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Maps and Memory, Rights and Relationships

Articulations of Global Modernity and Local Dwelling in Delineating Land for Communal-Area Conservancies in North-West Namibia

Cartes et mémoire, droits et relations

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Articulations of Global Modernity and Local Dwelling in Delineating Land for Communal-Area Conservancies in North-West Namibia

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This paper is dedicated to memories of Nathan †Üina Taurob, Philippine †Hairo †Nowaxas and Andreas †Kharuxab.

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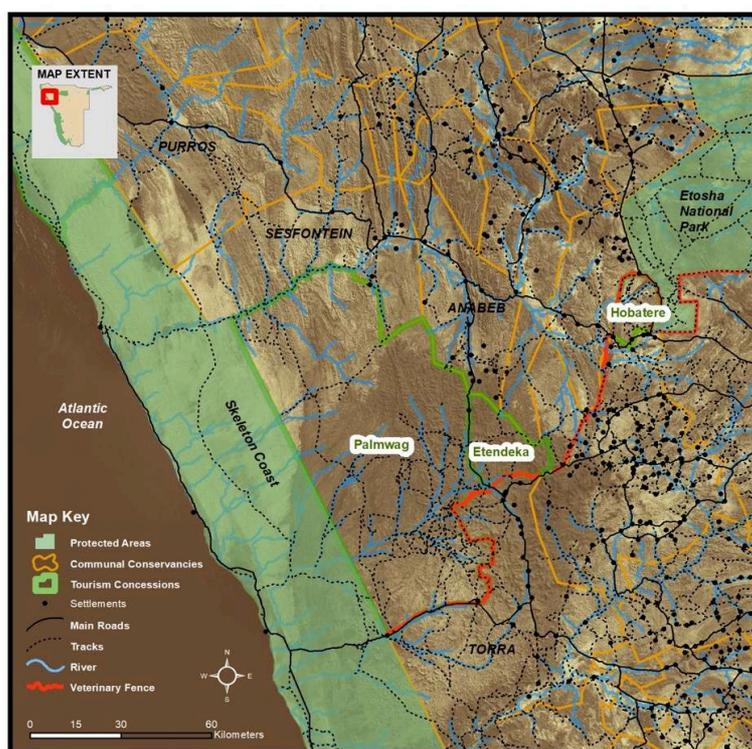
(Pre)ambling in north-west Namibia¹

Memory is always a collaboration in progress.

(POWERS, 2018, p. 404)

- 1 In the course of PhD field research in north-west Namibia in the mid-1990s, I met Nathan ǀŪina Taurob². ǀŪinab³ has since passed on. When I knew him, he was a materially impoverished man in his 70s – often sprightly and always dignified. He spoke of himself as a ǀNūkhoe person who was also ‘Purros Dama’. This meant that his *!hūs* or home area – the area in which he had grown up – was in the vicinity of present-day Purros village some 100kms north-west of the settlement of Sesfontein / !Nani|aus, where ǀŪinab lived in the years I knew him.
- 2 A decade previously, Purros had been the focus of an innovative ‘small pilot eco-tourism project’ with primarily ovaHimba pastoralists settled there in the 1980s (JACOBSON, 1995; DURBIN *et al.*, 1997)⁴, requiring ‘all tourists on Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) tours to pay a fee to the local community as caretakers of their natural resources, including land and wildlife’ (JACOBSON, 1998[1990], 55). In the 1990s the village was in the process of becoming the headquarters of a ‘communal area conservancy’ linked with Namibia’s emerging national Community-Based Natural Resources Management Programme (CBNRM) (TAYLOR, 2012, 42) (see Figure 1). Absent from this post-independence community-conservation focus on the settlement, however, was the complex association of Khoekhoegowab⁵-speaking peoples linked with this north-westerly area, traces of which are indicated by the many Khoe names on maps of the area: Hoanib, Hoarusib, Gomadom, Sechomib and Khumib for the westward flowing ephemeral rivers whose dense vegetation and subsurface water offer lifelines in this arid landscape; and Purros, Auses, Dumita, Gantias and Sarusa, for places where springs made it possible for people to live and access important food and forage plants in this dryland area.

Figure 1. Boundaries of current tourism concessions, surrounding communal area conservancies and state protected areas in southern Kunene Region, west Namibia

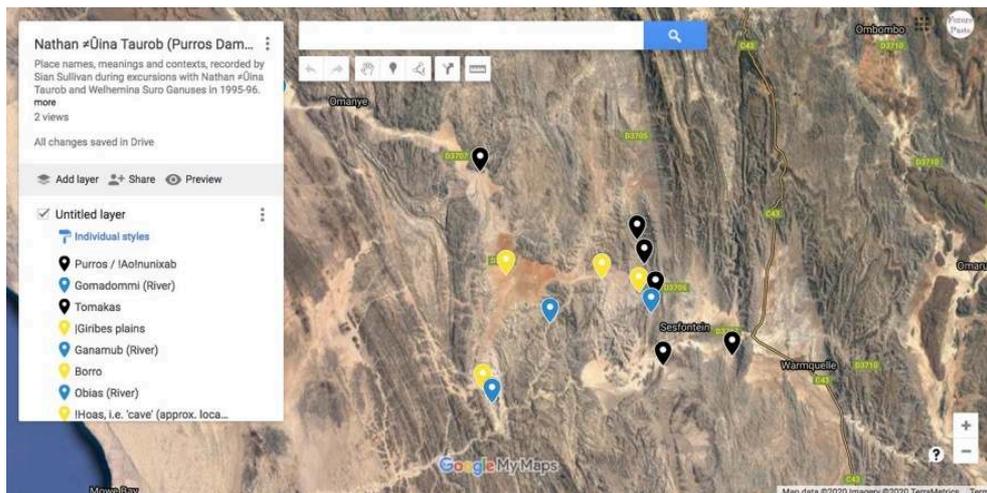


Source: Jeff Muntifering, 2 October 2019.

- 3 I was taken by †Ûinab on a number of trips into the *lgarob* – the ‘field’ – to locations where he and other members of his family harvested particular foods and had lived in times past. I remember a day in 1995 spent collecting honey (*danib*) from a hive near a place he called To-to to the north-west of Sesfontein – on the road to Gubikoti. Another day, after harvesting grass seeds from harvester ants nests (*†goburun oms*) in the | Giribes plains, he astonished me by walking several kilometres straight to a now disused honey hive in a lone *Sterculia africana* (*khoe hanu*) tree (for fuller description see SULLIVAN, 1999). The tree was located in a small valley in distant schist hills, seemingly indistinguishable from all the other valleys leading into the hills that surround the plains. †Ûinab had not been there for many years. For him this feat of orientation was clearly a normal part of being in what to me, and to the many tourists now encouraged to visit this area, was a wild and ‘ungraspable’ landscape. †Ûinab was the first person to introduce me to the greeting and offering practice known as *tsē-khom*, wherein known ancestors and anonymous spirits of the dead are spoken with to request safe and successful passage through areas in which their agency remains significant (SULLIVAN, 2017).
- 4 The remembered places encountered and recorded in 1995-96 with †Ûinab and added to through recent on-site oral history research are mapped on Figure 2, and can be viewed online with detailed information and images (where available) for each place. The combination of inscribed and embodied information comprising this ‘indigenous map’ (cf. CHAPIN *et al.*, 2005; EADES, 2012) provides some indication of the density of knowledge and of memory in relation to landscape for one person associated later in life with one living place (also see SULLIVAN, GANUSES, 2020, 2021). Detailed

descriptive place names (toponyms) speak of acute observation of biophysical characteristics of the landscape (cf. BASSO, 1984, 1996). Identification of people and events with particular places, tells of the remembered emplacement of defining moments in local history. Memories of places that have been home, communicate the loss of both pasts and futures that comes from being unexpectedly displaced through historical forces not of one's choosing (JEDLOWSKI, 2001; also ALBRECHT, 2007).

Figure 2. Screenshot of online map showing remembered places encountered and recorded in 1995-96 with Nathan ǀúina Taurob and added to through recent on-site oral history research.



<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/3/embed?mid=18xC97JUKuRJP6XVfobCIdbSc-IQDYZU>

- 5 The emotional force of this displacement began to dawn on me as ǀúinab showed me the exact location where his dwelling – his *oms* – had once stood at the settlement of ǀNū-larus to the north-west of Sesfontein (see Figure 3). Although not appearing on contemporary maps of the area, the settlement named ǀNū-larus is shown clearly on the ‘Traveller’s Map of Kaokoveld’ compiled from ‘tours’ in August – October 1917 and June – July 1919 by the first Resident Commissioner of Owamboland, Major Charles N. Manning, and deposited with the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) in London in 1921⁶. Travelling in the post-World War 1 moment in which events on the global stage conspired to transform Deutsch Südwestafrika into the League of Nations British Protectorate of South West Africa, Manning’s mission 100 years ago was to extend control by the emerging post-war state over native peoples and landscapes (HAYES, 2000; RIZZO, 2012). Manning has been described as having ‘fantasies of following in Francis Galton’s footsteps as an explorer and geographer’ (HAYES, 2012, x), implicitly representing himself

as the successor to a line of explorers and travellers [to the territory] such as Francis Galton and Charles John Andersson, inserting himself as it were in Galton’s wake as the geographer and cartographer of the remoter parts of Owambo and Kaoko. (HAYES, 2000, 50)

- 6 In terminology infused with the social mores of his class, race and sex in the early 20th century, Manning relates in a letter accompanying the copy of his Kaokoveld Map he sent to the RGS that:

[we were] assisted by the comparatively few wild native inhabitants (*viz* Herero Bantu type and Hottentot-Bushman Nama type) of the remoter parts who not only guided me and explained matters along many hitherto unknown mountain routes, –

frequently without even footpaths or the often useful elephant and other smooth game tracks through stones and bush, – but pointed out water in secluded kloofs and in beds of rivers which once flowed; abandoned settlements of previous generations, ... occasional rhinoceroses, elephants, giraffes and so forth which were very abundant before that greatest of all exterminators of the finest varieties of game viz the European's firearm.⁷

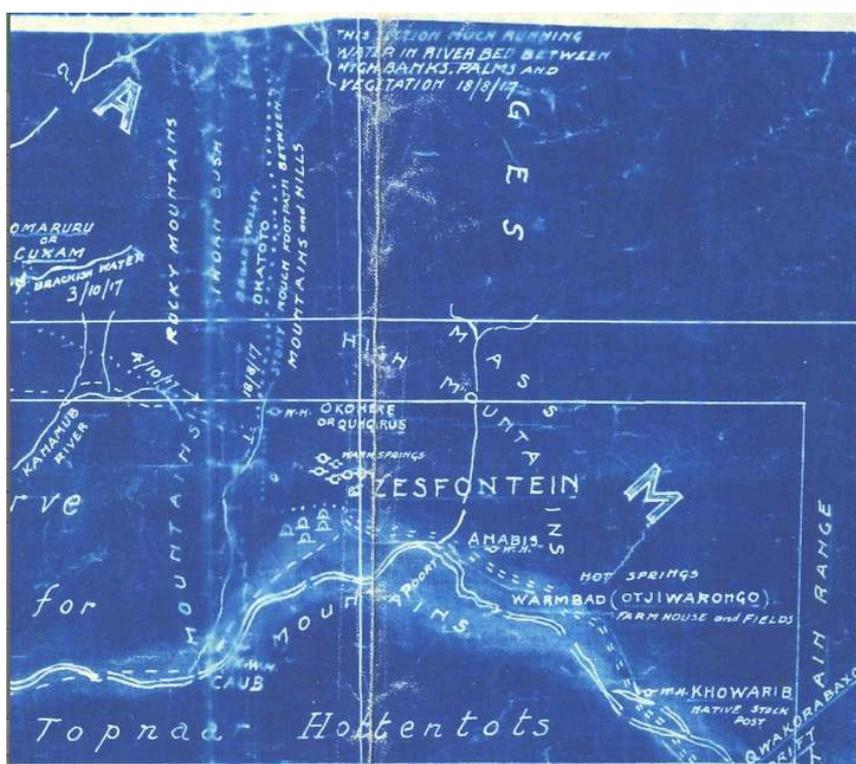
- 7 Although creating the most detailed map at the time of this north-western corner of the state now known as Namibia, the lands, natures and peoples documented in the reports, journals and map contributed by Manning continually exceeded and troubled his bureaucratic vision and intentions. Nonetheless, the settlement ǀNū-larus is shown clearly on his map as a place with both Otjiherero and Nama names ('Okohere' and 'QuhQrus' respectively, the 'qs' in the latter signalling click consonants) (see Figure 4)⁸. 'Puros', where the Hoarusib and Gomadom rivers meet, is noted to be inhabited by a 'few Nama-speaking natives', indicating that Khoekhoegowab-speaking people were known to be living there in 1917. At several places downriver, encounters with elusive so-called 'klip kaffirs'⁹ are marked on Manning's map, confirmed in oral histories and genealogies documented in the present to be ǀNūkhoe ancestors of ǀŪinab and connected families.

Figure 3. The late Nathan ǀŪina Taurob in 1996 at the site of his former home at ǀNū-larus, north-west of Sesfontein, Namibia.



Photo: Sian Sullivan.

Figure 4. Detail from Kaokoveld Map by Major C.N. Manning 1917, showing Sesfontein ('Zesfontein') and, marked just above, the place of †Nū-larus (i.e. 'Okohere' and 'QuhQrus').



Source: National Archives of Namibia.

- 8 Some decades after Manning's trek, †Ūinab and his family lived at †Nū-larus 'for a long time', cultivating small gardens of maize and tobacco using water channelled from the spring north of the settlement. In 1996 it was still possible to see the rough outlines of their irrigation channels, although nothing remained at the site of †Ūinab's dwelling. Nathan's family moved from here to Sesfontein due, he said, to pressure from southward moving ovaHimba with large herds of goats and some cattle. In 1999 †Nū-larus remained inhabited by ovaHimba, although by 2008 it was the site of a commercial trophy hunting outfit called Didimala Hunting Safaris which had gained a 10-year hunting concession with Sesfontein, Anabeb and Omatendeka Conservancies for trophy animals including leopard, elephant and lion. To my knowledge, †Ūinab and his family's history of association with this place – together with their experiences and knowledges of the landscape – did not and does not feature in contemporary land and wildlife governance practices and institutions. Their and their ancestors' successful human histories of living lightly on the land here for at least several generations have been all but erased by the various incarnations of a globalising modernity; just as the landscape now reveals no obvious material manifestation of their years of embodied dwelling in these places.

Introducing contexts and codifications

- 9 The preamble above touches on one thread of experience in relation to the conservation and cultural landscapes of north-west Namibia. Here, current international prominence is entangled with a global emphasis in rural environment

and development initiatives on conferring or strengthening the land and resource tenure rights of ‘communities’ of people. In southern Africa this focus has manifested in part as a range of national postcolonial programmes for Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM). These initiatives embody a discourse with the following tenets: that some sort of security of resource tenure is a prerequisite for empowerment; that ‘community’ is an appropriate and feasible level of aggregation for governance and decision-making; and that when local people become variously owners and managers of, and earners from, ‘natural resources’, they are more likely to act in ways compatible with biodiversity conservation, while at the same time benefiting in economic development terms (for example, NACSO, 2014; JACOBSON, 2019). CBNRM models generally are based on ideas of ‘common property’ or ‘customary tenure’ arrangements, either through strengthening existing or ‘traditional’ property arrangements, or by attempting to create new ‘common property’ tenure arrangements where it is considered that these have broken down (as summarised and discussed in OSTROM, 1991; JONES, 1999a; HULME, MURPHREE, 2001; FABRICIUS *et al.*, 2004; also overview in SULLIVAN, HOMEWOOD, 2004). Emergent social, democratic and environmental outcomes are now known to be rarely unambiguous, with dispute, conflict and protest sometimes arising in relation to these contexts (as outlined below for a range of studies of Namibian CBNRM).

- 10 Since 1996, CBNRM policy framework has allowed Namibian citizens in communally-managed areas to register new natural resource management institutions called conservancies. The framework has received core funding from a number of international donors, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the World Bank’s Global Environment Facility (GEF). The resulting nexus of implementation and facilitation activities on the part of donors and NGOs, with accompanying national legislative changes, has parallels with other major USAID-funded CBNRM programmes in southern Africa, for example, CAMPFIRE (the Communal Areas Management Programme For Indigenous Resources) in Zimbabwe and ADMAD in Zambia (SULLIVAN, 2002). Following MURRAY LI (2007), CBNRM and associated initiatives are engaged with in Namibia as a modernisation programme generating *improvement* in the management and governance of natural resources in rural communal areas. This improvement is considered to be multifaceted, producing multiple wins for environmental conservation, local development and business.
- 11 Communal-area conservancies thus enable Namibians inhabiting communal land (see below) to receive benefits from, and make some management decisions over, the natural resources within the territory demarcated as a conservancy¹⁰. Legally, a number of requirements have to be satisfied in order for a communal-area conservancy to be registered: its territorial boundaries have to be agreed; its membership has to be decided and registered; and a constitution and management plan have to be drawn up, focusing particularly on the management and distribution of conservancy wildlife and associated income. Conservancies are now described in part as organisations established to enable business, particularly with tourism and trophy hunting operators (NAIDOO *et al.*, 2016). A recent report of the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations thus states that a conservancy is ‘a business venture in communal land use... although its key function is actually to *enable* business’, such that conservancies, do not necessarily need to run any of the business ventures that use the resources themselves. In fact, these are often best controlled and carried out by private sector

- operators with the necessary know-how and market linkages (NACSO, 2014, 25, emphasis in original).
- 12 The premise is that it is through business that both conservation and conservation-related development will arise (see discussion in SULLIVAN, 2006, 2018; BOLLIG, 2016; SCHNEGG, KIAKA, 2018; KOOT, 2019).
- 13 CBNRM is thereby clearly positioned as a state-, NGO- and donor-facilitated process of outsourcing access to significant public natural/wildlife resources and associated potential income streams to private sector (frequently foreign) business interests – a governance arrangement associated with neoliberalism (see DUNLAP, SULLIVAN, 2019; also SULLIVAN, 2006; MELBER, 2014). CBNRM in Namibia strengthens market-based approaches to biodiversity conservation in particular by increasing income sourced from international tourism travel and trophy-hunting, and increasing the area of land available for such activities (LAPEYRE, 2011a; NAIDOO *et al.*, 2016; JACOBSON, 2019)¹¹. There are now 86 registered communal area conservancies in Namibia, concentrated in the wildlife-rich communal lands of the north-west and north-east of the country¹². With its populations of rare desert-dwelling elephant and rhino¹³, and its international profile as a ‘last wilderness’ (HALL-MARTIN *et al.*, 1988; OWEN-SMITH, 2010, 26) and ‘arid Eden’ (OWEN-SMITH, 2010) that is simultaneously home to exotic(ised) traditional Himba pastoralists (JACOBSON, 1998[1990], north-west Namibia has been a primary territory for this conservation-oriented work and is now a high-end ‘wilderness’ tourism destination. The area west of present Etosha National Park boundaries, however, has also been shaped historically by layers of land clearances and settlement constraint, both of which continue to haunt memories in the present of displacement and associated life-course disruptions (SULLIVAN, GANUSES, 2020, 2021).
- 14 Recent research introduces complexity into analyses of CBNRM success in Namibia. SILVA and MOSIMANE (2012) and SILVA and MOTZER (2015) document discontent with CBNRM as a development strategy, in part due to the exacerbation of human-wildlife conflict (SILVA, MOSIMANE, 2012; also SCHNEGG, KIAKA, 2018). SUICH (2012) observes insufficient, i.e. low value and low volume, levels of economic incentives. HUMAVINDU and STAGE (2015) express concerns regarding the long-term financial viability of many communal area conservancies. NEWSHAM (2007), HOOLE (2010) and LAPEYRE (2011b, c and d) observe a concentration of skilled knowledge, resources and decision-making power in the hands of tour operators and NGOs. SULLIVAN (2002, 2003), PELLIS (2011), TAYLOR (2012), PELLIS *et al.* (2015) and KOOT (2019) document the exacerbation of local differences and inequalities through complex local dynamics that can act to privilege particular constellations of people over others with similar claims to conservancy opportunities and resources. HEWITSON (2017) analyses the creation and flow of monetary values and payments in relation to elephant trophy hunting in Kwandu Conservancy, Zambezi Region. He demonstrates the limited disbursement of income to those local people whose labour creates the value of animals that become identified as potential trophies, showing too how fees become significantly concentrated amongst members of the conservancy elite and as profit to commercial operators. STAMM (2017) draws attention to how donor-funding for conservancy management committee members is often delivered through multiple training courses that do not necessarily translate into improved wages for those thus trained, leading to compromised retention of conservancy staff. MOSIMANE and SILVA (2014, 85), importantly, foreground the significance of conservancy establishment as a boundary-making exercise in which new conservation borders are created that, although unfenced,

‘involve complex social processes of cooperation and competition for rights and recognition’.

- 15 In part, these complex outcomes arise as cartographic techniques and legislative systems linked with the modern state and ‘State Science’ generally (DELEUZE, GUATTARI, 1988[1980]; SCOTT, 1999) are deployed to strengthen formal tenure rights of ‘communities’, acting in the process to increasingly codify and commodify these rights. PELUSO (1995, 400, 402) has suggested that such endeavours can engender a ‘... “freezing” [of] the dynamic social processes associated with “customary law”’, in part by emphasising the demarcation of ‘exact boundary lines’ of territories. ABRAMSON (2000, 14) notes further that ‘... where the law recognises and underwrites “traditional” tenure, the law codifies “tradition” as a system of customary property rights rather than as an affective relation of belonging’. TAYLOR (2012, 1) observes for conservancy contexts in north-east Namibia that codification processes may harden and politicise ethnic differences, ‘including through the implementation of land mapping projects’, even in contexts where great effort, particularly by facilitating non-state actors, is expended on ‘depolicitising’ struggles for authority over land and resources. Capacity constraints and the time-consuming nature of oral history and cultural mapping research also may prevent detailed information about these pasts to inform CBNRM activities in west Namibia, even in contexts where such information is perceived to be of local value for these activities (MUNTIFERING, pers. comm.).
- 16 These and other analyses affirm HARLEY’s (1988, 1992) Foucauldian interrogation of the inter-relationships between cartographic techniques, textual dimensions of maps, and relationships of power and authority. Whilst ‘the map is not the territory’, the relations of power distilled in mapped representations may nonetheless shape possibilities of use and access, with multiple material consequences. In combination, these tendencies become part and parcel of modernity’s epistemic ‘order of things’ (cf. FOUCAULT, 1970[1966]), erring towards the categorical fixing and representation of ‘a nonverbal world of *process* ... in words [and images] that indicate a *static* quality’ (CONDON, 1975, 15; cf. SULLIVAN, 2013¹⁴). In doing so they may discard semantic and sensual webs of dynamically improvised meaning to reduce and render local(ised) lives naked of significances that thereby become othered and discounted (FOUCAULT, 1970[1966], 129-133; BAUMAN, 1988, 88)¹⁵.
- 17 FOUCAULT (2003[1975-76], 7-8) affirms that it is ‘the reappearance of what people know at a local level’ – these ‘disqualified’ and ‘subjugated knowledges’ whose ‘historical contents ... have been buried or masked in functional coherences or formal systematizations’ – that makes ‘critique possible’ (also DODD, this volume). Indeed, a revisionist ‘countermapping’ that restructures claims to territory is increasingly deployed precisely so as to refract and decolonise the freezing tendencies noted above, paradoxically appealing for legitimacy to the specialist technologies of a globalising modernity (HUNT, STEVENSON, 2017). Surveys, maps and (now) GIS that previously acted to dispossess people of territory, or at least to control and often constrain access to significant places and resources, are thus utilised today to empower claims to land by local, indigenous and marginalised communities (PELUSO, 1995; POOLE, 1995; JACOBS, 1996; ALCORN, 2000; HODGSON, SCHROEDER, 2002; CHAPIN *et al.*, 2005; LEWIS, 2007; EADES, 2012; REMY, 2018). In Namibia specifically, ‘community-mapping’ processes have become part and parcel of fostering complexity in understanding indigenous and local values *vis à vis* conservation landscapes. ‘Cultural mapping’

(DIECKMANN, 2007, 2009, 2012, in press), ‘naming the land’ (TAYLOR, 2012), and on-site oral history at remembered and returned-to places (SULLIVAN, 2017; SULLIVAN *et al.*, 2019; SULLIVAN, GANUSES, 2021) are employed not only to inform administrative reorganisations of land areas for conservation purposes, but also with the desire to (re)vitalise cultural memories, heritage values and alternative knowledges of other-than-human natures associated with landscapes. Such work points towards both contrary and competing ‘regimes of visibility’ at work in the deployment of cartographic techniques of representation (TSING, 2005, 44), and the density of known, used and remembered places in the broader landscape that can remain diminished and displaced in postcolonial contexts. Recovering and historicising elements of this ‘density of meaning’ for elderly Khoe-speaking inhabitants in the geographical context of southern Kunene Region, north-west Namibia, is the focus of the remainder of this paper.

Sources and emphases

To call up the past in the form of an image, we must be able to withdraw ourselves from the action of the moment, we must have the power to value the useless, we must have the will to dream. (BERGSON, 1950, 94, quoted in RICOEUR, 2004, 25)

18 Against this contextual and conceptual background, in the sections that follow I explore some socio-cultural and political implications of land delineation in support of CBNRM policy in north-west Namibia. I consider aspects of the process of delineating conservancy boundaries (cf. MOSIMANE, SILVA, 2014), to comment on possible implications for the construction of both claims to community/conservancy membership, and the ways in which relationships with ‘the environment’ are conceived and represented in national and international policy. Geographically, I draw on case-material from north-west Namibia, specifically from Sesfontein, Purros and Anabeb conservancies in southern Kunene Region, which were a focus of dispute regarding their establishment (SULLIVAN, 2002, 2003; PELLIS, 2011; PELLIS *et al.*, 2015). I deploy a combination of research methods and materials, iteratively compiled in field engagements from 1992 to today (cf. HAYES, 2009). Particular sources are:

1. Two long oral histories with the late Andreas !Kharuxab, former Damara / ǀNūkhoe headman of Kowareb settlement (now part of Anabeb Conservancy), and the late Philippine |Hairo ||Nowaxas, resident of Sesfontein. These interviews are drawn from a dataset of some 885 minutes of oral history recorded in 1999 with 18 Damara / ǀNūkhoe individuals known to me through PhD field research from 1994-96 (SULLIVAN, 1998).

2. Multiple recorded oral accounts gathered in particular during a series of multi-day journeys with elderly Damara / ǀNūkhoe and ||Ubun (see below) individuals currently living in the settlements of Sesfontein / !Nani|aus and Kowareb (as listed in Table 2). These journeys were undertaken in 2014, 2015 and 2019 in a process of (re)finding places mentioned in prior interviews as where an array of now elderly people used to live. They have focused particularly (but not exclusively) on the area now designated as the Palmwag Tourism Concession (see Figure 1)¹⁶. During the years of our on-site oral history and mapping research the Concessionaire for the Palmwag Concession was the Big 3 Trust, comprised of the Chairpersons of Sesfontein, Anabeb and Torra Conservancies, with the Trust able to enter into business agreements with external operators and investors such that the latter can both run, and receive income from, tourism related infrastructure in the Concession. As I have invoked elsewhere

(SULLIVAN, 2017; SULLIVAN, GANUSES, 2021), this method of ‘on-site oral history’ led by research participants constitutes what anthropologist Anna TSING (2014, 13) describes as ‘historical retracing’: ‘walking the tracks of the past even in the present’ to draw out ‘the erasure of earlier histories in assessments of the present [thus] infilling the present with the traces of earlier interactions and events’. Such documentation can draw into the open occluded and alternative knowledges, practices and experiences that continue to ‘haunt’ the present despite their diminution through various historical processes (BIRD ROSE, 1991; BELL, 1993[1983]; BASSO, 1996; TSING, 2005, 81; DE CERTEAU, 2010, 24). The mapped dataset of named springs, former dwelling places, graves and landscape features recorded through this research, combined with stories, memories, genealogies and images can be viewed with permission online at <https://www.futurepasts.net/cultural-landscapes-mapping>. This dataset has formed the basis for reporting to the Namidaman Traditional Authority (TA) (SULLIVAN *et al.*, 2019) and in 2019 was mobilised as part of this TA’s submission to the Ancestral Land Commission established by the Namibian government in 2019 (TJITEMISA, 2019).

3. Lastly, this research draws on historical documents held in the National Archives of Namibia, and other secondary and grey literature sources, regarding the governance and truth regimes effected through colonialism, apartheid and the postcolonial state, especially in relation to land distribution and connected policies in north-west Namibia. This underlying literature review of ‘happening history’ and the ways this has unfolded and been framed is available in a series of iteratively updated texts online at <https://www.futurepasts.net/timeline-to-kunene-from-the-cape>.

- 19 The oral accounts generated in 1. and 2. above combine both first-hand experiences and inter-generationally transmitted oral history (cf. HAACKE, 2010, 24). Each account thus speaks of the experiences of multiple individuals connected through present and past webs of kinship and social relationships. All Khoekhoegowab oral accounts have been recorded, transcribed, translated and interpreted with significant work by Welhemina Suro Ganuses from Sesfontein, whose assistance and collaboration has been central to the development of this paper, as has that of Sesfontein resident and conservancy ‘Rhino Ranger’ Filemon |Nuab, who was the field guide for all the mapping journeys listed in Table 2. Namibia(n) scholar Wilfred HAACKE (2010, 7, 24) observes that oral accounts can offer pivotal information to facilitate the understanding of causalities and human interaction in historical events’, offering ‘valuable insight for the understanding of a situation’, even if ‘numerical detail in particular soon becomes unreliable’. Oral accounts of personally experienced pasts and past disruptions can also generate new historical and moral questions regarding present circumstances (as elaborated in the paper introducing this Special Issue).

Table 1. Journeys forming the basis for on-site oral histories in the broader landscape with elderly Khoe-speaking inhabitants of Sesfontein and Anabeb Conservancies.

Date	Name	Ethnonym	Focal Places
27-281014 & 20-231114	Ruben Sauneib Sanib, Sophia Opi Awises	Khao-a Dama, Ubun	Kowareb, Mbakondja, Top Barab, Kai-as
17-190215	Ruben Sauneib Sanib	Khao-a Dama	Kowareb, Kai-as, Hunkab, Sesfontein

21-220215	Ruben Sauneib Sanib	Khao-a Dama	West of Tsabididi, †Khari Soso, Aogu gams, Bukuba-†noahes, Huom
07-100315	Ruben Sauneib Sanib	Khao-a Dama	Sixori, Oruvao/ Guru-Tsaub, Sanibe- gams
07-091115	Ruben Sauneib Sanib, Sophia Opi Awises	Khao-a Dama, Ubun	Kowareb, Khao-as, Soaub (Desert Rhino Camp area)
13-141115	Christophine Daumû Tauros, Michael Amigu Ganaseb	!Narenin Hoanidaman / Ubun	Sesfontein, Purros, Hoanib
20-261115	Franz Hoëb, Noag Ganaseb	Ubun	Sesfontein, Hoanib, coast, Kai-as
05-090519	Franz Hoëb	Ubun	Sesfontein, !Uniab mouth, Hûnkab, Mudorib, Oeb, Hoanib
12-150519	Ruben Sauneib Sanib	Khao-a Dama	Sesfontein, Gomagorras, Nobarab, Khao-as, Soaub
17-200519	Julia Tauros	Purros Dama	Sesfontein - Purros
22-240519	Hoanib Cultural Group, Sesfontein (n = 18, + 7 facilitators)	Multiple	Kai-as

- 20 In what follows I mobilise these diverse methods and sources to problematise two interrelated issues regarding the establishment of conservancies in north-west Namibia as postcolonial wildlife management and income-generating institutions.
- 21 First, my discussion turns to the significance of national and local historical contexts regarding land distribution and the locating of boundaries. As ALEXANDER and MCGREGOR (2002) have traced for the emergence of protest and dispute in the context of Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE programme in an area of Matabeleland North, and Julie TAYLOR (2012) has analysed for Namibia's West Caprivi (now Bwabwata National Park), historical structuring of access to landscapes and wildlife shapes how contemporary 'community-based' conservation initiatives unfold in practice (also see MOSIMANE, SILVA, 2014; BOLLIG, 2016). Recognition of historical circumstances, however, can be in tension with an emphasis on 'moving forwards' from 1990 as the moment when the independent nation state of Namibia came fully into existence. Similarly, affirmations of a national identity can be in tension with differences in historical experience that are linked with ethnicity (SULLIVAN, GANUSES, 2020). Labelling CBNRM recipient-participants as 'communities' or 'communal area dwellers' (as in much CBNRM discourse) discursively abstracts and 'equalises' historical experiences and ethnicities but does not necessarily remove identities, struggles and inequalities linked with these differences. Indeed, by downplaying (discursively at least) that such differences may exist, conflict associated with them may be amplified. Such homogenising labelling

strategies also have less palatable roots, echoing, for example, the moment immediately following the Deutsche Südwestafrika genocidal colonial war of 1904-07 in which 'strong efforts ... [were] made to reclassify the black residents of the Police Zone reserves as black labourers', through deferring or deflating ethnic identities and related concerns (SILVESTER, 1998, p. 144). To add complexity, other contemporary governance tendencies pull in different directions. For example, the Namibian Traditional Authorities Act (2000) recognises ethnic difference and the specificities of cultural heritage, as well as the legitimacy of previous so-called traditional leadership structures (see, for example, HINZ, GAIRISEB, 2013). In relation to these issues, the section below on 'History: maps and rights' foregrounds the 'happening histories' at national and local levels of known historical events that have acted contingently to shape and constrain contemporary rights and identity narratives, as these have played out through CBNRM and other governance technologies in north-west Namibia.

- 22 In relation to this set of issues, the section 'Land: memory and relationship' brings into my narrative some considerations of memory, embodied experience and ideational conceptions of land on the part of Damara / ǀNūkhoe and ǁUbu families and individuals with whom I have interacted for a quarter of a century. So-called Damara Khoekhoegowab-speaking people refer to themselves as ǀNūkhoe, meaning literally 'black' or 'real' people and thus distinguished from *Nau khoen* or 'other people'. Historically, the ethnonym 'Dama-ra' is based on an 'exonym', i.e. an external name for a group of people. It is derived from the name 'Dama' given by Nama for 'black-skinned people' generally (with 'ra' 'referring to either third person feminine or common gender plural') (HAACKE, 2018, 140). Since Nama were often those whom early European colonial travellers first encountered in the western part of southern Africa, they took on this use of the term 'Dama'. This gave rise to a confusing situation in the historical literature whereby the term 'Damara', as well as the central part of Namibia that in the 1800s was known as 'Damaraland', tended to refer to dark-skinned cattle pastoralists who called themselves Herero (see, for example ALEXANDER, 2006(1853); GALTON, 1890[1853]; TINDALL, 1959). The terms 'Hill Damaras' ('Berg-Dama' / *ǀhom Dama* / and the derogatory 'kip kaffir') and 'Plains Damaras' (or Cattle Damara / *Gomadama*) were used to distinguish contemporary Damara or ǀNūkhoe (i.e. 'Khoekhoe-speaking black-skinned people') from Otjiherero-speaking peoples respectively.
- 23 In conjunction, these names also signalled historically-constitutive processes whereby pressure on land through expansionary cattle pastoralism pushed Khoekhoegowab-speaking Damara / ǀNūkhoe further into the mountainous areas that became their refuge and stronghold (HAHN *et al.*, 1928; LAU, 1979). Increasing use by missionaries in the nineteenth century of the exonym 'Nama' instead of the endonym 'Khoekhoegowab' for the Khoekhoe language contributed to a now disproved 'popular claim' that 'the ethnically distinct Damara ... adopted the language from the Nama', a discourse with pernicious and ongoing marginalising impacts for Damara / ǀNūkhoe (HAACKE, 2018, 138)¹⁷. Historian Brigitte LAU (1979, 30-32, emphasis in original) instead maintained that 'the Damaras are *historically* a group apart and settled in the country *before* other Nama and Orlams moved in', living in 'a scattered collection of communities *historically apart and separate* from all other Nama peoples who migrated into the territory'. Alongside a more recent consolidation and appropriation of an homogenising Damara ethnic identity associated with colonial and apartheid governance processes (FULLER, 1993), ǀNūkhoe are linked with a diversity of dynamic

and more-or-less autonomous *!haoti* (lineages) associated with different land areas (*!hūs*) (clarified below), with both specific and overlapping livelihoods and lifeworlds enacted by different *!haoti* as ‘local-incorporative units’ (BARNARD, 1992, 203) – as explored in more detail below.

- 24 Khoekhoegowab-speaking ||Ubus currently living in Sesfontein and environs are sometimes referred to as ‘Nama’ and at other times as ‘Bushmen’, for whom a mythologised origin tale tells that they split from †Aonin / Topnaar Nama at Utuseb in the !Khuseb river valley, following a dispute in which a †Aonin woman refused her sister the creamy milk (*!ham*) that the latter desired¹⁸. They travelled and established themselves north of the !Khuseb and are linked with many former dwelling sites located in the Namib close to the ocean [i.e. ‘*hurib*’]¹⁹ in this far westerly area (see SULLIVAN *et al.*, 2021). It seems possible that contemporary ||Ubus are descendants of a “Topnaar group” called |Namixan, who in the 1800s under a “Chief †Gasoab, lived in the !Khuseb but came into conflict with ... returning [Topnaar groups] !Gomen and Mu-||in”, causing the |Namixan to retreat northwards from the !Khuseb (VIGNE, 1994: 8; discussed more fully in SULLIVAN, GANUSES, 2020, 2021).
- 25 In relation to a context wherein differently remembered pasts generate diversity in present concerns, in ‘Land: memory and relationship’ I thus engage with some framings and experiences of the territories concerned that seem to be consistently occluded in the drawing up of postcolonial administrative boundaries, in which the delineation of the territory of conservancies is a recent iteration. I do this by working first through a series of Damara / †Nūkhoen and ||Ubus organising conceptions of land and settlement, followed by a selection of material from on-site oral histories recorded whilst journeying with senior Khoe-speaking inhabitants of Sesfontein and associated settlements to remembered places of past dwelling (as per Table 2). My intention is to begin to open up the density of cultural meanings associated with ‘wilderness spaces’ that has been affirmed and prompted through these journeys, as well as to foreground some of the other(ed) modes of knowing places and landscapes that have thereby emerged. Three additional place-associated dimensions of experience emerging through this on-site oral history research – namely, genealogies, ancestral agencies and song-dances – are explored more fully elsewhere (SULLIVAN, GANUSES, 2021).

History: maps and rights

- 26 For southern and central Namibia, a key outcome of history for today’s land use and planning initiatives is a situation of extreme inequality in the distribution of rights to land. The contemporary location of Namibia’s communal areas is a legacy of the establishment of ‘Native Reserves’ and ‘homelands’ during Namibia’s colonial and apartheid past, which in turn were pockets of land left for indigenous inhabitants as more productive land was taken as settler farmland. Large areas were also proclaimed for conservation and mining, both with extremely restricted access. With some exceptions, this pattern of land distribution has remained roughly the same since new regional boundaries combining communal and freehold land were drawn up in the 1990s after independence. Mapped documentation of these shifts in land tenure and territorial boundaries can be viewed and downloaded from the Atlas of Namibia and ACACIA project websites²⁰. A summary of the historical trajectory of shifting land distribution and administrative boundaries as it played out for the former ‘Damaraland’

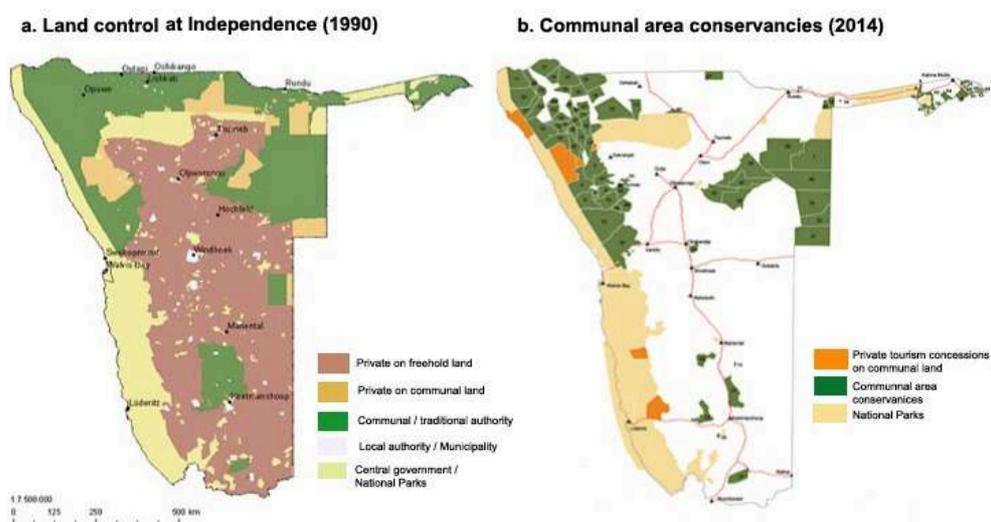
area is available online at <https://www.futurepasts.net/historical-events-west-namibia>. A fuller collation of information relating to conservation and land policy over the last 120 years, connected with the present-day Etosha National Park and Kunene Region, is available at <https://www.etosha-kunene-histories.net/wp1-historicising-etosha-kunene>.

- 27 The imposition of colonial rule and the later South African apartheid administration, and the accompanying ‘settler imperative’ driving large-scale land appropriation under private tenure and capitalist production ideals, engendered a massive and rapid conceptual shift in perceptions and understandings of land in the territory that became Namibia. Different local experiences of the impacts of this shift have produced a complex array of ‘winners’ and ‘losers’, whose historically-located quarrels over land rights feed contemporary disputes over conservancy boundary location and other aspects of communal area land and conservation policy. These two layers – national structuring and local engagements with this – are explored further below.

National context

- 28 As elsewhere (e.g. see WEITZER, 1990), the colonial imperative that played out in Namibia entailed surveying and registering the territory’s natural riches and appropriating these through European settlement and industry, a process accompanied by coercion, violence and a genocidal war (BLEY, 1996; GORDON, 2000; OLUSOGA, ERICHSEN, 2010). In southern and central Namibia, the country’s more productive land was surveyed, fenced and settled by livestock ranchers, resulting in a mapped landscape of static boundaries (see Figure 5). The process was inextricably bound with the ‘overcoding’ manifested by the cadastral land-planning mindset of modernity accelerated by the British Enclosure Acts of especially the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, extended worldwide as an integral part of western Europe’s project of colonialism and empire-building (DELEUZE, GUATTARI, 1988[1980], 208-213; SCOTT, 1999; HUGHES, 1999; SMITH, 2001; PORTER, 2010).

Figure 6. Pattern of land control in Namibia: a) showing areas under private and communal tenure (the pink and green coloured areas respectively)



Adapted from ACACIA Project E1 2007 online http://www.uni-koeln.de/sfb389/e1/download/atlas_namibia/pics/land_history/control-over-land.jpg; b) showing the area administered in 2014 as communal area conservancies (in green). (NACSO, Windhoek, see <http://www.nacso.org.na/conservancies>)

- 30 In recent decades additional historical processes have acted to further clear people and livestock from land areas of southern Kunene Region, as listed below:

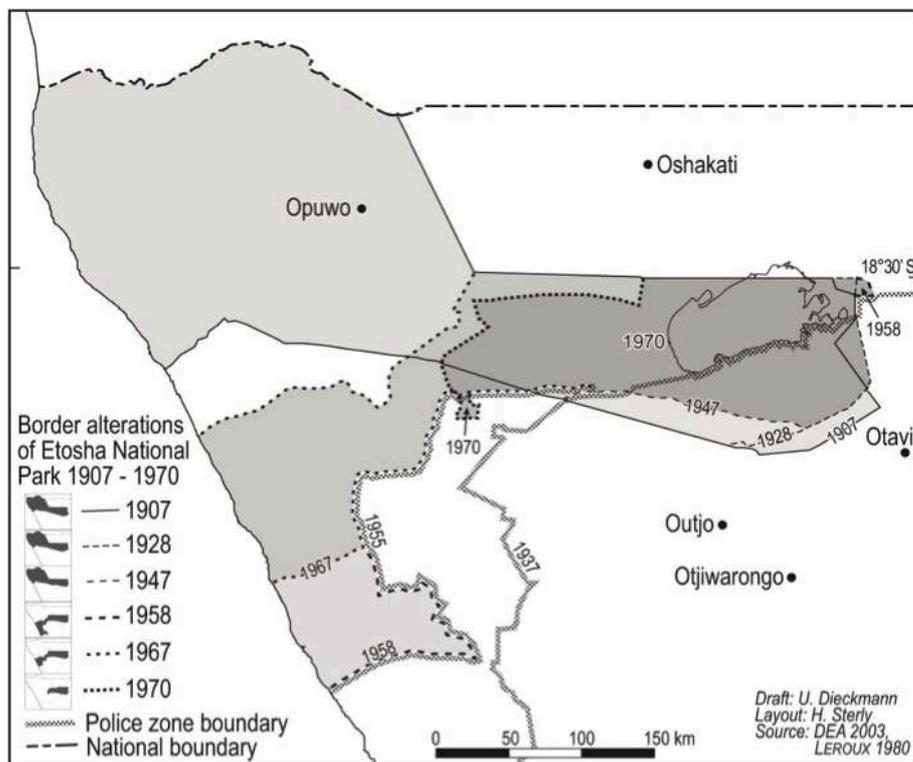
1. a livestock-free zone north of a shifting 'red line' of veterinary control stations dissecting Namibia from east to west (see Figure 1) was coercively cleared of people living there, so as to control the movement of animals from communal areas in the north to settler commercial farming areas in the state protected 'Police Zone' in the south (MIESCHER, 2012). Africans including 'Berg Dama' (i.e. \ddot{N} ukhoen) were repeatedly and forcibly moved out of the western areas between the Hoanib and Ugab Rivers, although inability to police this remote area meant that people tended to move back as soon as the police presence left (MIESCHER, 2012, 152). In the SWA Annual Report of 1930, for example it is noted that,

[c]hanges in regard to the settlements of natives have recently been carried out in the Southern Kaokoveld. Scattered and isolated native families, particularly [but not only] Hereros, have been moved to places where it is possible to keep them under observation and control. ... All stock has been moved north over a considerable area in order to establish a buffer zone between the natives in the Kaokoveld and the occupied parts of the Territory which remain free of the disease [lungsickness] (SWAA, 1930, 14).

- 31 Some years later, an Inspection report for the Kaokoveld by an Agricultural Officer recommended that the then derelict gardens at Warmquelle, at the time under small-scale agriculture by several families, be used '... to provide grazing and gardening ground for the Damaras [i.e. \ddot{N} ukhoen] who moved to Sesfontein from the Southern Kaokoveld'²¹. Moments of clearance are vividly remembered by elderly informants today (see transcript from Ruben Sanib below);
2. in the 1950s relief grazing was made available in the west under Namibia's South African administration, mostly for Afrikaans livestock farmers (KAMBATUKU, 1996). The veterinary control line was moved north and west to its 1955 position, releasing new freehold farms to the 'Police Zone' through appropriating inhabited 'government land' beyond the 1937 'Red Line' (see Figure 7; also MIESCHER, 2012);

3. from 1950 on, several diamond mines were established in the northern Namib, especially at Möwe Bay, Terrace Bay, Toscanini and Sarusa (MANSFIELD, 2006), making this territory a 'restricted access area'. This is a remembered process that displaced especially ||Ukun people living and moving in this far westerly area, as well as offering new employment opportunities in the mines thereby established;
4. in 1958 the boundary of the former 'Game Reserve no. 2 (now Etosha National Park) was extended westwards to the coast following the Hoanib River in the north and the Ugab River in the south (TINLEY, 1971) – see Figure 7 – a process associated with further constraints on people and livestock utilising and moving through this area;

Figure 7. The shifting boundaries of Game Reserve No. 2 / Etosha National Park, 1907-1970.



Source: DIECKMANN, 2007, 76, reproduced with permission.

- 32 5. in the 1970s various additional boundary and settlement changes occurred in connection with the creation of new 'homeland' areas following government recommendations (ODENDAAL REPORT, 1964). At this time, much of the short-lived western portion of Etosha National Park was allocated as part of the 'homeland' of 'Damaraland', with the western park boundary moved eastwards to its 1970 position. The process allowed the Skeleton Coast National Park to be gazetted (in 1971) from the northern Namib (TINLEY, 1971), already cleared of people through its establishment as a restricted access mining area from 1950. The new 'Damaraland Homeland' provided re-settlement opportunities for many Damara / ǀNūkhoen in other parts of Namibia. In the southern parts of the Homeland territory in particular, surveyed farms that had been settled by predominantly Afrikaans settler farmers (see Figure 5) were 'communalised' (i.e. turned into communal land) through their (re)allocation to ǀNūkhoe herders (SULLIVAN, 1996);

- 33 6. in 1978 a 10-year trophy hunting concession of 15,000km² was leased, reportedly by the former Dept. of Bantu Administration, to German-Namibian Volker Grellmann of ANVO Hunting Safaris, granting him land south of the Hoanib River described as ‘still game-rich and largely unoccupied’, that at the time was within the ‘Damaraland Homeland’ administered by the Damara Regional Authority of the second-tier government system (OWEN-SMITH, 2002, 2). Grellmann/ANVO’s initial annual quota was for ‘two trophy elephants north of the “Red Line”’ plus ‘problem elephants as they occurred anywhere in Damaraland’ as well as ‘common game’, and he created a hunting camp at Palmwag – where Nama and ǀNūkhoe families had previously lived – from where his hunting safaris were launched (OWEN-SMITH, 2002, 2). This camp formed the seed of the present-day Palmwag Lodge, which forms the primary tourism accommodation for what is now the Palmwag Tourism Concession (see Figure 1).
- 34 These and other processes (particularly military activity during Namibia’s war of independence and severe drought from 1979-1982) affected the land areas (*!hūs*) known as ǀKharī Hurubes, !Nau Hurubes²², Aogubus, and Namib (see Figure 10 below). ǀǀKhao-a Dama of ǀKharī Hurubes and Aogubus were mostly consolidated in the northern settlements of Sesfontein / !Nani|aus, Anabeb, Warmquelle and Kowareb. Dāure-Dama of the more southerly !Nau Hurubes became concentrated mostly in the vicinity of the Ugab River to the south of the Palmwag Concession. People were understandably reluctant to leave places they considered home. Some oral histories indicate that coercion accompanied this movement. In November 2014 I sat at the waterhole of ǀKhabaka, now in the Palmwag concession, with Ruben Sauneib Sanib, a renowned hunter of the |Awise ǀǀKhao-a Damara family associated with Hurubes and surrounding areas, who was born ca. 1930s. He recalled his experience of being evicted from the formerly large settlement of Gomagorras in Aogubus, now in the Palmwag Concession, an event that happened prior to the memorable death of Husa²³, then Nama captain of Sesfontein / !Nani|aus, who in 1941 was mauled by a lion at the place known as ǀAodaos (see below) (also VAN WARMELO, 1962(1951), 37, 43-44):

The government said this is now the wildlife area and you cannot move in here. We had to move to the other side of the mountains - to Tsabididi [the area also known today as Mbakondja]. Ok, now government police from Kamanjab and Fransfontein told the people to move from here. And the people moved some of the cattle already to Sesfontein area, but they left some of the cattle [for the people still in Hurubes and Aogubus] to drink the milk. Those are the cattle the government came and shot to make the people move.

- 35 Some of these cattle belonged to a grandfather of Ruben’s called Sabuemib:
- And Sabuemib took one of the bulls into a cave at |Gui-gomabi-!gaus and he shot it there with a bow and arrow [so that they would at least be able to eat biltong from the meat and prevent the animal being killed by the authorities]. Other cattle were collected together with those of Hereros [also herding in the area] and were shot by the government people at Gomagorras [named after the word *goman* for cattle and located in the hills south of Tsabididi]. Some of Sabuemib’s cattle were killed in this way.²⁴
- 36 Given this multi-layered historical context, and fuelled by a national situation of inequity and insecurity in access to land, local negotiation regarding conservancy establishment has arguably emphasised claims to land areas, even though legally a conservancy is limited to conferring certain rights over animal wildlife (SULLIVAN, 2002). I turn now to the ways in which differing historical and cultural experiences can influence claims to land and affect the outcomes of CBNRM initiatives by outlining

some additional local dynamics arising in the disputed registration of two specific conservancies.

Local context

He explained to them that history was like an old house at night. With all the lamps lit. And ancestors whispering inside.... 'To understand history,' Chacko said, 'we have to go inside and listen to what they're saying. And look at the books and the pictures on the wall. And smell the smells. ...' (ROY, 1998, 52-53)

37 As evoked by Arundhati Roy above, history is not only about the facts and figures that describe events and contribute to a legal architecture for governing land, lives and identities. The exigencies of history also shape changes in ways in which relationships with land are both conceptualised and experienced, influencing memories of past relationships that may flow into current events and discourses (SULLIVAN *et al.*, this volume). Clearly, where diverse groups of people are involved in negotiation over the establishment of rights to land and resources, one important issue is likely to be that of *whose* perspectives and claims are represented in these negotiations (SULLIVAN, 2002, 2003; TAYLOR, 2012). Here I outline some ways in which historical and recent establishment of state administrative boundaries has interacted with varied socio-cultural relationships with 'the land', contributing to emergent dispute through multiple and multi-layered processes of displacement.

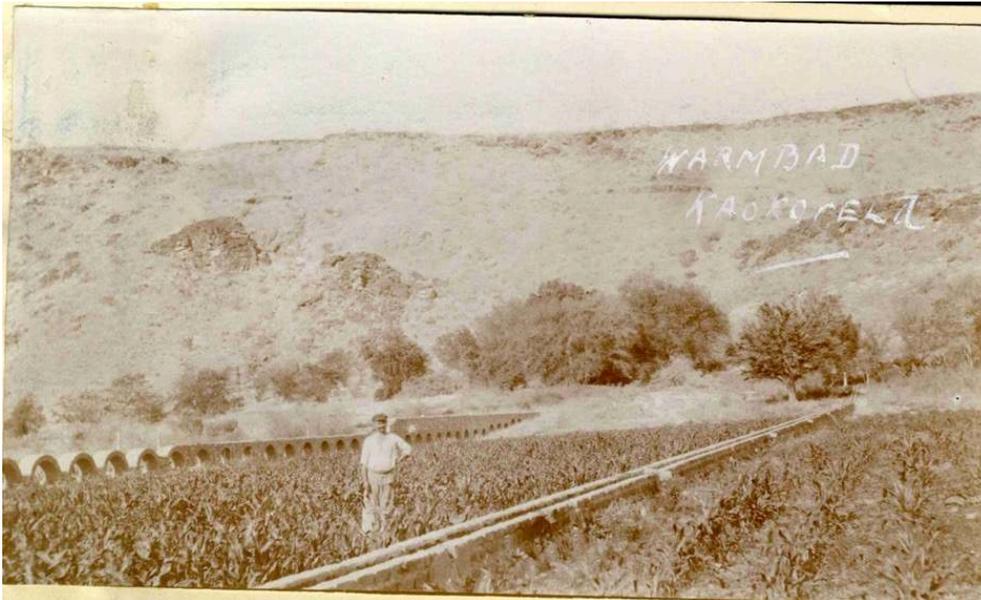
38 In particular, and connected with the shifting of administrative boundaries discussed above, in southern Kunene Region a dynamic has been set in motion that has impinged specifically on settlement and land use by Khoekhoegowab-speaking people in the area. To provide one example, in the 1970s the re-drawing of administrative boundaries and the creation of 'homelands' following the recommendations of the Odendaal Report (1964), reportedly led to the settlement of Warmquelle/|Aexa|aus (Figure 1) becoming part of Opuwo District to the north and thereby (re)created as a Herero/Himba constituency, i.e. as located in the Kaokoland ovaHimba 'homeland'. Historically Warmquelle/|Aexa|aus had been considered to be a place of Khoekhoegowab-speaking people, from at least the time of German colonial rule. For example, the incoming !Gomen Topnaar captain of Sesfontein, Jan |Uixamab of !Gomen, i.e. Walvis Bay, was able to assert such a position of prominence in the area in the late 1800s that on 3 October 1898 he 'sold' 4,000 hectares constituting the farm Warmbad (Warmquelle) to the colonial Kaoko Land and Mining Company (as documented in RIZZO, 2012). This farm was later taken over by a German settler called Carl Schlettwein (!HAROËS, 2010; MIESCHER, 2012, 33; RIZZO, 2012, 64-67), and under German colonial rule Damara / ǀNūkhoen contributed labour for the newly established German outpost and farm at the growing settlement. When Major Manning travelled through 'Warmbad' on 8 August 1917 he found it occupied by a manager for Schlettwein – an Italian called B. Oldani (see Figure 7). Manning described the place as follows:

[w]arm springs, permanent water, small house. Concrete aqueducts for irrigation, much land under corn, lucerne and mealies. Some native families on farm, road from Khowarib through open country, sandy and crossed Hoanib dry River bed²⁵.

39 In the late 1940s, a government 'ethnologist' for the South African administration noted again that 'Schlettwein's farm 'Warmbad' is occupied by one of the Sesfontein Nama 'voormanne' - Jafta Hendrik - 'with a small number of people', and grazing posts

linked with Sesfontein were also observed to be used in the area around Sesfontein itself 'for many miles around' (VAN WARMELO, 1962(1951), 37-38).

Figure 8. B. Oldani, manager for C. Schlettwein of Warmbad [Warmquelle] farm, near Sesfontein, in 1917



Source: Manning Report 1917, National Archives of Namibia.

- 40 Andreas !Kharuxab, former ǀNūkhoe (Dâureb Dama) headman of Kowareb, and his peer and friend, Salmon Ganamub, recall these dynamics in an interview recorded in May 1999:

First, Damara people were staying at |Aexa|aus/Warmquelle. Damara were there. ... At that time Gabriel, who is now dead, was the headman [at |Aexa|aus/Warmquelle]; it was he who passed the leadership on to me. You're asking how long had the Damara people been there? Those people were born there, they grew up and worked there. Look at that man [points to Salmon, who is very old]. It was a German place then. ... Damara people were already there, then the Germans came and they gathered other people who were in the veld [!garob, see below] and they gave them work [for food]. They rounded them up with horses and some people came of their own accord.

- 41 First before we came to Kowareb we stayed for years and years at |Aexa|aus/Warmquelle and we worked the gardens there. Here (i.e. Kowareb) was the farm-post of Nama people²⁶. !Nani|aus/Sesfontein and |Aexa|aus/Warmquelle were big villages and the Nama people of !Nani|aus/Sesfontein and the Damara people of |Aexa|aus/Warmquelle used to keep livestock here at Kowareb.

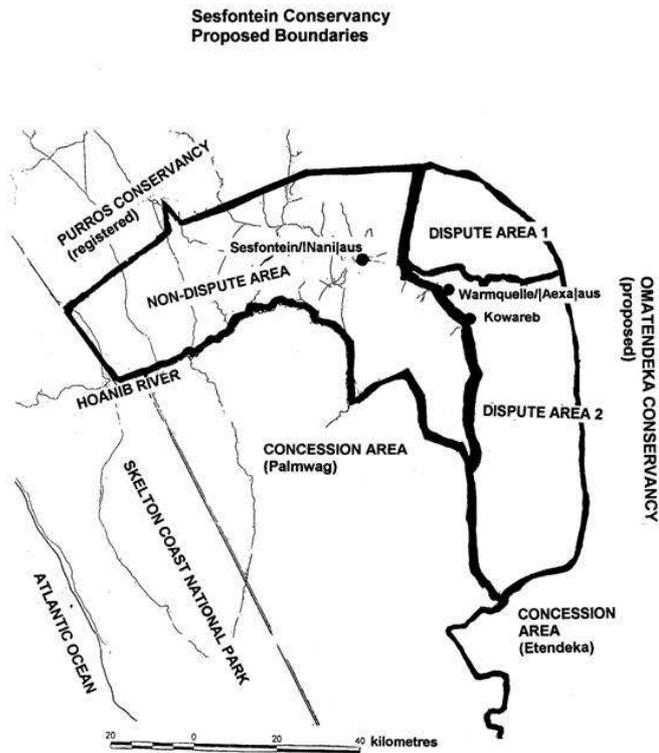
But there are reasons why we came here and made this garden [at Kowareb]. Political things²⁷ came in which were not here before in our lives. Political things were introduced which made |Aexa|aus/Warmquelle part of Opuwo district. That commissioner of Opuwo made |Aexa|aus/Warmquelle part of Opuwo district and he gave it to Herero people. We sat then on the plains and then we came here (to Kowareb) and talked with the government and they built us this garden; they built the dam and they pushed the water here (for irrigation). Then we founded this garden here.²⁸

- 42 This narrative describes the 1970s displacement of Khoekhoegowab-speaking people inhabiting Warmquelle /|Aexa|aus southwards to Kowareb in what became designated

as ‘Damaraland’ – the ‘homeland’ of ‘the Damara’. In recent history at least, it is apparently only since this time that Herero families who are now so important in the local politics of the area settled permanently in Warmquelle, and more recently (since the 1990s) have become prominently established at Kowareb. This history, and accompanying anxieties that similar processes of settlement and land loss will be repeated, underscored opposition expressed by some Damara / †Nūkhoen to the proposed form of conservancy establishment in the late 1990s and early 2000s (SULLIVAN, 2003). Such fears are compounded by a current momentum whereby pastoralists with relatively large cattle herds are moving into the area, generating experiences of displacement and feelings of resentment (as noted elsewhere in the country, see BOTELLE, ROHDE, 1995; HARRING, ODENDAAL, 2006; TAYLOR, 2012). In combination with conflict occurring between key Herero families regarding leadership and land rights in and around Warmquelle (SULLIVAN, 2003; PELLIS, 2011; PELLIS *et al.*, 2015), this ongoing argument regarding the delineation of long stretches of proposed conservancy boundaries in the late 1990s and early 2000s necessitated the designation of large potential conservancy areas as ‘dispute areas’ (LONG, 2004, 18).

- 43 Figure 9 reproduces one of the working maps used in late 1999 and 2000 in meetings discussing emerging conservancy boundaries, involving facilitating NGOs, representatives of the MET (Ministry of Environment and Tourism), conservancy and other local committee members, and local inhabitants. The map shows clearly the locations of conservancy dispute areas. What is striking about the map is the visual dominance of the marked *boundaries* of the proposed conservancies, which in this reproduction accurately reflects the size of these boundaries as demarcated on the original working map. These excessively marked boundaries convey a sense of the focus on determining conservancy borders as a prerequisite for administrative and managerial control. While the stated intention is for such control to devolve to local people and meet local aspirations, the tools used and the two-dimensional depictions that result seem to reflect and construct an emphasis on particular relations of objectification and experiential distance *vis à vis* land (and the ‘resources’ located therein).

Figure 9. Slightly edited working map of the proposed boundaries for the emerging Sesfontein Conservancy, 2000



Source: pers. comm. Blythe Loutit.

- 44 As noted above, this process, as well as the assumptions it conveys regarding what is important about people-land relations, acts discursively to devalue other experiences and constructions of landscapes that are less easily reduced, flattened and manipulated. Such acts of mapping thus become both representations and manifestations of attempts to manipulate both land and peoples’ relationships with ‘it’. Combined with a conservation priority of protecting large mammals and ‘last wildernesses’, and a strongly economic development frame oriented towards external tourism and trophy hunting markets (NAIDOO *et al.*, 2016), this impetus shapes and displaces dense local memories and knowledges of landscape. It is to these experiences and memories of landscape that I now turn, drawing primarily on material from encounters with Damara / ǃNūkhoen and ǁUkun inhabitants of the area.

Land: memory and relationship

We lived where we wanted; the land was open like our heart (*ǃgao*). (Andreas ! Kharuxab, Kowareb, 13 May 1999).

- 45 Anthropologist Keith BASSO (1996) writes in *Wisdom Sits in Places* that research that ‘maps from below’ faces the challenge of how to represent the layers of cultural significance entangled with land in a way that bridges gaps between oral and written dimensions of this knowledge (also see SULLIVAN, GANUSES, 2021). Damara / ǃNūkhoen and ǁUkun, as well as those speaking Khoekhoegowab more generally (cf. WIDLAK (1999) and DIECKMANN (2007) for Haiǁom), have framed, conceptualised and experienced land in terms that tend not to be represented by the mapping practices

considered above, or by the plethora of managerial and economic discourses that permeate CBNRM. As theorised in the anthropology of landscapes more generally (e.g. BENDER, 1993; TILLEY, 1994; ASHMORE, KNAPP, 1999; INGOLD, 2000; BENDER, WINER, 2001; TILLEY, CAMEROON-DAUM, 2017), these ‘other’ and othered frames arguably emerge for onlookers only when culture and land are perceived as mutually constitutive domains, produced in relation to the felt sense and *habitus* of lived and remembered practices and experiences. In responding to this nexus of concerns, in this section I outline four layers of socio-spatial organisation of Damara / ǀNūkhoen and ǁUkun cultural landscapes, before foregrounding the density of meaning prompted by places returned to with senior Khoekhoegowab-speaking members of conservancy communities in north-west Namibia.

1. !Garob

- 46 *!Garob* is the broader landscape where people go to collect veldfoods (*!garob ǀûn*), where people hunt (thus also ‘*laub*’, from *lau* meaning hunting, and used synonymously with *!garob*), and where livestock go to graze when they are not kraaled near homesteads. A small garden (*!hanab*) can be part of, or in, the *!garob*, but land ceases to be *!garob* – the ‘veld’ or ‘field’ – in places of permanent dwelling (*ǁan-ǁhuib*) – as detailed below. *!Garob* is thus a space of *movement*; of moving through in the process of procuring livelihood, and of being in whilst betwixt and between places of more permanent dwelling. It is nevertheless known and remembered, peppered with specific places charged with history and stories, and celebrated as the source of appreciated foods and water (as elaborated below). As such, *!garob* does not map on to the idealised ‘smooth space’ of DELEUZE and GUATTARI’s (1988[1980]) ‘nomad science’, although of course such ‘empty areas’ were constructed as the available *terra nullius* of the imperial imagination.

2. !Hūs

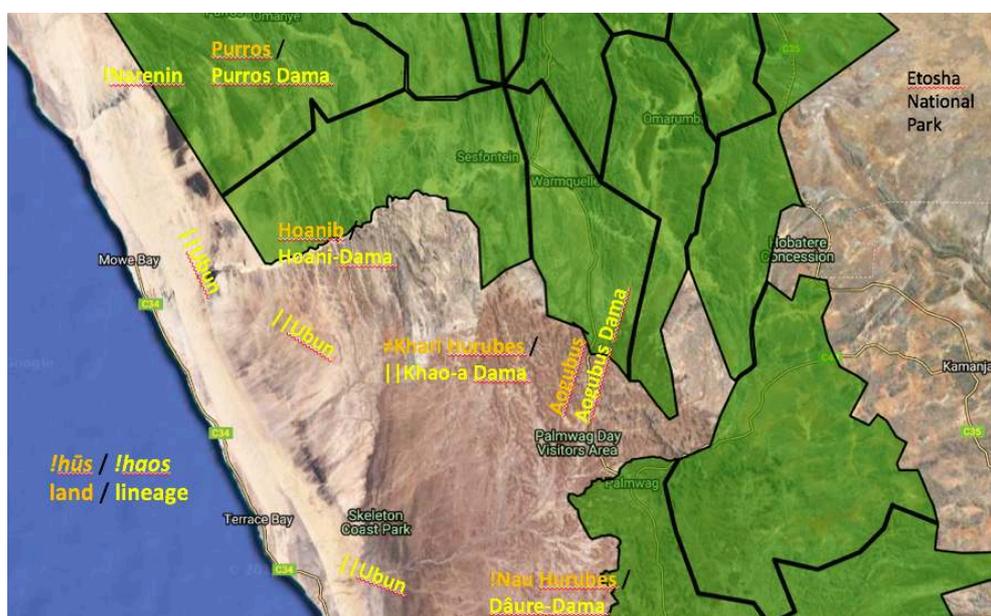
- 47 A *!hūs* is a named area of the *!garob*. As Andreas !Kharuxab explains:
- From the !Uniab River to this side it’s called Aogubus. And the Hoanib River is the reason why this area is called Hoanib. And from the !Uniab to the other side (south) is called Hurubes. That is Hurubes. From the !Uniab to that big mountain (Dâures) is called Hurubes. If you come to the ǁHuab River – from the ǁHuab to the other side (south) is called ǁOba (now Morewag Farm). Khorixas area is called ǁHuib. And from there if you pass through and come to the !Uǀgab River we refer to that area as |Awan !Huba, i.e. ‘Red Ground’. *Every area has got its names.*²⁹
- 48 A *!hūs* is also known in association with the lineage-based exogamous group of people or *!haos* who lived there. I say *lived* because the exigencies of a colonial and apartheid history mean that few such *!haoti* retain unbroken relations of habitation to such areas. Nevertheless, most Damara / ǀNūkhoen in north-west Namibia continue to identify with reference to the *!hūs* that they or their ancestors hail from, at least in recent generations (see Figure 10). So, for example:
- ... the people get their names according to where they were living. ... My mother’s parents were both Damara and my father’s parents were both Damara. I am a Damara child; I am part of the Damara ‘nation’ (*!hao*). I am a Damara (*Damara ta ge*). We are Damara but we are also Dâure Dama. We are part of the Dâure Dama ‘nation’ (*!hao*). We are Dâure Dama. (*Dâure Dama da ge*).³⁰

49 And,

My father was really from this place [Sesfontein/!Nani|aus], and my mother was from Hurubes. Really she's from Hurubes. She's ||Khao-a Damara.³¹

50 Dynamic relationship with a lineage-associated *!hūs* is further reflected in such things as the location and orientation of families in larger settlements, and the directions in which people travel when venturing into the *!garob* to gather foods and other items (see below). While Sesfontein, for example, is one of the longest established precolonial and colonial administrative settlements in Kunene with a relatively large and permanent population of Damara / †Nūkhoen people, most Damara 'households' tended in the 1990s to be physically located within the settlement in places that reflect their affinity towards the direction of the *!hūs* with which their *!haos* is identified (see Figure 10), a tendency similarly observed for desert peoples in postcolonial circumstances elsewhere³². In southern Kunene, these different *!hūs* / *!haos* groupings are now categorised under the broader linguistic, lineage, and land-based grouping of *Namidaman* and represented by the Namidaman Traditional Authority.

Figure 10. Named land areas (sing. *!hūs*) as dynamically known in recent generations by Khoekhoegowab-speaking Dama/†Nūkhoen and ||Ukun inhabitants of conservancies in southern Kunene. The green-shaded areas are conservancies, the orange-shaded area to the east of the image is Etosha National Park.

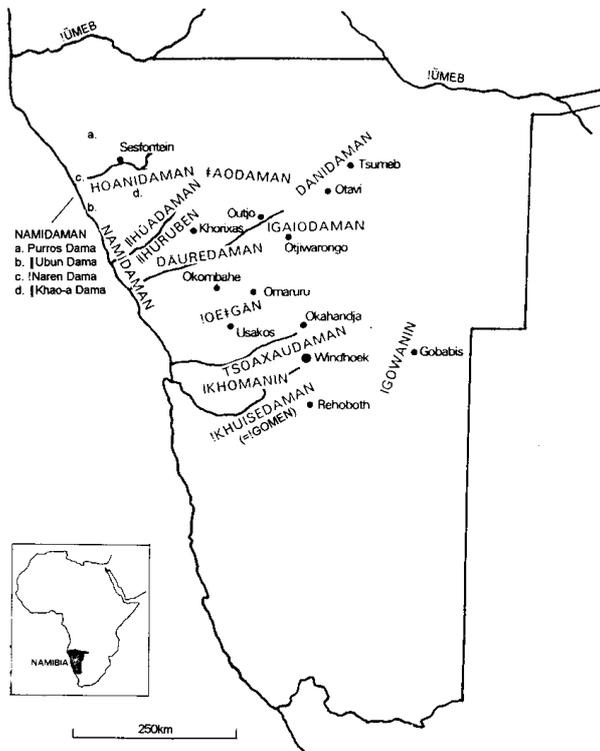


Source: personal fieldnotes and on-site oral histories.

51 As outlined above, African/indigenous Namibians experienced the loss of large areas of land inhabited during and prior to European incursion which for some indigenous groupings involved the removal of legal access to *all* the land to which they traced their ancestry and located their embodied memories. A number of Damara / †Nūkhoen *!haoti* were uprooted completely from the *!hūs* that at the time of colonialism constituted the fabric of their homes and lives (also see SULLIVAN, 2001). From the 1950s onwards, ||Ukun also lost all access to prior areas of dwelling and resource access. |Khomani of the valleys and mountains of the |Khomas Hochland to the west and south of Windhoek, †Aodaman of Outjo/Kamanjab/Etosha area, |Gaiodaman of Otijawarongo and environs, !

Oeǀgān of Usakos/Omaruru/Erongo Mountains area, and ǀGowanin of Hoachanas/west Gobabis area lost all legal and autonomous access to their land (see Figures 11 and 12). Since much of this land was delineated and settled as commercial farms by Europeans, many Damara/ǀNūkhoen found their way back to areas they had known as theirs, becoming domestic servants and farm labourers for those with legal title to land under the German and South African administrations³³. Others left their *!hūs* to be absorbed by the labour system servicing urban areas and industry. The establishment of the Damaraland ‘homeland’, located in today’s southern Kunene and northern Erongo Regions, completely bypassed these and other Damara /ǀNūkhoen territories. While viewing the expanded ‘homeland’ of the 1970s as an opportunity to become established as relatively independent farmers, Damara /ǀNūkhoen *!haoti* from elsewhere who settled in ‘Damaraland’ also identify themselves as displaced from ancestral lands they remember and know as home, and to which they have an ongoing sense of belonging and constitutive identification (SULLIVAN, 1996). As noted above, Damara/ǀNūkhoen have also been dispossessed of land in the ‘national interest’ of wildlife conservation, and have engaged in protest and other efforts to reclaim access to land in conservation areas, suffering government refusal to consider the possibility of constructing frameworks that might facilitate the restitution and reconstruction of such relationships. In the 1950s, for example, especially ǀKhomanin Damara/ǀNūkhoen were evicted from what became Daan Viljoen Game Reserve (known as !Ao-ǀaexas to its former dwellers), established for recreational benefit to Windhoek’s white, urban inhabitants. These ǀKhomanin were relocated several hundred kilometres away to the farm Sores-Sores on the Ugab (!Uǀgab) River, a less productive, ecologically and biogeographically different and remote area, where many of the promises for assistance by the then South African government remained unmet³⁴.

Figure 11. Rough precolonial locations of major Damara / ǀNūkhoen *Ihaoti*.



Source: HAACKE and BOOIS (1991, 51), supplemented with information in ǁGAROËB (1991) and oral history fieldwork in north-west Namibia.

Figure 12. Screenshot of online map for historical references to the presence of Damara / ǀNūkhoen in Namibia. Each placemark indicates a literature reference to people encountered for which the name and context clarifies them as Dama / ǀNūkhoen.



The full online map and references can be found at <https://www.futurepasts.net/historicalreferences-damara-namibia>.

- 52 Such displacements are present as an underlying tenor to contemporary disaffection. Of further significance for the broader process of registering conservancies as both units of community and territory, however, are the different ways in which land as *!hūs* is conceptualised and generated. A *!hūs* implies and enables geographical orientation and denotes constitutive relationships of belonging (as in the identification of *!haos* with *!hūs*), without requiring a fixed or static external boundary or a defined relationship of ownership sanctioned by distant authority. This ‘fuzziness’ and improvised flexibility in people-land relationships, together with a strongly affective orientation towards the broad vistas of ‘home’, has been noted globally for peoples dwelling beyond the expansionary reach of settled agriculture (see, for example, BELL, 1993[1983]; INGOLD, 2000; BRODY, 2001). It generates relational, dynamic and remembered experiences and conceptualisations of land that exceed a fetishing of boundaries and membership, as discussed further below.

3. ǁAn-ǁhuib

- 53 A ǁan-ǁhuib³⁵ is a place of permanent, or potentially permanent, dwelling; a place within a *!hūs* where people are living; and a place that lives – that holds its particular character – in part because people live there. In the semi-arid landscapes of central and north-west Namibia, a critical determinant for ǁan-ǁhuib is the presence of water. ǁAn-ǁhuib translates literally to ‘living place’. Thus:

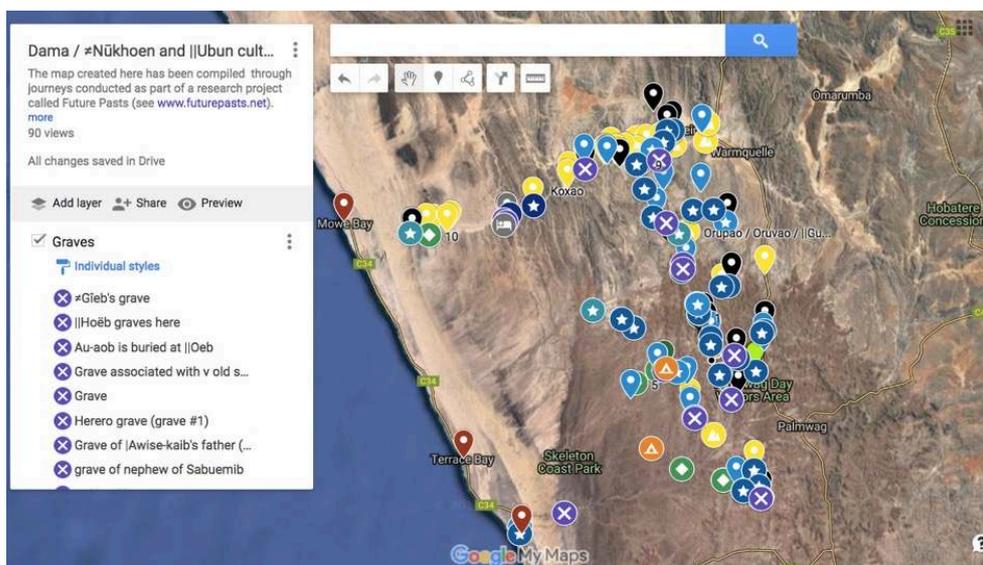
!Khoroxa-ams is up there. Behind that big blue mountain. The ground of Aogubus [see above] has lime in it. I could say it is a 'kalkran' [i.e. a limestone place]. It has lime. You know the '!khoron'? That means lime. It means the place of lime. It was the place where the people lived. ... There are many places whose names I haven't said yet. There is !Nobarab, !Hubub, !Gauta, †Gâob, †Khabaka and !Garoab. And there are more places where people lived in that area. !Hagos, Pos and Kai-as were the places where people were living.³⁶

- 54 Or, as Philippine !Hairo ||Nowaxas described when talking me through the different places she had lived in, '... this is Sixori, this is Tsaugu Kam, this is Oronguari, this is the home of *xoms* (termites), here is the field'³⁷.
- 55 It was the listing of named and formerly-dwelled-in places that mostly do not appear on maps of the area that stimulated the series of journeys enabling on-site oral history documentation in recent research. Through this fieldwork, most of the places named above have been (re)located and mapped (see Figure 13). These former living places are now situated in areas removed from current Damara / †Nūkhoe and ||Ūbu habitation and access, making it difficult for people to retain links to them³⁸. They live on, however, in memory and in the affects that remembering affirms. Sometimes they are visited in defiance of new rules of access and boundaries. Peoples' memories of removal from places they remember and with which they identify, can contribute scepticism towards current land and resource management initiatives.

4. ||Gâumais

- 56 ||Gâumais are livestock 'posts' or 'satellites' of more permanent settlements and are located in the broader landscape or !garob. Here, some members of a family will herd livestock and collect !garob †ûn, normally with frequent movement between a ||gâumais and the ||an-||huiib with which it is linked. Young children and children on school holidays often stay at a ||gâumais where they can benefit from easy access to milk and !garob †ûn or 'veld kos' (i.e. gathered 'bush foods'). These are places of space and freedom to roam and explore the wider environs, learning its geography, diversity and ecology. In recent decades, the locating of boreholes in the landscape around Sesfontein increased possibilities for livestock herding in these locations, although frequently these were already known for other reasons. Tsaurob, for example, is a ||gâumais to the east of Sesfontein where a borehole was established in the late 1970s, prior to which it was known as the location of a honey hive from which honey – *danib* – was harvested.

Figure 13. Screenshot of online map showing former *!an-!huib* (living places) and other sites (such as springs, graves, Haiseb cairns and topographic features) in the broader landscape of the Sesfontein, Anabeb and Purros Conservancies.

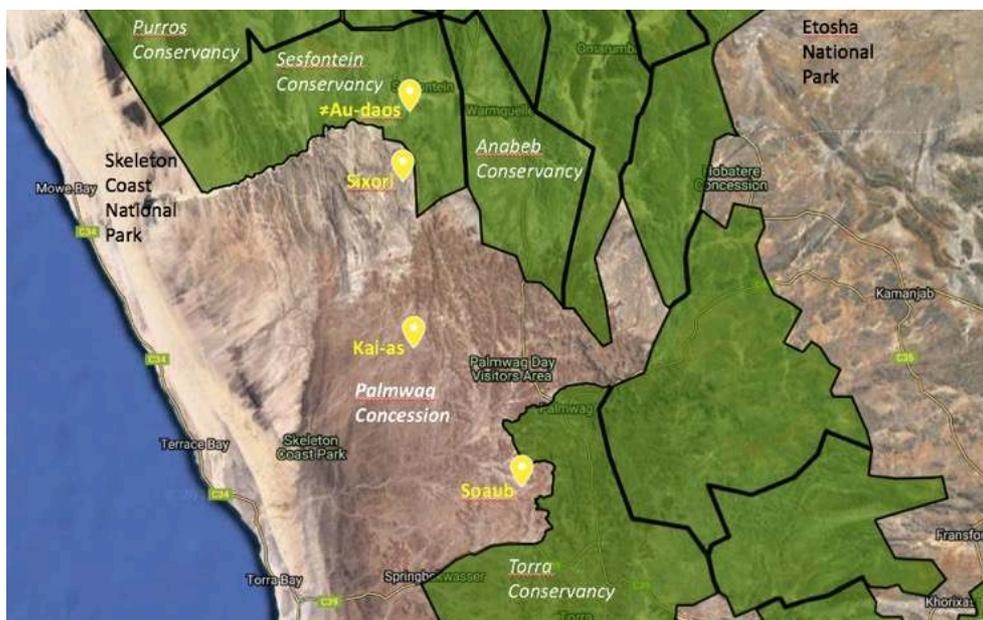


Source: on-site oral history research, 2014-2019, building on oral history documentation in the late 1990s - full dataset at <https://www.futurepasts.net/cultural-landscapes-mapping>.

Densities of meaning

- 57 As noted above, recent field research working with now elderly people to find remembered places is partly a response to hearing the series of named places – *!an-!huib* and *!gâumais* – mentioned above. The emerging partial recovery of place names, lived experiences and genealogies embedded in the landscape disrupts some written archived narratives and maps associated with the area, not least those concerned with delineating and zoning the landscape in relation to conservation concerns. Drawing out the interwoven relationships between places, people, ancestors, and varied beyond-human natures has powerfully clarified that none of these are distinct and atomised, but rather are rhizomatically associated and generatively connected. Space does not permit more than a brief illustrative glimpse into these densely constitutive interrelationships. By way of an illustration here, and drawing on Sullivan and Ganuses (2021) I invoke below a short series of four sought-out places – Sixori, †Au-daos, Soaub and Kai-as (see Figure 14) – that turned out to be densely connected through past mobilities and genealogies, often in spite of the modernising governmentalities that have come to constrain access possibilities.

Figure 14. Localities of four remembered places – Sixori, †Au-daos, Soaub and Kai-as.



- 58 A high point of the on-site oral history documentation underscoring and woven into this paper was finding **Sixori**, the birth-place of my field collaborator Suro's grandmother |Hairo. The *||gâumais* Sixori effectively kickstarted this deep mapping research when |Hairo began the first oral history interview recorded in 1999 with the words 'I was born at Sixori in Hurubes'. Neither of these names appear(ed) on maps of the area. After several failed attempts to (re)locate this *||gâumais*, eventually we made it to the spring Sixori that in 1999 started this thread of enquiry. Sixori is named after the *xoris* (*Salvadora persica*) bushes that grow around a permanent spring of clear, sweet water and whose fruit provide a filling dry season food. The spring is located in the deeply incised landscape to the south-west of Sesfontein. Finding it on a brutally hot day in March 2015 required triangulating the orientation skills of Ruben Sanib – who remembered Sixori from past visits – and Filemon |Nuab – a younger man and well-known rhino tracker, who knew from present patrols in the area the location of the spring, but had not previously known its name of 'Sixori'.
- 59 As we sat in the shade of a rocky overhang close to the spring Sanib recalled harvesting honey from a hive in the vicinity of Sixori. He was with three older men: Aukhoeb |Awiseb (also called *||Oesîb* after his daughter *||Oemî³⁹⁾*), Seibetomab and Am-!nasib (also known as Kano). Aukhoeb was the brother of |Hairo's mother (Juligen *||Hûri* |Awises). He was living and herding livestock at Sixori, a stock-post (*||gâumais*) linked with Sesfontein / !Nani|aus. *||Hûri* was visiting him when she gave birth to |Hairo, my collaborator Suro's grandmother. The honey cave was west of Sixori. Sanib and companions travelled there to *sam* (to pull) the honey out from this cave, coming to Sixori afterwards to make *sâu* beer with that honey. From Sixori they walked back to Sesfontein through the pass that is called †Au-daos. At that time they didn't have a donkey so they carried the honey in big tins on their shoulders.
- 60 †Au-daos means 'the road between two mountains' – 'dao' is a mountain pass, and '†Ao' is the name of the white-flowered plant *Salsola* sp. which grows here and from which soap can be made⁴⁰. This plant was reportedly gathered in the past by Damara / †Nûkhoen who had been recruited from their dwelling places in the wider *!garob* to

work for an emerging Nama élite as this became established historically in Sesfontein / !Nani|aus from at least the late 1800s. They would make soap from the ashes of the plant, combined with animal fat⁴¹. †Au-daos is a potent place, having been the site where the Nama headman of Sesfontein died after being mauled by a lion here in 1941. The story goes that cattle belonging to a Herero herder were bitten by a lion here and Husab, accompanied by Theophilous ||Hawaxab, Namasamuel and GamāGâub came to shoot that lion. The lion was lying there in a cave nearby and when Husa shot the lion the lion came to Husa and grabbed Husa. The lion dragged Husa to a /narab (*Acacia tortilis*) tree, attacking Husa after he had shot the lion. As the lion was pinning Husa down, Theophilous ||Hawaxab grabbed hold of its ears to try and pull him off. Meanwhile, GamāGâub shot the lion from far away (even though the others told him to get closer) and, although he managed to kill the lion, he also accidentally shot Husa in the side which killed him. When GamāGâub shot Husab, Namasamuel came and took the gun and shot the lion in the ear. When Husa was shot he called for his wife [De-i] and when she came he talked to her and then he passed away. They then brought Husa over to a big *Acacia tortilis* where, it is said, they made the /araxab [stretcher] on which they carried him back to Sesfontein.

- 61 On a later journey we relocated the grave of Aukhoeb, |Hairo's uncle who had been herding livestock of the Ganuses family at Sixori. Aukhoeb died and was buried at the ||an-||huib – the living place – of **Soaub**. Today Soaub is located in the private Wilderness Safaris tourism concession associated with Desert Rhino Camp in the Palmwag Concession, these names telling of the emphasis on tourism and wildlife conservation saturating the area in recent decades. Clearly a large settlement with multiple dwellings in the past, the headman of which was !Abudoeb when Sanib knew the settlement, Soaub was later linked with allocations of reserve grazing to Afrikaans settler farmers, especially in the 1950s (KAMBATUKU, 1996). As Ute Dieckmann (2009) also experienced in her research in Etosha National Park with displaced Khoekhoegowab-speaking Hai||om, Aukhoeb's grave is unmarked but located exactly where Sanib remembered. Like †Ûinab in the 'preamble' with which I opened this paper, Sanib led us with little hesitation to this grave. Its location had clearly lived on in Sanib's memory of past dwelling places, recalled in the present through the possibility and experience of return.

Figure 15. Ruben Sauneib Sanib sits at Aukhoeb's grave at the former living place of Soaub.



Photo: Sian Sullivan, 15 May 2019.

62 **Kai-as**, the fourth and final place described here, was once an important focus of past settlement for ||Khao-a Dama and ||Ubun at the site of a large permanent freshwater spring that used to feed a small garden (Figures 16 and 17). People would congregate at Kai-as after the rains had started, and it was also a key place on routes between locations of key resources. For example, ||Ubun would move between *Inara* (*Acanthosicyos horridus*) melon patches in the !Uniab and Hoanib river mouths via springs at Kai-as and Hûnkab (to the north-west of Kai-as). Ruben Sauneib Sanib and Sophia Obi |Awises recalled how people from different areas (*!hūs*) used to gather at this place to play their healing dances called *arudi* and praise songs called *!gaidi*. These were times when young men and women would meet each other. Times when different foods gathered in different areas were shared between the people, when much honey beer (*!khari*), made from the potent foods of *sâui* (*Stipagrostis* spp. grass seeds collected from harvester ants nests) and *danib* (honey), was consumed (see SULLIVAN, 1999). Thus,

when the ||Ubun and ||Khao-a peoples met in the rain time at Kai-as the ||Ubun would bring *Inara* and share with the others. The *Inara* has oil/fat inside. They would mix the *Inara* and the *sâui* and *bosû* together – it was delicious food!⁴²

63 As Sanib and Sophia described, ‘our hearts were happy here’ (*sida †gaogu ge ra !gaia neba*)⁴³.

Figure 16. Kai-as detail (see Figure 14).



Source: SULLIVAN *et al.* 2019, 10.

Figure 17. Ruben Sanib, Sophia Opi |Awises and Franze |Haen ||Hoëb return to Kai-as in November 2014 and 2015.



Composite image made in July 2017 with the assistance of Mike Hannis, combining original photographs by Sian Sullivan with two 10 x 10 km aerial photographs from the Directorate of Survey and Mapping, Windhoek.

CONCLUSION

... remembering is not only welcoming, receiving an image of the past, it is also searching for it, 'doing' something. (RICOEUR, 2004, 56)

- 64 My intention with this paper has been to bring some ethnographic and historical 'thickness' (cf. GEERTZ, 1973) into debates regarding conservancy establishment in a specific geographical context in west Namibia. In doing so, I have sought to both historicise the land areas concerned, and to (re)inscribe layers of cultural significance now usually occluded from maps and other formalised representations of the area. The diverse local histories articulated above affirm that communal areas of high conservation value 'are "hotspots" not only of biodiversity but of cultural heritage as well' (HECKENBERGER, 2009: 28).
- 65 The French philosopher Gaston BACHELARD (1994[1964]) writes in *The Poetics of Space* that '[i]t is because our memories of former dwelling-places are relived as daydreams that these dwelling-places of the past remain in us for all time'. It has been possible to map the above places and their stories in the present because memories of them have lived on in the day-dreams of people who once lived there (also SULLIVAN, GANUSES, 2021). It follows that if people can no longer go to the physical places of their memories, there is a limit to how long these places can live on as day-dreams. The contemporary moment is instead infused with erasure of the density of cultural meaning with which the landscapes of west Namibia have been known (also see DIECKMANN, 2009: 363). A cursory googlemaps search on the settlement of Sesfontein, for example, pulls up a map from which all the cultural meaning documented above is absent, however much the scale of the map is magnified (Figure 18). Notwithstanding that google here is simply providing information for navigation based on modern road infrastructure, it is noticeable that cultural detail is increasingly stripped away from the maps of the area that most people now see.

Figure 18. Erasure? A googlemap search on Sesfontein today pulls up a mapped landscape devoid of the density of locally known places and cultural meaning.



- 66 (Re)inscribing place names and relocating remembered places and associated memories are political acts, given a complex context of historically overlapping claims to land as well as the links between acts of ‘naming’ and acts of ‘claiming’ where land is concerned (cf. TAYLOR, 2012, p. 170).⁴⁴ Returning to the traces of particular dwelling structures as well as graves at many of these remembered places also stimulates memories for those who once lived there, becoming ‘cartographies of remembrance’ as SLETTO (2014) puts it. At times returning to these places has been emotional. People are reminded of friends and relatives who have now passed on. They also remember previously assumed futures and how these were altered by broader historical processes that were not of their choosing (JEDLOWSKI, 2001). Retaining both material and ideational access to such places is critical not only for utilitarian reasons, but also for the sustenance of biocultural knowledges and affective practices of environmental care (SULLIVAN, 2009, 2017; SINGH, 2013; IMPEY, 2018).
- 67 The Namibian constitution of 1995 is often celebrated for its clear statement regarding environmental care and protection, with Article 95(l) affirming that,
- [t]he State shall actively promote and maintain the welfare of the people by adopting, *inter alia*, policies aimed at ... maintenance of ecosystems, essential ecological processes and biological diversity of Namibia and utilization of living natural resources on a sustainable basis for the benefit of all Namibians, both present and future. (GRN 2014[1990])
- 68 The constitution also includes the right to culture (cf. PAKSI, 2020). Article 19 thus states that ‘[e]very person shall be entitled to enjoy, practise, profess, maintain and promote any culture, language, tradition or religion’, although adding that this is ‘subject to the terms of this Constitution and further subject to the condition that the rights protected by this Article do not impinge upon the rights of others or the national

interest' (GRN 2014[1990]). As observed elsewhere (SULLIVAN, GANUSES, 2021), when the ability to enact and sustain cultural knowledges and practices is linked with access to the places and 'resources' with which cultural expression is entangled, and when such places are sealed off in areas variously protected for wildlife conservation and tourism access, there may be friction between these two dimensions of the constitution. Thus, although great effort in post-independent Namibia has gone into establishing locally-run conservancies from which members can benefit from wildlife-related incomes, cultural and historical dimensions of land-use and value remain relatively weakly entangled with conservation concerns. Awareness of the oral history narratives and 'densities of meaning' 'mapped' in this chapter and elsewhere, could thus open up different realms of value in relation to the conservation and cultural landscapes of west Namibia. One practical possibility, for example, would be to protect and commemorate the graves of known ancestors buried in the Palmwag Tourism Concession and surrounding areas, as these have been mapped through the on-site oral history research reported in this paper. Such acts might illuminate how 'cultural heritage' and an appreciation of peoples' pasts can be connected more strongly, and with mutual benefit, to conservation activities in the area.

- 69 Clearly, and as with other narratives regarding the north-west Namibian landscape, the material shared here can only ever tell a partial story, and indeed one others may dispute – not least in relation to postcolonial considerations of 'voice', 'speaking for' and 'positionality' and the power relations infusing all these dimensions (cf. CHAKRABARTY, 1992; TWYMAN *et al.*, 1999; KINAHAN, 2017). I also do not intend with this analysis to suggest that the oral history concerns related above are the only terms of engagement via which those identifying as Damara / ǀNūkhoen and ǁUkun articulate with, and experience, the establishment of conservancies as an expression of CBNRM in Namibia. Conservancies, as for any locus of governance, are also forums for the playing out of power struggles involving a diverse array of interests, only some of which may intersect with the memory concerns traced above (cf. SULLIVAN, 2003, p. 76; SCHIFFER, 2004).
- 70 To conclude, then, CBNRM initiatives in west Namibia are fostering means by which local people and contexts can enter into globalising political and economic dynamics that place international conservation and tourism value on the natures and landscapes of this area. Whilst participated in and shaped *in situ*, CBNRM emerged as a pragmatic conservation response to impacts on wildlife in the 1970s and 1980s (JACOBSON, 2019). The programme is increasingly designed so as to facilitate access to business income-generating opportunities offered by what HANNERZ (2007) refers to as the globalising 'culture complex' of neoliberalism. Accompanying the changing shape of the programme, are also myriad subtle displacements of cultural and subjective experiences of land that sometimes deepen earlier displacements rooted in colonial and apartheid pasts. It is this simultaneous continuity and complexity that I have tried to explore here for specific circumstances in north-west Namibia, with the aim of bringing into view some different possible connections between conservation and cultural value in this context.

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NOTES

1. The work shared here has had a long gestation. Some of the content was first presented with the title “The “wild” and the known: implications of identity and memory for “community-based natural resource management” in a Namibian landscape’ for a session on ‘Contested Landscapes’ at the conference *Landscape & Politics: a Cross-Disciplinary Conference*, March 2001, Dept. Architecture, University of Edinburgh. It was later presented at a workshop on ‘Environment and Sustainable Development in Southern Africa’ at King’s College London, and most recently as “‘Our hearts were happy here’’: recollecting acts of dwelling and acts of clearance through mapping on-site oral histories in west Namibia’ for a panel on ‘Cultural maps and hunter-gatherers’ being in the world’, at the 12th international Conference on Hunter-Gatherer Societies (CHAGS12), August 2018, Penang Malaysia. I am grateful for comments and suggestions received at these events. I first submitted a version of the paper to the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* in 2008. Despite receiving a generous ‘revise and resubmit’ and three helpful reviewers’ reports, illness and a tight teaching schedule conspired at the time to prevent resubmission to that journal. I would like to belatedly thank the editor and three anonymous reviewers for their constructive engagements. This version of the paper has been substantially rewritten to incorporate recent oral history and archival research, carried out through research projects supported by the UK’s Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), which have enabled me to deepen my exploration of concerns engaged with in earlier iterations of the paper: see *Disrupted Histories, Recovered Pasts* [<https://dsrupdhist.hypotheses.org/>] (2016-2019), *Future Pasts* [<http://www.futurepasts.net>] (2013-2019), *Etosha-Kunene Histories* [<https://www.etosha-kunene-histories.net/>] (2020-2023).

2. The symbols |, ||, ! and † in Khoekhoegowab words indicate consonants that sound like clicks, as follows: | = the ‘tutting’ sound made by bringing the tongue softly down from behind front teeth (dental click); || = the clucking sound familiar in urging on a horse (lateral click); ! = a popping sound like mimicking the pulling of a cork from a wine bottle (alveolar click); † = a sharp, explosive click made as the tongue is flattened and then pulled back from the palate (palatal click).

3. Khoekhoegowab – the language spoken by Dama / †Nūkhoen in Namibia – is a gendered language in which nouns and names ending in ‘b’ are denoted as masculine whilst those ending in ‘s’ are feminine.

4. In 1971 Tinley describes Purros as an uninhabited temporary grazing post, and publishes a photograph of an uninhabited temporary ‘Himba Herero hut made of sticks and cow dung in the Namib Desert at Purros near the Hoarusib River’, stating that ‘[t]hese temporary huts are made

by the pastoralists for the period during which their herds graze the ephemeral flush of desert grass before moving back inland to sites with perennial grasslands' (TINLEY, 1971, 6).

5. Shortly after independence, the glossonym (language name) and former endonym 'Khoekhoegowab' was 'officially reintroduced for the language that had become known as 'Nama' or 'Nama/Damara', 'a dialect continuum with Nama as southernmost and Damara, Hai||om and ǀAakhoe as northernmost dialect clusters'. Khoekhoegowab 'is the sole surviving language of the *Khoekhoe* branch of the *Khoe* family'. See HAACKE, 2018, 133-134.

6. NAN A450 Vol.4 1/28, Manning - Royal Geographical Society, London 19/12/1921, also see HAYES, 2000, 53. Manning's Kaokoveld journeys are mapped and annotated at <https://www.etosha-kunene-histories.net/wp4-spatialising-colonialities>.

7. NAN A450 Vol.4 1/28, Manning - Royal Geographical Society, London 19/12/1921.

8. A 1903 map of north-west Namibia by cartographer Max Groll, drawing especially on the travels of Georg Hartmann, geologist for the Kaoko-land und Minen Gesellschaft (Kaoko Land and Mining Company) – a London-based company represented by Georg Hartmann in strategic alliance with the German colonial governor Leutwein (RIZZO, 2012, 63-64) – similarly includes the name ǀNuǀarus, noting that there is a spring here. On this earlier colonial map, the Otjiherero name 'Okohere' is placed some distance to the west of ǀNuǀarus'. See map reproduced in BOLLIG and HEINEMANN (2002, 274).

9. Identifying terms such as this one carry derogatory associations. After some consideration I have elected to incorporate them when written as such in quoted historical texts *only* where their use in such texts conveys information relevant for present understanding by clarifying the past presence of specific groups of people.

10. Note that this demarcation does not ascribe ownership over the land, which legally remains with the state (see discussion in SULLIVAN, 2002; HARRING, ODENDAAL, 2006).

11. It should be noted that since first drafting this paper the global pandemic of COVID-19 has illuminated some vulnerabilities of CBNRM due to its dependence on international travel and incomes, and the future may invite further reconfigurations of this conservation and tourism model (LENDELVO *et al.* 2020).

12. <http://www.nacso.org.na/conservancies> (last accessed 22 July 2019).

13. The area is home to the largest population of endangered black rhino (*Diceros bicornis bicornis*) outside a National Park (MUNTIFERING *et al.*, 2017).

14. Also see Lindsey DODD's article in this volume in which she problematises the 'fixing' of the past as history when the past was and is process: it is ongoing.

15. Also DELEUZE and GUATTARI (1988[1980]), especially 'plateau' 12, and discussion in SULLIVAN and HOMEWOOD (2018).

16. As such, this research is complementary to the valuable dataset concerning especially waterpoint access by livestock and indigenous fauna generated in an earlier mapping project carried out through visits to 136 settlements in conservancies surrounding the Palmwag Concession (MUNTIFERING *et al.*, 2008).

17. The proximity of Damara Khoekhoegowab dialects compared with Nama decreases with contemporary geographical distance between groups of speakers, and 'northern dialects' (associated with Sesfontein and surrounding area) have been shown 'to share a considerable amount of lexicon with especially Naro of West Kalahari Khoe': both observations point to Damara speaking Khoekhoegowab 'before they encountered the Nama' (HAACKE 2018, 138). Missionary Heinrich Vedder reportedly 'searched the whole country to find distant mountain communities speaking a language other than Nama [and] could not find any' (in LAU, 1979, 23).

18. As related in multiple interviews and oral histories, for example, with Franz ǁHoëb (near ǀOs), 6 April 2014 and Emma Ganuses (!Nao-dâis), 12 November 2015.

19. Interviews with Hildegaart|Nuas (Sesfontein), 6 April 2014 and Emma Ganuses (!Nao-dâis), 12 November 2015.

20. ACACIA Project E1 2007. Digital atlas of Namibia, available on-line: http://www.uni-koeln.de/sfb389/e/e1/download/atlas_namibia/e1_download_land_history_e.htm#land_allocation, based on data from the Atlas of Namibia Project online at http://209.88.21.36/Atlas/Atlas_web.htm (both last accessed on 7 June 2020).
21. Inspection report, Kaokoveld. Principal Agricultural Officer to Assistant Chief Commissioner Windhoek, 06/02/52, SWAA.2515.A.552/13 Kaokoveld - Agriculture.
22. Also '||Hurubes', see Dâure Daman Traditional Authority in HINZ and GAIRISEB (2013, 186).
23. Philippine |Hairo ||Nowaxas (Sesfontein), 15 April 1999.
24. Robert Hitchcock and colleagues record similar reports for the northern British Protectorate Crown Lands of Botswana in the late 1940s, describing the purposeful shooting by camel-mounted police of domestic livestock belonging to Tshwa Bushmen (HITCHCOCK *et al.*, 2017). The self-slaughter of livestock by 'Khoikhoi' so that the animals would not fall in to the hands of white settlers was observed historically in the Cape Colony, for example in 1776 by Swedish botanist Anders Sparrman (as reported in WÄSTBERG, 2010, 184).
25. Manning Report 1917, ADM 156 W 32 National Archives of Namibia, p. 7.
26. As Manning confirms, at 'Khowarib' on 8th August 1917, [a] '[g]ood stream of water which runs in Hoanib at intervals all way from CAYIMAEIS ends here', plus '[a] few Ghodaman natives (Klip Kaffirs or Bergdamaras) in charge cattle post here belonging to Zesfontein Hottentots whose Reserve said to extend as far as this point'. Manning Report 1917, ADM 156 W 32 National Archives of Namibia, p. 6. †Nükhoen and ||Ubun presence at Kowareb in connection with herding livestock in patron-client relationships with Nama families based in Sesfontein is also confirmed in oral histories, for example, Manasse and Hildegart |Nuab/s (Sesfontein / !Nani-|aus), 11 May 1999.
27. This is a literal translation of 'politiek xun'. Andreas is referring to the 1970s enacting of the recommendations of the Odendaal Report which amounted to the establishment of 'homelands' and the redrawing of administrative boundaries in the name of *apartheid* or 'separate development'.
28. Interview with Andreas !Kharuxab (Kowareb), 13 May 1999.
29. Andreas !Kharuxab (Kowareb), 13 May 1999.
30. Andreas !Kharuxab (Kowareb), 13 May 1999. (Nb. 'Dâures' is the Khoekhoegowab name for the Brandberg massif).
31. Philippine |Hairo ||Nowaxas (Sesfontein), 15 April 1999.
32. See BELL (1993[1983]) for the orientation towards 'country' by diverse Aboriginal peoples in Warrabri / Ali-Curang, Central Australia.
33. Also see SUZMAN (1995) who observes this situation for land-dispossessed Hai||om and Sān.
34. This nexus of displacements is traced more fully elsewhere (SULLIVAN, GANUSES, 2020).
35. ||an-||gui.b in HAACKE, EISEB, 1999 : 74.
36. Andreas !Kharuxab (Kowareb), 13 May 1999.
37. Philippine |Hairo ||Nowaxas (Sesfontein), 15 April 1999.
38. It is notable that employment in the NGO Save the Rhino Trust, which operates throughout the Palmwag Concession / Hurubes and wider area, is one of the main current means through which local people are able to continue to access areas for which various permits are now required. The founders of SRT in the early 1980s learned about the locations of springs in this westerly area in part through knowledge passed on by local inhabitants that knew the area, who also became trackers for this organisation. Given that a number of trackers and other employees of this organisation are from families with long histories of association with the area, their employment with SRT is now an important way that local people are able to continue to maintain connections with, and share knowledge about, the area.
39. As HOERNLÉ (1985[1925]) documents for Khoekhoegowab-speaking Nama, parents may be referred to by the name of their children.

40. Philippine |Hairo |Nowaxas (Sesfontein), 15 April 1999.
41. Ruben Sauneib Sanib (Kowareb), 9 March 2015. Soap-making in this way is described by James Edward ALEXANDER (2006[1838], vol. 1., p. 83), at the Nama-influenced reed mat hut of field-cornet Agganbag in the northern Cape, where he finds the ‘three fresh and strapping daughters [of the field-cornet] boiling soap, prepared with fat and the branches of the soap-bush’. A fictionalised account of such soap-making is also conveyed in the Northern Cape novel *Praying Mantis* by the late André BRINK (2006). At †Au-daos reportedly so much of the soap-plant was collected that there is little left here now, although the plant grows extensively further downstream in the Hoanib River.
42. Ruben Sauneib Sanib (|Awagu-dao-am), 18 February 2015.
43. Ruben Sauneib Sanib, Sophia Opi |Awises (Kai-as), 22 November 2014. See *The Music Returns to Kai-as*: <https://vimeo.com/486865709> [last accessed 17 February 2021].
44. An additional politics not emphasised here relates to overlapping and contested †Nūkhoe and ovaHerero claiming of land and pastures, in a context wherein Herero historically both lost access to immense tracts of land into which they were expanding, and deploy naming through praise songs (sing. *omitandu*; pl. *omutandu*) as a means of claiming places and spaces (HOFFMAN, 2009, 117).

ABSTRACTS

Mapping new administrative domains for integrating conservation and development, and defining rights in terms of both new policy and the citizenry governed thereby, have been central to postcolonial neoliberal environmental governance programmes known as Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM). Examples now abound of the complex, ambiguous and sometimes contested outcomes of CBNRM initiatives and processes. In this paper I draw on archival, oral history and ethnographic material for north-west Namibia, particularly in relation to indigenous Khoekhoegowab-speaking Damara / †Nūkhoen and ||Ubun peoples, to explore two issues. First, I highlight the significance of historical colonial and apartheid contexts generating mapped reorganisations of land and human populations for memories of access and use that exceed these reorganisations. Second, I foreground a nexus of conceptual, constitutive and affective relationships with lands now bounded as CBNRM administrative units or ‘conservancies’ that have tended to be disrupted through both past events and as economising neoliberal governance approaches have taken hold in this context. Acknowledging disjunctions in conceptions and experiences of people-land relationships may assist with understanding who and what is amplified or diminished in contemporary globalising trajectories in neoliberal environmental governance. In particular, oral histories recording individual experiences in-depth, especially those of elderly people prompted by return to remembered places of past dwelling, can historicise and deepen recognition of complex cultural landscapes that today carry high conservation value.

Le travail de cartographie des nouveaux domaines administratifs en vue de promouvoir la conservation et le développement, ainsi que la redéfinition des droits dans le cadre des nouvelles politiques et concepts de citoyenneté qui émergent de ce processus, sont deux éléments centraux des programmes s’inscrivant dans un mouvement de gouvernance environnementale néolibérale connus sous le nom de « Gestion communautaire des ressources naturelles » (GCRN)[Ndlr : En

anglais, « Community-Based Natural Resources Management » (CBNRM)]. Aujourd'hui, nombre d'exemples révèlent les effets complexes, ambigus et souvent contestés des initiatives prises et des processus engagés dans le contexte de cette GCRN. Dans cet article, je m'appuie sur des données historiques et ethnographiques collectées dans le Nord-Ouest de la Namibie, et en particulier relatives aux populations locutrices des langues Khoe Damara/ǀNūkhoen, pour interroger ces deux problématiques. En premier lieu, cet article met en lumière l'impact, dans des contextes marqués par le colonialisme et l'apartheid, des réorganisations cartographiques du territoire et des populations sur la mémoire encore vive d'un accès et d'un usage des territoires qui excède les réorganisations et démarcations en question. En second lieu, il met en avant la complexité et la densité des relations conceptuelles, constitutives et affectives avec les territoires aujourd'hui touchés par la création d'unités administratives ou « aires de conservation » liées à la GCRN, relations qui se sont vues affectées et reconfigurées par nombre d'événements passés et par le modèle de gouvernance économique et néolibérale qui s'est fermement implanté dans la région. Reconnaître les disjonctions ainsi créées dans le rapport pratique et conceptuel entre territoires et populations est de nature à permettre une meilleure compréhension de ce qui se voit amplifié ou diminué par les trajectoires mondialistes empruntées par la gouvernance environnementale néolibérale. Plus particulièrement, l'histoire orale qui documente en profondeur les expériences individuelles, et surtout celles des personnes plus âgées inspirées par un retour sur d'anciens lieux d'habitation remémorés, peut historiciser et approfondir la connaissance de territoires culturels complexes qui ont aujourd'hui comme hier une importance cruciale, en termes de protection et de conservation.

INDEX

Chronological index: 19th-21st centuries, XIXème-XXIème siècles

Keywords: maps, memory, affect, identity, rights, land, community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), neoliberalism, neoliberal environmental governance, on-site oral history, cultural landscapes, colonial and postcolonial Namibia, Khoekhoegowab Damara / ǀNūkhoen ǁUḅun

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