READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE AND SELF-GOVERNANCE BETWEEN OUKWANYAMA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY (1801 – 1900)

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

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ABSTRACT

For the Oukwanyama and other Kingdoms, the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) resulted in restricted trade and movement within Kingdoms which were divided into different colonial territories. This research attempted to identify and document the items most traded between the Ovakwanyama and their neighbours and how trade patterns changed during the nineteenth century; to evaluate and document how some materials and cultural objects were valued as status symbols and whether this was due to the skills needed for their manufacture, the rarity of the materials used or the ritual significance of the material culture, to investigate and document the sources of the items traded and finally, to establish and document the trade routes and the evolution thereof. The examination of material culture sought to provide evidence of regular interaction and trade between the communities. The research, which was framed by the theories of Afrocentrism, Postcolonial Theory and Decoloniality, was carried out using the qualitative research method while combining various research instruments which included an analysis of archival documents, semi-structured interviews and the examination of cultural objects. Although it is common to study trade patterns and movements of tangible materials, which this research found to be amongst others, copper, beads, shells and even people, this research also examined the trade of intangible assets such as ideas, knowledge, and processes such as smithing and jewellery-making. Finally, the prevalent trade items were contingent on the specific period within the nineteenth century, colonial borders, regulations, and accessibility, which influenced aspects such as the demands of the community, the nature of items or concepts being traded, and the trade routes themselves.

Key Words: Material Culture, History, Decoloniality, Trade, Oukwanyama, Nineteenth Century

LIST OF PUBLICATION(S)/CONFERENCE(S) PROCEEDINGS

A list of conference presentations of the research during the study.

1. **9th Namibia Research Day - Research Colloquium** hosted by the University of Basel, Basel Afrika Bibliographien and the University of Namibia on Saturday 01 October 2022, Basler Afrika Bibliographien, Klosterberg 23, 4051 Basel and online via the Zoom online meeting platform.
2. **Engaging the Past, Sharing the Future Summer School**, hosted by Linden-Tuebingen and the University of Namibia on Thursday 13 October at the University of Namibia.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to the late, Isaak Asser Tweuthigilwa Ashipala, my father who believed there was nothing on this planet I could not achieve, my late brothers Shilongo Peuyavali “KaniBal” Ashipala (*Shakawambo*) and Curtis Popyeni “Catty Catt” Yearwood who constantly reminded me of the important of knowledge of self, and to the late Dr Jeremy Gale Silvester, my mentor who spent years trying to make a historian out of me. You win J-MAN!

DECLARATION

I, Ndapewoshali Ndahafa Ilunga, hereby declare that this study is my work and is a true reflection of my research and that this work, or any part thereof has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution.

Ndapewoshali Ndahafa Ilunga  April 2025

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Who Are the Ovawambo?

Within the African context, the seemingly simple inquiry, "Who are you?" (*Oove lyelye*? in Oshikwanyama), carries profound significance. It transcends mere inquiries about one's name; rather, it serves as an entry point into understanding individual identity within the broader social fabric. In many African communities, including the Ovawambo/Aawambo, this question stimulates responses that are intricate narratives, including names, lineage, clan affiliations, geographical origins, and current social standing.

In light of this cultural backdrop, this chapter embarks on an exploration of the question, "Who are the Ovawambo?" Much like the inquiry into individual identity, this question demands a nuanced approach, one that acknowledges the complexities of Ovawambo identity within historical, social, and cultural contexts.

By delving into the multifaceted layers of Ovawambo identity, this chapter aims to unravel the intricacies that define this community and the various kingdoms within the greater community. It recognizes that identity is not static but rather fluid, shaped by historical legacies, contemporary realities, and ongoing negotiations of belonging.

In essence, the question "Who are the Ovawambo?" serves as a catalyst for deeper inquiry, inviting an exploration of the complexities of identity and community, which aids in shedding light on the diverse narratives that shape Ovawambo identity and develops a more nuanced understanding of African cultures and societies in relation to trade and trade routes.

Following the above, the *Ovawambo* (or *Aawambo* – depending on the dialect/language) people in North-Central Namibia are a collective group of kingdoms which are grouped because of their origins, similarities, and proximity to one another. Except for when quoting directly from a written source, this thesis uses Oshikwanyama words and terminology when referring to the different communities, people, and languages. Therefore, the collective group of communities, when not individually identified, is referred to as *Ovawambo*. Based on the results of the Population and Housing Census reports from Namibia (2011) and Angola (2014), the Ovawambo are a Bantu ethnic group of an estimated 1.9 million people, who reside in Southern Africa: primarily modern-day Northern Namibia, and Southern Angola. Nine of the communities/kingdoms with the largest population sizes in Namibia are the Aandonga, Aakwambi, Aanganjera, Aakwaluudhi, Aambalanhu, Aakolonkadhi, Ovaunda, Ovakwanyama and Aambandja. However, there also exist, the Aandombodhola and Aanghwanghwa. Malan (1995, p.16) states that the population consisted of, at the time of the publication of his book *Peoples of Namibia*, "Kwanyama (36.56%), Ndonga (28.66%), Kwambi (11.84%), Ngandjera (7.74%), Mbalanhu (7.38%), Kwaluudhi (5.03%), Eunda and Nkolonkadhi (2.79%) …the Eunda and Nkolonkadhi, occupy the same *tribal* area and share a common *tribal* administration. Other Owambo *tribes* resident in the adjacent Cunene district of South Angola are the Ndombothola, Mbadya or Kwamatwi, Kafima and Vale."

In Angola, the largest communities that fall under the *Ovawambo* umbrella are the Ovakwanyama, Aakafima, Aavale, Aakolonkadhi, Ovaunda, Aambandja, Aambalantu, Ovakwamatwi and Aandombodhola amongst others. Together, the Ovawambo make up the single largest ethnic group in Namibia, making up approximately half of the estimated 2.5 million people. In Angola, however, the

ethnic group is a minority, making up only about 2% of the Angolan population of 33 million people. In both countries, the largest of these communities is the Ovakwanyama.

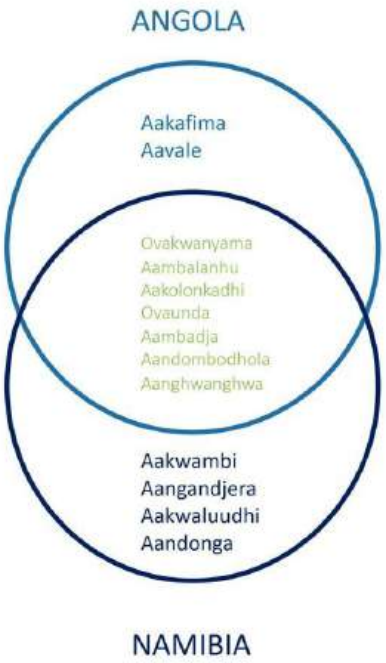

***Figure 1**: An illustration of the distribution of the Ovawambo communities in Namibia and Angola.*

(Source: Own Drawing)

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the Ovawambo communities in Namibia, and Angola and which communities are located in both countries. The illustration is purely for demonstrative purposes and should not be considered an accurate representation of the distribution of the communities between the two countries. This research has not ascertained the exact distribution in each country as such an endeavour is beyond the scope of my work. Although the communities have some obvious similarities, they are equally distinct in their linguistic variances, cultural practices and norms and material culture. They also have distinct territories with clear borders, leaders/rulers, and laws.

It is worth mentioning that while the communities discussed here currently have the largest population in Namibia, one must be cognizant of the fact that over time, migration, social, economic, political and other factors result in the division and mergers of communities. Therefore, this thesis does not assume that the communities/kingdoms listed here are all-encompassing of all the communities that fall under the *Ovawambo* "umbrella" to have ever existed and even, perhaps, to exist in the future. Instead, this classification should be viewed as a snapshot of the communities and the information available about them, during the period within which this research has been conducted.

Lastly, although commonly used to group the languages spoken by the communities that fall under the Ovawambo umbrella, this research acknowledges and emphasises the fact that what is termed as "Oshiwambo", being the language spoken by the Ovawambo communities, is in fact, a group of different languages spoken by the different communities. In his book titled *Peoples of Namibia* (Malan, 1995) argues the same. He argues that there is no lingua franca among the communities. Rather, each community has its dialect or language and what is commonly referred to as Oshiwambo is written Oshindonga. This, he argues, is a result of the close relationship between the different languages and the fact that apart from Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga was the only language that was written in schools and churches by 1995. He further postulates that because Oshikwanyama contained such linguistic differences from Oshindonga, the linguists at the time were motivated to develop a separate written language for the Ovakwanyama. Although some of the languages such as Oshikwambi and Oshimbadja are now used in published literature, the two languages that are still taught in schools and churches to date, remain Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama.

Who Are the Ovakwanyama? Origins and Migration

To understand the Ovakwanyama and how they relate to the *Ovawambo*, one is required to have some knowledge of their origins and how they ended up settling in the area that is now Northern Namibia and Southern Angola.

As a Bantu community (communities that are descendants of the Pro-Bantu-Speaking communities), philosophers argue that the Ovawambo originated from Central-West Africa (currently Nigeria, Cameroon and Gabon) and eventually settled in Southern Africa by way of the Bantu Migration (also referred to by authors such as Koile (2022) as the Bantu Expansion) which saw "a gradual population movement sweep through the central, eastern, and southern parts of the continent starting in the mid-2nd millennium BCE and finally ending before 1500 CE." (Cartwright, 2019, para. 1).

As a result of linguistic, genetic, and archaeological research, it is openly discussed that the migration occurred in at least two major waves, with the first wave travelling towards the Great Lakes in East Africa by tracking either along or across the Northern Border of the Congo Forest. The second wave is understood (Koile, 2022) to have travelled towards the Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo Brazzaville, and Angola, via the African coast, bordering the Atlantic Ocean or, further inland along the many south-to-north flowing rivers that are connected to the Congo River. Historians such as Kautondokwa (2022) argue that numerous smaller waves and groups branched off from the larger groups and travelled further south, towards Southern Africa. One of these groups is the Ovawambo, which is then segmented into various smaller communities, the largest of which, is the Ovakwanyama. The combination of the oral history interviews and the material culture examined during

this research provides evidence supporting this theory of the Ovawambo and consequently, of the Ovakwanyama people.

In addition, the Bantu were subsistence farmers who were known to grow crops such as millet, beans, melons, sorghum, and oil palms. They are also known to be ironsmiths, who make iron and stone tools. According to Cartwright (2019, para. 3) "The Bantu people's iron tools improved agricultural yields and their iron weapons made them formidable military opponents. They were also hunters, animal herders (goats, sheep, and cattle), potters, weavers, and traders, exchanging such goods as salt, copper, and iron ore for those things they needed." These characteristics are still true in Ovawambo today.

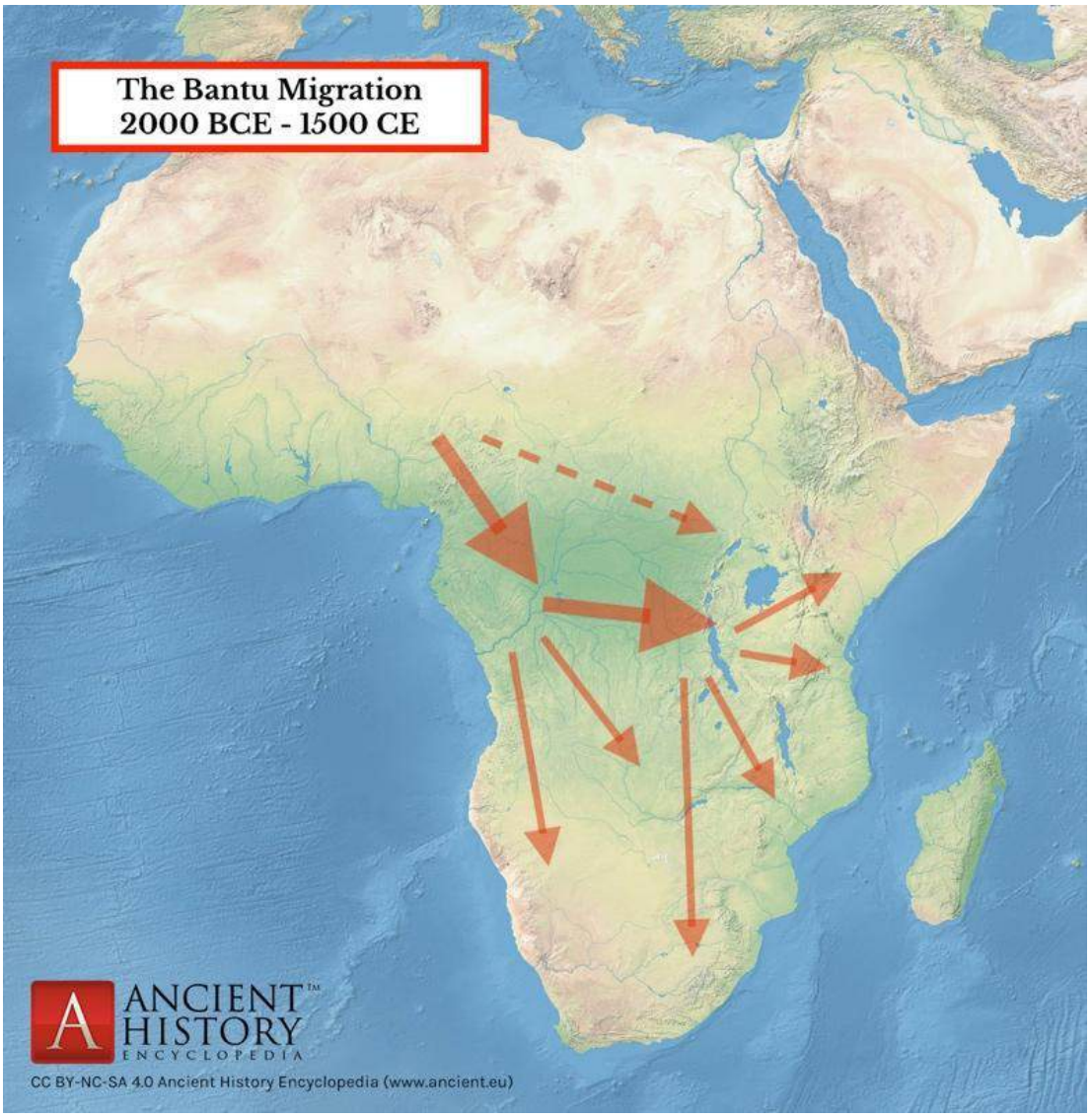

Figure 2: *A map illustrating the Bantu Migration/Expansion*

(Source: Cartwright, 2019)

Figure 2 illustrates the different waves of the Bantu migration, starting with the two major waves of migration, represented by the larger arrows. The smaller arrows represent the secondary waves that followed as groups began to split away from the larger groups and travel towards the East, in the direction of the African Great Lakes and the Indian Ocean, and South, towards Southern Africa. The dashed arrow represents a group that migrated after the initial migration and travelled towards the direction of the African Great Lakes as well.

Unfortunately, due to the lack of written records at the time, the reasons for “push factors” for the Bantu Expansion are not certain currently. However, historians such as Plaatje (2023) theorise that the migration could have been motivated by overpopulation and the increased competition for resources (especially land) which, as subsistence farmers, meant a lack of food. Other possible reasons include the possibility of epidemics, famine, and warfare between rival communities. While migration of such large groups is most influenced by push factors, one cannot discount the possibility of the migration being due to pull factors such as the spirit of adventure and curiosity.

According to the different literature examined such as Patin et. Al (2017) and oral history as detailed during the interviews conducted during this research, the story of the Ovawambo starts with a Genesis (such as the biblical story of Adam and Eve) of a great family, which birthed a great nation. Their community, then, due to different circumstances, based on who you ask, decided to migrate. The consensus, however, appears to be that the community migrated from the African Great Lakes region, specifically from the area which is modern-day Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Figure 3: *A Map of the African Great Lakes and the countries that surround them. (Source: https://www.dw.com/en/contested-waters-conflict-on-africas-great-lakes/a-45245425)*

However, in his article about the Bantu Migration/Expansion, Cartwright (2019) describes the Bantu communities as agriculturalists who hailed from the rainforest and savannah regions near the Niger River in the area that makes up countries now known as Nigeria, Cameroon, and Gabon. He further describes the communities as communities that fashioned tools from both stone and iron while, at the same time,

being subsistence farmers who grew crops such as millet, sorghum, wild rice, beans, oil palms, and melons. In his writing, he argues that the Bantu were also hunters, animal herders (who herded goats, sheep, and cattle), potters, weavers and traders and would trade the goods they produced for such goods as salt, copper, and iron ore. Most of these characteristics remain true to the Ovawambo communities today.

It is, however, fair to assume that perhaps the usual push factors, such as overpopulation, lack of resources, and possibly even the slave trade, caused the first wave of migration. It is also reasonable to postulate that perhaps, the same or similar reasons may have been the push factors for the first migration from the Great Lakes towards southern Africa.

The literature studied for this research such as Oliver (1966) and Hiernaux (1968) corresponds that the migration of the Ovawambo from the African Great Lakes region started during the 1400s and or 1500s. The group moved towards the west, passing through modern-day Zambia, and eventually ended up on the banks of the Kavango River. For different reasons such as political and social differences and disagreements (Bukassa, 2022), some groups broke away from the larger group and remained in certain areas while some returned to previous areas where they settled. It is also generally agreed by the sources interviewed for this research, that this is the migration route taken by this community. However, it is at this point that the oral history accounts start to differ.

Although it is important to note that there are minor differences in the oral and published history at this point, this research process did not identify any significant substantial differences. Some accounts complement one another, while others provide a slight variance, which perhaps speaks to the biases of the source. It can be argued that based on who is telling the story, the slight difference in the story about

what happened to this community once they arrived at the Kavango river, may speak to the identity of the individual telling the story, and how the legitimacy of the community and themselves within the history, is affected by the narrative.

Nagaraju (2016, para. 14) states, “Truth is most times a perception… Welcome a difference in opinion – they are not attacking you – instead, they might know a different viewpoint which can create a balance from a one-sided view.”

Some notable difference in the narratives is visible when the histories are narrated by people from different Ovawambo communities. The narrative also differs slightly when the histories are narrated by missionaries, researchers, and colonial administrators. Of course, based on who is telling the story, one can identify the reason behind the variation in the story. In some cases, the variance elevates a particular ruler or position within society. In other cases, the variation is relevant to the legitimisation of the storyteller and/or the choice of the author to engage with specific sources for their documentation. Therefore, the slight variances were not particularly focused on during this research. This research sought to identify the similarities within the stories, regardless of who was telling the story as this information provided an overview of which information is generally accepted to be factual. Therefore, the research attempted to find a common theme in the narratives regardless of whether the narrator was an author of European descent or an author of African descent. Also, regardless of whether the story was being told by someone who, for this research identifies themselves to be Omukwanyama or not.

The consensus, therefore, is that a group of people moved from the African Great Lakes towards what is now Namibia. The historians interviewed for this research agree that the group first reached the Kavango River, and that was where the first major split began. The consensus is also that before getting to southern Africa and

especially to the Kavango River, the group settled in some places for different periods.

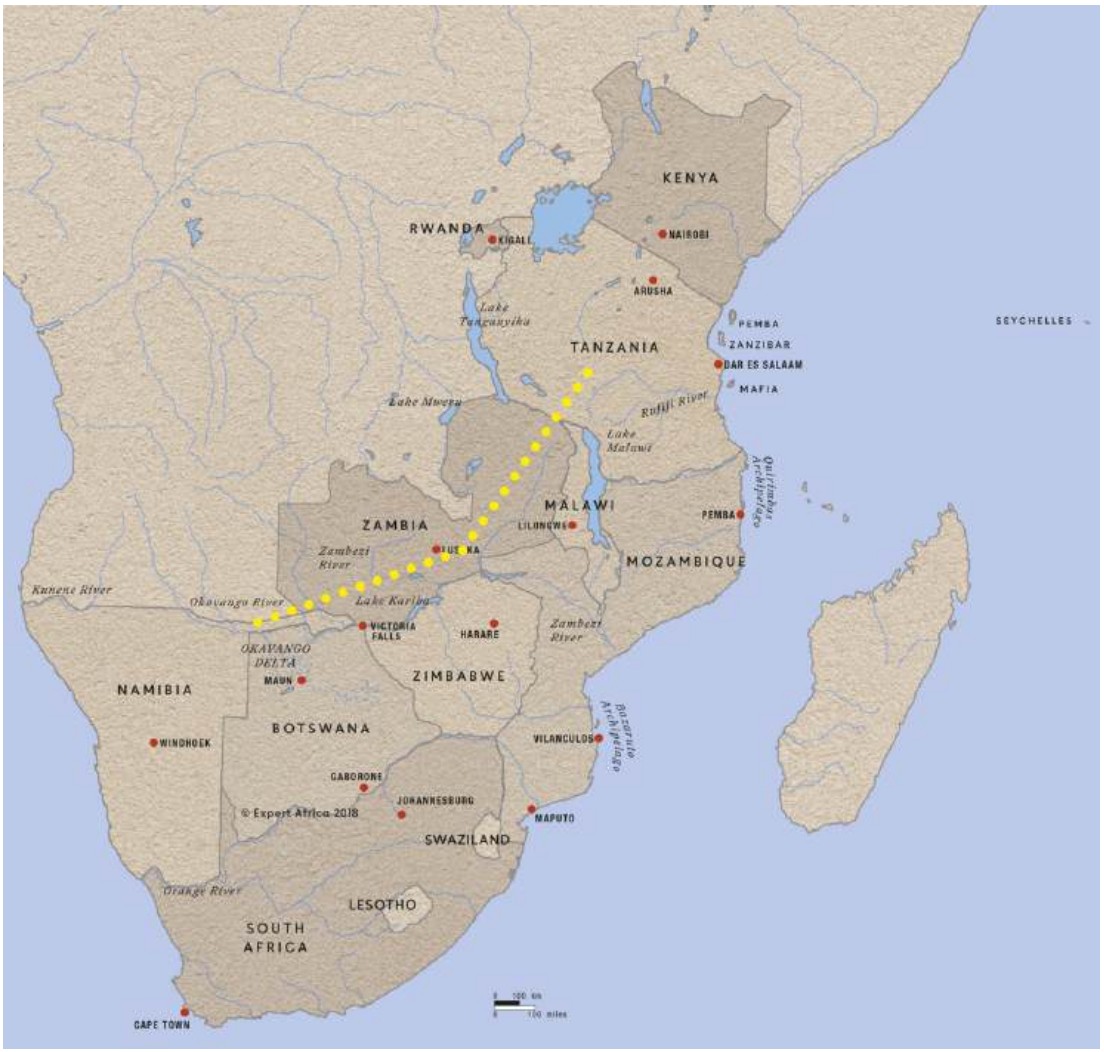

Figure 4: *An illustration of the possible migration route of the Ovawambo from the Great Lakes region to the Kavango River which currently borders Namibia and Angola.*

(Unedited map source: https://www.expertafrica.com/africa/reference-map)

The Map in Figure 4 illustrates the Okavango Basin which includes Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana. This map has been edited to include the yellow dotted path to illustrate the possible migration route. However, it is important to note that the route is simplified for purely demonstrative purposes.

Published Literature

Having lived in Oukwanyama since 1898, Tönjes (1911) attempted to document the oral history of the Ovakwanyama at the time. Tönjes' account of the origins of the Ovakwanyama starts with the group having already settled in what is today the Ondonga Kingdom. Tönjes' account commences with a group of "several persons of royal blood" (Tönjes, 1911, p.35) escaping from Ondonga and finding a place to settle, near the Kunene River. This account further details how after the king of Ondonga passed away, the group was invited to return to Ondonga. However, as legend would have it, they came across the carcass of an elephant that had recently died. After spending some time in the area, the group realized that the land was a good area for hunting. The Tönjes further narrates that after a while, the group of older people returned to Ondonga.

However, the younger people remained in this newfound land. After multiple attempts by the people in Ondonga, to convince the people in the new land to return home, they realized that their attempts were futile. Because the group had been known to have stayed behind for the sake of hunting, they were then referred to as the *O-va-kwa-nyama* which loosely translates to "those who love meat" or "the people of meat".

After some time, the Ovakwanyama also realized that it was providing them with fertile soil for them to plant their crops. As a result, they resolved to make this new place their new home. They appointed a king who was the oldest man at the time, and they formed a Kingdom with an organized social and economic structure.

It has been discussed earlier in this thesis that the Ovakwanyama make up the biggest group of the Ovawambo. Tönjes argues that this is the case because at some point, a group of people from an area called Humbe which is on the other side of the Kunene River, came to the area where the Ovakwanyama had settled and had made the Oukwanyama Kingdom.

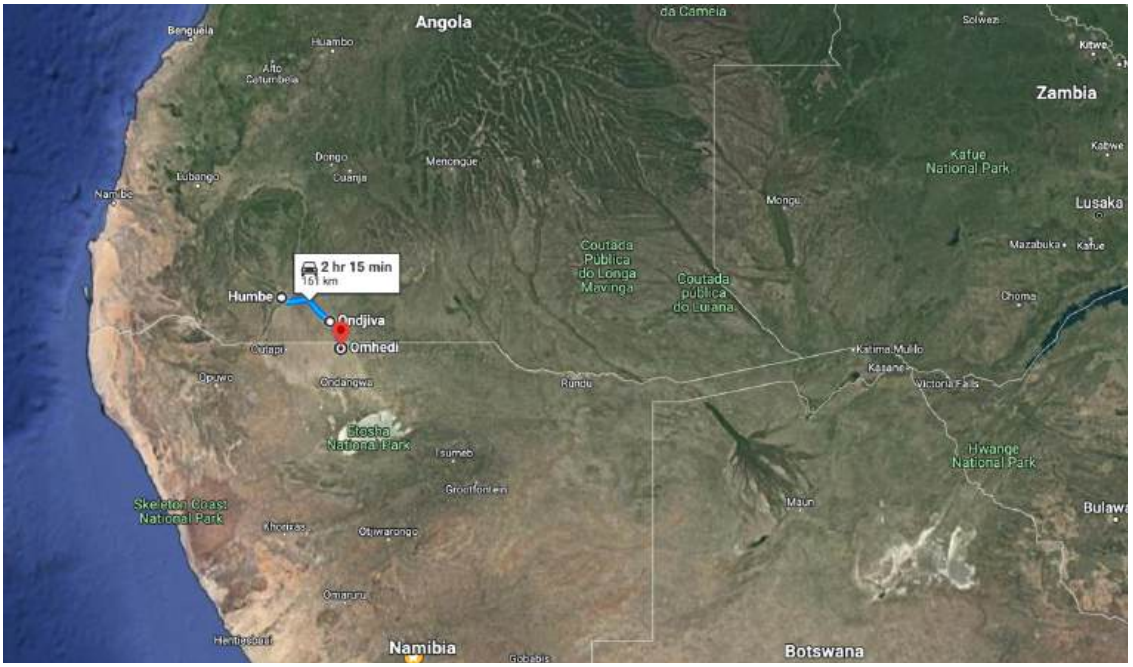

Figure 5: *A map showing the distance between Humbe, Ondjiva and Omhedi, on both sides of the border.*

(Map source: Google Maps)

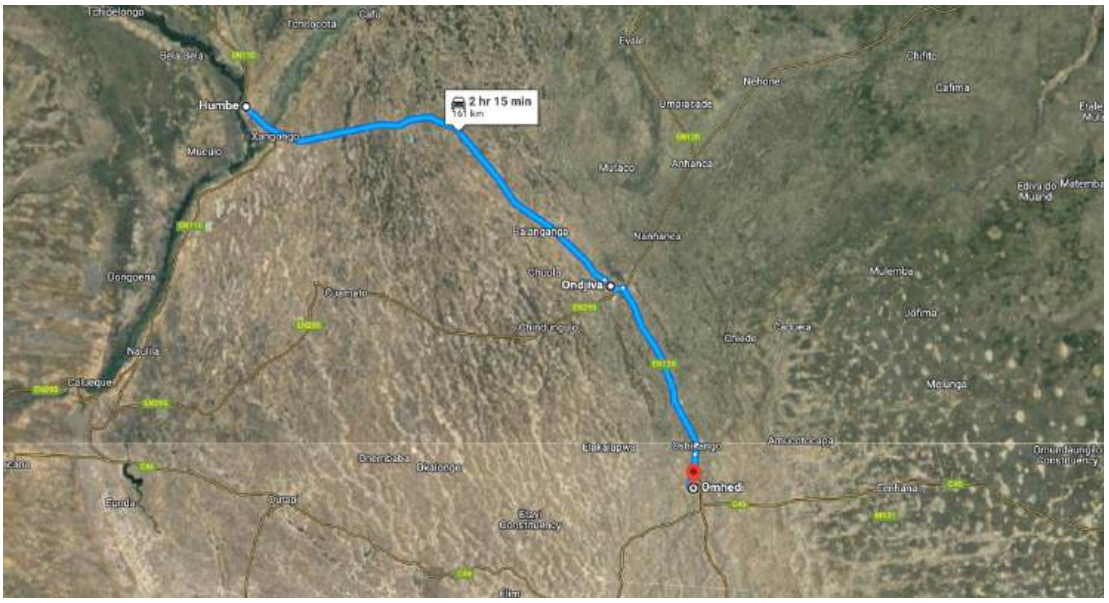

Figure 6: *A closer map illustrating the distance between Humbe, Ondjiva and Omhedi.*

(Map source: Google Maps)

Currently, Humbe is a town and commune in the municipality of Ombadja in the Cunene province which is in Southern Angola. The town is in the Ombadja community which is a community that falls under the Ovawambo umbrella. The Cunene province's capital city, Ondjiva, which is a mere 55 km from the Namibian border, is approximately 106 km from Humbe. Historically, Ondjiva has been said to be a centre for the Ovakwanyama as from when King Kawengeko ruled in the 1600s until the death of King Mandume ya Ndemufayo in 1917, the Oukwanyama royal homestead was in Ondjiva.

The only period in which the Oukwanyama royal homestead was not in Ondjiva between that time was when King Nande ya Hedimbi ruled the kingdom from Omukumbwaimbi from 1904–1911. After the death of King Mandume ya Ndemufayo, the Ovakwanyama did not have a reigning monarch until Cornelius Mwetupunga Shelungu took reign from Omhedi from 1998-2005. Omhedi is on the Namibian side of the current colonially imposed borders. He was then succeeded by

Martha Mwadinomho ya Kristian ya Nelumbu who has also ruled from Omhedi from 2005 until the present. As visible in the figures, Humbe is only a 2 hour and 15 minutes' drive from Omhedi and a 1 hour and 17 minutes' drive from Ondjiva.

Nevertheless, Tönjes narrates that after the reigning king died, the people from Humbe were unhappy that his nephew was appointed King. Given the proximity of where the Ovakwanyama had settled to the Humbe, it can be argued that the Humbe felt aggrieved because they felt that the Ovakwanyama had invaded their land. Therefore, they did not accept the new king as they saw him as an Omundonga. As a result, Tönjes further narrates how after firstly, attempts of force and then later through cunning, the people from Humbe overtook the Kingdom by driving out the king. As a result, Tönjes states that the people of Oukwanyama, have been ruled by people from Humbe up until the writing of his publication

Therefore, according to Tönjes' account, the reason for the size of the Ovakwanyama population is based on the combination of the group that originally left Ondonga to form the Oukwanyama Kingdom and the people from Humbe who then became part of and ruled the Ovakwanyama. However, although Tönjes states that the people from Humbe "had a great following", it is not clear in his writing if the people from Humbe outnumbered the Ovakwanyama.

While referring to the publications and accounts of both Tönjes and Karl Sckär, a German missionary of the Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft who came to Namibia in 1901 and first was stationed in Omupanda in Northern Namibia and Vedder who "abstracted Sckär's account", Loeb (1962, p.342) attempted to fully document the migration story of the Ovakwanyama for the one year he was in Namibia.

Like Tönjes, Loeb also starts his account of the Ovawambo in the African Great Lakes region. He tells the story of a family of six (mother, father, one daughter and

three sons) who lived in the region of the African Great Lakes but had nothing until God gave them cattle, sheep, the sacred fire, and sacred water. He wrote, “The names of the boys were Omukwanangobe, Omukwanaidi, and Omu-kuanhalanga. The name of the girl was Jahnoni(sic)…. The first son supervised the cattle, engobe(sic). Therefore, his name was Omukwanangobe, a child of cattle. The second son supervised agriculture, the growing of grain (oilya). In former times grain was called *eidi*, and therefore the name Omukwanaidi. The third son supervised the sheep, the sacred fire, and the sacred water. The daughter's name, Jahnoni, means the daughter of Honi, that is, of the man with the spear, the killer. Jahnoni was the mother of the Ovakwanghali Clan, People of the Mourning Chant. [The name of the third son was not explained.]” (Loeb, 1962, p. 342).

In this account, the exact reason why the family (which had, at this point, grown into a large community) chose to migrate west is unknown. However, Loeb narrates that the decision was made after a community meeting was held and the group travelled until they reached the Kavango River after which, they travelled south following a stream stemming from the Kavango River which led to them encountering many small lakes. One of these lakes was called Oshimholo and the group settled there for some time. When part of the group decided to continue travelling south, part of the group chose to remain at Oshimholo. After some time, the group that remained in Oshimholo began to split up further with some continuing South until they arrived and chose to settle in Hakafia, and the others arrived and chose to settle in Oshivete. Currently, Oshimholo is on the Angolan side of the colonial border, in Southern Angola. Both communities on both sides of the colonial border still consider Oshimholo to be a sacred place where no one is allowed to cut a tree or settle. In

2012, there were disputes between communities living in Namibia and those living in Angola about the use of the land in Oshimholo.

However, the group that continued to travel south did so until they reached the Etosha Pan, and the rest of the groups continued to split up and travel in different directions, usually following streams, and settling near different bodies of water. According to Loeb's narration, the group that became the Ovakwanyama settled in an area called Nehula. Because the landscape of Nehula was not one in which one could easily find large stones when the group found a stone that they could use to sharpen their axes, they called the stone *Emanya loMundilo Woshilongo shauKwanyama* – this is the Power Stone of the Oukwanyama Kingdom that was returned to Namibia from Finland in 1995.

Loeb's narrative of how the Ovakwanyama got their name differs slightly from that of Tönjes. According to Loeb, "One of the chiefs, Kahnene, finally went with his followers on a hunt deep in the forests. They came to a place called Omalambo, not very far from Nehula, where many wild animals could furnish meat. Kahnene decided to remain there with his people. They did not have much grain for sowing with them but used what they had. Some of them farmed and some hunted. They found many fruit trees, which are abundant in Ovakwanyama Land, and the crops they sowed provided them with their usual porridge. Since some of their cattle remained in Oshamba, Kahnene sent his men back to fetch them. The four chiefs who had stayed in Oshamba had not made an even division of the cattle entrusted to them, but each had taken for himself as many as he had been able to seize and had hastened to drive them into his own cattle enclosure. These chiefs scolded the "Ovakwanyama" (meat devourers) but dared not deprive them of their cattle. Thus, Kahnene and his people recovered their cattle and also received their name."

Furthermore, in the publication titled *Healing the Land: Kaulinge's History of Kwanyama* the late Reverend Vilho Kaulinge discusses the origins of the Ovakwanyama according to the late Reverend Vilho Kaulinge. In his account, Kaulinge collaborates the theory of the Ovawambo coming to northern Namibia and southern Angola from the African Great Lakes. In his interview with Hayes, Kaulinge referred to the migration as having happened with many groups from "the lake region in East Africa" having formed a large body of people who eventually settled in the area that was called Ombwenge at the time and is now known as Ondonga. He further added that the Ovakwanyama were a sub-group of that group who split away to pursue hunting and animal herders (who herded goats, sheep, and cattle), as well as subsistence farmers who farmed crops.

In this publication, much of Kaulinge's account concerning the origins of the Ovakwanyama collaborates with the accounts of other authors who had written about this same history before this interview in the late 20th century. Kaulinge refers to the Aambandja as an offshoot of the Ovakwanyama.

Although conducting their research, subsequent authors of European descent referenced the publications of Tönjes, Loeb, Sckär, Tötemeyer and Vedder in their writing. Such authors such as J.S. Malan who published *Peoples of Namibia* in 1995, and Märta Salokoski who published "How Kings are Made" in 2006 referenced a combination of the publications by Tönjes, Loeb, Sckär, Tötemeyer and Vedder while juxtaposing that narrative with those of African historians such as Jason Amakutuwa and Abraham.

Shifting the gaze to authors of African descent requires highlighting the work of Vilho Shigwedha in his master's thesis published in 2004, titled "*The Pre-Colonial Costumes of the Aawambo, Significant Changes under Colonialism and the*

Construction of Post-Colonial Identity" he states that the first group of the Ovawambo settled in the area sometime during the 16th century. However, unlike the publications discussed above, Shigwedha's (2014, p.6) research highlighted more than the kingdoms, the importance of the clans by stating "However, it should be noted that despite a person's sub-tribal affiliation and the nature of classifications concerning what kingdom he belonged, there was a strong inter-ethical relationship accorded in the individual's clan affiliation. The tribes were all organised along maternal patterns. Therefore, regardless of what kingdom a person belonged to, he still maintained a strong family tie with members of his clans not only within his kingdom but in other kingdoms. Individuals belonging to the same clan were expected to conform to required clan socio-cultural norms and standard costumes. In this regard, clans did not only promote but also integrated and conserved the Aawambo material culture, socio-cultural unity, and their common historical background as belonging to the same ancestry." Shigwedha's sentiments on the significance of clans when discussing the Ovawambo were echoed, in different ways, throughout the oral history interviews with individuals from different Ovawambo communities.

This perhaps illustrates the stark difference between the viewpoint of historians of African descent and those of European descent. At the end of his publication, Loeb (1962, p. 349) references Wells (1950, letter to the author) when he says the following "Ovakwanyama and the Aandonga in their native habitats and found no bipolarity within either group or difference in physical type between the two peoples. He writes, however, that not more than forty per cent of the Aawambo are predominantly Negroid in type, and that more than half show definite Caucasoid features." While many of the publications, identified communities by kingdom,

language and even physical features, the communities themselves found kingship by clan. This remains the case today.

Regardless of which account one chooses to believe when it comes to the separation of the groups after they reach the Kavango River, it is evident that the communities not only interacted with one another continuously over the centuries but also with the communities that they found in the areas to which they travelled and eventually settled. Furthermore, all the accounts agree that most of the communities that exist today are a result of centuries of splitting up to form new communities and kingdoms, returning to one another, and merging with other communities to form new communities, based on the circumstances. The Ovakwanyama, are not an exception to this. As discussed above, this is believed by some to be the reason the Ovakwanyama became the most populous of our communities. This perhaps further provides context as to why the individuals within the communities identify more by their clan than by their kingdom. This, therefore, makes it evident that the concept of ethnic purity was never one which was conceptualized within these communities. Rather, it was something developed for destruction and control by colonial forces.

As a result of being cognizant of this truth, this research started with interviews by trying to ascertain how the interviewees would identify themselves. The first questions asked were. *Can you tell me your full name? What do you like to go by? What should I call you? Can you tell me a little bit about yourself concerning Ovakwanyama? (Family history) and do you consider yourself to be an Omukwanyama?* However, as it is still common to introduce oneself to their clan, most of the interviewees did so without needing to be prompted to.

ORAL HISTORY: THE INTERVIEWEES

"Before we are Ovakwanyama, before we are Ovaunda, before we are anything; we are our clans." (N.H. Kautondokwa, interview, September 18, 2022).

Embedded within the theoretical frameworks of Afrocentrism, Postcolonial Theory, and Decoloniality, this section unfolds the intricate role of clan names within the tapestry of oral interviews. These names emerge not merely as labels but as profound markers of identity and belonging, highlighting the interviewees' ancestral roots and cultural affiliations. Their significance transcends mere nomenclature, serving as conduits for understanding the complexities of individual and collective histories.

As the interviews unfolded, the resonance of clan names echoed throughout, shaping the contours of dialogue and framing narratives within a broader socio-historical context. These names, wealthy with ancestral wisdom and communal memory, serve as anchors amidst the shifting currents of discourse, grounding both interviewer and interviewee in a shared cultural landscape.

Moreover, the deliberate structuring of methodologies, biographies, and interviews as discrete sections is not merely a logistical choice but a conscious effort to create a scholarly space attuned to African conversational norms. In this space, conversations begin not with abrupt interrogations but with a deliberate preamble, allowing for the establishment of rapport and the cultivation of trust. This methodological approach transcends the confines of academic formalism, embracing the nuances of oral tradition and the richness of interpersonal communication.

By affording ample room for introductory dialogues, this approach enables a deeper engagement with non-verbal cues and subtle nuances of communication, enriching

the tapestry of oral history research. It fosters an environment where interviewees are not merely subjects but active participants in the co-creation of knowledge, their voices resonating within a framework of cultural sensitivity and mutual respect.

In essence, the exploration of clan names within oral interviews serves as a gateway to understanding the complexities of African identity and heritage. It is a journey that transcends the boundaries of academia, intertwining strands of history, culture, and memory into a tapestry of shared humanity.

Ms Nehoa Hilma Kautondokwa hails from Eunda with family ties in Okangwati, Ombadja, Ondonga and Ondombothola. She is a published Historian and Heritage Practitioner, who has conducted extensive research in the communities in Northern Namibia and Southern Angola. Omukwamandjila kooMeme/kepata (on her maternal side) and Omukwaanyoka kooTate (on her paternal side); when answering the question "*What do you like to go by",* she responded *Nehoa.* This thesis will refer to her as *Mee Nehoa* as is traditionally appropriate, as a *sign* of respect for both her age, marital, academic, and social status, and the fact that she has children.

Mee Nehoa's account of the origins of the Ovawambo and Ovakwanyama is like that of Dr Vilho Shigwedha. However, she points out that apart from being the biggest Ovawambo community, the Oukwanyama Kingdom was also, for a long time, one of the most powerful and wealthy kingdoms, due to their iron-smelting skills. The iron-smelting skills gave them the monopoly on the production of iron tools such as hoes – which are used in every Ovawambo community and other iron tools.

In addition, Mee Nehoa highlights the fact that although the group of communities is now referred to as Ovawambo, was not a name the communities gave themselves and she argues that at the point of the establishment of that name, the communities did

not see themselves as a collective and had demarcated borders between them. She narrates “the Ovawambo came to Southern Africa before the Ovaherero. When the Ovaherero came, they moved from place to place and everywhere they found people, they were not treated well. However, they eventually came to the place where they found the Ovawambo. Unlike the Ovawambo, the communities they had encountered before, the Ovawambo were kind to them and even offered them a place to stay. Because of their kindness, the Ovaherero named the communities, *O-va-wa-mbo* which loosely translated to *the good people,* or *those people are good*. However, the Ovaherero eventually moved on and settled nearby, in the area that was later called Kaokoland by the Apartheid government.

However, although they had similarities, the communities did not see themselves as a collective and had demarcated borders between them, Nehoa argues that the communities found their kinship within their clans, more than their kingdoms. It is for this reason that most people, until this day, introduce themselves based on their clan and only secondly, usually if prompted to do so, by the kingdom from which they hail.

Finally, Mee Nehoa also highlighted how, because of the frequency and normality for people between different kingdoms to marry and move, one's identity cannot rest in a geographic location. Therefore, the manner used to record and preserve both identity and intangible cultural heritage, was, above all, your clan.

“A language not only carries an entire culture on its back; it is the result of the collective linguistic history of the culture.” Borque (2013, para. 7).

Dr Petrus Angula Mbenzi is a linguist who specialises in Oshiwambo languages. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy and is currently employed in the Department of Language and Literature Studies at the University of Namibia where he teaches courses such as *Language and Culture* and another course called *Oshiwambo*. Because language carries culture, Dr Mbenzi is well-versed in the oral and material history of the Ovawambo people. In his interview for this research, Dr Mbenzi that he has collected this knowledge "mostly from books and my interactions with other people." (P. Mbenzi, interview, September 02, 2022).

Dr Mbenzi was born and raised in Oniipa Constituency, Namibia which is in the Ondonga Kingdom, neighbouring the Oukwanyama kingdom. Omukwanekamba Kepata / kooMeme (on his maternal side) and Omukwambahu kooTate (on his paternal side); when answering the question "*What do you like to go by",* Dr Mbenzi responded *Tate Mbenzi* or *Tatekulu Mbenzi* and for the remainder of this thesis, he will be referred to as Tatekulu Mbenzi. Tatekulu is the word used in Oshiwambo languages when referring to or speaking to an older man. It is both a term of endearment and a sign of respect that can be used interchangeably when referring to a biological grandfather, biological uncle, or any other elderly man. Tatekulu Mbenzi is, therefore, referred to as Tatekulu in this thesis as not only a recognition of his age (because, although older, within the context of the researcher, he would most appropriately be referred to as *Tate*), but rather, as a sign of respect for his wisdom.

Tatekulu Mbenzi reflects on the origins of the Ovawambo by stating that the origin stories can be found in poems and folk tales. He notes that the earliest accounts of written documentation of these forms of intangible cultural heritage were recorded by Finnish and German missionaries. He, however, confirms that the origin of the group stems from the African Great Lakes. His account of the way the group split up

after they reached the Kavango River, is detailed and provides meaning to and the reason behind the name of the different Ovawambo communities. He details them as follows, “You will have poems and folk tales about the origin of the Ovawambo which tell us that they hail from the Great Lakes. But then, some stories talk about the Bantu migration which states that before the Great Lakes, they migrated from West Africa. So, the history that we have about the original migration is mostly recorded in literature, mostly by the Finnish and German missionaries.

They came as a group that later became three groups. The first group reached the Kavango River and found a tree. They laid down on their backs (*only*) to rest, under the tree and decided that they would no longer proceed. Therefore, they're called *Ovakwangali,* because they laid down *Anglia*, they didn't like to move further.

So, the other two groups proceeded. There is one school of thought that believes they proceeded to what is called *Ovambo* at present, moving towards Etosha, the Omuthiya area, and that is where the second separation started. There were two groups, but they were brothers and sisters hmm. They were led by the descendants of Nangombe and the descendants of Kazuu who were believed to be sisters, the daughters of Mugundu.

So, they settled there, near Etosha. However, one group were more interested in cattle herding and growing crops while the other group was mostly interested in cattle herding and farming livestock (such as goats). Therefore, the second group (the Ovaherero, the descendants of Kazuu) moved away from the group near Etosha (the Ovawambo, the descendants of Nangombe) and settled in what is now Kaokoland.

The group that remained decided that they would also split into different groups because they did not always remain in one group. One group used to go out in search of meat, but they would come back. However, there was a time they decided that did

not want to go back anymore. They settled where they were, and they were called the Ovakwanyama.

Then there was a group that was interested in pottery. They settled where they found good clay for pottery, and they were called Aakwambiga (those who make pots). Aakwambi is a short version of Aakwambiga.

It is believed that other groups like Aangandjera interacted with the San, who were the original settlers of Ongandjera. So, because the San knew about iron making, the Aangandjera also learned the skill.

One group thought they belonged to one community. They felt that they looked alike (*oludhi*), and they started to move away and decided to settle somewhere else. These were the Aakwaluudhi.

And then, another group split from our Aakwaluudhi. They used to make steps for the well. However, it was not done properly, and it was said that the steps looked like they were made by women. These are the Aakolonkadhi.

Next, there was a group who were considered to be people who are proud of themselves or thought highly of themselves. They felt that they were exceptional and royal and therefore, had to be independent. These are the Aambalanhu as *Mbalanhu* means royal people.

The Aambandja were a group that broke away from the Ovakwanyama. They were known to like the breast bone (*Ombadja*) of the cow which is a prestigious piece.

Finally, the Aandonga never moved. They settled and said *ndongo ompa*, which means we have settled, and we will not move anymore. The word was originally *Ndongo* but later changed to *Ndonga*.

In literature, you find people mentioning seven groups, which is incorrect. We don't have seven groups; we can start the conversation with at least eight groups, including

the Ovaunda. However, in terms of dialects linguistically varieties, we can talk about, at least, twelve. More groups speak Oshidombodhola and Oshikwnaka. When I was a student here (at the University of Namibia), my lecturer and I would travel there to Onkwankwa. You know, I had disputed as I told him I said I've never heard of them, but he said “OK, let's go, let's find whether we’ll be able to understand the language” because he was not from Namibia, he was South African. So, we travelled to Onkwankwa, and we went to school there was a student in the class, and they spoke a language that I could understand, although the accent was different. I said “But this is not Oshimbalanhu because the accent is different. So, I agreed that this is an Oshiwambo dialect which is not known in the literature.

And then you have got the so-called Ondombothola whom you also find in Ombalanhu. Their language is close to Oshimbalanhu. It’s something between Oshimbalanhu and Oshimbadja. Although some words are similar, you can detect that it’s a nether of the two languages. But you don't need a translator or interpreter when you speak to them. Therefore, we can talk about not only eight dialects, but we can also talk about more than eight dialects. There could also be different groups. Maybe the ninth, tenth and eleventh tribe/group. This requires further investigation.”

Given the period in which the Ovawambo are believed to have arrived in Southern Angola and northern Namibia, Tatekulu Mbenzi’s mention of the term *Ndongo* with regards to the first settlement of this Bantu Group in Southern Africa urges one to question the possibility of the connection of the origins of the Ovawambo; particularly, concerning and in connection with the Ovimbundu people of the Ndongo Kingdom in Angola which neighbours the Ovawambo communities. Historians such as Heywood (2017) and Ford (2022) assert that the Ndongo kingdom was formed in the fifteenth or sixteenth century and was most powerful in

the late sixteenth century. The kingdom stretched west to the Atlantic coast and south of Angola. It is believed that the kingdom of Ndongo's kings bore the title *ngola*, which the Portuguese later used to name the colony *Angola.* The Ovawambo and Ovimbundu remain close neighbours and share linguistic similarities today.

Ms Wilhelmina Ndahambelela Nangula Mukumangeni is a linguist who specializes in Oshikwanyama. Omukwamalanga Kepata / kooMeme (on her maternal side) and Omukwanekamba kooTate (on her paternal side); and Mee Nangula, as she prefers to be called, is a retired Oshikwanyama teacher who was born and raised in the Oukwanyama Kingdom and, as far as she can trace, her lineage is from the Oukwanyama Kingdom.

When discussing the origins of the Ovawambo and Ovakwanyama people, Mee Nangula echoes the oral history shared by Tatekulu Mbenzi. She also recalls a song from her childhood which goes as follows:

"Otwa dja kedu lomatale	We came from the land of the lakes
Tweuya twa tula mOwambo	We settled in Owambo
Peenhele di li nano na mbali	*We settled in seven places*
Ngaashi tadi landula… (x2)	*Like as follows… (x2)*
Moukwanyama fye omo tuli	We are settled in Oukwanyama
Twewaama moushilo	On Eastern side
Ludi la Mushindi wa Kanhene	*The lineage of Mushindi waKanhene*
Ludi li hole eengobe (x2)	*The lineage that likes cattle (x2)*
Otu na mo Ovandonga	We have the Aandonga
Va Nangolo da Hamutenya	Of Nangolo of Hamutenya
Vanhu ve hole oishingifonwa	*People who like doing business*
Vanhu ve hole oipindi (x2)	*People who like marketing products (x2)*

Vakwambi vaHashipala sha Kwedhi	The Aakwambi vaHashipala of Kwedhi
Veli novangandjela	Together with Aangandjera
Tava kunu, tava limi oshifukwa	*They sow, they reap nuts*
Haiti taleni owambo (x2)	*I say, look at owambo (x2)*
Mbalanhu va kenyanana Kamhaku	Aambalanhu grew tired of their leader, Kamhaku
Ve mu xwikila monduda	They burnt him in his hut while he slept
Vakwaaludi novakolonghadi	*Vakwaluudi and Vakolonghadi*
Va ama moutekelo (x2)	*Settled on the West of Oukwanyama (x2)*
Mauni nomapwaka mOwambo	Monkey Oranges and fruit,
Neembu da Katutu	Wild berries of Katutuma everywhere
Eembe neenyandi sha mbelyeta	*Eembe and Eenyandi in abundance*
Twa pandula Namhongo" (x2)	*We thank God (x2)*

This transcription and loose translation from Oshikwanyama to English was provided by Ms Laudika Mukumangeni

Figure 7: QR Code for "Otwa Dja Kedu Lomatale" Audio recording

(Source: Own QR Code)

The audio of the song as sung by Mee Nangula can be listened to by scanning the QR code (Figure 7) above with a cell phone, tablet, or any device which has a camera and internet connection. Although the English translation above is as accurate as possible, for one to fully grasp the context and meaning of the song, one would need to listen to the song itself.

Dr Napandulwe Tulyovapika Shiweda is a senior lecturer in the Department of the Social Science Division at the University of Namibia. Omukwaanime kepata / kooMeme (on her maternal side) and Omukwanangobe kooTate (on her paternal side); Dr Shiweda has published research on King Mandume ya Ndemufayo and the contest over political and social legitimacy in Oukwanyama. Her recent published work has focussed on the history of the migrant and contract labour system in Namibia and although she is of mixed heritage, she identifies most as being Omukwanyama.

While sharing the same overall theory about the origins of the Ovakwanyama as the interviewees detailed above, Dr Shiweda emphasised the significance of the sacred/power stones within the discussions around the origins and migrations of the communities. She stated that the stones would guide the communities and would inform them where they should travel next, and ultimately, where they chose to settle. She also accentuated the connection between the Ovakwanyama and the VaKwangali as she discussed the area referred to as “Uukwangali wa Hanyanga” who was an Omukwanyama princess, as well as the connections between all of the Vakavango and Ovawambo, especially with the similarities between their languages, cultural practices, and names.

Worth highlighting, she further stated that it was and is still possible for one to change their clan. An example of this was Shikesho sha Halweendo who was originally from Uukwambi and came to Oukwanyama. He changed his name and clan to escape to hide from his past. However, having spent his life and been buried in Oukwanyama, he was now an Omukwanyama. Being a seasoned academic and researcher, she used the case of Halweendo to exhibit that although one can attempt to document history as accurately as possible, the accuracy is subject to the reliability of the sources, regardless of the nature of the source. As a result, she emphasizes the crucial nature of cross-referencing information, the necessity to place the source's creation in context (whether it's written or spoken), considering the perspective of the writer/speaker, and maintaining thorough due diligence throughout the research process.

Ms Laimi Ndapunikwa Mbangula is a Bachelor of Arts in Visual Arts student at the University of Namibia. Omukwaudimbe Kepata / kooMeme (on her maternal side) and Omukwamalanga kooTate (on her paternal side), was raised by her grandmother, a clay pot maker and basket weaver in Okongo who inspired her to research, preserve and document both her tangible and intangible cultural heritage. During her undergraduate research, she focussed on Oukwanyama baskets. Her contribution in providing contextual information regarding material culture proved to be invaluable and is subsequently elaborated upon later in the paper.

Dr Lovisa Tegelela Nampala is a historian and linguist originally from Ondonga, who has been living and teaching History and Oshikwanyama at a school in Oukwanyama since 2000. Omukwaudimbe Kepata / kooMeme (on her maternal side)

and Omukwaanime kooTate (on her paternal side), Dr Nampala became a school principal in 2006 and has since done extensive research in the field of Ovawambo identity and pre-colonial-culture-and-spirituality.

Ms Hertha Kaunapawa Bukassa is employed as a Culture Officer in the Directorate of Heritage and Culture Programs in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. Omukwanambwa Kepata / kooMeme (on her maternal side) and Omukwanekamba kooTate (on her paternal side), Ms Bukassa who identifies as an Omukwanyama, can trace her lineage to Ondjiva and Evale.

Expanding on the shared theory concerning the origins of the Ovakwanyama, Dr Nampala delves deeper into the potential push factors that initiated their initial migration. She posits that a primary driving force was likely overpopulation in the sixteenth century. Although Ms Bukassa and all the interviewees concur that the Ovawambo likely commenced their migration earlier and from a more distant point, she also suggests that a portion of the group settled in what is now present-day Zambia for a period before continuing their migration to their current location, a process that began around the fourteenth century.

READING MATERIAL CULTURE

The process of reading material culture requires the studying and close examination of material culture, its features, and the materials that they are made of. In his book titled *Understanding Material Culture*, sociologist Ian Woodward (2007) argues that understanding these elements is key to understanding social relations and culture. He further argues that using the process of reading material culture challenges the historical view that understands the study of materials to be the role of natural sciences, while the study of societies and social relations to be the role of social sciences. Contrarily, he argues that culture and society are shaped and reproduced by the methods in which people create, purpose, and interact with the objects they produce. Hence, when analysing cultural artefacts and the significance of resources in their production, it becomes possible to pinpoint the specific regions where a community dwelled for extended periods, allowing the local resources to play a crucial role in crafting their material culture. Furthermore, by examining how various resources are utilized, one can discern the varying degrees of their availability. It is important to determine whether these availability levels are influenced by natural occurrences in the environment or if they are introduced into society through trade.

Cowrie Shells

A glaring example of resources that substantiate the theory of the migration of the group from the African Great Lakes is the prominence of cowrie shells portrayed in photographs taken of the communities from as early as the late nineteenth century through to the early twentieth century.

Therefore, in light of the intricate connections between material culture and identity formation among the Ovawambo people, this thesis dedicates significant attention to

the examination of cowrie shells. Material culture, particularly the utilisation of cowrie shells, serves as tangible evidence of historical narratives and cultural practices within the Ovawambo community. Notably, the prevalence of cowrie shells in various contexts, from adornment to ritualistic use, underscores their symbolic significance in shaping identity and social structures within the Ovawambo communities. In essence, the inclusion of cowrie shells as a focal point of inquiry underscores their significance as offering unique perspectives on migration and trade patterns and trade.

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.) and Britannica (2022) define Cowrie as a collective of marine gastropod molluscs sea snails of different sizes that are in the family Cypraeidae. The snails are generally found on rocky areas of the sea bed. Although still popular now, cowrie shells have long been important and highly valued in many cultures around the world, especially those near and around the Indian Ocean where the snails are commonly found. The shells, especially the Monetaria monetaare, are so valued that for several centuries, they were used as currency in Africa, Asia and across the world. For example, the Ghanaian cedi (modern-day currency) was named after cowrie shells. Currently, the shells are still used in jewellery across the world, as charms and ornaments, for spiritual, recreational, and ritualistic purposes. In many communities, cowrie shells are believed to have healing properties for ailments such as goitre and are viewed as symbols of womanhood, wealth, fertility and good luck.

In the publication *Stringing Together Cowrie Shells in the African Archaeological Record with Special Reference to Southern Africa,* the authors conclude the following about cowrie shells in Southern Africa, “While the origins of cowries in southern Africa remain difficult to provenance, evidence of the circulation and use of M. annulus cowries in the interior of east and central Africa from the early first

millennium CE gives strong precedence to the likelihood that cowries were collected from the East African coastline, where they occur naturally in abundance, and exchanged inland." (Chirikure, Bandama, Nyamushosho and Mofett, 2021, p. 886).

Figure 8: *A selection of cowrie shells which illustrates some of the variations within the group.*

(Source: Meyer, 2015).

Presently, cowrie shells are not prevalent in the contemporary material culture of the Ovakwanyama or the broader Ovawambo communities. Nevertheless, photographic evidence, such as those featured in the book *Hairstyles, Head-Dresses & Ornaments in Namibia & Southern Angola* by Scherz, Scherz, Taapopi, and Otto (1981), captured images of the communities from the late nineteenth century to the early

twentieth century. These images showcase headdresses and other cultural adornments worn by the Ovawambo and neighbouring communities, providing substantial confirmation that cowrie shells were indeed a part of their material culture during that period.

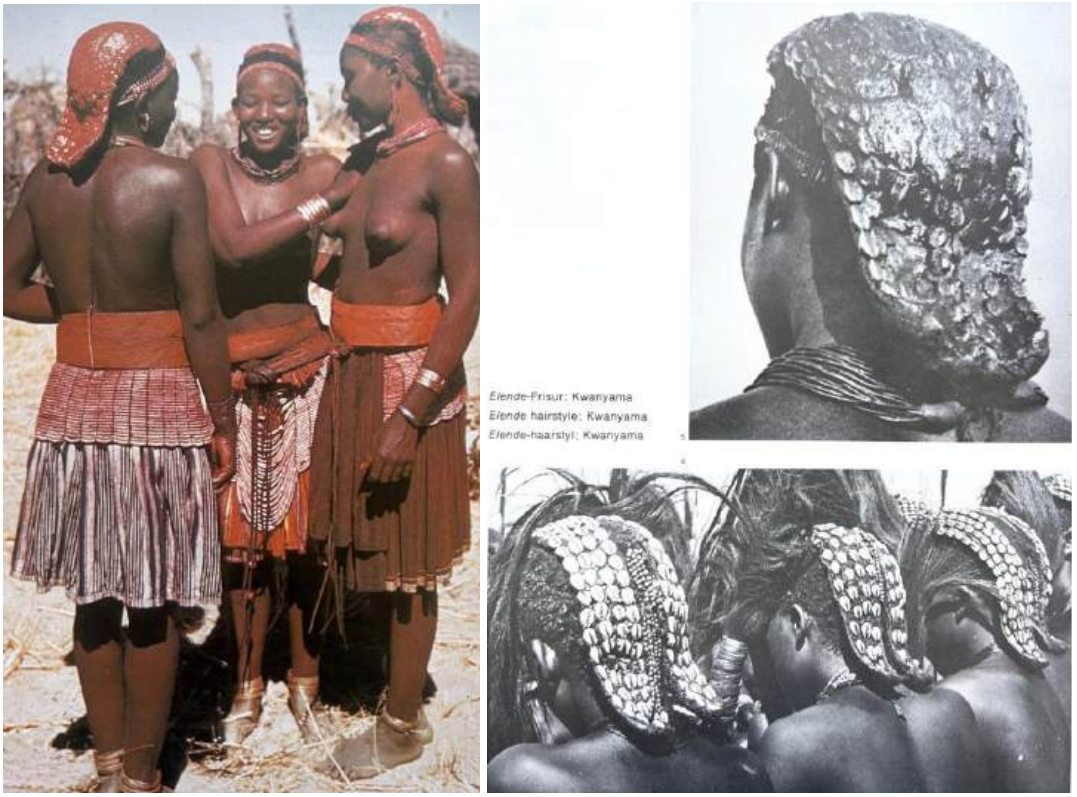

Figure 9: *Ovakwanyama girls wearing the Elende headdress*
(Source: Scherz, Scherz, Taapopi, and Otto, 1981)

The images above are taken from the book titled *Hairstyles, Head-Dresses & Ornaments in Namibia & Southern Angola,* which was first published in 1981 by Scherz, A., Scherz, E., Taapopi, G. and Otto, A. in English, Afrikaans, and German. The photographs in the book which were taken by Scherz were taken in the 1940s. Figure 9 is a combination of five images of Ovakwanyama girls wearing the *Elende* headdress. “When girls reached the age of approximately sixteen, another mixture of fat and *olukula* was rubbed onto their heads. The girls' hair was then lengthened with

leaf fibres of Sansevieria *scabrifolia,* and additional hair was carefully saved over a long period by the girls after it had been shaved off. Cowrie shells were fastened to the ends of these hair and fibre strands with sinews *(olufipa/eefipa).* These shells were called *ombaba* by the Kwanyama and were originally obtained from Angola." (Otto, Scherz, Scherz and Taapopi, 1981, p. 12).

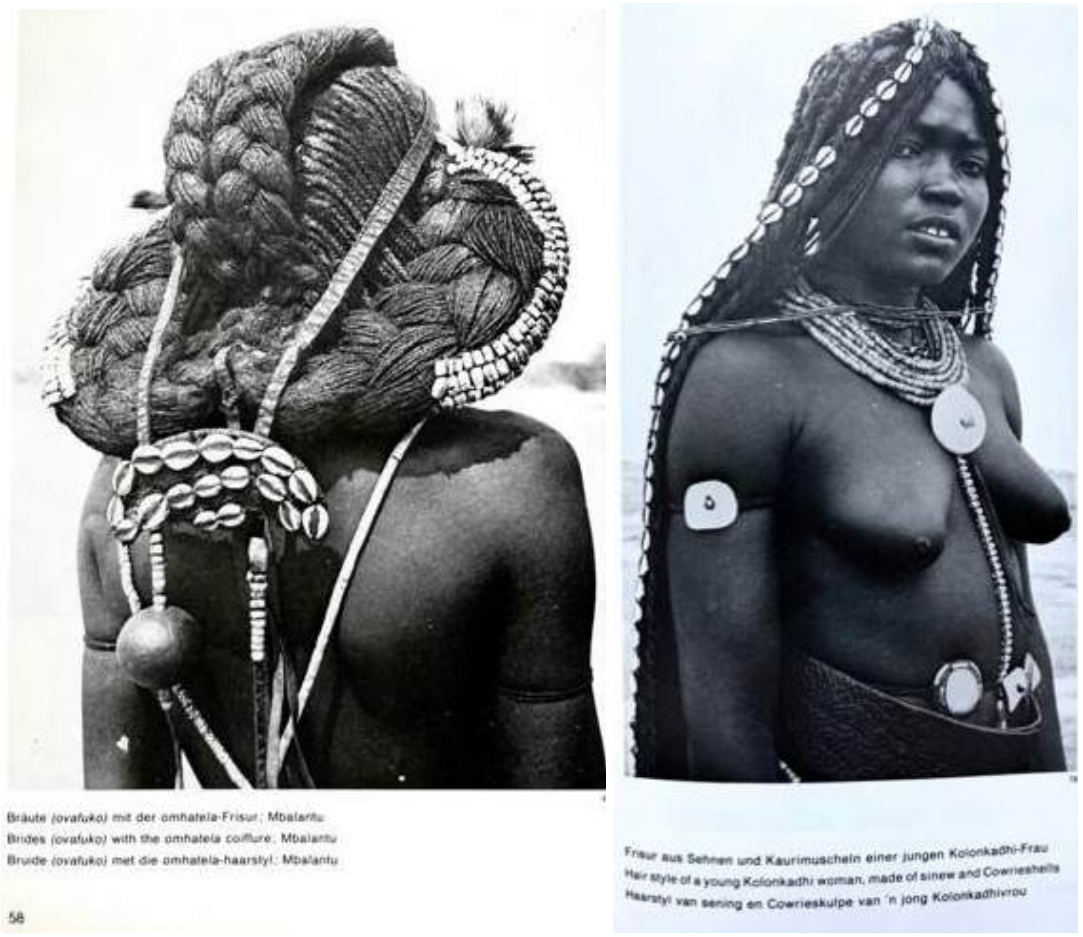

Figure 10: *Aambalanhu and Aakolonkadhi women adorned with cowrie shells. (Source: Scherz, Scherz, Taapopi, and Otto, 1981)*

Figure 11: *Mbukushu, Ovaherero, and OvaHimba women adorned with cowrie shells.*

(Source: Scherz, Scherz, Taapopi, and Otto, 1981)

Figures 10 and 11 show how the cowrie shells were used in headdresses from other Ovawambo (Aambalanhu and Aakolonkadhi), Mbukushu, Ovaherero and OvaHimba communities. Apart from the images in the *Hair-Styles Head-Dresses & Ornaments in Namibia & Southern Angola* publication, there are images and tangible material culture held at the National Museum of Namibia and at the Berlin ethnographic museum from this community that migrated to the Kavango River and beyond, that include or are made completely of cowrie shells. This leaves room for one of two possibilities. Either the Ovakwanyama, Ovawambo, or, more broadly, the Bantu group(s) of that era settled in regions where cowrie shells were commonly used and easily accessible for a duration sufficient to incorporate them into their material culture. Alternatively, cowrie shells could have been introduced to the people in the areas they settled. This suggests that either they brought them with them to their new

settlements, or they established trade routes that facilitated a steady supply of cowrie shells.

Figure 12: *A razor with a cover made from hair, leather, iron, and cowrie shells. (Source: Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, 2019)*

Figure 12 is an image of a razor which was collected by Carl Gotthilf Büttner in 1881 and is currently held by the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin and is listed in the *Ovambo* Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin Report from the database, August 2019. The razor is adorned with cowrie shells, however, because the museum record does not differentiate between which Ovawambo community the razor is from, it is possible that the razor was not, in fact, from any of the Ovawambo communities. However, during the interviews conducted during this research process, none of the interviewees recalled seeing a razor fashioned in this manner amongst the Ovawambo communities before. It is, therefore, possible that the razor was, indeed, from an Ovaherero community because Gotthilf Büttner was a linguist and missionary for the Rhenish Mission Society, who lived amongst the Ovaherero. He translated the New Testament into the OtjiHerero and published writings on the OtjiHerero language structure before he was dismissed in 1889 due to the link between his mission and colonialism which played an active and official role

in the negotiation of "protection treaties" with different Namibian communities (Dierks, n.d.).

Notwithstanding, if one agrees with the original version of the Bantu in Southern Africa, it would not be surprising for the Ovaherero and Ovawambo to have a similar material culture. Furthermore, it is also possible that Büttner did, indeed, collect the razor within an Ovawambo community, during his travels through Namibia and his interactions with different communities. It is also possible that the razor was made especially for trade and, therefore, was fashioned with cowrie shells to increase its sale value; or that it was made specifically as a gift or family heirloom. Another possibility is that the razor was made as a gift or for a special ceremony. While there is a wide range of possibilities, unfortunately, one can only try to theorise and attempt to make educated guesses about the true origins and the story behind this particular razor and the journey that resulted in it currently being held by the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin.

Figure 13: *A wristband or bracelet made from leather, plant fibre and cowrie shells.*

(Source: Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, 2019)

The bracelet in Figure 13, made from leather, plant fibre and cowrie shells, was collected by Georg Hartmann in 1898 and is currently held by the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin. It is also one of the artefacts listed under the *Ovambo* Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin Report from the database provided in August 2019. Like the razor in Figure 10, none of the interviewees confirmed having seen or used a bracelet such as this, amongst the Ovawambo communities. Yet, similar wristbands, as well as other jewellery items are held by the National Museum of Namibia. Still, the items are attributed to the Mbukushu of the Kavango region which further corroborates the notion that this group of people were once united as one, and at some point, split into different groups.

The Division of The Ovakwanyama – The Berlin Conference Of 1884-1885

The Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 formally sanctioned European colonization and trade in Africa. The General Act of the Berlin Conference, which was the main outcome of the conference, has often been argued to have been the formalisation of the Scramble for Africa (the invasion, occupation, division, and colonization of African territory by colonial European empires). The conference contributed to the start of a period of intensified colonial activity by European colonial powers, which disregarded and/or ignored most existing systems of self-governance and the autonomy of African communities. One of the communities that were severely affected by the Berlin Conference and the aftermath thereof was the kingdom of the Ovakwanyama people.

However, before physical colonial borders were imposed on the African continent by the Berlin Conference, Africans moved and traded freely amongst each other, across

the continent. The introduction of the new colonial borders restricted trade and movement, even within Kingdoms and ethnic groups which found themselves split into different parts; with one part of the kingdom now being in one colony and the other part(s) being in another colony or colonies.

While the tangible implications emerged at a later stage, the Oukwanyama Kingdom was among the numerous kingdoms on the continent that experienced this division. The majority of the kingdom's territory was allocated to modern-day Angola (then known as Portuguese West Africa), while a smaller portion was designated to Namibia (which was under German administration as German South-West Africa at the time). Because commerce with communities outside the colony in which one resided had become restricted, many existing and up to centuries-old trade routes were decreased, replaced or destroyed by Europeans and colonial powers. Perhaps, more important than the disruption of trade routes, families and communities were torn apart. These communities and families transitioned from being part of a unified kingdom, and in some cases, even a single village, to finding themselves in different countries. This approach was in no way unique to the Oukwanyama Kingdom. It can be surmised that this outcome was not a mere coincidence, but rather a deliberate strategy aimed at weakening the kingdoms to implement a divide-and-conquer approach.

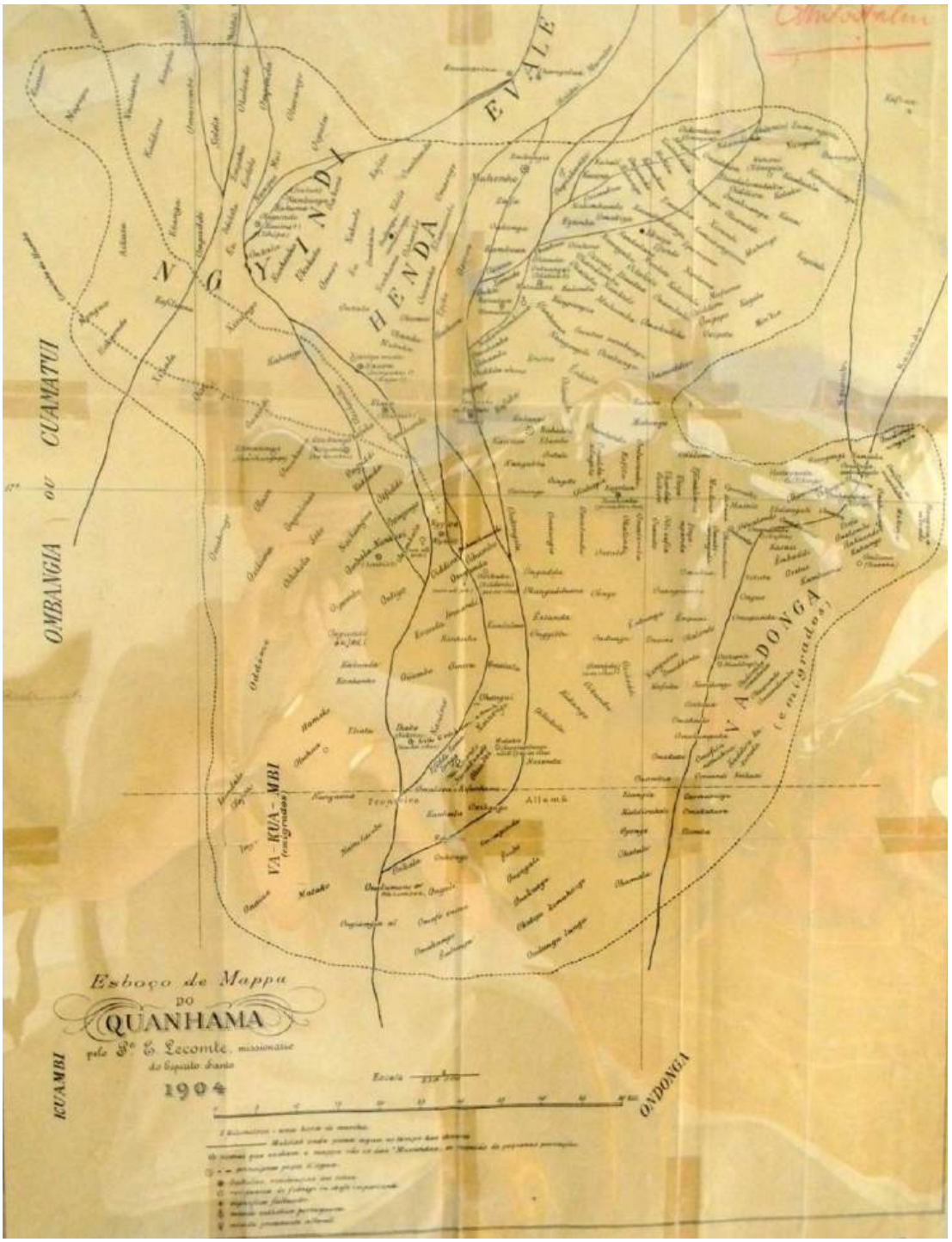

Figure 14: *A map of the Oukwanyama ("Quanhama") Kingdom and its neighbours was drawn in 1904.*

(Source: Silvester, 2020)

The map in Figure 14 which illustrates the entirety of the Kingdom, clearly pinpoints the Namibian/Angolan colonial border as created during the Berlin Conference and illustrates how the majority of the Oukwanyama Kingdom is in what is now Southern

Angola. The Map was drawn in 1904 by the Portuguese missionary S.E. Lecomte. The dotted line on the map is labelled “Fronteira Alemã” in Portuguese which means German Border. Most importantly, the map shows how an African community was divided into different colonial territories, without any consideration of the impact it would have on pre-existing family, culture, customs, leadership and language, amongst others, systems of the Oukwanyama Kingdom.

However, the Oukwanyama Kingdom is not at all, the only community to meet this fate. As with the Oukwanyama Kingdom, the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 saw the division of many great African communities. A significant example is that of the Yoruba people of West Africa. As a result of the conference, the ancestral land of the Yoruba people, called Yorubaland, was divided amongst colonial powers and spans the modern-day countries of Nigeria (colonised by England), Togo (Colonised by Germany) and Benin (colonised by France).

Although this research does not delve into the intricate details of resistance to colonial encroachment by African kingdoms, it is crucial to acknowledge that the process of colonization was far from straightforward for the European powers. They encountered formidable military opposition from well-organized African armies. This resistance compelled the colonial nations to recalibrate their strategies, ultimately preventing them from fully achieving the level of control and dominance they aspired to attain.

Over time, sustained resistance efforts by African nations culminated in their eventual independence from colonial rule. However, the comprehensive scope of the communities affected by colonial activities and the magnitude of that impact may never be fully quantified. While some communities have managed to preserve their identity despite the division imposed by physical colonial borders, many have

experienced significant losses in their cultural heritage and identity due to the influence of these borders, coupled with the constraints imposed by colonialism, the Atlantic Slave Trade, and the influence and conversion efforts of Christian missionaries, all of which were prevalent during that era. These factors collectively left an enduring mark on African identities.

Who Were the Neighbours of The Ovakwanyama in The Nineteenth Century and Before?

This research did not define the neighbours of the Ovakwanyama as a point of departure. This decision was deliberate to ensure that the neighbours are identified organically through the data collection and research process. The main intention was to ensure that no neighbours failed to be identified due to preconceived perimeters. As a result, the neighbours were identified based on the sources of the elements of the material culture, and not defined by colonial borders or groupings of communities.

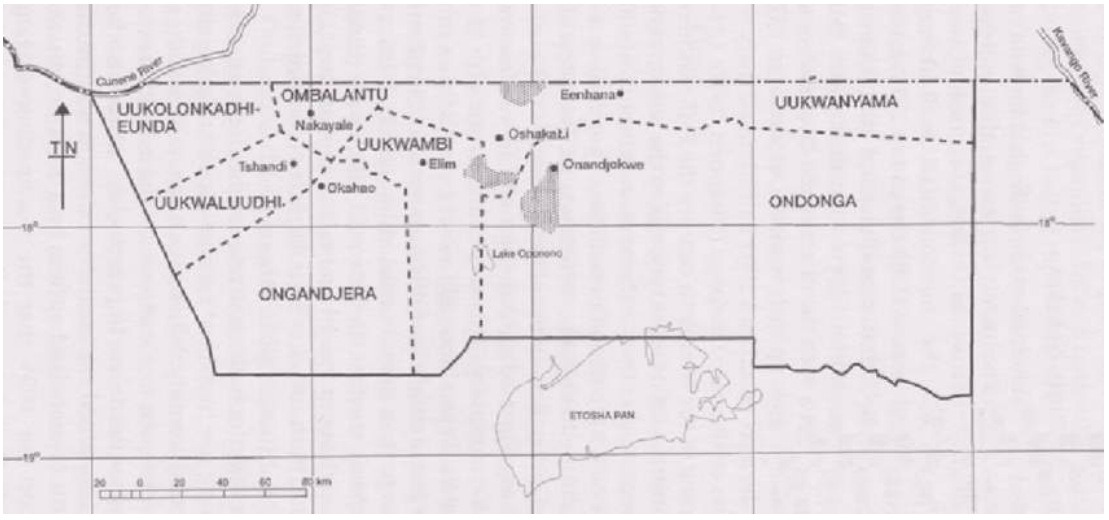

Figure 15: *A map of the seven Ovawambo Kingdoms.*

(Source: Notkola and Siiskonen, (note 18), 33. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Map-of-the-seven-Ovambo-groups-Source-Notkola-and-Siiskonen-note-18-33_fig16_264091639)

The term neighbour is defined by the Collins English Dictionary as a person who lives near or next to another. However, the terms near or next to, in an African context, are relative and subject to interpretation. While some would consider a neighbour to be someone whom one shares a fence (in a house setting with fences) with, some could consider someone who lives 20kms away to be their neighbour.

Secondly, the Collins English Dictionary also argues that one may also refer to the person who is standing or sitting next to you as your neighbour. This then obliges one to consider the legitimacy of temporary or *seasonal neighbours*. These neighbours are neighbours who are not permanently situated next to one another but are so, for either short or prolonged, but recurring periods. This thesis, therefore, considers the different types of neighbours the Ovakwanyama had, given different circumstances.

For one to accurately identify the neighbours of the Ovakwanyama, one would need to keep in mind, the contextual importance of the period. If one considers the theory of the Bantu Migration/Expansion to be accurate, then one would need to acknowledge that as the community's locale changed over time, so did their neighbours.

In the context of this thesis and research, the term *neighbours* refers to those communities that shared proximity with the focal community during the 19th century. It is important to consider the neighbours from periods before the nineteenth century as well. The interactions with these earlier neighbours can influence the

material culture of the community in the early nineteenth century and beyond. On the other hand, the events within the nineteenth century may or may not have an impact on these earlier neighbours.

Ovawambo, Ovaherero and Vakavango

By the nineteenth century, the Ovakwanyama had settled and formed a Kingdom in Northern Namibia and Southern Angola. According to both Oral History and published literature, the Bantu Migration/Expansion resulted in the Bantu communities settling within proximity of one another. These Bantu neighbours of southern Angola and northern Namibia are currently classified into three *main* groups which are the Ovawambo, Ovaherero and Vakavango. The immediate neighbours of the settlement area claimed by the Ovakwanyama kings were, therefore, the Bantu neighbours of the Ovakwanyama during the nineteenth century. Firstly, the Ovawambo communities consisted of Aandonga, Aakwambi, Aanganjera, Aakwaluudhi, Aambalanhu, Aakolonkadhi, Ovaunda, Aambandja, Aandombodhola and Aanghwanghwa. Secondly, the Ovaherero communities consisted of the OvaHimba, OvaTjimba, OvaMbanderu, OvaZemba, OvaHakawona, OvaKuvale, OvaTjavikwa, OvaKwandu and OvaMucubal. Finally, the Vakavango communities consisted of five kingdoms namely the vaKwangali, Mbunza, Shambyu, Gciriku and Mbukushu.

The San

The San are the original inhabitants of Namibia and Southern Africa as a whole. Although the term San is used as an umbrella term for similar communities in the same way the term Ovawambo is used, the Namibian San Council today identifies

and is represented by eight different San communities which are the !Xung, Ju/'Hoansi, Naro, Khwe, Hai//om, ǂAkhoe, !Xoon and 'Njoha. The Council does, however, acknowledge that "Our people lived in many small groups which had different names, but many of these have disappeared today" (Kautondokwa & Silvester, 2019, p1).

It, therefore, goes without saying, that when the Bantu groups began to settle in Southern Africa, they found the land inhabited by the San communities. It can therefore be argued that when the San communities encountered the Bantu communities in northern Namibia and southern Angola, this encounter impacted where the Bantu people chose to settle. Although the San communities were nomadic hunter-gatherers, there were areas with resources such as water, animals, certain plants, and minerals, that they would return to periodically. It would, therefore, mean that the new Bantu settlers could not settle in areas that were already inhabited, without resistance. However, by the nineteenth century, the Ovakwanyama had managed to find an area in which to settle and therefore, they were, at this point, neighbours to the San communities which were in direct contact with the Oukwanyama Kingdom

Europeans

The arrival of the Portuguese in Southern Africa in the fifteenth century changed the face of Southern Africa. However, as is evident by their current-day descendants, the Portuguese were not the only Europeans to take interest in Southern Africa. The Dutch, British, German and Finnish, not only frequently came to Southern Africa, but they also settled in the region. For example, in 1652 the Dutch East India Company sent Jan van Riebeek together with 125 men to set up a station at the Cape

which grew and by the end of the eighteenth century, the settlers who now called themselves Boers (the Dutch word for “farmer”) were far larger in numbers than the Portuguese. The group later began to refer to themselves as Afrikaners, which means Africans. This was a clear indication that they intended for their settlement to be permanent, and their descendants continue to live in mainly modern-day Namibia and South Africa, although there are also smaller populations in Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Botswana.

The British settled in Namibia in the 18th century both as missionaries and as colonizing forces, being the first European country to state a territorial claim on Walvis Bay in 1797.

Thirdly, the first missionaries from the German-based Rhenish Missionary Society arrived in Namibia in the 1840s and Germany colonised Namibia shortly after. As a result, the community of settlers of German origin grew.

Moreover, the first Finnish missionaries arrived in Northern Namibia in the 1870s and brought with them, the Lutheran doctrine. As a result, the majority of the Ovawambo people converted to Christianity and began to identify as Lutheran Christians.

Currently, people of European descent (Afrikaner/Dutch, German, British and Portuguese) make up between 4.0 and 7.0% of Namibia’s population. Therefore, especially when evaluating the impact of trade and material culture, it is crucial to consider both the European settlers (missionaries and/or colonial settlers) and the more sporadic traders as neighbours of the Ovakwanyama as well.

More Neighbours

Finally, in addition to the above-mentioned neighbours, it is prudent to also acknowledge the fact that the Ovakwanyama had many other neighbours. Perhaps, some may not have been in as proximity as the ones mentioned above, but depending on the definition, could still be regarded as neighbours. These communities include other Bantu communities which may have settled in the area before or after the Ovakwanyama did. These are communities in both Angola and Namibia and include communities that may be settled for a short time, before moving away for returning to their local of origin.

Secondly, one must also consider, other African communities which visited the area periodically and lastly, other European settlers, traders, missionaries etc. who do not originate from the countries discussed above. Therefore, the actual extent to which one can define a neighbour leaves room for interpretation. For this reason, this research focuses on the neighbours with the most documented contact. More specifically, this research sought to identify and therefore discuss the neighbours with which the Ovakwanyama traded the most.

THE SIGNIFICANCE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Namibian historiography has been shaped by coloniality and anti-colonialism and has largely been confined by the boundaries of the nation-state, as established by European colonial empires. This research is, therefore, an important contribution to the Namibian and Southern African economic history by researching the history of trade between an African kingdom and its trading partners in the nineteenth century.

The research goes beyond more than just identifying, documenting and examining trade. By centring the research in the African Kingdom, the research also highlights the systems of self-governance and autonomy of this African community. Lastly, the research provides insight into how the identified communities/kingdoms dealt with the new challenge of colonialism and its implications for their trade relations.

Finally, this research aimed to identify and record the prevalent items exchanged between the Ovakwanyama and their neighbouring communities, and to analyse how trading patterns evolved throughout the nineteenth century. It also sought to assess and document the factors contributing to the cultural and symbolic significance of certain materials and objects, including whether their value stemmed from the craftsmanship involved, the scarcity of the materials, or their ritual importance. Furthermore, it aimed to investigate and document the origins of the traded items, and ultimately, to establish a comprehensive record of the trade routes and their historical development.

THE LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research is subject to several limitations. Firstly, because the research draws on oral history, there is a risk that the information and data collected are inaccurate or misrepresented due to cultural and/or other biases. However, to mitigate the risk of inaccurate data because of bias, the research is limited to published research and interviews with experts and historians who specialize in the Ovawambo communities, with specific emphasis on experts on the Ovakwanyama people and the Oukwanyama Kingdom.

The second constraint pertains to the reliability and comprehensiveness of the existing data regarding the material culture amassed by prior researchers and collectors. It is crucial to acknowledge potential issues stemming from language barriers and a limited grasp of the cultural background and context, particularly considering that a majority of collectors during this specified period were of European descent. While Finnish Missionaries generally demonstrated a commendable proficiency in local languages, it is imperative to scrutinize their underlying motivations and the broader narrative they aimed to convey within the framework of Ovakwanyama history. Conversely, German colonial forces, in contrast, often did not invest the necessary time to acquire proficiency in the local languages.

Therefore, this study examines the accuracy of existing data as documented by the collectors of the material culture by cross-referencing publications, other collections and interviews with experts and historians who specialize in the Ovawambo communities, with specific emphasis on experts on the Ovakwanyama people and the Oukwanyama Kingdom.

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that this study may encounter potential constraints stemming from restricted access to material culture dating from the specified period. Consequently, the scope of this research is circumscribed to the resources available in specific repositories, including the Ethnographic Collection housed in the National Museum of Namibia, as well as the collection curated by the Berlin Ethnographic Museum. Additionally, insights were drawn from interviews conducted with experts and historians who possess specialized knowledge pertaining to the Ovakwanyama people and the historical landscape of the Oukwanyama Kingdom. This approach ensures that the study leverages the most pertinent and reliable sources of information available within its scope.

In conclusion, this research endeavour sought to engage with what Buckridge (2022) termed as "reading the silence." Recognizing the inherent constraints in the available information, whether in documented records or through oral history, this study endeavoured to delve into the underlying factors contributing to these limitations. By doing so, it aimed to transform these gaps into a connecting bridge between the realms of what is known and what remains yet to be uncovered. This approach acknowledges the valuable insights that can be gleaned from what has not been explicitly recorded or passed down through oral tradition. It invites a thoughtful exploration of the nuances and underlying dynamics that may have influenced the preservation and transmission of knowledge within the context of the Ovakwanyama community.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical Framework

The theory is a term used to describe social phenomena by identifying several factors to test for relevance, and whose interaction effects should be taken into consideration (Abend, 2005). Theories are, therefore, useful for shaping, directing, and providing focus to a study. Although they are merely concepts, they have a significant impact on any research study. This research is framed by the theories of Afrocentrism, Postcolonial Theory and Decoloniality. Together, the three theories provide the supporting structure on which the research builds.

For the purpose of this work the following definitions of Afrocentrism are sufficient as they contain the central elements informing my reflections. Early (2020, para. 1) defines Afrocentrism as a "cultural and political movement whose mainly African American adherents regard themselves and all other Blacks as syncretic Africans and believe that their worldview should positively reflect traditional African values." Merriam-Webster (n.d.) defines Afrocentrism as "emphasizing or promoting an emphasis on African culture and the contributions of Africans to the development of Western civilization". When used as a framework for research methodology in the study of world history, Afrocentrism focuses on the history of people of recent African descent. In some respects, it can be seen as a retort to Eurocentric narratives about African communities and their historical contributions to the global political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal spaces.

Afrocentrism, is therefore, the first theoretical framework that is relevant and helps shape the aims of this study as it supports the notion of complex systems of self-governance, trade, autonomy, and interaction between the communities in

current-day Northern Namibia and Southern Angola, before the arrival of Europeans. The theory supports the research's approach which is centred on reconstructing the narratives of African communities, by amplifying African voices and narratives.

The second theoretical framework that informs this research is the Postcolonial theory. Elam (2019, para. 1) defines postcolonial theory as "a body of thought primarily concerned with accounting for the political, aesthetic, economic, historical, and social impact of European colonial rule around the world in the 18th through the 20th century." Complimenting Afrocentrism, Postcolonial theorists argue that European philosophy, literature, and history should not be conceived without taking into consideration, the colonial oppression (and the consequences thereof) of European countries of countries communities across the world. The theory suggests that the parts of the world that were colonised by European countries are, in fact, the "forgotten centre of global modernity" (Elam, 2019, para. 1). However, the prefix *post* in *postcolonial theory* is heavily debated by Sociologists such as Chibber (2016) and others as some academics and theorists argue that the prefix implies that colonialism has ended; while there appears to be a consensus that there are numerous lingering forms of colonialism, even after the official *end* of the colonial rule. Nevertheless, this thesis considers Postcolonial theory as a framework that not only acknowledges the lingering forms of colonialism but also encourages the active dismantling thereof.

This research is therefore informed by Afrocentrism and Postcolonial theories which provide support for the decolonisation of Namibian historiography. Decoloniality is a theoretical framework that takes into consideration the systemic nature in which oppressive policy currently impacts the lives of formerly colonized communities. "It calls for an examination of the oppressive hegemonic narratives that are rooted in

colonial practices and incorporates the voice and narratives of those oppressed peoples in conversations that ultimately affect the creation of policy." (O'Connor et.al, 2020, p). William and Mary (n.d., para. 2) argue that decoloniality is "a method and paradigm of restoration and reparation that depends on context, historical conditions, and geography." Therefore, as a method, it aspires to restore, elevate, renew, rediscover, acknowledge and validate the multiplicity of lives, live experiences, culture and knowledge of indigenous people, people of colour, and colonized people as well as to decentre hetero/cis-normativity, gender hierarchies and racial privilege."

Oland et al. (2012) contend that the concept of decolonization plays a pivotal role in redressing the impacts of colonialism. It embodies the process by which colonial empires disintegrate, affording their erstwhile colonies the opportunity to attain self-rule and independence (Smith, 1999, 2008). Decolonisation, therefore, stands as the pivotal juncture where a newly reconstituted nation asserts and safeguards its sovereignty in matters of significance. Scholars hailing from developing nations perceive decolonization as an arduous struggle aimed at terminating the shackles of colonial dominance (Smith & Wobst, 2005). This perspective underscores that decolonization entails the emancipation of colonies. Conversely, in Western contexts, the transfer of power typically entails bestowing a measure of political autonomy without necessarily ensuring equitable economic justice (Wobst, 2005). This dichotomy highlights the complex and multifaceted nature of decolonization as it is understood and experienced across diverse global contexts.

Moreover, numerous authors have argued that museums and industry practitioners should actively work towards the decolonization of museum collections both in Africa and Europe, mainly through the inclusion and prioritization of Africans in

provenance research (Cole, 2018, p.19; Eichab, Förster & Henrichsen, 2018, p. 37; Mushaandja, 2018, p. 70; Perniola, 2018, p. 23; Shilongoh, 2018, p. 22; Shivute, 2018, p. 71; Valley, 2019). In Namibia, the legacy of colonialism left a profound mark on its cultural heritage, including the establishment and operation of museums. The effects of colonial rule were far-reaching, resulting in the disintegration of African communities and the erosion of their traditional systems of governance. One blatant manifestation of this colonial legacy is evident in the collections housed within Namibian museums. These collections often contain artefacts and cultural items acquired during the colonial era, sometimes through questionable means such as looting or unethical acquisition practices. These items, while now housed in museums, carry with them a complex history of ownership and cultural significance.

Therefore, the process of decolonizing museums in Namibia involves acknowledging and addressing this historical context. It requires re-evaluating the narratives and interpretations associated with museum exhibitions, as well as actively engaging with descendant communities to ensure their perspectives are included and respected. Additionally, it may involve repatriating certain artifacts to their places of origin, as has been the case with several African nations seeking to reclaim their cultural heritage.

As a result of a general shift in mindset and the critical examination of museums and their collections over the last few decades, museums are no longer considered by most scholars as innocent spaces but rather as spaces and collections that are entrenched in violence. It is therefore often argued that there is a need for cleansing museums and their collections, thus helping to decolonise these institutions and their overall operations. It is, therefore, necessary that those tasked with the role of

managing museums prioritise the voices of the communities from which their collections originate.

By undertaking the process of decolonization, Namibian museums are working towards a more inclusive and accurate representation of their cultural heritage. This endeavour not only serves to rectify historical injustices but also fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of Namibia's rich and diverse cultural heritage. It empowers communities to reclaim their narratives and take ownership of their cultural heritage, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and just society.

A newspaper article *Decolonizing the Mind* (Mahnke, 2006) discusses the need for the decolonization of mindsets within the current Namibia context and further emphasizes the importance of not only including but also prioritizing Namibian authors and researchers in the documentation and research of Namibian history. The article further discusses the importance of the inclusion of Africans in research processes and in the process of writing publications on African history. Combined, Afrocentrism, Postcolonial Theory and Decoloniality assist in shaping a framework that validates the importance of the research.

Firstly, the theoretical framework emphasises the need to expand the repositories of Namibian and Southern African history. This expansion should be approached through research that perceives pre-colonial African economies as self-reliant, and devoid of external influences and constraints. Secondly, this framework provides a foundation for conducting research that delves into African trade patterns and practices, recognizing their substantial influence on Western civilization and trade methodologies. This counters the prevailing notion that African methods and societies were inherently inferior and rudimentary, and thus only progressed under colonial regulation.

Finally, based on the theoretical framework that guides this research, it is possible to argue that one cannot attempt to decolonise any space, without actively attempting to give prominence to and amplify the voice of the colonised. This research, therefore, attempts to do so by giving equal prominence to published literature, oral history, and material culture, as valuable accurate sources. This is explained in greater detail in the methodological approach to this research process.

Literature Review

With a specific interest in reviewing the literature addressing the content related to this study, this chapter will present various analyses of material culture to construct a history of trade between Oukwanyama and its neighbours in the nineteenth century and arguments that have been made, in Namibia and elsewhere, as to the need for decolonisation. It would not have been possible to narrow down the research problems addressed in this study without linking the chosen research objectives with existing knowledge as found in the literature.

This research examined numerous publications and conference presentations such as the *Museum Conversations* and the *Past Present and Future of Namibian Heritage* conferences, amongst others, historians and culture practitioners from Namibia, South Africa, Germany, Switzerland, and other African and European countries. Shigwedha (2004) contributed richly to the argument for the self-governance and autonomy of African communities before the arrival of Europeans. Kautondokwa & Silvester (2020) outlined useful explanations on the source of materials in northern Namibia and trade between communities. Wallace & Kinahan (2011) particularly focused on trade, and Hayes (2007) highlighted the importance of material culture.

Maree (2007) emphasizes that the purpose of conducting a literature review is to furnish a condensed overview of the subject matter, anchoring it in prior research relevant to the identified research inquiries. Pertaining to this particular research venture, it is crucial to underscore the absence of any comprehensive examination scrutinizing the History of Trade between Oukwanyama and Its Neighbours in the Nineteenth Century. Consequently, there exists a noticeable dearth of scholarly discourse dedicated to the historical trade dynamics between Oukwanyama and its neighbouring regions during this period. This underscores the paramount importance of this research undertaking, as it stands as the inaugural endeavour of its kind, building upon the groundwork laid by earlier scholars such as Maree and Silvester, among others. This chapter focuses on three main areas, namely: understanding the Ovakwanyama of the nineteenth century, the trade between the Ovakwanyama and their neighbours and the impact of colonialism on trade.

The two main publications that have significantly influenced the research about the Ovakwanyama after the nineteenth century are *Ovamboland* (Tönjes, 1911) and *In Feudal Africa – History and Traditions of the Kwanyama* (Loeb, 1962). Loeb being an American scholar and Tönjes being a German missionary, the two publications are amongst the first by authors of European descent, that attempted to document a holistic overview of the Ovakwanyama. These publications have influenced and have been referred to in most of the publications and literature reviewed for this research. Therefore, this literature review begins by examining the context, purpose, and impact of the two publications on existing literature.

In his book Ovamboland, Tönjes (1911) documents the land (flora and fauna of the Oukwanyama kingdom) and the people (the material and immaterial culture and history of the Ovakwanyama people). Having lived in Oukwanyama for nine years at

the time he wrote the book, Tönjes arrived in Oukwanyama in the nineteenth century, in 1898. The chapters that are most relevant to this research are those that discuss clothing and adornment, household utensils and weapons, musical instruments, trade, and traffic.

However, Tönjes begins his publication by drawing attention to the fact that by his admission, he was an outsider looking in. He states, "Very few will realise how difficult it is as a foreigner, to establish oneself among a *heathen* people" (Tönjes, 1911, preface). As a missionary whose English translation of his publication stated that he sought to be a "contribution to the solution of the Ovambo issue" (Tönjes, 1911, preface), it is important to acknowledge the context and viewpoint from which Tönjes developed this publication. Nevertheless, the impact and contribution that this publication has made to the Namibian historiography, especially concerning the Ovakwanyama, is immeasurable.

Secondly, first published in 1962, *In Feudal Africa – History and Traditions of the Kwanyama* by Edwin Loeb provided insight and context to this research. Having come to Namibia in 1947 intending to study the Ovakwanyama people, the publication discusses the history, social order, and culture (both material and intangible), of the community. Particularly relevant to this research are the chapters that discuss the land and migration history, the clans, kinship and special social relations and the chapter on trade, cattle, and agriculture. In addition, the chapters on material culture, looking specifically at clothing, ornaments and craftmanship and the two chapters on the neighbours of the Ovakwanyama, and the chapter that explores the theory of *South West African Culture* provide valuable insight into what a researcher such as Loeb was able to document about the Ovakwanyama in the one year that he spent with the community.

One of the key reasons that makes this publication particularly pertinent to the study is Loeb's endeavour to document the culture of this community in its pre-European interaction state. However, it's worth noting that this research took place more than a century after the initial written accounts of Europeans engaging with the Ovawambo communities in 1851. From the tangible artefacts of material culture like beads and fabric documented in the publication, it becomes evident that by this time, interactions with Europeans had already begun to influence various aspects of the culture, including material elements.

Moreover, it's crucial to acknowledge that while the first written records of Europeans interacting with the Ovawambo communities date back to 1851, pinpointing the exact moment of initial contact is a challenging task. This nuance underscores the complexity and multifaceted nature of cultural exchange and adaptation between indigenous communities and incoming foreign influences.

Trade Between the Ovakwanyama and Their Neighbours

Numerous publications and research have alluded to the self-sufficiency of the Ovawambo people and the areas of speciality, concerning craftsmanship, between the different kingdoms that resulted in trade. In particular, in *Oombale Dhi Ihaka – A Bond That Can Not Be Broken* (Kautondokwa & Silvester, 2019), and in *The Pre-Colonial Costumes of the Aawambo, Significant Changes under Colonialism and the Construction of Post-Colonial Identity* (Shigwedha, 2004), the authors referred the Ovakwanyama being the main source for iron hoes, spearheads, arrowheads, that they would mine from the Mupa mountain and then trade with other surrounding communities, including the Aandonga and the San communities.

Figure 16: *Etemo = Field-hoe (VK1049c: 73)*

(Source: Kautondokwa & Silvester, 2019)

The *Etemo in* Figure 16 is discussed in Kautondokwa & Silvester (2019) as it was described in the Finnish Museum's catalogue on the Rautanen collection. In the catalogue, Rautanen is quoted as having written about the Ovakwanyama as the source of iron hoes to the rest of the Ovawambo kingdoms and the significance thereof. "Even though Owambo people are farmers, they have only one actual tool for that purpose, meaning the Etemo. Hoes are produced [...] only in Oukwanyama. [...] In most cases, a hoe will last a year and rarely it will last 2 years. It must be presumed, that Aakwanyama people make thousands of hoes every year. The normal price of a hoe is one animal for 9 hoes and 1 axe, for that is how they are put for trading, 9 hoes and one axe are tied together in a bundle. From a European view, this is a high price, but if you consider, that preparing a bundle like this, with the tools that the local smiths have, takes months, then they are very inexpensive. Iron is a valuable material for the people and so the old iron pieces are forged into new

smaller products, such as knives, beads etc. and the last-mentioned travel as merchandise to Herero land and are used to get cattle . . . Through this, the Aawambo have gained better-crossbred cattle. Hoes were, traditionally, made from metal that was obtained from the Aakwanyama around Oshimholo (today, in southern Angola) or Tsumeb. The blacksmiths (aahumbwidi) would place the metal in a fire using charcoal (omutundungu) to make it so hot that even heavy rain could not put the fire out." (Kautondokwa, & Silvester, 2019, pp.67-68).

Moreover, in the *Stand Together* (Kautondokwa & Silvester, 2020) mobile exhibition handbook about San cultural heritage, the authors detail the trade of copper between the Ovawambo Kingdoms and the San Communities, with the San being referred to as the "original copper miners". The publication refers to the Ondonga Kingdom in particular. However, the items fashioned from the copper such as the *Ongodo* (Figure 17) and the *Omwele Gwoshipika* (Figure 18) which are also common amongst the Ovakwanyama, referred to in Oshikwanyama as *Ongodo* and Ombele *WoShipika* or *Omukonda* respectively. This can be attributed to the proximity of the two kingdoms and similar practices. It can therefore be inferred that the Ovakwanyama also traded with the San for copper, amongst other items.

Figure 17: *Ongodo: a heavy copper anklet worn around the leg*

(Source: Museums Association of Namibia, 2020)

In the Stand Together mobile exhibition handbook, Kautondokwa and Silvester (2020) refer to the San communities as *the original copper miners* who provided the Ovawambo communities with copper to make the Ongodo visible in Figure 17. "Specialised blacksmiths from Ondonga smelted the copper ore to create objects which were important symbols of wealth and prestige. Francis Galton described `Nangoro's wives' as wearing `a copper amulet' as a sign of distinction' and noticed `very pretty' daggers where ". . . both handle and the sheath was in part covered with copper plating, and, in part wound round with copper wire beaten square" (Galton, 1854, 216, 223). The Swedish trader, Charles Andersson, commented on the importance of a particular copper object that was only worn by women: ". . . at the time of my first visit [to Ondonga in the 1950s] it was customary for the fair sex to wear as ornaments heavy copper rings about the ankles". Although he also heard

that, later, ". . . rings are worn by servants and slaves to prevent their running away" (Anderson, 1875, 231)." (Kautondokwa, & Silvester, 2020, pp. 45-46).

Figure 18: *Omwele gwoshipika = jewellery knife (VK1049c: 36)*
(Source: Kautondokwa & Silvester, 2019)

The knife and its accompanying sheath featured in Figure 18 originate from Rautanen's extensive collection. Crafted entirely from iron, these artefacts provide valuable insights into the material culture of the region. Notably, Rautanen primarily collected items from Ondonga, implying a significant connection between this specific piece and the broader trade dynamics within the Ovakwanyama and Aandonga communities.

This particular iron knife and sheath hint at the likelihood of a trade network encompassing raw materials like iron between the Ovakwanyama and Aandonga groups. This suggests a mutual reliance and interdependence in resource exchange, shedding light on the socio-economic relationships that characterized these

neighbouring communities. The presence of this artefact in Rautanen's collection thus serves as a tangible testament to the intricate web of trade and cultural exchange that flourished within the historical context of the Ovakwanyama and Aandonga societies. “This type of a knife is in most cases the property of the government and is given as a sign of honour to persons considered by the king to be particularly skilled, especially to loyal shepherds and loyal soldiers and other highly valued men. If a person carrying this kind of knife dies or is disgraced by the king, the king will claim it back to give it to someone else, and hence it can go from person to person and be multiple signs of honour. This knife is covered by copper string and a plate made by the people. The price of this knife is one good animal, a cow, or an ox...” (Kautondokwa & Silvester, 2019, pp.41-42).

In the publication *Trade and Socioeconomic Change in Ovamboland 1850-1906* (Siiskonen, 1990), the author discusses the status of exchange in the economy of the Ovawambo communities in the mid-nineteenth century. While giving an example of the Aandonga handling of copper, the publication looks at the Ovawambo people as a collective and their trade with other communities but not, particularly as different communities and the trade between those communities.

This research draws from the similarities in material culture, traditions, and norms between the Ovawambo as a basis to postulate the source of materials used by the Ovakwanyama in instances where no documented evidence is found that particularly pertains to the Ovakwanyama, but it can be found about other Ovawambo communities. Given that the history of the Ondonga Kingdom and its cultural heritage has been documented extensively, literature that details trade between the Aandonga and other communities provides insight that is beneficial to the research. However, although they share similarities, it is crucial to remain cognisant of the fact

that there are numerous, distinct differences in belief systems, cultural and societal practices, and material culture. Therefore, it would not be accurate to assume all that applies to the Aandonga also applies to the Ovakwanyama.

Throughout the literature reviewed, the Ovakwanyama have been identified as the source of iron for their neighbours. It has also been documented that the Ovakwanyama would also trade cattle, goats and other livestock and materials fashioned from livestock. In the concluding chapters, this research identifies and develops a list of the items the Ovakwanyama produced for both their consumption and trade, such as iron. It also identifies which items they would trade for and what they used them for, such as copper. In addition, the research identifies the value of the items traded and how the value was determined, during the barter system.

Finally, the literature reviewed suggests that certain objects held distinct significance, being earmarked for specific roles within the community, whether for ritualistic ceremonies or use by royalty. This research leverages both the existing body of literature and the insights gathered through interviews to discern the underlying principles governing the valuation of these items. Key factors in this assessment encompass the requisite craftsmanship for their creation and the scarcity of the materials employed in their construction. By synthesizing these elements, this study aims to illuminate the intricate web of cultural, social, and material factors that contribute to the nuanced roles and values attributed to these objects within the Ovakwanyama community.

Material Culture as Evidence of Trade

Material culture refers to the tangible assets, that communities use to define their culture. This includes clothing, buildings, tools, jewellery, and other tangible items. The examination of material culture; particularly tools, clothing, and jewellery,

provides, as I will show in a moment, evidence of regular interaction and trade between the communities.

It can be argued that tangible resources that are not common or native to a particular area being components of the material culture of the communities who live in that area provide evidence of a constant or a significant once-off supply of those resources from other areas. This is mostly achieved through one or other form of trade/barter system.

For example, the Ovakwanyama have numerous elements of their material culture such as *"Uuputu"* which are strings of beads worn around the neck, arms, and legs, made from either iron or copper. Rautanen (the 1880s, as cited in Kautondokwa & Silvester 2019, p. 61) describes the source of the iron and copper used in Oukwanyama material culture as a result of trade between the Ovakwanyama and the Aandonga. *"Getting the copper ore from the holes in the mountains is done by the San, for a small payment, such as tobacco, iron beads, knives etc. From these copper mines, only the [Owambo] tribes can take copper; hence copper is completely a monopoly of the Ondonga."*

Rautanen's account sheds light on an intriguing aspect of historical economic and cultural dynamics within the Aandonga and San communities. It highlights a specialized division of labour, where the San, a distinct group with expertise in extracting copper ore, engage in this task in exchange for various items of value such as tobacco, iron beads, and knives. The assertion that only the Ovawambo tribes, specifically the Aandonga, have the authority to claim the copper from these mines underscores the significant role of copper as a coveted resource within the Aandonga community. This essentially establishes a sort of economic monopoly, where the Aandonga have exclusive access to this valuable metal.

The practice of exchanging goods for services, as seen with the payment of tobacco, iron beads, and knives to the San, exemplifies a form of barter system. It demonstrates the interdependence and mutual benefit derived from these transactions, where each party gains something of value.

Furthermore, the passage reflects a sophisticated understanding of resource management and utilization within the Aandonga society. It suggests a well-defined system for exploiting the copper resources, likely regulated by customary practices and agreements among various groups.

Overall, this passage provides a fascinating glimpse into the complex economic and social structures of the Ondonga community, highlighting the significance of copper as a valuable resource and the specialized roles of different groups in its extraction and trade. It also underscores the importance of cultural exchange and mutually beneficial arrangements in the historical context.

The Impact of Colonialism on Trade

Figure 19: *Epoha Ekushu = uugondo wongopolo wokomaako = Copper arm-ornament (VK1049c: 61)*

(Source: Kautondokwa & Silvester, 2019)

It is crucial to recognize that the introduction of written sources documenting trade within the Oukwanyama Kingdom and with the Ovakwanyama marked a pivotal juncture in this economic activity. The influx of Western goods not only altered the trade patterns but also impacted the perceived value of locally produced items. Existing literature on the Ovakwanyama trade relies on the sources available during that period, approached with the central question of "What was it like before?"

Within the colonial framework of that era, African societies were often viewed as unchanging, implying that observations made at the time of initial contact were projected backwards in time, assuming a static state. Acknowledging this perspective, this research concedes that such extrapolation may be suitable for a certain period in the past but may fall short for spans of a century or more.

Consequently, this thesis contends that material artefacts provide a valuable window into the history of trade, even in the absence of written records. As a result, the literature surveyed in this research was approached from a standpoint that rejects the notion of societies existing in a timeless state.

For example, in Oombale Dhi Ihaka, Kautondokwa and Silvester (2019), quoted a statement in the Finnish catalogue on the Rautanen collection, where he details how the material culture of the Ovawambo (by referring to the "Epoha Ekushu" (Figure 19) has been impacted by the arrival of Europeans. He further illuminates how contact with the Europeans has impacted trade in African communities by changing what was once "the main rural product" from being abandoned, with the communities choosing to use European wire. He further states that the Europeans living in Namibia would produce "thousands of pounds [weight - Ed]" for sale to the "Owambo- and Herero land".

There is a wide range of ethnographic literature on the Ovakwanyama including, to an extent, their economic practices and trade. However, there are gaps in the existing literature that this research seeks to fill. In the publication *A History of Namibia – From Beginning to 1990* (Wallace & Kinahan, 2011), the authors document the history of politics, trade, and transformation, however, they focus mainly on Southern and Central Namibia in the chapters that cover the period between 1730 and 1870. Whilst it presents a nationalist narrative, the book reflects a general weakness in Namibian historiography that neglects the `pre-colonial' history of trade between the people of northern Namibia.

In her presentation titled *People and Things in Northern Namibia* (Hayes, 2007), Patricia Hayes discussed the inequalities and impact of trade of cultural objects, animals, and animal products which she referred to as *things*. While alluding to the

pre-colonial trade within the Ovawambo (Oukwanyama and Ondonga) kingdoms, the presentation was centred around the types of items traded and the impact of trade with European colonising forces and traders on the Ovawambo kingdoms, during the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century.

Other notable publications include *The Ethnography of South-Western Angola. Volume 1: The Non-Bantu Peoples; the Ambo Ethnic Group* (Estermann, 1976) and *Traders and Trade in Colonial Ovamboland, 1925–1990* (Dobler, 2014). The two books both discuss the history of trade in Northern Namibia and Southern Angola but do so after the introduction of currency by Europeans.

Publications such as the above-mentioned, assist the research in establishing how trade with European colonising forces and traders, impacted trade between the African communities, especially after the implementation of the General Act of the Berlin Conference in 1885. They do so by providing a baseline for studying what the Oukwanyama Kingdom and its neighbours were trading before the arrival of European influence and trade restrictions brought about by the colonial borders and what they traded in after, if at all. This, therefore, aids in establishing and possibly measuring the extent of the impact of colonialism on the trade between the identified African communities.

However, in his thesis titled *Significant Changes under Colonialism and the Construction of Post-Colonial Identity,* Shigwedha (2004) argues that the Ovawambo people settled in Northern Namibia and Southern Angola as early as 1550, with the first written record specifically referring to the Ovawambo people living in that area, being in 1590. The thesis further argues that the first written record of Europeans interacting with the Ovawambo communities only dates back to 1851. Based on this and other records, the evidence indicates that the Ovawambo communities were fully

functioning with systems of self-governance and autonomy for at least three hundred years before the first interaction between the Europeans and its residual impact on trade routes, patterns, and nature.

Therefore, the history of trade between the Ovakwanyama and European colonial forces and traders, starting only three hundred years after the establishment of the communities, cannot be presented as providing a comprehensive representation of the history of the trade of the Ovakwanyama people. On the contrary, doing so is not only inaccurate but also further endorses the colonial narrative of African communities only being noteworthy after making contact with Europeans.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

***"Until the lion learns how to write, every story will glorify the hunter."* – African proverb.**

The research was carried out by using qualitative research methods; specifically, semi-structured interviews, the assessment of material culture and document analysis. The data was collected using various research instruments which included a pre-interview information guide for the interviewees, an interview guide and an interview schedule. The assessment of cultural objects held in the National Museum of Namibia and the Berlin Ethnographic Museum was done using an observation guide as the primary research instrument. The research process relied heavily on a combination of the detailed analysis of museum material culture and oral history, as evidence of exchange. The material culture is used as an archive that can be connected to oral traditions and archival sources as well as a literature survey of early written accounts of the region. Data was collected through archival research and in-depth semi-structured interviews with knowledgeable individuals such as traditional leaders, Culture Officers from the Directorate of Heritage and Culture Programs in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, and other heritage, and culture practitioners. Regardless of the format, it can be argued that all history is subjective and should be amended, enriched, and even corrected, wherever necessary and relevant. This can only be done through the honest attempt to encourage inclusivity for all of the voices that speak for the different communities that played a role in or were affected by a set of events.

The aim of this research design is, therefore, not to discount or invalidate the existing narratives documented by previous authors. Rather, this thesis aims to use different

methods and sources to collaborate on those narratives that were relevant. However, wherever there appears to be a contradiction, it provides a space for documenting alternative narratives. The adage goes *the truth is somewhere in between*.

With that said, although published literature is generally considered to be the most reliable because it is tested through different academic processes, those processes are still influenced by the individuals and institutions which put them in place. They are also subject to the interpretation and implementation of the individuals and institutions involved in the testing process. Without diminishing the value of these processes, it would be dishonest to assume they do not leave room for error and subjectivity. More so, when they involve the research and documentation of communities by individuals who do not hail from the community. Worse still when the authors made contact with the community through colonial activity.

For this reason, this research considers oral history equal to and not inferior to, the published literature against which is it being tested. The argument that oral history is not as reliable as published literature assumes that the subjectivity within oral history is significantly more than that which can be found in published literature. However, Africans document and preserve their tangible and intangible cultural heritage through storytelling. This research, therefore, argues that because this research is being conducted within the African context, storytelling, and therefore, oral history, should be recognised to be the reliable method of documentation and preservation it has been since before colonial influence.

Moreover, it would also be misleading to not acknowledge the subjective nature of oral history, especially based on who is retelling the history. This, therefore, further highlights the importance of using a three-source approach to testing and evaluating

the accuracy of the data collected during this research process. It further plays a significant role in the analysis and interpretation of the data collected.

Concerning the reliability of reading as a source, the material culture, one can argue that *cultural objects cannot speak*. However, this thesis argues the opposite. If one views the material culture explored during this research as simply cultural objects, then one can argue that they do, in fact, not speak. However, if every piece of material culture is viewed as an item that belonged to a human being at some point, then they are more than just objects without voices. Rather, they were created, gifted, purchased etc., and belonged to an individual and, as argued by Buckridge (2022), should be referred to as *belongings*. This school of thought is amplified by Nampala who, during the interview I conducted with her, argued that "African life is centred around life". Therefore, every piece of material culture has its own life, which is tethered to the lives of everyone who has contributed to its creation of it and everyone who has ever owned it.

It then follows that my thesis not only challenges that notion, but it also provides a counterargument that not only can cultural belongings speak, but they are, in fact, able to sing, they can dance, and they can tell the stories that oral history has forgotten, and published literature has not put into words.

These belongings can tell the stories of how the materials that came together to make them were sourced and refined. They can tell the stories about why they were made, who made them and how they ended up where they are today. This is particularly important when in conversation about belongings which are held in museums and other collections, collected in colonial and other violent contexts. While perhaps not as significant for artefacts and objects that have been manufactured specifically for trade, in non-colonial, non-violent and mutually beneficial circumstances, referring

to material culture collected in colonial and other violent contexts as belongings, this thesis acknowledges the fact that these belongings have a past that is separate from their collector and their current location gives them the respect and dignity they deserve.

POPULATION SAMPLE AND RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The process of reading material culture during this research period provided the challenge to "*read the silence"* (Buckridge, 2022). Hence, this research methodology involved a comprehensive approach utilizing three primary sources. It commenced with an in-depth examination of material culture, followed by a parallel investigation of published literature. This process was then interwoven with a re-engagement with material artefacts, culminating in the inclusion of oral history interviews to provide a well-rounded perspective.

Published Literature

Firstly, through the exploration of existing literature written by both authors of European descent and authors of African descent. The literature written by authors of African descent is both those that either identifies as Omukwanyama and those that are classified in this research as originating from communities that neighboured the Oukwanyama Kingdom. The authors of European descent vary in demographics. They range from missionaries, academic researchers, soldiers, and other colonial sources, etc.

Material Culture

The second source is the material culture itself. The main material culture examined was that which was provided by the Ethnographic Museum in Berlin. The

Provenance Researcher, Julia Binter, responded to the request for access to the collection by providing a detailed database of all of the material culture categorised as originating from the Ovawambo communities (labelled as Ovambo in the collection). The database consists of 456 belongings which were accompanied by a colour image and a description which includes information about the artist/creator (where possible, but seldom), the object type and ethnic name, the materials and techniques used to create it and the dimensions. The records also include the registration number of the belonging in the museum, details about the date and manner of acquisition, the name of the collector and the current holder

After sorting through the collection of the Ethnographic Museum in Berlin, 20 images from the database were selected for the research process. The images and captions belongings were then compiled into a "pre-interview" guide. The pre-interview guide, together with the same request for access and information was then provided to the Senior Curator for Anthropology at the National Museum of Namibia, Golda Ha-Eiros.

As a result, Ms Ha-Eiros made accessible, the material culture that was similar to those in the pre-interview guide for photographing and closer, physical examination. The captions on the material culture in the National Museum of Namibia did not have captions as detailed as those at the Ethnographic Museum in Berlin. Most captions only included information such as the object type and ethnic identity, the registration number of the material culture in the museum, details about the date of acquisition and the name of the collector. However, because of the captions from the Berlin Ethnographic Museum and because of the physical access to the belongings, it was possible to identify the different elements and materials used in the production of the belongings. The final source of material culture for examination was the

organic discovery of photographs with images of material culture, found during the research process. These photographs were either found in existing publications, in the museum collections, on the internet or as physical photographs at the University of Namibia.

Oral History

The third and final source for data collection during this research process was semi-structured interviews. Initially, the aim was to select individuals to interview as follows; two Namibian Historians (one female and one male), two traditional leaders from the Oukwanyama Traditional Authority (one female and one male), two Culture Officers from the Directorate of Heritage and Culture Programs in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in the Ohangwena Region (one female and one male) and two culture practitioners who will be identified by reference from the Traditional Authority (one female and one male).

However, during the process of contacting individuals for an interview, a more organic process of selection occurred. As planned, interviews were conducted with Namibian Historians, Culture Officers from the Directorate of Heritage and Culture Programs in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and culture practitioners. Through recommendations by the knowledgeable people consulted and other heritage and culture professionals, it became evident that the pool of knowledgeable people that should be interviewed, needed to be expanded to include individuals who are from communities that are neighbouring the Oukwanyama kingdom, dues to the shared history. Therefore, oral interviews were also conducted with academics who specialize in linguistics, particularly Oshiwambo and Oshikwanyama, social sciences, visual arts, and history.

PROCEDURE

All but one of the interviews were held in person. One interview was held via the Zoom online platform. The interviews held in person were recorded with an audio recording device and detailed notes were also taken during the interviews. The interview held on Zoom was recorded as a video recording. As detailed above, the museum curators were provided with a written request for access to their collections. The letters included the request for information about the date and site of collection, the collector, and the method of acquisition. The letters also requested information about the materials the objects in the collections were made from, where the materials were sourced and photographs. Finally, the letter requested information about how the objects arrived at the museums and their value or what they were traded for.

The interviewees were provided with a pre-interview guide that provided them with an abstract of the research proposal as well as the objectives and the significance of the study. The pre-interview guide was provided in English and included an Oshikwanyama translation for all of the text. In addition, they were provided with a brief introduction to the 20 selected photographs of the material culture to be discussed and a list of questions that would be discussed during the interview. The purpose of the pre-interview guide was to provide the interviewees with the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the questions before the interview. It also provided them with the opportunity to research, if necessary, the information they were not certain of. The questions were sectioned into five sections. Below are both the English and Oshikwanyama translations of the questions. It is important to note that some words and phrases do not have a direct translation from English to Oshikwanyama and vice versa. Therefore, to ensure the true essence of the questions

is captured, certain words or phrases were not translated directly but rather, more descriptive terminology was used.

Finally, none of the participants was illiterate or assisted by an interpreter and none of the participants crossed “no” on the form, except for questions that asked if the participants had any questions or required further clarification. However, where questions related to the research did arise, they were discussed and clarified before and/or during the interview.

Museum Collections

The photographs below were taken during the research process, and they are of the material culture at the museum that is relevant to this research. The photographs provided to the interviewees in the pre-interview guide were those of the belongings in the Berlin Ethnographic Museum. However, for context and at some points, better visibility, the photographs below were also examined during the interviews as they are of a higher resolution and visibility. Because they were also taken for this research, they also provided better context as they were taken from different angles and attempted to highlight the materials and elements being discussed.

Although the material culture in the photographs from the Berlin Ethnographic Museum were all under the “Ovambo” collection, in the National Museum of Namibia collection, similar material culture was classified under different communities such as the Mbunza of the Kavango regions which can be attributed to the similarities between the culture and dress of the communities, based on their origins and continued close relations.

Figure 20: *Ongodo*

(Source: Own photo)

The Ongodo in Figure 20 are made from copper and are part of the National Museum of Namibia's ethnographic collection. These Ongodo were collected by S. J. Bonker in 1949. Based on the classifications on the tags in the National Museum of Namibia, they are listed as "Wambo" under "Ethnic Identity: nation" and as "Kwanyama" under "Tribe". It is unclear how and where the collector sourced these Ongodo however, the Ongodo that is a complete (uncut) ring is concerning as the only way to remove the Ongodo from an ankle is to cut (melt) the copper. This whole Ongodo could either have been commissioned specifically to collect or, if not, there is a

possibility that the individual who owned it either had their leg amputated while they were alive or after they had died.

Figure 21: *Ondjeva*

(Source: Own photo)

The Ondjeva in Figure 21 is made from ostrich egg shells and is part of the National Museum of Namibia's ethnographic collection. This Ondjeva was collected by P. K. Andreas in 1997. Based on the classifications on the tags in the National Museum of Namibia, they are listed as "Ovambo" under "Ethnic Identity: nation" but there is no detail under "Tribe". While labelled as a necklace, in Ovawambo communities, Ondjeva (worn around the waist) was originally made from ostrich shells, while Onyoka (a necklace) was made from river snail or mussel shells. However, it is now common for people from other communities such as the San communities to wear necklaces made from ostrich shells. Therefore, it is unclear whether this is a necklace made from an ostrich shell and it is labelled or if it is, in fact, Ondjeva.

Figure 22: *Jewellery made with cowrie shells*

(Source: Own Photo)

The necklaces and bracelets in Figure 22 are made with cowrie shells, sting and leather and are part of the National Museum of Namibia's ethnographic collection. These Ongodo were collected by whom the museum tag title lists as the "Museum Ethnologist" in 1957, 1975, 1976 and 1986. It is unclear whether the collector is the same person, However, based on the classifications on the tags in the National Museum of Namibia, they are listed as "Kavango" under "Ethnic Identity: nation" and as "Mbunza" and "Mbukushu" under "Tribe".

Conus Shells - Omba

The procurement and utilisation of shells within the Oukwanyama Kingdom hold significant implications for defining the neighbouring communities, understanding the intricate trade routes, and discerning the underlying social structures that prevailed both before, during, and in the aftermath of the nineteenth century. Shells, as a form of material culture, served as more than mere commodities; they encapsulated cultural, economic, and social significance, acting as tangible markers of connectivity and exchange. Their presence and distribution can thus be seen as a vital historical record, providing invaluable insights into the intricate networks that bound together the Oukwanyama Kingdom with their neighbouring societies. Additionally, by examining the patterns of shell usage and distribution, one can garner information about the socio-economic dynamics, hierarchical systems, and the evolving trade relationships that characterized this region across different eras within the nineteenth century and beyond. Through a comprehensive study of shells, this research endeavours to unlock a wealth of knowledge about the broader historical landscape in which the Oukwanyama Kingdom thrived and interacted with their surrounding neighbours.

With that said, the following section provides insight into Conus shells. Conus snails are a large group of small to large-sized exceptionally venomous predatory sea snails and marine gastropod molluscs. Like the Cowrie shells, the Conus shells have also been known to be used as currency in different parts of the world such as Papua New Guinea and were, even more so today, rare, and highly valuable to Ovawambo communities.

Figure 23: *The different angles of the Conus Spurius*
(Source: Wikipedia, 2021)

Omba is discussed in *Oombale Dhi Ihaka – A Bond That Cannot Be Broken* as it was described in the Finnish Museum's catalogue on the Rautanen collection. In the catalogue, Rautanen states ". . . is used as a decoration and a sign of honour. This type of seashell is found, according to the people in the Ombwenge, meaning the Okavango River and its tributaries. The way it is said to be fished is that a goat's caul, with its dregs, is put in the water for a night, and when it is taken out in the morning it will contain those seashells. Aandonga people with their cattle often go to Ombwenge to buy these and through the market routes they are transported to all the Owambo tribes, and they are considered valuable. The Omba found in this collection cost about 40 – 50 Finnish markka, but even bigger ones can be found, which cost 4

or even 5 animals, 200 – 250 Finnish markka, but those are only owned by kings or royalty. These kinds of large Omba are the property of the state, which a king will hold for some time and give as a mark of honour to his favourites and the worthiest people, as well as to decorate his wives and especially his main wife. Everyone has to take good care of them, so they do not get lost or broken, in which case one has to either pay or go into exile, otherwise a great punishment will follow. They are used wherever you want, either around the neck, upper arms or around the waist at the front. After they have been around someone's neck for a while they go back to the king's treasury, to be given to another favourite of the king. Smaller Omba is owned by poorer people, although they often end up in life-threatening danger, because of the rich people's jealousy." (Kautondokwa, & Silvester, 2019, pp.54-55).

In the same publication, Kautondokwa and Silvester added the following, "The snails that provide the shell used to make the Omba can also be found in the Onghumbi (Kunene) River. Cattle *ehoho* (the contents of the intestines when it is slaughtered) was dropped on the banks of the river when it was flowing. The smell attracted the snails and when a large number were gathered, they were harvested. The snail shells were cleaned, and the bodies were removed. The hole in the centre of the shell was filled with molten lead (oholo) which becomes hard as it cools. The ornaments were very valuable (in the 1930s it was reported that just one might be traded for an ox), but mainly because they had strong sentimental value as they were often passed down from one generation to the next. A thread made from specially prepared and softened cattle tendons is used to fasten the Omba to clothing so that it can be attached and removed easily." (Kautondokwa, & Silvester, 2019, pp.55).

Figure 24: *Omba = seashell (VK1049c: 54) filled with molten lead (oholo).*
(Source: Kautondokwa & Silvester, 2019)

During her interview, Mee Nehoa added that she had recently seen the Omba for sale at the open market in Outapi and the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) trading park in Opuwo. However, she emphasised that there have become increasingly more difficult to source. So much so that the individual who sells them at the open market in Opuwo, comes from Angola to do so. Mee Nehoa's observations were further collaborated by Mee Nangula who added that apart from individuals from Angola, some individuals come from Walvis Bay to sell them.

Figure 25: *Conus Shells (Omba)*

(Source: Own Photo)

The Conus shells in Figure 25 are part of the National Museum of Namibia's ethnographic collection. These shells were collected by A. Otto in 1976 and an unknown collector in an unknown year. However, based on the classifications on the tags in the National Museum of Namibia, they are listed as "Kavango" and "Wambo"

under “Ethnic Identity: nation” and as “Mbunza” and “Unknown” under “Tribe”. It is worth emphasising that one of the inscriptions on the shells indicates that they were adorned by affluent women, corroborating the narratives mentioned earlier.

Figure 26: *Onyoka = Shell beads (VK1049c: 55)*
(Source: Kautondokwa & Silvester, 2019)

Building on the descriptions above, it can be easily argued that because of the colonial borders, access to the shells such as the ones used to make the Onyoka in Figure 26 became increasingly less accessible. However, on the other hand, because of the influx of Europeans and in particular, European traders, access to plastic imitations and/or alternatives for Africans increased around the 1930s (DonVendor, 2022). Plastic and fabric were among the resources that quickly became more accessible through the development of these new neighbours in the form of colonial powers, missionaries, and traders.

Figure 27: Ekipa

(Source: Own Photo)

The Omakipa (plural) in Figure 27 is made from ivory and is part of the National Museum of Namibia's ethnographic collection. These shells were collected by F. Irlich and A. Otto in 1988 and D. Weeks in 1989. Based on the classifications on the tags in the National Museum of Namibia, they are listed as "Wambo" under "Ethnic Identity: nation" and as "Kwanyama" under "Tribe". Like the Omba, the Ekipa is exceptionally valuable as the ivory would come from elephant tusks.

According to Dr Nampala, the main reason the ivory is so valuable is that although elephants are wild animals and relatively many on the land, the hunting of elephants was only allowed to be commissioned by the king during specific periods. The king would do this for several reasons. Firstly, as a form of population control, to ensure that the hunters do not hunt pregnant elephants. Secondly, as a form of preserving social hierarchy. Because everything in the land is the property of the king, the king determines who can own ivory which would usually be the wealthy and only the royal family owned the tusks. She further stated that the arrival of the Portuguese exacerbated the need for the kings to monitor and control the hunting of elephants as the Portuguese also wanted to acquire the elephant tusks as they are valuable across the world. Finally, Dr Nampala recalled how the crafting of the Omakipa and Omba was a specialised skill that very few people in each community had the knowledge and permission to do.

Figure 28: *Omba nOmakipa a Mee Mbushange*
(Source: Toolu, 2022)

Currently, the Omakipa and Omba (Conus Shells) are even rare to come across due to nature conservation and hunting laws and the restrictions caused by the current borders. While in conversation with Mee Ndapewoshali Toini Toolu, she stated that

the Omakipa are particularly difficult to find. A retired school principal based in Ompundja, in Uukwambi, stated that she purchased hers, as visible in Figure 28, from Ondangwa. She stresses, however, that even though there are traders in Ondangwa whom she purchases them from, it is not always guaranteed that they will have stock.

Fertility Dolls - Ounona

The specific set of material culture mentioned earlier served as a focal point for examining various materials. Among these, the fertility dolls, known by their Oshikwanyama name "Ounona" meaning child, offered a comprehensive representation of the diverse elements explored. They encompassed all the materials found in other pieces of material culture such as wood, Omba, Ekipa, copper, an assortment of beads, buttons, ostrich feathers, seashells, and more. Consequently, these dolls were positioned at the conclusion of the pre-interview guide, signifying the final item to be examined and discussed.

Despite their widespread presence in European museum collections and online marketplaces like eBay today, Tönjes (1911) noted that fertility dolls were not available for sale. Instead, he emphasized that these dolls were highly cherished possessions, meticulously cared for by their owners. In the unfortunate event of a homestead fire, the doll would be the first item residents would try to rescue. Ownership of such a doll was a significant indicator of a girl's familial status, and when she bore her first child, it would be bestowed with the same name as the cherished doll. Due to the cultural significance attached to them, fertility dolls were not to be sold, making their acquisition a formidable challenge.

Figure 29: *"Kandina"*

(Source: Berlin Ethnographic Museum and Own Photo)

The fertility doll in Figure 29 is not from the Oukwanyama Kingdom. This fertility doll returned to Namibia in May 2022, from the Berlin Ethnographic Museum, as part of the 23 belongings that were returned as part of the *Confronting Colonial Pasts, Envisioning Creative Futures* Project which was implemented by the Museums Association of Namibia. According to the Berlin Ethnographic Museum, "This doll is of outstanding art-historical and historical importance, as it not only exemplifies courtly clothing and art styles but also the agency of African women in missionary contexts. Tönjes (1911) writes that the doll was given to the missionary's daughter Anna Rautanen by Queen "Olugondo" of Ondonga. It is, however, important to note that after the fertility doll's return to Namibia, the queen's relative informed the project team that the correct name of the queen was Lugondo and not Olugondo. According to the records in the Berlin Ethnographic Museum, in 1909

Tönjes sold the doll to the Königliche Museum für Völkerkunde. During the interviews conducted for this research, we explored and deliberated upon this fertility doll, which was included in the inventory provided by the Berlin Ethnographic Museum. Crafted from wood, it is embellished with an array of materials including blue and red glass beads, as well as two varieties of clear/off-white glass beads. Additionally, it features ostrich shell beads, buttons, hair, iron beads, and leather belts.

Figure 30: *Fertility Dolls at the Berlin Ethnographic Museum*

Source: Berlin Ethnographic Museum

The dolls in Figure 30 are held at the Berlin Ethnographic Museum and have been collected by different collectors between 1898 and 1950. These photographs were used during the interviews as visual aids for the discussions. One of the observations that were discussed by most of the interviewees was the introduction of the Odelela fabric on the dolls, which illustrates the introduction of the fabric within the material culture of the communities.

Figure 31: *Fertility Doll 2 - NMN*
(Source: Own Photo)

The fertility doll in Figure 31 is made from wood and adorned with blue, red, and two types of clear/off-white trade beads, ostrich shell beads and leather belts. This fertility doll is a part of the National Museum of Namibia's ethnographic collection. It was collected by Courtney Clarke in 1925. Based on the classifications on the tags

in the National Museum of Namibia, they are listed as “Wambo” under “Ethnic Identity: nation” and as “Kwanyama” under “Tribe”.

Figure 32: *Fertility Doll 3 - NMN*

(Source: Own Photo)

The fertility doll in Figure 32 is made from wood and adorned with blue, green, yellow, white, gold, brown, and two types of clear/off-white glass beads and ostrich shell beads. This fertility doll is a part of the National Museum of Namibia’s ethnographic collection. It was collected by “Logie” in 1933. Based on the

classifications on the tags in the National Museum of Namibia, they are listed as “Wambo” under “Ethnic Identity: nation” and as “Kwanyama” under “Tribe”. Under the remarks, the tag specifies that the doll was used for fertility purposes and refers to it as “Doll - Oshipipolo”.

Fertility dolls are a prevalent cultural tradition within various Bantu communities in Africa, employed to invoke fertility (Taylor, n.d.). Among the most globally recognized are the Akuaba and Ashanti dolls from present-day Ghana, as well as the Dilwana dolls originating from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Crafted predominantly from wood, these dolls are traditionally bestowed upon a young bride or woman, a gesture typically made by either her father upon marriage or her suitor as a declaration of his intent to marry her. Subsequently, the recipient takes on the responsibility of nurturing and safeguarding the fertility doll as if it were an actual child, while the couple tries to conceive. This practice embodies a deeply ingrained cultural belief in the doll's ability to enhance fertility and facilitate the journey to parenthood.

Although, as a result of the conversion of Ovawambo communities to Christianity, the dolls are uncommon in the Ovawambo communities within Namibia currently, the fertility dolls played a large in the marriage process of the Ovawambo communities. Taylor (n.d.) writes that how the fertility doll is adorned imitates a bride or newly married woman’s attire. As is visible in Figures 29 to 32, not all fertility dolls are alike. The fertility doll owned by the Queen of Ondonga is significantly more adorned and adorned in more expensive and rare materials than the others held at the National Museum of Namibia. The size and level of adornment of the doll, speak to the financial and social position of the father or suitor who gifts

the doll to the bride. Currently, one is more likely to find one of these dolls in a European Museum or for sale online, by collectors from Europe.

In addition to the traditional wooden fertility dolls, there were instances where brides would receive fertility dolls crafted from more readily available materials, such as palm fruit, known as "Okaana koNdunga" (singular for Ounona made from palm fruit) (refer to figures 33 and 34). These palm fruit dolls remain prominent and easily accessible in the present day, particularly in northern Namibia where palm trees are abundant. Nevertheless, the practice of fathers and suitors gifting these dolls to young women has become less common. Instead, they are primarily used as playthings for young girls, alongside fabric and plastic dolls.

This transition provides a tangible demonstration of the evolving influence of European missionaries, colonialism, and trade. Unlike the older dolls, which may have featured only small fabric elements, these palm fruit dolls are now fully attired in the distinctive Odelela fabric, while still retaining elements reminiscent of the older dolls and, consequently, the traditional cultural attire. Early versions of these dolls have also become sought-after items among European collectors and are often available for purchase online. This transformation underscores the dynamic nature of cultural practices and their adaptation to changing socio-historical contexts.

Figure 33: *Okaana koNdunga for Sale on E-Bay*

(Source: WorthPoint, 2022)

Figure 33 depicts Okaana koNdunga. This Okaana is for sale online and is described as a "Small Ovambo doll made of a gourd (calabash vegetable), fabric, beads, and buttons. Used by children who decorate the gourds and dress them up. What makes this doll more interesting is the string of buttons which are meant to represent ivory buttons, normally worn by women of high standing. The ivory buttons are commonly known as Ekipa. This little doll has 2 of these button strings.12cm tall. Book reference: ISN'T S/HE A DOLL, page 98."

Figure 34: *Three dolls - Auctionhouse Zemanek-Münster*

(Source: Pinterest, 2022)

The three dolls in Figure 34 are being auctioned by Auctionhouse Zemanek-Münster which is an auction house in Würzburg, Germany. On its official website, the company describes itself as specialising in fine *old tribal art* from Africa, Australia, Oceania, Asia and America and auctions *world-class art objects* such as masks, figures, ritual objects, ceramics, textiles, *primitive* money, and jewellery.

DATA ANALYSIS

It is important to address the lack of gender balance within the oral interviews. Although oral interviews were held with men many of the oral interviews were held with women. The International Symposium on the Role of Women in the Transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage held in 1999 highlighted the role of

women in the transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage both within the nuclear family setting and the larger societal setting.

Many argue that women carry culture through storytelling. Whether one agrees with this notion or not, while attempting to build the population sample as detailed above, the individuals who were referred most, by both men and women, were women. It is also the case that women were and are still the demographic most involved in trade and the fashioning of most material culture. As a result, the recommendations may also have been influenced by this knowledge, with the rationale that women would be the best-placed sources for this information, in this society. One must also take into consideration the fact that this research and the interviews were conducted by a young, female, Oshikwanyama-speaking researcher. The extent to which the demographic of the researcher influenced the individuals who were both recommended and agreed to be sources for the oral interviews cannot fully be determined. However, it cannot be ignored.

On the other hand, although the literature studied is authored by more diverse demographics, most of it is written by men of European descent. The socio-political rationale behind much of the earliest published material about these communities, during this particular period, can, at first sight, be attributed to missionary and colonial activity and their link to ethnographic and anthropological studies. In more simple terms, access to communities, the power to extract information from communities, the culture of documenting histories and cultures through writing and the access to academic and publishing institutions. The literature authored by individuals from demographics such as women and men of African descent, also for socio-political reasons, appears later in the timeline because these demographic groups adopted the culture of documenting histories and cultures through writing and

gaining access to academic and publishing institutions. In conclusion, the three sources of data collection provided not only diversity in data collection methods but also diversity in the voices which informed the data collection process. This diversity made it possible to cross-reference the information collected. This provided a basis on which to identify and analyse the similarities in the information and narratives, to identify the differences and the possible reasons behind those differences.

My findings are presented in a manner that addresses the objectives and main research questions. Therefore, the findings are arranged by first attempting to answer the questions "Who are the Ovawambo" and "Who are the Ovakwanyama?" These questions attempt to identify the origins of these communities and the migration history that resulted in them being in Northern Namibia and Southern Angola in the nineteenth century. The questions also attempt to identify and discuss the origins of the names "Ovawambo or Aawambo" and the reasons for the segmentation of the Ovawambo communities. Thereafter, and closely related to the questions above, the findings presented an attempt to identify who the neighbours of the Ovakwanyama in the nineteenth century and before were.

The next set of findings presented in this chapter relates to the history of trade in northern Namibia and southern Angola and its impact on material culture. These findings are then followed by the findings related to the division of the Oukwanyama kingdom as a result of the Berlin conference of 1884-1885 and the subsequent impact of colonialism on trade between the Oukwanyama kingdom and its neighbours. Finally, the last sets of findings discuss material culture as evidence of trade and the influence of trade on culture. Each set of findings is presented in the three methods of data collection. Firstly, each set of findings begins with the findings of the literature examined, followed by the data collected through oral interviews. Finally,

each set of findings ends with the data collected through reading the material culture examined.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH ETHICS

In conducting this research, utmost care was taken to safeguard the well-being of the interviewees, preserve the integrity of the material culture, and maintain a positive relationship with the communities involved in the study. As outlined earlier, participants were furnished with a "pre-interview" guide which encompassed an informed consent document. This ensured that all individuals interviewed were given the opportunity to carefully read and, if they chose to, endorse the informed consent form, indicating their willingness to share information. The consent form was distributed to participants ahead of the actual interview to afford them ample time for review and to seek clarification on any aspects they found necessary.

Additionally, the participants were also provided with the option to remain anonymous if they so desired. This option was reiterated both before and after the interviews. Participation was voluntary, and the participants were given the right to withdraw from the interview at any time or refuse to answer any question. Again, this option was reiterated both before and after the interview. This was deemed necessary because the interviews discussed family history which, in some instances may be considered sensitive or confidential because of its link to social identity and legal nationality and/or citizenship.

Moreover, through the “pre-interview” guide, all the participants were provided with information that attempted to give them sufficient context to give them the ability to make an informed decision as to whether they would like to participate in the research. The information included an introduction of the researcher (and their

contact details) and the details of the sponsor of the research. The information also included information about the purpose of the research, the procedure, participant selection criteria, and the anticipated risks, benefits, and outcomes. Because the "pre-interview" guide was provided before the interviews, the participants were provided with the opportunity to ask questions and gain clarity on any matters they require clarity about before agreeing to be interviewed. The final document in the "pre-interview" guide was proof of the approval of the research by the Decentralized Research Ethics committee. This provided evidence that the research is being conducted with permission and within the ethical parameters of the University of Namibia. The participants were informed that they will be provided with the final thesis once it has been approved by the University of Namibia.

With regards to the museum collections, permission was sought, in a letter addressed to the head of the museum and the curator in charge of the collection, from the National Museum of Namibia and the Ethnographic Museum in Berlin for the researcher to collect data. The Museums were requested to provide permission, in writing, from the museum, providing permission to the researcher and stating any stipulations and restrictions, if applicable. This process was completed for both museums. In addition, the researcher requested digital copies of photographs of the cultural objects in the collection and access to the digital database for both collections. The researcher also requested permission from the museums to print and show the photographs of the cultural objects (that are not already readily available to the public online) to the participants who consented to interviews, while providing information about the population sample, without revealing the identities of the participants.

Finally, all the material culture, whether in their physical state or through photographs, were handled carefully and respectfully, taking into consideration, their cultural, spiritual (where relevant) and historical significance, importance, and value; in adherence to the regional and international conventions as stipulated by the International Council of Museums (ICOM), and the International Council of African Museums (AFRICOM). The data collected, through the publication of the final thesis will be deposited in the National Archives of Namibia, the Museums Association of Namibia's archives and the University of Namibia.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a discussion of the findings, concerning the research questions identified at the start of the research process. The first section, Discussions, of this chapter, therefore, analyses the findings in an attempt to first, discuss the history of trade in northern Namibia and Southern Angola and its impact on material culture. With such an analysis I attempt to construct the history between the Oukwanyama and their neighbours in the nineteenth century by providing a summary of the answers to my four main research questions namely 1) identifying and documenting the items most traded between the Ovakwanyama and their neighbours and how trade patterns changed during the nineteenth century; 2) evaluating and documenting how some materials and cultural objects were valued as status symbols and whether this was due to the skills needed for their manufacture, the rarity of the materials used or the ritual significance of the material culture, 3) investigating and documenting the sources of the items traded and finally, 4) establishing and documenting the trade routes and the evolution thereof. I conclude the first section with an investigation/discussion on how trade influences culture. The second section, Conclusions, of this chapter discusses and evaluates how this research has built on and contributed to the theoretical frameworks which framed the research and ultimately, the contribution of this research to the decolonisation of the Namibian and Southern African Historiography. The third and final section of this chapter, Recommendations, provides the conclusions and recommendations for further research and other academic work, informed by the discussions in the first two sections of the chapter.

The History of Trade Between Oukwanyama and Its Neighbours and Its Impact on Material Culture

Before the introduction of the mercantile economy and its subsequent spread to the communities in Northern Namibia and Southern Angola, the communities would use a barter system to trade for the goods and services that they wanted or needed. Bartering is the oldest form of commerce which Kenton (2022) describes as the act of trading goods or services between two or more parties without the use of money or a monetary medium, such as a credit card. Bartering involves one party providing a good or service to another party, in return for another good or service. The two parties determine the value of their goods or services through a process of negotiation and then offer them to one another in what they have deemed to be an even exchange. For a good or service to have value, the party which possesses will have a monopoly over it.

While this thesis has discussed the impact of trade between the Ovakwanyama and their African neighbours, on the material culture of the Ovakwanyama, it is particularly important to examine the impact of trade between the Portuguese and later, the Finnish on not only the material culture but ultimately, the identity of the Ovakwanyama.

Arguably, the earliest European influence that impacted the material culture of the Ovakwanyama is the Atlantic Slave Trade (also referred to as the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Euro-American Slave Trade) which was rife between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries and was characterised by the transportation of enslaved African people to, mostly, the Americas, by European slave traders. Most of the Africans enslaved during the African slave trade originated from Central and West Africa

because of being either captured directly by European slave traders because they raided coastal Africa or, having been sold by other Africans, usually kings for different reasons.

Mee Nehoa highlights that the Atlantic Slave Trade, the start of the Bantu migration, and subsequent stories about *omakishi* stealing people, started around the same time. Omakishi were known to be scary, *white,* people who are cannibals and sought to buy and steal Africans to eat them. Thornton (1998, p. 316) supports this perception as he argues that there was a common assumption by Africans during the initial period of the Atlantic Slave Trade, that the true purpose of the Slave trade was that the Europeans, being cannibals, planned to cook and eat their captives. Mee Nehoa, therefore, draws attention to the possibility that one of the major push factors for the Bantu migration was the Atlantic Slave Trade. This reasoning, further explains why, the migration moved inland, away from the Atlantic Ocean. She argues that the arrival of Portuguese slave traders forced the African communities to migrate inland, in an attempt to escape the slave trade. She also highlights the possibility that the reason so much of the material culture currently, includes beads which have been traced back to initially, European origins, was that slaves and other products were traded for beads. This notion is substantiated by collections in European Museums. One such museum is the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. One item identified in the museum's collection is a string of forty-four, nineteenth-century beads which can be traced back as far as 1830 to Venice, Bohemia (now the Czech Republic) and the Netherlands. The beads are described as trade or often, slave beads as they were made in Europe, particularly for trade in West Africa. "The accessions register notes that the beads were 'made for use in the trading with Kaffirs of South Africa'." (Victoria and Albert Museum, n.d., historical context).

In 1526, the Portuguese completed the first transatlantic slave trip to Brazil, and soon, other Europeans followed. Concerning the number of Africans taken from Africa as slaves, the main Atlantic slave-trading countries, were Portugal, Britain, Spain, France, the Netherlands, and Denmark. However, many other European Nations benefited and build their wealth because of the African Slave Trade.

Figure 35: *A string of forty-four beads held by the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.*

(Image source: *https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1105/beads-unknown/)*

The beads in Figure 35 are part of a set of 142 painted trade beads which were donated to the museum by Moses Lewin Levin, a bead merchant who operated his import-export business in London between 1839 and 1913. The summary of the beads on the museum's website states "They are usually associated with West Africa but were created in Europe, particularly Venice, Bohemia, and the Netherlands. The history of trade beads dates to the 15th century when Portuguese trading ships arrived on the coast of West Africa to exploit its many resources, including gold, slaves, ivory, and palm oil. At that time, beads were a major part of the currency

exchange for people and products. The beads traded were not of a set form but were produced according to demand, which could vary from region to region, resulting in many thousands of different designs, as apparent here. The cost of producing the beads declined as glassmaking technologies developed and, for Europeans, the beads provided a cheap and efficient means of exploiting African resources." (Victoria and Albert Museum, n.d., para. 1).

Numerous publications document the slave trade within Ovawambo communities such as *The Atlantic Slave Trade from West Central Africa, 1780 – 1867*, published by Daniel B. Domingues da Silva in 2017 and the chapter titled *The Trade in Slaves in Ovamboland, ca 1850-1910* published by Kalle Gustafsson in 2005. Gustafsson details the dynamics between Ovawambo leaders (especially kings) and the way the slave trade impacted the economies of their kingdoms. It can, therefore, be argued that although it is a dark history, one of the earliest documented trade routes that included the Ovakwanyama was the Atlantic Slave Trade.

By the nineteenth century, beads were heavily entrenched in the material culture of the Ovakwanyama and the Ovawambo communities as a whole. While they varied in design, size, origin and colour, Different types of beads had different values and meanings. During her interview, Shiweda recounted that even beads with the same colour, but different shades, had different meanings and uses. She stated that the blue beads visible on the fertility dolls were not the only type of blue beads worn by Ovakwanyama women. She recounts that there were at least four types of blue beads worn by the women. Navy blue beads were worn by married women as is visible on the fertility dolls, however, a lighter shade of blue beads would be worn to display that the woman is not only married but married and pregnant. Women would wear an

even lighter shade of blue beads to display that they are experiencing challenges and another shade of blue to indicate that they are mourning.

Additionally, Tatekulu Mbenzi provided additional insight into the nuanced significance of bead colours. Notably, certain colours could hold multiple interpretations. For instance, black beads could symbolize either mourning or affluence, while white beads were often associated with economic hardship. These interpretations were rooted in the cultural symbolism of cattle. A completely black cow is considered rare and thus highly valuable. However, due to the superstition surrounding black as an omen of misfortune, it is considered inappropriate to offer a completely black cow as a dowry. Similarly, because white is associated with poverty, presenting an entirely white cow as a bride price is also considered inappropriate. This dual interpretation of colours exemplifies the complex interplay of cultural beliefs and practical considerations within the Ovakwanyama community.

Figure 36: *Omamanya Woshilongo (VK1049c: 53)*

(Source: Kautondokwa & Silvester 2019)

According to Kautondokwa and Silvester (2019), the beads in Figure 36 were known as *Omawe gwoshilongo* in Oshindonga. Kautondokwa and Silvester state that "These strings of beads are remembered as having been extremely expensive to buy (sometimes one might be exchanged for two cows) as they came from the Kunene River. The owners were women with high positions in society". This notion was substantiated by Dr Shiweda and Mee Nangula during her interviews where they both confirmed that the beads are referred to as Omamanya Woshilongo in Oshikwanyama and that they are particularly difficult to come across.

It, therefore, follows that the material culture such as the beads, shells and metal examined, points strongly towards a change and evolution in the material culture of the Ovakwanyama, as a result of trade. The evolution is visible in the differences between that which is prominent within the material culture from the early nineteenth century, and that which was prominent towards the end of the century. The cause for this evolution can be attributed to numerous factors. Firstly, one must consider the access to certain resources and the reasons for the change or variation in access to said resources; whether the access to the resources increased or decreased. Naturally, the most glaring cause of a change in access can be attributed to the Berlin Conference and the laws, particularly restrictions on trade and movement, that followed. The inability to trade between new borders called for resilience and adaptation within the communities whose free movement and trade were affected by these orders.

Examining an earlier period and considering the context of the Bantu migration, we observe an intriguing evolution regarding the prominence of cowrie shells within the material culture of the Ovakwanyama. As the Bantu group ventured further West and

South during their migratory journey, the accessibility of cowrie shells began to diminish. This gradual decline in availability had a notable impact on their significance within the material culture.

Furthermore, the imposition of colonial borders and the accompanying restrictions on trade further exacerbated the challenge of acquiring cowrie shells. Consequently, these shells gradually dwindled in prominence and, eventually, ceased to be a significant component of the material culture of the Ovawambo and the Ovakwanyama.

This evolution underscores the pivotal role that trade has played in shaping the material culture of the Ovakwanyama, a phenomenon applicable to communities worldwide. People adapt their material culture based on the resources readily accessible in their environment. When necessary, they substitute items with those that become more readily available, often via new trade routes. This adaptability becomes particularly evident when old trade routes are disrupted, as exemplified by the introduction of new borders and neighbours in the colonial era.

In essence, trade is an influential force in the evolution of material culture, continually shaping and reshaping the artefacts and objects that hold significance within a community's heritage. It reflects the dynamic nature of human societies as they respond to changing circumstances and adapt to new opportunities and challenges.

Between Oukwanyama and its neighbouring Ondonga kingdom in the nineteenth century, copper and iron were among some of the goods used to barter. The Finnish Missionary, Martti Rautanen who lived in the Ondonga Kingdom in the 1880s described the respective monopolies within the Oukwanyama and Ondonga Kingdoms as “Aakwanyama have mainly iron and the Ondonga copper quarries. The

iron excavations are in the mountainous lands north of the Kunene River. Blacksmiths go there with their bellows and other tools, and they prepare iron into what it should be and when ready, they carry it home. The smiths are in the iron excavations for many months. Only when they return do they forge the iron into the pieces that are needed, meaning axes, hoes, and spears…. This is a sort of monopoly of the Aakwanyama in the same way as the [*Ondongas*] have a monopoly over copper." (Silvester & Kautondokwa, 2019)

This account is collaborated by Salokoski (2006) who wrote about trade between the Ovawambo communities and detailed how the Ovakwanyama would source iron from Oshimanya in Southern Angola, north of the Kunene River. While referencing an account provided by Sakaria Haiduwa during an interview held in 1988, Salokoski wrote "The Kwanyama lived close to the iron fields in Angola, which were called *oshimanya*, and they went there each year on iron-fetching trips. They forged the iron into hoes, omatemo, axes, omakuwa, spearheads, omaonga, knives oimbele and other implements (MSc Haiduwa) and bartered these items with their neighbours."

In his MA thesis, Shigwedha (2004, p. 8) details that initially, traders brought in rare goods that were exchanged for local resources like ivory, ostrich feathers, and elephant tusks. However, it was towards the close of the nineteenth century that a surge in interaction occurred between the Aawambo people, European missionaries, and government officials. These external influences sought to alter what was perceived as the 'primitive traditions of the natives.' Consequently, even certain kings and influential community leaders, who were the upholders of traditional customs, found it hard to resist the allure of European goods. These items seemed to possess a special quality, bestowing unique attributes and signifying elevated economic status upon the wearer.

In addition to Shigwedha's analysis, the willingness of the kings and community leaders can be attributed to the fact that Christianity was introduced not only as a religion but ultimately, as a culture that required the converts to denounce their original culture, both material and immaterial. Therefore, convinced that their material and immaterial culture was both inferior and, in many instances, especially those relating to spirituality, and evil, the communities began to embrace and adopt that which they perceived as holy and Christian. Ironically, while Christianity as a religion was not birthed in Europe, the European missionaries did not differentiate between biblical teachings and their own culture. Therefore, the particular *brand* of Christianity adopted by the Ovawambo communities and continues to persist today was a blend of biblical teachings and the cultural practices of the specific European community from which the missionaries originated.

The most obvious examples of the culture adopted through the conversion to Christianity but does not have biblical relevance are the adoption of European names and surnames, healing and medicinal methods, and dress. In many Christian churches in northern Namibia, it was a requirement for parents who wished to baptise their children to give the child a name of European or biblical origin. Individuals who chose to convert themselves to the Christian religion would also be required to adopt a new "Christian" name. To date, most Ovawambo people have a "Christian" first name and perhaps only thereafter, a middle name in their vernacular language. As a rule, the "Christian" name is of Finnish, German, English or some other European country's origin. In other cases, the *acceptable* "Christian" name would have to be a European version of a name derived from a biblical (of Middle Eastern origin) name. For example, names such as Matthew which is the English version of the Hebrew name Matityahu and Joseph, which is the English version of the Hebrew name Yosef.

The erasure of the traditional healing and medicinal methods to replace them with European methods was also one of the elements of European culture adopted with the conversion to Christianity without biblical significance. This happened mainly because all healing whether, through spirituality, the use of herbs or any other medium was often lumped together by missionaries and witchcraft and sorcery. In their writings, many missionaries failed to distinguish between witch doctors, herbalists and traditional healers which are three completely different terms, as argued by Das and Thompson (2015). However, as a result, to date, in most Ovawambo communities, consultation with herbalists and traditional healers is still considered to be inferior, backward, and ultimately, unchristian.

Caley (2019) argues that many of the textiles that are currently considered to be traditional and form the material culture identity within Namibian communities were introduced by European traders. She uses an example of the Odelela fabric (as visible on the Fertility dolls in Figures 29 to 32) introduced to Aawambo by Portuguese traders. Although Caley argues that the Odelela fabric which forms a great part of the Ovawambo culture currently, was introduced to the Ovawambo by the Portuguese and not the Finnish, Iizyenda (2019), argues that the Finnish missionaries have, perhaps, the largest impact on the change in a dress within the Ovawambo communities. Iizyenda argues that "The beginning of Finnish missionary activities in Owambo from 1870 was one of the instrumental agents in the alteration of Aawambo traditional dress. The missionaries were from a different culture with their distinctive dress code and values which defined them. Through contact with these missionaries, and partly with European traders, the cultural dress of the Aawambo changed not only in design but also in the materials used." Iizyenda further argues that the pre-colonial attire of the Ovawambo communities was intricate and captivating,

serving as a visual expression of the wearer's life and societal standing. Initially, the fundamental clothing for the Ovawambo comprised a leather loincloth, a waistband, and embellishments crafted from various materials like oyster shells, reeds, and ivory buttons. The shift away from this customary attire was a direct consequence of the influence of missionary values. She argues that this shift significantly altered the authentic symbolic meanings associated with the cultural identity and way of life represented by the clothing worn by the Ovawambo people.

Therefore, while the Odelela fabric itself was introduced to the Ovawambo by the Portuguese, the style of dress that women who converted to Christianity would wear, called *Ohema Yeenhulo*, was introduced by the Finnish missionaries. While the first Odelela fabrics to be used by the Ovawambo looked like those on the fertility dolls in Figure 30, they have changed over time. As a result of the permutation of cultures, in particular, the use of European-sourced fabric, combined with the use of the red ochre called *Olukula* that the Ovawambo with smear their skin with and therefore, dye the fabrics with, the Odelela fabrics now mostly a deep pink with red, white, black, and blue stripes.

Figure 37: *Ohema Yeenhulo in 2022*

(Source: Own Photo)

More recently, the fabrics have been printed in China and imported to Namibia. Rather than being woven like the first fabrics, the ones imported from China are printed in a manner that gives them the appearance of being dyed. They come in similar but different designs and because the Odelela fabric has become so deeply entrenched in the material culture of the Ovawambo communities, are used not only for clothing but also for accessories and other items such as book covers, shoes, curtains etc. While the Ohema Yeenhulo such as the ones visible in Figure 37 is currently made with either Odelela fabric, a fabric printed with different designs or a piece of plain fabric, local Namibian Brands such as Couture by Kim and Juuho Creations and Consultancy, amongst others, use the different Odelela fabric prints to produce fashion and other items such as the notebooks in Figure 38 below.

Figure 38: *Odelela Fabric-covered notebooks made by Juuho Creations and Consultancy*

Source: Own Photo

During her interview, Mbangula discussed how many of the materials previously used to fashion different elements of material culture are no longer easily accessible within the Oukwanyama kingdom and Namibia as a whole. In particular, she discussed how Eurocentrism and Globalisation have impacted the material culture of the Ovakwanyama and many other, if not all, African cultures. As with the Odelela fabric, the Chinese traders in Namibia import cheaper and sometimes imitation materials such as printed fabrics, and buttons made of plastic to substitute the rare Omba and Ekipa, Onyoka and Ondjeva. The fact that these imitation materials are both readily accessible in bulk, and at a fraction of the price of the original or authentic versions, makes the sourcing and trade of the authentic materials and shells even more difficult as people will generally opt for the cheaper replica or alternative, especially if it resembles the originals enough.

Figure 39: *Two Ovawambo women collecting water*

(Source: August Pettinen, 1893-1908, National Board of Antiquities, Finland)

Figure 39 is a photograph of two young Ovawambo women in the process of collecting water. The woman on the left is dressed in an early version of Ohema Yeenhulo as encouraged by the missionaries, once one has converted to Christianity. The woman on the right is dressed in her traditional attire. By examining the

photograph alone, one can assume that the woman on the left has converted to Christianity and the one on the right has not. However, this is only the case if one uses European, and specifically, Finnish cultural standards to ascertain what would constitute as modest and, therefore, Christian attire. Iizyenda (2019) argues that the decision by the Finnish missionaries to convince the Ovawambo that their traditional material culture was in any way unchristian is both unethical and unsettling. She argues that "Missionaries should not have emphasized the need to change the locals' cultural attire to represent their conversion to Christianity. They should have rather focused on simply delivering the Christian message to the people."

This sentiment was shared by the interviewees such as who, during their interviews, voiced their frustration about how the Oukwanyama and, at a larger scale, the Ovawambo community's identity, has been diminished by the actions of the Finnish missionaries. While the interviewees acknowledge that the Finnish found the Ovakwanyama and the Ovawambo in general already have made contact with the Portuguese, it is the opinion of the interviewees that it was the Finnish who expedited the erasure of the Oukwanyama identity as it was, at the time.

Constructing a History of Trade Between Oukwanyama and Its Neighbours in The Nineteenth Century

In this thesis, I have argued that the process of constructing the history of trade between Oukwanyama and its neighbours in the nineteenth century is a multi-layered process that requires understanding and considering context and nuance. In this section, I attempt to construct this history by addressing the four main objectives of the study, and by summarising the findings discussed in greater detail, throughout the paper.

The first objective was *to identify and document the items most commonly traded items between the Ovakwanyama and their neighbours and how trade patterns changed during the nineteenth century.* Another objective of this research was to *establish and document the trade routes and the evolution thereof*. Through this thesis process, it has been established that the prevalent trade items were contingent on the specific period within the nineteenth century under consideration. This factor influenced various aspects including the demands of the community, the neighbouring societies at the time, and the nature of items or concepts being exchanged. Additionally, other influential elements such as colonial borders, regulations, and accessibility played a pivotal role. Likewise, the patterns of trade and the routes through which it occurred underwent a transformation due to these same factors.

In the earlier part of the nineteenth century, the Ovakwanyama traded mainly with other Ovawambo communities in northern Namibia and southern Angola and other neighbouring African communities such as the Ovaherero, the Vakavango, the different San communities in northern Namibia. In addition, as I have shown above, there were very strong trade routes and alliances between the communities in Southern Angola. Moreover, the communities traded that which they mined, grew, hunted, foraged, or forged for that which they required either to survive or wanted for other purposes such as decorative and spiritual items used in the fabrication of their material culture. Having the reputation of being the best ironsmiths, would trade iron, iron hoes, axes, beads, weapons and other tools for copper, shells, salt, clay pots and other items. Being both animal and crop farmers, the Ovakwanyama would also trade what they produced through crop farming and animals such as cattle and goats. The

Ovakwanyama also traded that which they hunted, foraged, and attained through raids such as ivory from elephant tasks and rhino horns, sea and river shells, and snail shells and sometimes, as argued by Salokoski (2006) captives that resulted from raids of other kingdoms and communities. The trade patterns and routes can, therefore, be visualised, if using the Oukwanyama Kingdom and Ondjiva, where the palace was in the nineteenth century, as the centre, as a system of trade between the central point and the neighbours within its radius as is illustrated in Figure 40 below.

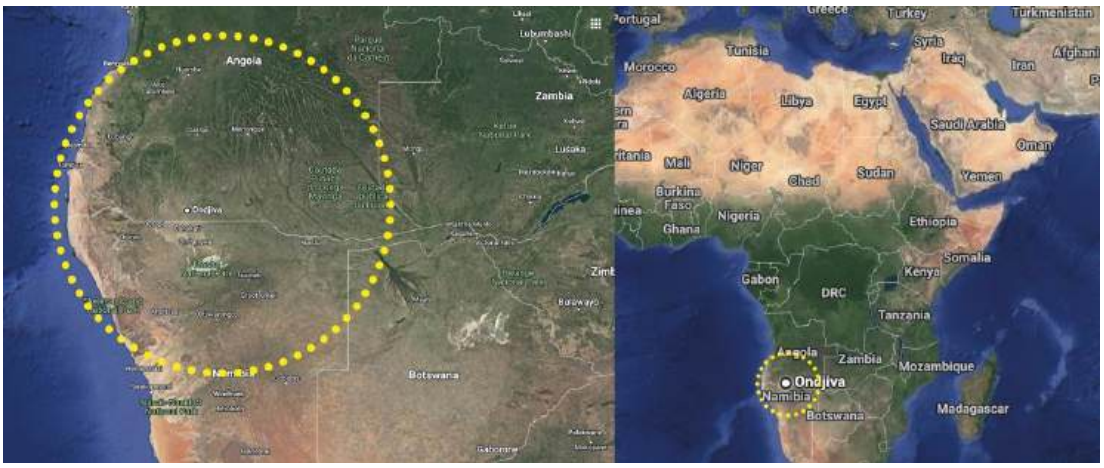

Figure 40: *A demonstrative illustration of the trading radius with Ondjiva as a central point.*

(Unedited map source: Google Maps)

The early nineteenth century also saw the continued interactions and trade between the Portuguese who had arrived in the area at least four centuries earlier. By the nineteenth century, the trade of slaves for the Atlantic Slave Trade was not as prominent as it was in previous centuries. Starting with Great Britain abolishing the slave trade with its colonies in 1807, followed by the United States Congress banning the importation of slaves in 1808, the rest of the nineteenth century saw an increase in the abolition of the slave trade and eventually slavery. However, the Portuguese continued to trade beads, fabric, ideas, and other items with the Ovakwanyama for

mainly ivory but also for other items the Ovakwanyama produced, as detailed above, using the route illustrated in Figure 41 below.

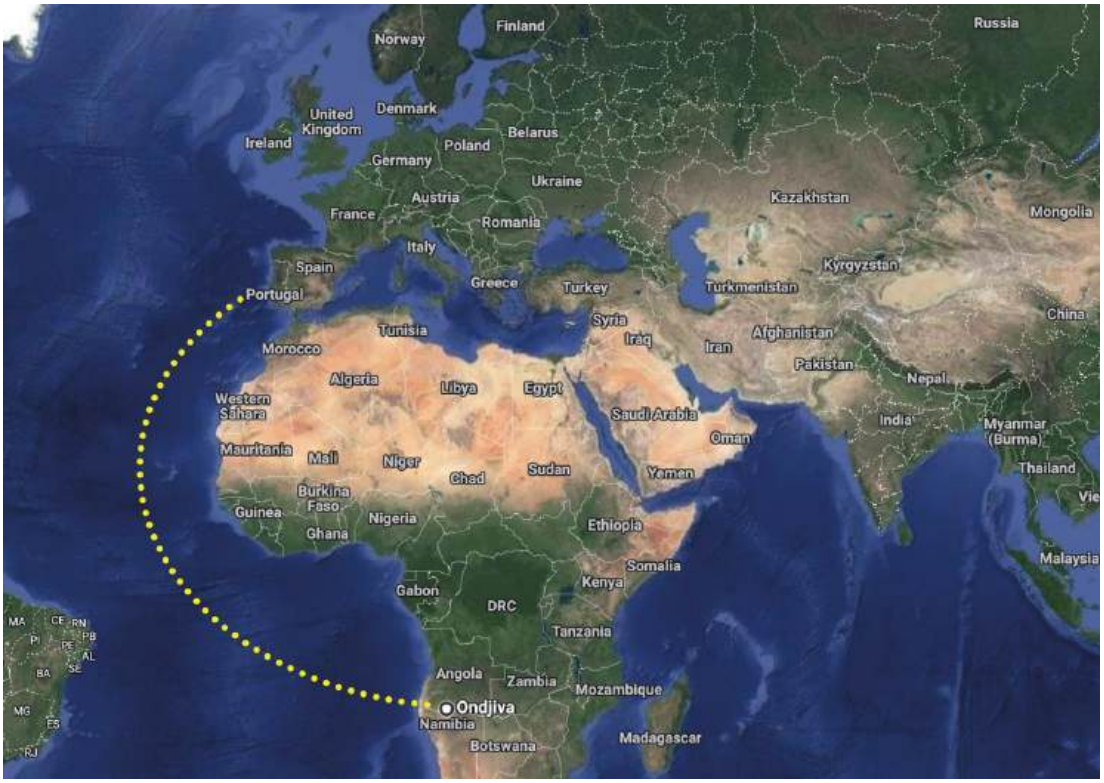

Figure 41: *A demonstrative illustration of the trade route between Ondjiva and Portugal.*

(Unedited map source: Google maps)

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, in 1870 when the first Finnish missionaries arrived in Southern Africa, the items traded with the missionaries included, that which the Ovakwanyama produced but also saw the trade of ideologies, in particular, the introduction of and conversion of the masses to Christianity. This is, arguably the greatest contributing factor to the change in trade patterns and the items traded by the Ovakwanyama in the nineteenth century. Because the conversion of the Ovakwanyama to Christianity meant a complete overall in dress, adornment, cultural and spiritual practices, the items that the Ovakwanyama needed and wanted to be changed drastically, giving prevalence to

fabric and other Finnish-style dress, and for many, severing the need for items such as copper and shells, which were prominent in the material culture which was now deemed heathen.

Figure 42: *A demonstrative illustration of the trade route between Ondjiva and Finland.*

(Unedited map source: Google Maps)

Shortly after, the German colonial period starting in 1884 formalised the implementation of the colonial borders which officially divided the Oukwanyama kingdom into two colonies (present-day Namibia and Angola). Not only did the border divide the kingdom, but it was also accompanied by laws which restricted trade, perhaps playing as the final straw in the destruction of the existing trade patterns. Although the communities on both ends of the border continued to trade and continue to do so today, the trade has become both expensive and physically challenging. The border also resulted in the establishment of completely new trade

patterns within the new nation-state for the Ovakwanyama on both sides of the border. An example of this on the Namibian side of the border is alluded to by the interviewees who recalled the sea and river shells being sourced from the north of the Kunene and Kavango rivers (now Southern Angola) which are geographically closer (less than 50kms) away from Ondjiva and Omhedi than Walvis Bay, from which shells are more easily and cheaply sourced at the time of this research, which is over 900kms away from Ondjiva. Moreover, the colonial period not only saw the introduction of new trade items and systems such as stores and currency, which completely changed the face of trade within the nation-state. Finally, the colonial period also saw the trade of both material and immaterial culture, visible in the heavy influence of German culture in terms of language, dress, food, names and more in the *Namibian* identity today.

Figure 43: *A demonstrative illustration of the trade route between Ondjiva and Germany.*

(Unedited map source: Google maps)

The second objective of this research was to *evaluate and document how some materials and cultural objects were valued as status symbols and whether this was due to the skills needed for their manufacture, the rarity of the materials used or the ritual significance of the object*. As is visible with the fertility dolls, the *Ongodo* and *Ombele WoShipika, Omba, Ekipa* and other significant material cultures discussed in this thesis, this research found that the value of an item is influenced by multiple factors. These factors were usually a combination of the skills needed for their manufacture and the rarity of the materials. These two factors are also intertwined with the ritual significance of the material culture as it is most common for well-crafted items that have been made with rare materials, to be used during special rituals such as weddings. An example of this is the fertility dolls, as discussed in the Procedure chapter. Even for items such as the *Ombele WoShipika* which were not necessarily used for rituals and special events, the value of the knife is based on the copper and iron used in its manufacturing, the craftsmanship and the fact that the knife can only be bestowed to an individual, by the king. Therefore, while designs and patterns may vary, craftsmanship played a large role in the value and use of the material culture of the Ovakwanyama in the nineteenth century. Seldom was any element of the material and immaterial culture random or without meaning and purpose.

Finally, the third objective of this research was to *investigate and document the origins of the items traded*. During this research, the identification of the trade patterns and routes considers the patterns and routes which are a point of first contact, specifically the neighbours of the Ovakwanyama. However, it is important to acknowledge that secondary and tertiary routes existed and continue to exist, through

intermediaries such as brokers, retailers, and wholesalers. Therefore, while the thesis attributes the source of the items to the traders that the Ovakwanyama interacted with directly, it is important to note that the different items and elements could have been sourced originally, from different sources. For example, the type of beads discussed in Figure 38 is recorded to have been created in Venice, Bohemia, and the Netherlands but were used by the Portuguese in Africa. This example illustrates how the Portuguese would source these beads from other European manufacturers and act as a middleman in the trade of these beads. However, establishing the initial source of every item traded would be beyond the scope of this research.

The Bigger Picture – The Influence of Trade on Culture

Although it is most common to discuss and study trade patterns and processes of tangible materials, this research also attempts to examine the trade of intangible assets such as ideas, knowledge, and processes. The trade of intangible assets is in some cases intentional. As a result, modern laws and regulations have put mechanisms into place, which protect and regulate the sale of intellectual property such as patents.

However, it is arguable that through different forms of human interaction, there are different degrees of unintentional or even unknowing trade of intangible assets such as ideas, knowledge, and processes. The result of the exchanges is then visible in the manner in which communities and cultures evolve, as a result of proximity to and interaction with other communities and individuals.

Moreover, Lohman (2021, para. 1) defines culture as “the beliefs, behaviours, practices, norms, values, history, characteristics, knowledge, and artefacts of a social group. Culture includes language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music, and arts. These elements combine to create the culture of the social group and impact how

members of the group think act and acquire possessions as a shared way of living." A simplified definition of culture would simply be "the way people do things'. Therefore, if one considers the simple definition of culture as the way people do things, then this thesis argues that culture is not stagnant but rather, it is organic and is constantly influenced by the different forms and levels of trade, which make a holistic impact on both material culture and intangible culture.

It is, therefore, fair to argue that throughout the different centuries that lead up to and inclusive of the nineteenth century, the Ovakwanyama identity and culture, both material and immaterial, have been impacted and moulded largely by two main factors: their geographical location and their systems of trade. With that said, the Ovakwanyama cultural identity today is equally a result of a combination of past and present influences and different forms and levels of trade. Moreover, the immaterial culture and material culture will continue to evolve.

DISCUSSIONS

The overarching purpose of this research was the attempt to conduct research that would contribute to the decolonisation of the Namibian and an extent, the Southern African historiography. For this reason, the research was conducted in a theoretical framework that was informed by Afrocentrism, "Post" Colonial Theory and Decolonial theory. This section evaluates and discusses the success of the research in acquiring and analysing the data that contributes to the theoretical framework established. For this reason, this section begins by analysing the findings of the research, concerning Afrocentrism. The second section of this section relates to postcolonial theory and the successful extent of the researcher's contribution, through this research, to this theoretical framework. Finally, this section analyses the

role of this research in the greater pursuit of decoloniality within the context of academia and Namibian history. Because no literary work is ever fully complete or fully accurate or without bias, this chapter closes with an analysis of the true impact of this research on the theoretical frameworks discussed, its contribution to the Namibian historiography, and in the greater questions around the championship for decoloniality of all spaces.

I would argue that despite the damaging impact of colonialism and the attempt by both colonial forces and missionaries to instil a sense of inferiority within African communities, oral history, adaptation, and mental fortitude have made it possible for the communities to rebuild their legacies and instil the sense of worth and royalty in their young.

Through identifying and tracing trade routes, this research has been able to amplify the knowledge around the pre-existing systems of autonomy, governance, and trade within the African communities in Northern Namibia and Southern Angola, especially, within the Oukwanyama Kingdom and its neighbours. The exploration of oral history has allowed for the research to view the Oukwanyama Kingdom, and the kingdoms and communities around it, in a light that not only confirms that which is postulated in the theory of Afrocentrism but also, hopefully, aids in the process of the dismantling of the deep-rooted insecurities and inferiorities instilled within these communities by colonizing entities common often with the use of missionaries.

As argued by Shigwedha (2004) although many scholars still attempt to shy away from it, one cannot divorce the impact of European missionaries, or the role of European missionaries, in the dismantling and destruction of African communities and cultures.

Although referred to by many early writers such as Tönjes and other missionaries, the Ovawambo, the Ovakwanyama, Africans, were never, and are not now, savages or people without an organised, intricate religion. Moreover, they have not been *saved* from savagery by colonial activity by European colonial powers and missionaries.

On the contrary, one can, by reading the material culture and its intricacies and complex nature, and the complex and advanced nature of sourcing the elements and materials that contribute towards the development of the material culture, easily identify the advanced nature of these communities. One can easily identify the advanced systems that they held in place, even as nomads when they were, for multiple centuries. The fact that these systems such as clans and pieces of knowledge of how to trade, religion, mathematics, life skills, medicinal knowledge (both mental and physical), and many more, speaks to the resilience of these communities that have been disrupted not only by their own choices to migrate and form smaller communities. But also, by intentional methods of disruption and destruction by colonial entities and the missionaries that they used.

While this research made use of the material culture held by museums and the information about the African communities in question, documented by previous scholars, it is evident that there is still a lot of work to be done. The mislabelling, misinformation and derogatory terminology in many museum collections and literary publications about the communities illustrate the urgent and critical need for provenance research centred around the community of origin of artefacts and material culture, rather than the collector. It also is imperative that researchers, scholars, and storytellers in all disciplines not only acknowledge but actively endeavour to, at the very least, document the political, aesthetic, economic,

historical, and social impact of European colonial rule in a manner that amplifies the narratives of the colonised communities. Only through this, can the lingering forms of colonialism be acknowledged and can the process of dismantling them begin.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"Mokaxwa (omu) wa dina omo mu na ndiba" – Oshikwanyama Proverb

In English, the direct translation of the Oshikwanyama proverb *"Mokaxwa wa dina omo mu na ndiba.",* means the rabbit is in the bush/shrub that you least expect it to be in. The proverb refers to the process of hunting for rabbits; and emphasises that one should never undermine what a seemingly small bush can hide. In this case, your next meal, i.e. the rabbit once hunted. The metaphorical translation, however, bears a similar meaning to the English proverb that "still waters run deep" which means that people who are quiet or placid are often very intelligent, knowledgeable, interesting, and passionate. Therefore, they should not be undermined. In essence, the proverb emphasises that one should never undermine the wisdom or intellect of another because they do not boast about it.

This proverb speaks to the knowledge of people from communities in which one conducts research. One should not undermine or underestimate the amount of knowledge that an individual could have just because they do not possess the professional or academic accolades and titles that have been created by the Western academic and social systems. This is particularly true when conducting research in colonised communities, where the communities have been conditioned to believe (or at least pretend to believe to survive) that they are inherently intellectually inferior to the colonisers and their descendants. Individuals will, therefore, often choose not to

speak up against incorrect information written about their communities by individuals who do possess professional or academic accolades and titles. However, this only further emphasises the importance of community-centred research by individuals who consider the individuals within the communities to be intellectual and social equals.

It is evident from the interview with Tatekulu Mbenzi that research into and about communities requires an individual to understand enough, to pick up what would appear to an outsider, as minor or insignificant nuances; and to understand the significance of variations in dialects and language. This is particularly important because these nuances identify and explain communities and cultures. It is also evident, how important oral history is, especially when it's told by those who understand the nuances of that culture and history.

Furthermore, a significant portion of the vital information gathered in this research was only accessible due to my intimate familiarity with the culture in question. However, this is said without negating the importance, significance or validity of research done in communities by individuals who do not hail from those communities. Moreover, the interviews, underpinned the importance of understanding nuances, no matter how minor they may appear at first glance.

While attempting to amplify indigenous African voices and truths within academic spaces that discuss African history and culture, it became evident that although the term decoloniality is at the centre of most discussions in these spaces, it should perhaps be written as decoloniality with an asterisk. According to McLeod (2022), the asterisk is used as a symbol for footnoted notations in existing text and it can also be used to point out additional details such as disclaimers or the fact that there is missing material or information. She argues that the use of the asterisk “provides a

visual connection to additional information for the reader to further understand the material."

Therefore, the argument that academic spaces that discuss African history and culture should, perhaps, include the use of an asterisk when speaking about decoloniality stems from the resistance I faced from some academics for considering the individuals within the communities to be intellectual and social equals during this research process. The asterisk would, therefore, represent the perimeters in which the word decoloniality is defined, to illustrate that the definition of decoloniality varies depending on who is using it.

For some, it appears to be used merely as a catchphrase to appear to be on the "right" side of history while doing little to nothing to truly progress the cause; while others use the term, while actively working against it. For example, during the course of my research, I encountered individuals within academic circles engaging in discussions about African history and culture. There remains a prevailing belief among some that the perspectives and narratives conveyed by oral historians of African descent concerning African history and culture are often deemed less significant than those provided by scholars, historians, and authors of European descent, particularly within the same subject matter.

During this research process, both the procedures and purpose of the research were regularly subject to critique for considering African methodology and systems to be equal to any other. The terminology used when discussing oral history and publications produced by historians of African descent was also subject to many critiques. While this research considered African sources to be reliable, there was continuous pressure to use oral history and publications produced by historians of

African descent only as secondary sources while publications produced by historians of European descent are superior.

For some who interacted with this research during the process of the research, the idea of an African voice, opinion, experience, or truth is equal to or perhaps even being given more prominence than that of a scholar, researcher, missionary etc. of European descent; was unfathomable. Therefore, words like “expert” and “historian” were encouraged to be reserved for authors who have been validated by the Western academic system. Based on this argument, an individual who visited a community for a limited amount of time as a researcher, missionary etc. can be considered an expert on the culture and norms of that community because they have produced literature that has been published through academic systems. However, the individuals and the descendants thereof, whom they used as sources for the information in their publications are not reliable sources because they have not been published. This notion is particularly peculiar given the fact that most, if not all published authors outright acknowledge their main source as the oral history provided by members of the communities in which they conducted their research. This argument, therefore, begs the question, who is the true owner of intellectual property? Is it the individuals who uphold, live, and communicate it or is it the individual who absorbs and patents it?

“The notion real-time time and real history only begin with the arrival of Europeans and their documentary methods has a long critique in African historiography. It is equally germane to ask how time and history figure in the residues of precolonial African discourse.” Hayes (2009).

The research has therefore birthed two crucial questions concerning academic spaces that discuss African history and culture. Firstly, can one truly aim to decolonize when one continues to benefit from colonisation and colonial ideology? And secondly, can one truly aim to decolonize when they inherently believe that is African is inferior to that which is of European descent? These questions can be applied to academic processes and to any other space that attempts to reverse and/or correct the effects of colonisation on nations and communities. The first question aims to bring light to the underlying challenge of honesty and intent when in a discussion about processes such as decoloniality. The decolonial process requires the deconstruction of both physical and mental institutions and such a process should not be taken lightly. In many instances, it calls for the challenging of known realities, identities and in some cases, bread, and butter issues. One, therefore, is forced to investigate within oneself, the way one benefits from colonial constructs and ideologies and, to question whether the benefits of decolonial activities will have a positive or negative impact on the individual, institution, or society. This heavily impacts one's willingness to truly champion decolonial activity.

The second question can be further dissected based on whom the "one" in question is. If the "one" is of European descent, the question is then, "Can one truly claim to decolonise if they still subscribe to colonial ideology?" If the "one" in question is of African descent, the question is then "Can one truly aim to decolonise if one is still colonised mentally?" Therefore, if one truly believes that decolonial activity will result in the regression of civilisation and the deconstruction of superior structures, one is unlikely to advocate for or support decolonial activity.

In conclusion, although this research intended to ultimately contribute to the decolonial agenda, the impact of this research is most likely to be accepted by those

who truly champion the decolonial agenda and those who, if not yet in that space, are open to unlearning the colonial ideology and being open to engaging different perspectives. Therefore, the onus then lies within those who are truly passionate about decolonizing not only academic spaces, but all spaces, to take up further research of this nature.

Because one is generally more inclined to be passionate about research that affects them directly, it would be beneficial for researchers conducting research within the decolonization agenda, to address issues that are relevant to the communities from which they hail, or to communities with which they have interacted with to an extent that they have formed a relationship with and can identify with.

However, this does not in any way suggest that one needs to be from the specific community to research it or to produce research findings that have the best interest of the community at heart. However, one does need to hold that specific community in high regard and see the purpose of the research as more than just a means to an end. For one to fully represent the community's best interest within the research, it would be important for one to hold the community in high regard and to consider both the tangible and intangible culture of that community to not be inferior to one's own (if the researcher is not from that community) and not inferior to any other.

This thesis, therefore, argues that the colonial work can only truly be done by individuals and institutions who are not or are no longer benefiting from colonial ideology; or have resolved to relinquish their benefits from colonization and colonial ideology for the sake of the greater good. Secondly, individuals who are not of the inherent opinion that that which is African is inferior to that which is of the colonizer.

***"Ohaka yale noluhoni limwe."* - Oshikwanyama proverb**

In English, the direct translation of the Oshikwanyama proverb "*Ohaka yale noluhoni limwe.*", means you build by adding one reed at a time. The proverb refers to the process of building a roof made of reeds for a hut. The roof takes hundreds if not thousands of reeds to complete. Therefore, the metaphorical translation bears similar meaning to the English proverb that "Rome was not built in a day" and the African proverb that states "there is only one way to eat an elephant: a bite at a time."

All three proverbs imply that everything in life that seems daunting, overwhelming, or even impossible can be overcome steadily by taking the challenge on, a little at a time or one step at a time. Therefore, although there is still a long way to go before, we can truly decolonise academia, museums, and our minds, we can achieve it by taking it one step at a time. That means one research thesis, one presentation, and one uncomfortable conversation at a time.

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APPENDICES

A) ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNAM
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: SHS 0028 Date: 30 April 2022

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Decentralized Ethics Committee (DEC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the School of Humanities, Society & Development Decentralized Ethics Committee.

Title of Project: Reading material culture to construct a history of trade between Oukwanyama and its neighbours in the nineteenth century.
Researcher: Ndapewoshali Ndahafa Ashipala
Student Number: 200830562
Supervisor(s): Dr. G. Gwasira

Centre for Research Services

Take note of the following:

1. Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the ethics committee. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
2. Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the ethics committee
3. The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the ethics committee (through the Chairperson) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by the ethics committee
4. The ethics committee retains the right to:

i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

The ethics committee wishes you the best in your research.

Prof. Trywell Kalusopa (Chairperson, Decentralised Ethics Committee)

Prof. Davis Mumbengegwi (Head, Multidisciplinary Research)

B) RESEARCH PERMISSION LETTER

University of Namibia, Private Bag 13301, Windhoek, Namibia
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☎ +264 61 206 3111; URL: http//www.unam.edu.na

UNAM
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND ARTS

02 May 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This letter serves to confirm that Ms. Ndapewoshali Ndahafa Ashipala is currently enrolled in the Master of Arts (History) programme at the University of Namibia. I am writing in my capacity as her research supervisor, to kindly request permission to conduct her research in your organization. Ms. Ashipala is required to consult some archives, museum documentation and objects as part of her research. She is also required to conduct oral history interviews with identified participants. She was granted an ethical clearance certificate which gives her official permission from the university to start collecting data for her research. Kindly see attached to this letter her ethical clearance certificate and an information sheet that describes her research topic, objectives, and research questions.

We shall be very grateful if you could grant her permission and assist her in carrying out her research in your organization or community. The research results will be shared with the participants. For any further information please do not hesitate to contact me on the details below.

Yours Sincerely

Dr Goodman Gwasira
Senior Lecturer: Archaeology and Heritage Studies
ggwasira@unam.na
061 206 3632

C) SIGNED INFORMED CONSENT FORMS

Below is the template for the informed consent form. This form was given to each participant, together with a request for an interview. The Informed Consent Form template is followed by each participant's signed Certificate of Consent.

UREC Annex 5F: Informed Consent for Qualitative Studies
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent for History and Culture Practitioners participating in the researched titled "Reading Material Culture to Construct a History of Trade Between Oukwanyama and Its Neighbours in The Nineteenth Century"

Name of Principal Investigator:	Ndapewoshali Ndahafa Ashipala
Name of Sponsor:	Carl Schlettwein Foundation

This Informed Consent Form has two parts:

- **Information Sheet (this section, to share information about the study with you)**
- **Certificate of Consent (for signatures if you choose to participate)**

You will be given a copy of the full Informed Consent Form.

PART I: INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

I am Ndapewoshali Ndahafa Ashipala, working for the Museums Association of Namibia and pursuing a master's degree in History at the University of Namibia. I am doing research which might help analyse and document the history of trade between Oukwanyama and its neighbours in the nineteenth century. In my research we will talk to other heritage and culture practitioners, both female and male, and ask them several questions. After you have heard more about the study, and if you agree, then the next thing I will do is ask you for your agreement. You have to agree before I can begin. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in the research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research. This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information, and I will take time to explain. If you have questions later, you can ask them of me.)

Purpose of the Research

This research aims to establish the ways in which material culture from the late nineteenth century can provide evidence of intra-Africa trade patterns between Oukwanyama and its trading partners.

This research will attempt to identify and document the items most commonly traded items between the Ovakwanyama and their neighbours and the way in which trade patterns changed during the course of the nineteenth century.

The research will also attempt to evaluate and document the ways in which some materials and objects were valued as status symbols and whether this was due to the skills needed for their manufacture, the rarity of the materials used or the ritual significance of the object.

Finally, the research will attempt to investigate and document the sources of the items traded and to establish and document the trade routes and the evolution thereof.

Type of Research Intervention

Material culture refers to the tangible resources, that communities use to define their culture. This includes clothing, buildings, tools, jewellery, and other tangible items. The examination of material culture; particularly tools, clothing, and jewellery, provides evidence of trade between the communities that resided in Northern Namibia and Southern Angola in the nineteenth century.

This research aims to establish in which way material culture from the late nineteenth century can provide evidence of intra-Africa trade patterns between Oukwanyama and its trading partners.

Participant Selection

You have been selected to participate in this study because this research will seek to collect information from two Namibian Historians (one female and one male), two traditional leaders from the Oukwanyama Traditional Authority (one female and one male), two Culture Officers from the Directorate of Heritage and Culture Programs in the Ohangwena Region (one female and one male) and two culture practitioners who will be identified by reference from the Traditional Authority (one female and one male).

Do you know why we are asking you to take part in this study? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you know what the study is about? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Voluntary Participation

You do not have to talk to me. You can choose to say no. I know that the decision can be difficult, and it can be especially hard when the research includes sensitive topics like cultural practices and material culture. You can ask as many questions as you like, and we take the time to answer them. You don't have to decide today. You can think about it and tell me what you decide later.

The choice that you make will have no bearing on your job or on any work-related evaluations or reports. You may change your mind later and stop participating even if you agreed earlier.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, you are free to decline should you wish not to answer any particular question or questions.

If you decide not to take part in this research study, do you know what your options are? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you know that you do not have to take part in this research study, if you do not wish to? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you have any questions? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box. If yes, please write your question(s) on the lines below.

Yes		No	

Procedures

I am asking you to help me learn more about material culture and the historical trade routes. I am inviting you to take part in this research project. If you accept, you will be asked to voluntarily participate in an interview with myself.

During the interview, I will sit down with you in a comfortable place at a public venue of your choosing. If it is better for you, the interview can take place in your home or a friend's home. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions during the

interview, you may say so and the interviewer will move on to the next question. No one else but me will be present unless you would like someone else to be there. The information recorded is confidential, and no one else except Dr Goodman Gwasira will access to the information documented during your interview. The entire interview will be recorded, but no-one will be identified by name in the recording. As a way of maintaining anonymity, I will replace your name with an interview identity number/ code when transcribing the interviews. I will request your written consent to use the interviews in the thesis. The recording will be kept on my Dropbox folder. The information recorded is confidential, and no one else except Dr Goodman Gwasira will have access to the recordings.

Duration

The research takes place over twenty-four months in total. During that time, I will visit you once for the initial interview and based on the first interview, I may request to visit again for follow up questions.

This research will involve your participation in an interview that will take about one hour but may run longer as some of the questions are open-ended and your additional insight would be appreciated. The interview will take place at your place of work (if you are employed) or at a public location as recommended by you.

If you decide to take part in the study, do you know how much time will the interview take? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Where will it take place? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you know how much time will the discussion with other people take? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

If you agree to take part, do you know if you can stop participating? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you know that you may not respond to the questions that you do not wish to respond to? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you have any questions? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box. If yes, please write your question(s) on the lines below.

Yes		No	

Risks

There is a risk that you may share some personal or confidential information by chance, or that you may feel uncomfortable talking about some of the topics. However, I do not wish for this to happen. You do not have to answer any question or take part in the discussion/interview/survey if you feel the question(s) are too personal or if talking about them makes you uncomfortable.)

If you feel that you have said something that you do not feel should be on record, you will be allowed to request that the statement or information be retracted or redacted. I transcript of the interview will be provided to you, after the interview for your review and approval before the research is submitted.

Benefits

There will be no direct benefit to you, but your participation is likely to help me find out more about the history of Northern Namibia and Southern Angola.

The knowledge that I get from this research will be shared with you and your community before it is made widely available to the public. Each participant will receive a summary of the results.

Reimbursements

You will not be provided any incentive to take part in the research.

Can you tell me if you have correctly understood the benefits that you will have if you take part in the study? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you know if the study will pay for your travel costs and time lost, and do you know how much you will be re-imbursed? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you have any questions? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box. If yes, please write your question(s) on the lines below.

Yes		No	

Confidentiality

The research being done in the community may draw attention and if you participate you may be asked questions by other people in the community. I will not be sharing information about you to anyone outside of the research team. The information that we collect from this research project will be kept private. Any information about you will have a number on it instead of your name. Only I will know what your number is, and we will lock that information up with a lock and key (password protected files on my Dropbox). It will not be shared with or given to anyone except Dr Goodman Gwasira.

Did you understand the procedures that we will be using to make sure that any information that I collect about you will remain confidential? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you understand that we cannot guarantee complete confidentiality of information that you share with me in a group discussion? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you have any questions? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box. If yes, please write your question(s) on the lines below.

Yes		No	

Sharing the Results

Nothing that you tell me today will be shared with anybody outside the research team, and nothing will be attributed to you by name. The knowledge that I get from this research will be shared with you and your community before it is made widely available to the public. Each participant will receive a summary of the results.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

You do not have to take part in this research if you do not wish to do so and choosing to participate will not affect your job or job-related evaluations in any way if you are employed. You may stop participating in the interview at any time that you wish without your job being affected. I will give you an opportunity at the end of the interview/discussion to review your remarks, and you can ask to modify or remove portions of those, if you do not agree with my notes or if I did not understand you correctly.

Who to Contact

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact me; Ndapewoshali Ndahafa Ashipala on +264812952606 or ndapewoshalia@gmail.com

This research has been reviewed and approved by the relevant Ethics Review Committee at the University of Namibia, which is a committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm. The committee reports to the University's Centre for Research Services. If you wish to contact this Centre, please call +264 61 206 4673 or send an e-mail to research@unam.na.

Do you know that you do not have to take part in this study if you do not wish to? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

You can say No if you wish to? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you know that you can ask me questions later if you wish to? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

Do you know that I have given the contact details of the person who can give you more information about the study? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

Yes		No	

You can ask me any questions about any part of the research study if you wish to. Do you have any questions? Do you have any questions? Please put an "X" in the appropriate box. If yes, please write your question(s) on the lines below.

Yes		No	

PART II: CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

I have been invited to participate in research which will help analyse and document the history of trade between Oukwanyama and its neighbours in the nineteenth century. I will be one of the ten heritage and culture practitioners who will be interviewed.

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read/ translated to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked, have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

……. ……

Name of Participant (print) Signature of Participant

……

Date (day/month/year)

If illiterate

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

…….

Name of Witness (print)

Thumb print of Participant

……

Signature of Witness

……

Date (day/month/year)

Statement by the Researcher/Person taking Consent

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands that the following will be done:

1. I will ask the participant which language they feel most comfortable communicating in. If the language is a language other than the languages I can communicate effectively in (being English, Oshikwanyama and Afrikaans), I will ask the participant if they are comfortable with the use of a translator.

2. I will share the PowerPoint presentation of my research proposal and my research proposal, together with this consent form to the participant at least one month before the interview, in order to provide them with enough time to familiarise themselves with the research and to peruse the form. If translation is required, I will provide a one-page summary translated in the language they feel most comfortable in.

3. On the day of the interview, I will go through the form with them again before requesting them to complete it. I will note down any questions they may have and answer them before they sign the form.

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this ICF has been provided to the participant.

……. ……

Name of Researcher/Person taking Consent (print) Signature

……

Date (day/month/year)

If Assisted by an Interpreter: Statement by Interpreter

I have accurately interpreted the information sheet to the potential participant in …….. (Insert name of target language), and to the best

of my ability made sure that the participant understands that the following will be done:

1. I will have a brief (10-minute) introductory conversation with the participant to establish a rapport. After which, I will ask the participant if they, based on our conversation are confident that I have the capacity to accurately translate for them.

2. I will ask the participant if they have read and understood the PowerPoint and my research proposal, together with this consent form to the participant that was sent to them.

3. I will go through the form with them again before requesting them to complete it. I will note down any questions they may have and answer them before they sign the form.

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been interpreted correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

I declare that I will not divulge any information that I interpret during this research intervention to a third party outside this study.

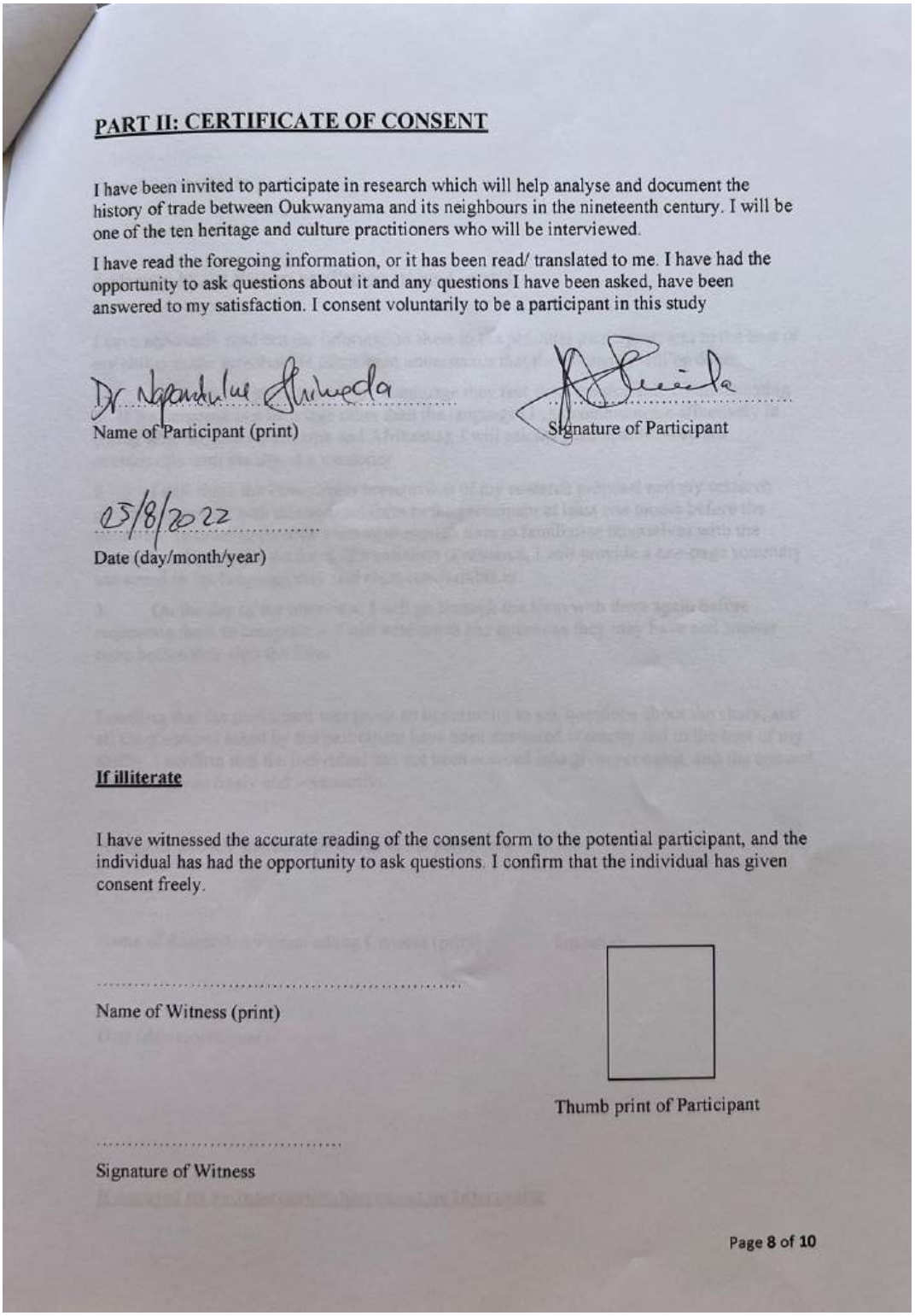
…… ……

Name of Interpreter (print) Signature

……

Date (day/month/year)

1. **Dr. Napandulwe Shiweda**



PART II: CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

I have been invited to participate in research which will help analyse and document the history of trade between Oukwanyama and its neighbours in the nineteenth century. I will be one of the ten heritage and culture practitioners who will be interviewed.

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read/ translated to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked, have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Dr Napandulwe Shiweda
Name of Participant (print)

Signature of Participant

05/8/2022
Date (day/month/year)

If illiterate

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

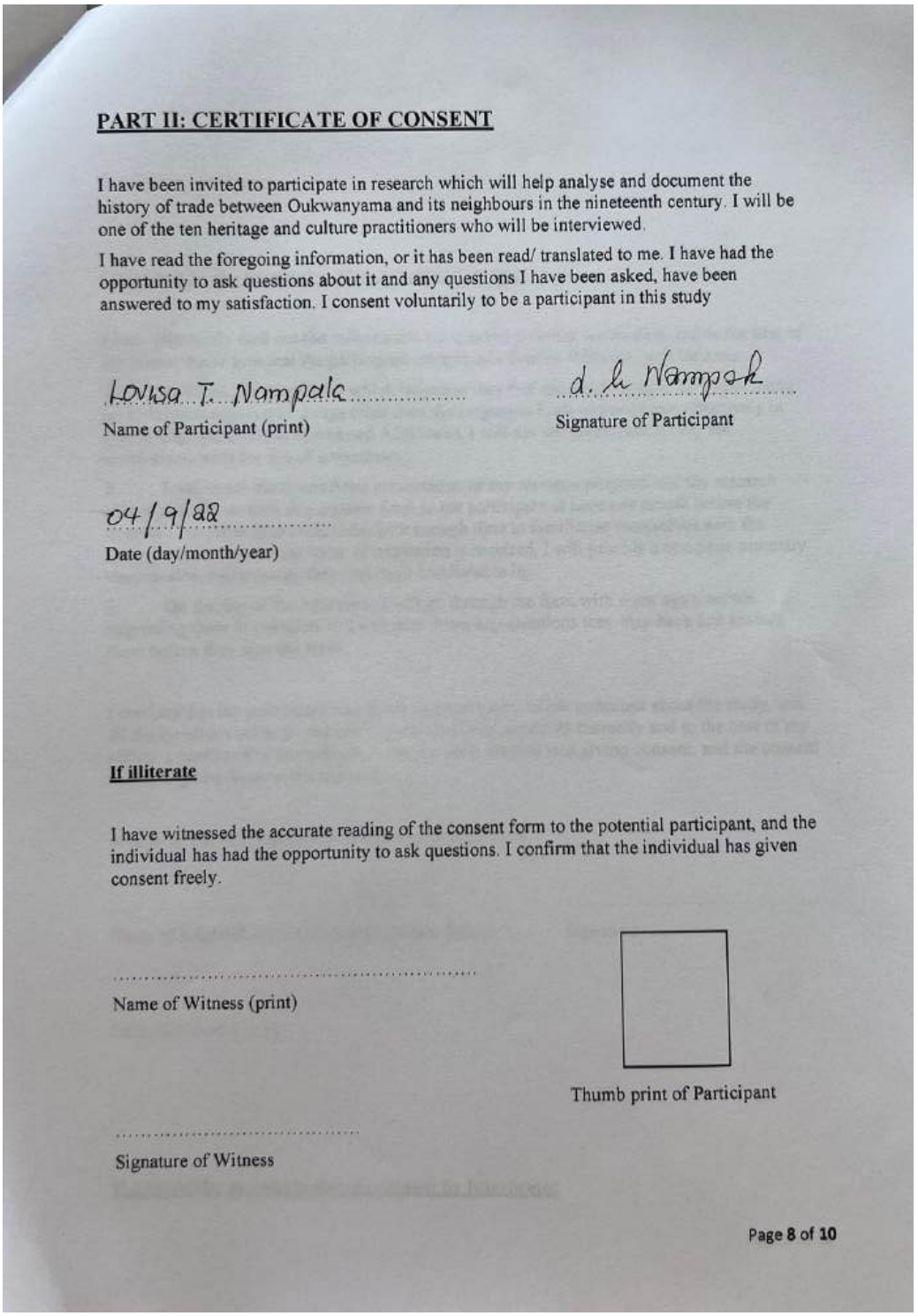
Name of Witness (print)

Thumb print of Participant

Signature of Witness

Page 8 of 10

2. Dr. Lovisa Nampala



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I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read/ translated to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked, have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Lovisa T. Nampala ..... d. L Nampak .....

Name of Participant (print) Signature of Participant

04/9/22 .....

Date (day/month/year)

If illiterate

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

.....

Name of Witness (print)

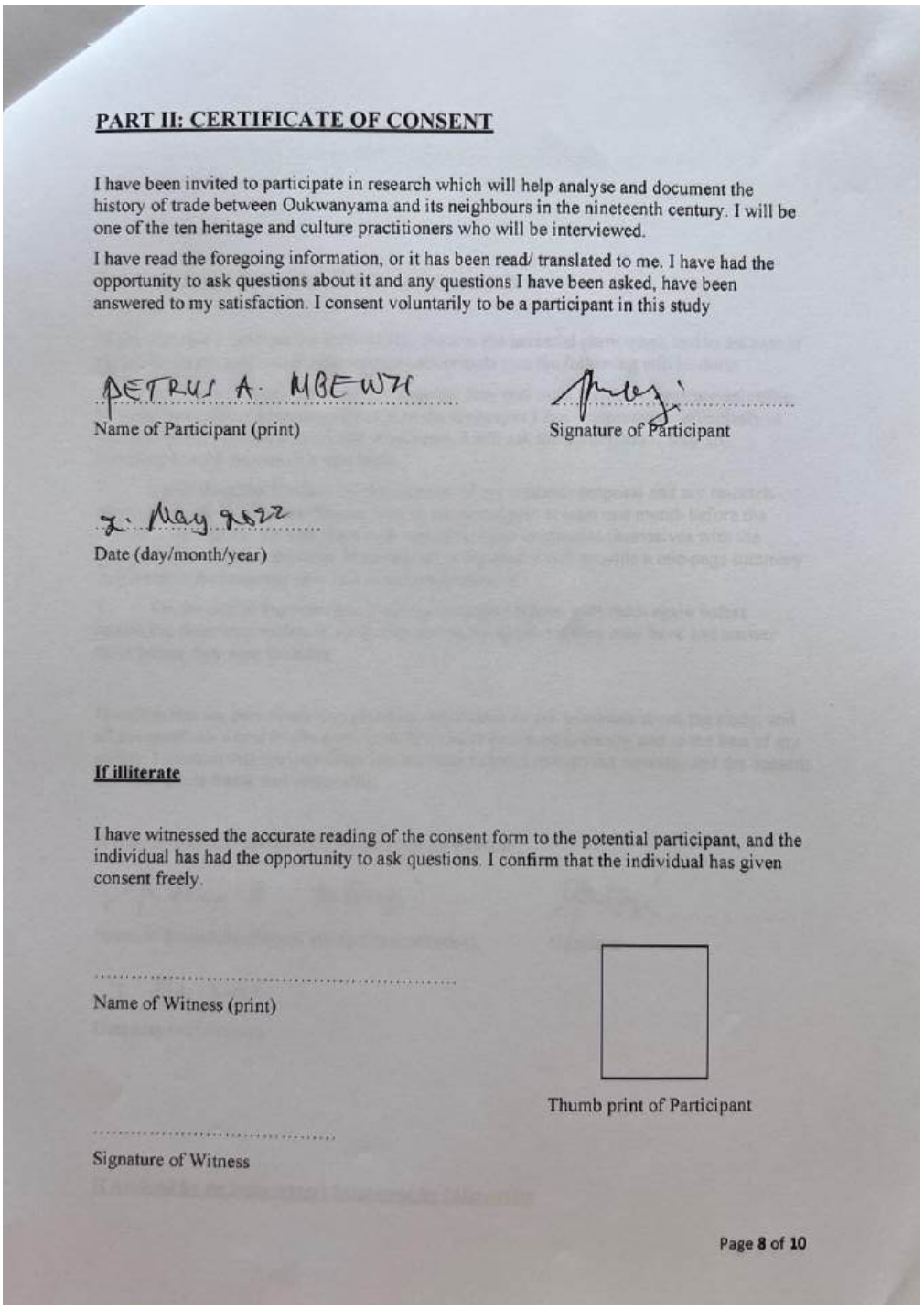
Thumb print of Participant

.....

Signature of Witness

Page 8 of 10

3. Dr. Petrus Mbenzi



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I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read/ translated to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked, have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

PETRUS A. MBENZI ....

Name of Participant (print) Signature of Participant

2 May 2022

Date (day/month/year)

If illiterate

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

.....

Name of Witness (print)

Thumb print of Participant

.....

Signature of Witness

Page 8 of 10

4. Ms. Hertha Bukassa

PART II: CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

I have been invited to participate in research which will help analyze and document the history of trade between Oukwanyama and its neighbours in the nineteenth century. I will be one of the ten heritage and culture practitioners who will be interviewed.

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read/ translated to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked, have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

…Hertha Kauna Bukassa…
Name of Participant (print)

Hertha Kauna Bukassa (Name in place of signature)
Signature of Participant

…26 September 2022…
Date (day/month/year)

If illiterate

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

……
Name of Witness (print)

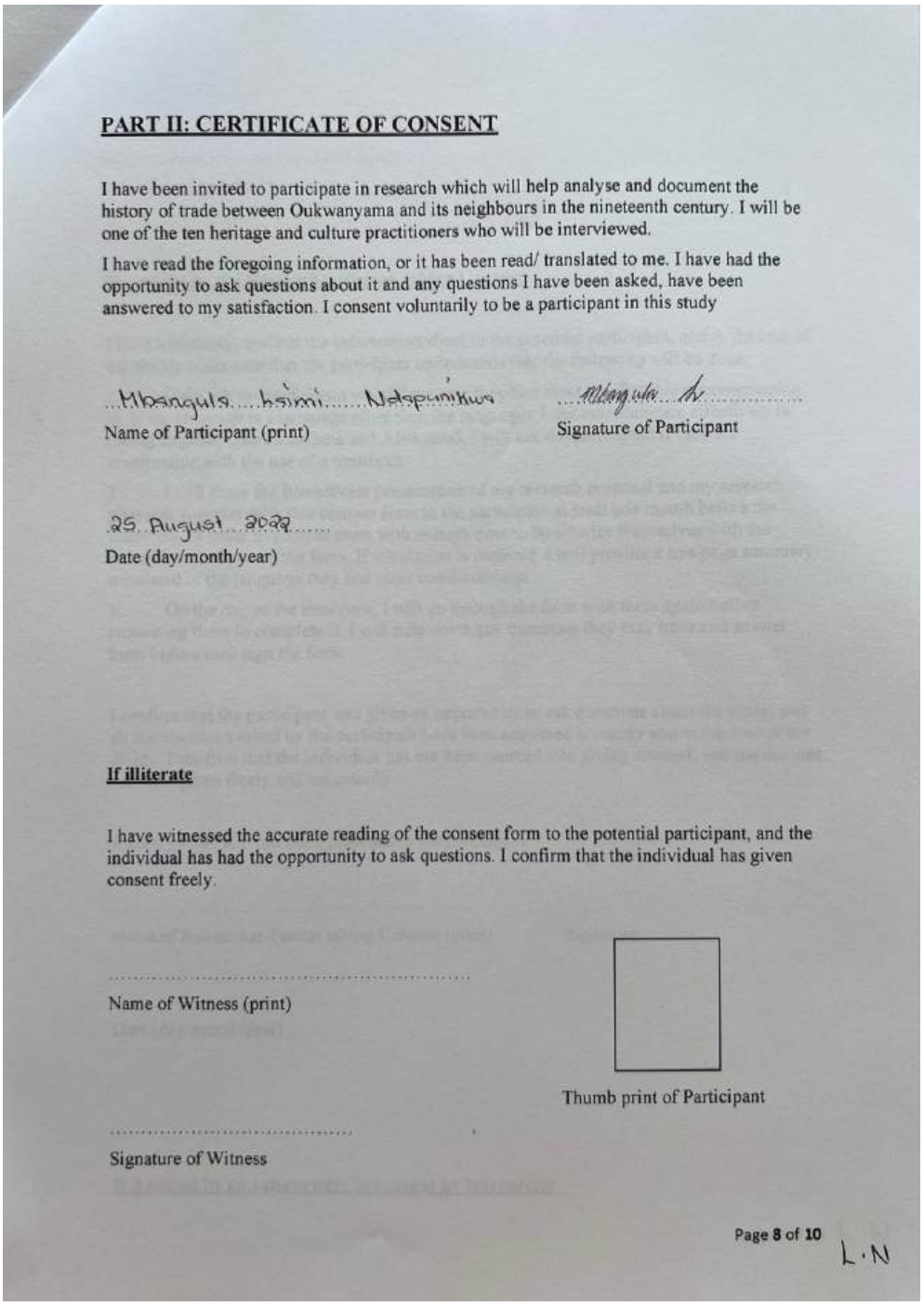
Thumb print of Participant

……
Signature of Witness

……
Date (day/month/year)

Page 8 of 10

5. Ms. Laimi Mbangula



PART II: CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

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I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read/ translated to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked, have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Mbangula Laimi Ndapunikwa — Mbangula L

Name of Participant (print) — Signature of Participant

25 August 2022

Date (day/month/year)

If illiterate

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

Name of Witness (print)

Thumb print of Participant

Signature of Witness

Page 8 of 10

L.N

6. Ms. Nehoa Hilma Kautondokwa

PART II: CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

I have been invited to participate in research which will help analyse and document the history of trade between Oukwanyama and its neighbours in the nineteenth century. I will be one of the ten heritage and culture practitioners who will be interviewed.

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read/ translated to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked, have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

NEHOA HILMA KAUTONDOKWA .....

Name of Participant (print) Signature of Participant

18/09/2022

Date (day/month/year)

If illiterate

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

.....

Name of Witness (print)

Thumb print of Participant

.....

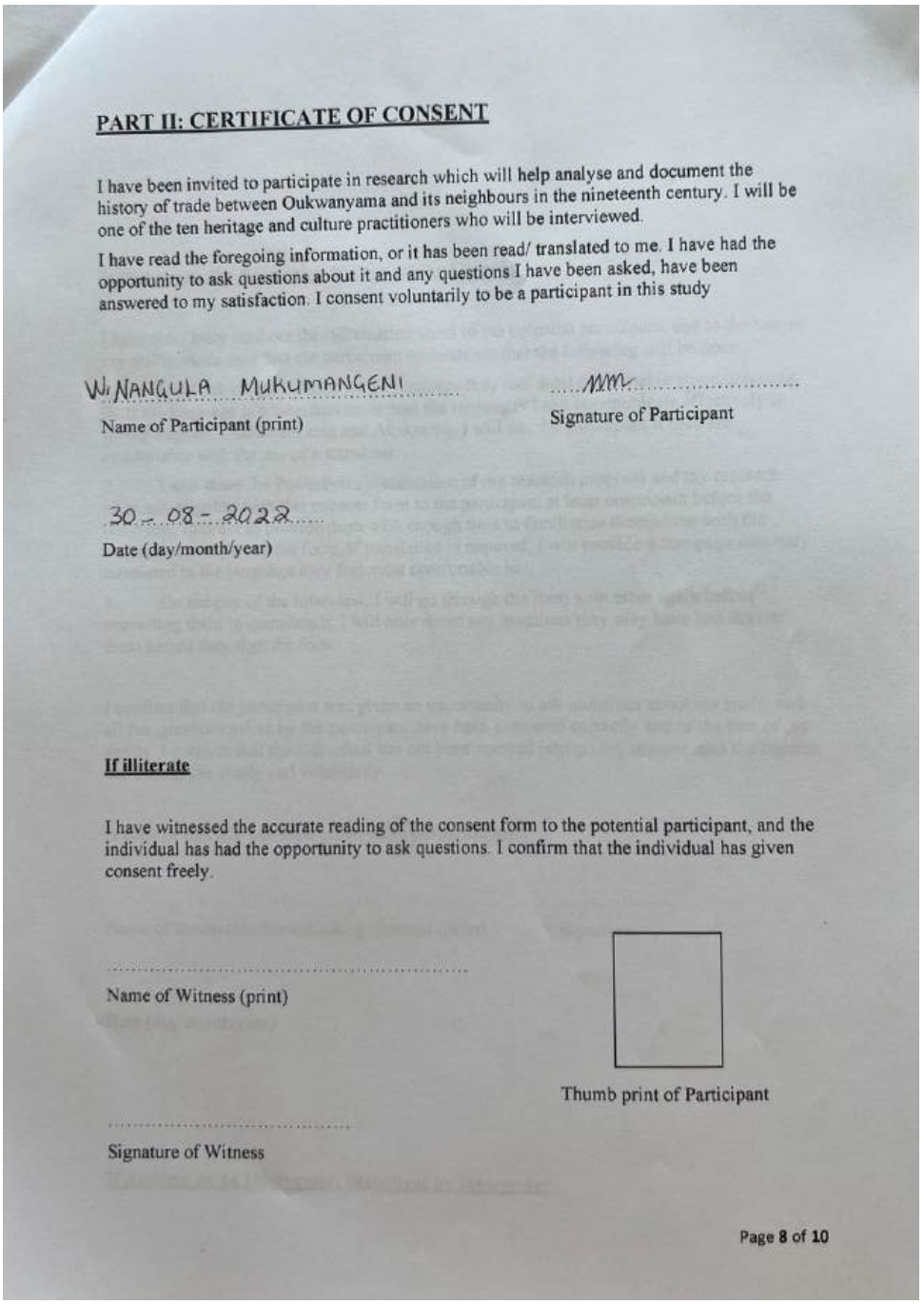
Signature of Witness

.....

Date (day/month/year)

Page 8 of 10

7. Ms. Nangula Mukumangeni



PART II: CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

I have been invited to participate in research which will help analyse and document the history of trade between Oukwanyama and its neighbours in the nineteenth century. I will be one of the ten heritage and culture practitioners who will be interviewed.

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read/ translated to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked, have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

W. NANGULA MUKUMANGENI ..... MM .....

Name of Participant (print) Signature of Participant

30 - 08 - 2022

Date (day/month/year)

If illiterate

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

.....

Name of Witness (print)

Thumb print of Participant

.....

Signature of Witness

Page 8 of 10

8. Ms. Golda Ha-Eiros

PART II: CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

I have been invited to participate in research which will help analyse and document the history of trade between Oukwanyama and its neighbours in the nineteenth century. I will be one of the ten heritage and culture practitioners who will be interviewed.

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read/ translated to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked, have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Golda Eureth Ha-Eiros ..... Ha-Eiros .....

Name of Participant (print) Signature of Participant

02/08/2022

Date (day/month/year)

If illiterate

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

.....

Name of Witness (print)

Thumb print of Participant

.....

Signature of Witness

Page 8 of 10

D) PRE-INTERVIEW AND OSBERVATION GUIDE

READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

INTERVIEW PREPARATION GUIDE
FOR INTERVIEWEES

AUGUST 2022

INDAPEWOSHALI NDAHAFA ASHIPALA
MA HISTORY STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

ABSTRACT

DIVIDING THE OVAKWANYAMA – THE BERLIN CONFERENCE OF 1884-1885

The Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 regulated European colonization and trade in Africa. The General Act of the Berlin Conference, which was the main outcome of the conference, has often been argued to have been formalisation of the Scramble for Africa (the invasion, occupation, division, and colonization of African territory by colonial European empires). The conference contributed to the start of a period of intensified colonial activity by European colonial powers, which disregarded and/or ignored most existing systems of self-governance and the autonomy of African communities. One of the communities that was severely affected by the Berlin Conference and the aftermath thereof, was the kingdom of the Ovakwanyama people.

Before physical borders were imposed on the African continent, by the Berlin Conference, Africans moved and traded freely amongst each other, across the continent. The introduction of the new borders restricted trade and movement, even within Kingdoms and ethnic groups which found themselves split into different parts; with one part of the kingdom now being in one country and other part(s) being in another country or countries.

The Oukwanyama Kingdom was one of the many kingdoms on the continent which was affected in this manner with the majority of the kingdom being allocated to modern day Angola (Portuguese West Africa) and the smaller part of the kingdom being allocated to Namibia (German South-West Africa at the time). Because commerce with people outside one's colony had become restricted, many existing trade routes were decreased or completely destroyed.

Figure 1: A map of the Oukwanyama ("Quanhama") Kingdom and its neighbours drawn in 1904. The map which illustrates the entirety of the Kingdom and identifies the Namibian/Angolan border as created during the Berlin Conference.

The Map was drawn by the Portuguese missionary S.E. Lecomte. Source: Dr. Jeremy Gale Silvester (2020).

READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

01

INDAPEWOSHALI NDAHAFA ASHIPALA
MA HISTORY STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

INDAPEWOSHALI NDAHAFA ASHIPALA
MA HISTORY STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

02

THE HISTORY OF TRADE IN NORTHERN NAMIBIA AND SOUTHERN ANGOLA AND ITS IMPACT ON MATERIAL CULTURE

Before the introduction of the mercantile economy and its subsequent spread to the communities in Northern Namibia, the communities would use a barter system to trade for the goods and services that they wanted or needed. Bartering involves the one party providing a good or service to another party, in return for another good or service. The two parties determine the value of their goods or service through a process of negotiation and then offer them to one another in what they have deemed to be an even exchange.

Material culture refers to the tangible resources, that communities use to define their culture. This includes clothing, buildings, tools, jewellery, and other tangible items. The examination of material culture; particularly tools, clothing, and jewellery, provides evidence of trade between the communities that resided in Northern Namibia and Southern Angola in the nineteenth century.

Tangible resources that are not common or native to a particular area being components of material culture provides evidence of a constant or a significant once-off supply of those resources from other areas, commonly through one or other form of trade/barter system.

THE SIGNIFICANCE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Namibian historiography has been shaped by coloniality and has largely been confined by the boundaries of the nation state, as established by European colonial empires. This research is, therefore, an important contribution to the Namibian and Southern African economic history depository by researching the history of trade between an African kingdom and its trading partners in the nineteenth century. In addition, the research plays a significant role in the decolonization of the Namibian history depository through identifying, documenting, and examining trade and the systems of self-governance and autonomy of this African community. Lastly, the research provides insight to impact of colonialism on the trade between the identified communities/kingdoms.

This research attempts to:
1. Identify and document the items most commonly traded items between the Ovakwanyama and their neighbours and the way in which trade patterns changed during the course of the nineteenth century.
2. Evaluate and document the ways in which some materials and objects were valued as status symbols and whether this was due to the skills needed for their manufacture, the rarity of the materials used or the ritual significance of the object.
3. Investigate and document the sources of the items traded.
4. Establish and document the trade routes and the evolution thereof.

READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

INDAPEWOSHALI NDAHAFA ASHIPALA
MA HISTORY STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (0-1)

0. TO GET TO KNOW THE INTERVIEWEE

0.1. Can you tell me your full name?
0.2. What do you like to go by? What should I call you?
0.3. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself in relation to the Ovakwanyama? (Family history)
0.4. Do you consider yourself to be an Omukwanyama (if not answered and here relevant)?
0.5. Who are the Ovakwanyama? Do you know where they came from?
0.6. Is there a difference between being an Omukwanyama and being Omuwambo? What is the relationship?

1. TO IDENTIFY AND DOCUMENT THE ITEMS MOST COMMONLY TRADED ITEMS BETWEEN THE OVAKWANYAMA AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS AND THE WAY IN WHICH TRADE PATTERNS CHANGED DURING THE COURSE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

1.1. Have you ever seen these objects before? If yes, can you recall when last and how often you've seen them?
1.2. Have you ever used these objects before? If yes, can you recall when last and how often you've used them?
1.3. Are you able to tell me the names of the objects?
1.4. Do you know any other name (perhaps in another language) that these objects go by?
1.5. Are you able to identify if and/or when these objects either began to decrease or increase in popularity/availability?
1.6. Do you know what that happened?
1.7. Are you able to provide me with any additional information about the objects in this collection?

03

READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

INDAPEWOSHALI NDAHAFA ASHIPALA
MA HISTORY STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

OMAPULAAPULO (0-1) MOSHIKWANYAMA

0. OKUSHIIVA KOMBINGA YOMUPULWA

0.1. Oto dulu okulombwela nge edina loye mouyadi?
0.2. Ou hole okwiifanwa lyelye? Nandi kwiifane lyelye?
0.3. Oto dulu okuhokolela nge pauxupi kombinga yoye mwene, nhumbi wa kwatafana nOvakwanyama? (ondjokonona yepata/edimo leni)
0.4. Ove mwene oho li tale ko Umukwanyama, (nongeenge hasho, yandja enyamukulo mekwatafano nasho)
0.5. Ovakwanyama ovo oolyelye? Ou shii apa va dile?
0.6. Ope na eyooloko pokati kokukala Omukwanyama nokukala Omuwambo? Ekwatafano pokati kavo oli lipi po?

1. TOFA MO NOKUTUMBULA OISHINGIFOMWA EI KWA LI HAI SHINGIFWA POKATI KOVAKWANYAMA NOIWANA YOMOUSHIINDA WAVO, OSHOYO OMILANDU DOKUSHINGIFA NANHUMBI DA KA LUNDULUKA MEFELEMUDO ETIMULONGO NETIMUGOYI.

1.1. Oishingifomwa ei nghee wa dalwa owe i mona, nongeenge owe i mona, oto dimbulukwa efiku we i mona xuuninwa, noho i mono diva shi fike peni?
1.2. Oishingifomwa ei owe i longifa nale, nongeenge owe i longifa nale, oto dimbulukwa efiku we i longifa xuunina, noho i longifa luhapu shi fike peni?
1.3. Oto dulu okulombwela nge omadina oilongifo oyo?
1.4. Ou shii omadina oilongifo ei momalaka amwe elili, nhumbi hai ifanwa?
1.5. Oto dulu okutofa mo, ngeenge ile pamwe onaini oilongifo ei ya tameka okuninipala ile okuhapupapa mefimano layo?
1.6. Ou shii eshi sha ningwa po?
1.7. Oto dulu okupa nge vali omauyelele amwe a wedwa po, kombinga yoilongifo ei ya tumbulwa moshishangomwa eshi?

READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

INDAPEWOSHALI NDAHAFA ASHIPALA
MA HISTORY STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (2-4)

2. TO EVALUATE AND DOCUMENT THE WAYS IN WHICH SOME MATERIALS AND OBJECTS WERE VALUED AS STATUS SYMBOLS AND WHETHER THIS WAS DUE TO THE SKILLS NEEDED FOR THEIR MANUFACTURE, THE RARITY OF THE MATERIALS USED OR THE RITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OBJECT.

2.1. What materials are the objects made with?
2.2. Do you know which calibre of people (social or economic status) would have access to these materials?
2.3. Do you know who in the community would have the skills to manufacture these objects?
2.4. Do you know if these objects had any ritual significance?
2.5. What was their value/what were they traded for?
2.6. Are you able to provide me with any additional information about the materials that these objects are made with?

3. TO INVESTIGATE AND DOCUMENT THE SOURCES OF THE ITEMS TRADED.

3.1. Where do the materials in these objects come from?
3.2. Do you know how the materials were attained? (Mining, gathering, hunting etc.)
3.3 How easy/rare were they to obtain?
3.4. Do you know of any specific guidelines that are related to the attainment of these objects? (Gender, age, season etc.)

4. TO ESTABLISH AND DOCUMENT THE TRADE ROUTES AND THE EVOLUTION THEREOF.

4.1. These objects were found in (specify according to object) are. Are you able to give me information about how they could have gotten from where they were made to where they were found?
4.2. Do you know who the Ovakwanyama traded with and for what?
4.3. Are you aware of the change in pattern over time and why?
4.4. Are you able to provide me with any additional information about the trade routes in these communities during the 19th century?

05

READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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OMAPULAAPULO (2-4) MOSHIKWANYAMA

2. MOKUNGONGA SHANGA EENGHEDI OMO IMWE YOMOILANDIFOMWA NOYOMOILONGIFO YA NGUSHUPALEKWA ONGOMADIDILIKO NOILIMBO, NONGEENGE PAMWE OMOLWOMHUMBWE YOUPAUNHGULUNGU, OUFIKEPAMWE MELONGIFO MOIVILO YOPAMUFYUULULWAKALO WOPALONGOITAVELO, NHUMBI YA LONGIFWA.

2.1. Oilongifo eyi oya longwa/ndulikwa moshike?
2.2. Ou shii ondodo moshiwana omu mwa dja ovashingifi/ovalandifi ava, opo va kale ve na emanguluko koilongifo eyi?
2.3. Oto shiiva kutya moshiwana olyelye kwa li e na ounghulungu wokuhanbula/okweeta po oilongifo eyi.
2.4. Ou shii, ngeenge oilongifo eyi oi na efimano moivilo yopamufyuululwakalo wopalongoitavelo?
2.5. Ongushu yoishingifomwa okwa li yashike ile okwa li tai shingifilwa shike?
2.6. Oto dulu vali okupa nge omauyelele amwe a wedwa po, kombinga yoinima imwe ya longifwa okweeta po oilongifo/oilandifomwa eyi?

3. KONAKONA NOKUSHANGA EEDJO OMU MWA DJA OISHINGIFOMWA.

3.1. Oietifipo/oitungifi yoilongifo eyi oya dja peni?
3.2. Ou shii nhumbi oietifipo yoilongifo eyi ya monika? (mokufa, mokutoola, mokwoongela, moukongo).
3.3. Okwa li shipu ngahelipi mokwiimona?
3.4. Ou shii omikalo donhumba meyukililo mekwatafano nokweetapo/nokumona oilonghifo eyi? (oludi, omido, efimbomudo nosho tuu)

4. OKUTULIFAPO NOKUNONGONONA OMIFANGO DOKUSHINGIFA NOMALUNDULIKO AA E UYA PO.

4.1. Oilongifo eyi okwa li hai longifwa meenhele dimwe adike. Oto dulu nee okupa nge ouyelele kutya ohashi ende ngahelipi, opo oilongifo eyi i monike, oku ya dja noi ye oku ya ka hambulwa?
4.2. Ou shii kutya Ovakwanyama okwa li hava shingifafana/kumaana noolyelye, nokwa li yo hava shingifa shike?
4.3. Owa didilika elunduluko melandifafano moulefimbo, nomolwashike?
4.4. Oto dulu vali okupa nge omauyelele amwe a wedwa po kombinga yomifango dokushingifa moiwana eyi pefimbo lefelemudo etimulongo netimugoyi?

06

MATERIAL CULTURE FOR DISCUSSION

ENGLISH

The material culture on the following pages is part of the collection at the "Ovambo" Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, Germany.

They have been collected by different European (mainly German) collectors and the information may not necessarily be correct.

The main reason I am sharing the information recorded in the museum is to seek your opinion/advice as to whether the information (especially the name, usages, and material) recorded is correct.

MOSHIKWANYAMA

Oilongomwa yopamufyuululwakalo momapandja taa shikula oili oshitukulwa shoiongelomwa nomafano mongulu yoikulunima yoikwailongo yoiwana yOvawambo moBerlin shaNdowishi.

Oya ongelwa kOvaEuropa va yoolokafana unene tuu (Ovandowishi) ovaongeli, onghene otashi dulika ihe li naana mondjila.

Elalakano lange linene opo tu tukulilafane omauyelele aa, ngaashi a didilikwa/pungulwa mongulu yoikulunima, ohandi kongo omadiladilo/omayele, ngeenge omauyelele aa (unene tuu omadina, elongifo noilongifo) oku li tuu mondjila?

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READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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MATERIAL CULTURE FOR DISCUSSION

"Ovambo" Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin - Report from the database, August 2019

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Bracelet (endamufa)**; Armring
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Copper (oshikushu)**; Kupfer
Dimensions: 2 x 7 x 6,5 cm; 0,08 kg
Registration number: III D 573
Acquisition: Ankauf; Date of acquisition: 1881
Collector & Previous holder: Carl Gotthilf Büttner
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Leglet (Ongodo)**; Beinring
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Copper (oshikushu)**; Kupfer
Dimensions: 4,5 x 11,5 x 14,5 cm; 1,5 kg
Registration number: III D 574
Acquisition: Ankauf; Date of acquisition: 1881
Collector & Previous holder: Carl Gotthilf Büttner
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

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READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

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MATERIAL CULTURE FOR DISCUSSION

"Ovambo" Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin - Report from the database, August 2019

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Razor with cover (oshilaleko)**; Rasiermesser mit Hülle
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Hair (eexwiki/omalududi), leather (oshipa), iron (oshivela), cowrie**; Haar, Leder, Eisen, Kauri
Dimensions: 4 x 49 x 9,5 cm (Lagermaß); 0,25 kg
Registration number: III D 568 a,b
Acquisition: Ankauf; Date of acquisition: 1881
Collector & Previous holder: Carl Gotthilf Büttner
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Wristband (endamufa)**; Armband
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Cowrie, leather (oshipa), plant fibre (omufuva)**; Kaurischnecke, Leder, Pflanzenfaser
Dimensions: 2 x 11 x 9 cm; 0,02 kg
Registration number: III D 1879
Acquisition: Schenkung; Date of acquisition: 1898
Collector & Previous holder: Georg Hartmann
South-West-Africa Company
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

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READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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MATERIAL CULTURE FOR DISCUSSION

"Ovambo" Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin - Report from the database, August 2019

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Necklace (oshilanda)**; Halsschmuck
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Leather (oshipa), iron (oshivela), glass beads (oluhoni ile oshipeta shomwiidi), ostrich eggshell beads (oipeta yomai omho);** Leder, Eisen, Glasperlen, Straußeneierschalenscheibchen
Dimensions: 2,5 x 24,5 x 2,5 cm; 0,1 kg
Registration number: III D 1167
Acquisition: Schenkung; Date of acquisition: 1887
Collector & Previous holder: Otto Lindner
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Necklet (oshilanda)**; Halsband
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Leather (oshipa), hair (eexwiki/omalududi), glass beads (oluhoni ile oshipeta shomwiidi), wood (oshiti);** Leder (?),Haar, Glasperlen, Holz
Dimensions: 38 x 25 x 11 cm; 0,05 kg
Registration number: III D 1174
Acquisition: Ankauf; Date of acquisition: 1887
Collector & Previous holder: F. & V. Claes
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

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AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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MATERIAL CULTURE FOR DISCUSSION

"Ovambo" Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin - Report from the database, August 2019

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Corset (onyoka - NB: Onyoka is a necklace, not a corset)**; Korsett
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Ostrich eggshell beads (oipeta yomai omho)**; Straußeneierschalenscheibchen
Dimensions: 4 x 63 x 9 cm (Lagermaß); 0,7 kg
Registration number: III D 1864
Acquisition: Schenkung; Date of acquisition: 1898
Collector & Previous holder: Georg Hartmann South-West-Africa Company
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Belt for women (ondjeva)**; Gürtel für Frauen
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **seashell beads (?) (omapeta onghofya)**; Muschelscheibchen (?)
Dimensions: 3 x 41 x 7,5 cm (Lagermaß); 0,3 kg
Registration number: III D 1870
Acquisition: Schenkung; Date of acquisition: 1898
Collector & Previous holder: Georg Hartmann South-West-Africa Company
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

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READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

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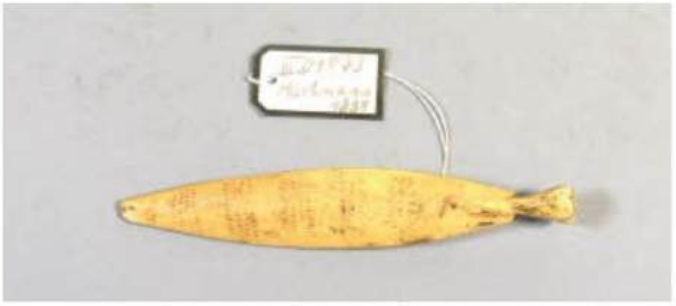
MATERIAL CULTURE FOR DISCUSSION

"Ovambo" Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin - Report from the database, August 2019



Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Ivory jewellery (oumanya vomaoo eemanda neendjaba)**; Elfenbeinschmuck
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Ivory (omaoo eemanda neendjaba)**; Elfenbein
Dimensions: 1 x 12 x 2 cm; 0,1 kg
Registration number: III D 1873
Acquisition: Schenkung; Date of acquisition: 1898
Collector & Previous holder: Georg Hartmann
South-West-Africa Company
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Ivory jewellery (oumanya vomaoo eemanda neendjaba)**; Elfenbeinschmuck
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Ivory (omaoo eemanda neendjaba)**; Elfenbein
Dimensions: 1,5 x 18 x 4 cm; 0,05 kg
Registration number: III D 1874
Acquisition: Schenkung; Date of acquisition: 1898
Collector & Previous holder: Georg Hartmann
South-West-Africa Company
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

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READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

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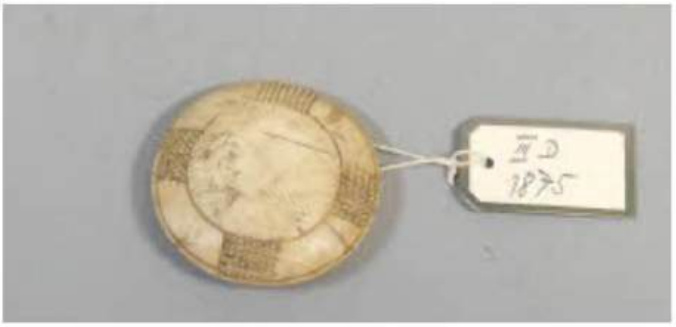
MATERIAL CULTURE FOR DISCUSSION

"Ovambo" Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin - Report from the database, August 2019



Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Ivory jewellery (oumanya vomaoo eemanda neendjaba)**; Elfenbeinschmuck
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Ivory (omaoo eemanda neendjaba)**; Elfenbein
Dimensions: 1,5 x 4,5 x 4,5 cm; 0,01 kg
Registration number: III D 1875
Acquisition: Schenkung; Date of acquisition: 1898
Collector & Previous holder: Georg Hartmann South-West-Africa Company
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Shell jewellery**; Muschelschmuck
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Seashell (omapeta onghofya)** (?); Muschel (?)
Dimensions: 2 x 7 x 7 cm; 0,1 kg
Registration number: III D 2423
Acquisition: Kauf; Date of acquisition: 1903
Collector & Previous holder: Dr. Lübbert
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

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READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

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MATERIAL CULTURE FOR DISCUSSION

"Ovambo" Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin - Report from the database, August 2019

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Wooden doll (okanona);** Holzpuppe
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Wood (oshiti), glass beads (oluhoni ile oshipeta shomwiidi), metal (oshivela ile outale), ostrich eggshell beads (oipeta yomai omho), leather (oshipa);** Holz, Perlen, Metall, Eierschale, Pflanzenfaser, Perlmutt (?), Leder
Dimensions: 22,5 x 10 x 6 cm; 0,5 kg
Registration number: III D 2424
Acquisition: Kauf; Date of acquisition: 1903
Collector & Previous holder: Dr. Lübbert
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Doll (okanona);** Puppe
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Deutsch-Südwestafrika; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Wood (oshiti), glass beads (oluhoni ile oshipeta shomwiidi), iron beads, hair (eexwiki/omalududi), ostrich eggshell (oipeta yomai omho), leather (oshipa), textile (oshiyata), metal (oshivela ile outale);** Holz, Glasperlen, Textil, Leder, Perlmutt (?), Metallperlen, Pflanzenfaser, Eischale
Dimensions: 37,5 x 11 x 7,5 cm; 1,1 kg
Registration number: III D 4392
Acquisition: Schenkung; Date of acquisition: 1950
Collector & Previous holder: Hermann Tönjes
Hermann Tönjes (jr. ?)
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

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READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

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MATERIAL CULTURE FOR DISCUSSION

"Ovambo" Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin - Report from the database, August 2019

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Doll (okanona)**; Puppe
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Wood (oshiti), iron (oshivela), fur (omukova), ostrich eggshell beads (oipeta yomai omho), seashell (omapeta onghofya), glass beads (oluhoni ile oshipeta shomwiidi), copper (oshikushu)**; Holz; Eisen; Fell; Kalk (Straußenei); Perlmutt; Glas; Messing
Dimensions: 35 x 13 x 9,5 cm (Lagermaß); 1,1 kg; H: 33 cm, D: 8 cm (ohne Schnurstränge) Objektmaß
Registration number: III D 3656
Acquisition: Ankauf; Date of acquisition: 1909
Collector & Previous holder: Hermann Tönjes
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

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MATERIAL CULTURE FOR DISCUSSION

"Ovambo" Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin - Report from the database, August 2019

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Knife with sheath (oshilaleko omu hamu xwekelwa omukonda)**; Messer mit Messerscheide
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Angola; Kwanyama; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Wood(oshiti), metal (Oshivela ile Outale)**; Holz, Metall
Dimensions: 0,4 kg; 43 x 5,5 x 5,5 cm
Registration number: III C 34405 a,b
Acquisition: Ankauf; Date of acquisition: 1932
Collector & Previous holder: Aengeneyndt
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: **Knife with sheath (oshilaleko omu hamu xwekelwa omukonda)**; Messer mit Messerscheide
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Namibia; Ovambo
Materials/technique: **Iron (oshivela), wood(oshiti), leather (oshipa), brass (oshikushu) (?), copper (oshikushu)** (?); Eisen, Holz, Messing, Leder
Dimensions: 31,7 x 9,5 x 4 cm (Lagermaß); 0,25 kg
Registration number: III D 3646 a,b
Acquisition: Ankauf; Date of acquisition: 1909
Collector & Previous holder: Hermann Tönjes
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

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OUKWANYAMA

AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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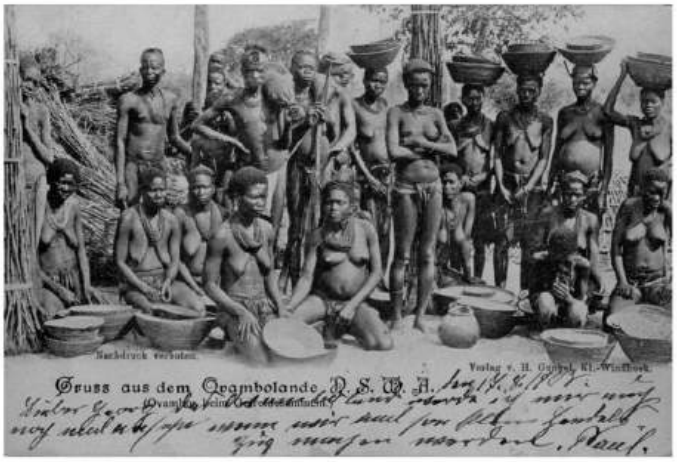
MATERIAL CULTURE FOR DISCUSSION

"Ovambo" Objects and Photographs at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin - Report from the database, August 2019



Artist/creator not recorded
Object type: ; Positiv, SW
Ethnic name/ geogr.: Deutsch-Südwestafrika; Ovambo
Materials/technique: ;
Dimensions: (Positiv, SW) Pd Bildformat (Foto)
Registration number: VIII A 9333
Acquisition: ; Date of acquisition:
Collector & Previous holder: Franz Seiner
Current holder: Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

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READING MATERIAL CULTURE TO CONSTRUCT A HISTORY OF TRADE BETWEEN

OUKWANYAMA

AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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E) INTERVIEW GUIDE

Oral history interviewing can be elevated by good habits or diminished by poor ones. In *Oral History for the Local Historical Society* (see the box below), Willa K. Baum provides a number of very useful guidelines for interviewing.

Mostly common sense, these points are also worth keeping in mind:

- **Encourage your narrator to relax.** Let them get comfortable in the chair you're having them sit in, and chat with them while you go over your checklist (see below). Let them know the interview can be paused at any time, if they're uncomfortable talking about a topic, need some time to think, or use the bathroom. Have a bottle of water on hand for them -- throats get parched in oral histories.
- **Let your subject know that as the interview progresses you will be checking your questions and writing notes;** that is, just because you're looking down or away from them -- and if you're on your own, checking the recorder -- doesn't mean you are uninterested in what they are saying.
- **Introduce the interview with your name, the date, where you are, and who you are interviewing** (for example, "My name is Jane Smith and today is September 1, 2017. I am in Durham, North Carolina, and with me is John Smith, my grandfather, who I will be interviewing today for an oral history.")
- **Ask your questions in open-ended fashion, avoiding simple "yes" or "no" responses**. So, rather than saying, "Did you enjoy going to Duke University?" you could say, "Tell me about going to Duke University."
- **Avoid jumping into a response or cutting off the interviewee in mid-reply.**
- **Avoid verbalizing affirmation, such as "uh-huh," or "mmmm."** While these may seem naturally conversational, they can really leap out of the recording when it's played back. Just nod your head instead.
- **Try not to fidget, click your pen, etc.** A good microphone will pick these up.
- **Your eyes should be on the interviewee or on your notes.** Take your watch off and keep it on your clipboard or notepad (making a show of checking the

time could make your subject anxious regarding how much he or she has said). Cellphones should be silenced and put away.

- **While diverging from the questions can be a great thing, keep the interviewee focused on the topics you came to discuss.** This can be done fairly easily, simply by saying, for example, "Let's get back to your days at Duke."
- **As the interview concludes be sure to ask your narrator if there's anything they wished to include that hasn't been covered.**

As noted elsewhere in this guide, to a great degree a successful interview comes down to good planning and preparation. This does not mean that a cheat sheet is not appropriate on the day of the interview. See this Session Checklist for some practical reminders on getting the interview underway.

A note on documentation: In an oral history interview produced by the Rubenstein Library, there are ideally three people in the room: the interviewer, the narrator, and, the recording technician. The recording technician's responsibility goes beyond gear setup and pushing the record button. S/he brings critical listening skills, recording the content of the conversation on the topics sheet and relating it to the time elapsed, as well as assessing the narrator and the environment, and recording that information in the log sheet. The topic sheet can be invaluable when processing an interview that has not yet been transcribed, while the log sheet can give a sense of how the narrator "performed" during the interview, and if there were any distracting or noteworthy external elements affecting the production.

Log sheet

Topics sheet

If an interview does not have a recording technician, the log sheet should still be completed. The interviewer should try also to keep a record of the discussion using the topics sheet; however, if this is unwieldy, the interviewer could note the approximate elapsed time next to the questions being asked.

After the interview is complete, the log and topic sheets, as well as the question list used by the interviewer, should be scanned, named appropriately, and placed with the other files created for the interview.

Willa K. Baum's interviewing rules

I imagine Willa K. Baum was kind of an oral history taskmaster, but while the tone of these tips is somewhat stern the advice is quite good and comes from one of oral history's original movers and shakers.

Tips for Interviewers
From Willa K. Baum, *Oral History for the Local Historical Society*

1. **An interview is not a dialogue.** The whole point of the interview is to get the narrator to tell *his* story. Limit your own remarks to a few pleasantries to break the ice, then brief questions to guide him along. It is not necessary to give him the details of your great-grandmother's trip in a covered wagon in order to get him to tell you about his grandfather's trip to California. Just say, "I understand your grandfather came around the Horn to California. What did he tell you about the trip?"

2. Ask questions that require more of an answer than "yes" or "no." Start with "Why, How, Where, What kind of...." Instead of "Was Henry Miller a good boss?" ask "What did the cowhands think of Henry Miller as a boss?"

3. **Ask one question at a time.** Sometimes interviewers ask a series of questions all at once. Probably the narrator will answer only the first or last one. You will catch this kind of questioning when you listen through the tape after the session and you can avoid it the next time.

4. Ask brief questions. We all know the irrepressible speech-maker who, when questions are called for at the end of a lecture, gets up and asks a five-minute question. It is unlikely that the narrator is so dull that it takes more than a sentence or two for him to understand the question.

5. **Start with non-controversial questions;** save the delicate questions, if there are any, until you have become better acquainted. A good place to begin is with the narrator's youth and background.

6. Don't let periods of silence fluster you. Give your narrator a chance to think of what he wants to add before you hustle him along with the next question. Relax, write a few words on your notepad. The sure sign of a beginning interviewer is a tape where every brief pause signals the next question.

7. **Don't worry if your questions are not as beautifully phrased as you would like them to be for posterity.** A few fumbled questions will help put your narrator to ease as he realizes that you are not perfect and he need not worry if he isn't either. It is unnecessary to practice fumbling a few questions; most of us are nervous enough to do that naturally.

8. **Don't interrupt a good story because you have thought of a question, or because your narrator is straying from the planned outline.** If the information is pertinent, let him go on, but jot down your question on your notepad so you will remember to ask it later.

9. If your narrator does stray in non-pertinent subjects (the most common problems are to follow some family member's children or to get into a series of family medical problems), try to pull him back as quickly as possible. "Before we move on, I'd like to find out how the closing of the mine in 1898 affected your family's finances. Do you remember that?"

10. **It is often hard for a narrator to describe persons. An easy way to begin is to ask him to describe the person's appearance.** From there, the narrator is more likely to move into character description.

11. Interviewing is one time when a negative approach is more effective than a positive one. **Ask about the negative aspects of a situation**. For example, in asking about a person, do not begin with a glowing description of him. "I know the mayor was a very generous and wise person. Did you find him so?" Few

narrators will quarrel with a statement like that even though they may have found the mayor a disagreeable person. You will get a more lively answer if you start out in the negative. “Despite the mayor’s reputation for good works, I hear he was a very difficult man for his immediate employees to get along with.” If your narrator admired the mayor greatly, he will spring to his defense with an apt illustration of why your statement is wrong. If he did find him hard to get along with, your remark has given him a chance to illustrate some of the mayor’s more unpleasant characteristics.

12. **Try to establish at every important point in the story where the narrator was or what his role was in this event, in order to indicate how much is eye-witness information and how much based on reports of others.** “Where were you at the time of the mine disaster?” “Did you talk to any of the survivors later?” “Did their accounts differ in any way from the newspaper accounts of what happened?” Work around these questions carefully or you can appear to be doubting the accuracy of the narrator’s account.

13. **Do not challenge accounts you think may be inaccurate.** Instead, try to develop as much information as possible that can be used by later researchers in establishing what probably happened. Your narrator may be telling you quite accurately what he saw. As Walter Lord explained when describing his interview with survivors of the *Titanic*, “Every lady I interviewed had left the sinking ship in the last lifeboat. As I later found out from studying the placement of the lifeboats, no group of lifeboats was in view of another and each lady probably *was* in the last lifeboat she could see leaving the ship.”

14. Do tactfully point out to your narrator that there is a different account of what he is describing, if there is. Start out “I have heard...” or “I have read....” This is not a challenge to his account, but rather an opportunity for him to bring up further evidence to refute the opposing view, or to explain how that view got established, or to temper what he has already said. If done skillfully, **some of your best information can come from this juxtaposition of differing accounts.**

15. **Try to avoid "off the record" information — the times when your narrator asks you to turn off the recorder while he tells you a good story.** Ask him to let you record the whole thing and promise that you will erase that portion if he asks you to after further consideration. You may have to erase it later, or he may not tell you the story at all, but once you allow "off the record" stories, he may continue with more and more and you will end up with almost no recorded interview at all. "Off the record" information is only useful if you yourself are researching a subject and this is the only way you can get the information. It has no value if your purpose is to collect information for later use by other researchers.

16. **Don't switch the recorder off and on. It** is much better to waste a little tape on irrelevant material than to call attention to the tape recorder by a constant on-off operation. For this reason, I do not recommend the stop-start switches available on some mikes. If your mike has such a switch, tape it to "on" to avoid an inadvertent missing of material — then forget it. Of course you can turn off the recorder if the telephone rings or someone interrupts your session.

17. **Interviews usually work out better if there is no one present except the narrator and the interviewer**. Sometimes two or more narrators can be successfully recorded, but usually each one of them would have been better alone.

18. **Do end the interview at a reasonable time. An hour and a half is probably maximum. First**, you must protect your narrator against over-fatigue; second, you will be tired even if he isn't. Some narrators tell you very frankly if they are tired, or their wives will. Otherwise, *you* must plead fatigue, another appointment, or no more tape.

19. Don't use the interview to show off your own knowledge, vocabulary, charm, or other abilities. Good interviewers do not shine; only their interviews do.

SOURCE: https://guides.library.duke.edu/oralhistory

F) INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Student: Ndapewoshali Ndahafa Ashipala

Student Number: 200830562

Course: MA History: Reading Material Culture to Construct a History of Trade between Oukwanyama and Its Neighbours in the Nineteenth Century

University: University of Namibia

Point of first contact/request for interviews: 10 July 2022 (Golda and Julia) and 01 August for everyone else (once I have the images from Golda and Julia)

Send Interviewees Interview Preparation Guide and Informed Consent form: 15 August 2022

Planned interview date(s): 22 August – 02 September 2022

Dr. Napandulwe Shiweda **Maternal: omukwaanime kepata** **Paternal: omukwanangobe kooTate**	Napandulwe Shiweda is a senior lecturer and Head of Department of the Social Science Division at MRC, the University of Namibia. She has published on King Mandume ya Ndemufayo and the contest over political and social legitimacy in Oukwanyama. Her recent published work has focussed on the history of migrant and contract labour system in Namibia.	Interview on Wednesday 25th August Venue: UNAM Y-Block time: 11h00 -13h00
Dr. Lovisa Nampala **Paternal: Kootate/kolupale ondi mukwaanime,** **Maternal: kepata/koomeme ondi mukwaundibe.**	In her MA Thesis "Christianization and cultural change in northern Namibia: a comparative study of the impact of Christianity on Oukwanyama, Ondonga and Ombalantu, 1870-1971", she seeks to identify to what extent the type of colonial government, the local political set-up and the denomination of missionaries can explain variations in speed and extent of the eradication of local culture. Nampala has collected her ethnographic data through personal	Interview on Thursday 09 September 2022 Venue: MAN Office Time: 11h-13h00

	interviews with local informants, and the yield is impressive. She counters the missionary perspective that for long has dominated the image of the Owambo past. Together with Dr Vilho Shigwedha's MA thesis, the two studies cut through a thick layer of Owambo identity, formed as Christian, and tease out elements of historical local culture still remembered. The political and psychological agenda is to restructure the Owambo self-image and openly reclaim the pre-colonial culture without derogatory labels.	
Dr. Petrus Mbenzi **Paternal clan:Aakwambahu** **Maternal clan:Aakwanekamba**	University of Namibia, Department of Language and Literature Studies Doctor of Philosophy https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Petrus-Mbenzi http://www.namtranslations.iway.na/mbenzi%20petrus.htm	Interview on Friday 02 September 2022 Venue: UNAM Y038 time: 10h00
Ms. Hertha Bukassa **Maternal: Nknwanabwa ke pata.** **Paternal: Nkwanekamba ko tate.**	Culture Officer and Heritage Practitioner	Interview done in Berlin, Germany on Sunday 18 September 2022 at 15h30
Ms. Laimi Mbangula **Maternal: Omukwaudimbe kepata** **Paternal: omukwamalanga kootate**	Recommended by Dr Lovisa Nampala and Ms. Loini Iizyenda She is a textile artist who creates beautiful artworks inspired by Ovakwanyama traditional baskets.	Interview on Tuesday 24th August Venue: UNAM Art department time: 11h00 -13h00
Ms. Nehoa Hilma Kautondokwa **Paternal: ondi mukwaanyoka kooTate Materal: Omukwamandjila kooMeme**	Historian and Heritage Practitioner	Interview done in Berlin, Germany on Sunday 18 September 2022 at 15h30
Ms. Nangula Mukumangeni	Recommended by Mr. Tuuda Haitula (His aunt) Oshikwanyama Teacher	Interview on Tuesday 30 August 2022

Paternal: Kootate = mukwanekamba **Maternal: Kepata / koomeme = mukwamalanga**		Venue: Zoom Time: 11h-13h00
Ms. Golda Ha-Eiros	Golda is the Senior Curator for Anthropology at the National Museum of Namibia. The interview with Golda will be to establish which artefacts in her collection are "from" Oukwanyama (and/or Ovawambo) and to get/take high resolution images of these artefacts. These images, together with those at the Berlin Ethnographic Museum will be used for the oral history interviews.	Monday 22nd August Venue: National Museum of Namibia time: 11h00 -13h00
Dr. Julia Binter	Julia is working as a provenance researcher at the Zentralarchiv/ Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, where she oversees the Namibian collection. The interview with Julia will be to establish which artefacts in her collection are "from" Oukwanyama (and/or Ovawambo) and to get/take high resolution images of these artefacts. These images, together with those at the National Museum of Namibia will be used for the oral history interviews.	Berlin, Germany - Email Correspondences