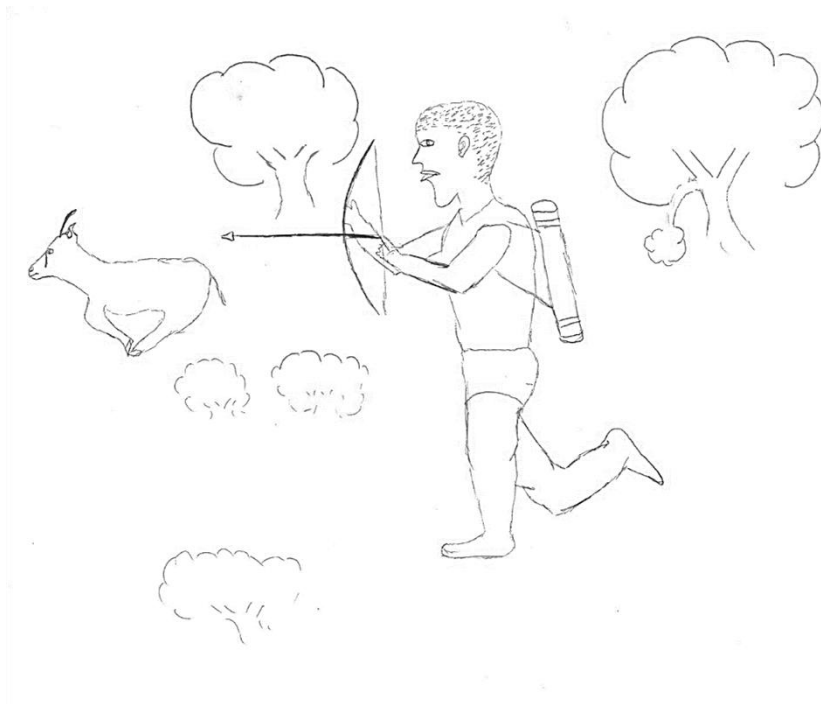


Call Me By My Tribe

San and other actors negotiating indigeneity in Nꞛa Jaqna
Conservancy, Namibia



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SDC-80436

Mei 2019

ABSTRACT

The ambiguous definition of indigeneity caused conflict between the San, other ethnic groups, the state and (inter)national organizations in Namibia. This thesis shows how the San of NꞤa Jaqna Conservancy perceive and strategically represent essential elements of their culture to strengthen their claim as indigenous people. A claim that can be seen as struggle to obtain justice through redistribution of resources, recognition and representation. This ethnographic study reveals how indigeneity creates competition, division and exclusion among the two different San tribes in NꞤa Jaqna Conservancy, while simultaneously it strengthens their representation within Namibian politics. Furthermore, it reveals how other ethnic groups in NꞤa Jaqna Conservancy contribute to the marginalized position of the San and take advantage of the ambiguous power play between the San and the state. The San have forged an alliance with (inter)national organizations to defend themselves against other ethnic groups and state domination. This led to commercialization of their indigenous identity to meet (inter)national wishes. While the San insist on cultural differentiation, the state enforces assimilation as a way to obtain justice. As long as the actors do not communicate about the underlying processes of redistribution, recognition and representation this conflict between competing knowledge systems will continue.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACHPR African Commission on Human People's Rights
CBNRM Community Based Natural Resource Management
CLB Communal Land Board
CLRA Communal Land Reform Act
ICEMA Integrated Community-Based Ecosystem Management Programme
IWGIA International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs
LAC Legal Assistance Centre
LCFN Living Cultural Foundation Namibia
MCA Millennium Challenge Account
MET Ministry of Environment and Tourism
NDF Namibian Defence Force
NJC N꞉a Jaqna Conservancy
NNC Nyae Nyae Conservancy
NNDFN Nyae Nyae Conservancy Foundation
PLAN People's Liberation Army of Namibia
SADF South African Defence Force
SWAPO South West Africa People's Organization
TA Traditional Authority
TAA Traditional Authority Act
UN United Nations
UNDRIP United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
WIMSA Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without support of many people.

My special gratitude goes to all the inhabitants of Nꞑa Jaqna Conservancy, who were not just my respondents, but also welcomed me within their community by sharing their customs, food and thoughts with me in trust.

I also want to thank my translator, Letu, with whom I could ponder about the many topics we covered in the interviews and make an occasional joke to make this hard work also enjoyable.

Additionally, Nꞑa Jaqna Committee, in particular Sarah and Frans, who gave me valuable information about the broader social and legal processes in Nꞑa Jaqna Conservancy.

Moreover, I want to thank my supervisor, Stasja Koot, who always responded quickly if I needed his support and helped me to keep a critical attitude towards my own work.

Furthermore, I want to thank my boyfriend, friends and family, who provided motivation, relaxation and feedback when I needed it.

1. INTRODUCTION

Many people know the San as 'Bushman'. They are often portrayed as a homogenous group of hunter-gatherers, who live in the Kalahari of Southern Africa and wear nothing but a loincloth. Since the 1980s there have been many attempts to nuance this image, also known as the 'Bushman myth' (Gordon & Douglas, 2000). Currently, most academics agree that the San are a heterogenous and largely impoverished group of people with different histories and cultural backgrounds. They define the San by their common linguistic groups, which are together called the Khoisan language family and are known for their 'click' sounds (Barume, 2014; Dieckmann et al, 2014; Suzman, 2001). Today, of course, the San in Namibia have been influenced by other ethnic groups and modernity.

These long-term processes have brought along development, change and tensions about the San's understanding of their traditional identity. Especially through the expression of their indigenous status within Namibian society, these issues surface in relation to other ethnic groups, the state and (inter)national organizations. In line with the theory of Nancy Fraser (2010), the indigenous claim of the San is understood as a process to gain redistribution of resources, recognition, and representation that ultimately contributes to more justice. Representation plays an important role in this theory and also seems to be relevant in this case, since some authors claim that the San partly stage their indigenous identity based on stereotypes, in order to strengthen their political position. This is a process known as strategic essentialism (Robins, 2000; Sylvain, 2014). This thesis focuses on the way the San perceive and strategically represent essential elements of their indigenous status to gain redistribution of resources, recognition and representation to improve their modern livelihoods and how other actors respond to this claim. Understanding these dynamics can contribute to a better contiguous approach of the San, the state and the development organizations, who are all involved in this struggle for indigenous rights.

What complicates this struggle is the ambiguous debate about indigeneity and its practice. The definition of indigeneity is ever evolving and heavily disputed among academics, politicians and development organizations. Until this day these debates have not resulted in any form of consensus. Even within international law, people cannot uphold one fixed universal definition of the concept indigeneity, while the indigenous rights movements has increasingly gained popularity and support all over the world (Zenker, 2011). In 2007 the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), signed by 140 countries, attempted to create a bit more uniformity. This extensive document of 46 articles ascribes four characteristics to indigenous peoples: firstly, the ancestries of people that came first to the land before other ethnic groups, often referred to as priority in time. Secondly, people are culturally distinct to the majority of the population. Thirdly, people are subject to marginalization, subjugation or other forms of dispossession. And finally, people identify themselves as indigenous people and are recognized as such by other ethnic groups (UN, 2008). Furthermore, it emphasizes rights to culture, education, employment, participation and development, access to land and natural resources, as well as self-government and indigenous laws. While this UN document aims to contribute to more justice for indigenous

people, it is not a legally binding instrument under international law. So in reality Namibia signed this declaration, but the Namibian state is often accused of negligence and not living up to their intentions to protect their indigenous populations.

As a result, the ambiguity of the concept of indigeneity causes discrepancies in the contemporary Namibian context (Barnard, 2006; Suzman, 2001; Sylvain, 2002). Meanwhile, the Namibian government still ascribes an indigenous status to every citizen and refuses to assign any additional indigenous rights to the San (Suzman, 2001; Welch, 2013), whereas most (inter)national organizations only recognize the San, Ovahimba, Ovazemba, Ovatjimba, and Ovatue (also known as Twa) as indigenous people of Namibia. The San are suspected to take a strategic position to improve their impoverished livelihoods (Robins, 2000; Sylvain, 2014). There are multiple examples of ways in which the San strategically position themselves. For example, research suggests that mapping of land by San is used as a strategic socio-political tool to secure authority over territory (Taylor, 2008). Another example, is the use of the bushman brand in tourism. Koot (2018) explains how the San use 'authenticity' and often essentialist ideas that outsiders have of their cultural identity as a commodity to benefit from economically.

This research aims to understand how the San frame their internationally assigned status as indigenous people, focusing on the exceptional case of Nꞛa Jaqna Conservancy (NJC), since talking about indigeneity is not evident in this setting. Within this 912,000 ha conservancy, 85% of the inhabitants have an indigenous status according to international law, mostly belonging to the !Kung and Ju/'hoansi San. However, most of the !Kung that currently live in NJC are immigrants, who fled the civil war in Angola and Northern Namibia in the 1970s (United Nations Development Programme, 2012; Welch, 2013). Therefore, they do not meet the 'priority in time' principle of the international definition of indigeneity. Nevertheless, they actively assign an indigenous status to themselves, according to an UN case study in NJC. In this ambiguous setting the San might depend more on strategic use of a status as indigenous people compared to San who live in other areas of Southern Africa.

The main objective of this research is to give a unique insight in how the San in NJC strategically shape their status as indigenous people to achieve justice in relation to other actors. Since this shaping of indigeneity is not only a processes that happens in a vacuum among fellow San, relationships with other ethnic groups, the state and (inter)national organizations are also taken into account. Justice explained by redistribution, recognition and representation are used to explain and reveal the underlying discourses and power (im)balances that can possibly help to rethink the indigenous claim. The theory of strategic essentialism is applied on this setting as an attempt to transform the current image of the San as solely marginalised victims to a more nuanced representation in which there is room for agency. This has resulted in the formulation of the following research questions:

How are strategic essentialism in relation to indigeneity, negotiated by the San in Nꞛa Jaqna Conservancy, Namibia, to achieve justice and how do other ethnic groups, the Namibian state and (inter)national organizations respond to this?

- ❖ *How do the San of the NꞤa Jaqna Conservancy make use of strategic essentialism to strengthen their indigenous claim?*
- ❖ *How do the San and other ethnic groups in NJC understand and negotiate an indigenous identity?*
- ❖ *What effect does the San profiling themselves as indigenous people have on their relationship with the state?*
- ❖ *How are (inter)national organizations involved in the strategic framing of the indigenous status of the San?*

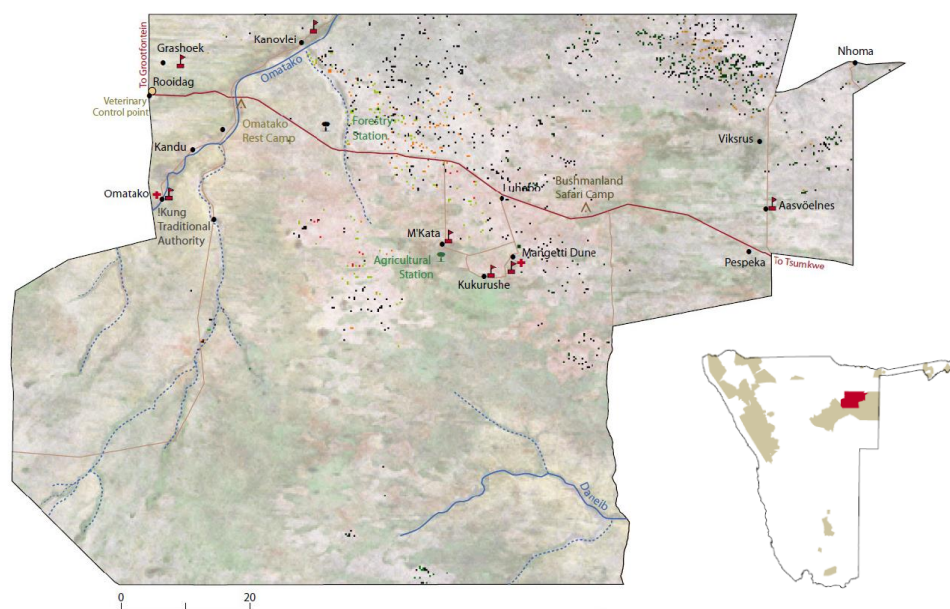
2. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter describes the methodology that will be used to answer the research questions. It is divided into three sections. First an introduction to the case study will be given. Secondly, data collection and analysis will be described and thirdly positionality and access will be reflected on.

2.1 Case study

This case study focuses on two of the largest San communities, the !Kung and the Ju/'hoansi. Other language groups that are considered San are the Hai||om, Khwe, Naro, ≠Au||eisi, ||Anikwe, !Xóó, l'Auni, and the N|u. Together they make up 1,3%-1,6% of the national population. Currently, all groups have diversified their traditionally, solely hunter-gatherer livelihoods. Nevertheless they are considered one of the most marginalized groups in contemporary Namibia (Draft White Paper, 2014). In total 70% of the San depend on food-aid programmes and many live in conservancies, such as NJC (Suzman, 2001).

This research will take place in NJC, also known as Tsumkwe West District, a relatively new established conservancy in the Otjozondjupa Region, North-East of Namibia.



Map of N̄a Jaqna Conservancy (NASCO, 2010).

The 25 villages host 2000 to 5000 inhabitants belonging to different ethnic groups, mainly San, but also Owambo, Herero, Damara and Kavango. Most of the San inhabitants are illiterate, receive little education and do not have access to electricity or phone reception. The conservancy was established in 2003 by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA). WIMSA assisted the San in NJC to establish a !Kung Traditional Authority, led by late chief John Arnold, so NJC falls under the Traditional Authority Act (TAA, further explained in chapter 4). NJC is a Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programme. It is established to

empower the San, diversify their livelihoods and train them to manage wildlife and natural resources in a sustainable manner. For example, through sustainable tourism in which the San are presenting themselves as indigenous people, trophy hunting, harvesting of the indigenous plant 'Devil's Claw' and jobs such as conservancy staff or, as game guards. Through the establishment of the conservancy some people obtained jobs, but the majority still depend on small scale farming, wild food collection and drought relief programmes. The resources in NJC are scarce, so overpopulation, poaching and over-harvesting endanger the vast amount of biodiversity (United Nations Development Programme, 2012).

2.2 Data collection and analysis

This research is based on an ethnographic study of two months spent among the San in NJC between 13th of November 2018 until the 22th of January 2019. Ethnography is a suitable method, since it allows the researcher to observe and participate within the everyday lives of people for an extended period of time (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). This method makes it possible to study the representation of the San as indigenous people that does not only limit itself to their presentation to outsiders, but also includes patterns in the daily lives of people in NJC. Snowball sampling ensures a diverse research population. In some cases respondents approached me and requested an interview. Informed consent was pursued as much as possible prior to all interaction with respondents. Data is obtained by literature study and fieldwork, consisting of fifty-nine semi-structured interviews, participant observation, informal conversations and three focus groups.

Literature study provided a solid foundation to frame this research (Webster & Watson, 2002). Scientific literature was mainly obtained from the Wageningen University library and Google Scholar using search terms such as 'indigeneity', 'San', 'redistribution', 'recognition', 'identity', and 'strategic essentialism'. References used by other authors were looked into to follow the debate, construct a theoretical framework and understand the context of this research. The retrieved articles give insight in the academic and national debate on indigeneity. The theories of Nancy Fraser (2010) on justice and Gayatri Spivak (1993) on strategic essentialism provide focus and helped to direct observations in the field. The National Archive in Windhoek provided more in-depth, non-Western literature and reports on the historical, social and legal processes that take place in NJC.

Fieldwork data is comprised of fifty-nine semi-structured interviews, participant observations and three focus groups. Fifty-two interviews are conducted with the San living in NJC. Three formal interviews are done with other ethnic groups living in NJC and four interviews with people working for (inter)national organizations such as Nyae Nyae Development Foundation Namibia (NNDFN), the Living Culture Foundation Namibia (LCFN), an (ex)member of WIMSA, currently working for the UN, and an employee in the Division of Marginalized Communities that are all linked to NJC. They are used to triangulate the data and to place the data within the broader context of Namibia. Semi-structured interviews fit this setting, because this method welcomes input of the respondent, but at the same time ensures that the most important topics are covered to relate them to the retrieved literature

(Green & Thorogood, 2014; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Moreover, this flexible technique leaves room for extra clarification questions that help to provide an in-depth understanding of the perception of the respondent. Different generations of the San are interviewed to check whether their perspective on indigeneity has changed over the past decades. In consultation with the respondents most interviews were recorded, in other cases notes have been taken. Since the local language was impossible to learn within the timeframe, members of NJC helped to find a suitable translator who was sensitive to the local power (im)balances. Furthermore, translations were cross-checked by another (professional) translator, who verified the quality of the translation.

Participant observations were used to supplement data, because they uncover dynamics that are not pronounced in interviews and give more insight in the way indigeneity is used and framed by the San in NJC. Participant observations uncovered discrepancies in what respondents said and did (see chapter 5.1). These observations are useful when researching strategic behaviour. Informal conversations was another way to complement or supplement data, since people often talk more openly outside a research setting. The role of the researcher within these observations depended on the situation, but preferably involved (semi-)participation.

Since the meaning of 'indigeneity' was not known by all respondents, this research has included some more creative methods: these entailed photography and drawings of 'San-ness', as can be seen on the cover, and three focus groups in different villages. Children were given a camera to make photos of activities and they were asked to draw things that are typically 'San'. Furthermore, three focus groups were organized in which participants had to visually position themselves on a self-made map among the other ethnic groups in NJC and discuss their relationships with other people and organizations. They comprised of 5-10 respondents of diverse sexes and ages. They were done in three different villages: Grashoek, Luhebu and Kukurushe. Grashoek participants were Ju/'hoansi and the other two groups were !Kung. The focus groups enabled an in-depth discussion on the topic and uncovered group dynamics, e.g. the influence of age and gender.

In this research, 'indigeneity' is understood as a relational instead of static concept (Hays & Biesele, 2011). Therefore, this study emphasizes that the San are not passive actors, but actively shape, together with other actors, the practices and understanding of an indigenous status. To get more insight in how the San frame their status as indigenous people, it is important to explore discourses that are at play. This research makes use of critical discourse analysis. Within this method language is understood as a social process and discourse as the dominant notion of what is thinkable and sayable in a particular setting by a particular individual:

"A discourse tends to build in assumptions and "taken-for-granted structures" that ultimately and cumulatively take on a life of their own by controlling, confining, and defining thought, understanding, knowledge, and what may be recognized or understood to be true in any particular community or context" (Dewey, 2016, p. 455).

A discourse in this research is understood as an interrelated system of knowledge and power, which results in inequality. On the one hand, power produces knowledge, on the other, knowledge is in service of power. This creates a continuous process of tension, tactics and manoeuvres, because power is never possessed; it is exercised and held in place by structures. Power structures cannot be overthrown all at once, but struggle and resistance by agents can affect power-relations in the long term (Foucault, 1975). By observing the dominant assumptions of respondents, also non-verbal communication, this research attempts to get a better understanding of the underlying discourses that shape 'indigeneity'.

All important observations are gathered on a daily basis in a notebook. The recorded interviews are transcribed, coded and analysed using a programme called Weft QDA. The discovered patterns and contradictions are presented in this thesis.

2.3 Reflections on positionality and access

Since I cannot change my appearance as a white, young, rich, female researcher I feel obliged to reflect on my position and the way this affected access to my research population.

The first obstacle to access my research area was contacting NJC without phone reception or internet. I wanted to inform them about my research and ask for permission for the execution, so I decided to contact an international organization called NNDFN working in NJC. At first this email correspondence seemed promising and they were willing to send my proposal to NJC. However, after I had send my proposal, I was asked to justify how the community would benefit from my research, which was called an 'intrusion' by my contact. Most people in NJC were welcoming me and they were grateful for my interest in them and happy to speak to me. It was difficult for me to understand why I could not speak with the San of NJC directly, because they seemed very capable in handling this issue themselves. Moreover, by complicating access for research to the area, it gives the researcher less time to obtain an in-depth understanding of processes going on in NJC. However, in-depth research could benefit both the San and other organizations, such as NNDFN.

One of the most obvious and sensitive issues is being a white researcher in an post-Apartheid setting. Therefore, it is impossible to be seen as impartial. However, one can influence the way one is seen by considering with whom we are seen and interact. This also affects the data respondents are willing to disclose (Malejacq & Mukhopadhyay, 2016). For this reason I decided not to collaborate with any organisation. Many respondents asked me if I was working for the conservancy or any other organisation. The fact that I did not, in combination with my promise to reveal my data anonymously, opened up conversations that criticized the performances of organizations that work in NJC. Trust was easier established because I lived in a tent in the centre of the village so people saw me every day while I learned the very basics of the !Kung language. Contrary to my expectations, being a white foreigner proved to be an advantage instead of a disadvantage. Many San agreed that foreigners treat the San with more respect and equality than most other citizens in Namibia, so they feel supported by them and more willing to share their stories (Interviewee 6, Mangetti Dune, 26-

11-2018; Interviewee 17, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018). However, some San were wary to talk about indigenous knowledge, since they fear this knowledge will be taken from them and used for commercial purposes. In those cases I tried to explain my intention and clarified the purpose of this research.

Since I am only 27 years old I tried to show respect to elders in an appropriate way. In the beginning of my research I observed customs and manners of the San to sensitise myself to the cultural practices and asked my translator for clarification of local procedures, such as greetings and gender relations. I followed the advice of my translator to first interview the elder men of the TA, only later on we included women and younger respondents. This process revealed how wisdom was related to age. My translator was hesitant to interview people younger than 30 years old, because he considered them as not serious and valuable for the research. In the end I did most interviews with the youth on my own. He even stated that he, 34 years old, was hardly an adult and his wisdom was nothing compared to the elders of his community.

Being a woman was both an advantage and a disadvantage. Some women were very open in discussing issues as women's rights, domestic violence or women ceremonies. However, since it is not very common for men and women to spend much time together, rumours were spread in the community that my translator and I were in a romantic relationship. These stories were sometimes deemed more interesting than my research.

The economic inequality between me and my research population was sometimes difficult for me to cope with. I tried to dress and act in a modest manner, but I always stood out. Every day people, most of the time drunk, would come to my camp and ask me for money or food. This gave me conflicting feelings, because I knew many would spend it on alcohol instead of investing it in their future. Some became aggressive if I would not oblige and one person even threatened to burn me and my car. In this particular case I asked other people who knew him for advice. What made many respondents more friendly and open was the fact that I shared all my meals with their children. However, sometimes it felt like they were also misusing my generosity by for ever demanding more and pretending they were starving, when they were feeded at home. So at some point I decided to trade my food for their traditionally gathered food.

In the beginning my translator needed some time to get used to his role, since he did not have any experience as a translator. For example, he wanted to summarize the answers of the respondents and also voice his own opinion on matters. This, and the fact that often other people joined the interviews, made it difficult to separate individual opinions. Furthermore, the translator worked for the police, so at the start he did not want to translate critical attitudes towards Apartheid and other political themes. As time passed and we openly discussed these issues, our collaboration improved.

Sometimes I was a bit uncomfortable with my role as researcher, because my questions confused my respondents at times, but it was also encouraging that some people were incredibly grateful for my interest in them as can be understood from this quote:

“ You people can help us. We know most help comes from you people. You used to come to do research and give it to companies so they can see us. So they know that some people are hiding, so they can look for us and come for us. I encourage you to continue that good job” (Interviewee 6, Mangetti Dune, 26-11-2018)

However, just as this quote, it puts quite a lot of pressure on my role as researcher and I am not be able to fulfil their wishes, so I often had to nuance the expectations of my respondents. As a gesture of gratitude I gave my respondents some tea and sugar, which were valuable products in NJC.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: INDIGENEITY, JUSTICE & STRATEGIC ESSENTIALISM

To frame this research, the central concepts of this research: indigeneity, justice, and strategic essentialism, will be explored in greater depth. First, the discussion on indigeneity within scientific literature will be briefly presented to understand how academics approach this topic. Hereafter, Nancy Fraser's theory on justice (2010) is used to explain how the indigenous claim of the San can be seen as a collective fight for justice. The three central concepts of this theory, distribution, recognition and representation will be explained and linked to indigeneity and strategic essentialism. These theories will show how the San in NJC benefit from the ambiguity of an indigenous discourse.

3.1 Debate on indigeneity

The definition of indigeneity is not static, but has continuously evolved over the past couple of decades. To understand this concept in more detail, this section will give a brief overview of the most important actors who shaped the understanding of indigeneity. Starting with the ILO conventions in which the first legally binding definition for indigeneity was developed.

Many authors, such as Balaton-Chrimes (2015) and Sylvain (2014), argue that the concept 'indigeneity' is highly problematic in the contemporary African context. The use of this term is a constant reminder of the unsettling history and subjugation of natives by the colonizers (Sylvain, 2002). Until the 1980s people, who already lived in areas before the colonists arrived, were seen as indigenous peoples. This definition was made up by colonists who distinguished themselves from others based on essential cultural aspects.

The first time that indigenous people were legally defined was in 1957 in ILO Convention 107. They were seen as subjects, who led a tribal or semi-tribal life based on similar traditional social, economic and cultural institutions that existed before the colonization. This same demarcation was later used in the Apartheid era and therefore heavily critiqued.

This led to the adaptation of ILO Convention 169 in 1989. The document replaced disputed words such as tribal, with more neutral terms such as 'distinctiveness of people and populations'. Moreover, supported by indigenous representatives, they added the criteria of self-identification as indigenous peoples. This resulted in a definition of indigenous peoples within the international discourse based on four pillars: priority in time, culturally different, marginalized and self-ascription. The ILO Convention 169 is currently the most legally binding document for the protection of indigenous peoples (Barume, 2014). However, contrary to the UNDRIP, this lawful document has only been signed by the Central African Republic in Africa.

As a result many international organizations, such as International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), African Commission on Human Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), the UN and WIMSA, feel committed to protect the rights of indigenous peoples. This widespread involvement of collaborations between organizations and indigenous peoples strengthens on the one hand the position of these populations, but at the same time it complicates the many different and contradicting claims that are made using this ambiguous concept.

Simultaneously, interest in this subject has grown within the academic world since 1980s, induced by Wilmsen and his book *Land filled with flies* (1989). He argued that the image of the San as isolated hunter-gatherers is upheld by anthropologists and describes this myth as: “*The isolation in which they are said to have been found is a creation of our own view of them, not of their history as they lived it*” (Wilmsen, 1989, p. 3). According to him, the !Kung San were involved in and influenced by trading with Bantu-speaking agro-pastoralists from the Iron Age onwards (Barnard, 2006). In line with this argument, South African anthropologist Adam Kuper (2003) would later argue that the whole theorization of this concept is fiction, based on a romantic and false ethnographic essentialist notion that denies the relational aspect. It suggests that indigenous people do not change and interact with other groups. He explains in his article *the Return of the Native* that indigeneity simply replaces the colonial word for ‘primitive’ that separates indigenous peoples from modern subjects (Kuper, 2003; Barnard, 2006).

Other authors, such as Barnard (2006), Balaton-Chrimes (2015), Kenrick (2002) and Sylvain (2015) embrace this relational aspect. Barnard (2006) separates the unfavourable complex theorization from its practical use. He argues that even though an indigenous status is an imagined construct, it is relevant to explain from a western perspective how people identify with something that does not follow western logic (Barnard, 2006). In this line of thought, Colchester clarifies that the struggle for self-determination, which is incorporated within the indigenous claim, arises from the context in which market-driven nation-states dominate and exclude what they cannot relate to, for example indigenous knowledge (Milton, 2002). Kenrick (in Guenther et al, 2006) highlights that indigenous peoples can query the dominant states’ legitimacy and dominant understanding of identity. It does not only question the notions of indigenous peoples, but also the identity and knowledge systems of all actors involved. He gives four reasons why people define themselves as indigenous. First, they feel related to other collectives who often are in marginalized positions and likewise define themselves as indigenous. Second, this status has become a tool for resisting domination and development-based assimilation. Third, it is a response to the incompatibility of capitalism and indigenous knowledge systems. Four, by pronouncing oneself indigenous, it is possible to claim rights and land which is denied by the state. Balaton-Chrimes (2015) identifies NGOs as another actor and sees the indigenous claim as complex evolving product of NGOs, nation-states and indigenous groups (Balaton-Chrimes, 2015).

Kuper (2003) argues that indigenous rights is an advocacy for special rights that goes beyond the basic human rights. Therefore it could result in reversed processes of exclusion of majorities. According to him this same logic is nowadays used by right-wing politicians to justify anti-immigration policies. Authors such as Bowen (2000), Barume (2014), Colchester (2002), Guenther et al (2006), and Zips (2006) counter this idea and explain that indigenous people simply try to obtain human rights. The only difference is that the human rights movement is based on individual rights, whereas the indigenous rights movement fights for collective rights. This makes sense in the African context, in which communitarianism is present and counters western individualism. Therefore, it is more logical to talk about the

way the community shapes indigenous rights, instead of human rights, which are referencing to individual freedom and equality (Mosima, 2018). Zips (2006) explains that the indigenous rights movement builds on the human rights movement to reach the same goal. It is a collective response to other powerful actors who denied excluded groups equal rights and the justice they deserve (Zips, 2006).

3.2 Justice through recognition, distribution and representation

If we consider the indigenous rights movement as a struggle for justice, as most of the authors above do, it is important to understand what justice consists of. According to Fraser (2010) this depends on three factors: Distribution, recognition and representation. Distribution has to do with the economic structures of society that result in socioeconomic positions of people. Justice can be obtained in absence of exploitation, economic marginalization and deprivation. The second form deals with culture and symbolism caused by social patterns of cultural domination, non-recognition, and disrespect. The third, the political dimension of representation, is decisive in who is included and excluded from processes of recognition and distribution. Within unjust settings, such as the position of the San, one should tackle all three intertwined causes: one should not only evaluate distribution of income, division of labour and land, and other economic structures, but also involve the revaluation of discriminated identities or cultural products of marginalization, and thirdly the framing of these boundaries and decision making processes. The goal of the indigenous people movement is to gain recognition as culturally and socially different people, acquire ownership of resources and land to decrease the economic gap between them and other ethnic groups in the country and to be politically included and represented in decision-making processes.

This creates an other dilemma, because redistribution often demands assimilation, while recognition desires differentiation of a group (Fraser, 2003). To overcome this contradiction, Fraser (1997) suggests affirmative and transformative remedies. Affirmation improves the undesirable elements of social patterns without changing the underlying structures. Transformation goes beyond affirmation and deconstructs and re-evaluates the complete framework (Fraser, 1997). Especially the principle of self-identification with an indigenous status can be understood as a dialectic process of recognition and negotiation of past and present between the San and other existing groups (Jenkins, 2014). This results in different realities as shown in the figure below.

	AFFIRMATION	TRANSFORMATION
REDISTRIBUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reallocation of existing goods to existing groups. ➤ Supports group differentiation. ➤ Can generate misrecognition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Deep restructuring of relations of production. ➤ Blurs group differentiation. ➤ Can help remedy some forms of misrecognition.
RECOGNITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reallocations of respect to existing identities of existing groups. ➤ Supports group differentiations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Deep restructuring of relations of recognition. ➤ Destabilises group differentiation.
REPRESENTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Redrawing the boundaries of territorial states and revalue who is in- and excluded from justice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Instead of territorial states focussing on flows. ➤ Redrawing and restructuring the framework of justice.

3.3 Strategic essentialism

In order to obtain justice that restructures such a dominant socioeconomic and political system, indigenous people often present themselves taking strategic measures that can be affirmative or transformative. Overall, the indigenous rights movement can be seen as a strategic representation to escape impoverished situations and demand redistribution of goods, representation and recognition. Kenrick and Lewis (in Guenther et al, 2006), Robins (2000) and Sylvain (2014) argue that the San take advantage of the contradictions and confusion about indigeneity in Namibia, making use of strategic essentialism. Strategic essentialism is a concept introduced by Spivak (1993) and described as *“an insincere presentation of an identity, in terms of essentialist stereotypes, for purposes of a scrupulously visible political interest”*. This tactic is especially used by minorities in postcolonial settings who simplify their collective identity so they can achieve their goals, such as equal rights (Spivak, 1993, p. 3). Since the indigenous rights movement gives the San the opportunity to obtain rights by presenting themselves as culturally different people, for example traditional clothing during political congresses, this discourse could encourage them to reflect on their own identity.

Guenther (in Guenther et al, 2006) warns for the dangers that accompany such an ‘indigenous’ presentation. On the one hand, an indigenous status confirms ethnic

stereotypes, such as being primitive, which prevent the San to empower themselves in a modern age. At the same time, it can be seen as a (re)invention of the identity and culture of indigenous people, because the ambiguity of indigeneity leaves room for manipulation, commodification and commercialisation by the San as well as by outsiders, which questions the Namibian political-economic structures that are in place.

For the San strategic essentialism can be an opportunity to position themselves in relation to others, to resist domination and capitalism, and demand indigenous rights supported by international law to reclaim their land (Guenther et al, 2006). Robins (2000) suggests that the San actively frame this indigenous identity , because the legal framework allows indigenous people to successfully win lawsuits based on essentialist claims. Moreover, framing essentialist stereotypes of their culture in mass media and tourism helps the San to obtain political visibility that enhances their position in legal issues, such as land claims (Robins, 2000).

4. INDIGENEITY IN CONTEMPORARY THE CONTEMPORARY NAMIBIAN CONTEXT

In order to properly introduce and understand indigeneity in the Namibian context, this chapter is dedicated to the national context in which this research takes place. It briefly identifies how the state deals with indigeneity in their constitution and government structures. Moreover, it will describe the national organizations that are involved in NJC, i.e. WIMSA, LAC and the Namibian San Council. The attitude of these national actors towards indigeneity are helpful in explaining which aspects the San strategically use, which they contradict and which they ignore.

4.1 The constitution of Namibia

After describing the ambiguity of the concept indigeneity from an academic perspective, it is not surprising that the Namibian government has difficulties to position itself in this debate. Especially since Namibia is a relatively new democratic state that gained independence only in 1990. This country is still struggling with deep-rooted inequalities caused by practices in the colonial and Apartheid eras. Namibia's economy is one of the most unequally distributed economies in the world. This reality is in contradiction with the Constitution of Namibia, which guarantees equal and human rights for all inhabitants of Namibia (Welch, 2013). Nevertheless, the Namibian government states that there is no need to acknowledge any additional indigenous rights to few ethnic groups, as formulated by the ILO Convention 169, since the Constitution of Namibia protects all their citizens and their non-ethnic policy does not allow any kind of ethnic favouritism (Welch, 2013; van der Wulp & Koot, 2019). The government argues that assigning a special status to few ethnic groups is following Apartheid logic and can therefore not be accepted in their modern democracy.

4.2 Traditional Authority Act (TAA)

The only legal document in the constitution that refers to indigeneity is the TAA. Interestingly, this document directly links indigenous peoples and traditional communities. The TAA defines 'traditional communities' as an indigenous, social, homogenous group that recognizes the same traditional authority, shares the same language, cultural heritage, ancestry and traditions and often inhabits the same communal area (Traditional Authority Act, 2000). Therefore the act indirectly recognizes that all traditional communities are indigenous (Barnard, 2006; Welch, 2013; van der Wulp & Koot, 2019). In order to represent impoverished communities all over Namibia, Article 102 of the Constitution of Namibia clearly states: *"There shall be a Council of Traditional Leaders to be established in terms of an Act of Parliament in order to advise the President on the control and utilization of communal land and on all such other matters as may be referred to it by the President for advice"* (Constitution of Namibia, 1990, p. 48). This gives Traditional Authorities the rights to manage their land and have leadership systems that deviate from the national system in consultation with the government. Although many San are not satisfied with this role, because it still subordinates

traditional leadership to national authority, it gives them an opportunity to have more control over their own communal land (Barnard, 2006; van der Wulp & Koot, 2019).

4.3 Ministry of Marginalized Communities

Even though the Namibian government seems to avoid indigenous claims, they associate the San with one of the characteristics of indigeneity, namely marginalization. Since 2005 the Namibian government developed the San Development Programme under the Office of the Prime Minister to integrate the marginalised San communities into the mainstream economy (Division Marginalized Communities, n.d.). In 2009 this programme was upgraded to the San Development Division and included other marginalized communities, such as the Ovahimba, Ovazemba, Ovatjimba, and Ovatie. Nevertheless, the San remained of special focus. For example, the latest National Development Plan 5 (n.d.) describes how San are marginalized and only mentions other minorities briefly. The document reveals that 55,4% of the San do not have access to formal education, are economically dependent and that alcohol abuse is high, that tensions with other communities often arise, and the lack of culture to keep and accumulate assets are causing impoverished situations. For these reasons, the president of Namibia Hage Geingob pronounced his intentions to assimilate these marginalized San communities into the mainstream economy by 2022. This ethnic focus is contradictory to the law that forbids data collection based on ethnicity (Suzman, 2001), but it does create political visibility for the San. Since 2015, the San Development Division under the Office of the Prime Minister has undergone a name change and is currently called the Division of Marginalized Communities under the Office of the Vice President. This division is led by San deputy minister Kxao Royal Ui|o|oo, who grew up in Tsumkwe East region (IWGIA, n.d.).

4.4 WIMSA, LAC and Namibian San Council

On the contrary to the attempt of the government to unify and assimilate the different ethnic groups in Namibia to the mainstream society, other initiatives in Namibia, such as WIMSA and Namibian San Council, promote the distinct cultural identity of the San. WIMSA tried to raise human rights awareness, political recognition, secure natural and financial resources and regain a strong and proud cultural identity. The board consisted only of San while other non-San members were providing expertise, logistic and financial support. WIMSA offered different trainings and workshops mainly targeting education, employment and law in NJC (Brörmann, 2002). Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) especially assisted with juristic support and is still involved in land claims in NJC. Recently WIMSA became defunct, possibly due to financial problems (Interviewee 47, Windhoek, 24-1-2019). The Namibian San Council is an initiative of the San to represent themselves better in Namibian politics. This Council was established in 2006 to unify and represent all San NGOs and CBOs in Namibia by forming a bridge between the San communities, other inhabitants of Namibia and the government. From each of the six formally recognized San Traditional Authorities, two members are elected by the communities to represent their needs in the San council. Their aim is to create

awareness and share information and problems in order to strengthen the position of the San and defend their (indigenous) rights within the wider public domain (Interviewee 48, Windhoek, 7-3-2019).

5. THE !KUNG AND JU/'HOANSI NEGOTIATING INDIGENEITY

The following four chapters will enclose the results retrieved from the research data. This chapter will explain how the San in NJC represent themselves as indigenous people. First of all, it is important to note that within the communities in NJC the word San is hardly used. They use their 'tribe' names, the !Kung or Ju/'hoansi instead. To keep this thesis readable but in respect for the respondents, please read San as !Kung and Ju/'hoansi. The respondents argue that only their tribe names grasp the full scope of 'who we are and where we are from', which constitutes their indigenous identity. If we translate this to the definition of indigeneity they mostly relate to the 'culturally different' and 'priority in time' principles. The first section will describe how the !Kung and the Ju/'hoansi present essential elements of their culture to prove they are indigenous people. The second section will explain how the San link the priority in time principle to their indigenous status. The third section will describe how they strategically use words from the international discourse, such as indigenous, San and Bushman to strengthen their position within the political landscape.

5.1 'Who I am', the indigenous representation

Most San represent themselves as indigenous people based on their hunter-gatherers skills, housing, clothes, rituals, traditional healing and language. Both tribes name only minor cultural differences, such as the size of their bows. As will be shown below, this indigenous representation of the San is based on essential cultural elements of their past that does not entirely resemble their current, by modernity affected, livelihood. In order to gain a better understanding of how and which cultural essential elements are framed, this section will give a description of the contradictions of their cultural presentation and observations that are made by the researcher. This discrepancy of multiple realities show how the element of cultural differentiation of an indigenous status can be complex and depending on the way they are framed.

The San respondents predominantly present themselves as hunter-gatherers, however these practices do not always characterize their daily lives. The gathering of *veldkos* (i.e. wild edible plants from the bush) is still traditional knowledge on which they depend to supplement the food support they receive from the government. Traditionally, this practice was predominantly done by women, but currently both men and women are participating in it. They use their vast knowledge of edible plants to distinguish themselves from other tribes, as this young !Kung man explains:

"What makes me different from any other tribe, for example from morning time I start with veldkos. I do not eat this modern food. I live from veldkos as it was before"
(Interviewee 16, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018)

Their food habits are connected to their previous nomadic lifestyle. However, the influx of people impacted the abundance of resources and made it impossible to maintain this lifestyle.

The San are still gathering seasonal food (e.g. fruits, vegetables, honey & meat) and water (contained in roots), but it is no longer the only primary mode of subsistence (Suzman, 2001; United Nations Development Plan, 2012).

While they present themselves as hunters, one can only occasionally encounter men with bow and arrow in the villages in NJC, especially during morning and evening hours, because hunting is prohibited in NJC (more on this topic in chapter 7.1). Nevertheless, the interest in hunting prevails; from a very early age onwards groups of boys are busy all day with catapults to hunt birds and tracking animals is a commonly acquired skill. The fact that they are not totally dependent on resources from their direct environment has also altered their connection with the bush. Currently, many respondents fear the bush due to its dangerous predators, such as snakes, leopards, lions and the possibility to get lost.

Most respondents explain this changed when left their nomadic lifestyles behind them. Even though they portray to live in traditional portable houses, called !Uhchu, these dome-shaped huts made out of grass and bended sticks (as shown in the picture) can only be found in very few places in NJC and are no longer used as permanent residences. Over time they have adopted the architecture of the Kavango's, an ethnic group living in the North-East of Namibia, but most San present these building styles as their own. When confronting respondents with this observation they explain they prefer bigger and stronger permanent structures to live in, which provide protection for 'modern' electronics, such as radios and televisions (Interviewee 1, Mangetti Dune, 23-11-2018; Interviewee 15, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018).



Traditional housing



Current housing adopted from Kavango's

Besides the adoption of electronic devices, most San have adopted a more modern clothing style. Nevertheless, almost all respondents argue that traditional clothing, made out of wild animal skin, is essential to their culture and plays a crucial role in the performance of their rituals. They proudly wear these clothes, but the prohibition of hunting makes it difficult to obtain such a skin. As a result, the valuable traditional clothing is hardly seen in everyday life and the younger generation has developed a feeling of shame wearing it. Several younger interviewees state that they are ashamed of their body and prefer to wear modern (Western) clothes that covers their bodies.



Traditional clothing worn in tourism ventures



Modern clothing worn in villages

This feeling of shame is not only restricted to clothes; the youth in general does not want to participate in traditional maturity and wedding ceremonies anymore. During these ceremonies, girls were disciplined on how to respect themselves and their future husbands, that ended with a celebration eating wild meat. The dowry, called *Lobola*, would often be a wild animal. While the use of wild animals is of ceremonial importance and is presented as part of their current lifestyle, the daily lives of the San are characterized by more global trends.

Furthermore, traditional healing plays an important role in their representation as indigenous people. Nevertheless, trance dances performed by *Sangomas* are not often performed anymore (Interviewee 6, Mangetti Dune, 26-11-2018). As explained to me in many interviews, their traditional knowledge of medicinal plants got another function. The use of traditional medicines has been changed by commercial use. For example, harvesting and exportation of Devil's Claw as a medicine for the European market has become one of the biggest sources of income in NJC. There it is used to cure rheumatism, arthritis and other muscle or joint problems. The San are proud that their knowledge of traditional medicines is recognized on a global level and they receive an income from the harvest (Interviewee 16, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018). Two employees of NNDFN explain that knowledge about Devil's Claw was stolen by the Germans in 1907 and the San cannot equally benefit from their intellectual property (informal conversation, Mangetti Dune, 23-11-2018; Interviewee 46, Windhoek, 24-1-2019). Many western respondents criticize the commercial use of traditional medicines, because of unequal negotiation positions.

Nowadays, the San use traditional healing as first aid instead of communication with ancestors. Many respondents argue that christianity influenced their perception on traditional healing. Currently, they fear ancestral or evil powers evoked by witchdoctors. Some believe that Christianity is the only way to protect themselves against it, as this young !Kung woman pronounces:

“Some of us, we are Christians now. There is God and then we decided there is only one healer and that is God. We do not go to the traditional healer anymore, because he is a person, he cannot know where there is pain in your body. We can only pray so the healing can work [...] Those who do not go to church still believe in it. Also for the elders it is difficult to understand to leave their culture, but this young generation never tasted the life of the traditional culture. So it is hard for them to believe it can work” (Interviewee 6, Mangetti Dune, 26-11-2018)

Older generation still live according to their traditions, while the younger generation tends to follow more global and ‘Western’ trends. The older generation blames the younger generation for forgetting their roots and education, focussing on things of modernity, such as materialism (money, mobile phones, music, and parties), internet, and alcohol (Interviewee 11, Mangetti Dune, 29-11-2018; Interviewee 12, Mangetti Dune, 3-12-2018). Even though they live in desolation, the San are well aware of the coexistence of traditional and global cultures (Sullivan, 2001). This influences their identity as this young !Kung man describes:

“The important thing is that someone should speak honestly about their tradition, for example the elders, I see they really want to do something. It is only the youth, for example me myself, who does not want to follow their footsteps. That is why we have soft hands [...] even though the modern life is bringing in more technology or technical thoughts, at least sometimes we should divide ourselves into two bodies; one of the new world and one of past. Then maybe they will generate [...] The identity is a bit split” (Interviewee 43, Mangetti Dune, 18-1-2019)

Most of the youth believe they have a modern and traditional or indigenous identity, which until this day cannot be united.

Their language is considered another important element of their indigenous identity, with which the San respondents distinguish themselves from other ethnic groups. The ‘clicks’ within the language are unique to the San and Damara in Namibia. Most elders do not speak any other language, but Afrikaans is popular among the younger !Kung generation. In NJC !Kung youth often speak a mixture of !Kung and Afrikaans, some even prefer to speak Afrikaans ‘street language’. Several respondents argue that the San languages will soon become extinct. One respondent notes that their originally oral language and culture has to be written down for it to persist (Interviewee 28, Mangetti Dune, 14-12-2018). It seems as if the assimilation policies of the government in the past to teach only German and Afrikaans in schools have been a success (Sapignoli & Hitchcock, 2013).

In summary, contrary to the many attempts of scholars to deconstruct this idealised image of the San as hunter-gathers (Robins, 2000), the San try to confirm and actively frame a primordial image of themselves. The presentation of this traditional culture ignores the fact that intercultural marriages (chapter 6), the prohibition of hunting, hierarchical leadership

systems (chapter 7), and human rights (chapter 8) have a profound effect on their culture and contribute to their marginalized position. Through the presentation of essential elements of their traditional culture towards 'outsiders', suggest the San are one homogeneous culture. However, the next section shows that the Ju/'hoansi distinguish themselves from the !Kung based on the priority in time principle.

5.2 'Where I am from'

Prior to the colonization of the area, the Ju/'hoansi were hunting and gathering in the area which is currently Tsumkwe District East, the eastern part of Tsumkwe District West, Kaudum National Park and Gam area (Botelle & Rhode, 1995). The !Kung wandered in a much bigger area, including the western part of the Kalahari Desert, Northern Namibia, Southern Angola, Botswana and South Africa (Draper, 1975). Their traditional social, political and economic structures were disrupted by the Portuguese and many !Kung were killed or became 'superb soldiers' (Hitchcock, 2019). Permanent settlement of the !Kung in NJC started from 1974 onwards when the South African Defence Force (SADF) recruited mainly !Kung to fight against the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) and the army of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) (Welch, 2013). All the older !Kung respondents, who fought during this war, confirm that most were taken out of the bush from the northeast of Namibia or southern part of Angola, leaving their hunting and gathering oriented lives behind. This recruitment changed their lives dramatically as this following quote of an older !Kung woman affirms:

"Back then they [the !Kung] never knew what was war [...] They heard a strange noise one day. The men thought they were animals, they got their bows and arrows and ran that side. They came to find that this was something really strange, so they came back from that [...] During that time they were grabbed and moved by the Portuguese. They drove them out of the field, the whole family" (Interviewee 22, Danger, 6-12-2018)

Some Namibian citizens still resent the San for siding with the 'enemy', South Africa, instead of the Namibian SWAPO army, who forms the current government. They seem to ignore the fact that the San were forced and at a great cost lost their traditional livelihoods, while being continuously discriminated against by the government (Hitchcock, 2019).

The establishment of 'homelands' according to ethnicity in 1976 in Namibia enforced the idea that Bushmanland, Tsumkwe East and West, belonged to the Bushman/San. However, historical land use was hardly recognized. Ethnic groups, such as the San, settled down, but missed out on ancestral land claims (Sullivan, 2001). The Ju/'hoansi lost 30% of their historical territory and the !Kung lost far more. Some respondents working for NGOs suspect this accelerated the assimilation process of the !Kung, because they no longer lived in their ancestral lands and were forced to socialize with other ethnic groups (Interviewee 45, Windhoek, 23-1-2019; Interviewee 47, Windhoek 24-1-2019). Since the Ju/'hoansi still live on ancestral lands, they see themselves as more 'pure' and less influenced by others.

Based on this genealogical difference the Ju/'hoansi of a village called Nhoma, distance themselves completely from the !Kung in order to be recognized by the Ju/'hoansi TA of the neighbouring Nyae Nyae conservancy (NNC). They call them their 'real family' and they feel misrepresented by the !Kung TA of NJC. Respondents state that the !Kung, unlike the Ju/'hoansi, lost their tradition and culture and they cannot survive in the bush anymore (Interviewee 34, Nhoma, 7-1-2019). Many interviewees argue the !Kung started copying the cultural representation of the Ju/'hoansi for economic profit.

Historically, this grudge is understandable, because some Ju/'hoansi from NNC were resettled by colonists in 1976 to Aasvoelness and Nhoma, villages in eastern part of NJC respectively, due to nature conservation initiatives in NNC. Which subsequently resulted in the establishment of two separate conservancies with different policies and rights of self-determination. NNC won a land claim based on ancestral ties and they obtained the right of self-determination, which means they can still hunt traditionally (Welch, 2013; Interviewee 26, Mangetti Dune, 12-12-2018; Interviewee 34, Nhoma, 7-1-2019; Interviewee 36, Omatako, 8-1-2019). However, Nhoma is a very important village for NJC: it has one of the few boreholes that is used by the trophy hunter in NJC, it houses a successful lodge and a lot of *veldkos* can be found in the area. If NJC recognizes that the Ju/'hoansi of Nhoma belong to the Ju/'hoansi TA, they would lose many important resources. This example shows how genealogical ancestry and cultural distinctiveness are framed within the indigenous representation to obtain recognition and redistribution of resources.

While these groups struggle over their indigenous identity on a local level, they present themselves as the homogenous groups of San on regional and (inter)national fora. The next subchapter will show how the San strategically adopt different concepts to identify themselves, depending on the audience and fora they speak on.

5.3 Representation as Bushman, San & indigenous

The names Bushman, San and indigenous are all concepts that do not derive from the local communities. However, by distancing or adopting these assigned terms, the !Kung and the Ju/'hoansi try to keep a foothold in the representation of their identity in Namibian politics.

While the word Bushman was commonly used and accepted a decade ago (Koot, 2013), the San of NJC currently distance themselves from this word and argue it is a demeaning and discriminating word, interchangeable for primitive and backward, because it downgrades them to people that live in the bush:

Interviewer: "Do you like the name San?"

Interviewee 36: "Yes, of course. Bushman was the bad one. That one still makes me angry, because you take me back to the bush" (Interviewee 36, Omatako, 8-1-2019)

Most respondents explain that this image of the past does no longer resemble who they are: 'Now their eyes are open' (Interviewee 16, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018; Interviewee 36, Omatako, 8-1-2019; Interviewee 48, Windhoek, 7-3-2019). Contrary to their own represented

as hunter-gatherer identity (see chapter 5.1) respondents do not want to be seen as primitive subjects. They explain they have adopted a more modern lifestyle, that involves education, employment, politics, etc. The San youth only use the concept Bushmen when they are joking with their friends. In other cases it is seen as an insult.

As can be extracted from the quote above, the concept San is more accepted among younger respondents who learned this concept in school. They adopted the name while only a few of the respondents in NJC know that it refers to the language group characterized by the 'clicks'. Most associate it with the San Development Plan of the government and feel recognized as people who are developing towards more modern subjects. While it is hardly used within the communities in NJC, on regional and national fora, speakers often name themselves San. These respondents explain that a united representation of similar groups strengthens their political position. One higher educated respondent urges that it is important for the San to decide how they want to be called. She argues the San should develop a collective word for themselves to take control over their own representation (Interviewee 48, Windhoek, 7-3-2019).

Whereas the name Bushman is rejected and San is only used in public spaces, all respondents assign an indigenous status to themselves. Even though they find it hard to explain what such a status entails. Most of the San link the indigenous status directly to their own living standard, tradition, culture (as explained in chapter 5.1) or mention they are the first people living in Africa. They have come to understand indigeneity as something that is unique to their culture:

"For me it is something that authentically belongs to someone, for example your race and knowledge that is unique to us and knowledge, heritage and practices that belong to us. And a common identity for example how the San used to live and how they relate to each other now. That is really what indigenous means. It means that we are all common" (Interviewee 48, Windhoek, 7-3-2019)

As shown in chapter 5.1 indigeneity is often related to a traditional life opposed by big scale agriculture, businesses, and politics. This divide complicates a feeling of unity amongst the San, because some community members have partly adopted non-traditional livelihoods (Interviewee 6, Mangetti Dune, 26-11-2018; Interviewee 12, Mangetti Dune, 3-12-2018). Several interviewees argue that being called indigenous is worse than being called marginalized, because the government at least tries to support marginalized people to be brought back into the mainstream society. Here the government thus helps redistributing resources to reach more equality, whereas an indigenous status only emphasizes that a group is 'left behind'. The chairperson of NJC argues the opposite:

"At a conference or a meeting you go as a representative of indigenous people of Namibia. It empowers you. It is an advantage for people that are behind [...] to let the

people know, even if we are behind, our voice also needs to be heard” (Interviewee 28, Mangetti Dune, 14-12-2018)

Not all respondents agree that indigenous rights should be appointed to specific ethnic groups. In line with the political slogan of Namibia “One Namibia, one Nation” several respondents argue that everybody should be included in Namibian society. Appointing an indigenous status to a few would mean exclusion of other groups. They state, in accordance with government officials, that this is the same logic underlying Apartheid, tribalism and discrimination, which cannot be tolerated in their democratic society (Interviewee 26, Mangetti Dune, 12-12-2018; Interviewee 43, Mangetti Dune, 18-1-2019).

6. THE !KUNG, JU/'HOANSI AND OTHER SETTLERS

As the previous chapter has already indicated, the !Kung's and Ju/'hoansi's understanding of indigeneity is constantly related to relationships in which they distinguish themselves from the 'other'. In the focus groups they even use different materials to differentiate themselves from other settlers. The first subchapter will reflect in greater detail on the way the San have been socially affected by the influx of other ethnic groups that settled in NJC and how respondents argue this endangers their indigenous livelihoods. The second section will show how the influx of people accelerated a cultural transition, especially for the !Kung. The last section will explain how hierarchical leadership systems are adopted by the !Kung TA and conservancy causing division in the community.

6.1 Marginalization caused by other settlers

Because the constitution of Namibia permits all Namibian citizens to move on communal land (Sullivan, 2001), many other ethnic groups have settled in NJC over the past decades. Frustrating the San:

"Those [the San] are the first people that arrived in the area and in Africa and because the others came there now everything fell apart. We are the first people, but are now the last" (Interviewee 28, Mangetti Dune, 14-12-2018)

Different authors confirm that ethnic groups in Namibia take advantage of the confusion and complexity of land allocation that is managed by many different stakeholders (Hitchcock & Vinding, 2004; Sullivan, 2001). They are drawn by the government's free social services, that are intended to reduce poverty among the vast amounts of San living in NJC. As a result, 'outsiders' are buying big and cheap pieces of communal land and set up profitable businesses, since there is no market competition. The establishment of (expensive) bars and shops, overgrazing of animals, fencing off land, discrimination, logging, and digging for diamonds are named as causes of their marginalized position.

The large increase in bars obviously causes problems, because most communities struggle with alcoholism. The lack of employment, boredom and exclusion makes the San more vulnerable to alcoholism (AHCPR & IWGIA, 2008). One respondent thinks that the suppressed feelings of powerlessness and anger of their impoverished situation causes alcoholism within the communities (Interviewee 48, Windhoek, 7-3-2019). As explained in many interviews, children grow up with alcoholic parents, spending their time in a bar from an early age onward, easily following their parents' footsteps. However, alcoholism forms an obstruction to receive financial support from donors and be recognized as indigenous people (see chapter 8.2).

Besides the dependence on the bars and shops, illegal fences are another problem caused by other settlers, which complicates traditional practices such as the gathering of *veldkos* and hunting. Since the conservancy manages the resources and land, the San have a

more organized way to patrol land and protect resources. Between 2008 and 2013 illegal fences arose and the conservancy filed, in collaboration with LAC, a court case to remove those. In 2016 the San won the case and the court demanded the eviction of 22 fences (Van der Wulp & Koot, 2019). Currently, several (email-)respondents explain that those fences have not been removed. In order to prove that the fences are still in place, the conservancy has to assess the illegal properties in NJC together with the CLB, TA, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET). But multiple interviewees and email correspondence between NJC and MET explain that some parties, such as the TA chief and the Land Board, simply ignore the invitations. Even though the high court gave clear orders, the competing leadership system on the ground makes it impossible to reinforce and execute these orders.

This complicates the traditional hunting and gathering practices of the San:

“The other tribes just came in, fencing everything off, a San person cannot benefit anymore from what he was using in the past” (Interviewee 37, Omatako, 8-1-2019)

Besides the gathering of *veldkos*, it complicates the hunting for the Ju/'hoansi located at Grashoek, who have obtained a permit to hunt traditionally for their tourism venture. If an animal collapses by a poisoned arrow in a fenced off area, the Ju/'hoansi cannot collect their kill, because they risk getting shot by the 'owner' or face a criminal charge for 'trespassing'. (Interviewee 31, Grashoek, 17-12-2018). Moreover, the vast numbers of non-San in NJC make it impossible for MET to allow traditional hunting ever again, as in Nyae Nyae, because it will be an uncontrollable legitimization for non-San to start poaching without the resources to patrol the 912,000 hectares area (Interviewee 45, Windhoek, 23-1-2019).

Besides the fences, other ethnic groups brought in large herds of cattle to graze the lands, drawn to the access of water paid for by the government, intended as drinking water for the San. The fragile ecosystem in NJC is unable to sustain that many animals and humans with overgrazing, destroyed crop fields and water shortage as a result (Interviewee 18, Luhebu, 5-12-2018; Interviewee 40, Pespeka, 9-1-2019).

Within this struggle over scarce resources, e.g. *veldkos*, water and land, the San do not feel recognized by other ethnic groups. As elder !Kung respondent articulates:

“Those [the San] are peoples that live in a hut, facing many problems. It is not easy for them to get employment, food, they feel they are not part, they feel alone. There is no one who can stand or feel together with them” (Interviewee 6, Mangetti Dune, 26-11-2018)

Many respondents do not only feel 'left behind', but also discriminated against by other ethnic groups. Some older respondents even state that times were better when serving the SADF and the whites were commanding the armies. At that time they felt recognized, because people listened to their advice and used it during times of war (Interviewee 7, Mangetti Dune,

26-11-2018; Interviewee 14, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018; Welch, 2013). Currently the San feel bossed around by other ethnic groups and are not listened to, for example the removal of fences that is still not executed.

The more contact they have with other more wealthy settlers, the less satisfied they are with their own position. The San in NJC state that other ethnic groups try to seduce them with their wealth as the following quote confirms:

“So one can come in he is rich, he takes a poor San member, employs him, pressuring him with alcohol and all that kind of unnecessary things, so someone’s life is getting backwards” (Interviewee 37, Omatako, 8-1-2019)

This enforces dependent relations with other ethnic groups. Relative poverty is especially present in the bigger towns in NJC, e.g. Mangetti Dune and Grashoek, in the smaller villages the !Kung and the Ju/’hoansi are more satisfied with their livelihoods and try to resist any form of interference from ‘outside’. Many respondents argue that they feel not recognized as equals by other ethnic groups:

“Most of the time we are with our own tribe. The other tribes like to discriminate us. They say ‘what does a bushman know, a bushman does not know anything’” (Interviewee 17, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018)

Many respondents rather socialize with their own tribe, because they trust their ‘like-minded’ relatives, while they fear exploitation and misrecognition from other ethnic groups. In contact with other settlers respondents feel constantly reminded of their inferior position within the Namibian society.

6.2 Intercultural marriages

Contradicting this differentiating behaviour towards other ethnic groups in Namibia, the !Kung youth engages in many intercultural marriages, especially in the bigger villages that host different ethnic groups. As a response many elder respondents blame intercultural marriages causing deterioration of their culture and with this the possibility to claim an indigenous status (Interviewee 2, Mangetti Dune, 23-11-2018; Interviewee 5, Mangetti Dune, 26-11-2018; Interviewee 32, Aasvoelness, 18-12-2018).

Without traditional marriage ceremonies, parents cannot find a suitable moment to teach their children cultural standards and values. While the youth finds it easier to avoid these time consuming wedding processes of the past, they also miss the support of their parents when problems in their relationship arise (Interviewee 16, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018). Many intercultural relationships fail, because of cultural differences and women usually chose to raise their children mainly or entirely on their own. This complicates the way traditional or indigenous knowledge can be transferred from father to son and mother to daughter. Consequently, global culture, or as the respondents call it ‘modern life’ among

youth is on the rise and many elder interviewees feel culturally excluded from their community. The following quote summarizes what most elders expressed:

“Marriage became to turn upside down. You find a !Kung married to an Owambo, a !Kung get married to a Damara, so it is not as before. Back then we had our traditional marriages, with our own tribe, in our own way [...] Now the marriages are something that is drying out the culture, traditions, norms and believes. In the future we will be no more having these types of things. We will only know ourselves as !Kung, but traditions we are about to lose” (Interviewee 5, Mangetti Dune, 26-11-2018)

The younger generation state they want to know about their roots and culture which are part of their identity, but they are also insecure about the relevance of their own traditional culture in the contemporary Namibian society.

While the younger generation of San struggle to overcome the divide between their primitive and modern identity, respondents of other ethnic groups strategically frame an indigenous status. This is an example of how the multi-interpretable definition of indigenous can be strategically used by other ethnic groups to classify themselves as indigenous as well (Thornberry, 2001). In NJC some Damara’s adopted the indigenous identity, arguing that they are the same as the San, because they belong to the same language group and they have a hunter gatherer culture (Interviewee 25, Mangetti Dune, 10-12-2018; Interviewee 38, Mangetti Dune, 9-1-2019). However, this Damara woman they make a clear distinction between herself and the ‘primitivity’ of the San:

“I don’t know if I should say modernized, but they [the San] should become somebody in life as the other tribes [...] They are inferior [...] Actually they always need to be motivated to stand up [...] They are withdrawn and somehow sensitive. I cannot come to them and keep myself as I am, the clean, working person, I am that high society. They do not like that” (Interviewee 38, Mangetti Dune, 9-1-2019)

In this case primitivity is especially related to hygiene. For example, bathing, wearing clean and not torn clothes and using a toilet instead of the bushes are characteristics of modern subjects. The indigenous representation of both Damara’s seems to be based on a (false) genealogic connection with the San languages and adaptation of the San culture, while much knowledge about the Damara culture has already vanished (Interviewee 45, Windhoek, 23-1-2019).

6.3 Leadership

Different leadership systems that co-exist in NJC complicate matters even more. Egalitarian social systems of the San operate side by side with hierarchical systems. Even though CBNRM project are often seen as unified systems, they reinforces different legal systems to occur at the same time. Within a heterogenous community such as NJC there are many competing

powers that cause contradictions and conflicts (Rozemeijer, 2003). Powerful players in NJC are mainly the TA, the conservancy and government departments, such as the CLB and MET. In absence of collaboration between these actors and supervision other ethnic groups can settle without the required legal documentation confirm the Communal Land Reform Act (CLRA). According to this act one needs approval from the community, the TA, the conservancy and the Communal Land Board (CLB) to receive land rights (Interviewee 26, Mangetti Dune, 11-1-2019). The !Kung TA and the conservancy use this decisive power in land issues differently. The conservancy tries to lay claim on the land (von Benda-Beckmann, von Benda-Beckmann & Wiber, 2006) while the TA, together with the CLB, are in charge of land allocation. This great variety of organizations with different interests and powers obscures the pathways to achieve clear and transparent decision-making within and among actors in NJC.

What makes the !Kung TA instable is the distrust of the communities living in NJC in their TA chief, Glony Arnold. She followed in her father's footsteps when he died in 2012 after a car accident. Originally the San did not have a chieftain and power was not inherited through royal bloodlines such as the Bantu's, the dominant language group in Central and South Africa (Interviewee 5, Mangetti Dune, 26-11-2018; Interviewee 47, Windhoek, 24-1-2019; Interviewee 48, Windhoek, 7-3-2019). However, Chief Glony Arnold obtained power through family bonds instead of the usual elections procedure. This created a lot of conflict and many respondents suspect that the TA chief is collaborating with the government and other (Bantu) parties. She is repeatedly accused of selling off land to non-San and turning a blind eye to illegal fencing. Many San explained during the interviews that they do not feel heard and think she is not acting in the interest and wellbeing of the San.

Many !Kung see the TA as the bridge between the government and them, so it is an important role to fulfil. Two respondents states that they are elected to function as their eyes (Interviewee 1, Mangetti Dune, 23-11-2018; Interviewee 2, Mangetti Dune, 23-11-2018), another says they fight for the San's rights (Interviewee 43, Mangetti Dune, 18-1-2019). As described in the TAA the TA should be responsible for the implementation of customary law, resolving conflicts within the community and safeguard culture, language and tradition (Hitchcock & Vinding, 2004). However, NJC is one of the exceptions in Namibia, that does not have a customary law that resolve conflict in a traditional way. In absence of it, they can solely fall back on the general TAA, which does not give enough guidelines and as a respondent says *"leaves too much room for leaders to do whatever they want"* (Interviewee 26, Mangetti Dune, 12-12-2018; Interviewee 48, 7-3-2019). Respondents explain that the newly elected TA members have innovative ideas, but they are not formally recognized by the chief, do not receive any payment and do not have the power to change the situation (Interviewee 40, Pespeka, 9-1-2019). Without communication between TA members the relationship with the government cannot change.

The conservancy seems to taken up the role to compensate for the TA. First the establishment of this conservancy was deemed a strong representative body that encourage community participation to get a better foothold in the Namibian society. However, this

development complicates the relationship between the San and non-San. As this programme collectively strengthen the position of the San, their claims often counter the desire of the state or other ethnic groups who own the land and resources in NJC. Sarah Zungu, both TA member and the chairperson of the conservancy, tries to protect the indigenous communities mainly through the eviction of other ethnic groups, because she also thinks that they contribute to marginalization of the San (see chapter 6.1). Therefore the conservancy is counteracting the TA. They use membership of the conservancy as a tool to deny newcomers. The first five years they do not have any say in the activities done by the conservancy (Interviewee 43, Mangetti Dune, 18-1-2019). Even though the influx of other settlers has created a lot of conflict and seemed to worsen the situation of the San, it also created awareness of law, land rights and legal processes (Hitchcock & Vinding, 2004). On the longer run organizations, such as the conservancy, can arm the San and enlarge their control on the people living on their land and the available resources (Hohman, 2003).

However, community members are losing their faith in the conservancy because the illegal fences are not removed and community members do not see much development around them. Moreover, rumours within the community are spread that the conservancy is corrupt, e.g. embezzlement of money which should benefit the community, favouritism within the application procedure and unequal distribution of meat obtained from trophy hunting among villages. These issues have resulted in short periods of many different chairpersons who took up leadership. As a result support of Sarah Zungu by the community is fragmented and variable.

The TA and the conservancy have become opposing power, instead of reinforcing the interest of the San. Both leaders accuse each other of misbehaviour using media as a tool. They question each other's ancestry and specially use the priority in time principle as a tool to obtain power, such as Glony Arnold does in this newspaper article:

"Most people [including Sarah Zungu] making these allegations are the San from Angola, and not the (!Kung) San. They say the Owambos must go back to Owamboland; then they must go back to Angola" (Sasman, 12 October 2016)

This resentment towards the Angolan !Kung also originates from them siding with the SADF in the past (as described in chapter 5.2), while the TA chief is captain of the opposite party, the Namibian Defence Force (NDF). With this claim the TA chief damages the conservancies' representation of the San in NJC as one homogenous group of indigenous people.

This lack of trust and sabotage does not only limit itself between the TA and the conservancy, the relationship with the CLB complicates the situation even more. Otjozondjupa area includes eight conservancies, but only one is allowed to represent all eight of them. NJC was represented by another conservancy, who was not aware of the ongoing political issues in NJC (Interviewee 26, Mangetti Dune, 11-1-2019). All these local conflicts hinder decision-making and makes community members more reluctant to support the different parties. Some inhabitants of NJC try to overcome this by joining the San Council. This

is another institution that tries bridge the community and the government, so they can stay out of the local conflict. Through this council they try to solve land issues and build the capacity of the leaders, so they can better represent themselves (Interviewee 28, Mangetti Dune, 14-12-2018; Interviewee 48, Windhoek, 7-3-2019). The question is if the establishment of another representative body would solve these leadership issues in NJC? Without coherent and cooperative leadership the San in NJC are not fairly represented and it obstructs any form of self-identification as a unified group, let alone win the claim for rights as an indigenous people opposing a power of the government.

7. THE IKUNG, THE JU/'HOANSI AND THE NAMIBIAN STATE

This chapter will give more insight into the dynamics between the contradicting claims of the San, who present themselves as indigenous, and the government, who recognizes them solely as marginalized communities. First the tension between nature conservation and traditional hunting, which complicates their claim to be indigenous based on cultural differences, will be discussed. To understand their current marginalized situation a brief overview of their economic marginalized position and the role of the government in it will be given. The following section looks at the impact the prohibition of hunting has on the communities, which contributes to cultural marginalization and misrecognition. The third section will show that the government's focus on their economically marginalized position and neglect of any indigenous claims enhances their marginalized position only further, but also strengthens their urge to fight for recognition.

7.1 Hunting

All San respondents have trouble understanding that the conservation of nature is deemed more important by governmental organizations, such as MET, than their traditional hunting practices. The ban on hunting has a profound effect on their culture overall and all respondents clearly state that the prohibition of hunting is 'killing their culture' as can be drawn from the following quote:

"You want to follow your tradition, but they [the government] are controlling you. At the same time they are killing you with starvation on both sides. You are hungry for your tradition and you are hungry to eat meat, but there is no way" (Interviewee 40, Meduletu, 14-1-2019)

Ever since the adaptation of the Nature Conservation Amendment Act of 1975 inhabitants of communal areas, such as NJC, need permission from the government to hunt and gather certain indigenous plants (Nature Conservation Amendment Act, 1975). However, as some respondents recall, the state's interference was low at the time and they were not patrolling the area as they do now (Interviewee 3, Mangetti Dune, 24-11-2018). Since the establishment of the conservancy, MET is more involved in the area and game guards see to it that people comply with the law. Some respondents understand that it is important to manage the wildlife populations in order for their children to see animals roam around. Furthermore, if they deplete the population of wild animals they would lose trophy hunting, their biggest source of income.

While many interviewees say their hands are cuffed by the law, there are also statements, such as the following one, that suggest otherwise:

“The animals are protected, but we cannot stop, we will still continue, only if we can find a way to...” [respondent makes a hand sign like a swimming fish] (anonymous)

Besides the fact that many San want to hunt, it is important to understand that the proud feeling they associated with their cultural hunting practices in the past, is now replaced by a constant fear of being caught by the conservancy or MET. If people are seen with a wild animal skin, MET will start an investigation and people risk imprisonment if they are found guilty of poaching. MET seems to neglect the cultural value of hunting for the San and solely focuses on the management and conservation of resources. Similarly the government argues that:

“Hunting and gathering is a transient mode of life and not a permanent feature” (Permanent Mission of the Republic of Namibia to the United Nations, 2007)

As explained in section 5.1, most respondents argue that hunting and the usage of skin and meat of wild animals are an essential part of the dances and rituals. Denied access to these resources creates feelings of incomprehension, grieve and anger towards the state. Without being allowed to perform this important element of their culture, it is more difficult to culturally differentiate themselves from others and consequently claim indigenous rights. As the first quote of this section explains, conservation does not only affect the culture, but also makes them more vulnerable and dependent on government-organized food aid and other social services.

7.2 Dependency and domination

One of these dependencies is the support that the government provided for the San since the 1990s in Namibia to endorse development through food-aid, food for work, pensions, education and health programmes (Hohman, 2003). The San in NJC receive all these social services for free. For example, monthly they get a bag of maize, a tin of fish and some cooking oil. This makes some respondents feel supported by the government:

“We are very lucky to get someone next to you that supports you. Previously, life before, if you could not help yourself, no one would help you” (Interviewee 20, Danger, 6-12-2018)

Some interviewees argue that the government tries to develop their region and they feel recognized and grateful that these investments are made. Even though many welcome these affirmative measures, they also create economic dependency on the state. This elicits a more critical attitude on the involvement of the government. Many respondents told me during the interviews that these social services are not enough to sustain themselves, deliveries are unreliable and the dependency on these social services *‘take away everything they had’*:

“The biggest change is the law and the feeding programmes, because in the old days I could walk freely searching for what is eatable, hunting to feed my family, but nowadays the law protects the animals and now you have the feeding programme...”
(Interviewee 9, Mangetti Dune, 28-11-2018)

This quote shows that this economic dependency affects their agency, because many basic needs are provided by the government. Many San struggle with boredom and a loss of meaning but simply do not have an alternative to regain agency over their lives. Other ethnic groups sometimes see these free services as a special right. For example, in informal conversations a Damara and an Ovambo argue that it makes the San lazy, they show no initiative, they do not realize that other tribes work hard to obtain accumulation of wealth and they get social services and water free of charge. One could question if this is a special right for the San who live in a situation that is dominated by marginalization. The government seems to focus on sustaining this situation without really aiming for systematic transformation of the marginalized communities.

Access to all these social services alone is not enough to realize such a transformation. For example, while most parents agree that education is essential to the quality of the rest of your life, in practice only 20% of the San complete grade 7 (Welch, 2013) while most jobs require graduation of grade 10. The mentioned causes for dropping out of school are relationships, pregnancies, severe homesickness, transport, or a lack of money for higher education or accommodation (Interviewee 14, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018; Interviewee 31, Grashoek, 17-12-2018; Interviewee 43, Mangetti Dune, 18-1-2019). However, it also seems to relate to the way education is presented to the San. As shown in the picture, ‘Education fights ignorance’ is written on the school gate in Mangetti Dune primary school. Access to mainstream education does not only widen the distance to their traditional roots and identity, but also devalues their traditional knowledge systems and sets the San aside as primitive subjects (Aikman, 2011), in this specific case as ignorant. Education in this setting can be seen as a knowledge system through which the government exercises power. The government decides which knowledge system dominates and which is set aside as primitive, to assure assimilation as the only possibility to obtain justice.



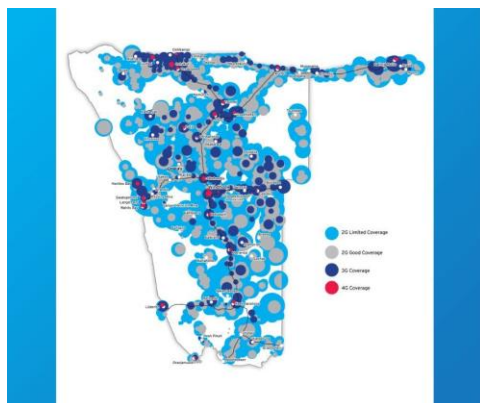
School gate Mangetti Dune Primary School

Another example given by many interviewees, both respondents of NJC, as well as members of NGOs in Namibia, is the government who is postponing improvement of infrastructure and telecom communication. They say this would transform the current power balance and contribute to overcome the gap between the ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’ communities. Some respondents believe the lack of transportation and communication is a

form of social exclusion that maintains the San's marginalization position (Interviewee 48, Windhoek, 7-3-2019; Interviewee 45, Windhoek, 23-1-2019):

"Information came late for us. Media here is very slow, we do not get newspapers, we don't have network coverage, we do not have electricity. Everything they [other ethnic groups] have on that other side" (Interviewee 25, Mangetti Dune, 10-12-2018)

Many San brought me to the telecom pole, which has been under construction for years now. They express their hope and trust that, once communication will be possible, their lives will change drastically: They will finally be well informed, they can represent themselves and will be able to close alliances to strengthen their indigenous claim and fight their currently isolated and marginalized situation. It is notable MTC, the biggest national provider, proudly states that their telecom network covers 95% of the population, but entirely excludes Bushmanland.



©MTC coverage.



Telecom pole in NJC without communication equipment

A foreign respondent argues that the government tries to maintain a positive image towards the rest of the world with their drought relief programmes, but simultaneously increases their power by making the San more dependent (Interviewee 45, Windhoek, 23-1-2019). Education, transportation and communication seem to be used as tools to dominate the San. Thus, this telecom pole stands for much more than just communication; it represents the wish to be more included and recognized as a Namibian citizen and the ability to voice themselves on regional and (inter)national fora.

7.3 Misframing of Marginalized Communities

The current dependency of the San only furthers domination by the government (Hohmann, 2003). In this dependent situation they fear losing access to their free social services. Many academics accuse the government of being unable or unwilling to implement transformative programmes that can end economic and cultural marginalization (Dieckmann, 2007; Welch, 2013), for example the completion of the telecom. This can be explained by the state's unsympathetic attitude towards the indigenous claim that does not serve the national

interest and nation building, but instead increases group differentiation. Special Rapporteur of the UN on human rights and fundamental freedoms for indigenous people, Anaya, confirmed:

“A lack of coherent Government policy that assigns a positive value to the distinctive identities and practices of these indigenous peoples, or that promotes their ability to survive as peoples with their distinct cultures intact in the fullest sense, including in relation to their traditional lands, authorities, and languages” (Anaya, 2012, p. 2).

This quote shows that the government not only tries to ignore group differences, but also complicates the conservation of such distinctive identities. The representation as ‘marginalized communities’ gives the government the freedom to shape their development programmes (Interviewee 45, Windhoek, 23-1-2019; Interviewee 48, Windhoek, 7-3-2019) with assimilation as ultimately goal.

The San and the state use the same available tools to achieve their contradicting goals and gain power. The same CBNRM programme, which is designed by the government to stimulate development and assimilation, also creates a nexus for the San to discuss issues such as land and human rights, issues on recognition, representation and indigeneity. It has made the San aware of the advantages of presenting oneself as one united traditional community (Hohmann, 2003). Another example is the way in which leadership is negotiated. Just as shown in the example of the TA chief of NJC in section 6.3, the Deputy Minister of Marginalized Communities U|o|oo is accused of selling off land in Tsumkwe East and serving the interest of the government. One respondent even calls him toxic and a token gesture of the government (Interviewee 45, Windhoek, 23-1-2019). On all levels the San and the state are competing for power and representation. To counter the domination by the government the San sided with (inter)national organizations. This next chapter will elaborate on the ways this relationship strengthen the San’s political and socioeconomic representation in the Namibian society.

8. (INTER)NATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

The involvement of (inter)national organizations in the indigenous debate in NJC has both positive as negative consequences. First, the division created among the San by the international human rights and women's rights movement will be presented. Secondly, this chapter explores how (inter)national organizations are involved in NJC to strengthen their indigenous status through tourism. The next section will conclude that the San with support of international organizations commodify their indigenous status to receive financial support that strengthens their position within the Namibian society.

8.1 Human rights and women's rights

Human rights and women's rights movement is something relatively new to the San living in NJC. It is not common knowledge among everyone. Therefore, these rights are sometimes seen as an obstruction instead of support. For example by this elder man who tries to force his son to go to school:

"Human rights are now taken for granted by nowadays kids. So you tell your own kid, or advise them on education, a kid will ask you 'why were you not doing the same?' so you are telling your kid life before and nowadays life are not the same. If you might get angry your own kid tells you 'may you lay a hand on me I will file a criminal charge on you' so they are taking it on their own way. It is like a new disease" (Interviewee 14, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018)

In this case it caused quarrels that eventually led to less communication between the different generations. Knowledge on human rights does not mean these rights are used in ways they are intended.

Something similar is happening between men and women influenced by the women's rights movement. Women from NJC are often taught about their rights by international organizations outside the community setting. The perception of their role in the household is changing and, like this young !Kung woman, they are standing up for their rights within their community:

"Men are demanding. They want to sit. Mostly in my tradition it is like that. If you have a man you have to cook for him, wash for him, go and collect firewood for him. They [the (inter)national organizations] were teaching us that men and women have to be equal [...] They abuse women. Even if I am on my menstruation and he want sex he has to beat me and makes it by force with me. What I have learned about my right is that I can say no. If I do not want sex today a man has to understand. Now we know a little bit about our women's rights" (Interviewee 17, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018)

According to international organizations this can be seen as a fruitful development, but the implementation within the community seems to be problematic. While the attitudes of the women are changing, men do not always accept this and several interviewees told me that violence increases instead.

The San are taught by (inter)national organizations to have these human and women's rights, but what does it mean to have rights if nobody protects and upholds it? Many respondents who have learned about human and women's rights movement have difficulties unifying this knowledge with the traditional living style in their communities and safeguarding their rights (Interviewee 45, Windhoek, 23-1-2019; Interviewee 48, Windhoek, 7-3-2019). Instead of protecting people's rights, this knowledge creates a lack of communication between generation and sexes. The individual education about human and women's rights movement is not accepted and enforced by all community members living in NJC.

8.2 Living museum Grashoek and Omandumba

While many factors in this thesis indicate transition of the San culture, the San in NJC are supported by Western investors to preserve their culture. The two living museums in Grashoek and Omandumba currently serve as a place where the Ju/'hoansi, and to a lesser extent the !Kung, have become increasingly interested to re-discovering and (re)inventing their culture and heritage (/Useb, 2005). The living museums are open-air museums for tourists. They are both represented by German investors to shed an interesting and unique light on the indigenous life of the Ju/'hoansi. The museums offer activities, such as bushwalks, to learn about hunting and gathering, traditional dance, storytelling and the making of fire. All these attractions are done in traditional setting with !Uhchu houses and leather clothes (LCFN, n.d.; Rust & Rust, 2019). These are the same cultural elements as the San use to represent themselves as indigenous people.

Even though the website mentions this as a traditional representation of the Ju/'hoansi culture and original way of living, most tourists encountered during this research thought the Ju/'hoansi are still pursuing this traditional hunter-gatherers lifestyle. Both museums have two villages: a place where the Ju/'hoansi actually live and a traditional village where they act out their traditions. The Ju/'hoansi change clothes every time they go to 'the other side'. The traditional villages do not have the influences of modern times and suggest that they still live in harmony with nature. In the 'modern' villages one can find a lot of trash. In absence of a waste system, people throw all their packaging in nature and/or burn it outside the villages. Here you can find large quantities of half burned waste, which shows that their lifestyles in balance with nature has changed (Sylvain, 2014). Furthermore, the inhabitants outside the traditional villages focus on 'inauthentic' livelihoods, such as gardening and livestock farming programmes.

In these museums the San emphasize on traditional distinct practices instead of the modern practices. For example, in Grashoek there is a pricelist at the entrance of the living museum with all activities. However, the prices of visiting the 'modern' villages are on the back of the form, which is attached to a wooden board. When I asked the Ju/'hoansi

employees of the living museum why they did not put the prices on the front, they responded that tourists know about their modern lives, because they can read it on the website. Most tourists believe this traditional representation in the living museums confirms that the San are indeed indigenous people.

In response, the San feel recognized by tourists, while at the same time it creates all kinds of benefits for their communities, e.g. German financial aid, supporting the primary school in Grashoek. In NJC the living museums functions as an educational centre for the youth to learn, participate and stay interested in their culture. The living museums are a gathering place for generations to come together and exchange knowledge with cash benefit as an extra motivator. This is one of the few places where the San practice their culture on an everyday basis (Interviewee 16, Mangetti Dune, 4-12-2018). A member of the managing board of the living museum Grashoek, confirms that:

“They all stand with one leg in the old days and one leg in the modern world [...] They really have a place where they can circulate old wisdom and they make money with it and have a better standing in the new world”

Side effects of the income from the living museums are increased alcoholism. Even though drunk performances are forbidden, they regularly cause conflicts and derogation to the ‘authentic’ image of these indigenous people if seen by tourists. In general, their cultural practices become modified to suit the wishes of the tourists. For example, the time consuming ceremonies are shortened and made more understandable for tourist. Furthermore, the actual traditional practices, such as the gathering of *veldkos*, become superfluous and knowledge about *veldkos* that is found remote areas will be forgotten, since the San can buy their food in shops (Interviewee 46, Windhoek, 24-1-2019).

Another side effect is that other people in the community, especially !Kung, feel disadvantaged and jealous, because they are not part of these activities in which they feel recognized culturally and they cannot benefit from it economically. In Grashoek living museum this enforces processes of exclusion; if someone is not fully Ju/'hoansi, that person cannot participate. A while ago a person who was half Kavango and half Ju/'hoansi wanted to join the museum, but was rejected by the community, because he did not resemble a ‘pure’ physical Ju/'hoansi representation (Interviewee 46, Windhoek, 24-1-2019). Similarly, living museums provide by law protected materials for the crafts, such as ostrich egg and leather, and connect the San to a market to sell their products. The San who do not participate in the living museums often lose the feeling of their culture's relevance.

The living museums are the only few places in which the traditional knowledge seems to be of use again in their modern lives. The representation is used to ‘prove’ the indigenous status of the Ju/'hoansi (and !Kung) in NJC to the (inter)national visitors, which consist of potential donors, and can result in support of NGOs and other organizations that feel sympathy with them.

8.3 Selling the indigenous identity

Despite the fact that the Namibian state does not recognize indigenous people as such, it does influence the politics and sets a new agenda (Saugestad, 2004). Within national politics the San are becoming more aware of the importance of their involvement. The Namibian San Council, established in November 2015, is a milestone for the San to fight marginalization and inclusion in education, gender equality, recognition and economic, social and political development. They actively organize conferences, talking to San groups in other countries and voicing their problems as indigenous people as a unified group (Interviewee 28, Mangetti Dune, 14-12-2018) to strengthen their negotiation position towards the government. Other national, such as NNDFN, LAC, in the past WIMSA, and international organizations, e.g. UN, IWGIA, LCFN, support this movement. Therefore, indigeneity does not only limits itself to a dialectic relationship between indigenous people and the state (ACHPR & IWGIA, 2008), but seems to be a triangular relationship that includes the international indigenous peoples' movement that transcend national borders.

In national affairs the San differentiate themselves from other ethnic groups by creating an essential narrative that is often based on their past lives, outlined in chapter 5. Most of the San, NGOs and the wider public relate an indigenous status to the preservation of their culture and the balanced and sustainable use of natural resources and land (Sylvain, 2002). This ultimately manifests itself in the representation of the living museums. Employees of NNDFN, LCFN and a freelancer working for the UN all agree that the San are not politically ignorant. They understand the need to voice their indigenous identity to receive support from organizations, but they find it hard to position themselves in a competitive environment. This environment is characterized by hierarchy and bureaucracy, instead of egalitarianism and consensus (Interviewee 45, Windhoek, 23-1-2019; Interviewee 46, Windhoek, 24-1-2019; Interviewee 47, Windhoek, 24-1-2019). Many non-San interviewees state that the San still have to learn to stand up for themselves.

The San have adopted the international language of the indigenous debate as a strategy to improve their visibility, constantly trying to make their audience aware of their cultural differences. For example, the San gain attention by speaking their native language, even though some are able to speak English. One respondent, working for the UN, states that the San have to sell their indigenous status more:

"People [the San] need to get more into salesmanship and like people from Northern America really know that stuff and come with their hairdressing" (Interviewee 47, Windhoek, 24-1-2019)

The international indigenous peoples' movement seems to encourage strategic essentialism, which ultimately is a commercialization of their traditional culture that tries to fit the Western market. (Inter)national organizations, such as WIMSA, the UN, etc, seem to have the interesting need to teach the San how to present themselves as indigenous and how to voice this to the 'outsiders'. While this discourse is developed to empower the San, it also makes

them inferior to the knowledge of the 'whites' on indigenous rights movement. With the support of the international discourse, the San are encouraged to fight for their right to resources and land which is controversial to the Namibian policy (Welch, 2013). It strengthens their political position on a national level, but at the same time it creates an even bigger gap between the local and national discourse.

An excellent example of the introduction and framing of the indigenous identity is WIMSA's involvement in NJC. This organization was founded to represent the interest of all the San in Southern Africa. WIMSA facilitated meetings between different San groups and connected them to international workshops that introduced them to other indigenous minorities worldwide and advocated for their rights (Interviewee 26, Mangetti Dune, 12-12-2018; Interviewee 47, Windhoek, 24-1-2019). In NJC respondents state that WIMSA initiated the establishment of the conservancy and strongly recommended that they got a committee and leader so the San could position themselves within the hierarchical system (Interviewee 28, Mangetti Dune, 14-12-2018). WIMSA gave advocacy trainings to create awareness among the inhabitants of NJC on their rights as an indigenous community. According to a respondent it was a paralegal programme (Interviewee 26, Mangetti Dune, 12-12-2018). WIMSA assured the San to hold on to their traditional knowledge and culture, such as the gathering of *veldkos* and use of traditional medicine (Interviewee 26, Mangetti Dune, 12-12-2018; Interviewee 28, Mangetti Dune, 14-12-2018). They linked the conservancy to organizations such as NNDFN, who contact donors and support the management of resources and LAC who give legal support. LCFN establishes a tourism sector in which the San's authentic indigenous status is endorsed. The creation of the indigenous identity comes at the cost of fitting in this image of what indigeneity means for the West and damages the 'real' traditional practices and knowledge. Furthermore, WIMSA introduced the inhabitants of NJC to the strategic use of media for political gain (Niezen, 2004). Within national and international media the San are represented as indigenous people that are unfairly treated by other ethnic groups in the region and the government. Their firm language appeals globally to organizations that are sympathetic to indigenous communities (Welch, 2013).

Currently, the indigenous rights movement is profitable for the development sector and the name dropping of the San has become a powerful tool in itself to receive support (Felton, 2000), because this groups stand for some of the last hunter-gatherers in the world (Robins, 2000). Almost all donors involved in NJC, mainly UNDP, Worldbank's Integrated Community-based Ecosystem Management Programme (ICEMA) and Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), argue the San fit their definition of indigenous people very well (Interviewee 45, Windhoek, 23-1-2019; Welch, 2013). The downside of these investments is that the media and NGOs are accused of making huge profits of this commercialization of the indigenous status, while that money is intended for the San (Welch, 2013). Several San interviewees confirm that: "*Indigenous knowledge is used as a business*". It is essentialized and commercialized to fit the (inter)national discourse.

The White Paper on the Rights of Indigenous People (2014) is a promising document which opens up the discussion on indigenous people in Namibia among the many different

actors involved. This document has been initiated and drafted by the Office of the Ombudsman in 2014. In collaboration with the UN, ILO, African Commission's Working Group on Indigenous Populations, and the Division of Marginalized Communities the White Paper is intended to guide the Namibian government to improve human rights of indigenous people in Namibia. The White Paper tries to set a *"comprehensive regulatory framework to guide coherence and coordination in redressing the marginalisation of indigenous communities"* (Draft of the White Paper, 2014, p. 4) in which only the San, Ovahimba, Ovazemba, Ovatjimba, and Ovatue (Twa) are considered to be indigenous people in Namibia.

Through an overview of relevant existing treaties, frameworks and clarification on terminology such as indigeneity, core problems and affirmative strategies, all the actors involved try to unify the ambiguous understanding of indigeneity. This seems a good starting point to gain more recognition for the San as indigenous people which is supported by the different actors. One !Kung respondent, who worked on the White Paper, mentions that advocacy and awareness raising are the most important activities to change the current situation of the San and to make sure their involvement only increases in the future (Interviewee 48, Windhoek, 7-3-2019). Currently the White Paper awaits its approval of the President. Hopefully for the San in NJC they will receive the recognition they deserve in the end:

"The name is still in the process to come. The government will let us now. So the government called us San, from San they called us marginalised and now it [the government] does not know what they will call us [...] They can call me !Kung, straight to my tribe. Then I will feel happy. They are still trying to give us another name, but they are struggling, so just call us !Kung" (Interviewee 36, Omatako, 8-1-2019)

9. DISCUSSION

This thesis showed how the San, other ethnic groups in NJC, the state and (inter)national organizations negotiate indigeneity and struggle over representation, recognition and redistribution. The establishment of NJC, as a CBNRM programme, gave the San a foothold in their representation as indigenous people, and hereby countered the San's representation of the government as solely a marginalized group. Strategic essentialism as a representation strategy is used by the San to obtain support from (inter)national organizations and increase their visibility as the indigenous 'other'. However, the San's quest for justice through their indigenous claim increased tensions, competition and division among the actors in NJC. For example, other ethnic groups take advantage of the multiple competing legal structures in NJC that obscure regulations and control and hereby contribute to the San's marginalized position. This chapter will place the aforementioned outcomes within a broader debate on indigeneity and reflects on some of the dilemmas that arise and the limitations of this research.

9.1 One universal definition?

Several African and Asian states question if the discussion and claims based on indigenous rights should proceed while the concept is not yet clearly defined (Muehlebach, 2001). As shown in this thesis the discourse of 'indigenous peoples' rights' is neither universally applicable nor legally accepted in the Namibian context. The actors discussed in this thesis have a different understanding of what indigeneity is comprised of. Even among the San tribes there is discussion about the degree of indigeneity based on the context-driven arguments. Nationally and globally, politicians struggle to develop and ratify one definition that unifies indigenous people, such as Aboriginals, Maasai, Native Americans, and exclude other groups. A solution to this problem is to focus on a nomothetic definition of indigeneity, that centers around the study of local groups of people to draw conclusions from that are context-bound but serve the greater goal (Barnard, 2006). In this case indigeneity would be redefined from a local perspective to achieve justice for the San in the Namibian society, such as this thesis and the White Paper (2014) seek to do.

The debate on indigeneity in the Namibian context especially revolves around who is and who is not indigenous. This discussion is limited to these questions by the Namibian government who argues that by perceiving everybody as indigenous, the country will be unified through assimilation and building a national identity that leaves the colonial past behind. Whereas the San insist on group differentiation assigning an indigenous status to some ethnic groups (Zenker, 2011). This claim contains *“external protections' (self-governance, specific economic rights, language protection) necessary to ensure real equality, and the extent to which one ought to permit social norms that would not be permitted in the wider society – for example, those which discriminate against women - to be enforced in the minority group”* (Bowen, 2000, p. 12). That would perhaps be less necessary if the San would feel justice is served by the government. Minorities, in this case the San, 'say the unsayable'

complicating their relationship with the state, because the indigenous claim highlights cultural differences and genealogical differences, thus counters the national politics of unification and result in an ambiguous powerplay to form in-, and out-group.

9.2 Strategic alliances

Besides these external protections, the San also try to enlarge their decisive power on the formation of in, and out groups sealing a strategic alliance with the (inter)national discourse to, as Kenrick (in Guenther et al, 2006) argues, oppose state domination. The conservancy and TA are institutions that are used by the San to exercise more centralized power. Indigenous groups, such as the San, often lack the power and knowledge to change the discourse. Firstly, due to the lack of knowledge on international human, and indigenous rights discourses. Secondly, 'indigenous people' often do not know how to navigate national legal and political discourses. Thirdly, they often lack the required stage of integration into the state to exercise power (Zenker, 2011). These alliances, for example with LAC, taught them how to navigate through legal procedures, such as illegal fencing. However, through these alliances they have so far not been able to obtain indigenous rights, such as self-determination and land rights, and in the end national politics prevail, e.g. the negligence of the removal of the illegal fences.

Depending on the context, the San's manoeuvres make the alliances dynamic. Sometimes the San side with their fellow San or (inter)national organizations highlighting conservative elements of their culture to fight more powerful groups, while at other times they use strategic essential elements, for example genealogical arguments such as the Ju/'hoansi of Nkhoma and TA chief, breaking with these alliances and creating division among the San. Representation by (inter)national discourse helped improve the San's position, but at the same time strongly influenced what 'indigenous' means and which group it is assigned to (Merlan, 2009). For example, the San borrow international concepts, such as San and indigenous, but need to be supported by this same international discourse to fully understand what this entails. These strategic alliances have not resulted in a structural transformation of their livelihoods; instead, affirmative and conservative action has been taken, e.g. the San's representation in the living museums enforce recognition of the San as primitive subjects.

9.3 Conservative or transitional representation?

Globally, these strategic alliances concentrating on conservation of marginalized groups often go together (Apple, 2003). Conservation of the San culture has led to more political and global visibility, but at the same time to cultural reductionism, because there is too much diversity among San to be more specific without losing their representation as a homogenous group of hunter gatherers. Their focus on first arrival and cultural distinctiveness denies mixed descents, influence by 'outsiders' and their active role involvement in the contemporary system and politics. The international discourse encourages them to speak their own language, wear traditional clothes or jewellery to differentiate themselves from other

speakers. This performance of strategic essentialism of the San makes a strategic alliance with the international discourse and donors possible, but simultaneously enforces the image of San as primitive subjects.

However, some Damaras found a way to claim an indigenous status, but distance themselves from being primitive subjects. They argue that their (western) standard of hygiene parts them from being primitive and includes them in a more modern society. Simultaneously, culture distinctiveness makes it possible to claim an indigenous status. This proves that the terms indigenous and primitive do not necessarily have to be interchangeable as Kuper (2003) argued. It depends on the way they are represented and recognized by others.

San respondents, who can speak this international language or have knowledge of the national politics, are often already influenced by commercial practices and lost some traditional knowledge and practices. They risk falling back on cultural stereotypes because they have already adopted and internalized many aspects of the global culture. So in reality, the San in NJC follow the worldwide trend of indigenous people who combine cultural transitions with cultural preservation (Niezen, 2003). They engage in political fora and adopt the international indigenous rights language and salesmanship that is guided by the commercial setting, while at the same time they enforce a preserved image as primitive subjects. However, in their representation as indigenous people more hybrid forms of their livelihoods, resembling daily life mixing traditional and modern practices, are underrepresented in the political debate in Namibia.

9.4 Us vs them

In line with Kuper's argumentation (2003) this binary representation seems to reinforce processes of exclusion. While the government argues that indigeneity assigned to few ethnic groups follows the same logic as Apartheid policies and therefore is unfavourable, it is questionable how assigning a marginalized status to few ethnic groups is any different. Both claims enforce a inclusion-exclusion perspective by construction of 'otherness' based on ethnicity. This binary presentation of the majority versus the minority ignores more fluid or hybrid forms of identities (Eide, 2010).

On the one hand, the state segregates every San as the 'marginalized other' from the majority. This term indirectly recognizing an asymmetric mode of development between the San and the majority, downgrading the San to an inferior group. The state uses subtle measures to dominate the San. For example, the type of education offered by the government, that is considered better than the San's manner to acquiring knowledge, is a way to assimilate and dominate the San. Another example is the telecom network in Bushmanland that is still not operational. This complicates communication and strategizing with the indigenous rights movement and other organizations. Without provision of transformative solutions this could be seen as an indirect form of racial domination.

On the other hand, the San heavily oppose this representation and try to obtain justice through strategic essentialism, a different process that also excludes people. Ethnicity is essentialised ignoring heterogeneous aspects among ethnic groups (Posel, 2001). Through

the commodified and commercial representation of their 'indigenous' identity as the 'cultural other' the San try to entitle themselves to exceptional rights, which are not accessible for non-indigenous people. For example, land rights over what is currently communal land, allowance of traditional hunting or self-governance by leadership systems that are exceptional for the San, but not permitted for the majority living in Namibia. While both discourses advocate more justice and equality among Namibian citizens, they seem to reinforce rights assigned to specific groups instead.

9.5 Human rights and indigenous rights

This seems to indicate special rights, contradicting the ultimate goal of the indigenous claim to obtain collective human rights, an argument upheld by authors such as Bowen (2000), Colchester (2002) and Kenrick (in Guenther et al, 2006). So one could question if human rights are special rights or basic rights? In NJC, human rights only seem to further division. It creates fragmentation between younger generation, who are familiar with these rights, and the older generation, who are not. Furthermore, how can rights be accepted if only few people in a community are familiar with it, e.g. women's rights. Moreover, since the Namibia state has not been able to implement and enforce human rights for all their citizens (Welch, 2013), meaning more ethnic groups than just the San, human rights can be seen as special rights in this context.

This raises interesting questions for future research: Why will the indigenous rights movement be a success if human rights cannot be upheld in this context? Does justice mean assimilation or should it accept difference between ethnic groups? And can justice be obtained without diverting from the power (im)balances that include colonial and neo-colonial domination and resulted in this situation in the first place? In this competitive field powers struggles and inequality will only increase driven by capitalism. The debate is currently focussed on the representation of the San, as marginalized or indigenous, but should it not take a step back and analyse the power relations? Since *'answers are not determined by words, but by the power relations that impose their interpretation of these concepts'* (Apple, 2003, p. 48). So to obtain justice should we not rethink the dominant structures that would lead to other conclusions?

9.6 Limitations

For example, Simpson (2014) and Coulthard (2014) argue that indigenous people, such as the San, do not try to obtain recognition within the dominant system, but instead refuse the state system. This means they do not want to be included, but rather would like to exit it. Which makes sense since many respondents in NJC explained that one day they will live solely with their own ethnic group self-governing land they own. They fight for justice through 'external protections', because assimilation of their culture has been proven to be difficult. The San do not aim to drastically change their livelihoods, but they want to continue their traditional

practices e.g. hunting within their communities. The use of this perspective on recognition would change the understanding of justice.

Furthermore, while the theory about justice of Fraser (2010) guided my observations and gave structure to this thesis, deconstruction of recognition, redistribution and representation was sometimes counterproductive or ambiguous, because the processes are extremely intertwined and dialectic. It would have been easier if I could have attended a meeting with all actors involved, so i could observe the dynamics between actors. Unfortunately, in absence of communication between parties such as the TA, conservancy and state that was impossible. Instead I had to work with the different perspectives of individual actors. However, the San of NJC gave me a comprehensive insight in their shaping of indigeneity, which was my main focus.

In sum, the *politics of indigeneity* can be seen as a nexus where different worldviews, ideas and practices meet and mix (Koot & Büscher, 2019). Marginalization seems to be the consequence for indigenous communities that do not follow competitive logic and therefore lose resources. I agree with Kuper's perspective (2003) that this theoretical concept does not cover the ambiguous reality of the practical, relational and strategic use of an indigenous status. However, looking at the relational context of the indigenous claim proves to be useful in order to name the struggle between (more Western) knowledge systems approved by the government and other knowledge systems that are not driven by the market, accumulation and hierarchy. The question remains how to do justice to a knowledge system that contradicts the discourse of the majority. The San in NJC decided to side with (inter)national organizations, who developed the concept of indigeneity, but at the cost of commercialization of their traditional identity. Simultaneously, opposing the attempts of the state to create a national unity. The absence of communication between the actors about indigeneity counteract transitions and maintains the current reactive and affirmative shaping of existing conflicting groups.

10. CONCLUSION

This thesis answered the question how the San strategically frame their indigenous status to obtain more justice and how they negotiated redistribution, recognition and representation with other actors in NJC. All actors argue that they strive for justice, in this case predominantly equality. However, they use different essentializing strategies to achieve this goal which ultimately reinforces group differentiation and power struggles. The indigenous claim thus encloses a contradiction, which can be explained by the assimilation-differentiation dilemma of Fraser (2003). The San try to obtain recognition as a distinct culture with self-determination rights, while at the same time they welcome the redistribution measures of the state that encourages assimilation to the mainstream.

This thesis has shown how the San use different strategies to represent themselves depending on their audience and context. Meanwhile, the struggle over who is and who is not recognized as indigenous in Namibia has become more fierce due to a reactive power play between the state and the San supported by (inter)national discourse. Over the past years, the San actively commercialize their indigenous representation to receive more support of (inter)national organizations, who fight for justice of indigenous people. As a result, the indigenous claim of the San increasingly opposes the marginalized representation of the San by the government, only widening the gap between the San and the state. The government provides resources, but consequently uses those as a way to dominate the San and undermine their indigenous claim. This has led to more and more division, exclusion and domination among the different actors in NJC instead of unification.

In order to revisit the initial goal to achieve justice, all actors should communicate with one another about what justice entails: Does it mean assimilation or acceptance of the differences and knowledge systems that are in play? Human, women's and indigenous rights have so far not been fruitful within the San community in NJC, because the rights are not enforced by all actors involved. Instead communication about the underlying power struggle of redistribution, recognition and representation will transform the struggle about indigeneity into a dialogue about the relationship between the San and the state.

The San's quest for justice requires mainstream knowledge and language or adequate representation to get a foothold in the indigenous discussion in Namibia. Therefore the White Paper (2014) can be seen as a promising document that could potentially open up communication on the definitions and objectives of the indigenous and marginalized claims between all actors involved. Clarification on these issues could lead to a more transformative dialogue about the underlying struggles about justice to overcome rivalry in order to recognize one another as fellow human beings.

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APPENDIX 1. LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Interviewee:	Date:	Place:	Male/Female :	Age:	Additional:
1	23-11-2018	M’Kata	M	40-50	Active in Local Developmen t Programme
2	23-11-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	30-40	
3	24-11-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	>60	TA-member
4	24-11-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	>60	Teaches children traditional craft making
5	26-11-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	>60	TA-member
6	26-11-2018	Mangetti Dune	F	20-30	NJC employee
7	26-11-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	>60	NJC employee
8	27-11-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	30-40	
9	28-11-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	>60	
10	28-11-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	>60	Devils Claw harvester
11	29-11-2018	Mangetti Dune	F	>60	Teaches children traditional craft making
12	3-12-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	>60	TA-member
13	3-12-2018	Mangetti	F	30-40	Traditional

		Dune			healer
14	4-12-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	>60	Married couple
15	4-12-2018	Mangetti Dune	F	50-60	
16	4-12-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	30-40	Tresorier NJC
17	4-12-2018	Mangetti Dune	F	30-40	Involved in Women's Rights Movement + approached me
18	5-12-2018	Luhebu	F	>60	Dance at public events
19	5-12-2018	Luhebu	F	50-60	
20	6-12-2018	Danger	M	>60	
21	6-12-2018	Danger	F	>60	
22	6-12-2018	Danger	M	>60	
23	7-12-2018	Mgoro	F	40-50	Approached me
24	10-12-2018	Mangetti Dune	F	40-50	Devils Claw Manager
25	10-12-2018	Mangetti Dune	F	30-40	Damara
26	12-12-2018	Mangetti Dune	M	40-50	Coördinator NJC + Damara
27	13-12-2018	Grashoek	M	>60	Vice Chairperson NJC + Ju/'hoansi
28	14-12-2018	Mangetti Dune	F	40-50	Chairperson NJC
29	17-12-2018	Nkandu	M	40-50	Ranger
30	17-12-2018	Kanovlei	F	>60	Traditional healer
31	17-12-2018	Grashoek	M	>60	Employee + Ju/'hoansi + living

					museum
32	18-12-2018	Aasvoelness	M	40-50	Ex-Chairperson NJC + Ju/'hoansi
33	7-1-2019	Aasvoelness	M	40-50	Ju/'hoansi
34	8-1-2019	Nhoma	M	40-50	Ju/'hoansi
35	8-1-2019	Omatako	M	50-60	TA-member
36	8-1-2019	Omatako	M	50-60	TA-member
37	9-1-2019	Omatako	M	>60	Pastor
38	9-1-2019	Mangetti Dune	F	30-40	Director school + Damara
39	11-1-2019	Pespeka	M	50-60	Ju/'hoansi
40	14-1-2019	Manduletu	M	40-50	
41	16-1-2019	Rest Camp	M	>60	Committee NJC
42	17-1-2019	Kukurushe	M	30-40	Ranger
43	18-1-2019	Mangetti Dune	M	30-40	Translator
44	18-1-2019	Mangetti Dune	F	30-40	Employee lodge
45	23-1-2019	Windhoek	F	40-50	NNDFN
46	24-1-2019	Windhoek	M	30-40	LCFN
47	24-1-2019	Windhoek	M	40-50	UN + WIMSA
48	7-3-2019	Windhoek	F	30-40	San Council
Following interviews are not recorded and transcribed in respect to wishes respondents:					
49	18-12-2018	Vicsris	M	20-30	Employee Omandumba + Ju/'hoansi
50	28-12-2018	Omandumba	M	40-50	Employee living museum + Ju/'hoansi

51	6-12-2018	Mgoro	F	>60	
52	11-12-2018	Sagmeel	M	>60	Traditional healer
53	11-12-2018	M’Kata	F	50-60	Committee NJC
54	12-12-2018	M’Kata	F	>60	
55	17-12-2018	Grashoek	F	20-30	Employee living museum + Ju/’hoansi
56	9-1-2019	Kankude	M	20-30	Employee lodge
57	9-1-2019	Mangetti Dune	M	50-60	Police officer
58	15-1-2019	Tsumkwe	M	20-30	
59	18-1-2019	Mangetti Dune	M	30-40	Employee Division Marginalized Communities