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THE HAI//OM

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'THE VAST WHITE PLACE':¹ A HISTORY OF THE ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK IN NAMIBIA AND THE HAI//OM

Ute Dieckmann

In the African version of wildlife conservation history, the experience has been that game reserves are White inventions which elevate wildlife above humanity and which have served as instruments of dispossession and subjugation. (Carruthers 1995: 101)

Introduction

For many people, in particular those in Western countries, Africa represents a remote continent, associated with a small and distinct set of stereotyped and exotic ideas. While war, drought, ethnic conflicts and underdevelopment represent the dark side, the variety of wildlife, vast savannahs, and beautiful landscapes form the positive images. The beautiful imagination of wilderness or 'nature' serves as a contrast to 'our own modern society', reflecting the alleged dichotomy of culture *versus* nature. The African wilderness is mostly confined to National Parks, which are now important symbols of the continent.

But what is often overlooked is that National parks are not isolated, pristine islands surrounded by constantly changing cultural landscapes, but that they are part of states and their politics and have until recently usually been inhabited. A closer look at the history of National Parks in Africa shows how hazy the dichotomy between 'nature' or wilderness and 'culture' really is. One realises that National Parks are not 'natural', timeless spaces: native people shaped these environments for millennia, before they were removed, making space for the creation of these now famous symbols of African nature and wildlife. Far from being 'authentic', wilderness has been imposed (Neumann 1998). The Etosha National Park in Namibia is one of many examples of such a process; other more well known examples are the Kruger National Park in South Africa (Carruthers 1995), and the Arusha National Park in Tanzania (Neumann 1998).

Nowadays, the Etosha National Park covers an area of 22,270 km² and is thus one of the world's largest National Parks and the premier tourist attraction in Namibia (Mendelsohn, el Obeid and Roberts 2000: 34). The popularity of this park is based on its abundance of wildlife: most of Namibia's lions, elephants, rhinos and other large animals live within the boundaries of the park (Mendelsohn, el Obeid and Roberts 2000: 30). In 1997 about 98,100 tourists visited Etosha, spending 268,000 days and nights in the park. Two-thirds of all foreign tourists to Namibia include Etosha in their itinerary. Etosha is obviously the best opportunity

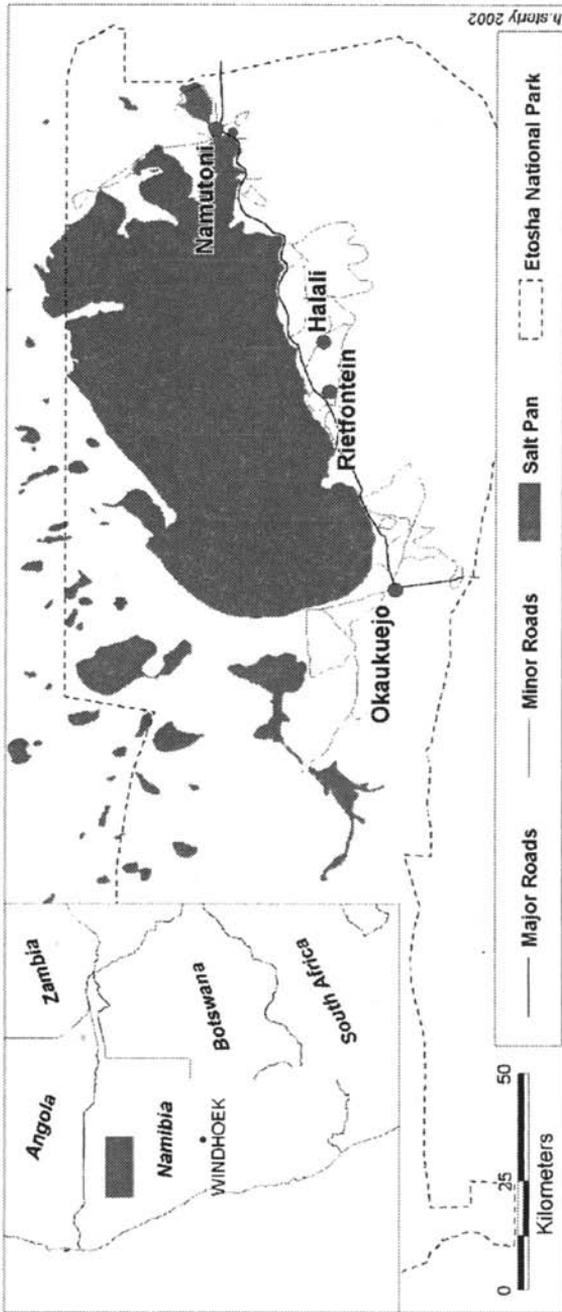


Figure 1: The Etosha National Park

in Namibia to see African wildlife, a major motivation for Western tourists visiting Africa. One writer about Etosha expressed this in the following words:

The real reasons for the existence of places like the Etosha National Park still lie deeply buried in man's slowly awakening consciousness.... Men are realising that they still need places of refuge where they may escape from themselves, their fellow human beings, the hustle and bustle of their towns and cities, the stink of their garbage heaps and the effluent of their industries. However brief such escapes may be, we all still need them. Conservation movements, both professional and amateur, however weak, bumbling and fitful they may be, are our way of acknowledging this need. Conservation areas are the visible manifestations of this need and our lives, in ways which were not easy to define, are fuller because they are still places where flamingo can build their mud nests, where "troops of springbok and herds of zebra" can crop the grass, with a few wild cheetahs to stalk them. The Etosha National park is such a place. (Germishuys and Staal 1979: 125).

This comment reveals the island character of National Parks clearly: nature is a refuge for people tired of 'civilisation'. This view disregards the fact that these islands are the very products of Western 'civilisation', imposed upon non-Western populations and 'landscapes'.²

The island-haven nowadays constituting the Etosha National Park has, for centuries at least, been the central residential area of hunters and gatherers, who are generally categorised as one of the 'Bushman' or San groups of Namibia,³ and came to be known as the Hai//om during the nineteenth century. The concept of 'Bushmen' as a collective term for different ethnic groups was a European concept, the different groups themselves (e.g. Kxoe, Hai//om, Ju/'hoan) did not perceive themselves as one integrated unit, since they occupied different areas and spoke different languages.⁴ The Hai//om lived in the region stretching from Ovamboland, Etosha, Grootfontein, Tsumeb, Otavi, and Outjo to Otjiwarongo in the South (some authors claim that the southern limits extended up to Rehoboth, e.g. Bleek 1927, Schapera 1930). The Park was created in the beginning of the twentieth century, but initially and for a long time, the Hai//om were still accepted as residents within the Game Reserve,⁵ while the surrounding environment was increasingly occupied by white settlers. Nowadays, the Hai//om are left without legal title to any land in Namibia (Widlok 1999: 32).

This article deals with the history of this Game Reserve, and outlines the process of dispossession of the former inhabitants of the area, demonstrating thereby that contrary to its public image, Etosha was not and is not an island. I focus on the developments which affected the Hai//om within the park and try to examine the factors responsible for their removal in 1954. After a short description of the pre-colonial and German colonial phases, I shall concentrate on the period of the South African Administration, in particular the time prior to 1954 and the expulsion of the Hai//om. I shall also sketch the developments that took place thereafter and briefly

examine the political discussions after Namibian Independence in 1990, since these impinge on the current situation. The information presented here is based mainly on archival sources, collected in the National Namibian Archives in 1999. Interviews with Hai//om people conducted during my field research in Outjo and Etosha in 2000 complement the archival findings.⁶

Pre-colonial Times and the German Period (1850–1915)

The region around the Etosha Pan was visited by travellers (e.g. Galton 1889, Schinz 1891) and missionaries (e.g. Hahn and Rath 1859) in the nineteenth century who mentioned 'Bushmen' living there. These travellers often used the 'Bushmen' for odd jobs during their journeys (e.g. Schinz 1891: 339), and reported about their contacts with the Ovambo-speaking people in the North and their copper mines near Otavi (Schinz 1891: 340, Hahn 1867: 286). Galton (1889) observed that the 'Bushmen' regarded the 'Ghou Damup' (now known as Damara) as inferior and had taught them their language (Galton 1889: 154). The ideology about the 'Bushmen' which, grounded in evolutionary assumptions, was to become popular later, was not expressed as openly in nineteenth century travel accounts as it was in twentieth century accounts. In 1879, the Thirstland Trekkers from South Africa also passed through the area on their way to Angola. A smaller group returned this way in 1885, and tried to settle here, but failed due to malaria, bovine pleuropneumonia, and the lack of hospitality on the part of the inhabitants (Berry 1996: 37, de la Bat 1982: 11). Germany took over control of the territory in 1884. In order to incorporate the Hai//om into the colonial system, a treaty was signed in 1898 with Aribib, one of the Hai//om leaders. Similar treaties were signed with many other 'chiefs' from various ethnic groups. Köhler comments: 'The purpose of the treaty was to get the Hei//um Bushmen of the Etosha Pan under German control and create some order between the Bushmen and the colonists' (Köhler 1959: 19).

The idea of creating Game Reserves was discussed in 1902 by the German Colonial Government. The district administrator (*Bezirksamtman*) of Outjo – a town situated around 100 km South of Etosha – suggested declaring the Etosha area a game reserve, for various reasons, but mainly to close the area for vehicular traffic. Thus commercial hunters could be kept out of the locality (SWAA Nature Conservation and Toursim: iv). However, it was only in 1907 that Governor von Lindequist proclaimed the Etosha region as one of three Game Reserves⁷ (ZBU MII E.1). According to this proclamation, hunting of kudu cows, eland, zebra, buffalo and giraffe was prohibited in Game Reserves, and all vehicular traffic required written permission of the Government (SWAA Nature Conservation and Toursim: iv). The explicit reason for the establishment of Game Reserves was the protection of game in specific areas, since game had become scarce in the territory over the preceding century.⁸ However, economic motivations are clearly articulated in the explanatory paper for the establishment of the Game Reserves:

...The high economic value of the game in the country is known to everybody. In some kitchens you can find game as fresh meat. The practical value of the skin as straps and whips, etc. is known. No statistics are available, but if you calculate its value by taking the average price of meat as a basis, you would get a sum of more than 200000 M. If you took this sum as annual pension, the capital which we have in the game population in the country would exceed several millions. We all get this pension for free... Thus, each inhabitant should try to protect the game because it is in the interest of every individual. ... The use of the Game Reserves for the country might be the following: Centres might be established where the game could increase without disturbance. This increase may mean that the game would have to switch over to other grazing areas and reach the farms, where it could be shot and processed. ...I must add the following remarks to the different paragraphs of the proclamation. To § 1: The defined reserves comprise areas, which because of their nature, are not fit for farms either now or in the near future...⁹ (ZBU MII E.1, translation mine).

Thus, game protection and nature conservation were not goals in themselves. The settlers and the colonial administration were to benefit in a direct and material way: game meat was pinpointed as a crucial resource for the colony.

The proclaimed Game Reserve N° 2 included today's Etosha National Park as well as the Kaokoland from the Kunene River to Hoarusib River, an area of 93,240 km² (de la Bat 1982: 12).¹⁰ During the German period the Hai//om were allowed to stay in the park, probably partly due to the lack of control measures, a perpetual problem for both the German and the South African Administrations in their 'Bushmen' policy. The prohibition of hunting in this area applied only to guns, but not to bows and arrows. Archival documents do not provide a detailed insight about the life of the people within the Park. It was suggested in 1908 that more 'Bushmen' be settled outside the Game Reserve, near Namutoni (ZBU 1908); this cropped up again in the South African period (see below). In 1910 the *Distriktchef* Zawada asked for more police patrols to round up the Hai//om at the different waterholes and bring them to Namutoni, where they should work and be fed with maize, in order to protect the game living in the reserve (ZBU 1910).¹¹ But the administration did not emphasise this issue and follow up steps were not taken. Oberleutnant Fischer, first warden of the Reserve, summarises the attitude of the German Colonial Government towards the Hai//om in a comment in his report on an expedition to the Omuramba, Ovambo and Okavango in 1908: 'With the advancement of the settlement, the Heigum will soon face the choice of becoming farm labourers or moving to areas, where they will eventually disappear under more unfavourable living conditions. The tribe of Heigum are not essential for the development of the colony' (ZBU 1909, translation, mine).¹² In both German and South African colonial discourses, the Hai//om or 'Bushmen' were rarely regarded as subjects, but rather as objects which had to be subjugated, in order to serve the colonial powers. Often, the language used implies that colonists were dealing with

animals, rather than human beings. Though there have been various discourses (e.g. farmers', missionaries' and the administration's) which were by no means consistent concerning the treatment of the 'Bushmen', they all shared some underlying assumptions, grounded in the pseudo-Darwinist ideology of the time, which saw 'Bushmen' on the lowest rung of human evolution; for them all, it was merely a matter of time before 'Bushmen' disappeared completely from the face of the earth.

South African Period (1915–1954)

When South African troops invaded the area in 1915, prohibitions concerning the hunting of specific game were lifted for the duration of the war, since the military required food and the Game Reserve N°2 offered a vast supply of fresh meat¹³ (Germishuis and Staal 1979: 112 f.). Later on, the German Proclamation was repealed by Ordinance No. 1 of 1916 and was amended to suit the new situation. Among others, the Ordinance made provision for hunting licenses, and penalties for offences were introduced. Specific game (e.g. elephant, rhino, buffalo, giraffe, zebra) were declared as 'royal game' and could be hunted only for scientific reasons.

The South African Military Administration reconfirmed the borders of Game Reserve N° 2 by accepting the so-called 'red line'¹⁴ which could not be crossed without a permit (SWAA Nature Conservation and Tourism: iv). Permanently manned police posts were established at Namutoni and Okaukuejo. The Sergeants of these Stations controlled tourism, in addition to conducting their police duties (de la Bat 1982: 12). They had to write regular reports about their areas concerning the game, stock owned in the Game Reserve, 'Bushmen' living within their areas, native employment, visitors, etc. (e.g. NAO 33/1).¹⁵ In the beginning Captain Nelson assumed the post of the Game Ranger for the Game Reserve N°2. In 1928 the post was abolished and the Native Commissioner of Ovamboland, Major Hahn,¹⁶ took over and acted as part-time Game Warden (SWAA A511/1, 1928), a job which he surely appreciated, given his enthusiasm for hunting (officers were always allowed a 'shot for the pot'), well represented in his photographs (Hartmann, Silvester and Hayes 1998: 99–104). The abolition of the post of Game Ranger may document the lack of importance of Nature Conservation (for whatever purpose) for the South West African Administration during that period.

The Hai//om were at the time still living in family groups near the various waterholes inside the park. According to informants, every group occupied a specific area that often included a number of waterholes; extended family networks guaranteed access to the natural resources in other areas. It is impossible to get exact figures on the number of Hai//om living there, since the Monthly and Annual Reports were written by people responsible for different areas (e.g. Namutoni or Okaukuejo) and including land outside the Game Reserve. Additionally, the accounts given are based only on estimates, since the officers did

not have any detailed knowledge about the Hai//om living in their areas, a fact which they often mentioned in their reports:

In Ovamboland proper there are few real Bushmen. ... It is impossible to give accurate figures but a rough estimate of the Bushmen inhabiting the country which falls under the control of this office – including the game reserves – is given below. It must be remarked, however, that Bushmen come and go according to season. This is particularly the case with the wild Bushmen inhabiting Eastern Ovamboland who roam from place to place in that vast area following the water and game... (NAO 11/1, Annual Report 1937).

The administration distinguished then, between 'wild' and 'tame' or 'domesticated' 'Bushman', sometimes adding to these the category of 'semi-wild'.¹⁷ Originally, this typology was meant to be spatial and economic: the 'wild Bushmen' were those not permanently incorporated in the administrative system, generally living beyond the Police Zone, while 'semi wild Bushmen' came from beyond the Police Zone to work temporarily on farms. Finally the 'tame Bushmen' were those who were permanently employed on settler farms (Gordon 1992: 90). But the officials used this categorisation quite arbitrarily. In 1926 for instance, the Game Warden wrote to the Native Commissioner:

Approximate number of families of "A" wild Bushmen = 280, embracing about 820 men, women and children. Approximate number of families of "B" those who are in contact with Europeans = 60. Approximate number of "C" those who have a mixture of other native blood in them = zzz. It is a difficult matter to state what Bushmen have an admixture of other native blood in them, it is however commonly recognized that the Hykoin Bushmen appear to have Bantu blood. (SWAA A50/26, 1926)

This particular officer obviously used 'blood' as a criterion for the distinction, implying crude racial concepts. Others were of the opinion that stock thieves were automatically 'wild', and sometimes the border of the Police Zone was simply taken as the marker between 'wild' and 'tame'. Thus it is difficult to grasp whom the officials exactly meant when talking about 'wild', 'semi wild' or 'tame Bushmen'.

But regardless of these problems, it can be concluded that a few hundred to one thousand Hai//om lived in the Park, mainly inhabiting the southern part of the Etosha Pan. Lebzelter (1934: 83) even estimated that 1500 Hai//om lived around the Etosha Pan in the 1920s. The number varied with economic and environmental circumstances – such as the need for labour on the surrounding farms or the seasonal availability of wild foods – but no clear trends can be identified, and had there been one, the officials – anxious to document everything – would most probably have described them.

Within the Reserve, the Hai//om lived mostly off hunting and gathering. In the 1920s, the Game Ranger received instructions from the Government regarding various subjects, one of which has the heading 'Bushman':

The Ranger should take every opportunity on his patrols, of getting in touch with Bushmen and of endeavouring to persuade them either to hire themselves out to employment with farmers or otherwise to take up their residence away from the vicinity of occupied farms, in the Reserve. It should be noted that wild Bushmen should not be prosecuted for offences committed beyond the Police Zone, except if of a most serious nature. Breaches of the Game Law, for example, should pass unnoticed unless firearms are used. (NAO 33/1: Instructions for the Guidance of Game Ranger).¹⁸

Some of the Hai//om kept dogs within the boundaries of the Game Reserve, a fact which was not appreciated by the Warden due to the risk involved in the use of these dogs for hunting. This could only be controlled with a complete ban on dogs which was introduced in 1930 (NAO 33/1, 1930). But generally, hunting by the Hai//om was not seen as a problem in the 1920s and 1930s, as the following comments indicate 'The amount of game shot by Bushmen is by no means decreasing the game' (SWAA A50/26, 1926) or, ten years later: 'The game of the pan was on the increase, even after making liberal allowance to the Bushmen there' (NAO 33/1, 1936a). There were undoubtedly certain limitations – no firearms, no dogs, no shooting of giraffe, kudu, eland, impala and loeffelhund (NAO 33/1, 1928), but even the violation of these prohibitions were not generally punished. On the one hand, some officials were of the opinion that it was better to have 'Bushmen' living within the Game Reserve and killing game for their own consumption than to having them move out and committing stock thefts at the occupied farms. In 1926, the Game Warden wrote to the Native Commissioner, 'I encourage the Bushmen to leave the vicinity of occupied farms and to reside in the Game Reserve, where their activities can be controlled to a certain extent, this does not apply to "tame Bushmen"' (SWAA A50/26, 1926). On the other hand, Station Commanders were sometimes concerned about strange 'Bushmen' moving in and killing game: 'I have the honour to report that it would appear from investigations that quite a lot of Bushman have made their appearance in the Reserve within the last two months.... The continuance of Game being destroyed is a daily routine...' (NAO 33/1, 1929b). The Secretary for S.W.A. pointed out that the 'privilege' of 'Bushmen' to shoot game for their own consumption did not extend to 'Bushmen' not resident in the reserve 'who merely come in following game...' (NAO 33/1, 1930a). But shortly thereafter it was reported that 'Bushmen' were gradually leaving for farms to the south of Etosha (NAO 33/1 1930b). These movements were certainly seasonal, and linked to the opportunities to find game and *veldkos* or the necessity of seeking employment.¹⁹ Controlling these movements presented some difficulties for the police stationed in the Game Reserve. In 1948, after a period of twenty years without amendments to the laws concerning hunting by 'Bushmen', a further limitation was imposed regarding the species allowed to be shot. Thereafter the Hai//om were only allowed to hunt wildebeest and zebra and it was specified that '...action, under the Game Law, will be taken against them if

they continue to shoot other species of Game...' (SWAA A511/1, 1948b/c). This new limitation was probably connected to the appointment of the first full-time game warden, A.A. Pienaar in 1947²⁰ (SWAA A511/1, 1954). The question of control measures remained, especially in remote areas within the Reserve.

In addition to hunting and gathering, a lot of families had livestock, especially goats, but also a few cattle and donkeys.²¹ In the 1920s, there was uncertainty among the officials about the number of stock that should be allowed (e.g. NAO 33/1, 1929a). It was decided then that the 'Bushmen' should not keep more than ten head of large and fifty head of small stock per person, within the borders of the Reserve (NAO 33/1, 1929b). But the issue of livestock was to be raised again later. During the 1930s, there were fair numbers of livestock at some waterholes – for example at Okevi in 1939 there were twenty-eight cattle, two donkeys and sixty-nine goats belonging to different owners (SWAA A511/1, 1939a). The Station Commander of Namutoni again suggested a reduction in numbers, and the Monthly Report two months later states that all 'Bushmen' stock-owners reduced their herds considerably (SWAA A511/1, 1939b). Based on the numbers of stock reported by the Station Commanders over the years, one can not notice a tendency towards stock accumulation between 1929 and 1945, and even in 1947, the Station Commander of Okaukuejo reported that there was enough grazing for game and livestock in his area (SWAA A511/1, 1947). But to control the Foot and Mouth Disease and in connection with the transfer of the Foot and Mouth Disease Barrier from Osohama to Namutoni, instructions were issued in 1948, that stock-owners were no longer allowed to possess more than five head of large stock and ten head of small stock each (SWAA A511/1, 1948a/b).

Besides foraging and pastoralism, there were several opportunities for seasonal or regular employment, either inside or outside the Game Reserve. The motivation to do so depended on the season and on the amount of game and *veldkos* within the Reserve as well as on the need for cash to buy additional goods, such as stock or blankets, at the nearby farms. In the 1920s, a number of Hai//om were employed in the Bobas mine near Tsumeb (ADM 1922, 1924b, SWAA A50/26, 1926). They also could go out to seek work on the farms around the National Park, a possibility which several men chose temporarily and seasonally throughout the first half of the twentieth century (e.g. ADM 1924a). Furthermore there was a lot of employment available within the Game Reserve. Hai//om were always employed in road construction gangs, preparing and repairing the roads in order to ensure more comfortable trips for administrative officers, hunters and tourists (NAO 33/1, 1932b, 1938b). Between 1938 and 1940 for instance, around fifty Hai//om were permanently engaged in repairing or constructing roads (SWAA A50/26, 1940). Additionally, they were employed to keep the waterholes clean (e.g. NAO 33/1, 1932a) and had jobs inside the police stations/rest camps (SWAA A511/10, 1948). Some of the men²² were employed by the police at Namutoni and Okaukuejo. Their names appear again and again in the Monthly or Annual Reports.²³ The 'payment' for the work varied substantially. Sometimes the only

payment was the permission to stay in the Park, sometimes they were given rations like mealie-meal, sugar and tobacco, and sometimes they received additional wages. At least in the Game Reserve, a trend could be observed over the years: from threats to expel the Hai//om from the Reserve, through rations of mealie meal, sugar, tobacco towards 'proper' wages and supplements of meat, to the food rations – a development certainly not valid for the farms outside the reserve. Yet the wages of the Hai//om were always considerably lower than those paid to Ovambo labourers (LGR 1937).

It is clear that the Hai//om within the Game Reserve were not exclusively foragers anymore. They employed various economic strategies, which were connected partly to their earlier lifestyle, and partly to the changing circumstances, new opportunities and limitations arising from the creation and administration of the Game Reserve. In this, they were no different from other Hai//om or even other San groups (e.g. Gunther 1986, Suzman 2000, Widlok 1999). Life within the Park changed over the years, new laws were made, new opportunities arose. Especially in the 1940s, there was a tightening of legislation. New rules concerning hunting and new prohibitions on livestock were introduced. But these processes cannot be attributed to a single cause; several factors were involved. The necessity of controlling the Foot and Mouth Disease was one such factor; but the increasing interest in tourism (SWAA A511/10) – and the potential of nature conservation in this context – was undoubtedly, another major factor that influenced for instance, the appointment of a full-time Game Warden. The Kruger National Park in South Africa was held out as the shining example to be followed, and as late as 1954, Schoeman wrote: 'Concerning the tourist facilities, the Etosha Game Reserve is still in its infancy compared to the Kruger Game Reserve' (SWAA A511/1, 1954). The people living inside the Game Reserve never played an important part in the perceptions of the visitors. In the earlier accounts, one rarely finds more than stray references to the people in the Park. Obviously, concepts of nature and the enthusiasm for wilderness excluded people from the picture at the time.²⁴

'Bushmen' Policy in General and the Hai//om-Discussion

To understand the developments that finally led to the expulsion of the Hai//om from Etosha, one must consider the overall 'Bushmen' policy of the South African Administration of Namibia over the years. In the very beginning of the South African Mandate period, official attitudes towards the 'Bushmen' were remarkably tolerant. As Gordon notes, 'Initially, the South African Occupation Forces were concerned to show the world how much better they were than their German predecessors and consequently were more tolerant toward Bushmen.' But he also adds, 'Below the level of magisterial rhetoric aimed at superiors, a different world existed' (Gordon 1992: 89). In 1921, the Native Reserves Commission (the body responsible for the development of segregation as policy) was of the opinion that '

the “Bushmen problem ... must be left to solve itself” and that “any Bushmen found within the area occupied by Europeans should be amenable to all the laws” (South West Africa 1922, quoted in Gordon 1992: 91). But the ‘problem’ did not solve itself. In the early 1920s, the magistrate Van Rynefeld was murdered by ‘Bushmen’ (Gordon 1992: 92f.). Ovambo labourers were occasionally attacked and robbed on their way back to Ovamboland, and this obviously endangered the system of migrant labour that was indispensable for the economy of South West Africa. Additionally, the farmers complained regularly about the ‘Bushmen’, whom they held responsible for stock thefts, grass fires and attacks (SWAA A50/26). They pressurised the administration to solve the problem. For instance, E. Schwarz, a farmer, wrote to the magistrate of Grootfontein, painting the ‘Bushmen’ in the darkest colours:

...The above said proves that the Bushmen put themselves outside the law, they are a danger for life and property of all human beings. Therefore, the State has not only the right but the duty, in the interest of its citizens, to make very severe and drastic laws for and against the Bushmen. (SWAA A50/67a, 1926)

The administration took action, and laws were amended: the *Vagrancy Proclamation* in 1927 (SWAA A50/27, 1927), the *Arms and Ammunition Proclamation* in 1928, and ‘Bushmen’ bows and arrows were now included under the definition of ‘firearms’ (Gordon 1992: 130). Thereafter a slight improvement was reported in the situation (e.g. LGR 1930).

Another discussion about the ‘Bushmen’ problem ran parallel to these developments – namely, the suggestion of a ‘Bushmen’ reserve, a suggestion already made in the German Colonial Period (e.g. von Zastrow 1914, ZBU 1911²⁵), but put aside at the time as impracticable. In 1936 the issue was raised once again, shortly after the Empire Exhibition in Johannesburg, where a number of ‘Bushmen’ families were exhibited for ‘public’ curiosity. The question now arose if ‘Bushmen’ with their ‘fascinating’ habits and customs were not worthy ‘of being preserved for all time in South Africa’ (SWAA A50/67b, 1936). This question was also addressed to the administration of South West Africa in regard to the ‘Bushmen’ there.²⁶ The administration itself was sceptical about the idea of a ‘Bushmen’-Reserve (SWAA A198/26, 1937a), but demonstrating good will, it agreed to undertake an ethnological enquiry funded by the Carnegie Corporation (SWAA A198/26, 1937b). One of the Commission’s members entrusted with ethnological investigations was Isaac Schapera, a social anthropologist. He drew up a questionnaire which the district administrative officers were supposed to complete. The replies of the officers were by no means enthusiastic, and the information collected not very useful (SWAA A198/26, e.g. 1939). With the outbreak of World War II the matter was dropped once again (SWAA A198/26, 1946).

The Hai//om played only a minor part in this discussion, since their status as ‘pure Bushmen’ was questioned by both academics and administrative officers.²⁷ But the need to deal with them existed, especially with those living outside the

Game Reserve. The opinions about how to go about this were by no means consistent. In 1921, the Deputy Commissioner of Police in Outjo reported that the 'district is infested with Bushmen who undoubtedly do a great deal of harm to the stock of farmers...and who are more like jackals than human beings' (ADM 1921). In 1936, an inquiry was made concerning the possibility of prosecution even inside the Game Reserve. The police considered the Game Reserve as a possible shelter for 'Bushmen criminals' and wished to send patrols into the Reserve, but they were denied permission (SWAA A50/67a, 1936, NAO 33/1, 1936b, 1936c). In 1938 there had been another contradictory suggestion: move all the Hai//om of the region into the Game Reserve (SWAA A50/67a, 1938). In 1940, the Native Commissioner of Ovamboland suggested that 'Bushmen' families should either be moved inside the Game Reserve or to Ovamboland. In reference to a former letter to the Secretary of S.W.A. he wrote,

...I do not consider the Bushmen population of the Game Reserve excessive; in fact I thought that room could be found for more wild families and that these could be settled at places other than the main springs and game watering places, where big concentrations of various species of game even proved so attractive to visitors. I pointed out too that the Bushmen in the Reserve form part and parcel of it and that they have always been a great attraction to tourists. (SWAA A50/26, 1940)

His comments are exceptional, insofar as in the same letter he suggested involving both Hai//om and Ovambo in the discussions.

After World War II, the issue of how to deal with the 'Bushmen' again gained prominence, partly due to a strong White farmers' lobby, which continued to approach the officers to solve the 'Bushmen' problem. The first step taken was the formulation of a general policy in regard to the future treatment and control of 'wild Bushmen' – 'befriend' them rather than 'scare them off'. This included feeding schemes and a peaceful and conciliatory attitude of the police towards the 'Bushmen'. The police were issued small supplies of tobacco, salt and mealie-meal to hand out when necessary in making contact with the 'Bushmen'. There were also supplies of the same items for old and sick 'Bushmen', or in cases of severe drought. The main purpose was preventing further stock thefts (SWAA A50/67b, 1947). In subsequent years the Station Commanders from Okaukuejo and Namutoni amongst others submitted regular requisitions for supplies for mealie-meal, salt and tobacco (SWAA A50/67b).

Under this new policy, a *Commission for the Preservation of Bushmen*²⁸ was appointed in 1949, and P.A. Schoeman and Dr. L. Fourie were among its members. Schoeman was known as a famous writer and anthropologist, actively involved in developing a cohesive doctrine of *Grand Apartheid*. Fourie was the medical officer of the Mandate and 'Bushmen expert' (Gordon 1992: 144, 160f.). The Commission undertook official tours to investigate the 'Bushmen question' and wrote several reports with different suggestions. Although in its preliminary report, the Commission suggested a Hai//om Reserve near the Game Reserve, this

suggestion was dropped in the final report, without giving any convincing explanation for the change.²⁹ All Hai//om (except twelve families employed by the Nature Conservation) were to leave the Game Reserve and move either to Ovamboland or to farms south of Windhoek, where they were expected to look for work (SWAA A50/67b, 1953a). The reasons for the decision to expel the Hai//om without any compensation were not clearly expressed anywhere. This harsh recommendation might seem surprising, since till then there had been no consistent complaints about game being targeted by the Hai//om living there. Indeed, the Hai//om in the Game Reserve were sometimes considered 'part and parcel' of it or, at least, as not disturbing the game population. An article about the Etosha Pan Game Reserve, prepared by an officer of the South West African Administration for a publisher in Johannesburg in 1949, stated: '...Perhaps one should also mention the Bushmen, although nowadays they are no longer classed as "game"! They certainly fit into the picture and help to give to the Etosha Pan something of the atmosphere of the old wild Africa that is fast disappearing everywhere...' (SWAA A511/1, 1949).

The proposals were undoubtedly influenced by the fact, that one of its members, the anthropologist P.A. Schoeman, had been responsible since 1951 for Etosha as full-time game warden. He recognised the tourist potential of Etosha and had already started to develop the tourist infrastructure of the Game Reserve – constructing bungalows for tourists, improving roads, drilling new bore-holes (de la Bat 1982: 15). The general opinion that the Hai//om were no 'real Bushmen' was certainly yet another factor, for the final report of the Commission mentioned that:

Nowhere did your [the Administrator's] commissioners receive the impression that it would be worthwhile to preserve either the Heikum or the Barrakwengwe [Kxoe, another group labeled "Bushmen"] as Bushmen. In both cases the process of assimilation has proceeded too far and these Bushmen are already abandoning their nomadic habits and are settling down amongst the neighbouring tribes to agriculture and stock breeding... (SWAA A627/11/1, 1956).

We are faced here with a monumental ignorance of history: the necessity of integrating the Hai//om in the economic system, which did not stop at the borders of Etosha, almost inevitably led to their assimilation. This implied, without doubt, an alienation from an exclusively foraging way of life, and this in turn finally produced the opinion that the Hai//om were not worth 'preserving'.

The attitudes of the White farmers also played a part in the recommendations, even if the protection of game was the officially expressed reason for the decision. The farmers needed labour, and perhaps this explains why the Hai//om were ultimately not forced to shift to the south of Windhoek. Instead, it was accepted that they be moved to farms in the vicinity of the Game Reserve. The Game Warden Schoeman himself was afraid of informing the Hai//om in the Reserve about the government decision, and the Native Commissioner of Ovamboland was appointed for this task: '... because he considers that their removal from the

Game Reserve is bound to [lead to] antagonism amongst these Bushmen, Dr. Schoeman feels that he should not present the matter personally as such antagonism may hamper his work in the Game Reserve. There is, therefore, no alternative but to ask you to take the necessary steps for their removal...' (SWAA A50/67b, 1953b). And the Native Commissioner of Ovamboland took the necessary steps; he reported later to the Chief Native Commissioner that:

I addressed 24 men, 33 women and 35 children...on the 30th January 1954 at Namutoni and 14 men, 15 women and 21 children...on the 31st January at Okaukueyo, in the following terms: -

"I have come here to tell you that it is the order of the Administration that you move out of Game Reserve N° 2. The reason for this order is that you are destroying the game. You may go into the Police Zone and seek work on farms South of Windhoek, or elsewhere. You must take your women and children with you, also your stock. There are many farmers who will take you into their employ and I am sure allow you to have your stock with you. Those of you who do not wish to go and work on farms must move into Ovamboland, but without your stock of any description, i.e. cattle, horses, goats, donkeys, fowls, dogs etc. You will have to be out of the Game Reserve the 1st May, 1954. If you are still in the Game Reserve on that day you will be arrested and will be put into gaol. You will be regarded as trespassers...None of you will be allowed to return to Game Reserve N° 2 from Ovamboland. Those of you who go to farms will not be allowed to return to the Game Reserve unless you are in possession of a permit issued by a Magistrate...I hope you understand this message. If you have something to say I will listen but I wish to tell you that there is no appeal against this order. The only Bushmen who will be allowed to continue to live in the Game Reserve are those in the employ of the Game Wardens. Convey what you have heard today to your absent friends and relatives."

Replies made by some of the Bushmen at Namutoni do not deserve any comment. Those of Okaukueyo made no representations...I should have held these meetings with the Bushmen in November but was asked to postpone them by your telegram...In the meantime 80 % of the Bushmen have already left the Game Reserve and have taken up employment in farms in the Outjo, Tsumeb and Grootfontein districts. Although I told those remaining at Namutoni and Okaukueyo that they should seek work on farms South of Windhoek, I added, or elsewhere, as the whole object is to get them to leave the Game Reserve. It would be impracticable and certainly undesirable to try and compel them to take up employment on farms in a particular portion of South West Africa. I understand that since November, 1953, certain farmers were given permits by Magistrates to enter the Game Reserve for the purpose of recruiting Bushmen labour. (SWAA A50/67b, 1954)

According to Hai//om informants in Etosha, the expulsion was gradual. One of the informants, who is still employed by the Nature Conservation inside the Park and stayed there nearly his whole life recounted:

It is a long story, but I will try it. When it was the free life, I was still young. But I was very awake, I always listened [to the words of the older people]. This place was first...only a police station...But the tourists were coming all the time...And later in the time, slowly, the Nature Conservation came in...Schoeman came first, then Aschenborn, those men came. They just worked. They went out, when the tourists went out, they went with the people. They asked, "how are you?", "all right". "Good" [asking the Hai//om at the different waterholes]...That time, those people [Hai//om] they still wore their traditional clothes. So they [Nature Conservation or police] said, you have beautiful clothes, you can dance nicely, can you dance [for the tourists]. So, the people said, "yes, we can dance..." and they danced...There is now another story. Now the people got a ration, food and meat, that time, they began to say, "the people must come to dance here also" [at Okaukuejo]. Here were less people, there were not a lot of people here [at the waterhole of Okaukuejo]. The work was also less, and there were not as many buildings as today. There was just the police station. So they [Nature Conservation or police] took the people to work here, to clean. Here were just a few houses, they cleaned those houses...Other people were still staying at Rietfontein, they also went to //Nubes or stayed at !Gobaub [waterholes in the Park]. Later in the time, all the people just came here. They were brought here with the lorries [to dance at Okaukuejo for the tourists], brought back to Rietfontein. From there they went back to the different waterholes [where they normally stayed]. So it worked. And later...the lorries brought the people in. And some were told to gather together at Rietfontein. That was the place where they [police and Nature Conservation] always got the people, when they looked for labourers. So the people came together at Rietfontein, they first stopped..."big animals are not allowed to be killed anymore, like giraffes, elands and big animals should not be shot anymore", they stopped it. So they came off, there, where the trees are, there was the old location, where the people stayed. There [another place in the Restcamp of Okaukuejo] they danced. They got a ration, zebra. They danced in the evening. Later in time, the Government decided, they said, Schoemann and Aschenborn, and the police worked also together with...the Nature Conservation to bring the people out, to bring them away from the waterholes. But they were not transported, they were just told, "go to Okaukuejo". Some went by foot others were brought with the cars. So we came here, and here they divided the people. Those people who should go out to the farms and those who should stay here to work for the Government. We were also from the people who had to go out. There at Namutoni, that other area, from Halali the other side, they did the same. Those who should stay with the Government stayed behind, other people: out. The people were called, and the farm owners came and they have chosen by themselves, how many and whom they wanted to take. They asked which people are from

one house, so the people from one house [family] were taken by one man, one man took those people. So we were brought out. There was no gate, there was no border, there was nothing. We went there to the farms, we stayed there, came a little bit by foot to Okaukuejo, everything was open, the people went by foot, back again to the farms. Later in the time, the border was built... (interview with K.K., 7.11.2000).

Interpreting the events and in several discussions about the topic, this informant often repeated that the Hai//om people were firstly 'tamed' before they could be removed – an obvious adoption of the colonial discourse about the 'Bushmen'.

It is remarkable that the former Chief Game Warden of South West Africa, Bernabé de la Bat (1982), who was appointed as biologist in the Park and was stationed there until 1963, did not mention these events in his article about the history of Etosha. He only writes that 'In 1955 the Administration decided to establish a permanent section to deal with game and game reserves...Our total staff establishment in Etosha consisted of three whites, 12 Wambo and 16 Heikum Bushmen...' (1982: 15). Reminiscing about 'those days' he writes, 'The small number of Heikum Bushmen still living in the park were induced by the Bantu Commissioner, Harold Eedes, to settle at the rest-camps where proper housing, medical care and work opportunities were available. They became our trackers, builders, camp workers and later our road grader and bulldozer operators.' (1982: 16). Even Dieter Aschenborn, the famous Namibian painter, who was Game Warden in Okaukuejo between 1952 and 1954 did not mention the Hai//om in his highly readable and amusing memoirs about those two years in Etosha (Aschenborn 1957). On the other hand, some of the Hai//om-informants, interviewed about that period, still remember these men. Some of them worked for instance, in the de la Bat and Aschenborn households, taking care of their children, but even their opinions are by no means consistent. For example, some of those now living in town, enjoyed recalling these people and 'those times' when they still stayed in Etosha, while others were more reserved and critical in their attitudes towards them.

South African Period (1954–1990)

In the same year, 1954, the SWA Parks Board was accorded responsibility for the maintenance and expansion of game reserves (Gaerdes 1957: 43). More funds were made available, resulting in better planning and development. At least some Hai//om could stay in the Park, though no longer at the various waterholes but under tight control at the rest camps at Okaukuejo and Namutoni and near the two gates, Lindequist and Ombika.³⁰ Since interest in tourism increased significantly, especially in the 1960s, under Daan Viljoen, the Administrator of S.W.A. (Viljoen 1961: 3–9) and a greater awareness of conservation also became evident (de la Bat 1982: 20), there was no lack of work in the following years for the few remaining

Hai//om. Tourist facilities were extended or constructed, and a new location for the 'Black' employees was built (NTB N 13/3/2, 1958). Women were employed to clean the rest camps and as domestic workers for the sergeants and game wardens. Men were employed in road construction, as cleaners, mechanics and assistants of the *veldwagters*. Till the 1960s, they were still engaged as tourist attractions, dancing their 'traditional dances' in their 'traditional clothes' for visitors on Saturday nights, in the rest camp of Okaukuejo (SWAA A511/1, n.d.).³¹ Those who were born in the Park, were given permission to stay there for the rest of their lives.³² In the 1970s and 1980s, during the liberation struggle, the male Hai//om of the Park were also used as trackers for the S.W.A. Territory Forces. In 1984, 244 Hai//om were living in the Park, at Okaukuejo, Halali, Namutoni and the two gates (Marais 1984: 37f.). They were better off than those who had left the Park. The wages were higher than those paid on farms, and the men, often working on road construction or together with rangers, had the possibility of visiting their old places. Life on the farms was tough. The wages and rations paid, as well as the treatment and the workload depended on the discretion of the farmers. Only a few Hai//om stayed at any one farm for the rest of their lives, the majority moving from one farm to another; some of them worked on more than twenty farms in the region around Outjo and Otavi.

Independence

With the Independence of Namibia in 1990, the political environment changed. The following assessment of the Kruger National Park, is valid for Namibia too: 'In the African version of wildlife conservation history, the experience has been that game reserves are White inventions, which elevate wildlife above humanity and which have served as instruments of dispossession and subjugation' (Carruthers 1995: 101). Thus, with independence, it became necessary to develop new concepts of nature conservation and tourism. Now, the impact on, and the eventual benefits to the local population had to be taken into consideration. Hitherto, no general method has been found to reconcile the interests of the local people with those of conservation. Several initiatives were taken, especially by the Ministry of Wildlife, Conservation and Tourism (now Ministry of Environment and Tourism, MET) to approach this issue,³³ which is indeed, a much larger one and goes beyond the question of nature reserves and National Parks to include the future of all communal areas.³⁴ *Community Based Natural Resource Management* (CBNRM) is one important approach towards reconciling such apparent contradictions of interest. It aims at providing 'communal area residents with appropriate incentives to use their resources sustainably and combines reform of policy and legislation with implementation at community level' (Jones 1999: 2). Similar developments towards involving local people in natural resource management can be observed in other countries of southern Africa (Hohmann

2000:13). *Community-based tourism* is another relevant concept. Participation of the people in tourism, establishing conservancies,³⁵ etc. have partly been realised in different regions of Namibia, but these projects have been developed mostly in communal areas (see e.g. Research Discussion Papers of the MET 1994–1999).

Till now, the Hai//om have not benefitted from these initiatives. They were not granted land during the Apartheid era and only a few families now live in communal areas and can not hence, participate in resource management or tourism there. Many Hai//om all across the region regard Etosha as their 'homeland', even if their direct ancestors never stayed in the area which later became the Etosha National Park. This is not surprising, since Etosha was the last area where the Hai//om could at least partly continue to lead a relatively autonomous life: Oshivambo speaking groups already occupied areas north of Etosha for centuries and White farmers increasingly occupied the areas adjoining the Park to the south and east – especially since the early 1900s, once the railway line to Tsumeb, Otavi and Grootfontein was completed in 1908 (Gordon 1992: 54). Today, most of the Hai//om live on farms owned by others or in the towns of the Kunene and Otjozondjupa Regions; only a small number are still employed in Etosha.³⁶ Scattered over a huge area, they are still struggling to unite their communities in different places into a stronger political organisation. The NGO WIMSA (Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa), a San Organisation, whose activities are focused particularly on land claims, institutional capacity building, education, training and networking of the various San communities in Southern Africa supports the Hai//om in their aspirations (Brörmann 1999: 22, 2000: 3). In 1996, the Hai//om elected a chief to represent them in the Council of Traditional Leaders,³⁷ but he was never recognised by the Government and over the years he lost the support of most Hai//om.³⁸ In 1997, a demonstration at the gates of the Etosha National Park was organised by the Hai//om, claiming their ancestral land. Seventy-three of them were jailed, some were granted bail and the charges were dropped later on (AZ 1997a). It was the first time that the fate of these people achieved national and international recognition (e.g. TN 1997a, b, c, AZ 1997b, RP 1997), but due to internal struggles for representation within the Hai//om community, these steps were not followed up on. In 2001, new elections were planned for a Traditional Authority. This may help to unite the Hai//om and lend them a more powerful voice.

Conclusion

The development of the Etosha National Park and the dispossession of the Hai//om people clearly reflect processes within the wider society. As shown above, concepts of nature conservation changed over time and had a great impact on the Hai//om. The German Colonial Government was preoccupied with administration and survival in the arid and strange environment. Material needs in particular,

formed the background for steps towards nature conservation, whereas idealistic motivations or the role of tourism played only a minor part: a Game Reserve should offer protection for game to be used by White settlers. As the Hai//om did not seriously threaten the game population inside the Game Reserve, there was no need to remove them. During the South African Administration however, the potential of tourism grew, and with this, new ideas about 'wilderness' (as a motivation for tourists to visit Etosha) became relevant. Contemporary thinking offered little room for people – definitely not for those who had adapted their way of life to new constraints and opportunities and thus no longer fitted into the image of the 'wild'. The scientific interest in preservation increased as well, but this was kept separate from the image that was offered to tourists in Etosha. As early as 1958 for instance, the Fauna and Flora Research Organisation was established (SWAA A511/1, A511/9), and the Etosha Ecological Institute was opened in 1974. Since Etosha had shrunk in size, while game density and with it game diseases had increased, the nature conservationists were forced 'to "farm" with wildlife' (de la Bat 1982: 21), a fact that certainly would not have fitted into the wilderness myth of European or American tourists. The residents (employees and families) within the Park could just be perceived as workers, giving no indications to tourists about the life of the people, or the difficulties of Park management. The scientific interest within the Game Reserve was grounded in its 'island-character' as well, though with a different perspective: inhabitants would have disturbed the exceptional ('artificial') research setting within a National Park.

The policies towards "Natives" in the Apartheid era, entailing concepts of separate development and the ideas about 'Bushmen' in particular underlay the concepts and processes of nature conservation in Namibia. What for instance would have happened, one wonders, had the academic and administrative eye viewed the Hai//om people as the embodiment of the 'pure Bushmen', worthy of 'preservation'? Would it then have been possible to accommodate them in the Park? Could one then imagine that they would have fitted into the image of 'the wilderness' for tourists? Had this happened, the Hai//om would have become part of this artificial island, 'preserved' like nature, without any chance of an autonomous development as part of the wider society.³⁹

After Independence, the European concept of nature preservation, the creation of 'islands', was replaced step by step. It became necessary to include the interests of local people in the discussion, and alternative strategies for the sustainable use of natural resources instead of the 'fencing-off idea' gained influence in the debate. But these developments are still in progress and no final solution is in sight, in particular concerning the former inhabitants of these protected areas. Will it be possible to integrate the interests and claims of the Hai//om in their ancestral land and the idea of a National Park in a sustainable as well as economic manner?

Notes

1. 'The vast white place' is one of several possible translations of 'Etosha', a term originating from one of the Ovambo languages for the Etosha pan (Berry et al. 1996: 9).
2. It is pertinent to ask whether this image of National Parks is a necessary precondition for their existence as tourist attractions.
3. The label 'Bushmen' is no longer popular in the official discourse in Namibia, and the term 'San' is used instead. But in informal conversations, people, especially farmers, still talk of 'Bushmen'. I use the term 'Bushmen' here in the context of historical sources, since the attitudes and actions of the Administration and of White society at large was motivated by their ideas about 'Bushmen'. Even academics disagree about the politically and/or scientifically correct term; for a discussion see Gordon (1992: 4f., 17ff.) and Widlok (1999: 6f.).
4. But images have the power to create reality and the perspectives of others influence one's own self-perception or identity. Nowadays for example, some Hai//om speak of themselves as 'Bushmen', even if they do not know anything about the other 'Bushmen' groups, or possible similarities among them.
5. Most of the earlier writers did not distinguish between the different San groups. Thus even when specific cases are mentioned, it is not easy to determine which group a given author means. But since the area of Etosha was always 'Hai//om-country', one may assume that references to 'Bushmen' living there indicate the Hai//om.
6. Since my field research is still in progress, the perspectives of the Hai//om people themselves will not be discussed much, and the stress will be on archival documents.
7. '...Als Wildreservate werden bestimmt: ...Das Gebiet südlich, westlich und nordwestlich der Etoscha-Pfanne in den Bezirken Grootfontein und Outjo, welches durch folgende Linien begrenzt wird: Im Osten und Süden die Westgrenze des Ovambolandes vom Kunene bis Osohama. Von dort nach Koantsab und über Ondowa, Chudop, Obado [?], Aigab, Vib, Chorub nach Gub. Von Gub über Otjokaware (Kowares) bis Oachab. Von Oachab das Hoarusib-Rivier bis zum Meere. Im Westen vom Meere. Im Norden vom Kunene bis zur Grenze des Ovambolandes...'
8. The Germans had proclaimed the first Game Laws in South West Africa some years before the establishment of Game Reserves (Germishuis and Staal 1979: 110 f.).
9. '...Einen wie hohen wirtschaftlichen Wert das Wild im Lande hat, ist jedem bekannt. In manche Küche kommt als frisches Fleisch nur Wildbret. Auch der Gebrauchswert der Felle zu Decken und zur Anfertigung von Riemen, Peitschen pp ist jedem bekannt. Eine Statistik ist leider unmöglich, aber wollte man die vielen, jährlich im Lande erbeuteten Zentner Wildbret nach den durchschnittlichen Schlachtpreisen berechnen, so würde es sich da schätzungsweise um eine Summe von mehr als 200000 M handeln. Wenn man diese Summe als jährliche Rente nimmt, so würde das dazugehörige Kapital ein Vermögen von vielen Millionen bedeuten, das wir in unserm Wildbestand besitzen. Wir alle beziehen diese Rente völlig kostenlos aus dem Lande, und so bietet unser Wildbestand einen sehr bedeutenden Teil unseres Gemeindevermögens, das zu schützen jeder Bewohner des Schutzgebietes peinlich bemüht sein sollte, da dies eben im Interesse jedes Einzelnen liegt...Der Nutzen, den die Wildreservate dem Lande bringen würden, wäre folgender: Es würden Zentren geschaffen, in denen sich das Wild ungestört vermehren könnte. Diese Vermehrung hätte zur Folge, daß das Wild von den dortigen Äsungsplätzen auswechseln müßte und auf die Farmen käme, wo es geschossen und verwertet werden könnte...Zu den einzelnen Paragraphen der vorliegenden Verordnung wäre noch folgendes zu

bemerken: Zu §1. Die ad 1–3 angegebenen Reservate umfassen Flächen, die ihrer Beschaffenheit nach zum größten Teil für Farmbetrieb nicht, oder vorläufig nicht in Frage kommen...'

10. The area of the Game Reserve was reduced and expanded several times under the South African Administration (de la Bat 1982: 14, 19f.).
11. If the logic of the above quotation is taken to its logical extreme, one could conclude that the Hai//om should be fed with maize in order to keep the meat for the White settlers.
12. 'Mit dem Fortschreiten der Besiedelung werden die Heigum sich bald vor die Alternative gestellt sehen, entweder Farmarbeiter zu werden oder in Gegenden gedrängt zu werden, wo sie unter immer ungünstigeren Lebensbedingungen ihrem Ende entgegen gehen. Für die Weiterentwicklung der Kolonie ist der Stamm der Heigum ohne Belang.' (ZBU 1909).
13. Again, it becomes obvious that Nature Conservation or Game Protection is neither a goal in itself nor a moral issue, but serves specific purposes which can change over time and depend on the various interest groups involved.
14. The 'red line' was established in 1896 to control the rinderpest (Dierks 1999: 50).
15. These reports resulted in a huge amount of archival documents which help to reconstruct the former Hai//om way of life and the development of the Park in general.
16. Up to the 1940s, Major Hahn occupied this post (Gordon 1992: 248).
17. Again, it seems to be a typology of animals.
18. The border of the Police Zone passed through Etosha (see Hartmann et al. 1998: map: viii).
19. The appearance of strange 'Bushwomen' collecting *velkos* (bushfood) in the Reserve was also discussed with the same result: the *velkos* should be left for the resident people (NAO 33/1, 1938a).
20. In the same year, the Kaokoland portion of the Game Reserve N° 2 was set aside 'for the sole use and occupation by natives'. During the same year, 3406 km² were cut off from Etosha and partitioned into farms (de la Bat 1982: 14).
21. Driving around Etosha and visiting the different waterholes, informants could still show me the stones of the former kraals for goats, which, they said, had to be protected against carnivorous predators. Hence, the walls built around the kraals were not necessarily for human shelter.
22. Hai//om women are rarely mentioned in these reports.
23. Of course their European names (e.g. Fritz, Izak, Joshua) were mostly meant, and not their Hai//om names or surnames, which were too difficult to pronounce and nearly impossible to write.
24. 'Footprints of Bushmen' (Heck 1956: 85) are referred to, and mention is made of 'another exciting experience [that] was a hunt and "kill" by a party of Bushmen who then had their werft at Rietfontien' (Davis 1977: 142, writing about 1936). The idea of wilderness or 'pure nature' does not inevitably exclude native people. For the concept of wilderness including the Indians in North America in the first half of the nineteenth century see Spence (1999: 11ff.).
25. Kaiserliches Bezirksamt Outjo an das Kaiserliche Gouvernement: Betr.: Erhaltung der Buschleute: '...Meines Erachtens muß es das Bestreben der Verwaltung sein, aus dem vagabundierenden Buschmann einen sesshaften und nützlichen Arbeiter zu machen. Sollten diese Versuche mißlingen, so bleibt nichts übrig als den Buschleuten den Aufenthalt im besiedelten Lande derartig zu verleiden, daß sie sich in Gebiete zurückziehen, wo sie dem Weißen nicht gefährlich werden können (etwa in der Namib

- oder im Betschuanaland). Reservate für sie zu schaffen wäre mit der Schaffung eines Sammelplatzes für Viehdiebe und Straßenräuber gleichbedeutend. Das wissenschaftliche Interesse muß gegen das Interesse der Sicherheit der weißen Ansiedler und der farbigen Arbeiter insbesondere der arbeitssuchenden Ovambos zurücktreten.' (ZBU 1911); see also Gordon 1992: 60 ff. for the discussions during that time.
26. The scientific community, especially anthropologists, with their own specific interests took an active part in these discussions about 'Bushmen' reserves (Gordon 1992: 147f.).
 27. According to common typologies, for which racial, geographical as well as linguistic parameters were used by academics, the Hai//om could not be identified as the 'prototypical Bushmen'. Their language is more closely related to Nama/Damara than to other 'Bushmen' languages, they lived for a long time in an multi-ethnic environment, and their appearance was not really 'Bushman-like'. It was often supposed that they were a 'racial mixture' or 'hybrids' (e.g. von Zastrow 1914: 2–3, Fourie 1959 [1931]: 211f., Bruwer 1965: 58, Gusinde 1954: 56).
 28. Note the terminology: 'Bushmen' should be 'preserved' as nature should, but at separate places.
 29. The explanation given was: 'The Commission for the Preservation of Bushmen has found that, since presenting its preliminary report, developments have taken place in the Etosha Pan Game Reserve which make its previous recommendation – that a Reserve for the Bushmen should be established along the border of the Game Reserve – impracticable....' (SWAA A627/11/1).
 30. Since 1967, some were also staying at Halali, an additional rest camp opened during that year (Berry 1996: 38).
 31. No explanation could be found in the documents consulted for the abolition of this custom.
 32. I did not get the exact information about the date, but both the Chief Game Warden and Hai//om informants assured me that they can stay there, if they have been born there.
 33. At the same time, the sections dealing with tourism within the National Parks were privatised in 2000.
 34. At independence, 40.8 per cent of the land had been allocated to Black homelands, supporting a population of about 1.2 million, while 43 per cent was allocated to mostly White farmers and about fourteen per cent was covered by several protected areas. The former Black homelands are now recognised as communal lands, which can be used by the residents, although the ownership is vested in the State (Jones 1999: 1).
 35. A conservancy can be formed by communal area residents. The community has to define its membership and its physical boundaries, elect a representative Committee, agree on a plan for the equitable distribution of benefits and adopt a legally recognised constitution. Then they obtain rights over wildlife and tourism within this conservancy. Until August 1999, the ministry of Environment and Tourism received more than twenty-five applications for conservancies; at least nine of these have been gazetted and accepted (Jones 1999: 4–6).
 36. Some Hai//om still resident in Etosha complain that things became worse after independence. According to them, it is more difficult to get a job there nowadays, since more and more people of other ethnic groups are entering the labour market in Etosha.
 37. Traditional leaders in Namibia now play vital roles at the national and local levels, as defined by the Traditional Authorities Act of 1995. At the national level, their task consists of advising the President, through the Council of Traditional Leaders, on 'the control and utilisation of communal land'. The Council also provides a means for

- information to be communicated from the government to the people, and traditional leaders have to be recognised by the Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing (Blackie and Tarr 1999: 17).
38. Hai//om are no exception; several San communities are struggling for political representation and recognition of Traditional Authorities. They are often confronted with statements like: 'You people never had leaders. Why do you need leaders today?' (Useb 2000).
 39. The Himba of north-western Namibia are an example of such a development, but to a lesser degree than would have happened in a National Park. Today, they are glorified as the last remnants of the 'Old Africa'. Bollig (1998) has traced the process of marginalisation and encapsulation during the colonial period, which led to this 'product', the 'beautiful traditional people', until recently ostensibly untouched by the modern world.

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Résumé

«La grande espace blanche»: L'histoire du parc national d'Etosha et les Hi//kom

Les parcs nationaux en Afrique sont souvent perçus comme des espaces de 'nature pure', intemporels, tels des îles, isolées, immuables et sauvages, en contraste avec l'extérieur, qui a connu un développement politique et écologique rapide à l'époque de la globalisation. Mais cette conception des parcs nationaux devient de plus en plus discutable, si l'on considère leur évolution. Dans cette étude l'auteur trace l'histoire du parc national d'Etosha en Namibie au cours du 20^e siècle et montre comment son développement reflète l'évolution dans la société plus large. Ce faisant, elle démystifie l'image publique de l'Etosha, en la privant de son caractère insulaire.

L'espace occupé aujourd'hui par le parc national correspond à la région habitée depuis des siècles par les H//kom, groupe ethnique, classifié autrefois comme 'Bushmen', de l'Afrique du Sud. L'auteur décrit le processus de leur dépossession et examine les facteurs qui ont finalement mené à leur expulsion du parc, déroulement non sans complications, dont les raisons avancées n'étaient pas concluantes, du fait de l'implication de plusieurs groupes d'intérêt – soit des représentants de l'administration allemande et sud-africaine de l'Afrique du Sud-ouest, des anthropologues et les conservateurs. L'évolution des idées concernant la préservation de la nature, de même que la politique coloniale de l'apartheid ont exercé une forte influence sur la population indigène, et notamment sur les 'Bushmen'.

Resumen

La historia del Parque Nacional Etosha y los Hi//kom

Parques nacionales en África están visto a menudo como espacios eternos de "naturaleza pura", como islas aisladas, inalterables y salvajes, en contraste con el

“afuera” que es sujeto de un rápido desarrollo político y ecológico en tiempos de la globalización. Sin embargo, estudiando más de cerca la historia, la imagen de parques nacionales se convierte más y más cuestionable. En este artículo voy a trazar la historia del Parque Nacional Etosha in Namibia durante el siglo XX y demostrar que su desarrollo refleja procesos dentro de la sociedad a un nivel más amplio. Con esto despojo a la imagen pública de Etosha de su carácter insular.

El área que hoy en día está cubierto por este parque nacional era, por lo menos en los últimos siglos, el área central de residencia de los Hai//om, los cuales anteriormente eran considerados como uno de los grupos de “Bushmen” in África del Sur. Perfiló el proceso de su desposeimiento y exploró los factores que finalmente condujeron al desahucio de esta comunidad del parque. Este desenvolvimiento no fue de ninguna manera correcto, ni los argumentos sostenidos fueron consistentes, pues diversos grupos de interés (por ej. representantes de la administración alemana y surafricana de África del Suroeste, antropólogos, ambientalistas) estuvieron envueltos en el proceso. Ideas cambiantes sobre la conservación del medio ambiente al igual que las políticas de las eras colonial y del Apartheid han tenido un impacto mayor sobre los “nativos”, en especial sobre los “Bushmen”.

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