National Gallery in Cape Town, and was curated by Pippa Skotnes, artist and lecturer at the University of Cape Town (Skotnes 2001, 314).

As South Africa turned over a new page with the democratic transition of 1994, Skotnes felt she had to do her part in exposing and tackling the legacies of colonialism and apartheid. Drawing on her entanglement in this history as a white academic exponent of Khoisan studies, *Miscast* sought to lay bare the various ways in which centuries of representations of, and research on, the Khoisan left a record of abuse and complicity in manifold atrocities in its wake. The exhibition was Skotnes' way of carrying out an exorcism on the discipline and facing her demons by confronting them head on. As a consequence, *Miscast* had a macabre and eerie feel to it. Among the various objects on display to implode the scientific gaze were instruments that had been used to measure cranium size or genitalia, resin casts of bodies, pictures of naked prisoners chained by the neck, and stacks of boxes that had been used to transport and store human remains (Lane 1996, 7; Robins 2000, 56; Bregin 2001, 99). While photographs from Paul Weinberg showing the contemporary living conditions of Khoisan in the Northern Cape were put up as a way of presenting their "voice", as Skotnes explains, the exhibition was not "about" the Khoisan, but instead offered a "critical and visual exploration of the term 'Bushman' and the various relationships that gave rise to it" (Skotnes 1996, 18).

Not everyone agreed, both with this assessment of *Miscast*, and with the manner in which Skotnes attempted to realize her stated ambitions. Even more significant than the ensuing discussions among academics, was the unprecedented degree to which Khoisan themselves exercised their agency in such debates (Lane 1996, 9; Bregin 2001, 100; Davison 2001, 6; Skotnes 2001, 317). A case in point is the statement by the *!Hurikamma Cultural Movement*, authored primarily by Yvette Abrahams, a key figure in Khoisan revivalism (see below). In her characteristically outspoken style, Abrahams charged Skotnes with (un)wittingly perpetuating the very type of behaviour that *Miscast* took to task. This, her argument goes, by taking it upon herself as a white academic to exhibit and exploit violence and nudity. While some Khoisan actually praised Skotnes for not shying away from the graphic aspects of this history (Skotnes 2001, 317; Bregin 2001, 100), others deplored her stylistic choices. Particularly controversial was the fact that visitors were made to walk over pictures of Khoisan (and images related to their representation) that had been turned into tiles in most of the rooms making up the exhibition. Though acknowledging this is as Skotnes' way of rendering visitors uncomfortable with, and

complicit in, the subjugation of the Khoisan, this was considered offensive by some Khoisan as they had to trample on the pictures all the same (Douglas and Law 1997, 84-85). Skotnes' "exhibit about exhibits" clearly did not resonate well with those for whom the ironies of deconstruction were deemed out of place (Douglas and Law 1997, 104; Jackson and Robins 1999, 89). While she had communicated previously with certain Khoisan communities in the Northern Cape in anticipation of such feedback, Skotnes (2001, 315) had not expected her exhibition to cause such emotional distress. Denning's words were perhaps more prescient than Skotnes had foreseen; the politics of knowledge certainly did not lie in the past, nor would there be any easy escape from them.

As the events surrounding *Miscast* evidenced, not only were Khoisan descendants not speaking with one voice, their numbers had been vastly underestimated by Skotnes. About 700 people attended the public forum about the exhibition organized the day after the official opening, among whom delegates representing over 11 Khoisan groups from various corners of the country (Bregin 2001, 100). Besides the type of interventions concerning *Miscast* that I just mentioned, the forum also functioned as a platform to articulate (competing) political aspirations. The Khoisan representative from the Northern Cape who gave the opening speech at the exhibition did not reference *Miscast* once, instead capitalizing on his moment in the limelight to plead for greater protection of economic and cultural rights for the Khoisan (Klopper 2011, 37). At the forum, Mansell Upham, "the mandated legal representative of the Griqua National Conference" (see below), faulted Skotnes for not addressing political issues of recognition, particularly as they relate to the Griqua (Lane 1996, 9). For Skotnes (2001, 317), the forum showed how *Miscast* had turned into a rallying point for both Khoisan unity and disunity. Disagreement arose over who qualified as authentically Khoisan and on what basis, particularly between the supposedly westernized Griqua and traditionalist San, with arguments revolving around the impact of Europe-derived Afrikaans as the mother tongue of most coloured people, and the need for traditional clothing (Jackson and Robins 1999, 87; Skotnes 2001, 317). The complexity surrounding Khoisan representation was embodied by a group of Khoisan who worked at the tourist village Kagga Kamma, located a couple hours' drive from Cape Town, where visitors can interact with "the near extinct Bushmen" (White 1995, 11). Clad in animal skins and personifying the romanticized narrative of Kagga

Kamma on the steps of the National Gallery, the delegation's strategic essentialism contrasted starkly with the deconstructionist critique of Khoisan representation offered in the exhibit behind them (Douglas and Law 1997, 102; Jackson and Robins 1999, 95).

*Miscast* and its fallout indeed revolved around a maelstrom of controversial issues connected to the question of who held the right to represent the Khoisan and in which way. With the opening up of the public space after the end of apartheid, the stage was set for such debates to proliferate, and as this thesis attests, they certainly have. As the late Michael Wessels (2014, 465, 470) pointed out, together with a special issue on Khoisan representation in 1995, *Miscast* was a conduit in the ongoing self-reflexive turn in Khoisan studies. Ironically, as it turned inward, Khoisan studies began paying more mind to dynamics outside of academia. *Miscast* showed how the issues academics increasingly concerned themselves with were directly relevant to the political aspirations of a vocal group of people who Skotnes and many others had hereto not accounted for. As Skotnes (2001, 319) learned to her surprise, *Miscast* created an awareness among Khoisan descendants and others of their Khoisan lineage (Bregin 2001, 101). In fact, the 'Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference' took place only a year later, which I view as the starting point of post-apartheid Khoisan revivalism proper. Where did these initial Khoisan revivalists come from? Who were they and how did they organize themselves? What did they want and what did they campaign against? Such questions need to be explored in order to fully appreciate *Miscast* as a watershed moment in the history of Khoisan revivalism.

I provide answers in this chapter and the next, which together make up Part I of this thesis, *Lost in Categorization? The Khoisan extinction discourse and the intellectual roots and aspirations of Khoisan revivalism*. The aim of this chapter is to historicize the operation and contestation of what I, inspired by the work of various other scholars (Adhikari 2011, 21; Besten 2011a, 69, 77; Ellis 2012, 2, 10; Schramm 2016, 134; Parkington, Morris and de Prada-Samper 2019, 739, Øvernes 2019, 152-193), will call the 'Khoisan extinction discourse' in reference to the commonplace belief that the Khoisan have ceased being a distinct collective as a result of their decimation and dispossession by colonial aggressors, and their assimilation as coloureds through a protracted process of bureaucratic erasure. A couple of caveats are vital here. A meaningful distinction can be made in this regard

between the ‘hunter-gatherer’ San and the ‘pastoral’ Khoikhoi (see Introduction). Debates are ongoing about (the lack of) differences in economic activity, descent, language and culture between them (Elphick and Malherbe 1989, 5; Smith 1990, 11; Wright 1996; Smith 1998; Du Plessis 2019). As I will show, colonialists frequently differentiated between San and Khoikhoi based on perceived differences in ways of life, at times with deadly consequences. As Robert Ross (cited in Bredekamp 1991, 70) points out, however, “the distinction [between Khoikhoi and San] is meaningless [...] when the history of their suppression comes to be written”. I agree for reasons that will become apparent and therefore in the main use ‘Khoisan’. I also do not solely reference Khoisan history as it relates to Cape Town and its direct environs, but draw on relevant episodes from South African history in general to make broader points concerning the plight of the Khoisan and the development of ideas about them. The further one goes back in time, the fewer the sources authored by the Khoisan themselves (Penn 2005, 4; Hamilton, Mbenga and Ross 2010, 1, 9). Yet it is precisely the resulting Eurocentric bias that I am interested in showing in this chapter. With these caveats in mind, I take my cue here from Alan Barnard (2017, ix), who calls for studying the diverse interpretations of ‘Khoisan’ (he specifically speaks of ‘Bushmen’) as “an image that remains in anthropological consciousness, although transformed through history”.

Studying the diversity of Khoisan representation through the prism of the Khoisan extinction discourse yields original interpretations of South African history, but this does not mean that every event in the past conforms to this discourse. Neither has it remained static across centuries. I also do not suggest that resistance to colonialism only took place in the form of Khoisan revivalism, or that the Khoisan had no prior influence on, or say in, how they were represented or represented themselves, as I make clear with plenty of examples. The point of this chapter is rather that Khoisan revivalism is historically significant in the manner in which it publicly and assertively leads the Khoisan themselves to engage with the Khoisan extinction discourse — a point I come back to at length in Chapter Seven. To make this case for agency compelling, I distil the predominant ideas that have shaped, and continue to shape, (re)thinking about the Khoisan. The first subchapter provides an overview of colonialism and apartheid and their varied impact on the Khoisan extinction discourse. For the sake of convenience, I

split the discussion into three parts, respectively covering more or less the periods of Dutch colonialism, British colonialism and apartheid. Surveying such vast stretches of time necessitates a broad-brush approach. Moreover, my focus is on the career of 'Khoisan' (and its many historical precedents) as a top-down concept rather than on the fate of the people it sought to define. The following subchapter takes off from the anti-apartheid struggle of the 1970s and shifts the emphasis towards Khoisan agency. I hone in on the role of the Khoisan revisionist historiography that was written from this time onward as I believe it functioned as a precursor to post-apartheid Cape Town-based Khoisan revivalism through its (in)direct contestation of the Khoisan extinction discourse. A pivotal figure in this regard is Henry Bredekamp, who was instrumental in organizing the aforementioned ground-breaking Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference in 1997, where I pick up the discussion in Chapter Three. Before getting there, however, I need to back up roughly half a millennium, and confront the problem of Khoisan representation at its inception.

## **2.1 Dispossession, assimilation and the 'vanishing native': a brief overview of Khoisan history**

### **2.1.1 Dutch colonialism settles on South African shores: frontier settlers and expendable natives (1652-1806)**

As Khoisan revivalists frequently point out, South African history does not begin in 1652, the year Jan van Riebeeck arrived as the first commander of the Dutch colony. The presence of the Khoisan in Southern Africa, which stretched roughly from the Cape of Good Hope to Northern Namibia in the North, and the Fish River in the East (see Figure 3), certainly predates that of the settlers by several centuries. The history of Khoisan representation by Europeans also does not to start with van Riebeeck. Ideas and images about the local inhabitants of the Cape were forged long before. The oldest known encounter between Europeans and Khoisan took place during the 1487-1488 expedition



of Bartolomeo Diaz, under whose command three Portuguese sail rounded the Cape of Good Hope in an attempt to reach India. As they sailed across the Cape, the Portuguese and the Khoisan were cautiously trying to figure one another out (Raven-Hart 1967, 1-7). Initial impressions from the Portuguese side were not particularly negative and they

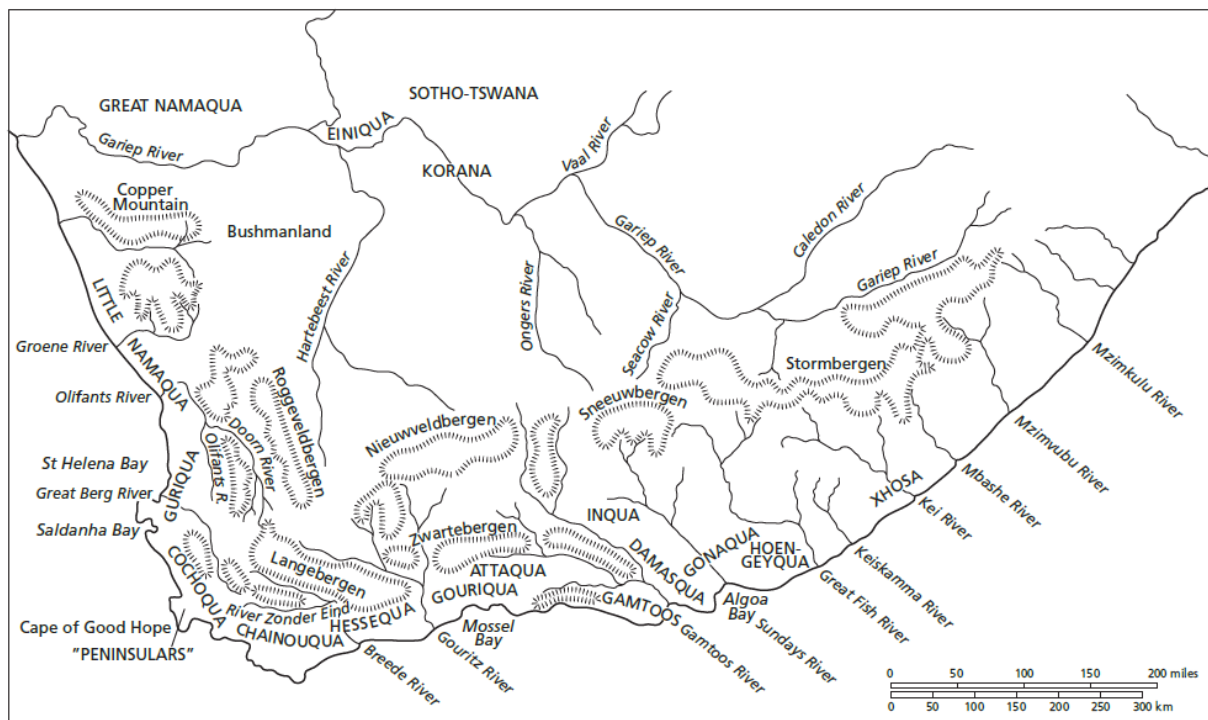


Figure 3. “Approximate locations of Khoikhoi before contact with whites” (Ross 2010, 172)

engaged in small-scale trade with the local Khoisan. Things turned violent as the Portuguese attempted to take fresh water from a watering hole in present-day Mossel Bay, a couple of hours’ drive from Cape Town. Diaz himself reportedly fired his crossbow at the Khoisan who were chasing them away, resulting in the first recorded murder of a Khoisan at the hands of a European. As Diaz and his crew continued their voyage the next day, they noted how “ten or twelve blacks” tore down the cross and *padrão* (a type of signpost) they had erected on the land. Similar events occurred roughly twenty years later, in March 1510, when another Portuguese commander, Francisco D’Almeida, attempted to make use of local resources. In the culmination of an unclear series of events, possibly involving the attempted abduction of a local child, the Portuguese were defeated in battle by a group of “bestial negroes” on the shores of Table Bay, with

D'Almeida perishing in the process (Johnson 2011, 10-34). This episode gave the inhabitants of the 'Cape of storms' a notorious reputation and effectively pushed back settlers for another 150 years.

Traders kept calling at the Cape, however, particularly in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Its favourable location and climate made it a natural pit stop on the passage to the East. The local Khoisan traded livestock for metal objects and other wares Europeans had on offer. Both the Dutch and English even brought the Khoisan leaders Coree and Autshumato, some say forcefully, to Batavia and London respectively to make them acquainted with their languages and economic system in order to set them up as trading agents at the Cape (Worden, Van Heyningen and Bickford-Smith 1998, 12, 14). Ships came and went, and barter trade flourished for decades. Descriptions of the Khoisan during this time were not exactly flattering, with Europeans taking offense at their supposed hedonistic lifestyle and incomprehensible click-languages. But these types of observations were few and superficial. There was little interest in describing or commenting on Khoisan ways of life during this time (cf. Raven-Hart 1967). This changed drastically after the Dutch East India Company, or *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC), decided to erect a permanently populated structure on the shores of Table Bay in 1652. The rationale behind the outpost was that it would facilitate trade with the local Khoisan – who were during this time often referred to with the now highly derogatory terms *Hottentotten*, *Kafirs* or *Bosjesmannen* (Ardnt 2018, 66). The permanent post would also make it easier to provide visiting ships with fresh water and produce. While the VOC was certainly in it for the long haul, there was no directive to colonize or dispossess the local population from the onset. Van Riebeeck took care to maintain cordial relations with the Khoisan in the initial years following the fort's establishment. Large scale conflict would have been too expensive and unlikely to be successful as the Khoisan wholly outnumbered them (Elphick 1977, 97).

As long as it kept its distance and a relatively low profile, the Khoisan seemed to have viewed the VOC as an opportune trading partner and potential ally in intertribal conflicts (Worden, Van Heyningen and Bickford-Smith 1998, 14). However, the establishment, fortification and expansion of the fort put them at risk of no longer being able to access crucial fresh water sources and grazing areas that were part of their traditional migration routes (Elphick 1977, 75; Guelke 2003, 93). This cut-off became a reality for the Khoisan in

the aftermath of a resolution that was passed on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 1656, which allowed the VOC to lease tracts of land on the banks of the Liesbeeck river to nine ex-employees, who in turn committed to selling their produce back to the company. This type of settlement was increasingly encouraged in order to accommodate the growing demand for meat, which exceeded what the Khoisan could or wanted to provide (Elphick and Malherbe 1989, 11; Ross 2017, 187-188). When van Riebeeck planted an almond hedge in 1657 to prevent Khoisan from entering his newly demarcated territory, violent retaliation loomed (Bredekamp and Netwon-King 1984: 10; Worden, Van Heyningen and Bickford-Smith 1998, 25). Estimates put the figure of Khoisan in the South-Western Cape at the time at around 50.000, but they did not operate as a uniform force (Elphick and Malherbe 1989, 3). Leadership was likely lineage based, with more powerful tribes extracting tribute from weaker ones, which often led to breakaway groups (Ibid., 6). The VOC readily manipulated such divisions to pit tribes against one another, and some collaborated with them (Elphick 1977, 53-55). As the Khoisan were defeated in the ensuing wars (1659, 1673-1677), they were chased from the territories they traditionally occupied (Ibid., 92). In a 1672 treaty, two Khoisan chiefs sold a massive area of land to the VOC, from Table Bay to Saldanha Bay in the North, to the Hottentots Hollands mountains in the East, for close to nothing (Bredekamp 1980). Their defeat was compounded by a series of smallpox epidemics, which continued into the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and wreaked havoc among the Khoisan, although their impact is disputed. Subjugated and dispossessed, Khoisan leaders were at first co-opted as 'captains', but eventually totally side-lined, with no independent tribes in existence south of the Orange River by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Bredekamp and Netwon-King 1984, 15-35).

The VOC consolidated its power in the region and an expanding settler frontier came into being that eventually engulfed the whole of South Africa (Penn 2005, 27). By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the population at the Cape had risen from 250 in 1679 to 15.500 (Elphick 1977, 222-223). While the colonial government continuously sought to regulate the rapid expansion of settlers into the interior, in practice, the further away from Cape Town, the more so-called *trekboers* were the sole authority regarding how much territory they seized and how they dealt with the Khoisan (Adhikari 2011, 18, 29, 34). As Nigel Penn (2005, 1) put it, confronted with a violent and land hungry group of settlers, the Khoisan

had three options available to them: retreat, submit or perish. I would replace the latter with resistance, as this better captures what occurred well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see e.g. Viljoen 2006 or Elbourne 2003). Settlers would often be attacked through guerrilla style raids that also aimed to (re)capture cattle and sheep (Ross 1979, 69). This in turn provoked an extremely violent counteraction from the settlers, which Mohammed Adhikari (2011, 12) has persuasively argued amounts to genocide, as in the wilful intention to prevent a group from reproducing itself *both* biologically and culturally. The presence of the Khoisan ran counter to the colonial project: they were literally in the way of settler expansion, and hence ultimately expendable in the eyes of settlers. To defend seized lands, the colonial government allowed, and at times officially sanctioned, settlers to join 'commandos', groups of armed men who patrolled an area, arrest or kill intruders, but also carry out punitive expeditions into enemy territory (Adhikari 2011, 39; McDonald 2016b, 925). Once again, while the colonial authorities sought to regulate the excesses of the commando system, settlers in effect acted with impunity (Adhikari 2011, 57).

Such destructive and predatory behaviour found inspiration and legitimation in then-prevailing notions concerning the Khoisan. In what is a common settler fantasy, the land was imagined as virgin territory, *terra nullius*, largely void of people and awaiting cultivation in order to be turned into a settler's paradise (Veracini 2007; Boisen 2017). The Khoisan frequently moved around in search of good pastures and left little physical traces of their presence behind (Guelke 2003, 91). Instead, a system of rotational grazing and shared resources was likely in place (Elphick and Malherbe 1989, 12). Settlers either did not care for such local understandings of settlement and land use, or deemed them to be rendered invalid as a result of conquest and the signing over of territories (Bredekamp 1982, 62; Worden, Van Heyningen and Bickford-Smith 1998, 24). Dispossession was further justified on grounds that they did 'own' any land and/or made ill use of it (Adhikari 2011, 19, 52). Making the land productive was indeed a common justification to assume ownership during colonial conquest (Veracini 2007, 274). In general, indigenous inhabitants were not seen as occupants in their own right, but as part of the wilderness, people without history in a place without history (Ibid., 272). Overall attitudes towards the Khoisan in this period were highly derisive and degrading, with some even calling for their outright extermination (Guenther 1980, 135). To be sure, the Khoisan are not the

only Africans in contemporary South African territory who were subjected to exoticization or highly derogatory views, but they arguably received harsher treatment in this regard (Lindfors 1996; see below).

Among the many things written about the Khoisan was their supposed bestial nature, miserable ways of life, oddly shaped genitals, revolting body odour, worship of false gods, raw-meat diet, laziness, lack of intelligence and proclivity towards theft (Van Wyk-Smith 1992, 293, 296). Such details were honed in on, grossly exaggerated or simply made up in order to deny the Khoisan their (full) humanity and to validate preconceived Eurocentric worldviews (Smith 1993, 8, 11). While degrading assessments of the Khoisan were the rule, there were noteworthy exceptions. A fascinating pre-settlement example is the 1647 account of two shipwrecked Dutch sailors, who went out of their way to debunk the supposed cannibalistic and violent ways of the locals, since they had been taken excellent care of by them for six months until they were rescued by a passing ship (Marks 1981, 16). They even justified the Khoisan's retaliatory behaviour by reasoning that Dutch people would "not be a hair better" if settlers had encroached on their soil. Ironically, however, this rather sympathetic portrayal of the Khoisan as harmless was drawn on to support the idea of establishing a permanent settlement (Worden, Van Heyningen and Bickford-Smith 1998, 15). As I show in the next sections, more sympathetic views on the Khoisan began appearing from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onward in particular, after they had been more thoroughly decimated and dispossessed. There are important precursors in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with travel writers and philosophers, including François Levaillant and Peter Kolb, but also Jean-Jacques Rousseau, portraying the Khoisan as 'noble savages', innocent children of nature who had been unjustly brutalized by Europeans (Van Wyk-Smith 1992, 317). As David Johnson (2007, 544) reminds us, such views, uncommon as they were, coexisted alongside violent conquest, and were hardly ever in direct opposition to colonialism. This paradox will surface at various other points in this chapter.

Seemingly more favourable views can coexist with derogatory ones as neither necessarily contradicts the aims of the settlers. Indigenous presences are disavowed either way, whether through encouraging or mourning their disappearance. Crucial in this regard was the fact that Khoisan labour was not a make-or-break factor in settler expansion. Khoisan labour was certainly exploited by the settlers, but it ran second to the

primary objective of procuring land (see also Carey and Silverstein 2020, 5). If the Khoisan were supplanted in this process, then so be it. Labour needs were met with new settlers, but also with slaves who were shipped in from other parts of Africa and Asia (Ross 2017, 188). The Khoisan were never officially enslaved, but those who joined the ranks of colonial labourers in practice suffered a similar fate, if not worse (see Ross 1979, 68; Elbourne 2003, 383). Slaves held (resale) value as a cheap self-reproducing labour force, as opposed to the Khoisan (Adhikari 1992, 104). This bring me back to Penn's third option: 'submit'. It is hard to estimate what percentage of Khoisan decided or were forced to become colonial labourers (see Elphick 1977, 175). Legions certainly did; mostly as farmworkers, domestic workers or wagon drivers (Adhikari 2011, 19). In a testament to the rupture and chaos caused by colonialism, some Khoisan returned runaway slaves to settlers, joined the commandos or formed a distinct battalion in the colonial army (Elbourne 2003, 393, Adhikari 2011, 73). While the Khoisan were never considered equal to settlers, neither in law or in practice, the extent to which they were allowed to assimilate in colonial society remains contested. As I show next, the debate surrounding their assimilation came to a head under British colonial rule.

### **2.1.2 British colonialism, assimilation and salvage ethnography (1795-1910)**

The British took over the Cape Colony from 1795 to 1910, with an interlude between 1803 and 1806, when the Dutch briefly resumed control. Now part of the vast British Empire, South Africa saw a steady influx of British settlers (Ross 2017, 191). The British integrated to some extent with the existing Dutch/Afrikaans-speaking settler population (known around this time as *Afrikaner* or *Boer*), but there was also a great deal of friction, which provoked the so-called Great Trek of the mid-1830s, i.e. the exodus of Afrikaners away from the Cape Colony into the interior. This in turn led to the founding of two Afrikaner republics in the 1850s, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic, which retained their autonomy until the Boer wars of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This eastward movement of settlers resulted in violent clashes with the local population, which mostly consisted of Bantu-speaking groups, particularly the amaXhosa and amaZulu, who, as mentioned

earlier, had settled in the Eastern half of South Africa between two to three thousand years ago. European settlement of these areas was nonetheless once more justified by notions of 'vacant lands' (Crais 1991, 256-257). Conversely, a persistent myth came into being during this time — often attributed to the widely influential historian George McCall Theal — that posited that whites and Bantu-speakers arrived in South Africa at the same time, albeit from opposite sides (Pillay 2004, 215-216; Hamilton, Mbenga and Ross 2010, 21). The Khoisan were acknowledged as the original inhabitants, but not accorded a contemporary presence (Pillay 2004, 217-218). With the indigenous people 'gone', everybody else was rendered a settler, with equally (in)valid claims to the land (see Conclusion). Among other things, this myth was mobilized to legitimate the existence of the newly created Colony of Natal. The Khoisan had of course not simply disappeared, but were instead increasingly assimilated into settler-colonial society under British rule, as I will show. While concerning territories far away from the Cape, two Khoisan groups are worth briefly mentioning in this regard: the Griqua, who I have already mentioned various times, and the Khoisan at the Kat River settlement.

Although other Khoisan groups such as the Korana likely coalesced (partially) as a result of migrations away from the Cape Colony and frontier expansion (see e.g. Ross 1975), the Griqua are arguably the most sizeable and enduring collective. The origins of the group that later became known as Griqua are located in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Various individuals, ranging from runaway slaves and local Khoisan to Bantu-speaking individuals and so-called *Bastaards/Basters* (descendants of mixed parentage, i.e. Europeans and slaves, slaves and Khoisan, or Europeans and Khoisan), began to settle north of the Orange River and align themselves with the figure of Adam Kok I, himself probably a manumitted slave (Lewis 1987, 9; Waldman 2007b, 10, 59-60; Cavanagh 2011, 5). This organic collective, referred to by many at the time as *Basters*, came into contact with the London Missionary Society, who had established their first mission aimed at the Khoisan in 1799 (Adhikari 2011, 63). The name 'Griqua' refers to the Grigriqua/Griguriqua tribe they had absorbed and was suggested to them by the missionary Joseph Campbell, who disliked the sinful connotations of the term *Baster* (Waldman 2007b, 10-11, 59-60, 62). The inclusivity of the Griqua has been likened to the rainbow nationalism of the early post-apartheid era, and even to Khoisan revivalism, as the Griqua managed to maintain a form of continuity with

Khoisan identity, if adapted to Christian values and blended with various other cultural influences (Cavanagh 2011, 8; Johnson 2011, 166). The historical trajectory of the Griqua has been extensively documented and falls outside the scope of this thesis (see Waldman 2007b, 56-87). What is crucial to take into account here is that they were initially successful in procuring territory, often at the expense of local inhabitants, including other Khoisan (Penn 2003, 183; Waldman 2007b, 59-60). Not unlike Afrikaners, Griqua trekked away from the Cape Colony to establish independent farm-based polities in the interior in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most notably at Philipolis, Griquatown and Kokstad (Waldman 2007b, 69). This relative autonomy, however, was discontinued after colonial authorities quelled a series of rebellions in the 1870s and set their sights on Griqua land; particularly the mineral deposits that lay beneath them (Cavanagh 2011, 8). This, however, as I will show later, did not spell the end of Griqua politics.

In many ways the Khoisan at the Kat River settlement on the Eastern Frontier suffered a similar fate. The settlement, which lay on land traditionally utilized for cattle grazing by both Khoisan and amaXhosa, had been set up by the British in 1829 as a buffer zone with the amaXhosa, who they battled for decades (Elbourne 2003, 394). Many Khoisan, notably the brothers Klaas and David Stuurman, fought on the side of the amaXhosa against the British (Freund 1972, 631, 639). The Khoisan who assisted the British in pacifying the frontier were rewarded with plots of land in the settlement (Ross 1997b, 96). Khoisan from other parts of the country were also encouraged to join. Due to the subsequently sizeable presence of Khoisan, some historians have argued that the dynamics of the Kat River settlement acted as a conduit for a type of Khoisan/'Hottentot' nationalism that was premised on redressing the history of dispossession and decimation (Ibid., 91, 99). However, as with the Griqua polities, the settlement did not last and with it went perhaps the last concerted armed resistance effort on part of the Khoisan, with the possible exception of the Korana wars, which ran into the 1880s (Elbourne 2003, 394, Ross 1975). Indeed, according to Robert Ross (1997b, 92), the end of the settlement in the aftermath of the failed rebellion of 1851-1852 also spelled the end of an active awareness and expression of Khoisan identity, since thereafter such expressions became highly inopportune. The Kat River settlement was an important experiment in the wake of Ordinance 50 of 1828, which recognized land and property ownership by non-white



individuals (Elbourne 2003, 389, 394). The cynicism inherent in Khoisan buying back land they were originally dispossessed from went unacknowledged. The involvement of the London Missionary Society with the Khoisan at the Kat River settlement and elsewhere also bears witness to the wider push to assimilate the Khoisan as Christian labourers and colonial subjects (Elphick and Malherbe 1989, 39-42; Ross 1997b, 92; Elbourne 2003, 387). This assimilationist philosophy sets the British apart from the Dutch, but there were also many continuities. The commando system was reluctantly tolerated for some time, though eventually discontinued (Adhikari 2011, 60, 64). Speaking in particular about the plight of the San, Jared McDonald (2016b, 521) notes that while the British sought to quell their brutal treatment, they still violently coerced them to relinquish their indigenous culture, to their own supposed benefit. As pastoralist Khoikhoi were deemed more suitable as farm workers than the 'wild' hunter-gatherer San, adult male San were in particular seen as expendable (Penn 2003, 185). San children and women were for their part often taken captive as their indoctrination was deemed more feasible (Ibid., 186). This deliberate denial of indigenous socio-cultural identity and ways of life is a feature of settler-colonial societies elsewhere, and in effect amounts to cultural genocide (McDonald 2016b, 522, 524).

The erasure of Khoisan indigeneity was accompanied by a high degree of paternalism. The Caledon Code of 1809, which required Khoisan to have a "fixed place of abode" and carry identity-documents at all times to prove that they were not vagrants, was justified on grounds that it would lead the "Hottentot nation" away from a life of indolence (Elbourne 2003, 387; Dooling 2005, 50). A common depiction of the Khoisan in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was that of the drunken drifter (Worden, Van Heyningen and Bickford-Smith 1998, 156). The state was judged to be a better warden than the abusive bosses on the farms. The latter for instance frequently reimbursed labour in the form of alcohol and tobacco under the so-called 'tot system', which had devastating intergenerational effects on the coloured population (Bredekamp and Netwon-King 1984, 2-3). As purchasing land was not a realistic option, in practice legislation such as the Caledon Code bounded the Khoisan to the farms or mission stations they were working on (Dooling 2005, 50). Most Khoisan became integrated into colonial society as landless proletarians through such processes and a series pro-imperialist humanitarian efforts aimed at dealing with those

for whom assimilation was more difficult or unsuccessful. Missionaries and clergy took the lead in campaigning for the abolishment of slavery and signalling the ill treatment of the Khoisan (Freund 1972, 641; Ross 1997b, 97). A range of commissions were created to investigate the living conditions of the Khoisan in the British colony, most notably under the Reverend John Philip (Brantlinger 2014, 79-80; McDonald 2016b, 529). While these had little impact on the lives of the Khoisan, an interesting exception is the brief existence of ‘Bushmanland’, a vaguely defined area in the Northern Cape intended as a reserve for the Bushmen, where settlers were not allowed to enter (Adhikari 2011, 63; see below).

Initiatives such as these reflected the widespread consensus that so-called primitive societies would vanish in the face of Western civilization (Brantlinger 2014, 1-2, 199; see also Forte 2006, 46). This notion had been around for some time, but received a boost through social Darwinism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, which held that natives were fated to perish due to their inherent biological inferiority (Wolfe 1999, 39). For their part, anthropologists rushed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and thereafter to ‘salvage’ the supposedly few remaining ‘authentic’ elements of native life and culture through meticulous documentation or safekeeping in reservations; as if to freeze them in time before their corruption or disappearance was a done deal (Forte 2006, 9). So-called salvage anthropology has its roots in North America, but was practiced with rigour in South Africa as well, where traditional Khoisan became studied as ‘living fossils’ (Clifford 1989, 73; Lane 1996, 7; Rassool 2019, 356). Bantu-speaking populations were not judged to be facing extinction due to their greater numbers and supposedly more advanced stage of civilization (Dubow 1995, 66; Brantlinger 2014, 13). This is the time when the Khoisan extinction discourse flourished. Robert Gordon (2014, 111) even goes so far as to suggest that “discovering something of “the last wild Bushmen” has become something of a (white) South African tradition” ever since. Before they would cease to exist, scientists rushed to examine, label and collect what they saw as the peculiarities of the Khoisan. This includes the well-known late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century efforts by linguists and racial theorists Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd — often accredited with pioneering Khoisan studies — to record and publish stories from the last remaining /Xam speakers

(Deacon 1997, 20; Wright and Weintraub 2014, 735).<sup>20</sup> Salvage anthropology also nursed an obsession with physical features (Rassool 2019, 356). The latter involved, as *Miscast* would later admonish, measuring skulls, making body casts and examining human remains, often stolen from graves and at various times shipped to scientific institutions abroad (Morris 1987; Rassool 2019). This type of enquiry also motivated the physical anthropologist Leonhard Schultze to coin the term ‘Khoisan’ in 1928 while investigating phenotypical, linguistic or cultural similarities between Khoi and San. As I show next, the dynamics regarding the Khoisan that came into being in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century would reach fever pitch in the following century.

### **2.1.3 Union, apartheid and coloured citizens (1910-1970s)**

The 1910 Union of South Africa united the colonies of the Cape, Orange River, Natal and Transvaal. As Edward Cavanagh (2013, 7) notes, although the British and Afrikaner settlers in these territories were marked by differences in language and culture, and the latter had been defeated by the former in battle during the Boer wars, they found common cause in securing their position at the top of the socioeconomic pecking order. A crucial piece of legislation in this regard was the 1913 Natives Land Act, which legally enshrined the property ownership patterns that had come about after centuries of dispossession. The Act forbade the Bantu-speaking majority from buying or owning land

---

<sup>20</sup> It is important to appreciate how the efforts of colonial-era linguists such as Bleek and Lloyd were not just attempts at describing linguistic realities. They also served as means through which “Westerners interpreted the world, categorized its peoples, and affirmed the superiority of their own position within it” (Gilmour 2006, 2). These categorizations projected homogenous and clearly bounded units, which often “mapped badly, if at all, onto existing social realities, or pre-colonial African ideas about languages and identities” (Ibid., 11). In the 1850s Bleek for instance created the highly influential linguistic-based distinction between ‘Hottentot’, ‘Bushman’ and ‘Bantu’ — the later classificatory label he coined himself — and he linked these groups to separate stages of evolutionary development as well as particular cultural and racial traits (Ibid., 169, 175, 195). While the historical and contemporary purchase of these categories may be put into question, this is not my aim here as I focus on emic identifications. As I argue in Chapter Seven with regards to Khoisan revivalist appropriations of the ethnographic archive in general, such terminology and ideas can be molded to fit present needs and ascribed new or altered meanings in the process.

outside of 'Native reserves', which together made up about 13 percent of available territory (Walker 2014, 655, 659). The remaining land, which was much more valuable and fertile, was exclusively available to whites. Roughly three decades later, segregation was implemented even further. In the aftermath of the electoral victory of the Afrikaner-nationalist National Party in 1948, the apartheid doctrine became official policy and settlers left the British Commonwealth altogether with the founding of the Republic of South Africa in 1961.

As I noted in the Introduction, apartheid was a set of institutionalized policies that policed everyday contexts by according privileges to individuals based on their membership in the newly carved out racial groups White, Coloured, Indian and Black. This resulted in an inherently ambiguous bureaucratic exercise in racial boundary making and -management. Notwithstanding the arbitrary nature of its verdicts, so-called native administration articulated its demographic labels in relation to the convoluted history of enumerating, naming and legislating population groups that preceded it. The censuses that had been carried out previously had used a wide variety of categories. The challenge here is to avoid projecting meaning into such categories anachronistically, specifically when it comes to the use of 'Native' and 'Bantu'. The 1903-1905 South African Native Affairs Commission ruled that 'Native' would henceforth refer to the "aboriginal inhabitants of Africa, [including] half-castes and their descendants" (Pillay 2004, 222). 'Native' would subsequently often include the Khoisan, although they would also be enumerated as 'Hottentots', 'Aboriginal Native', 'Bantu' or 'Coloured' (see below), depending on the degree to which their ways were deemed 'rural' (Posel 2001, 93; Christopher 2009, 104). From 1951 onward, however, 'Native' was replaced with 'Bantu' (and adjacent subcategories), based on the then prevailing assumption that linguistic communities reflected distinct cultural ones, which were in turn transformed into administrable tribal units (Pillay 2004, 226-227). In 1978, the term 'Black' began to be favoured (Adhikari 2011, 100). For settlers, these substitutions resolved the rather awkward implication of the term 'Native' with regards to claims to the land (Erasmus 2017, 88). Indeed, as Suren Pillay (2004, 221) remarked, this process ironically made settlers belong by turning natives into strangers. As he goes on to argue, this "discursive

shift” found expression along a continuum: decimation, assimilation, and finally through an emphasis on difference and segregation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

As I noted in the Introduction, the ideal of ‘distinctiveness’ through separate development was promulgated by the anthropological school known as *volkekunde*, and in particular through influential figures such as Werner Eiselen and Nicolaas Jacobus van Warmelo (Spiegel and Becker 2015, 755; Rassool 2019, 352). Echoing premises of salvage anthropology, *volkekundiges* argued that apartheid would safeguard and nurse the supposedly innate cultural values of ethnic groups (Pillay 2004, 224-225). To realize this vision, vetted pro-regime traditional authorities were put in charge of self-governing homelands, or Bantustans, which were established for the different Bantu-speaking groups in the country from the early 1960s onward. The apartheid dispensation fervently promoted the development of Bantu culture in these areas (Meskell 2011, 66). The same paternalistic reasoning regarding the maintenance of racial purity was used to justify limiting the type of jobs that were open to non-whites. Homelands were in practice vastly overcrowded cheap labour reserves with poor infrastructure and were highly dependent on whites for various forms of support (Posel 2011, 329). Segregation was not limited to rural areas, but was also implemented in the cities. A key piece of legislation in this regard was the Group Areas Act of 1950, which brought about racially homogenous residential areas (Ibid., 335). This and similar legislation ultimately led to the forced removal of close to four million people from their homes between 1913 and 1983 (Field 2001, 119). While apartheid ideologues kept insisting that Africans were innately rural and did not belong in cities, and they were only allowed in the Western Cape if their documentation allowed them to do so, for instance if they had employment there, they kept settling on urban peripheries in search for jobs and a better life – a trend that continues till this day (Western 2001, 624-625; Rassool 2019, 353).

The same reasoning was not extended to those classified Coloured. The historiography on Coloured identity is not settled on its meaning, both historically and contemporary, legally and symbolically. People remain at odds over whether Coloured is a top-down construction or a bottom-up one (Erasmus 2001, 16). While the degree to which Coloured referred *and* refers to a shared historical experience is open to discussion, it undoubtedly became a socially significant term to many (Adhikari 1992, 99, 110). As will be evident at

various points in this thesis, Coloured remains a rather open-ended term. With these important caveats in mind, the term 'Coloured' came into usage in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by way of lumping together diverse groups of people who had been known previously (or interchangeably) by various other names, including assimilated Khoisan, but also the aforementioned *Basters*, Asians and other descendants of mixed parentage (Giliomee 1995, 204; Worden, Van Heyningen and Bickford-Smith 1998, 177). This vaguely defined group was present mostly in the Cape Colony, and particularly in Cape Town. As Vivian Bickford-Smith (2012, 146) put it, segregation was more “de facto than de jure” in pre-apartheid Cape Town, and only really sped up with the creation of the Union of South Africa, where race replaced class as the most significant social marker. In the Cape Colony, for instance, the right to vote was extended to non-whites during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, if steadily curtailed thereafter, and entirely abolished for both groups during apartheid (Beinart and Dubow 1995, 3-4; Elbourne 2003, 397; Christopher 2009, 105). This had little effect as too few had been able to meet the stringent educational and property criteria to form a critical demographic (Giliomee 1995, 205, 219; Rassool 2019, 358). This is not to say that the politics of demography did not play a role in the city and beyond. In fact, some argue that the earliest segregationist policies are to be found there at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with an outbreak of the bubonic plague and the subsequent removal of Bantu-speaking populations from the city centre to the periphery, supposedly to stop its spread (Beinart and Dubow 1995, 6-7).

Though fitted within segregationist schemes as well, coloureds occupied a different place than Bantu-speaking Africans. Indeed, in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, through distinctly tailored cultural, economic and social policies, Coloured took on a slightly different meaning and increasingly began to refer to Afrikaans-speakers who were not categorized as Black or White (or Asian), but were considered 'mixed' (Erasmus 2017, 112). As a result, several settlements that had been created as mission stations in the Northern Cape were for instance transformed into Coloured 'reserves' in 1961. Here coloureds would get preferential treatment in terms of land ownership and access to grazing lands (Oakley 2006, 491). Moreover, areas in the Northern Cape and Western Cape fell within the confines of the “Eiselen line” of 1954 — named after the aforementioned *volkekundige* and following more or less the borders of the old British Cape Colony, wherein the labour

of coloureds was preferred over that of others (Western 2001, 624). Blacks could (in theory) only be hired when no coloureds were available to fill the position; a rule that remained in effect till 1984 (Van Kessel 2001, 227). This also applied to Cape Town, where coloureds were steadily relocated from the centre to the public housing developments on the Cape Flats from the 1920s onward, causing 150,000 displaced people by the late 1960s (Wilkinson 2000, 196). To be sure, Coloured reserves and townships equally functioned as overcrowded (in)formal labour dormitories with poor infrastructure, but these were generally speaking (marginally) better serviced than areas where blacks had to reside (Chetty 2015, 57). Though nowhere in the vicinity of the standards applied to whites, social welfare and housing schemes were for example more elaborate for coloureds than for blacks (Salo 2003, 549).

Coloured areas differed in design from homelands in that they were not aimed at the preservation of a distinct culture. Coloured culture and identity always remained highly ambiguous. The 1950s Population Registration Act for example defined coloureds as those who are “obviously” neither Black or White. Prior to the impact of the anti-apartheid ideology of the 1970s and 1980s, but arguably even thereafter (see below), European ancestry was clearly fronted by the vast majority (Worden 2009, 25). Many for instance straightened their hair in order to appear less ‘African’ (Simone 1994, 166). Adhikari (1992, 110) argues that the incorporation of Bantu-speakers into the labour force in the wake of territorial conquest and the mineral revolution of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century accounts for their pro-White attitudes. Threatened by the competition, “coloured petty bourgeoisie” assumed that emphasizing proximity to European ways and phenotypes was the best strategy to keep an edge over blacks (Ibid., 103). This ideology of defending relative privilege underpinned Coloured interest groups such as the African Political Organization, founded in 1902 (Adhikari 2002). Whites for their part encouraged aspirations to whiteness. During the apartheid years, members of the National Party often flirted with notions of ‘Coloured/*bruin* [brown] Afrikaners’ and potential greater benefits, while simultaneously keeping full equality firmly at bay (Giliomee 1995, 211). The latter could be denied by falling back on the notion that coloureds were ‘tainted’ by non-white influences. Sourced from centuries of derogatory representation, apartheid’s forceful indoctrination and politics of race led coloureds to internalize a sense of inferiority, not

least by (publicly) refuting slave and particularly Khoisan ancestry (Smith 1983, 39, 47; Nienaber 1989, 84; Adhikari 2002, 56). One spokesperson for instance proudly asserted in 1937 that “all traces of [coloureds’] Hottentot ancestry have entirely disappeared” (Desmore 1937, 347).

Legislation also played a role in effacing Khoisan identity. Various scholars have noted in this regard how the 1950 Population Registration Act legislated the Khoisan out of existence, with “one stroke of the bureaucratic pen” (Besten 2009: 136-137; Ellis 2012, 11). The Act consolidated a lengthy process of “discursive erasure” (Cavanagh 2011, 30-31) that ultimately rendered the Khoisan lost in categorization. As I noted, Coloured identity remained vague at all times, and its application as a demographic demarcation tool continuously ran into practical problems as a result. The various bureaucratic commissions and legal amendments that attempted to clarify its boundaries never mentioned the Khoisan (Lewis 1987, 3). A 1959 legal revision for instance made provisions for seven Coloured subgroups, introducing categories such as “Cape Malay” (see Worden 2009, 26; Bickford-Smith 2012, 138) and “Other Coloured” (Posel 2001, 102). True, the category ‘Griqua’ also made the cut for some time, although some Griqua became classified as Bantu (Waldman 2007b, 90-91). The government recognized a Griqua subcategory in part to validate the specific historical and contemporary elements of Khoisan culture, such as the prevalence of certain traditions or the occasional speaker of Khoisan languages (Ibid.). This, however, was not so much an acknowledgement of Khoisan ancestry, as it was a definitive official encapsulation of the Griqua as Coloured (Ibid., 36).

At this stage the Griqua believed their political future was best guaranteed by throwing in their lot with coloureds as opposed to emphasizing an indigenous or African identity (Waldman 2007b, 92). European lineage was (reluctantly) accentuated as a result (Besten 2006, 263). Ultimately, however, this strategy did not pay off in the sense that, several commissions of enquiry later, a ‘distinctive’ Griqua identity did not receive official acknowledgement and the Griqua homeland that some campaigned for until the 1980s was not established (Besten 2006, 223; Waldman 2007a, 165). Interestingly, one of the motivations the 1983 committee provided for not creating a separate Griqua category was that it might be seen as an acknowledgment of aboriginality, which in turn could set a



precedent for others with similar ancestry to come forward (Besten 2006, 244). One of the factors that compounded the inability to procure special rights for the Griqua was the absence of a united front. Foreshadowing similar arguments of the post-apartheid era, disunity was one of the reasons why apartheid anthropologists did not grant the Griqua the recognition they desired (Waldman 2007b, 36). Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, infighting around leadership positions led to the formation of several splinter groups of Griqua, who amassed their own followers (Waldman 2007a, 163). This complex history falls outside the scope of this thesis (see Waldman 2007b; Besten 2006). For present purposes the most relevant group here is the Griqua National Conference (GNC), as they play an important role in the history of Khoisan revivalism as well (see below). Created in 1920 by Paramount Chief A.A.S. Le Fleur I, the GNC was made up by the newly created Griqua Independent Church and the more politically oriented wing. The organization was created in Maitland, Cape Town, and a following of Griqua remains there today, but the GNC's activities mostly concerned traditional Griqua areas in the interior (Besten 2006, 103).<sup>21</sup> Despite a split that occurred in the organization in 1967, through its involvement in politics, syncretic Christianity, and the spread of its newspaper — the tellingly titled *The Griqua and Coloured Peoples' Opinion*, the GNC emerged during this time as the main vehicle for Griqua political aspirations. This in turn made Griqua identity endure in the face of dispossession and political disappointments (Waldman 2007b, 43; Boezak 2019, 91-93, 127). Nevertheless, the GNC generally confirmed to the pattern outlined above. While occasionally acknowledging to speak on behalf of the “offspring of the Hottentot race”, Le Fleur himself tailored his aspirations to the political realities of the day and strongly profiled the GNC on Colouredness (Besten 2006, 155).

The plight of the Griqua illustrates the ultimately inescapable imposition of apartheid's tri-racial native administration; top-down racial categories by the state became reified as social identifiers. Indigeneity lost much of its relevance within apartheid ideology: it had

---

<sup>21</sup> More research is needed to ascertain continuities between current-day residents in the Cape Flats and Griqua heritage. While I did not come across such continuities myself and the people I interacted with did not mention this either, this could be an oversight on my and their part. It is my understanding that, at the time of writing, June Bam-Hutchison is working on a research project that looks precisely at these issues.

either been appropriated by settlers, or was considered dissolved among coloureds as the result of miscegenation (see also Cavanagh 2013, 11). References to the Khoisan had become largely meaningless, with the term (and its many alternatives) steadily losing its purchase on altered social realities. The Khoisan's assimilation as Coloured was considered a *fait accompli*. Khoisan history was largely subsumed *and* compounded by that of Coloured identity; an empty shell devoid of connotations of indigeneity, and manipulated to best suit the aims of settlers (see also Wolfe 1999, 34; Cavanagh 2013, 10). As Marike de Klerk infamously put it in 1983, “[coloureds] are a negative group [...] They are the leftovers. They are the people that were left after the nations were sorted out” (Marike de Klerk cited in Adhikari 2002, 35). Purportedly often referring to themselves as a people without history, coloureds' self-effacement was accelerated (Hattingh 1988, 41). ‘Coloured’ Khoisan descendants certainly suffered through their enrolment in the apartheid system. But Khoisan presences as ‘Khoisan’ were disavowed, which differed from attitudes towards those that were eventually classed as Black. As the apartheid system relied heavily on their labour, the Bantu-speaking populations were not approached with the same type of assimilationist or annihilationist policies. To be sure, their territorial conquest and subsequent dispossession and discrimination was devastating, but it was not premised on an ‘extinction discourse’. At the time, the Khoisan were much fewer in number, did not constitute a crucial labour pool, no longer practiced a vibrant culture or posed a potential threat to the system that warranted their containment in homelands. At most, reserves were considered for assimilated descendants (Robins 2001, 847). This is not to ascertain who suffered more than others, but to identify differences in the process of colonization (see also Veracini and Verbuyst 2020).

While ‘Khoisan’ faded as a form of identification during this time, Khoisan representation endured. Assimilated Khoisan were of little interest to researchers, unless conceptualized as Coloured (see e.g. Carstens 1966), but the reverse is true when it came to those Khoisan who had undergone far less assimilation, the San. Against the backdrop of the Khoisan extinction discourse, one could posit that the Khoi became ignored in favour the San in both the academic and political sense (see below). Although equally enumerated as Coloured, the San were appraised as the last remaining traditional Khoisan

specimens in the spirit of the aforementioned paradigm of salvage ethnography (Sylvain 2003b, 112). The prominent historian Isaac Schapera had little doubt in 1930 that the San were on the verge of extinction: “what persecution at the hands of other peoples has not achieved is being slowly accomplished by disease and racial intermixture” (Schapera cited in Tobias 1956, 184). In a rather self-serving manner, physical anthropologist Phillip Tobias likewise ascertained in 1956 that “extinction by hybridization” was awaiting the Bushmen, and that this would deprive anthropologists of “a tremendously important insight into human development” (Tobias 1956, 185). Tobias urgently called for studies to document the purported last of their kind in their supposed traditional habitat: the remote stretches of the Kalahari Desert across Southern Africa, but particularly in Namibia and Botswana. Prospects of locating and studying these pristine hunter-gatherers captivated anthropologists (Wilmsen 1995, 2). Agnes Winifred Hoernlé, for instance recorded in 1917 how she scouted numerous locations in search for Khoisan who had experienced the least encounters with settlers (Abrahams 1995, 26). Viewed as curiously surviving anomalies, the Bushmen were “identified as distinctly South African finds and resources”, and subsequently “subject to major projects of collection, documentation, and preservation [...] They were unearthed, demonstrated, annotated, labelled, transported, cast, interviewed, reproduced, photographed, exhibited, drawn, captured, dissected, celebrated, proclaimed, and classified” (Witz, Minley and Rassool 2017, 182).

Opinions regarding the (in)ability of these remaining pockets of Khoisan to assimilate kept circulating. As late as 1936, the Minister of Native Affairs referred to them as “fauna [...] incapable of assimilating to European ideas” (Gordon 1995, 30-31). Such views were frequently espoused alongside more favourable ones (see above). No longer a threat to their rule, settlers could afford more sympathetic assessments of the Khoisan; nothing approximating restitution, but rather manifested through a preservationist ethic (Ibid., 251). On one level, this concerned pre-historic markers of Khoisan presence. The Bushmen Relics Act of 1911 was the first conservation legislation in South Africa and aimed not only to protect rock art sites, but also to stifle the (inter)national trade in human remains (Legassick and Rassool 2000, 1). Such collections had been formed already under British rule, but boomed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century – with many scientific institutions

in South Africa and abroad still housing vast collections of Khoisan remains (Schramm 2016, 133). Louis Péringuey, director of the South African Museum from 1906 to 1924 was for example an avid collector of human remains and created several replicas of living Khoisan in the form of body casts (McGee 2008, 121). Under his command the “museum modeller” James Drury made casts of the “last remaining Bushmen” in 1907, which would in turn feature in the notorious ‘diorama’ at the South African museum (Dubow 1995, 36; Davison 2001, 14). Created in 1959 and on show from 1960 to 2001, the diorama depicted Khoisan hunter-gatherer ways of life. It was the museum’s most prized attraction, including among non-white visitors (Davison 2001, 4; Rassool 2015, 660).<sup>22</sup> As the audience was invited to gaze upon a supposedly extinct Stone Age race, guides often capitalized on the occasion to share and reify Khoisan stereotypes (Skotnes 2001, 311).

This fossilization logic extended beyond scientific institutions and museums, and affected living Khoisan as well. General Smuts for instance notoriously referred to the Khoisan as “living fossils”, who should be allowed to hunt in a demarcated area in the Northern Cape provided they use “traditional weaponry” (Gordon 1995, 32). This, it seems, was the type of Khoisan existence that the apartheid dispensation allowed for. As an expression of what Renato Rosaldo (Rosaldo 1989, 108) terms “imperialist nostalgia”, the mourning of what colonialism destroyed, settlers were on some occasions reminiscent, or oddly proud, of the state of their ‘conquered’ subjects. Khoisan were exhibited abroad – the most famous case being Sarah Baartman (see Chapter Three) – but they were also paraded at home. During the 1952 celebration of 300 years since the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck, a Bushmen delegation housed in the South-West Africa pavilion was among the most popular stands. Visitors were promised the “last remnant of [an] almost extinct aboriginal people” (Witz 1993, 13, 19). Cast in this fashion, Khoisan were on display as potent objects for image building and scientific examination. Viewed as rare resources, there have been attempts to protect and “save” the Bushmen under

---

<sup>22</sup> Supporters of the diorama, which included some Khoisan, felt that it was a crucial instrument to get people to learn about Khoisan culture. Critics on the other hand dismissed it as an offensive and colonialist portrayal of the Khoisan. The latter camp eventually won the argument and the diorama was dismantled in April 2001 (see Davison 2001).

“crisis” as early as 1836 (Gordon 1995, 28). The claim made earlier that no homelands were ever created for the Khoisan needs to be nuanced. In 1935, the head of the Rhenish Missionary Society for example campaigned for two Bushmen reserves to be created in South-West Africa after it was transferred from Germany to South Africa as a protectorate in the wake of World War I (Gordon 1992, 119). Similar pleas were made in 1949 and 1959 (Hoernlé 1925, 8; Gordon 1992, 163, 175). While it is unclear to what extent such plans gained traction, they did not lead to the establishment of a homeland. The only exception here is the creation of Bushmanland in 1964, a non-self-governing small piece of land in the Otjozondjupa Region (Sylvain 2003b, 112). This was negligible however in the overall history of dispossession and assimilation.<sup>23</sup>

The noble savage idea had not disappeared either, but was recycled in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Barnard 2007, 129; Wright and Weintraub 2014, 736). Up until then, the Khoisan had mostly been studied through the discipline of physical anthropology, as opposed to blacks, who were studied in the main by social anthropologists and *volkekundiges* (Rassool 2019, 354). Interest in the Khoisan among anthropologists of all stripes grew after World War II due to the production of influential works of fiction, particularly the written and televised works of Laurens van der Post, such as *Lost World of the Kalahari* (1958) and *The Heart of the Hunter* (1961) (Barnard 2007, 59). Together with Jamie Uys’ *The Gods Must be Crazy* blockbuster comedy movies of the 1980s, these instilled a romanticized image of the Bushmen as innocent and primitive, if cunning, hunter-gatherers among the general public (Barnard 2007, 129; Gordon 2014, 111). They also gave shape to the idea that the Khoisan were “ethnically particular, culturally vulnerable, and threatened” (Gordon 1992, 214). Anthropologists assisted in this redefinition of the Khoisan by reappraising them as the “original affluent society” and attributing them with positive qualities such as generosity, egalitarianism and peacefulness, which Western civilization was deemed to lack (Guenther 1980, 123; Barnard 2007, 69). Another popular designation was “harmless people”; coined by the American Marshall family of anthropologists who carried out ethnographic fieldwork among the !Kung in Northern

---

<sup>23</sup> See Gordon 1995 for more on attempts to create reserves for the Bushmen.

Namibia and Botswana between the 1950s and 1970s (Guenther 1980, 123; Barnard 2007, 58). Their work enticed countless anthropologists, especially from North America, to descend on the Kalahari and conduct their own fieldwork (Wilmsen 1989, xv; Barnard 1992, 296).

Detailing their work would let me off trail. The broader point is that it highlights the status quo of Khoisan representation after centuries of colonialism. The legacies of this history are present throughout this thesis and affect Khoisan revivalism as much as its societal reception. Before Khoisan revivalism, whatever was publicly written or said about the Khoisan involved anthropologists and other scientists, but increasingly also artists, writers and other members of the general public (Guenther 1980, 123). The Khoisan themselves were left out of the equation. Certainly, as far as I could tell there were no Khoisan interest groups during apartheid. This would not have been tolerated by the regime, nor found traction among the vast majority of Khoisan descendants who had internalized Coloured identities after centuries of assimilation and dispossession. Griqua politics certainly remained a factor, but this was caught up in debates on Coloured assimilation. Khoisan representation was instead sourced mainly from the Kalahari Desert during apartheid; where salvation or salvaging were still considered actions worth pursuing. However, as I show next, it is in part in relation to the Kalahari's polar opposite, Cape Town, that rigid conceptions of Khoisan culture and identity began to be subverted and the first signs of Khoisan revivalism were becoming apparent.

## **2.2 Black Consciousness, Khoisan revisionist historiography and the origins of Khoisan revivalism (1970s-1997)**

Starting this subchapter in the 1970s is to an extent arbitrary. Resistance to apartheid and colonialism is as old as the systems themselves. Neither was there a greater degree of Khoisan revivalism in the 1970s than the preceding or following decade. In retrospect, however, a series of events during this time, most not directly related to Khoisan issues and some originating in the 1960s and even earlier, clearly formed the basis for the

Khoisan revivalism that crystalized in Cape Town after 1994: the rejection of Coloured identity among a critical minority of coloureds during the anti-apartheid struggle, the spread of Black Consciousness philosophy, and the production of Khoisan revisionist historiography.<sup>24</sup>

Before making my case, I need to expand on a caveat concerning historical continuity that I began to unpack in the Introduction. I do not claim that people were not relating to Khoisan identity prior to Khoisan revivalism. Such an excessive assessment does not live up to empirical scrutiny, as numerous accounts in this thesis will illustrate (see also Hoff 1993, 2; 1995, 29; Western 2001, 621; Øvernes 2019, 55).<sup>25</sup> Yvette Abrahams (16/07/2019) expressed her scepticism at the notion of revivalism to me as follows: “I always knew who I was [...] identity changes through every generation, it can be suppressed and oppressed, but the notion of revival, that it disappeared and then came back, is one from the top”. In her 1994 MA thesis, Abrahams (1994, 10) claimed that residents of Mitchells Plain and Bonteheuwel in the Cape Flats area “always” acknowledged their “Khoi” lineage when she asked them about their identity. Whether her or mine interlocutors were aware of their Khoisan lineage to the extent they purport to be is not my concern. In any case, proto-Khoisan revivalists were evidently eclipsed by assimilated coloureds or those identifying as Black during the anti-apartheid struggle (see below); something which Khoisan revivalists readily acknowledge. They would also confirm that, pre-1994, communicating about the Khoisan was done so privately (cf. Waldman 2007b, 138; De Wet 2011, 101). Publicly proclaiming such identities was not tolerated by the apartheid dispensation; who for instance violently cracked down on people speaking Khoisan languages (Bam-Hutchison 2016, 22). Embracing Khoisan ancestry during this time indeed

---

<sup>24</sup> It should be noted that what I present in this chapter are in many ways superficial observations about the ways in which Khoisan revivalism’s intellectual history ties into to the longer Cape intellectual tradition of critiquing White minority rule and championing non-racialism. The work of Crain Soudien (2019) constitutes an excellent starting point to flesh out these links in closer detail.

<sup>25</sup> Continuity with the Khoisan past, if clandestinely communicated through specific strategies, including seemingly going along in assimilationist policies, has also been reported with regards to !Xam identity (Parkington, Morris and de Prada-Samper 2019, 730) or a group of San in the Drakensberg region in KwaZulu-Natal, often referred to as the ‘Secret San’ (Francis 2009; 2010; Prins 2009).

meant going against the grain of centuries of derogatory Khoisan representation and forceful assimilationist policies. The Khoisan extinction discourse conflates assimilation and dispossession with cultural and physical obliteration, thereby (in)directly disavowing contemporary Khoisan identities, but the effects of these processes were certainly devastating. When people, including Khoisan revivalists, note that ‘nobody identified as Khoisan before 1994’, this should not be taken as an absolute, but rather as a reference to the devastating impact of colonialism, as well as the critical turning point that is Khoisan revivalism.

### **2.2.1 Black Consciousness and the reinvention of Coloured identity in the anti-apartheid struggle**

The anti-apartheid struggle faced coloureds with a dilemma. One option was to keep working within apartheid’s racialized system and to push for greater rights. This path had been pursued for several decades and although it had safeguarded coloureds’ position of relative privilege, it also kept brushing up against the limits of the regime’s assimilationist policies. The alternative was to join the coalition of South Africans of all stripes in opposing apartheid and fighting for a more just society by relinquishing their distinctive status. A third possibility could have been a militant Coloured nationalism that framed Coloured identity and history as a rallying point for their grievances, and perhaps even as a basis for solidarity with others in the resistance to apartheid. Coloured intellectuals however never succeeded in providing an inspirational unifying historical narrative or in exchanging the previously mentioned stigmas regarding miscegenation and impurity for a more positive set of identity markers (Adhikari 2002, 483). As Zimitri Erasmus (2001, 17) put it, Coloured identity remained mostly defined by what it was deemed to lack. Coloureds were not exactly considered a nation among nations, which prevented Coloured identity from informing an anti-apartheid nationalism (Petrus and Isaacs-Martin 2012, 53). Those same connotations regarding Coloured identity did lead some to oppose apartheid in another way: by rejecting the notion altogether. It is important to note that most coloureds continued to support assimilationist ideals; evident for instance through their overwhelming support for the National Party during



the first post-apartheid elections (Giliomee 1995, 222). Nevertheless, the rejection of Coloured identity constitutes an important break with the past; one that also laid the groundwork for Khoisan revivalism.

Khoisan revivalism was indeed something that featured only at a later stage, after apartheid's assimilationist policies were discontinued and the Khoisan past no longer overtly functioned as a reservoir of derogatory stereotypes. More importantly perhaps, Khoisan did not become an alternative identity during this time because, together with Coloured identity, 'tribe', 'race' and 'ethnicity' were also rejected as colonial inventions intended to divide and rule the oppressed. What mattered in the fight against minority-rule was creating as broad as possible a coalition, not to get bogged down in debates over distinct historical trajectories. This reasoning was particularly applied to Coloured identity, which was considered anathema to the anti-apartheid struggle (Jackson and Robins 1999, 89). Slave descent denoted foreignness and was also not explicitly mobilized as an anti-colonial identity (Coetzee 1998, 209). Tellingly, the various ideologies and groups that called for the rejection of Coloured identity shared this consensus. Though earlier attempts by a pocket of Trotskyists to rally around class to oppose segregation had not enjoyed much support among coloureds (Adhikari 2002, 25), Marxism remained a source of inspiration (see below). Non-racialism, arguably subscribed to by the Non-European Unity Movement created in 1943, remained a powerful ideology in South Africa as well. However, notwithstanding important exceptions such as Neville Alexander, this ideology too was generally speaking unpopular among coloureds, who seemed content on holding on to their relative privilege (Ibid., 9, 26). Adopting a more amorphous Pan-Africanist identity, as called for by the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), and/or a Black political identity, derived from Black Consciousness philosophy, were seemingly more popular choices. It is important to interject here that, as this thesis will confirm, ideological preferences or identities such as these do not necessarily contradict or exclude one another. In practice they are able to coexist in their articulation.<sup>26</sup> Having

---

<sup>26</sup> An interesting example from the Northern Cape in this regard is the coloured Trotskyist PAC politician Benny Alexander, who changed his name to !Khoisan X in 1994; drawing parallels here with the case of Malcolm X in

said that, I believe it is worthwhile to explore Black Consciousness as a source of ‘Coloured rejectionism’ in particular due to its strong resonance within Khoisan revivalism — hence in part the choice of the title of this thesis (Lee 1998, 50; Brown and Deumert 2017, 575-576; see Conclusion).

The Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) crystallized in the mid-1960s in the wake of the imprisonment and exiling of the leadership of the ANC and PAC (Mngxitama, Alexander and Gibson 2008, 4). BCM is commonly associated with Steve Biko and the South African Students’ Organization (SASO), of which he was a founding member in 1968. Biko was a thorn in the side of the apartheid government and was assassinated at the hands of security services in 1977. Through SASO, writings, speeches and public protests, Biko inspired his followers to militantly oppose the apartheid dispensation. Black Consciousness philosophy revoked ethnic and tribal identities based on skin pigmentation in favour of ‘Black’ as a form of political subjectivity. Blackness was not non-Whiteness, but an “inward-looking process”, an authentic consciousness that one had to attain in order to come to grips with centuries of psychological oppression and ‘false consciousness’ (Biko 2000 [1978], 21, 29; Gibson 2003, 1; Thomas 2014, 22-23). Stimulated by Pan-Africanist philosophy and similar movements abroad, particularly in the US, BCM promoted a way of life that celebrated and rejuvenated African culture through poetry, music and various other forms of “protest art”, which flourished in the 1970s and 1980s (Biko 2000 [1978], 91; Minty 2006, 425). Black history was not inferior or backward, as colonialists portrayed it, but it had to be revised in order to produce African heroes in their own right. As Biko (2000 [1978], 29) himself put it: “A people without a positive history is like a vehicle without an engine”. Due to its wide appeal, BCM never operated as a bounded unit, but rather inspired a broad coalition of politically like-minded individuals who opposed white-minority rule (Van Kessel 2001, 18; Marabel and Peniel 2008, vii). Biko (2000 [1978], 38) was unequivocal in his belief that coloureds could come to the same type of political subjectivity as Bantu-speaking people. As Adhikari (2003, 182) notes, despite relatively few coloured BCM activists, its ideological impact was

---

the US and combining Pan-Africanism, Khoisan heritage and Black Consciousness (Western 2001, 622; Lee 2003, 98; Brown and Deumert 2017, 575-576).

significant among the younger generation in terms of questioning, reconfiguring and discarding Coloured identity.

Such dynamics were amplified by the United Democratic Front (UDF), which was officially launched in Mitchells Plain in the Cape Flats in 1983 in opposition to the so-called Tricameral Parliament, where whites, coloureds and Indians were given their own chambers (Johnson 2017, 19). Blacks did not qualify for the Parliament as they were still considered citizens of their homelands. Coloureds had been removed from the common voters' role in 1956 and this redesigned Parliament was presented by the apartheid government as a concession, aimed at increasing support among their ranks (Bickford-Smith 2012, 146). Some politicians participated in this system, but their elections were boycotted by the vast majority of coloureds, who saw the Tricameral Parliament as an empty gesture (Walshe 1988, 342). While it originally profiled itself on this issue, the UDF expanded into the main anti-apartheid outfit. With other powerful anti-apartheid collectives such as the ANC banned or their functioning severely hampered, the UDF grouped together local, regional and national organizations, including churches and labour unions, under the aegis of non-racialist opposition to apartheid (Johnson 2017, 19). Its motto 'UDF Unites, Apartheid Divides'. Throughout the 1980s, the UDF coordinated massive crowds to take to the streets to protest segregation and call for the unbanning of the ANC (Van Kessel 2001, 2). BCM activists also found a home with the UDF after it too was banned in 1977 (Johnson 2017, 19). A key figure was the UDF President, the coloured Reverend Allan Boesak, who combined his oratory talents to spread a revolutionary blend of Black liberation theology and Black Consciousness (Van Kessel 2001, 16; Thomas 2014, 27). Boesak and others drew on such ideologies to argue that coloureds were equally 'Black', despite receiving slightly preferential treatment under apartheid. As a result it became common practice in these circles to speak of 'so-called coloureds' (Yarwood 2006, 162). Discarding the identity altogether became the unstated proviso that accompanied the realignment of Colouredness in the context of the anti-apartheid struggle (Erasmus 2001, 19). Ultimately this meant that while the UDF had become the most popular anti-apartheid body in the country, it disbanded itself in 1991 to make way for the ANC in the lead-up to the democratic transition of 1994 (Van Kessel 2001, 47; Suttner 2004, 694).

While there are important ways in which Khoisan revivalism differs from BCM and related ideologies, many of their core-concepts and themes, such as “false consciousness” (which in turn clearly derives from Marxist scholarship) and the explicit quest for heroes in the past strongly influenced Khoisan revivalism (see Conclusion). As I show in Chapter Four, various Khoisan revivalists are also reminiscent of their participation in the UDF and in other anti-apartheid organizations. People such as Jean Burgess (De Wet and Burgess 2011, 489) or Garth Erasmus (see Chapter Six) were for example avid enthusiasts of the BCM. It is also not a coincidence that two brothers of UDF stalwart Allan Boesak, Reggie and Willa became Khoisan revivalists after the end of apartheid (see Chapter Four). The list runs longer, but Yvette Abrahams and Vanessa Ludwig deserve a special mention as they were one of the few who were explicitly inspired by the BCM to revive the Khoisan before 1994. In an interview, Abrahams (16/07/2019) explained that growing up with exiled parents in Sweden since she was six meant that there was no need for a taboo on Khoisan identity in her family, contrary to most coloureds. When Abrahams returned to the University of Cape Town to pursue her studies in 1983-1984, she dropped out and moved to Mitchells Plain to become more immersed in the anti-apartheid struggle. Here, together with Ludwig, she founded the BCM-inspired collective ‘Black Culture Lives!’, which they renamed the *!Hurikamma Cultural Movement* in 1994 and authored the scathing attack on *Miscast*. Ludwig, whose family was aligned to the PAC, had always been aware of her Khoisan roots whilst growing up in District Six in Cape Town, but actively began researching her family tree in the Cape Town archives in the 1980s: “The history books said I was extinct but here I am” (Vanessa Ludwig, 19/08/2019). Through Black Culture Lives! Abrahams and Ludwig taught dance classes, spread “banned books” (such as the work of Hosea Jaffe, see below) and carried out community projects inspired by BCM-ideology infused with references to the Khoisan. As Abrahams recounts in an article in *Eland Nuus* “[M]y choreography was inspired by rock-art because the Khoisan liked to paint dancers. My class danced, draw, wrote poems and read” (EN 2009c, 15).<sup>27</sup> While the emphasis on ‘roots’ was textbook BCM, Abrahams noted that the Khoisan element was

---

<sup>27</sup> Author’s translation from Afrikaans: “my choreografie het gekom van inspirasie van rotsskilderye omdat die Khoisan graag dansers geteken het. My klas het gedans, geteken, gedigte geskryd en gelees”.

not really mobilized by anyone else at the time, especially not to the same extent. To understand how this steadily changed in the run up to the end of apartheid, I need to turn to a parallel series of developments in academia regarding Khoisan historiography, and more specifically to the historian Henry Bredekamp.

### **2.2.2 Henry Bredekamp and Khoisan revisionist historiography**

As Coloured identity was being scrutinized during the anti-apartheid struggle, academia did not remain unaffected. At the centre of this was the University of the Western Cape (UWC), the only university open to coloureds. Established in 1959 with mostly pro-apartheid Afrikaner staff, UWC gradually opened up to coloured personnel (Messina 1995, 124). As anti-apartheid efforts picked up pace, UWC eventually reinvented itself in 1987 as “the intellectual home of the left” (Wolpe 1995, 286). Black Consciousness was tolerated by UWC’s first coloured rector, Richard Van der Ross, and proliferated on campus through the sharing of photocopied (banned) books and political leaflets (Messina 1995, 125; Thomas 2005, 81, 87; 2014, 22). This put UWC on the map as a ‘struggle university’ and gave its students a repute for being politically conscious and militant. Research conducted at the university’s Institute for Historical Research (IHR), founded in 1976, also gradually moved away from its original mission to become an “archive and research platform on ‘coloured’ history, culture and economic development”; poised to instil coloureds with the historical consciousness they were judged to be lacking (Hattingh 1988, 41; Forte, Israel and Witz 2017, 226). While initially reifying apartheid notions of Coloured identity through an exclusive focus on ‘Coloured history’ and ‘*volkverhoudings*’ [relations between populations], much of the IHR’s output from the 1980s onward was relatively subversive for its time in that it problematized a settler-focused history of South Africa. A case in point is the 1984 publication *Groep sonder grense* [Group without borders] by Hans Heese (1984), which laid bare the ‘racial intermixture’ that characterized the early decades of the Cape Colony (Worden 2007, 5). Another example is the IHR’s weeklong seminar series on “liberatory history” in 1989, which deliberately coincided with Black History Month in the US (Henry Bredekamp 28/12/2018). Ultimately, however, the IHR’s use of racial registers and ambivalence towards Coloured

identity became too much to bear for the more radical and Marxist-oriented members at UWC's History Department (see below), who led the way in refashioning the institute into the Centre for Historical Research in 2006 (Worden 2007, 6; Forte, Israel and Witz 2017, 226).

The relevance of the IHR's mandate for the post-apartheid era is not my concern here, but what tends to get lost in such discussions are the vital contributions of its first coloured faculty in revaluing Khoisan identity and culture in both academic and public spheres. Indeed, many Khoisan revivalists refer to Henry Charles Bredekamp, as "the father of the Khoisan revival" (Willa Boezak, 03/05/2018) or their guide for making them aware of their Khoisan roots (see e.g. De Jongh 2016, xiii). Due to Bredekamp's significant influence on Khoisan revivalism, it is worth elaborating on his career and intellectual influences, much of which I reconstruct here from a series of interviews I conducted with him between 2018 and 2019. Born on the old mission station of Genadendal, Bredekamp began his career as a school teacher (Henry Bredekamp, 30/04/2018). While taking part in an afternoon program at UWC for teachers to get their BA, Bredekamp was offered a position as lecturer-researcher at the soon to be established IHR in 1975. He accepted and began contemplating a potential line of research. Bredekamp had always been aware of his Khoisan roots, but it was after encountering the work of Canadian historian Richard Elphick while compiling a bibliography in 1977/1978 (Scholtz, Bredekamp and Heese 1981) that he fully embraced Khoisan history as a subject in its own right: "Elphick opened something in my mind, it sparked something in me" (Henry Bredekamp, 30/04/2018). While not without its critics (see e.g. Abrahams 1995), Elphick's PhD dissertation (1972) and related monographs (Elphick 1977; 1985) became instant classics in the field of Khoisan history. Detailing the devastating impact of the decades preceding and following the establishment of the Cape Colony on the local population, Elphick's pioneering arguments contrasted starkly with then-prevailing notions about the Khoisan. One reviewer praised Elphick for "at long last" giving "the Khoikhoi their due measure of attention and sympathetic understanding" (Hughes 1978, 65). Another commentator argued he ushered in "a new generation of Khoikhoi studies" (Smith 1990, 3). Elphick was an exponent of the Africanist school of historiography of the late 1960s and 1970s, which emphasized the agency of African actors (Falola 2011, 401). This approach was for a long

time impossible or unpopular at South African history departments, which caused several intellectuals to pursue their academic careers in more favourable intellectual climates abroad, including Elphick's supervisor at Yale University, Leonard Thompson (Elphick 2008, 555).

According to Edward Cavanagh (2011, 1-8), these "critical revisionists" were responsible for carrying South African history forward from the 1960s onward (see also Dubow 2007, 69-70). Whether at the hands of historians in South Africa or elsewhere, an innovative push towards recuperating and fronting African agency and class oppression became discernible in the anti-apartheid inflected "radical"/"revisionist" historiography of the 1970s and 1980s (Cavanagh 2011, 80; Kros 2017, 360). While these efforts were mainly directed at reinterpreting South Africa's mineral revolution and revealing the class-struggle origins of apartheid, forgotten 'histories from below' concerning slaves, Khoisan, landless settlers, etc. during the VOC period were also written (Worden 2007, 3, 7, 9; 2009, 24). An interesting precursor in this regard is *Three Hundred Years*, authored by Cape Town-born Non-European Unity Movement member Hosea Jaffa, but published under the penname 'Mnguni' in 1952 (Saunders 1986, 75). Jaffa offered an anti-apartheid and Marxist-inspired interpretation of South African history, seeking to "expose the process of the conquest, dispossession, enslavement, segregation and disfranchisement of the oppressed Non-Europeans of South Africa, in order that [they] will understand better how to transform the status quo" (Mnguni 1988 [1952], 13). In unprecedented fashion, the opening pages of *Three Hundred Years* condemn the exploitation and dispossession of the Khoisan, highlighting their resistance and agency, as well as the cruelty of colonialists. Though it stands out as an anti-colonial text, it is not clear to what extent people were aware of its existence at the time (cf. Bredekamp 1991, 62). In the more well-known circuits of academic historiography, it is roughly two decades after *Three Hundred Years* that works of revisionism began to appear. Besides Elphick, prime examples in this regard are Shula Marks' (1972) study of Khoisan resistance; Vertrees Malherbe's (1979) paper on the Khoisan convert Cupido Kakkerlak; and Robert Ross' (1976) history of the Griqua. To give an insight into the overtly revisionist stance of these authors without going into too much detail, notice how Marks sets the tone for her ground-breaking paper:

The Khoisan [...] have on the whole had a bad press from historians [...] Jan van Riebeeck [...] was neither the first nor the last to refer to the Hottentots as 'a dull, stupid, lazy, stinking nation' — who were, at the same time, 'bold, thievish and not to be trusted'. Stereotypes of the San or Bushmen as 'incorrigible banditti', 'uneducable' and 'unassimilable' also abound in the literature of South Africa (Marks 1972, 55)

Full-frontal assaults on remnants of old-school Khoisan historiography such as these captivated Bredekamp. On that note, Elphick not only inspired him through his work, but did so in person as well. During our conversations, Bredekamp (30/04/2018) recalled with fondness how he met Elphick at an event in the whites-only suburb of Rondebosch in 1980. Classified Coloured, Bredekamp was in theory barred from entering, but was allowed inside and managed to set up an appointment with Elphick. Organizing a public meeting between whites and non-whites was a complicated affair at the time as restaurants or pubs were out of the question. They settled on the Compagny's Gardens in central Cape Town, where they enjoyed a picnic on one of the public benches. Elphick told Bredekamp he needed to be “exposed” to a different intellectual climate, free from apartheid ideology. This ultimately culminated in Bredekamp pursuing an MA in Liberal Studies in 1981-1982 at Wesleyan University on a Fulbright scholarship, where Elphick was based (Henry Bredekamp, 02/08/2019). When he returned to the IHR in 1983, no one was working on Khoisan history; at least not to the extent and in the way that he was about to do: “I spoke of Khoikhoi, San or Khoisan whereas most spoke about *Hottentots* and *Boesman*. They teased me by calling me *ou-Khoikhoi* [old Khoikhoi]” (Henry Bredekamp, 03/07/2018). Bredekamp made a conscious decision not to pursue a PhD, but to make “modest contributions” in the form of publications in Afrikaans and English that would appeal to ordinary coloureds’ sense of ancestral heritage (Henry Bredekamp, 21/05/2018; see also Bredekamp 1992, 54-55). The mounting opposition to apartheid inspired Bredekamp to focus on historical Khoisan figures and their resistance to, and interactions with, European settlers (Henry Bredekamp, 21/05/2018). The publication of his 1979 MA thesis (Bredekamp 1979b) in 1982 under the telling title *Van veeverskaffers tot veewagters* [from cattle suppliers to cattle herders] (Bredekamp 1982) bears witness to his revisionist inflection, but examples abound in his other work as well (see e.g. Bredekamp



1979a; 1980; 1981; 1987; 1988; 1991). There is no need to discuss these publications in detail. What is key is that their focus on topics such as the resistance tactics of the Khoisan or the invalidity of colonial treaties reveal what one reviewer described as “‘n besondere simpatie vir die inboorlingroep [a surprising sympathy towards the indigenous people]” (Hattingh 1988, 55) and another one as a “gebalanseerde benadering [balanced approach]” that does away with common stereotypes (Lubbe 1983, 78).

As much as Khoisan revisionist historiography broke with tradition by being ‘balanced’ and ‘sympathetic’, its effects on Khoisan revivalism should not be overstated. Khoisan resistance was certainly explored and the concept ‘Khoisan’ was endorsed along the way because the Khoikhoi and San were deemed to have experienced colonialism in similar ways (see Marks 1972, 57, 60; Bredekamp 1991, 65; Wright 1996, 16). However, as Michael Besten (2011a, 71) notes, many of these authors implicitly or explicitly endorsed the notion that the Khoisan were extinct or assimilated into oblivion. Marks (1972, 55) for instance wrote that the Khoisan have “all but disappeared [...] at least in their earlier guise”; they “literally acculturated themselves into the Cape Coloured population” (Marks 1981, 20). In a series of polemics between archaeologists and anthropologists in the 1980s and 1990s known as the ‘Kalahari Debates’, the degree to which, and in what guise, San culture and identity had persisted throughout centuries was likewise ferociously contested (Wright and Weintraub 2014, 736). One side claimed they had remained in relative isolation and retained their “pre-historic” lifestyle, while the other camp argued that they needed to be “historicized” in order to lay bare various forms of outside influence (Wilmsen 1989, 10; Douglas 1997, 53; Barnard 2007, 97-111). To varying extents this type of language concerning continuity and authenticity lives on in academic publications (see e.g. Steyn 1990), and as this thesis continuously attests, outside of academia as well. A second line of criticism levelled at Khoisan revisionist scholarship has to do with the extent to which it effectively dispelled stereotypes. While there is a general consensus that it did (Smith 1983, 44, Besten 2011a, 67; Øvernes 2019, 152-193), Abrahams argued that it reproduced them (Abrahams 1994, 76; see also Abrahams 2000). As I show in later chapters, she is mainly concerned here with gender and traditional leadership. Anticipating Khoisan revivalism, Abrahams warned that if historiography did not purge

itself of such stereotypes, Khoisan descendants would reject it and look elsewhere for the historiography they deserve (Abrahams 1994, 77; 1995, 22).

This brings me to a final related point. It is telling how the origins of Khoisan revisionist historiography are located abroad and steadily worked their way into South African academia through figures such as Bredekamp. However, as I show in the next section, it is only in the run-up to a large scale conference on Khoisan identities that such academic debates definitively entered the public sphere and began enticing coloureds to become Khoisan revivalists.

### **2.2.3 Towards a new Khoisan agenda in the post-apartheid era**

Until the 1997 edition, which I work my way towards in this section, Khoisan studies conferences were habitually held abroad. Consequently, Bredekamp found himself attending his first Khoisan-related conference in Tutzing, Germany in 1994 (Henry Bredekamp, 21/05/2018). The gathering had been instigated to celebrate and debate the contributions of Wilhelm Bleek (see above). What struck Bredekamp were not the presentations at the conference, but that he was the only African in attendance at an event that was ostensibly about people like him, which provoked him to make an off the cuff intervention during the plenary session. The anthropologist Richard Lee was struck by Bredekamp's heartfelt plea to the audience:

This meeting has a great deal of significance for me because I am a Khoisan person. There are millions of South Africans like me who trace their ancestry back to the Khoi and the San peoples. These are our histories our languages you are discussing. Under Apartheid we lost much of our culture. Now we want to work closely with you in recovering our past and our traditions (Lee 2003, 96)

As Lee (Ibid.) recalls, Bredekamp's words "energized the meeting" and "gave a new lease on life to the field of Khoisan studies". Indeed, Bredekamp was overwhelmed by the support he received, particularly by leading scholars in the field such as Megan Biesele, Sidsel Saugestad, Jeanette Deacon and Robert Ross. They agreed that Khoisan studies was in for some overdue introspection and urged him to organize the following edition of the conference not in Austin, as originally planned, but in South Africa (Henry Bredekamp,

21/05/2018). After getting the green light from the rector of UWC and the new head of the IHR, Colin Bundy, Bredekamp procured funding for the conference through Lee, who also joined the organizing committee. Financial support trickled in from other foreign and national sponsors, including the South African government (see Bank 1998a). Noted academics such as archaeologists John Parkington and Andrew Smith helped to organize the conference and lent it academic credence. As the absence of Khoisan in Tutzing had been a source of consternation for Bredekamp, the organizing committee invited Khoisan from all over Southern Africa. The uncomfortable fallout from the *Miscast* exhibition in 1996 created even more impetus to do so.<sup>28</sup> Khoisan representatives from Botswana and Namibia attended the conference (see Chapter Three), but in the remainder of this chapter I want to single out two South African delegates who sat on the organizing committee and had a more direct bearing on the unfolding of Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town.

The first of these men is Cecil Le Fleur, grandson of A.A.S. Le Fleur and chairman of the Executive Council of the GNC, who was suggested for the organizing committee by Jeanette Deacon (Henry Bredekamp, 21/05/2018). As the collective with arguably the strongest, if complicated, claim to continuity with the past and the largest membership base (Schweitzer 2015, 141), the GNC was a natural pick. Griqua politics had run somewhat out of steam after the definitive categorization of the Griqua as Coloured under apartheid (see above). However, Griqua aspirations were given a new lease on life with the end of white-minority rule in sight. On the one hand, Griqua representatives were not part of the so-called CODESA (Convention of Democratic South Africa) debates of the early 1990s. During these heated deliberations various stakeholders presented their vision for a post-apartheid South Africa and negotiated the way forward. The GNC's request for a seat at

---

<sup>28</sup> When I mentioned to Bredekamp that I had come across a conference report regarding a meeting that took place in Pretoria in September 1996 entitled 'The Khoisan Peoples of South Africa', this was news to him. This is all the more striking as the gathering reportedly delivered "[a] clear message [...] that the Khoisan are not some extinct group of people who disappeared after the arrival of the Europeans, but that their descendants are still to be found [...] in modern South Africa" (Viljoen 1996, 144). Unfortunately, as far as I can tell there are no published conference proceedings. Nor have I been able to find any further information about this gathering.

the negotiating table, motivated primarily to discuss matters of land in Griqualand-West, received no response (Willa Boezak, 03/05/2018; Cecil Le Fleur, 10/07/2019; see also SAHRC 2018, 56). While the burning issue of Zulu separatism was firmly part the negotiations, the Griqua's dispossession and political aspirations were not (Muthien and Khosa 1995, 304). On the other hand, one author claims it was as a result of pressure from the GNC that the South African census included an option 'Other' from 1996 onward (Christopher 2009, 107). Be that as it may, Griqua issues ranked low on the list of priorities for those that were busy designing the new South Africa. The end of apartheid brought with it new venues for political pressure, for instance in the domain of the recognition of traditional leadership, which I come back to in the following chapter, but the democratic transition of 1994 did not bring about the de facto accommodation of Griqua grievances. A highly significant shift in Griqua discourse occurred in the face of this disappointment, one that perhaps had the most enduring impact on Khoisan revivalism as a whole: their redefinition as indigenous people.

The concept of indigenous people was foreign to South African politics up to that point, and it is telling that it made its way to the Griqua via an outside figure. Mansell Upham, a lawyer classified White but who also claimed Khoikhoi descent, joined the GNC as an advisor between 1994 and 1998 (Schweitzer 2015, 157-159). Upham had worked for the South African embassy in Japan previously, where he took notice of the Ainu, the country's indigenous people. Upon returning to South Africa, he advised the Griqua to identify as indigenes to boost their struggle for land and self-determination. With the United Nations' proclamation of the World Decade on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 1994, it indeed increased the visibility of Griqua grievances, particularly in the international arena. With the assistance of Upham, a GNC delegation attended a session of the United Nations-affiliated International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) in Geneva in 1995 and they have continued doing so since (Ibid.). The Griqua were not the only Khoisan lobbying at the UN in order to put pressure on the South African government during this time. San who had been relocated to the Schmidtsdrift army base in 1990 after fighting for the South African Defence Force in Namibia also made several appearances at the IWGIA (Douglas 1997, 45, 48). Together with other San representatives, the Schmidtsdrift community formed the Windhoek-based Working Group of Indigenous

Minorities of Southern Africa (WIMSA) in 1995, a body aimed at protecting San rights in the region (Douglas 1997, 57). The South African San Institute (SASI) was in turn created in 1996 as a WIMSA affiliate and focused specifically on South Africa. A key figure in SASI is the Canadian socio-linguist Nigel Crawhall. Not unlike what Upham did for the Griqua, Crawhall was instrumental in campaigning for the linguistic and resource rights of the San in international circles (Crawhall 1999; Le Fleur 2001, 85). This activist conviction made Crawhall decide to assist with organizing the 1997 conference.

In this fashion, Bredekamp and his colleagues on the organizing committee brought together Khoisan representatives and spokespeople from all corners of the subcontinent. As I show in the next chapter, there was some disagreement over the focus of the conference and who ought to attend. Much of this related to the second member of the organizing committee I want to highlight: Joseph Little. Little, who is arguably the first Khoisan revivalist and certainly qualifies as the progenitor of Khoisan identity politics, is somewhat of an enigmatic figure, prone to giving different accounts of his background and motivations for becoming involved with Khoisan issues. Little told a reporter from the *Mail & Guardian* in 1997 that his father had “taught us to be proud of our Khoi bloodline”.<sup>29</sup> He went on to explain that he perused various archives in Europe over the last 15 years in his search of his Khoisan roots. Without specifying how he got his information, Duane Jethro (2017, 354) notes instead that Little lived and worked in Europe in the 1980s and that it was “in the libraries of England” that he “rediscovered” his indigenous roots. Access to historical works, Jethro argues, helped him substantiate his lack of “concrete tenets of indigeneity such as blood ties, language, religion and established cultural tradition”. When I interviewed Little, I received yet another version of these events. To me, Little (17/05/2018) spoke of his time in Ireland in 1984 in terms of finding out more about his Irish roots. He “lost interest” in this part of the family tree and decided to look more closely at his grandmother on his father’s side when he came back to South Africa. He pieced together to his surprise that she was of Khoikhoi descent, more specifically from the Chainouqua tribe, and had married an Irish man with the surname

---

<sup>29</sup> “Chief Little takes on a big job.” *Mail & Guardian* (1997) <https://mg.co.za/article/1997-07-25-chief-little-takes-on-a-big-job/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

Little (Joseph Little, 08/05/2018). This finding intrigued Little and made him eager to discover as much as possible about the Khoisan. He had always been puzzled by the fact that some in his family had been classified White but others Coloured. In the context of the Group Areas Act, members of the family who were classified Coloured were forcibly removed from Plumstead to Grassy Park, a coloureds-only suburb of Cape Town. Irish and Scottish ancestry was the only recognized lineage in Little's family. As a result, some family members still resent him for exploring the Khoikhoi roots of his father's side of the family. Contrary to Jethro's account, Little emphasized his genetic descent, at least in the context of my two interviews with him (see Chapter Three).

Jethro's observation regarding Little's use of historical and academic materials does ring true to my experiences, however. Indeed, during our first interview Little laid out a series of worn-out books across the coffee table as reference points for the various arguments and claims he was making. An avid reader with an impressive memory, Little frequently cited passages from travellers' accounts or suggested reading materials to me with ease during our conversations. As a lecturer in automotive engineering at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Little had exceptional access to libraries containing such research at the time. He was known as a man who had "documents, books and papers" and was eager to share them with anyone looking for information (Øvernes 2019, 45; see Chapter Three and Four). As Little explained, most did not know about the existence of such books, or could not access them because they were classified Coloured or did not have the financial means. It is important to note therefore that Little was also in touch with other academics who supplied him with materials and sources. Jeanette Deacon gave him a reprinted edition of Donald Moodie's *The Record*, a collection of sources relating to the early years of VOC rule, originally compiled in 1838 (Janette Deacon, 06/08/2019). *The Record* appeared on the day of our interview on the coffee table alongside some of his other cherished sources of inspiration: the aforementioned work of Elphick, Rowland Raven-Hart's collection of sources, *Before van Riebeeck* (1967), Gabriel Stefanus Nienaber's *Khoekhoense Stamname* (1989) and Tony Simpson's *Indigenous Heritage and self-determination* (1997). One of his favourite texts is Wilfred Haacke and Eliphas Eiseb's dictionary *Khoekhoegowab-English/English-Khoekhoegowab* (1999). Reviving

Khoekhoegowab remains central for Little, as he felt it was the most authentic marker of indigenous authenticity:

You are identified by a language [...] A coloured does not speak Coloured, he speaks English or Afrikaans, he borrows language [...] The word Coloured does not exist in the Constitution [...] it does mention language, which put me on course to find our language [...] when I found the language I wanted to name the people after it: Khoekhoegowab (Joseph Little, 17/05/2018)

This quote gives an insight into what propelled Little to align his fascination with the Khoisan with his activism for people classified Coloured, which had previously found expression in a brief career as city politician (Lee 2006, 456). While I am not entirely certain what Little was getting at in weaving together references to the 1996 Constitution of South Africa, Coloured identity and Khoekhoegowab, he was clearly stressing that coloureds' forgotten Khoisan ancestry was their salvation from marginalization. To further these ambitions, Little quit his job and poured his savings into the Cape Cultural Heritage Development Council (CCHDC), a non-profit organization he set up in August 1996 in the wake of *Miscast* (Besten 2006, 288). Little told the aforementioned *Mail & Guardian* journalist that he created the CCHDC “to foster unity among historically coloured people and give them pride in their origin [and] in response to the government’s affirmative action policies: under the previous dispensation we weren’t white enough, with the next we weren’t brown enough [...] Black people have no respect for us because we have no ancestral roots”.<sup>30</sup> Little was gesturing at Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), a policy aimed at tackling skewed employment patterns as a result of segregation, but often judged by coloureds to be unfairly privileging those classified Black (see Chapter Five). By making the connection between Coloured identity and the Khoisan, Little had effectively come up with a third option for those seeking to re-invent their identities without emphasising White or Black ancestry. The ‘December First Movement’ — referring to the date of the abolishment of slavery in South Africa in 1834 — began

---

<sup>30</sup> “Chief Little takes on a big job.” *Mail & Guardian* (1997) <https://mg.co.za/article/1997-07-25-chief-little-takes-on-a-big-job/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

emphasizing the history of slavery among coloureds in 1996, at the same time that Little began avidly promoting Khoisan ancestry. However, the movement's traction is dwarfed by that which Khoisan revivalism courted from the onset, perhaps due to the fact that slavery was not associated with indigeneity (cf. Worden 2009, 28; see also Ruiters 2009, 118-120).

While the CCDHC thus clearly functioned as way to advance a form of Coloured nationalism and flirted with racialized language in the process, I show in the next chapter how Little's views on these matters as well as the operations of the CCHDC are much more complex than what the *Mail & Guardian* article conveys. When Deacon suggested Little for the organizing committee, Bredekamp knew what he was in for. By that time Little was already openly flirting with the idea of appointing "chiefs", something Bredekamp was always wary of. At the same time, when he met Little in person he picked up on his charisma, his relative prominence among coloureds and his insatiable appetite for Khoisan history (Henry Bredekamp, 21/05/2018). The Griqua and various other Khoisan representatives were already on board and Bredekamp suspected Little could bring an original contribution to the conference with his focus on Khoisan identity in the Cape (Henry Bredekamp, 03/07/2018). As I show in the next chapter, Bredekamp would get more than he bargained for as Little exceeded all expectations at the 1997 conference and its aftermath.



### 3                      The political accommodation and diversification of post-apartheid Khoisan revivalism

*“I used to see this kind of thing as an invention, a calculated manipulation motivated by another agenda, whether it be land acquisition, political representation, jobs or an income [...] In part it is a creation, yet that does not mean the participants do not feel strongly about these ideas. One must acknowledge many populations draw on history to create a sense of identity and they have every right to do so [...] Within living memory people have experienced negative connotations of being called hotnot and bushmen [...] That hurt is still with them. This is a healing thing. It has a positive aspect. But the leaders of such groups are much more conscious and calculating about the way they manipulate symbols than the rank and file who see images that resonate with them – and that’s one of the dangers.”*

- Emile Boonzaier quoted in Mail & Guardian (1997)<sup>31</sup>

This was anthropologist Emile Boonzaier’s considered response to a *Mail & Guardian* reporter who asked him to comment on Joseph Little and the ‘Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference’ (hereafter ‘the 1997 conference’), held at the South African

---

<sup>31</sup> “Chief Little takes on a big job.” *Mail & Guardian* (1997) <https://mg.co.za/article/1997-07-25-chief-little-takes-on-a-big-job/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

Museum and the Dutch Reformed Church's Synod Hall on 12-16 July 1997. His input is meaningful since three years earlier he had co-authored the seminal paper deconstructing the "controlled performance" of Nama ethnicity I discussed in the Introduction. While suspect of Little's motives and claims, Boonzaier's initial scepticism towards Khoisan revivalism seems to have tempered after attending the 1997 conference. To those present, not least the various household names in Khoisan studies, Little and his entourage presented somewhat of an anomaly. Born and bred in Cape Town, but dressed for the occasion in a toga refashioned into a faux-leopard skin *kaross* [mantle] (Joseph Little, 17/05/2018), the flamboyant and charismatic Little did not conform to commonly held views about where Khoisan reside and how they practice culture. Richard Lee (2006, 456), whose work focused on Namibia and Botswana, felt Eric Hobsbawm and Terrance Ranger "would have had a field day" at the conference; in reference to their famous thesis on the invention of tradition (see Introduction). Lee was struck by the ceremonial swearing-in of traditional leaders from tribes that had been dissolved in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries: "members of the audience were called to the podium where they donned a highly eclectic mix of regalia and announced [...] who they were, what clan they were representing and what Khoi name they were adopting". Little became 'Chief of the Hamcumqua', although he later spoke of the 'Chainoqua', which to him refers to the same people (Besten 2006, 294-295). The inductees held "impassioned speeches" about forgotten Khoisan "heroes" and the need to reclaim Khoisan heritage (Lee and Hitchcock 2001, 272). Revivalist themes also dominated the public events prior to the scientific part of the conference, including parades and the ritual slaughter of a goat at Iziko Museum. There was also an excursion to Robben Island for conference delegates. Famous for imprisoning Nelson Mandela for 18 years, Little "with documentary filmmakers in tow" instead stressed how Robben Island's first prisoner was the largely forgotten 17<sup>th</sup> century Khoisan chief Autshumato, "King of Robben Island" (Lee and Hitchcock 2001, 272; Lee 2006, 456).<sup>32</sup> By emphasizing "a highly eclectic mix of regalia", "the invention of tradition" or Little's overall behaviour at the 1997 conference, Lee was not being condescending.

---

<sup>32</sup> Attempts to find out more about this documentary were unsuccessful.

Rather, like Boonzaier, he struggled to make sense of budding expressions of Khoisan revivalism in a drastically altered conference setting.

While more of an intellectual curiosity to academics, Little's brand of Khoisan revivalism also did not sit well with some of the other stakeholders of the 1997 conference. Little controversially borrowed from, and added to, various cultural influences, often coupled with politically charged aspirations to traditional leadership roles. He improvised a new kind of overarching Khoisan identity, but associating with stereotypical imagery and sharing a platform with more established Khoisan communities such as the Griqua or the San also boosted his credentials as an authentic Khoisan spokesperson (see also Jethro 2017, 357). Little was for instance adamant about having native speakers of Khoisan languages at the conference "so that people could know *our* language was not dead and that *we* are not dead" (Joseph Little, 08/05/2018). Henry Bredekamp, the driving force behind the conference, recalls how some prominent advocates for San rights were put off by Little's Khoisan revivalism (Henry Bredekamp, 11/12/2018). To them, Khoisan revivalism smacked of opportunism, risked detracting attention from the cause of the San and above all muddied their image-building (Henry Bredekamp, 21/05/2018; see Chapter Seven).<sup>33</sup> According to Michael Besten (2006, 297), SASI was "very averse" to alliances with Khoisan revivalists because they "lacked the marketable primordial socio-cultural attributes and the association with ultra-marginality that appealed to international donors". Some San representatives also clashed with the Griqua for similar reasons (Henry Bredekamp, 10/07/2019). As I show below, some Griqua were in turn initially reluctant to associate with Khoisan revivalists like Little; adding further complexity to the struggle over Khoisan representation in the post-apartheid era (Besten 2006, 282). Griqua representatives, particularly from the Griqua National Conference (GNC), formed the other major block of Khoisan delegates at the conference (Bank 1998b, 1). Like Little, they capitalized on the occasion to showcase their culture. An improvised traditional dwelling that was loosely modelled on a Nama-styled *matjieshuis* was for example erected in the courtyard of the South African Cultural

---

<sup>33</sup> Although the term's origins remain unclear, Little argues that Nigel Crawhall began referring to him as a "revivalist" to create conceptual distance between him and the San (Joseph Little, 08/05/2018).

History Museum, where a re-enacted initiation ritual of a young girl into womanhood was staged for the audience (Davison and Klinghardt 1997, 190-191). The Griqua national choir also officially opened the conference with their rendition of, among others, the GNC anthem and the new South African national anthem, *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*.

As per design, the 62 Khoisan delegates outnumbered academics at the 1997 conference (Bank 1998b, 1). Together with the political overtones and cultural performances, this made it a drastically different affair from previous editions. The preceding gathering in Germany had indeed been the last “colonialist conference” (Ross 1997a, 154). The academic debates still revolved around rather conventional topics in Khoisan studies (cf. Bank 1998a), but they were overshadowed by the dynamics outlined above; making the 1997 edition “at once academic symposium, cultural manifestation and political forum”, according to Robert Ross (1997a, 154). He was not only referring to intra-Khoisan tensions, but also to the calls for reparations and restitution that were made by various Khoisan delegates. South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was still in full-swing at the time. Created in 1995, the TRC held public hearings and investigations across the country until 1998. Although its mandate concerns the apartheid-era and Khoisan grievances therefore largely fell outside of its scope, the TRC placed historical justice firmly on everyone’s minds. A land reform process ran parallel to the TRC with the aim of redressing dispossession and skewed property ownership patterns along racial lines (see below). Not surprisingly therefore, calls for land, indigenous rights and recognition pervaded the 1997 conference (Davison and Klinghardt 1997, 190-191). For Ross (1997a, 154), these were in reality veiled attempts to make presenters complicit and uncomfortable and tended to railroad academic sessions as a result. By claiming authorship and ownership of what was written and said about them in this fashion, if need be at the expense of academics, the Khoisan sought to embolden and legitimate their political ambitions. Indeed, Ross appreciated the “emergent Khoisan consciousness from within the coloured community” may well generate “important psychological effects”, but also flagged the “disquieting” presence of self-proclaimed Khoisan “traditional leaders” (Ibid., 155). Others were more enthusiastic about the prospects of increased interactions between Khoisan and academics, as this could lead to greater access of academic materials (Besten 2006, 320), address the lack of “dignity and

respect” in relation to research ethics (Ngakaeaja 1998, 31) and reset “the relationship between popular participant and academic knowledge” more generally (Bank 1998, 41).

By empowering Khoisan agency in the academic debates that concerned them, the 1997 conference constitutes the first major public affirmation of Khoisan revivalism and its political ambitions. More than ever before, the Khoisan compelled to no longer be treated as passive objects of study, and asserted themselves as contemporary individuals in need of political recognition and cultural redemption. Bredekamp was quite clear about what this meant when he stated in his opening remarks that “it is a beginning of a battle for identity in the new South Africa and in Southern Africa” (Ibid., 14). Though Khoisan revivalism is more complex (see Chapter Seven), the principle foe in this ‘battle’ is the Khoisan extinction discourse I discussed in the previous chapter. Little understood as much when he likened the 1997 conference to the rebirth of “a proud and honourable nation” (Bank 1998, 7). In his speech, Lionel Mtshali, then Minister Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, concurred: “one of the biggest problems faced by the Khoisan is the way they are seen as static or as nearing extinction” (Ibid., 17). In his keynote address, the retired professor of anatomy and human biology Phillip Tobias (1998) made similar remarks as he debunked common misconceptions about the Khoisan. However, as the concerns of critics showed, the Khoisan not merely asserted their vitality, they also voiced various entitlement claims, especially concerning land and the official recognition of traditional leadership; two topics that continue to dominate Khoisan politics.

There is of course much more to Khoisan revivalism than ‘politics’ but it is imperative to appreciate how the various legislative and political developments form the backdrop to the expressions of Khoisan revivalism and the divergent articulations of indigeneity I detail in Part II. I organize this chapter around a non-exhaustive selection of key events and actors that have shaped Khoisan revivalism’s diversification and political accommodation in the post-apartheid era, particularly in Cape Town. Some of this has been covered by others (Bredekamp 2001, 199; Fauvelle-Aymar 2006, 129; Besten 2011b), but they have not yet been strung together in chronological fashion. I acknowledge that my text might suffer from important omissions; future authors might place different emphases, or focus on other events and actors altogether (see Chapter One). I lean more towards the descriptive side here, but revisit policies and government standpoints in

more analytical fashion in the Conclusion. The first subchapter explores how Khoisan revivalism grew more prominent, both numerically and politically in the wake of the 1997 conference as a collective of intellectuals under Little's auspices began publicly self-identifying as Khoisan and drawing on the global indigenous rights movement to initiate institutionalised demands for recognition from the state, particularly in the domain of traditional leadership. After the follow-up conference in 2001, Khoisan revivalism peaked in terms of influence with the reburial of Sarah Baartman in 2002 and the visit of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples in 2005. The subsequent period of relative stagnation ends around 2012, where the second subchapter picks up the argument. Combined with more assertive articulations of Khoisan indigeneity and direct-action approaches, significant accelerations in land and traditional leadership politics mark the start of a more direct-action oriented, militant and (social)media infused phase of Khoisan revivalism. I end with an overview of the status-quo and the passing of the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act (TKLA) in 2019, which potentially heralds a new transformation of Khoisan politics.

### **3.1 Joseph Little, traditional leadership and the politicization of Khoisan identity (1997-2012)**

#### **3.1.1 From the Cape Cultural Heritage Development Council to the National Khoisan Council: traditional leadership and indigenous rights on the agenda**

As I noted in the previous chapter, while their bid to take part in the CODESA negotiations was unsuccessful, the Griqua kept pressure on the ANC-government to acknowledge their political aspirations. In 1995, GNC Paramount Chief A.A.S Le Fleur II held several productive meetings with President Nelson Mandela, who later visited Griquatown and met with representatives in Genadendal (Besten 2006, 274; Bredekamp 2001, 204). The GNC was also part of a delegation of “about twenty representatives of Griqua, Nama and

San communities” that pleaded with the Department of Constitutional Development to recognize their traditional leaders in 1995 (Besten 2006, 274). The Department responded with an “investigation of the history, social structure and leadership of the Griqua community” in 1997 (Bredekamp 2001, 204). Together with the GNC’s lobbying at the United Nations (see Chapter Two), this investigation, which is not publicly available, formed the rationale for the National Griqua Forum (NGF), established in July that same year as a body to liaise with the government on how best to constitutionally accommodate the concerns of “indigenous minorities” in South Africa (Besten 2006, 277). According to Bredekamp (2015, 11), the decision to create the NGF was taken during a closed-door meeting of Department officials and Griqua representatives just days before the 1997 conference. In attending the conference, networking among the various Khoisan delegates present and learning about the global indigenous rights movement, those same officials were exposed to non-Griqua issues as well, not least those put forward by Little’s group, which eventually made them pursue a different policy route.

As mentioned earlier, Joseph Little created the Cape Cultural Heritage Development Council (CCHDC) in 1996 as a non-profit organization to recruit allies in his quest to revive Khoisan identity and culture.<sup>34</sup> As illustrated by the abovementioned ceremony, Little bestowed traditional leadership titles to certain CCHDC members in reference to historical tribes he discovered during his perusal of the literature, particularly Elphick’s historical maps, Nienaber’s etymological study of Khoisan tribal names or the 17<sup>th</sup> century *Daghtregister* [diary] kept by van Riebeeck (Joseph Little, 08/05/2018). To visualize the CCHDC’s tribal structure, Little drew up a map by hand, indicating the historical territories the revived tribes presided over with the help of colour codes. Little did not claim that the men and women heading the revived tribes were directly related to the Khoisan of the VOC era, but rather that their families hailed from the same historical areas, *and* that they were fully committed to learning and reviving as much as they could

---

<sup>34</sup> Documents detailing CCHDC meetings and activities reportedly reside with Poem Mooney, one of its members in Oudtshoorn. Attempts to access this information were ultimately unsuccessful. It also remains unclear what exactly the distinction is between the CCHDC and the *Cape Cultural Heritage Development Organization* (CCHDO). As the latter is not frequently mentioned, I speak mainly of the CCHDC.

about the tribe they identified with. At the same time, Little occasionally implied he was from noble pedigree, particularly by referring to his grandmother as a member of a “royal tribe”.<sup>35</sup> Much about these CCHDC appointed traditional leaders remains unknown; including how many followers they had and whether salaries were ever paid – something Little vehemently denies. The CCHDC reportedly only received small scale donations (Basil Coetzee, 06/05/2018), but one source mentions that Little’s Chainouquas charged membership fees (Bredenkamp and Olivier 2000, 81). It is also not entirely clear if the traditional leaders appointed at the 1997 conference are the same who appeared later on.

Among the names that were mentioned to me as CCHDC affiliates are Sharon Leng, John Cloete, Margareth Coetzee, Moira Daya, John Jansen, Nicholas de Weer, Willa Boezak, George Brink, Ron Martin, Poem Mooney, Priscilla De Wet, Harleen Sasman and Basil Coetzee – many of whom I did not manage to contact and seemed to no longer be actively involved in Khoisan revivalism. Besten (2006, 287) describes the CCHDC as an organic network of prominent coloured intellectuals, mainly from the Western and Eastern Cape provinces (see also Crawhall 2002, 422). Members such as Willa Boezak and George Brink held PhDs and others such as Little were lecturers at university. Priscilla De Wet studied history and anthropology at UWC and also graduated with an MA in Indigenous Studies at Tromsø University, Norway (De Wet 2011). Basil Coetzee (06/05/2018; 25/04/2018), an amateur historian and organic intellectual of repute within the coloured community of Mitchells Plain, explained to me that the CCHDC was the “vehicle that drove Cape Khoi resurgence” as a result of friends approaching other friends and family. Coetzee himself met Little by coincidence in 1998, when he delivered a speech on Coloured identity and indigenous rights at Pollsmoor prison in Cape Town, where Basil had been working for several years. In his part-history, part-autobiography *Tears of the Praying Mantis* (see Chapter Four), this encounter is described quite vividly:

I was blown over by Joseph Little and never could I predict how my acquaintance with him would irreversibly change the course of my life [...] I listened attentively

---

<sup>35</sup> “Chief Little takes on a big job.” *Mail & Guardian* (1997) <https://mg.co.za/article/1997-07-25-chief-little-takes-on-a-big-job/>, accessed 20 March 2021.



to what [he] communicated regarding the true identity and culture of the people known as “Coloureds” [...] Suddenly all the years of inner turmoil, confusion, despondency and introspection fell into place like a picture-puzzle gone crazy [...] What I was searching for all those agonizing years was in fact right with me, it was me, and I found myself! It took one Joseph Little to pluck me from the depths of ignorance and to unlock the potential within myself if I were to live my life as me (Coetzee 2019b, 93-94)

Although his father had always expressed pride in his “Khoi distinctiveness” and vehemently rejected any association with the term Coloured while growing up in Paarl, it was Little who “ignited the proverbial dynamite” inside Coetzee and made him “no longer live a lie” (ibid., 94-95). Whereas he would have sued anyone who had called him ‘*Hotnot*’ previously, he would now thank them for reminding him of his history and what his ancestors had to endure: “I turn it now into a positivity” (Basil Coetzee, 25/04/2018).<sup>36</sup> Coetzee suspected early on that Little “has a way of twisting facts” and he was scorned and ridiculed for associating with him, but this was immaterial in light of the urgent need to “build something that did not exist”. He and others found inspiration for their mission during the CCHDC’s weekly meetings in the Athlone community centre. Here they discussed books, shared and photocopied new literature they had come across and talked Khoisan culture and history in general (Coetzee 2019b, 227). Coetzee (06/05/2018) described it as “an academic operation” where they cross-read and analysed several historical and contemporary authors: “we do not own our history so we created a whole bibliography on the Khoi”. This was not just a way to inform themselves, but also to spread a new type of historical consciousness among coloureds:

The undoing of the deliberate destruction of our people’s identities were a very difficult challenge as the denialism and lack of knowledge existent in our people were so fervently ensconced that we had to devise specific stratagems to sway our

---

<sup>36</sup> It is worth noting that the South African Equality Court ruled in 2015 that hate speech (including the use of words like “*Hotnot*”) is now a punishable offence (see Williams 2015). Whereas “*Hottentot*” is likely judged in the same manner, it should be noted that this is a historical term, which, while still offensive, is considered less offensive than the word *Hotnot*, specifically designed to demean and denigrate (see Chapter Two).

people with our message [...] We held informative meetings at the residences of people in various communities and at schools with fairly reasonable success [...] We accepted invitations to address communities, schools and unexpectedly from church leaders from various denominations (Coetzee 2019b, 150)

Little too remembers the passions that drove their collective research and the Eurocentric bias they had to contend with:

We wanted to find out about our history, going as deep as possible, going to the Diaz' story, looking for the correct name of our people [...] One of the major discoveries I made in the books was that there were a lot of untruths written about us and taught to us at school [...] We never heard about Krotoa or Doman. At school they called our people strandlopers, wanderers without community spirit [...] so we had to swing the history more in our favour (Joseph Little, 17/05/2018)<sup>37</sup>

Texts were obtained from archives, libraries and universities, but also from academics who were supportive of their endeavours. Coetzee (2019b, 133) notes that a “valuable and scholarly fount of expertise” in this regard was Ron Martin. When Martin joined the CCHDC in 1999 he was working as a heritage practitioner for the National Monuments Council, where he collaborated with the aforementioned archaeologist Janette Deacon in her project to remove graffiti from rock-art sites in the Cederberg region. Martin, but also on occasion other CCHDC members, accompanied Deacon and her team as they went to restore sites. These trips gave them direct exposure to Khoisan culture and were an excellent setting to meet like-minded Khoisan revivalists and supportive academics (Janette Deacon, 06/08/2019; see also Coetzee 2019b, 133, 156). The CCHDC went for fieldtrips of their own as well, particularly in the Northern Cape, where they effectively conducted participant observation among the Nama and the San to learn about their ways of life (Basil Coetzee, 13/12/2018). CCHDC members also scouted out relevant scientific conferences, such as the World Archaeological Congress, which was held in Cape Town in

---

<sup>37</sup> Although this project never came to fruition, Little professed in 1997 to be in the process of compiling a history textbook (“Chief Little takes on a big job.” *Mail & Guardian* (1997) <https://mg.co.za/article/1997-07-25-chief-little-takes-on-a-big-job/>, accessed 20 March 2021).

1999. Indigenous people from all over the world attended, which turned it into a unique networking opportunity for the CCHDC, as well as for the GNC, who made use of the occasion to call for the repatriation of Sarah Baartman's remains (Gordon 2000, 606; Coetzee 2019b, 149; see below).

By participating in conferences, improvising community-oriented history seminars, conducting fieldwork and drawing on academic materials — not least the Khoisan revisionist historiography I discussed in Chapter Two, the CCHDC shaped Khoisan revivalism in the late 1990s and early 2000s. As stated earlier, these endeavours were coupled with calls for recognition from the state. Yet the type of recognition the CCHDC desired was not entirely clear. Besten (2006, 294-295) notes how the CCHDC profiled itself on section 235 of the Constitution, which deals with the right to self-determination for “any community sharing a common cultural and language heritage” and section 212, which makes provision for the recognition of traditional leadership. The CCHDC was open to anyone who identified as Khoisan, regardless of lineage or creed (Joseph Little, 08/05/2018). The criteria for becoming a “chief” as opposed to a mere member were not as clear cut, although they were in practice those most involved in the CCHDC's day-to-day affairs. Coetzee (06/05/2018) maintains that tribes were referenced to create an awareness of people's origins, not to bring back “tribal consciousness”. Indeed, Little seems to have been the one most determined to get the CCHDC's revived structures officially recognized by the state. This was in large part a reaction to the 1997 Council of Traditional Leaders Act, which provided for the recognition of traditional leaders from other ethnic groups (Ntsebeza 2005; Oomen 2005; Ainslie and Kepe 2016, 20). The 1996 Communal Property Association Act and later the 2004 Communal Land Rights Act, which was declared unconstitutional in 2010, also made provisions for (traditional) communities to claim and manage land collectively, if according to locally shared customs (Walker 2008, 66). While the functions and privileges of traditional leaders remained contested and vague, their envisaged role was ceremonial and advisory (Williams 2009, 191-192; Settler 2010, 56-58). And yet, their permanent presence in South African politics was guaranteed and hence there was much for Khoisan revivalists like Little to campaign for.

The ANC-led government and to a lesser extent the Khoisan themselves directed the process of recognising Khoisan leadership in a different direction. Griqua representatives

had scored a victory in 1997 with the establishment of the NGF and were not inclined to work with other groups, particularly the CCHDC (Waldman 2007b, 55). For Mansell Upham, associating with Little ran the risk of “trivializing” those “with genuine historic claims”.<sup>38</sup> Khoisan revivalists were a recent phenomenon and it took time for the GNC to warm up to the term ‘Khoisan’, which most San representatives and advocates continue to reject (Henry Bredekamp, 03/07/2018; see also Bredekamp 2001, 199; Besten 2006, 263). Then again, as Richard Lee and Robert Hitchcock (2001, 272) observed, while Khoisan revivalists might have lacked the cultural legitimacy of the Griqua or the San, they made up for it with their “political and media clout”. Little leveraged his influence to mint alliances with the GNC’s numerically weaker rivals (Besten 2006, 282). While the NGF created an incentive for the various Griqua factions to unite, tensions remained, particularly among the two competing branches of the GNC (Waldman 2007b, 31-32, 53-54). These branches are often referred to as ‘GNC-Knysna’ and ‘GNC-Kranshoek’, based on where their main offices are located. When speaking of the ‘GNC’ up till now, I was referring to the more prominent GNC-Kranshoek and its leading spokesperson, Cecil Le Fleur. For reasons I explained in Chapter Two, the split occurred in 1967. In the 1980s GNC-Knysna formed the ‘Griqua National Council’ together with the *Griekwa Volks Organisasie* of Archbishop Daniel Kanyiles, and it is this organization Little later endorsed as well (Brink 2003; Waldman 2007b, 46).

Little struck up a friendship with Kanyiles, who had campaigned for Griqua recognition for decades and was at the time a member of the National Council of Provinces for the National Party. Together they launched yet another organization in 1998, the National Council of Khoi Chiefs (NCKC). As Little (08/05/2018) explained to me in reference to the Waterboer lineage among Griqua leaders, “Kanyiles had been sworn in by Waterboer, the King” so it was only right that he became the “Paramount Chief” of the organization (see also Brink 2003, 6). On the occasion of a government-sponsored meeting on the “constitutional accommodation of vulnerable indigenous communities in South Africa” in Kimberley in 1998, the NCKC officially inducted several “chiefs” (Bredekamp and

---

<sup>38</sup> “Chief Little takes on a big job.” *Mail & Guardian* (1997) <https://mg.co.za/article/1997-07-25-chief-little-takes-on-a-big-job/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

Olivier 2000, 40-41). Most, if not all, of the twelve inductees were CCHDC affiliates. Little had come across the *!Nau* — an ancient ritual practiced by certain Khoisan groups I say much more about in Chapter Six — while conducting fieldwork in Namibia in 1996 (Joseph Little, 17/05/2018). He learned that the *!Nau* was part of a swearing-in ceremony, whether for chiefs or rank and file, and that they could only be carried out by a paramount chief (Joseph Little, 08/05/2018). As thus prescribed, Kanyiles presided over the *!Nau* outside of Kimberley's old city hall on 25 April 1998 (see also Besten 2006, 297). The inductees were asked to swear that they would further the cause of Khoisan revivalism “as a First National indigenous descendant of the Great Khoi Nation of Southern Africa, So help me *!Tsui!Goab/God*” in front of a Commissioner of Oaths and several government officials. Certificates were issued upon completion as well as necklaces of beads whose colours Little carefully selected to reference historical tribes, for example by mirroring the colour of minerals that are found in the area (Joseph Little, 08/05/2018). As new members joined the NCKC, it repeated *!Nau* ceremonies near the Kango Caves in Oudtshoorn in 1999 and 2000 (Besten 2006, 298; Coetzee 2019b, 158, 164; see Chapter Six).

Little's prominence at the 1997 conference and the geographical reach of the CCDHC and NCKC made the Department of Provincial and Local Government appreciate how Khoisan issues extended beyond the Griqua and the San. To avoid drowning in a plethora of competing organizations, they decided at the aforementioned meeting in Kimberley in 1998 that Khoisan grievances would best be dealt with through a National Khoisan Forum, a non-statutory body which was renamed the National Khoisan Council (NKC) the year after (De Wet 2010b, 17-18). Significantly, it was Little and not an established Griqua leader who was elected as chair, a position he filled until 2011 (Cecil Le Fleur, 10/07/2019). The government hailed the inauguration of the NKC as “a truly historic occasion, [restoring] the pride and dignity of the Khoisan” (Department of Constitutional Development 1999). Some Khoisan hoped the NKC's mandate included land claims. Little had made his way to the United Nations in 1999 to plead for the recognition of aboriginal title (see below) in South Africa in a speech about the illegitimacy of the 1672 treaty between the VOC and the Khoisan (Little 1999; see Chapter Two). What brought Khoisan land rights more firmly in the public eye was the much-publicized restitution of about 68.000 hectares of land to the *ǀKhomani* San in the Northern Cape in 1999 (Ellis 2012, 14).

As various academics have pointed out, the portrayal of the #Khomani San as pristine indigenes by organizations such as SASI surely contributed to it becoming the first land claim that was settled in the post-apartheid era (Robins 2003a, 131; Ellis 2012, 121; Koot and Büscher 2019, 358). At the official ceremony where the land was returned, the Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs celebrated not just the land claim, but “the rebirth of the #Khomani San” (Sylvain 2002, 1081). President Thabo Mbeki likewise applauded “an ancient people of Africa who regained not only their freedom but their identity” (Besten 2006, 278). He even reasoned it proved his government was adhering to UN guidelines regarding indigenous peoples (Chennels and du Toit 2004, 100). The reason the land was returned had nothing to do with the claimants being Khoisan, however, but with the fact that their dispossession from the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park took place in 1931, after the constitutionally enshrined cut-off date of 1913 *and* as a result of “past racially discriminatory laws or practices”; i.e. the requirements of South Africa’s land restitution program.

As I show further on, Khoisan land claims were eventually dealt with by another body than the NKC, whose initial mandate was strictly about the constitutional recognition of Khoisan communities and traditional leaders (Bredenkamp 2015, 12). It was originally composed of 22 members, who were all elected during the aforementioned meeting where the plans for the National Khoisan Forum were laid out (Le Fleur and Jansen 2013, 3). Till this day there is little information available regarding the NKC’s activities or its membership. They lack an established communication channel and it is unclear how frequently they convene or what is discussed during their meetings. The NKC receives little to no funding from the government, who only occasionally reimburses travel expenses; it never paid out salaries (ENN 2013d, 12; Chantal Revell, 25/11/2014; Henry Bredenkamp, 10/07/2018). But most frustrating to NKC members is the government’s ambiguous position with regards to recognition. While the reason for dealing differently with Khoisan than with other ethnic groups was never officially stated, some claim it is due to the Khoisan extinction discourse’s afterlife in the post-apartheid era; i.e. the notion that Khoisan culture did not survive the violence of colonialism and apartheid (ILO/ACHPR 2009, 1). Besten (2006, 274) recounts a revealing episode in this regard from 1995. It concerns a reply from Cecil Le Fleur to Roelf Meyer, then Minister of

Constitutional Development. The latter doubted whether the Griqua met the criteria for the recognition of traditional leadership set out in the interim Constitution, particularly the need for an unabated practice of indigenous law or tradition. Le Fleur's retort took Meyer to task for his apparent ignorance about the centuries of violence and assimilation the Khoisan had experienced:

For years, first by the Brits and later by other governments, we have been deprived of our traditional customs and rights. Later we were forcefully classified as coloureds and deliberately stripped of our identity. Enter a house today and you might find Griqua parents, a coloured son, a Griqua daughter and another one classified as Cape Coloured or Other Coloured. It is only logical that we not pass that test [of cultural purity] (Besten 2006, 274)<sup>39</sup>

The government's reluctance to grant the Khoisan recognition also stemmed from their self-identification as indigenous people and calls for indigenous rights. While Khoisan articulations of indigeneity cannot be reduced to prior occupancy and special rights, these two connotations of the term 'indigenous' render it most controversial in South African society (see Conclusion). South Africa was promoting itself as a 'Rainbow Nation' at the time, where everyone collectively made up the multicultural rainbow by cherishing their own 'colours' or cultures, but adhered to the same Constitution. The young nation also struggled with Zulu separatists in KwaZulu-Natal and was perhaps fearful of a similar scenario unfolding among the Khoisan. As a result, ethnicity in general was viewed as potentially destabilizing. The Constitution, internationally recognized for its progressive nature, had also just been passed in 1996; coincidentally in a ceremony where Mbeki (1996) controversially pronounced the Khoisan "perished" as result of their resistance to colonial violence in his famous *I am an African* speech. He mentioned the Khoisan's purported extinction again when he inaugurated the new South African Coat of Arms in 2000; although this went largely unnoticed, perhaps because the Coat of Arms was

---

<sup>39</sup> Author's translation from Afrikaans: "Ons is deur die jare, eers deur die Britte en later deur ander regerings, ons tradisionele regte en gebruike ontnem. Ons is later onder dwang gevekleuring en doelbewus van ons identiteit ontnem. Stap vandag by 'n huis in en daar kry jy Griewka-ouers met 'n Kleurlingseun, 'n Griekwadoogter en nog een wat as 'n Kaapse Kleurling of sommer net 'n 'Ander Kleurling' geklassifiseer is. Dit is logies dat ons nie die toets slaag nie".

inspired by a famous rock-art display and the motto was written in |Xam: *!ke e: /xarra //ke* [diverse people unite] (Barnard 2004, 10). Mbeki also referred to the Khoisan as “the very first inhabitants of our land” (Ibid., 5-6). As I show further on, Mbeki was not the only official to acknowledge the Khoisan’s indigeneity, but as stated before, the government’s stance has never been spelled out. Insights into government attitudes and opinions towards the Khoisan therefore need to be gleaned from a swathe of official documents that speak to the issue of Khoisan traditional leaders. These documents are either publicly available — if one knows where to look for them — or I have gotten access to them via my interlocutors.

One of the earliest documents in this regard are the so-called Status Quo Reports (SQR), which were mandated by the Department of Constitutional Development in the late 1990s. As their name suggests, these aimed to get an overview of where Khoisan groups in South Africa stood in terms of historical background, current membership and political aspirations. Khoisan revivalists, including NKC members, often complained to me about the inaccessibility of the SQR, and I too never managed to get a hold of them, with one exception (ENN 2013d, 13; see below). However, Bredekamp shared a report with me that summarized, evaluated and elaborated on the SQR at the request of the Department of Provincial and Local Governance in 2000, after they had taken over the Khoisan portfolio (Henry Bredekamp, 10/07/2018). His collaborator was Nic Olivier, a law professor at the University of Pretoria who had done consultancy work for the Department previously. Bredekamp and Olivier (2000, 6) note that the SQR consist of five individual research papers, each looking into one of the five Khoisan groups the government identified and which also formed the basis for the NKC’s composition: the Griqua, San, Nama, Korana and Cape Khoi. One source claims the respective authors are Anthony Le Fleur, Pippa Skotnes (the curator of *Miscast*, see Chapter Two), Willa Boezak (a CCHDC member), “Mr. Beddy” and George Brink (also affiliated to the CHDC) (ENN 2013b, 14). Gauging the “status and authenticity” of each group was left to unnamed government officials. It is unclear how these authors were appointed, although some sources state the communities concerned chose them (DRDLR 2013, 96). Whoever authored which parts of the SQR, it was evident to Bredekamp (10/07/2018) that the government was dissatisfied with their quality. I came across Brink’s report at the University of Stellenbosch, who later conceded



to me it was not his finest work (George Brink, 09/05/2018). Despite using the “historical method” to track down and evaluate Khoisan leaders (Brink 2000, iv, 16), Brink merely listed them and their contact information alongside a description of the historical tribes they were reviving. Without providing evidence, he notes they all have valid bloodline claims and should receive funding and recognition (Ibid., iv, 2, 57-58). Bredekamp and Olivier (2000, 46, 96) instead called for “a much more reliable study of the bloodline claims of all current ‘chiefs’ who claim royal lineage”, together with an appraisal of how far membership extends beyond the leading figures in the CCHDC: “It seems still too much a matter of many chiefs but not yet Indians to follow”.

The authors were overtly sceptical of any self-proclaimed Khoisan traditional leader being a direct descendant of those that were recorded in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Due to a lack of “credible written and oral sources”, they argued there is “almost no proof yet that most of the current incumbents represent a legitimate bloodline to occupy the office of traditional Chief” (Bredekamp and Olivier 2000, 95, 170-171). Little’s lineage claims are flagged at various points in the report as “extremely problematic” in light of his prominent position (Ibid., 15, 53). Khoisan revivalism had more to do with people reviving “a suppressed self-identity” than with traditional leadership, the authors concluded (Ibid., 170). The report also appraised whether the Khoisan qualified as “vulnerable indigenous people” (see Bredekamp 2015, 12-13). The qualifier “vulnerable” set the precedent for what more or less became the South African government’s implicit take on Khoisan indigeneity, although it is at times couched in slightly different terms (see below): the Khoisan face a specific predicament, but not one that warrants special rights, as every African is indigenous to South Africa. The first to frame the Khoisan as “vulnerable indigenous people” was the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) in its 1999 “Research Project on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” (SAHRC 1999a). The research project’s stated objective was to “inform government’s process in addressing the rights of indigenous groups in South Africa, particularly those of the Khoi and San peoples, whose rights, for various historical reasons, are not adequately provided for in relation to *other* indigenous communities in South Africa” (SAHRC 1999b; my emphasis). I could not access the SAHRC report as it was embargoed soon after

completion, but Bredekamp and Olivier cited an interesting section of it dealing with indigeneity in South Africa:

The term first nation is often used to refer to those indigenous communities who had inhabited a specific territory before the arrival of colonists [...] Within the South African context, there is no evidence that the Khoisan communities had settled in parts of what later became the geographical area of 1910 South Africa before the settlement of other indigenous communities [...] It has to be concluded that it cannot be said that the South African vulnerable (or marginalised) indigenous communities should be accorded first nation status (with the possible exception of the San) (SAHRC 1999a cited in Bredekamp and Olivier 2000, 102)

According to Bredekamp and Olivier (2000, 147-148), the 1999 SAHRC report suggested self-identification and lineage as criteria to qualify as indigenous. However, as the authors note, these are too vague and do not elucidate the distinction between indigenous people and 'vulnerable' indigenous people. Bredekamp and Oliver point to the International Labour Office's Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) (hereafter 'ILO 169') for inspiration instead. Besides self-identification, the ILO 169 has prior occupancy and "social, cultural and economic" distinction as requirements. The authors also disagreed with the SAHRC's purported suggestion to recognize Khoisan leadership through the same mechanisms as other ethnic groups, and instead proposed a "special form of recognition and protection by the state", for instance by giving the NKC statutory recognition (ibid., 148). As I show below, it took more than a decade for the South African government to take a decision on this matter. When the 2001 annual report of the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (Crawhall 2001, 284), a leading indigenous rights organization, claimed the South African government had recognized the Khoisan as indigenous people at the UN in 2000, this was only partially true as this 'recognition' did not translate into any meaningful legislative accommodation in South Africa itself. As I show next, the government did keep looking into the issue and attempting to refine its position, not least because of the continuous pressure from this pioneering group of Khoisan revivalists, whose popularity and clout peaked in the aftermath of the follow-up edition of the 1997 conference.

### 3.1.2 Khoisan politics in the aftermath of the 2001 National Khoisan Consultative Conference: from peak to stagnation

If the 1997 conference stood out for the number of Khoisan delegates, the 2001 National Khoisan Consultative Conference held at the *Burgersentrum* in Oudtshoorn between 29 March and 1 April (hereafter ‘the 2001 conference’) took things one step further and scheduled a majority of Khoisan presenters. It had been resolved in 1997 to have another edition in three years’ time, but plans for Springbok and Gaborone (Botswana) fell through, causing some delay (Crawhall 2002, 422).<sup>40</sup> UWC once again acted as a sponsor and the government covered the travel and accommodation expenses of Khoisan delegates (Besten 2006, 321). As Bredekamp (18/12/2018) explained to me, the 2001 conference differed from its predecessor “where Khoisan studies itself was at issue” since Khoisan representatives took centre stage this time around: “I proposed a ‘consultative’ conference [...] Let us no longer have academics invite Khoisan people as such, but have another dynamic and more emphasis on people speaking for themselves about themselves”. A number of intellectuals entered the Khoisan revivalist scene around this time, such as Priscilla De Wet, William Langeveldt and Willa Boezak, who were all eager to present at or at least attend the conference. Most of these were also affiliated to the CCHDC at one time or another. Among them was also Poem Mooney, head of the Attaqua, whose organizing abilities and prominence in the area motivated the decision to hold the conference in Oudtshoorn. Bredekamp and the organizing committee — which was virtually identical to the one of the 1997 conference — held a series of meetings around the country to scout for potential delegates. For reasons that are not entirely clear, Little is mentioned in the list of delegates in Oudtshoorn, but did not sit on the organizing committee. Nor did he deliver a presentation. CCHDC affiliates nevertheless once again turned out in droves, although the most prominent among the 500-600 delegates at the 2001 conference were Griqua and Nama-related organizations (Besten 2006, 320; ENN 2013b, 14).

---

<sup>40</sup> Securing funding for the conference in Botswana was difficult, in part because its government was not inclined to engage with the issue of indigenous people within its borders (Henry Bredekamp, 18/12/2018).

Bredenkamp's opening remarks set the tone for the gathering, which he saw as an extension of the "battle for identity" he announced at the 1997 edition: "[Khoisan revivalism] is a highly necessary process of self-discovery, through which you recuperate your humanity through your indigeneity and claim and celebrate your true identity" (ENN 2014e, 12).<sup>41</sup> Besten (2006, 323), who also attended the 2001 conference, recalls how the meeting was all about "Khoe-San self-affirmation and multi-dimensional empowerment, that is [...] in the economic, political, cultural and psychological realms". CCHDC members delivered most of the presentations. Willa Boezak (2001) highlighted the common ground between Khoisan spirituality and Christianity (see Chapter Four); George Brink (2001) gave an overview of Khoisan cultural practices; Basil Coetzee (2001) detailed how the Khoi lost their identity through the "internalization of Coloured identity" and their forceful conversion to Christianity; and William Langeveldt (2001) spoke about the need for land to restore Khoisan culture. Cecil Le Fleur (2001) also addressed the conference and pleaded for more awareness around international developments in the field of indigenous rights. Le Fleur moreover argued that the social ills plaguing coloured communities are due to an "identity crisis" (Garman 2001). Besten (2006, 323) recalls how emotional appeals to Khoisan indigeneity as the antidote to marginalization were met with resounding applause from the audience; indeed setting a trend for years to come (see Chapter Four). Remarkably, these sentiments were to a large extent echoed by then Deputy-President Jacob Zuma. Bredenkamp and the organizing committee had invited Mandela to the 1997 conference, but he instead put in a letter of endorsement (Bank 1998a, x). Mbeki could not make it either at the 2001 conference but dispatched his deputy, Jacob Zuma (Henry Bredenkamp, 18/12/2018). Zuma's address stands out among speeches on Khoisan issues for its support for Khoisan revivalists and their political aspirations:

It is the first time that people of Khoisan descent [...] *the first indigenous people of our country* [...] have taken charge of [their] heritage and destiny [...] Not even 350 years

---

<sup>41</sup> Author's translation from Afrikaans: "'n baie nodige proses van selfontdeking, waardeur jy jou menswaardigheid herstel deur jou inheemsheid, jou ware identiteit te eis en te vier".

of harsh colonial rule and apartheid policies have crushed the Khoisan spirit [...] The history of the struggle against colonialism cannot be complete until we record the stories of heroes such as Khoisan leader Autshumato [...] As descendants of the San and Khoekhoe whose ancestors lived here for over 100.000 years and populated the rest of the world, you are a shining example of the liberating effects of democracy [...] The strong cultural and social focus of this conference will provide significant inspiration for the African renaissance movement [...] The growing sense of pride amongst people of Khoisan descent about their roots in Southern Africa will bring increased benefits [...] There is value in Khoisan heritage beyond land claims and tourism. Acknowledging where you came from - as did the descendants of slaves in the United States forty years ago - is empowering because it gives you the *choice* to decide where to place yourself in the broader South African society (Zuma 2001; my emphasis)

There is a lot to unpack here. Zuma acknowledges the ancient presence of the Khoisan, their resistance to colonialism as well as their neglect in historical consciousness. He also cheers on Khoisan revivalism, which he acknowledges is not just about land claims or looking for opportunities in tourism. It is in fact a “choice” about which position one takes in South African society. At the same time, in describing the Khoisan as the *first* indigenous people (which Zuma has not done since), he remains deliberately ambiguous about indigenous rights or who the indigenous people of South Africa are (if any). Indeed, in line with the philosophy of Mbeki, Khoisan revivalism is both stimulated and captured as an expression of the African Renaissance, the overall celebration and promotion of African culture (Johnson 2011, 29). One of the most interesting lines of the speech is the promise of “increased benefits”. He once again remains vague, although later on he mentions greater access to heritage sites (see below), land restitution and indigenous language development.

Khoisan delegates for their part put forward a series of recommendations as the National Khoisan Consultative Conference (NKCC), a new structure that was created during the 2001 conference. As is unfortunately the case with many similar kinds of bodies, information about its mandate, membership or current status is scarce. However it is clear that the NKCC’s ambition was to get an overview of the grievances of Khoisan communities around the country and to present these as a united front to the

government along with possible solutions. Despite some overlap with the NKC, some of its members ultimately joined the NKCC as well, including Le Fleur, who became chairman (Besten 2006, 328). 19 other members were elected among the 30-odd Khoisan groups represented at the 2001 conference (Crawhall 2002, 421). Resolutions had been improvised at the 1997 conference as well, naming among other things the need for greater transparency and reciprocity in research and the recognition of Khoisan land claims (Bank 1998a, 43-44), but the 2001 conference explicitly produced actionable resolutions and presented these to the government (Bredekamp 2015, 2). These are unfortunately left out of the published conference proceedings (Institute for Historical Research 2001), but “Annexure D” lists a series of grievances that sprang forth from meetings with Khoisan representatives in Cape Town, East London, Port Nolloth and Kimberley Bredekamp and the organizing committee carried out in preparation for the conference. These include demands for land and the constitutional recognition of Khoisan traditional leadership, but also greater protection for indigenous knowledge systems, as well as control over Khoisan representation in education and the media. In the years directly following the 2001 conference, two other issues would get a fair degree of attention from the government as well: heritage and the return of human remains.

The former concerns the Khoisan Legacy Project, which was initiated by the Ministry of Arts, Science, Technology and Culture during a meeting in Pretoria in 1999. Heritage specialists were asked for suggestions for ‘legacy projects’ to highlight “historical turning points” and celebrate multiculturalism, but above all boost patriotism by commemorating “great leaders” in the resistance against oppression (Rassool 2000, 11). Bredekamp’s suggestion for a national route covering significant places in Khoisan history made the final selection of ten (Henry Bredekamp, 18/12/2018). The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), which Bredekamp was a member of between 2000 and 2003 and chaired between 2016 and 2019, was mandated to draft a proposal of what became known as the Khoisan Heritage Route (KHR). Funding was made available to get input from Khoisan communities during a series of meetings that were facilitated by the IHR (Deacon 2001, 49; Crawhall 2002, 423). A list of suggestions related to rock-art, battles of the colonial era, sacred sites and places of forced removal was quickly compiled (Deacon 2001, 50-51). Work on the KHR stalled however because it was apparently unclear

who was responsible for implementing the project (Henry Bredekamp, 18/12/2018). A comprehensive report on the KHR replete with a site catalogue only materialized in 2013 (Department of Arts and Culture 2013b, 1-10). All the while, the R3.5 million earmarked for the project remained on the books in 2016 and it was still only “at the planning stage”.<sup>42</sup> The Department of Arts and Culture also announced that an online interface was being designed, but three years later it too remained under construction (DTA 2019, 9). As Bredekamp (18/12/2018) saw legacy projects around ANC figures such as the Albert Luthuli Museum being prioritized, he concluded that the government never fully committed to the KHR. Coetzee (12/05/2018), who was involved in the early stages of the planning, likewise lost faith in the KHR, dismissing it as “artificial CPR” on Khoisan heritage.

Khoisan revivalists therefore also looked elsewhere for support. Various CCDHC members joined the Western Cape Cultural Commission (WCCC), a body formed in 1999 to register and subsidize organizations that safeguard and develop the cultures of specific demographic groups in the province (WCCC 2003, 8, 10-11). Being part of the WCCC gave the CCHDC access to small-scale funding. In 2002 the Gorachouqua House for example received R668 to help build a Khoisan hut outside the public library of Grassy Park to promote awareness of Khoisan culture (Ibid., 11). That same year the Gouriqua House was sponsored with R15,000 to convene a conference in Great Brak River to celebrate Khoisan heritage. It is unclear who currently sits on the WCCC or what activities they are sponsoring related to the Khoisan.<sup>43</sup> Another relevant body was the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Linguistic and Religious Communities (CRLC), established in 2003. In her MA thesis, Priscilla De Wet (2006, 36), a CCHDC member, details how the CRLC was a compromise between the ANC and Afrikaner interest groups,

---

<sup>42</sup> “Social cohesion & nation building; Mvezo Site & Nelson Mandela museum; Infrastructure / Legacy projects; Capital works project challenges: DAC & Public Works.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2016) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/23209/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>43</sup> See the website of the WCCC for its most up-to-date mandate (“Background on the Western Cape Cultural Commission.” <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/general-publication/background-western-cape-cultural-commission>, accessed 20 March 2021).

who sought to guarantee protection of their minority cultures in the post-apartheid era. With a mandate to protect and promote cultures, it operates somewhat like the WCCC, albeit on a national scale. While two Khoisan representatives, Willa Boezak and William Langeveldt, were part of the original board and took up a mandate of five years, it is not clear what the CRLC has done in terms of Khoisan heritage beyond flagging it as an issue requiring urgent attention (Ibid., 44).<sup>44</sup> De Wet (Ibid., 5-8, 37) concluded that the CRLC's mandate centres on minority group rights and is therefore ultimately ill-equipped to deal with Khoisan grievances and indigenous rights; even if the government seems to be steering Khoisan politics in this direction, as I show in a moment.

First I turn briefly to a ground-breaking episode in the history of the repatriation of human remains: the much-publicized reburial of Sarah Baartman in 2002. Baartman, a Khoisan woman from the Eastern Cape, was paraded as an exotic specimen in Europe in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (see Chapter Two). Her remains were dissected and stored in jars of formalin by the French anatomist Georges Cuvier and a cast made of her body was displayed in the *Musée de l'Homme* in Paris until the 1970s (Fauvelle-Aymar 2006, 127). The earliest calls to repatriate Baartman's remains were made by the GNC in 1994, more specifically by Mansell Upham, who used his connections and appearances in the media to exert pressure on the French government (Morris 1997, 106; Schweitzer 2015, 173). The latter eventually agreed to return her remains, partly due to the popularity of Diana Ferrus' (2006, 1-2) evocative *A Poem for Sarah Baartman*.<sup>45</sup> The South African government set about preparing an appropriate ceremony and approached Bredekamp and Yvette Abrahams, who completed a PhD dissertation on Baartman at the University of Cape Town in 2000, to figure out the particulars and get as much input from Khoisan communities as possible (Henry Bredekamp, 11/12/2018). The ceremony took place in

---

<sup>44</sup> Consulting the website of the CRLC and some of the documentation it has uploaded did not clarify this matter ("CRL Rights Commission." <https://crlcommission.org.za/>, accessed 20 March 2021).

<sup>45</sup> Other remains have been repatriated since (see e.g. Rassool 2015), but this was not a prevalent topic among most of my interlocutors, at least not when it came to the repatriation of specific individuals. More often, more generalized claims were made referencing the historical trade in humans remains (see Chapter Two), as well as the fact that many institutions in South Africa and abroad likely still held their ancestors.



Hankey on 9 August in front of a massive audience (Besten 2006, 339). The event deliberately coincided with National Women's Day *and* the International Day of Indigenous Peoples as declared by the United Nations. While Mbeki mentioned the need to restore the "dignity and identity" of the Khoisan during his speech, he likened the plight of Baartman to that of African women in general in line with his African Renaissance philosophy (Besten 2006, 340-341; Schweitzer 2015, 177). Conversely, Khoisan revivalists saw Baartman as Khoisan first and foremost; a "mother and figure of the First Nation of South Africa", as a CCHDC-affiliate put it in her speech (Besten 2006, 337-338). With the world watching, Baartman's reburial provided a unique opportunity to promote Khoisan culture and political aspirations. Khoisan revivalists such as Basil Coetzee and Joseph Little were dressed in traditional clothing and featured prominently at the ceremony. They and other CCHDC members made up the majority of those who carried the coffin to Baartman's final resting place (Coetzee 2019b, 220). Some GNC representatives also carried the coffin, but they were in the minority, symbolizing the influence they had lost to the CCHDC (Besten 2006, 339). Little had also presided over the cleansing ceremony at the Cape Town Civic Centre the day before, where they reportedly read from the Bible, prayed and burned *buchu* and aloe (Ibid.).

The international coverage of Baartman's funeral likely contributed to the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples' decision to visit South Africa in 2005. For two weeks Rodolfo Stavenhagen met with Khoisan representatives from various provinces (Stavenhagen 2005, 2-3, 7). He subsequently compiled a condemning report, calling for, among others things, scrapping the 1913 cut-off date, providing for the Khoisan in existing traditional leadership legislation and the ability to refuse being classified as Coloured (Ibid., 7-8, 19). The report also advised including the Khoisan in the next census; a suggestion already put forward by Bredekamp and Olivier (2000, 147). In the aftermath of the Stavenhagen report, the South African government appointed William Langeveldt, who I say more about in Chapter Four, as a Khoisan representative to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for a period of three years, although he saw his job mostly as window dressing (William Langeveldt, 12/03/2018). It also signed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

in 2007.<sup>46</sup> Calling for various types restitution and recognition for indigenous people, the UNDRIP is a powerful document, one that could have important consequences in the South African context as well. However, as a non-binding document it needs to be translated into national legislation and this has not happened yet. Stavenhagen's report was also never tabled in Parliament or officially responded to; once again showing the characteristically ambiguous stance of the South African government. A flirtation with internationally recognized instruments also took place in the context of a land claim in the Richtersveld region in the Northern Cape that was settled after a protracted legal battle in 2003. Some experts argue that the international doctrine of aboriginal title was key to the claimants' victory (see e.g. Chan 2004). In short, aboriginal title, which is recognized in countries like Australia, recognizes indigenous communal ownership of an area if the community in question can prove historical links or continuous occupation (Chan 2004, 115, 118-119; Gilbert 2007, 609). The debate usually revolves around whether or not these rights were extinguished by later developments. The court might have drawn inspiration from aboriginal title in underlining the Khoisan's continued occupation of the area, but this did not amount to an official endorsement of the doctrine or a subversion of the 1913 cut-off date (cf. Powell and Bennett 2005, 431; Lehmann 2006, 521; Cavanagh 2012, 453). As with the ≠Khomani San, what ultimately made the land claim successful was that the Nama community in question was unjustly dispossessed after 1913.<sup>47</sup>

Aboriginal title also conflicted with the unofficial standpoint that there were no indigenous people in South Africa, or that all Africans were equally indigenous. After a

---

<sup>46</sup> On the occasion, the South African delegation urged its neighbours to sign the declaration as well. This is somewhat ironic considering that Namibia and Botswana's policies towards indigenous people are very similar to those of South Africa. Despite a sizeable presence of NGOs dealing with the issue in their countries, particularly Botswana, their governments seem to be much more reluctant to explore the matter on a national or international level. Ultimately however, they too stress that all African citizen are indigenous and that no group warrants special treatment (for more on Khoisan in Namibia and Botswana; see Robins 2008: 67, 68; Chebanne 2010).

<sup>47</sup> The same goes for smaller settlements that were reached with regards to the farm "Ratelgat" and the farm located in Bethany that were both returned to the Griqua in 1998 and 1999 respectively, and the land that was returned to the so-called Schmidtsrif Bushmen in 2000 (see Schweitzer 2015, 138).

cascade of bureaucratic changes in 2000, it became unclear which department was in charge of the Khoisan portfolio (Crawhall 2001, 286, 287). The report by Bredekamp and Olivier was apparently updated in 2004, but no further information is available (DRDLR 2013, 96). That same year Cabinet agreed on a memorandum — also not available to the public — that envisioned to recognize “vulnerable indigenous communities” via separate legislation as well as an “inter-department working group on indigenous affairs” to coordinate this (Crawhall 2005, 511; Stavenhagen 2005, 2, 8; De Wet 2006, 27).<sup>48</sup> This working group commenced its activities in 2005 and received input from the NKC during a “consultative workshop” in 2007 (Ntsewa 2013, 13-14). Willa Boezak recalls passionately debating during this meeting with the government officials who were not convinced that the Khoisan should be classified as indigenous people (ENN 2013b, 14). Indeed, the Department of Provincial and Local Governance compiled a “Policy Document on Khoi and San Governance Issues” in 2009, which apparently convinced Cabinet to make a policy U-turn and not go down the path of separate legislation after all.<sup>49</sup> Ten years down the line, the issue of Khoisan recognition was back where it started as the government pondered whether the 2003 Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act — which includes the line “South African indigenous people consist of a diversity of cultural communities” — and the 1997 National House of Traditional Leaders Act could be merged into new comprehensive legislation on traditional leadership, where the Khoisan would become part of the National House of Traditional Leaders.<sup>50</sup> This vision culminated in the

---

<sup>48</sup> According to Nigel Crawhall (2003, 412) a 2003 revision of the 1999 SAHRC report recommends that the concept of “vulnerable indigenous peoples” be applied only to the *ǀKhomani* San and the Nama. I could not locate this source or find further information about it.

<sup>49</sup> This Policy Document is also often referred to as the “Draft White Paper on Khoi-San communities, leadership and structures” (see e.g. “National House of Traditional Leaders Strategic Plan 2011–2013 briefing.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2011) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/12638/>, accessed 20 March 2021). It is not publically available.

<sup>50</sup> “Local Government Elections: Deputy Minister's briefing; Departments Public Service & Administration, Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs Strategic Plans & Budgets 2011.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2011) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/12977/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

first draft of the National Traditional Affairs Bill in 2011, which I come back to in the next section.<sup>51</sup>

I can only speculate as to why there was little progress with regards to Khoisan traditional leadership legislation for almost a decade. Academic support for Khoisan revivalism certainly waned as long-time efforts by Bredekamp and others to reinvent the IHR as a Khoisan Studies Centre were unsuccessful (Henry Bredekamp, 11/12/2018; cf. Brink 2001, 57).<sup>52</sup> As mentioned in Chapter Two, various critics felt that the IHR's legacy, or a focus on the Khoisan, were out of step with the times. Ex-rector Jakes Gerwel expressed this sentiment quite clearly when he reprimanded Willa Boezak, who lectured at UWC and had joined the CCHDC (Besten 2006, 305). He felt Khoisan revivalism was tantamount to promoting a "recidivist neo-ethnicity" that betrayed the type of "trans-ethnic nation-building" Boezak's brother Allan had fought for with the UDF. With the blessing of Bredekamp, who retired as director of the IHR and became CEO of Iziko Museums in 2002, the NKCC approached the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein for support in 2004 (Henry Bredekamp, 18/12/2018). Members of the Anthropology Department liked the idea and founded the Unit for Khoe and San Studies in 2007 to "provide an anchor for the indigenous movement in South Africa as well as to upgrade the academic and research skills of Khoe and San people" (De Wet and Crawhall 2008, 521). While some Khoisan-related conferences and research projects took place at UFS (cf. Crawhall 2005, 511; Erasmus 2012; Øvernes 2019, 205) and its website still mentioned the Unit at the time of writing, it became dysfunctional soon after opening its doors.<sup>53</sup> According to Priscilla De Wet, who worked at the Unit for some time, it failed to involve the Khoisan as active agents in its research (De Wet 2011, 109). Piet Erasmus (Erasmus

---

<sup>51</sup> One source also mentions an elusive research report "focusing on the history and present social context of Khoisan communities (the San, the Korana, the Griqua, the Nama and the Cape Cultural Heritage Development Organisation (CCHDO)" compiled in 2010 (DTA 2019, 10-11).

<sup>52</sup> Although a conference on "Research for Khoe and San Development" was held in Gaborone in 2003, it is unclear how this relates to the conferences Bredekamp was involved in (see Motshabi and Saugestad 2004).

<sup>53</sup> "Faculty of The Humanities Home/Anthropology Home." <https://www.ufs.ac.za/humanities/departments-and-divisions/anthropology-home>, accessed 20 March 2021.

2005, 77, 89; 2010, 71), who headed the Unit, however argues that infighting among Khoisan representatives vying for influence was detrimental to its functioning.

Regardless of what ultimately caused the Unit's downfall, infighting was clearly disrupting Khoisan revivalism. Combined with a lack of funding, internal discord reportedly made the NKCC disband in 2007 (De Wet 2006, 32; De Wet and Crawhall 2008, 519). Part of the disagreements arose over who was qualified to represent whom. In the NCKC (not to be confused with the NKCC, see above), this too had become a burning issue when Kanyiles passed away in 2003. Little (08/05/2018) maintains that Kanyiles appointed him as his successor and that he was sworn in during a *!Nau* where "two members of the National Party" were also present. His leadership was fiercely contested, however, causing the NCKC to collapse as well. Little blames his detractors for breaking the momentum of Khoisan politics and sees them as illegitimate representatives jockeying for positions that might yield financial benefits if and when they become officially recognized. Little's assessment of the rise of self-appointed Khoisan chiefs and the scourge of opportunism is shared by various others, such as Basil Coetzee (25/04/2018) or Bredekamp (10/07/2018), who both blame Zuma for promising to remunerate Khoisan traditional leaders in 2001, although the official speech transcript does not mention this. Others blame Little himself for appointing the first revived Khoisan 'chiefs'. For reasons that are not entirely clear, while the CCHDC — which by this time increasingly called itself the *Khoi Cultural Heritage Development Council* (KCHDC) (Besten 2006, 289) — is technically still in existence, Little steadily receded to the background. He currently goes at it mostly alone and still organizes occasional *!Nau* ceremonies among a much smaller number of followers (see Chapter Six). By his own account he is "virtually broke" and does not have the means to organize conferences and create publicity like before. He had hoped to get a book published by this time to get some income, but he "never got that far" (Joseph Little, 17/05/2018).

It is striking that, despite Little's vital role in politicizing Khoisan identity and getting the South African government to take the matter seriously in the first decade of Khoisan revivalism, many Khoisan revivalists today have never heard of him. And yet, Little and others laid the groundwork for an even more vibrant and numerous Khoisan revivalism in the 2010s. Indeed, as I show next, the vacuum left by Bredekamp and Little was to a

large extent filled by a new cohort of Khoisan revivalists who viewed and mobilised Khoisan identity and culture in a manner that differed significantly.

## 3.2 Khoisan revivalism in the 2010s: towards a broad-based identity movement?

### 3.2.1 A new cohort of Khoisan revivalists

“//Hui !Gaeb. Where the clouds gather” read the large green billboard that was unveiled outside the Castle of Good Hope on 28 June 2012. The ceremonial erection of the sign on this symbolic location meant to restore Cape Town’s “old name” and assert a Khoisan presence in the city (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 03/01/2015).<sup>54</sup> It was also a way to honour the well-known #Xhomi San leader Dawid Kruiper, who passed away earlier that month. The event was instigated by the Institute for the Restoration of the Aborigines of South Africa (IRASA), created in 2009 by Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, Francisco MacKenzie (also known as ‘Chief Autshumao’ or ‘Mackie’) and Nico Nel. That day in front of the massive billboard, which was not approved by the Castle or the City of Cape Town and was removed weeks later, IRASA members held up placards that read “Alienation and extermination of the Khoisan”, “Cultural genocide of the Khoisan” and “Khoisan forever, “coloured” never!!” (see Chapter Four).<sup>55</sup> Tania did not mince words either when she told reporters that the Khoisan did not need the approval of “colonialists” because their rights were entrenched in the ILO 169 (see above). Mackie in turn told those present that the Khoisan should unite to form a strong block against the government to honour Kruiper’s

---

<sup>54</sup> I was not able to trace the origins of the name //Hui !Gaeb. However, Francisco MacKenzie claims people in Namaqualand still use it to refer to Cape Town (Mackie, 04/07/2018).

<sup>55</sup> Footage of the event as well as interviews with Kleinhans-Cedras and Mackie can be found at Eyewitness News. *Khoisan group renames the Cape.* 2012, YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1stIhiV5L0&ab\\_channel=EyewitnessNews](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1stIhiV5L0&ab_channel=EyewitnessNews), accessed 20 March 2021.

legacy: “the moment we become conscious, we become one”. The stunt was sponsored by fast-food chain Nandos, who were contacted by Kleinhans-Cedras after they had implicitly endorsed Khoisan indigeneity in a controversial ad that parodied xenophobia (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 03/01/2015). In the commercial, various ethnic groups and nationalities are dubbed “foreigners” and vanish into puffs of smoke. When the camera finally turns to a Khoisan man dressed in animal skins and equipped with bow and arrow, he says “I’m not going anywhere. You \*\$&!@#\* [blocked swearword] found us here” before running off into the landscape. The ad debunked anti-foreigner sentiments by showing how everyone but the Khoisan are technically ‘foreign’ to South Africa (cf. Mboti 2013, 456).

While the donation of Nandos made the *//Hui !Gae*b-billboard possible, IRASA organized similarly controversial activities that same year without any outsider funding. On 6 April, Mackie and Kleinhans-Cedras climbed the statue of Jan van Riebeeck in Central Cape Town and covered it with black garbage bags to mark “360 years of colonialism”. The media were told that the statue belonged to the apartheid museum or ought to be shipped off to the Netherlands.<sup>56</sup> Kleinhans-Cedras and Mackie called for more visible markers of Khoisan presence in the city, for instance by erecting statues of “Khoisan heroes” (see Chapter Four). This type of heritage, Kleinhans-Cedras argued, had to be reclaimed in the face of ongoing colonial oppression (EN 2012b, 13). The perceived lack of respect for the Khoisan also motivated IRASA to inaugurate a small kraal and sign honouring “*Tsui Goab*”, the Khoisan god of rain and thunder, in Rondebosch Common, a public park in the southern suburbs of Cape Town “where the first European farmers settled” (Jethro 2017, 358). IRASA wanted to transform the park into a place where Khoisan descendants could “rediscover their self-determination”. In 2013, IRASA members occupied a building in District Six, one of South Africa’s most complex restitution cases involving a large number of displaced people from a historically multicultural area that since became prime real-estate (Cronje 2013; see also Mceachern 1998). Kleinhans-Cedras always placed an emphasis on land rights as her family had been forcibly removed three times under

---

<sup>56</sup> SABC News. *Khoisan people aim to reclaim their heritage*. 2012, YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjDlydJe6jw&ab\\_channel=SABC](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjDlydJe6jw&ab_channel=SABC), accessed 20 March 2021.

apartheid (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 03/01/2015). Mackie claimed it was their “fundamental right” to occupy the land in District Six as it belonged to the “Cochoqua nation”, whose historical territory he claims stretched from Table Bay along the West Coast to St. Helena Bay. The “Cochoqua flag” was flown outside one of the windows of the building and a *matjieshuis* was improvised outside. The latter, Kleinhans-Cedras argued, was to pay “homage to their ancestral roots” and to “link us to the land before the development took place” (Mposo and Dano 2013).

I will mention several other IRASA-led activities in this thesis but it should already be evident at this point that they embodied a new approach to Khoisan politics, both in style and content. Preceding generations primarily expressed their grievances through institutionalized bodies and organizations that liaised with the government. This new cohort was more direct-action oriented and oppositional towards the state. While not without its critics, their influence proved to be enduring. To understand where this militant style of Khoisan revivalism comes from, it is worthwhile examining the backgrounds of the founding members of IRASA.<sup>57</sup> However, I want to remind the reader at this point that a lot of the information regarding (members of) organizations like IRASA that are mentioned in this chapter is contested, hard to fact-check and mainly based on interview data. This is largely unavoidable due to the chaotic and quickly shifting nature of Khoisan revivalist politics — which in itself presents a revealing finding — but it should nevertheless at all times be taken into account.

The relevance of this caveat becomes clear in light of Mackie’s account of his “awakening” in 1969, when he spoke out against his colleagues at the South African Police Department in Caledon who referred to him as *amalawu*, an IsiXhosa word meaning a person without a soul (Mackie, 02/07/2018; see also Adhikari 2006, 154). At first he struggled to formulate a response, but when he researched his family history — he is originally from the Hardeveld region in Namaqualand, but moved to Cape Town at a young age — he “rediscovered himself” and managed to “put in place the jigsaw puzzles”. Ever since, he identifies as a “radical, revolutionary conscious aboriginal Khoisan”. Being

---

<sup>57</sup> It seems IRASA was mostly carried by Kleinhans-Cedras and MacKenzie. Nel, who I did not manage to contact, seems to have receded to the background relatively soon after the organization’s founding (see below).



aware of his roots early on, Mackie sees himself as the progenitor of Khoisan revivalism and the architect of the original “National Khoi-San Council”. The idea for such a council, he claims, was the outcome of several meetings he held in Belhar in the 1980s with sympathizers such as Mervyn Ross, who founded the right-wing social movement *Kleurling Weerstandsbeweging vir die Vooruitgang van Bruinmense* (KWB) in 1995 (see Ruiters 2009, 116, 121), and a Peter James Holmes; both of whom he takes credit for “conscientizing” (Mackie, 04/07/2018). Mackie (05/07/2018) says there is ample documentation to back this up, but that Joseph Little and others jumped ship and stole his files to create the CCHDC, which he dismisses as a rip-off.<sup>58</sup> Interestingly, Mackie’s timeline then shifts to UWC, where he graduated in theology in 1979 and took up a position as faculty librarian for nearly thirty years. Mackie (02/07/2018) says he was vocal about his Khoisan roots on campus and constantly had to go against the grain as a result. He even claims to have “conscientized” Bredekamp, who for his part only remembers Mackie speaking about Khoisan issues long after the 1997 conference (Henry Bredekamp, 03/07/2018). What is certain is that Mackie met Kleinhans-Cedras at UWC as she worked as a shelf-attendant at the same library for a while to finance her studies (Mackie, 04/07/2018). Their conversations at the library had a profound impact on her, as she explains in an article in *Eland Nuus* in 2009:

During 1982 my consciousness as an aboriginal KhoiSan was reaffirmed when I was pleasantly enthralled by the deep aboriginal spirit of [Mackie]. It was this initial meeting that fostered the connection of our ancestral calling, which has spanned three decades of active aboriginal KhoiSan consciousness in South Africa [...] Then, in 1982 and a long time afterwards, the word KhoiSan was a historical reality only in the textbooks of academia and historians (EN 2009c, 9)

As noted previously, their “active aboriginal KhoiSan consciousness” ultimately gave rise to IRASA. During a 2015 interview, Kleinhans-Cedras (03/01/2015) said the organization

---

<sup>58</sup> Because I came across this information during the final stages of my fieldwork in South Africa I did not have enough time to cross-check Mackie’s allegations or to contact some of the other people who he claimed were involved in the meetings in the 1980s. Most of them are seemingly no longer involved in Khoisan revivalism.

had 620 members and counting. Both Mackie and Tania are skilled at attracting and galvanizing followers with fiery speeches on the relation between Khoisan identity, indigenous rights and contemporary socio-economic challenges, on which I elaborate at length in Chapter Four. They reasoned for instance that people needed to shed Coloured identity and embark on “an incomprehensible journey of the inner self on a deep spiritual level” to recognize “the denial, alienation and extermination of the KhoiSan nation” and become involved in the “fight for survival” (EN 2009c, 9). IRASA broadcasts its views via self-funded road trips and educative workshops, but also through the self-described “radical” actions mentioned above (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 03/01/2015). This strategy was indeed consciously pursued by IRASA since 2009 in order to draw more attention to the plight of the Khoisan: “The aggressiveness with which we are asserting our consciousness is so fast moving it is scaring the government” (Mackie, 08/01/2015). Amplified by social media — WhatsApp and Facebook in particular, the type of Khoisan revivalism IRASA promoted indeed spread rapidly (cf. De Wet 2012, 508). Yet, Mackie and Kleinhans-Cedras were not its only exponents and social media was not the sole medium through which it proliferated. In fact, one could make the case that Zenzile Khoisan, who is not a member of IRASA, and *Eerste Nasie Nuus* (ENN), the newspaper he co-founded with Debbie Hendricks in 2013 (see Chapter One), shaped the contemporary discourse on Khoisan indigeneity most of all.

Zenzile boasts a distinguished career as a journalist, radio host and pundit. He has worked for various outlets, including Bush Radio, the Cape Argus, and the Daily Maverick. Zenzile also acted as an investigator for the TRC and wrote about this work in his memoir *Jakaranda Time* (Khoisan 2001). He became involved with Khoisan issues after he joined the ANC’s military wing, *uMkhonto we Sizwe*, at the age of 17 and was forced to flee South Africa (Zenzile Khoisan, 02/05/2018). In striking similarity to what happened to Mackie in 1969, one of Zenzile’s “comrades” told him while in exile in Lesotho in July 1983 that, being Coloured, he had no culture or history to speak of. Triggered by this derogatory comment, Zenzile replied to his comrade by saying that, as a Zulu, he was in fact a member of a “young nation”; “the Khoisan fought the colonialists long before Shaka Zulu was born”. Emotionally-charged exchanges such as these were a regular occurrence for Zenzile, who became convinced that coloureds would never be accepted as equals to

blacks in the anti-apartheid struggle, despite promises of ANC leadership to the contrary. In the wake of these incidents he fully committed himself to the Khoisan cause and unofficially changed his name from Charles Jackson to Zenzile Khoisan, a isiZulu word he translated as “taking responsibility”. He eventually made his way to New York on a refugee passport, where he found inspiration among African-American and indigenous activists before returning to South Africa “with a Khoisan consciousness” after the end of apartheid (Zenzile Khoisan, 17/05/2018). He also attended the 2001 conference. As Zenzile became involved in Khoisan revivalism, he railed against what he saw as faulty premises of an ANC-driven cultural nationalism centred on blacks at the expense of coloureds and other minorities: “It is not because one is put in the pigsty and the other in the chicken pen that we were not all treated like animals during apartheid” (Zenzile Khoisan, 17/05/2018). Like many others, Zenzile (24/05/2018) feels affirmative action policies disproportionately benefit blacks (see Chapter Five). Zenzile does not desire a special position for coloureds reminiscent of apartheid, but strives to be a “catalyst for broader social justice” by addressing the country’s continued violation of the Khoisan. Drawing on revolutionary thinkers and indigenous intellectuals far and wide, he believes Khoisan revivalism presents “the biggest antidote to capitalism”.

To jolt the “pacified proletariat” into action, one needs to “sift through broken pieces of history to frame a sense of identity” (Zenzile Khoisan, 02/05/2018). While recognizing Little’s pivotal contributions, Zenzile wanted to push Khoisan revivalism “into overdrive” and made a deliberate choice in 2001 in this regard to “align struggle history to the earlier history” (Zenzile Khoisan, 17/05/2018; 24/05/2018). As I detail in Chapter Four, Zenzile frames coloured people’s grievances in a Khoisan perspective in unparalleled fashion and does so in a revolutionary register that bears witness to his many years in exile and familiarity with indigenous struggles worldwide. He succeeded CCHDC-affiliate Sharon Leng as head of the Gorinhaiqua in 2010. While Zenzile, or Chief !Garu as he is since also referred to, frequently attends public events, he shares most of his thoughts and those of likeminded Khoisan revivalists through *Eerste Nasie Nuus* (ENN). ENN was in many ways the successor of *Eland Nuus*, a two-weekly newspaper that ran between 2009 and 2013. It was the brainchild of Desmond Sampson, a Cape Town-based entrepreneur who carried the newspaper until it began to sell (Basil Coetzee, 06/05/2018; see also De Wet 2010a,

567). The idea for *Eland Nuus* had come to him as he travelled across South Africa in 2003 to explore his Khoisan roots (Desmond Sampson, 22/06/2018). While *Eland Nuus* did not focus on Khoisan issues to the same extent as ENN, it did regularly feature Khoisan revivalists such as Little, whose contributions on Khoisan history appeared in several issues (see e.g. EN 2009d, 15), or Yvette Abrahams, who wrote about the Khoisan and their relationship with food and plants (see e.g. EN 2012a, 14). Sampson's ambition was to spread awareness about Khoisan culture and to get Khoisan to share their thoughts through the newspaper. For this reason it appeared in Afrikaans and was sold at a cheap price across the Western Cape, Northern Cape and Gauteng provinces; in part with the help of volunteers such as Basil Coetzee (Basil Coetzee, 25/04/2018). *Eland Nuus* eventually became too much of a financial burden and was discontinued (Desmond Sampson, 22/06/2018).

Until he left after a spat with the owner, Zenzile was sub-editor at *Eland Nuus* and travelled throughout South Africa to report on Khoisan communities (Zenzile Khoisan, 17/05/2018; EN 2012d, 2). He continued working with this network in ENN, but the focus was more firmly on Khoisan indigeneity and political activism. The title of the newspaper embodied this and also reflected the increasingly common import of international concepts such as 'First Nations', 'Aborigines' or 'First People'. ENN aspires to be the "mid-wife" of the Khoisan revival by reporting on news related to land claims and recognition, but also culture, history, "heroes" and indigenous knowledge (ENN 2013a, 8). It informs its readers about upcoming events and relevant legislative or political developments, nationally and abroad. ENN for example published the UNDRIP (ENN 2013c, 8-9), had a themed issue on human rights (ENN 2017a), and reported on the plight of the Zapatista's in Mexico (ENN 2013d, 1). The newspaper also seeks to amplify "submerged voices" and "unite the nation" (ENN 2013a, 8). As noted in Chapter One, the pages of ENN feature opposing points of view and I regularly found copies of the newspaper at events and my interlocutors' homes. If funding is available, up to 5000 ENN copies are dispersed in print across South Africa, but predominantly in Cape Town (Zenzile Khoisan, 07/05/2018).

Various others pushed Khoisan revivalism forward in the 2010s. One of these is Hennie van Wyk, head of the Gorachouqua since 2010 (Bam 2014, 124). Van Wyk, a former UDF activist and a ANC supporter, has an outspoken style and stands out with his porcupine

quills headgear. He commonly appears in public alongside other members of his house, and is generally respected in Khoisan circles. However, I never managed to agree with the Gorachouqua House on the terms for an interview. While I am therefore to some extent ill-equipped to make this assessment, the Gorachouqua House does not seem to have had the same impact on the development of Khoisan revivalism as a whole as IRASA or Zenzile Khoisan. Another organization that needs to be mentioned is Khoisan Kingdom (KSK). Set up in 2010, the KSK was omnipresent during my fieldwork in 2014, as well as in the pages of ENN around that time, but they were virtually absent when I returned in 2017. While the KSK describes itself in 2014 as a non-monarchical “cultural organization” with “10.000 members” that seeks to rally all Khoisan organizations under its banner, it is headed by the elusive “King Cardi” (ENN 2014c, 3-4; see Chapter Five). It carried out various projects in and around Cape Town and the Northern Cape in 2013 and 2014 to combat “the deprived state” of Khoisan descendants, mostly involving distributing water and food to those in need (ENN 2014a, 3; 2014c, 5-6; 2014e, 13; 2014f, 12; 2014j, 15; 2014k, 4; 2016a, 4). Leveraging its prominence in Khoisan revivalist circles in the run up to the elections of 2014, the KSK secured meetings with the Deputy Minister of the Department of Rural Development and Land Affairs (ENN 2014g, 5), the Western Cape Minister for Community Safety (ENN 2014j, 4), as well as Julius Malema, the leader of the political party Economic Freedom Fighters (see Conclusion).

However, as I mentioned, the KSK became largely inactive soon after. This ‘sudden’ disappearance was (and is) however not unusual for Khoisan organizations. As I explained in Chapter One, the mushrooming of short-lived organizations made it impossible to compile an overview of Khoisan revivalist entities in Cape Town. As I show below, but particularly in Chapter Five, the unabated infighting between Khoisan representatives partly accounts for this. To contextualize why so many organizations came into being during this time *and* why they often compete vigorously with one another, I turn to legislative developments in the domain of land and traditional leadership.

### 3.2.2 Land reform, the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act and the advent of a broad-based identity movement

In his 2012 State of the Nation Address, President Jacob Zuma told South African citizens that “[i]t is important to remember that the Khoi-San people were the most brutalised by colonialists who tried to make them extinct, and undermined their language and identity. As a free and democratic South Africa today, we cannot ignore to correct the past” (Zuma 2012). Zuma added that he had met with the “Khoi-San community” in Cape Town the year before and that they agreed to work together.<sup>59</sup> In his State of the Nation Address the following year, he announced that the 1994 Restitution of Land Rights Act would be amended to reopen the land claims process that previously ran between 1995 and 1998. The restitution of land was part of the ANC’s three-tier land reform program alongside land tenure reform (i.e. securing rights for those who continued to work under unclear statutes) and land redistribution (i.e. the state buying up land for landless citizens). Zuma felt too many had missed the opportunity to file their claims, but also that “exceptions to the June 1913 cut-off date” needed to be codified, among other things “to accommodate claims by the descendants of the Khoi and San”. The 1997 White Paper On South African Land Policy issued by the Department of Land Affairs (1997, 77-78) argued that land claims before the cut-off date would be impossible to verify and give rise to “overlapping and competing claims [which] awaken and/or prolong destructive ethnic and racial politics”. It is not entirely clear why the government decided to revisit its position in 2013. IRASA however takes credit for this and points to a presentation it delivered in Parliament in 2010 highlighting their exclusion from the restitution process and Khoisan marginalization more generally.<sup>60</sup> Tania Kleinhans-Cedras (05/01/2015) also mentioned several subsequent “informal meetings” with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) that were instrumental in changing their minds. Though the underlying motivations remain somewhat obscure, the DRDLR organized two “National

---

<sup>59</sup> I have not been able to figure out who Zuma is referring to here.

<sup>60</sup> “Petition on Complaints about Land Claims on behalf of Western Cape Land Restitution group: update.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2010) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/11777/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

Khoi-San Dialogues” to explore Khoisan land issues in greater detail in 2013 and 2014. Both took place in Kimberley and are hence commonly referred to as Kimberley One and Kimberley Two.

This brings me to Chantal Revell, who featured prominently at both meetings. In the next chapter I delve deeper into her first encounters with Khoisan revivalism. Important to note here is that she was elected to the NKC as Western Cape representative in 2012 (Chantal Revell, 07/10/2014).<sup>61</sup> The well-attended election in Rawsonville sought to make the NKC more inclusive of the various groups that had come to the fore since it was created in the late 1990s (Bredekamp 2015, 16). This issue had already been flagged in 2005, but the NKC leadership was under the impression they were close to fulfilling their mandate and therefore feared elections would cause unnecessary delays (ENN 2013d, 12; see below). As noted previously, even though a lack of government support is partially to blame, the NKC communicated poorly with its constituents, not least about who was on the council and how they had gotten there. Annual updates from the *Indigenous World* for instance mention “elections” taking place in 2007 and 2008 without any additional information about why these were held or who participated in them (De Wet and Crawhall 2008, 518; De Wet 2009, 576-577). Mounting criticism of the NKC, which I come back to below, however made additional elections unavoidable. The government concurred after consulting with complainants in March and April 2012, and the NKC — chaired by Cecil Le Fleur since Little’s departure in 2011 — subsequently expanded from 21 to 30 representatives (Jansen 2013, 440).

The reconfigured NKC was asked by the DRDLR alongside other Khoisan representatives to select roughly 100 delegates per province for ‘Kimberley One’, from which in turn a board of representatives would be established composed of 45 members, i.e. five per province (Chantal Revell, 25/11/2014; Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 05/01/2015). The Western Cape elected Ron Martin, Wendy Williams, Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, Abre Hector and John Cornelius Witbooi during a meeting in March 2013. Gugile Nkwinti, the Minister of the DRDLR inaugurated this “Reference Group” of 45 at the gathering, which

---

<sup>61</sup> An additional Western Cape representative was also elected, Hillary Solomons, but she did not become involved in the NKC to the same extent as Chantal Revell (see Chapter Four).

took place on 15-16 April 2013 and was ultimately attended by more than 500 delegates (ENN 2013a, 6; Gabie 2014, 64). A “Working Group” of 12 was also appointed to communicate with Nkwinti and a policy-subcommittee of five to suggest policy recommendations regarding exceptions to the 1913 cut-off date and the recognition of “historical landmarks” and “heritage sites” (ENN 2014a, 2; 2014b, 2).<sup>62</sup> “Historical researchers and academics” were also envisioned to be part of the team, but this apparently fell through. There was a recurring call for Khoisan researchers to be involved at all stages of the process. Virtually all presenters also related the topic of land to issues such as organized crime, “psychological trauma”, alcohol abuse and housing (see Chapter Four). Concrete suggestions included recognizing Khoisan heritage sites, renaming “streets and hospitals” after the Khoisan, valorising rock-art as “title deeds” and overall assistance from researchers to fact-check competing claims.

Tommy Ntsewa, “special advisor” to the Department of Traditional Affairs, also gave a presentation (Ntsewa 2013). He reasoned that all Africans were indigenous to South Africa because centuries of “assimilation” and “absorption” before the “more rude interruption” of Europeans rendered differences between groups meaningless. Everyone ultimately had San ancestry, so they too did not need a special designation. “Excluding” Africans as non-indigenous would be unconstitutional and unethical. While he made clear that their leadership still had to be recognized, his refusal to acknowledge the Khoisan as indigenous people enraged the audience to the degree that he was called back from the airport to apologize (Zenzile Khoisan, 12/06/2018). Some felt Ntsewa had given away the position of the government and had no business speaking about the Khoisan: “It seems that everyone, except the [Khoisan], can speak on, speculate and make wild assertions about our origins and our essential search for identity, cultural definition, and recognition” (ENN 2013e, 3). The Khoisan could “sort out their own history” and did not

---

<sup>62</sup> An article in ENN (2013e, 6) notes it was composed of “Raymond Trollip (KZN), J.J. Williams (Limpopo), Charlotte Bouah ([Eastern Cape]), Michael Hurton (Mpumalanga), [Headwoman] Minnie Booysen (Gauteng), Chief Godson Moffat ([North West]), Chief Willem Mouers ([Free state]), [Captain] Goab Paul Swartbooi ([Northern Cape, vice chair]), [Headwoman] Letitia Petersen (Gauteng), [secretary general]), [Captain] John Cornelius Witbooi ([Western Cape, chairman]), [Headman] Ron Martin ([Western Cape, secretary])”.



need a “quack contaminating it”. There were other reasons why the Khoisan did not share the government’s celebration of Kimberley One as an “epic and historical moment”.<sup>63</sup> Many felt the cut-off date was never up for debate; the government wanted to negotiate with “coloureds”, not with indigenous people (ENN 2013a, 1, 6). Discussions about land were also deemed premature as the issue of Khoisan traditional leadership and indigenous status was still up in the air (see below). In fact, frequent suggestions that traditional leaders would get (back) land only made the question of Khoisan leadership more contested (Bateman 2016).

Not surprisingly therefore, delegates declared open season on the NKC at Kimberley One. Many were angered by their involvement with land issues as their mandate was restricted to constitutional recognition (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 14/10/2014). Others felt the NKC did not represent them and wanted to replace it with a new organization (ENN 2014e, 6). One critic felt it ultimately bore responsibility for the “disorder, corruption and opportunism” among the Khoisan (ENN 2014e, 6). The government’s calls for “unity among the Khoisan” were therefore quite cynical, he concluded. Others too saw the NKC as a way for the state to divide the Khoisan (ENN 2013a, 6). In our interview, Cecil Le Fleur (10/07/2019) acknowledged the NKC had not lived up to expectations. Engaging with Khoisan revivalists made him appreciate how fortunate he was to be born into the culture and never had to “revive”. It was never foreseen that so many Khoisan revivalists would come to the fore, but the NKC could only call so many elections. Le Fleur also blamed the government for not providing funding to improve communications with constituents while simultaneously interacting with other structures claiming to represent the Khoisan (ENN 2013a, 6; 2014g, 14). Newcomers are understandably frustrated with the status quo, but piecemeal progress was the only way their grievances would get addressed according to Le Fleur. Chantal Revell (07/03/2018) was initially among the NKC’s critics, but realized NKC-related disputes are a red herring; they provide the government with a reason to halt negotiations with the Khoisan while moving forward with land reform in the country

---

<sup>63</sup> “The Khoi and San people agree to work with government in restoring their land rights.” *South African government* (2013) <https://www.gov.za/khoi-and-san-people-agree-work-government-restoring-their-land-rights>, accessed 20 March 2021.

at large. The Reference Group was in her view a deliberate attempt to foment discord among the Khoisan. A meeting to clarify their roles descended into chaos, with government officials reportedly refusing to intervene. While the DRDLR stated it only dealt with land issues, its consultation process had intertwined them with contestations and legislative developments regarding Khoisan leadership (see below); putting the Reference Group and the NKC at loggerheads.

As the Reference Group relentlessly criticized the NKC, it ironically faced similar problems and accusations. Ron Martin gave an update in ENN in 2014 (ENN 2014a, 2) regarding progress made with identifying heritages sites, conceptualizing “capacity-building and development projects” and formulating policy suggestions. In a presentation at Kimberley Two, held 10-11 April 2014, Martin also listed several sites for consideration, including Table Mountain, Genadendal and the Castle of Good Hope (Martin 2014). Some, including the NKC, however claimed the Reference Group had not reported back to its constituents (ENN 2014d, 2-3). In its defence, like the NKC, the Reference Group cited a lack of resources and the fact that the government was speaking to multiple groups simultaneously (ENN 2013e, 6; 2014e, 11; IRASA 2017, 3). The bulk of exchanges within the Reference Group reportedly revolved around locating affordable venues to have meetings and calculating the cheapest mode of transport or communication. Once again mirroring allegations levelled against the NKC, some felt unjustly excluded from the Reference Group and demanded membership or that it be dissolved (ENN 2014e, 11). Many also put forward a vote of no confidence against Witbooi, the Reference Group chairman, for overtly campaigning for the ANC at Kimberley Two (Chantal Revell, 25/11/2014; ENN 2014d, 3). Tania Kleinhans-Cedras (05/01/2015) blamed Witbooi for turning the gathering into a “cultural concert”, with Nama heritage in particular being emphasized thanks to his lobbying. There was little time for actual negotiations about land as a result, to great frustration of those attending (ENN 2014d, 3).

The DRDLR meanwhile contracted independent researchers in 2013 to conduct a “Regulatory Impact Assessment” (RIA) regarding the new land claims process, exceptions to the 1913 cut-off date and Khoisan land issues. The two-volume RIA report perhaps provides the background of the DRDLR’s policy preferences (see below). The report, which is not publicly available, is partly based on meetings with “stakeholders” in various

provinces, but not the Western Cape (DRDLR 2013, 193-199). Like Ntsewa and others, the authors find “first nation status” inappropriate for the South African context as Africans arrived there virtually simultaneously and experienced the same degree of dispossession and violence at the hands of European settlers (Ibid., 24, 133). Yet the Khoisan endured “the most violent of forms of dispossession including genocide” and could therefore possibly qualify as “vulnerable indigenous people” (Ibid., 18, 133; see above). Pre-1913 land claims are “politically and economically unbearable” as all land in South Africa would become claimable, including where cases have already been settled (DRDLR 2013, 149, 186-187). According to oddly precise figures from consultancy firm “Urban-Econ”, scrapping the cut-off date would prompt “23.170 claims from traditional Khoi-San provinces” involving 500.000 Khoisan descendants (Ibid., 25, 40). The authors also warned how “politically organised and assertive Khoe and San groups” might feign Khoisan indigeneity to access benefits (Ibid., 191). As the 1997 White Paper already suggested 16 years earlier (Department of Land Affairs 1997, 14-15), the RIA report suggests instead to amend the 1993 Provision of Land and Assistance Act to prioritize the Khoisan in the land redistribution process (DRDLR 2013, 187-189). Revised heritage legislation could also give the Khoisan a greater sense of ownership, “sense of place” and ability to practice “indigenous cultural heritage” (Ibid., 147, 187-189). “Symbolic gestures/remedies”, such as renaming towns or roads with “former or new Khoe and San terminologies” were also options (Ibid., 151).

While Reference Group members claimed the RIA’s historical narrative could be debunked with research “of our own”, they relinquished earlier positions such as a 1652 cut-off date and endorsed identical recommendations regarding land redistribution at Kimberley Two (ENN 2014a, 2; 2014b, 2). The Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act, whose announcement had put in motion the whole process, was passed two months after Kimberley Two, and no longer mentioned the Khoisan.<sup>64</sup> The DRDLR for their part acknowledged that heritage sites and “historical landmarks” – the distinction was never clarified – needed to be returned to “the owners of the heritage and history”, but did not

---

<sup>64</sup> The Act was found unconstitutional in 2016 as too many previous claims still needed to be processed and there had not been enough public consultation (Padayachee 2016).

specify much beyond that (Mdontswa 2014). While Kimberley Two was once again touted as a significant milestone, the Khoisan were even less in agreement this time around and wondered why they had been asked for feedback in the first place.<sup>65</sup> Some felt the Kimberley meetings only served to keep up appearances and that the outcomes had been predetermined (ENN 2014e, 11). Others accused the ANC of perpetuating a “white colonialist agenda” by seeking to capture Khoisan politics, and likened the chaos of the Reference Group to the divide-and-rule tactics allegedly applied through the NKC (ENN 2014e, 6). Tania Kleinhans-Cedras claims the Reference Group was rushed to reach recommendations and that few of her colleagues suggested pilot projects because they were too busy campaigning for the ANC (IRASA 2017, 4).

As agreed during Kimberley Two, a meeting was called in Arniston on 14 June 2015 where Khoisan representatives were asked to elect 60 delegates for the next national dialogue (ENN 2017a, 6). Heated exchanges ensued over who should be included and excluded (Chantal Revell, 19/08/2019). A DRDLR official reportedly made the potentially game-changing statement that the Khoisan would no longer need to prove “ancestral ownership” to file land claims and that proving a link to the land would suffice, but this apparently got lost in the thick of the fray (Khoisan 2015a). Plans for Kimberley Three were put on hold in the wake of the chaotic Arniston meeting, but a pilot land redistribution project was at some point launched in Wellington. A ENN (2017a, 6) respondent reports that Nkwinti promised the project would bring sustained benefits to all Khoisan, but many criticized the fact that Witbooi and other Nama were “put in charge”. The trust set up to manage the property reportedly turned into a “nightmare of greed and personal enrichment” according to the same source. Its current state is unknown. In September 2018, DRDLR staff organized a “study tour” to “draw lessons from Canadian experiences regarding redress for land alienation from the indigenous people

---

<sup>65</sup> “Minister Nkwinti leads consultation on accommodation of the Khoi and San communities, heritage sites and historical landmarks to access land restitution.” *South African Government* (2014) <https://www.gov.za/minister-nkwinti-leads-consultation-accommodation-khoi-and-san-communities-heritage-sites-and>, accessed 20 March 2021.

and processes for reconciliation”.<sup>66</sup> One of the explicit purposes was to reflect on the cut-off date and the plight of the Khoisan, yet little was suggested beyond the general recommendation that the South African government “should consider prioritising addressing the land needs of the descendants of the Khoi & Sans [sic] in terms of the Redistribution programme”; a suggestion already made in 1997 (see above).

Despite this apparent long-time consensus, land redistribution legislation has not been revised to date. Zuma announced in 2015 that the Khoisan would be able to claim land in the next five years, but it was not clear what he was referring to (Zuma 2015). This has not made land any less of an animating issue for Khoisan revivalists. The ANC’s policy U-turn regarding the ‘willing buyer, willing seller’ principle in February 2018 has in fact made it more volatile than ever before. Widely seen as the result of pressure from the opposition and a poor showing in the 2016 local elections (Adebayo 2019, 139), the ANC now endorses expropriating land without compensation to “fast-track land reform” and achieve “radical economic transformation”. Although it remains unclear how this policy will be implemented, it is advertised as a way to transfer property from whites to landless blacks. As I show in Chapter Five and the Conclusion, many Khoisan fear being side-lined and look to an unprecedented degree for leverage in arguments of prior occupancy and indigeneity. Deputy-Minister of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Obed Bapela, however advised the government in 2016 “not [to] go into the temptation of giving [the Khoisan] first-nation status” as it stimulated secessionism and applied only to Latin America and Canada, “where people were completely removed from their land and some arrived and settled there” (Makinana 2016). In South Africa by contrast, he argued, “we do not know who arrived at which point, when and where” and land was still held by the Khoisan “together with other indigenous people of Africa”. Similar statements have been made by others, but it should be evident at this point that despite ambiguous statements by officials, the government

---

<sup>66</sup> “Report of the Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform on study tour on the restitution of indigenous people’s land rights in Canada, dated 13 March 2019.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2019) <https://pmg.org.za/tailed-committee-report/3725/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

is not intent on granting the Khoisan the exclusive status of indigenous people or entertaining land claims based on prior occupancy.<sup>67</sup>

Yet this does not mean that Khoisan grievances are no longer on the government's radar or that the issue has been settled. After several years of receiving complaints, the SAHRC decided in 2015 to look into the matter once again (see above). A series of public hearings were held in Gauteng, the Western Cape and the Northern Cape in 2015-2017, which formed the basis for the report that was released in 2018 (SAHRC 2018, 8). The investigation was instigated by the late Danny Titus, who headed the SAHRC at the time. Chris Nissen, who was born and raised in Cape Town and at one time led the ANC in the Western Cape, succeeded Titus as commissioner. Both men are openly supportive of Khoisan revivalism. Nissen in particular has reflected on Khoisan issues for some time. He wrote his MA thesis on the "supposed loss of the Khoikhoi traditional religious heritage amongst its descendants" at the University of Cape Town in 1990 (Nissen 1990). The thesis advances a revivalist argument: Khoisan religiosity has survived colonialism and apartheid in altered shape and this realization should give Khoisan descendants a "dignified continuation with their forbearers" (Ibid., ii; see Chapter Four). Nissen wanted to prevent "the history to die" and deliberately chose this "subversive" topic (Chris Nissen, 21/05/2018). He personally believes the Khoisan need increased access to land in order to make them feel more part of South African society. This despite some making "a mockery" of things with outlandish claims. Nissen fears this distracts from the burning question of indigeneity: "It is politically convenient for government to say everyone is indigenous [but] some people are indigenous to specific parts of Africa".

The SAHRC report (2018, 17) however endorses a slightly adapted version of the vulnerable indigenous people argument: all African groups may be considered indigenous, but the concept "indigenous" should be used as a parameter to measure the continued marginalization of the Khoisan, not to one-up and exclude other groups in society based on "ethnic, cultural or racial distinction". One wonders where

---

<sup>67</sup> See e.g. "State of traditional affairs in South Africa: Department of Traditional Affairs briefing, with Deputy Minister." *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2016) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/23711/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

marginalization derives from if not some type of distinction. Indeed, the report argues that the Khoisan merit special attention because they remain “virtually invisible as a distinct group” due to a history of forced assimilation, classification as Coloured and overall denied dignity as “a people of equal worth and value” (Ibid., 9). It recommends a wide range of measures to accommodate their grievances, including debunking stereotypes; reinvigorating the Khoisan Heritage Route (see above); creating “cultural information centres, museums and tourism initiatives”; but also greater access to “ancestral land” and a “official and legally recognized existence as a distinct group” by ending their de facto categorization as Coloured (SAHRC 2018, 47, 67-71, 81-82, 85, 91-92). While Tania Kleinhans-Cedras (11/07/2018) believes the report does not go far enough, mainly by being imprecise about what “recognizing the Khoisan” entails in practice, it is the most pro-Khoisan official document to date. It has already spurred the government to promise the option “Khoisan” in the census of 2021 as well as “all government forms” (DTA 2019, 4). As Nissen reminded the Khoisan revivalists attending the official release of the report in Cape Town on 22 March 2018, the report should be seen as “a living, working document”.

The passage of the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act (TKLA) in Parliament on 26 February 2019 however took away any lasting doubts regarding the recognition of Khoisan traditional leaders.<sup>68</sup> Drafts of the TKLA circulated for comment in 2011, 2013 and 2015 and several public hearings have been convened (De Wet 2012, 504; ENN 2016b, 1). Khoisan revivalists were quick to react to the drafts, crucial sections of which were published in ENN (2013d, 4-5). One contributor believed the TKLA advanced “decolonization” and brought “hope for the restoration of peoples’ cultural identity” (ENN 2015, 11). Although they shared critical feedback on earlier drafts, such as renaming the Act “National Traditional and First Indigenous Khoi and San Affairs Bill”, the NKC also endorsed the TKLA (ENN 2013d, 2, 7). They had been instrumental to the drafting process,

---

<sup>68</sup> It is noteworthy that the Western Cape was the only province that voted against the bill. Siv Øvernes (2019, 93) argues that they did so because “different criteria were used when it concerned recognising the Khoisan [and] too much power would be in the hands of Khoisan leaders and councils, especially when it came to how land would to be utilised. It should be noted that the TKLA does not stipulate anything about controlling land.

but were also keen on securing a consultative role thereafter, something many Khoisan opposed (Ibid., 6). The government has already requested the assistance of the NKC with identifying communities that could qualify for recognition; in what way and whether in the capacity of a statutory body remains to be seen (DTA 2019, 6; see also SAHRC 2018, 57, 60). As stipulated in the TKLA, these community representatives may in turn apply for recognition with the “Commission on Khoi-San Matters”, which will operate similar to the Commission on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims — the so-called Nhlapo Commission — that previously validated the claims of non-Khoisan traditional leaders (Ainslie and Kepe 2016, 23). The government issued a call for nominations in April 2019 and up to seven members with relevant experience and without affiliation to any Khoisan collective will staff the commission.<sup>69</sup>

Those that support the TKLA are eclipsed by those who thoroughly reject it.<sup>70</sup> Criticism comes in a variety of forms and relates to various issues. Whereas Le Fleur expressed his dismay at once again merely being a guest at the House of Traditional Leaders in 2018 (Le Fleur 2018), most Khoisan dread the prospect of local, provincial and national Houses of “traditional *and* Khoi-San leaders” (TKLA, 70; my emphasis). These government-funded entities will host elected traditional and Khoisan leaders fulfilling largely ceremonial and advisory roles for five year terms (Ibid., 77-78, 82, 90). Most Khoisan do not take issue with this but fear to be in a perpetual minority position as a result of having to share seats with non-Khoisan members (William Langeveldt, 12/03/2018). The Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (CONTRALESA), a non-governmental entity founded in 1987 to organize the resistance of traditional leaders against the apartheid regime, for its part endorsed “claims by the Khoisan people and those dispossessed before 1913” and asked

---

<sup>69</sup> “Minister Zweli Mkhize invites public nominations for appointment of Commission of Khoi-San Matters.” *South African government* (2019) <https://www.gov.za/speeches/cogta-minister-calls-nominations-members-commission-khoi-san-matters-9-apr-2019-0000>, accessed 21 March 2021.

<sup>70</sup> Others have criticized the TKLA for different reasons, mainly that it grants traditional leaders unforeseen powers and endangers gender equality (see e.g. Heywood 2019).



the government to speed up “getting the land back to its rightful owners” in 2013.<sup>71</sup> Aaron Messelaar (16/03/2018), who I say more about in Chapter Four, joined Contralesa as the only Khoisan member in 2007 and claims it supported Khoisan revivalism from the beginning as they want to empower traditional leadership wherever they can. Those who see a contradiction between the concepts ‘indigenous’ and ‘traditional’ are therefore mistaken, he argues (Aaron Messelaar, 06/10/2017).

And yet, Rico Settler has noted how traditional leaders have increasingly associated with the global indigenous rights movement and the “rhetoric of the ancestral” in order to bolster their claims (Settler 2010, 59). Perhaps this also played a role in the fierce opposition to earlier drafts of the TKLA that referred to all parties as “traditional leaders” (ENN 2015, 2). Not mentioning the Khoisan in the title not only compromised their political influence, it also impeded addressing predicaments that are specifically related to their indigeneity (Gabie 2014, 26). Some felt the TKLA ought to have addressed the “cultural and physical genocide” of the Khoisan (ENN 2013d, 8; 2014g, 8). Khoisan revivalists also regret that the TKLA makes no mention of indigenous rights, the ILO 169 or UNDRIP (ENN 2013d, 6; 2017c, 15). On this point, the TKLA is crystal clear: it does not bestow upon anyone “any special indigenous, first nation or any other similar status” (TKLA, 10). Furthermore, whereas President Cyril Ramaphosa celebrated the legislation for granting “statutory recognition to the Khoi-San [...] one of South Africa’s indigenous groups”, it only speaks to the issue of traditional leadership.<sup>72</sup> As Zenzile Khoisan (24/05/2018) noted, no Khoisan are recognized by the TKLA beyond a set of government-approved “chiefs”. These representatives are moreover not constitutionally recognized, but reliant on legislation that could be repealed in the future (Peter Marais, 02/07/2018).

---

<sup>71</sup> “1913 Native Land Act Centenary Workshop with parliamentary committees, MPLs & other stakeholders: day 1.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2013) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/15987/>; “1913 Native Land Act Centenary Workshop with parliamentary committees, MPLs & other stakeholders: day 2.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2013) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/15990/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>72</sup> Ramaphosa, C. 2019. *Address by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the Annual Opening of the National House of Traditional Leaders, Parliament, Cape Town.* <https://www.gov.za/speeches/president-cyril-ramaphosa-opening-national-house-traditional-leaders-19-feb-2019-0000>.

The criteria for the recognition of Khoisan traditional leaders are also under fire. The TKLA defines a “Khoi-San” person as anyone who “lives in accordance with the customs and customary law” of any of the five groupings identified in the SQR (TKLA, 8; see above). ‘Customs and customary law’ need to be sufficiently distinct and in line with the constitution and other criteria set out in the TKLA, such as gender equality (TKLA, 10). Khoisan communities also need to demonstrate a history of self-identification “from a particular point in time up to the present” and occupy “a specific geographical area or various geographical areas” (Ibid., 20). Some find this ignores the history of forced assimilation and dispersal as well as the complexities of a process of revival (ENN 2013d, 2; 2017a, 13). The fact that ‘customs and customary law’ and ‘a particular point in time’ is open to interpretation, and that both elected and hereditary leaders qualify might however work in their favour (TKLA, 20). Then again, the TKLA upholds different hierarchies for Khoisan and “traditional leaders”. The latter is made up of Kings, Queens, Principle Traditional Leaders, Senior Traditional Leaders and Headmen and Headwomen, while the former only consists of Senior Khoi-San Leaders and Branch Heads (Ibid., 12, 18). A Khoisan “royal house” did not make it into the final version (ENN 2013d, 6). The meaning of these various appellations is once again left largely unspecified. Much is left to the discretion of the premier of the respective province, including remuneration and additional advisory roles (TKLA, 48, 64, 68). The aforementioned Commission scrutinizes claims and makes recommendations, but the final verdict rests with the premier and the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Ibid., 96). Many Khoisan wonder what the rationale behind this decision is and why the premier holds so much power, not least because they feel those of the Western Cape have ignored them for decades (ENN 2013e, 5; 2014i, 12; Aaron Messelaar, 06/10/2017). Moreover, many, including the SAHRC (2018, 81), judge it unfair that traditional leaders get automatic ‘authority’ over people within their boundaries whereas Khoisan leaders need to supply the premier with an annually updated list of members replete with their signatures and explicit consent (TKLA, 18-20, 24; SAHRC 2018, 58-59). All this makes many Khoisan revivalists defiant of any government involvement in defining Khoisan communities and leadership (ENN 2014g, 8; 2014j, 12; Joseph Little, 08/05/2018; SAHRC 2018, 58).

The emotions accompanying rejections of the TKLA are profound. A 2016 clip circulating on Facebook for example showed Khoisan throwing copies of the TKLA on the floor before storming out of a public hearing in George. Clearly agitated by the subject during our interview, Khoisan activist Tanyan Gradwell (31/07/2018) rejected the TKLA as “an apartheid Bill” that needs to be condemned by the international criminal court as it seeks to co-opt their leadership in order to be able to control them. Another group blasted the “heinous Euro-colonial, White-apartheid and Black neo-colonial” TKLA and warned it might turn the Khoisan into “liberation fighters” (WCLKSC 2018, 2-3). As someone with a finger on the pulse of Khoisan revivalism, Zenzile Khoisan (12/06/2018) repeatedly cautioned this might be the last generation of peaceful Khoisan revivalists (see also ENN 2016b, 1). The threat of violence was issued at a public hearing on the TKLA in Parliament on 8 May 2018, which I attended.<sup>73</sup> Hennie Van Wyk warned that many Khoisan were militarily trained and on standby to prove it if need be. To great cheers of his supporters, van Wyk added he did not need “government to tell me who I am” and was insulted for “being assimilated into Nguni tribes” through the TKLA. Even more applause was generated when speakers criticized the government for negating coloureds’ contributions to the struggle or when they asserted the Khoisan had sole authority over the land as indigenous people. Hardly anyone commented on the contents of the TKLA but rejected it out of hand. Their allotted speaking time was filled with history lessons and passionate pleas to embrace Khoisan indigeneity. The chairman’s attempts to restore order to the meeting were met with boos and jeers from the crowd.

Before concluding this chapter I want to contrast this episode with another meeting I attended on 1 August 2019 at the Castle of Good Hope regarding a imminent benefit-sharing agreement between the NKC, the South African San Council and the South African Rooibos Council. Despite many rooibos companies explicitly branding their products with references to the Khoisan, this was never accompanied by a recognition that the Khoisan were the traditional knowledge holders (Wynberg 2017, 46). The deal that was about to be signed was nine years in the making and did exactly that (Jansen 2016; 456; see also

---

<sup>73</sup> See also “Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Bill [B23-2015]: public hearings Day 2.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2016) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/21974/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

Ives 2017, 5-7). One of the main sources of inspiration for the agreement was a settlement the San and SASI had reached in 2003 concerning *Hoodia*, an appetite-suppressing plant (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009, 90).<sup>74</sup> At the time of the meeting, the NKC could not yet disclose the details, but it later emerged that 1.5 percent of proceeds from Rooibos sales, which could amount to R10 million per annum, would henceforth go to the NKC and the South African San Council.<sup>75</sup> The purpose of the gathering in August was to get input from Khoisan representatives on what that money could best be used for. The conveners particularly wanted feedback on their suggestion to set up a “Khoi trust” where people could apply to fund projects that benefit the community (Chantal Revell, 10/07/2019). The meeting however revolved almost entirely around whether the NKC had the appropriate mandate to negotiate the rooibos settlement — a recurrent theme, as overall criticism of the NKC had continued unabated (cf. SAHRC 2018, 57, 60; see above). Most sitting around the table felt there had not been enough prior public consultation and declared the rooibos negotiations null and void. One veteran NKC member tried to discredit his detractors by noting that they were not around when the NKC was formed. Zenzile Khoisan attempted several times to lower the temperature by stating that leadership issues could be left for another meeting and that it was worthwhile to at least listen to the offer that was on the table. While the NKC eventually managed to explain its plans for the trust, the meeting ended without any feedback. Those that came to the meeting were apparently predetermined to use the occasion to admonish the NKC.

Whereas the TKLA hearing was a rare show of unity among a group that is marred by infighting, the rooibos meeting illustrates how detrimental conflicts are to moving Khoisan revivalism forward. The income from rooibos brings unforeseen financial means to advance Khoisan revivalism, but the endemic distrust of the NKC put any agreement

---

<sup>74</sup> Rachel Wynberg (2017, 40) notes the San Council and the NKC settled a similar case with local pharmaceutical company Cape Kingdom Nutraceuticals about proceeds from *Buchu*. The agreement, which according to Wynberg gives both Khoisan parties 3 percent of the proceeds from *Buchu* sales, was never mentioned to me by my interlocutors. Nor is any further information available on the internet.

<sup>75</sup> “San and Khoi claim benefits from rooibos.” *Mail & Guardian* (2019) <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-11-01-00-san-and-khoi-claim-benefits-from-rooibos/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

over how to manage the funding out of reach. Whether the common enemy is the government or the NKC (or both), their critics are divided as well. As I noted, Khoisan revivalists share the assessment that the promise of paid leadership positions and land claims exacerbated already existing tensions (ENN 2014f, 8). For all to see, Khoisan revivalism is still trapped in a cycle of fierce infighting and heartfelt pleas for unity (cf. Adhikari 2004, 186; Worden 2009, 28; Sato 2018, 206). The situation is all the more depressing since, as Basil Coetzee (2019b, 246) realized looking back at decades of attempting to rally conflicting parties, “the more efforts were made to unify and consolidate, the more divisive we became”. Many are painfully aware that they duplicate each other’s work and stall political negotiations, or even worse, provide the government with a scapegoat (IRASA 2012, 13; ENN 2013a, 12; 2014j, 12). Government officials have indeed cited infighting as one of the reasons to delay policy developments.<sup>76</sup> While certain government officials have also backed efforts to establish unity (ENN 2014g, 5), their involvement is often explicitly rejected, perhaps due to previous experiences with the NKC or the Reference Group (ENN 2014j, 12; 2017b, 1-2). As I show in greater detail in Chapter Five, infighting is both diagnosed and remedied in a variety of ways.

Those that feared the TKLA will divide the Khoisan further might be proven right when the Commission on Khoi-San Matters commences its work for a period of five years. Nissen (21/05/2018) felt infighting prevented a critical mass from materializing and that the government will control Khoisan revivalism’s development through state-appointed leaders. However, it is my impression that the number of Khoisan revivalists has increased dramatically in recent years. Amplified by social media and endorsed by prominent coloureds, such as ex-Cape Town mayor Peter Marais and the suspended ANC politician Marius Fransman, Khoisan revivalism seems more popular now than ever before (see Conclusion). Several Khoisan political parties have also been founded, such as the “true Khoisan party” Patriotic Alliance or the First Nation Liberation Alliance, which emphasises “aboriginality” (ENN 2014b, 12; 2014c, 3; see also De Wet 2012, 504). Besides a

---

<sup>76</sup> “Local Government Elections: Deputy Minister's briefing; Departments Public Service & Administration, Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs Strategic Plans & Budgets 2011.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2011) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/12977/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

few advertisements in ENN, no additional information is available. None managed to gain any seats, with the possible exception of Khoisan Revolution, created in 2016 by Stanley Pieterse, a Northern Cape Khoisan representative who also sits on the NKC (Parkinson 2016b). The party reportedly has 25.000 paid members and contested the 2016 local elections with a campaign centred on land, recognition and language rights for the Khoisan and won one seat in Springbok in the Northern Cape, where it formed a coalition with the ANC (Jansen 2017, 55). While not translated into votes for Khoisan political parties, Khoisan revivalist entities have mushroomed across Cape Town and many speak of a “mass phenomenon” (ENN 2014i, 12). It is indeed turning into what is perhaps best described as a broad-based identity movement. As Khoisan revivalism gained traction, articulations of Khoisan indigeneity diversified accordingly. The following chapters will show how the majority of those that come to find Khoisan identity and culture empowering and helpful in understanding the world around them are not necessarily interested in joining tribal structures or getting recognized as traditional leaders. They relate to their Khoisan identity in different ways. To be able to understand this, I explained in the Introduction that it is vital to exchange the concept ‘indigenous’ for ‘articulations of indigeneity’ as an analytical lens. In other words, one needs to take an in-depth look at what Khoisan revivalists are doing and saying; where, how and when the Khoisan past is engaged with, and not least, why. In Part II, I aim to do just that by presenting the bulk of my empirical data.

## **Part II. Ethnographic encounters with Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town**





## 4                    The Khoisan identity discourse (I): reclaiming history and remedying the ‘identity crisis’

*“The history of our people has been lost, stolen, strayed and distorted and now, as a resurgent nation, rising from our valley of dry bones, where we must knit together a cohesive story of who we are as a people, where we come from and who we are now. It is the story of our existence, our travails and our triumphs. This is our cohesive narrative that must be sensitively put together as we chart our pathway to a future where we are recognised and restored.”*

- Zenzile Khoisan (ENN 2014j, 6)

When I asked my interlocutors about their identity, the resulting ‘Khoisan identity discourse’, as I refer to it, was typically premised on a rejection of the racial label Coloured. Given the history I detailed previously, this should not come as a surprise. The apartheid dispensation actively suppressed Khoisan identity among coloureds, particularly in urban environments such as Cape Town. While many remained aware of their Khoisan ancestry, assimilationist ideology ensured that the majority of coloureds fronted their European ancestry while reluctantly acknowledging themselves as products of miscegenation. The Khoisan extinction discourse also cut off any linkages between Coloured identity and the Khoisan by casting the former as virtually extinct. In this sense, everything associated with Coloured identity runs anathema to Khoisan revivalism. However, when the earliest Khoisan revivalists began challenging Coloured identity alongside other critics in the 1970s and 1980s, they all had come to at least partially

experience their lives through such a lens as apartheid did not just assign labels, but impacted everything from where one lived to the minutiae of everyday life. Moreover, although segregationist policies have been discontinued, racial labels like Coloured continue to imbue life in the post-apartheid era, including for Khoisan revivalists. Michael Besten (2006, 349) understood as much when he noted that they did not just reject Coloured identity, but seemingly affirmed it by defining Khoisan identity in opposition to Black and White. Katharina Schramm (2016, 138) likewise found that “The political subjectivity as a Khoisan descendant is thus intimately linked to a collective memory of apartheid discrimination under the label ‘coloured’”. While any association with the term might be strongly opposed and various other influences are discernible, Khoisan revivalists’ articulations of indigeneity are thus inescapably related to past and present experiences of being known as Coloured. The aim of the three chapters that make up Part II is to scrutinize the bulk of my empirical data in an effort to examine why, when and how Khoisan revivalists’ articulations of indigeneity are constituted by, among others, an intertwining of historical Khoisan representations, notions of indigeneity and Coloured identity.

The focus in Chapter Six is on what Khoisan revivalists *do* in practice, but this chapter and the next tackle the Khoisan identity discourse alluded to above, i.e. how Khoisan revivalists “knit together a cohesive story” of their being, as Zenzile Khoisan put it. What do they mean when they speak of and narrate their indigeneity in relation to their identity as Khoisan? Identity is to a large extent individualized and the aspects of the Khoisan identity discourse I delineate might not resonate with each and every Khoisan revivalist. Notwithstanding individual discrepancies and keeping in mind the methodological limits of my approach (see Chapter One), I maintain that the fieldwork-induced themes that structure this chapter and the next capture the core elements of how most Khoisan revivalists discursively shape their indigeneity. In this chapter I focus on emic interpretations of the Khoisan past and the commonplace that coloureds suffer from an ‘identity crisis’. In the first subchapter I scrutinize testimonials from Khoisan revivalists regarding the origins of, and motivations for, their embrace of Khoisan identity and attitude towards Coloured identity. I show how appeals to the Khoisan past are viewed as the remedy to the identity crisis. In the second subchapter I look more

closely at how Khoisan revivalists relate to the past in relation to contemporary circumstances and needs. The first section examines the widespread assessment that Khoisan history has been distorted and needs to be reclaimed and rewritten, with an emphasis on emphasizing continuities between past and present. In the following section, I take a closer look at some of the historical works and initiatives Khoisan revivalists have produced to cultivate an historical interpretation along these lines. In the third section, I hone in on a specific dimension of these types of engagements: the search for meaning in the past by focusing on specific historical figures. I take the 17<sup>th</sup> century Khoisan woman Krotoa as a case study as she seems to be the most popular. I extend the discussion on historical continuities to Chapter Five, where I discuss how the Khoisan identity discourse is informed by notions of empowerment, land claims and traditional leadership.

## **4.1 ‘Khoisan forever, Coloured never’: Khoisan identity as the answer to the identity crisis**

‘Khoisan forever, Coloured never’. I came across this slogan early on in my MA research. I first saw it written on a placard at the house of Tania Kleinhans-Cedras. I later learned it was the same sign she and other IRASA members had used during the *//Hui !Gaeb* protest in 2012 (see Chapter Three). At the time of my fieldwork in 2014, her home functioned as the base of operations for IRASA. Kleinhans-Cedras showed me several signs and posters with similar messaging that afternoon, but the statement ‘Khoisan forever, Coloured never’ in particular seems to have struck a chord with Khoisan revivalists. I have heard it being chanted at events and protests, but I also noticed it in various newspaper articles and academic publications (see e.g. Brown and Deumert 2017, 575). The phrase indeed encapsulates one of the central — and perhaps most controversial to some — tenets of Khoisan revivalism: that Khoisan revivalists ‘were’ never Coloured, but always Khoisan. The slogan epitomizes the outright rejection of anything associated with Coloured identity; a term that is dismissed by many Khoisan revivalists as an apartheid-era

imposition that is deliberately devoid of connotations of indigeneity and emphasizes miscegenation and rootlessness.

Indeed, as it is common these days to refer to “the k-word” instead of using the highly derogatory term *kaffir* to refer to blacks, Francisco MacKenzie (Mackie), the author of the slogan ‘Khoisan forever, Coloured never’, believes people should speak of “the c-concept” instead of Coloured (Mackie, 05/07/2018). As I noted in Chapter Three, Mackie discarded the Coloured label after a series of encounters made him reflect on his roots and reconsider how he identifies. Ever since, he is committed to convince others of the notion that Coloured identity is a form of “false consciousness” and that coloureds should identify as Khoisan instead. Mackie (16/17/2018), who refers to himself as a “historian, historical researcher”, not only strives to achieve this through his public appearances in IRASA-sponsored activities, or more recently in his capacity as a founding member of the Western Cape Khoisan Legislative Council (see Chapter Five), but also during daily encounters with strangers on the streets, at restaurants or on the train. As I was chatting to Mackie (02/07/2018) over breakfast at Zevenwacht Mall in July 2018, he for instance ordered “Khoisan tea” instead of rooibos tea, as the beverage was listed on the menu. He used this reference to the Khoisan in order to make the waitress — whom he clearly identified as Coloured, perhaps because she spoke Afrikaans — reflect on her roots and to make a larger point about Khoisan claims to rooibos tea (see Chapter Three). Mackie also referenced the gap in her teeth, noting it was not a common cultural practice among coloureds, but that it dates back to the forced removal of front teeth to make it impossible to pronounce the click sounds in Khoekhoegowab. Whether or not his claims are factually correct is not my concern, the point is rather that Mackie deliberately weaves past and present together to “conscientize” potential Khoisan revivalists. As he explained to me on a later occasion, the most effective way to achieve this is by making people question the myth that coloureds are “Jan van Riebeeck’s bastards”, i.e. the illegitimate offspring of unions between Europeans and locals (Mackie, 16/07/2018). Like many other Khoisan revivalists, Mackie insists that Khoisan ancestry is not diluted by the addition of exogenous genetic markers: “Who were you before [the Population Registration Act of 1950]? If you accept the Coloured label you have to accept you have no existence prior to

that date, no claim to the land no history, nothing [...] It means you came with Jan van Riebeeck”.

Together with many others, Mackie therefore wants to have the term Coloured officially scrapped.<sup>77</sup> To be sure, not all Khoisan revivalists are as fiercely opposed to the notion of Coloured identity as Mackie. Rochey Walters (18/05/2018) personally dislikes the term, but does not want it to be abolished because he acknowledges that others have an emotional attachment to it and do not see it as an imposed or negative identity. In her study of Griqua identity in the Northern Cape, Linda Waldman (2007b, 114) also found that some simultaneously embraced Coloured and Griqua identity. For many, the opposition or difference between the two is not absolute. Moreover, given the demographic history of the Cape, one wonders whether Khoisan revivalists believe that all coloureds can claim a Khoisan identity and if certain members of other groups potentially could not – a topic I elaborate on in the next chapter. However, regardless of how criticizing Coloured identity relates to boundaries of Khoisan identity, all of my interlocutors echoed Mackie’s assessment that Coloured identity is problematic and that relating to the Khoisan past is necessary to understand, resist and resolve a wide range of present-day predicaments. More specifically, it is common among Khoisan revivalists to diagnose that centuries of assimilation have resulted not just in a loss of identity, but in an “identity crisis” among coloureds, which in turn causes many of the social ills and challenges in their communities.

Before probing this reasoning in greater detail, it is important to underscore that not all coloureds consider their identities to be (particularly) problematic (see e.g. Erasmus and Pieterse 1999, 176, 179). Many proudly identify as Coloured. Others sympathize with Khoisan revivalism or recognize their Khoisan ancestry, but hold on to their Coloured identity (Rockman 2017). Moreover, the claim that coloureds suffer as a result of being uncertain about their identities is not only advanced by Khoisan revivalists (see e.g. Field 1998, 232; see Chapter Two). In a well-known piece, writer and academic Zoë Wicomb (1998, 100) for example argued that being ashamed of the various “origins” of Coloured

---

<sup>77</sup> “Khoi-San: Abolish the term ‘coloured’.” *News24* (2013) <https://www.news24.com/News24/Khoi-San-Abolish-the-term-coloured-20130524>, accessed 20 March 2021.

identity still causes a great deal of pain among coloureds in the post-apartheid era. Others have also underlined the importance of debunking stereotypes about coloureds as prone to laziness, violence, alcoholism and crime when considering the root causes of community afflictions (Petrus and Isaacs-Martin 2012, 88). Lastly, it is equally important to bear in mind that certain scholars have shown how struggling with identity has led coloureds to pursue belonging in various non-Khoisan related domains (at the same time) as well, ranging from African and European heritage, to Malay ancestry and African-American culture (see e.g. Simone 1994; Yarwood 2006; McKaiser 2015).

While the notion of an identity crisis is therefore not unique to Khoisan revivalism, I found it to be particularly pronounced in the Khoisan identity discourse. Perhaps unbeknownst to him, an interlocutor who unexpectedly joined an interview I was conducting with Chantal Revell (07/03/2018) gave a succinct account of what can be considered a broadly supported identity crisis thesis. He pleaded with me to spread his assessment as it was vital the world understood how the identity crisis accounts for the violence and trauma coloured communities are faced with. According to him, coloureds “do not know who they are” and are alienated from their “true identity”. They are thought to have no history or culture to speak of and therefore nothing to be proud of. This makes coloureds recede into a state of nihilism, anger and (self-)destruction. Being stripped of any sense of indigeneity and regarding themselves as a bastardized people, many seek belonging in subcultures or organized crime. Yet he had no doubt that “a spiritual healing could come to them” if only someone would make them aware of their unrecognized “wealthy inheritance” as Khoisan. As I show in the remainder of this subchapter by scrutinizing various other emic perspectives on Khoisan identity, even though identities are given shape to in differing ways, convincing others, self-alienation, spirituality, social ills and healing are indeed omnipresent in, and foundational to, the Khoisan identity discourse.

### 4.1.1 Identities lost and found: Khoisan identity as a spiritual experience

I explain in Chapter Seven why the Khoisan identity discourse is not a complete refutation of the Khoisan extinction discourse, but Khoisan revivalists obviously disagree that the Khoisan are virtually extinct. One of the most potent counters is increasing the number of people who publicly identify as Khoisan. As the example of Mackie at the shopping mall illustrated, Khoisan revivalists aim to get as many people as possible to reflect on their Khoisan roots. IRASA regularly advertises workshops and plays called *Who am I?* on its social media page, which anyone can attend to discuss and meditate on their (Khoisan) identity. Acting as somewhat of a ‘safe space’ in this regard since it is authored almost entirely by Khoisan revivalists, ENN regularly hosts a section entitled “*Jou Komvandaan* [your ancestry, i.e. where one comes from]” that explains how to carry out genealogical research (see e.g. ENN 2013c, 12). Additionally, ENN frequently publishes testimonials of Khoisan revivalists who thank those who got them to the point of embracing Khoisan identity (see e.g. ENN 2014i, 4). These efforts are not without success as the vast majority of the people I interacted with were explicitly brought to Khoisan revivalism through exposure to, or the help of, others. While social media, and in the case of Khoisan revivalism Facebook in particular, has amplified the reach of such messaging and recruitment drives, physical encounters and in-depth conversations seem to remain the most effective way to get someone involved. Gregg Fick (16/08/2019), the founder of First Indigenous Nation of South Africa, for instance began to mull over his identity after he saw Mackie brandishing his ‘Khoisan forever, Coloured never’ sign in central Cape Town in the early 2000s. Fick recalls how the encounter initially made him angry and confused, but eventually reflect on his upbringing in the Eastern Cape, and more specifically his grandmother, who he then realized had spoken “the Khoisan language”. A sickly child, Fick remembered how his grandmother treated him with what must have been “a kind of Khoisan traditional medicine”. Years later, when he moved to Cape Town, and particularly towards the end of my fieldwork in 2019, Fick became an avid proselytiser of Khoisan revivalism himself, in his own words “re-writing history and trying to restore pride in our communities”.

The snowball effect resulting from Khoisan revivalists recruiting others is well illustrated by the account of how Chantal Revell became involved with Khoisan issues. Her career as a Khoisan revivalist also shows where indigeneity becomes relevant once it is taken on board, as well as the spirituality that is commonly associated with the experience of affirming a newfound Khoisan identity.<sup>78</sup> It is therefore worthwhile looking into at some length with the help of autobiographical excerpts published in ENN (2013a, 12; 2013b, 8; 2014i, 14; 2015, 6) and *Eland Nuus* (2009a, 4), as well as a series of interviews I conducted with her over several years (Chantal Revell, 07/10/2014; 25/11/2014; 19/08/2019). Revell was born and raised in the township of Bishop Lavis, which she often described as a “a warzone” in reference to the crime and violence that impacts daily life in the area. Her family took their Coloured identity for granted and never mentioned anything about the Khoisan. Looking back, Revell realized that “something was not right” with the term Coloured for the first time during a school visit to the Castle of Good Hope when she was eight years old. As her class toured the complex, she was overcome with “a great sadness”, particularly as they entered the “*donker gat* [dark hole]”, a space that had been used for centuries to torture prisoners (see also Bam-Hutchison 2016, 17). At the time, however, Revell did not understand what made her so upset. She joined anti-apartheid protests as a teenager, but it is only after 1994 that she explicitly began to question Coloured identity, a label she had never felt entirely comfortable with, but had not vehemently rejected either. Like so many other Khoisan revivalists and coloureds in general, Revell became disillusioned with the ANC in the post-apartheid era, believing them to be neglecting the contributions of coloureds in dismantling apartheid and seemingly only validating the suffering and resistance efforts of blacks (see below).

---

<sup>78</sup> Paul Landau (1999) offers an insightful critique of the use of concepts such as “religion” or “spirituality” to frame certain practices and experiences in non-European contexts. In most cases, speaking of “religion” might be a Eurocentric translation of something else entirely. At the same time, contrasting African “spirituality”, “rituals” or “beliefs” with “religion” (as Europeans practice it), might suggest an unintended moral hierarchy between them. While it is vital to keep this in mind when using certain words at the expense of others, in line with my overall approach, I stick to emic interpretations of these concepts as much as I can.



However, Revell only began to translate her dissatisfaction with Colouredness into an embrace of Khoisan identity in 2009, when a pastor by the name of Benjamin Wilson spoke at her church, the House of Benjamin in Elsies River, about the need for coloureds to embrace their Khoisan “inheritance”. Wilson, who never became a prominent Khoisan revivalist or actively sought to spread his message beyond his church, explained to Revell that he had started to reflect on his Khoisan roots in the aftermath of Mbeki’s African Renaissance, which urged South Africans to take pride in their African heritage. Wilson’s sermon shook up Revell’s entire being. Making the link between coloureds and the Khoisan cleared up any lasting confusion about her identity. It also helped her make sense of troubling experiences in her life, such as the abovementioned school visit to the Castle. Revell began to look for traces of Khoisan ancestry in her own family, but her siblings and parents initially refused to, or could not, give her the answers she was looking for. Many till this day distance themselves from her because of her public profile as a Khoisan revivalist. Some family members, on the other hand, have slowly opened up to Khoisan identity precisely because of her commitments. With their assistance, Revell has since pieced together that her mother’s family has Nama roots and that there are connections to the Griqua on her father’s side. She also began to attend Khoisan-related events she came across and sought to learn as much as possible about them. In this process she got in touch with a couple of Khoisan revivalists who ran a donations-based satellite office and “information centre” in Elsies River that was linked to King Joseph Katz and his Katz Koranna Royal House, based in the Northern Cape. Many Khoisan collectives wanted to recruit Revell at the time, but she decided to associate herself with Katz because she “liked the way he explained history”. Katz in turn inspired Revell to volunteer weekly community history seminars at the satellite office, where we had our first interview in 2014. Although these were discontinued soon after we met, a handful of participants had usually showed up with all sorts of questions about (family) history and identity. Many reportedly left with a newfound appreciation of their Khoisan roots. The seminars were advertised in ENN as follows:

We want to bring back cultural knowledge to the community. We feel that it is a dire need and vital for the “so-called coloured people” to know who they are and what their roots are. We are dedicated to help restore our identity and do away with

the “coloured” identity by virtue of self-determination through education of historical background on ground level (ENN 2014i, 14).

Engaging in these types of activities and networking among likeminded individuals in Cape Town and beyond made Revell well-known in Khoisan revivalist circles. It also gave her access to more information on the Khoisan and indigenous rights. With the help of her connections, Revell successfully applied for a bursary to attend the Short Course of Indigenous Rights at the University of Pretoria’s Centre for Human Rights in September 2011. This exposed her to the predicaments of indigenous people globally and the legal context in which they are dealt with. A certificate proudly hangs on her living room wall today. As I described in preceding chapters, Revell was elected as a Western Cape representative to the NKC in 2012 and she formally entered the Katz Koranna Royal House as a princess in 2017 (more on these kinds of appellations in Chapter Five). In the span of a decade, Revell thus went from being largely clueless about the Khoisan to becoming one of the most prominent Khoisan revivalists in the country and a leading figure in Khoisan politics. But Revell’s Khoisan revivalism is not just related to politics, it also informs her everyday life. For Revell, who is a strong believer and avid churchgoer, this especially means articulating a sense of Khoisan spirituality. Concomitantly, one of the reasons why Revell, and indeed many other Khoisan revivalists, understand their embrace of Khoisan identity as a profound spiritual experience undoubtedly has to do with the prominent role of religion in their lives. Both of these features are evident in Revell’s engagements with her church as a Khoisan revivalist.

As I explained in the Introduction, not long after I met Revell she began working as a secretary and office manager with the charismatic evangelical New Hope Church based in Retreat, founded in 2001.<sup>79</sup> Before she joined New Hope, there had not been any talk about the Khoisan. According to Revell, aside from the various stigmas attached to Khoisan identity, churches are reluctant to associate with the Khoisan because they fear it entails embracing some sort of heathen culture. Many Khoisan revivalists, however, have argued that Khoisan spirituality is not opposed to Christianity — echoing similar

---

<sup>79</sup> “Christian Nation International.” <https://www.christnationint.com/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

arguments made by the early missionaries among the Khoisan (Landau 1999). Willa Boezak, who holds a PhD in theology from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, has for instance devoted much of his work to highlighting the similarities between Khoisan spirituality and the Christian faith (see e.g. Boezak 2017a). To make his arguments more digestible to a lay audience, he published *Struggle of an Ancient Faith. The Khoi-San of South Africa* in 2017. The book starts off with a critique of colonialism's dismissive and destructive attitude towards Khoisan spirituality, but then makes a theological case for appreciating Khoisan spirituality as a form of proto-Christianity. According to Boezak (2017b, 139), the Khoisan kept practicing their "ancient faith" all along, just by a different name: "[T]he Khoi-San faith is like the solid foundation of a house, and our culture the bricks, walls, windows, doors and roof". Boezak (Ibid., 323) argues that there are countless similarities, ranging from the figure of *Heitsi-Eibib*, who, like Jesus Christ is said to have arisen from the dead, to the ancient *!Nau* ritual, which he interprets as a kind of communion and baptism (see Chapter Six). Boezak (2017b, 327) concludes that the Khoisan therefore "gladly accepted the Christian faith, because [they] discovered that much of it was just like [theirs]. And that's the bottom-line". The bottom-line indeed being that, according to Boezak and others who share his line of thinking, embracing Khoisan roots only deepens their Christianity (see also Ives 2017, 44).

A similar argument is put forward by those claiming that one has to embrace their 'true identity' in order to live an upright and God-fearing life, which echoes the premises of the identity crisis thesis. Bradley van Reenen, who preaches at New Hope but only began to reflect on Khoisan identity after meeting Revell, explained to me that coloureds needed to embrace Khoisan identity and culture from a spiritual point of view in order to put an end to cycles of oppression:

Our soul is not connected to the place where we come from [...] We have generations that take on values birthed in the context of oppression [...] They will not understand the heritage and the value of it [...] Our true identity and heritage is that we were a resourceful and powerful people [...] As a church we redirect our people to the beginning, uncover the value system, the identity (Bradley van Reenen, 11/05/2018)

The *Foundation Nation Restoration* (FNR), an organization set up in 2010 by Hilary-Jane Solomons, similarly mobilizes “Biblical research truths [...] the Biblical principle of the “First” in relation the First Nation Restoration People and its comparisons with Israel as God’s first national people” to draw a distinction between an “ordained identity” (i.e. identity as “First Nations” as endowed by God) and a “inherited identity” (i.e. imposed labels that run counter to “the plan of the Most High”) (ENN 2014c, 13; 2017a, 12; 2017b, 12). For FNR, “revival” is about restoring the ordained identity, “being alive again to the purposes of the Most High El” (ENN 2015, 7). Khoisan revivalism is not only the road towards individual salvation, it will also “biblically restore” the original balance among nations in South Africa and bestow “blessings” upon all of its occupants. Not unlike arguments made by other Khoisan revivalists (see e.g. ENN 2014j, 6), FNR argues that, as the Foundation Nation, God intended the Khoisan to be the “stewards” of the land (“i.e. to tend, guard and nurture the land and its resources”) and conflicts ensue because the Khoisan are not taking up this role (ENN 2015, 6). As Solomons put it during one of our interviews:

There are so many ailments in the land [...] there is no acknowledgment, it is not about worshipping us, but about recognition [...] We are doing this for the generations to come to ensure justice [...] If the foundation nation gets recognized, benefits will flow through all the land [...] The Cape Flats is fruits of a bad root [...] If you do not respect the foundation, everything build on it will not function accurately (Hillary Solomons, 10/10/2017)

I come back to the topic of land in the next chapter. The point here is rather to make initial forays into the links between Khoisan revivalism and the religiosity and Christianity that is practiced in coloured communities. As churchgoers engage in Khoisan revivalism, their religious experiences are affected, particularly if they insist that the two cannot be separated. It is indeed by making the types of arguments I just went through that Revell managed to make her colleagues at New Hope more receptive towards Khoisan revivalism. As I showed in the Introduction when I briefly mentioned the Resurrection Day event held at the Castle of Good Hope on Easter Sunday 2018, New Hope seems to have taken Khoisan revivalism on board wholeheartedly. The location was chosen in order to “spiritually take possession of the gates trauma [...] to go back to the original sin

[and] restore the prophetic destiny of the so-called coloured people” (Desray van Rensburg, 08/05/2018). In their own account of what transpired in the next edition of ENN, Pastors José and Desray van Rensburg draw extensively on Khoisan revivalist themes and the identity crisis thesis:

Our program – An Arising of a Nation’s redemptive purpose – was based on our belief that God is busy calling up the first nation peoples of South Africa to take up their rightful place in this country and contribute profoundly to the healing and restoration of our nation at this time. We believe that there are generational curses which are plaguing our first nation communities and those curses need to be broken [by] an act of redemption and a cleansing of the curses which have lingered for centuries, especially those emanating from the Castle and its torture chambers [...] Apostle Roman confessed to not taking the Khoisan struggle seriously and in so doing contributing to the plight of the Khoisan people. Furthermore, Apostle Roman expressed his deep regret at how dismissive he, and indeed the church, has been regarding the plight of the first nation people of our country. For that the Apostle asked the leaders present to please forgive him [...] He then proudly declared his Khoisan identity and called on others to do likewise (ENN 2018, 9)

I was present at the event and followed the proceedings from one of the balconies of the Castle, giving me somewhat of a bird’s-eye view of the audience that occupied the main courtyard in the complex. The crowd, which included clergy from across the city and was several hundred strong, were indeed repeatedly asked to embrace Khoisan identity to “get closer to God” and ensure that “the inheritance of the Khoisan could no longer be ignored”. These pleas were met with resounding cheers, prayers and applause. When I spoke to the church leadership afterwards, they felt the event had been a tremendous success. In fact, they had plans to inform other churches in Cape Town of their brand of Khoisan revivalist Christianity, set up a “Khoisan village” as a tourist attraction and “do something with history and archives because people do not know their heritage” (Jose van Rensburg, 09/10/2017; Desray van Rensburg, 08/05/2018).

In sum: Khoisan revivalists articulate their Christianity/spirituality in ways that strengthen other tenets of Khoisan revivalism, such as having a special relationship to the land and the importance of being recognized as indigenous people. These articulations not only allow Khoisan revivalists to thicken their Khoisan revivalism, they

also potentially recruit believers into Khoisan revivalism. As the work of Boezak showed, there is not necessarily a contradiction between celebrating Christianity and criticizing the historical complicity of the church in colonialism (see below). There is undoubtedly a great deal more to say about the links between Khoisan revivalism and religion as practiced in coloured communities in Cape Town, but I do not have the data or qualifications to make further meaningful observations in this regard.<sup>80</sup> I addressed these links to note that they are meaningful, but also to provide an example of how aspects from everyday life feature in the Khoisan identity discourse. Moreover, as I pointed out, the language of spirituality and religion chimes well with the identity crisis thesis. These types of sentiments regarding a newly embraced Khoisan identity, however, it is important to note, are not always articulated in direct reference to institutionalized religions.

#### **4.1.2 An eye-opening experience: diagnosing and healing the identity crisis**

Indeed, closely related, but perhaps less religiously inspired language informs the more secular reflections about coming to terms with one's newfound Khoisan identity after a lifetime of alienation. To some, identifying as Khoisan means putting a stop to (post-)colonial pressures to assimilate on the one hand, and experiencing a renewed sense of dignity and belonging as fully-fledged human beings on the other hand (see e.g. Langeveldt 2001, 71-81; ENN 2014a, 5; 2017b, 4). These types of sentiments for instance resonate throughout the following excerpt from the poem *Let me be* by Colin Guido Papier, published in ENN:

---

<sup>80</sup> Given the prominence of religion in Khoisan revivalists' lives it would for example be worthwhile to explore the theological aspects of Pentecostalism, Evangelicalism and Apostolic Faith in relation to Khoisan revivalism, particularly the identity crisis argument (e.g. discourses on 'revival', conversion, proselytization, being reborn and turning your back on previous sins, newfound love for Christ, etc.). Another approach would be to scout for links to traditional Khoisan beliefs among Khoisan revivalists.

You ask of me to be what I'm not. Allow me to find myself, to find my soul. Do not push me to assimilate, to become what I'm not. Grant me the freedom to discover my inner-most self. I am hurt and confused because I want to belong. But yet, I belong nowhere. For centuries now I carried this pain and turmoil within my spirit [...] In my mind's eye I can see my ancestors walk this land, feel and experience through their spirit [...] I look up and see the half moon, beckoning the stars to show me the way home. In tune with my heartbeat my feet brought me home, home to myself. I've found myself, I am Khoi I am me (ENN 2013c, 12)

Kirk Krotz, a hip-hop artist based in Mitchells Plain similarly recounted in ENN how becoming aware of his Khoisan roots was an eye-opening experience:

Like many others I grew up in a kind of dysfunctional family. I searched for my identity. It felt as if there was a conspiracy to keep silent about who I was, what my identity was. Then I met someone who told me about my Khoisan roots. It was a spiritual experience, it was *hectic*. He told me about things I had struggled with even unconsciously. He told me about my ancestry and my forebears. *It struck a chord*. Today I look around and I wonder where are my Khoisan people? [...] Where are the street names called after them? Where is our visibility? (ENN 2013b, 13, original emphasis)<sup>81</sup>

Khoisan revivalists in general often describe their first encounters with Khoisan identity as eye-opening experiences, casting a radically different light on both the past and the present. These perspectives were off limits as long as they knew themselves as Coloured. In her autobiography *The Keeper of the Kumm* (2016), Sylvia Vollenhoven describes how discovering her Khoisan identity and engaging with Khoisan history was the only cure for her debilitating condition (see also Veracini and Verbuyst 2020). Reflecting on her life

---

<sup>81</sup> Author's translation from Afrikaans: "Ek het, soos talle ander, opgegroeï in 'n soort disfunksionele familie. Ek het gesoek na my identiteit. Dit het vir my gevoel asof daar 'n sameswering van stilswye was oor wie ek was, wat identiteit was. Toe ontmoet ek iemand wat my vertel van my KhoiSan wortels – dit was soos 'n geestlike ervaring, dit was hectic. Hy het gepraat oor dinge waarmee ek geworstel het sels in my onderbewussyn. Hy het my vertel van my Komvandaan en van my voorvaders. It struck as chord. Vandaag kyk ek rond en wonder waar is my KhoiSan mense? [...] Waar is die straatname wat na jullie genoem is? Waar is ons sigbaarheid?"

through this lens and reconnecting with her “ancestors” allowed her to confront “a prison” she did not know existed, and remedy “an illness” she could not name: “[Coloured] is a word that has become heavy and diseased” (Vollenhoven 2016, 4, 142). Others have similarly described being labelled Coloured as being born in a prison and having to live a life of lies (see e.g. ENN 2014c, 6). As Ruben Richards, a business man, community leader and sometime academic, put it in a column for ENN after wondering why so many Khoisan descendants seem to “hate themselves” and engage in self-destructive behaviour:

For 400 years we have been described in negative terms - sub-human, beasts, not capable of intellectual reasoning and a plethora of other negative descriptions [...] If you believe that you are less than, then you will be less than [...] May I suggest that we start acting like we are valuable to this society - not in an arrogant way - but with the quiet confidence that comes from a person and a people who are okay with themselves - a healed person - a whole nation [...] Unfortunately, the scars of our past run deep and the wounds are still tender - even after 400 years. So let's be gentle with each other as we help each other heal (ENN 2014j, 3)

Richards' reference to wounds and scars to describe the ongoing harm of certain historical legacies is common among Khoisan revivalists, and indeed among marginalized groups globally (see Chapter Seven). To provide a safe space to relay such experiences, ENN regularly features “healing stories” where painful experiences related to Coloured identity are shared (see e.g. ENN 2016a, 6; 2017a, 8). Lucelle Campbell often writes in ENN about the need to acknowledge and break the cycle of “intergenerational trauma”, which in her appraisal generates “multiple deficiencies and dependencies” and stems from “generations of painful servitude and a collective loss of memory of self, kinship, language, culture, land, labour, and much more” (ENN 2017c, 12). Tellingly, in their recent report on the Khoisan, the SAHRC also acknowledged the potential effects of trauma by ascertaining that various social ills might be “a direct result of the culmination of a history of discrimination, forced assimilation, dispossession and the denial of recognition as a distinct group, resulting in a lack of confidence, self-trust and ultimately, a loss of identity” (SAHRC 2018, 71). Many Khoisan revivalists have called for the establishment of a new Truth and Reconciliation Commission that specifically deals with trauma related to



the pre-apartheid period, which were previously left out (see e.g. ENN 2016b, 2; Richards 2017, 206).

The language of trauma and healing is particularly pronounced in discussions about organized crime, which has plagued the Cape Flats since the 1980s (cf. Jensen 1999; 2006). While organized crime affects various parts of Cape Town, the incarceration rate is highest among coloureds, as are drug related crimes (Johnson 2017, 16). Operating in the sex industry, drugs, alcohol, contraband and poaching, gangs particularly recruit among the poor, unemployed and those born in dysfunctional families (Lambrechts 2012, 787-193). People such as Don Pinnock have argued that part of the appeal of gangs, who have their own markers of belonging, stems from the swathe of negative stereotypes that are associated with Coloured identity (Pinnock 2016, 9; see also Petrus 2013, 77). Khoisan revivalists give a similar interpretation. One ENN contributor for instance noted that the only way “disturbing evils such as gangsterism and drugs and an overwhelming sense of hopelessness” can be overcome is if “the root of the problem” is dealt with, “which is to restore our people’s humanity through the full and proper recognition as the descendants of the very first people who live in this land” (ENN 2014i, 12). Another piece in ENN (2014i, 8) likewise concluded that “claiming back identity” was the only bulwark against the “degradation, denial of our humanity” that spawns community violence and overall acts of desperation.

Though the success of this approach is hard to gauge, the idea of fighting crime with Khoisan revivalism has been around for decades; generating concrete examples of how Khoisan identity is believed to be an antidote to social ills. As I noted in Chapter Three, Basil Coetzee became involved in Khoisan revivalism in the aftermath of Joseph Little’s speech at Pollsmoor prison in 1998. Having worked with inmates for over a decade, Basil Coetzee and some of his colleagues subsequently began to proselytize Khoisan revivalism among them; an approach that caught the attention of various other correctional facilities in the country (Coetzee 2019b, 123-124).<sup>82</sup> He was stunned by how effective

---

<sup>82</sup> Basil Coetzee’s initiatives should not be confused with those of the Movement Against Domination of African Minorities (MADAM). Created in 2004 by some of his colleagues at correctional services, MADAM promoted

Khoisan revivalism was in getting prisoners motivated and potentially turn their lives around (Basil Coetzee, 06/05/2018). Coetzee understood that the inmates had given up hope for a better life and he made it clear to them that they were first and foremost “incarcerated in the mind” and were looking for a “replacement identity” as criminals (Basil Coetzee, 25/04/2018). As he explains in *Tears of the Praying Mantis*:

To our amazement the prisoners started to respond to what we were doing and wanted to know more about their own roots. We tried our best to provide what they were strongly longing for as it was essential that they disengage themselves from the deceptive and duping prison culture that were so detrimental to them [...] The Khoi identity proved exactly what was needed in order for them to lead a life free from artificial existence [...] I think we reignited the essence of self-knowledge to more people than we could have imagined (Coetzee 2019b, 125)

Coetzee is not the only one reaching for Khoisan identity to both combat and historically frame organized crime in Cape Town. ENN for instance regularly publishes opinion pieces from authors claiming that coloureds commit crimes because they “do not know where they are coming from” (see e.g. ENN 2013a, 12). Sometimes the reference to Khoisan history is more direct. Chantal Revell, who blamed soaring levels of crime on the fact that the Khoisan, “natural warriors” with a “strong inherent territorial nature” who “seem to lose their tempers in a matter of seconds for no apparent reason”, are made to live in “flats with no space to breathe”:

There was a governmental structure who ruled the way of life for the indigenous peoples. When colonialism came it was destroyed. Indigenous groups knew how to interact with each other’s boundaries. There were treaties made when they needed to use each other’s resources like water or grazing lands. When colonialists took the land they took their systems away and replaced it with an oppressive one. This is still evident today (ENN 2015, 6)

---

Khoisan identity with the aim of earmarking jobs for coloureds and putting a stop to the hiring of supposedly underqualified black staff (Besten 2009, 149).

According to some, sheer exposure to indigeneity suffices to get people to turn their backs to a life of crime and transition back into society. ENN (2016a, 13) featured an interesting testimonial in this regard by the NGO *South Roots International*, established in South Africa in 1997 as an offshoot of *Island Breeze International*, a religiously inspired NGO based in Polynesia to uplift indigenous communities through “cultural expression dances and songs”.<sup>83</sup> The episode in question dates from 2004, when South Roots invited a delegation of Maori from Aotearoa/New Zealand to perform a play entitled *Broken Shackles* at a location where rivalling gangs had recently fought one another (ENN 2014j, 7). When the delegation performed the *Haka* and explained to the bystanders that they ought to be proud of their indigenous identity, many gang members reportedly “left their weapons and contraband” and asked for forgiveness. Most, however, bank on a long-term investment. A case in point is the aforementioned Ruben Richards’ NGO, the Ruben Richards Foundation. The Foundation organizes “community conversations”, aimed at crafting “solutions for broken communities which are trapped in cycles of despair and crisis [by] exploring the pain and trauma experienced by the indigenous Khoisan over many centuries of colonial and post-colonial rule in South Africa” (ENN 2017b, 6). The focus is on “facilitating healing linked to identity in general and indigenous identity and heritage in particular” by, among other things, educating participants about Khoisan history and identity and boosting their “sense of self-worth” (RRF 2017, 6, 8). The rationale behind these exchanges, which not only involve (ex-)gang members, is to create “a safe space where when you tell your story, you get the audience to say yes, I feel that, I can empathize with that” (ENN 2017b, 6). The workbook designed to guide the conversations suggests several exercises, such as provoking a reflection on the relationship between political and cultural identity, and organizing quizzes about Khoisan history (RRF 2017, 10, 14, 30). Hinting at a Khoisan revivalist interpretation, participants are asked how they would sum up South Africa’s history (see below):

Will you start your narrative with your mother and father? Will you start [...] with Jan van Riebeeck who allegedly arrived in an empty land in 1652? Or will you start

---

<sup>83</sup> See also “South Roots.” <http://www.southrootsint.com/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

with the story about the original inhabitants (possibly your ancestors), namely the [Khoisan] who for millennia lived harmoniously with nature – in a green (or blue) economy – all over South Africa long before anyone else arrived; certainly long before the Europeans made the first recorded contact with the South African indigenous people at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and long before the Bantu peoples migrated into South Africa from central and east Africa almost 2000 years ago (RRF 2017, 31)

ENN featured a series of testimonials from people who took part in ‘community conversations’ in 2017 (ENN 2017b, 6-7). Lucelle Campbell relayed how she felt “goose bumps” while overlooking Table Bay during the break and reflecting on the “process of dispossession of the indigenous people [...] the arrival of various ships of colonial empires”. Another participant, “Chief Ernest Solomon”, likewise realized how “*Alles het hier by die see begin. Dit is die plek waar ons mense verneder is* [the sea is where everything began, the place where our people were humiliated]”. He went to argue that this humiliation will persist until people come to realize they are “*die slagoffers van die misdade van Jan van Riebeeck* [the victims of the crimes of Jan van Riebeeck]”. Solomon was a highly controversial figure in Khoisan revivalist circles because of his involvement in organized crime under the nickname Ernie “Lastig”. Solomon however maintained he had put all of that behind him and that his embrace of Khoisan identity proved pivotal in this regard (ENN 2015, 4). He was subsequently ordained as a chief of the Gorinhaiqua by undergoing a *!Nau* organized by Zenzile Khoisan in 2011. Zenzile (29/06/2018) saw Solomon first and foremost as a leader and it was precisely his troubled past that made it so significant that he became invested in Khoisan revivalism. Other Khoisan revivalists shared this view. One of my interlocutors for instance believed gangsters were “leaders in our communities by natural selection [...] they are like chiefs, guarding their territories” (Nolan Berry, 18/12/2018). They did not want a life of crime at heart, and therefore needed to be “conscientized as Khoisan” and made to realize they are perpetuating a “system of oppression”.

Solomon professed he wanted to be “part of the solution” by acting as a “national arbiter of peace” between conflicting gangs and inducting them through a process of

“indigenous conscientization” (ENN, 2014e, 2; 2015, 4).<sup>84</sup> In an interview I conducted with Solomon, he repeatedly emphasized how he had grown up “on that side of the street” and had been at the frontlines of “the struggle” all his life, making him the ideal candidate for the job (Ernest Solomon, 29/06/2018). Solomon located the root of community violence and the lack of respect for human life with the perpetrators’ refusal to accept indigenous identity (ENN 2015, 5; 2016b, 1-2; 2017b, 2). The identity crisis can only be resolved, he argued, through the “foundational principle of indigenous healing”, which he defined as understanding your identity, being proud of your roots and acting responsibly towards your community. Until he was murdered in a gang-related assassination in November 2020 (Cruywagen 2020), Solomon was actively spreading his message. He spoke at schools and prisons, but also appeared in a feature film with strong Khoisan revivalist undertones and political messaging, *The Lost Tribe*, directed by Mark Fyfe and released in 2016 (see also ENN 2017a, 5). By focusing on Solomon’s life and activities as a Khoisan revivalist, *The Lost Tribe* endorsed the identity crisis thesis, concluding that if indigenous status is not granted to the Khoisan, “the intergenerational infection of the disease that is killing off the earliest inhabitants of South Africa will spread unchecked with devastating consequences”.

I could give countless other examples to illustrate how a self-diagnosed identity crisis is foundational to the Khoisan identity discourse. Indeed, the case of Solomon illustrates the recurrent emphasis on the need to relate to the Khoisan past in order to frame and deal with grievances in the present, as well as the catharsis that is associated with embracing Khoisan identity. But the historical references I have mentioned thus far are mostly broad-brush. In the remainder of this chapter I shift the emphasis away from identity as such, and focus more on concrete Khoisan revivalist interpretations of history.

---

<sup>84</sup> The Khoisan Kingdom has also reportedly designated peacekeepers to quell conflicts between gangs in 2014 (ENN 2014c, 10).

## 4.2 Reclaiming Khoisan history: Coloured indigeneity and indigenous Colouredness

As I argued in the Introduction, the notion of indigenous revivalism prompts the question: which aspects of the past are engaged with and why? The motives are not unidimensional and therefore scrutinized across this thesis. However, this subchapter takes this line of enquiry on board in particular by examining various explicit emic perspectives on the Khoisan past. Just as Khoisan revivalists can differ greatly in the way they relate to (their) Khoisan identity, perspectives on the past are not uniform either. And yet, as with identity, there are commonalities in the ways Khoisan revivalists think, speak and write about the past. In line with the overall approach of the thesis, my aim is to both showcase this diversity and to distil common themes. I begin by delineating the premise of Khoisan revivalist engagements with the past: the idea that Khoisan history has been distorted and urgently needs to be countered with the perspectives of Khoisan revivalists. These interpretations are primarily concerned with continuities between past and present, particularly in relation to experiences of marginalization in the post-apartheid era and Coloured identity. In the following section I examine some concrete initiatives, mostly history books authored by Khoisan revivalists. In the final section I look at how Khoisan revivalists' articulations of indigeneity relate to specific values and figures from the past. Due to her prominence in this regard, I focus on the historical figure Krotoa.

### 4.2.1 Khoisan revivalist perspectives on the past: exposing historical continuity

Looking back on my fieldwork, almost as common as the rejection of Coloured identity was the belief that Khoisan history has been, and continues to be, erased, untold and distorted. As made apparent in this thesis, a great deal is often referenced all at once with the terms 'history', 'the past', or *geskiedenis*, ranging from history textbooks and academic works, to representations in the media and general knowledge about the Khoisan. Specific

authors or episodes from the past are sometimes referenced, but on most occasions the status quo of representations of the Khoisan past is assessed in the form of blanket statements, related to feelings of contemporary discrimination and exclusion from institutionalized circuits of knowledge production. In line with the identity crisis argument, it is common to hear opinions like Chantal Revell's (07/03/2018), who lamented that coloureds “do not know their history [...] They do not know what they owned, what they had, what is theirs. They are like bastard children, they have no inheritance”. The Khoisan, it is indeed often claimed, have been “written out of history” (see e.g. Langeveldt 2001, 71). There is a sense that the ‘truth’ about the Khoisan past remains unexplored or deliberately hidden from the public, particularly when it comes to violent atrocities and acts of dispossession — another reason why some have called for a Khoisan-themed Truth and Reconciliation Commission (ENN 2014c, 4). As a result, the existing ‘history’ is frequently dismissed for perpetuating the Khoisan extinction discourse and impeding political mobilization around reparations (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 03/01/2015). For Basil Coetzee (2019b, 37), most existing historical texts and monuments have “elevated white murderers to heroes [...] while the Khoikhoi and San were made out to be scoundrels and savages”. His assessment is echoed by countless others; with calls such as “*ons moet ons geskiedenis herskryf* [we have to rewrite our history]” (EN 2012d, 9) or “we have the responsibility to change the narrative” (ENN 2017b, 7) made on a regular basis. To a large extent, Khoisan revivalism is therefore about identifying forgotten, suppressed or distorted histories on the one hand, and going against the grain, reimagining what was lost and spreading Khoisan revivalist histories on the other hand.

To be sure, this drive is discernable in all of the Khoisan revivalists’ engagements with the past, not just those expressed discursively. Having said that, discourse constitutes a vital component because, as I argued in Chapter Two, Khoisan revivalism is rooted in the Khoisan revisionist historiography of the 1970s and 1980s. Indeed, the Khoisan revivalist historical initiatives I discuss in more detail in the next section can be seen as extending this line of critical enquiry. However, for reasons I get into at length in Chapter Seven, the two cannot be equated either. What is important to note for present purposes is that attitudes towards history as an intellectual practice can differ greatly. As I showed with

the CCHDC in Chapter Three, academic texts are often simultaneously criticized in the abovementioned manner *and* utilized to dig up facts about Khoisan history. In my estimation, claims that academic materials are unjustly off limits by being behind pay walls or authored by non-Khoisan trump calls for their outright rejection. I regularly spotted well-known academic texts at the homes of my interlocutors, such as the work of historian Nigel Penn (2005). On the social media app WhatsApp, digitalized books, articles and PhD theses related to the Khoisan also regularly circulate alongside historical maps and illustrations. This suggests a widespread, if critical and divergent, engagement with academic materials for purposes of Khoisan revivalism. According to many Khoisan revivalists, particularly university graduates, academic output is often mobilized uncritically. While providing much of the initial impetus for Khoisan revivalism, Henry Bredekamp (10/07/2018) eventually distanced himself from it because its engagements with the past went against his training as an academic historian, particularly in the domain of traditional leadership claims: “people do not read the footnotes” and are not interested in a “balanced perspective”, but in “mythologizing”. On a similar note, Johann Abrahams (10/07/2019), who shot a documentary on the Khoisan (see below), feels that most Khoisan revivalists “do not go enough into the records to get the true information, even if they have to approach it critically, of course”. Other interlocutors too decry that many practice “cut and paste history” (Calvyn Gilfellan, 29/09/2017).

Tellingly, these criticisms mostly concern claims for land or traditional leadership positions, which is but one of the ways in which Khoisan revivalists engage with the past (see Chapter Five). Multiple factors are driving them to relate to and reclaim Khoisan history. What they have in common, regardless of opinions about academic historiography, is laying bare historical continuities between past and present. Coming back to my opening remarks, the continuity that is emphasized is primarily between the early encounters between the Khoisan and the settlers on the one hand, and experiences of being known as Coloured during apartheid and thereafter on the other hand. Given the origins of Khoisan revivalism in the anti-apartheid struggle and the widespread disappointment with the post-apartheid dispensation, this is not surprising. This frustration is compounded by the belief that coloureds were in fact more instrumental to bringing the apartheid regime to its knees than the ANC (cf. Simone 1994, 168). Khoisan



revivalists often reference the fact that coloureds made the streets of Cape Town “ungovernable” in the 1980s while the ANC leadership was imprisoned or in exile (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 03/01/2015). Many who (had parents who) participated in the UDF, or in the anti-apartheid struggle in general, pointed to the lack of progress in Khoisan politics as evidence that they were “excluded” or “sold out” by the ANC in the post-apartheid era, who they allege has relinquished its non-racialist position for an agenda that is primarily aimed at uplifting blacks – a point I return to in the next chapter (see e.g. Mackie, 08/01/2015; William Langeveldt, 12/03/2018; Tanyan Gradwell, 31/07/2019). Disgruntled activists who had shelved issues of Coloured identity during the struggle years, some notable UDF members such as Joe Marks, thus turned to Khoisan revivalism in the post-apartheid era to make sense of the plight of coloureds.<sup>85</sup>

A key architect in setting up a platform to vent these frustrations is Zenzile Khoisan. As I noted in Chapter Three, Zenzile was actively involved in the anti-apartheid struggle and came to Khoisan identity and his revolutionary brand of Khoisan revivalism as a result of experiencing stigmas surrounding Coloured identity and his disappointment with the ANC’s neglect of Khoisan issues post-1994: “everything was put on suspension [during apartheid] because we had a common enemy to fight, but the Khoisan question has been written out of the transition” (Zenzile Khoisan, 17/05/2018). “Starting history in the middle” in this manner fails to appreciate how the Khoisan past serves as a proxy to frame experiences related to Coloured identity (Zenzile Khoisan, 12/06/2018). For Zenzile, and indeed many other Khoisan revivalists, the origins of anti-colonialism lie not with the ANC, but with the Khoisan and their resistance to the European settlers in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century: “[O]ns is nie weeskinders in die land waar ons voorouers ‘n groot bloedspeer getrap het om hierdie land te verdedig en te bewaar nie. Dit is ons mense wat gemartel, beroof en byna uitgewis is sodat ander die vrugte kan geniet, sodat ander die voordeel kan trek en sodat ander wet kan slaan [We are not orphans in this country, which our forebears shed their blood to defend and keep, where our people were tortured, mugged and almost erased so that

---

<sup>85</sup> “UDF stalwart Joe Marks laid to rest.” SABC news (2011) <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/b520a88049347d5a9b89fb5254ee30e3/UDF-stalwart-Joe-Marks-laid-to-rest-20111126>, accessed 28 November 2018.

others could enjoy its fruits, so that others could reap the benefits and become in charge]” (ENN 2015, 2). As one user on social media put it in a post in 2018, ‘long before’ the celebrated black anti-apartheid icons ‘[Steve] Biko, [Chris] Hani and Winnie [Mandela], there was Autshumato, Doman and Krotoa’ – their 17<sup>th</sup> century Khoisan predecessors (see below). To highlight the timeworn credentials of their struggle, Mackie (08/01/2015) never uses the popular ANC rallying cry “*Amandla!*” but deliberately subverts another popular ANC slogan ‘the struggle continues!’, by using its translation into Khoekhoegowab instead, “*toa tama !kham s ge*”.

The emphasis on the Khoisan as “the first freedom fighters in South Africa” is indeed omnipresent (ENN, 2016b, 1-2). It is common to refer to the defeat of the Portuguese general D’Almeida in 1510 in this regard, “the first war against colonialism” and “the first struggle for freedom” (ENN 2014b, 2; see Chapter Two). Repelling D’Almeida and his troops epitomizes “*n tyd van oorwinning, volkstrots, buitengewone dapperheid en patriotisme, meer as 500 jaar gelede* [a time of victory, pride, outstanding bravery and patriotism, more than 500 years ago]” (ENN 2014c, 6). Willa Boezak, urges coloureds to “take lessons to heart and apply to the society of today, where the people are facing danger, and the social ills need to be tackled with the same spirit as the soldiers in 1510” (Ibid., 6). In 2010, Zenzile suggested that not enough was being done to honour the significance of the battle during a commemoration of the events of 1510 at Iziko museums in Cape Town (De Wet and Burgess 2011, 485). As I show in the following chapter, this perception led certain Khoisan revivalists to stage a land claim at the location where the battle is believed to have taken place. In any case, there is clearly agreement across the board that the defeat of D’Almeida is too significant to be “omitted [...] from the official record” or reduced to a “footnote” (ENN 2014b, 8). The same reasoning extends to the first Khoikhoi-Dutch war in 1659, which one interlocutors describes as the fight against the “first apartheid border” in reference to Jan van Riebeeck’s almond hedge, which impeded the Khoisan’s cattle from entering his newly demarcated property (Langeveldt 2001, 71).

Speaking about Khoisan resistance campaigns through an anti-apartheid register not only ties Khoisan revivalism to the earliest forms of Khoisan ‘nationalism’, it also pushes back the ‘anti-apartheid struggle’ hundreds of years. Indeed, the Khoisan past is not only engaged with to cultivate pride, historically frame contemporary social ills and resolve

the identity crisis (as I show in more detail in the next section), it also works the other way around: the lives of coloureds are embedded in an ancient indigenous struggle against oppression and thereby given greater significance. Coloureds are pulled from the margins of history and placed firmly at the centre. Lucelle Campbell for instance believes it is “shameful” that prominent coloured activists go unrecognized considering that their backs carry “the marks of struggle and bondage long before apartheid” (ENN 2016a, 12). To rectify this, ENN (2016a, 11) celebrated notable figures in the anti-apartheid struggle from the coloured community in Cape Town such as Coline Williams, Robbie Waterwich, Ashley Kriel and Anton Fransch as “[y]oung Khoi warriors that roared across the flats” and “Khoi freedom fighters”. The article does not reference their relation to Khoisan identity (or history), but rather sums up their lives under this banner to call forth volunteer Khoisan revivalists: “Are you willing to follow in the footsteps of the Heroes and Heroines of the Khoi and San People of South Africa? The Nation needs you to stand up and become a volunteer in the fight for recognition, restitution, restoration” (ENN 2016a, 7). As a reply to the article noted, Khoisan revivalism essentially recuperates and endorses the efforts of coloureds, past and present, in this fashion (ENN 2016a, 11).

This is clearly close to Zenzile’s heart. In March 2018 I attended a meeting he called in the town hall of Mowbray to collectively reflect on how to push Khoisan politics forward and address a host of other pressing issues, such as the drought that was afflicting South Africa at the time. Attendees stressed the need for unity in their ranks and to campaign for the establishment of a Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. However, as often happens in similar meetings, the gathering ended up mostly functioning as a safe space and echo chamber, where likeminded views about the Khoisan past could not only be expressed without judgement, but reinforced and validated with praise. There was agreement across the board that prominent members in the coloured community were overdue for their moment in the spotlight, which they got to enjoy to some extent that evening by taking to the stage and being thanked for their commitment to the advancement of both coloured communities and Khoisan revivalism. Disgruntled at their current lack of recognition in society, Khoisan revivalism seems to have given these people a second life as indigenous leaders, and their contributions similarly recast as part of an ancient struggle for freedom.

Those attending the Mowbray meeting also relayed a rather common view regarding the wider implications of relating Coloured history to indigenous history for South Africa's philosophy on historical justice. According to Khoisan revivalists, any serious attempt at rectifying past injustices needs to reckon with "the proverbial thorn in the flesh of the new South Africa [...] 400 years of cultural and social disintegration [...] and the deliberate destruction of the first nation and its descendants" (ENN 2014j, 3). South Africa's primordial sin needs to be acknowledged, and for some, this extends beyond returning stolen land and encompass "biological warfare, genocide, political exclusion, mass murder and a host of other gross human rights violations" (ENN 2014a, 4). Taking the long view means appreciating that many of the debates that are ongoing in South Africa, such as the discussions on land or the decolonization of (tertiary) education, need to have an appropriate temporal reach in order to become meaningful for the Khoisan and deal with "*n baie groter probleem wat diep ingebed is in die fondasie van ons samenlewing [...] die onteining van die inheemse volk die basis vorm van al die euwels wat hier plaatsgevind het; dat die super rykes in hierdie land hul rykdom gebou het op* [a much bigger problem that is embedded in the foundation of our society [...] the dispossession of the indigenous people that became the root of all evil that took place here, upon which the rich built their wealth]" (ENN, 2016b, 1-2). Indeed, for Zenzile (12/06/2018), these kinds of historical continuities uncover "the agency in our story" and allow "the essence of history" to be extrapolated. Khoisan revivalism, he concludes, is not about "returning to the past", but "about unlocking the power that lies embedded in what has been disturbed in antiquity to be able to give us the mechanisms to deal with the complexities of the contemporary world" (Zenzile Khoisan, 17/05/2018).

Zenzile is far from alone in embracing such a perspective. Indeed, this way of thinking resonates widely among Khoisan revivalists, who constantly draw parallels between past and present (or point out stark contrasts, for that matter, as I show below) in order to make sense of the world around them and articulate their indigeneity. Looking at everyday realities through this lens provokes reflections on historical continuities between the trials and tribulations of the Khoisan and personal experiences, family histories and contemporary socio-economic challenges. Underlining continuities is also a direct counter to the Khoisan extinction discourse. However, while this way of relating

past to present is shared by Khoisan revivalists, they go about showcasing and selecting these continuities differently and they do so for different reasons. In the remainder of this chapter I detail this variety at some length.

#### 4.2.2 Rewriting the Khoisan past

The bulk of this section deals with written texts, but there are of course other ways representations of the Khoisan past are put forward. While my research has not focused on social media, over the years it has become evident to me as a casual observer that, whether through public posts or interactions in closed groups on Facebook or WhatsApp, the amount of Khoisan revivalist-related discussions have skyrocketed. Particularly in closed groups, social media functions as a safe space to express Khoisan identity, connect with likeminded individuals and share interpretations of Khoisan history. Moreover, as I noted, it also facilitates the exchange of (academic) materials about Khoisan history and identity. As the example of Chantal Revell's weekly seminars shows, another way of spreading Khoisan revivalist histories is organizing participatory gatherings or holding presentations. Willa Boezak for instance embarked on a series of public lectures in Cape Town in 2015 and 2016 entitled "*Die naelstring lesings* [The umbilical cord lectures]", where he put forward arguments from his aforementioned *Struggle of an Ancient Faith*. Aside from religion, the series covered Khoisan identity more broadly as well as the origins of the Khoisan and Afrikaans (ENN 2015, 15). As he explained in ENN (2017a, 11) when advertising his talks, Boezak picked the title for two reasons. Firstly to refer to an age-old Khoisan tradition of burying the umbilical cord of a new-born child close to the house, which Boezak maintains is still practiced today, and secondly, to make his case that coloureds are inescapably bound to Khoisan culture and religion.

Khoisan-themed documentaries by Khoisan revivalists or sympathizers to their cause have also emerged in recent years. As it pertains to Cape Town, two examples stand out. Filmmaker and activist Weaam Williams has shot three documentaries: *A Khoi Story Part 1 – Reclaiming the Mother Tongue* (2009), showcasing efforts to revive Khoekhoegowab (see Chapter Six); *A Khoi Story 2 – Returning the Remains* (2011), focusing on indigenous knowledge; and *A Khoi Story 3 – Stories from the Caves* (2014), discussing rock-art and

intellectual knowledge. While these documentaries do not focus on the past per se, they do explore in some detail how Khoisan revivalists like Cecil Le Fleur or Yvette Abrahams engage with the Khoisan past to find meaning in their present-day lives, whether in the form of indigenous knowledge or issues of identity. In *The Khoekhoe Saga*, creative producer Rudolf Rieger and director Johann Abrahams on the other hand focus mostly on a chronological overview of Khoisan history and feature a host of established academics such as Henry Bredekamp or Nigel Penn.<sup>86</sup> I noted earlier how Abrahams holds the view that most Khoisan revivalists are not interested in (critical) historical accounts and miss a basic set of facts about the past. This drove him to become involved with the *The Khoekhoe Saga*, which consists of 13 episodes of roughly 25 minutes, and is shot across South Africa (Johann Abrahams, 10/07/2019). The documentary will be freely available in schools and universities: “I want to see us rewrite the history with the documentary [...] the youngsters need to know their history”. Abrahams himself only began to seriously reflect on his ancestry while studying overseas at the University of Kansas and interacting with Native Americans. When he came back to South Africa after the end of apartheid, he had a newfound pride in his Khoisan roots. His partner in the shooting of the documentary, Rudolf Rieger, is a European immigrant who has been interested in the Khoisan for two decades, including the Khoisan revivalists in Cape Town, resulting in a vast archive of footage, pictures and audio recordings (Rudolf Rieger, 21/06/2018). At the official screening of part of the documentary at the Castle of Good Hope in July 2019, Zenzile Khoisan praised it as a victory for Khoisan revivalists, stressing how it showed the past was not forgotten: “We come here to celebrate what has not been broken [...] This is not about sitting at a grave site and mourning”.

Roughly two years earlier, on 19 September 2017, Zenzile was at the Castle as well, making similar remarks during the well-attended launch of *Bastaards Or Humans: The Unspoken Heritage of Coloured People*, a two-volume historical overview of Coloured history

---

<sup>86</sup> The trailer of *The Khoekhoe Saga* is available at R. Rieger. *The Khoekhoe Saga*. 2018, YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7oX-BBtwN8>, accessed 20 March 2021.

by the aforementioned Ruben Richards, with an emphasis on the Khoisan.<sup>87</sup> As I noted, Richards enjoys a certain standing in the coloured community. It is unclear when he became involved with Khoisan revivalism, although he rose to the forefront after going through a *!Nau* in 2014 and publishing *Bastaards or Humans*, which has enjoyed some success (ENN 2014f, 1). Indeed, during the Resurrection Day event I mentioned previously, Richards delivered a speech on the history of the Castle of Good Hope where he announced that the Western Cape Minister of Education had endorsed his book as “an alternative history of South Africa, which will be integrated into the curriculum of high school learners”. Richards donated copies of his book to every public school in the Western Cape, and his alma mater, Heathfield High School, has made it part of its curriculum.<sup>88</sup> Khoisan revivalists too have welcomed his work as it in many ways endorses their interpretations of the past. Indeed, in his remarks at the book launch, Zenzile celebrated the book as “an instrument to shift the paradigm” because it departed from a “dispassionate distance, that coldness, that almost anti-sceptic way of dealing with history” (see also ENN 2017a, 16). In his blurb, he praised *Bastaards or Humans* as a “a sentinel text that answers the nagging questions about origins, bravely gives form and definition to a people who have been relegated to the margins of South Africa’s history” (Richards 2017, ii). Aaron Messelaar, who I return to below, concurred in his own commentary, lauding the book for providing both “critical insights into the distortions of our history” and “the necessary tools for reinterpreting this history to restore the dignity of a people with a rich and proud history”. Lucelle Campbell for her part saw in the book an expression of “agency”, a determination on part of the Khoisan to tell their “own stories”.

---

<sup>87</sup> When I refer to *Bastaards or Humans* in this text I draw exclusively from the first volume. The second volume, which appeared in 2018, was announced in the first volume as “the extended footnotes, explanations and supporting evidence” for the arguments made in Volume One (Richards 2017, xix, xxi). However, it seems to be more of a second edition, as it covers mostly the same content.

<sup>88</sup> “Coloured origins book to be available in Western Cape schools.” *Independent Online* (2018) <https://www.iol.co.za/entertainment/books/coloured-origins-book-to-be-available-in-western-cape-schools-13762084>, accessed 20 March 2021.

As I suggested previously, these homespun ‘stories’ lay bare continuities between past and present, and *Bastaards or Humans* is a prime example of this. Written for a general audience and drawing on both historical materials as well as clippings from previous writings, Richards intersperses a largely chronological account of Khoisan history with anecdotes pertaining to his own life and struggles with identity to provide “a hermeneutical window into the broader historical and cultural narrative” (Richards 2017, xix, xxi). *Bastaards or Humans* is his attempt to “answer three simple, profound and recurring questions which we all encounter: *Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going?*” (Ibid., xvii; original emphasis). Richards (Ibid., xix, xxi) finds these questions to be (made out to be) particularly complicated for coloureds, whose heritage is “a subject matter which in many circles remains *unspoken* - and in literary circles hidden, sometimes distorted, or at best camouflaged”; especially as it relates to Khoisan ancestry. He was confronted with this in particular while attending the debate on Khoisan land issues in Kimberley Two in 2014 as a “facilitator” (see Chapter Three). Richards (2017, 12; original emphasis) was struck by the widespread sentiment among delegates that “*their* stories, *their* heroes, *their* contributions to this country and *their* acts of resistance against *their* dispossession and dehumanisation [were] not part of the mainstream discourse”. Citing Khoisan revivalism as an explicit source of inspiration for the book, he chose to focus on the Khoisan in the hope that others also “embark on a personal journey of self-discovery, healing, restoration and optimal living” (Ibid., xix, xxi, 10). *Bastaards or Humans*’ goal is therefore not so much to “re-write history”, but to make it “come alive” and “use data from our ancient past to construct a narrative that is meaningful to our present” (Ibid., 552). According to Richards, this currently lacking alternative interpretation of history has the potential to resolve the damage of centuries of assimilation, “self-hatred” and “national amnesia” (Ibid., 30). He is convinced of this in large part in light of his own transformative encounter with Khoisan revivalism:

My urban upbringing ha[s] disabused me of any Khoisan consciousness [...] The distance I felt then, compared to the closeness I feel today, is staggering. So what has changed? The short answer is: me [...] I needed to move beyond the pejorative view of the Khoi and San as museum specimens and cultural artefacts to be studied, as opposed to being a fundamental core of my personal identity and more broadly



the identity of our nation. Wow! What a full-circle for me. What a shift in consciousness (Ibid., 523-524)

*Bastaards or Humans* prescribes a history that fronts the agency of the Khoisan and debunks notions that Coloured identity is all about “shame and disgrace” and lacks a deeply rooted indigeneity (Richards 2017, 44). Richards seems especially intent on recasting the early encounters between Khoisan and settlers as cordial and welcoming, particularly on part of the Khoisan, except for their defeat of the Portuguese general D’Almeida, which is celebrated repeatedly in the book as an iconic anti-colonial battle (see Chapter Two). Drawing for instance on the 1647 shipwreck of the Dutch ship *Haerlem*, which caused crewmembers to spend half a year on the shores of Table Bay, Richards (Ibid., 126-127) stresses how those who were stranded or felt ill were nursed back to health by the Khoisan. Richards (Ibid., 130-131) infers from sailors’ favourable accounts of the Khoisan that the Cape had “a reputation for being a place of healing - in addition to being a place of abundance in meat and water - indeed a Garden of Eden”. Portraying the 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> century Cape as a site of healing and hospitality, Richards feels values from this early culture could mend divisions in contemporary South Africa. In an interesting passage, he paraphrases a response that was reportedly made by certain Khoisan leaders while negotiating with the Dutch in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Notice how Khoisan culture is juxtaposed to that of the colonialists:

We, the people of the Cape, are not like these van Riebeeck people. We are not colonial conquerors [...] We are a welcoming people. We have a different values framework and code of conduct by which we live, compared to these Europeans who arrive uninvited and just stay indefinitely. For the sake of argument, just imagine that we did decide to arrive and settle in Holland, uninvited and without a visa and then had the audacity to brutally and violently take control of the means of production of that economy [...] Just imagine what the Dutch people would say (and do) in response to our unethical actions! (Ibid., 155)

Richards (Ibid., 2-3) describes pre-settlement Cape Town as a “bustling port”, ran by “internationally travelled, educated and commercially knowledgeable Khoisan leaders, who learned English and Dutch [and] understood global macro-economics and the dynamics of supply and demand in the context of international market forces”. Coree’s

time in England is likened to a form of international education, and his tactics to pressure the Dutch as imposing “economic sanctions” (Ibid., 130-131). Autshumato, is similarly referenced as the “Cape Town-based strategic communications expert and international liaison officer ensuring accurate communication was passed on from one ship to the other as they passed through the port of Cape Town [with] impeccable [...] local and international credentials” (Ibid., 4, 133). Richards (2017, 239) debunks misconceptions that Autshumato was “a beach-bum roaming and strolling along the Blouberg/Milnerton beach front providing language translation services (i.e. interpreter) to the captains of passing ships” (Ibid., 5). He refuses to only refer to them as interpreters because this does not do justice to their other important functions and talents (Ibid., 239). In a telling footnote, Richards explicates his Khoisan revivalism by noting how his “own experience provides some clues to understanding Autshumato’s predicament” and vice versa:

In spite of attaining my technical and academic qualifications on merit, some of which include degrees attained in Europe and the USA, there is still that niggly feeling of never quite being accepted as an equal. Admittedly, this might have more to do with an outsider-insider perspective or a South Africa versus international prejudice, more than it has to do with a black-white race factor. However, for many in South Africa, I am first a coloured (Khoisan), and that then provides the lenses through which people view my other qualifications and professional achievements and experience (Ibid., 134)

The anachronistic language to describe historical persons as well as the early encounters between colonialists and Khoisan is typical of Khoisan revivalists’ engagements with the past. While Richards is particularly successful at getting his message across, he is of course not alone in spreading awareness about forgotten or undervalued figures from the past. Joseph Little has always been driven to reframe the way figures in Khoisan history were portrayed. In 2009, he for instance wrote an article for *Eland Nuus* (2009d, 15) describing how the Khoisan were skilled at learning foreign languages and cunning in their resistance to colonialism; facts he believed went widely unacknowledged. ENN is also strongly committed to reclaiming Khoisan history, for instance by calling for official holidays to celebrate their legacies (ENN 2013a, 8). The newspaper regularly devotes segments to “honouring the sacrifices of Khoisan heroes” (ENN 2016a, 2-10), such as David

Stuurman, the “unrelenting rebel” from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century who escaped twice from Robben Island, or Coree, the “Girachoqua resistance hero” who prevented the establishment of a British penal colony in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>89</sup> Another figure who often gets praised by Khoisan revivalists is Doman, “the hero of the first Khoi-war” and a “military strategist”. During his time in Batavia he is said to have noticed that the muskets and cannons of the Dutch frequently malfunctioned during rainfall, which he supposedly drew upon when mounting counterattacks in his later resistance campaigns. In reflecting on Doman’s historical significance in the same edition of ENN, Lucelle Campbell takes away explicit lessons for how to look for legacies of Khoisan history in the present:

One can uncover his great skills of multilingualism, political shrewdness [...] understanding of the economy with a most astute military talent. A keen spy for his people, leader, fighter and spokesperson [...] Truth is, you will not hear these stories from mom and dad, maybe they are too ashamed to tell you or they do not know. Or they just don't care. Yet, if we should dare to take a closer look, we start to grow to understand the neighbour, the cashier at the till point, the librarian's tone of voice, the Rasta selling indigenous herbs, the preacher on the train, or the hawker selling his greens on the pavement. Only then will I come close to knowing my true heritage. Do we really know why we are led to believe that the chain of events pre-apartheid has little or no bearing on our lives today? (ENN 2016a, 12)

At the book launch of *Griekwa Held* [Griqua Hero], an historical overview of the life of A.A.S. Le Fleur I compiled by Willa Boezak (2019; see Chapter Two), in July 2018, Cecil Le Fleur likewise announced that this was not a book that “you should hide under the mattress, but show all visitors”. Moreover, through the involvement of Bredekamp, who contributed a chapter on the legacy of the ‘Griqua hero’, Le Fleur celebrated *Griekwa Held* as a “unique combo between our people’s contribution and validation by academic scholars”. In the foreword, Le Fleur explains why this was such a significant feat:

---

<sup>89</sup> David Stuurman was exiled to Australia, where he died in 1830. The NKC mounted a campaign in 2013 to repatriate his remains. However, as Stuurman lies buried under the Sydney railway station, a “ceremonial/spiritual repatriation” was instead carried out by a South African delegation on Australian soil in 2017 (Jansen 2014, 486; see also ENN 2013c, 12).

Until now, the significant and indisputable role played by Paramount Chief A.A.S Le Fleur I in the history of South Africa has only been revealed by researchers and historians outside the domain of the Griqua people's movement. This frequently led to mistrust of the factual content of the work by Griqua readers. It is still a well-known fact that most authors still lean heavily on Eurocentric sources and consciously or subconsciously give a version that represents the dominant group in history (Le Fleur 2019, vi)

Basil Coetzee too wrote *Tears of the Praying Mantis* to contend with the Eurocentric bias in Khoisan history. As I showed in Chapter Three, when he started getting involved with the CCHDC, Coetzee (06/05/2018) was concerned that historical materials were seemingly only accessible to (white) academics: “In our communities there is not a single book about the Khoi. I looked for all of them in libraries. Nothing [...] I want those books to be in our libraries. It is a deliberate attempt to suppress our history”. The only available history is that of “the oppressor [...] a negative history that nobody wanted to associate themselves with”. As a history buff who regularly posts on social media to share his views on the past, and more recently through “educative poetry” (Basil 2019a), Coetzee decided in 2010 to write a book of his own and put forward a counter-interpretation of the past to fight the identity crisis.<sup>90</sup> This is indeed his ultimate ambition for *Tears of the Praying Mantis*, as evidenced by his insistence to have the book launch in Mitchells Plain, where he has lived for several decades and is well-known as a community activist: “Media coverage of the area is very negative. I want to show that books such as this can also come out of Mitchells Plain” (Basil Coetzee, 06/05/2018). In an interesting parallel with Richards (and indeed various other Khoisan revivalist authors), Coetzee (25/04/2018) describes *Tears of the Praying Mantis* as a “a personal odyssey” saturated with historical elements. The book pursues several aims by drawing on both autobiographical reflections and interpretations

---

<sup>90</sup> Basil Coetzee is certainly not alone in dedicating his written work to combatting the identity crisis. In 2019, Gregory Edwards self-published *The Table Mountain Story*, a children’s book that seeks to explain Khoisan culture and history in an accessible way. In an interview for *The Daily Voice* (Duval 2019), Edwards explains that he sees his work as a contribution to the fight against the “identity crisis”. A similar motivation sparked the idea for *Return to the Kalahari - The Hoerikwaggo Chronicles (Origin Story)*, a graphic novel series I say more about in my MA thesis (Verbuyst 2015, 105).

of Khoisan history. Echoing the identity crisis thesis, Coetzee (2019b, 22) argues throughout the text how colonialism has rendered the Khoi “physically and mentally traumatized, rejected and spurned in the accounts of history” and propagated the notion that coloureds are “a people without substance or presence of being”. He explains how certain laws, such as the Population Registration Act of 1950 or Ordinance 50 of 1828, were instrumental in alienating the Khoi. Reflecting on how the Khoi today relate (or do not relate) to their past as a result, Coetzee decries how effective these tactics were at getting them to internalize a sense of inferiority:

We turned out to be our own strangers, alienated from our culture and identity [...] and became like the proverbial tree detached from its own roots causing a slow and distressing demise of self [...] We are still estranged from our land [...] removed from our ancient faith and tongueless in our original language, Khoikhoi-Gowab [...] [The] reality today is that our people and particularly the youth look to gangsters as their role-models. The disgusting and vile language of gangsterism has become the language of our streets. The dress-code resembles the dress-code of American gangsters [...] Is this our destiny? Was what happened to Krotoa her destiny? She was after-all the first Khoikhoi woman to be converted to the Dutch Reformed version of Christianity, and it so happened that it was the same Dutch Christians that would refuse to accept our people as fellow Christians (Coetzee 2019b, xiii, 39, 217)

I return to Krotoa at length in the next section. What I want to illustrate with this segment is Coetzee’s take on the identity crisis, as well as his criticism of the Christian church, the book’s main focus. He also regularly brought it up during our conversations:

Hundreds of missionaries came to South Africa. The first thing they did was to remove your identity, second thing was ownership of land, third declaring your customs as heathen. So they owned your heritage, we could not access our graves or sacred sites. People do not know what our sacred sites are anymore (Basil Coetzee, 25/04/2018)

Coetzee strives to restore this forgotten link to the Khoi and their spirituality, which is why he chose *Tears of the Praying Mantis* as the title. According to him, coloureds never hurt a praying mantis, but they do not know that this practice dates back to the animal’s

status as a God in Khoi spirituality (Basil Coetzee, 25/04/2018). To revalue these types of ancient connections, the Dutch Reformed Church needs to acknowledge and be held accountable for its role in the destruction of Khoisan identity (Coetzee 2019b, xiii). The fact that they previously recognized their complicity in apartheid was deliberately short-sighted. Aside from allocating the blame for colonialism with the responsible parties, Basil also seeks to contrast grim present-day outlooks with an idealized depiction of precolonial Khoisan society:

As Khoikhoi people we lived a life of serenity, in harmony with nature, living off it and in accordance with the natural laws of the land. We believed that God owns the land as the Creator thereof and that we were the custodians of the land and animals. We were a spiritual people who saw God in His creation, the universe, the animals and the resources needed for Man to sustain himself. We healed the sick, and cared for the elderly. Animals were not killed for leisure but for consuming uses only and to aid in supporting our livelihoods. Family units were sustained with the raising of children of utmost importance (Coetzee 2019b, xvii)

Attributing the precolonial Khoisan with the values that contemporary society is judged to lack is a widespread practice among Khoisan revivalists. In this sense, the Khoisan past becomes a panacea for the present, a source of escape and inspiration to image how things were (and could be) different. To clarify, I am not commenting on the accuracy of these interpretations, I am merely highlighting a common aspect of Khoisan revivalists' engagements with the past. Indeed, similar themes permeate the work of William Langeveldt. Langeveldt is a prominent Khoisan revivalist, having, among other things, presented at the 2001 conference, sat on the NKC, staffed the CRLC and represented South Africa at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. When I met Langeveldt at his home in Cape Town, I quickly realized just how committed he is to Khoisan revivalism. One of the walls in his living room is completely covered by a local artist's rendering of the defeat of D'Almeida in 1510 – an event he often references. Langeveldt was born in Vryburg in the North West Province, but lived in Cape Town intermittently thereafter. As he recounts on the cover of one of his books, *THOSE WHO ARE FIRST WILL BE LAST AND THOSE WHO ARE LAST WILL BE FIRST!* (Langeveldt 2016; original emphasis), he was “dehumanised at birth as his birth certificate states his ethnicity as

"mixed," not Korana". He was assigned a "Christian slave name" and his mother did not teach him any indigenous language because it was regarded as a "baboon language" and speaking it would "result in a beating". Not unlike the story of Johann Abrahams, who also studied in the USA, Langeveldt began to critically reflect on his youth and identity while he was studying for his MA and PhD degrees at the University of Iowa. Aside from participating in a powwow with Native Americans, he specifically recalls a campus debate about indigenous languages in 1986 (William Langeveldt, 27/03/2018). When Langeveldt explained that he spoke Afrikaans and English, members of the audience were reportedly confused and asked him why he did not speak "his own indigenous language". This episode led him down an ongoing path of self-discovery and confrontation with the identity crisis:

People have been lied to that they are Coloured. There is no Coloured language. There are only brown people, light-skinned and dark-skinned variations. So who are we? [...] It took me many years to discover who I am [...] Slowly I put the history together and I began to understand what it is all about, how we got here and where we are going [...] As a coloured you are constantly humiliated, insulted and that has an impact on your self-esteem. How do you revive coming from this background? Which programs do you put in place? (William Langeveldt, 27/03/2018)

Back in South Africa after the end of apartheid, Langeveldt indeed devoted himself entirely to Khoisan revivalism, working with communities across the country and the bodies I just mentioned. He experienced a great deal of mockery and disbelief in the possibility of "bringing back the culture", but looking back he feels his "perseverance has been rewarded" with Khoisan culture alive and kicking again (William Langeveldt, 12/03/2018). Langeveldt draws on these experiences in his work, which includes several books. Like many other Khoisan revivalists, he understood how a new interpretation of history was required to change people's minds. As Langeveldt explains in *THOSE WHO ARE FIRST WILL BE LAST AND THOSE WHO ARE LAST WILL BE FIRST!*:

Every time when our people appear on television everything about them is negative [...] there is supposedly nothing beautiful about the first nation Khoisan and San Africans. The brutal and inhumane "white" history of colonial slave-masters that conquered our ancestors in the most horrific ways deliberately set out to erase our

true history from our native minds, especially the missionaries, our enslavers that colonised our minds and misled our people with their constant exploitation and exclusion [...] The 'coloured' speak other people's languages, imitate other people's cultures; desire other people's lifestyles; wear other people's clothes, eat other people's food; buy other people's products; accept other people's names and place names, and on top of it all, are ruled by other people [...] The Historic Factor is the cultural cement that unite the people as a whole, to experience collective continuity [...] Our historic consciousness creates feelings of social cohesion [...] being a conscious co-creator of your life (Langeveldt 2016, 29, 32, 38)

While Langeveldt's books also contain information about indigenous medicine, concise Khoekhoegowab lessons and excerpts from Khoisan mythology (see e.g. Langeveldt 2016, 73), he largely paves the way towards this "consciousness" in typical Khoisan revivalist fashion. Through extensive use of bold, capitalized or underlined text, Langeveldt lays bare legacies of colonialism by attributing blame and identifying "*historiese trauma en slawe mentaliteit [...] aangeleerde hulpeloosheid, gebrek aan motivering* [historical trauma and slave mentality [...] learned helplessness and lack of motivation]" (Langeveldt 2012, 4). He for instance argues that the colonial practice of reimbursing labour with alcohol accounts for the high rate of alcoholism, crime and murder in coloured communities; the self-destruction of people's lives (Langeveldt 2016, 38). Langeveldt suggests these negative attributes were alien to the precolonial Khoisan, who lived in "the most egalitarian society on planet earth". Colonialism brought "*korruptsie, oorheersing, diefstal* [corruption, domination, theft]", but indigenous society was one of "*menslikheid, empatie, soorgsaamheid, gasvryheid, eerlikheid en nederigheid. Wedersydse erkenning en gelykheid vir almal, veral tussen mans en vrouens* [humanity, empathy, caring, hospitality, honesty and humility. Mutual recognition and equality, especially between man and woman]" (Langeveldt 2001, 70, 71). The Khoisan enjoyed abundance, peace, and self-sustainability: "Everybody had equal access to all land resources", the "indigenous restorative justice system" was more humane, and there was "renewable energy production and purified water" (Langeveldt 2012, 6; 2016, 15-17). Langeveldt seeks to recuperate these ancient values to resist "forced assimilation into the English language and culture of hypocrisy and exploitation" (ENN 2014j, 6). He calls for "spiritual healing" to put an end to the



“[p]sychology of jealousy, mistrust, backstabbing” (Langeveldt 2016, 104). It is not always clear what this healing entails, but history and pedagogy play key roles:

The level of a person's self-esteem depends on the levels of positive information he got about himself from childhood — what you know or do not know about your own history as first Africans [...] We must learn to celebrate ourselves so that self-celebration becomes self-healing [...] Reclaiming our First Nation History means to conduct investigations into own family-, community-, and peoples history, and South African history from an indigenous perspective. This is a kind of psycho-education to prepare participants for their journey of healing (Langeveldt 2016, 21, 83)

Langeveldt conforms to a pattern in Khoisan revivalism, hopefully apparent at this stage, whereby pride is sought in a renewed interpretation of the Khoisan past, poised to counter currently prevailing views that are said to be at the base of the identity crisis and related social ills. There is one last author I want to mention as he does not only pursue this ambition by writing books, but also through a self-funded museum.<sup>91</sup> Aaron Messelaar is High Commissioner in the Griqua Royal House, which strives to unite all Griqua factions (Aaron Messelaar, 06/10/2017). He was born in Campbell in the Northern Cape, where Griqua culture is still practiced, but he moved to Cape Town to work as a police officer and then in social services, “particularly in gangster areas” such as Valhalla Park (Aaron Messelaar, 16/03/2018). Messelaar, who was well aware of his roots at the time, was struck by the lack of historical awareness among coloureds in Cape Town. In 1999, he opened an office in Elsies River “focussing on culture and tradition” (not to be confused with the Katz Koranna satellite office mentioned previously) and he ran “awareness campaigns” across the Western Cape for several years (Aaron Messelaar, 06/10/2017). Years later he also began writing books to create awareness about Griqua culture. In the foreword to the tellingly titled book, *Forgotten but not buried* (2015), which,

---

<sup>91</sup> Calls for a Khoisan-run museum are often made by Khoisan revivalists (see Chapter Six). The 2013 site catalogue of the Khoisan Heritage Route also mentioned plans for the development of a “Cape Town Community-based Khoe Museum”, although these have not been followed up on to date (Department of Arts and Culture 2013a, 1).

just like *Griqua Cultures and Superstitions* (2018), covers various Griqua cultural practices, Adam Kok V sums up its spirit succinctly:

For far too long the history of our people has been portrayed by outsiders. It is heartening to, at last, have it told by a true son of the Griquas [...] It is through these efforts that we, the dormant descendants of the Khoi and San people, have come to realize that we have a history to be proud of and not that as reflected through foreigners. We have traditions unique to us and not practices adopted from others, we have (had) land that was taken from us and have a right to proclaim and live out our traditions in the country of our forefathers (Kok 2015, iii-iv)

In 2009, Messelaar transformed his office in Elsie's River into a small-scale and self-funded museum. Figure 4 shows the entrance to the museum. With the residential buildings on the left, the picture captures its essence. These two or three storey buildings were built across the Cape Flats to provide social housing and are commonly associated in popular imagination with the worst kind of living conditions in the area (Jensen 1999, 76). At some point a meme circulated on social media, juxtaposing a picture of the buildings with a historical illustration depicting the living conditions of the Khoisan prior to colonialism. The intention was clearly to underline how current harsh housing conditions and high levels of poverty and population density were a consequence of colonialism. The same



Figure 4. Griqua Museum Elsie's River (Author's photograph 2017)

contrast is deliberately pursued in the decision to open the museum in the area. As Messelaar (06/10/2017) explained, people in the area are drawn to gangs and “do not know who they are [...] there is the identity crisis”. The museum wants to fight this by inviting schools and churches to visit in particular, “to make sure the history is among us”. The museum is evidence that they have a culture to be proud of and that their forbears lived in drastically different conditions and according to different values (see Figure 5). As an article in ENN (2017b, 10) explains, visiting the museum, is like a form of time-travelling “[w]ith the Griqua flag prominently displayed, indigenous artefacts, indigenous medicinal stones and roots, indigenous craft ware, pots, shoes, documents, time-aged photographs, royal indigenous garments, staffs, indigenous weaponry, coinage and even furniture from the Griqua and other Khoisan indigenous groups dating back several centuries”.



Figure 5. Griqua Museum Elsie's River – detail (Author's photograph 2017)

When I visited the museum in 2017, I noticed how Messelaar had indeed jam-packed an interesting collection of materials relating to the Khoisan in a rather confined space. Next to “Khoisan woman traditional regalia” and the male counterpart, there was a set of kudu horns, “used to burn herbs for cleansing ceremony”, as the adjoining label read. The walls

were covered with various sources of historical information, much of which seems to have been photocopied from books. On display as well were flags from the United Nations and the Griqua. Messelaar also dedicated a corner of the museum to Krotoa, as he felt it was important that visitors learned about her life in particular. While certain other figures from Khoisan history such as Autshumato or Sarah Baartman are frequently mentioned, Krotoa is by far the most commonly referred to historical figure by Khoisan revivalists. In the final section I use Krotoa as a case study to show how and why some of the characteristics of Khoisan revivalists' engagements with the past I have tackled thus far are applied to a specific historical figure.

#### **4.2.3 Recuperating Khoisan heroes: the case of Krotoa**

The 17<sup>th</sup> century Khoisan woman Krotoa first appeared in written sources in Jan van Riebeeck's *Daghregister*, when he records that the niece of Autshumato, a 12 year old girl, is joining their household. She became an interpreter between the Dutch and the Khoisan, splitting her time between them. After she was baptized as Eva, Krotoa married and had several children with the Danish surgeon Pieter van Meerhoff. After van Meerhoff died while in Madagascar and Khoisan society at the Cape disintegrated, van Riebeeck went back to Europe and Krotoa was banished to Robben Island and prevented from seeing her children. She developed an alcohol addiction and died shortly afterwards in 1674. As I will show in this section, my attempted summary of Krotoa's life would not be acceptable to everyone. One runs into a whole range of challenges and dilemmas when writing about her life. As Christina Landman (1996, 30) pointed out, "Krotoa had no opportunity to tell her own story [...] The Khoekhoe themselves were muted on this subject [...] Only white men, travellers from Europe, wrote about the Khoekhoe". Confronted with this problem in Chapter Two as well, I opted for an approach not unlike the one suggested by Landman: "a deconstruction of European representations of the Khoekhoe [...] through a social-critical reading of the relevant texts". All the while, Krotoa will likely remain a "story-generator" because the existing sources leave much open to interpretation and her life is deemed so significant (Ibid., 35). Krotoa has indeed inspired a wide range of artists, writers and academics from various backgrounds (see e.g. Coetzee 1998, 113-114; Dunton

2015, 38). Novels, articles, books, children's books and plays have presented narratives of Krotoa, with themes as varied as alienation, gender rights, nation-building, Afrikaner-nationalism, oppression, savagery or syncretism.

While the story of Krotoa has been told for centuries, it was done so by an academic of Khoisan extraction for the first time in 1996. In her ground-breaking essay, *Was Eva Raped? An Exercise in Speculative History*, Yvette Abrahams (1996, 4, 5) opens by flagging the almost unsurmountable Eurocentric bias in the sources; "the memory of her enemies" is all she has to go on. Writing firmly in the tradition of Khoisan revisionist historiography, she argues that the existing historiography is based on an uncritical reading of these sources and unjustly portrays Krotoa as torn between her loyalties to the Dutch and the Khoisan as a result; "a woman between", as one historian put it (Malherbe 1990). Abrahams (1996, 10) instead chooses a speculative approach and reads the sources against the grain. She discloses her Khoisan revivalism at the onset: she writes about Krotoa because "her experience of colonialism was later to be repeated by thousands of Khoisan women" and is therefore highly relevant to the Khoisan today (Abrahams 1996, 3). Abrahams (Ibid., 5) is out to "reclaim history" in a way that avoids to "reobjectify" the Khoisan. According to her, Krotoa remained loyal to the Khoisan and was in fact coerced into cooperating with the Dutch. She specifically argues that Krotoa suffered from Rape Trauma Syndrome after being sexually assaulted by Jan van Riebeeck (Ibid., 15). Abrahams (Ibid., 3) recognizes that her approach does not conform to "ordinary rules of evidence" but believes her analysis of the evolving relationship between van Riebeeck and Krotoa is convincing. Writing about Sarah Baartman in her PhD thesis later on, Abrahams explains why relying on her personal experiences is vital in framing such interpretations and formulating hypotheses:

Personal experience as a historical datum poses a peculiar epistemological challenge. From my point of view, it offers certainty. My personal experience is a datum I can be absolutely sure of. My historical experience is such that I yield to none a better claim to expertise on sexism and racism (Abrahams 2000, 75)

Abrahams' work anticipated a whole range of Khoisan revivalist engagements with Krotoa along these lines. As I noted in Chapter Two, she warned early on that if academia would not address their concerns, Khoisan revivalists would look for their history

elsewhere. Reflecting on her academic career and work on Baartman specifically (see Chapter Six), Abrahams underscored the importance of history in framing her own identity:

Constructing ourselves as self-loving subjects sounded just like what I needed. I wanted to be finished with rehashing old white insults. The very next thing I wanted to do was [Baartman's] biography [...] I do not seek to claim her suffering. There is more than enough of that going around to need to take another's share. I do identify with it. Pain, though unendurable at the time, is easily forgotten when it is over. Ultimately, all that is going to matter is that we can be Khoekhoe again (Abrahams 2007, 439, 450)

Engaging with figures like Baartman or Krotoa proved empowering and therapeutic for others as well. Abrahams was among those involved in such an act of Khoisan revivalism in August 2016, when Krotoa's "soul" was repatriated from the *Groote Kerk* in Central Cape Town, where her physical remains are believed to lie, to the Castle of Good Hope.<sup>92</sup> The ceremony, which involved a large contingent of Khoisan revivalists including Mackie, Zenzile Khoisan and Ron Martin, was initiated by gathering around a tree near the church and performing a ritual to summon Krotoa's spirit, which was then transported by horse carriage back to the Castle (Etheridge 2016). The ceremony was part of the celebrations marking 350 years of the Castle's existence, which also involved a "symbolic reclaiming ceremony" of the building to initiate a long-term process of healing.<sup>93</sup> Once 'Krotoa' was back at the Castle, which still stations personnel from the South African Defence Force, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, wished that more knew about "this incredibly resilient woman whose true account of her life was never told" despite being exemplary of what "millions of women in our country" had to endure. The ceremony ended with the unveiling of a commemorative wooden bench. Meanwhile, some Khoisan revivalists, including Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, were outside

---

<sup>92</sup> For footage of the event, see SABC News. *Mapisa-Nqakula on unveiling a monument in honour of Krotoa*. 2016, YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1bEKCeCjT0E&ab\\_channel=SABCNews](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1bEKCeCjT0E&ab_channel=SABCNews), accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>93</sup> SABC News. *KhoiSan perform a cleansing ceremony at Castle of Good Hope*. 2015, YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJfmMZm3sI0&ab\\_channel=SABCNews](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJfmMZm3sI0&ab_channel=SABCNews), accessed 20 March 2021.

protesting the fact that Krotoa was brought back to a place where she had experienced so much suffering.<sup>94</sup> They also felt a bench was deeply offensive and claimed they were insufficiently consulted in the planning process (February 2016; Bam, Van Sitters and Ndhlovu 2018, 166-168).

In September 2015, many of the same protesters vandalized another commemorative bench that stood nearby at the intersection of Castle Street and St George's Mall. The concrete bench, known as *Krotoa's place*, was covered with colourful mosaics, including a rendering of Krotoa, and was donated by the NGO Rock Girl SA on Women's Day 2012 as part of its safe spaces for women campaign.<sup>95</sup> The NGO chose Krotoa as she symbolized the struggle of women in the country at large. Chantal Revell (19/08/2019) believes the protesters had not done "their proper research", as the bench was created by someone who wanted to trace back the history of gender violence in the country to its beginnings, not unlike Khoisan revivalists (see below). Many Khoisan revivalists had indeed endorsed the project (Jolly 2016). To the protesters in question, however, it was disrespectful to "sit" on Krotoa's 'face' and they would have preferred a statue instead (Olifant 2015). Duane Jethro (2017, 350-351) argues that the bench's destruction constituted "an ancient form of indigenous religious action" and describes how the group carefully "unpacked artisans' implements" to attack the bench. In the settlement that was reached two years later, all charges were dropped and the bench was restored. It no longer depicts Krotoa and includes a placard with historical background (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 11/07/2018). This was a victory for Kleinhans-Cedras. Mackie concurred, but gave a different account of the events, putting in doubt Jethro's claims that it was a premediated act to religiously "recover" the sacred site of the bench (Jethro 2017, 351). Mackie explained he and roughly 25 others had gathered in District Six to organize something to mark Heritage Month (Mackie, 02/07/2018). The suggestion to protest *Krotoa's place* gained traction and the

---

<sup>94</sup> eNCA. *Khoi community protesters disrupt Krotoa monument ceremony*. 2016, YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FLW0Xm23-M&ab\\_channel=eNCA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FLW0Xm23-M&ab_channel=eNCA), accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>95</sup> "Khoisan leaders in court for allegedly vandalising 'disgraceful' tribute bench." *News24* (2015) <https://www.news24.com/News24/Khoisan-leaders-in-court-for-allegedly-vandalising-disgraceful-tribute-bench-20150925>, accessed 20 March 2021.



group set off with the intention of laying down flowers on the location, chanting and praying in the process. As Mackie began to address the disrespect of Krotoa's legacy he "got riled up". When he noticed a crowbar at a nearby construction site, he worked himself up into somewhat of a frenzy and proceeded to attack the bench. A handful of others soon joined in.

Whether premeditated or not, the reason for attacking the bench was clearly to signal their contempt for fraught representations of Krotoa in South African society. As differing opinions about *Krotoa's place* illustrate, there is rarely agreement across the board about how unsatisfactory these representations are or what to do about them. However, Khoisan revivalists were unanimous in their dismissal of *Krotoa*, the motion picture, directed and produced by Roberta Durrant and written by Kaye Ann Williams and Margaret Goldsmid. The biopic was highly anticipated in South Africa as it was praised at various international film festivals (Kemp 2017). The movie presented a "rare and precious opportunity for healing and instilling pride over a key figure in South Africa's history, someone who serves as a reminder of place and belonging in the minds of those who consider themselves coloured and descendants of the Khoi" (October 2017). Durrant and Williams collaborated previously on a documentary about Krotoa for the national broadcasting network, SABC, in 2013.<sup>96</sup> Various (Khoisan revivalist) intellectuals, including Henry Bredekamp and Yvette Abrahams, commented on Krotoa's life and legacy, suggesting that Krotoa's survival against all odds was inspiring to women on the Cape Flats, that she initiated the liberation struggle and that her navigation of Dutch and Khoisan culture embodied a kind of reconciliatory spirit. Afterwards, Durrant and Williams realized the potential for a "strong fictional narrative feature inspired by historical fact and speculation" (Matroos 2017). Williams believed a movie about Krotoa could "uncover" the undervalued and unrecognized role of women in "South Africa's multi-racial history". Moreover, classified Coloured, shooting the film made her reflect on "racial tension and misogyny" and "appreciate my physical self". Durrant, who is white, on the other hand, believed Krotoa was a "visionary" by looking for a way for the

---

<sup>96</sup> The documentary can be viewed at Penguin Films. *Krotoa*. 2013, Vimeo. <https://vimeo.com/65957411>, accessed 20 March 2021.



Dutch and the Khoisan to coexist (Cornwell 2017). On the eve of the premiere, Durrant was excited about the movie's reception in South Africa; "it's only up from here" (Matroos 2017). She would be in for a rude awakening, however, particularly pertaining to the reaction of Khoisan revivalists.

The latter turned out in droves to attend the movie's premiere in Cape Town on 31 July 2017, the eve of Women's Month in South Africa. During the crowded reception that was set up in front of the three theatres where the movie would be shown later that night, I spotted a number of familiar faces. Zenzile was going around taking pictures. Mackie was present too as part of the delegation of Hennie van Wyk's Goringhaiqua (see Chapter Three). Donned in full regalia, they seemed eager to get photographed by journalists and others present. After most of the guests trickled in, Durrant delivered her speech. The acoustics were awful, but I made out references to the importance of language and recognizing the Khoisan's contemporary existence, without specifically acknowledging those that were present. Durrant seems to have anticipated some of the incoming backlash, as she warned that the movie might make some "angry and confused" and reconsider their identities. Then again, she affirmed, this was actually one of the aims of the movie. I made sure to follow the Khoisan revivalists into the theatre they had chosen as I anticipated they might have some interesting reactions during the screening. As some of the more controversial scenes were shown, they were indeed met with widespread disapproval from the crowd. After the movie was finished the mood was somewhat anticlimactic and most went straight home.

The overall reception of *Krotoa* by Khoisan revivalists was indeed negative. Sylvia Vollenhoven needed time to write a response, as the movie had left her "deeply traumatised" (Van Niekerk 2017). It is not hard to see why Khoisan revivalists are disappointed. *Krotoa* opened with "inspired by historical facts", but this did not prevent it from being lambasted for factual inaccuracies. The movie was attacked on multiple fronts, too much to cover here, but the main critique was that it downplayed the violent character of Dutch colonialism. As the artist Blaqpearl, who I come back to below, put it, Jan van Riebeeck initiated colonialism in South Africa, "how did you manage to underplay that?" (Philander 2017). Van Riebeeck was also portrayed by a handsome actor, despite being "fat and ugly in reality", as one Khoisan revivalist phrased it (Tania Kleinhans-

Cedras, 11/07/2018). For Basil Coetzee (22/06/2018), the Khoekhoegowab language was the only believable element in the “pathetic” movie. Other than the rape scene, van Riebeeck is not shown in a negative light and his well-documented disdain for the Khoisan is absent. Van Riebeeck’s relationship with Krotoa is indeed widely seen as historically inaccurate, offensive and inappropriately sexualized. In the aftermath of the rape by van Riebeeck, which Durrant argued was necessary to capture his “forbidden lust” and their “complicated relationship”, Krotoa forgives him and develops feelings for him, most vividly expressed through an even more controversial masturbation scene (Kemp 2017). The Khoisan in the movie, for their part, reject Krotoa because of what happened to her and are shown to stubbornly resist her plea to share the land with the Dutch. Van Riebeeck on the other hand emerges as a benevolent colonialist, eager to establish peace and trade with the Khoisan. The movie seems to suggest that, if people on both parties had been more like van Riebeeck and Krotoa, forward-thinkers, but man and woman-between respectively (see above), a peaceful coexistence could have ensued.

Durrant did not expect this amount of backlash and defended *Krotoa* by arguing that different sides of Krotoa had to feature in the movie to “paint the picture as accurately as possible” and avoid “one-dimensional characters” (Cornwell 2017; Kekana 2017).<sup>97</sup> Williams, who grew up on the Cape Flats and therefore dismissed charges of being a “white colonist”, also explained why she did not portray van Riebeeck as a villain, as originally planned (Kekana 2017). The focus, she reminded her critics, was on Krotoa, whose depiction she believed was still inspirational to “young coloured women” (Philander 2017). Khoisan revivalists like Chantal Revell (19/08/2019) believe differently and wonder why they were not more included in writing or starring in the movie. This might have changed the storyline, such as the final lines that are shown in the movie highlighting that the descendants of Krotoa include the pro-apartheid stalwarts Piet Willem Botha and Hendrik Verwoerd. Many Khoisan revivalists regretted that they, or coloureds in general, were not mentioned. I also recall a casual conversation with a

---

<sup>97</sup> Controversies regarding who qualifies to write or participate in fictions about historical Khoisan figures extend beyond *Krotoa*. Khoisan revivalists were for instance upset at rumours that Beyoncé might play Sarah Baartman in a possible Hollywood movie about her life (Parkinson 2016a).

Khoisan revivalist on the campus of UCT in this regard. For the woman I was speaking with, the 2016 reburial ceremony of Krotoa had been the gateway to her Khoisan revivalism. She understood that *Krotoa* was a work of fiction and therefore needed to cater to a diverse audience, but she would have preferred to see Krotoa emerge as a strong and empowered woman at the end, even if she knows that is not what “really happened”.<sup>98</sup>

As Zenzile Khoisan and Debbie Hendricks put it in their review of *Krotoa* in ENN (2017b, 3), a consensus emerged among Khoisan revivalists that the time had come to tell their own stories and relate to Krotoa in ways that are meaningful to them in the first place. ENN previously lauded Krotoa as a “heroic figure, brilliant linguist and early diplomat, who is considered one of the founding mothers of modern South Africa” in this regard (ENN 2016a, 10). As I showed briefly, authors such as Basil Coetzee also dedicated various sections of their work to Krotoa, highlighting her ill-treatment by colonialists, her unrecognized status in South African historiography and the Khoisan revivalist-message her story embodies. In a poem entitled *Krotoa, Die Khoi Meisie!*, Coetzee (2019a, 44-45) for instance portrays Krotoa as an unrecognized victim of colonialism, but also praises her ingenuity and the fact that “*sy het steeds haar naam onthou* [always remembered her [true] name]”, which he asks his readers to do as well to make her whole again. Krotoa also frequently featured in another capacity, which had also motivated the creators of *Krotoa*: as a relatable victim of abuse.<sup>99</sup> According to Chantal Revell (19/08/2019), who regularly refers to Krotoa when speaking about her Khoisan revivalism, so many people relate to her story because they are themselves victims of abuse, particularly women and mothers. She is herself drawn to Krotoa because, like her, she grew up with an absent father and raised her kids as a single mother. In Revell’s interpretation of Khoisan history, the equal status between men and women was disrupted by colonialism, which instilled

---

<sup>98</sup> *Krotoa* does end on somewhat of a Khoisan revivalist-inspired note, with a scene showing Krotoa criticizing Dutch colonialism and reaffirming her Khoisan identity and rejecting Dutch culture.

<sup>99</sup> While Khoisan revivalists in Cape Town mostly relate to Krotoa, she is not the only Khoisan figure that is referenced to highlight issues of domestic abuse or gender violence. Sarah Baartman’s legacy too has been framed in this fashion (see Twidle 2013, 142). *The Saartjie Baartman Centre for Women* based in the Cape Flats for instance acts as a shelter for families fleeing domestic abuse since 1999 (“The Saartjie Baartman Centre for Women and Children.” <http://www.saartjiebaartmancentre.org.za/>, accessed 20 March 2021).

relationships of subjugation (ENN 2015, 6). During her speech at the Resurrection Day event in April 2018, she drew on these interpretations of Krotoa to argue that her story acted as a metaphor for Coloured history, particularly for women: “She had the first children of mixed ancestry, but nobody ever told us that [...] She underwent the first identity crisis because she was never accepted by van Riebeeck and the others as one of them, even if she walked, spoke and talked like them”.

These and other interpretations of Krotoa’s life also featured in the play *Krotoa van vandag. A story of identity, challenge and hope*, written in 2016 by the abovementioned artist from Mitchells Plain, Blaqpearl (Janine Van Rooy-Overmeyer).<sup>100</sup> Known for her involvement in the collective of artists that starred in the 2010 musical *Afrikaaps*, which I elaborate on in Chapter Six, Blaqpearl also heads the *Blaqpearl Foundation*, an NGO engaged in arts and sports programs to “encourage youth to break away from and cope with the harsh realities and social ills such as gangsterism, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy/parenting, amongst others that’s rife in the communities on the Cape Flats”.<sup>101</sup> A large component of this involves activities where youth “learn a sense of identity, culture, self-awareness and self-love”. The play *Krotoa van vandag*, which toured schools across Cape Town in 2016, is an example of this, as it is explicitly aimed to show positive things can come out of the Cape Flats and that its inhabitants do not lack “self-pride”, as Blaqpearl put in a fundraising video (Maregele 2017). The *Blaqpearl Foundation* website explains how *Krotoa van Vandag*, which is performed mostly in Afrikaans, but is suffused with elements of Khoekhoegowab, strives to accomplish this in Khoisan revivalist fashion:

---

<sup>100</sup> Other Khoisan revivalists have also written plays about Krotoa’s life. Sylvia Vollenhoven for instance wrote *Krotoa – Eva van de Kaap*, a Dutch/South-African collaboration directed by Basil Appollis. Unlike *Krotoa van Vandag* which only ran locally, *Krotoa – Eva van de Kaap* was performed across South Africa and the Netherlands. However, while I did not manage to see the play for myself, reviews indicate that *Krotoa – Eva van de Kaap* was also set in contemporary South Africa and dealt with the legacies of Krotoa’s emotional and physical suffering (see “Krotoa’s story still shakes us – emotionally battered by clash of cultures.” *Independent Online* (2019) <https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/arts-portal/krotoas-story-still-shakes-us-emotionally-battered-by-clash-of-cultures-18840563>, accessed 20 March 2021).

<sup>101</sup> “Blaqpearl Foundation.” <http://blaqpearlfoundation.org.za/about-us/>, accessed 25 June 2019.

It's about the journey of a girl from [...] the Cape Flats growing up in search of identity. The production depicts her various experiences, encounters & struggles, through music, poetry, storytelling, dance & dialogue, unto the point where she reaches the age of twenty five and embarks on a mission to research her roots and ancestry. Amongst this she finds herself in a peculiar ongoing conversation with her grandmother who tells her about Krotoa [...] She tells her that her roots come from this woman Krotoa and guides her to places in Cape Town where she can learn even more about her story and culture. The girl, at first confused becomes very fascinated and starts reflecting towards the transition for her into claiming her identity, in today's time. Realising that so much of Krotoa's experiences still resonates in the lives of women today<sup>102</sup>

The performance of *Krotoa van Vandag* in Beacon Hill High School in Mitchells Plain in August 2017 made the connections to Khoisan revivalism even more apparent. For one, prior to the play, Mackie addressed the audience of about 250 people with songs in Khoekhoegowab as well as a speech about the colonial origins of Coloured Identity and the lack of recognition for the Khoisan. He also shared his dismay with the movie *Krotoa* and received some cheers when he informed them he was confident about winning the court case related to *Krotoa's Place*. Before Mackie spoke, *Mothers for Justice*, a collective of mothers who lost children in the gang-related violence on the Cape Flats, briefly performed some dancing and spoke of the grief they had endured. The mood was set for the identity crisis thesis to be emphasized in the play itself. Indeed, as the excerpt from the website shows, the main character suffers in ways like the *Mothers for Justice*, leading her down a path of drugs and reckless partying. Her grandmother, played by Blaqpearl, tries to set her straight by telling her about Krotoa and reminding her that “jy het ‘n identity [you have an identity]”, a message the protagonist steadily warms up to and relates to the social ills in her community. At the end, Blaqpearl brings this message home to the audience with spoken word poetry, asking them “where are all the Krotoas van vandag [today]?”, to which they enthusiastically responded. The audience enjoyed the

---

<sup>102</sup> “Blaqpearl Foundation – our programmes.” <http://blaqpearlfoundation.org.za/our-programmes/>, accessed 25 June 2019.

performances very much, with applause lasting for several minutes. As she was cheering, the woman sitting next to me was convinced that the play “was much better than the movie [*Krotoa*]”.

While Blaqpearl actually shared some of the same motivations for writing her play as the people behind the movie *Krotoa*, *Krotoa van vandag* was a bigger hit among Khoisan revivalists because it overtly endorsed its main tenets and ambitions. Contrary to the film, Jan van Riebeeck was only mentioned in passing in *Krotoa van vandag*. The play explicitly focused on the identity crisis and the continuities between past and present. It was also written and performed by one of their own, which certainly played a role in its positive reception. What emerges from these forays into the role of *Krotoa* in Khoisan revivalism is then that the main concern is not so much presenting a picture of *Krotoa* that is as factually accurate as possible, but rather one that relates *Krotoa* to present-day needs. Moreover, these initiatives need to be carried first and foremost by Khoisan revivalists, ensuring they embody appropriate interpretations of the past. As the fallout from the movie *Krotoa* or the destruction of the bench *Krotoa's Place* illustrate, those representations of *Krotoa* that steer from the Khoisan revivalist interpretation are not spared criticism. The idea that these depictions contribute to a disrespectful view of Khoisan history at large is seen as a token of the overall mistreatment of Khoisan revivalists in society. Not surprisingly then, when a debate arose about a new name for Cape Town International Airport and *Krotoa* was among the suggestions, Khoisan revivalists eagerly participated.

After 1994, ‘Cape Town International Airport’ emerged as a preliminary replacement for ‘D.F. Malan Airport’, as it was named after the first apartheid-era prime minister. In March 2018, the Minister of Transport directed Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) to initiate the process of changing the airport’s name to Nelson Mandela International Airport (Vilette 2018). A process of public participation in order to ponder alternative options was part of this procedure. Julius Malema, leader and founder of the opposition party Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), felt the airport should instead be renamed after his mentor, the anti-apartheid icon and ex-wife of Nelson Mandela, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, who had recently passed away. Various politicians opined on the issue and other candidates were added to the list, including Robert Subokwe and Albertina Sisulu, all of

whom black anti-apartheid veterans. Khoisan revivalists put forward Krotoa as their choice on social media. Zenzile Khoisan (12/06/2018) had little faith in the public participation process, but felt partial to both Madikizela-Mandela and Krotoa. Ultimately it had to be Krotoa, however, as she needed to be “brought out into the bigger narrative of South Africa”. Tania Kleinhans-Cedras (11/07/2018) campaigned stridently for Krotoa International Airport, including at the airport itself, but also did not find the public participation process credible. To her, Krotoa was not seriously up for consideration and this was emblematic of the ANC’s disregard of the fact that the Western Cape province will always be populated for the most part by coloureds (see also Ndletyana 2012, 100-101). Another interlocutor shared the letter she sent to ACSA on social media.<sup>103</sup> In it she explains that Krotoa had been “a peace negotiator during times of war and [...] developed the Afrikaans language” through her role as an interpreter. Krotoa had welcomed various other nations to South Africa and her name therefore befitted the Airport of Cape Town International. The name-change would also symbolize undoing the colonial imposition of ‘Eva’ on Krotoa, which she felt forebode the assimilationist processes of apartheid. It ultimately had the potential of fighting the identity crisis and the related violent crime on the Cape Flats. Lastly, not choosing Krotoa was tantamount to ignoring coloureds’ claim to the land and suppressing Khoisan identity and culture (Tanyan Gradwell, 31/07/2019).

Various political actors also opined on the issue. Dawid Kamfer, the Provincial chair of the political party Independent Civic Organization of South Africa (ICOSA) stated that Krotoa was the obvious choice as she was not a political figure and, unlike Madikizela-Mandela, had a strong relation to the Western Cape province: “We can no longer allow the big names in the ANC to grab all the titles in South Africa”.<sup>104</sup> Peter Marais, the ex-mayor of Cape Town and, at the time of writing, representative of the Western Cape for

---

<sup>103</sup> T. Gradwell (6 June 2018, Facebook). <https://www.facebook.com/tanyan.gradwell/posts/10215068718766870>, accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>104</sup> “CT airport name must change to Krotoa - Icosa and EFF debate.” *CapeTalk 567AM* (2018) <http://www.capetalk.co.za/articles/306438/ct-airport-name-must-change-to-krotoa-icosa-and-eff-debate>, accessed 20 March 2021.

the political party Freedom Front+, campaigned for Krotoa International Airport on social media and elsewhere, noting it would be a great way for people to learn about “the indigenous people of the Cape and their heroes”.<sup>105</sup> Like Kamfer, Madikizela-Mandela was a rather absurd choice for Marais (02/07/2018), as he did not see how she was connected to the Western Cape. Marais, who was always aware of his Griqua roots but has been involved with Khoisan revivalism in recent years, explained his views in more detail on his Facebook page:

[I]t must be in her name that we welcome visitors from all over the world and Africa in particular [...] When visiting tourists should ask “who was Krotoa”? We will be able to tell them with a sense of pride “She was the kind lady from Africa who welcomed your forefathers to our shores at the Cape of Good Hope, who gave them fresh food and water, loved and cared for them, sheltered them from the elements, but whose children became the slaves of those she treated so well [...] We have had enough of honouring politicians who did nothing to improve our lives. It will restore the pride in a culture everybody tried to wipe out over centuries<sup>106</sup>

Picking up on the heated discussions, ACSA vowed to make the public participation process “as democratic and inclusive as possible”; setting in motion an ongoing bureaucratic process that ends with the Minister of Arts and Culture making the final decision after receiving a host of recommendations from the Geographical Names Council (Grootbek 2018). ACSA also organized a forum on 4 June 2018 where suggestions for the new name could be put forward (Dano 2018). However, with more than 800 estimated to have attended, the meeting descended into chaos as competing factions tried to get their point across (February 2018). When a Khoisan revivalist warned of “civil war” should Krotoa International Airport not materialize, the organizers called off the meeting.

The Krotoa International Airport saga illustrates the emotional investment that Khoisan revivalists have in Krotoa. It also shows that Khoisan revivalism does not occur

---

<sup>105</sup> “Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport 2018/19 Annual Report.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2019) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/29232/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>106</sup> P. Marais (5 June 2018, Facebook). <https://www.facebook.com/peter.marais.180/posts/2157160891186530>, accessed 20 March 2021.



in a political vacuum. Indeed, politicians of various backgrounds have claimed a stake in the debate; a topic that falls beyond the scope of my thesis, but which I reflect on in the Conclusion. More than politics as such, however, the sentiments that are expressed in relation to the name change campaign, such as claims to the land and marginalization by the ANC, reflect the empowerment and entitlement aspects of the Khoisan identity discourse. I shift my focus to these features in particular in the next chapter.



## 5                      The Khoisan identity discourse (II): entitlement, land claims and traditional leadership

*“Having seceded from South Africa on the 24th of September 2017, The Sovereign State of Good Hope aims to implement a policy of Self Determination [sic] [...] A wise and compassionate soul, the King has clearly and humbly expressed his deep knowledge regarding the abundance of human and natural resources within the Sovereign State of Good Hope. The King is well aware that these resources are currently and historically mismanaged and diverted, resulting in as much as half of South Africa’s population living in abject and hopeless poverty, in relentless fear for their lives and struggling daily with survival under the current political regime. The intention of the Sovereign State of Good Hope is to restore the Nation to a state of dignity, and send a beacon of hope and opportunity to those who are impoverished and suffering; to overhaul the education system in a way that teaches compassion, balance and practical life-skills, whilst eradicating the lies, manipulations, fabrications and misrepresentations from history.”*

- Sovereign State of Good Hope (SSOGH s.d., 2)

On 16 July 2018, ‘King Goab Khoebaha Calvin Cornelius III’ (hereafter King Cornelius) of the Royal Khoisan Nation oversaw the removal of four South African flags from the gates of Parliament in Cape Town, and the hoisting of the flag of the Sovereign State of Good

Hope (SSOGH) in their place.<sup>107</sup> Accompanied by about 50 people, including bodyguards, King Cornelius handed over an eviction notice addressed to President Cyril Ramaphosa, giving Cape Town-based governmental officials five days to vacate the premises.<sup>108</sup> Except for the Khoisan, who became citizens automatically, those wishing to remain in the SSOGH were welcome to apply for citizenship with “our government officials”, provided they had a valid reason to stay. An “Oath of Allegiance”-form was shared on various social media, allowing subjects to swear fealty to their new monarch and rally behind him. The young nation’s boundaries mirrored those of the old Cape province, encompassing the Western Cape, Northern Cape and Eastern Cape up until the Fish River. Drawing on the UNDRIP and the legal counsel of “Law Professor Winston P. Nagan, of Gainesville, Florida [...] a descendent of the Khoisan Nation”, King Cornelius explains in the SSOGH manifesto (s.d., 12-13, 20) that, having exhausted all other means, secession was the only remaining option to stop the government from enacting “[c]onstitutional failure, lawlessness without Justice, hate speech, threats, rapes and xenophobia all targeted towards our own people”. The Khoisan had “absolute rights and entitlement to the land”, and these had been suppressed for too long (Naidoo 2019). In the eyes of King Cornelius, land expropriation without compensation amounted to an illegal transfer of Khoisan land to blacks. The SSOGH website links to various documents that further detail its vision.<sup>109</sup> It also includes King Cornelius’ family tree, reaching all the way back to a certain “#Hâb” in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (see also SSOGH s.d., 4). Based on his royal lineage, Cornelius was sworn in as “king of the nation” in 2001 at “the Last Kraal in Genadendal”.<sup>110</sup> He was inducted into the CCHDC by Joseph Little in the early 2000s, but he soon left to pursue his own ambitions, including a provocative claim on the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront in 2001,

---

<sup>107</sup> “Khoisan group ‘evicts’ ANC.” *Daily Voice* (2018) <https://www.dailyvoice.co.za/news/western-cape/khoisan-group-evicts-anc-16088094>, accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>108</sup> “Khomani San Distance Themselves from Khoisan Sovereign State Call.” *SABC news* (2018) <http://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/khomani-san-distance-selves-khoisan-seceded-call/>, accessed 18 June 2019.

<sup>109</sup> “Sovereign State of Good Hope.” <http://www.ssogh.org/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>110</sup> “Khoisan group ‘evicts’ ANC.” *Daily Voice* (2018) <https://www.dailyvoice.co.za/news/western-cape/khoisan-group-evicts-anc-16088094>, accessed 20 March 2021.

Cape Town's most visited attraction (Besten 2006, 303; Øvernes 2019, 91). As early as 2009, he began to identify as the King of the Royal Khoisan Nation (EN 2009e, 11), but the SSGOH by far landed him the most publicity.

Needless to say, King Cornelius sparked quite a controversy. Among those taking him to task was Patrick Tariq Mellet, an anti-apartheid struggle veteran and heritage expert who commands a sizeable following among Khoisan revivalists on social media and is sympathetic to their cause. In a Facebook post in July 2018, Mellet dismisses King Cornelius' claims of royal descent as fraudulent, "a cut and paste internet job".<sup>111</sup> He also argued that King Cornelius, who purports to fight for the recognition of all "marginalized minority groups [...] the Eurokaner, Afrikaners and Coloured Nations" (SSGOH s.d., 12-13), struck alliances with (White) right-wing separatist organizations to fund and support his activities (see Conclusion). Mellet (2010, 29) has also long decried what he sees as the uncritical borrowing of "feudal terminology" from a European context, such as 'King', to unscrupulously pursue land and financial resources. According to Mellet (16/03/2018), such claims traffic in distortions of history that are reminiscent of apartheid, particularly the assertion "full of holes" that the Khoisan "were here first", have exclusive rights to the land and should sit atop of a reshuffled "hierarchy of rights". The root of the problem, in his view, is a lack of historical criticism and interest in scrutinizing the original sources: "[Some Khoisan revivalists] go through Van Riebeeck's diary and believe as gospel what is written there; they do not read the footnotes".

Mellet regularly broadcasts his own historical interpretations via his blog about Cape history and social media.<sup>112</sup> In 2010, he also authored *Lenses on Cape Identities: Exploring Roots in South Africa*, an autobiographic reflection on the multitude of historical "lenses"

---

<sup>111</sup> P. Mellet (25 July 2018, Facebook). <https://www.facebook.com/melletpt/posts/10155751561342507>, accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>112</sup> "Camissa People. Cape Slavery & Indigene Heritage." <https://camissapeople.wordpress.com/about-2/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

through which to conceive of ‘identity’ in the region.<sup>113</sup> In *Lenses on Cape Identities*, Mellet argues that everyone is ultimately foreign to South African soil and that Cape history is marked by perpetual ethnic fluidity and mixing instead of “neat boundaries”.<sup>114</sup> Cape identity is not about a single indigenous lineage, but about exceptional degrees of hybridity and multiculturalism (see also Ulrich 2015, 38). He even coins an alternative, non-racial form of identification to better capture this: *Camissa*, after the river that runs beneath Cape Town (Mellet 2010, 6). Mellet’s main concern is that coloureds “begin to see themselves as African first and foremost” and do not focus on one lineage, which he deems arbitrary (Patrick Mellet, 16/03/2018). He acknowledges that not all Khoisan revivalists are “charlatans” or overlay their indigeneity with race-based claims (i.e. Coloured identity) (Mellet 2010, 246). Citing among others Zenzile Khoisan and Yvette Abrahams, Mellet recognizes those who revive “in a respectful and informed manner, paying due regard to accuracy and authenticity as they explore their heritage”. Their Khoisan revivalism, he finds, is “not adversarial, aggressive or peppered by bizarre claims and actions [which] drives people to make boundaries and strive for purity” (Patrick Mellet, 16/03/2018). For Mellet, certain elements of Khoisan revivalism are a continuation of apartheid-era efforts to pit coloureds against blacks. He also opposes a politics of entitlement based on indigeneity, seeing more merit in a contemporary needs-based audit in South Africa. Ultimately then, Mellet would like to see Khoisan revivalism

---

<sup>113</sup> In 2020 Mellet published *The Lie of 1652: a Decolonized History of Land* with Tafelberg. While the book stirred up a lot of debate, it falls outside the purview of this thesis because it was published towards the end of the writing phase. However, it seems that much of the writing is based on earlier work, which I do engage with here (Mbao 2020).

<sup>114</sup> Mellet (2010, 67) highlights several episodes to support his argument, mostly from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. He for example flags instances of intermarriage between Khoisan and AmaXhosa. He also seeks to counter “simplistic claims” by referencing the fact that Khoisan participated in the colonial commando system and too migrated to the Cape at some point in time (Patrick Mellet, 16/03/2018; see Chapter Two).

more explicitly distance itself from “apartheid “separate development” ideology and racism”.<sup>115</sup>

Mellet justifiably emphasizes that claims need to be fact-checked, particularly if they come at the expense of other South Africans and involve land, traditional leadership titles, or entitlement in general. This chapter confirms he is right to be wary of claims of purity and (race-based) exclusivity. Like many other critics, Mellet primarily views indigeneity-based entitlement in relation to (in his case, supposedly historically inaccurate claims of) prior occupancy and essentialism (see Introduction). However, during my fieldwork I more frequently encountered indigeneity-based entitlement claims that were not tied to notions of purity, racial exclusion or an anti-African agenda. Most Khoisan revivalists have for instance joined Mellet in rejecting King Cornelius’ endeavours and lineage claims as far back as 2001 (Øvernes 2019, 91).<sup>116</sup> Khoisan revivalists can moreover have multiple motives at the same time and make claims literally, symbolically or hyperbolically depending on the setting. Ruben Richards (2017, 107) concluded that for Khoisan revivalists, “the need to feel that you belong seems to outweigh any other political imperative such as the need to control the political-economy of the country”. Yet, as I show below, aspirations to “control the political-economy” are not entirely alien to the Khoisan identity discourse either. Writing about entitlement in Khoisan revivalism thus becomes a difficult task. It is easier to discern what it is *not* about than to distil a definitive list of issues it pertains to – not least because Khoisan revivalists have no such ‘list’ of detailed demands. In practice, discourses on empowerment, entitlement, self-determination, secession, traditional leadership and land claims are often entangled. Indigeneity-based entitlement claims are therefore best refracted on a spectrum, ranging from radical positions taken up by people like King Cornelius, to less

---

<sup>115</sup> “Stop calling us ‘coloured’ and denying us our diverse African identities.” *Mail & Guardian* (2018) <https://mg.co.za/article/2018-08-02-stop-calling-us-coloured-and-denying-us-our-diverse-african-identities/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>116</sup> See also “Khomani San Distance Themselves from Khoisan Sovereign State Call.” *SABC news* (2018) <http://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/khomani-san-distance-selves-khoisan-seceded-call/>, accessed 18 June 2019.

far-reaching demands and more mundane concerns. The first subchapter shows this in relation to emic delineations of Khoisan indigeneity and discourses on empowerment and land. The second subchapter extends this discussion to traditional leadership claims.

## **5.1 Empowerment, discursive land claims and the boundaries of Khoisan indigeneity**

My ambition in this thesis is to showcase and explain why Khoisan revivalists articulate indigeneity. Pursuing this enquiry, I applied different methods, collected diverse types of data and came across a wide range of answers, which in turn inform the various chapters in this text. However, one of the ways I sought to find out what indigeneity meant for my interlocutors was to ask them point-blank. This was my somewhat naive way of getting emic definitions of indigeneity. I certainly collected such perspectives, but even more so, conversations about indigeneity ended up naturally broaching a swathe of related topics, such as the boundaries of Khoisan indigeneity, who might (not) qualify as indigenous, and what that all meant in terms of land ownership, entitlement and belonging. In this subchapter I give an overview of the contents of these conversations as well as other relevant source material to show how these notions constitute the Khoisan identity discourse as well.

As I explained in the Introduction, claiming indigeneity is not tantamount to demanding a separate state. Some government officials I mentioned in Chapter Three fear this would be the case if the Khoisan are granted indigenous status, but hardly any of the Khoisan revivalists I interacted with wished to secede. Lesle Jansen is the daughter of a prominent Khoisan revivalist and a lawyer working with the NGO Natural Justice, which provides legal assistance to the NKC. In an article for ENN (2016b, 7), she emphasized that the South African state should not fear secessionist aspirations if they recognize Khoisan indigeneity, as international legal instruments on indigenous rights exclude secession from the right to self-determination. As exemplified by the lack of support for King Cornelius and his SSOGH, only a tiny fraction of the Khoisan revivalists I came across



actually desired this (cf. Besten 2009, 147). Tania Kleinhans-Cedras does not want a separate Khoisan state, but instead desires “self-determination”: a way to live within the South African state on different terms, freed from pressures to assimilate and compromise her “true identity” (ENN 2013a, 9). Zenzile Khoisan (24/05/2018) also made a point of stressing how his indigeneity “has nothing to do with subverting the Constitution”. Chantal Revell too stressed that she is not out to secure “superior treatment or want[s] to be treated as a superior Nation”, but only asks for recognition of the Khoisan’s specific historical trajectory and contemporary needs (ENN 2017a, 13). For many, an official acknowledgement of Khoisan indigeneity in this fashion would already go a long way (see e.g. Chantal Revell, 07/01/2014; Zenzile Khoisan, 17/05/2018; Joseph Little, 08/05/2018). This might explain the recurrent demand to have Khoisan identity recognized on South African passports and in the census (see e.g. ENN 2014a, 4; 2014i, 5; 2014g, 14; 2014k, 4).

The vast majority of my interlocutors also did not leverage Khoisan indigeneity to exclude other groups from South African society, or to deny them their rights or historical roots. Chizuko Sato (2018, 209) argues that some identify as “first indigenous” because a ratified ILO 169 — which defines everybody present in an area at the time of colonialism as indigenous (see Chapter Three) — would render all African groups ‘indigenous’ to South Africa. In my experience, expressions of Khoisan identity were not tailored to better fit international law or to one-up others. The argument that emerged during my fieldwork was not so much that ‘everyone is indigenous, but some are more indigenous than others’, but rather that Khoisan indigeneity has a distinctive meaning that only partially relates to notions of prior occupancy. Aaron Messelaar (16/03/2018) believes that if you are born in South Africa, you are indigenous. The Khoisan are the “first indigenous nation of South Africa”, but that does not give rise to special rights, but to “equal rights”; an equal recognition of their identity and culture. Priscilla De Wet similarly uses the term “First Nation” (or “First Nation Indigenous”) to set the Khoisan, “the first inhabitants of South Africa”, apart from blacks, who she also considers “indigenous” (De Wet 2010b, 6, 30). This distinction is meant to assist the pursuit of “equality and restitution of justice from the nation state”, not to chase people away (Ibid., 6). Mackie (16/17/2018; see below) believes that all Africans are indigenous to the African

continent, but that the Khoisan are “aboriginal” to parts of it, which does not grant them “more rights”, but necessitates a historical scope that reaches beyond apartheid: “they are fellow Africans [...] we are not anti-people, we are anti-ignorance, anti-racism”. Jansen also stressed that “[t]here is no question that all Africans are indigenous to Africa in the sense that they were there before the European colonialists arrived and that they were subject to subordination during colonialism” (ENN 2016b, 7). The Khoisan, she argues, use indigeneity in the “modern analytical form [...] to draw attention to and alleviate the particular form of discrimination from which they suffer. They do not use the term in order to deny all other Africans their legitimate claim to belong to Africa and identify as such”.<sup>117</sup>

Just as Khoisan revivalists in the main do not articulate indigeneity to deny others their belonging, or even their ‘indigeneity’, they are also not attempting to recycle apartheid-era Coloured nationalism in an effort to distance themselves from their African roots. In fact, as I detailed in Chapter Three, people like Mackie and Zenzile Khoisan became involved with Khoisan revivalism in part to counter their supposed lack of African roots. Claiming a Khoisan identity is indeed often hailed as the ultimate assertion of African belonging, and therefore the strongest counter to common sentiments that “the Western Cape is not really African” (Cruywagen 2019). For Nolan Berry (18/12/2018), who I return to in the next chapter, “history is like a puzzle you have to put together” and he realizes he chose to emphasize Khoisan ancestry because “the government” refused to see him as an African like any other. If things would have turned out differently, he might “not have considered reviving the Khoisan”. De Wet (2011, 101) also explained that an encounter in Mozambique where someone referred to her as a “*mulata* [mixed-race person]” led her to assert her “Khoesan identity” and join “the Khoesan movement’s quest for the restoration of their rightful place as full citizens in the “new” South African and its history”. Identifying as Khoisan made De Wet take pride in her “African hair and features.

---

<sup>117</sup> These interpretations of Khoisan indigeneity closely resemble the South African governments’ “vulnerable indigenous people”-argument I laid out in Chapter Three. I reflect at greater length on the similarities and differences in the Conclusion.

I finally know who I am, where I belong, and exercise my right to self-identification and identify with my African ancestors, the KhoeSan people”.

One has to take care here not to confuse the term Black, in its South African context, with exclusive access to African roots. Whereas Khoisan revivalists proudly feel African, and thereby reflect the influence of Black Consciousness and Pan-Africanist thinking, their relationship with blacks and with the term Black is more complex (see also Brown and Deumert 2017, 574). Pumla Dineo Gqola (2010, 46) argues that the *!Hurikamma Cultural Movement*, which I discussed in Chapter Two, embodied “a redefinition of how to inhabit Blackness in a post-apartheid South Africa: by identifying as b/Black, African, Brown and Khoi all at the same time”. In her reading, identifying as Khoisan “challenges the narrowness of conservative definitions [...] It works also as an alternative to ‘coloured’ because it chooses an indigenous African trajectory of naming over a colonially imposed one” (Ibid., 52). While I have not encountered Khoisan revivalists who simultaneously and explicitly embrace various labels in the way Gqola discerned (though I did not ask them about this directly either), Khoisan revivalism certainly amounts to a belated ‘Africanization’ of Coloured identity; but not as Black, which most Khoisan revivalists deem meaningless and politically ineffective. For Mackie (02/07/2018), the problem is that Black in the post-apartheid era came to exclusively denote African belonging, thereby foreclosing his ability to identify as African: “Black was supposed to bring us together, but it is not working [...] it does not explore the depth of colonialism”. Growing up in a family of staunch pan-Africanists, Basil Coetzee (06/05/2018) similarly endorsed the ideas of the Black Consciousness Movement early on, apart from its emphasis on the label “Black”, “a European colonial construct” he is dead set against (see Chapter Two). The word ‘Native’ was “corrupted” to mean ‘Black’ as they “are not native to South Africa. Africa, yes, of course, but not South Africa” (Basil Coetzee, 12/05/2018). “Coloureds” were not thought of as indigenous “because it was said they came about as a result of black and white coming together. Because of history books we never viewed ourselves as natives or indigenous”. Coetzee (25/04/2018, see below) emphasized that “this is not to say they have no place here [...] or not belong here”, just like whites or other groups: “the AmaXhosa have a large degree of Khoi DNA [...] we share the clicks and so forth so they are not our enemies”. He ultimately wants to see “race” abandoned in the post-apartheid

era: “It’s about historical rights, self-determination and recognition [...] We are not the passengers in the bus here and [others] the drivers, we should be the drivers as well”. In an article for *Eland Nuus*, IRASA similarly argued that race was an invention and therefore not an appropriate concept “within a true democracy” (EN 2012e, 9). The continued use of race in post-apartheid society only worked to further “subjugate and dehumanise the KhoiSan”.

Then again, as I noted at the beginning of Chapter Four, Khoisan revivalism is articulated in relation to Coloured identity and therefore inescapably functions in large part as a vessel to express ‘Coloured grievances’. Conversations on indigeneity naturally drifted towards issues related to their ongoing racial categorization as Coloured as a result. Khoisan revivalists often speak of the need to ameliorate the living conditions of ‘our people’ in this regard, but which people are they referring to? Some certainly seem to consider all coloureds as Khoisan, as an ENN contributor did when he put the number of Khoisan in South Africa at 8.5 million, roughly the number of coloureds in the country in 2013 (ENN 2014h, 10). Critics such as Richard van der Ross (2015, 22) have debunked such statements by pointing out that not just the Khoisan were categorized as Coloured, but various other groups as well, including from outside the continent. The flipside of the argument could be used to counter the same statement as well: Khoisan ancestry is found among various population groups, not just coloureds. As I noted, most Khoisan revivalists do not deny the multiple lineages that make up Coloured identity, nor do they simply equate the two (see below). Their view is rather that all Khoisan were labelled Coloured, but that not all coloureds are necessarily Khoisan. This still does not resolve the question of what then makes someone ‘Khoisan’. As I show below, the answer is intriguingly complex. Conversations where I probed the supposed boundaries of Khoisan identity were difficult to navigate, as it might have felt at times as if I was trying to ‘expose’ people’s identities. While there are seemingly endless interpretations of who counts as Khoisan and who does not, particularly when discussed in relation to claims of traditional leadership (see below), two common, but non-mutually-exclusive or definitive, elements surfaced during interviews: a show of dedication to revive Khoisan identity and a credible claim to the experience of being known as Coloured (i.e. the identity crisis; see Chapter Four).

For Mackie (02/07/2018; see below), who prefers “aboriginal” to “indigenous” because it denotes a presence as far as time stretches back, “everybody has the genetic makeup of Khoisan”, so the relevant question is “what were you before?”. If prior to embracing Khoisan identity, one has enjoyed certain privileges associated with another label, including Coloured, one has to renounce these. The longer one identifies as Khoisan, the longer one can “cultivate that spiritual relationship to the land [which] counts for something” (Mackie, 05/07/2018). Indeed, in Mackie’s view, those “arriving late to the Khoisan struggle” should have to explain why it took them so long. The test, in Mackie’s view, is therefore “not based on looks or tribal affiliation”, but on a combination of dedication to Khoisan revivalism and a rejection of Coloured identity. William Langeveldt (12/03/2018; 27/03/2018) suggests a “verification process” to check whether people “truly come from the areas they said they come from” to ensure they are not identifying as Khoisan for ulterior motives. Another interlocutor likewise did not exclude anyone from claiming Khoisan identity on biological terms, but demands an explanation from non-coloureds why they did not identify as Khoisan sooner (Tanyan Gradwell, 31/07/2019). Growing up with another racial label meant a person did not undergo the same history of discrimination, potentially accessed certain benefits, and knew “who they were for centuries”. Zenzile (24/05/2018) put forward a similar view as he described indigeneity as being “aligned with your foundational being [...] Asserting who you are beyond anybody’s control”. According to Zenzile, competition over resources however gives rise to all manner of ill-conceived boundaries of Khoisan identity. Proving a single link to the Khoisan within one’s family tree suffices to be seen as a “descendant” — a point also made by Joseph Little (08/05/2018), who sees this as enough of a “link” to claim indigeneity and “indigenous rights”. At the same time, Zenzile (24/05/2018) believes that Khoisan revivalists should also “associate themselves with, and actively practice, the lost culture [...] they should live out the revival and set right what was destroyed”. When I asked Zenzile if this meant whites could also qualify, this was fine provided they “apologize” for being part of an oppressive system and explain why they did not distance themselves from it earlier: “If you have not witnessed a history of oppression, this renders you way down the line in terms of entitlement to indigeneity”.

The link between Khoisan identity and the experience of being known as Coloured (under apartheid) is constantly affirmed — but not necessarily as an absolute criterion. Intuitively, Khoisan revivalists seem to relate to the same kind of experiences in this regard and accept one another based on a shared understanding; organically giving rise to something which could be seen as a Khoisan revivalist “imagined community” (Anderson 1991, 6). In this sense, Khoisan revivalists are inclusive of people of various backgrounds, race and creeds – a point also observed by the SAHRC in its report on Khoisan marginalization (SAHRC 2018, 50). At the same time, the ‘Coloured experience’ seems enshrined in the Khoisan identity discourse, which includes the commonly held sentiment that those labelled Coloured are woefully ignored by the ANC government. There is a strong sense among coloureds in general that whites control the economy and blacks the political sphere, leaving them to fall by the wayside (Adhikari 2004, 173). One interlocutor even spoke of being marginalized by a form of “Black majoritarianism, Black apartheid” (Joe Damons, 16/07/2018). ANC officials have on occasion certainly expressed sentiments that seem to suggest that coloureds ought to fall in line with a Black-African agenda, for instance by pursuing a strategy of deriding any embrace of Coloured identity as anti-African (see e.g. Farred 2000, 56). For some Khoisan revivalists, their marginalization is part of a larger design to oppress coloureds and multiple examples are cited to prove their point, as I show in the remainder of this subchapter.

One example that is sometimes cited is the purported lack of recognition and overall mistreatment of veterans from the *Suid Afrikaanse Kleurling Korps* (SAKK) [Cape Coloured Corps (SACC)] — the previous Coloured branch of the apartheid army — some of whom have become involved in Khoisan revivalism, such as Basil Coetzee (06/05/2018; see also ENN 2013a, 8; Messelaar 2015, 61). According to Zenzile Khoisan (07/05/2018), the fact that soldiers in the SAKK, many of whom joined to escape poverty, were dismissed after 1994 instead of being integrated into the reformed defence force like other contingents shows that the ANC considers them as “traitors”. As the SAHRC report on Khoisan marginalization (2018, 75) notes, this meant among other things that SAKK veterans could not access the same retirement benefits as other personnel. Some of the veterans have caused a controversy by reportedly establishing a “Khoisan Nation Self Defence Unit”, threatening to use violence against “South Africa’s black colonial government” if they

were not taken seriously and “ancestral land” was not returned (Secorun 2018). The same source claims the Unit is a few hundred strong, but none of my interlocutors ever mentioned them. Be that as it may, the SAKK was certainly frequently referred to in general terms as a sign of Khoisan marginalization. For Mellet (16/03/2018), this is proof that many Khoisan revivalists essentially endorse racial segregation. I have not done enough research among ex-SAKK members by far to make an assessment in this regard. In the context of my MA I did attend a “wreath laying ceremony for the fallen Khoisan soldiers throughout history”, organized by IRASA at the SAKK’s recreational centre in Athlone (Verbuyst 2015, 90-91). I describe the ceremony in more detail in my MA thesis, but it essentially drew a historical parallel between the SAKK and Khoisan resistance to colonialism to showcase their ongoing marginalization by the post-apartheid government. The link between Khoisan revivalism and the SAKK certainly deserves further scrutiny, but it did not play a major role during my fieldwork.

Much more prevalent were grievances related to affirmative action policies and immigration to Cape Town. People have been moving to Cape Town for decades, predominantly from the Eastern Cape province (Western 2001, 635). Fear for the effects of this movement of people was part of the apartheid regime’s warning of the so-called *swart gevaar* [black danger], which was used to whip up support among whites and coloureds who were eager to safeguard their positions of relative privilege (Posel 2001, 98). People however never stopped moving to Cape Town and coloureds were no longer the absolute majority demographic in the Cape Peninsula by 1985 (Van Kessel 2001, 228). Migration picked up speed after apartheid, causing the city’s population to expand rapidly and informal settlements to mushroom across the Cape Flats and the Northern Suburbs (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001, 642; Western 2001, 627; Mosselson 2010). Till this day, the economic and cultural impact of immigration remains a hotly contested issue in the Western Cape. Crudely put, the migration of blacks to areas with great concentrations of coloureds is seen by some as an unwelcome development because it reduces the latter’s employment opportunities and limits their access to housing — objections that are often formulated in the same breath (Stevens 1998, 209). For Basil Coetzee (12/05/2018), unchecked immigration is part of the state-sanctioned “forced integration and assimilation” of coloureds, which also includes turning a blind eye to crime and violence.

He also feels unfair positive discrimination policies (see below) are allowing blacks to skip ahead of others in waiting lists for social housing: “If I go to Port Elizabeth [in the Eastern Cape] I would not get ahead” (Basil Coetzee, 06/05/2018). Another interlocutor felt deliberately “ring-fenced” by Black squatter camps, which according to him drastically reduced the number of opportunities for coloureds (Mackie, 16/17/2018). Another contribution in ENN similarly sensed that

our living space is taken over by African Nationals and the ANC encourages blacks to ‘take their province back’ [...] The more coloureds that are drugged and killing each other, the more space for blacks! We only become a minority since the blacks arrived! Check your history books, not the ANC history books, but the real history that goes back to 1652, and then you will see things for what they are (ENN 2013f, 7).

Despite the overtly racialized nature of these types of complaints, one of my interlocutors, Tanyan Gradwell (31/07/2019), insisted that it is not racist to oppose “this influx of people” as it results in the further marginalization of the Khoisan. Zenzile Khoisan (07/05/2018) explained to me in an interview that he feels compassion for those migrating from the Eastern Cape as “they too are disappointed in failures of leadership”. However, he also recognized it gave rise to frustrations (“a feeling of suffocation”) among coloureds, particularly in the job market. Affirmative action policies, in place since 2003 and known as Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) since 2008, strive to undo apartheid-era discrimination by requiring companies to employ a certain percentage of non-white staff and provide programs to develop their skills and careers (Knight 2014, 29). Coloureds benefit as well from BBBEE, but many interlocutors complained they do so to a far lesser degree than blacks. Zenzile (07/05/2018) argues that the problem in the Western Cape is that the national equity criteria on which the policies are based are out of sync with the demographic make-up of the province, where coloureds are the largest population group. There is a strong sense among Khoisan revivalists (and



others) that blacks are therefore disproportionately advantaged.<sup>118</sup> According to William Langeveldt (2016, 85), BBBEE is racist because it forces the Khoisan to identify as Coloured in order to benefit. Interlocutors regularly complained that they or their relatives and friends could not get employed because of BBBEE. Editions of ENN also feature testimonials from people who are fed up with affirmative action (see e.g. ENN 2013b, 5). One respondent for instance complained that “Foundation Nation applicants are discouraged to apply for positions, even though they have the necessary skills, experience and expertise. They are told straight don't apply because a black person must be appointed” (ENN 2013f, 7). Others point to the fact that this exacerbates the already high unemployment figures, which in turn worsens the identity crisis (ENN 2014k, 3). Affirmative action as such is not always opposed, but it would have to include the Khoisan in a more meaningful way (ENN 2014e, 10). As Tanyan Gradwell put it: “We want people to get involved in running the businesses and owning them” (Tanyan Gradwell, 31/07/2019). Though it is not clear what this entails in practice, some companies have begun to explicitly support Khoisan revivalism by advertising in ENN as law firms that are sympathetic to the cause (ENN 2014a, 7), a “*trotse eerste nasie maatskappy* [proud first nation business]” specialized in electricity and lighting services (ENN 2013a, 3), or “*Eerste Nasie finansiële dienste* [First Nation financial services]” providing insurance policies (ENN, 2016a, 5).

As I noted in Chapter Three, mounting frustrations have made indigeneity an increasingly popular and volatile form or leverage to accentuate grievances that are traditionally related to the experience of being known as Coloured. One episode from my fieldwork stands out. It relates to the social movement *G@tvol Capetonian* [fed-up Cape Town citizens], which was set up in 2017 by three well-known activists in Mitchells Plain

---

<sup>118</sup> Affirmative action policies remain shrouded in controversy. In 2020, Glen Snyman, a coloured schoolteacher identified as “African” on a job application, which some saw as a fraudulent claim, intent on getting ahead of disadvantaged groups (“Glen Snyman: South African accused of fraud for saying he's 'African'.” *BBC News* (2020) <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54531457>, accessed 20 March 2021). Snyman defended his choice by stating that he was “first and foremost” South African. I have not been able to locate any studies that examine the diverging impact of BBBEE on coloureds vis-à-vis blacks.

and campaigns around socio-economic issues affecting coloureds, such as housing and organised crime. *G@tvol Capetonian* was founded just days before violent conflicts broke out as residents from Siqalo, a predominantly Black informal settlement lacking basic infrastructure, began protesting and destroying property in adjacent Mitchells Plain (Jacobs and Levenson 2018). Fadiel Adams, one of the leaders of *G@tvol Capetonian*, confronted the protestors from Siqalo and threatened to retaliate together with other disgruntled residents. He felt blacks should not protest about housing because coloureds “had been here since before the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck” and welcomed everyone else in; unlike blacks who “don’t want to share; they want it all” (Pather and Whittles 2018). Adams complained about “people from the Eastern Cape” avowedly unjustly skipping the cue on waiting lists for social housing (see above). He refused to “shut up and sit down” and vowed to get as “physical” as the government in its “housing, employment and economic war”. *G@tvol Capetonian* has reportedly organized numerous land occupations of their own in response, setting up illegal structures on vacant land across Cape Town. The organization demands better housing conditions and social services, but also openly flirts with the idea of an independent state, “where we don’t have racism [and] there will never be a hungry person” (Kamaldien 2018). Some commentators have argued that *G@tvol Capetonian*’s politics are an incarnation of the anti-Black Coloured nationalism of apartheid, as evidenced for instance by its alleged ties to the Cape Party, a small-scale White-dominated political party that advocates for a separate state (Jacobs and Levenson 2018; see Conclusion).

The reference to the Khoisan is certainly novel in Coloured nationalism, which brings me to the fieldwork event I want to share: a meeting called by *G@tvol Capetonian* on 30 July 2018 in Beacon Hill High School in Mitchells Plain. The gathering was billed as a “Call for unity”, a brainstorm session on how to best organize coloureds to increase their political leverage and have their voices heard. Though not advertised as a meeting about Khoisan issues specifically, a Khoisan revivalist stood at the entrance of the hall chanting and burning incense. I also estimate that two thirds of the roughly 200 hundred people that turned up were Khoisan revivalists because Khoisan issues were brought up at a every turn, not just during the “Special Announcement – Promoting Khoisan Culture, Issues and Plight”, as listed on the programme. The dynamics of the meeting functioned somewhat

like an echo chamber. Various activists and representatives of organizations attending the meeting delivered impromptu speeches about Khoisan indigeneity being the last frontier against land expropriation without compensation and that their identity as indigenous people needed to be urgently recognized. One speaker received cheers when he pretended to spit on the floor while rejecting Coloured identity and stating that “our nationhood was taken from us with Jan van Riebeeck, yet we are still here [...] We survived apartheid, we survived colonialism and we will survive this as well”. Like other speakers, he felt that his “dignity” had been stepped on. A *G@tvol Capetonian* spokesperson joined him in embracing his Khoisan roots: “We are Khoisan people. We are here and we are staying here. We are ready to take back what rightfully belongs to us [...] They all found us here and raped and murdered us”. Mackie was also present in his animal skins and exclaimed “we are not poor, we are dispossessed. The Khoisan are not poor, the coloureds are poor!”. Now more than ever, it was argued, the government pursued divide-and-rule tactics. Increased protest, activism and subversion of the state were the appropriate response. All of this was met with applause, although the meeting ended without a specific plan on how to move forward. Additional research is necessary to ascertain whether these types of meetings are representative of the increased salience of Khoisan issues within Coloured identity politics.

The *G@tvol Capetonian* meeting did however clearly evidence the increased appeal of Khoisan indigeneity in debates surrounding land, as I already noted in Chapter Three. And yet, as with so much else related to Khoisan revivalism, the discourse on land is characterized by a wide range of positions. On the one hand, blanket statements such as those made during the *G@tvol Capetonian* meeting that ‘all of South Africa’ belongs to the Khoisan as they ‘were there first’ are frequently voiced, both privately and publicly (cf. Sato 2018, 207). William Langeveldt (12/03/2018) maintains that “the [old] Cape Colony, all of Namibia, as well as the western half of Botswana are Khoi territories”. For Joseph Little (08/05/2018), the matter was quite straightforward as well, the Khoisan had the oldest presence in Southern Africa and “everyone else founds us here”. An IRASA manifesto from 2012 similarly argued that “South Africa is founded on stolen land, the descendants of the invaders are squatting on KhoiSan land, our association with our ancestral land was disrupted by colonial invasion” (IRASA 2012, 47). For Tania Kleinhans-

Cedras (03/01/2015), charging Khoisan revivalists with illegal “occupations” is therefore nonsensical: “how do you occupy what belongs to you?”. A contributor in ENN similarly insisted that all existing title deeds are null and void, since he inherited “*elke sentimeter* [every centimetre]” of Southern Africa by birth right (ENN 2014i, 5). It is common when making these sort of abstract claims to leverage rock-art as a type of title deed; an analogy also made by others as far back as the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Deacon 1997, 28; Prins 1998, 112; Morris 2014, 656). Joseph Little (08/05/2018) argued that the spread of rock-art paintings across Southern Africa is proof that the land does not belong to blacks. Tanyan Gradwell (31/07/2019) too reasoned that “we have rock-art all over, we own those countries”. Cecil Le Fleur made a reference to rock-art in the same vein when he addressed President Cyril Ramaphosa at the opening of the House of Traditional Leaders in 2018:

If you visit the mountains, valleys and riverbeds of our beautiful country Mr president, you will see the ancient title deeds of our ancestral lands beautifully painted on the walls of the caves and grafted on the faces of the rocks in the valleys. These almost holy places of heritage survived through thousands and in some cases for hundreds of thousands of years to be used by us today as testimonies to our claims for land in the country of our origin (Le Fleur 2018)

Interpreted in this way, rock-art serves as the ultimate marker of indigeneity; it cuts across any bureaucratic red tape in the land restitution process — principally the need for a written title-deed and the dispossession to have occurred after 1913 — and leapfrogs centuries of dispossession and dislocation. Rock-art is moreover historically related to Khoisan spirituality and embedded in the relationship Khoisan revivalists cultivate with land more generally. The inability to access rock-art sites that are located on farms is a common complaint (see e.g. ENN 2014h, 2). IRASA (2012, 47) and others flagged their inability to relate “spiritually” to “holy sites and sites of remembrance” in general. For Vanessa Ludwig (19/08/2019), Khoisan revivalism is about “heritage, rootedness, ancestry [...] the bones of my ancestors are in a specific piece of territory [...] I want to be able to go there and have the right to carry out my rites, I am not saying I need to live there or own it, but it has to be recognized that I have that connection”. Ownership is indeed also a contested subject in Khoisan revivalist circles. For Zenzile Khoisan (24/05/2018), “ownership is a complete contradiction of indigeneity, it taps into a vertical

hierarchical concept of society. Indigeneity has nothing to do with kicking people out”. Willa Boezak (03/05/2018) too believes Eurocentric views on land “completely clashed with the worldview of indigenous people, who had a spiritual relationship with the land”. Land reform, in his view, however needs to address real material concerns, by taking into account “economic realities”. What this means for Khoisan revivalists is not clear, not least because policy proposals in this regard have been highly ambiguous (see Chapter Three). None of my interlocutors however wanted to evict present-day occupants. Joseph Little (08/05/2018) clarified that he does not want to “chase people away” as they too have contributed to South African society. He does believe that “the base” should be owned by the Khoisan, the rest can be negotiated. Others too have demanded a bigger share of South Africa’s mineral wealth, possibly through royalties, in reference to past and present mining operations located on historical Khoisan territory (ENN 2017b, 5). Basil Coetzee (12/05/2018) made a similar observation, stating that he had no interest in farming himself, but that more Khoi should have ownership of those farms and enjoy part of the profits.

In line with my earlier findings about entitlement more broadly, despite their diversity, claims to land are on the whole clearly not intent on dispossessing others. Khoisan revivalist land claims are certainly rooted in pragmatic concerns, as evidenced by the Siqalo protests surrounding housing or the various statements I referenced. But they are simultaneously pegged on issues that I described somewhat casually as “symbolic” in my MA thesis. As I explained in the Introduction, I surveyed a series of sites in and around Cape Town to understand why and how Khoisan revivalists were claiming ‘land’ (Verbuyst 2015, 63-116). Back then and now, I hardly encountered people who were trying to claim back specific plots of land because they or their families were historically dispossessed, as is generally the case in land restitution in South Africa. Instead, claims were mostly abstract and collective in nature, sometimes related to specific sites, but most often expressed through the blanket statements I discussed above. ‘Land’ functioned mostly as a metaphor for their exclusion, not so much as a means of procuring specific physical spaces (cf. Verbuyst 2016). The discourse on land thus acted as a way to express grievances regarding “Coloured identity, history and healing”, as I put it in 2016. Revisiting this assessment in light of later findings I would perhaps speak instead of

‘discursive land claims’ to highlight their embeddedness in the Khoisan identity discourse, particularly the various aspects related to entitlement I discussed above. In this sense, land remains a gateway issue, connected to various other concerns of Khoisan revivalists (cf. Van Wyk 2014, 25). Interestingly, Cherryl Walker came to somewhat of a similar realization when reflecting on pre-1913 land claims in general:

It is not so much that these claimants believe that we should be dealing with the disposessions of the colonial past. It is rather that many of them do not place the colonial period in a distant, previously experienced but now concluded past - they present historical personalities and events almost as if they are still alive, operating in some sort of meta-present. In these popular histories, historical figures [...] are active and meaningful contemporary reference points. At times the evidence can be woven together into the most exhilarating collage, in which time and causality are completely subordinated to the requirements of the claimant's personal, current quest (Walker 2000, 5)

As I noted in the previous chapter, historical continuities are at the core of Khoisan revivalists’ engagements with the past and are indeed reflected in their discourse on land, which I revisit at some length in the Conclusion. Highlighting both the historical and current Khoisan presence in Cape Town is key for Khoisan revivalists, not only to deepen their belonging, but to counter the Khoisan extinction discourse and address the colonial character of the city (see also Bam-Hutchison 2016, 19). This presence is asserted in relation to iconic places in Cape Town, as well as in more general terms. As I showed in Chapter Three, a seminal event in 2012 aimed to restore the “indigenous name” of the city itself, //Hui !Gaeb. It is common to speak of !Huri#oaxa or ‘Hoerikwaggo’ instead of Table Mountain in Khoisan revivalist circles for similar reasons. Robben Island too, is frequently linked to Autshumato more so than Nelson Mandela, arguably its most famous prisoner. A contemporary picture of Robben Island for instance circulated on social media with the caption “Autshumato Island”. In his poem *Robben Island*, Basil Coetzee (2019a, 27) too seeks to restore the often forgotten associations of the island with Khoi historical figures such as Krotoa, Stuurman or Autshumato. Driving around with Coetzee, he often regretted that streets and areas were often given nonsensical or offensive names: “All the streets are named after white artists, politicians and poets of the apartheid-era. They tells

us nothing about ourselves [...] We have thousands of poets, where are they? They are nowhere, they are not honoured” (Basil Coetzee, 06/05/2018).<sup>119</sup> As I mentioned at various point in this thesis, Khoisan revivalists have already begun making both physical and symbolic interventions in this regard, ranging from erecting small commemorative signs at meaningful locations in Cape Town, to calling for the city and its airport’s name to reflect their presence. In closing I want to reiterate that the notion of ‘discursive land claims’ in no way negates the material concerns of the land debate. Nor does it foreclose Khoisan revivalists’ desire to claim ownership of specific sites that are meaningful to them. It is also not a reflection of what Khoisan revivalists necessarily desire as an outcome in the ongoing policy negotiations regarding pre-1913 land restitution. More research is necessary to audit their current views on land, which are certain to be far-ranging. What my subchapter does argue for, however, is that the discourse on land needs to be seen as part of a wider Khoisan identity discourse. As I show next, I make a somewhat similar observations with regards to another core feature of Khoisan politics: traditional leadership.

## 5.2 On Khoisan revivalist traditional leadership

Reflecting on the fieldwork I carried out in the context of my MA research, I noted in 2015 how I was struck by the amount of “kings and chiefs” I had met along the way (Verbuyst 2015, 12). My subsequent visits to the field were equally filled with encounters with Khoisan traditional leaders with various titles and ambitions. As I noted in the Introduction, most of the media coverage of Khoisan revivalism deals with this issue as well, particularly if it involves controversial claims like those of King Cornelius.

---

<sup>119</sup> It should be noted that things in this regard are slowly changing. Cape Town is for instance home to a “Dawid Kruiper bridge” since 2015 (see “Cape Town footbridges to be named after SA legends.” *News24* (2015) <https://www.news24.com/news24/travel/cape-town-footbridges-to-be-named-after-sa-legends-20150626>, accessed 20 March 2021).

Traditional leadership has never been at the centre of my research; in the sense of honing in on a specific set of Khoisan traditional leaders and scrutinizing in detail what the institution meant to them. I welcome this kind of research, however, as it would generate ethnographic data that might fine-tune, challenge or invalidate some of the views I present below. My thoughts on the topic are indeed provisional and drawn mostly from indirect engagements with a number of Khoisan traditional leaders and their organizations, rather than a sustained analytical enquiry based on an extensive data set. I did attempt to work more closely with some Khoisan traditional leaders and their organizations at various points during my fieldwork. For reasons that I can only speculate on — except for one occasion, where I was denied access because I refused to pay for the privilege (see Chapter One) — my attempts were largely fruitless. Based on informal conversations, I suspect the people in question might have feared that I was out to ‘expose’ the ‘inauthenticity’ of their claims. After all, as I explained in Chapter Three with regards to the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act (TKLA), certain Khoisan revivalists have been anticipating the official recognition of Khoisan traditional leadership organizations and the accompanying privileges and benefits for years. Having a critical researcher poke around might seem detrimental to their efforts. Skepticism of my ‘true’ motives might explain why my questions about topics such as membership figures, lineage or funding were frequently dodged, or why my overall attempts to find out more were stonewalled. Perhaps a researcher who is able to negotiate a greater degree of trust and access could provide insights into these matters. Then again, another reason why I believe that my attempts to shadow Khoisan traditional leaders in their explicit capacity as such were not successful is because Khoisan revivalists in general face organizational challenges and it is not always clear (to them) what their (day-to-day) activities consist of. In other words, for reasons I elaborate on below, while I interacted with various Khoisan traditional leaders, it was unclear whether they were acting in that capacity at the time.

This brings me to the main argument I want to develop with regards to Khoisan traditional leadership within Khoisan revivalist circles in Cape Town: emic perspectives on Khoisan traditional leadership are articulated in conjunction to contested, shifting, and at times contradictory, sets of criteria; which in turn suggests a strong



improvisational component to them, rather than a uniform adherence to a specific historical reference point.<sup>120</sup> As I noted in Chapter Three, Khoisan revivalist traditional leaders often face scrutiny for the way they reference the historical record to bolster their lineage and entitlement claims. In no other Khoisan revivalism-related context are claims as contested and potentially impactful as in the realm of Khoisan traditional leadership. Critics' insistence on fact-checking claims is therefore highly appropriate (see also Oomen 2005, 113). However, perhaps as a consequence of the apparent inflation of such claims, scholars have been less inclined to explore other reasons why Khoisan revivalists use traditional leadership titles and set up traditional leadership organizations. An important exception is William Ellis, who argued that Khoisan revivalist traditional leaders in many ways function like their historical predecessors, who also had a "situational", i.e. improvisational, creative and dynamic style of leadership (Ellis 2019). For Ellis, Khoisan revivalism continues to revolve around spokespersons who are 'leaders' in their own right in certain settings, but embody a link to Khoisan 'tradition' that renders them credible 'traditional leaders' by their peers and followers. I read Ellis' argument as an invitation for further ethnographic research on Khoisan revivalist traditional leadership, in particular concerning the arguments that are mobilized to bolster and contest claims. The following foray into issues of Khoisan traditional leadership therefore proceeds along these lines.

Regarding the use and interpretation of the different types of titles themselves, as one Khoisan revivalist observed in relation to the word "chief", which is most commonly used by Khoisan revivalists to denote a position of traditional leadership, "in the Khoisan revival we use the title 'chief' with no clear meaning or content to the title" (ENN 2013e, 5). As varied as the expressions of traditional leadership, are the divergence of opinions

---

<sup>120</sup> I am not trying to ascertain whether or not these entities are 'tribes', 'clans' or institutions of 'traditional leadership' as defined in some of the (older) literature. Drawing on Archie Mafeje (1971, 18), it is perhaps more accurate to speak of an "ideology of tribalism" rather than an empirical 'tribalism', as "things are not necessarily what they are known as socially". While one could certainly be critical towards the explanatory potential of the terminology that is used (in English) to describe traditional leadership in Khoisan revivalist circles, this is not my aim here and I stick with emic registers.

about it. To some, “chief” is a demeaning and offensive colonialist label (Cornelius Kok, 02/09/2014). Some argue there were never “kings” in Khoisan history, while others vehemently defend a monarchical tradition (ENN 2013b, 10). Some of my interlocutors claimed patrilineal succession should be the organizing principle among Khoisan traditional leaders, while others believed the title of “chief” should pass to the oldest living member. Yet others believed a successor should simply be appointed by the incumbent. One Khoisan revivalist even turned to the work of historian Richard Elphick to clarify how traditional leadership titles ought to function in Khoisan revivalism (ENN 2013e, 5). Yvette Abrahams (16/07/2019) in turn argues that her historical research has shown that hierarchical positions of leadership were a reaction to colonialism, and in fact foreign to the precolonial Khoisan, as there is no evidence is to argue otherwise. While she decries the rapid increase of and competition over traditional leadership positions, she understands that people might view it as a “vehicle out of their marginalization” and did not have the same privileged access to information that she had enjoyed as an academic. Abrahams moreover sees the diverse expressions of traditional leadership as potentially liberating, in the sense that they refuse to fit into a government-approved mould and continuously prompt new interpretations of the institution.

On that note, I got the impression that titles such as “chief” and “leader” are more often used to show respect and acknowledge one’s commitment to the cause of Khoisan revivalism, rather than to explicitly endorse someone’s claims. As I show below, one’s contributions to Khoisan revivalism are indeed regularly factored in. Interestingly enough, the legitimacy of a specific person’s claim is usually not questioned publicly. This might be because Khoisan revivalists are well aware of the fact that such contestations more often than not only add fuel to the fire, and in turn cause political negotiations to stall, or at least become more complex. Barring criticism of the NKC, or any other government-sponsored entity for that matter, contestations of leadership claims in the main take place in private settings, through gossip or closed chat groups on social media. Another way they find expression is by being referenced indirectly or in abstract terms, such as the complaint in ENN (2014j, 13) that “certain organizations” often make claims “on behalf of the nation” without the mandate to do so. As will become apparent, the more a Khoisan traditional leader or organization reaches prominence, manages to

secure meetings with government officials or accesses funding, the more their legitimacy will be contested in public by other Khoisan revivalists. This is also the case when their claims of entitlement compete with those of others or reach great heights, as was the case with King Cornelius and his SSOGH. Indeed, if mostly done so privately, the boundaries of Khoisan traditional leadership are fiercely policed and charges of opportunism abound because so much is thought to be at stake, ranging from benefits related to the TKLA, to simply being in a position of power to lead others. William Langeveldt (27/03/2018) discerned a scourge of “fly-by-night chiefs, opportunists” in this regard. Chantal Revell (10/12/2014) also mentioned that some “suddenly became chiefs” when they sensed benefits were forthcoming. To one interlocutor, traditional leadership legislation was therefore “a little carrot on a stick”, yet “another push to assimilate us and pit us against one another” (Hillary Solomon, 10/10/2017).

As I noted in Chapter Three, many Khoisan revivalists became less involved because they felt traditional leadership contestations were straying the whole endeavour from its original purpose. Vanessa Ludwig (19/08/2019) for instance felt that “in the beginning the movement was about invisibility, not about materiality as it has now become for many. We did not have this stratified system of chiefs [...] The government puts their own understanding of culture on us, we cannot accept it”. Basil Coetzee (06/05/2018), who like Ludwig was deeply involved in the early days of Khoisan revivalism, likewise believes “chieftaincy ruined everything [...] our original cause was to free people of mental slavery”. He regrets that those Khoisan revivalist traditional leaders who arrived later seem less interested in “assisting with the recognition of heritage or preservation of it” (Basil Coetzee, 13/12/2018). Like many others, Coetzee suspects that many publicly reject the TKLA, but are in effect mobilizing behind the scenes to reap its benefits when it becomes law:

Somebody who called himself proudly Coloured a few years ago; how can he be King today? [...] People fabricate bloodlines, copy paste from Google and so forth. I am the spoke in their wheels because I am familiar with this history and I point out these fabrications [...] Today there are about nine or eleven Cochoqua houses so I

withdrew myself. I am not part of a circus. I am busy with restoring a people's dignity. I am not in it for a job (Basil Coetzee, 25/04/2018; 06/05/2018)<sup>121</sup>

Coetzee was himself appointed as “chief” of the Cochoqua tribe within the CCDHC. However, he argues that this was different in various ways. The CCHDC used the concepts “chief” and “tribe” because they opted to work with the information they had at the time, even if they suspected it was not entirely faithful to the way Khoisan traditional society was originally organized (Basil Coetzee, 13/12/2018). Their intent was never to “retribalize people” by recreating “tribal settings”, but to create “structures to coordinate” headed by people they could trust. Through the CCHDC and related organizations I discussed in Chapter Three, Coetzee and others came up with a set of internal rules for the recognition of Khoisan traditional leaders. This effectively meant that anyone who was in some kind of position of leadership within a certain community or area could apply for recognition, provided that position had not yet been filled. However, as I showed, this system soon collapsed as people began competing over positions, particularly those at the top of the hierarchy (see below). Then again, for Coetzee (25/04/2018) chieftaincy should have nothing to do with politics or power, which is why he prefers *Khoeseb* (*Khoeses* for women) these days, which means “man of high standing”. Coetzee believes traditional leadership should be mostly ceremonial: “I am a community activist, chieftaincy is not about that [...] Politically I am Basil Coetzee. People know me as a Khoi chief because of my many years of service and because I am a custodian”.

Zenzile Khoisan (24/05/2018) for his part concurs that “there is a place and time for traditionalism”, but that it should never come at the expense of “constitutional liberties and rights”. We should not to confuse “an indigenous leader with indigeneity”, particularly if they promote the “racist and reactionary principles” enshrined in the TKLA (Zenzile Khoisan, 07/05/2018). On that note, Zenzile (24/05/2018) also stressed that he did not believe that people should become subsumed under a “chieftaincy” if they did not

---

<sup>121</sup> Basil Coetzee was not exaggerating when he noted that there are numerous people competing over the same title or claim to be the leader of the same historical tribe. During the 2018 public hearing on the TKLA I described briefly in Chapter Three, three speakers for instance claimed they were the “chief” of the Cochoqua.

want to, and that leaders equipped with certain powers should never be left unaccountable. Instead, rather than a “vertical” leadership design, he sees more potential in the “circular” model as “practiced by the Bushmen”, based on listening and consultation, rather than delegation (Zenzile Khoisan, 29/06/2018). To Zenzile’s regret, this mode of leadership is seldom put into practice and many instead shape the institution with “underdeveloped ideas”. He fears that Khoisan traditional leadership is increasingly becoming a cover to promote retrograde agendas and curtail women’s rights (see also Ainslie and Kepe 2016, 28). While the sexes seem more or less evenly represented among Khoisan revivalist traditional leaders, Chantal Revell (19/08/2019) has indeed experienced how some draw on supposed “Khoisan traditions” to discriminate against women. During our conversations, Zenzile (29/06/2018) often wondered if these types of issues were not signs that he should relinquish his support for the institution of Khoisan traditional leadership, beginning with his own group, the Gorinhaiqua Cultural Council. As far as I can tell he has not disbanded the Council to date, but he certainly continues to call out those who mobilize Khoisan traditional leadership to stoke conflicts and manufacture claims of “purity” in the process.

Unlike some other settings where appeals to genetics are mobilized in intra-indigenous conflicts over leadership positions (see e.g. Sturm 2002, 203-204; see above), such contestations are absent in Khoisan revivalist circles. Critics have pointed out that genetic identity claims flirt dangerously close with notions of essentialism by conflating DNA with identity labels (Brodwin 2002, 323-327; Jobling, Rasteiro and Wetton 2016). However, contrary to what some scholars have claimed with regards to Khoisan revivalism (see e.g. Morris 1997; Erasmus 2013, 40, 44), I have not seen references to genetic ancestry become mobilized to trump the rights of others or to manufacture claims of purity. As I explained in the Introduction, the genetic strain most commonly associated with the Khoisan is most prevalent among present-day coloureds, though certainly not exclusively. Virtually all Khoisan revivalists acknowledge this. However, they often simultaneously emphasize that if someone were to judge their identities through a genetic lens, their claim would be the *least* refutable (see e.g. ENN 2013b, 3; IRASA 2012, 16; ENN 2017a, 11). Somehow laying claim to genetic descent is an added bonus so to speak, not an absolute criterion to claim Khoisan identity. Genetic descent is therefore

mostly appealed to in the abstract sense, as a type of scientific leverage to rebuke notions that the Khoisan are extinct, not to bolster one's personal claims to Khoisan identity or traditional leadership positions as being (more) pure (cf. Schramm 2016, 138-139). Some have explicitly rejected undergoing a genetic test because they felt that would reify colonialist ideologies of purity and blood quantum (Mackie, 08/01/2015). As Ruben Richards (2017, 102) put it, while "the DNA of the ancestors [is] still running through their veins – with the heartbeat of the first nation still pumping in their breasts – pumping with a sense of pride and dignity", for Khoisan revivalists, genetics is but "only one element in the identity mix".

More hotly contested than genetics are so-called bloodline claims or notions of adhering to 'authentic' Khoisan cultural practices. There is no agreement among Khoisan revivalists about the importance of either of these when claiming traditional leadership positions. Some, such as King Cornelius, claim to be direct descendants from historical Khoisan leaders. "Chief Gokou II of Hessekwa" from Riversdale for instance claims he is a fifth-generation descendant from "Chief Gokou", and therefore entitled to wield his authority over a vast stretch of territory (ENN 2017a, 4). However, perhaps because such claims are believed to be untenable, bloodline descent is seldom mobilized this explicitly. Most seem uncertain about the extent to which claiming continuity with the past in genealogical terms or otherwise ought to be important (see Chapter Six). While a 2012 document compiled by IRASA notes that the Khoisan should "not be fragmented with various clans, which is reinforced by ideological political prospects" (IRASA 2012, 160), Tania Kleinhans-Cedras (05/01/2015) seems to have changed her mind when she told me in 2015 that the only way to avoid "making a joke out of the whole thing" is to prove one's bloodline and ancestry. Proceeding in this fashion would weed out the various "opportunists" that are "degrading" the cause by fraudulently claiming descent from historical "clans" and taking on a swathe of "Eurocentric" titles – "chief" being the only exemption as this, according to her, reflects original Khoisan traditional leadership titles. As her family is from the West Coast, which she considers historical Cochoqua territory, she aligned herself with the Cochoqua and assumed the title of chief (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras 03/01/2015; see also Verbuyst 2015, 106-110). When it comes to asserting positions of leadership, Kleinhans-Cedras (23/01/2015) believes that "talk is cheap" and that one's

track-record should count most of all, not bloodline descent. She maintains in this regard that IRASA was “the only Aboriginal KhoiSan organization that has steadfastly refused to be co-opted politically [and] unambiguously maintained our Aboriginal Cultural KhoiSan stance, categorically and publicly” (IRASA 2012, 160). Equally important in claiming traditional leadership positions is one’s involvement in their community:

If you are not doing work in the area to uplift the people, that should disqualify you. In the case of traditional leadership it is more about revivalist efforts than claiming bloodline descent [...] You can either be elected by people as chief or by birth right. The Commission on Khoi-San matters is going to make public fool out of many people that are claiming all those things only to see them debunked (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 11/07/2018)

Chantal Revell (19/08/2019) has a similar position on the matter. When she started being involved in Khoisan revivalism she refused to become a chief or to take any other title. However, when the Katz Koranna Royal House kept insisting that Revell officially join their House as a “princess”, she eventually accepted. King Katz felt she had put in so much effort to help organize the Royal House that she became like a daughter to him, hence he believed the “adoption”-gesture was appropriate. As Revell clarifies, her title is only honorary, as Katz’ grandson will inherit his grandfather’s title. She soon experienced that the title of princess opened doors for her, particularly when trying to get meetings. Experiencing the effects of her newfound title on her daily life made her realize that traditional leadership titles were perhaps more than anything an appropriate form of recognition of one’s contributions to Khoisan revivalism (see above), which is why Revell makes a point of using people’s preferred titles as a way of showing respect. She is confident that the legality and validity of claims will be vetted later, once appropriate legislation is in place. According to Revell, bloodline descent should not be the only criteria, but those that can legitimately make such claims do fulfil a special role, as she believes they are the closest one can get to a custodian of “traditional Khoisan culture”. This is why she had to “travel to the Kalahari to look for my leaders” when she began to be involved in Khoisan revivalism (Chantal Revell, 07/10/2014). Revell (07/03/2018) regrets that newcomers do not “respect the knowledge of their elders”, mostly out of ignorance, as this causes much of the infighting. While much of this “ancient history” still

needs to be assembled and updated to adhere to “modern times”, she believes “traditional culture” should function as a guide for Khoisan traditional leaders: “When it comes to us, people mix everything, they make their own culture. They do not study or go into the history”.

Some in fact hold that practicing authentic Khoisan culture should be the main requirement to occupy traditional leadership positions. Aaron Messelaar (2015, v) believes that a Khoisan traditional leader should first and foremost possess a solid foundation in traditions and customs; something he believes many Khoisan revivalists lack. As he put it to me in an interview, many of the recent Khoisan revivalist traditional leaders “said before they are not Khoi because they have European ancestry [...] I ask them: you say you are a chief where are your Indians? What about your wife and children are they a part of it? If not, how can you be a chief” (Aaron Messelaar, 16/03/2018). It is a net positive that people are rediscovering their identities, but too many are opportunistically claiming traditional leaderships titles; turning a cultural movement into a political competition (Aaron Messelaar, 06/10/2017). Some Khoisan revivalists, such as Ernest Solomon, have anticipated such criticisms by stressing that they “were confirmed entirely according to indigenous protocols” by undergoing the “New Moon *!Nau* of dedication” (ENN 2015, 4; see Chapter Six). He also warned that leaders who lack such credentials and instead “see the Khoisan revival as a way to abuse our people [and] do not have the concerns of our people at heart, but use the cause for their own benefit” will be purged (ENN 2014e, 2). Joseph Little (08/05/2018) for his part regards himself as the sole “paramount chief” and therefore the only one fit to carry out *!Nau* ceremonies to usher in new chiefs (see Chapter Three). He disqualifies anyone who was not sworn in through a *!Nau* he presided over as others do not possess the required cultural knowledge and occupy the appropriate positions to conduct such a ceremony. Little is confident that future developments will bear this out and put a stop to the current climate of “opportunism and back-stabbing”. People were still welcome to apply for recognition with him as long as they adhered to the guidelines of the CCHDC; i.e. if they hail from a specific area where no tribal house has yet been established, explain why they have not come forth earlier and gathered a “tribal council” of at least 12 people (Joseph Little,



17/05/2018). As I show in the following chapter when I discuss the *!Nau* in more detail, Little continues to carry out such ceremonies till this day.

As I suggested earlier, exchanges over what constitutes appropriate ‘traditional’ cultural behaviour and who qualifies as a Khoisan traditional leader can get especially heated when there is competition over specific resources. A prime example is the conflict that occurred in 2014 over the rights to access the potential Khoisan heritage site at the eco-village located in Oude Molen in the Cape Town suburb of Pinelands. Some Khoisan revivalists believe it went unrecognized that this is where the defeat of D’Almeida took place in 1510 (ENN 2014b, 8). As I explained in the previous chapter, 1510 is celebrated by Khoisan revivalists as the first anti-colonial battle. The Gorinhaiqua Cultural Council, led by Zenzile Khoisan, furthermore believed Oude Molen was where the kraal of the 17<sup>th</sup> century leader of the Gorinhaiqua, Gogoso, was originally located, and therefore also where the First Khoikhoi-Dutch war was fought (ENN 2013d, 3; 2014f, 3; see also Verbuyst 2015, 97-99). As the revived Gorinhaiqua, the group felt they had to turn the site into a space where “we can begin to rebuild ourselves, and heal from the historical trauma at the hands of those who attempted to crush Khoisan people in an orgy of cultural genocide” (ENN 2014b, 1, 8). IRASA, and primarily Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, argued that the site instead belonged to all; claiming it for just one group sowed disunity (Nombembe 2014).<sup>122</sup> Together with some 50 followers, she proceeded to occupy the site for several days, although she declined to characterize it as an ‘occupation’ since the land belonged to the Khoisan, and instead described it as an “act of restoration”. The Gorinhaiqua Cultural Council reportedly condemned their actions as a publicity stunt that ran counter to “Khoi principles” and would only antagonize the government and make negotiating future access to the site more complicated (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 14/10/2014). They also added that IRASA was “not grounded in any customary or indigenous protocol” and had only managed to marginalize itself within the broader Khoisan movement and sow disunity, “possibly with a commercial motive”.

---

<sup>122</sup> As I noted earlier, Tania Kleinhans-Cedras later apparently changed her mind and believed that affiliating with one particular historical tribe was appropriate. Ironically, Zenzile Khoisan for his part contemplated dissolving his own group because he believed this might facilitate creating unity among Khoisan revivalists.

It is unclear what further transpired at Oude Molen. The occupation ended shortly after it was initiated and the area has not been turned into a heritage site to date. The actors involved seem to have resolved their conflict, in so far as I regularly spotted them together at events and interact with each other on an amicable basis. Khoisan revivalists understand that infighting is ultimately detrimental to their cause as they could exert more pressure on the government by working together, and this realization might have played a role. Many have certainly actively sought to unite competing factions. Chantal Revell (07/10/2014), who has a background in counselling, has been attempting to unify Khoisan traditional leaders since 2013 (see also ENN 2014j, 12). Her efforts have been only marginally successful, a track-record she partially blames on the lasting legacy of colonial divide-and-rule tactics: “We are a nation in arrested development. Colonialism split up families and pitted members against each other”. During a protest on Indigenous People’s Day in 2017, which I discuss in more detail in the next chapter, there was an episode that captured very well how emotions can run high during these attempts to quell infighting. As a couple dozen Khoisan revivalists were standing in a circle after the protest to discuss the way forward, disunity was diagnosed as the main impediment. The usual speeches were given, suggesting that there was no need to fight as everyone essentially wanted the same thing. Revell intervened by asking the female traditional leaders to step forward and hold her hand in prayer. They all agreed on a solemn “declaration” to set the right example by no longer attacking each other in the future, some of them in tears. The Foundation Nation Restoration (FNR) has also organized several “Foundation Nation Convocations” since 2013 to unite the Khoisan by drawing on religious principles (see Chapter Four). I attended one of these events in 2014. The various attendees were asked at the beginning of the proceedings to walk through a maze made out of carton boxes, which had notes pinned to them identifying “internal” and “external” challenges (i.e. ‘distrust’, ‘money’, ‘government interference’) (see also ENN 2014k, 7). The idea was to confront these challenges and emerge stronger from the “maze” and engage in a productive dialogue about “the bigger picture” afterwards.

Infighting has been addressed in various other ways, but one suggestion that keeps coming up and needs to be elaborated on in light of this subchapter’s focus is that of setting up one overarching organization of Khoisan traditional leaders, where all parties

have an equal say and get the opportunity to work out their differences free from government interference (see e.g. ENN 2013a, 12). There have been several attempts to establish such bodies, but none seems to have achieved their stated objective. A case in point is King Cornelius and his SSOGH, which did not become a rallying point for Khoisan revivalists, on the contrary. Another organization that actively pursues unity is the Western Cape Legislative Khoisan Council (WCLKSC). It was established in 2015, with “all the Aboriginal Nation Formations [...] of the Western Cape and elsewhere present [...] after a series of crisis meetings” (WCLKSC 2018, 1). As its first act, the WCLKSC (Ibid.) revoked all the government appointed bodies that negotiate about Khoisan issues and asserted that they would henceforth take the lead. The group argues this was greenlighted by various government officials, who reportedly recognized the WCLKSC as “the most representative body of the KhoiSan in the Western Cape Province”. I did not come across this endorsement, and hardly any of my interlocutors mentioned the WCLKSC. It is also unclear what its specific ambitions are or how it seeks to accomplish them. Mackie (05/07/2018), who chairs the organization, believes that tribalism is undesirable as it pits people against each other. Yet he also defended his chairmanship by noting that he was “elected by the 17 tribes” that make up the organization. Mackie (04/07/2018) also asserts that there is nobody with an “unbroken lineage” and that people should therefore first and foremost feel part of “a nation, a collective”. In the WCLKSC’s (2018, 3) submission to Parliament concerning the TKLA, however, it explicitly demands that “Cape Khoi clans [be] recognized individually, not collectively”. It is unclear if the WCLKSC is still in operation, how large its support base is and what its track record is thus far.

As I noted in Chapter Three, one organization that took the initiative to unify the Khoisan quite far was Khoisan Kingdom (KSK). Despite its name, KSK described itself as a non-monarchical entity. Yet they clearly attempted to become the leading arbiter concerning who counts and does not count as Khoisan. In an advert in ENN (2014a, 3-4) entitled “strength in numbers”, the KSK assessed that “the movement for the recognition of Khoisan rights have been plagued by problems of disunity and general ill-discipline” and called to “gather around one table and talk with one voice”. They more specifically pleaded with Khoisan revivalists to stop creating their own organizations and unite by joining KSK (ENN 2014j, 12). KSK members actively profiled their organization as the sole

body capable of pushing Khoisan politics forward. It is a common grievance among Khoisan revivalists that there are not enough people with the right skills and training to effectively run an organization (De Wet 2010b, 26-27). KSK responded to this by stressing that they were the only ones with a “clear plan” and strategy on when and how to effectively deploy “human and material resources” to make sure initiatives were not “short-lived or sabotaged” (ENN 2014d, 14). A newly joined KSK member wrote to ENN (2014a, 3) to endorse them as “the only effective vehicle for the unification of the Khoi and Boesman Nation”. Most Khoisan-related initiatives are also self-funded, which poses a huge challenge for many (De Wet 2010b, 58). In organizing various activities across Cape Town (and beyond) and buying up advertising space in ENN, KSK has clearly shown it has ample financial capital. They also boasted on one occasion that they had “briefed a team of advocates and experts in the field” to ensure ‘Khoisan’ would be included in the census of 2021 (ENN 2014k, 4; see above).

While membership was free and could be arranged by filling in a short form on their website, which is now offline, the criteria were never specified (ENN 2014a, 3-4).<sup>123</sup> By showing ‘strength in numbers’, KSK aimed to counter the government’s supposed excuse that it was impossible to negotiate with the Khoisan because there is no clear leadership in place (ENN 2014b, 5). In an open letter to politicians ahead of the general elections of 2014, KSK representatives notified the government it would need to recognize their organization “as the representative of most Khoisan structures” alongside the “customary roles and positions” it had to fulfil (Ibid.). KSK not only argued they should be recognized because they had unified the Khoisan, but also because they had proven their traditional leadership credentials through their actions, “the real test to see who someone really is” (ENN 2014d, 15). This, they argued, should be one of the “fundamental criteria” for how Khoisan traditional leadership is recognized in the spirit of “self-determination”, together with “group-acceptance” and “a combination of strict and loose

---

<sup>123</sup> As I showed at the beginning of this chapter with King Cornelius and the SSOGH, the practice of amassing members by letting them sign forms is ongoing, perhaps in large part because the incoming Commission on Khoi-San matters will likely vet Khoisan organizations in part based on their number of followers (see Chapter Three).

bloodlines” (ENN 2014g, 4, 8). While it claimed in 2014 it would manage to rally “99% of houses [...] on own initiative and not government driven” under its banner by the end of the year, it apparently ceased its operations soon thereafter (ENN 2014a, 4).

The specifics of KSK’s apparent inactivity are unknown to me, but it is clear that initiatives like these seem to collapse because of mistrust, lack of financial resources and skills, and a host of other differences of opinion regarding Khoisan revivalist traditional leadership claims which I laid out (see also Verbuyst 2015, 141). The TKLA might streamline such efforts in the future or at least regulate the way Khoisan revivalist traditional leadership organizations (cannot) structure themselves — a topic I revisit in the concluding chapter. However, the different interpretations of traditional leadership are likely to remain precisely because the institution is considered malleable to Khoisan revivalists’ current needs. As I showed, the contestations indeed largely revolve around the degree to which continuity with the past and change are permissible. Seen in this light, Khoisan traditional leadership is but one aspect of Khoisan revivalism as a whole, which, as I show in the next chapter, too navigates the same tensions, though perhaps with less politically-charged consequences at stake.



## 6 Reviving Khoisan culture: between continuity and change

*“Language of our ancestors, language of our fore parents, language of my mother. My language. Welcome to //Hui !Gaeb (Cape Town). Our leader welcome. Creator bless the words of this leader so it can strengthen us. Let the name of the Creator Tsui //Goatse be lifted high. We honour. We are in praise and we are thankful that the Creator carried us through the day. Please guard over us during the night. Creator help us to unite for our heritage. Creator bless our coming in and bless our going out. Bless everything that is said and bless everything that is heard. Bless us in our journey to inherit the Kingdom of the Heavens. Our Creator. Creator of our ancestors. Our father Tsui //Goatse. Oh let it rain. Let everything live please.”*

- Bradley van Sitters, 2019 State of the Union Address

Cape Town-based Khoisan revivalist Bradley van Sitters delivered these words in Khoekhoegowab at the 2019 State of the Union Address when he acted as that year’s praise singer.<sup>124</sup> Never before was a Khoisan representative invited to ritually introduce the president or was Khoekhoegowab spoken on such an occasion. The fact that the event

---

<sup>124</sup> Van Sitters later provided an English translation of what he said to the *Independent Online*. The transcript, as well as video footage of the event, is available at “#SONA2019: This is what the Khoisan imbongi said.” *Independent Online* (2019) <https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/sona2019-this-is-what-the-khoisan-imbongi-said-27030378>, accessed 20 March 2019.

marked 25 years since the advent of democracy in South Africa only increases its significance. Aside from lauding Cyril Ramaphosa, who ascended to the presidency after Jacob Zuma resigned in the face of mounting corruption scandals in 2018, and pleading with *Tsui //Goatse* to bring rain to break the protracted dry spell South Africa was experiencing at the time, Van Sitters used his brief moment in the limelight to draw attention to Khoisan issues as well. Though few at the time were capable of following what he was saying, Van Sitters emphasized the ancientness of Khoekhoegowab, deliberately spoke of *//Hui !Gaeb* instead of Cape Town and called on everyone to “unite for our heritage”. Not contained in the transcript he provided to the media, but apparent in the video footage, Van Sitters, who was dressed in animals skins, also honoured Khoisan ancestors such as Krotoa, Xhoré and Autshumato — a practice I have witnessed on several other occasions (Khoza 2019; see below). The MPs and various dignitaries in attendance enthusiastically repeated their names as Van Sitters lifted a set of kudu horns above his head and pointed them in all cardinal directions. Chantal Revell stood behind Van Sitters the whole time, beating a drum and keeping a modest profile. She had been instrumental in getting him on board just hours before. Ramaphosa had explicitly requested a Khoisan praise singer and the NKC was asked to suggest potential candidates (Chantal Revell, 26/06/2019). After its chairperson learned that Paul Swartbooï, a Nama from the Northern Cape, was not available, Revell was asked to get in touch with Van Sitters, who is well-known for his language activism in the Cape Town area.

The pair made history on 20 June 2019, but all eyes were on Van Sitters. Zindzi Mandela, the ambassador to Denmark and the daughter of ex-President Nelson Mandela, tweeted that his performance had given her “goosebumps”.<sup>125</sup> Khoisan revivalists lit up my social media feed with posts congratulating Van Sitters and celebrating his actions as a turning point for Khoisan revivalism. Many of them also rushed to his defence when a number of critics put the authenticity of his speech into question. A Namibian journalist charged Van Sitters with not speaking the language “properly” and thereby peddling a

---

<sup>125</sup> “#SONA2019: Twitter loves Khoisan imbongi, Zindzi gets goosebumps.” *Independent Online* (2019) <https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/sona2019-twitter-loves-khoisan-imbongi-zindzi-gets-goosebumps-26874640>, accessed 20 March 2021.



“misrepresentation” (Khoza 2019). Van Sitters, who studied Khoekhoegowab at the University of Namibia, readily admitted he was not a native speaker, nor “the best speaker, best linguist”, but that he made up for it with his passion for the language and Khoisan culture.<sup>126</sup> Focussing on accuracy moreover risked detracting attention away from the more pressing matter of officially recognizing Khoisan languages in South Africa. In Van Sitters’ view, his way of speaking Khoekhoegowab should be seen as a new “dialect” — a Khoisan revivalist dialect, one might say.<sup>127</sup>

The debate that ensued in the wake of the 2019 State of the Nation Address only partially revolved around language; a topic I revisit later on in this chapter. The ‘authenticity’ of acts of Khoisan revivalism more broadly were scrutinized in the process as well. Indeed, Patrick Tariq Mellet, who I introduced in the previous chapter, responded to Van Sitters’ critics on Facebook by suggesting how one should (and should not) consider the notion of authenticity in a setting of indigenous revivalism:

The critics say that Bradley had a poor grasp of the Khoekhoegowab language, had difficulty with pronunciation, utilised memory of known Khoekhoegowab texts etc. So what! [...] It is quite understandable that people are feeling their way through their cultural roots and are on a learning curve [...] Purity arguments are at root based in Apartheid racist mentalities and those who hold such views are as so-called "impure" as the rest of us. They live in a fool's paradise of impurity. Bradley is no charlatan and makes no claim to be born "pure" [...] Yes our brother Bradley showed all the scars of this past in his rendition. It only makes him more authentic than less so<sup>128</sup>

---

<sup>126</sup> “Watch: People expected too much of me – Khoisan praise singer.” *News24* (2019) <https://www.news24.com/news24/SouthAfrica/News/watch-people-expected-too-much-of-me-khoisan-praise-singer-20190624>, accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>127</sup> “Bradley van Sitters Defends SONA Performance.” *SABC News* (2019) <http://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/bradley-van-sitters-defends-sona-performance/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

<sup>128</sup> P. Mellet (21 June 2019, Facebook). <https://www.facebook.com/melletpt/posts/10156456776417507>, accessed 20 March 2021.

By rejecting “purity” and affirming “authenticity” in spite of the “scars of the past”, Mellet’s riposte aptly names the tension between ‘continuity’ and ‘change’ embedded in the revival of Khoisan culture. Distinguishing between acts of Khoisan revivalism that constitute ‘continuity’ or ‘change’ vis-à-vis the past does not contradict my definition of indigenous revivalism as a dynamic process that continuously navigates ‘past’ and ‘present’ (see Introduction). As with any other ‘culture’, every expression of Khoisan revivalism evidences some measure of continuity and some degree of change. One can, and should, question the arbitrary nature of the reference points that determine such equations. If seen in this manner, ‘continuity’ and ‘change’ correspond to outdated conceptualizations of static cultures, which, in the spirit of the Khoisan extinction discourse, could moreover disqualify Khoisan revivalism as inauthentic for being tainted with ‘change’. As Sam Pack (2012, 177) put it with regards to the similar binary “traditional-modern”: “they connote a false watershed demarcating a pristine past that has been sullied by contemporary forces”. And yet, I argue that ‘continuity’ and ‘change’ can retain analytical purchase if they are not used as etic measuring sticks, but understood as emic signifiers. Khoisan revivalists themselves often, though certainly not always (see below), find these kinds of terms meaningful to differentiate between their own and others’ efforts. As I showed in previous chapters and elaborate on in the following, appraising each other’s ‘continuity’ and ‘change’ is to large extent part and parcel of the competition over the “authenticity” that is believed to be required to access (potential) resources. However, the use of such categories also reflects different motivations for reviving Khoisan culture. Hence I divide the subchapters into acts of Khoisan revivalism that seek to emulate the past as it once ‘was’, and those that deliberately introduce novel or innovative elements. Granted, this does not absolve me of nevertheless determining where my interlocutors place their emphasis, which is rarely absolute or one-sided. While not in any way reflecting a degree of authenticity, consigning certain data into one subchapter or the other in that sense remains arbitrary. However, as I show below, the distinction proves meaningful as an analytical lens as it reveals paradoxical strategies of reviving Khoisan culture: emphasizing continuity or change are equally potent.

Three caveats are in order before proceeding. The first relates to my methodological limitations. My open-ended definition of Khoisan revivalism impedes a comprehensive overview as it encompasses both large-scale public events as well as private everyday acts (see Chapter One). This also means that I have already said a great deal about the revival of Khoisan culture in other chapters. The difference in this chapter is that I shift the emphasis from what Khoisan revivalists *say* to what they *do*. But here too, I am faced with certain challenges. The writing process in particular has exposed various gaps. The fine-grained ethnographic data I was set on collecting has in some respects taken a backseat to a more varied overview of events. This is in part because of my intention to survey Khoisan revivalism as a whole and my fears of getting bogged down in a case study that might not be ‘representative’. Another factor relates to my positionality (see Chapter One). During fieldwork I often felt I had to straddle a fine line between expressing genuine interest in, and being respectful towards, Khoisan identity and culture, at times by and keeping an appropriate distance, *and* prying about details, origins and meanings. As I explained with regards to traditional leadership in the previous chapter, probing these issues might come off as inquisitive. Someone who is able to negotiate a greater degree of trust might receive more leeway and insight into the ‘backstage’. It is not so much that I was explicitly made aware of this by Khoisan revivalists (although that did happen on occasion), or that I am implying they did so because they have something to ‘hide’. Rather, it was a gut-feeling I experienced during fieldwork, which subsequently impacted my data-collection.

Then again, and this brings me to the second caveat, topics such as culture and authenticity are without a doubt sensitive for many Khoisan revivalists. There are two principal reasons for this. As I noted above and showed in Chapter Five in particular, there is a widespread perception that being “authentic” is key to procuring resources, and true enough, the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act (TKLA) demands Khoisan revivalists (and others) to conform to a certain type of authenticity in order to qualify for benefits. But a second reason why culture and authenticity are loaded terms for Khoisan revivalists is the belief that their authenticity is judged more severely than others due to the spectre of the Khoisan extinction discourse. Some Khoisan revivalists reference the “cultural genocide” in this regard, a common recourse in contexts involving indigenous people (cf.

Niezen 2003, 5). While argued for by various Khoisan revivalists (see e.g. ENN 2014j, 3; 2016a, 14), IRASA members were particularly instrumental in mainstreaming the term. In a couple of articles for *Eland Nuus*, IRASA explained what they mean by this concept:

Cultural genocide extends beyond attacks upon the physical and or biological elements of our KhoiSan nation and seeks to eliminate its wider institutions. It is the complete destruction of a culture for political, racial or military reasons, which includes language, art, music, traditions, religious and anything else unique to that specific culture [...] To embrace the term “coloured” makes you culpable of cultural genocide! (EN 2012c, 9; 2012e, 9)

Cultural genocide thus refers to *both* the historical and contemporary systemic erasure, assimilation and suppression of Khoisan identity and culture. In 2012, an IRASA delegation travelled to New York to put it in a complaint with the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 05/01/2015). In the document in question, entitled “Cultural Genocide of the KhoiSan Nation”, IRASA pleads for increased support by noting that they meet all the requirements to be recognized as indigenous people as stipulated in relevant international legislation. For Tania Kleinhans-Cedras (03/01/2015), the legacies of cultural genocide run “deeper” than those of a physical one, as the former continues unabated in the present. Their argument is indeed tied to the identity crisis; hence the recurrent pleas for self-determination. A great deal of Khoisan revivalists share these views. It is quite common to characterize the colonialization of the Khoisan as having particularly devastating effects. One Khoisan revivalist informed a reporter from *News24* that “[w]e lost too much to even try to explain — our land, our livestock, our culture, language, way of life, our heritage sites and historic landmarks, our forefathers’ farms, our identity and our first-nation status”.<sup>129</sup> Basil Coetzee (25/04/2018; 13/12/2018) also reasoned that the Khoi and San are “the worst affected because our colonization trajectory took centuries [...] 180 years ago colonialism started for other African groups. Our culture was removed long time ago, theirs preserved

---

<sup>129</sup> “Khoi-San: Abolish the term ‘coloured’.” *News24* (2013) <https://www.news24.com/News24/Khoi-San-Abolish-the-term-coloured-20130524>, accessed 20 March 2021.

in the homeland system”. Many others shared this perspective on homelands and what they meant for the preservation of Bantu identity and culture (EN 2012d, 9; ENN 2014j, 9).

The reasoning behind the cultural genocide argument bespeaks the aforementioned tension between continuity and change as it concomitantly confirms and dismisses the (in)authenticity of Khoisan revivalism. Mellet’s comments about Van Sitters’ authenticity are a case in point. Referring to a process of cultural genocide is used to dispute any purported lack of authenticity by referring to systemic oppression, but it simultaneously acknowledges a certain degree of inauthenticity precisely because of that same oppression, which is moreover tied to arguments that Khoisan culture is under threat of extinction, resulting in a complex dialogue with the Khoisan extinction discourse I say more about in Chapter Seven. Then again, and this brings me to my final caveat, as I will show, certainly not all Khoisan revivalists are preoccupied with (in)authenticity or endorse the cultural genocide argument, particularly if it is mobilized to compete with other groups over who suffered (and suffers) most. To some, the preponderance of questions surrounding authenticity have faulty premises. I was made aware of this quite directly when the proprietor of a “first indigenous tea shop” quipped “the revival is bullshit” when I told him about my research. His popup shop was filled with bows and maps indicating the origins of his teas and their medicinal qualities. Pointing to these items, he explained how knowledge had been passed down for generations in his family. For him, there was no need to “revive” anything, the mere presupposition was offensive to him. As I explained in the Introduction, despite the concept’s connotations to the contrary, I do not use ‘revival’ to name a process of bringing something back that is no longer there. In line with what I noted earlier, to me, it is better understood as a process straddling continuity and change. As this chapter attests, it would be a mistake to reduce Khoisan revivalism to a slavish exercise in copy-pasting from the past, or to presume that Khoisan revivalists are not aware of, or upfront about, the effects of historical change on Khoisan culture, or the necessity to imagine what has been lost (see also Messelaar 2015, 23). As Mellet put it, most Khoisan revivalists are aware that they are just as “impure” as anyone else and many also have a sense of humour and relativism about it. Other scholars who have engaged with Khoisan in Cape Town or elsewhere have come to similar conclusions (see e.g. Ellis 2014, 502; Øvernes 2019, 8). Basil Coetzee (25/04/2018) summed

it up best: “It’s not recreating yourself, it’s actually creating who you are. You must create what was, we cannot recreate anything it goes back too far”. These caveats need to be taken into account when surveying the revival of Khoisan identity and culture, which I turn to next.

## 6.1 “Like stepping into a time machine”

On International Indigenous People’s Day, 9 August 2017, a group of Khoisan revivalists led by Tania Kleinhans-Cedras and Mackie gathered in front of the Castle of Good Hope to stage a protest. When I arrived to the scene they were present with roughly 25 supporters, each holding up placards highlighting Khoisan-related grievances. They were waiting for more people to show up, as the intent was to form an “Aboriginal Khoisan human chain” around the Castle. Kleinhans-Cedras had called on social media for Khoisan revivalists to turn out *en masse* to mark International Indigenous People’s Day and broadcast their plight to the media. While the first hour was rather uneventful, eventually a couple dozen people showed up and joined the protest. There were not enough people to achieve the human chain, but they spread out to take up as much space as possible. The group then coalesced around Mackie, who was standing in the middle of the road, chanting, dancing, and occasionally blocking traffic. For a brief moment he even laid flat on the ground. Together with Kleinhans-Cedras in particular, Mackie railed against the Castle and the legacies of colonialism it embodied, describing it as a “slaughterhouse”, the “home of the first paedophile” (in reference to Jan van Riebeeck) and the place where Krotoa had suffered for decades. This went on for about half an hour, after which the group walked around the Castle, chanting along the way. They halted close to one of the walls of the Castle, where a number of homeless people had set up shelter. These people’s living conditions, it was argued, was the ultimate symbol of Khoisan marginalization: “their” descendants “were forced to sleep” outside this bastion of colonialism. As the protesters began sharing their grievances while forming a “sacred circle”, which Mackie had



Figure 6. Indigenous People's protest at Castle of Good Hope, August 2017 (Author's photograph 2017)

prepared by removing rubbish from the grass, emotions ran high. Meanwhile, a small local media delegation had showed up and found many Khoisan revivalists were enthusiastic to have their pictures taken. The group dispersed shortly thereafter.

The bulk of the protesters were wearing at least some type of animal skin attire (see Figure 6), which certainly helped to draw attention from the media and other spectators. Clothing is indeed one of the most visual ways in which many Khoisan revivalists give expression to their identities. For Mackie, it is vital to his Khoisan revivalism:

When I have my aboriginal indigenous dress on, my vellekies [skins], I notice people staring at me, people want to touch it, they see it is real skin [...] I wear skins that look like that of leopards, but it is not really from them as they are endangered animals [...] I feel different when I wear the skin. I act different. It is a form of remembrance; maybe not exactly like it was, but close enough, like stepping in a time machine [...] When people laugh at me when I wear these clothes I tell them



they have a colonialist mind-set. They get angry, but then we get into a discussion and it blows their mind (Mackie, 05/07/2018)

Mackie indeed almost seems to ‘go somewhere else’ when he reaches fever pitch protesting, making a speech or engaging in ritual activities (see below). The time machine metaphor captures why and how many Khoisan revivalists (do not) engage with Khoisan identity and culture. In many ways, Mackie refuses to partake in the game of authenticity by acknowledging that his clothes are not “really” made from leopard skin. In fact, he uses the (in)authenticity of his regalia to provoke a discussion about Khoisan revivalism more generally and to debunk “a colonialist mind-set”. Having said that, the role of Khoisan traditional clothing, however defined, is certainly debated. For Vanessa Ludwig (19/08/2019), “just because we are not looking the way Khoisan are depicted, it does not mean we have no connection to them. It is not about walking around with skins and things like that, but about what you do to change realities on the ground”. Joseph Little (08/05/2018), who was one of the first in Cape Town to flaunt a leopard-motif “*kaross* [mantle]”, too recognized that clothes in themselves do not prove anything. Another interlocutor remarked that while going about “half-naked” did not help Khoisan revivalism’s public image, “the feathers do not make the bird” and people should be free to wear whatever they want (Peter Marais, 02/07/2018). The British did not have to dress “like Vikings”, so why would they. Aaron Messelaar (16/03/2018) did not understand why some wore these types of garments either, if the Khoisan “already stopped wearing animal skins in the 17<sup>th</sup> century”. For him, wearing animal skins often represented an opportunistic “shortcut” to authenticity; through clothes that were possibly “bought at the airport curio shop”. Others also feared that people dress in a certain way because they believe it makes them more “pure” or “credible” as Khoisan revivalists (Bradley van Reenen, 11/05/2018). For William Langeveldt (27/03/2018), on the other hand, to debate clothing at all is absurd: “Many people say I will not wear *vellekies* [skins], so I tell them ‘your jackets, bags, etc. are also made of leather, what’s the difference?’ Why is one normal and not the other?”. Yvette Abrahams rejected any correlation between Khoisan identity and clothes on a similar basis:

When I was at university many anthropologists told me it was impossible that I was a Khoi-woman, just because I had not walked around in animals skins and ran about



in the desert. The relevance of being a Khoisan is how you live your daily life. Are you honest and sincere? Do you respect God in everyone? This is how you know you are a Khoi. Whether you are wearing jeans or a piece of skin does not matter because being Khoi is not about how you look, but how you act (EN 2009c, 15)<sup>130</sup>

While different opinions about Khoisan traditional clothing circulate, the vast majority of my interlocutors possessed some type of garment or ornament, whether a headband, a set of beads, porcupine quills or a wooden stick. Though not seen as proof of one's Khoisan identity, they become meaningful attributes in the articulation of their indigeneity all the same. As Basil Coetzee explains, there is a time and place for Khoi culture:

If I put on skins I am suddenly a Khoi? Nonsense. I do not need to convince you [...] It's not my appearance, it's inside [...] Of course, for a ceremony I might consider it. If we put a show about Krotoa in 1654 we would put historical clothing, but to go to the mall with traditional attire; in what context are you doing that? It means you are a slave of imagery, to stereotypes [...] When media came to interview me I put on my beads, which tells you I am from a Khoi identity group, that's all. I do not put on my gown, that's for ceremonies (Basil Coetzee, 25/04/2018)

Not everyone is as meticulous about which facets of Khoisan culture are appropriate for which occasions. Some consider this a problem and have called for a large gathering to clarify and codify traditional protocols and rituals (ENN 2014j, 12). It strikes me that most do not share these concerns, however, and instead draw on various markers of indigeneity as 'time machines' that are only partially based on their claim to authenticity or purported historical provenance. In relation to clothing, this might account for the frequent appearance of shirts with rock-art motives: the shirt itself is not meant to be 'authentic', but the reference certainly is, giving the one wearing it an embodied

---

<sup>130</sup> Author's translation from Afrikaans: "Toe ek op universiteit was het baie antropoloë vir my gesê dat dit onmoontlik was dat ek 'n Khoi-vrou kon wees – net omdat ek nie in 'n stuk vel rondgeloop het of in die woestyn rondgehardloop het nie. Die relevansie van Khoisan is hoe jy elke dag leef. Is jy eerlik en opreg? Respekteer jy God in elkeen? Dit is hoe jy weet jy is Khoi. Al dra jy jeans of 'n stuk vel dit maak dit nie saak nie want om Khoisan te wees gaan nie oor hoe jy lyk nie, maar hoe jy optree".

connection to Khoisan culture as well as a way to aesthetically assert the presence of the past. It might also be an additional reason why my attempts to find out more about the origins, composition and specific meanings of types of clothing or cultural attributes were regularly met with little enthusiasm or avoided all together (see above). I give numerous other examples of this throughout this chapter and revisit this hypothesis from a theoretical vantage point in Chapter Seven. For now, notwithstanding the methodological limits I laid out in the beginning of this chapter, I make the point also in relation to certain practices that are deemed to represent Khoisan historical traditions by the people involved. I have triaged these according to fieldwork-induced themes. The first section focuses on the role of plants, rituals and the “North” as sources of inspiration. In the second section I focus on tourism, artistic engagements with Khoisan culture and the revival of Khoekhoegowab.

### **6.1.1 Plants, rituals and inspiration from the North**

No one made me question the role and use of ‘authenticity’ in Khoisan revivalism as much as Yvette Abrahams. Much of this is probably owed to her wit in handling researchers like myself. At least, this is how I experienced my day with her at her farm in Gordon’s Bay, an hours’ drive from Cape Town (Yvette Abrahams, 16/07/2019). As some of her other statements in this thesis might have already suggested, ‘authenticity’ is at once crucial and entirely irrelevant for Abrahams. She discards the notion of authenticity if it is deployed as a touchstone to (in)validate acts of Khoisan revivalism. Herself an academic, though not affiliated to a university at the time, she is at her best when pointing out the ironies and ambiguities of the academic enterprise in this regard. At our first meeting I had a sense that she was feeling me out by subversively joking with me “so, you are studying me?” or “is that how we are called these days?”, when I stumblyingly tried to explain I was aware of the contestations surrounding the term ‘Khoisan’. As the above clipping from *Eland Nuus* shows, Abrahams indeed loves poking holes in overly-intellectualized concepts and ideas, not least if tied to notions of authenticity. At the same time, she made a point of adding that “if someone does want to talk about Khoisan culture, I have been studying and living it for years”:

I read the obsession with authenticity as a symbol of our oppression [...] To whom is Khoisan culture problematic? It is not our jobs to make sense to academics who want to put us in boxes. Those boxes, we have to question them. It is about how one makes culture. When people say I am not doing Khoisan culture I challenge them, tell me what it is and what it is not? [...] When I began to self-identity as Khoisan it was like the laboratory animal speaking back (Ibid.)

The irony of me using this citation to reluctantly ‘box’ Abrahams in a certain analytical frame does not escape me; as she was also fond of pointing out. As she argued, there is more to learn about Khoisan revivalism by looking at how ‘one makes culture’. Fittingly, she made these comments as she was preparing a batch of soap: “The Khoisan have been making soap for centuries. I wanted to do it authentically so I looked for the materials they used back then to recreate it. Much I had to reconstruct by myself, of course” (Ibid.). Aside from soap, her company, *Khoelife*, which she started in 2013, offers a range of health and beauty products, ranging from body lotions and shampoo, to creams to remedy arthritis and washing powders. All “organic, natural, carbon neutral, handmade, cooked on solar power & biogas. Vegan friendly & not tested on animals”. The website clarifies the origins of *Khoelife* and philosophy behind it:

Khoelife came about because Yvette’s health problem, Psoriasis (a skin disease usually marked by red scaly patches) [...] the Psoriasis continued to trouble her, despite the use of Western Medicine. The Khoisan survived for centuries without modern medicine and used buchu for a number of ailments [...] With her indigenous knowledge, Yvette began experimenting on herself and cured the Psoriasis [...] the demand grew for the buchu products and this was the beginning of the Khoelife business<sup>131</sup>

Abrahams’ Khoisan revivalism is indeed intrinsically linked to plants (see also Abrahams 2004). As she explained that day on the farm, she went from an initial interest in plants, to encountering them in the sources, to studying botany to able to harvest them herself and utilize their medicinal qualities:

---

<sup>131</sup> “Khoelife – About.” <http://khoelife.co.za/about/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

I realized I could not speak the language, but I could speak plant very well, that's what my mother taught me, gardening and working on the land. I had bought the farm in 2006 because I needed space to cultivate all those plants I had been reading about. Many plants fell out of use so I had to go and find them all around to reconstruct that 18<sup>th</sup> century ecology here (Yvette Abrahams, 16/07/2019)

Abrahams thus scrutinizes historical sources and conducts ethnographic fieldwork among those that are knowledgeable about the plants she is looking for. She describes this as a “practical form of decolonization” as it involves bringing back plants that are no longer in use to create a “living library of knowledge” as well as a “sustainable eco-system” in the face of climate change: “I had a PhD, but in an indigenous sense I was totally illiterate so I walked with old ladies and they taught me so many things” (Ibid.). Abrahams pursues this in large part through her engagements with the historical figure of Sarah Baartman, whose life she studied in her PhD: “I moved more from the academic to the practical side of things [...] I am just trying to be my authentic self in the course of writing about Saartjie Baartman”. This meant that, rather than writing a biography, she looked for a medium which Baartman herself would have understood as “history”: “I wanted this book to see the world through Auntie Sarah's eyes [...] Well, here I am; I am busy developing the biography—except it is not a book at all. It is a garden” (Abrahams 2011, 38). Abrahams (16/07/2019) reasoned that Baartman would not have written a book herself, but instead have opted for “a garden”. The ‘biography’ is currently located in her backyard, but she always had the ambition to plant “a walking museum of indigenous plants and products”, a ‘time machine’ where one could engage with “what Baartman wore, what she ate, what her hairstyle was etc. [...] Not a word would have to be said, you could walk around and get a sensory experience”.

Abrahams has been involved with the Department of Arts and Culture since the funeral of Sarah Baartman in 2002 in setting up the ‘Sarah Baartman Legacy Project Memorial Garden’ as part of the ‘Sarah Baartman Centre for Remembrance’ in Hankey in the Eastern Cape (Abrahams 2011, 40-41). The original design included land for farming and the grazing of cattle “so that the plants can once again thrive like they should”, as well as vacant land “for the people to roam and wander as the KhoeSan did of old”. Also envisioned was “a site for learning and research on indigenous knowledge systems, arts,

and crafts”. In 2009, the then Minister of Arts and Culture communicated that a “a solemn tree-planting ceremony” had taken place to mark the beginning of the construction process (Jordan 2009). He also added that a research centre would be constructed to “uncover the hidden aspects of Khoekhoe indigenous knowledge [...] and audit cures, medicinal plants and other indigenous species”, to ultimately “feed back [...] the heritage, the history and the culture of the Khoekhoe and San [...] into the broader South African community”. More details about the Sarah Baartman Legacy Project Memorial Garden emerged in 2014, when the South African government announced construction had finally begun in earnest after the plans for the site had been finalized.<sup>132</sup> It was decided that the entire complex will consist of a “secular portion and the sacred portion”. The former will house administrative offices and classrooms, as well as a “language laboratory” and “artwork depicting Khoi and San dialects”. The “sacred” portion will comprise the “Sarah Baartman Museum” and a connected “Khoisan Museum”, replete with a “Genocide Wall with inscriptions of all Khoisan genocides” and a commemorative “Genocide Pond”. This Pond will be flanked by a “Healing Pond”, which is placed on route to Baartman’s resting place. Abrahams’ trademark garden will also be located on the premises, which will also function as a place to explain “myths and legends”. After almost two decades, the project is reportedly nearing completion (Chirume 2019).

Before moving on to the next topic I should stress that Abrahams is by far not the only one for whom plants play a crucial role in their Khoisan revivalism. Jeremy Klaasen, an Associate Professor at the Department of Medical Bioscience at the University of the Western Cape became involved with Khoisan revivalism in the wake of studying a specific type of fungus that is native to Namaqualand during his PhD research (Jeremy Klaasen, 12/04/2018). This blossomed into a broader interest in ethnobotany, indigenous knowledge, ethno medicine and, indeed, Khoisan identity and culture. Klaasen is currently linking specific species of plants to their historical geographic boundaries to assist certain Khoisan collectives with their campaigns for intellectual property rights. During my fieldwork I also encountered references to the “bush doctors”, who are

---

<sup>132</sup> “Progress on the Sarah Baartmann Centre for Remembrance.” *South African Government* (2014) <https://www.gov.za/progress-sarah-baartmann-centre-remembrance>, accessed 20 March 2021.

organizing in Cape Town and hawking indigenous herbs and medicines at several locations around the city (see also Philander et al. 2014, 304). The non-profit organization “Cape Bush Doctors/Kaapse Bossiedokters” strives to unite these “indigenous healers” in the Western Cape and campaign on their behalf for greater protection of their harvesting practices and rights to sell their services and products.<sup>133</sup> The organization also aims to have the Bush Doctors officially join the Traditional Healers Council. But these are just some additional examples of the ways in which plants feature in Khoisan revivalism, more of which are also apparent below. To some extent, however, plants remained somewhat of a blind spot throughout my fieldwork and more research is required to include them more meaningfully in an ethnography of Khoisan revivalism.

This point also to some extent applies to the ancient ritual known as the *!Nau*, as I did not examine the subject in-depth or claim to have understood its varied meanings for Khoisan revivalists. Having said that, arguably no other practice is valued more as an authentic Khoisan tradition by Khoisan revivalists than the *!Nau*. As I noted in Chapter Three, the first to carry out *!Nau* ceremonies in a Khoisan revivalist setting was the group associated with Joseph Little and Daniel Kanyiles, who used the rituals to induct chiefs into the Cape Cultural Heritage Development Council and other bodies that sought to rally Khoisan traditional leadership. Michael Besten gives a description of the *!Nau* that was carried out by the collective in Oudtshoorn in June 2000:

Preparations for the induction ceremony began at midnight [...] with the cleansing of a ‘holy kraal’ and the slaughter of a ram [...] Kanyiles led those who were to be sworn in into a special kraal [...] The feet of the inductees were dipped in blood in a sink container. The inductees then moved in circles in the kraal. Their feet were afterwards washed with water. *Boegoe-water* (herbal-water) was then placed on their tongues followed by honey. The final step in the ritual was an oath of loyalty. Those inducted were then led out and introduced to awaiting ‘tribe’ members as new ‘tribal’ chiefs and council members [...] The footprints left in the kraal by the blood-dipped feet of inductees symbolized a blood-print supposedly running through history and the connection of humans with the earth giving life to everyone. The

---

<sup>133</sup> “Cape Bush Doctors.” <http://www.cbd.org.za/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

walk in circles in the kraal symbolized the Khoekhoe's nomadic existence and the different paths that cross in life (Besten 2006, 298; original emphasis)

While Little is no longer at the forefront of Cape Town-based Khoisan revivalism, he still carries out *!Nau* ceremonies roughly twenty years later. I was invited to such an occasion at the Castle of Good Hope on 28 July 2019, where a series of chiefs were sworn into Little's Chainouqua tribe. A makeshift kraal made out of reeds was erected in the centre of one of the building's courtyards, but only those undergoing the ceremony were allowed to see and venture inside. It was reportedly the first *!Nau* carried out inside the Castle. On this occasion too, a sheep that been "fasting for one day" was slaughtered and its blood gathered in a small hole in the ground for inductees to dip their feet in. People lined up to undergo the ritual and affirm their commitment to the "Khoisan struggle" and the Chainouqua House. As one of the men involved in conducting the ceremony explained, people step inside the kraal wearing their everyday clothes, but emerge with "cultural attire" to symbolize their transformation — bringing Mackie's time machine metaphor to mind. Once all new chiefs were inducted they were given a certificate with their name, ID number and Little's signature testifying they had been traditionally sworn in. As the "paramount chief" who succeeded Kanyiles, who assumed this role in the National Council of Khoi Chiefs (NCKC) until he passed away, Little stressed that he was the only one fit to oversee a *!Nau* (see Chapter Three). The notion that only someone in that position can carry out the ceremony is also shared by others who were involved in the early days of Khoisan revivalism, such as Basil Coetzee (25/04/2018). To him, the fact that so many are carrying out *!Nau* ceremonies shows a lack of respect for protocol.

Many indeed seem to organize *!Nau* ceremonies without Little's blessing or oversight. The first *!Nau* I attended was such an occasion. I was given permission by the leadership of Khoisan Kingdom to attend the "*!Nau* of affirmation" on 27 September 2014 in Botriver, about an hour's drive from central Cape Town (see also Verbuyst 2015, 117-118). Zenzile Khoisan was in charge of the ceremony and urged me to take pictures and approach anyone for information. Roughly 100 people were present, but only a fifth or so underwent the actual *!Nau*. As was the case with Little's *!Nau*, a kraal was fashioned out of reeds and covered with leaves so as to make it virtually impossible to see inside. At the beginning of the ritual, Zenzile explained that participants committed themselves to the

“Khoisan struggle”, some by becoming “chief”. One by one the inductees were called forth and asked to take off their shoes and clean their feet with *buchu* water, which had also been used to cleanse the kraal itself. *Buchu* is a fynbos herb and used as a remedy in Khoisan traditional medicine (Low 2007). As they entered inside they were asked to dip their feet into a small puddle of blood, which stemmed from a sheep that was slaughtered for the occasion. This was to symbolize walking in the footsteps of the ancestors (see above). They were asked by the master of ceremony to state that they identified as Khoisan, to salute “Khoisan heroes” and to swear to uphold “traditional values and customs”. Upon completion, participants received a set of beads, and if applicable, their new title was proclaimed to the audience. After this part of the *!Nau* was concluded, Ron Martin, who was coordinating the ceremony as well, held up a set of kudu horns above his head and then placed them back on the ground, something which I commonly encountered in Khoisan revivalist settings (see also ENN 20104c, 7). Martin explained that the horns symbolized how Khoisan revivalists could unite: the ends of the horns were sharp and pointed to opposing directions, but they originated from the same “base”. In that space of hollowed out skull, *renosterbos* [rhinoceros bush] and *khoigoed* [*imphepho*, *Hottentotskooigoed* or liquorice plant] was burned inside an abalone shell to resolve differences of opinions (see also ENN 2014i, 15). As soon as one had entered the kraal, they were also asked to leave all strife behind them. After the *!Nau* concluded, a seafood *potjie* [stew] was served and various more light-hearted activities took place, such as a hip-hop performance by local youth and various other musical items (see below).

On 27 June 2014, the same group carried out a “*!Nau* of dedication” near Oude Molen, where Ruben Richards and Marius Fransman, among others, were inducted and affirmed their commitment to Khoisan revivalism (ENN 2014f, 1; see Conclusion). Members of the Gorinhaiqua Cultural Council explained in ENN (2016b, 8-9) that the *!Nau* had to be carried out “*soos in die oertyd* [as in ancient times]” when there was a new moon, a condition that was also met at the time of the *!Nau* in Botriver and the one of Joseph Little (ENN 2014f, 15). The new moon symbolizes “new beginnings and renewal”, as captured in ENN’s description of the event at Oude Molen:

At the rising of the new moon, a new chapter was written in Khoi history, with leaders who came to embrace their indigenous culture and practice that carried



their ancestors through the centuries, even under the most brutal conditions [...] As the moon took to its path, with the scent of Khoigoed and lavender burning sweetly, fires lighting the perimeter a blessed night brought the clans together, a spirit of renewal seemed to [have been] reached (ENN 2014f, 3)

The ENN report (2014f, 1) added that the inductees thus underwent their “first” *!Nau*. Indeed, while the ritual as practiced in Khoisan revivalist settings is commonly associated with publicly “authenticating” leadership, pleading allegiance to Khoisan revivalism and affirming “a sense of community” (De Wet 2010b, 60; Brown and Deumert 2017, 589), it also serves other purposes. Many see it as a rite of passage. As an article in ENN spells out, some hold that there are in fact seven *!Nau*’s:

For indigenous people everything is interconnected [...] Everything has a bigger and deeper meaning, a flowing rhythm connects everything we do and everywhere we found ourselves in every phase of our life. For the indigenous Khoi and Bushmen-people of our country this is called the *!Nau* — the dance of life with its different phases, experiences and responsibilities [...] This starts with birth; life changes brought about by puberty; adulthood; followed by the responsibility of the man, woman and family; the phase of tribal- or national identity; followed by tribal or national responsibilities and lastly there is the final *!Nau*, our return to the earth, to our Creator, and this is mostly a very spiritual process (ENN 2016b, 8-9; my emphasis)<sup>134</sup>

In *Tears of the Praying Mantis*, Basil Coetzee (2019b, 168) similarly describes the *!Nau* as an “ancient ritual” that “plays a very decisive role in the life progressions of all Khoi peoples” and consists of “seven rites of passage that end with the death of the human being and

---

<sup>134</sup> Author’s translation from Afrikaans: “*Vir die inheemse mense is alles verweef [...] Alles het n groter of dieper betekenis, en 'n vloeiende ritme verbind alles wat ons doen en waar ons onselfbevind in elke fase van ons lewe. Vir die inheemse Khoi en Boesman-volke van ons land word dit die !Nau genoem - die dans van die lewe met sy verskillende fases, ervarings en verantwoordelikhede [...] Dit begin met die geboorte; die lewensverandering wat puberteit bring; mondigwording; gevolg deur die verantwoordelikheid van die man, vrou en gesin; die fase van stam- of volksidentiteit; gevolg deur stam of volks-verantwoordbaarheid en uiteindelik is daar die laaste !Nau, ons terugkeer na die aarde, na ons Skepper, en dit is veral 'n baie geestelike proses*”.

the return of the physical body to the earth”. The funeral *!Nau* in particular is assigned importance by Khoisan revivalists. Several articles in ENN are devoted to “indigenous funerals” (see e.g. ENN 2014i, 4; 2014j, 1). As one of these explains, *buchu* is important here as well, both to clean the grave site and to escort the dead during their “final *!Nau*” (ENN 2013c, 14). The burning of *Khoigoed* further serves to accompany the departed so that their “*siel lig en vreedzaam kan vlieg deur die heelal en ons herinneringe an hom/haar mooi kan bly* [soul can roam the universe in peace and our memories of him/her remain unspoiled]” (ENN 2016b, 8). It is also common to break the bow and beads of the deceased to indicate that their fight has been concluded.

Funerals and the swearing in of Khoisan revivalist(s) (chiefs) are the two contexts that are most commonly associated with the *!Nau* in Khoisan revivalism, but there also other uses. Bradley van Sitters for instance describes the *!Nau* as a “cultural thanks-giving ceremony” (ENN 20104c, 1). During her fieldwork among people living on the streets of Cape Town who asserted a Khoisan identity, Siv Øvernes (2019, 122, 143) noticed that for her interlocutors the *!Nau* was an occasion to share food with one another. This signified that the ritual not only functioned to cultivate a sense of Khoisan “belonging”, it also offered “a sacred space in the midst of a harsh reality” by acting as a reminder of the importance of sharing so that no one has to go hungry. I certainly do not claim to comprehend the various meanings of the *!Nau* for my interlocutors. In fact, as I noted at the beginning of this chapter, I try to be mindful of my limitations in this regard. However, I elaborated on the descriptions of the varied interpretations of the *!Nau* to showcase the diverse roles it fulfils for Khoisan revivalists, as well as the materials they draw on in the process. Despite this diversity and differences in choreography, the *!Nau* always clearly functions as an explicit manifestation of Khoisan identity, which brings to mind William Ellis’ observation about one mode of Khoisan traditional leadership being in large part about the ability to credibly and creatively channel Khoisan cultural practices as a “ritual specialist”:

[Ritual specialists] are those that attempt to reproduce the cosmological world of the Khoi and San by deploying readily available symbols and artefacts associated with KhoiSan identity, and recombining them in a creative process in order to recall or recreate a world that was lost in the colonial encounter [...] The individuals who

lead these rituals are called upon to lead because they are seen as having the knowledge to rediscover the lost world of the KhoiSan by successfully deploying the available symbols (Ellis 2019, 312)

The ‘ritual specialist’ does not aspire to being ‘accurate’ per se, but rather to be credible, meaningful and above all, relevant for his peers and followers. This, however, does not mean that the materials and practices that make up Khoisan revivalist articulations of indigeneity are sourced randomly. Here too a pattern emerges that lays bare the tension between continuity and change (see Chapter Seven). Although Chantal Revell (07/03/2018) does not believe in the existence of unspoiled authenticity, she holds that there should be an emphasis on “original principles”; a position echoing her views on Khoisan traditional leadership (see Chapter Five). She reasons that adhering to these ‘principles’ would remove the need to “get bits and pieces from all over” and stop “our history from dying”. Revell is convinced that the answers in this regard are found with “old people [...] outside of Cape Town [...] Because for us in Cape Town, everything to do with tradition was like witchcraft”. Aaron Messelaar was similarly motivated to record traditional Griqua culture in *Forgotten but not buried* in light of the fact that “custodians of the culture who strive to keep the Griqua culture alive are busy dying out [...] most of the elders have already passed on” (Messelaar 2015, vi, 31). It is crucial that the younger generation in particular understood that “their culture is not dead” (Ibid., 90). To this end he went back to his native Campbell in the Northern Cape to conduct fieldwork. As I showed in Chapter Three, many Khoisan revivalists undertook similar trips to areas that are commonly considered as unspoiled or less tainted reservoirs of Khoisan culture due to their briefer histories of colonialism (see also Verbuyst 2016, 85-86). Once more the time machine metaphor shows its relevance: geographical remoteness from the epicentre of colonialism connotes ancientness and authenticity. Considering the historical progression of the colonial frontier, this argument is not without merit, and is indeed also made elsewhere in countries with histories of settler colonialism (see e.g. Gibson 2012, 211; Cooke 2016). Then again, it does mark a parallel with anthropologists working in the tradition of salvage anthropology (see Chapter Two) – a complex relationship I revisit in the next chapter. Suffice to say that much of the inspiration for Khoisan revivalism is indeed sourced from the Kalahari and other northern areas; a case in point being the

*matjieshuise* [traditional dwellings in the Northern Cape] that are erected at Khoisan revivalist events (see also Davison and Klinghardt 1997, 186) or Mackie and others' insistence that they learned about the *!Nau* as a result of their upbringing in Namaqualand or visits to the Northern Cape (Mackie, 08/01/2015).<sup>135</sup>

When I explained that my research was looking into Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town, many people in South Africa (and elsewhere) responded by urging me to plan a visit to the Northern Cape to get a 'different' picture. It is important to note that a difference between the Khoi and the San is often made here. For reasons I mentioned in Chapter Two, the San are frequently considered to be less assimilated than the Khoi. Khoisan revivalists tend to downplay these differences and emphasize what they have in common instead. And yet, as Michael Besten (2006, 309) has observed, the difference is somewhat asserted in more subtle ways as well, by capitalizing on the "ultra-indigeneity" of the San and their associations with a pristine hunting and gathering lifestyle (see also De Wet 2010, 10). These markers of indigeneity, he points out, could be used to make up for the supposed lack of authenticity of Cape Town-based Khoisan revivalists. Chantal Revell (09/08/2017) noted that not all San appreciate that Khoisan revivalists associate themselves with them as this waters down their own attempts to sketch an indigenous ideal type; an issue that was already present during the earliest engagements between Khoisan revivalists and the San in the lead up to the 1997 Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference (Watt and Kowal 2019, 65; see Chapter Two). Some San reportedly consider Khoisan revivalists as less 'pure' or "not-indigenous" because of their history of assimilation and alleged greater degree of genetic intermixture (Chantal Revell, 07/03/2018; 19/08/2019). Under apartheid many distanced themselves from the San because they were emphasizing European roots. As Revell pointed out, it is therefore ironic that the tables have now turned and the San seek to avoid any association with Capetonians (see also Comaroff 2009, 96). Besten therefore certainly has a point in commenting on the political nature of their relationship.

---

<sup>135</sup> Interestingly, as I noted in the Introduction, Siv Øvernes (2019, 230) observed that her interlocutors in Cape Town often referenced the Karoo area that spans the Eastern, Northern and Western Cape Provinces in this regard; a reference that was largely absent among the people I interacted with.

I would add, however, that appealing to the San serves different purposes as well. Once again resulting in complex articulations with salvage anthropology, and the noble savage trope in particular, the San are viewed favourably by some Khoisan revivalists as role models for supposedly being more close to nature and in touch with their identities. Berte Van Wyk (2014, 19, 23) for instance wrote that they are “perhaps the most profound human beings on earth who believe that nature has a spiritual and a symbolic relationship with them”. Another interlocutor once showed me a brief fragment from *The Gods Must be Crazy* on his smartphone (see Chapter Two). The scene in question always made him tear up as it showed a father being reunited with his son and crying tears of joy. He wanted people in Cape Town to embody a similar type of fatherhood, which he felt was currently lacking in coloured communities (see also Langeveldt 2012, 24). Basil Coetzee (25/04/2018) also shaped his Khoisan revivalism in large part through his interactions with the San, though in more direct and long-term ways. As I explained in Chapter Three, his upbringing, career and stint in the military made it possible for him to travel across Southern Africa and interact with Khoisan communities in various locales. He lived for a year with the !Kung in Northern Namibia, immersing himself in their way of life. Coetzee drew on these experiences when we visited !Khwatttu, “the ‘embassy’ of the San of southern Africa”, located in Yzerfontein, about 70-80km from Cape Town.<sup>136</sup> As an educational and cultural institution partially owned by the San, !Khwatttu trains and employs San since 1999 to “tell their own stories” through the museum and the guided tours (see also Wildschut 2007, 549). Together with his wife and my partner, we took one of those guided tours during our visit. At some point we halted at a location where a couple of dwellings were set up. The guide imparted some “secret knowledge” about a local plant (which I cannot divulge here for it would no longer be secret) and showed us how to make fire with a few pieces of locally-sourced wood. As Coetzee was chatting to the guide he half-jokingly asked if it was possible for us to stay overnight in the huts (see Figure 7). He was fully aware of the fact that !Khwatttu was a recreation. This was no naïve attempt at manufacturing authenticity. It is rather that he felt the experience could have

---

<sup>136</sup> “!Khwatttu – San Spirit Shared.” <https://www.khwatttu.org/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

given us an approximate experience of San culture. If the request had been granted, the huts could perhaps have functioned as modest time machines for the night.



Figure 7. !Kwa ttu (from left to right: Lu-Ann Kearns, Francesca Pugliese, Rafael Verbuyst, Basil Coetzee) (Author's photograph 2018)

### 6.1.2 Tourism, mending the “broken string” and reviving Khoekhoegowab

Tourism is a controversial topic for Khoisan revivalists. Scholars have argued that many tourist enterprises advance static conceptions of Khoisan culture, perpetuate stereotypical conceptions of the Khoisan or embody paternalistic attitudes towards them by operating under the flag of conservationism (see e.g. White 1995, 13; Mogalakwe and Nyamnjoh 2017, 8; Boonzaaier and Wels 2018, 184-185). Khoisan revivalists have also put forward similar critiques. An anonymous letter published in ENN in 2014 for instance took aim at *southafrica.net*, South Africa's official tourism website, for reportedly mourning the Khoisan's “extinction” (ENN 2014h, 8). More common is the charge that tourism in general perpetuates, rather than debunks, assumptions about Khoisan culture as static. June Bam-Hutchison, Bradley van Sitters and Bongani Ndhlovu (2018, 175) note that the

“pre-colonial” is not taken seriously as a result, with “indigenous partners [...] relegated to ‘song and dance’ activities in public programmes”. One of her interlocutors was even reportedly told to get his “leopard skin and dance, and do some Khoi clicks when the tourists arrive”. I too was once asked by a Dutch documentary maker if I had some contacts he could interview on camera, with the caveat that they “of course, had to be photogenic” and “look the part”. For Yvette Abrahams (16/07/2019), these types of perceptions are stymieing a more open-minded view of Khoisan revivalism: “Of course cultures grow and change so it would be the worst offence to Khoisan to expect us to remain fossilized in one moment in time”. As she put in *Eland Nuus* (2009c, 15): “People think we need to live in the past to be Khoisan [...] Growth and change are a very important part of the Khoi-culture [...] The Khoi have adapted things and grew and transformed”.<sup>137</sup>

Combined with economic incentives, it is precisely a drive to do things differently, or at least on their own terms, that makes Khoisan revivalists want to have their own tourism ventures. While such initiatives have been announced in Cape Town at various points in time — at Hangberg and Princess Vlei, for instance — little has materialized to date (ENN 2014c, 1; see also Bam 2014, 130; Mama 2011). Chantal Revell (07/03/2018) desires to purchase a piece of land “and put up a kraal to preserve the culture, which is busy dying out”. Jonathan Muller (10/04/2018), who works as a tour guide for a local company, also dreams of having his own business one day. The potential for Khoisan revivalist-operated initiatives is great as “we are poor in terms of money, but rich in terms of heritage”, he argued. While Muller had been aware of his Khoisan roots because he regularly visited his family in Upington in the Northern Cape as a child, he particularly became interested in them in 1999, when he began to scout for potential sites to create tourist initiatives. While “North” provides his main reference point for Khoisan authenticity, he does not believe one necessarily has to travel great distances from Cape Town to find it: “Already a few hours outside of Cape Town we see signs of indigenous culture, even further North in Namibia there are other examples [...] In that sense,

---

<sup>137</sup> Author’s translation from Afrikaans: “Mense dink om Khoisan te wees moet jy in die verlede leef [...] Groei en verandering is ’n baie belangrike deel van die Khoi-kultuur [...] Die Khoi het goed aangepas en gegroei en getransformeer”.

connecting with that culture is not as impossible as people say”. Tourism is Muller’s passion because, unlike the politics of Khoisan traditional leadership, which he is suspicious of, the potential to reach people is immense:

I try to keep authentic culture alive. When I ask people today why they are Khoi, they need to be able to tell me about their beliefs about the land, spiritual beliefs, etc. [...] You need to tell me what sets us apart. We need to begin focussing on culture and customs. Those messages need to get out there [...] We need to get it to schools and the youth in particular (Jonathan Muller, 10/04/2018)

Lucelle Campbell has established *Transcendental History Tours* in 2009 to pursue a similar objective with regards to the city of Cape Town. Lucelle’s “journey” began in 1988, when she was working in marketing at the Groot Constantia Museum, located on the famous Groot Constantia wine farm on the slopes of Table Mountain (Lucelle Campbell, 11/07/2018). At some point in time she picked up a magazine about the estate’s history, which triggered an interest into the history of slavery in Cape Town. After studying at the University of Cape Town and the University of the Western Cape, Lucelle started working at Iziko Museums, which gave her additional opportunities to explore her passion. This historical knowledge helped process the “intergenerational trauma” that people like her were left with after the dispossession and disruptions of colonialism. Experiencing this type of healing inspired Lucelle to organize her own “personalized” tours, where she guides tourists to places in Cape Town that embody various traumatic legacies — an effort she describes as “decolonizing” (ENN 2017b, 7). Just as this experience proves therapeutic to her, she hopes “lifting the veil of shame” will help heal the wounds of others as they explore and confront the city from a new angle (Campbell 2014; Khoisan 2015b). I participated in a walking tour which Lucelle catered with an associate of hers on 25 June 2018. The guided tour aimed to give a basic history of Cape Town, but primarily seen through the lens of the Khoisan and the enslaved. Her commentary was marked by strong Khoisan revivalist overtones, as she and her fellow guide constantly stressed the interrelatedness of past and present and emphasized the importance of being able to tell their “own stories”. A key theme was uncovering “invisible” colonial legacies. This invisibility extended to seemingly uneventful places, but also to more conspicuous places such as museums, which the guides noted still housed hundreds of bones from the



“indigenous people”. Another stop was the Castle of Good Hope, where Lucelle explained the crucial role of Doman in resisting colonialism and how his story, and particularly those of female resistance fighters, had regrettably been forgotten. Through her actions, Lucelle was “reclaiming space” in Cape Town (see also Amoamo 2011, 1266).

I have mentioned the Castle numerous times in this thesis as it is a site of major importance for Cape Town-based Khoisan revivalists. Opinions about it certainly differ. Some want to demolish it (see above), but most see ways to appropriate the building to advance Khoisan revivalism and create “a counter narrative *within* the space [...] by counter curating the castle as a site of memory” (Bam-Hutchison 2016, 24, original emphasis; see also Bam, Van Sitters and Ndhlovu 2018, 162-169). William Langeveldt has been campaigning for years to turn the “Stone-Kraal” into a “Place of Love and Indigenous Healing” and the headquarters of the National Khoisan Council (NKC), or a newly created “Ministry of Indigenous Affairs” (ENN 2013b, 1; 2014b, 7; 2014g, 14; 2014k, 6). His plans for a reimagined Castle are quite elaborate and involve, among other things, renaming the “5 colonial bastions after the 5 first indigenous nations”, creating “storage facilities for organic food production” and using the roofs to generate solar and wind energy (Langeveldt 2016, 80). Those in charge of managing the Castle have been actively encouraging such new ideas for the Castle for about a decade and a process is currently underway to officially recognize the Castle as a World Heritage Site to assist in changing the building’s narrative (McCain 2016). In an interview, Calvyn Gilfellan (29/09/2017), the Castle’s first and current CEO, expressed his opinion that the building needs to shed its association with White colonialism: “the Dutch did not build the castle, the Khoisan and slaves did” (see also ENN 2014h, 2). He explained his vision for the Castle in more detail in an article for ENN:

One of my main objectives is to transform the Castle into a living heritage space and position it as a place of education, healing, reconciliation and understanding [...] It is time that a true reflection of our crossed paths be showcased in the space where it was real in history. We will achieve this by showcasing the importance of every role player in the history of the Castle and showing how today and in the future all these conflicting cultures and communities can thrive in unity [...] On a practical level, this vision will be activated through the showcasing of the past, present and

future of the Cape and its people. Not just looking back but looking forward (ENN 2016b, 5)

While Gilfellan highlights unity and shared narratives, the emphasis in practice, and for historical reasons, is mostly on the Khoisan. He for instance brought the unwritten rule into being that Khoisan revivalists are free to use parts of the Castle for meetings or ritual practices, which they regularly do. Gilfellan has also supported various initiatives more directly. In 2016, to celebrate 350 years of the Castle's existence (see Chapter Four), a "Khoi-khoi Village Scene" was erected in front of the complex: "a new exhibition celebrating the journey, culture, heritage and aspirations of the first indigenous people" (ENN 2016a, 15). Ron Martin, who was involved in setting up the exhibition, gave more details in his contribution in ENN:

[T]he KhoiSan kraal retains all the elements of authenticity. This means that the covering for the huts were both in the form of hessian cloth and the scarce reed mats, which were added to the structure and tied down with natural twine or sisal rope [...] Other elements include the traditional pit-fire, cooking pots and utensils [...] supplemented by day-to-day utensils, including the digging sticks, bows, arrows, quivers, hand-axes, flakes, adzes, knives and pottery. There are also natural elements such as ostrich eggs, skin bags, calabashes, ceremonial horns and musical instruments (ENN 2016a, 15)

Another article in ENN explained how the Foundation Nation Restoration (FNR) organized for a group of learners from a local school to step into the 'time machine' and visit the Village Scene in June 2017:

Ron Martin [...] has erected a Khoisan kraal in classical and authentic fashion to remind the youth of their forebears and their way of life. To this end he also drew a map of Africa in the sand and clarified for the youth how important it is to understand their own history and background. This formed the background for the

youth to take pictures of themselves after the day's events concluded (ENN 2017b, 13)<sup>138</sup>

Martin, who has an extensive background in heritage (see Chapter Three), has been involved in various similar activities aimed at educating youths about (their) Khoisan identity. An interesting program in this regard was the *Aba Te* initiative, launched at the Castle in August 2015 as a “fun, yet uniquely comprehensive triple-treat of Khoe-khoe language, culture and heritage” for people of all ages (ENN 2015, 10). Martin was in charge of the “history and heritage component” and explained in ENN that *Aba Te* effectively amounted to a safe space to discuss Khoisan identity and culture: “It is indeed a unique opportunity to be able to debate the true history of our forefathers freely, without fear of being ridiculed by 'established' academia, in a friendly, safe environment”. Aside from history lessons, also on offer were educative and creative sessions covering art, plants, spirituality and medicinal practices. *Aba Te* also featured Collin Meyer, who showcased the musical, therapeutic and cultural qualities of the “KhoeSan Mouth Bow [...] reputedly the oldest percussion instrument”. He presided over the “Bow-making and Playing facilitation workshops”. The fact that the bow is often only thought of as a hunting tool “is an indication of the cultural genocide of Khoe cultural systems”, Meyer argued.

Garth Erasmus is one of the first to mainstream the (mouth) bow as a musical instrumental. He grew up in the Eastern Cape, surrounded by “a wealth of folklore”, but moved to Cape Town in the mid-1980s, where he became a “cultural worker” in the anti-apartheid art scene (Garth Erasmus, 18/03/2018). Julie McGee (2008, 122-123) has written about his transformation in some detail. She explains how his interest in Khoisan instruments stems from a visit to the South African Museum in Cape Town in the early 1980s, where he encountered a display featuring a body cast of a Khoisan boy playing a bow as a musical instrument, which was meant as an illustration of musical practices among the San in the Kalahari. Erasmus became curious about what the bow would sound

---

<sup>138</sup> Author's translation from Afrikaans: “Ron Martin [...] het op 'n klassieke en outentieke manier 'n Khoisankraal opgerig om die jeug te herinner aan hul voorvaders se lewenswyse. Hy het daarby ook 'n landkaart van Afrika uit sand uitgebeeld, en aan die jeug verduideling hoe belangrik dit is dat hul hul eie geskiedenis en agtergrond verstaan. Hierdie uitbeeldings het toe later gedien as agtergrond waar die jeug foto's van hulself kon neem na die dag se verrigtinge”.

like and decided to replicate the musical instrument at home. Around 1985, he finished his first musical bow, which had a calabash attached to it to act as a resonator; resembling the Brazilian *berimbau*. Erasmus often refers to the “broken string” metaphor in this regard, which stems from one of the stories captured in the Bleek and Lloyd archive (see Chapter Two), to explain the disruption that colonialism brought to bear on the Khoisan (Adhikari 2011, 94). Erasmus sees his work as literally “mending the broken string” and communicating with his indigenous past through the vibrations of the instrument (McGee 2008, 123). The bow, in a sense, equally transformed into a time machine. Indeed, while striving for authenticity, his “artistic archeology” takes the metaphor fully on board as it does not seek to emulate “an extinct historical past”, but embraces what he describes as the “indigenous now”:

[Garth Erasmus] sources and excavates [Western perceptions of Khoisan culture] to find connections to the very culture othered by Western engagements with Africa. Herein lies the difference, subtle perhaps, but keen [...] Erasmus borrows liberally from Khoi and San cultural resources and their contemporary symbolic potential matters more than marking their archeologic time as “the past” [...] For Erasmus, indigenous heritage provides material necessary for a creative healing process, a way of deconstructing colonial and apartheid identities embedded in racial concepts, and restoring personal, national, and African dignity [...] Erasmus’ use of Khoisan culture is a personally recuperative one, not a modernist salvage mission (Ibid., 120, 128-129)

Playing the bow and engaging with Khoisan identity and culture more generally indeed proves therapeutic for Erasmus. One of the reasons why he was drawn to the bow in the first place was because he no longer found inspiration in the political motifs that characterized Cape Town’s anti-apartheid art scene (Garth Erasmus, 24/04/2018). While he tends to avoid the political side of Khoisan revivalism for the same reasons, he certainly sympathizes with many of its tenets. The 1510 defeat of D’Almeida or the 19<sup>th</sup> century Kat River Settlement are explicit sources of inspiration for him (Garth Erasmus, 18/03/2018). With the help of his network, Erasmus (13/04/2018) believes he has been fortunate to access academic materials to draw on for inspiration. This also assists his effort to make “a philosophical connection to something that is not there anymore [...]

The disconnect becomes the strength of my work, I expose the facts of our dispossession up to the point we have to reinvent things” (Garth Erasmus, 18/03/2018). This effort is both personal and collective, as Erasmus made clear when explaining that in order to play the bow, it has to face the one playing it:

Turning it around becomes a metaphor, turning it at yourself and focussing on the inside [...] I needed to be ‘shot’, I needed this internal awakening [...] Everybody in South Africa is traumatized [...] Healing needs to go to root issues, we are not going back in trauma deep enough. The Coloured identity crisis is too simplified, self-discovery is the key and the artist works to ensure dignity [...] That means acknowledging that we are cut from history, that it is a mess, not pretending we are not. A *!Nau* is a way into identity crisis, not out of it [...] acknowledging that you are trying to make a connection to something that has disappeared [...] The music brings this healing and I was hunting for music (Ibid., 18/03/2018)

Armed with this Khoisan revivalist philosophy, Erasmus has been successfully ‘hunting for music’ in South Africa and abroad, including via other mediums such as visual art and performance. In 1999 he created *Khoi Konexxion* together with two other likeminded artists he met in the poetry music scene, Jethro Louw and Glen Arendse (Garth Erasmus, 13/04/2018). While Erasmus (18/03/2018) explains that the collective had to go against the grain because it was initially “side-lined culturally”, they quickly became well-known in Khoisan revivalist circles and for instance performed as the airplane carrying the remains of Sarah Baartman landed in 2002 (Henry Bredekamp, 11/12/2018). *Khoi Konexxion* released their first album in 2009, *Kalahari Waits*, which one reviewer in *Eland Nuus* described as “full of creative ways to play music” (EN 2009b, 16). It indeed features a wide range of indigenous instruments, mostly from South Africa. Jethro Louw, who is a locally renowned spoken word artist who has long been involved with Khoisan revivalism (see below), in particular provides the vocals. Louw overlays many of the tracks with Khoisan revivalist themes, mentioning the need for the “awakening of the slumbering Hottentot” in *Morning Sky* and stressing the fact that “Khoisan descendants are in a state of spiritual confusion” in *On the Edge*, for instance. I come back to the topic of music in the next subchapter. What I wish to add here is that *Khoi Konexxion* has also organized various workshops. These partly consists of bow-making workshops in the style offered during

the *Aba Te* program, the proceeds of which went to local underserved communities. Another set of activities are more directly involved in those communities and involve teaching children how to fashion musical instruments such as the “*bliksnaar* [improvised guitar]” out of locally sourced recyclable materials (Garth Erasmus, 24/04/2018). As Erasmus explained, this is both a way to help clean up polluted areas, as well as to bring healing and a sense of pride in Khoisan identity among the youth: “people see the bow and they get excited [...] they sense there is a connection there”.

This brings me back to the *Aba Te* program, and more specifically to its language module, which was coordinated by Bradley van Sitters.<sup>139</sup> The word *Aba Te* “literally means “carry me” in the ancient Khoekhoegowab language” and aptly reflects the motives of its language component (ENN 2015, 10). Indeed, the idea was to teach youths in particular to read, write and speak Khoekhoegowab so that they could in turn become “ambassadors” for the language and carry it over to future generations. It is important to recall that colonialism and apartheid’s assimilationist policies actively suppressed Khoisan languages (cf. ENN 2013c, 15; Bam-Hutchison 2016, 22). As Van Sitters explained in an article for ENN, however, remnants of Khoisan languages are discernible in the English and Afrikaans (and other languages) that is spoken in South Africa (see below). This point is also made by others, such as Basil Coetzee, who gave the examples of saying “tss” to chase someone away, which is “a Khoi click”, and “*Eina*” when you are hurt, which is also a “Khoi word” (Basil Coetzee, 25/04/2018). Tanyan Gradwell (31/07/2019) likewise explained that the Afrikaans word “*gam*”, used to disparagingly refer a gangster or a thief, dates back to way of referring to the /*Xam*, a Khoisan subgroup, in a derogatory manner during colonialism.<sup>140</sup> Yet, despite Khoekhoegowab’s (assumed) influence on Afrikaans or English, it is not widely spoken in South Africa, except for areas in the Northern Cape. As

---

<sup>139</sup> I should flag here that the role of Khoekhoegowab in Khoisan revivalism is far more complex than what my commentary below potentially suggests. Justin Brown, who co-authored a pioneering article about Khoisan revivalism and Khoekhoegowab (Brown and Deumert 2017), is at the time of writing finishing his PhD thesis on the topic at the University of Cape Town.

<sup>140</sup> It should be noted that ‘*gam*’ or *gamtaal* not only refers to criminals, but that it is a derogatory way of referring to coloureds in general and the specific dialect that is spoken among coloureds in Cape Town (see Van Heerden 2016).

I noted in the Introduction, Khoekhoegowab is a standardized version of Nama, so it is still in moderate use in Namibia, where Van Sitters also pursued his studies and continues to source teaching materials from (cf. Du Plessis 2019, 34; Brown and Deumert 2017, 582). To help promote Khoekhoegowab in South Africa, particularly as a language of instruction in schools, Van Sitters and others, notably Pedro Dâusab, have been ardently campaigning to have it recognized as an official language alongside the eleven others currently with that status.<sup>141</sup> The specifics of this campaign fall beyond the scope of this thesis (see Brown and Deumert 2017). Suffice it to say that while it has not yet achieved its goals, Khoekhoegowab has received increased attention from the Pan-South African Language Board, which announced in 2011 it was funding an initiative to translate the Khoekhoegowab-English dictionary into Afrikaans (see ENN 2017b, 2). Another noteworthy milestone is the University of Cape Town's decision in 2019 to offer *both* a Khoekhoegowab course and eventually install it as a fourth language of instruction (Swingler 2019; Van Dieman 2019; see Conclusion). Van Sitters has also recently joined as faculty.

Van Sitters has certainly come a long way from his language classes at the Castle of Good Hope. As I noted in the Introduction, I attended these weekly classes for a while in 2015. It is unclear exactly how long he had been organizing these, but they seem to have taken place on and off, depending in large part on overcoming practical and financial hurdles. Van Sitters did not charge a fee for the classes as he wanted as many people as possible to learn basic Khoekhoegowab. There were usually half a dozen students that pitched to his classes, but frequently many times more. What I take away from these gatherings was not just Van Sitters' patience and his passion for the language, but also the easy-going dynamic he cultivated in his classroom. The classes were not designed to

---

<sup>141</sup> The official languages of South Africa are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, SiSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu. The Constitution does mention the need to “promote, and create conditions for, the development and use of” Khoisan languages under Chapter 1, Section 6, Subsection 5. While Khoisan languages are singled out in this way, presumably because they face a greater threat of dying out, the Constitution places them under the rubric of “indigenous” alongside other languages that are spoken in the country, but not as an official language.

cram as much knowledge as possible into the students, but to offer them a chance to learn at their own pace. While many certainly came to study Khoekhoegowab in-depth, which also accounts for the circulation of academics texts on the topic on social media, it is my impression that most attended to interact with the language itself in the first place. Speaking a basic set of words, talking about the language's history and about Khoisan identity and culture in general during the weekly classes were acts of Khoisan revivalism first and foremost. I have made this observation on various other occasions as well, where I interpreted the speaking of Khoekhoegowab as a way to summon authenticity. The mere act of engaging with Khoekhoegowab itself provided a gateway to Khoisan identity and culture, regardless of one's actual command of the language. Justin Brown and Ana Deumert (2017, 588) came to a similar conclusion, noting that what sets Khoisan revivalism apart as a "language revitalization movement" is "the commitment to diversity and the absence of policing cultural-linguistic expression":

The importance of language [...] as a core marker of indigenous authenticity, seems uncontested among Khoisan activists; yet the question of 'how much language' is desired and/or necessary remains refreshingly open [...] [E]valuations of revitalization programs often focus narrowly on the acquisition of linguistic competence, and tend to forget pragmatic, cultural, phatic, poetic as well as metalinguistic competencies. The latter aspects have been the focus of Khoisan language activism in Cape Town, an activism which is not only political but also artistic-aesthetic, celebrating language form rather than simply promoting its use (Ibid., 582, 591)

'Celebrating' Khoekhoegowab in this respect is often ascribed therapeutic qualities; for instance by William Langeveldt, who speaks of "*Geestelike Genesing deur Moedertaal Opvoeding* [psychological healing through education in the mother tongue]" (Langeveldt 2012, 35). As I noted in Chapter One, the fact that I knew how to greet someone in Khoekhoegowab was often seen as a sign of respect; even leading one of my interlocutors to frequently introduce me as someone who "speaks our language", despite my continuous clarifications that I only knew a handful of words and phrases. And yet, a handful is more than nil, which suffices as basic qualifications for Khoisan revivalism. Often times, the same slogans and chants in Khoekhoegowab are voiced seemingly



independent of the precise occasion. The click sounds in particular seem to get crowds eager to participate, as Van Sitters proved during his praise singing at Parliament. As Brown and Deumert (2017, 585) put it, “the articulation of clicks is almost magical at times, evoking ancestral roots even in the absence of fluency”. Certain translations of key texts or slogans are highly evocative in this regard, such as “*toa tama :khams ge* [the struggle continues]” (see Chapter Four) or the Lord’s Prayer (ENN 2013b, 15; 20104c, 7; 2017a, 14). As I show in the next subchapter, where I shift the focus on acts of Khoisan revivalism where the emphasis is on innovation, Khoekhoegowab is not the only language at stake.

## 6.2 21<sup>st</sup> century interpretations of Khoisan culture: hip-hop, jazz and fashion

Most coloureds speak Afrikaans as their mother tongue, making them the largest demographic of Afrikaans-speakers in South Africa, followed by whites. *Kaaps*, the dialect of Afrikaans spoken by coloureds at the Cape, has however been castigated as impure and subjected to stigmatization for a long period of time, particularly during apartheid, when it was often referred to as “*gamtaal* [language of criminals]” (cf. Carstens and Le Cordeur 2016; Becker 2017, 257). This has made *Kaaps* a highly political subject and there have been various attempts to elevate it to a literary medium in its own right. This is a highly complex topic, one that pertains far beyond Khoisan revivalism (see e.g. Carstens and Le Cordeur 2016). And yet, there has been a decisive push from Khoisan revivalists to reclaim Afrikaans as an “indigenous” Khoisan language first and foremost (cf. Brown and Deumert 2017, 581). According to Tanyan Gradwell (31/07/2019), “Krotoa developed Afrikaans so that the Dutch could understand her”. In fact, she argues that much of what is deemed Afrikaner culture is “stolen” from the Khoisan: “The Khoi made biltong [beef jerky] because they did not want to waste any piece of the meat [...] Dried *snoek* [northern pike] as well, it’s not a Boer thing”. Mackie (05/07/2018) advanced a similar point of view, stating that “Afrikaans is not a White language, Khoisan people developed it to speak with

the Dutch after they were forbidden to speak Khoekhoegowab”. In ENN (2013c, 14), Willa Boezak likewise referred to the “*KhoiSan grondleggers* [Khoisan founders]” of Afrikaans.

However, no other single performance to date sought to make this point more directly than the “hip-hopera” *Afrikaaps*, which was directed by Catherine Henegan, a South African expat in the Netherlands, and ran between 2010 and 2015, both in South Africa and abroad. Most of the cast emanated from Cape Town’s hip-hop scene, such as the aforementioned Blaqpearl (see Chapter Four) and Jethro Louw. Other performers include Emile Jansen, also known as ‘Emile YX?’, a member of the group *Black Noise*, which was one of the pioneers of the South African hip-hop scene, and Quintin Goliath, also known as ‘*Jitsvinger*’, an equally prominent artist in Cape Town (Williams 2017; Becker 2017, 251). *Afrikaaps*’ main target is the notion that Afrikaans is the “language of the oppressor” due to its common exclusive association with whites and apartheid (Brown and Deumert 2017, 583). Instead of Europe, *Afrikaaps* focusses on its diverse African influences, but the Khoisan in particular. The audience is asked if they are aware of the fact that the Khoisan were also responsible for the development of Afrikaans, after which the artists proceed with a historical overview of the language’s development (Becker 2017, 245). Afrikaans emerges as the language of communication between colonizer and colonized. But it is also subversively “reclaimed”, for instance by pronouncing words in Afrikaans with clicks sounds (Brown and Deumert 2017, 585; see above). As Justin Brown and Ana Deumert (Ibid., 583) observe, “[r]e-imagining Afrikaans as a language that allows one to express indigenous authenticity and indigenous rights, rather than mimicking the voice of the master, is a radical move”. And yet, this embrace of hybridity while singling out the Khoisan leads Heike Becker (2017, 258) to conclude that *Afrikaaps* “embrace[s] both the making and unmaking of difference as the paradoxical foundations of post-apartheid belonging”.

Another way to put it is that *Afrikaaps* has all the hallmarks of Khoisan revivalism, as it deals not just with language, but with Khoisan identity and culture more broadly. All of the artists involved have to varying degrees expressed their sympathy for Khoisan revivalism, before and after *Afrikaaps*, but the hip-hopera was arguably their most overt

assertion.<sup>142</sup> The typical Khoisan revivalist emphasis on historical continuity permeates the play. Large pictures of contemporary housing conditions on the Cape Flats are for instance regularly projected on the background alongside historical figures like Autshumato, colonial-era prints and depictions of slavery (Ibid., 250). The link is also made more explicitly, particularly during the songs *Ek Is* [I am] and *Kom Khoisan* (*Kry Terug Jou Land*) [Come Khoisan, take back your land]. Except for the obvious political messaging of the title, the latter also contains other assertions of Khoisan indigeneity such as “Go ask the Xhosa and the Zulu who was here first” and “Bushmen and Hotnot were used to insult but everywhere the rock art still exists steadfastly for thousands of years” (Schuster 2016, 48-49). Emile YX? also alerts the crowd during this song that the Khoisan are no longer “asleep or tired” and willing to accept their stereotypical portrayal, which is explicitly called out in reference to the movie *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (Ibid., 50; see Chapter Two).

*Afrikaaps* is a particularly successful exponent of a wider trend of Khoisan revivalist articulations of indigeneity in relation to hip-hop subculture (see also Amoamo 2011, 1266). The ancientness of the Khoisan remains part of the articulation, but the difference with the examples in the previous subchapter is that the emphasis here is not so much on continuity or reviving from the past, but presenting Khoisan identity in conjunction with various contemporary cultural influences. The examples in this subchapter equally count as acts of Khoisan revivalism, however, as they are articulations of Khoisan indigeneity all the same; the main difference being that they explicitly embrace a certain degree of reinvention, or ‘change’. There might well be other subcultures that are relevant here. Although I encountered it less among my network of interlocutors, Rastafarianism certainly comes to mind. Many Rastafarians indeed seem to have found common cause with Khoisan revivalists, suggesting various points of overlap with the subculture, which became popular among coloured youths after the end of apartheid (cf. Järvenpää 2015, 123-124; Brown and Deumert 2017, 578; Sato 2018, 205-206; see also

---

<sup>142</sup> Emile YX? has for instance released numerous tracks with explicit Khoisan revivalist messaging, such as *I Am a Bushman* (*Afro Centric*, 2018), *Boesman Daans* (*Kaapse Katte*, 2018), *Ek ‘s ‘N Boesman* (*Kaapse Katte*, 2018) and various tracks on *Songs and Stories for My Son* (2017).

Chawane 2012). There is a specific overlap between Rastafarianism and the Cape Bush doctors (see above), evident in the prominence of dreadlocks, as well as an emerging discourse of psychological liberation, herbs (predominantly *dagga* [cannabis]) and Khoisan ancestry (Philander 2010, 118-122; 2011, 579). More research is needed to explore how Khoisan revivalism and Rastafarianism touchpoints in Cape Town. Hip-hop did frequently feature during my fieldwork, however, perhaps because it is especially popular among coloureds.<sup>143</sup> Another reason might be because hip-hop in the Cape Flats originated as a reaction to the alienation and urban dislocation of forced removals; experiences that were related to the plight of African Americans (Yarwood 2006, 163-166). In Cape Town, as elsewhere, social commentary and activism has thus been engrained in hip-hop culture from the start.

An interesting example in this regard is the artist Kirk Krotz from Mitchells Plain, who I briefly mentioned in Chapter Four. In an article for *News24* (2013), Krotz reflects on the success of his hit *The Good And The Bad*, which he released under the pseudonym *The Boesman Project* in 2013.<sup>144</sup> *The Good And The Bad* is a reflection on Krotz' love-hate relationship with Mitchells Plain and the fact that Cape Town is at once "the most beautiful city in the world. The most dangerous city in the world". Krotz explains how he was going to use the pseudonym *Boesman*, but was cautioned not to use that name: "You are too talented to be called a *Boesman*". This remark offended him, as he recently traced his family tree to the Khoisan in Namibia. Krotz' family had always emphasized their German ancestry and believed that, as coloureds, they had no real culture to speak of. Krotz himself was frequently mocked as a child for looking like a "*Boesman*" and recalls

---

<sup>143</sup> Certainly, there is also a great deal more to say about hip-hop and Khoisan revivalism. After all, I have not focused on it during my research or carried out an in-depth analysis of the sources. Those looking into the topic might find inspiration in the work of Itunu Bodunrin, who has carried out ethnographic research about hip-hop cultures among the !Xun and Khwe in Platfontein in the Northern Cape (Bodunrin 2018; 2020).

<sup>144</sup> The video clip of *The Good And The Bad* is available at *The Boesman Project's* YouTube channel at BoesmanProject. *The Good and the Bad - The Boesman Project*. 2013, YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfmNBBqKxFw&ab\\_channel=BoesmanProject](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfmNBBqKxFw&ab_channel=BoesmanProject), accessed 20 March 2021. It depicts various locations in Mitchells Plain, but also briefly features Zenzile Khoisan and a famous 19<sup>th</sup> century painting by Charles Bell portraying the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck in 1652.



Figure 8. Taking Hip-Hop Back To Its Roots  
(Photo credit: Nolan Berry 2018)

how similar words were regularly used as swearwords, including by coloureds. When he was in high school he encountered a more positive interpretation of the Khoisan as a result of the revised post-apartheid history curriculum, which in turn set him on a path to embrace his Khoisan roots. While not going for the more “radical” move of calling himself *Boesman*, he chose *The Boesman Project* to signal his Khoisan revivalism and assert his Khoisan identity. More specifically, not unlike what African-American hip-hop did with regards to the ‘n-word’, artists like Krotz or Emile YX? are using the subversive qualities of hip-hop to recuperate words such as *Boesman* and *Hotnot* as positive markers of identity.

There are other, less explicitly activist, facets of hip-hop culture which makes it chime well with Khoisan revivalism. One episode from my fieldwork stands out in this regard, an event billed as “Taking Hip-hop Back To Its Roots”, organized by Khoisan Revival Holistic Development (KRHD) on 17 December 2018 (see Figure 8). The event’s principal



Figure 9. “Tita Ge A Khoe” (Author’s photograph 2018)

organizer, Nolan Berry (18/12/2018), explained the underlying philosophy of KRHD and the event in question during an interview. Berry traces his Khoisan revivalism to 2013/2014, when he was asked to help set up a Khoisan political party; a project that never really took off. He joined the initiative for a while and got “educated” about the Khoisan in the process. After the book was recommended to him by a professor at Stellenbosch University he only referred to with the pseudonym “Krotoa”, Nolan read Ruben Richards’ *Bastaards or Humans* to deepen his interests in the Khoisan. *Bastaards or Humans* opened his eyes to the fact that “history does not teach us much about who we really are because history was written by our oppressors”. Berry also began to warm up to the identity crisis thesis, believing there is a need to teach youths in particular about “the spirit of the Khoisan, the way they lived, shared with one another and lived in harmony with the environment”. He contrasted this idyllic way of life with the harsh living conditions on

the Cape Flats, “where a life means nothing”. “To me”, Berry concluded, “Khoisan revival is about living a purpose-driven life”. This made him establish KRHD in 2018 with his own and his wife’s savings, as “many people are complaining, but few are actually doing something”. He deliberately opted for an apolitical body, as he felt politics did little to advance “culture”. As the name suggests, KRHD aims to counter the identity crisis by offering a “holistic consciousness”: ranging from abandoning drugs and fast-food, to embracing discipline and respect for the environment. One of its activities entails going to the beach and cleaning up the surroundings, followed by martial arts classes, fire-making and nature walks, in order to get youths “out of the concrete jungle prison”; all free of charge.

Taking Hip-hop Back Its Roots was all about drawing parallels between the Khoisan and various facets of hip-hop culture. The celebration took place on the grounds of Rocklands stadium. The loading dock of the local cantina was fashioned into a podium and a large flag featured in the background (see the cover of this thesis). A local traditional leader briefly spoke about indigenous rights in his opening speech, but after that all performances were of a less political nature. Beatboxers, break-dancers, karate practitioners and rappers all took turns showing off their skills. Basil Coetzee had joined me at the event and also took to the stage for a couple of minutes to read some of his poetry. The various speakers all alluded to the identity crisis by sharing observations such as “*Ons is Khoisan* [we are Khoisan!]” and “*Ons mense ken hulle roots nie* [our people do not know their roots]”. What is interesting to note is that Nolan Berry himself is not “into hip-hop”, but chose to “use anything to achieve my objective” and realized that the subculture was tremendously popular among the youth, thereby making it an ideal vessel to promote Khoisan revivalism (Nolan Berry, 18/12/2018). By all estimations that goal was certainly accomplished, with kids taking the occasional break from playing soccer in the nearby field to line up to have the logo “Khoisan Revival” spray-painted on their t-shirts by local graffiti artist Rizah Potgieter, who also designed the flag. Many of them also partook in the graffiti workshop that took place behind the building, where kids (and a clumsy researcher) were taught how to paint Khoisan revivalist messages, such as “*//Hui !Gaeb*” or “*Tita ge a Khoe* [I am a Khoi]”, on large pieces of white cloth that were draped over the fence (see Figure 9). As one of the artists was marking the kids’ t-shirts, I



noticed some other children perusing a worn-out book that “has been a major source of inspiration” to him. It was a thick collection of Khoisan rock-art illustrations, but I could not make out the title of the book. Contemporary graffiti culture is indeed frequently likened to the rock-art of the Khoisan. For Jonathan Muller (10/04/2018), the fact that “our people love graffiti” was a form of 21<sup>st</sup> century rock-art, a sign that Khoisan identity and culture endured, though perhaps in a different guise. One artist from the Cape Flats thus summed up the links between hip-hop and the Khoisan quite succinctly:

Hip hop has come full circle at present. Emcees are like the storytellers of the tribe, graffiti is cave paintings and the drums of Africa are like turntables, this is our ideology. We talk about the Khoi-San. I’m sorry, but we are sitting in the cradle of mankind, so why should we want to sound like Americans? Back in the day, if you’d told me that ‘you’re Bushman or you’re Khoi’, I’d have felt offended. But tell me now, man, and I’m proud (Neate 2004, 120)<sup>145</sup>

Capitalizing on the success of the hip-hop event, Nolan Berry (18/12/2018) contemplated a Khoisan beauty pageant, where participants would also be quizzed about Khoisan history. He abandoned this plan, however, after “Krotoa”, his academic contact at Stellenbosch University, disabused him of the idea, which she saw as a continuation of colonialist exhibitions of the Khoisan.<sup>146</sup> Others did work with the idea of ‘Khoisan fashion’, however, and perhaps no other individual has done so more than Rochey Walters, who I mentioned in the Introduction. Walters was born and raised in the Eastern Cape, where he also founded his company *Khoi Kulcha* in 2013. It is only when he moved to Cape Town in 2018 to look for opportunities to grow his business that I got to know him personally. In many ways, *Khoi Kulcha* exemplifies a broader trend of marketing ethnicity in South Africa and beyond, which John and Jean Comaroff have described as *Ethnicity Inc.* (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009; see also Schweitzer 2015; McNeill 2016; Steyn

---

<sup>145</sup> I thank Danelle van Zyl-Hermann for sharing this reference.

<sup>146</sup> Sharon Gabie (2018, 7-11) describes a Khoisan-themed beauty pageant, “*Mr and Miss Khoisan*”, that was organized by a group based in the Northern Cape. Contestants “were judged solely on their knowledge of history, their confidence levels in wearing traditional/indigenous attire and how well they could illustrate the background of the various Khoisan clans”.



2016; Sonnekus 2016). As I noted in the Introduction and elsewhere, various Khoisan commodities have seen the light of day and bear testimony to the commercial potential of Khoisan identity and culture. *Khoi Kulcha* is however not just trading on ethnicity, it is also an explicitly Khoisan revivalist-oriented enterprise. Walters' passion for the Khoisan is apparent in the way he explains the philosophy that drives his company. The idea for *Khoi Kulcha* was born out of his shock that youths in his native Humansdorp in the Eastern Cape were either unaware of their Khoisan ancestry or saw it as something negative (Rochey Walters, 18/05/2018). Walters left his job in 2010 as he realized that he too was largely clueless about the Khoisan at that point in time and that something had to be done to rectify the situation, as "the heritage was dying out": "What am I going to tell my kids? What is their heritage? I have Zulu and Xhosa friends, it's amazing how they celebrate their culture". Contemplating possible ways to corner this niche market, he realized that he needed to come up with something that "will last for years, hundred years for now":

The world evolved, people are not wearing skins anymore. So I said I am going to design a t-shirt, something that looks cool, funky and attractive and people say I want to wear this [...] You will not get a fashionable guy wearing skins, but you will get them wearing t-shirts, they will still represent [...] My thing is also anything positive will last. There are so many stereotypes about the Khoisan, so many things written that are not true [...] people all over are claiming the land but nobody is interested in keeping the heritage alive and this is going to keep the heritage alive for years and years to come. A hundred years from now people will still wear clothes [...] there might be *Khoi Kulcha* cars and cell phones one day (Rochey Walters, 18/05/2018)

*Khoi Kulcha* is thus in many ways Walters' 'time machine' into the future; a way of guaranteeing Khoisan culture's perseverance for centuries to come. To be clear, he is an ardent supporter of acts of Khoisan revivalism that emphasize continuity as well. Walters (Ibid.) sees an important role for what he regards as "authentic indigenous tradition", evidenced for instance by his desire to one day "go to the Kalahari to experience how people live indigenous" and essentially engage in participant observation: "I want to put on animal skin, eat what they eat, do what they do etc.". Walters' Khoisan revivalism thus involves both efforts at creating continuity with the past and repackaging it in

accordance with 21<sup>st</sup> century fashion trends. Moreover, while equally passionate about laying bare the violence of colonialism and its enduring legacies, he specifically created *Khoi Kulcha* to emphasize the beautiful, “cool” and positive inherent in the “Khoisan story”; an appeal also made by various other Khoisan revivalists (ENN 2017b, 7; Richards 2017, 535). Walters’ diverse motives are illustrated by his involvement in selling flavoured organic (ice)teas and exploring ways to expand with energy drinks brewed from “something the Khoisan ate to give them energy for weeks to hunt” and even a Khoi lager (Rochey Walters, 18/05/2018). The difference between *Khoi Kulcha* and companies like Yvette Abrahams’ *Khoelife*, however lies in the way they package Khoisan culture; one emphasizes time-worn indigenous knowledge, the other contemporary fashion. Walters’ brand “is not political as it does not harm anyone”, but that does not mean it is not concerned with Khoisan issues. *Khoi Kulcha*’s tea assortment is for instance sourced from tea plantations in the Cederberg region that are “Khoisan-owned”, as “Rooibos was discovered by the Khoisan” (see Chapter Three). The tea packaging accordingly displays a Khoisan figure in rock-art style, “to commemorate the first unknown Khoisan who discovered the process” (Rochey Walters, 18/05/2018).

Initially it was hard for Walters and his associates to get their products out there. He recalls facing ridicule for being involved with Khoisan issues and having to go door-to-door to sell his items (Rochey Walters, 05/12/2018). Slowly *Khoi Kulcha* became financially viable, but he continues to reinvest the profits back into the company to make it grow (Rochey Walters, 18/05/2018). While the teas are sold at the supermarket chain Spar and shipped to various restaurants, *Khoi Kulcha*’s flagship product remains their t-shirts and



Figure 10. “Embrace your roots – Live original” (Photo credit: Rohey Walters)

other apparel. Walters explains his company’s modest success by reasoning that he is not selling mere t-shirts, but “stories”. These ‘stories’ more often than not explicitly embody Khoisan revivalist tropes, with messaging printed on clothing such as “embrace your roots” and “live original”, juxtaposed to all manner of Khoisan-related imagery such as rock-art figures and hunting bows (see Figure 10). “Live original” has become *Khoi Kulcha*’s motto: “the original slogan was ‘we are alive’, that kind of promotes a certain political element [...] I am a creative person, I want to be original [...] You do you and I do me [...] Living original does not mean you have to wear an animal skin” (Rohey Walters, 05/12/2018). Walters therefore actively encourages everyone to buy his products, whether they are Khoisan or not, as everyone should “live original” and celebrate the Khoisan in the process.

Aside from running *Khoi Kulcha*, Walters also incorporates his Khoisan revivalism in his performances as a stand-up comedian, musician and activist, frequently all at the same time. This accounts for his involvement in the short-lived UNISON-initiative he launched with his long-time friend Richard Burns and the locally renowned jazz musician Camillo Lombard. Replicating various other initiatives to cultivate unity, UNISON attempted to unify all Khoisan representatives and get them to speak with one and the same voice, hence the reference to singing in ‘unison’. I attended the launch of UNISON in Mitchells Plain on 16 July 2018. Lombard chaired the meeting and gave a speech that emphasized how “we are all *pragtige Khoi mense* [beautiful Khoi people]” seeking “self-determination” and greater promotion of Khoisan culture. Citing Ruben Richards’ book as a source of inspiration, he stressed that more people needed to learn about historical figures such as Doman or Autshumato. Lombard also expressed his support for the campaign to rename Cape Town International Airport after Krotoa (see Chapter Four). He and the other UNISON members believed the Khoisan could rally around this message, but as I said, the initiative soon ran out of steam, thereby conforming to the trend I laid out in Chapter Five. However, during UNISON’s launch I also got more insight into Lombard’s fusion of Khoisan revivalism and music – which deserves to be elaborated on in light of this chapter’s focus.

At the meeting Lombard pleaded for music-themed “education programs”, where “youths learn about their true indigenous identity so that they realize who they really are as a first nation”. I do not know if these programs were ever rolled out, but Lombard himself underwent precisely such an evolution. Although he plays Khoisan traditional instruments such as the mouth bow, I would argue that he fronts them to a lesser extent in his productions than groups like *Khoi Konexxion*. Instead, Lombard explicitly aims for a blend of Khoisan revivalism, Khoisan traditional instruments and jazz, particularly its local variety, *Goema*. Lombard is not alone in creating this flavour of fusion Cape jazz. The husband of the prominent Khoisan revivalist Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, Tony Cedras, who is a locally acclaimed artist in his own right, for instance released *Love Letter to Cape Town* in 2015, which includes titles such as *Autshumao Suite* and *//Hui !Gaeb (Where the Clouds Gather)*. One reviewer describes the album as drawing out the “indigenous blood heart of Tony Cedras” through its “soundscapes echoing the joyous resonations of originality

from the ancient language of a First Peoples, the Khoisan” (Martin 2015). With his band, Topdog SA, Lombard however seems to have reached an even bigger audience. Soon after the release of their debut album, *Griqua DNA*, in 2016, the band began organizing the Nama Jazz Series at Cape Town’s Artscape Theatre Centre on a yearly basis. As one journalist reviewing the 2018 edition, entitled *This is Who We Are*, for *Independent Online* described it, the series takes the audience on “an indigenous journey”:

Nama Jazz, which pays musical homage to Khoi and San heroes, is a new term that has given the music unusual style and is a fusion of indigenous melodies, rhythms and jazz chord progressions [...] TopDog SA will use mouth bows, the Boesmans Klawier (African piano), the talking drum and rice shakers (instruments used by the Cape Khoena). These instruments are the origins of their music, which links these indigenous instruments to contemporary sounds such as the accordion, banjo, melodica and flute, all of which will feature in the performance<sup>147</sup>

I attended the 2018 edition in Cape Town as well on 27 April. The seats were all but sold out and I was struck by the enthusiasm of the roughly 500-strong audience as Lombard greeted them in Khoekhoegowab and exclaimed “we are the first nation”. During and in-between performances, Lombard in particular echoed similar messaging, stressing that the time was ripe to tackle the identity crisis by claiming indigenous status. He even plugged the book of Ruben Richards, “the book that has all the answers”, which people lined up to buy in the lobby during the break. Richards was present to sign copies. In an interesting parallel to *Afrikaaps*, pictures of a man meant to represent Autshumato were projected in the background as the band performed *Aushumao*, which featured both bow music and a saxophone solo. The lyrics also bring home the Khoisan revivalist revision of history, by noting that “*Aushumao is my regte naam*” [*Aushumao* [Autshumato] is my real name]. Other songs with similar themes include *Krotoa*, *Origins* and *Hoerikwaggo*. The concert ended with *Stam van Afrika* [Tribe of Africa], with the chorus going “*Wie se kind is ik? Stam van Afrika. Wie se kind is ek? Wie se kind is ons? Wie se kind is jy? Khoisan, Griqua, Nama*

---

<sup>147</sup> “TopDog SA pays homage to Khoi, San heroes in third Nama Jazz Series.” *Independent Online* (2018) <https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/arts-portal/topdog-sa-pays-homage-to-khoi-san-heroes-in-third-nama-jazz-series-18184717>, accessed 20 March 2021.

[Whose child am I? Tribe of Africa. Whose child am I? Whose children are we? Whose child are you? Khoisan, Griqua, Nama]”. Topdog SA officially launched their album *Nama Jazz* the next year, on 3 July 2019. At the launch, the artists explained that they had recorded an entire album previously, but decided not to release it because it sounded “too foreign, too American”. As they began to “reconnect” with their Khoisan ancestry, “inspiration flowed [...] We all did research about who we are as a people, it was really intense [...] this is who we are and the sound is in us”. This included a visit to “the archives” and, as Lombard pointed out in an earlier interview, a fieldwork trip to *!Khwa ttu*.<sup>148</sup> Several band members, all of whom coloured, attested that confronting the “identity crisis” and discovering their “African root” had been a “spiritual experience”. Playing music put them on the same “spiritual wavelength”; the same sonic path towards Khoisan revivalism. The potential to get youths enthusiastic about their Khoisan roots was highlighted by Lombard, but also by several Khoisan revivalists who attended the launch. Khoisan culture was not only a powerful source of artistic inspiration. As with hip-hop, the attendees recognized that Cape Jazz, and music more generally, was an opportune medium to amplify Khoisan revivalism’s reach.

One of the people Lombard and Topdog SA collaborate with in their performances is Amanda Lois Stone, a local blues singer who has been involved with Khoisan revivalism for several years, though kept a more modest profile. Stone, who was born in Elsies River, but grew up in Beaufort West, has become somewhat of a staple at Khoisan revivalist events (Amanda Lois Stone, 01/04/2017). She traces her first “real thoughts” about the Khoisan to a “vision” she had in 2011 after coming across the poetry about Sarah Baartman by Diana Ferrus. During the vision, Stone “could see the world through the eyes of Sarah Baartman [and] feel so much intense pain, but also a great love to get over the pain”. This inspired her to write poetry of her own, which she later added music to and began performing at local low-key events. It is at one of these that she met Chantal Revell, who made her “realize I got an identity, culture and history” and convinced her to become

---

<sup>148</sup> “TopDog SA pays homage to Khoi, San heroes in third Nama Jazz Series.” *Independent Online* (2018) <https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/arts-portal/topdog-sa-pays-homage-to-khoi-san-heroes-in-third-nama-jazz-series-18184717>, accessed 20 March 2021.

more involved in Khoisan revivalism. She has since adopted the stage name *Khoi Noi* [Khoi Lady] and has composed various songs in Afrikaans bearing witness to her newfound Khoisan identity. Stone's performances draw on gospel and blues to "hit the soul" and provide "spiritual healing". As with Topdog SA, her songs frequently embody Khoisan revivalist themes. In *Krotoa*, she sings from the point of view of Krotoa herself and asks her listeners to "*bring tog my lewensvershaal aan die lig [...] Ek, jy, ons is mos Afrikas eerste mense [...] Ons testament nie op papier maar vir ewig op kliptafels rotswand* [bring my life's story to light [...] Me, you, we are Africa's first people [...] Our testament not on paper, but forever on stone tables on rock walls]". In *David Stuurman*, which celebrates Khoisan resistance fighter David Stuurman, Stone again takes the point of view of Stuurman and also explicitly advances land claims: "*Moet my mense dan net in armoede verdwyn? [...] Ek vra maar net na Identiteits en grondves reg* [Do my people simply have to disappear into poverty? [...] I am merely asking for the right to identity and land]".

Stone gets her inspiration from the various Khoisan revivalists she meets along the way, such as Camillo Lombard or Willa Boezak, who have shared their books and information with her (Amanda Lois Stone, 11/04/2018). Others have directly requested her to write songs about specific historical figures, as was the case with *David Stuurman*. During our last interview Stone also mentioned that she was looking for funding to take a trip to the Kalahari to seek inspiration. She gets occasional financial support from fans, but she still struggles to get by. One of the ways Stone tries to raise funding is by organizing Khoisan-themed events. I attended one of these on 29 June 2019 in Parow, billed as "Khoisan Winter Evening – come and experience a wonderful cultural jazz evening". The evening was organized like a gala dinner and took place in a local museum known as the "Whalemark Building" that doubles as a small-scale conference centre. Stone's daughter acted as the host for the evening and set the tone by opening with "Khoisan brothers and sisters rise [...] It's time for our voices to be heard, that people know we are a nation of our own [...] We are the bows and the clicks, the sounds and where the future begins [...] Tonight is all about celebrating everything indigenous". Khoisan-themed objects such as ostrich shells, *khoigoed* and kudu horns were placed around the podium, where various artists performed as the guests were served "traditional Khoisan food". The artists provided the 'bows, clicks and sounds' mentioned earlier by playing the

bow (“the indigenous sounds of South Africa”), reading their poetry or performing their stand-up comedy routines, which focused on Khoisan stereotypes.

It would not have been a celebration of Khoisan culture in true Khoisan revivalist-fashion if the evening had not included the *rieldans*, a high-octane social dance characterized by fast footwork and performed by men and women wearing farm-style clothing (Arnolds 2016, 46; Nel 2016, 320). The host indeed revealed that local *rieldans* would feature as the closing act, performing “the oldest dance in the world”, as it is often referred to by Khoisan revivalists (see e.g. ENN 2015, 1). The writer, teacher and artist Elias Nel is accredited with its revival, who relates it to the Khoisan, but also to farmworkers in general (ENN 2015, 2; Arnolds 2016, 84; Nel 2016, 318-326). The origins of the dance are disputed. Some trace it to the 1940s and 1980s Northern Cape countryside (Van Wyk 2012, 52). Most however argue that it grew organically out of a combination of indigenous dance forms from the Northern Cape and modern influences, including “Scottish reel dancing”, hence its name (Van Wyk 2012, 52; Arnolds 2016, 46). Few believe it has survived unaltered in the present. Whatever the case may be, Nel danced the *rieldans* as a child in his native Verneukpan in the Northern Cape, but steadily saw it go out of fashion as he grew older (Arnolds 2016, 43). He approached the *Afrikaanse Taal en Kultuurverning* (ATKV), a non-governmental organisation that was created in 1930 to promote Afrikaans language and culture, for assistance to help make it popular again. Eager to open up to non-whites after the end of apartheid, the ATKV agreed to assist Nel in organising yearly competitions in Paarl (Ibid., 49). These have exceeded expectations and become incredibly popular, with only seven groups involved in 2006, to 96 in the 2015 edition, and the dance being practiced in various other provinces in South Africa as well (Arnolds 2016, 53; Van Wyk 2013b, 148). Khoisan revivalists have been very enthusiastic about the increased popularity of the *rieldans*. One ENN contributor saw it as a way to cherish indigenous knowledge and folklore in general (ENN 2016b, 8). Others celebrated it as a sign that the youth are warming up to their “indigenous identity” (ENN 2015, 1). Willa Boezak (2017b, 337) even reasoned it would keep them off the streets and prevent them from losing themselves in “drugs and gangs”. Another interlocutor was confident that the *rieldans* will ultimately result in “young kids bringing the adults back in again” (Jonathan Muller, 10/04/2018).



What is interesting to take away from the revival of the *rieldans* at the conclusion of this chapter is that it has managed to become popular by a skilful navigation of the ‘continuity’ and ‘change’ I identified at the beginning of this chapter as being typical of the revival of Khoisan culture. By most accounts, the dance itself grew out of a fusion of new and old; yet it emerges as no less potent an act of Khoisan revivalism. In fact, *rieldans* has quickly become yet another core element of Khoisan revivalist culture, in no small part because it is now tied to ATKV-sponsored competitions. The involvement of the ATKV shows how Khoisan revivalism, in all of its diversity, expands in ever new directions and continues to attract various partners (see Conclusion). But whichever directions Khoisan revivalism might take in years to come, I argue in the next chapter that important theoretical conclusions about indigenous revivalism, authenticity and the uses of history can be drawn from the diversity of empirical data I have presented up to this point.



## **Part III. Theoretical perspectives on Khoisan**

### **revivalism**



## 7 Khoisan revivalism and the therapeutics of history

*“The historical conscience, through the feeling of cohesion that it creates, constitutes the safest and the most solid shield of cultural security for a people. This is why every people seeks only to know and to live their true history well, to transmit its memory to their descendants. The essential thing, for people, is to rediscover the thread that connects them to their most remote ancestral past. In the face of cultural aggression of all sorts, in the face of all disintegrating factors of the outside world, the most efficient cultural weapon with which a people can arm itself is this feeling of historical continuity.”*

- Cheikh Anta Diop (1991 [1981], 212)

*“Today, we must utilise our past, how bad it may have been and exploit it to our own benefit. We must tell our own story, market and sing our own blues.”*

- Martin Engelbrecht (1998, 32)

Why and how do Khoisan revivalists engage with the past? This open-ended question lies at the core of my enquiry and has guided my fieldwork since 2014. The empirical data which I generated shows that Khoisan revivalists are driven by a wide range of motivations, which correspond to equally diverse articulations of indigeneity. For Khoisan revivalists, ‘the past’ refers to historical legacies; personal and collective experiences; history books; museums; family trees; objects, and much, much more. This

'past' is engaged with to diagnose and remedy a felt identity crisis; inform and counter specific historical narratives; undergo religious and spiritual experiences; cultivate a sense of community; bolster entitlement claims; set up tourist ventures; tailor aesthetics; reconstitute Khoekhoegowab and inspire rituals and artistic performances. This is a non-exhaustive list, as the past undoubtedly has functions that I failed to identify. As Martin Engelbrecht, a Griqua representative, reminded those attending the Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference in 1997, Khoisan revivalism above all else urges its adherents to "utilise", "exploit" and "market" the past to their "own benefit". That much is indeed evident at this point. In this chapter I revisit my central research question from a theoretical vantage point and examine why and how the past is engaged with in a certain way in pursuit of these 'benefits'.

The diversity inherent in Khoisan revivalism offers several entry points for such an analysis. To my mind, however, a productive avenue is revealed in Engelbrecht's reference to singing "our own blues". I could be reading too much into this, but I find it telling that Engelbrecht specifically mentions the blues musical genre. Indeed, when lamenting (the legacies of) dispossession and assimilation, Khoisan revivalists seem to experience the kind of melancholia that is also fostered in blues. They feel robbed of an essence, an authenticity, a core element of their being; "the essential thing [...] the thread that connects them to their most remote ancestral past", as Cheikh Anta Diop referred to it. Khoisan revivalism is not only about mourning what has been lost; the revival of the past is deemed equally imperative. Rediscovering "this feeling of historical continuity" is elemental for those who have experienced colonization and "cultural aggression of all sorts", according to Diop. Khoisan revivalists certainly strive "to know and to live their true history" with rigour, both as an "efficient cultural weapon" and as the "most solid shield of cultural security". Feeling divorced from the past, Khoisan revivalists attempt to bridge that felt sense of distance. Mourning and reviving are two sides of the same coin; indications that the past strikes an emotional chord with Khoisan revivalists, possibly with life-changing consequences. Not surprisingly therefore, as I have shown, terms such as "healing" and "trauma" permeate Khoisan revivalism. The regularity with which I encountered these terms made me ponder the ascribed 'therapeutic' qualities of my interlocutors' engagements with the past. If historical legacies can be considered

‘traumatic’, then Khoisan revivalism might perform a process akin to ‘therapy’ from my interlocutors’ point of view. I wondered how ‘therapeutic’ engagements with the past might look like in terms of methodology, sources, style and ideas concerning authentic representations of, or engagements with the past. As I was eager to theorize alongside my interlocutors and perused inspirational works that suggested this could be a productive line of enquiry, I decided early on to base my theoretical assessment of Khoisan revivalism around this observation.

Before I elaborate on the specifics of my approach, two caveats are necessary. While the concepts ‘trauma’, ‘healing’ or ‘therapy’ stem from the fields of psychiatry and medicine, I have no intention of diagnosing whether Khoisan revivalists are traumatized, actually perform self-therapy or experience psychological healing in the biomedical sense. That said, the belief that South African society is “traumatized” due to its “vast archive of suffering” is certainly widespread (Colvin 2008, 223). If ‘trauma’ refers to both the event and its psychological traces, then Khoisan revivalists are at least partially affected by these historical legacies (Fassin and Rechterman 2009, 4). Various scholars have made the case for such intergenerational trauma, with regards to indigenous people and others, citing a loss of identity and culture, as well as various psychological and physical ailments as evidence (see e.g. Alfred 2009, 42, 49; Argenti and Schramm 2009; Montgomery 2019). Frantz Fanon, who I come back to later on, is well-known for his analysis of the (post)colonial condition as a psychopathology (Gibson and Beneduce 2017, 17). Charles Taylor (1994, 25-26) also famously argued that “[n]onrecognition or misrecognition”, as a consequence of assimilationist policies for instance, has the potential of “imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being [...] [It] can inflict a grievous wound, saddling its victims with a crippling self-hatred”. As various groups began coalescing and demanding justice and recognition on the basis of their trauma, a specific mode of identity politics demanding a victim-oriented reinterpretation of the past materialized (Misztal 2004; Fassin and Rechterman 2009, 16; Fukuyama 2018). Critics believe that terms such as trauma have become inflated and devoid of their original meaning in the process (Huyssen 2000, 23; Furedi 2004, 177). Trauma has undoubtedly come to denote any form of “serious violence or suffering” in everyday discourse (Colvin 2008, 223). According to Frank Furedi (2004, 2, 12, 152),

trauma-related vocabulary has become part of our cultural imagination and therefore increasingly drawn on to understand both ourselves and others. While Furedi (Ibid., 180) is mostly critical of this “therapy culture”, he insists that it should be seen as a social phenomenon first and foremost.

While the therapeutic jargon is appropriate given South Africa’s history, I am primarily seeking to appreciate why this vocabulary is meaningful to Khoisan revivalists and what it reflects on their engagements with the past. This calls for a second caveat, as the relationship between trauma, history and healing has taken on specific dimensions in South Africa. Indeed, no other institution infused the post-apartheid era with a “therapeutic vocabulary” than the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (Humphrey 2005, 208; Colvin 2008, 226). The TRC operated between 1995 and 2003 and, among other activities, granted amnesty to perpetrators in exchange for coming forward with the ‘truth’ about atrocities they committed or were involved in during the apartheid era. As then President Nelson Mandela argued, this trade-off would ultimately “heal the nation” and allow victims, perpetrators and survivors to reconcile and move on: “Only by knowing the truth can we hope to heal the terrible wounds of the past that are the legacy of apartheid. Only the truth can put the past to rest” (Nelson Mandela cited in Field 2006, 31-32). These religiously-inspired ideals of reconciliation and nation building suffused the TRC’s historical narrative in its final report, most overtly in its insistence on multiple ‘truths’ about the past, such as “emotional truth”, “personal truth”, “healing truth” and “social truth” (Verbuyst 2013, 6-10). These different, subjective and individualized interpretations of the past did not stand in the way of “healing”, but in fact contributed to the overarching “restorative truth” Mandela also gestured at. The TRC’s interpretation of the past and its overall effectiveness have been criticized from various perspectives. Some, not least Khoisan revivalists, feel excluded because their dispossession and colonization far predates apartheid. Others, such as Berber Bevernage (2008, 164; 2010, 164), have shown how the TRC’s insistence on closure does not work for the various victims for whom the past, including that of apartheid, is still very much in the ‘present’. The extent to which the TRC or similar bodies managed to “heal”, or for that matter reconcile, compensate or deliver transitional justice indeed remains hotly contested (cf. Humphrey 2005, 204-206; Bevernage 2014).



What struck me while studying the TRC during an earlier research was the virtual absence of historians in the commission. Most had a background in law or theology. While the reasons remain unclear, there are indications that leading figures in the TRC saw historians as hell-bent on fact-finding and stubbornly clinging to a singular definition of truth, which ran counter to the framework of multiple truths (Verbuyst 2013, 10). Notwithstanding this narrow understanding of historians, as others have pointed out, it is not a coincidence that a series of heritage projects “celebrating, commemorating, and often commodifying selected aspects of the past” were set up as the TRC was propagating its vision on how (not) to deal with the past (Hamilton, Mbenga and Ross 2010, 1). The TRC explicitly supported heritage studies and commemorative sites that embodied the ANC-driven reconciliation narrative (Verbuyst 2013, 22). Historical research as such was not part of the report’s recommendations. Post-apartheid heritage legislation also emphasized the importance of nation-building and propped up heritage as “a form of therapy” or “a therapeutic device”; an inexpensive measure compared to material compensation and socio-economic development (Marschall 2005, 78; Meskell 2011, 17-18, 72, 256). As I noted in the Introduction, this formula did not work for everyone. Heritage remains hotly contested terrain in South Africa, not least for Khoisan revivalists. As Lynn Meskell and Colette Scheermeyer (2008, 156) have observed, the ANC-sanctioned narrative prioritizes ANC members and the recent past, “the longer, more complex colonial history of the country, and the reasons why apartheid was successfully entrenched in the first instance, have been subsequently downplayed”. Whether heritage effectuates healing in post-conflict societies like South Africa is not my concern here (Giblin 2014, 500, 509). Nor do I want to get bogged down in debates about the “therapeutic state” — i.e. whether the state should strive to effectuate healing and promote a therapeutic discourse; although I broach the subject in the Conclusion (see e.g. Humphrey 2005, 209; Marrus 2007, 88). As with trauma-related language, I am primarily interested in the notion that heritage has therapeutic qualities, not so much in whether it actually possesses these (see also Giblin 2014, 500-502).

As I explained in the Introduction I see heritage as a process. I hinted at certain distinctions and tensions with what is traditionally termed ‘history’, all the while acknowledging both as engagements with the past in the first place. Keeping the specific

South African triangular relationship between trauma, history/heritage and healing in mind, I explore these distinctions and tensions at greater length in this chapter and enter Khoisan revivalism into a dialogue with various international case studies. One concept stands out in particular: “therapeutic history”, coined by the anthropologist Ronald Niezen in one of his lesser known works, *The Rediscovered Self* (2009). While some have highlighted its potential as an analytical concept (Hodgson 2010b, 698), it has not been picked up by academics. Given its relevance for Khoisan revivalism, I work with it throughout this chapter while drawing on complementary insights from the fields of history, heritage studies, postcolonial studies and settler-colonial studies. In the first subchapter I explain therapeutic history in greater detail and link it to characteristics which David Lowenthal discerned about ‘heritage’. I also revisit some of my empirical data in light of their insights. I continue doing so in the second subchapter by honing in and expanding on the concept of ‘authenticity’. Across two sections I deal with authenticity ‘from above’ (i.e. ‘repressive authenticity’ as embodied in the Khoisan extinctions discourse) and ‘from below’ (i.e. Khoisan revivalists’ ‘subversive authenticity’), respectively — although I will complicate this distinction along the way. I close with a brief reflection on the conundrums that arise from the political implications of ‘subversive authenticity’; as well as the differences between therapeutic history and academic history.

## **7.1 Therapeutic history, heritage and the case of Khoisan revivalism**

In *The Rediscovered Self* (2009), Ronald Niezen reflects on his work among indigenous communities in northern Canada to, among other things, scrutinize the role of the past in a context of indigenous revival; although he speaks of “rediscovery”, “reconstruction” and “recovery” instead. He is particularly interested in how the past informs identity construction. In the preface, Niezen summarizes what he means with a “rediscovered self” in this regard:

[R]ecovering an essence seen to have once been a part of one's innermost being but that was temporarily lost, maligned, and excoriated by outside forces, in some cases slated for elimination through state-sponsored policies of assimilation. The rediscovered self is the articulation of collective being that has been brought back from an imposed condition of oblivion and forgetting (Niezen 2009, xv-xvi)

Key to this collective 'rediscovering of the self' is a process of "therapeutic history":

[T]he appropriation or sponsorship of narratives about the past as a way to define the moral essence of a people [and] to recover from a lingering collective experience of rejection, dispossession, assimilation, and economic and political marginalization [...] Its main criterion for determining the truth is the subjective experience of group affirmation, the way it makes people feel about themselves [...] The qualities and feats of one's forbears can be artistically and educationally cultivated in a process of common remembering that can improve one's potential to act and to develop a sense of personal ability and worth [...] It thus emphasizes those aspects of the past that are emotionally positive, such as social peace, egalitarianism, spiritual enlightenment, and harmony with nature, while excoriating anything that is inconsistent with today's widely accepted standards of environmental and political responsibility (Niezen 2009, 149-150)

According to Niezen (2009, 153), a "critique of the West's cultural imperialism" and a "recovery of indigenous virtues" are thus central features of therapeutic history. The emphasis is commonly placed on histories of dispossession and violence on the one hand, and periods in (pre-colonial) history when "one's people were stronger, healthier, more autonomous, and, above all, more respected" on the other hand. The latter offer "a model with possibilities for emulation, from which to draw inspiration not simply as a representation of a good society but also as a source of self-discovery, of access to one's innermost being". Therapeutic history serves as a rallying point to thicken a sense of community; it generates a framework to articulate a felt sense of oppression, which can also form the basis for a campaign of redress (Ibid., 177). While Niezen (Ibid., 153, 167-168) recognizes that therapeutic history bolsters indigenous nationalisms and entitlement claims, he emphasizes that it is but one aspect of "a personal and collective movement towards wellness", though not necessarily in the biomedical sense.

Niezen is particularly interested in the tensions between therapeutic history and history of the academic kind. I address some of his concerns at the end of this chapter as they relate to therapeutic history's political ramifications. Suffice it to say that one of his central observations is that what counts as 'true knowledge' in therapeutic history does not stem from "a consensus on fundamental facts and on refinement or revision of that consensus through systematic, thorough, and critical presentation of evidence", as is the case in academic history-writing (Niezen 2009, 167-168). Rather, the ultimate criterion is its "contribution to the intellectual comforts of self-validation", as therapeutic history is "above all auto-history, with or without the assistance or cooperation of outside sympathizers" (Ibid., 154). Histories that cause "discomfort, inconvenience, the introduction of doubt, and the disconfirmation of self-image" run counter to the needs of therapeutic history and are shunned. As Niezen (Ibid., 185-186) notes, this rejection reflects the postcolonial critique that colonialism ceases only when it no longer has a hold over the politics of knowledge production. In fact, he argues that "an informal [in-group] process of validation or rejection" in which "[a]uthenticity follows from public approval, from a sufficiently broad acceptance and acknowledgment of a fit between idea and ideal" is typical of therapeutic engagements with the past (Ibid.). By prioritizing the needs of indigenous people, therapeutic history is elemental to a process of indigenous revivalism: "Though presented as truth about the past and the essence of one's being, the self-representations of therapeutic history are actually part of a creative process of becoming" (Ibid., 167-168).

There is a great deal to unpack here as many of Niezen's observations resonate strongly with Khoisan revivalism. I will address these throughout this chapter, but some of the main parallels can already be identified. Khoisan revivalists evidently seek out a "rediscovered self" and practice a kind of therapeutic history as both a reaction and remedy to processes of dispossession and assimilation. Emphases on self-worth, a true identity and one's "innermost being" characterize the Khoisan identity discourse. Khoisan revivalism is in many ways about gaining control over how the Khoisan are represented, and by extension how knowledge about them is produced. Niezen notes that therapeutic history informs entitlement claims, but that this is just one aspect of the overall pursuit of "wellness". As the three previous chapters in particular have made

clear, I believe this applies to Khoisan revivalism as well. What Khoisan revivalists consider useful history in this regard certainly differs in great respects from the academic history they frequently criticize; although, as I show below, this relationship is complex. On the face of it, Khoisan revivalism indeed coalesces around something akin to therapeutic history, which appeals to an increasing number of individuals who further contribute to the in-group process of validation of knowledge that Niezen described.

It is worth pointing out how some of the attributes of therapeutic history conform to characteristics of non-academic engagements with the past more generally. Notice for instance how, in David Lowenthal's analytical distinction between 'history' and 'heritage', therapeutic history emerges as a specific product of the latter:

The historian [...] seeks to convey a past consensually known, open to inspection and proof, continually revised and eroded as time and hindsight outdate its truths. The heritage fashioner, however historically scrupulous, seeks to design a past that will fix the identity and enhance the well-being of some chosen individual or folk. History cannot be wholly dispassionate, or it will not be felt worth learning or conveying; heritage cannot totally disregard history, or it will seem too incredible to command fealty. But the aims that animate these two enterprises, and their modes of persuasion, are contrary to each other (Lowenthal 1998, xi; my emphasis)

Lowenthal distinguishes between history and heritage on the basis of separate intentions while acknowledging that this distinction is often blurred in practice (Lowenthal 1998, x). The notion that history ought to serve life by contributing to "well-being" never disappeared entirely, but there was a concerted effort to disabuse it of this function from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century onward, when history was reframed as a dispassionate and critical enquiry above all else (Lowenthal 2015, 4).<sup>149</sup> Historians have become reflexive about such concepts since the postmodern turn, but there is a continued belief that the authority of

---

<sup>149</sup> Beverley Southgate (2005, 8) has argued that the pursuit of academic history can equally fulfil "therapeutic" functions: "For history, as the study of the past, can take one's mind off the troubles of the present; it can serve to put one's own problems into longer chronological perspective; and it can provide models for how to lead a better life". This, however, is not something I explore here as I focus entirely on non-academic engagements with the past by Khoisan revivalists.

historians stems from their ‘impartial’, ‘critical’ and ‘objective’ pursuit of truth over interpretation (Southgate 2005, 21; 2008, 29). The differences that Lowenthal discerns between heritage and history should therefore be seen as tools to think with, rather than strawmen. All the while, I revisit these distinctions towards the end of this chapter as they have political ramifications as well; not least because therapeutic history is arguably a hybrid between ‘heritage’ and ‘history’. It is with these caveats in mind that I draw on Lowenthal and Niezen’s insights throughout this chapter.

Let me first off identify insights from heritage studies that are most germane to the concept of therapeutic history. I have already noted how, just like Niezen places “wellness” at the core of therapeutic history, Lowenthal sees “well-being” as the desired outcome of heritage. Heritage makes the past less ‘foreign’ and more accommodating of present needs, whereas history is the study of the past on its own terms. History emphasizes difference and distance from the present to enhance its claim to objectivity (Lowenthal 1998, 109, 119). Heritage instead aspires to subjectivity: “Celebrating some bits and forgetting others, heritage shapes an embraceable past”; a congenial and affective one, commonly focused on specific parts that are most fit for purpose (Lowenthal 1998, 148, 162; see also Slotkin 2005, 225-226; Landsberg 2015, 178-179). “While historians aim to reduce bias, heritage sanctions and strengthens it. Bias is a vice that history struggles to excise; for heritage, bias is a nurturing virtue”, Lowenthal argues (Lowenthal 1998, 122). Once more as in therapeutic history, heritage is valued for its ability to address current needs, not for being able to withstand critical scrutiny (Ibid., 127). It is a personally or collectively-tailored version of the past, excised of the “obnoxious and the awkward” or the ambiguous: “Retooling the past to our needs and desires, we merge into it, conform it with ourselves, and ourselves with it, matching our self-images and aspirations. Rendered grand or homely, magnified or tarnished, the past is continually recast to promote personal or group agendas” (Lowenthal 2015, 40, 502; see also Landsberg 2015, 9). Fact and fiction alike feature in heritage; their distinction in fact becomes blurred, if not deliberately obfuscated (Lowenthal 1998, 128; see also De Groot 2015, 2). Accuracy is not the main concern in heritage: “We ask of heritage an imagined past, not an actual one” (Lowenthal 1998, 165).

I can easily picture how certain Khoisan revivalists would be offended by Lowenthal's claims that they deliberately blur fact and fiction, conceptualize an "imagined past" and explicitly promote bias, as it could imply that their engagements with the past are somehow dishonest. But this is not what these authors argue or why their insights are valuable to think with. However, in order to explain my position I need to contextualize terms at the core of their assessments, such as 'accuracy' and 'authenticity'. Before I fine-tune this terminology and refine my argument in the next subchapter, let me revisit some of my empirical material and make additional preliminary observations about the sources and methods Khoisan revivalists draw on in order to highlight the value of viewing their engagements with the past through the lenses of therapeutic history and heritage.

It is opportune to start off with the role of (academic) historical narratives. Historical fiction, particularly in an audio-visual format, has become a source of knowledge about the past in its own right against the backdrop of the rise of heritage and non-academic engagements with the past (see e.g. Rassool 2000, 21; Lowenthal 2015, 14). History of this kind is often considered more accessible and suitable for the cultivation of a profound historical experience than a work of academic history. In the context of Khoisan revivalism one can point to the circulation of Khoisan-related imagery on social media or to the engagements with movies such as *Krotoa* or *The Gods Must Be Crazy*. As Kalle Pihlainen (2014, 17) observed, consumers of these kinds of products "are not burdened by the same commitment to truthfulness as the historian". He adds that "historical arguments still have a high status in many contexts [...] [A]lthough the interpretation of the past is understood as being rhetorical on one level, this rhetoric continues to play a central role in the ways in which we position ourselves in the present" (ibid., 15). Indeed, the objective claim to knowledge attached to academic historiography appeals to those who seek to give their claims a specific layer of authority. This reasoning belies the way most Khoisan revivalists relate to academic historiography: its exponents are critiqued for omitting or distorting what they regard as their 'true' history, however they are not rejected outright, but (critically) mobilized as sources to formulate counter narratives, which can come in various shapes. This simultaneous rejection and appropriation of academic history-writing is typical of postcolonial settings and shows how academia remains a significant battleground (Ashcroft 2002, 103; Clifford 2004, 5; Falzetti 2015, 129).

Among other things, Khoisan revivalists have authored their own history books, curated their own guided tours, edited their own newspapers and created their own museums to propagate their interpretations of the past. At the same time, they have also spread their views on the past through hip-hop and other musical genres, theatre performances and incorporated them into everyday acts such as drinking rooibos tea or speaking Afrikaans. In light of the urgency attached to therapeutic history, and indeed to Khoisan revivalism, ‘histories’ come in both conventional and less conventional forms; whichever is most effective. Khoisan revivalists work through as many channels and with as many mediums as possible to get their message across. However, what makes their engagements with the past stand out — and indeed, as I argue in more detail below, potentially ‘subversive’ — is not so much their style, but their content. Niezen’s observation that therapeutic history focuses on histories of dispossession on the one hand and the precolonial (anti-colonial) past on the other hand certainly rings true. As I have shown, Khoisan revivalists highlight how their forbears lost their lives and land and were subsequently assimilated into colonial society. The recurrent celebration of episodes such as the 1510 defeat of D’Almeida or other Khoisan resistance campaigns are on the other hand examples of the characteristic emphasis on anti-colonial or precolonial history. There are obvious reasons why these pasts are continuously fronted, but they are selected first and foremost for their purported relevance for the present. Details or ‘accuracy’ are less relevant than ascribing meaning or bolstering entitlement claims and generalizations about the past (e.g. “The Khoisan were the first resistance fighters” or “The Khoisan were here first”).

There is, however, another crucial component to Khoisan revivalists’ engagements with the past: their (historical) experiences of being known as Coloured, which adds a layer of complexity to the binary indigenous/non-indigenous that is typically constitutive of a process of indigenous revivalism. As I explained in Chapter Four, these experiences relate to past and present perceptions of Coloured identity as an empty shell devoid of indigeneity and marked by connotations of miscegenation and assimilation, but also to a felt sense of socio-economic and political marginalization in the post-apartheid era by virtue of having this racial classification. Such experiences need to be factored into their engagements with the past in order to deliver on the “wellness” that is at the heart



of therapeutic history. On that note, “wellness” is a rather vague term and needs to be translated to the specific context of Khoisan revivalism. The same holds true with the embrace of “bias”: which bias and why? As I explained in Chapter Four, Khoisan revivalists make the past relatable in their pursuit of historical continuity. Historical figures, events and practices are primarily engaged with this goal in mind. Anachronism is shunned in academic history-writing, but emerges here as an efficient tool as it collapses temporal distance and allows for the meaning of the past to be extracted (see also Lowenthal 2015, 538). Examples that come to mind here are the depictions of Autshumato in Ruben Richard’s *Bastaards or Humans* as the “Cape Town-based strategic communications expert and international liaison officer” or interpretations of Krotoa as a feminist icon. Similarly, the past is frequently romanticized. The precolonial Cape is for instance commonly described as a place of gender equality, egalitarianism and abundance. Such interpretations of the past provide models for emulation and inspiration. The complicity of some Khoisan in colonialism works counter to such needs, and is therefore not necessarily denied, but evidently less focused on. I want to underscore that I am not arguing that such depictions are falsehoods, but rather stressing how they are primarily intent on delivering on the aims of therapeutic history. Khoisan revivalists want anything but a neutral reading of the past; they want a relatable and relevant one first and foremost, one that serves the ends of Khoisan revivalism.

Coming back to my earlier point: if relatability is the prime concern, then it follows that lived and historical experiences of being known as Coloured are viewed as an extension of the trials and tribulations of the Khoisan who faced the colonialists in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In Chapter Four I noted how a Khoisan ‘lens’ brings into focus those aspects of *both* the past and the present that are considered relatable and relevant in this regard. Khoisan revivalism is marked by a core set of grievances related to identity, land, traditional leadership, etc., but as the development of Khoisan revivalism across time shows, the Khoisan lens is able to adapt to new elements as they emerge, such as the mobilization around ‘Krotoa International Airport’. This explains the current variety in articulations of indigeneity among Cape Town-based Khoisan revivalists. The Khoisan lens indeed has to be flexible enough to accommodate the great diversity among (potential) Khoisan revivalists, yet it cannot, and does not, refract radically different

interpretations of the past because those that find Khoisan revivalism appealing seem to share the same socio-cultural experiences. The Khoisan lens is premised on this specific bias, which is simultaneously claimed in the process. As Lowenthal notes, history (in theory) strives to be open to everyone, but heritage is frequently thought of as a possession, only accessible or open for critical scrutiny by the in-group (Lowenthal 1998, 146; 2015, 505, 596). However inclusive Khoisan revivalism might be in many respects, one of its central tenets is the experience of being known as Coloured. This is why Khoisan revivalism's 'therapeutic history' indeed cultivates that sense of community and rallying point for redress Niezen identified. For whatever else, the Khoisan revivalist community in Cape Town is certainly real in its effects; friendships are made, a network is established and frictions arise. It is also in this particular network that knowledge validation takes place, which I say more about towards the end of this chapter when I reflect on the political implications of basing engagements with the past on 'experience'.

Before moving on, I want to highlight two more mediums through which Khoisan revivalists *both* source and spread their interpretations of the past as they also showcase the centrality of the 'Coloured experience'. *Eerste Nasie Nuus* (ENN), which I cite extensively in this thesis, certainly comes to mind here. ENN is first and foremost a communication tool. As I explained in Chapter One, while it is run by Zenzile Khoisan and Debbie Hendricks, whose particular political viewpoints and opinions are apparent in the newspaper's orientation, the publication strives to be as inclusive as possible and regularly publishes opinions that go against the editors' points of view. All the while, however, ENN emerges as a source of authority or "in-group validation". As it is part of the nature of Khoisan revivalism itself, ENN is not responsible for inventing the arguments about historical continuity that define it or for policing what its contents are, but with Zenzile Khoisan at the helm, it certainly acts as a megaphone in this regard. As I noted repeatedly, there is a great deal of diversity in Khoisan revivalism, but ENN inescapably occupies a niche through its implicit rather than explicit endorsement of what its core features are. No comparable publication exists, making ENN a highly valuable source for both potential and seasoned Khoisan revivalists. Having said that, a different kind of research would have to track the distribution and consumption of ENN among Khoisan revivalists to properly gauge its impact.

A similar study would need to measure the influence of social media. I did not conduct this research, but I have noted previously that social media — Facebook and WhatsApp in particular — has become a key medium for Khoisan revivalists. To a certain degree, this simply reflects the rise of social media worldwide. However, several authors have argued that it fulfils specific roles in the context of (indigenous) activism, and many of their findings resonate with my observations about Khoisan revivalism. Many have pointed to the democratic nature of the medium in allowing users to cultivate safe spaces to celebrate, counter, publicize, discuss and exchange theirs or others' interpretations of the past without having to fear censure, ridicule or discrimination from outsiders (Kolia 2016, 613; Bodunrin 2018, 176; Brinkman and Luyckfasseel 2020, 16). Social media can operate as a way for indigenous people to take control of the way they are depicted and feature in discourses (Carlson 2016, 251). Platforms like Facebook also allow for likeminded users to identify, organize and network among one another with ease (Lumby 2010, 69). I readily made use of this digitally sustained network to both examine the diversity of articulations of indigeneity in Khoisan revivalism, as well as to get in touch with potential research participants. Some of these connections extend across continents, giving rise to “imagined communities” of indigenous people of an unprecedented scale (Niezen 2009, 58). As Maximillian Forte (2016b, 267) put it, social media has given indigenous people and other marginalized groups “a web of mutual recognition and self-definition”, the potential of which for indigenous people might rival that of the printing press for European nationalists.

As I noted, I did not conduct the necessary research to respond to these observations in detail. What I have certainly observed, however, is that social media has indeed amplified the circulation of the imagery and information which Khoisan revivalists draw on to shape their identities (see also Dodge 2006, 355; Clifford 2013, 279; Lowenthal 2015, 37). Social media is designed to stimulate the rapid dissemination of easily digestible information, often in a visual or concise format, but, as I noted, it is also used to share academic books and articles. This digital archive drastically increases the access to such information and speeds up its dissemination. However, critics fear that the nature of the exchange of information on social media simultaneously undermines the belief in objective facts and polarizes its users (Cox 2017, 1852). Its algorithms are not geared

towards exploring differences of opinion, but instead encourage the formation of ‘echo chambers’, virtual environments that reinforce pre-existing opinions or push them to extremes. Niezen (2005, 537) has also reflected on this, noting that the freedom associated with the medium proves as empowering as disempowering because it destabilizes the idea of evidence and facts. This means that “almost any idea – no matter how imprecise and unsubstantiated” can attain the status of “evidence” and live a digital life of its own (Niezen 2009, 157). I too have seen how social media allows for the dissemination of information and opinions, both for better and worse. It stimulates debate, but these discussions can easily descend into conspiracy thinking or conflicts. More research is required to assess the role of social media in Khoisan revivalism, but it is clear that some would celebrate it as a safe space, whereas others would dismiss it as an echo-chamber.

This observation to a large extent applies to assessments of Khoisan revivalism as a whole. Recall here the differences of opinion I detailed in the Introduction. Some might view Khoisan revivalists as marginalized individuals who are attempting to reclaim history and authenticity in the wake of colonialism; the cultivation of a ‘safe space’ to reap the benefits of therapeutic history. Critics might on the other hand discern in Khoisan revivalism great cause for concern, seeing it instead as a misguided quest for essentialism and entitlement fuelled by an ‘echo-chamber’ of inauthentic colonialist representations. I side with the former assessment (although with an emphatic asterisk), but critics certainly have a point in so far as they highlight the complexity of the role of authenticity in Khoisan revivalism. As I revisit more empirical data and add to the theoretical analysis in the next subchapter, I make clear why ‘authenticity’ indeed needs to be scrutinized in some detail in order to appreciate its relationship to therapeutic history, heritage, and what I refer to as the Khoisan revivalist guide to reclaiming history and authenticity more generally.

## 7.2 Subverting ‘repressive authenticity’? The Khoisan revivalist guide to reclaiming history and authenticity

I have used the word ‘authenticity’ countless times in this thesis, yet I have stopped short of defining it. Due its centrality in this subchapter, it is necessary that I do so here. I have made do without a definition perhaps because of the inherently ambiguous meanings that are commonly assigned to ‘authenticity’ in both popular and academic discourse. Definitions of authenticity refer to the “quality of being authentic” or, among other things, being true, real, original, honest, genuine, sincere, natural, pure, rightful or accurate (see e.g. Taylor 1992, 29; Chakrabarty 2007, 79-80; Jones 2010, 181; Lindholm 2013, 362).<sup>150</sup> While I work with the tensions that arise from these various ascriptions below, I want to make a crucial analytical distinction between ‘accuracy’ and ‘authenticity’ by drawing on a study of historical fiction by Laura Saxton (2020). Saxton starts off with the observation that ‘accuracy’, i.e. “adherence to established – or agreed upon – historical fact”, is often considered “a marker of merit”, not just when writing about the past in an academic setting, but also when evaluating historical fiction (Ibid., 127-128). “Authenticity” is frequently used interchangeably with accuracy, but this, she argues, is incorrect as the latter is not a precondition for the former. In the distinction Saxton proposes, authenticity is defined as a “far more complex, variable, and subjective concept”: “Authenticity refers to the experience of consuming an historical text and the audience’s impression of whether it captures the past, even if this is at odds with available evidence” (Ibid., 128). In this sense, an inaccurate representation of the past can still be considered authentic and an accurate depiction might nevertheless be seen as inauthentic. Authenticity and accuracy are certainly related, as the “verisimilitude” (i.e. the quality of emulating what is considered original or accurate with a certain degree of proximity) evidently bolsters authenticity. Whereas accuracy can be debated in reference to established facts, methods and primary sources (i.e. “the methodologies of academic

---

<sup>150</sup> I am interested in ‘authenticity’ as an anthropological notion, not as a philosophical one. Hence I do not reference the vast literature on the subject from the field of philosophy.

historians”, which admittedly also depend on the standards of the time), the debate over authenticity is ultimately “shaped intertextually, culturally, and subjectively”, Saxton concludes. Authenticity relates to the essence of the past, and therefore ultimately lies in the eye of the beholder.

While based on a study of historical fiction, Saxton’s observations about (historical) authenticity as a subjective quality, though certainly not original (see also Cohen 1988; Banks 2013; Ellis 2014), are relevant for the type of anthropological investigation I engage in here. Elaborating on her juxtaposition of authenticity and accuracy, as well as on the role of verisimilitude in this equation, is particularly helpful for my analysis. In this subchapter I revisit more empirical data and expand on earlier arguments concerning therapeutic history to show how authenticity is shaped by Khoisan revivalists and various other parties; resulting in a set of tensions that determine the specific roles and shapes of authenticity in Khoisan revivalism. In the section below I begin by looking at such influences as they manifest themselves primarily ‘from above’. I then shift the focus to my main concern: understanding how Khoisan revivalists shape authenticity ‘from below’.

### **7.2.1 Authenticity after colonialism: repressive authenticity and the Khoisan extinction discourse**

If ‘authenticity’ is subjective, it changes over time. Khoisan revivalists seek to effectuate such a shift, not least because they are dismayed with the degree to which Khoisan authenticity continues to be shaped by people other than themselves. While their self-representations were never determined entirely by others, Khoisan revivalism constitutes an unprecedented assertion of agency in this respect. All the while, the sources of Khoisan revivalism remain affected, if to varying degrees, by (the legacies of) the Khoisan extinction discourse I described in Chapter Two. From the first encounters between Khoisan and Europeans, but particularly from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century onward, colonialists generated a swathe of stereotypes to represent the Khoisan as lazy, inhuman, heathen and (nobly) savage. During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, the notion that the Khoisan had all but perished as a result of colonial encroachment took root and informed both

popular and academic representations. The image of the Khoisan as pristine stone-age hunter-gatherers living in the desert is a product of this era. Scientists and artists alike flocked to places where the remaining Khoisan were thought to reside in order to ‘salvage’ their ways of life before they would vanish in the face of modernization. Accordingly, an urban Khoisan presence was disavowed. As my references to the international literature attest, the trope of the ‘vanishing native’ is not unique to South Africa and ‘extinction discourses’ exert(ed) influence elsewhere as well. While these representations were criticized in academic and public circles in South Africa from the 1960s and 1970s onward, indeed culminating in Khoisan revivalism itself, the Khoisan extinction discourse goes on to inform Khoisan representation to a great extent. Its spectre has been apparent at various moments in this thesis.

For one, Khoisan revivalists continue to experience disbelief and ridicule when their classification as Coloured and urban upbringing and lifestyle are referenced to deny their Khoisan identities. While perceptions are quickly changing, Cape Town is still associated with a historical Khoisan presence more so than a contemporary one. It is where the origins of colonialism in South Africa lie, making the case for historical continuity difficult to sustain there, at least according to some. By associating indigeneity with remoteness and rural lifestyles, cities are often seen as either devoid of indigenous people, or as places where they necessarily feel alienated (James 2012, 256). Urban-based indigenous people usually require more “identity work” to qualify as ‘authentic’, both in the eyes of peers and others, than those who ‘look the part’ in rural areas (cf. Carlson 2016, 166). Khoisan revivalists in Cape Town indeed do not conform to what Frans Prins (2009, 193) has referred to as “Kalahari San stereotypes”: yardsticks to measure Khoisan authenticity that are based on the Khoisan residing in the Kalahari region, particularly in the wake of salvage ethnography (see also Frans 2009, 106). Various commentators have identified such stereotypes: being short in stature, wearing animal skins, hunting with bow and arrow, herding animals, speaking click languages, being close to nature, and residing in a desert climate (cf. Jackson and Robins 1999, 71; Besten 2011b, 176; Ellis 2012, 16). As a result of the widespread circulation of such ideas and imagery, the Khoisan might very well be “one of the most imaged/imagined peoples in the world” (Francis 2010, 46). William Ellis even argued that this has led the word “bushman” to become a

representational category more so than a reference to an actual person (Ellis 2014, 496; see also Rasool and Hayes 1998).

The literature on indigenous people is awash with references to what Patrick Wolfe (1999, 179) termed “repressive authenticity”: the doubting or outright rejection of the authenticity of indigeneity if it does not conform to a set of top-down criteria or popular concepts, like the “Kalahari San stereotypes”. More often than not, these criteria, which inform policies and popular opinions alike, both explicitly and more subtly, reflect non-indigenous assumptions about indigenous people that might have little salience among the people concerned. Expressions of identity and culture are disqualified or met with suspicion if they venture beyond pre-set boundaries, thereby allowing little room for hybridity or an acknowledgement of historical change. This led Jeff Sissons (2005, 37) to conclude that “indigenous authenticity is racism and primitivism in disguise”, an unfair set of requirements thrust upon an already marginalized group. Niezen (2009, 180) too has argued that indigenous people are often required to act out a kind of “cultural primordialism” in order for their cultures and identities to be legible by the wider public. Maximillian Forte (2006a, 63) concurs: “Few, or no, other people on this planet have been consistently held to such rigid standards of “proof,” to represent themselves with an authenticity that accords with distant antiquity, like museum pieces on legs”. As Jace Weaver (Weaver 2005, 228) remarked, if indigenous people are cast as extinct, that implies that they do not ‘change’.

Wolfe coined the concept of repressive authenticity in particular to point to instances where it is used to deny indigenous people certain (land) rights and forms of legal recognition by the state. In order to qualify for such recognition, indigenous people habitually need to exhibit a certain degree of historical continuity in terms of customs, practices and identification. Too much historical continuity might be interpreted as a sign that special forms of recognition are not required, but too little renders the claim illegible (Kolia 2016, 617-618; Rifkin 2017, 5). The struggle for recognition can demand of indigenous people to live out (or act out) fetishized representations and ideals (De la Cadena and Starn 2007, 9). Those who refuse to go along with state-sanctioned recognition politics can be dismissed as unwilling to reconcile with other members of society and as standing in the way of cosmopolitan values (Keenan 2014, 165). All of this



causes various critics to dismiss the politics of recognition altogether (see e.g. Simpson 2014). In a paradigm of repressive authenticity, indigenous people are locked in a frustrating state of ‘becoming’, floating in an ambiguous time and space that is never quite ‘present’ (Kisin 2013, 146). They are “displaced into an anachronistic space by which they always appear to be in an anterior relationship to modernity” (Smith 2013, 357; see also Povinelli 2002, 8; Rifkin 2017, vii). Repressive conceptualizations of authenticity struggle with revived identities and cultures as they have a tendency not to resemble the preapproved mould and to assert their contemporaneity with rigour (Cassel and Maureira 2017, 5). Ultimately then, those with the least ‘legible’ features lose out the most in the paradigm of repressive authenticity. Ironically, these tend to be the worst affected by assimilation and dispossession, such as Khoisan revivalists.

As I have already shown in Chapter Two and beyond, dominant Khoisan representations have certainly proved ‘repressive’. As Julia McGee (2008, 117) observed, “South African discourses on indigenous culture that centre temporal distance are laden with modernist conceptions of extinction and acculturation and often preclude contemporary exigencies”. In her ethnography of the rooibos industry, Sarah Ives (2017, 56-60) shows how the supposed extinction of the Khoisan is referenced by white industrialists to deny claimants the status of traditional knowledge holders or to disrupt their campaigns in pursuit thereof. Generalizations regarding the Khoisan’s nomadic lifestyle have also been put forward to deny the land rights of certain communities (see e.g. Steyn 1995, 82). Some have argued that the salience of and commercial potential inherent in the “Kalahari San stereotypes” renders the Khoisan victims of their reputation; *de facto* prevented from embodying a different type of culture or identity than that which is marketable in tourism (see e.g. Gordon 1992, xiv; Sylvain 2003a, 145; Robins 2003a, 133; Tomaselli 2012b, 113). In short, as William Ellis (2015, 130) noted: “Any attempt by San people to live out a vision of San-ness that is radically different from the popularly recognised, simulacral San norm is treated with suspicion [and] regarded as inauthentic (see also Mboti 2014, 473). Keyan Tomaselli (2012a, 10) concluded on the basis of similar observations that the Khoisan were stuck in a “cycle of representation and misrepresentation [...] as these images and stories circulate among readers for whom the

romantic image of the dying world of authenticity has already been fixed in countless other representations”.

Suspiciously absent in this “cycle”, although increasingly acknowledged in Khoisan studies, is the agency of the Khoisan themselves. Unless repressive authenticity is considered to be all defining, one wonders what ‘authenticity’ is mobilized ‘from below’ in order to counter that which is considered ‘repressive’. The ‘same’ repressive authenticity is in fact seemingly enacted with agency ‘from below’; at times ostensibly feeding, rather than breaking out of the “cycle of representation and misrepresentation” Tomaselli identified. But this is not where the complexity ends, as considering additional potential examples of repressive authenticity in relation to Khoisan revivalism make clear. As a set of rules issued by the South African state regarding the recognition of traditional leadership, the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act (TKLA) is a likely manifestation of repressive authenticity. While some Khoisan representatives were consulted during the drafting process, many felt left out or ignored (see Chapter Three). Regardless of their degree of inclusion, as Khoisan revivalists were not the sole authors of the rules regarding their own recognition, features of repressive authenticity are discernible in the TKLA. Among other aspects, Khoisan revivalists critiqued the TKLA for not granting them indigenous status, restricting recognition to the realm of traditional leadership and co-opting Khoisan traditional leadership into government-sanctioned bodies. Their main objection, however, was that the requirement to demonstrate a history of self-identification “from a particular point in time up to the present” within “a specific geographical area or various geographical areas” did not take into account the history of dispossession and assimilation that might prevent such historical continuity. I noted previously how this vague wording might actually benefit the Khoisan and does not reflect the strict boundary policing or the ‘freezing’ of cultures in time and place that some have discerned in similar legislation (see e.g. Ellis 2019). Then again, the fact that this recognition ultimately lies with a commission that is staffed by non-Khoisan remains ‘repressive’, although this wording is misleading (see below). It should also be borne in mind that the TKLA deals specifically with the issue of traditional leadership, an institution many Khoisan revivalists reject in favour of other forms of recognition.

As I have shown, many do have the ambition of becoming recognized as Khoisan traditional leaders under the TKLA and are willing to engage in the competitive politics of authenticity it requires if need be. Are they falling prey to repressive authenticity or are they accepting the TKLA as a compromise and exercising agency in the process? Concomitantly, if the infighting over the legitimacy of leadership claims — which can only be partially ascribed to the repressive authenticity of the South African government — is anything to go by, some of the Khoisan revivalists that end up being recognized might enact a form of repressive authenticity of their own (see also Carlson 2016, 270). Indeed, many Khoisan revivalists do not wish to become subsumed under a traditional authority for this reason. Ultimately, of course, the rejection of repressive authenticity in this regard lies in granting full agency to the Khoisan to make the choices they see fit. What is crucial to note here, however, is that, in their criticism of the TKLA, Khoisan revivalists also point to the agency of those involved in seeking its benefits. Theirs is therefore not only a rejection of repressive authenticity, but an equally pointed critique of the strategic essentialism some are engaged in in this context. To be sure, the fact that ‘essentialisms’ have gained currency or have become a requirement for recognition from the state in the first place is not a choice that indigenous people have made for themselves, but a result of complex historical processes. Seen from such a perspective, the strategic use of essentialisms in pursuit of resources and recognition can be a ‘weapon of the weak’, an empowering, if controversial, tactic (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009, 9; see Introduction). Various authors have convincingly shown how marginalized groups are left with few other options but to resort to strategic essentialism to get public attention, recognition or secure rights (see e.g. Fischer 1999, 473; Niezen 2003, 6). And yet, I argue that the situation is once again more complex in the case of Khoisan revivalism.

Take for instance the fact that NGOs concerned with indigenous people, such as Survival International, have been involved for decades with Khoisan communities in the north of South Africa, Namibia and Botswana (cf. Francis and Francis 2010; Sylvain 2005, 354; Ellis 2012, 124). These communities are usually those that get referenced in discussions on Khoisan marginalization (see e.g. Mogalakwe and Nyamnjoh 2017, 7-8; Sylvain 2001; Sylvain 2002, 1074). Marked by poverty, landlessness and various forms of discrimination, it is not unwarranted to focus on these locales. However, it is telling that,

until the 2018 SAHRC report (see Chapter Three), Khoisan revivalists in Cape Town were not meaningfully included in such overviews. One could suspect repressive authenticity to be at work here, as a possible reason for their exclusion might be the absence of “Kalahari San stereotypes”. Then again, those same NGOs have been criticized for their strategic essentialism, their promotion of idealized depictions of the Khoisan, which some argue distracts from the “real problems” in the communities concerned, such as poverty, substance abuse or intra-community violence (Robins 2001, 853; Sylvain 2002, 1082; Wilmsen 2009, 57-62; Sylvain 2014, 258). To make matters more complex, as I have shown, Khoisan revivalists also deliberately tailor their identities and cultures to such “Kalahari San stereotypes” to bolster their authenticity, both for themselves and for others. As with urban-based indigenous revivalists elsewhere, the rural and remote (i.e. what I called ‘North’ in reference to the Kalahari Desert in particular) act as reference points for aesthetic inspiration, commercial exploits and overall authenticity for Khoisan revivalists in Cape Town (see e.g. Handler and Linnekin 1984, 282; Sissons 2005, 73; Peters and Andersen 2014, 8). Examples of this in previous chapters are aplenty, ranging from excursions to the Northern Cape, to the episode when one of my interlocutors found inspiration in a scene from *The Gods Must Be Crazy*.

Strategic essentialism or repressive authenticity have run into the limits of their analytical purchase here; neither provides a comprehensive understanding of Khoisan revivalists’ engagements with the past. As Khoisan revivalists point out when making their case for the cultural genocide, it is historically illiterate to expect them to embody “Kalahari San stereotypes”. The fact that such stereotypes nevertheless circulate among them might be a sign of strategic essentialism; a consequence of the Khoisan extinction discourse and the repressive authenticity it engenders. Those arguing for the cultural genocide thesis might agree that the Khoisan extinction discourse is all that is left as a model for emulation after centuries of colonial violence. ‘North’ as a point of reference is certainly sensible in light of this history. However, overstating the difference between Cape Town and ‘North’ betrays the kind of repressive authenticity related to urban-based indigenous people I mentioned earlier. What is discernible in Cape Town are not mere embodiments of “Kalahari San stereotypes”. It would be repressive to view everything through the lens of the Khoisan extinction discourse or to discount the agency of Khoisan

revivalists. While some undoubtedly exercise their agency by engaging in strategic essentialism, particularly in the pursuit of entitlement claims, this lens has little value in framing other facets of Khoisan revivalism. The Khoisan extinction discourse is not simply providing the ammunition for strategic essentialism. Indeed, I have given countless examples of how Khoisan revivalism is all about adapting the past to present needs, whether through “Kalahari San stereotypes” or something else entirely. This agency, I argued earlier, should be understood as an outcome of the priorities of therapeutic history. This brings me to rephrase the question I posed earlier: what kind of agential ‘authenticity’ is pursued in a process of therapeutic history? As I argue in the next section, Khoisan revivalists are first and foremost developing a ‘subversive authenticity’: rejecting, appropriating and disregarding ‘repressive authenticity’ along the way. This reveals the complex roles of authenticity in processes of indigenous revivalism more generally.

### **7.2.2 ‘Subversive authenticity’: repressive authenticity turned inside out?**

I explained earlier how the priorities in therapeutic history are lined up to best accommodate the pursuit of “wellness”. Understood in relation to authenticity (i.e. a subjective interpretation of the ‘essence of the past’), one wonders what importance therapeutic history assigns to ‘accuracy’ and ‘verisimilitude’. The previous section made clear that ‘accuracy’ (i.e., as Saxton defined it, in line with established facts and the methodology of academic history) is a problematic concept due the omnipresence of the Khoisan extinction discourse, both as a set of contemporary societal attitudes, but also as a reservoir of historical ideas and images that Khoisan revivalists draw on. What emerges in this context as ‘established facts’ is not the most productive line of enquiry. If “accuracy” instead refers to “being faithful to an original”, one wonders what the accurate and immaculate ‘original’ is that Khoisan revivalists are supposed to emulate (Dean 2017, 257). One runs into similar problems with regards to the notion of verisimilitude (i.e. the quality of emulating what is considered original or accurate with a certain degree of proximity), as it is in large part based on the same legacies and set of

ideas. I have shown how verisimilitude is of prime importance to Khoisan revivalists, who mobilize it in the context of strategic essentialism, but even more so in their everyday acts of Khoisan revivalism. The need for verisimilitude, if defined as either explicitly rejecting or replicating the Khoisan extinction discourse, thus both reifies and counters it. I argue in this section that verisimilitude should be understood in relation to the priorities of therapeutic history; it needs to be likened to Khoisan revivalists' attempts to manufacture historical continuity and relatability. If viewed primarily through emic parameters, Khoisan revivalists paradoxically replicate, appropriate, reject and disregard the Khoisan extinction discourse in their pursuit of authenticity. As I argue below, the authenticity Khoisan revivalists cultivate in the process has the potential to subvert and (dis)empower, but it also embodies a kind of meta-critique academics should take on board when studying contexts of indigenous revivalism.

To be sure, many Khoisan revivalists hold that 'accuracy' is the best way of manufacturing the verisimilitude that is required for authenticity. Such an attitude is reflected in references to 'ancient cultural practices', 'fake chiefs' or 'opportunistic claims', to name but a few examples. Khoisan revivalists are of course rarely consciously choosing whether to be 'accurate' or not and indigenous revivalism is never a slavish reconstruction of the past in every possible detail. Moreover, what is considered accurate or authentic is subjective and changes over time. 'Being accurate' might also be considered more important in the context of an entitlement claim than that of a cultural performance. Viewed as emic parameters, authenticity, accuracy and verisimilitude all matter, but the degree to which they do can differ and they are rarely taken as absolutes. Indeed, as I have shown in Chapter Six in particular in relation to notions of 'continuity' and 'change', being accurate — whichever way it is interpreted — is simply valued differently among Khoisan revivalists. All the while, in a context of therapeutic history, verisimilitude needs to be distanced (but not entirely removed) from notions of accuracy. It cannot afford putting accuracy above all else in pursuit of authenticity, as an academic historian or critic might be inclined to do. Easing the emphasis on accuracy allows Khoisan revivalists to pursue "wellness" without having to overthink whether what they are doing is accurate. cursory knowledge often already goes a long way. One example that comes to mind here is the fact that for most, engaging with Khoekhoegowab or mastering

a concise vocabulary generates just as much authenticity as it does for those that seek to speak it as accurately as possible. Language itself is ascribed an empowering and decolonizing potential (see also Wa Thiong'o 1986, 15). Perhaps it was this 'inaccuracy' that made the performance of Bradley van Sitters at the 2019 State of the Union Address all the more authentic as an act of Khoisan revivalism.

Indeed, what matters most of all is whether the experience generates authenticity for Khoisan revivalists. This is why Khoisan revivalists view the Khoisan extinction discourse, both in the sense of 'archive' and societal attitudes, not as something to replicate or deliberately counter, but as a set of tools that can be moulded in ways that best fit present purposes. To be sure, this is a risky endeavour and every such appropriation comes with a price. NGOs might for instance be more inclined to cater to those that embody "Kalahari San stereotypes" or go along in the Khoisan extinction discourse, but those same notions become reinforced, at least to some extent, with every such interactions as well; thereby enshrining them further as criteria to qualify for assistance or recognition (see also Sylvain 2014, 260). However, rather than a colonial legacy or a top-down discourse with clear boundaries, the Khoisan extinction discourse is perhaps best understood as a "repertory set down by colonial experience", a wide range of materials, ideas and images shaped by various Khoisan and non-Khoisan actors for different reasons (Forte 2005, 214). Edward Fischer (1999, 488) identified a "cultural logic" in this regard: a set of assumptions and expectations that "changes much more slowly than surface makers of identity", always constraining (though not preventing) innovations over the long term. In relation to this "repertory" or "cultural logic", authenticity is not a "a problem projected onto them" (Bell 2014a, 26), but a quality that is shaped with a certain degree of agency as well, which is of course never absolute (cf. Ortner 2006, 152; see also Ashcroft 2015, 416). The goal of Khoisan revivalists is indeed to use existing tropes to their advantage in political settings and beyond; it is not to pretend that such representations do not exist or to devote all efforts at countering them.

The literature on tourism and museums not only identifies instances of repressive authenticity, but also cases where indigenous people balance catering to tourists and visitors via stereotypes with creating awareness about their grievances and spreading critiques of their own (see e.g. Harkin 2003, 853; Amoamo 2011, 1268; Gibson 2012, 214;

Cassel and Maureira 2017, 8-9; Ruhanen and Whitford 2019, 181). Stereotypes can be challenged, played with, reinvented and even turned into sources for indigenous revivalism in their own right. As I noted, Khoisan-run guided tours and museums motivated by precisely such aims have already materialized. Stereotypical imagery and stigmas can also be transformed into tools of empowerment (see also McGee 2008, 115). Despite increasingly seen as highly offensive, terms such as ‘Hotnot’ are still sometimes used as insults (cf. Kiewit 2019). However, they are also emerging as terms of endearment among the Khoisan themselves (cf. Besten 2011b, 176, 188; Øvernes 2019, 199). Khoisan revivalists are still invested in debunking stereotypes, but the affective potential of these types of subversive engagements can be profound. Patrick Mellet (2010, 225) warned Khoisan revivalists they might unknowingly be “buying into the primitivism paradigm of the ‘Nobel Native’”. While I take his point, it has to be noted that not everyone sees such ideas as necessarily disempowering or their actions as reifications of primitivism. This explains for instance why one of William Ellis’ (2012, 23-24) research participants stated that “nature was exactly where they wanted to be placed” and many of my interlocutors too stressed the importance of being in touch with nature. Focusing on the fact that “a major source [of inspiration] are precisely those middle-class whites who have essentialized the San” might be short-sighted (Gordon 2014, 112). The use of stereotypes for instance did not bother Roche Walters one bit when designing apparel and other products for his company *Khoi Kulcha*. As I discussed in Chapter Six, rather than seeking to move as far away as possible from what might be regarded as stereotypes, he works with them to produce a form of authenticity that is both accessible and fashionable. Walters uses those symbols because they assist in creating the verisimilitude required for an authentic experience, but he incorporates various other cultural markers in his designs as well. Like I showed with regards to hip-hop or jazz, *Khoi Kulcha* emerges as an articulation of Khoisan authenticity that is just as potent as those articulations seeking to emphasize accuracy or continuity with the past, if not more.

Indeed, trying to replicate the past seldom does the job, as it impedes adapting it to present needs. Lowenthal argues on this basis that revivals have a greater potential to embody authenticity than the ‘original’, as “the revivalist perfects [the genius of the past] in the spirit of his own time” (Lowenthal 2015, 20, 518; see also MacCannell 1973, 598-599).



Acknowledging inaccuracies or the fact of reconstruction — both of which Khoisan revivalists regularly do — does not hamper the quest for, or experience of authenticity either (see also Chhabra, Healy and Sills 2003, 716). If authenticity is a result of cultural processes of reification, the more people believe that something is authentic, a satisfactory “fit between idea and ideal”, as Niezen put it (Niezen 2009, 185-186), the more it in turn becomes an established model for emulation and perhaps ceases to be an act of revival altogether (see also Saxton 2020, 132; Cohen 1988, 379). Whether the *rieldans* was danced by the Khoisan in 17<sup>th</sup> Cape Town or not, it is a staple expression of Khoisan revivalism. In practice, accuracy, verisimilitude and authenticity are then all calibrated to suit present needs and herein lies the subversive dimension. What is unknown can also be imagined. As Greg Denning noted, “imagination” does not mean “fantasy”, but “finding a word that others will hear, a metaphor that someone else will see” (Denning 2007, 101). Indeed, while the end might justify the means, verisimilitude remains key. Mark Auslander (2013, 163) showed in this regard how “sensual contact with physical objects that stand in for historical artefacts” in the context of historical re-enactments have the potential to deliver on “the promise of coming into direct, intimate contact with past persons and past epochs” (see also Lowenthal 2015, 387, 389). They create a “ritual performative field of affective transformation”, which in turn cultivates a sensation of being ‘in touch’ with the past (Auslander 2013, 164). Simulacra or not, the felt sensation of the past is manifestly authentic. Khoisan revivalism is not a re-enactment; it deals with the core of one’s being. Nevertheless, Auslander’s observations resonate with the way Khoisan revivalists relate to traditional attire, for instance: while opinions vary, clothing is considered authentic as long as it emulates Khoisan-ness, not depending on how ‘accurate’ it is.

The topic of clothing is well-suited to bring home one of the factors that makes such authenticity ‘subversive’. What is being subverted by Khoisan revivalists is in many cases the notion of repressive authenticity itself. In their expression of agency they accomplish precisely the opposite: they do not just ‘counter’ it — thereby still ‘responding’ to it and letting it dominate their authenticity, they cultivate an authenticity where what could be considered repressive in a certain context is appropriated, reified or simply disregarded depending on what best suits present needs. Note here that I am not commenting on the

outcomes of such ‘subversive’ actions, which is a matter I revisit below. Indeed, Khoisan revivalism most of all displaces the Khoisan extinction discourse as the prime source for Khoisan representation and complements it with various other sources that are just as potent to bring about verisimilitude and accomplish the aims of therapeutic history. It for instance did not matter to Mackie whether his clothing was made out of real leopard skin; through their verisimilitude, his animal skins operated as a time machine all the same. The same goes for the recreated huts in *!Khwa ttu* or those that are regularly erected at the Castle of Good Hope. Whether Krotoa was sexually assaulted or not, the fact that such a historical interpretation resonates with so many Khoisan revivalists is what makes it an authentic representation of the past for them. The band Topdog SA created powerful expressions of Khoisan revivalism by using modern and traditional Khoisan instruments alike. Although many contest the term ‘Khoisan’ for reasons I explained in the Introduction, the fact that most Khoisan revivalists find meaning in it and disregard its historical baggage, as well as the debates among historians and archaeologists, might be taken as an instance of subversive authenticity as well (see also Solomon 2014, 733).

I could give various other examples, but I want to underline another subversive consequence of the way Khoisan revivalists shape their authenticity: it prompts academics to not *solely* focus on political empowerment, deconstructionist critiques or the dangers of reification, but to also consider how such processes can cater to identity needs. Many academics have indeed struggled with these kinds of ‘subversive authenticities’ and have resorted to framing indigenous revivalism as inescapably, mistakenly or regrettably filtered through the (historically) dominant Eurocentric bias (see e.g. Friedman 1992, 843; Conklin 1997, 729; see also Keesing 1989; 1991; Trask 1991). Andrew Lattas (1992, 161) was disappointed in Australian academia in the 1990s for seemingly being unable to conceive of Aboriginal identities as anything but reifications of Western stereotypes and racial ideas. His colleagues would rather have Aborigines “embrace themselves as pure simulacrum. They are to recognize themselves as an artifice, as a fabrication of the state” (Lattas 1993, 247). Lattas (1992, 162; 1993, 246) emphasized that “essentialism should not be essentialised”; it can be just as empowering as disempowering (see also Grossman and Cuthbert 1998, 113; Spiegel 2020, 150). Those drawn to essentialisms are not necessarily “essentialist” (i.e. opportunistically “flattening

difference” or mobilizing “fakes”) (Sayer 1997, 456). Khoisan revivalists also do not engage in strategic essentialism to cover up their ‘true’ socio-economic aims, as some have suggested is typical of strategic essentialism (see e.g. Sylvain 2014, 258). They do not distinguish between socio-economic goals and cultural struggles, the two are in fact enmeshed in the Khoisan identity discourse (see also Fraser 1995; Young 1997, 148; Coulthard 2014, 19). Indeed, as Avril Bell (2014a, 120-121) pointed out, contrary to what Gayatri Spivak, who coined the term, believed, if those claiming indigeneity engage in strategic essentialism, what is mobilized is intended as an outcome, not as an object for eventual deconstruction (see below). Lattas (1992, 163) too related essentialism to authenticity and affect, rather than a calculated political strategy. What is important therefore, he concludes, is to let indigenous people pursue “a sense of ownership of oneself” and “regain some control over the conceptual terrain from which one speaks” so they can “symbolically place themselves outside the discourses and memories owned by Europeans” (Lattas 1993, 247, 250, 254).

As I have shown, the authenticity that Khoisan revivalists cultivate is not necessarily located outside European “discourses and memories”, but this is perhaps proof that it is truly liberating. As Charles Taylor argued, one needs to be able to move beyond existing patterns and make variations on a theme to experience an authentic self (Taylor 1992, 62-63). There is then something empowering in being freed from an incessant push to counter, reject or respond to, and instead shape one’s authenticity from whichever precolonial, colonial, anti-colonial or postcolonial source deemed meaningful (Escárcega 2010, 21-22; Eze 2010, 30, 48, 151; Cowlishaw 2012, 411; LeFevre 2013, 137; Bell 2014a, 128, 200). As Bill Ashcroft (2001, 6) points out, such “[t]ransformation is not contrary to resistance, but it reveals that the most effective strategies of post-colonial resistance have not become bogged down in simple opposition or futile binarism [i.e. colonial vs. anti-colonial], but have taken the dominant discourse and transformed it for purposes of self-empowerment”. Adaption, pluralism and creativity is crucial for indigenous survival and bereaving them of that through repressive authenticity supresses their ability to exert their agency (Reid 2013, 59; Ashcroft 2015, 417; Coburn 2016, 297). International legislation on indigenous people prioritizes self-determination and the right to “revitalize culture” for this reason (Maddison 2013, 292; Hirsch 2015, 110-111). If

conceptualizing a singular Khoisan category against which to recover authenticity could be seen as a token of repressive authenticity, then there might very well be a decolonizing dimension to articulations that generate multiple Khoisan identities and authenticities that do not conform (solely) to the rules stipulated by others (Wolfe 1999, 183; Aschcroft 2002, 2, 35; Sissons 2005, 143, 149; Paradies 2006, 362). Such perspectives also recast the repressive authenticity surrounding urban-based indigeneity, as they frame places like Cape Town as creative hubs, “a powerful site of cultural (re)affirmation” and experimentation with indigeneity (Hill 2012a, 256; Maddison 2013, 300; Nyseth and Pedersen 2014, 147; Busbridge 2016, 517).

James Clifford (2013, 279) studied indigenous revivals throughout his career and remarked in 2013 that anthropology was still struggling to come to grips with “a reweaving of old and new [...] something our holistic concepts of culture, identity, and historical development are ill equipped to recognize”. While I would agree that the same applies to my case, several authors have begun to shift the research away from mistrusting reconstructed identities as tainted by colonial categories, to seeing them as expressions of agency. June Bam-Hutchison, who has worked extensively on Khoisan revivalism, opts for “occupy” instead of “de-colonial” in this context because the former is not “a response”, but a “self-determined social agency [...] to *claim* without explanation” (Bam-Hutchison 2016, 25, original emphasis). Through what he terms a “decolonial interpretation”, Itunu Bodunrin (2018, 91, 103, 177) also concluded that his interlocutors in Platfontein in the Northern Cape were “metaphorically reclaiming and reworking [their] identities to highlight contemporary socio-economic issues, needs and realities” and striving towards “self-representation and authoring their own narratives”, both in the private, public and digital spheres. Ana Deumert and Justin Brown (2017, 589) have similarly observed that “authenticity” in Khoisan revivalism is not achieved by “following a pre-existing script”, but by “drawing on a shifting repertoire of semiotic forms”. They conclude that “[d]iscourses on purism and authenticity are conspicuous by their absence: being Khoisan is not only about that which has been lost [...], but even more so [about] creative agency” (Ibid., 591).

While I encourage further research along these lines, the “creative agency” inherent in therapeutic history and subversive authenticity is not simply an empowering feature.

These analytical frameworks also raise various conundrums related to the politics of entitlement and the intellectual and political accommodation of Khoisan revivalism. As I explain next, this is indeed why I placed a question mark after the title of this section — ‘*Subversive authenticity: repressive authenticity turned inside out?*’ – and alluded several times to the political ramifications of tensions between therapeutic history and academic history. I do not aim to resolve these conundrums, but an analysis of the therapeutics of history would not be complete if I did not address them in relation to the South African context.

### 7.3 Closing reflections on the therapeutics of history

Thus far I have showed how therapeutic history and subversive authenticity help explain why and how Khoisan revivalists engage with the past, and what role authenticity has in the process. Subversive authenticity problematizes the relation between their identity constructions and the Khoisan extinction discourse. The main premise of this discourse, i.e. that the Khoisan are virtually extinct, is certainly dismantled and no group benefits more from this than Khoisan revivalists in Cape Town, who conform the least to representations cast in the mould of repressive authenticity. Pursuing a subversive authenticity allows Khoisan revivalists to articulate their indigeneity how they prefer; liberating them from an emphasis on either explicitly rejecting or replicating colonial representations. It allows them to strive towards the “wellness” that is cherished in a process of therapeutic history, i.e. the relatability and historical continuity at the core of Khoisan revivalism. Engaging in therapeutic history aligns priorities with regards to knowledge validation, source criticism and objectivity in ways that best accommodate these aims. Early on I likened therapeutic history to ‘heritage’ as ways of engaging with the past that have much in common. However, it is worth revisiting some of these features of heritage, subversive authenticity and therapeutic history in light of the conundrums they pose with regards to Khoisan revivalism’s societal, intellectual and political accommodation.

Lowenthal (1998, 78) understood the empowering potential of heritage when he observed that “[h]istory is still mostly written by the winners. But heritage increasingly belong to the losers”. Yet in his work he is undoubtedly more critical towards ‘heritage’ than he is towards ‘history’. I do not want to get side-tracked by speculating on what might have motivated him to be more critical towards heritage as such, but I will distil some of his and others’ commentary in this regard as they help evaluate some of the challenges that arise from the way Khoisan revivalists engage with the past. It seems to me that a central problem relates to the role of criticism. As Lowenthal (Ibid., 120) put it: “Testable truth is history's chief hallmark. Historians' credibility depends on their sources being open to general scrutiny”. As he and others have noted, heritage does not have the same inclination towards ‘openness’. In fact, I have argued that one of the prerequisites of Khoisan revivalism is the experience of being known as Coloured. This experience guides much of Khoisan revivalists’ engagements with the past and the claims of entitlement that flow from it. Linking experience to historical understanding poses certain challenges. In what he identifies as “historical wounds”, i.e. specific articulations of past events that highlight their traumatic resonance, Dipesh Chakrabarty (2007, 79-81) notes that an “experiential access to the past” is often at the core. This frustrates many academic historians, who generally eschew experience as a mode of historical understanding because it is considered too subjective to count as evidence. The “truth” underlying historical wounds is not “verifiable by historians”, who are only able to ascertain the validity of “historical truths”, “broad, synthetic generalizations based on researched collections of individual historical facts [...] open to empirical verification” (Ibid., 77-78). This problem presents itself most sharply when ‘historical wounds’ are presented as ‘historical truths’. Indeed, while most Khoisan revivalists do not hold absolutist views about the past or their own identities, they do not see their views as just one perspective among many. It is fair to posit that they in fact regard their interpretations of the past as more ‘truthful’ than those expressed in ‘historical truths’, as these have been stacked against them for centuries.

It is therefore one thing to point out that the type of history academic historians produce does not mirror that which is generally desired in a context of what I have called therapeutic history (see e.g. Callinicos 1991, 22; Foner 1995, 171), it is quite another to

understand how they overlap and emerge in hybrid forms. The problem with ‘hybrids’ is that, to a large extent, it becomes impossible to judge Khoisan revivalists’ engagements with the past on the same basis as ‘historical truths’. In the eyes of many Khoisan revivalists, their views on the past hold the same, if not greater authority than those from academics, but they do not want to be held to the same standards of criticism, as these could be considered tokens of repressive authenticity. As Joan Scott (1992, 18) notes, there are two exclusionary aspects to taking membership of a specific group as “authority enough for one’s speech [...] the only test of true knowledge”: “all those not of the group are denied even intellectual access to it, and those within the group whose experiences or interpretations do not conform to the established terms of identity must either suppress their views or drop out”. In foregrounding experience, differences between ‘sources’ and ‘methods’ dissolve, making it hard for those without a valid claim to that experience to scrutinize their engagements with the past. In privileging a certain kind of bias that is only available through experience, the resulting histories can moreover mirror the topological biases that have long been criticized in academic history-writing (Confino 2011, 43; Lowenthal 1998, 89). The peer-reviewed authenticity and “auto-history” that Niezen (2009, xvi, 172-173) placed at the core of therapeutic history makes the notion of authenticity and history more democratic, but he also fears that, when taken to “extremes”, it can in turn lead to “exclusivism and political intolerance”. I did not discern such “extremes” in Khoisan revivalism beyond the politics of entitlement. In fact, as I noted in Chapter Five, Khoisan revivalism puts forth a rather inclusive set of criteria for Khoisan identity and gives rise to a wide variety of articulations of indigeneity as a result.

While I do not see many signs of what Niezen and Scott fear in therapeutic history reflected in Khoisan revivalism, these could become more apparent in the future, particularly if Khoisan revivalism gains more political traction. Perhaps this is indeed behind the reluctance of the South African government to grant the Khoisan the status of indigenous people (see Conclusion). Inescapably, entitlement claims, whether related to land, traditional leadership or something else, need to be scrutinized by positing at least some (historical) reference; which will permanently be contested through both the lenses of ‘history’ and ‘heritage’. As the South African case shows, where history’s public

role as an arbiter of historical criticism has receded to the background in favour of heritage (Comaroff 2005, 126-128), hegemonic interpretations of the past in practice emanate mostly from the most powerful groups. While the TRC strived to be as inclusive as possible through its constellation of multiple truths, it too ultimately made a choice to emphasize plurality over a more positivist interpretation of the past. And yet, as I noted at the beginning of this chapter, this recognition of a 'healing' truth by acknowledging multiple 'truths' left various parties aggrieved and unaccommodated by heritage's ascribed therapeutic virtues. As I suggested previously, what Khoisan revivalists, and indeed processes of therapeutic history, desire is then something of a hybrid between history (with its attached authority and claim to objectivity) and heritage.

In the Conclusion I share some thoughts on how this insight might inform future policy developments, but it is important to appreciate how the tensions between 'history' and 'heritage' in Khoisan revivalists' engagements with the past are scrutinized in academia. Calls to recognize the non-academic ways indigenous people might engage with the past as histories in their own right are easy enough to make (see e.g. Clark et al. 2018, 511), it is quite another to consider how this brings tensions between emic and etic "approaches to the past" into focus: ignoring "Native epistemologies" is not an option as that would render them invalid, but sparing them from criticism for the sake of political correctness augments their "difference" from conventional history-writing (Jacoby 2013, 60, 63-64). Such a position ultimately implies that the histories of indigenous people are radically different from those of others, which generates the problems related to experience I mentioned earlier. Yin Paradies has raised similar concerns, noting that an uncritical view on indigenous people and the way they engage with the past can render indigeneity "synonymous with suffering and marginality" and relate this "victimhood" to a "privileged access to social truths" (Paradies 2006, 360; see also Schwab 2010, 19; Furedi 2004, 149-150, 173). Most importantly, such an approach "fails to recognize that engaging in debate with indigenous people is a sign of intellectual respect" and that it risks turning a blind eye to inaccuracies, generalizations or blatant manipulations (Paradies 2006, 360). According to Niezen (2009, 155, 175), this ultimately leads to a "largely unrecognized dilemma facing both academic communities and those attempting in practical ways to promote the emotional recovery of the dispossessed and excluded": "to what extent



should one promote, ignore, or critically engage with the collective self-knowledge of marginalized peoples that dispenses with widely recognized academic procedures?”. Niezen (Ibid., 173) seems to favour a critical stance: “The therapeutic criterion of accepted knowledge limits the possibilities for historical self-criticism, for open, honest encounter with uncomfortable events, attitudes, and attributes. It enables historical distortion or amnesia”. While he goes on to add that it hampers reconciliation efforts, he also recognizes that the excesses of therapeutic history are perhaps a “necessary aspect or outcome of a process of recovery from the traumas and cultural effacements of colonial domination [which] takes precedence over the pursuit of truth and the wider consequences of politically bounded knowledge” (Ibid., 174).

Contemplating the notion that Khoisan revivalism might be undergoing a phase, or constitute a phase itself is an appropriate way to conclude this chapter. Niezen is not the first to suggest that decolonization takes place in phases. One of the first to do so was Frantz Fanon. Fanon (2008 [1952], 4) believed that colonized people suffered from “the epidermalization of inferiority”. Accepting themselves as less-than, the colonized hopelessly imitate the culture of the colonizer, which only causes further “depersonalization” as the colonizer never assimilates the colonized as an equal (Fanon 1994 [1964], 38, 53). The contradictions inherent in this assimilationist dialectic ultimately push the colonized to revisit the past which the colonizer has worked to suppress (Fanon 2005 [1961], 149). This is done with a vengeance: “This culture, abandoned, sloughed off, rejected, despised, becomes for the inferiorized an object of passionate attachment” (Fanon 1994 [1964], 41-42). While Fanon ultimately advocated for a critical examination of such pasts and much of his work critiques this part of the dialectic (Nielsen 2013, 448; Coulthard 2014, 114-115, see below), he believed that a phase “overvaluation” was necessary as the colonized culture had been deprived of any life: “The oppressed goes into ecstasies over each rediscovery. The wonder is permanent” (Fanon 1994 [1964], 41-42; 2005 [1961], 158). The difference with the colonized culture is exaggerated to extremes and it becomes the foundational pillar of one’s identity and the rallying point for the anti-colonial struggle (Fanon 2008 [1952], 7). Most effective in this process of “counter-assimilation” is the “oldest, inner essence, the farthest removed from colonial times” (Fanon 2005 [1961], 148; 1994 [1959], 42). This brings to mind Niezen’s (2009, 185-186)

hypothesis that the greater the devastation, the more “utopian” ideals are projected into the past. Others have also described this “refuge” into the past as a requirement to start “a period of healing and regaining strength” after colonialism (Gilroy 1993, 188-189). This phase can also allow the group in question to “solidify and develop its own distinctive voice, signature, discursive practices, and other unique features” (Nielsen 2013, 349). According to Fanon, this stage eventually gives way to the synthesis of the “new human”, where the previously colonized attain “freedom” by accepting the ambiguous legacies that make up their identities (Schwab 2010, 108). Aside from the more positive markers of identity, dislocation, loss, dispossession, disruption all become part of the experience of an authentic decolonized self (Povinelli 2002, 49). This final phase achieves ‘decolonization’ as indigenous identities are no longer determined by the “objectifying gaze and assimilative lure” of the colonizer, and they are instead able to engage with the past in ways that best suits their needs (Coulthard 2014, 43, 156-157). This turning away from colonial legacies amounts to a form of self-recognition and self-realization (Balaton-Chimes and Stead 2017, 12). Fanon (2008 [1952], 179) himself put it best of all in a couple of famous lines in *Black Skin White Masks*: “I am not a prisoner of history. I should not seek there for the meaning of my destiny. I should constantly remind myself that the real *leap* consists in introducing invention into existence. In the world through which I travel, I am endlessly creating myself”.

I wonder where Khoisan revivalism fits within this scheme or whether this dialectic is perhaps irrelevant. I can think of arguments either way. The more extravagant claims or actions of Khoisan revivalists might indicate that it is still in the “overvaluation” phase. During fieldwork I frequently got the impression that Khoisan revivalists felt they had to assert themselves in the intellectual and political landscape with a particular rigour because of the salience of the Khoisan extinction discourse and their political marginalization. I have noted at length how features such the wearing of animal skins, the speaking of Khoekhoegowab or the celebration of Khoisan ‘heroes’ are meaningful acts of Khoisan revivalism, but they simultaneously at times struck me as a means of asserting presence in ways that resembles the emotions that Fanon and others described. These two observations of course do not contradict one another, but they do show the difficulty of placing Khoisan revivalism in a certain ‘phase’. The same holds for

entitlement claims. On the one hand, Khoisan revivalists themselves have considered that actions such as claiming ‘all the land’, castigating government officials during public hearings or even declaring secession might be deliberate exaggerations to make themselves heard more than anything else (see also Hirsh 2015). Then again, most of their claims are not metaphoric and I also do not want to make excuses for excesses by describing them as ‘growing pains’. As I noted, Niezen implicitly argued that therapeutic history was a temporary phenomenon as its features were ultimately untenable and its excesses morally unacceptable. Yet he does not explain what follows therapeutic history. For that matter, when does Khoisan revivalism cease to be a project of ‘revivalism’? I revisit this question in the Conclusion but suffice it to say that I do not have the answer. I have argued instead that the subversive authenticity that emerges in Khoisan revivalism is certainly a sign that it is setting out to achieve its goals. How I have described subversive authenticity certainly resonates with what the above-mentioned authors have suggested as characteristics of the synthesis the dialectic leads up to.

Does this however indicate that Khoisan revivalism has progressed through the dialectic and come out the other side? It depends who you ask, I suppose. Some would argue that subversive authenticity is an unattainable state, an illogical concept. Critics such as Ciraj Rassool (2009, 107, 115) would not see the reification of stereotypes as unavoidable collateral damage, but as a sign that Khoisan revivalism remains “the reinvention of ethnicity in the name of Indigenesness [...] [A] rebirth and recoding of ethnography and colonial identities rather than their transcendence”. To be fair, Rassool (Ibid., 115) is aware that his observations pertain in particular to those Khoisan revivalists who advance entitlement claims, and I have to varying degrees agreed with his and others’ observations regarding this aspect of Khoisan revivalism. Nevertheless, I would posit that he maintains that Khoisan revivalism is ultimately a self-defeating strategy in light of his alignment to the non-racialist school of thought in South Africa, which I mentioned briefly in the Introduction and say more about in the Conclusion. In short, it advocates that ethnic identity ought to play a smaller role in our lives, if any at all. Khoisan revivalism indicates, to me at least, that ethnic identity is not exactly on the way out, for better *and* worse. More importantly, however, I would argue that Rassool’s analysis conflates top-down apartheid-era manipulations of ethnicity with the retrieval

of identity from-below. As I noted, this does not mean that subversive authenticity or therapeutic history are unambiguously empowering or that it does not at times replicate colonialist representations, but it does indicate their effectiveness in aiding their practitioners to better comprehend what is (not) at stake in processes of indigenous revivalism. Lastly, I cannot help but feel awkward about academics, whose discipline has been historically complicit in the Khoisan extinction discourse, now using sophisticated critiques in the first place to discount those who are recovering their identities and cultures after colonialism and apartheid (see also Lattas 1993, 244-245). Note here that I am not absolving myself either, or suggesting there is no room for criticism from academics. There is, however, certainly something to be said for “turning the ‘gaze’ back on the questioner”, as questioning identity, whether by academics or non-academics, is never entirely devoid of political motives (Forte 2013, 7). If my thesis has convinced anyone to ‘turn the gaze’ onto themselves in this regard and reflect on how groups like Khoisan revivalists construe post-colonial identities, it has already accomplished a great deal.

## Conclusion: Khoisan Consciousness and its discontents in a post-transitional South Africa

*“These weak people, the most helpless, and in their present condition perhaps the most wretched of the human race, duped out of their possessions, their country, and finally out of their liberty, have entailed upon their miserable offspring a state of existence to which that of slavery might bear the comparison of happiness. It is a condition, however, not likely to continue to a very remote posterity. The name Hottentots will be forgotten or remembered only as that of a deceased person of little note [...] [W]herever Europeans have colonized, the less civilized natives have always dwindled away, and at length totally disappeared.”*

- John Barrow (1801, 144)

*“We have risen up. We have begun to initiate healing practices, our own traditional healing sessions. We came to the realization that we have our ancestors, we have the ancient knowledge, we have power, we have our beingness. We are determined to heal and we have that ability. By gaining the insight and understanding to what we have become, can we go back and be who we really are. In understanding our pain, we can begin to heal. In dying to what we have become, can we be who we really are. In dying I became me!”*

- Jean Burgess (2007, 21)

When the British colonial administrator, geographer and travel writer John Barrow foretold the impending demise of the “Hottentots”, he expressed a widely held belief at

the time. While the seeds of this prognosis were sown during the period of Dutch colonialism, it was particularly from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onward that the Khoisan were gauged to have “dwindled away”, if not “totally disappeared” as a distinct collective because of their assimilation into colonial society and their dispossession and decimation at the hands of colonial aggressors. Save for a few pockets in the remote Kalahari Desert who drew the attention of racial scientists and salvage anthropologists, the ‘Khoisan extinction discourse’ effectively disavowed any meaningful contemporary Khoisan presence. In the eyes of most, South African history proceeded as a protracted clash between White and Black. The Khoisan were co-opted into colonial society as a Christianised labour force and amalgamated under the racial category ‘Coloured’ by the apartheid regime in the 1950s; a racial label that endures as a semi-official classification. African identity, not least related to the Khoisan, was violently suppressed among coloureds by the apartheid dispensation and they were instead encouraged to embrace their European ancestry. Nowhere has this assimilationist push left more traces than in Cape Town, whose residents would likely have agreed with Barrow up until the end of apartheid. Indeed, in the late 1990s something occurred that few predicted, least of all Barrow himself: the supposedly vanished Khoisan ‘reappeared’. Increasing numbers of coloureds began to identify as Khoisan and stake various claims on behalf of their newfound identification as indigenous people. While Khoisan identity had not been completely ‘erased’, it took great effort to reintroduce Khoisan identity into the private and public sphere. As the Eastern Cape-based activist Jean Burgess explained during a presentation at an indigenous people’s conference in Norway in 2007, people like her had to ‘die to what they have become’ by shedding their Coloured identity. Only then could they “heal”, comprehend the potency of their past, realize who they “really are” and ultimately “rise up”. What she describes is therefore aptly referred to as ‘Khoisan revivalism’, or as I have defined it:

The increasing affinity towards, and politicization of, the Khoisan in post-apartheid South Africa, deriving mostly from a critical interrogation of the identity label Coloured, especially among those currently classified as such, whereby some (re)claim Khoisan identities, indigenous status and/or land and leadership titles

Ever since I became interested in Khoisan revivalism, I have tried to grasp what role the past was playing in this process. That the past is central to indigenous revivalism is a moot point, but it is less evident to explain how and why it is engaged with in specific ways. Accordingly, I chose the following central research question for this PhD thesis: why and how do Khoisan revivalists engage with the past? Not only is ethnographic research among Khoisan revivalists rare, the existing literature mostly focuses on the political dimensions of Khoisan revivalism and the ‘instrumentalist’ uses of Khoisan identity, leaving various questions related to other uses of the past unaddressed. Across several fieldwork visits to Cape Town between 2015 and 2019, my emphasis has always been on understanding the emic perspectives of Khoisan revivalists through interviewing, participant observation and collecting various types of relevant documentation. Due to the centrality of ‘indigeneity’ in Khoisan revivalism, I took inspiration from articulation theory to unpack what the concept meant to Khoisan revivalists, whether in their everyday lives or their political campaigns. I recap my main findings below and revisit the concept of indigeneity further down the line.

In order to understand why and how Khoisan revivalists engage with the past, I began with an overview of Khoisan revivalism’s historical trajectory across Chapter Two and Chapter Three, which together make up Part I, *‘Lost in Categorization? The Khoisan extinction discourse and the intellectual roots and aspirations of Khoisan revivalism’*. Keeping in mind my definition of Khoisan revivalism as a post-apartheid phenomenon and the fact that Khoisan identity never ‘disappeared’, I showed how its intellectual roots are partially located in the rejection of Coloured identity in favour of a Black political identity, as practiced in particular by certain anti-apartheid coloured activists during the 1980s. As I discuss in more detail below when arguing why it is productive to think through Khoisan revivalism’s societal accommodation with the concept of ‘Khoisan Consciousness’, this rejection of Coloured identity was partially inspired by Steve Biko’s Black Consciousness philosophy, which postulated ‘Black’ as a political identity based on shared discrimination, rather than skin pigmentation or ethnicity. The rejection of Coloured identity paved the way for coloureds to embrace their African heritage. A similar critique of Eurocentrism was being developed at the time among those shaping a revisionist Khoisan historiography at institutions of higher learning in South Africa and abroad,

particularly the historian Henry Bredekamp at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, who was instrumental in organizing two Khoisan-themed conferences that propelled Khoisan revivalism into the intellectual and public sphere.

Indeed, these twin currents culminated in two watershed events in the history of Khoisan revivalism: the exhibition *Miscast*, which deconstructed centuries of Khoisan representation, but in particular the 1997 Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference, both held in Cape Town. The conference was the first large-scale public celebration of Khoisan identity. It was also the moment when Joseph Little — arguably the progenitor of Khoisan identity politics — rose to prominence. Together with a group of likeminded avant-gardists, including Burgess, Basil Coetzee, Willa Boezak and William Langeveldt, Little erected structures of traditional leadership and campaigned for official recognition of, and support for his Khoisan revivalism through the Cape Cultural Heritage Development Council (CCHDC). Via the CCHDC and several related short-lived organizations, Little and his entourage conducted fieldwork and historical research in order to cultivate their own interpretations of the Khoisan past and spread them among the wider public. Together with the efforts of the more established Khoisan groups — primarily the Griqua — Khoisan revivalists such as Little were instrumental in establishing the National Khoisan Council (NKC) in 1997, an overarching non-statutory body to explore the constitutional accommodation of the Khoisan, which was chaired by Little until 2011. The NKC remains the main Khoisan institution the South African government engages with regarding all matters Khoisan, despite facing criticism from many Khoisan revivalists for being ineffective and corrupt. It became apparent early on that the government was not eager to grant the Khoisan the status of indigenous people as defined in international legislation. Instead, it occasionally floats the term “vulnerable indigenous people” — one indigenous people among many in South Africa, but perhaps facing particular predicaments that merit special measures, which usually remain unspecified. While there is no official standpoint on this issue, it is clear that the government maintains this position to date (see below).

The campaign for recognition also focused on traditional leadership from the onset, especially after the follow-up conference held in Oudtshoorn in 2001. Some seasoned Khoisan revivalists argue that the vague promises regarding recognition made at this



conference and thereafter caused infighting to break out among various competing factions, which continues till this day. Contestations over leadership positions was one of the reasons why Little receded to the background in the wake of the reburial of Sarah Baartman in 2002 and the visit of the United Nations Special Rapporteur in 2005. In the 2010s, fuelled by social media and the Khoisan revivalist-authored newspaper *Eerste Nasie Nuus* (ENN), people such as Zenzile Khoisan, Chantal Revell, Mackie and Tania Kleinhans-Cedras dramatically increased the reach of Khoisan revivalism, as well as the assertiveness of its political campaigns and engagements with the South African government. While Little and the CCHDC had also attempted to recruit as many people as possible, this new cohort of Khoisan revivalists proved vastly more successful. It is not farfetched to consider contemporary Khoisan revivalism as a nascent broad-based identity movement. Khoisan-themed organizations and events mushroomed across Cape Town and beyond. While most of these were short-lived, they all contributed to a ripple effect, spreading Khoisan revivalism into various spheres of life, whether explicitly political or not. One of the reasons why Khoisan revivalism proliferated the way that it did during this time is undoubtedly related to developments regarding land claims and the recognition of traditional leadership. While there are various other components to Khoisan revivalist politics, such as language rights, the South African government has focused on these two topics and they seemed to be the most salient among the people I engaged with as well.

In 2013, then President Jacob Zuma announced that his administration would reopen the land claims process that previously ran between 1995 and 1998 and make provisions that would also allow the Khoisan to claim land. Aside from a few smaller settlements, two largescale land claims involving Khoisan communities in the Northern Cape took place in 1999 (Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park) and 2003 (Richtersveld), but the fact that these concerned Khoisan was immaterial as the claims met the criteria of the restitution program for all South Africans, i.e. the racially motivated dispossession took place after 1913, the year of the Natives Land Act. Zuma vowed to create “exceptions” to this cut-off date in part because it impeded the Khoisan from filing their claims. A series of consultations took place to give shape to Zuma’s ‘exceptions’ policy, but the cut-off date was never truly up for debate. The government instead vowed to prioritize the Khoisan

in the land redistribution program and to support heritage programs (see below). These two options had already been identified roughly fifteen years earlier and to date little has materialized in terms of land claims or land redistribution. While the Sarah Baartman Centre for Remembrance in the Eastern Cape is nearing completion after two decades of delays, the Khoisan Heritage Route, which was greenlighted in 1999 and criss-crosses the country, remains unimplemented. It similarly remained unclear for decades how the Khoisan (traditional leadership) would be constitutionally recognized. In 2011 a draft version was released of what in 2019 was officially signed into law as the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act (TKLA). While some support the TKLA, the vast majority of Khoisan revivalists are dead set against it for a variety of reasons, but chiefly because they perceive its criteria to be too strict; it does not recognize them as indigenous people; it co-opts their leadership into state-backed Houses of Traditional Leaders and it does not take into account their specific history and grievances. The TKLA also only grants recognition to traditional leaders. At the time of writing, nominees to staff the 'Commission on Khoi-San Matters', which will vet Khoisan traditional leadership claims, are being considered. Once these are appointed and the Commission begins its work for a period of five years, the Khoisan revivalist landscape might be shaken up as competing leadership claims come to a head and those who previously rejected the TKLA might change their minds and try to reap its benefits after all.

I revisit these policy developments below. Suffice it to say that they informed much of the context of my fieldwork. In Part II, *'Ethnographic encounters with Khoisan revivalism in Cape Town'*, I scrutinized my fieldwork data across three chapters in order to study in greater detail how and why Khoisan revivalists engage with the past. Chapter Four and Chapter Five focus on what I have called the 'Khoisan identity discourse', i.e. the ways in which Khoisan revivalists relate to their Khoisan identities. I explained in Chapter Four how Khoisan revivalists diagnose coloureds with an "identity crisis", which they maintain causes various social ills within their communities. Embracing Khoisan identity is put forward as the only remedy to this felt identity crisis. Correspondingly, as Burgess' heartfelt description attests, discovering one's 'true' Khoisan identity is often described as a spiritual/religious, eye-opening and life-changing experience, and Khoisan revivalists strive to 'conscientize' as many potential followers as possible. What is

prioritized in these engagements with the past is establishing historical continuity between the Khoisan past and personal histories and (collective) experiences of being known as Coloured. These experiences pertain to past and present perceptions of Coloured identity as an empty shell devoid of indigeneity and marked by connotations of miscegenation and assimilation, but also to a felt sense of socio-economic and political marginalization in the post-apartheid era by virtue of having this racial classification. Articulations of Khoisan indigeneity are inescapably tied to Coloured identity: their indigeneity is articulated in response to it and their history is reclaimed in light of it. Through these engagements with the past, which take a wide variety of forms, ranging from writing history books and curating museums, to staging theatre performances and organizing guided tours, events and figures from past become relatable as their meaning for the present is fronted. Contemporary issues affecting their communities such as organized crime, substance abuse, domestic violence or unemployment are placed on a historical continuum with the trials and tribulations of the Khoisan. I illustrated this at some length by taking the 17<sup>th</sup> century Khoisan woman Krotoa as a case study, but also by scrutinizing various recurrent themes, such as an emphasis on being ‘the first freedom fighters’ and ‘the victims of the longest colonial history’.

In Chapter Five I shifted my focus to entitlement claims and the boundaries of Khoisan identity. I took these two topics together as Khoisan identity is most contested in relation to entitlement claims. Khoisan revivalism is characterized by a great degree of inclusivity in other settings. The vast majority of Khoisan revivalists distance themselves from Black identity because they believe it has taken on exclusive connotations in the South African context as the only valid marker of African heritage. Indeed, in claiming Khoisan identity, Khoisan revivalists deepen their African roots; they do not pursue an anti-Black, anti-African or racist agenda. Many also do not purport to be the only ones who are ‘indigenous’ to South Africa (see below). Moreover, rather than staking their claims on notions of ‘purity’, phenotype or descent, Khoisan revivalists readily acknowledge that their identity is just as ‘constructed’ as any other. Nevertheless, they retain that their historical and contemporary predicaments can only truly be addressed by first recognizing that they are ‘indigenous’, *‘eerste nasie’* [first nation], ‘first indigenous’; to name the most common labels. This take on indigeneity is not endorsed by all Khoisan

revivalists, particularly among those invested in entitlement claims. Indigeneity is leveraged in these settings to resist what Khoisan revivalists regard as their discrimination by an ANC agenda that is solely invested in the advancement of blacks, for instance by privileging them in the context of affirmative action policies or social housing schemes.

As I indicated previously, Khoisan revivalists also claim land and traditional leadership titles, although both types of claims encompass more than property and power respectively. Some Khoisan revivalists couch their indigeneity in terms of prior occupancy, noting that they were ‘first’ in (parts of) South Africa. Save for a few secessionists on the fringes, hardly anyone advocates that non-Khoisan vacate the country. More common is the position that the Khoisan should be first in line to receive land or reap the benefits of owning property because of their distinct past and present predicaments. Khoisan revivalists tend to claim land ‘discursively’: linking *both* their material and immaterial concerns through generalized claims, for instance through blanket statements such as ‘South Africa belongs to the Khoisan’ or likening rock-art to title deeds. This does not render these claims any less ‘materially’ significant; nor do I discount specific claims for historical territory or heritage sites, but these are in the minority. With regards to traditional leadership, while many reject the institution, let alone as defined in the TKLA, some believe there is a time and place for it. Most point to ceremonial functions, and some feel entitled to state recognition as Khoisan “chiefs”, the most popular term to indicate traditional leadership positions in Khoisan revivalist circles. It is in this setting that attempts to demarcate Khoisan identity are most fierce. There are regular charges of opportunism, of not possessing the right descent or not having done enough to advance Khoisan revivalism or uplift the community one claims sovereignty over. In the main, however, traditional leadership titles are used as a form of in-group recognition, an open-ended appellation to show respect, rather than a claim to an exclusive position. Having said that, the competition over (traditional) leadership positions is the biggest cause for *both* recurrent pleas for unity *and* for such efforts to falter. People have a tendency to become suspicious of each other’s motives, financial support and ability to negotiate with government officials. While the TKLA might regulate Khoisan traditional leadership to a certain extent, the diverse interpretations of

the institution by Khoisan revivalists is likely to remain as it continues to be moulded in ways that best suit their daily needs.

Indeed, part of the debate over traditional leadership relates to the degree to which ‘continuity’ and ‘change’ with the past is tolerated. I worked with these categories through an emic lens in Chapter Six, where I shifted the emphasis away from what Khoisan revivalists say to what they do. Looking at Khoisan revivalism in practice, I discerned two kinds of activities: those that seek to emulate the past as it is believed to have been at a certain moment in time, and those that strive to revive Khoisan culture via the explicit introduction of novel elements; all the while acknowledging that this distinction is primarily analytical as Khoisan revivalism in practice always adapts and therefore inescapably combines ‘continuity’ and ‘change’. With regards to efforts that emphasize continuity, there is a recurrent emphasis on finding inspiration ‘North’, i.e. the Northern Cape and the ways of life of the San. One of the things Khoisan revivalists revive in this fashion are what are considered to be timeworn traditions, chiefly the *!Nau*. Other examples include traditional ways of using plants and playing musical instruments, as well as wearing traditional attire and learning the Khoekhoegowab language. Concerning acts of Khoisan revivalism that explicitly introduce innovation and change, I scrutinized efforts to revive Khoisan culture through hip-hop, jazz, fashion or everyday activities such as speaking Afrikaans or making art. Crucially, both ‘kinds’ of Khoisan revivalism are equally potent and one does not seem decisively more popular than the other.

In Chapter Seven, the sole chapter of Part III, ‘*Theoretical perspectives on Khoisan revivalism*’, I reflected on my empirical data and central research question (‘why and how do Khoisan revivalists engage with the past?’) from a theoretical vantage point. Due to the recurrent emphasis on ‘healing’ in Khoisan revivalism — once again well-illustrated by the opening quote from Burgess — I decided to focus on the ascribed ‘therapeutic’ qualities of Khoisan revivalism and on how these reflect their views on what constitutes an ‘authentic’ engagement with the Khoisan past. I more specifically engaged with Ronald Niezen’s concept “therapeutic history” (2009), and to a lesser extent David Lowenthal’s ideas concerning ‘heritage’ (1998; 2015). The aim of therapeutic history is to counteract histories of dispossession and assimilation by cultivating a form of history that generates

and prioritizes “wellness” (i.e., in the case of Khoisan revivalism, historical continuity and relatability). The past needs to serve present needs first and foremost, thereby emphasizing histories of dispossession and loss on the one hand, and inspirational episodes from precolonial times and anti-colonial resistance campaigns on the other hand. What counts as ‘useful’ historical knowledge in this regard is the result of a process of in-group validation. This is a departure from the emphasis on source-criticism, dispassionate criticism and objectivity in what can be described as (conventional) ‘academic history’. This framework helps to understand why Khoisan revivalists romanticize the past, place ‘Coloured experience’ at the centre of their historical understanding, single out certain episodes from the past, utilize anachronisms and propagate their interpretations of the past across various mediums and channels.

Khoisan revivalists pursue a specific kind of ‘authenticity’ in this process. Borrowing definitions from Laura Saxton (2020), I drew a useful distinction in this regard between ‘authenticity’ as the subjective interpretation of the essence of the past and ‘accuracy’ as that which is in line with established facts. Accuracy and authenticity are related, but do not define one another. Key to producing authenticity is ‘verisimilitude’, or the subjective approximation of what is considered original or accurate. I argued that what Khoisan revivalism produces is ‘subversive authenticity’: an agential authenticity that is based on a verisimilitude that is not bound by notions of accuracy, nor the rejection or reification of colonialist representations of the Khoisan, which I critically surveyed with the help of Patrick Wolfe’s (1999) concept ‘repressive authenticity’. What is being subverted by Khoisan revivalists is in many cases the notion of repressive authenticity itself: they do not just ‘counter’ it — thereby still ‘responding’ and letting it dominate their authenticity, they cultivate an authenticity where what could be considered repressive in a certain context is paradoxically appropriated, reified or disregarded depending on what best suits present needs. The result is not the antithesis of the Khoisan extinction discourse per se, although its central premise of extinction is certainly debunked and its imposed boundaries of what constitutes Khoisan authenticity are manifestly eroded. Rather, the outcome of Khoisan revivalism is a plurality of articulations of indigeneity that assist Khoisan revivalists in pursuing the ends of therapeutic history without being fixated on whether their identities are ‘accurate’ or sufficiently anti-colonial.

To me, the concepts ‘subversive authenticity’ and ‘therapeutic history’ address the analytical limits of strategic essentialism and what I described as ‘instrumentalism’ in the Introduction, and thereby embody a kind of meta-critique academics should take on board when studying contexts of indigenous revivalism. ‘The Khoisan revivalist guide to reclaiming history and authenticity’, as I referred to it, is a useful case-study to think through how indigenous identity is shaped and perceived in a 21<sup>st</sup> century world that is increasingly urban and cosmopolitan in its outlook. It can be a useful analytical lens in what Maximillian Forte (2013, 15) called “resurgent ethnography”, a type of ethnography that directly seeks to counter the legacies of the ‘salvage ethnography’ of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries by emphasizing the dynamism and complexity inherent in instances of indigenous revivalism. By looking at articulations of indigeneity, my research has certainly added a layer of dynamism and complexity to the case of Khoisan revivalism. The importance of the historical and contemporary experience of being known as ‘Coloured’ does not invalidate their claims to indigeneity, but it renders their articulations of indigeneity more complex than the binary indigenous/non-indigenous. The central role of (Coloured/Khoisan) experience also poses various conundrums with regards to Khoisan revivalism’s intellectual and socio-political accommodation, particularly in relation to entitlement claims. In drawing on a dialectic interpretation of (anti-) colonialism by Frantz Fanon, I concluded Chapter Seven by considering whether Khoisan revivalism is undergoing a phase where it still has to shed its colonial baggage and assert itself in society, thereby necessitating a process of therapeutic history. Others might see Khoisan revivalism as a temporary phenomenon; a fleeting incarnation of identity politics. Indeed, as I elaborate below, a lot depends on one’s views regarding the role of ethnicity in everyday life and politics.

I am quite confident that Khoisan revivalists will stake their claim in South African society for years to come. As Khoisan revivalism expands in new directions, it will benefit from being scrutinized from a variety of perspectives. Revisiting the limitations of my research, some suggestions come to mind. My open-ended definition of Khoisan revivalism led me to survey a wide range of people and events at the expense of in-depth case studies. It would be worthwhile for another researcher, preferably someone with more access, to focus on the day-to-day activities of a number of Khoisan revivalists or to

canvass the support for Khoisan revivalism in a specific locale. On that note, I have tended to focus on leading Khoisan revivalists at the expense of those who do not feature as prominently. Similarly, there is little data on what average South Africans think about Khoisan revivalism. While Khoisan revivalism is most vibrant in Cape Town, it is apparent elsewhere in South Africa (see e.g. Erasmus 2012). During my fieldwork, but particularly in editions of ENN or on social media, I especially came across Khoisan revivalists in the Johannesburg/Pretoria area. As no research exists about these groups to date, I wonder how their articulations of indigeneity might differ or overlap with those I discerned in Cape Town. Conversely, it would be interesting to examine how communities where Khoisan identity is more established relate to Khoisan revivalism. San communities across Southern Africa come to mind, but also mission stations in the Western and Northern Cape (see e.g. De Jongh 2012). Other thematic approaches could also be taken, such as Khoisan revivalist spirituality or epistemology; topics I barely addressed. It is also important to appreciate that Khoisan revivalism does not operate in a political vacuum. Various groups are reconfiguring their identities in post-apartheid South Africa and one wonders how these compare to Khoisan revivalists (see e.g. Carton, Laband and Sithole 2008; McNeill 2016). This is by no means an exhaustive list, but I want to add one more suggestion for further research, which merits a separate section as I believe it is of particular importance.

## **Indigeneity, prior occupancy and ‘belonging’: a political conflation**

If Khoisan revivalism is to stay for the foreseeable future, it is vital to understand how it navigates the wider South African political landscape. Recent developments regarding land reform I revisit shortly have made this an urgent topic. As I will show, Khoisan revivalism has interacted with politicians and political parties since its inception. However, Zenzile Khoisan (24/05/2018) discerned an increased interest since the general elections of May 2014 in particular, when “every constituency started looking on how





Figure 11. “Recognition + Restitution + Restoration = Dignity” (ENN 2014d, 6)

best to interact with [Khoisan revivalism] and hitch their wagon to it”. As an ENN (2014d, 13) contributor remarked in 2014, establishing alliances with political parties not only helps to address their grievances, it also gives them access to financial resources, administrative infrastructure and a vast network of constituents. The more established political parties might also be able to support those created by the Khoisan themselves. While more research is needed to ascertain how Khoisan political parties were funded, what their support-base was and on which campaigns they ran, they were all short-lived and unsuccessful at the ballot box, with the possible exception of Khoisan Revolution (see Chapter Three). Various political actors have placed advertisements and opinion pieces in ENN hoping to rally votes among Khoisan revivalists, particularly in the lead up to the 2014 elections (see e.g. ENN 2013a, 5, 7). The conservative right-wing party Freedom Front Plus (FF+) and the extreme-left Africanist party Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), both of which I say more about below, pledged to support Khoisan revivalism if elected (ENN 2014a, 1). Political advertisement in ENN declined after the elections, but politicians have kept engaging with Khoisan revivalism and it is worth elaborating on some of the main actors and their motives. Others are likely to be relevant here; this is but a brief reflection

on scattered data I have gathered along the way.<sup>151</sup> I also did not pool my interlocutors' political preferences directly — both subjects require further research to properly address. However, based on informal conversations and observations, I did not discern clear voting patterns. The following should be read bearing these caveats in mind.

As the sole party in charge on the national level since the end of apartheid, I have already given a lot of insight into the ways the ANC relates to Khoisan revivalism, but I have mostly focused on policy development, rather than ideology or concrete electoral campaigns. On the one hand, the ANC clearly emphasizes that the Khoisan are equal citizens and 'Africans'. As the then Secretary General put it in 2013, the Khoisan should not "think like a minority, because [they] are part of a majority" (ENN 2013f, 7). If they would vote as the majority, the ANC would defeat the main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA) (see above), and take control of the Western Cape, which they have only managed for a brief period of time in the mid-2000s. Votes for the ANC have declined among coloureds for decades (Justesen and Schulz-Herzenberg 2018; Paret 2018). One could see the appeasement of Khoisan revivalists by people such as Marius Fransman, who was chairman of the Western Cape ANC between 2011 and 2016, as a strategy to increase its votes among this demographic. Fransman underwent a *!Nau* (see Chapter Six) and has repeatedly made pro-Khoisan revivalist statements in public, such as accusing the DA of perpetuating "cultural genocide" by refusing to recognize the Khoisan as the "original owners" of the land, or pledging his full support to "reclaiming our ancestral land" (ENN 2014d, 6; ENN 2014f, 1; ENN 2016a, 6). At the funeral of the prominent Khoisan revivalist Richard Kutela in 2016 he also referenced the defeat of D'Almeida in 1510 by asking those in attendance if they were "ready to take up the spears of the warriors of the 1500s and do justice to their legacy?" and unite as one to reclaim the land (ENN 2016a, 6;

---

<sup>151</sup> I reiterate that I cannot draw any conclusions from this, but the Democratic Alliance (DA), the main opposition party in South Africa, which also heads the Western Cape, was largely absent during my fieldwork. The only reference I have relates to the Khoisan Kingdom, who reported in ENN (2014k, 5) that they held a meeting with DA representatives in 2014, who recognized their identity as Khoisan and the fact that more needed to be done to celebrate their history.

see also Robins 1997, 37; see Figure 11). I return to the implications of this appeasement in light of the ANC's commitment to non-racialism below.

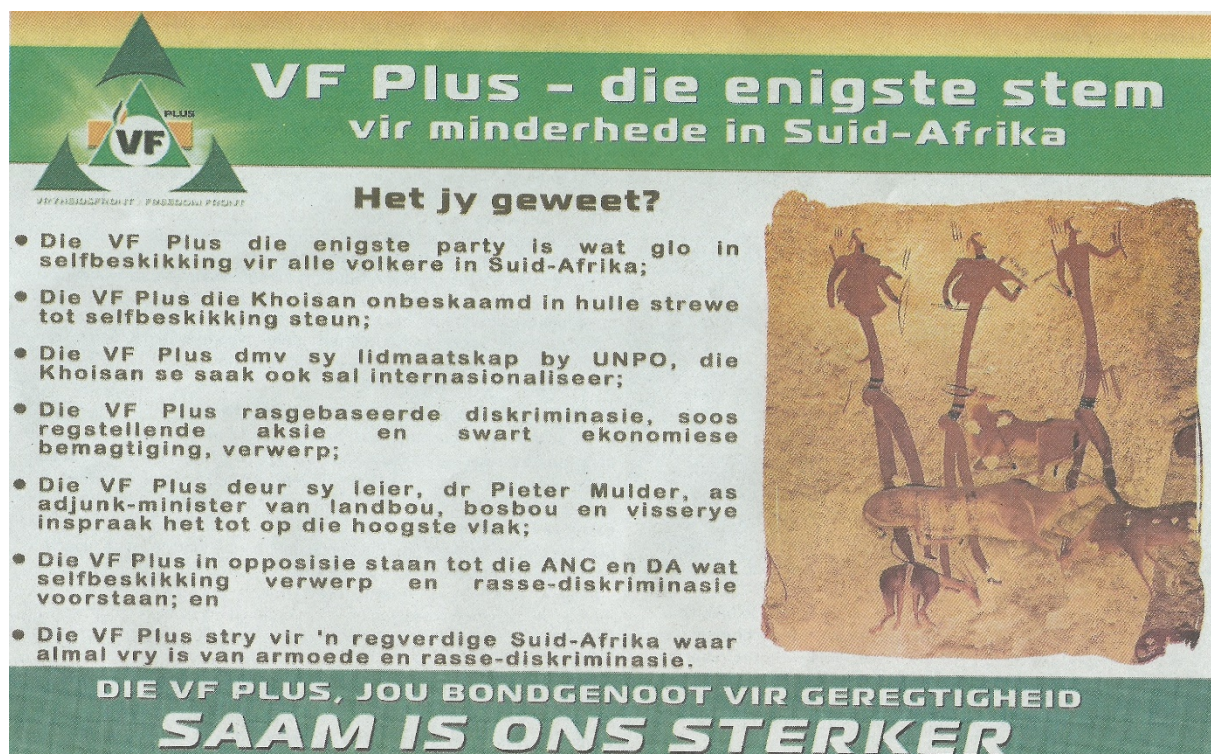


Figure 12. “VF Plus – die enigste stem vir minderhede in Suid-Afrika” (ENN 2013b, 7)

In terms of political engagements by the opposition, one demographic stands out, which I will broadly refer to as ‘Afrikaner interest groups’ as they are primarily intent on safeguarding and advancing the rights of the Afrikaner minority. Such groups have interacted with Khoisan revivalism since the beginning, and with the Griqua even before that. Michael Besten (2006, 279-282) and Linda Waldman (2007b, 48) describe some of the earliest ties between Griqua groupings and the Freedom Front (FF, the predecessor of the FF+) in the 1990s. Some of the individuals involved played key roles in Khoisan revivalism later on, such as Daniel Kanyiles, who joined Joseph Little in setting up the National Council of Khoi Chiefs (Brink 2003, 16; see Chapter Three). Peter Marais was also a member of Kanyiles’ *Griekwa Volksparty* until the 1990s, when he joined the National Party (Brink 2003, 7). As I noted in Chapter Four, Marais was mayor of Cape Town and Premier of the Western Cape in the early 2000s and is the Western Cape representative for the FF+ at the time of writing. His names carries weight and it is therefore significant that he has begun



to engage with Khoisan revivalism as well, for instance in the context of Krotoa International Airport (see Chapter Four). Marais strives for greater autonomy for the Western Cape, in order to, among other things, recognize the Khoisan as indigenous people (see Meyer 2014a; 2014b), but more research is necessary to scrutinize how Marais' politics interacts with Khoisan revivalism (see e.g. Jacobs and Levenson 2018).

The fact that Marais has made the FF+ his political home provides some clues, however. The FF not only approached the Griqua in the 1990s, it also campaigned among a contingent of Khoisan soldiers who fought on the side of the apartheid regime in Namibia, but were relocated to temporary housing in Schmidtsdrift in the Northern Cape after the country gained independence in 1990 (Douglas 1997, 47; see Chapter Two). During a campaign rally in the area in 1994, the FF emphasized what they saw as the shared political plight of Afrikaners and Khoisan in the new South Africa: i.e. the need for a *volkstaat*, “a formalised locale, a politically legitimated spatial locus of cultural and ethnic exclusivity” (Douglas 1995, 66-67). As a separate nation state became increasingly unlikely to materialize and unpopular among its support base, various Afrikaner collectives have begun to rebrand themselves as “minorities” (Alsheh and Elliker 2015). The emphasis on a shared fate as ‘discriminated minorities’ looking for self-determination became the main argument for rapprochement with the Khoisan ever since (cf. Bam 2014, 126; see also Muthien and Khosa 1995, Figure 12). The FF+ has not only approached the Khoisan, but indigenous people elsewhere to bolster its case for self-determination along these lines (Furlong 2012, 60).<sup>152</sup> With regards to the Khoisan, the party has openly sympathized with King Cornelius’ ambitions for self-determination and secession (Besent 2018; see Chapter Five), recognized the Khoisan as indigenous people (ENN 2013a, 7; 2013b, 7), supported publications such as ENN (2014c, 2) and provided other means of financial support to Khoisan revivalists. Other Afrikaner interest groups such as Afriforum, the civil society outfit of the labour union *Solidariteit* [Solidarity], which considers itself “a key

---

<sup>152</sup> A number of Afrikaner collectives pleaded with the United Nations on several occasions to be recognized as indigenous people, but their requests were denied as Afrikaners were judged not have a historical and present-day experience of marginalization and discrimination (Oomen 2005, 10). For more on Afrikaners claims to indigeneity, in relation to the Khoisan or otherwise, see Douglas 1995; Pillay 2004; Koot 2015.

extra-parliamentary counterweight to the ruling ANC” (Van Zyl-Hermann 2018), have also expressed their support for recognizing the Khoisan as indigenous people, drew parallels between their campaigns for greater protection of Afrikaans and those of the Khoisan for Khoekhoegowab, and argued that their history too has “been tarnished and their importance in the country’s history glossed over” (ENN 2013a, 5; 2013f, 11; Nicolson 2012; see also Furlong 2012, 58).

A final political actor that needs to be mentioned is the aforementioned EFF, founded in 2013 by former members of the ANC Youth League, and widely regarded as responsible for pushing the ANC to embrace a policy of land expropriation without compensation (Paret 2018, 473). In fact, the EFF profiles itself mainly on expedited land reform, arguing that the persistence of socioeconomic inequalities along racial lines is primarily due to the unjust distribution of land ownership, resulting in a majority of landless blacks and a minority of property-owning whites. It is unclear where the Khoisan feature in this dichotomy, although the EFF President and Commander-in-Chief, Julius Malema, once replied to a Khoisan revivalist who argued that he had no “authority” to speak about land matters “since the Khoisan were there first” that she failed to recognize that they were all Africans first and foremost.<sup>153</sup> However, Malema has since not only called for recognizing Khoekhoegowab as an official language and giving the Khoisan statutory recognition, he has also acknowledged that everyone in South Africa is historically-speaking an immigrant except for the Khoisan (ENN 2014c, 2; Keppler 2018; see also Bam 2014, 127). Malema elaborated on this reading of history when he spoke at a meeting that was called by the Khoisan Kingdom in Capricorn, Cape Town in January 2014.<sup>154</sup> On this occasion he not only described the Khoisan as the “most marginalized Africans on the continent”, he also recognized them as indigenous people, “the rightful owners of the land”, and thanked them for “welcoming” the “African majority” that came from “the North” into “their country” at an unspecified time in the past.

---

<sup>153</sup> “‘Mr Malema, you have no authority over land’.” <https://www.news24.com/News24/mr-malema-you-have-no-authority-over-land-20160212>, accessed 18 March 2021.

<sup>154</sup> I thank Rudolf Rieger for sharing an audio-recording of this meeting.

Before reflecting on how these interactions and endorsements relate to South Africa's current political climate and recent policy developments, I reiterate that additional research is required to ascertain whether my hypotheses have any merit. Having said that, I read in these political engagements a particular conflation of indigeneity, prior occupancy and belonging set against the ANC's endorsement of land expropriation without compensation in February 2018. With 'belonging' I refer to "a sense of connection [...] familiarity, comfort and ease [...] feelings of inclusion, acceptance and safety" (Koot, Hitchcock and Gressier 2019, 347). Belonging is a "relational concept" and someone can be designated as not belonging as well (Ibid., 349). As various political actors position themselves in anticipation of land expropriation without compensation, the notion of belonging gains greater significance: if land is transferred away from whites, does that imply that they do not 'belong' or that blacks belong more? As Stasja Koot, Robert Hitchcock and Catie Gressier recently put it: "[A]gainst the background of [...] increasing inequalities, the question of who the land belongs to – and, equally important, who belongs to the land – is more relevant than ever" (Ibid., 342). So too are connotations of prior occupancy attached to indigeneity as these emerge as potentially powerful forms of leverage: if only the Khoisan can claim prior occupancy, are they not the first victims of colonial 'land expropriation and compensation' and therefore most entitled to compensation? These issues have always been part of South African politics, but they seem to crystalize around the land debate in recent years, boosting the political traction of Khoisan revivalism in the process.<sup>155</sup> As Thembela Kepe and Ruth Hall (2018, 134) put it, now more than ever are there two "competing narratives" regarding land: land as a resource to be put to optimal economic use on the one hand, and land as related to historical injustices and "arguments of indigeneity", but also "identity, home, family, heritage, livelihood and many other meanings" on the other hand.

---

<sup>155</sup> It is important to emphasize that while historical justice has always been part of South Africa's land reform program, present-day economic arguments have taken precedence (Kepe and Hall 2018). Indeed, there are of course various ways of claiming land, belonging and even indigeneity in this context, but these fall outside the scope of this thesis (see Veracini and Verbuyst 2020).

While it is unlikely that these concerns will displace the predominant economic incentives that dictate land reform policy in South Africa, it is noteworthy how they are turned into political capital by the various political players I mentioned above. I do not want to speculate too widely on what motivates them. Nor do I regard their views as representative of the constituencies and demographic they (aim to) represent. All the while, one cannot help but notice that Afrikaners and Khoisan are strange bedfellows in light of the role of the former in the colonization of the latter. Then again, as they both feel threatened by what they regard as the ANC's 'Africanist agenda', mutual efforts to establish alliances are not as surprising as they might seem at first glance (Steyn 2016, 485, 499; see below). There is more at play here than 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend'; the political geometry involved in recognizing the Khoisan as the only indigenous people in South Africa places everyone else on an 'equal' footing as 'settlers', including the Bantu-speaking majority (see also Veracini and Verbuyst 2020). Positioning the Khoisan in this way is reminiscent of the way apartheid officials envisaged coloureds as a buffer between whites and blacks (see Chapter Two). This broad-brush reading of the past has been used to deflate the latter's claims to the land. The previous leader of the FF+ for instance claimed in 2012 that Bantu-speaking groups were "foreign to 40 percent of South Africa [...] Technically, no one can lay claim to land in SA. We have got a complicated system. Nobody can say this is my total land [...] When whites arrived [in the Western Cape], there were Khoi people, not blacks" (Piet Mulder cited in Mboti 2013, 459). Moreover, the CEO of Afriforum emphasized in 2018 that "it was important to recognise that black people were also responsible for the dispossession of the Khoi and the San" (Hlatshaneni 2018). In this perspective, the Bantu-speaking majority are colonial 'immigrants' just like whites.

Naturally, the EFF refutes this interpretation, even if they do endorse the Khoisan's prior occupancy. Yet they stand little to lose in this endorsement as it does not alter their position that "Africans" in general should be first in line to benefit from expedited land reform. Indeed, there is a subtle, but highly relevant, clue contained in the way Malema framed the historical encounter between the Khoisan and the Bantu-speaking groups who migrated to South Africa roughly 1800 years ago (although he did not specify a date). Malema stressed how the Bantu were "welcomed" by the Khoisan; he does not couch their

meeting as one of colonialism, a term he reserves for the interactions between “Africans” and Europeans. According to Malema as well as the ANC, at the end of the day, what matters most is that the Khoisan were on the receiving end of European colonialism, just like other Africans. While this onslaught was felt by Khoisan and non-Khoisan alike, I have shown how it impacted them in different ways as well. Underplaying these differences has been described by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang (2012, 17) as “colonial equivocation”, or the homogenisation of “various experiences of oppression as colonization”. I showed in Chapter Three how colonial equivocation informs the South African government’s unofficial position that there is no merit in designating the Khoisan as indigenous people. Indeed, as I noted, it prefers to frame them as “Africans”, “vulnerable indigenous people” or as one indigenous people among many. In this process, specific predicaments faced by Khoisan (revivalists) did not get addressed or meaningfully acknowledged, principally the unique ways in which they are affected by legacies of dispossession and assimilation (see also Crawhall 1999, 324; Lehmann 2004, 110; Veracini and Verbuyst 2020). What is offered instead through legislation such as the TKLA is assimilation: not as the sole indigenous people, but as “Africans” (even if, under the TKLA, as Khoisan).

To understand where all of this politicking around indigeneity, prior occupancy and belonging leaves Khoisan revivalists and their land claims, I want to elaborate next on why I believe it is productive to think through Khoisan revivalism’s societal repercussions and potential political accommodation through the frame of ‘Khoisan Consciousness’.

## **Khoisan Consciousness and its discontents**

What I referred to as ‘colonial equivocation’ can be motivated by noble intentions. Had South Africa’s reconciliation ethos not emphasized rallying points over difference, the transition of power likely would not have been as peaceful. And yet, as Adam Habib and Kristina Bentley (2008, 337) observe, ever since the main challenge of “South Africa’s democratic experiment” has been “how to advance redress in order to address the historical injustices while simultaneously building a single national cosmopolitan



identity”. Many have put forward suggestions in this regard and I do not have the space to do justice to them all here, but let me single out a few to highlight some of the main arguments. Habib and Bentley suggest no longer linking redress to ‘race’, but to ‘class’ (which overlaps with ‘race’ in practice), as this is the only way to avoid “forever holding South Africa hostage to a polarised politics of fractiousness and ethnic mobilisation” (Ibid., 337, 346). Mahmood Mamdani (2001, 661) also proposes to flatten differences by focussing on “common residence over common descent — indigeneity — as the basis of rights”. Ciraj Rassool (2019, 343) offers a similar pathway, arguing that South African history is a “deep, historical contest” between societies that organize around race and ethnicity, and those that seek to do without them. Rassool (Ibid., 344) sides with the latter camp of “non-racialism”, which he argues is not “merely a politics of racial equality” or “a facile, opportunistic politics of colorblindness”, but a “politics of race that calls attention to histories of how races and racial systems were made in legislative, social, and epistemic terms”. On this “long-term epistemological project of making new society and new persons [...] outside the racial terms and categories of colonialism and apartheid” the main challenge, according to Rassool, is debunking notions of ‘race’ and ‘ethnicity’ as “natural and innate” (Ibid., 343, 345, 366). This is an urgent mission, he underscores, as “[t]wenty-five years after the end of apartheid, these race categories have gone on to have new life, with race-based claims framed around the distinction between indigeneity and settler foreignness, the need for land expropriation to reverse long histories of racialized land dispossession, and with attention also drawn to alleged racial hierarchies of suffering under apartheid” (Ibid., 346).

As I noted in Chapter Seven, Rassool sees certain strands of Khoisan revivalism as examples of this trend. Like Habib and Bentley, who suggest that class should replace other parameters, or Mamdani, who believes the politics of ethnicity are a dead-end, Rassool holds that ethnicity should not have any political sway. Their critique of the mobilization of ethnicity as “natural and innate” is commendable, but it does not capture how most Khoisan revivalists relate to their identities or consider them political assets. I also wonder where their framework leaves other, perhaps more important, ways in which people relate to ethnicity or indigeneity in their everyday lives. As I noted in the Introduction, an instrumentalist reading of ethnicity is not the only valid approach to

study the subject. In the work of scholars like Rassool, indigeneity is frequently conflated with prior occupancy and belonging along the lines I set out above. From this perspective, any kind of embrace of ethnicity risks “reviving the dead-weight legacy of apartheid ascriptions” (Dubow 1994, 368) or fuelling xenophobic sentiments (Solomon 2019). Once more, I am not arguing that there is no merit to their criticisms or that some Khoisan revivalist articulations of indigeneity do not evidence what they warn about. As I noted in Chapter Five, entitlement claims in particular have a tendency to aggravate exclusionary tendencies. There has, however, also been significant pushback against this kind of take on ethnicity — most of which I covered in the Introduction. Related to South African nationalism more specifically, various studies have pointed out how, for most citizens (including Khoisan revivalists), ethnicity does not negate their national identity; multiple identities can co-coexist (see e.g. Comaroff and Comaroff 2009, 50; Brown 2001, 766). Duncan Brown saw possibilities in a “recuperated or revindicated nationalism” along these lines, “based not on the fiction of imagined unity [or ethnic purity], but on a shared problematic: a mutual implication in a history of difference” (Brown 2001, 757). Crucially, for Brown, this meant holding onto labels such as ‘African’ or ‘Afrikaner’, but assigning them new meaning, particularly stressing their historical “mutual involvement” (Brown 2001, 767). In other words, Brown emphasized that ethnicity does not necessarily have to be conflictual and any attempt to negate ethnicity might backfire.

Looking at South African society in recent years, Brown turned out to be correct in his prediction that the rhetoric of nation-building and reconciliation would eventually run into its limits, at least according to various disgruntled stakeholders in South African society. Indeed, some have argued in recent years that the period of transition to democracy has concluded; “multiracialism, constitutionalism, and reconciliation” are now increasingly seen as part of the “post-apartheid mirage” (Hodes 2017, 149). “Post-transitional” South Africa is not marked by an emphasis on reconciliation, but by appeals to socio-economic transformation and redress that are considered long overdue, as well as a reoriented politics of history, “a new kind of (commemorative) public culture” that not *only* scrutinizes the legacies of apartheid, but just as much those of the colonial history preceding it (Holmes and Loehwing 2016, 15-17; Hayem 2017, 394). Rebecca Hodes (2017, 149) has argued that this emphasis, as embodied in movements such as Rhodes Must Fall,

is “to reveal the persistence of the past in the present [...] Through actions involving statues, paintings, and buildings, the artefacts and edifices of memorialization, protestors refute the protective estrangement of the past, rendering its symbols live, present, and productive”. While Khoisan revivalism was initiated during the ‘transitional period’, it is undeniably the case that it gained more traction as a result of the rise of such sentiments across the board. Ethnicity or race have not slowly disappeared as meaningful social labels since 1994, but, as Rassool also pointed out, seem to have become more prominent. This includes the ANC, where many, including leading members such as ex-President Thabo Mbeki, have discerned a growing caucus that abandoned “non-racialism” in favour of “Africanist traditional values” and “populist Black republicanism” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009, 65; Beresford 2015, 228).<sup>156</sup> As I noted, it is unclear where Coloured identity fits within this strategy, although the majority of Khoisan revivalists I interacted with regard this as something to their exclusion and further discrimination.

In order to understand how Khoisan revivalism relates to these socio-political developments, the abovementioned commentary of critics needs to be complemented with the type of understanding of ‘ethnicity’ I have tried to cultivate in this thesis. As I announced earlier, I believe it is opportune to do so by thinking through Khoisan revivalism’s relationship with indigeneity and ethnicity through the notion of ‘Khoisan Consciousness’; which I put forward here not as an elaborated concept, but as more of an ambiguous hypothesis to provoke further research. As I signalled earlier, I speak in part of Khoisan Consciousness to highlight the overlap with Steve Biko’s Black Consciousness philosophy, which pleaded for a Black political identity, not on the basis of skin colour, but as a result of being on the receiving end of a racist political system *and* one’s willingness to dismantle it. Any other form of identification, including Coloured identity, was dismissed as a form of ‘false consciousness’. Biko and his followers furthermore felt it was imperative to instil pride in African roots, celebrating noteworthy historical figures and events in the process. Many have highlighted how Biko’s ideas retain their relevance in today’s South Africa through movements such as Rhodes Must Fall (see e.g. Ntloedibe

---

<sup>156</sup> “South Africa's Mbeki blasts ANC for becoming 'black party'.” <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-45638859>, accessed 18 March 2021.

2019, 70). As others have observed, not only were (and are) many Khoisan revivalists adherents of Black Consciousness, many of its core tenets are also reflected in Khoisan revivalism at large, most notably the idea of false consciousness and the need to take pride in the past (see e.g. Lee 1998, 50; Brown and Deumert 2017, 574). While ethnicity is shunned in Biko's philosophy, there are also telling parallels with the criteria for claiming Khoisan identity (Gibson 2003, 65). Similar to the requirements of Black identity set out by Biko, Khoisan identity is primarily (though not exclusively) related to the experience of being known as Coloured *and* the decision to distance oneself from it. As I noted in Chapter Five, the majority of Khoisan revivalists therefore do not consider their identities as 'natural or innate' or based on race or skin colour, but the result of a complex, somewhat contradictory set of factors involving both lineage and one's mind-set in the present.

Although I have noted the exceptions that prove the rule, indigeneity emerges here not so much as a lever to diminish the indigeneity of others, to deny their historical or present-day grievances or to mask a Coloured identity politics based on race or class, but as an inclusive, open-ended and meaningful articulation in response to the experience of being known as Coloured, with both political and less explicitly political features. Indeed, in the spirit of 'Khoisan Consciousness', people are able to articulate their Khoisan identity in the terms they find most meaningful; regardless of religion, political creed, and to a large extent, their 'race' as defined by the South African government. I say 'to a large extent', because Coloured identity plays a crucial role, but not as an absolute criterion. A real 'test' in this regard would be to gauge the reaction of Khoisan revivalists should people who are not classified as Coloured but have 'Khoisan' genetic markers (see Chapter Five, Introduction) or Khoisan members in their family also start identifying as Khoisan (see also Besten 2006, 343). As I showed, Khoisan revivalists in principle do not oppose such claims although they are sceptical of peoples' motives in this regard. Then again, the fact that such claims have not taken place on a massive scale suggests that those who did not undergo the 'Coloured experience' find less meaning in Khoisan identity. While inescapably linked to the legacy of apartheid-era ethnicity politics, 'Khoisan Consciousness' is not a mere reincarnation of the ethnic politics of old. Just like Black Consciousness was not only about fighting racial segregation through protests and

manifestations, but also about making cultural interventions, so too do Khoisan revivalists' articulations of indigeneity pertain to various spheres of society. Rather than an innate feature, Khoisan revivalism suggests a particular 'mind-set' or 'consciousness' as reflected in the way its adherents conceive of themselves and the world around them. Not coincidentally then, the term 'consciousness' is regularly used by Khoisan revivalists as well (see e.g. ENN 2014e, 12; 2015, 4; Coetzee 2019b, 150). Ultimately, the rub lies not with the experiences Khoisan revivalists place at the core of their identities, but with whether these are sufficient grounds for entitlement claims, particularly in light of the abovementioned struggle over prior occupancy, land and belonging.

It falls outside the scope of this thesis to formulate policy suggestions or other ways through which South African society can better accommodate Khoisan revivalism given the challenges I just highlighted, but I would be remiss if I did not briefly meditate on some suggestions in light of my thought-experiment with 'Khoisan Consciousness' (see also Veracini and Verbuyst 2020). A couple of caveats first. How Khoisan revivalism should feature in South African society is a decision which all South African citizens have to make, not just Khoisan revivalists, whom I am likely biased towards, but who are not speaking with one voice either. I am probably overemphasizing the degree to which Khoisan revivalism plays a role in my interlocutors' lives; not all of the predicaments they face are (solely) related to their Khoisan identity (see Chapter One). Perhaps most of their day-to-day concerns deal with factors that are unrelated to Khoisan revivalism and which they share with various other groups in South African society, if not the majority. Critics of identity politics, not unlike the critics of ethnicity I mentioned previously, have made such observations to question whether placing 'identity' and 'culture' as policy outcomes would not create more "divisions" and move further away from addressing the underlying grievances (see e.g. Rorty 2000, 9, 13, 19). As I have argued throughout this thesis, for Khoisan revivalists there is no distinction between socioeconomic grievances and their Khoisan identity; in their view both are related. That is not to say that policy should therefore solely deal with 'identity' or cease focusing on apartheid. With its traces painfully present, the dismantling of apartheid certainly needs to remain the top priority of South African politics of redress. Nothing I say here is to diminish apartheid's importance, including for Khoisan revivalists, who also continue to suffer from its

legacies. Once again, however, Khoisan revivalists tie the recent (i.e. apartheid) and distant (i.e. colonial) past together; they are not considered as fundamentally separate historical episodes. My point is rather that various policies that are already in place could assist the Khoisan (to a greater extent), if they took their emic interpretations of indigeneity into greater consideration.

It is important to clarify here that the post-apartheid dispensation inherited the injustices of the colonial and apartheid past; it is not responsible for them. This, however, should not serve as an excuse not to address them according to Jana Thompson (2006, 160-161), who argues that the state is an “intergenerational” entity, which needs to be seen as a credible moral actor by its citizens and therefore strive to rectify past wrongs. Not doing so undermines trust in the state and stimulates discontent, as is evident not only in Khoisan revivalism, but in the various outbursts of ‘post-transitionalism’ more broadly. The vast majority of Khoisan revivalists are not irredentists, but desire more recognition from the South African state, if on their own terms. They do not wish to get rid of their South African citizenship, but to make it more meaningful to them, paradoxically through claiming indigeneity. The ANC government faces the brunt of their criticism not because they are held responsible for the past, but for their perceived lack of commitment to redress. It has signed potentially powerful treaties such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, but as a non-binding instrument, this has changed little on the ground. I do not want imply here that all of the government’s positions and policies are cynical or intent on keeping the Khoisan and their claims to indigeneity as far at bay as possible, but I do want to flag both the counterproductive effects they might generate as well as the points about Khoisan revivalism they might miss in the process.

It is not unreasonable to celebrate the TKLA as the first time the South African government officially recognizes the Khoisan within its borders (see e.g. Øvernes 2019, vii). The TKLA places a foot in the door in that it will register the amount of Khoisan traditional leaders and their constituents in the country; a longstanding demand (see Chapter Three; see also Rowse 2009). Recognition is only granted to traditional leaders, however, and combined with ambiguous communication from the South African government regarding the requirements for recognition or the possible accommodation

of their land claims, it can exacerbate infighting and risks only catering to those most apt at strategic essentialism, not the other grievances which drive Khoisan revivalism. Khoisan revivalists recognize that the matter is complex. Ruben Richards (2017, 553) for instance noted that “merely accommodating the Khoisan, culturally, in terms of a 12<sup>th</sup> [official] language and, politically, in terms of a seat within the House of Traditional Leaders is the easy part. The psychological and spiritual challenge is to repair the ongoing and visible legacy of four centuries of brutalisation”. With Edward Cavanagh (2013, 16), I do feel that a first step is recognizing that “[t]he politics of transformation have been noble but deliberately (and strangely) short-sighted: land restitution and other programmes of restorative justice [...] have addressed present and recent injustice, but they have left foundational acts of dispossession, annexation, and subjugation unscrutinised”. The urgent need to deal specifically with apartheid also likely prevented taking a longer historical reach at the time (see also Cavanagh 2012, 438; Cavanagh 2013, 11).

I would add that Khoisan revivalists do not reject South African historical justice policies as much as they feel excluded from them. This is apparent in how Khoisan revivalists’ land-related grievances could be accommodated. Echoing the position of several government officials (see Chapter Three), Chizuko Sato (2018, 216) has made a compelling case for prioritizing the Khoisan in existing land redistribution legislation. This route would not necessarily require “deep historical and genealogical research to establish the legitimacy of historical landownership of some particular land by a particular people who also have to be proven to be descendants of the historical owners”. Land redistribution allows the government to select plots of land (of historical significance), thereby avoiding potentially overlapping claims on land or having to displace current occupants. It also does not require the unlikely two-thirds majority needed in Parliament to scrap the 1913 cut-off date or providing the Khoisan with a special status as indigenous people. The South African government has to take into account all of its constituents, but it is striking that so little has happened with regards to the Khoisan. A significant gesture in this manner could already go a long way in tempering Khoisan revivalists’ belief that the government does not take their grievances seriously. It could be an example of the “real economic change” that is required for a

project of redress to be seen as credible (Wells 2017, 360). As my hypothesis regarding ‘discursive land claims’ suggests, heritage sites have the potential to benefit Khoisan revivalism to a great extent (see also Patton 2005, 265; Walker 2008, 232). This context too, does not require legally designating the Khoisan as indigenous people, but perhaps making more use of the constitutionally enshrined “right to culture”, as Karin Lehmann (2004, 118) pointed out. Once again, the South African government has identified this early on, but the relevant projects remain in the planning stages for reasons that are unclear. Here too, a swift intervention could signal that the government does not solely seek to memorialize ANC figureheads and endorses Khoisan revivalism as a serious political and cultural project. An example that comes to mind here is renaming Cape Town International Airport after Krotoa; a relatively inexpensive gesture with great symbolic potential.<sup>157</sup>

This way of dealing with Khoisan grievances would take into account how Khoisan revivalists relate to indigeneity, which means not just thinking about the political nexus prior occupancy-belonging I sketched above. The longer meaningful policy developments remain absent or the South African government insists on ‘colonial equivocation’, the more Khoisan revivalists will lose faith and look for assistance elsewhere, including among those that draw on the Khoisan past to advance an exclusionary or racialized project. Once again, I reiterate that more research is necessary to conceptualize proper policy suggestions. What is undoubtedly required, however, is greater involvement of Khoisan revivalists themselves, not just in policy negotiations, but in the academic knowledge such processes draw on.

---

<sup>157</sup> While the process of renaming Cape Town International Airport is still underway at the time of writing, the South African government has recently announced that Port Elizabeth Airport will be renamed the “Chief Dawid Stuurman International Airport” in honour of the Eastern-Cape based Khoisan resistance leader David Stuurman (“Who is Dawid Stuurman, the man whose name will soon grace Port Elizabeth airport?” <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/eastern-cape/who-is-dawid-stuurman-the-man-whose-name-will-soon-grace-port-elizabeth-airport-7aa3b91c-b7f3-4f6a-bcbb-2b879dea3207>, accessed 18 March 2021; see Chapter Two).



## ‘Listening’ to Khoisan revivalism

The Khoi and San Centre was officially inaugurated on 21 September 2020 (Swingler 2020). It is housed at the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town and its mission is to “foreground erased or marginalised indigenous knowledge, rituals, language and ‘ways of knowing’ of the San and Khoi clans across the university and its communities”. Khoisan issues are part of UCT’s “Vision 2030”, which seeks to confront its colonial past and transform the university into a fully-fledged African institute of higher learning (see also May 2018). At the launch of the Centre, the university’s vice-chancellor, Mamokgethi Phakeng, announced that a Khoekhoegowab undergraduate program will be developed over the next five years and that it will feature as an official language of instruction in due course. As I noted in Chapter Three, several universities have hosted Khoisan-focused centres in the past, but these proved short-lived. No comparable institute exists at the time of writing and the lack of involvement from Khoisan communities in academic knowledge production concerning them remains a major concern (Du Plessis 2014, 745).<sup>158</sup> This is precisely what makes the UCT-based institute a potential game changer. Not only does it stand out for its intellectual ambitions, it also strives to involve local communities in a sustained and unprecedented manner. The Centre was principally designed by the current acting director, June Bam-Hutchison, who held an appointment at UCT previously, and Tauriq Jenkins, chairperson of the *A/Xarra Restorative Justice Forum*, a network of Khoisan activists, “focused on meaningful transformation at the university, nationally and globally” (Swingler 2020). As Phakeng remarked during the launch, this ‘transformation’ is not only manifested by creating the Centre on “San and Khoi land”, but also in recognizing that its target community of “indigenous inhabitants” live in its direct vicinity. To redress “the painful truth of the deep architecture of our university”, Phakeng furthermore vowed to “engage

---

<sup>158</sup> Robert Gordon noted in 2014 that Sol Plaatjie University in Kimberley in the Northern Cape announced it would offer a doctorate in “Khoisan studies”, though I have not managed to find further information about this program or Khoisan studies at Sol Plaatjie University (Gordon 2014, 106).

in deep listening as we work in partnership with the San and Khoi descendant communities” in “a continual journey of recognition and acknowledgement”.

Bam-Hutchison has written passionately about this type of “listening” and I want to close by sharing some of her thoughts. For her as for many others, the dawn of a ‘post-transitional’ phase is evident: “[T]he ‘rainbow nation’ is in fact a false reality; we relate to each other with silent hostility, with a silent mutuality of unresolved and unspoken bitterness and even with grief and perhaps fear for what was ‘lost’ in the ambivalence of 1994” (Bam-Hutchison 2016, 7). Bam-Hutchison (Ibid., 12-13) points to the symbolism of the 2015 Rhodes Must Fall protests in this regard and how the Khoisan were not as meaningfully included as they could have, perhaps due to the “unresolved and burning land question for the indigenous people of the Cape”. The protests were directly relevant to Khoisan revivalists as they did not request to be heard, but compelled it, “thereby claiming and creating an ethos of belonging for the ‘minoritized’ and ‘peripherised’” (Ibid., 25). These expressions of disenchantment and anger are a consequence of the fact that “the majority of the intergenerational wounded was not ‘heard’ at the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s] ‘hearings’” (Ibid., 20). What is necessary, Bam-Hutchison (Ibid., 13-14, 18, 25, original emphasis) concludes, is a way of “listening” that does not simply give “voice”, but does so “*genuinely*”. Listening in this fashion not only forms the basis for potential solutions, it also promises a rewarding research agenda, as precolonial South African history “is a matter of widespread active public interest and a concern that is only weakly served by scholarly research” (Ibid., 13-14; Hamilton 2018, 96). Through “methods, concepts and theories that are not trapped in European colonial legacies”, academia can further assist in making “the long past” more relevant for the present in the spirit of Khoisan revivalism: “to make [the past] available as resources to fuel creative thinking about the future” (Hamilton 2018, 96-97). In this way, and particularly through the Khoi and San Centre, Bam-Hutchison (2016, 13) believes the gap between Khoisan revivalism and academia can be bridged and a more productive and sustained public debate can flourish. Regardless of the challenges involved in producing such a ‘history’ I laid out at the end of Chapter Seven, this is a crucial step towards taking Khoisan revivalism seriously as a long-term political and intellectual project.

The question of when Khoisan revivalism ‘ceases’ to be a ‘revival’ surfaces once again. Which goals need to be met before it is no longer sensible to speak of Khoisan revivalism? When Khoisan identity will be considered by South Africans to be just as (un)problematic as any other; when it will be possible to indicate ‘Khoisan’ in the census; when Khoisan land claims will be officially recognized are all criteria to consider. In my estimation, however, it will take at least a generation or two until Khoisan revivalism’s mission will begin to seem obsolete. From being dismissed as passive relics of the past to assertively demanding recognition and reviving their culture, the Khoisan have certainly come a long way since Khoisan revivalism’s inception in the late 1990s. Indeed, what a decade or two ago could be described as a fringe movement has over the years evolved into a broad-based multifaceted phenomenon. Khoisan revivalism’s historical trajectory even seems to have come full circle with Khoisan revivalists with links to institutions of higher learning producing their own academic critiques. While Barrow’s assessment was always flawed, South Africans are today more than ever confronted with anything but vanishing Khoisan. They are increasingly faced with people like Burgess, embracing their newfound “beingness” and compelling her fellow South Africans to ‘listen’ to her. Not only have I tried to ‘listen’ and develop arguments and concepts in a way that takes her call and that of countless other Khoisan revivalists seriously, it is my sincere hope that this thesis will stimulate others to do the same.



# Bibliography

- Abrahams, Y. 1994. *Resistance, pacification and consciousness: a discussion of the historiography of Khoisan resistance from 1972 to 1993 and Khoisan resistance from 1652 to 1853*. MA thesis, University of Cape Town.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1995. "‘Take me to Your Leaders’: A Critique of ‘Kraal and Castle’" *Kronos* 22 (November): 21–35.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1996. "Was Eva Raped? An Exercise in Speculative History." *Kronos* 23 (November): 3–21.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000. *Colonialism, Dysfunction and Dysjuncture. The Historiography of Saartjie Baartman*. PhD dissertation, University of Cape Town.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2007. "Ambiguity Is My Middle Name: A Research Diary." In *Women in South African History: They Remove Boulders and Cross Rivers*, edited by G. Nombinosa, 421–452. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (Khib Omsis). 2011. "‘My Tongue Softens On That Other Name’: Poetry, People, and Plants in Sarah Bartmann’s Natural World." In *Representation and Black Womanhood: The Legacy of Sarah Baartman*, edited by N. Gordon-Chipembere, 31–46. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014. "Moving Forward to Go Back: Doing Black Feminism in the Time of Climate Change." *Agenda* 28 (3): 45–52.
- Adebayo, J.O. 2019. "The Bill, the Billed and Billy: Analysis of Media Framing of the South African Land Expropriation Bill." *African Identities* 17 (2): 147–162.
- Adhikari, M. 1992. "The Sons of Ham: Slavery and the Making of Coloured Identity." *South African Historical Journal* 27 (1): 95–112.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2002. *Hope, Fear, Shame, Frustration: Continuity and Change in the Expression of Coloured Identity in White Supremacist South Africa, 1910–1994*. PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003. "From Manenberg to Soweto: Race and Coloured Identity in the Black Consciousness Poetry of James Matthews." *African Studies* 62 (2): 171–186.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2004. "‘Not Black Enough’: Changing Expressions of Coloured Identity in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *South African Historical Journal* 51 (1): 167–178.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005. *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community*. Athens: Ohio University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006. "God Made the White Man, God Made the Black Man...': Popular Racial Stereotyping of Coloured People in Apartheid South Africa." *South African Historical Journal* 55 (1): 142–164.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011. *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide: The Extermination of the Cape San Peoples*. Athens: Ohio University Press.
- Agnew, V. 2007. "History's Affective Turn: Historical Reenactment and Its Work in the Present." *Rethinking History* 11 (3): 299–312.
- Ainslie, A., and T. Kepe. 2016. "Understanding the Resurgence of Traditional Authorities in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 42 (1): 19–33.
- Alcoff, L. M. 2000. "Who's Afraid of Identity Politics?" In *Reclaiming Identity: Realist Theory and the Predicament of Postmodernism*, edited by P. M. L. Moya and M. R. Hames-Garcia, 312–344. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Alfred, G. T. 1995. *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors: Kahnawake Mohawk Politics and the Rise of Native Nationalism*. Toronto ; New York: Oxford University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2009. "Colonialism and State Dependency." *International Journal of Indigenous Health* 5 (2): 42–60.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and J. Corntassel. 2005. "Being Indigenous: Resurgences against Contemporary Colonialism." *Government and Opposition* 40 (4): 597–614.
- Alsheh, Y., and F. Elliker. 2015. "The Art of Becoming a Minority: Afrikaner Re-Politicisation and Afrikaans Political Ethnicity." *African Studies* 74 (3): 429–448.
- Alvesson, M., and K. Sköldberg. 2009. *Reflexive Methodology. New Vistas for Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.
- Amoamo, M. 2011. "Tourism and Hybridity: Re-Visiting Bhabha's Third Space." *Annals of Tourism Research* 38 (4): 1254–1273.
- Anderson, B. 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Angus, I. 1992. "The Politics of Common Sense: Articulation Theory and Critical Communication Studies." *Annals of the International Communication Association* 15 (1): 535–570.
- Argenti, N., and K. Schramm. 2009. "Introduction: Remembering Violence: Anthropological Perspectives on Intergenerational Transmission." In *Remembering Violence: Anthropological Perspectives on Intergenerational Transmission*, edited by N. Argenti and K. Schramm, 1–42. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Arndt, J. S. 2018. "What's in a Word? Historicising the Term 'Caffre' in European Discourses about Southern Africa between 1500 and 1800." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 44 (1): 59–75.
- Arnolds, H. 2016. *Cultural Heritage Events: A Case Study of the ATKV Rieldans Competition in South Africa*. MA thesis, UNISA.
- Arthur, S., and J. Nazroo. 2003. "Designing fieldwork strategies and materials." In *Qualitative Research Practice*, edited by J. Ritchie and J. Lewis, 109–138. London: SAGE.
- Asch, M., et al. 2004. "On the Return of the Native." *Current Anthropology* 45 (2): 261–267.

- Ashcroft, B. 2001. *On Post-Colonial Futures: Transformations of a Colonial Culture*. London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2002. *Post-Colonial Transformation*. London: Routledge.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*. London: Routledge.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015. "Towards a Postcolonial Aesthetics." *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 51 (4): 410–421.
- Atkinson, D., H. Okada and S. Talmy. 2011. "Ethnography and Discourse Analysis." In *Bloomsbury Companion to Discourse Analysis*, edited by K. Hyland and B. Paltridge, 85–100. London: Bloomsbury.
- Aurell, J. 2018. "Rethinking History's Essential Tension: Between Theoretical Reflection and Practical Experimentation." *Rethinking History* 22 (4): 439–458.
- Auslander, M. 2013. "Touching the Past: Materializing Time in Traumatic 'Living History' Reenactments." *Signs and Society* 1 (1): 161–183.
- Balaton-Chrimes, S., and V. Stead. 2017. "Recognition, Power and Coloniality." *Postcolonial Studies* 20 (1): 1–17.
- Bam, J. 2014. "Contemporary Khoisan Heritage Issues in South Africa: A Brief Historical Overview." In *Papers From the Pre-Colonial Catalytic Project*, edited by L. Ntsebeza and C. Saunders, 123–135. Cape Town: Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town.
- \_\_\_\_\_, B. Van Sitters, and B. Ndhlovu. 2018. "Whose History Counts? A Conclusion." In *Whose History Counts: Decolonising African Pre-Colonial Historiography*, edited by J. Bam, L. Ntsebeza, and A. Zinn, 155–178. Cape Town: AFRICAN SUN MeDIA.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and A. Zinn. 2018. "Whose History Counts? A Conclusion." In *Whose History Counts: Decolonising African Pre-Colonial Historiography*, edited by J. Bam, L. Ntsebeza, and A. Zinn, 199–205. Cape Town: AFRICAN SUN MeDIA.
- Bam-Hutchison, J. 2016. "Lalela: Occupying Knowledge Practices and Processes in Higher Education in South Africa (UCT as Case Study)." Paper presented at the Social Anthropology department at University of Cape Town, Cape Town, March 1.
- Bank, A. (editor). 1998a. *The Proceedings of the Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference: Organised by the Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape, Held at the South African Museum, Cape Town, 12–16 July 1997*. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1998b. "Introduction." In *The Proceedings of the Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference: Organised by the Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape, Held at the South African Museum, Cape Town, 12–16 July 1997*, edited by A. Bank, 1–2. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research.
- Banks, M. 1996. *Ethnicity: Anthropological Constructions*. London: Routledge.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. "Post-Authenticity: Dilemmas of Identity in the 20th and 21st Centuries." *Anthropological Quarterly* 86 (2): 481–500.
- Barbieri, C., et al. 2014. "Unraveling the Complex Maternal History of Southern African Khoisan Populations." *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 153 (3): 435–448.
- Barnabas, S., and S. Miya. 2019. "KhoesSan Identity and Language in South Africa: Articulations of Reclamation." *Critical Arts* 33 (4–5): 89–103.

- Barnard, A. 1992. *Hunters and Herders of Southern Africa: A Comparative Ethnography of the Khoisan Peoples*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2004. "Coat of Arms and the Body Politic: Khoisan Imagery and South African National Identity." *Ethnos* 69 (1): 5–22.
- . 2007. *Anthropology and the Bushman*. Oxford, New York: Berg Publishers.
- Barrow, J. 1801. *An Account of Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa, in the Years 1797 and 1798: Including Cursory Observations on the Geology and Geography of the Southern Part of That Continent; the Natural History of Such Objects as Occurred in the Animal, Vegetable, and Mineral Kingdoms; and Sketches of the Physical and Moral Characters of the Various Tribes of Inhabitants Surrounding the Settlement of the Cape of Good Hope*. London: T. Cadell and W. Davies.
- Barth, F. 1969. *Ethnic groups and boundaries. The social organization of culture difference*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Bateman, B. 2016. "Traditional Leaders urged to work together to reclaim land." *Eyewitness News*. <https://ewn.co.za/2016/04/08/Zuma-urges-traditional-leaders-to-work-together-in-taking-back-land>.
- Becker, H. 2017. "A Hip-Hopera in Cape Town: The Aesthetics, and Politics of Performing 'Afrikaaps.'" *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 29 (2): 244–259.
- . 2010. "Introduction to Anthropology Southern Africa Special Issue on 'Engaging Difference: Perspectives on Belonging and Exclusion in Contemporary Southern and East Africa.'" *Anthropology Southern Africa* 33 (3–4): 75–80.
- Beinart, W., and S. Dubow. 1995. *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*. East Sussex: Psychology Press.
- Bell, A. 2014a. *Relating Indigenous and Settler Identities: Beyond Domination*. London: Pallgrave Macmillan.
- Bell, K. 2014b. "Resisting Commensurability: Against Informed Consent as an Anthropological Virtue." *American Anthropologist* 116 (3): 511–522.
- Benzecry, C. E. 2017. "What Did We Say They've Said? Four Encounters between Theory, Method and the Production of Data." *Ethnography* 18 (1): 24–34.
- Beresford, A. 2015. "Power, Patronage, and Gatekeeper Politics in South Africa." *African Affairs* 114 (455): 226–248.
- Berger, R. 2015. "Now I See It, Now I Don't: Researcher's Position and Reflexivity in Qualitative Research." *Qualitative Research* 15 (2): 219–234.
- Berliner, D. C. 2005. "The Abuses of Memory: Reflections on the Memory Boom in Anthropology." *Anthropological Quarterly* 78 (1): 197–211.
- Bernardo, C. 2020. "Measuring the Success of the Cape Flats Army Deployment." *Daily Maverick*. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-01-17-measuring-the-success-of-the-cape-flats-army-deployment/>.
- Besent, Mercedes. 2018. "Freedom Front plus Sympathises with Khoisan King." *SABC News*. <https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/freedom-front-plus-sympathises-with-khoisan-king/>.



- Besten, M. 2000. *Khoisan Revivalism and the Limits of Theory: A Preliminary Assessment*. Unpublished Seminar Paper: Department of History, UWC.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006. *Transformation and Reconstitution of Khoe-San Identities: AAS le Fleur I, Griqua Identities and Post-Apartheid Khoe-San Revivalism (1894–2004)*. PhD dissertation, Leiden University.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2009. “We are the Original Inhabitants of This Land”: Khoe-San Identity in Post-Apartheid South Africa.” In *Burdened by Race: Coloured Identities in Southern Africa*, edited by M. Adhikari, 134–155. Cape Town: UCT Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011a. “The Ghost of Theal: Representation of the Khoe-San in SA School History Books.” *African Studies* 70 (1): 67–88.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011b. “Envisioning ancestors: staging of Khoe-San authenticity in South Africa.” *Critical Arts* 25 (2): 175–191.
- Bevernage, B. 2008. “Time, Presence, and Historical Injustice.” *History and Theory* 47 (2): 149–167.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2010. “Writing The Past Out of the Present: History and the Politics of Time in Transitional Justice.” *History Workshop Journal* 69 (1): 111–131.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014. “Transitional Justice and Historiography: Challenges, Dilemmas and Possibilities.” *Macquarie Law Journal* 13 (7): 7–24.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2016. “Tales of Pastness and Contemporaneity: On the Politics of Time in History and Anthropology.” *Rethinking History* 20 (3): 352–374.
- \_\_\_\_\_. et al. 2019. “Philosophy of History After 1945: A Bibliometric Study.” *History and Theory* 58 (3): 406–436.
- Bickford-Smith, V. 2012. “Providing Local Color?: ‘Cape Coloreds,’ ‘Cockneys,’ and Cape Town’s Identity from the Late Nineteenth Century to the 1970s.” *Journal of Urban History* 38 (1): 133–151.
- Biko, S. 2005 [1978]. *I Write What I Like: A Selection of His Writings*. Cambridge: ProQuest.
- Bluteau, J. M. 2019. “Legitimising Digital Anthropology through Immersive Cohabitation: Becoming an Observing Participant in a Blended Digital Landscape.” *Ethnography* (online first): 1–19.
- Bobel, C. 2007. “‘I’m Not an Activist, Though I’ve Done a Lot of It’: Doing Activism, Being Activist and the ‘Perfect Standard’ in a Contemporary Movement.” *Social Movement Studies* 6 (2): 147–159.
- Bodunrin, I. 2018. *A Decolonial Interpretation of Indigeneity, Citizenship and Identity of the !Xun and Khwe San Youth of South Africa*. PhD dissertation, University of Johannesburg.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019. “Hip-Hop and Decolonized Practices of Language Digitization among the Contemporary !Xun and Khwe Indigenous Youth of South Africa.” *Critical Arts* 33 (4–5): 174–190.
- Boezak, W. 2001. “Khoisan Geloof!” In *National Khoisan Consultative Conference Oudtshoorn: 29 March to 1 April 2001*, edited by Institute for Historical Research, 1–11. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2017a. “Die gewonde God: ’n Teologies-etiese besinning, veral vanuit Khoisan-perspektief.” *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 73 (4): 1–12.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2017b. *Struggle of an Ancient Faith: The Khoi-San of South Africa*. Cape Town: Bidvest Data.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019. *Griqua Hero: The Remarkable Life of A.A.S. Le Fleur I*. Cape Town: Bidvest Data.
- Boisen, C. 2017. "From Land Dispossession to Land Restitution: European Land Rights in South Africa." *Settler Colonial Studies* 7 (3): 321–339.
- Boonzaaier, C., and H. Wels. 2018. "Authenticity Lost? The Significance of Cultural Villages in the Conservation of Heritage in South Africa." *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 13 (2). Routledge: 181–193.
- Borofsky, R. (editor). 2000. *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation to Remake History*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Brantlinger, P. 2014. *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800–1930*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Bredenkamp, H. C. 1979a. "Khoikhoi-Hollander-Kontak Buite Die Kaapse Skiereiland Tussen 1662 En 1679." *Kronos* 1: 1–26.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1979b. *Khoikhoi-Euro-Interaksie Aan Die Kaap 1662-1679. 'n Historiese Ondersoek*. MA dissertation, Bellville: University of the Western Cape.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1980. "Die Grondtransaksies van 1672 Tussen Die Hollanders En Die Skiereilandse Khoikhoi." *Kronos* 2: 1–10.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1981. "Die Lewe van 'n Khoikhoi-Kaptein Dorha Alias Klaas 1669-1701." *Kronos* 4: 10–23.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1982. *Van veeverskaffers tot veewagters: 'n historiese ondersoek na betrekkinge tussen die Khoikhoi en Europeërs aan die Kaap, 1662-1679*. Bellville: Wes Kaaplandse Instituut vir Historiese Navorsing.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and S. Newton-King. 1984. *The Subjugation of the Khoisan During the 17th and 18th Centuries*. Bellville: University of the Western Cape.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1987. "'Tot Afschrikt van Andre': Die V.O.C.-Regstelsel En Geweld Ten Opsigte van Die Khoisan Aan Die Kaap, 1677-1705." *Kronos* 12: 8–32.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1988. "George Schmidt Se Posing Tot Transformasie van 'n Overbergse Khoikhoi-Gemeenskap, 1737-1743." *Kronos* 14: 20–31.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1991. "Die Khoisan En Vakterminologie Na The Oxford History of South Africa: 'n Historiografiese Dilemma." *South African Historical Journal* 25 (1): 61–71.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (editor). 1992. *Afrikaanse Geskiedskrywing En Letterkunde: Verlede, Hede En Toekoms*. Bellville: Instituut vir Historiese Navorsing (UWC).
- \_\_\_\_\_. and N. Olivier. 2000. *Khoisan Communities in South Africa. Background, International Context, Constitutional Framework and Proposals on Accommodation*.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "Khoisan Revivalism and the Indigenous Peoples Issue in Post-Apartheid South Africa." In *Africa's Indigenous Peoples: "First Peoples" or "Marginalised Minorities"?*, edited by A. Barnard and J. Kenrick, 191–210. Edinburgh: Centre of African Studies.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015. *My Story of the Khoisan Peoples Story of Frustration in Democratic SA (Submission: The HRCSA Hearing, Goodwood: 9&10 December 2015)*.
- Bregin, E. 2001. "Miscast: Bushmen in the Twentieth Century." *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa* 13 (1): 87–107.

- Brink, G. 2000. *A Research Paper. A historical analysis of the constitutional development of the groups within the cape cultural heritage development organisation*. Pretoria: Department of Constitution Development.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "Kultuur van Die Khoisan." In *National Khoisan Consultative Conference Oudtshoorn: 29 March to 1 April 2001*, edited by Institute for Historical Research, 12–16. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003. "Archbishop Daniel James Augustine Kanyiles, a Khoi Religious, Political and Cultural Leader." *Dutch Reformed Theological Journal = Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif* 44 (1–2): 6–19.
- Brinkman, I., and M. Luyckfasseel. 2020. "History as Hidden Truth: Imagining the Kongo Past on Religious Websites." *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 32 (1): 7–23.
- Brodwin, P. 2002. "Genetics, Identity, and the Anthropology of Essentialism." *Anthropological Quarterly* 75 (2): 323–330.
- Brown, D. 2001. "National Belonging and Cultural Difference: South Africa and the Global Imaginary." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27 (4): 757–769.
- Brown, J., and A. Deumert. 2017. "'My Tribe Is the Hessequa. I'm Khoisan. I'm African': Language, Desire and Performance among Cape Town's Khoisan Language Activists." *Multilingua* 36 (5): 571–594.
- Brubaker, R. 2004. *Ethnicity Without Groups*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and F. Cooper. 2000. "Beyond 'Identity.'" *Theory and Society* 29 (1): 1–47.
- Bucholtz, M. 2001. "Reflexivity and Critique in Discourse Analysis." *Critique of Anthropology* 21 (2): 165–183.
- Burgess, J. 2007. "In Dying I Became Me." In *Forum Conference Report 2007: Indigenous Peoples-Migration and Urbanisation*, edited by E. M. Jensen and B. Hatteng, 18–21. Tromsø: University of Tromsø.
- Busbridge, R. 2016. "Between Continuity and Change: Contemporary Indigenous Identities and Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand." *International Sociology* 31 (5): 515–524.
- Byrd, J. A., and M. Rothberg. 2011. "Between Subalternity and Indigeneity." *Interventions* 13 (1): 1–12.
- Callaway, E. 2017. "South Africa's San People Issue Ethics Code to Scientists." *Nature News* 543 (7646): 475.
- Callinicos, L. 1991. "Popularising History in a Changing South Africa." *South African Historical Journal* 25 (1): 22–37.
- Campbell, L. 2014. "Lifting history's 'veil of shame'." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/opinion/lifting-historys-veil-of-shame-1788819>.
- Canessa, A. 2008. "The Past Is Not Another Country: Exploring Indigenous Histories in Bolivia." *History and Anthropology* 19 (4): 353–369.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014. "Conflict, Claim and Contradiction in the New "Indigenous" State of Bolivia." *Critique of Anthropology* 34 (2): 153–173.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2018. "Indigenous Conflict in Bolivia Explored through an African Lens: Towards a Comparative Analysis of Indigeneity." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60 (2): 308–337.
- Carey, J., and B. Silverstein. 2020. "Thinking with and beyond Settler Colonial Studies: New Histories after the Postcolonial." *Postcolonial Studies* 23 (1): 1–20.
- Carlson, B. 2016. *The Politics of Identity: Who Counts as Aboriginal Today?* Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Carstens, W. A. M., and M. L. A. Le Cordeur. 2016. *Ons Kom Van Vêr: Bydraes Oor Bruin Afrikaanssprekendes Se Rol in Die Ontwikkeling Van Afrikaans*. Cape Town: Naledi.
- Carstens, W. P. 1966. *The Social Structure of a Cape Coloured Reserve: A Study of Racial Integration and Segregation in South Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Carter, T. F. 2018. "Disciplinary (Per)Mutations of Ethnography." *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 18 (6): 392–399.
- Carton, B., J. Laband, and J. Sithole. (editors). 2008. *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Cassel, S. H., and T. M. Maureira. 2017. "Performing Identity and Culture in Indigenous Tourism – a Study of Indigenous Communities in Québec, Canada." *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 15 (1): 1–14.
- Cavanagh, E. 2011. *The Griqua Past and the Limits of South African History, 1902–1994*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012. "Land Rights That Come with Cut-off Dates: A Comparative Reflection on Restitution, Aboriginal Title, and Historical Injustice." *South African Journal on Human Rights* 28 (3): 437–457.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. *Settler Colonialism and Land Rights in South Africa: Possession and Dispossession on the Orange River*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Césaire, A. 2000 [1950]. *Discourse on Colonialism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Chakrabarty, D. 2007. "History and the Politics of Recognition." In *Manifestos for History*, edited by S. Morgan, K. Jenkins, and A. Munslow, 77–87. New York: Routledge.
- Chan, T.M. 2004. "The Richtersveld Challenge: South Africa finally adopts Aboriginal Title." In *Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Southern Africa*, edited by R. Hitchcock and D. Vinding, 114–133. Copenhagen: IWGIA.
- Chatterjee, A. 2019. "Measuring Wealth Inequality in South Africa: An Agenda." *Development Southern Africa* 36 (6): 839–859.
- Chawane, M. 2012. "The Rastafari Movement in South Africa: Before and after Apartheid." *New Contree : A Journal of Historical and Human Sciences for Southern Africa* 65: 163–188.
- Chebanne, A. 2010. "The Khoisan in Botswana – Can Multicultural Discourses Redeem Them?" *Journal of Multicultural Discourses* 5 (2): 87–105.
- Chennels, R. and A. du Toit. 2004. "The Rights of Indigenous Peoples in South Africa." In *Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Southern Africa*, edited by R. Hitchcock and D. Vinding, 98–113. Copenhagen: IWGIA.
- Chetty, R. 2015. "Social Complexity of Drug Abuse, Gangsterism and Crime in Cape Flats' Schools, Western Cape." *Acta Criminologica: Southern African Journal of Criminology* 3: 54–65.

- Chhabra, D., R. Healy, and E. Sills. 2003. "Staged Authenticity and Heritage Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research* 30 (3): 702–719.
- Chirume, J. 2019. "Minister makes big promises about R280-million Baartman centre." *GroundUp*. <https://www.groundup.org.za/article/years-behind-schedule-Baartman-centre/>.
- Christopher, A. J. 2009. "Delineating the Nation: South African Censuses 1865–2007." *Political Geography* 28 (2): 101–109.
- Clark, A., and C. L. Peck. 2018. "Introduction. Historical Consciousness: Theory and Practice." In *Contemplating Historical Consciousness: Notes from the Field*, edited by A. Clark and C. L. Peck, 1–18. New York: Berghahn Books.
- \_\_\_\_\_, et al. 2018. "What Is History? Historiography Roundtable." *Rethinking History* 22 (4): 500–524.
- Classen, C., and W. Kansteiner. 2009. "Truth and Authenticity in Contemporary Historical Culture: An Introduction to Historical Representation and Historical Truth." *History and Theory* 48 (2): 1–4.
- Clifford, J. 1989. "The Others: Beyond the 'Salvage' Paradigm." *Third Text* 3 (6): 73–78.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003. *On the Edges of Anthropology: Interviews*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2004. "Looking Several Ways: Anthropology and Native Heritage in Alaska." *Current Anthropology* 45 (1): 5–30.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. *Returns: Becoming Indigenous in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Coburn, E. 2016. "Alternatives: Theorizing Colonialism and Indigenous Liberation: Contemporary Indigenous Scholarship from Lands Claimed by Canada." *Studies in Political Economy* 97 (3): 285–307.
- Coetzee, B. 2001. "Khoisan Identiteit." In *National Khoisan Consultative Conference Oudtshoorn: 29 March to 1 April 2001*, edited by Institute for Historical Research, 17–26. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019b. *Tears of the Praying Mantis. The Christian Church and the Conversion of the Khoikhoi to 'Coloured' Christian Identity*. Cape Town: Mbana Publishing and Printing.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019a. *The People's Poems: Poetry Revolution*. Cape Town: Mbana Publishing & Printing.
- Coetzee, C. 1998. "Krotoa Remembered: A Mother of Unity, a Mother of Sorrows?" In *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, edited by S. Nuttall and C. Coetzee, 112–119. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, E. 1988. "Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research* 15 (3): 371–386.
- Colvin, C. 2008. "Trauma." In *New South African Keywords*, edited by N. Sheperd and S. Robins, 223–234. Athens: Ohio State University Press.
- Comaroff, J. 2005. "The End of History, Again? Pursuing the Past in the Postcolony." In *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond*, edited by A. Loomba, et al., 125–144. Durham: Duke University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and J. L. Comaroff. 2001. "Naturing the Nation: Aliens, Apocalypse and the Postcolonial State." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27 (3): 627–651.

- \_\_\_\_\_. and J. L. Comaroff. 2003. "Ethnography on an Awkward Scale: Postcolonial Anthropology and the Violence of Abstraction." *Ethnography* 4 (2): 147–179.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and J. L. Comaroff. 2009. *Ethnicity, Inc.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Comaroff, J. L., and J. Comaroff. 1992. *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Confino, A. 2011. "History and Memory." In *The Oxford History of Historical Writing (Volume 5)*, edited by A. Schneider, D. Woolf, and I. Hesketh, 36–51. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Conklin, B. A. 1997. "Body Paint, Feathers, and VCRs: Aesthetics and Authenticity in Amazonian Activism." *American Ethnologist* 24 (4): 711–737.
- Cooke, L. 2016. "'North' in Contemporary Canadian National–Cultural Imaginaries: A Haunted Phantasm." *Settler Colonial Studies* 6 (3): 235–251.
- Cornwell, D. 2017. "Robert Durrant on the making of her new feature Krotoa." *ScreenAfrica*. <https://www.screenafrica.com/2017/06/15/film/film-content/roberta-durrant-on-the-making-of-her-new-feature-krotoa/>.
- Coulthard, G. S. 2014. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Cousins, T., and L. Reynolds. 2016. "Indexing the Human: From Classification to a Critical Politics of Transformation." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 39 (2): 110–115.
- Cowlshaw, G. 2012. "Culture and the Absurd: The Means and Meanings of Aboriginal Identity in the Time of Cultural Revivalism." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18 (2): 397–417.
- Cox, J. M. 2017. "The Source of a Movement: Making the Case for Social Media as an Informational Source Using Black Lives Matter." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40 (11): 1847–1854.
- Crais, C. 1991. "The Vacant Land: The Mythology of British Expansion in the Eastern Cape, South Africa." *Journal of Social History* 25 (2): 255–275.
- Cramer, C., D. Johnston, C. Oya and J. Sender. 2016. "Research Note: Mistakes, Crises, and Research Independence: The Perils of Fieldwork as a Form of Evidence." *African Affairs* 115 (458): 145–160.
- Crawhall, N. 1999. "Going to a Better Life: Perspectives on the Future of Language in Education for San and Khoe South Africans<sup>1</sup>." *International Journal of Educational Development* 19 (4–5): 323–335.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2000/2001*, edited by A. Molbech, 284–288. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2002. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2001/2002*, edited by D. Vinding, 419–424. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2002/2003*, edited by D. Vinding, 409–413. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2005*, edited by D. Vinding and S. Stidsen, 510–514. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.

- Cronje, J. 2013. "This land is our land, say occupiers." *Independent Online*. <http://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/this-land-is-our-land-say-occupiers-1.1533587#.VKGmoV4gA>.
- Cruywagen, D. 2019. "Coloureds are Africans: We are the indigenous people of South Africa." *Daily Maverick*. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2019-10-15-coloureds-are-africans-we-are-the-indigenous-people-of-south-africa/#gsc.tab=0>.
- Cruywagen, V. 2020. "CHRONICLE OF A DEATH FORETOLD: Slain Gangster Ernest Solomon's Warning: 'People Die Every Day Because of This Story of the Number.'" *Daily Maverick*. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-11-24-slain-gangster-ernest-solomons-warning-people-die-every-day-because-of-this-story-of-the-number/>.
- Culhane, D. 2005. "'Real' Indians and Others: Mixed-Blood Native Peoples and Indigenous Nationhood." *American Anthropologist* 107 (2): 296–297.
- Dano, Z. 2018. "Four Struggle icon names for Cape Town International Airport." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/four-struggle-icon-names-for-cape-town-international-airport-14486403>.
- Davies, C. A. 1999. *Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others*. London: Psychology Press.
- Davison, P. 2001. "Typecast: Representations of the Bushmen at the South African Museum." *Public Archaeology* 2 (1): 3–20.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and G. Klinghardt. 1997. "Museum Practice, Material Culture and the Politics of Identity." *African Studies* 56 (2): 181–194.
- De Groot, J. 2015. *Remaking History: The Past in Contemporary Historical Fictions*. London: Routledge.
- De Jongh, M. 2007. "Primordialist Paranoia, Essentialism and South African Realities: Participating and Observing across the 'Anthropological Divide.'" *Anthropology Southern Africa* 30 (3–4): 75–84.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012. *Roots and Routes: Karretjie People of the Great Karoo: The Marginalisation of a South African First People*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2016. *A Forgotten First People: The Southern Cape Hessequa*. San Francisco: Watermark Press.
- De la Cadena, M., and O. Starn. 2007. *Indigenous Experience Today*. New York: Berg.
- De Wet, P. 2006. "'Make Our Children Proud of the Heritage'. A Case Study of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities in SA with Specific Reference to the Emerging Khoe and San Indigenous Peoples in the Republic of South Africa." MA thesis, University of Tromsø.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and N. Crawhall. 2008. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2008*, edited by K. Wessendorf, 516–523. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2009. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2009*, edited by K. Wessendorf, 574–582. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2010a. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2010*, edited by C. Mikkelsen, 562–568. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2010b. *South Africa's Unfinished Business. The First Nation Indigenous KhoeSan Peoples*. Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011. "The KhoeSan Early Learning Center Pilot Project: Negotiating Power and Possibility in a South African Institute of Higher Learning." *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education* 5 (2): 100–111.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and J. Burgess. 2011. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2011*, edited by K. Wessendorf, 483–489. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2012*, edited by C. Mikkelsen, 503–508. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- De Wit, E., et al. 2010. "Genome-Wide Analysis of the Structure of the South African Coloured Population in the Western Cape." *Human Genetics* 128 (2): 145–153.
- Deacon, J. 1997. "'My Heart Stands in the Hill': Rock Engravings in the Northern Cape." *Kronos* 24 (November): 18–29.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "Report on workshop to discuss the DACST Khoisan Legacy Project, jointly organized by SAHRA and the UWC Institute for Historical Research at the McGregor Museum, Kimberley, 1-3, December 2000." In *National Khoisan Consultative Conference Oudtshoorn: 29 March to 1 April 2001*, edited by Institute for Historical Research, 49–54. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape.
- Dean, D. 2017. "Negotiating Accuracy and Authenticity in an Aboriginal King Lear." *Rethinking History* 21 (2): 255–273.
- Denning, G. 2007. "Performing Cross-Culturally." In *Manifestos for History*, edited by S. Morgan, K. Jenkins, and A. Munslow, 98–107. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Denzin, N. K., and Y. S. Lincoln. 2017. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Fifth edition. London: SAGE.
- Department of Arts and Culture. 2013a. *Final Report: The National Khoe and San Heritage Route - Site Catalogue*. Pretoria.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013b. *Final Report: The National Khoe and San Heritage Route - Recommendations*. Pretoria.
- Department of Constitutional Development. 1999. *Statement of the National Khoisan Forum*.
- Department of Land Affairs. 1997. *White Paper on South African Land Policy April 1997*. <http://www.ruraldevelopment.gov.za/legislation-and-policies/category/6-white-papers>.
- Department of Rural Development and Land Affairs (DRDLR). 2013a. "Regulatory Impact Assessment Report on the Feasibility of the Provision of Exceptions to the 1913 Cut-Off Date to Accommodate the Descendants of the Khoe and San, Heritage Sites and Historical Land Marks (Version 2.0)." Unpublished.
- Department of Traditional Affairs (DTA). 2019. Draft Report on the Human Rights Situation of the Khoi-San in South Africa - Responding to the 2016 South African Human Rights Commission Report. Pretoria.



- Desmore, A. 1937. "The Cape Coloured People To-Day: An Address Delivered to the League of Coloured Peoples, London." *Journal of the Royal African Society* 36 (144): 347–356.
- DeWalt, K.M., and B.R. DeWalt. 2011. *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. Plymouth: Rowman Altamira.
- Diop, C. A. 1991 [1981]. *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology*. Translated by Y. M. Ngemi. Brooklyn, N.Y: Lawrence Hill Books.
- Dodge, B. 2006. "Re-Imag(in)ing the Past." *Rethinking History* 10 (3): 345–367.
- Dooling, W. 2005. "The Origins and Aftermath of the Cape Colony's 'Hottentot Code' of 1809." *Kronos* 31(November): 50–61.
- Douglas, S. 1995. "The Human Isthmus: Dangerous Diluted Sewerage Poison." *Critical Arts* 9 (2): 65–75.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1997. "Reflections on State Intervention and the Schmidtsdrift Bushmen." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 15 (1): 45–66.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and J. Law. 1997. "Beating around the Bush(Man!): Reflections on 'Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan History and Material Culture.'" *Visual Anthropology* 10 (1): 85–108.
- Du Plessis, M. 2014. "A Brief Post-Conference Reflection." *Critical Arts* 28 (4): 745–746.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019. "The Khoisan Languages of Southern Africa: Facts, Theories and Confusions." *Critical Arts* 33 (4–5): 33–54.
- Dubow, S. 1994. "Ethnic Euphemisms and Racial Echoes." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 20 (3): 355–370.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1995. *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2007. "Thoughts on South Africa: Some Preliminary Ideas." In *History Making and Present Day Politics. The Meaning of Collective Memory in South Africa*, edited by H. E. Stolten, 51–72. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
- Dunton, C. 2015. "Sara Baartman and the Ethics of Representation." *Research in African Literatures* 46 (2): 32–51.
- Duval, M. 2019. "Khoisan for Kids." *Daily Voice*. [https://www.dailyvoice.co.za/news/khoisan-for-kids\\_30494747?fbclid=IwAR2xXJ27nYcbL0hUMWVCy6pAczZneIf0UhokuZLujmUQ5g3-\\_jo3xN9Z82I](https://www.dailyvoice.co.za/news/khoisan-for-kids_30494747?fbclid=IwAR2xXJ27nYcbL0hUMWVCy6pAczZneIf0UhokuZLujmUQ5g3-_jo3xN9Z82I).
- Eide, E. 2016. "Strategic Essentialism." In *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*, edited by N. Napels. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Elbourne, E. 2003. "'The Fact so Often Disputed by the Black Man': Khoekhoe Citizenship at the Cape in the Early to Mid Nineteenth Century." *Citizenship Studies* 7 (4): 379–400.
- Ellis, W. 2012. "Genealogies and Narratives of San Authenticities. The #Khomani San Land Claim in the Southern Kalahari." PhD dissertation, University of the Western Cape.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014. "Simulacral, Genealogical, Auratic and Representational Failure: Bushman Authenticity as Methodological Collapse." *Critical Arts* 28 (3): 493–520.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015. "Ons Is Boesmans: Commentary on the Naming of Bushmen in the Southern Kalahari." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 38 (1–2): 120–133.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019. "Situational Chiefs. Notes on Traditional Leadership amidst Calls for KhoiSan Recognition after 1994." In *Traditional Leaders in a Democracy: Resources, Respect and*

- Resistance*, edited by B. Mbongiseni and D. Skosana, 297–328. Oxford: African Books Collective.
- Elphick, R. 1972. *The Cape Khoi and the First Phase of South African Race Relations*. PhD dissertation, Yale University.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1977. *Kraal and Castle: Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1985. *Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and V.C. Malherbe. 1989. "The Khoisan to 1828." In *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840*, edited by R. Elphick and H. Giliomee, 3-65. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2008. "Hermann Giliomee and The Shaping of South African Society: Memories of a Collaboration." *South African Historical Journal* 60 (4): 553–561.
- Engelbrecht, M. 1998. "The Seduction and Denial of Khoisan Rights." In *The Proceedings of the Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference: Organised by the Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape, Held at the South African Museum, Cape Town, 12-16 July 1997*, edited by A. Bank, 32–33. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research.
- Erasmus, P. 2005. "The 'lost' South African Tribe – Rebirth of the Koranna in the Free State." *New Contree* 50 (November): 77–91.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2010. "'Vote for Real People': The Making of Griqua and Korana Identities in Heidedal." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 33 (1–2): 65–73.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012. "Old perceptions and new identities in Heidedal 'I am the names you call me and the names that are no longer known'." *African Identities* 10 (4): 391–406.
- Erasmus, Z., and E. Pieterse. 1999. "Conceptualising Coloured Identities in the Western Cape Province of South Africa." In *National Identity and Democracy in Africa*, edited by M. Palmberg, 167–187. Cape Town, Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, Human Sciences Research Council and Mayibuye Centre of the University of the Western Cape.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "Re-Imagining Coloured Identities in Post-Apartheid South Africa." In *Coloured by History, Shaped by Place: New Perspectives on Coloured Identities in Cape Town*, edited by Z. Erasmus, 13–28. Cape Town: Maroelana: Kwela Books.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. "Throwing the Genes: A Renewed Biological Imaginary of 'Race', Place and Identification." *Theoria* 60 (136): 38–53.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2017. *Race Otherwise: Forging A New Humanism For South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019. "Racialisation and the Afterlife of Colonial Divide and Rule: A Response to Avtar Brah." *Identities* 26 (4): 494–500.
- Escárcega, S. 2010. "Authenticating Strategic Essentialisms: The Politics of Indigenism at the United Nations." *Cultural Dynamics* 22 (1): 3–28.
- Etheridge, J. 2016. "Spirit of Krotoa Returned to the Castle of Good Hope." *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/spirit-of-krotoa-returned-to-the-castle-of-good-hope-20160819>.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019. "First Khoisan Praise-Singer at SONA Gets Tongues Wagging and Clicking." *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/news24/SouthAfrica/News/first-khoisan-praise-singer-at-sona-gets-tongues-wagging-and-clicking-20190620>.
- Eze, M. O. 2010. *The Politics of History in Contemporary Africa*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Falola, T. 2011. "African Historical Writing." In *The Oxford History of Historical Writing (Volume 5)*, edited by A. Schneider, D. Woolf and I. Hesketh, 399–421. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Falzetti, A. G. 2015. "Archival Absence: The Burden of History." *Settler Colonial Studies* 5 (2): 128–144.
- Fanon, F. 1994 [1959]. *A Dying Colonialism*. New York: Grove Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1994 [1964]. *Toward the African Revolution*. New York: Grove Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005 [1961]. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2008 [1952]. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Sidmouth: Pluto Press.
- Farred, G. 2000. "Better the Devil You Know? The Politics of Colouredness and Post-apartheid South African Elections in the Western Cape." *Souls* 2 (2): 50–64.
- Fassin, D., and R. Rechtman. 2009. *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry Into the Condition of Victimhood*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Fauvelle-Aymar, F. 2006. "The Reappearance of the Khoesan in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *IFAS Working Paper Series* 8: 125–139.
- February, S. 2016. "Khoisan Chiefs Unhappy over Bankie Honour." *Daily Voice*. <https://www.dailyvoice.co.za/news/khoisan-chiefs-unhappy-over-bankie-honour-5521590>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2018. "Organisations clash over airport rename." *Daily Voice*. <https://www.dailyvoice.co.za/news/organisations-clash-over-airport-rename-15340057>.
- Ferrus, D. 2006. *Ons komvandaan*. Kaapstad: Diana Ferrus Uitgewery.
- Field, S. 1998. "Ambiguous Belongings: Negotiating Hybridity in Cape Town, 1940s-1990s." *Kronos*, no. 25: 227–238.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "'I dream of our old house, you see there are things that can never go away': Memory, Restitution and Democracy." In *Lost Communities, Living Memories. Remembering Forced Removals in Cape Town*, edited by S. Field, 117–210. Claremont: David Philip Publishers.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006. "Beyond 'Healing': Trauma, Oral History and Regeneration." *Oral History* 34 (1): 31–42.
- Fielding, N. 2012. "Triangulation and Mixed Methods Designs: Data Integration With New Research Technologies." *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 6 (2): 124–136.
- Fischer, E. F. 1999. "Cultural Logic and Maya Identity: Rethinking Constructivism and Essentialism." *Current Anthropology* 40 (4): 473–500.
- Foner, E. 1995. "'We Must Forget the Past': History in the New South Africa." *South African Historical Journal* 32 (1): 163–176.
- Forte, J. R., P. Israel, and L. Witz. 2017. *Out of History: Re-Imagining South African Pasts*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

- Forte, M. C. 2005. *Ruins of Absence, Presence of Caribs: (Post)Colonial Representations of Aboriginality in Trinidad and Tobago*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006. "Introduction: The Dual Absences of Extinction and Marginality—What Difference Does an Indigenous Presence Make?" In *Indigenous Resurgence in the Contemporary Caribbean: Amerindian Survival and Revival*, edited by M. C. Forte, 1–17. Bern: Peter Lang.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. "Introduction: 'Who Is an Indian?' The Cultural Politics of a Bad Question." In *Who Is an Indian?: Race, Place, and the Politics of Indigeneity in the Americas*, edited by M. C. Forte, 3–51. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Francis, D., and E. Webster. 2019. "Poverty and Inequality in South Africa: Critical Reflections." *Development Southern Africa* 36 (6): 788–802.
- Francis, M. 2009. "Silencing the Past: Historical and Archaeological Colonisation of the Southern San in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 32 (3–4): 106–116.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2010. "The Crossing: The Invention of Tradition among San Descendants of the Drakensberg, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa." *African Identities* 8 (1): 41–54.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and S. Francis. 2010. "Representation and Misrepresentation: San Regional Advocacy and the Global Imagery." *Critical Arts* 24 (2): 210–227.
- Fraser, N. 1995. "From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a 'Post-Socialist' Age." *New Left Review* I (212): 68–93.
- Freund, W. M. 1972. "The Eastern Frontier of the Cape Colony during the Batavian Period (1803–1806)." *The Journal of African History* 13 (4): 631–645.
- Friedman, J. 1992. "The Past in the Future: History and the Politics of Identity." *American Anthropologist* 94 (4): 837–859.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2002. "From Roots to Routes: Tropes for Trippers." *Anthropological Theory* 2 (1): 21–36.
- Fukuyama, F. 2018. *Identity: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics of Resentment*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Furedi, F. 2004. *Therapy Culture: Cultivating Vulnerability in an Uncertain Age*. London: Routledge.
- Furlong, P. J. 2012. "Indigenous 'Africans' and Transnational 'Pan-Netherlanders': Past and Present in the 'Re-Construction' of Post-1994 Afrikaner Identity." *New Contree* 65 (December): 47–65.
- Gabie, S. 2014. *Khoisan ancestry and Coloured identity: A study of the Korana Royal House under Chief Josiah Kats*. MA thesis, University of the Witwatersrand.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2018. "An Analysis of Contemporary Claims to Culture, Heritage, Identity and Indigeneity Amongst Khoisan Groups in South Africa." In *The Strategic Repositioning of Arts, Culture and Heritage in the 21st Century*, edited by G. Mugovhani, O. Seda, and S. Mzo, 2–28. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Gagné, N. 2013. *Being Māori in the City: Indigenous Everyday Life in Auckland*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Garman, A. 2001. "Khoisan Revivalism - the Claims of Africa's First Indigenous Peoples: Racism and the Media." *Rhodes Journalism Review* 2001 (20): 41.

- Gausset, Q., J. Kenrick, and R. Gibb. 2011. "Indigeneity and Autochthony: A Couple of False Twins?" *Social Anthropology* 19 (2): 135–142.
- Geertz, C. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1988. *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Gentry, K., and L. Smith. 2019. "Critical Heritage Studies and the Legacies of the Late-Twentieth Century Heritage Canon." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 25 (11): 1148–1168.
- Geschiere, P. 2011. "Autochthony, Citizenship, and Exclusion - Paradoxes in the Politics of Belonging in Africa and Europe." *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 18 (1): 321–339.
- Giblin, J. D. 2014. "Post-Conflict Heritage: Symbolic Healing and Cultural Renewal." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20 (5): 500–518.
- Gibson, L. 2012. "Colonizing Bricks and Mortar: Indigenous Place-Making through Art Objects and Artifacts." *Postcolonial Studies* 15 (2): 203–219.
- Gibson, N. C. 2003. *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*. Cambridge: Polity.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and R. Beneduce. 2017. *Frantz Fanon, Psychiatry and Politics*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield International.
- Gilbert, J. 2007. "Historical Indigenous Peoples' Land Claims: A Comparative and International Approach to the Common Law Doctrine on Indigenous Title." *International & Comparative Law Quarterly* 56 (3): 583–611.
- Giliomee, H. 1995. "The Non-Racial Franchise and Afrikaner and Coloured Identities, 1910–1994." *African Affairs* 94 (375): 199–225.
- Gillan, K., and J. Pickerill. 2012. "The Difficult and Hopeful Ethics of Research on, and with, Social Movements." *Social Movement Studies* 11 (2): 133–143.
- Gilmour, R. 2006. *Grammars of Colonialism. Representing Languages in Colonial South Africa*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gilroy, P. 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Gordon, R. J. 1988. "Apartheid's Anthropologists: The Genealogy of Afrikaner Anthropology." *American Ethnologist* 15 (3): 535–553.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1992. *The Bushman Myth: The Making of a Namibian Underclass*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1995. "Saving the Last South African Bushman: A Spectacular Failure?" *Critical Arts* 9 (2): 28–48.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000. "The Life and Times of Sara Baartman: The Hottentot Venus." *American Anthropologist* 102 (3): 606–607.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014. "The Demise and Rise of the Coy San." *Africa Spectrum* 49 (2): 105–112.
- Gqola, P. D. 2010. *What Is Slavery to Me?: Postcolonial/Slave Memory In Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Graham, L. R., and H. G. Penny. 2014. "Performing Indigeneity: Emergent Identity, Self-Determination, and Sovereignty." In *Performing Indigeneity: Global Histories and*

- Contemporary Experiences*, edited by L. R. Graham and H. G. Penny, 1–31. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Grootbek, M. 2018. "What's in an airport name?" *Daily Voice*. <https://www.dailyvoice.co.za/opinion/current-affairs/munier-grootbek/whats-in-an-airport-name-15374977>.
- Grossberg, L. 1996. "On Postmodernism and Articulation: An Interview with Stuart Hall." In *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, edited by K.-H. Chen and D. Morley, 131–150. London; New York: Routledge.
- Grossman, M., and D. Cuthbert. 1998. "Resisting Aboriginalities." *Postcolonial Studies* 1 (1): 109–124.
- Guelke, L. 2003. "The Tragedy of Privatisation: Some Environmental Consequences of the Dutch Invasion of Khoikhoi South Africa." *South African Geographical Journal* 85 (2): 90–98.
- Guenther, M. 1980. "From 'Brutal Savages' to 'Harmless People': Notes on the Changing Western Image of the Bushmen." *Paideuma* 26: 123–140.
- Haacke, W. H. G., and E. Eiseb. 1999. *Khoekhoegowab-English/English-Khoekhoegowab*. Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan Publishers.
- Habib, A., and K. A. Bentley. 2008. *Racial Redress & Citizenship in South Africa*. Cape Town.
- Hale, H. E. 2004. "Explaining Ethnicity." *Comparative Political Studies* 37 (4): 458–485.
- Hall, S. 1990. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." In *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, edited by J. Rutherford, 222–237. London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Hamilton, C., B. K. Mbenga and Robert Ross. 2010. "The Production of Preindustrial South African History." In *The Cambridge History of South Africa (Volume 1)*, edited by C. Hamilton, B. K. Mbenga and R. Ross, 1–62. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2018. "The long southern African past. Enfolded time and the challenges of archive." In *Whose History Counts: Decolonising African Pre-Colonial Historiography*, edited by J. Bam, L. Ntsebeza, and A. Zinn, 91–116. Cape Town: AFRICAN SUN MeDIA.
- Hammersley, M. 2005. "Ethnography and discourse analysis: incompatible or complementary?" *Polifonia* 10 (10): 1–20.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and P. Atkinson. 2007. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. Third edition. Routledge.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2010. *Methodology: Who Needs It?* London: SAGE.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. *What's Wrong With Ethnography?* London, New York: Routledge.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019. "Ethnomethodological Criticism of Ethnography." *Qualitative Research* 19 (5): 578–593.
- Handler, R., and J. Linnekin. 1984. "Tradition, Genuine or Spurious." *The Journal of American Folklore* 97 (385): 273–290.
- Harkin, M. 2003. "Staged Encounters: Postmodern Tourism and Aboriginal People." *Ethnohistory* 50 (3): 575–585.
- Harvey, D. C. 2001. "Heritage Pasts and Heritage Presents: Temporality, Meaning and the Scope of Heritage Studies." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 7 (4): 319–338.
- Hattingh, J. L. 1988. "Geskietskrywing Deur Bruines." *Kronos* 13: 41–56.
- Hayem, J. 2017. "What Do We Call Post-Apartheid?" *Social Dynamics* 43 (3): 386–402.

- Hazan, H., and E. Hertzog. 2012. "Introduction: Towards a Nomadic Turn in Anthropology." In *Serendipity in Anthropological Research: The Nomadic Turn*, edited by H. Hazan and E. Hertzog, 1–11. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Heese, H. 1984. *Groep Sonder Grense: Die Rol En Status van Die Gemengde Bevolking Aan Die Kaap, 1652–1795*. Bellville: Institute for Historical Research.
- Hendricks, C. 2004. "The Burdens of the Past & the Challenges of the Present: Coloured Identity & the Rainbow Nation." In *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa*, edited by B. Berman, D. Eyoh, and W. Kymlicka, 113–128. Athens: Ohio University Press.
- Heywood, M. 2019. "The Traditional Khoisan Leadership Bill: President signs away rural people's rights." *Daily Maverick*. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-11-29-the-traditional-khoisan-leadership-bill-president-signs-away-rural-peoples-rights/>.
- Hill, R. S. 2012a. "Maori Urban Migration and the Assertion of Indigeneity in Aotearoa/New Zealand, 1945–1975." *Interventions* 14 (2): 256–278.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012b. "People, Land and the Struggle for Rangatiratanga/Autonomy in New Zealand." *Identities* 19 (1): 26–42.
- Hirsch, A. K. 2015. "Articulating Secession: Self-Determination, Decolonization and Stateless Independence amongst the Kanaka Maoli." *Social Identities* 21 (2): 102–116.
- Hlatshaneni, S. 2018. "Mngxitama, AfriForum at Odds over Khoi-San 'Being the First Nation.'" *The Citizen*. <https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/1905418/khoi-san-should-get-first-dibs-on-land/>.
- Hobsbawm, E., and T. Ranger. (editors). 1983. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hodes, R. 2017. "Questioning 'Fees Must Fall.'" *African Affairs* 116 (462): 140–150.
- Hodgson, D. L. 2010a. "Becoming Indigenous in Africa." *African Studies Review* 52 (3): 1–32.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2010b. "Review: Ronald Niezen, *The Rediscovered Self: Indigenous Identity and Cultural Justice*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 52 (3): 697–698.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011. *Being Maasai, becoming Indigenous. Postcolonial Politics in a Neoliberal World*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Hoernlé, A. W. 1925. "The Social Organization of the Nama Hottentots of Southwest Africa." *American Anthropologist* 27 (1): 1–24.
- Hoff, A. 1993. "Die tradisionele wereldbeskouing van die Khoekhoen." *South African Journal of Ethnology* 16 (1): 1–9.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1995. "Puberteitsrite van 'n Khoekhoemeisie." *South African Journal of Ethnology* 18 (1): 29–41.
- Holmes, C. E., and M. Loehwing. 2016. "Icons of the Old Regime: Challenging South African Public Memory Strategies in #RhodesMustFall." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 42 (6): 1207–1223.
- Hughes, K. R. 1978. "Kraal and Castle." *Social Dynamics* 4 (1): 65–68.
- Humphrey, M. 2005. "Reconciliation and the Therapeutic State." *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 26 (3): 203–220.

- Huyssen, A. 2000. "Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia." *Public Culture* 12 (1): 21–38.
- Ingold, T. 2017. "Anthropology Contra Ethnography." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 7 (1): 21–26.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019. "Art and Anthropology for a Sustainable World." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 25 (4): 659–675.
- Institute for Historical Research. (editor). 2001. *National Khoisan Consultative Conference Oudtshoorn: 29 March to 1 April 2001*. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape.
- IRASA. 2012. *The Cultural Genocide of the KhoiSan Nation*.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2017. *Critical Assessment of the National KS RG - NAREG*.
- Ives, S. 2017. *Steeped in Heritage: The Racial Politics of South African Rooibos Tea*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Jackson, S., and S. Robins. 1999. "Miscast: The Place of the Museum in Negotiating the Bushman Past and Present." *Critical Arts* 13 (1): 69–101.
- Jacobs, M. R., and D. M. Merolla. 2017. "Being Authentically American Indian: Symbolic Identity Construction and Social Structure among Urban New Indians." *Symbolic Interaction* 40 (1): 63–82.
- Jacobs, S., and Z. Levenson. 2018. "The Limits of Coloured Nationalism." *The M&G Online*. <https://mg.co.za/article/2018-06-13-00-the-limits-of-coloured-nationalism/>.
- Jacoby, K. 2013. "Indigenous Empires and Native Nations: Beyond History and Ethnohistory in Pekka Hämäläinen's the Comanche Empire." *History and Theory* 52 (1): 60–66.
- James, S. W. 2012. "Indigeneity and the Intercultural City." *Postcolonial Studies* 15 (2): 249–265.
- Jansen, L. 2013. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2013*, edited by C. Mikkelsen, 438–442. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2014*, edited by C. Mikkelsen, 482–487. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2016. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2016*, edited by C. Mikkelsen and D. Vinding, 455–459. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2017. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2017*, edited by K. Broch Hansen, K. Jepsen, and P. L. Jacquelin, 547–551. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2019*, edited by D. N. Berger, 543–550. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- Järvenpää, T. 2015. "The Voices of Azania from Cape Town. Rastafarian Reggae Music's Claim to Autochthonous African Belonging." *Etnomuskologian Vuosikirja* 27: 112–141.
- Jenkins, R. 2008. *Social Identity. Third Edition*. New York: Routledge.
- Jensen, S. 1999. "Discourses of Violence: Coping with Violence on the Cape Flats." *Social Dynamics* 25 (2): 75–97.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006. "Capetonian Back Streets: Territorializing Young Men." *Ethnography* 7 (3): 275–301.



- Jethro, D. 2017. "Of Ruins and Revival: Heritage Formation and Khoisan Indigenous Identity in Post-Apartheid South Africa." In *Handbook of Indigenous Religion(s)*, (Volume 15), edited by G. Johnson and S. E. Kraft, 349–365. Leiden: Brill.
- Jobling, M. A., R. Rasteiro, and J. H. Wetton. 2016. "In the Blood: The Myth and Reality of Genetic Markers of Identity." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 39 (2): 142–161.
- Johnson, D. 2007. "Representing the Cape 'Hottentots,' from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40 (4): 525–552.
- . 2011. *Imagining the Cape Colony: History, Literature, and the South African Nation: History, Literature, and the South African Nation*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Johnson, V. D. 2017. "Coloured South Africans: A Middleman Minority of Another Kind." *Social Identities* 23 (1): 4–28.
- Jolly, L. 2016. "A Failure of Imagination." *Independent Online*. <http://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/arts-portal/a-failure-of-imagination-2065139>.
- Jones, S. 2010. "Negotiating Authentic Objects and Authentic Selves: Beyond the Deconstruction of Authenticity." *Journal of Material Culture* 15 (2): 181–203.
- Jones, T., A. Mozaffari, and J. M. Jasper. 2017. "Heritage Contests: What Can We Learn from Social Movements?" *Heritage & Society* 10 (1): 1–25.
- Jordan, P. 2009. *Competition for design of Sarah Baartman centre of Remembrance*. <https://www.gov.za/p-jordan-competition-design-sarah-baartman-centre-remembrance>.
- Justesen, M. K., and C. Schulz-Herzenberg. 2018. "The Decline of the African National Congress in South Africa's 2016 Municipal Elections." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 44 (6): 1133–1151.
- Kamaldien, Y. 2018. "'Gatvol Capetonian' comes under fierce attack for independence call." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/weekend-argus/gatvol-capetonian-comes-under-fierce-attack-for-independence-call-15277270>.
- Kansteiner, W. 2002. "Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies." *History and Theory* 41 (2): 179–197.
- Kapferer, B. 2007. "Anthropology and the Dialectic of Enlightenment: A Discourse on the Definition and Ideals of a Threatened Discipline." *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 18 (1): 72–94.
- Kawulich, B. 2005. "Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method." *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 6 (2): 1–28.
- Keenan, S. 2014. "Moments of Decolonization: Indigenous Australia in the Here and Now." *Canadian Journal of Law & Society* 29 (2): 163–180.
- Keesing, R. M. 1989. "Creating the Past: Custom and Identity in the Contemporary Pacific." *The Contemporary Pacific* 1 (1/2): 19–42.
- . 1991. "Reply to Trask." *The Contemporary Pacific* 3 (1): 168–171.
- Kekana, C. 2017. "'I'm not a white colonialist' – Krotoa writer addresses criticism." *Times Live*. <https://www.timeslive.co.za/tshisa-live/tshisa-live/2017-08-15-im-not-a-white-colonialist-krotoa-writer-addresses-criticism/>.

- Kemp, G. 2017. "New Krotoa film reveals life of 'that' Khoi woman." *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/channel/Movies/News/new-krotoa-film-reveals-life-of-that-khoi-woman-20170806>.
- Kenrick, J., and J. Lewis. 2004. "Indigenous Peoples' Rights and the Politics of the Term 'Indigenous.'" *Anthropology Today* 20 (2): 4–9.
- Kepe, T., and R. Hall. 2018. "Land Redistribution in South Africa: Towards Decolonisation or Recolonisation?" *Politikon* 45 (1): 128–137.
- Keppler, V. 2018. "Malema Says Khoi-San Are the 'Original' South Africans." *The Citizen*. <https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/1938031/malema-says-khoi-san-are-the-original-south-africans/>.
- Khoisan, Z. 2001. *Jakaranda Time: An Investigator's View of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. Cape Town: Garib Communications.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015a. "Khoi, San leaders want say in new law." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/khoi-san-leaders-want-say-in-new-law-1871441>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015b. "Transcending history of shame to reclaim hope." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/weekend-argus/transcending-history-of-shame-to-reclaim-hope-1856070>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2018. *There are no more Words: a collection of poems*. Cape Town: Uhuru Design Studio PTY LTD.
- Khoza, L. M. 2019. "First Khoisan Praise Singer at SONA Labelled a Commman." *Eyewitness News*. <https://ewn.co.za/2019/06/21/outrage-over-first-khoisan-praise-singer-at-sona>.
- Kiewit, L. 2019. "Etzebeth vs SAHRC Soon at the High Court." *The M&G Online*. <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-10-14-springbok-lock-sues-sa-human-rights-commission/>.
- Kisin, E. 2013. "Unsettling the Contemporary: Critical Indigeneity and Resources in Art." *Settler Colonial Studies* 3 (2): 141–156.
- Klopper, S. 2011. "Whose Heritage?: The Politics of Cultural Ownership in Contemporary South Africa." *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art* 5 (1): 34–37.
- Knight, C. 2014. "Theories of Distributive Justice and Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Politikon* 41 (1): 23–38.
- Kok, A. 2015. "Foreword." In *Forgotten but not buried*, by A. Messelaar, iii–iv. Cape Town: s.l.: Mega Digital.
- Kolia, Z. 2016. "The Aporia of Indigeneity." *Interventions* 18 (4): 605–626.
- Kombuis, K. 2013. "Afrikaaps: The New Rebellion on the Block." *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/channel/Columnists/Koos-Kombuis/Afrikaaps-The-new-rebellion-on-the-block-20130131>.
- Koot, S. 2015. "White Namibians in Tourism and the Politics of Belonging through Bushmen." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 38 (1–2): 4–15.

- \_\_\_\_\_, and B. Büscher. 2019. "Giving Land (Back)? The Meaning of Land in the Indigenous Politics of the South Kalahari Bushmen Land Claim, South Africa." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 45 (2): 357–374.
- \_\_\_\_\_, R. Hitchcock, and C. Gressier. 2019. "Belonging, Indigeneity, Land and Nature in Southern Africa under Neoliberal Capitalism: An Overview." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 45 (2): 341–355.
- Kros, C. 2017. "Twenty Years of Heritage Studies – the Showbiz of History?" *Social Dynamics* 43 (3): 358–373.
- Krotz, K. 2013. "I love and hate Mitchell's Plain." *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/news24/Travel/MyTravels/I-love-and-hate-Mitchells-Plain-20131008>.
- Krzyżanowski, M. 2011. "Ethnography and Critical Discourse Analysis: Towards a Problem-Oriented Research Dialogue." *Critical Discourse Studies* 8 (4): 231–238.
- Kuper, A. 2003. "The Return of the Native." *Current Anthropology* 44 (3): 389–402.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006. "Discussion. The Concept of Indigeneity." *Social Anthropology* 14 (1): 21–22.
- Lambrechts, D. 2012. "The Impact of Organised Crime on State Social Control: Organised Criminal Groups and Local Governance on the Cape Flats, Cape Town, South Africa." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 38 (4): 787–807.
- Landau, P. 1999. "'Religion' and Christian Conversion in African History: A New Model." *Journal of Religious History* 23 (1): 8–30.
- Landman, C. 1996. "The Religious Krotoa (C1642-1674)." *Kronos* 23 (November): 22–35.
- Landsberg, A. 2015. *Engaging the Past: Mass Culture and the Production of Historical Knowledge*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Lane, P. 1996. "Breaking the Mould?: Exhibiting Khoisan in Southern African Museums." *Anthropology Today* 12 (5): 3–10.
- Langeveldt, W. 2001. "Herstel van Khoisan Grondregte En Ekonomiese Bemagtiging." In *National Khoisan Consultative Conference Oudtshoorn: 29 March to 1 April 2001*, edited by Institute for Historical Research, 70–81. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012. *Gister Is Geskiedenis. Môre Is 'n Raaisel? Vandag Is 'n Gawel Benut En Geniet! Van "Kleurling" Sielkunde Tot Inboorling Self-Beskikking!* s.l.: self-published.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2016. *THOSE WHO ARE FIRST WILL BE LAST AND THOSE WHO ARE LAST WILL BE FIRST! THE STORY AND HISTORY OF OUR PEOPLE. "BROW PEOPLE."* s.l.: Korana Kloof Heritage Publishers.
- Lattas, A. 1992. "Wiping the Blood Off Aboriginality: The Politics of Aboriginal Embodiment in Contemporary Intellectual Debate." *Oceania* 63 (2): 160–164.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1993. "Essentialism, Memory and Resistance: Aboriginality and the Politics of Authenticity." *Oceania* 63 (3): 240–267.
- Le Fleur, A., and L. Jansen. 2013. *The Khoisan in Contemporary South Africa. Challenges of Recognition as an Indigenous People*. Berlin: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

- Le Fleur, C. 2001. "Internationale Skakeling." In *National Khoisan Consultative Conference Oudtshoorn: 29 March to 1 April 2001*, edited by Institute for Historical Research, 82–87. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2018. *The National Khoi-San Council's Response to the Opening Speech of the President at the NHTL*.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019. "Foreword." In *Griqua Hero: The Remarkable Life of A.A.S. Le Fleur I*, by Willa Boezak, iv–vii. Cape Town: Bidvest Data.
- Lee, R. B. 1998. "Anthropology at the Crossroads: From the Age of Ethnography to the Age of World Systems." *Social Dynamics* 24 (1): 34–65.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and R. K. Hitchcock. 2001. "African Hunter-Gatherers: Survival, History and Politics of Identity." *The Center for African Area Studies, Kyoto University* 26: 257–280.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003. "Indigenous Rights and the Politics of Identity in Post-Apartheid Southern Africa." In *At the Risk of Being Heard. Identity, Indigenous Rights, and Postcolonial States*, edited by B. Dean and J. M. Levi, 80–111. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006. "Twenty-First Century Indigenism." *Anthropological Theory* 6 (4): 455–479.
- LeFevre, T. A. 2013. "Representation, Resistance and the Logics of Difference: Indigenous Culture as Political Resource in the Settler-State." *Settler Colonial Studies* 3 (2): 136–140.
- Legassick, M., and C. Rassool. 2000. *Skeletons in the Cupboard: South African Museums and the Trade in Human Remains, 1907-1917*. Cape Town, Kimberley: South African Museum.
- Lehmann, K. 2004. "Aboriginal Title, Indigenous Rights and the Right to Culture." *South African Journal on Human Rights* 20 (1): 86–118.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006. "To Define or Not to Define: The Definitional Debate Revisited." *American Indian Law Review* 31 (2): 509–529.
- Lewis, G. 1987. *Between the Wire and the Wall: A History of South African "Coloured" Politics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Li, T. M. 2000. "Articulating Indigenous Identity in Indonesia: Resource Politics and the Tribal Slot." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42 (1): 149–179.
- Lichterman, P. 2017. "Interpretive Reflexivity in Ethnography." *Ethnography* 18 (1): 35–45.
- Lindfors, B. 1996. "Hottentot, Bushman, Kaffir: Taxonomic Tendencies in Nineteenth-Century Racial Iconography." *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 5 (2): 1–28.
- Lindholm, C. 2013. "The Rise of Expressive Authenticity." *Anthropological Quarterly* 86 (2): 361–395.
- Linnekin, J. S. 1983. "Defining Tradition: Variations on the Hawaiian Identity." *American Ethnologist* 10 (2): 241–252.
- Linton, R., and A. I. Hallowell. 1943. "Nativistic Movements." *American Anthropologist* 45 (2): 230–240.
- Little, J. 1999. *Oral Intervention: Khoi-Khoi (Hottentot) (Coloured) Descendents Relationship to Land*.
- Liu, S.-T. 2014. "Reclaiming Cultural Identities under Settler Rule: Case Studies of the Hakkas and the Taiwanese Indigenous Peoples." *Settler Colonial Studies* 4 (1): 100–104.
- Low, C. H. 2007. "Different Histories of Buchu: Euro-American Appropriation of San and Khoekhoe Knowledge of Buchu Plants." *Environment and History* 13 (3): 333–361.

- Lowenthal, D. 1994. "Identity, Heritage, and History." In *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, edited by J. R. Gillis, 41–60. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1998. *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015. *The Past Is a Foreign Country - Revisited*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lubbe, H. J. 1983. *Review of Van Veeverskaffers tot Veewagters: 'n Historiese Ondersoek na betrekkinge tussen die Khoikhoi en Europeërs aan die Kaap, 1662-1679, IHN, Bellville, 1982, by H.C. Bredekamp. Kronos 7: 77–79.*
- Lumby, B. 2010. "Cyber-Indigeneity: Urban Indigenous Identity on Facebook." *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education* 39 (1): 68–75.
- MacCannell, D. 1973. "Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings." *American Journal of Sociology* 79 (3): 589–603.
- Maddison, S. 2013. "Indigenous Identity, 'Authenticity' and the Structural Violence of Settler Colonialism." *Identities* 20 (3): 288–303.
- Mafeje, A. 1971. "The Ideology of 'Tribalism.'" *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 9 (2): 253–261.
- Makinana, A. 2016. "First-nation status for Khoisan 'unsustainable'." *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/first-nation-status-for-khoisan-unsustainable-20161126>.
- Malherbe, V. C. 1979. "The Life and Times of Cupido Kakkerlak." *The Journal of African History* 20 (3): 365–378.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1990. *Krotoa, Called "Eva": A Woman Between*. Cape Town: Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town.
- Mama, S. 2011. "Hangberg plans on track – De Lille." *Independent Online*. <http://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/hangberg-plans-on-track-de-lille-1.1148128#.VL62oiusXuM>.
- Mamdani, M. 2001. "Beyond Settler and Native as Political Identities: Overcoming the Political Legacy of Colonialism." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 43 (4): 651–664.
- Marable, M., and J. Peniel. 2008. "Steve Biko and the International Context of Black Consciousness." In *Biko Lives! Contesting the Legacy of Steve Biko*, edited by A. Mngxitama, A. Alexander and N. Gibson, vii–x. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mare, A. 2017. "Tracing and Archiving 'Constructed' Data on Facebook Pages and Groups: Reflections on Fieldwork among Young Activists in Zimbabwe and South Africa." *Qualitative Research* 17 (6): 645–663.
- Maregele, B. 2017. "Cape Flats artists create modern twist to the life story of Krotoa." *GroundUp*. <https://www.groundup.org.za/article/cape-flats-artists-create-modern-twist-life-story-krotoa/>.
- Marks, S. 1972. "Khoisan Resistance to the Dutch in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." *The Journal of African History* 13 (1): 55–80.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1981. "'Bold, Thievish, and Not To Be Trusted': Racial Stereotypes in South Africa in Historical Perspective." *History Today* 31 (8): 15–21.

- Marrus, M. R. 2007. "Official Apologies and the Quest for Historical Justice." *Journal of Human Rights* 6 (1): 75–105.
- Marschall, S. 2005. "Gestures of Compensation: Post-Apartheid Monuments and Memorials." *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 55 (1): 78–95.
- Martin, C. 2015. "'Love letter to Cape Town' draws out the indigenous bloodheart of Tony Cedras, a CD Review." *Alljazzradio.co.za*. <http://www.alljazzradio.co.za/2015/10/03/love-letter-to-cape-town-draws-out-the-indigenous-bloodheart-of-tony-cedras-a-cd-review/>.
- Martin, R. 2014. *Eykamma's Story. Mapping the Systematic Dispossession of the Indigenous People (1652 – )*. Unpublished PowerPoint presentation, National Khoisan Dialogue in Kimberley, 10 April 2014.
- Matroos, J. 2017. "The creators of Krotoa on leading an all-women team in a male dominated industry." *Design Indaba*. <https://www.designindaba.com/articles/creative-work/creators-krotoa-leading-all-women-team-male-dominated-industry>.
- May, A. 2018. "UCT Renames Jameson Hall after 'Saartjie' Baartman." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/watch-uct-renames-jameson-hall-after-saartjie-baartman-18494104>.
- Maybury-Lewis, D. 2003. "From Elimination to an Uncertain Future: Changing Policies toward Indigenous Peoples." In *At the risk of being heard: Identity, Indigenous Rights, and Postcolonial States*, edited by J.M. Levi and B. Dean, 323–334. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Mbao, W. 2020. "The archive has been rigged — Wamuwi Mbao reviews Patric Tariq Mellet's *The Lie of 1652*, uncovering the debased half-truths installed as national narrative." *The Johannesburg Review of Books*. <https://johannesburgreviewofbooks.com/2020/11/19/the-archive-has-been-rigged-wamuwi-mbao-reviews-patric-tariq-mellets-the-lie-of-1652-uncovering-the-debased-half-truths-installed-as-national-narrative/>.
- Mbeki, T. 1996. *Statement of Deputy President TM Mbeki, on Behalf of the African National Congress on the Occasion of the Adoption by the Constitutional Assembly of the Republic of South Africa Constitution Bill 1996*. <http://www.mbeki.org/2016/06/06/statement-onbehalf-of-the-anc-on-the-occasion-of-the-adoption-by-the-constitutional-assembly-of-therepublic-of-south-africa-constitution-bill-1996-cape-town-19960508>.
- Mboti, N. 2012. "Research, Method and Position: What Are We Doing?" In *Cultural tourism and identity : rethinking indigeneity*, edited by K. Tomaselli, 53–70. Leiden, Boston: Brill.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. "Who Is (South) African? A Re-Reading of Thabo Mbeki's 'I Am an African' Speech in the Context of the Banned (Later Unbanned) Nando's 'Diversity' Television Commercial." *Communicatio* 39 (4): 449–465.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014. "To Exhibit or Be Exhibited: The Visual Art of Vetkat Regopstaan Boesman Kruiper." *Critical Arts* 28 (3): 472–492.
- McCain, N. 2016. "Heritage site at least." *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/local/peoples-post/heritage-site-at-last-20161101>.
- McDonald, J. 2016a. "Inclusive Histories for Inclusive Futures: Interactions and Entanglements Then and Now." *Yesterday and Today*, no. 15 (July): 66–83.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2016b. “‘We Do Not Know Who Painted Our Pictures’: Child Transfers and Cultural Genocide in the Destruction of Cape San Societies along the Cape Colony’s North-Eastern Frontier, c.1770–1830.” *Journal of Genocide Research* 18 (4): 519–538.
- Mceachern, C. 1998. “Mapping the Memories: Politics, Place and Identity in the District Six Museum, Cape Town.” *Social Identities* 4 (3): 499–521.
- McGee, J. L. 2008. “Indigenous Relations.” *Critical Interventions* 2 (3–4): 114–132.
- McGregor, J., and L. Schumaker. 2006. “Heritage in Southern Africa: Imagining and Marketing Public Culture and History.” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 32 (4): 649–665.
- McKaiser, E. 2015. “Don’t Tell Me Who I Am, Black Man.” *The Mail & Guardian*. <https://mg.co.za/article/2015-12-03-dont-tell-me-who-i-am-black-man/>.
- McNeill, F. G. 2016. “‘Original Venda Hustler’: Symbols, Generational Difference and the Construction of Ethnicity in Post-Apartheid South Africa.” *Anthropology Southern Africa* 39 (3): 187–203.
- Mdontswa, T. 2014. *Reversing the Legacy of the 1913 Natives’ Land Act – The codification of exceptions to the 1913 Natives Land Act Cut-off date*. Unpublished PowerPoint presentation, National Khoisan Dialogue in Kimberley, 10 April 2014.
- Mellet, P. T. 2010. *Lenses on Cape Identities: Exploring Roots in South Africa*. Cape Town: Dibanisa Publishing.
- Memmi, A. 2003 [1957]. *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. London: Earthscan.
- Merlan, F. 2009. “Indigeneity: Global and Local.” *Current Anthropology* 50 (3): 303–333.
- Meskell, L. 2011. *The Nature of Heritage: The New South Africa*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and C. Scheermeyer. 2008. “Heritage as Therapy: Set Pieces from the New South Africa.” *Journal of Material Culture* 13 (2): 153–173.
- Messelaar, A. 2015. *Forgotten but not buried*. Cape Town: s.l.: Mega Digital.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2018. *Griqua Cultures and Superstitions*. Cape Town: Mbana Designs and Printing.
- Messina, Ernest. 1995. “‘Kleurline Is Ook Swart’. Swartbewustheid in Die Wes-Kaap Tot 1977.” *Kronos* 22 (November): 115–140.
- Meyer, W. 2014a. “‘Coloureds Must Take Their Rightful Place.’” <https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/coloureds-must-take-their-rightful-place-1755820>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014b. “Peter Marais on Shades of Brown.” <https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/peter-marais-on-shades-of-brown-1719329>.
- Minty, Z. 2006. “Post-Apartheid Public Art in Cape Town: Symbolic Reparations and Public Space.” *Urban Studies* 43 (2): 421–440.
- Misztal, B. A. 2004. “The Sacralization of Memory.” *European Journal of Social Theory* 7 (1): 67–84.
- Mitchley, A. 2019. “Khoisan Will Continue to Camp Outside Union Buildings until Their Demands Are Met.” *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/hold-for-am-khoisan-will-continue-to-camp-outside-union-buildings-until-their-demands-are-met-20190119>.
- Mnguni. 1988 [1952]. *Three Hundred Years*. Core Readings. Cape Town: APDUSA.

- Mngxitama, A., A. Alexander and N. Gibson. 2008. "Biko Lives." In *Biko Lives! Contesting the Legacy of Steve Biko*, edited by A. Mngxitama, A. Alexander and N. Gibson, 1–20. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mogalakwe, M., and F. Nyamnjoh. 2017. "Botswana at 50: Democratic Deficit, Elite Corruption and Poverty in the Midst of Plenty." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 35 (1): 1–14.
- Montgomery, L. M. 2019. "Memories That Haunt: Layered Landscapes of Historical Trauma on the American Plains." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 25 (7): 736–749.
- Moran, S. 2009. *Representing Bushmen: South Africa and the Origin of Language*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.
- Morris, A. G. 1987. "The Reflection of the Collector: San and Khoi Skeletons in Museum Collections." *The South African Archaeological Bulletin* 42 (145): 12–22.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1997. "The Griqua and the Khoikhoi: Biology, Ethnicity and the Construction of Identity." *Kronos* 24 (November): 106–118.
- Morris, D. 2014. "Narrating Biesje Poort: Negotiating Absence of Storyline, Vagueness and Multivocality in the Representation of Southern Kalahari Rock Engravings." *Critical Arts* 28 (4): 648–669.
- Mosselson, A. 2010. "'There Is No Difference between Citizens and Non-Citizens Anymore': Violent Xenophobia, Citizenship and the Politics of Belonging in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 36 (3): 641–655.
- Motshabi, K., and S. Saugestad. (editors). 2004. *Research for Khoe and San Development International Conference, University of Botswana, 10–12 September 2003*. Gaborone; Tromsø: University of Botswana; University of Tromsø.
- Mposo, N. and Z. Dano. 2013. "'Matjieshuis' erected to honour Khoi past." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/matjieshuis-erected-to-honour-khoi-past-1546642#.VKGOOF4gA>.
- Musuva. 2010. *Peeping Through The Reeds: A Story About Living In Apartheid South Africa*. Milton Keynes: AuthorHouse.
- Muthien, Y. G., and M. M. Khosa. 1995. "'The Kingdom, the Volkstaat and the New South Africa': Drawing South Africa's New Regional Boundaries." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 21 (2): 303–322.
- Naidoo, S. 2019. "Khoisan 'king' has filed a court application to stop the elections." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/weekend-argus/news/khoisan-king-has-filed-a-court-application-to-stop-the-elections-20272378>.
- Ndletyana, M. 2012. "Changing Place Names in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Accounting for the Unevenness." *Social Dynamics* 38 (1): 87–103.
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. 2009. "Black Republican Tradition, Nativism and Populist Politics in South Africa." *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 68 (1): 53–86.
- Neate, P. 2004. *Where You're at: Notes from the Frontline of a Hip Hop Planet*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Nel, E. P. 2016. "Die Rieldans - van Wupperthal Tot Los Angeles!" In *Ons Kom Van Vêr: Bydraes Oor Bruin Afrikaanssprekendes Se Rol in Die Ontwikkeling Van Afrikaans*, edited by W. A. M. Carstens and Michael Lucien Arnaud Le Cordeur, 318–326. Cape Town: Naledi.



- Ngakaeaja, M. 1998. "A San Position: Research, the San and San Organisations." In *The Proceedings of the Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference: Organised by the Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape, Held at the South African Museum, Cape Town, 12-16 July 1997*, edited by A. Bank, 30-31. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research.
- Nicolson, G. 2012. "AfriForum Joins Khoisan in Land Rights Fight." *Daily Maverick*. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2012-02-22-afriforum-joins-khoisan-in-land-rights-fight/>.
- Nielsen, C. R. 2013. "Frantz Fanon and the Négritude Movement: How Strategic Essentialism Subverts Manichean Binaries." *Callaloo* 36 (2): 342-352.
- Nienaber, G.S. 1989. *Khoekhoense stamname; 'n voorlopige verkenning*. Pretoria: Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing (Academica).
- Niezen, R. 2003. *The Origins of Indigenism: Human Rights and the Politics of Identity*. Oakland: University of California Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005. "Digital Identity: The Construction of Virtual Selfhood in the Indigenous Peoples' Movement." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 47 (3): 532-551.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2009. *The Rediscovered Self: Indigenous Identity and Cultural Justice*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press.
- Nissen, C. 1990. *An Investigation into the Supposed Loss of the Khoikhoi Traditional Religious Heritage amongst Its Descendants, Namely the Coloured People with Specific References to the Question of Religiosity of the Khoikhoi and Their Disintegration*. MA Thesis, University of Cape Town.
- Nombembe, P. 2014. "Khoisan want kraal back." *Times Live*. <http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2014/05/29/khoisan-want-kraal-back>.
- Nora, P. 1989. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." *Representations* 26: 7-24.
- Ntloedibe, F. N. 2019. "Where Are Our Heroes and Ancestors? The Spectre of Steve Biko's Ideas in Rhodes Must Fall and the Transformation of South African Universities." *African Identities* 17 (1): 64-79.
- Ntsebeza, L. 2005. *Democracy Compromised: Chiefs And the Politics of the Land in South Africa*. Leiden: Brill Academic.
- Ntsewa, T. 2013. *Talk by adv. Tommy Ntsewa on work done by the DTA on Khoi-San during the Khoi-San Dialogue "Reversing the Legacy of the 1913 Natives Land Act*. [http://www.ruraldevelopment.gov.za/phocadownload/branch/presentations/2013/KhoiSan\\_15\\_160413/cogta\\_presentation\\_150413.pdf](http://www.ruraldevelopment.gov.za/phocadownload/branch/presentations/2013/KhoiSan_15_160413/cogta_presentation_150413.pdf).
- Nyseth, T., and P. Pedersen. 2014. "Urban Sámi Identities in Scandinavia: Hybridities, Ambivalences and Cultural Innovation." *Acta Borealia* 31 (2): 131-151.
- Oakley, R. 2006. "Collective Rural Identity in Steinkopf, a Communal Coloured Reserve, c.1926-1996." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 32 (3): 489-503.
- October, A. 2017. "Whose Krotoa is it anyway?" *Daily Maverick*. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2017-09-04-whose-krotoa-is-it-anyway/#gsc.tab=0>.

- Oevernes, S. 2002. "The Cape Khoekhoe: The Appearance of a People Presumed Dead." *Pula: Botswana Journal of African Studies* 16 (2): 172–175.
- Olifant, P. 2015. "Khoisan protesters break princess's bench." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/khoisan-protesters-break-princesss-bench-1920183>.
- Oomen, B. 2005. *Chiefs in South Africa: Law, Power & Culture in the Post-Apartheid Era*. Suffolk: James Currey Publishers.
- Ortner, S. B. 2006. *Anthropology and Social Theory: Culture, Power, and the Acting Subject*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Øvernes, S. 2019. *Street Khoisan: On Belonging, Recognition and Survival*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.
- Oxlund, B. 2016. "#EverythingMustFall: The Use of Social Media and Violent Protests in the Current Wave of Student Riots in South Africa." *Anthropology Now* 8 (2): 1–13.
- Pack, S. 2012. "What Is a Real Indian? The Interminable Debate of Cultural Authenticity." *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 8 (2): 176–188.
- Padayachee, K. 2016. "New land claims stopped." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/new-land-claims-stopped-2050899>.
- Palmié, S., and C. Stewart. 2019. "Introduction: The Varieties of Historical Experience." In *The Varieties of Historical Experience*, edited by S. Palmié and C. Stewart, 1–30. London, New York: Routledge.
- Paradies, Y. C. 2006. "Beyond Black and White: Essentialism, Hybridity and Indigeneity." *Journal of Sociology* 42 (4): 355–367.
- Paret, M. 2018. "Beyond Post-Apartheid Politics? Cleavages, Protest and Elections in South Africa." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 56 (3): 471–496.
- Parkington, J., and S. Hall. 2010. "The Appearance of Food Production in Southern Africa 1,000 to 2,000 Years Ago." In *The Cambridge History of South Africa (Volume 1)*, edited by C. Hamilton, B. K. Mbenga and R. Ross, 63–111. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_, D. Morris, and J. M. de Prada-Samper. 2019. "Elusive Identities: Karoo |Xam Descendants and the Square Kilometre Array." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 45 (4): 729–747.
- Parkinson, C. 2016b. "The First South Africans." *BBC News*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-africa-36522970>.
- Parkinson, J. 2016a. "The significance of Sarah Baartman." *BBC News*. <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35240987>.
- Pather, R. and G. Whittles. 2018. "'Gatvol' Capetonians stir up tensions." *Mail & Guardian*. <https://mg.co.za/article/2018-06-01-00-gatvol-capetonians-stir-up-tensions/>.
- Patton, P. 2005. "Historic Injustice and the Possibility of Supersession." *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 26 (3): 255–266.
- Pelican, M. 2009. "Complexities of Indigeneity and Autochthony: An African Example." *American Ethnologist* 36 (1): 52–65.
- Penn, N. 2003. "The British and the 'Bushmen': The Massacre of the Cape San, 1795 to 1828." *Journal of Genocide Research* 15 (2): 183–200.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005. *The Forgotten Frontier: Colonist and Khoisan on the Cape's Northern Frontier in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*. Cape Town: Double Storey.
- Perera, K. 2020. "The Interview as an Opportunity for Participant Reflexivity." *Qualitative Research* 20 (2): 143–159.
- Peters, E., and C. Andersen. 2014. "Introduction." In *Indigenous in the City: Contemporary Identities and Cultural Innovation*, edited by E. Peters and C. Andersen, 1–20. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Petrus, T., and W. Isaacs-Martin. 2012. "The Multiple Meanings of Coloured Identity in South Africa." *Africa Insight* 42 (1): 87–102.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. "Social (Re)Organisation and Identity in the 'Coloured' Street Gangs of South Africa." *Acta Criminologica: Southern African Journal of Criminology* 26 (1): 71–85.
- Philander, L. E. 2010. "An Emergent Ethnomedicine: Rastafari Bush Doctors in the Western Cape, South Africa." PhD dissertation, The University of Arizona.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011. "An Ethnobotany of Western Cape Rasta Bush Medicine." *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 138 (2): 578–594.
- \_\_\_\_\_, et al. 2014. "The Informal Trade of Medicinal Plants by Rastafari Bush Doctors in the Western Cape of South Africa." *Economic Botany* 68 (3): 303–315.
- Philander, R. 2017. "Khoisan activists condemn 'Krotoa' portrayal of history." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/khoisan-activists-condemn-krotoa-portrayal-of-history-10966422>.
- Phillips, A. 2010. "What's Wrong with Essentialism?" *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory* 11 (1): 47–60.
- Pihlainen, K. 2014. "On Historical Consciousness and Popular Pasts." *História Da Historiografia: International Journal of Theory and History of Historiography* 7 (15): 10–26.
- Pillay, S. 2004. "Where Do You Belong? Natives, Foreigners and Apartheid South Africa." *African Identities* 2 (2): 215–232.
- Pinnock, D. 2016. *Gang Town*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.
- Poole, R. 2008. "Memory, History and the Claims of the Past." *Memory Studies* 1 (2): 149–166.
- Posel, D. 2001. "Race as Common Sense: Racial Classification in Twentieth-Century South Africa." *African Studies Review* 44 (2): 87–114.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011. "The Apartheid Project, 1948–1970." In *The Cambridge History of South Africa (Volume 2)*, edited by R. Ross, A. K. Mager and B. Nasson, 319–368. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Postill, J., and S. Pink. 2012. "Social Media Ethnography: The Digital Researcher in a Messy Web." *Media International Australia* 145 (1): 123–134.
- Povinelli, E. A. 2002. *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Powell, C. H., and T. W. Bennett. 2005. "Restoring Land : The Claims of Aboriginal Title, Customary Law and the Right to Culture." *Stellenbosch Law Review = Stellenbosch Regstydskrif* 16 (3): 431–445.
- Prins, F.E. 1998. "Khoisan Heritage or Zulu Identity Markers: symbolising Rock-Art and Place in Asserting Social and Physical Boundaries among the Sithole." In *The Proceedings of the*

- Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference: Organised by the Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape, Held at the South African Museum, Cape Town, 12–16 July 1997*, edited by A. Bank, 112–117. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2009. “Secret San of the Drakensberg and Their Rock Art Legacy.” *Critical Arts* 23 (2): 190–208.
- Quintana-Murci, L., et al. 2010. “Strong Maternal Khoisan Contribution to the South African Coloured Population: A Case of Gender-Biased Admixture.” *The American Journal of Human Genetics* 86 (4): 611–620.
- Ramaphosa, C. 2019. *Address by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the Annual Opening of the National House of Traditional Leaders, Parliament, Cape Town*. <https://www.gov.za/speeches/president-cyril-ramaphosa-opening-national-house-traditional-leaders-19-feb-2019-0000>.
- Ramos, A. R. 2003. “Comment on Adam Kuper's “The Return of the Native”.” *Current Anthropology* 44 (3): 397–398.
- Rappaport, J., and M. M. Tavuzzi. 1998. *The Politics of Memory: Native Historical Interpretation in the Colombian Andes*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Rassool, C. 2000. “The Rise of Heritage and the Reconstruction of History in South Africa.” *Kronos* 26 (August): 1–21.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and P. Hayes. 2002. “Science and the spectacle: [Khanako’s South Africa, 1936–37.” In *Deep histories*, edited by W. Woodward, G. Minkley and P. Hayes, 117–161. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2009. “Ethnographic Elaborations, Indigenous Contestations, and the Cultural Politics of Imagining Community: A View from the District Six Museum in South Africa.” In *Contesting Knowledge. Museums and Indigenous Perspectives*, edited by S. Sleeper-Smith, 106–128. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015. “Re-Storing the Skeletons of Empire: Return, Reburial and Rehumanisation in Southern Africa.” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 41 (3): 653–670.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2019. “The Politics of Nonracialism in South Africa.” *Public Culture* 31 (2): 343–371.
- Raven-Hart, R. 1967. *Before Van Riebeeck: Callers at South Africa from 1488 to 1652*. Cape Town: C. Struik.
- Reid, J. 2013. “Indigenous Power in the Comanche Empire.” *History and Theory* 52 (1): 54–59.
- Richards, R. 2017. *Bastaards Or Humans: The Unspoken Heritage of Coloured People (Volume 1)*. Sunnysvale: Indaba Publishing.
- Riese, J. 2019. “What Is ‘Access’ in the Context of Qualitative Research?” *Qualitative Research* 19 (6): 669–684.
- Rifkin, M. 2017. *Beyond Settler Time: Temporal Sovereignty and Indigenous Self-Determination*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Rivoal, I., and N. B. Salazar. 2013. “Contemporary Ethnographic Practice and the Value of Serendipity.” *Social Anthropology* 21 (2): 178–185.
- Robins, S. 1996. “Anthropology and the Problems of Alterity and Location.” *Social Dynamics* 22 (2): 15–22.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 1997. "Transgressing the Borderlands of Tradition and Modernity: Identity, Cultural Hybridity and Land Struggles in Namaqualand (1980–94)." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 15 (1): 23–43.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000. "Land Struggles and the Politics and Ethics of Representing 'Bushman' Identity." *Kronos* 26 (August): 56–75.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "NGOs, 'Bushmen' and Double Vision: The #Khomani San Land Claim and the Cultural Politics of 'Community' and 'Development' in the Kalahari." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27 (4): 833–853.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003a. "Talking in Tongues: Consultants, Anthropologists, and Indigenous Peoples." *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice* 47 (1): 129–136.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003b. "Whose Modernity? Indigenous Modernities and Land Claims after Apartheid." *Development and Change* 34 (2): 265–286.
- Rockman, D. 2017. "An Open Letter to the Khoisan Activists from a Coloured." *Coloured South Africa*. <https://www.colouredsa.co.za/opinion/an-open-letter-to-the-khoisan-activists-from-a-coloured>.
- Rorty, R. 2000. "Is 'Cultural Recognition' a Useful Concept for Leftist Politics?" *Critical Horizons* 1 (1): 7–20.
- Rosaldo, Renato. 1989. "Imperialist Nostalgia." *Representations* 26 (Spring): 107–122.
- Rosenzweig, R., and D. Thelen. 1998. *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Ross, R. 1975. "The !Kora Wars on the Orange River, 1830–1880." *The Journal of African History* 16 (4): 561–576.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1976. *Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1979. "The Changing Legal Position of the Khoisan in the Cape Colony, 1652–1795." *African Perspectives*, 2: 67–87.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1997a. "'Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference' Organised by the Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape and Held at the South African Museum, Cape Town, 12 - 16 July 1997." *Kronos* 24 (November): 154–155.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1997b. "The Kat River Rebellion and Khoikhoi Nationalism: The Fate of an Ethnic Identification." *Kronos*, no. 24: 91–105.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2010. "Khoisan and Immigrants: The Emergence of Colonial Society in the Cape, 1500–1800." In *The Cambridge History of South Africa (Volume 1)*, edited by C. Hamilton, B. K. Mbenga, and R., 168–210. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2017. "Settler Colonialism in South Africa, 1652–1899." In *The Routledge Handbook of The History of Settler Colonialism*, edited by E. Cavanagh and L. Veracini, 187–200. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Rowse, T. 2009. "Official Statistics and the Contemporary Politics of Indigeneity." *Australian Journal of Political Science* 44 (2): 193–211.
- Ruben Richards Foundation (RRF). 2017. *Seminar Workbook. Community Conversations*.

- Ruhanen, L., and M. Whitford. 2019. "Cultural Heritage and Indigenous Tourism." *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 14 (3): 179–191.
- Ruiters, M. 2009. "Collaboration, assimilation and contestation: emerging constructions of coloured identity in post-apartheid South Africa." In *Burdened by Race. Coloured identities in Southern Africa*, edited by M. Adhikari, 104–133. Cape Town: UCT Press.
- Salo, E. 2003. "Negotiating Gender and Personhood in the New South Africa: Adolescent Women and Gangsters in Manenberg Township on the Cape Flats." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 6 (3): 345–365.
- Salzman, P. C. 2002. "On Reflexivity." *American Anthropologist* 104 (3): 805–811.
- Sampson, H. 2019. "'Fluid Fields' and the Dynamics of Risk in Social Research." *Qualitative Research* 19 (2): 131–147.
- Sato, C. 2018. "Khoisan Revivalism and Land Question in Post-Apartheid South Africa." In *Land Reform Revisited. Democracy, State Making and Agrarian Transformation in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, edited by F. Brandt and G. Mkodzongi, 134–155. Leiden, Boston: Brill.
- Saunders, C. 1986. "'Mnguni and 'Three Hundred Years' Revisited." *Kronos* 11: 74–81.
- Saxton, L. 2020. "A True Story: Defining Accuracy and Authenticity in Historical Fiction." *Rethinking History* 24 (2). Routledge: 127–144.
- Sayer, A. 1997. "Essentialism, Social Constructionism, and Beyond." *The Sociological Review* 45 (3): 453–487.
- Schiller, N. G., S. Reyna, and J. Eckert. 2016. "Positioning Theory: An Introduction." *Anthropological Theory* 16 (2–3): 133–145.
- Schlebusch, C. M. et al., 2016. "The Disappearing San of Southeastern Africa and Their Genetic Affinities." *Human Genetics* 135 (12): 1365–1373.
- Scholtz, P. L., H. C. Bredekamp, and H. F. Heese. 1981. *Race Relations at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652–1795: A Select Bibliography*. Boston: G. K. Hall.
- Schramm, K. 2016. "Casts, Bones and DNA: Interrogating the Relationship between Science and Postcolonial Indigeneity in Contemporary South Africa." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 39 (2): 131–144.
- Schuster, J. 2016. *Afrikaans on the Cape Flats: Performing Cultural Linguistic Identity in Afrikaaps*. MA Thesis, Stellenbosch University.
- Schuster, S. C., et al. 2010. "Complete Khoisan and Bantu Genomes from Southern Africa." *Nature* 463 (7283): 943–947.
- Schwab, G. 2010. *Haunting Legacies: Violent Histories and Transgenerational Trauma*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Schweitzer, E. 2015. *The Making of Griqua, Inc: Indigenous Struggles for Land and Autonomy in South Africa*. Münster: LIT Verlag.
- Scott, J. W. 1992. "Multiculturalism and the Politics of Identity." *October* 61: 12–19.
- Secorun, L. 2018. "South Africa's First Nations Have Been Forgotten." *Foreign Policy*. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/10/19/south-africas-first-nations-have-been-forgotten-apartheid-khoisan-indigenous-rights-land-reform/>.
- Seixas, P. editor. 2004. *Theorizing Historical Consciousness*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

- Settler, F. 2010. "Indigenous Authorities and the Post-colonial State: The Domestication of Indigeneity and African Nationalism in South Africa." *Social Dynamics* 36 (1): 52–64.
- Sharp, J. S. 1981. "The Roots and Development of Volkekunde in South Africa." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 8 (1): 16–36.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1988. "Ethnic Group and Nation: The Apartheid Vision in South Africa." In *South African Keywords: The Uses & Abuses of Political Concepts*, edited by E. Boonzaier and J. S. Sharp, 79–99. Cape Town: David Philip.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and E. Boonzaier. 1994. "Ethnic identity as performance: lessons from Namaqualand." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 20 (3): 405–416.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1997. "Beyond Expose Analysis: Hybridity, Social Memory and Identity Politics." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 15 (1): 7–21.
- Simone, A. 1994. "In the Mix: Remaking Coloured Identities." *Africa Insight* 24 (3): 161–173.
- Simpson, L. B. 2017. *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Simpson, T. 1997. *Indigenous Heritage and Self-Determination: The Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Copenhagen: IWGIA.
- Sissons, J. 2005. *First Peoples: Indigenous Cultures and Their Futures*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Skotnes, P. (editor). 1996. *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "'Civilised Off the Face of the Earth': Museum Display and the Silencing of the /Xam." *Poetics Today* 22 (2): 299–321.
- Slotkin, R. 2005. "Fiction for the Purposes of History." *Rethinking History* 9 (2–3): 221–236.
- Smith, A. 2013. "Voting and Indigenous Disappearance." *Settler Colonial Studies* 3 (3–4): 352–368.
- Smith, A. B. 1983. "The Hotnot Syndrome: Myth-making in South African School Textbooks." *Social Dynamics* 9 (2): 37–49.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1990. "The Origins and Demise of the Khoikhoi: The Debate." *South African Historical Journal* 23 (1): 3–14.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1993. "Different Facets of the Crystal: Early European Images of the Khoikhoi at the Cape, South Africa." *Goodwin Series* 7: 8–20.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1998. "Khoesaan Orthography." *The South African Archaeological Bulletin* 53 (167): 37–38.
- Smith, L. 2006. *Uses of Heritage*. London: Routledge.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and G. Campbell. 2017. "'Nostalgia for the Future': Memory, Nostalgia and the Politics of Class." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 23 (7): 612–627.
- \_\_\_\_\_, M. Wetherell, and G. Campbell. 2018. "Introduction: Affective Heritage Practices." In *Emotion, Affective Practices, and the Past in the Present*, edited by L. Smith, M. Wetherell, and G. Campbell, 1–22. New York: Routledge.
- Smith, L. T. 2012. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Second edition. London: Zed Books.
- Snape, D., and L. Spencer. 2003. "The foundations of Qualitative Research." In *Qualitative Research Practice*, edited by J. Ritchie and J. Lewis. London: SAGE: 1–23.

- Soguk, N. 2007. "Indigenous Peoples and Radical Futures in Global Politics." *New Political Science* 29 (1): 1–22.
- Solomon, A. 2014. "Response to Tomaselli's 'Researching the San, San/Ding the Research.'" *Critical Arts* 28 (4): 733–734.
- Solomon, R. 2019. "Xenophobic Violence and the Ambivalence of Citizenship in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Citizenship Studies* 23 (2): 156–171.
- Sonnekus, T. 2016. "Spectres of Afrikanerdom in Contemporary Commodity Culture: History, Memory, and Imagining the Self." *Social Dynamics* 42 (3): 462–480.
- Soudien, C. 2019. *The Cape Radicals. Intellectual and Political Thought of the New Era Fellowship, 1930s to 1960s*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC). 1999a. *Research Project on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999b. *South African Human Rights Commission 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Report December 1998 – December 1999*.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2018. *Report of the South African Human Rights Commission: National Hearing Relating to the Human Rights Situation of the Khoi-San in South Africa*.
- South African San Institute (SASI). 2017. *San Code of Research Ethics*.
- Southgate, B. 2003. *Postmodernism in History: Fear or Freedom?*. London: Routledge.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005. *What Is History For?*. London: Routledge.
- Sovereign State of Good Hope (SSOGH). s.d. *The Intention of The Sovereign State of Good Hope*. s.l.
- Spear, T. 2003. "Neo-Traditionalism and the Limits of Invention in British Colonial Africa." *The Journal of African History* 44 (1): 3–27.
- Spiegel, A. 2005. "From Exposé to Care: Preliminary Thoughts about Shifting the Ethical Concerns of South African Social Anthropology." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 28 (3–4): 133–141.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and H. Becker. 2015. "South Africa: Anthropology or Anthropologies?" *American Anthropologist* 117 (4): 754–760.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2020. "Sheep, Herbs and Blood on the Beach: Discrepant Representations of Ritual Acts for Essentialising and Reinforcing Difference in Contemporary South Africa." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 43 (2): 143–155.
- Spivak, G. 1988. "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography." In *Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics*, edited by R. Guha and G. Spivak, 197–221. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Statistics South Africa. 2012. *Census 2011: Metadata*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa.
- Stavenhagen, R. 2005. *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous People - Mission to South Africa*. United Nations.
- Stellmach, D. 2020. "The Field Is Ever Further: In Search of the Elusive Space of Fieldwork." *Ethnography* (online first).
- Stevens, G. 1998. "'Racialised' Discourses: Understanding Perceptions of Threat in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *South African Journal of Psychology* 28 (4): 204–214.



- Steyn, A. S. 2016. "Afrikaans, Inc.: The Afrikaans Culture Industry after Apartheid." *Social Dynamics* 42 (3): 481–503.
- Steyn, H. P. 1990. *Vanished Lifestyles of the Early Cape Khoi and San*. Pretoria: Maskew Miller Longman Pty.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1995. "Dilemma van Boesmangrondregte." *South African Journal of Ethnology* 18 (2): 77–83.
- Sturm, C. D. 2002. *Blood Politics: Race, Culture, and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Suttner, R. 2004. "The UDF Period and Its Meaning for Contemporary South Africa." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 30 (3): 691–702.
- Swingler, H. 2019. "Warm welcome for historic Khoekhoegowab language course." <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2019-06-14-warm-welcome-for-historic-khoekhoegowab-language-course>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2020. "UCT Launches Milestone Khoi and San Centre." <http://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2020-09-23-uct-launches-milestone-khoi-and-san-centre>.
- Sylvain, R. 2001. "Bushmen, Boers and Baasskap : Patriarchy and Paternalism on Afrikaner Farms in the Omaheke Region, Namibia." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27 (4): 717–737.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2002. "'Land, Water, and Truth': San Identity and Global Indigenism." *American Anthropologist* 104 (4): 1074–1085.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003a. "Between Rock Art and a Hard Place: Development and Display in the Kalahari." *Visual Anthropology Review* 19 (1–2): 141–148.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003b. "Class, Culture and Recognition: San Farm Workers and Indigenous Identities." *Anthropologica* 45 (1): 111–119.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005. "Disorderly Development: Globalization and the Idea of 'Culture' in the Kalahari." *American Ethnologist* 32 (3): 354–370.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014. "Essentialism and the Indigenous Politics of Recognition in Southern Africa." *American Anthropologist* 116 (2): 251–264.
- TallBear, Kim. 2013. "Genomic Articulations of Indigeneity." *Social Studies of Science* 43 (4): 509–533.
- Taylor, C. 1992. *The Ethics of Authenticity*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1994. "The Politics of Recognition." In *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, edited by A. Gutmann, 25–74. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Thomas, C. 2005. "Disaffection, Identity, Black Consciousness and a New Rector : An Exploratory Take on Student Activism at the University of the Western Cape 1966-1976." *South African Historical Journal* 54 (1): 72–90.
- Thomas, C. 2014. "Finding Voice, Vocabulary and Community. The UWC Student Movement 1972-1976." *Journal for Contemporary History* 39 (1): 19–37.
- Thompson, J. 2006. "Collective Responsibility for Historic Injustices." *Midwest Studies In Philosophy* 30 (1): 154–167.

- Tobias, P. 1956. "On the Survival of the Bushmen. With an Estimate of the Problem Facing Anthropologists." *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 26 (2): 174–186.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1998. "Myths and Misunderstandings about Khoisan Identities and Status." In *The Proceedings of the Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference: Organised by the Institute for Historical Research, University of the Western Cape, Held at the South African Museum, Cape Town, 12–16 July 1997*, edited by A. Bank, 19–29. Cape Town: Institute for Historical Research.
- Tomaselli, K. 2012a. "'Die Geld Is Op' - Storytelling, Business and Development Strategies." In *Cultural Tourism and Identity: Rethinking Indigeneity*, edited by K. Tomaselli, 1–16. Leiden, Boston: Brill.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012b. "Place, Representation and Myth." In *Cultural Tourism and Identity: Rethinking Indigeneity*, edited by K. Tomaselli, 109–118. Leiden, Boston: Brill.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012c. "Research Phases: What Have We Been Doing?" In *Cultural Tourism and Identity: Rethinking Indigeneity*, edited by K. Tomaselli, 29–52. Leiden, Boston: Brill.
- Trask, H.-K. 1991. "Natives and Anthropologists: The Colonial Struggle." *The Contemporary Pacific* 3 (1): 159–167.
- Trundle, C. 2018. "Uncomfortable Collaborations: The Ethics of Complicity, Collusion, and Detachment in Ethnographic Fieldwork." *Collaborative Anthropologies* 11 (1): 89–110.
- Tuck, E., and K. W. Yang. 2012. "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1 (1): 1–40.
- Twidle, H. 2013. "Writing the Company: From VOC Dagberegister to Sleigh's Eilande." *South African Historical Journal* 65 (1): 125–152.
- Ulrich, N. 2015. "Cape of Storms: Surveying and Rethinking Popular Resistance in the Eighteenth-Century Cape Colony." *New Contree* 73 (November): 16–39.
- Van der Ross, R. 2015. *In Our Own Skins: A Political History of the Coloured People*. Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers.
- Van der Waal, C. S. 2015. "Long Walk from Volkekunde to Anthropology: Reflections on Representing the Human in South Africa." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 38 (3–4): 216–234.
- Van Dieman, E. 2019. "UCT launches Khoekhoegowab course, plans to make it fourth language option." *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/news24/SouthAfrica/News/uct-launches-khoekhoegowab-course-plans-to-make-it-fourth-language-option-20190524>.
- Van Heerden, M. 2016. *Afrikaaps: A celebratory protest against the racialised hegemony of 'pure' Afrikaans*. MA thesis, Stellenbosch University.
- Van Kessel, I. 2000. *Beyond Our Wildest Dreams: The United Democratic Front and the Transformation of South Africa*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.
- Van Niekerk, G. 2017. "'Whitewashed': New Krotoa Movie is 'Insult to Heritage of Khoisan People'." *Huffington Post*. [https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2017/08/11/whitewashed-new-krotoa-movie-is-insult-to-heritage-of-khoisa\\_a\\_23074394/](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2017/08/11/whitewashed-new-krotoa-movie-is-insult-to-heritage-of-khoisa_a_23074394/).
- Van Wyk, B. 2014. "The Khoisan Indigenous Educational System and the Construction of Modern Khoisan Identities." In *Indigenous Concepts of Education: Toward Elevating Humanity for All Learners*, edited by B. van Wyk and D. Adeniji-Neill, 17–30. Palgrave Macmillan.

- Van Wyk, I. 2013a. "Beyond Ethical Imperatives in South African Anthropology: Morally Repugnant and Unlikeable Subjects." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 36 (1-2): 68-79.
- van Wyk, M. 2012. "[Re]Claiming the Riel as Khoisan Indigenous Cultural Knowledge." *Stud Tribes Tribals* 10 (1): 47-56.
- van Wyk, M. 2013b. "[Re]Vitalize Khoisan Art and Culture via a Community Outreach Initiative." *Stud Tribes Tribals* 11 (2): 145-151.
- Van Wyk-Smith, M. 1992. "'The Most Wretched of the Human Race': The Iconography of the Khoikhoi (Hottentots) 1500-1800." *History and Anthropology* 5 (3): 285-330.
- Van Zyl-Hermann, D. 2018. "Make Afrikaners Great Again! National Populism, Democracy and the New White Minority Politics in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41 (15): 2673-2692.
- Veracini, L. 2007. "Historylessness: Australia as a Settler Colonial Collective." *Postcolonial Studies* 10 (3): 271-285.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and R. Verbuyst. 2020. "South Africa's settler-colonial present: Khoisan revivalism and the question of indigeneity." *Social Dynamics* 46 (2): 259-276.
- Verbuyst, R. 2013. "History, historians and the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission." *New Contree* 66 (July): 1-26.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015. *Claiming Cape Town. Ethnographic interpretations of Khoisan activism and land claims*. MA thesis, Leiden University.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2016. "Claiming Cape Town: Towards a Symbolic Interpretation of Khoisan Activism and Land Claims." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 39 (2): 83-96.
- Vilette, F. 2018. "Cape Town International IS to be renamed." *Independent Online*. <https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/news/cape-town-international-airport-is-to-be-renamed-14468326>.
- Viljoen, R. 1996. "Khoisan Heritage and Identity." *South African Historical Journal* 35 (1): 140-145.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006. *Jan Paerl, a Khoikhoi in Cape Colonial Society, 1761-1851*. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo. 2013. "The Relative Native." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 3 (3): 473-502.
- Wa Thiong'o, N. 1986. *Decolonising the Mind*. London : Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.
- Wacquant, L. 2003. "Ethnografeast A Progress Report on the Practice and Promise of." *Ethnography* 4(1): 5-14.
- Waldman, L. 2007a. "Exploring the intersection of Racial Labels, Rainbow Citizenship and Citizens' Rights in Post-Apartheid South Africa." In *The Power of Labelling: How People Are Categorized and Why It Matters*, edited by J. Moncrieffe and R. Eyben, 160-176. London: Routledge.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2007b. *The Griqua Conundrum: Political and Socio-Cultural Identity in the Northern Cape, South Africa*. Oxford; New York: Peter Lang AG.
- Walker, C. 2000. "Relocating Restitution." *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 44: 1-16.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2008. *Landmarked: Land Claims and Land Restitution in South Africa*. Athens: Ohio State University Press.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014. "Critical Reflections on South Africa's 1913 Natives Land Act and Its Legacies: Introduction." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 40 (4): 655–665.
- Wallace, A. F. C. 1956. "Revitalization Movements." *American Anthropologist* 58 (2): 264–281.
- Walshe, P. 1988. "Coloured Politics of Apartheid." *The Journal of African History* 29 (2): 342–343.
- Watson, M. K. 2014. "Cities. Indigeneity and Belonging." In *Performing Indigeneity. Global Histories and Contemporary Experiences*, edited by L. R. Graham and H. G. Penny, 390–414. Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.
- Watt, E., and E. Kowal. 2019. "To Be or Not to Be Indigenous? Understanding the Rise of Australia's Indigenous Population since 1971." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 42 (16): 63–82.
- Weaver, J. 2005. "Indigenusness and Indigeneity." In *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, edited by H. Schwarz and S. Ray, 221–235. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Wells, J. C. 2017. "When the Past Transforms: A Case Study from a Western Cape Wine Farm." *South African Historical Journal* 69 (3): 345–360.
- Wessels, M. 2014. "San Representation: An Overview of the Field." *Critical Arts* 28 (3): 465–471.
- Western Cape Cultural Commission (WCCC). 2003. Annual report 2002–2003.
- Western Cape Legislative Khoisan Council (WCLKSC). 2018. *Formal Submission on the Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Bill (TKLB) to COGTA in the Western Cape Legislature, Cape Town on 8 May 2018 at 18:00*.
- Western, J. 2001. "Africa Is Coming to the Cape." *Geographical Review* 91 (4): 617–640.
- Whitaker, E. M., and P. Atkinson. 2019. "Authenticity and the Interview: A Positive Response to a Radical Critique." *Qualitative Research* 19 (6): 619–634.
- White, H. 1995. *In the Tradition of the Forefathers. Bushman Traditionality at Kagga Kamma: The politics and history of a Performative Identity*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- Wicomb, Z. 1998. "Shame and identity: the case of the coloured in South Africa." In *Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid and Democracy, 1970–1995*, edited by D. Atteridge and R. Jolly, 91–107. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wildschut, A. 2007. "South Africa." In *The Indigenous World 2007*, edited by S. Stidsen, 546–552. Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- Wilkinson, P. 2000. "City Profile: Cape Town." *Cities* 17 (3): 195–205.
- Williams, J. M. 2009. "Legislating 'Tradition' in South Africa." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35 (1): 191–209.
- Williams, Q. 2017. *Remix Multilingualism: Hip Hop, Ethnography and Performing Marginalized Voices*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Williams, P. 2015. "Hate speech is a crime – Equality Court rules in favour of domestic worker." *De Rebus* 45 (26).
- Wilmsen, E. N. 1989. *Land Filled with Flies: A Political Economy of the Kalahari*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_, S. Dubow, and J. Sharp. 1994. "Introduction: Ethnicity, Identity and Nationalism in Southern Africa." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 20 (3): 347–353.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1995. "First People?: Images and Imaginations in South African Iconography." *Critical Arts* 9 (2): 1–27.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2009. "The Structure of San Property Relations: Constitutional Issues and Interventionist Politics." *Anthropologica* 51 (1): 53–65.
- Wimmer, A. 2008. "The Making and Unmaking of Ethnic Boundaries: A Multilevel Process Theory." *American Journal of Sociology* 113 (4): 970–1022.
- Winkler, R. 2017. "Who Has Authority to Talk about Identity?" *The M&G Online*. <https://mg.co.za/article/2017-02-07-00-who-has-authority-to-talk-about-identity/>.
- Witz, L. 1993. "'n Fees Vir Die Oog': Looking In on the 1952 Jan van Riebeeck Tercentenary Festival Fair in Cape Town." *South African Historical Journal* 29 (1): 5–27.
- \_\_\_\_\_, G. Minkley and C. Rassool. 2017. *Unsettled History: Making South African Public Pasts*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Wolfe, P. 1999. *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event*. London: Cassell.
- Wolpe, H. 1995. "The Debate on University Transformation in South Africa: The Case of the University of the Western Cape." *Comparative Education* 31 (2): 275–292.
- Worden, N., E. Van Heyningen and V. Bickford-Smith. 1998. *Cape Town: The Making of a City: An Illustrated Social History*. Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2007. "New Approaches to VOC History in South Africa." *South African Historical Journal* 59 (1): 3–18.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2009. "The Changing Politics of Slave Heritage in the Western Cape, South Africa." *The Journal of African History* 50 (1): 23–40.
- Wright, J. 1996. "Sonqua, Bosjesmans, Bushmen, AbaThwa: Comments and Queries on Pre-Modern Identifications." *South African Historical Journal* 35 (1): 16–29.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and J. Weintraub. 2014. "The Problem with 'Bushman Studies.'" *Critical Arts* 28 (4): 735–736.
- Wynberg, R. 2017. "Making Sense of Access and Benefit Sharing in the Rooibos Industry: Towards a Holistic, Just and Sustainable Framing." *South African Journal of Botany* 110 (May): 39–51.
- Yarwood, J. 2006. "Deterritorialized Blackness: (Re)Making Coloured Identities among Youth in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Österreichische Zeitschrift Für Geschichtswissenschaften* 17 (4): 155–172.
- Ybema, S., and F. Kamsteeg. 2009. "Making the Familiar Strange: A Case for Disengaged Organizational Ethnography." In *Organizational Ethnography: Studying the Complexity of Everyday Life*, edited by S. Ybema et al., 101–119. Los Angeles; London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Young, I. M. 1997. "Unruly Categories: A Critique of Nancy Fraser's Dual Systems Theory." *New Left Review*, I (222): 147–160.
- Zenker, O. 2011. "Autochthony, Ethnicity, Indigeneity and Nationalism: Time-Honouring and State-Oriented Modes of Rooting Individual-Territory-Group Triads in a Globalizing World." *Critique of Anthropology* 31 (1): 63–81.
- Zuma, J. 2001. *Address by Deputy President Zuma to the opening ceremony of the National Khoisan Consultative Conference*.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012. *State of the Nation Address*. <https://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/2012-president-zuma-state-nation-address-09-february-2012>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015. *Address by President Jacob Zuma on the occasion of the annual official opening of the National House of Traditional Leaders*. <http://www.customcontested.co.za/action-alerts/zumas-real-2015-address-to-national-house-of-traditional-leaders/>.

## Social media sources and websites

### Facebook (accessed 20 March 2021)

- P. Mellet (21 June 2019). <https://www.facebook.com/melletpt/posts/10156456776417507>.
- P. Mellet (25 July 2018). <https://www.facebook.com/melletpt/posts/10155751561342507>.
- P. Marais (5 June 2018). <https://www.facebook.com/peter.marais.180/posts/2157160891186530>.
- T. Gradwell (6 June 2018). <https://www.facebook.com/tanyan.gradwell/posts/10215068718766870>.

### YouTube (accessed 20 March 2021)

- BoesmanProject. *The Good and the Bad - The Boesman Project*. 2013. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfmNBBqKxFw&ab\\_channel=BoesmanProject](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfmNBBqKxFw&ab_channel=BoesmanProject).
- eNCA. *Khoi community protesters disrupt Krotoa monument ceremony*. 2016. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FLW0Xm23-M&ab\\_channel=eNCA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FLW0Xm23-M&ab_channel=eNCA).
- Eyewitness News. *Khoisan group renames the Cape*. 2012. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1stIhiV5L0&ab\\_channel=EyewitnessNews](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1stIhiV5L0&ab_channel=EyewitnessNews).
- R. Rieger. *The Khoekhoe Saga*. 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7oX-BBtwN8>.
- SABC News. *Khoisan people aim to reclaim their heritage*. 2012. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjDlydJe6jw&ab\\_channel=SABC](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjDlydJe6jw&ab_channel=SABC).
- SABC News. *KhoiSan perform a cleansing ceremony at Castle of Good Hope*. 2015. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJfmMZm3sI0&ab\\_channel=SABCNews](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJfmMZm3sI0&ab_channel=SABCNews).
- SABC News. *Mapisa-Nqakula on unveiling a monument in honour of Krotoa*. 2016. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1bEKCeCjT0E&ab\\_channel=SABCNews](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1bEKCeCjT0E&ab_channel=SABCNews).

## Vimeo (Accessed 20 March 2021)

Penguin Films. *Krotoa*. 2013, Vimeo. <https://vimeo.com/65957411>.

## Websites

“!Khwa ttu – San Spirit Shared.” <https://www.khwattu.org/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“#SONA2019: This is what the Khoisan imbongi said.” *Independent Online* (2019) <https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/sona2019-this-is-what-the-khoisan-imbongi-said-27030378>, accessed 20 March 2019.

“#SONA2019: Twitter loves Khoisan imbongi, Zindzi gets goosebumps.” *Independent Online* (2019) <https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/sona2019-twitter-loves-khoisan-imbongi-zindzi-gets-goosebumps-26874640>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“1913 Native Land Act Centenary Workshop with parliamentary committees, MPLs & other stakeholders: day 1.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2013) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/15987/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“1913 Native Land Act Centenary Workshop with parliamentary committees, MPLs & other stakeholders: day 2.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2013) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/15990/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Background on the Western Cape Cultural Commission.” <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/general-publication/background-western-cape-cultural-commission>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Blaqpearl Foundation – our programmes.” <http://blaqpearlfoundation.org.za/our-programmes/>, accessed 25 June 2019.

“Blaqpearl Foundation.” <http://blaqpearlfoundation.org.za/about-us/>, accessed 25 June 2019.

“Bradley van Sitters Defends SONA Performance.” *SABC News* (2019) <http://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/bradley-van-sitters-defends-sona-performance/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Bushman’s Chilli Co.” <http://www.bushmanschilli.co.za/>, accessed 17 March 2021.

“Camissa People. Cape Slavery & Indigene Heritage.” <https://camissapeople.wordpress.com/about-2/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Cape Bush Doctors.” <http://www.cbd.org.za/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Cape Town footbridges to be named after SA legends.” *News24* (2015) <https://www.news24.com/news24/travel/cape-town-footbridges-to-be-named-after-sa-legends-20150626>, accessed 20 March 2021

“Chief Little takes on a big job.” *Mail & Guardian* (1997) <https://mg.co.za/article/1997-07-25-chief-little-takes-on-a-big-job/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Christian Nation International.” <https://www.christnationint.com/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Coloured origins book to be available in Western Cape schools.” *Independent Online* (2018) <https://www.iol.co.za/entertainment/books/coloured-origins-book-to-be-available-in-western-cape-schools-13762084>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“CRL Rights Commission.” <https://crlcommission.org.za/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“CT airport name must change to Krotoa - Icosa and EFF debate.” *CapeTalk* 567AM (2018) <http://www.capetalk.co.za/articles/306438/ct-airport-name-must-change-to-krotoa-icosa-and-eff-debate>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Faculty of The Humanities Home/Anthropology Home.” <https://www.ufs.ac.za/humanities/departments-and-divisions/anthropology-home>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Glen Snyman: South African accused of fraud for saying he's 'African'.” *BBC News* (2020) <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54531457>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Khoelife – About.” <http://khoelife.co.za/about/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Khoisan Gourmet.” <http://www.khoisantea.com/>, accessed 17 March 2021.

“Khoisan group ‘evicts’ ANC.” *Daily Voice* (2018) <https://www.dailyvoice.co.za/news/western-cape/khoisan-group-evicts-anc-16088094>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Khoisan Hand-harvested Sea Salt.” <https://khoisansalt.co.za/>, accessed 17 March 2021.

“Khoisan leaders in court for allegedly vandalising 'disgraceful' tribute bench.” *News24* (2015) <https://www.news24.com/News24/Khoisan-leaders-in-court-for-allegedly-vandalising-disgraceful-tribute-bench-20150925>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Khoi-San: Abolish the term ‘coloured’.” *News24* (2013) <https://www.news24.com/News24/Khoi-San-Abolish-the-term-coloured-20130524>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Khomani San Distance Themselves from Khoisan Sovereign State Call.” *SABC news* (2018) <http://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/khomani-san-distance-selves-khoisan-seceded-call/>, accessed 18 June 2019.



“Krotoa’s story still shakes us – emotionally battered by clash of cultures.” *Independent Online* (2019) <https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/arts-portal/krotoas-story-still-shakes-us-emotionally-battered-by-clash-of-cultures-18840563>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Local Government Elections: Deputy Minister's briefing; Departments Public Service & Administration, Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs Strategic Plans & Budgets 2011.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2011) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/12977/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Minister Nkwinti leads consultation on accommodation of the Khoi and San communities, heritage sites and historical landmarks to access land restitution.” *South African Government* (2014) <https://www.gov.za/minister-nkwinti-leads-consultation-accommodation-khoi-and-san-communities-heritage-sites-and>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Minister Zweli Mkhize invites public nominations for appointment of Commission of Khoi-San Matters.” *South African government* (2019) <https://www.gov.za/speeches/cogta-minister-calls-nominations-members-commission-khoi-san-matters-9-apr-2019-0000>, accessed 21 March 2021.

“‘Mr Malema, you have no authority over land’.” <https://www.news24.com/News24/mr-malema-you-have-no-authority-over-land-20160212>, accessed 18 March 2021.

“National House of Traditional Leaders Strategic Plan 2011–2013 briefing.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2011) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/12638/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Petition on Complaints about Land Claims on behalf of Western Cape Land Restitution group: update.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2010) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/11777/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Progress on the Sarah Baartmann Centre for Remembrance.” *South African Government* (2014) <https://www.gov.za/progress-sarah-baartmann-centre-remembrance>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Report of the Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform on study tour on the restitution of indigenous people’s land rights in Canada, dated 13 March 2019.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2019) <https://pmg.org.za/taled-committee-report/3725/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Same same but different: Moya Michael – Coloured Swan 1: Khoiswan.” [https://www.vooruit.be/en/agenda/656/Coloured Swans 1 amp 2/Moya Michael/](https://www.vooruit.be/en/agenda/656/Coloured%20Swans%201%20and%202/Moya%20Michael/), accessed 12 March 2021.

“San and Khoi claim benefits from rooibos.” *Mail & Guardian* (2019) <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-11-01-00-san-and-khoi-claim-benefits-from-rooibos/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Social cohesion & nation building; Mvezo Site & Nelson Mandela museum; Infrastructure / Legacy projects; Capital works project challenges: DAC & Public Works.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2016) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/23209/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“South Africa's Mbeki blasts ANC for becoming 'black party'.” <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-45638859>, accessed 18 March 2021.

“South Roots.” <http://www.southrootsint.com/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Sovereign State of Good Hope.” <http://www.ssogh.org/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“State of traditional affairs in South Africa: Department of Traditional Affairs briefing, with Deputy Minister.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2016) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/23711/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Stop calling us ‘coloured’ and denying us our diverse African identities.” *Mail & Guardian* (2018) <https://mg.co.za/article/2018-08-02-stop-calling-us-coloured-and-denying-us-our-diverse-african-identities/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“The Khoi and San people agree to work with government in restoring their land rights.” *South African government* (2013) <https://www.gov.za/khoi-and-san-people-agree-work-government-restoring-their-land-rights>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“The Saartjie Baartman Centre for Women and Children.” <http://www.saartjiebaartmancentre.org.za/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Bill [B23-2015]: public hearings Day 2.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2016) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/21974/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“UDF stalwart Joe Marks laid to rest.” *SABC news* (2011) <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/b520a88049347d5a9b89fb5254ee30e3/UDF-stalwart-Joe-Marks-laid-to-rest-20111126>, accessed 28 November 2018.

“Watch: People expected too much of me – Khoisan praise singer.” *News24* (2019) <https://www.news24.com/news24/SouthAfrica/News/watch-people-expected-too-much-of-me-khoisan-praise-singer-20190624>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport 2018/19 Annual Report.” *Parliamentary Monitoring Group* (2019) <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/29232/>, accessed 20 March 2021.

“Who is Dawid Stuurman, the man whose name will soon grace Port Elizabeth airport?” <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/eastern-cape/who-is-dawid-stuurman-the-man-whose-name-will-soon-grace-port-elizabeth-airport-7aa3b91c-b7f3-4f6a-bcbb-2b879dea3207>, accessed 18 March 2021.

## Legal sources

Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act 3 of 2019 (TKLA).

## Interviews

Aaron Messelaar, 06/10/2017.

Aaron Messelaar, 16/03/2018.

Amanda Lois Stone, 01/04/2017.

Amanda Lois Stone, 11/04/2018.

Basil Coetzee, 25/04/2018.

Basil Coetzee, 06/05/2018.

Basil Coetzee, 12/05/2018.

Basil Coetzee, 22/06/2018.

Basil Coetzee, 13/12/2018.

Bradley van Reenen, 11/05/2018.

Cecil Le Fleur, 10/07/2019.

Chantal Revell, 09/08/2017.

Chantal Revell, 10/12/2014.

Chantal Revell, 07/10/2014.

Chantal Revell, 25/11/2014.

Chantal Revell, 07/03/2018.

Chantal Revell, 26/06/2019.

Chantal Revell, 10/07/2019.

Chantal Revell, 19/08/2019.

Chris Nissen, 21/05/2018.

Calvyn Gilfellan, 29/09/2017.

Cornelius Kok, 02/09/2014.

Ernest Solomon, 29/06/2018.

Desmond Sampson, 22/06/2018.

Desray van Rensburg, 08/05/2018.

Garth Erasmus, 18/03/2018.

Garth Erasmus, 13/04/2018.

Garth Erasmus, 24/04/2018.

George Brink, 09/05/2018.

Gregg Fick, 16/08/2019.

Henry Bredekamp, 30/04/2018.

Henry Bredekamp, 21/05/2018.

Henry Bredekamp, 03/07/2018.

Henry Bredekamp, 10/07/2018.

Henry Bredekamp, 11/12/2018.

Henry Bredekamp, 18/12/2018.

Henry Bredekamp, 10/07/2019.

Henry Bredekamp, 02/08/2019.

Hillary Solomons, 10/10/2017.

Janette Deacon, 06/08/2019.

Johann Abrahams, 10/07/2019.

Joe Damons, 16/07/2018.

Jonathan Muller, 10/04/2018.

Joseph Little, 08/05/2018.

Joseph Little, 17/05/2018.

Jose van Rensburg, 09/10/2017.

Lucelle Campbell, 11/07/2018.

Mackie (Francisco MacKenzie), 08/01/2015.  
Mackie (Francisco MacKenzie), 02/07/2018.  
Mackie (Francisco MacKenzie), 04/07/2018.  
Mackie (Francisco MacKenzie), 05/07/2018 .  
Mackie (Francisco MacKenzie), 16/07/2018.

Nolan Berry, 18/12/2018.

Patrick Mellet, 16/03/2018.

Peter Marais, 02/07/2018.

Rochey Walters, 18/05/2018.

Rochey Walters, 05/12/2018.

Rudolf Rieger, 21/06/2018.

Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 14/10/2014.

Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 03/01/2015.

Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 05/01/2015.

Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 23/01/2015.

Tania Kleinhans-Cedras, 11/07/2018.

Tanyan Gradwell, 31/07/2019.

Vanessa Ludwig, 19/08/2019.

Willa Boezak, 03/05/2018.

William Langeveldt, 12/03/2018.

William Langeveldt, 27/03/2018.

Yvette Abrahams, 16/07/2019.

Zenzile Khoisan, 02/05/2018.

Zenzile Khoisan, 07/05/2018.

Zenzile Khoisan, 17/05/2018.

Zenzile Khoisan, 24/05/2018.

Zenzile Khoisan, 12/06/2018.

Zenzile Khoisan, 29/06/2018.

## **Eland Nuus (EN)**

2009a. 15/05-29/05 (Volume 6).  
2009b. 12/06-26/06 (Volume 8).  
2009c. 14/08-28/08 (Volume 12).  
2009d. 28/08-11/09 (Volume 13).  
2009e. 17/12 (Volume 20).

2012a. 08/03-21/03 (Volume 53).  
2012b. 19/04-02/05 (Volume 56).  
2012c. 31/05-13/06 (Volume 59).  
2012d. 28/06-11/07 (Volume 61).  
2012e. 06/09-19/09 (Volume 66).

## **Eerste Nasie Nuus (ENN)**

2013a. July (Volume 1).  
2013b. August (Volume 2).  
2013c. September (Volume 3).  
2013d. October (Volume 4).  
2013e. November (Volume 5).  
2013f. December (Volume 6).

2014a. January-February (Volume 7).  
2014b. February-March (Volume 8).  
2014c. March-April (Volume 9).  
2014d. May (Volume 10).  
2014e. June (Volume 11).  
2014f. July (Volume 12).  
2014g. August (Volume 13).  
2014h. September (Volume 14).  
2014i. October (Volume 15).  
2014j. November (Volume 16).  
2014k. December (Volume 17).

2015. December.

2016a. July.

2016b. November.

2017a. March.

2017b. August.

2017c. December.

2018. March-April.





