

Re-Viewing Resistance in Namibian History brings together the work of experienced academics and a new wave of young Namibian historians – architects of the past – who are working on a range of public history and heritage projects, from late nineteenth century resistance to the use of songs, from the role of gender in SWAPO's camps to memorialisation, and from international solidarity to aspects of the history of Kavango and Caprivi.

In a culturally and politically diverse democracy such as Namibia, there are bound to be different perspectives on the past, and history will be as plural as the history-tellers. The chapters in this book reflect this diversity, and combine to create a remarkable collection of divergent voices, providing alternative perspectives on the past.

Re-Viewing Resistance in Namibian History writes 'forgotten' people into history; provides a reading of the past that reflects the tensions and competing identities that pervaded 'the struggle'; and deals with 'heritage that hurts'.

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EDITED BY JEREMY SILVESTER

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AACRLS

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Contents

List of Contributors.....	v
List of Abbreviations.....	viii
Map of Namibia	ix
Introduction: Re-Viewing Resistance, Liberating History	1
1 Transforming the Traumatic Life Experiences of Women in Post-Apartheid Namibian Historical Narratives	22
<i>Ellen Ndeshi Namhila</i>	
2 Hendrik Witbooi and Samuel Maharero: The Ambiguity of Heroes	38
<i>Werner Hillebrecht</i>	
3 The Vagciriku-Lishora Massacre of 1894 Revisited	55
<i>Shampapi Shiremo</i>	
4 Revolutionary Songs as a Response to Colonialism in Namibia	71
<i>Petrus Angula Mbenzi</i>	
5 Of Storying and Storing: ‘Reading’ Lichtenecker’s Voice Recordings	89
<i>Anette Hoffmann</i>	
6 Colonialism and the Development of the Contract Labour System in Kavango	105
<i>Kletus Muhena Likuwa</i>	
7 Liberals and Non-Racism in Namibia’s Settler Society? Advocate Israel Goldblatt’s Engagement with Namibian Nationalists in the 1960s	127
<i>Dag Henrichsen</i>	
8 The Caprivi African National Union (CANU) 1962–1964: Forms of Resistance	148
<i>Bennett Kangumu Kangumu</i>	
9 Brendan Kangongolo Simbwaye: A Journey of ‘Internal’ Exile	160
<i>Bennett Kangumu Kangumu</i>	
10 The Kavango Legislative Council	170
<i>Aaron Nambadi</i>	

11	The 1978 Election in Namibia	178
	<i>Timoteus Mashuna</i>	
12	Waking the Dead: Civilian Casualties in the Namibian Liberation Struggle	192
	<i>Jeremy Silvester and Martha Akawa</i>	
13	Okongo: Case Study of the Impact of the Liberation Struggle in the Ohangwena Region	207
	<i>Lovisa Tegelela Nampala</i>	
14	The Liberation Struggle Inside Namibia 1966-1989: A Regional Perspective from the Kavango Regions	221
	<i>Herbert Kandjimi Karapo</i>	
15	The Gendered Politics of the SWAPO Camps during the Namibian Liberation Struggle	240
	<i>Martha Akawa</i>	
16	Solidarity with Liberation in Namibia: An Analytical Eyewitness Account from a West German Perspective.....	252
	<i>Reinhart Kössler</i>	
17	Finnish Solidarity with the Liberation Struggle of Namibia: A Documentation Project.....	266
	<i>Pekka Peltola</i>	
18	Colonial Monuments in a Post-Colonial Era: A Case Study of the Equestrian Monument	276
	<i>Helvi Inotila Elago</i>	
	Comment: Colonial Monuments – Heritage or Heresy?	292
	<i>André du Pisani</i>	
19	Heritage Education in the School Curriculum: A Critical Reflection	298
	<i>Gilbert Likando</i>	
	Index	307
	About the cover photograph	317

List of Abbreviations

AAB	Anti-Apartheid Bewegung (West German Anti-Apartheid Movement)
AACRLS	Archives of Anti-Colonial Resistance and the Liberation Struggle
AKTUR	Aksienfront Vir Die Beihoud Van Die Turnhalle-Beginsels (Action for the Retention of the Turnhalle Principles)
ANC	Africa National Congress
CANU	Caprivi African National Union
ELCIN	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia
ELOC	Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church
FELM	Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission
FINNIDA	Finnish International Development Agency
FNLA	Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (National Front for the Liberation of Angola)
GDR	German Democratic Republic
ISSA	Information Service Southern Africa
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola)
NAN	National Archives of Namibia
NUDO	National Unity Democratic Organisation
OMEG	Otavi-Minen-und Eisebahngesellschaft (Otavi Mining and Railway Company)
PLAN	People's Liberation Army of Namibia
SADF	South African Defence Force
SWA	South West Africa
SWABC	South West Africa Broadcasting Corporation
SWACO	South West Africa Company
SWANLA	South West Africa Native Labour Association
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
SWATF	South West Africa Territorial Force
UN	United Nations
UNIN	United Nations Institute for Namibia
UNIP	United Independence Party (Zambia)
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola)
UNSWP	United National South West Party
WNLA	Witwatersrand Native Labour Association
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union

Introduction

Re-Viewing Resistance, Liberating History

Jeremy Silvester

Over two decades have passed since the last battles of Namibia's liberation struggle took place in April, 1989 and Namibia finally obtained its independence from South Africa on 21 March, 1990. Today over half of Namibia's population is under the age of 25.¹ When I first taught history at the University of Namibia in the 1990s the majority of my students had strong (and traumatic) childhood memories of the war.² Today the majority of students at the university are 'born frees' who do not remember the independence celebrations of 1990, let alone the long, twenty-three year, guerilla war that preceded it.

The majority of the population no longer has strong memories of the liberation struggle, but relies increasingly on the construction of a history of resistance that is reflected in written texts, but more pervasively in the spoken word through public speeches, the radio and TV, in public projects of memorialisation and commemorative public holidays.³

History was one of the early conscripts to the nationalist struggle with SWAPO's *To Be Born a Nation* creating a highly influential narrative that interpreted all acts of resistance to German and South African rule as nationalist. In his Foreword to the publication Prof. Peter Katjavivi highlighted the way in which a 'history of resistance' could play a role in nation-building. 'The title is taken from a saying of the Mozambican liberation struggle – "to die a tribe and be born a nation". It encapsulates the drive for unity and the bonds forged through common endeavour and sacrifice that are such vital elements of the national liberation struggle' (SWAPO, 1980, p. iii). The book traced the roots of 'popular resistance' as far back as 1670 and the first meeting between indigenous residents and European travellers on the banks of the Kuiseb River (SWAPO, 1980, p. 151). Independence was thus the culmination of over three hundred years of struggle. Whilst the necessity of discipline and unity was evident during the course of a guerilla campaign against a militarily stronger opponent, this reading of the past reduces the

1 The calculations are based on the demographic figures provided by the World Bank's World Development Indicators. <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators?cid=GPD_WDI>. {Accessed 11 March, 2011}.

2 I was a lecturer in the History Department of the University of Namibia from 1997 to 2005. Since 2005, I have worked as the Project Planning and Training Officer with the Museums Association of Namibia.

3 After independence the commemoration of 'The Day of the Vow' on 16 December was abolished, but Independence Day (21 March), Cassinga Day (4 May), Heroes Day (26 August) and the Day of the Namibian Woman – also Human Rights Day (10 December), were all introduced as public holidays that marked important dates in the struggle for independence.

dynamics of struggle to a simple dichotomy in which characters are presented as either 'Freedom Fighters' or 'Puppets'. The danger is that agency is reduced and the complex political dynamics around issues such as generational conflict, ethnicity, traditional authorities and gender are ignored (Van Walraven and Abbink, 2003, p. 3).

The Archives of Anti-Colonial Resistance and the Liberation Struggle incorporated the nationalist narrative within its lengthy title. The founding premise of the project was the admission that the National Archives of Namibia were dominated by the documentary records of the colonial administrations and that many important oral and written archives that presented oppositional perspectives were absent. The central aim of the project was, therefore, defined as 'filling the gaps' (Namhila, 2004, p. 224). The AACRLS, as it was popularly known, was a joint project between the Namibian and German governments that sought to actively multiply and diversify archival sources and thus 'democratise the archive'. The priorities of the project were to repatriate copies of important archives held beyond Namibia's borders, to support research by young Namibian scholars, to encourage the collection of oral histories of resistance and to support educational projects on Namibian history. The AACRLS achieved a great deal with reference to each of these tasks and it is unfortunate that no comprehensive final report that documented all its achievements was ever produced and made public. Future archivists and historians should also be conscious of Ciraj Rassool's warnings about such documentary projects as documents can become '... divorced from their own history of safekeeping, storage, collection and recollection as they had been passed along or transacted into circuits of distribution within which they shed old meanings and took on new ones'.⁴ The mission of the AACRLS, to incorporate 'subaltern' groups within the nationalist narrative, may itself have created new layers of silence and exclusion.

On 7-9 December 2009, the AACRLS project organised a conference to mark the dawn of the 20th year of independence and the end of the AACRLS project; it included over 44 presentations. The 19 chapters in this volume have been developed from papers presented at that conference and might be viewed as the raw edge of history production in Namibia. The AACRLS project, based at the National Archives of Namibia, has sought to recover archival materials and support new research in order to reshape both the archives and the history of 'The Struggle'. However, the performance of the conference itself was a seminal moment in the history of discussion about the liberation struggle. Active participants in the liberation war drew on their personal memories to engage with work presented by young historians who had mined the archives. It was for example, perhaps the first public occasion, where details of SWAPO's early involvement with UNITA was discussed.⁵ The numerous and extensive interviews conducted by Christian Williams (that provided the foundation for his doctoral thesis) suggest that Namibian leaders are also becoming more willing to present personal perspectives on the struggles within the struggle. The collation of individual insights will provide

4 Ciraj Rassool, 'The Individual, Auto/Biography and History in South Africa' (PhD thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2004), p. 124.

5 The account presented at the Conference by Comrade Nghiyalasha Hauliyondjaba, a former Political Commissar and liaison officer between SWAPO and PLAN. A written account of his version of events can be found in 'Caught in the Eye of a Cold War Hurricane', *Insight*, February 2011.

different views on neglected topics such as the, sometimes tense, relationships between SWAPO and different 'host' nations and liberation movements and a critical appraisal of the operations of the internal security establishment within PLAN that regularly detained SWAPO members (Williams, 2011).⁶

The title of the AACRLS conference, *Moments, Memories and Monuments: Tracing the Footprints to Independence*, suggests a clear linear, chronological, nationalist view of the past as a trail to triumph. History, it presumes, is a series of significant events ('moments') with these events being recalled by participants ('memories') or important historical figures being commemorated ('monuments') to create the footprints that reveal the path to independence.⁷ However, as in the conference that took place in South Africa in September 2011, to mark the centenary of the ANC, the AARCLS conference itself marked a moment when a new generation of Namibian historians and historians of Namibia started to explore new views on the past (Soske, Lissoni and Erlank, 2012, p. 30). In a culturally and politically diverse democracy there are bound to be different perspectives on the past. Different historians will prioritise different moments, select different memories and celebrate or demonise different monuments. History will be as plural as the history-tellers.

The conference provided an opportunity to showcase some of the research of new Namibian history-tellers that has been supported by the project over the years and illustrates the emphasis that was placed on supporting the emerging new generation of Namibian historians. Namibians who have recently obtained doctorates in History include Bennett Kangumu, Martha Akawa, Vilho Shigwedha, Kletus Likuwa, Napandulwe Shiweda and Memory Biwa, whilst others such as Helvi Elago, Timoteus Mashuna, Aaron Nambadi, Herberth Karapo, Ndahambebelela Alweendo, Naitsikile Iizyenda, Hilma Kapuka, Alma Nankela, Romanus Shiremo, Eliot Mowa, Casper Erichsen, Lovisa Nampala and Inger Nyau have completed MAs in History or Archaeology or the Postgraduate Diploma in Museums and Heritage Studies. All these students have produced significant new research and written work providing new insights and perspectives on Namibia's history and heritage. It would be no exaggeration to state that Namibia is experiencing a renaissance of interest in history and heritage. The new wave of Namibian historians, as architects of the past, are well qualified to work on the wide range of important public history and heritage projects that have emerged over recent years.

One of the challenges facing these Namibian historians has been access to archival materials about the more recent (historically speaking) liberation struggle. Namibia does not have an 'access to information' clause such as is found in South Africa's Promotion of Access to Information Act (No. 2 of 2000). The South African Act enables citizens to request access to archival records that concern them, with the emphasis being placed on

6 Christian Williams, 'Exile History: An Ethnography of the SWAPO Camps and the Namibian Nation' (PhD thesis, University of Michigan, 2009).

7 Terence Ranger applied the term 'patriotic history' to the imposition of an unquestionable 'master narrative' as a tool in the construction of a nation in the context of Zimbabwe. Christopher Saunders has expressed the concern that history in Namibia might also be limited to accounts that 'help legitimize the present order' and that 'alternative and critical voices' may be silenced; (Saunders, 2007, p. 26; Ranger, 2004). It is hoped that the present volume indicates that there is actually an ongoing process of historical debate in Namibia within a growing public sphere.

the State to demonstrate to a court of law why a particular file or document should not be made public because, as Richard Callard argues, ‘the state must explain and thereby justify its retreat to secrecy’ (Callard, 2009, p. 2).⁸ The Act has already been used, for example, to ensure that a substantial number of South African documents relating to the attack on Cassinga on 4 May 1978 have been declassified and made accessible to the public. A significant difference also exists concerning the period during which Government records are kept ‘closed’ to the public. In South Africa, members of the public can view files (that do not have additional security classification) after twenty years; in Namibia the public must wait thirty years.

At present many of the crucial documents relating to Namibia’s liberation struggle, such as the archives of the South West African Territorial Force (SWATF), remain in South Africa.⁹ Ironically, it is easier for South African, rather than Namibian, historians to access these important records on the Namibian liberation struggle. In Namibia itself SWAPO’s own archives are currently housed in a private, party archive and have not yet been fully catalogued. It is for these reasons that historians of the Namibian liberation struggle still tend to rely heavily on interviews with participants, rather than documentary evidence, and this trend is reflected in the chapters in this volume that deal with the more recent history. If the many unwritten histories of the liberation struggle are to emerge, then ways will need to be found to make these major archival collections more accessible to new Namibian historians.

Memories of the liberation struggle for Namibia are being written by ex-combatants and many accounts of the war are emerging. Walking into a typical bookshop in Namibia in February 2011, I found seven books giving personal accounts of the experiences of South Africans who were involved in the ‘Border War’, but not a single title that provided a Namibian perspective.¹⁰ The point is that whilst all those who participated in the war, on either side, have powerful, if fading, memories of their experiences, not all memories circulate through the same networks. A visit to a bookshop or a surf on the internet (perhaps, today, an even more pervasive medium) will reveal a cacophony of voices and memories that still reflect South African perspectives on the war. Christopher Saunders has noted the surprising point that no Namibian historian has yet critically engaged with this literature and their pervasive argument that the South African military operations against SWAPO were both ‘justified’ and ‘effective’ (Saunders, 2007, p. 16).

8 Whilst there has not yet been a test case, it does seem possible that Namibians might also be able to seek access to documents through the South African legislation, but in order to do this they need to obtain details of the documents to which they wish to obtain access.

9 The author has, personally, seen extensive shelves of SWATF documents at the South African Army’s Documentation Centre in Pretoria, although efforts to locate Koevoet’s archives have been unsuccessful to date, as they do not seem to be housed at the South African Police Archives.

10 The seven titles available at the CNA store in Swakopmund on 20 February 2011 were: Cameron Blake, *Troepie: Van Blougat tot Bosoupa* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2009); Jannie Geldenhuys, *At the Front* (Johannesburg and Cape Town, 2009); Granger Korff, *19 with a Bullet* (Johannesburg: South Publishers, 2009); Johan Marais, *Time Bomb: A Policeman’s True Story* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2010); Piet Nortje, *32 Battalion* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2003); Tim Ramsden, *Borderline Insanity* (Alberton: Galago, 2009); Jacqui Thompson, *Dit Was Oorlog: Van Afkak tot bosbefok* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2006).

Oswin Namakalu's publication suggests the wealth of detail that can be drawn from interviews with participants (2004). However, Namakalu did not record his interviews, but used a notebook to record information provided by his sources to create a comprehensive description of the major battles that PLAN combatants were involved in during the struggle. A comprehensive oral history project which would allow surviving participants (who were involved on either side) to record their accounts of the war would be an important legacy project for Namibia and a democratic memorial for future generations of the meaning of the war to those who participated in it. The fact that, in 2007, Namibia signed UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage means that Namibia has committed itself to developing effective mechanisms for recording indigenous knowledge and collective memories.¹¹

The central position of the liberation struggle in the collective consciousness of the nation surely means that significant resources need to be committed to achieve this goal and to continue the work that was started by the AACRLS project. It is commendable that the Ministry of Veterans Affairs has, through its Heritage Directorate, already taken the initiative to establish a collection of audio-visual interviews with ex-combatants and those particularly affected by the war. It should also be noted that one of the positive achievements of the AACRLS was the launch of the 'Footprints' series that sought to make Namibian accounts of the past available to a Namibian readership. It is to be strongly hoped that the National Archives of Namibia will obtain sufficient financial support to sustain and expand this series despite the end of the AACRLS funding.¹²

The chapters in this collection originate from differing points of departure. Some derive from work done for an academic thesis and are thus punctuated with references, whilst others are working papers drawn from shorter research or collection projects supported by the AACRLS. However, all the chapters combine to create a beautiful discord of divergent voices providing alternative perspectives on the past. Richard Callard has argued that the trawling of the archives and the collection of new testimony about past events is important for nation-building: '... the digging out of old records is not just of passing academic interest for historians, but also about establishing accountability for past deeds and abuse of power, and that part of the task of establishing accountability in the future is also, therefore, about settling the account of the past' (2009, p. 12). I will, therefore, use the opportunity provided by the Introduction to highlight what, in my view, are some of the most significant points raised by each chapter, but also suggest the ways in which the chapters provide signposts that might lead to further research by young Namibian historians who will continue the important task of debating Namibian history.

- 11 The Convention identifies five main areas (or 'domains') of importance for ICH: 1) Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; 2) Performing arts; 3) Social practices, rituals and festive events; 4) Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and 5) Traditional craftsmanship. South Africa has also emphasised the importance of oral history as an additional area of importance, particularly with reference to memories of the anti-apartheid and liberation struggle (Deacon, 2004, p. 9).
- 12 The three publications produced by the AACRLS in the Footprints Series were Lydia Shaketange, *Walking the Boeing 707* (Windhoek: AACRLS, 2009); Ellen Ndeshi Namhila, *Tears of Courage: Five Mothers, Five Stories, One Victory* (Windhoek: AACRLS, 2009), and a reprint of Vinnia Ndadi's classic account of the migrant labour system and early political mobilisation in Walvis Bay, *Breaking Contract* (Windhoek: AACRLS, 2009).

Ellen Namhila served as Vice-Chairperson of the AACRLS project (which was Chaired initially by Hon. Ben Amathila and then by Hon. Andimba Toivo ya Toivo). Namhila's chapter deals with the process through which she sought to create a new perspective on the liberation struggle by producing a book based on the memories of five women who were intimately involved in the conflict. Namhila's chapter opens this collection by providing an overview of the objectives of the AACRLS project. Namhila previously served as a Director in the Ministry of Education with particular responsibility for the National Archives of Namibia and Namibia's library services and she, therefore, positions the project within the wider context of her ambitions to reconfigure the material content of the National Archives of Namibia which, at independence, was dominated by the documentary paper records of the German and South African colonial administrations. Her chapter reflects on the concept and challenges of creating a 'post-colonial archive' in Namibia.

Namhila's particular interest is in the role that can be played by oral history in addressing silences in Namibian history and absences in the archives. She argues that oral history is essential to address the gender imbalance in the categories of history and the configuration of archives. Yet, she argues further that the recording of narratives is not simply a documentary exercise, but also has a therapeutic and empowering impact on the narrators. Namhila states '... I wanted each woman to feel the power of her own voice' through the transformation of the original interviews recorded in Oshiwambo into a translated typed and published narrative. The fact that Namhila repeatedly interacted with the women whose stories she tells over a number of years means that she is extremely conscious of the moral issues raised by her efforts to resurrect painful memories and the importance of building a relationship of trust. Her descriptions of the women's process of remembering during their conversations suggest the potential damage that can be caused by the pillaging of memory by historians who extract interviews, but never return to the speaker.

One might argue that Namhila's chapter reveals very clearly the mediating role of the historian as the creator of a sequential narrative, even though Namhila admits that when she writes the stories of the five women in the book she writes in the first person. The chapter raises interesting questions about the way in which historians often work with oral history, mediate memory and weave a narrative, rather than present the reader with a transcript revealing the original dialogue and the interaction between the distinct voices of the historian and the narrator.¹³ In contrast to Namhila's chapter the two chapters (by Shampapi Shiremo and Werner Hillebrecht) that deal with the earliest topics rely far more heavily on archival material.

Werner Hillebrecht writes about two icons of early resistance to colonial rule, Kaptein Hendrik Witbooi and Chief Samuel Maharero. He argues for a denser reading of their roles in Namibian history, rather than a 'cartoon' version of the past that threatens to reduce the complexity of these important historical leaders. Hillebrecht makes it clear that his aim is not 'to tear down monuments', but that historians need to address the

13 For an example of a text that conveys the sense of oral history as a dialogue between an interviewer and an interviewee see Elsabé Brink and Gandhi Malungane, *Soweto, 16 June 1976: Personal Accounts of the Uprising* (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2001).

reasons why both men participated in what (with hindsight) nationalists would view as collaboration with the German colonial forces, by actively assisting in the military conquest of other Namibian communities.

The focus in Hillebrecht's chapter on the Hendrik Witbooi diaries illustrates the way in which archives are constructed and yet, at times, also 'accidental' in their accessioning of documents. Witbooi's chapters were fragmented and scattered, but have, gradually, been retrieved and collated by the National Archives of Namibia. Hillebrecht provides the 'biography' of the books that were the first artifacts of Namibia's documentary heritage to be inscribed by UNESCO on their 'Memory of the World' inventory. Fate has been a factor in the survival and recovery of these fragile notebooks. However it was, of course, the iconic status given to Witbooi and his representation as an honourable opponent of Imperial Germany that gave them recognition and make them 'archivable'.

Whilst it can be argued that the writing of Namibian history as a nationalist narrative which culminates in independence is an important vehicle for nation-building, it can also lead to the marginalisation of histories that may not easily fit into this framework. In 1894, ten years after Namibia was formally colonised by Imperial Germany, a massacre took place which left many Vagciriku dead. **Shampapi Shiremo** argues that one of the reasons the massacre has been 'silenced' from Namibian history has been the failure of Namibian historians to write about internal politics and the friction between neighbouring communities that preceded and transcended colonial rule. Shiremo also argues that a further reason for the absence of the massacre from Namibian history books is that the colonial borders fragmented the archival records that relate to many African communities. The case of the massacre is a good example of one of the central concerns that the AACRLS project sought to address. Whilst the massacre features strongly in the community memory of the Vagciriku living in Namibia, crucial documents relating to the massacre were located in the National Archives of Botswana. Furthermore, Shantjefu, the site of the massacre, is located in Angola, suggesting that further research in the Portuguese colonial archives in Luanda (and Lisbon) might reveal more about the massacre.

Petrus Mbenzi's work highlights, ironically, one of the 'gaps' or 'silences' in the archives of the liberation struggle – and that is the songs that were sung by SWAPO activists, both inside and outside the country. Songs are an important part of the intangible cultural heritage of the struggle and could circulate without the risk of being confiscated (unlike posters or other printed propaganda materials). The singing or, perhaps, even the silent memory of the songs could provide a source of strength within communities facing harassment for their political beliefs and could be, in James Scott's term, one of the 'weapons of the weak' (Scott, 1985). Mbenzi reflects on a collection project conducted with the assistance of students at the University of Namibia which resulted in the documentation of over 2,000 'revolutionary songs'. The translation of the lyrics of the songs provides a new perspective to a wider audience on the political culture of SWAPO and the ways in which the struggle was conceptualised and promoted.

Mbenzi presents his interpretation of the role of songs in the struggle within the broader context of the traditional role of songs in northern Namibia (as the majority of

the songs that he has documented are in Oshiwambo). He argues that ‘revolutionary songs’ drew heavily on themes (and tunes) derived from traditional praise songs or Christian gospel music. Importantly, Mbenzi not only discusses the lyrics of the songs, but also reflects on the media through which they circulated and the extent to which they were sung and heard within and beyond the borders of Namibia. Mbenzi not only provides English translations of songs that were originally sung in Oshiwambo, but also interprets the cultural references made in the songs to belief systems and individuals. One of the challenges that Mbenzi faces in his work and that applies to all forms of intangible cultural heritage is that the music and lyrics of songs often change over time. Mbenzi illustrates the way in which gospel music was recycled with new texts, and future research might use older recordings to reflect on the ways in which the lyrics used by SWAPO also changed over time to reflect changes in the leadership of the movement.¹⁴

Annette Hoffmann writes about another neglected and disturbing audio-visual collection from the colonial archive. She describes the efforts of Hans Lichtenecker from Germany to ‘document’ people through the moulding of plaster casts and collection of voice recordings in Namibia in 1931. It seems that Lichtenecker was more interested in the physical sound of the voices that he recorded than the cultural content, with speakers being invited to say ‘something’ into the recording equipment. Hoffman defines this initiative within a broader Western project, often linked with museums, to create an ‘archive of vanishing races’ in which artifacts, body casts, photographs, notes and audio-visual recordings were collected to form an ethnographic archive to document a particular community. Such projects pose questions on the shaping of museum collections that parallel those about archiving practices, and suggest that Namibian academics might find it interesting to interrogate the politics of past and present museum collection policies.

Hoffman focuses particularly on Lichtenecker’s sound recordings and notes the rarity of recordings of the voices of black Namibians from the early twentieth century. At a time when Namibians were politically voiceless, their voices also, literally, remain unheard. The American activist Allard Lowenstein made clandestine recordings of early nationalist leaders such as Hosea Kutako and Rev. Markus Kooper making statements about their political grievances. However, the important difference was that these speakers were interviewed as important community leaders and were consciously presenting their case to an external audience. Hoffman argues that the Lichtenecker’s recordings of people who had been used as models for body casts can also be read as containing subaltern narratives, even though they were composed within a highly controlled situation. The speakers were not leaders and whilst embodied and memorialised through body casting, were disembodied from their individual biographies. Hoffman critically analyses the recordings and highlights traces of agency struggling against the attempt to objectify and classify individuals within a fixed formulaic typology.

14 One might consider, for example, the lyrics found on the long playing record *Onyeka = Namibia Will Be Free* (IDAF, London, 1984) which contains praise of the then SWAPO Vice-President, Mishake Muyongo, with current renditions of the same songs that no longer mention Muyongo (who tried to lead a successionist movement in Caprivi in 1999 and now lives in exile in Denmark).

One point that Hoffman's work unconsciously highlights is the virtual total absence of academic study of audio-visual sources of more recent Namibian history. Whilst quite extensive work has been done on visual sources, audio recordings and film remain under-researched despite the extensive film archives of the National Archives of Namibia and both sound and film recordings from the South West Africa Broadcasting Corporation and the Namibia Broadcasting Corporation. One important national project would be the establishment of a unified searchable national database providing comprehensive coverage of audio-visual holdings that would help stimulate such research.

In **Kletus Likuwa's** chapter, the introduction and development of the migrant labour system in the Kavango region is placed within the context of the location of the region at a geographical location which, in the final decades of the nineteenth century, faced the possibility of inclusion within either the Portuguese, German or British colonial spheres of influence. Likuwa argues that the ways in which the residents of the region were economically recruited into the colonial economy requires an analysis of the friction between these competing colonial powers. He also argues strongly that the efforts to establish a Christian missionary presence within different tribal territories within the region should be viewed as laying the foundations for capitalist economic penetration and colonial political occupation. In Likuwa's analysis the missionaries' demands for access and influence and the recruiting agents demands for labour were both perceived as direct manifestations of colonial domination because they directly challenged the authority of traditional authorities.

Likuwa seeks to explain the background to the reasons why, by 1926, male workers from the region were excluded from work on the diamond fields of southern Namibia and recruited instead by the 'Northern Labour Organisation' that focused on providing labour to the copper mine at Tsumeb and other mines in central Namibia, as well as providing labour for commercial farms and urban areas. He argues that one factor that should be considered in the restructuring of the recruiting system was the agency of workers who resisted recruitment to the south because of the negative reports they received about the working conditions there. Likuwa's work complements the work of Patricia Hayes, which looks at the dynamics of the labour recruiting system in the Owambo kingdoms by considering the dynamic between the recruiters and the recruited and, particularly, the role played by traditional authorities in the system.

Whilst these chapters focus on the frictions caused by early encounters with colonialism in Namibia, the chapters by Dag Henrichsen and Bennett Kangumu deal with the transition from engagements at a local level to the development of a broader nationalist political agenda.

On one level **Dag Henrichsen's** chapter provides an individual biography – the story of Israel Goldblatt whose notebooks documenting his meetings with early Namibian nationalists were recently published by the Basel Afrika Bibliographien (Henrichsen, Jacobson and Marshall, 2010). However, Henrichsen's work also suggests the need for a greater contemplation and problematisation of the racial categories that often form the basis of popular historical analysis in Namibia. Henrichsen asks why there was an absence of a non-racial, liberal tradition in Namibia and considers the factors that

generated ‘white coherence’, rather than taking it as an assumption. Indeed, given the fact that many German-speaking Namibians experienced internment in prison camps for several years during both the First and Second World Wars, the administration’s introduction of land settlement schemes that favoured Afrikaans-speaking settlers (such as the so-called ‘Angola Boers’) and the constant reinforcement of cultural differences between different language groups within the ‘white’ community, there was also plenty of potential for antagonism and division within the settler community.

Henrichsen argues that the framework for opposition within this community was extremely limited. Advocate Goldblatt engaged with political issues, but essentially viewed problems legalistically through the lens of international law. The chapter provides a new perspective on the attempts to base the campaign for Namibian independence on the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, such as universal suffrage, and to seek international intervention prior to the launch of the armed struggle. The chapter emphasises that this form of resistance to the South African occupation of Namibia represented a liberal, rather than a radical, viewpoint. The premise was that reform was necessary to prevent the radicalisation of African nationalist movements and potential threat that this would pose to the existing (racially entrenched) distribution of land and private property. Henrichsen’s chapter dissects the political culture of ‘settler society’ and the boundaries of its imagination that excluded the conception of ‘non-racial’ political activism.

Bennett Kangumu Kangumu provides two complementary chapters that build on his doctoral research. The first provides an overview of the role played by the Caprivi African National Union (CANU) in the liberation of Namibia. The second focuses on CANU’s leader and, later, the Vice-President of SWAPO, Brendan Simbwaye, who was detained by the South African authorities in 1964 and eventually ‘disappeared’ seven years later in 1971. The first chapter provides a historical overview that provides an explanation of why an opposition movement developed that was explicitly rooted in the Caprivi region, and the way in which the criticism of the colonial administration changed over time, and provides the necessary background to explain CANU’s decision to merge with SWAPO. Kangumu’s chapter includes interesting observations on the relationship between the nationalist movement and the traditional leadership of the Caprivi and thus highlights the need for a wider consideration of the relationship between traditional authorities and SWAPO during the liberation struggle.

Kangumu’s bibliographical chapter on Brendan Simbwaye provides a substantive account of a figure who has been surprisingly neglected in Namibian historiography, perhaps because there does not seem to have been the same type of international campaign to maintain public awareness of Simbwaye as there was with leaders such as Nelson Mandela or Toivo ya Toivo who also ‘disappeared’ following their arrest. Kangumu’s work is characterised by the meticulous care with which he has traced the trail through the Namibian archives. However, Kangumu’s research also highlights the fact that many questions from the history of the liberation struggle, such as the sequence of events leading to the presumed death of Simbwaye, will remain unanswered for as long as Namibian historians are not able to easily access and evaluate the South African police and army archives in Johannesburg.

Aaron Nambadi provides the first detailed analysis of the composition and contradictions of 'Homeland' politics through an overview of the history and operations of the Kavango Legislative Council from 1970 to 1979. The chapter is drawn from Nambadi's postgraduate research and is the first work by a Namibian historian since independence that seeks to explore the ways in which the 'Homeland' systems of self-rule impacted on the communities under their authority.¹⁵ Nambadi also attempts to measure the extent to which the system actually devolved any meaningful decision-making powers from the South African controlled administrative structures and the limited political influence of the Windhoek based Legislative Assembly elected by white voters.

Nambadi's chapter is important because it develops an argument regarding the dynamic relationship between 'traditional authorities' and 'nationalist party politics'. The South African political model for the first ethnically based Legislative Councils was built on the foundation of existing traditional political systems. In Kavango, the first members of the Legislative Assembly were all nominated (not elected) by the traditional authorities that represented the five recognised ethnic groups in the Kavango Regions, and the Executive was made up of one representative from each group. The second Council was partly nominated and partly elected. Nambadi avoids a simple nationalist reading of the period that would be drawn towards a critical reading of this political project as a totally inadequate exercise in democratic expression. Instead Nambadi is concerned with suggesting the ways in which the new political structures generated a 'Kavango identity', presented possibilities for changes in political culture, and provided the opportunity to relocate nationalism as an external threat, rather than an emancipatory campaign. The 'Homeland' politics described in Nambadi's chapter provide a useful background to the discussion of the national election that took place in 1978 and which is the subject of the chapter by Timotheus Mashuna.

Up until 1978, only white people were entitled to vote in elections in Namibia. **Timotheus Mashuna** writes about the first election in Namibia, which the South African Administrator-General claimed was 'free', stating that it was based on universal suffrage, and would facilitate the 'transfer of power' to Namibians. Mashuna provides a critical examination of the extent to which the election could be described as democratic and a meaningful development in political culture in Namibia. He notes that the election saw the establishment of the first national electoral roll following a nationwide voter registration campaign, and the first national election campaigns by political parties (although SWAPO and the Namibia National Front held rallies to campaign for support for an election boycott). He argues that the election provided an opportunity for a widespread public debate about the meaning of 'democracy' and the conditions that needed to exist to enable a 'free and fair' election to take place in Namibia, and thus created a forum for political education.

Mashuna's chapter also highlights the significance of the year 1978 in the history of Namibia's liberation struggle. In hindsight, it might be easy to dismiss the 1978 election as a transparent attempt by South Africa to manipulate the democratic process. However, the fact that over 80 percent of the electorate were reported to have voted and

¹⁵ Nambadi's work provides a much more detailed analysis of the content of 'Homeland politics' than was found in earlier work such as that of Tötemeyer (1978).

that the election followed the adoption of UN Resolution 435, meant that it was crucial for the liberation movement that the international community should not interpret this election as reflecting the democratic aspirations of the Namibian people. The fact that the election took place just over six months after the attack on Cassinga had been a major public relations disaster for the South African Government, which was probably one of the key factors that prevented the international community from accepting the election results as a genuine reflection of the will of the Namibian people. The chapter suggests that there is a need for more extensive research into the propaganda war that took place in the months before and after the election to ensure that the international community refused to accept the South African argument that Namibia had obtained its independence in 1978.

One feature of the years leading up to the 1978 election was a clear escalation of violence in northern Namibia.

The chapter by **Martha Akawa** and myself explains the methodology that we used to try and create the first database that would provide Namibia with a list of the names of all the civilians who were victims of the liberation struggle inside Namibia. We, like Helvi Elago, also discuss the ways in which the past is, or could be, remembered and seek to contextualise our research within the context of the ways in which those who died during the Namibian liberation struggle are remembered today through a variety of memorial projects.

Our work developed a strong public history component when a draft list of the names of all those killed was published in a national newspaper.¹⁶ The chapter raises the issue of the public responsibility of historians, particularly when dealing with sensitive history that involves the, historically speaking, recent death of people. One of the responses to the publication of the list was that a number of adults who had lost one or both of their parents when they were a child contacted us to learn more about their deaths.

The project remains incomplete and the chapter maps out the challenges that faced us and the way in which the project might be expanded if further funding became available. Our research faced the challenge of locating source material that was accessible and that provided the actual names of victims – the evidence provided in the newspaper archives that were consulted by the project presented obvious limitations. However, the chapter argues that the research also faced conceptual challenges as we were confronted on a daily basis with the need to define the boundaries of our subject. What were the geographical and chronological boundaries of the liberation struggle and who might or might not qualify to be defined as a ‘civilian’? The chapter simply indicates the choices that we made, but, in doing so, makes clear the subjective nature of the decisions that historians make in the moulding of their narrative texts.

We know that the 1,278 individual cases identified by our research to date do not provide a complete list of those that died during the war and our database is gradually expanding as people contact us with additional names and information. However, in order to make the list as comprehensive as possible it will be necessary to find a way to conduct a comprehensive review of the inquest files in the magistrates courts that

16 Jeremy Silvester and Martha Akawa, ‘Opening Pandora’s Box’, *The Namibian*, 5 November 2006.

investigated cases and provided ‘cause of death’ verdicts in the majority of cases. The chapter also argues that interviews with survivors and the families of victims would also provide more detailed accounts. However, the chapter warns that such research would be likely to raise expectations of compensation that historians are not in a position to directly address. The chapter seeks to present not only some initial research data but also to seriously consider the potential consequences of opening up a new perspective on the past. The chapter’s central argument is that history is a narrative about the past that is experienced in the present and, therefore, its impact on the present should always be theorised by the engaged historian. Whilst history sometimes poses as a science, it can never be an innocent activity.

Lovisa Nampala’s chapter also deals with the impact of the liberation struggle on people living inside Namibia. However, the perspective that her chapter provides is a case study, rather than a national overview. She focuses on the memories of the war in the village of Okongo in Ohangwena Region, an area that was particularly affected by the war following the construction of an SADF base there in 1973. As she is dealing with memories she focuses on a set of interviews that she conducted with residents of the village. In her chapter Nampala argues that the psychological, social, economic and cultural impact of the war on communities should not just be sought in the ‘headline incidents’ in which people were killed, but also in the everyday atmosphere of repression, fear and suspicion that permeated society during the war. Military actions such as the violent enforcement of the nightly curfew or the public display of the corpses of dead guerillas left residents traumatised. Nampala argues that a memorial or a museum (or perhaps a memorial museum) would be an appropriate way to deal with this latent social trauma. However, Nampala’s analysis of oral histories of the period also reveal that not all memories of the South African presence were negative as, for example, some residents argued that they received good medical treatment from the military hospital.

Nampala’s chapter is also significant because she included in her interviews a Namibian who fought throughout the war on the South African side. The demobilisation figures suggest that at least 25,000 Namibians fought in the locally recruited South West Africa Territorial Force (SWATF) and this excludes those who were members of units such as the paramilitary police unit Koevoet or ‘Home Guard’. The numbers can be compared to the 42,000 SWAPO members who returned from exile after the end of the war in 1989 of whom 32,000 were ‘demobilised’ as ex-combatants – meaning, presumably, that the remainder were considered to be civilians (McMullin, 2005). However, few historians have actively interviewed these ex-combatants who could explain the reasons why so many Namibians joined the security forces and provide considerable insight into the ways in which these units operated. Incidents such as the uncovering of the mass graves of unidentified victims of the war at Eenhana, and the role of an ex-soldier in directing the authorities to other mass graves in northern Namibia, illustrate the ways in which such witnesses might provide an alternative perspective of the recent past and provide practical assistance to the mapping of liberation heritage.

Herberth Karapo's chapter provides a second regional perspective that reminds readers of the political complexity of Namibia during the liberation struggle when the limitations of communications and infrastructure (such as the road and rail networks) presented real challenges to young nationalists seeking to weave residents of regions such as the Kavango and Caprivi into a national narrative. Karapo also argues that, given the difficulties of accessing the restricted archival documents of both sides in the liberation struggle, local and regional perspectives are best developed through listening to and documenting oral histories.

Such histories not only provide a sequence of events which are considered to be significant to the oral historian, but also provide insight into the ways in which South African propaganda filtered through society and contributed to what Karapo terms 'a climate of fear'. In one example, the assertion that SWAPO was a communist organisation and therefore hostile to Christianity was visualised in the belief that SWAPO's soldiers might even have 'tails' as the very incarnation of demonic (anti-Christian) forces. The memories that are entwined in Karapo's account of the impact of the war demonstrate the ways in which the banality of violence and the pervasive threat of violence permeated society – the possibility of a landmine explosion on the way to school, unexpected visits by armed men at night whose allegiance was uncertain, or the slap in the face given to a schoolboy by a soldier that still stings decades later!

Karapo's chapter also raises the important issue of the role of the traditional authorities during the liberation struggle, a topic that has been under-researched to date. He argues that traditional leaders were placed in a difficult and ambiguous position. On the one hand, they were responsive to the complaints of their subjects about the abuses of the security forces and the economic grievances of the period. On the other hand, they were also recruited by the South African authorities to serve in administrations of the 'Homelands' that were established as a result of the Odendaal Commission's recommendations, and provided with armed guards.¹⁷ Whilst the impact of the war inside Namibia was considerable many Namibians who went into exile spent most of their time in camps beyond the border.

The presence of a number of former PLAN combatants and commanders was one of the features of the AACRLS conference that added considerable significance and weight to the debates and discussions around the chapters that were presented.

Martha Akawa's research has provoked frank and open discussion about the issue of 'sexual politics' in SWAPO's camps in exile during the liberation struggle. Her chapter tackles the subject from three different perspectives.

The first is her attempt to unpack the social baggage that men and women carried into exile – the conventions and taboos that conditioned gendered relationships and which were framed within the context of both 'traditional' and Christian belief systems. Importantly Akawa does not represent this as a static cultural template, but a contested

17 See *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into South West African Affairs, 1962-3* (Odendaal Commission), RP 12/64, Government Printer, Pretoria, 1964.

one, in which the socio-economic intervention of the colonial state through mechanisms such as the imposition of the migrant labour system, which removed men from their homes and families for long periods of time, had had a significant impact on gender relationships.

The second perspective on the experience of women is drawn from the projection of the struggle in the speeches and publications produced by the liberation and solidarity movements in which they presented 'liberation' as having a particular meaning for women involved in the struggle. Akawa seeks to analyse a gendered concept of freedom – who was to be liberated from what when the liberation struggle was over? The third layer in Akawa's chapter is that of personal testimony based on extensive interviews conducted with women and men who lived in the camps, about their own memories and experiences.

In her argument Akawa does not document or claim that there was extensive sexual abuse in the camps, but she uses material from her extensive oral interviews with ex-combatants to open up a debate about the sexual dynamics of the camps and the ways in which relationships were framed within a camp context. The chapter is not only important for the issues that it confronts directly, but also because it opens up a broader discussion about the political culture of the camps and the systems of security and control that were used to manage those who lived in the camps. Whilst the experience of 'exile' continues to be a central reference point in political debate inside Namibia, there has been surprisingly little academic attempt to describe and analyse the camp experience.¹⁸ Akawa explores the 'culture' of the camps by emphasising the militaristic elements of discipline, security consciousness and suspicion and the hierarchical command structures.

Whilst there have been several publications about the Anti-Apartheid Movement and solidarity movement, their focus has tended to be on South Africa, rather than Namibia, and these publications have been difficult to obtain in Namibia.¹⁹ Exceptions have been the excellent six volume series of publications produced by the Nordic Africa Institute covering the roles of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in the solidarity movement in Southern Africa, which have extensive material relating to Namibia (but which have, to date, not been effectively used by Namibian historians); Vladimir Shubin's work on

18 Recent work that has started to provide new insights into the history of SWAPO's camps include Martha Akawa (2014), *The Gender Politics of the Namibian Liberation Struggle*, and Christian Williams (2009), 'Exile History: An Ethnography of the SWAPO Camps and the Namibian Nation'.

19 For example, on the anti-apartheid movement in the UK, Sweden and the USA see Roger Fieldhouse, *Anti-Apartheid: A History of the Movement in Britain, 1959-1994* (London: Merlin Press, 2005); Hakan Thorn, *Anti-Apartheid and the Emergence of a Global Civil Society* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); William Minter, Gail Hovey and Charles Cobb Jr. (eds), *No Easy Victories: African Liberation and American Activists Over a Half Century, 1950-2000* (Trenton/Asmara: Africa World Press, 2008).

the role of the Soviet Union; and Christopher Saunders' article on the British-based Namibian solidarity movement.²⁰

This publication contains two chapters that provide personal perspectives on the international solidarity movement that campaigned in support of SWAPO for Namibian independence. **Reinhart Kössler** recalls the work of small solidarity organisations in West Germany (as it was at that time), whilst Pekka Peltola provides an insight into the work of Finnish activists, although he focuses more on the ways in which the AACRLS project has attempted to document the history of Finnish support for the Namibian liberation struggle. Ironically whilst the central argument of the Namibian liberation struggle was that Namibia was not a 'Fifth Province' of South Africa, the strategies of many organisations tended to subsume the Namibian struggle within broader anti-apartheid and other issue-based campaigns, and both chapters provide considerable insight into the way in which the solidarity movement in each country intersected with the agendas of other local interest groups and campaigns.

Kössler's chapter, which is based heavily on his personal memories of his own involvement in the solidarity movement, clearly demonstrates the extent to which the solidarity movement included political activists who were often involved in a number of contemporary left-wing campaigns, and this helps to explain why campaigns on Namibia often involved alliances. For example, in the UK in the 1980s, the 'Cancel the Namibian Uranium Contract' (CANUC) campaign enabled the Namibia Support Committee to work with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), which had a much larger membership base, and also with trade unionists organising workers at Liverpool docks who were involved in unloading ships bringing 'yellowcake' (the concentrated uranium powder which is smelted to provide the fuel rods in nuclear reactors) from Namibia. Peltola's chapter also suggest, the different ways in which political dynamics within Finland shaped the form of the solidarity movement there and intersected with wider geopolitical considerations, such as the position of Finland in relationship to its powerful neighbour, the Soviet Union.

Pekka Peltola's chapter provides a systematic explanation of the way in which the Finnish AACRLS Committee approached the process of documentation and offers this as a template for other projects. The proposal should be an important reminder of the need to adequately document the role of other countries, particularly in Africa, such as Ghana, Tanzania, Zambia and Angola, in Namibia's liberation struggle. Peltola highlights the importance of collection and selection in archival work and illustrates

20 Ina Soiri and Pekka Peltola, *Finland and National Liberation in Southern Africa*, (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999); Tor Sellström (ed.), *Liberation in Southern Africa. Regional and Swedish Voices* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999); Tor Sellström, *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa. Volume I: Formation of a Popular Opinion 1950-1970* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999); Tore Linné Eriksen (ed.), *Norway and National Liberation in Southern Africa* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2000); Tor Sellström, *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa. Volume II: Solidarity and Assistance 1970-1994* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2002); Christopher Morgenstjerne *Denmark and National Liberation in Southern Africa: A Flexible Response* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2003); Vladimir Shubin, *The Hot 'Cold War': The USSR in Southern Africa* (Pluto Press, London, 2008); Christopher Saunders, 'Namibian Solidarity: British Support for Namibian Independence', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 35 (2), (2009).

the need for archivists to be pro-active to shape their collections, rather than being perceived as only cataloguers and storage agents. The archives must be refigured.²¹ Whilst the archives are one of the ways in which a nation stores a collective memory of the past, a more publically visible statement is made by the construction of high profile monuments across the landscape.

Helvi Elago's chapter considers the meaning attached to German colonial monuments in 'post-colonial' Namibia with special reference to the 'Equestrian Statue' near the National Museum of Namibia in the centre of Windhoek. She argues that the monument has had 'layers of meaning' attached to it over time and that the decision to move (or even, theoretically to remove) the monument focuses only on the physical presence of the monument and not the intangible cultural significance of the monument to different communities and individuals. She argues that the monument should not be viewed as an uncontested celebration of German colonial might, but an icon that might actually be used to open up public discussion about the past. Elago's arguments suggests the need for further research on the possible plural readings of Namibia's cultural heritage sites, and encourages more multi-vocal interpretative displays reflecting the diverse meanings attached to some of Namibia most iconic heritage sites.²²

Elago's chapter also starts to open up a debate about the ways in which Namibia's cultural heritage is employed in the branding of Namibia as a tourist destination. She suggests that the packaging of Namibia as a destination with a unique 'German' flavour has been a conscious strategy within the tourism industry and contributes to the fact that Germany provides the largest number of overseas tourists to Namibia. Tourism studies in Namibia have largely been limited to the more practical aspects of the hospitality industry and Elago's arguments suggest the need for greater academic engagement by Namibian historians with the ways in which representations of Namibian history and culture are deployed in the tourism sector. Indeed it might be argued that the exported version of Namibian identity owes more to the pervasive ways in which commercial displays and marketing materials 'package' Namibia than to weighty academic dissertations. Namibian historians must engage with the whole range of ways in which historical narratives are produced and circulated. Since Elago wrote her chapter the statue 'has been moved, and not removed' for a second time (on 24 December, 2013, although the decision had already been announced in August).²³ However, the intense debate on social media and in other forums that surrounded this intervention to reshape

21 For a more expansive argument on the need to refigure the archives see Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris and Graeme Reid, 'Introduction', in *Refiguring the Archive*, edited by Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Jane Taylor, Michele Pickover, Graeme Reid and Razia Saleh (Cape Town: David Philip, 2002).

22 Whilst Andreas Vogt has provided a comprehensive descriptive account of recognised national monuments prior to independence, there is clearly a need for more research on the meaning of places to people. The National Heritage Council is working towards a more democratic interpretation of heritage significance through programmes such as the 'Heritage Hunt', which could draw on such research (Vogt, 2004). The 'Heritage Hunt' has produced reports on six of the fourteen regions of Namibia, based on residents' proposals of places that they feel are significant.

23 'Nujoma to get statue in Windhoek', *Namibian*, 27 August 2013; 'Reiterdenkmal must go – Kaapanda', *Namibian Sun*, 24 September 2013; 'Reiterdenkmal disappears overnight', *Namibian Sun*, 26 December 2013.

the heritage landscape reinforces Elago's argument that the contemporary significance of heritage sites is the opportunity they provide to provoke debate about the meaning of the past, and explore the different perspectives of the past held by individual Namibians within a context where dialogue and increased understanding provide a prerequisite for real post-conflict reconciliation.

André Du Pisani provides a critical commentary on Elago's chapter and a film by Tim Huebschle, *Rider Without a Horse*, which was also screened during the AACRLS conference. Huebschle, visually, argued that the monument might no longer be acceptable in a nation where descendants of those who died fighting the German Schutztruppe drive past the statue on their way to work in the nearby Parliament building. His central argument engages with the question posed by the conference panel. Should monuments that were erected to celebrate colonial victories and achievements be embraced as part of our national heritage or removed as symbolic of values that, with a national constitution enshrining human rights and equality, are now viewed as heresy? Du Pisani notes that conflicts over the way in which the past of a country should be remembered often take the form of battles around the construction or destruction (iconoclasm) of monuments, as this is when competing readings of the past are most often publically performed. Du Pisani's argument is developed further in Gilbert Likando's chapter which argues that heritage should feature more prominently in the school curricula.

Gilbert Likando makes a clear argument about the importance of integrating Namibia's heritage, whether cultural or natural, into our education system. Likando argues that Namibia's rich heritage including its heritage sites, oral traditions and museum objects, should be seen as important educational resources. Heritage education, he argues, can help Namibians to gain greater knowledge of (and respect for) the country's cultural diversity and biodiversity and thus play an important role in nation-building. However, Likando also highlights five potential dangers that might emerge during the process of integrating 'heritage' into the curriculum.

One of the threats that Likando highlights is the 'romanticism' of the past that has been one of the common criticisms of the 'heritage industry'. His argument implies that heritage as well as heritage education must allow for alternative readings of past events. Stuart Hall has argued that heritage shapes the nation, but that the nation is an 'ongoing project, under constant reconstruction. We come to know its meaning partly through the objects and artefacts which have been made to stand for and symbolize its essential values' (Hall, 2008 p. 220). Heritage education would, therefore, be at the forefront of the constant debate over the significance and meaning of Namibia's natural and cultural heritage and, therefore, at the very centre of the process through which Namibia's identity is forged and interrogated.

Re-Viewing Resistance in Namibian History seeks to question categories that create a simplified 'cartoon' version of the past. The chapters employ new empirical evidence to suggest new perspectives on the past. As a whole, the chapters present an alternative to a history that focuses on a few individuals at the expense of a wider understanding of the notion of resistance that is more inclusive, by providing regional perspectives in

the tradition of 'history from below'. However, it is hoped that the book will not only write 'forgotten' people into history, but also serve to provide a reading of the past that reflects the tensions and competing identities that pervaded 'the struggle' and created ambiguity regarding those who remained peripheral to it or opposed to it. If readings of the past provide the windows through which society addresses the present, then the ways in which we package the past will be indicative of the way in which we deal with the present.

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