Etosha Pan to the Skeleton Coast

Conservation Histories, Policies and Practices in North-west Namibia

Edited by Sian Sullivan, Ute Dieckmann, and Selma Lendelvo

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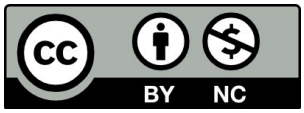

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1. Etosha-Kunene, from “pre-colonial” to German colonial times

Sian Sullivan, Ute Dieckmann and Selma Lendelvo

Abstract

We outline “pre-colonial” and German colonial structuring of “Etosha-Kunene”, leading in the early 1900s to the institution of formal game laws and game reserves as key elements of colonial spatial organisation and administration. We review the complex factors shaping histories and dynamics prior to formal annexation of the territory by Germany in 1884. We summarise key Indigenous-colonial alliances entered into in the 1800s, and their breakdown as the rinderpest epidemic of 1897 decimated indigenous livestock herds and precipitated enhanced colonial control via veterinary measures and a north-west expansion of military personnel. A critical and collaborative Indigenous “uprising” in the north-west in 1897–1898—known variously as the Swartbooi or Grootberg Uprising—was met by significant military force, disrupting local settlement and use of the area stretching from south of Etosha Pan towards the Kunene River. It resulted in the large-scale deportation of inhabitants of the area, who were brought to Windhoek for mobilisation as forced labour for the consolidating colony. An intended outcome was the clearance of land for appropriation by German and Boer settler farmers, a process that also contributed to establishing a massive game reserve in Etosha-Kunene in subsequent years. The proclamation of “Game Reserve No. 2” in 1907 can be seen as the beginning of a long and varied history of formal colonial nature conservation in Etosha-Kunene, whose shifting objectives, policies and practices had tremendous influence on its human and beyond-human inhabitants.

1.1 Introduction[1]

Part I of this volume provides an overview of historical circumstances that left their mark on the peoples and landscapes of “Etosha-Kunene” as a connected area of north-central and north-west Namibia. There are many ways in which we could disaggregate and periodise the history of environmental policy and nature conservation for this area. In this chapter—the first of three considering historical and contemporary factors shaping this broad area (see Chapters 2 and 3)—we focus first on the mid- to late-1800s (Section 1.2). Here we trace some of the complex shifts through multiple interactions and events that rather unexpectedly led to state colonisation by Germany through the territory’s formal annexation in 1884 (Section 1.3). This highly disruptive period of colonial reorganisation saw the emergence of the first colonial state efforts towards formal “game preservation” through various state laws, and the gazetting of a Game Reserve that included a very large part of Etosha-Kunene. For ease of reference, Figure 1.1 shows the locations of most of the places mentioned in this chapter.

1.2 Etosha-Kunene, prior to German colonisation

Given our emphasis in this volume on histories of conservation and conservation policy, we focus here on the growing impact of firearms and hunting on indigenous fauna, or so-called “game”

1 Acknowledgements: We are grateful to Dag Henrichsen of the Basler Afrika Bibliographien for very helpful comments on a draft version of this chapter.

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(Section 1.2.1). We draw attention to a parallel general rise in concern about human impacts on colonised environments (and elsewhere), later manifesting in formal legislation for the territory to restrict hunting and set aside areas of land for the protection of flora and fauna (Section 1.3.3). We touch on the importance of natural history specimen collecting in the period prior to formal annexation (Section 1.2.2), and on the ways that early, mostly European, colonial-era travellers, traders, hunters and missionaries drew into focus particular perspectives on the diverse African peoples they encountered. We revisit the so-called "*ovaKuena* wars" dominating many contemporary representations of the north-west (Section 1.2.3), considering how representations of those encountered in the past linger to this day in conservation visioning for the area.

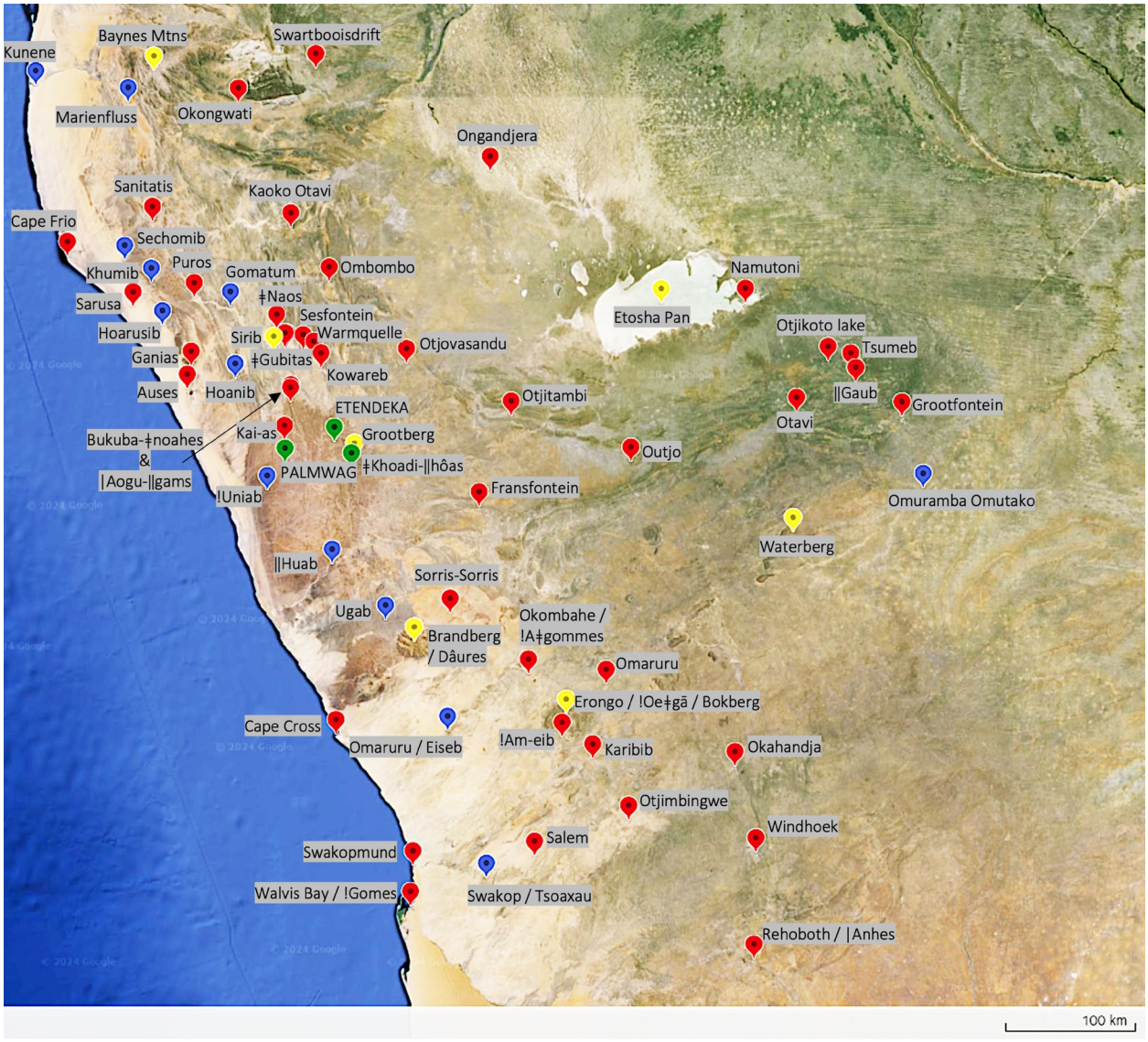

Fig. 1.1 Map of places (red), rivers (blue), topographical features (yellow), and tourism concessions and conservancies (green) mentioned in this chapter. Prepared by Sian Sullivan, including data from Landsat / CopernicusData SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO, Imagery starting from 10.4.2013.

1.2.1 Firearms, hunting and indigenous fauna

Prior to the legislated establishment of Game Reserves in 1907 (Section 1.3.3), Etosha-Kunene was increasingly drawn into external focus through the perspectives and writings of diverse colonial actors from the "global north".[2] Much of what is outlined below comes from those who wrote about their experiences; as well as from historical analyses of their narratives and the impacts of these pre-1900s hunters, traders and travellers from especially the Cape Colony, Britain, Sweden,

2 Siiskonen (1990)

North America, and increasingly from Germany. Figure 1.2 shows the extent of travel in north-west Namibia undertaken by a selection of these actors.[3] These individuals were interested in commercial opportunities, especially cattle for trading, ivory from elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), ostrich (*Struthio camelus*) feathers, animal hides and guano found along the coast. They aimed to develop transport routes that would support their interests, and increasingly to acquire land and labour for their own commercial activities.

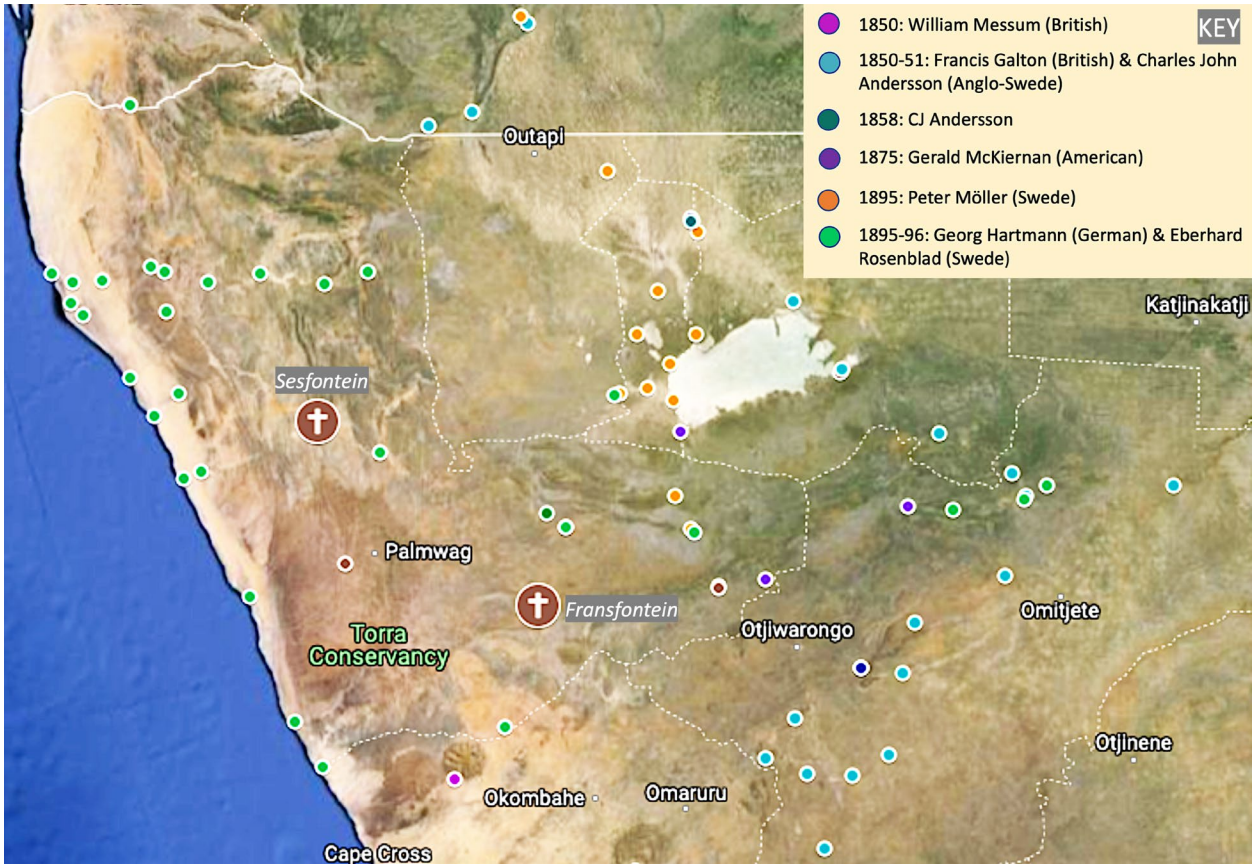

Fig. 1.2 Selected colonial journeys through Etosha-Kunene, prior to 1900. Prepared by Sian Sullivan using Google Maps: Map data © 2024 Google, INEGI Imagery © 2024 NASA, TerraMetrics. Full annotated map linked at https://www.etosha-kunene-histories.net/wp4-spatialising-colonialities, © Etosha-Kunene Histories, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

These colonial-era travellers and traders were also curious about the natures and cultures they encountered. The collection of "natural history" specimens for review by growing scientific establishments in the metropole formed a focus of their efforts; as did the documentation and mapping of the peoples they encountered (Section 1.2.2). Whilst providing significant sources with which to understand early historical contexts, these narratives also need to be read carefully for the instrumentalising, objectifying and colonising assumptions they convey. In the latter part of the 1800s (building on earlier missionary enterprise in southern and central areas of the territory), expansion of especially the Rhenish and Finnish missionary societies occurred in conjunction with commercial and colonial acquisition in Etosha-Kunene.

The mid-1800s in southern Africa were already shaped by concerns regarding environmental damage and the decline of populations of species encountered in these lands (see Table 1.1 below)—especially associated with the decline of fauna due to commercial hunting.[4] In 1850, at the Rhenish Mission Society (RMS) station at Otjimbingwe to the south of Etosha-Kunene, Francis Galton—a British explorer and later founder of eugenics—observed, for example, that hunter and trader Hans Larsen had in the preceding seven years 'utterly shot off all the game' in the Swakop (Tsoaxau) River area; and had also 'shot a great many lions out of the Swakop', making it 'a much

3 Their journeys and observations have been mapped from the narratives they wrote at https://www.etosha-kunene-histories.net/wp4-spatialising-colonialities

4 Wallace (2011: 60–61); also Henrichsen (2011: 30)

safer place than it used to be to drive cattle in'.[5] Referring to lions, Galton commented on 'how in a short time one or two guns would entirely exterminate them'.[6] Indeed, in this pivotal mid-1800s moment, the introduction of firearms had an immense impact on wildlife in the territory that over the following 150 years would be governed as Deutsch-Südwestafrika, South West Africa, and formally as Namibia after 1990.[7]

These declines notwithstanding, in the mid-1800s Galton and his travelling companion—the Anglo-Swede Charles John Andersson—were able to observe large populations of diverse fauna as they travelled north-eastwards from the Swakop River towards Etosha Pan. In May 1851 they reached Otjikoto lake to the south-east of the Pan, finding 'wildlife in large numbers, although rhinoceros was rarely encountered'.[8] They were apparently the first Europeans to record the existence of Etosha Pan, later forming the focus of Namibia's flagship protected area, Etosha National Park (ENP) (see Chapter 2). They saw a glimpse of Indigenous socioeconomic complexity in this area when they reached Omutjamatunda, now well-known as the tourism resort of Namutoni but then an important Ndonga (Owambo) cattle-post and source of salt for trade north of the Kunene River:

> [w]e got water at Otchando, and came to the first Ovampo cattle-post at Omutchamatunda [Namutoni]. Travelling on, we arrived suddenly at the large salt-pan of Etosha, which is about 9 miles across from N. to S., and extends a long way to the W. […] This lake is impassable in the rainy season, but was perfectly dry when I saw it, and its surface was covered over in many parts with very good salt.[9]

Galton and Andersson were travelling in the company of Ndonga traders from north of Etosha Pan who in these years regularly exchanged 'iron spearheads, knives, rings, iron and copper beads' for Herero cattle further south; they also acquired copper mined by 'the San community living in the Otavi area to the southeast of Etosha Pan'.[10] Owambo of north-central Namibia additionally traded cattle, iron and copper items—and later muzzle-loading guns acquired from Portuguese to the north—for ostrich egg shells and ivory with ovaTjimba in the west: oral history refers to cattle-posts of Owambo[11] kings in Kaoko in the north-west, probably drawing in raided cattle.[12] At Namutoni, Galton and Andersson observed 3–4,000 head of cattle, as well as springbok (*Antidorcas marsupialis*) and zebra (*Equus quagga burchellii*), with Andersson giving an impression of lushness:

> there is a most copious fountain, situated on some rising ground, and commanding a splendid prospect of the surrounding country. It was a refreshing sight to stand on the borders of the fountain, which was luxuriantly overgrown with towering reeds, and sweep with the eye the extensive plain encircling the base of the hill, frequented as it was not only by vast herds of domesticated cattle, but with the lively springbok and troops of striped zebras.[13]

Galton illuminates the broader new impacts of European trade in the territory at this time, estimating that some 8–10,000 head of cattle, and many more small stock, were being sent overland annually to the Cape.[14] A significant rise in commercial hunting was also unfolding in these years, particularly for ivory traded northwards following 'the dissolution of the [Portuguese] government monopoly of the ivory trade' in 1834.[15]

5 Galton (1890[1853]: 35, 38–39)
6 *Ibid*., pp. 38–39
7 See Sullivan *et al*. (2021) for a detailed account of how the introduction of firearms decimated black and white rhino (*Diceros bicornis bicornis* and *Ceratotherium simum*) in the territory.
8 Rookmaaker (2007: 126–27)
9 Galton (1852: 151)
10 Siiskonen (1990: 76–79, 82–83, and references therein)
11 Note that authors use 'Owambo' and 'Ovambo' to refer to oshiWambo-speaking peoples of north-central Namibia. 'Ovambo' is often used in older texts.
12 Siiskonen (1990: 84–85), Engoombe Kapeke in Bollig & Mbunguha (1997: 202), Bollig (1997: 22), Rizzo (2012: 42)
13 Andersson (1861: 183–84)
14 Galton (1890[1853]: 68–70); also Lau (1994[1987])
15 Siiskonen (1990: 82)

By the 1860s, game stocks in southern Angola were depleted, encouraging interest south of the Kunene River.[16] Kaokoveld in the north-west of the territory now known as Namibia supplied ivory to traders from the east in these years.[17] The scale of hunting is illustrated by a figure of over 700 elephants estimated to have been shot by Canadian trader and 'big-game hunter' Frederick Green, between 1854 and 1876.[18] Owambo kingdoms in north-central Namibia were also engaging in commercially oriented ivory hunting, with a rule that one of each pair of tusks hunted should become the property of the relevant king, such that leaders could accumulate ivory.[19] By the late 1800s, entrepreneurial interest in 'cattle, ivory, ostrich feathers and copper from the interior' led to '[r]epresentatives of various merchant houses' negotiating 'concessions' with local people, involving '[n]umerous traders of diverse nationalities'.[20]

This hunting-based entrepreneurial activity was highly dependent on the specialist knowledge of local guides and hunters, with specific local actors in this enterprise having significant impacts on later historical developments in the territory. German missionaries Carl Hugo Hahn and Johannes Rath, travelling together with hunter Frederick Green, deployed Hai‖om "Bushmen" as guides in the 1850s;[21] and the American trader Gerald McKiernan, travelling in the area between 1874–1879, also reports that Hai‖om acted as guides, trackers and messengers for elephant hunts.[22] Swedish trader Axel Eriksson employed 'Hottentot[23] and Griqua hunters', spending 'some years as an elephant and ostrich hunter', and making 'a good profit out of it'.[24]

The life of Vita "Oorlog" (i.e. "war") Thom (also "Harunga"[25]) is illustrative here. Born in 1863 into 'the matrilineage of a prominent Herero family at Otjimbingwe on the Swartkop [Swakop] River' with a Tswana father[26] called Tom Bechuana (a guide of Galton's),[27] Vita Thom became involved in commercial hunting in central and northern Namibia with Andersson and Eriksson.[28] In 1917, he recounted to Major Charles N. Manning, the first Resident Commissioner of Owamboland in the immediate post-German colonial period, that:

> [w]hen old enough to shoot I went with my father [Tom Bechuana] under [Frederick] Green the hunter elephant shooting on OKOVANGO [*sic*] RIVER thence ONDONGA under OVAMBO Chief KAMBONDE where we met hunter [Axel] ERICKSON [Eriksson] known as KARAVUPA. My father had been with Green and Missionary Hahn at Ondonga before when Chief NANGORO tried to kill them [in 1857].[29] Erickson, my father and I went to OVAKUANYAMA country and Green went South again.[30]

16 Rizzo (2012: 41), Bollig & Olwage (2016: 63)
17 Rizzo (2012: 41)
18 Wallace (2011: 66)
19 Hayes (1998: 181)
20 JHA Kinahan (2000: 19); also Henrichsen (2010: 98)
21 Hahn & Rath (1859: 299–300)
22 McKiernan (1954: 59–60)
23 This term is considered derogatory (Elphick 1977: xv). No offence is meant by its occasional inclusion when quoting directly from historical texts, in which the term denotes a specific ethnic and cultural identity for Khoekhoegowab-speaking peoples, usually pastoralists known today as Nama or Khoe/Khoikhoi. It is included only when quoting directly from historical material, with the intention of drawing into focus the past presence of Khoekhoegowab-speaking peoples who are often marginalised or negatively presented in work concerning north-west Namibia.
24 Rudner & Rudner [Möller] (1974[1899]: 61); also Rizzo (2012: 33, 37)
25 *Ibid.*, p. 53
26 Jacobsohn (1998[1990]: 14), Rizzo (2012: 54)
27 NAN ADM 156 W 32 General Kaokoland report [and 'Manning Map'] by Major Manning 15.11.1917: 2
28 Rizzo (2012: 53–54)
29 Vita Thom is referring here to a serious skirmish with the AaNdonga Chief Nangolo who deployed warriors with bows and arrows to prevent their departure. Men accompanying Hahn at the rear of their party were attacked; Green shot dead a warrior who appears to have been the brother-in-law of Chief Nangolo; the party was nearly encircled, retreating only when the use of firearms and especially Green's elephant rifle put their attackers to flight, causing a number of Nangolo's men fall, including his son (Lau/Andersson 1987: 90–93; Siiskonen 1990: 99–100).
30 Statement taken by Major C.N. Manning at "Zesfontein" (Sesfontein), Kaokoveld, in the presence of Lt. Olivier (the officer in charge of the expedition and patrol who previously was an official of native affairs for three years in the Transvaal), Manning Diary Notes 23, 26.8.1917, 2nd M.C. from Native Chief Vita, alias OORLOG or ORO, on 19.8.1917, National Archives of Namibia.

Sometime later Tom Bechuana and his son Vita Thom left Otjimbingwe due to conflicts between Nama/Oorlam[31] and ovaHerero leadership in central Namibia, travelling northwards[32] where they would have a strong effect on local politics (also see Chapter 7).

In the 1870s, hunter James Chapman is known to have made 'several hunting trips to Kaoko and western Owambo',[33] whilst Transvaal Boers ("Trekboers"[34]) moving into Kaoko also participating in commercial hunting.[35] In these years prior to formal colonisation (see Section 1.3) influential traders such as Charles John Andersson and Frederick Green took advantage of divisions between different Indigenous "groups". In the 1860s, for example, they enlisted 'Herero aid to end Oorlam-Nama control over the trade routes', shifting the balance of power 'from among local pastoralists to the traders themselves', who 'established permanent trading centres to exploit the country's resources' from which they made 'enormous profits'.[36]

In the late 1870s, William Coates Palgrave, Special Commissioner for the British Cape Colony to "Damaraland" and "Great Namaqualand", makes reference to 'competing claims for Kaoko by Swartbooi and Herero leaders in central Namibia'.[37] "Damaraland" in these years was a commonly used name for the swathe of central Namibia into which ovaHerero pastoralists had moved in the late 1700s from southern Angola and north-east Kaokoveld.[38] By 1876, commercial European hunters and traders were known to travel from Kaokoveld in the west to Ongandjera in the Uukwambi area of 'Owamboland'.[39] Kamaherero, the ovaHerero leader based in Okahandja, stated in this year a wish that all hunting should cease whilst Palgrave was absent in the Cape because '[p]eople go into the hunting veldt, and live there permanently, and so drive away all the game, and we suffer in consequence'; although Palgrave resisted this proposal.[40]

In the presence of Palgrave, Kamaherero and other ovaHerero captains—with the help of English trader and prospector Robert Lewis[41]—mapped their claim to a huge area of the territory, minimising the presence of Indigenous Sān, Damara/ǂNūkhoen and Nama: see Figure 1.3. They reportedly 'set aside a tract of country for a "Reserve" for the Government',[42] including 'the whole Kaokoveld and the west coast as far [south] as the level of Rehoboth, as well as part of Ovamboland'.[43] In doing so, they indicated that these lands were not considered central for ovaHerero livelihoods at this time, given relocations south by *ovahona* (wealthy herders)—such as the well-known Mureti who moved to the Omaruru area in 1861.[44] Palgrave reports that the inhabitants of the so-called 'Damara Reserve'

31 Oorlam Nama were Khoekhoe/Nama who in the Cape Colony had acquired horses, firearms, wagons, the Dutch language and Christianity (Lau 1994[1987]; Dedering 1997; Wallace 2011).
32 Rizzo (2012: 54)
33 *Ibid*., p. 36
34 In the wake of the abolition of slavery in the 1830s and the new freedoms of "coloured" peoples of the Cape (under Ordinance 50 of 1828), several thousand "Trekboers" 'abandon[ed] their farms and settlements in the Cape to embark on their famous Great Trek': some pushed into Nama lands south of the Orange/Gariep [!Garib] River, contributing to the movement of Nama northwards over the Orange (Olusoga & Erichsen 2010: 23); others moved east to the Transvaal, and in the 1870s trekked west across the Kalahari towards present-day Grootfontein in Namibia, and thence to north-west Namibia and southern Angola (Rizzo 2012: 37).
35 *Ibid.*
36 JHA Kinahan (2000: 19) after Lau (1994[1987]: 143); also Siiskonen (1990) and Henrichsen (2011: 128–29)
37 Reviewed in Rizzo (2012: 29).
38 Historically, the ethnonym "Dama-ra" is based on an exonym, i.e. an external name for a group of people, "Dama" being the name given by Nama for darker-skinned people generally (with "-ra" 'referring to either third person feminine or common gender plural' (Haacke 2018: 140). Since Nama(qua) pastoralists were often those whom early European colonial travellers first encountered in the western part of southern Africa, the latter took on this application of the term "Dama". This usage gave rise to a confusing situation in the historical literature whereby the term "Damara", as well as the central part of Namibia that in the 1800s was known as "Damaraland", tended to refer to cattle pastoralists known to themselves as ovaHerero. The terms "Hill Damaras" (also "Berg-Dama", "*!hom* Dama" and the derogatory "klip kaffir") and "Plains Damaras" (also "Cattle Damara" and "*Gomadama*") were used to distinguish contemporary Damaraūkhoen (i.e. Khoekhoegowab-speakers) from speakers of the Bantu language otjiHerero.
39 Siiskonen (1990: 123, 176)
40 Stals (1991: 45, 48)
41 Henrichsen (2010: 101)
42 Stals (1991: 49)
43 Esterhuyse (1968: 17); also Stals (1991: 49–50), Henrichsen (2011: 325)
44 Stals (1991: 36)

area on Figure 1.3 'consist of Berg Damaras, Bushmen and Namaquas': estimating 'Berg Damaras' [ǂNūkhoen] to number around 30,000, of which half live in 'the Reserve', 'their claims to the land [...] disregarded by the Namaquas as well as by the Hereros'—although Okombahe was 'granted to them by the Hereros' around 1873 'upon the urgent representations of the missionaries'.[45] Palgrave observes that 'there are already in Damaraland a number of people [Europeans] who wish to hire land [e.g. in the 'Damara Reserve'] and only wait for some guarantee that the terms of their leases will be respected'.[46] Palgrave estimated the different population groups in 'Damaraland' as follows: 'Herero or Cattle Damaras' 85,000; 'Houquain or Berg Damaras' [[ǂNūkhoen] 30,000; 'Bushmen' 3,000; 'Namaquas' 1,500; 'Bastards' 1,500; 'Europeans and other Whites (not including Boers) 150.[47] Swartbooi/'Khau-goas [ǁKhau-|gôan] or Young Red Nation' under Abraham Zwartbooi, defined as 'pure Namaquas', were estimated at 1,000.[48]

The growing power and influence of Europeans was also contested and attacked. For example, in 1864 a miner, hunter, and trader called H. Smuts working for Andersson—as well as white hunters Robert Lewis and J. Todd—were robbed in Kaokoveld by an Oorlam Nama individual known as 'Sammel' (Samuel) and associates.[49] Formerly a subject of Jonker Afrikaner—the Oorlam leader who dominated politics in central Namibia in the mid-1800s—Sammel had become established 'on a high mountain called Otjironjupa[50] situated about 80 miles NNE of Otjimbingwe', as recounted in the journal of the Swedish traveller and hunter Thule Gustav Een.[51] By the 1870s, however, the balance of power was shifting towards European traders. Boer and Portuguese traders and hunters in Kaoko and southern Angola, with firearms and ox wagons, started to crowd out the African/Oorlam presence.[52] When Catholic missionary Carlos Duparquet reached western Etosha in 1879, he thus met 'numerous [commercial] hunters at places such as Otjivazandu [Otjovasandu] and Ombombo'[53] (see Chapter 14).

Alongside hunting and trading influences was a growing interest in establishing mission stations in the north. In late July of 1857, for example, trader and hunter Frederick Green, in the ill-fated expedition to Ondonga mentioned above, included Rhenish Missionaries Hahn and Rath who were seeking 'new mission fields' beyond 'Damaraland'.[54] The Trekboer presence had become increasingly significant in these years, with around one hundred Afrikaner Dorstland/Thirstland trekkers travelling with ox wagons through Nyae Nyae in the Kalahari towards Angola, via Kaokoveld springs such as Kaoko Otavi.[55] Their circumstances were often vulnerable. In 1879, Trekboer Gert Alberts led a small mounted party down the valley of the Hoarusib River to the sea in an attempt to collect supplies gathered in response to an appeal by trader Axel Eriksson: becoming the first white men to traverse the Kaokoveld from east to west.[56] In this decade 'business with ivory [and cattle] from the northern areas both to Mossamedes and to Walvis Bay flourished', although 'traders complained that there was no longer enough ivory and cattle to buy in Owambo'.[57] A published return of 40,000 lbs of gunpowder and 300,000 cartridges shipped through Walvis Bay in 1879–80 illustrates the scale of inland hunting:[58] "game" was considered exhausted in central

45 Palgrave (1961[1877]: 50–51)
46 *Ibid.*, p. 50.
47 *Ibid.*, p. 83.
48 *Ibid.*, p. 94.
49 Rudner & Rudner (2004: 61–62).
50 Presumably Otjozondjupa (Waterberg), also known as !Hos.
51 Rudner & Rudner (2004: 61–62).
52 Bollig (1997: 15)
53 Rizzo (2012: 36)
54 Hayes (2009: 242)
55 Rudner & Rudner (1974[1899]: 41), Suzman (2017: 82)
56 Rudner & Rudner (1974[1899]: 41–42)
57 Rizzo (2012: 40, 42–43), the latter point based on McKittrick (2002: 55); also see Bollig & Olwage (2016: 63) referencing Siiskonen (1990)
58 JHA Kinahan (2000: 19) drawing on Cape of Good Hope (1881: 101)

Namibia and the Kalahari, causing a withdrawal of commercial hunters around this time.[59] In 1881, the last herd of elephants near Namutoni was reportedly shot by European hunters, with lion and rhino surviving only in remote and inaccessible areas.[60]

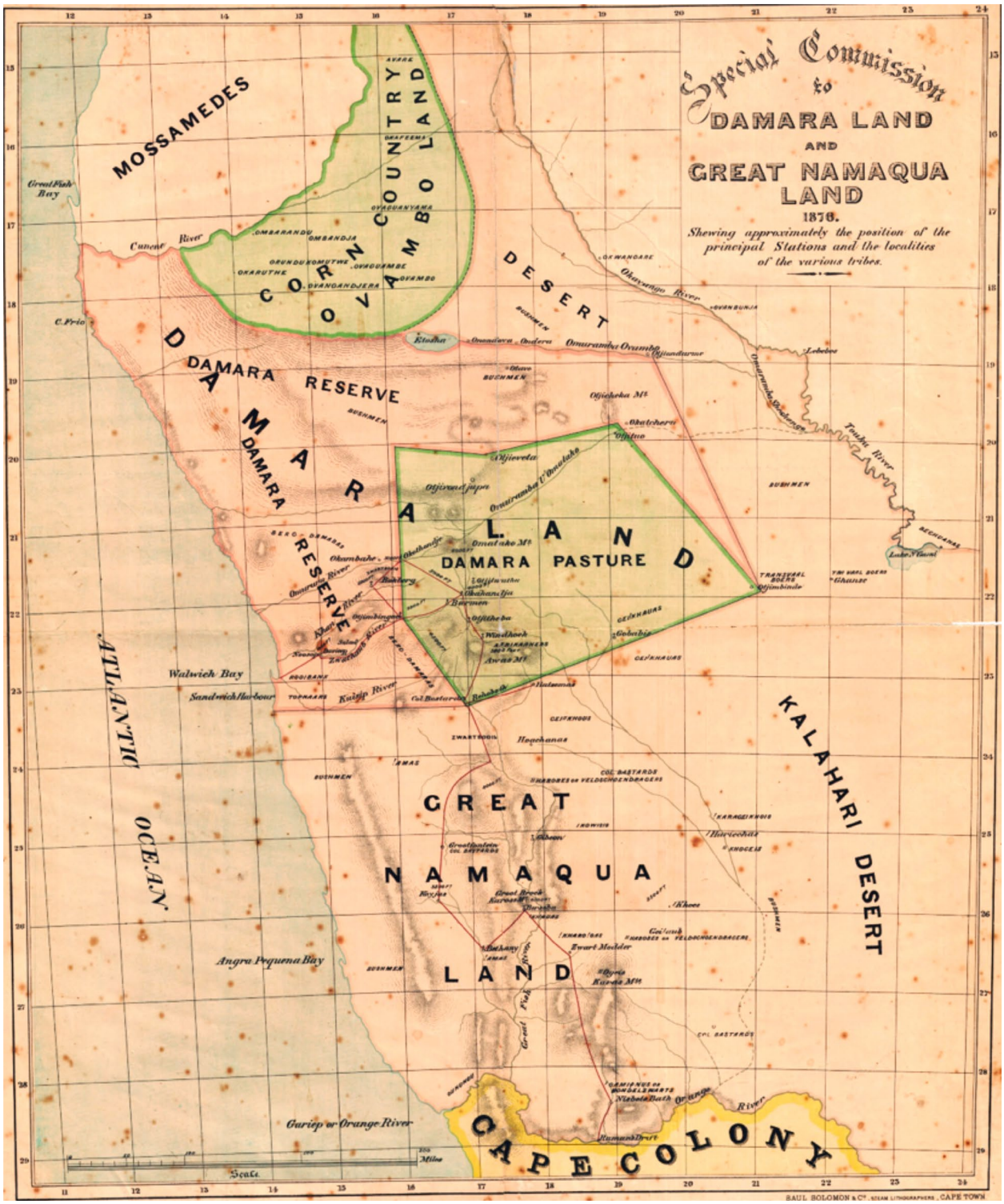

Fig. 1.3 'Map of WC Palgrave Commission to report on the people and states of Damaraland and Namaqualand and inform decision on merging Government of Cape of Good Hope with states of South West Africa', 12.12.1876. Source: Cape Archives—Palgrave Papers. Public domain image: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/24/1876_-_map_from_Palgrave_Commission_papers.png, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

59 Esterhuyse (1968: 31), Henrichsen (2011: 128–29), Wallace (2011: 54)
60 Bridgeford (2018: 12).

Clearly colonial-era activity caused observable damage to wildlife populations in these years, providing impetus for the establishment of formal conservation policy in the Cape Colony (and elsewhere): see Table 1.1.[61] Although opposed by Kamaherero, in August 1878 Palgrave introduced ‘hunting and trading licences to defray the proposed expenses of the [Cape Government Walvis Bay] magistrate’: initially welcomed by traders on the understanding that ‘they would be protected by government’.[62] These rising concerns and accompanying legislation provide additional context for the later impetus to formalise state wildlife protections in Deutsch Südwestafrika, as considered in Section 1.3.3.

Table 1.1 Emerging formalisation of environmental concern and associated protection policies in the Cape Colony and elsewhere, mid- to late-1800s.

Year	Cape Colony	Elsewhere	Source
1820s		Zulu leader Shaka sets aside a game reserve in Umfolozi district of Zululand	Carruthers 1995: 7
1822	Proclamation 21 March 1822 brings in ‘sophisticated hunting restrictions’, providing ‘for certain closed seasons, special protection for elephant, hippopotamus [*Hippopotamus amphibious*] and bontebok [*Damaliscus pygargus*], restrictions on killing pregnant and immature animals, [and] stringent anti-trespassing provisions’; and an ‘embryonic’ state game reserve is established at Groenekloof near Malmesbury		Carruthers 1995: 8
1846	Ordinance passed for preservation of the Cape Flats and Downs (led by Austrian surgeon and unpaid ‘Cape Botanist’ Dr Ludwig Pappe)	In the Transvaal, legislation permits white settlers to hunt for own consumption	Carruthers 1995: 7
1851		A report presented at the British Science Association annual meeting highlights the economic consequences of tropical forest destruction, stimulating colonial conservation efforts	Grove 1988: 27
1850s	The first ‘Conservancies’ are set up for forests in the George region of the Cape		Grove 1988: 25
1856	State game reserve established at Knysna		Carruthers 1995: 8

61 See, for example, the Palgrave Commissions in Stals (1991).
62 Esterhuyse (1968: 21–22)

1858	Government Notice 263 is issued concerning the 'Preservation of Elephants and Buffaloes', formalising 'a latent (and mainly urban) interest in the protection of the remaining isolated population of large mammals in the South Cape forests, which had been heavily reduced by ivory hunting'	The first hunting legislation is passed for Transvaal as a whole ('Law for the improved regulation of the hunting of elephant and other wild animals in the South African Republic), intended to 'ensure a sustainable yield and thus to perpetuate the economic welfare and security of the state', whilst also controlling and restricting 'African access to wildlife'	Grove 1988: 27 Carruthers 1995: 12
1858	First state Game Reserves established in Africa, in the Knysna and Tsitsikamme forests		Grove 1988: 27
1862	Serious drought affects the Cape, coinciding with appointment as second Cape Colonial Botanist of John Croumbie Brown (from Scotland) with strong views and Scottish Romantic proclivities towards environmental conservation		Grove 1988: 28
1864		G.P. Marsh publishes *Man and Nature*, 'widely held to have stimulated the initial growth of the conservation and national park movement in the United States'	Grove 1988: 32
1870		Law Number 10 of 1870 in the Transvaal creates the context for state gamekeepers to be employed when local demand required this, to police the law and with powers of arrest and to collect fines; more restrictions imposed on African hunters, and trapping outlawed	Carruthers 1995: 13
1876		The Whitehall government (UK) seeks to 'obtain information on existing models of game and wildlife protection legislation' from all colonies and some non-colonial territories, with involvement by Kew Gardens, Cambridge University and the British Association, stimulating 'centralised encouragement of conservation ideas'	Grove 1988: 32

1880		In Natal a 'Commission to enquire into and report upon the extent and condition of the forest lands in the colony' publishes a report surveying conservation literature and methods throughout the colonies, making interventionist recommendations on several fronts, especially regarding 'the rapid gazetting of forest reserves and the promotion of exotic-tree planting policies'	Grove 1988: 33
1886	The Cape Act for the Preservation of Game becomes the first Cape Colony legislation for game conservation		Mackenzie 1988: 56
1888	The Cape colony Forest and Herbage Preservation Act no. 18 is modified as the Forestry Act no. 22 to become 'the most comprehensive form of conservation legislation passed in British colonies during the nineteenth century'		Grove 1988: 26
1891		The Cape's Act for the Preservation of Game (1886) is extended to the British South Africa Company ("Rhodesia") by Proclamation of the High Commissioner	Mackenzie 1988: 56
1894		Pongola Game reserve established in the Transvaal.	Carruthers 1995: 19

1.2.2 Cataloguing and Mapping

Alongside the processes of commercialisation and extraction documented in Section 1.2.1—with their corresponding impacts and causes for concern—the mid- to late-1800s were notable for the time, energy and resources devoted by many travellers to Etosha-Kunene to tracking down, killing and preparing natural history specimens for collections later housed in museums elsewhere, often in their home countries. Charles John Andersson's first collections, for example, 'including about 500 bird-skins and 1 000 insects',[63] were brought by Galton to England in 1852. More insects were donated to the South African Museum in 1860, and the rest of his collections are housed in Swedish museums and the Nottingham Museum in the UK.[64] Swedish trader Axel Eriksson created a large collection of bird specimens from the territory, mostly donated to the municipal museum in his home town of Vänersborg, which as a result hosts the world's largest exhibition of Namibian birds.[65] A large collection of insect specimens was also donated by Eriksson to the South African Museum in Cape Town, and a large number of bird skins collected by him are currently housed in Uppsala's

63 Rudner & Rudner (1974: 188)
64 *Ibid.*, pp. 188–189
65 Rudner & Rudner (2006), Johansson (2007)

Evolutionsmuseet. The first plant specimens from Kaokoveld were probably collected along the Kunene River in 1878 by the Rev. Duparquet.[66]

Procured as an objective and objectifying catalogue of encounter with exotic natures, these colonial collections and associated displays acted in the past as 'imperialistic propaganda'; leaving us today with 'a passive witness' of past relationships with plants and animals that communicates something of how nature in the colonial encounter was approached and dealt with.[67] This mapping and cataloguing of the natures of the territory was accompanied by the mapping of lands and cultures. For example, in 1852, Galton's mapping work was 'professionally transcribed onto a map by Livingstone, Oswell and Gassiot of London' and published in this year.[68] This map, reproduced in Figure 1.4, clearly shows people named as 'Nareneen', presumably referencing Khoekhoegowab-speaking *!nara*-harvesting !Narenin west of the 'Kaoko' mountains (see Chapter 12).[69] Damara/ǂNūkhoen (denoted using a derogatory name 'Ghou Damup') are positioned north-west of Erongo, and 'Soun Damup' east of Outjo.[70] 'Damara', referencing ovaHerero, dominate central Namibia, although Galton reports that they had come to inhabit these lands only around 50 years prior to his mid-1800s travels. Damara/ǂNūkhoen and Hai‖om documented in early traveller maps tend to be positioned between groups that became more dominant historically (also Figure 1.16). Such maps reflect the biases and prejudices of their authors, as well as attempts to fix otherwise fluid, overlapping and interconnected "groupings" of people in an essentialising manner,[71] extended later into the establishment of so-called "Native Reserves" and "Homelands" (see Chapter 2).

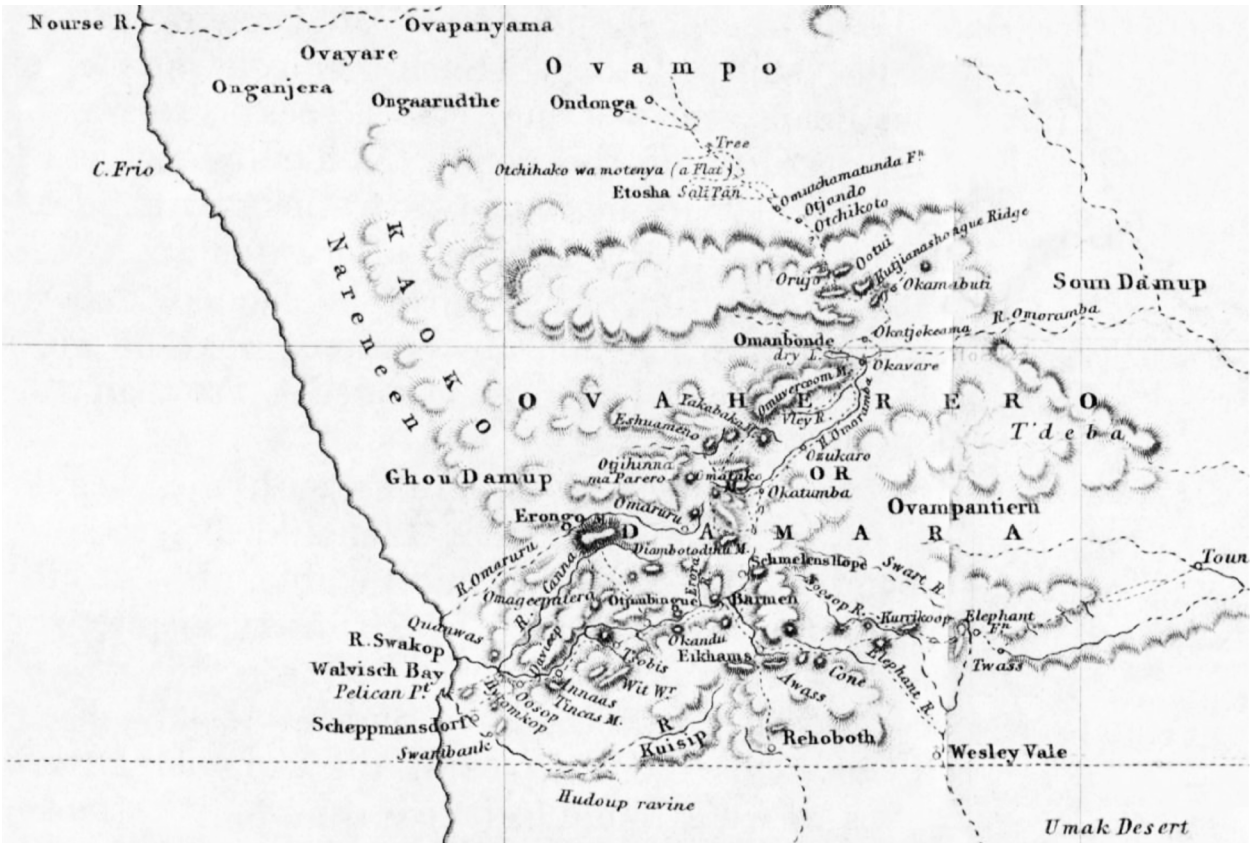

Fig. 1.4 Detail from Francis Galton's map of Africa between 10 and 30 degrees south. Source: Galton (1852: 141, out of copyright), CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

66 Craven (2005: 24).
67 Lemaitre (2016: 15, 73); also Kranz (2016)
68 Galton (1852: 140–141); also see Hayes (2009: 243–245)
69 Sullivan (2021), Sullivan & Ganuses (2022)
70 Galton (1852: 141)
71 Dieckmann (2007a: 38–44)

1.2.3 Khoekhoegowab and otjiHerero speakers in north-west Namibia, mid-to late 1800s: Revisiting the "*ovaKuena* wars"

A key characterisation of north-west Namibia from the 1850s onwards is of 'marauding bands'[72] of Oorlam Nama commandos with firearms—referred to with the otjiHerero exonym *ovaKuena*[73]—raiding the livestock of 'Bantu-speaking pastoralists of Kaokoland'.[74] Vita Thom, the Tswana-Herero guide to European hunters mentioned above, thus reports to Manning in Sesfontein in 1917:

> before my sons were born (about 30 years ago? CNM. [i.e. late 1880s]) an OVATSHIMBA named MUHONA KATITI being driven out from Kaokoveld by Hottentots came to me in Angola with his people for protection. He had nothing and I gave him cattle and small stock also a blanket. He wears no clothing like us. I got Portuguese authority for him to live near me. He got rich and left me to go to TSHABIKWA in Angola.[75]

This period of the 1800s, and how it is understood and conveyed, arguably remains a determining factor into contemporary times, underlying frictions arising in the context of post-Independence conservation praxis in Etosha-Kunene.[76] For this reason, this history will be considered in some depth here. It also provides critical background for the emergence of Indigenous resistance in the north-west as German colonisation took hold in the 1890s, as outlined in Section 1.3.2.

In around the 1700s (i.e. seven to ten generations from the mid-1990s, assuming 25 years per generation), oral history reported by anthropologist Michael Bollig indicates that otjiHerero-speaking peoples began trekking westwards down the Kunene River, reportedly prompted by drought.[77] They were migrating from a hill in southern Angola called Okarundu Kambeti: moving into hills on either side of the Kunene[78] that, like the Orange River, is referred to as !Garib by Khoekhoegowab-speaking peoples.[79] Cattle and sheep are described as coming from the north, and goats from the south, the pastoral economy including hunting, gathering—especially of *Hyphaene petersiana* palm fruits, *Cyperus fulgens* corms (*ozoseu*) and honey—but without agriculture until the end of the 19th century,[80] perhaps following interactions with immigrating Trekboers. Bollig states that 'these early migrants did not enter an unpopulated area or an area only thinly populated by foragers (presumably of Khoisanid origin)', but according to oral testimony 'met with other pastoralists […] rich in livestock and culturally akin to themselves'.[81] In current strategies to claim "Kaokoveld", it is asserted that this 'pre-Kuena War society was dominated by *ovahona* (rich and powerful men) such as Kaoko'—reportedly 'the giver of the name for the entire region'—as well as 'Kaupanga and Mureti in northern and eastern Kaokoland, Tjikurundjimbi in the western parts and Nokauua in the southern parts'; although there were reportedly 'few *ovahona*' and 'many people had few livestock'.[82] Cattle raiding was a known feature of the regional livestock economy. A significant raiding event remembered in oral histories with pastoralists of north-east Kaokoveld is recorded as the 'War of the Shields': cattle were seized by oshiWambo-speaking 'Ovahuahua' from the north, the raids named as such because these warriors 'protected their bodies with shields against the arrows of the Herero'.[83]

72 Owen-Smith (1972: 32–33)
73 Wilmsen (1989: 92), Bollig & Mbunguha (1997), Rizzo (2012: 47), Heydinger (2023)
74 Bollig (1998: 164)
75 Statement taken by Major C.N. Manning at Zesfontein, Kaokoveld from Native Chief Vita, 19.8.1917, National Archives of Namibia.
76 Sullivan (2003), Pellis (2011), Pellis *et al.* (2015), Mumbuu (2023)
77 Bollig (1997: 13)
78 *Ibid.*
79 Welhelmina Suro Ganuses pers. comm., Swakopmund, 27.9.2023.
80 Bollig (1997: 13–14)
81 *Ibid.*, p. 14
82 *Ibid.* See Friedman (2014[2011]: chs. 8 & 9) for a detailed discussion of competing ancestral claims and associated genealogical narratives informing establishment of the Kaoko, ovaTjimba and Vita Thom Royal House Traditional Authorities in contemporary times. Also see Chapters 6 and 7.
83 Bollig (1997: 15), Katjira Muniombara in Bollig & Mbunguha (1997: 221). Elsewhere, the descriptor "Battle of the Shields" refers to ovaHerero conflict with Tswanas using shields, who moved east to west into territory that had

This regional herding and raiding economy becomes shaped in the mid- to late 1800s by northwards moving Indigenous Swartbooi (‖Khau|gôan) and Topnaar (!Gomen) Nama, often framed very negatively in contemporary literature. Echoing to some extent a 1953 narrative by popular author Lawrence Green, in 1972 well-known conservationist the late Garth Owen-Smith writes, for example, that:

> [i]n the Herero/Nama wars of the last century, most of the Kaokoveld natives (Herero) lost their cattle and became known as the OvaTjimba. […] In the second half of the nineteenth century, marauding bands of Topnaar and Swartbooi Nama came to Sesfontein where they settled after driving out the Herero and subjugating the Damara [ǂNūkhoen]. In the following years the once considerable herds of cattle, belonging to these Nama, have been depleted by disease and drought and today they rely largely on crops irrigated from fountains at Sesfontein and Anabib [Anabeb].[84]

Recent analyses often repeat this description, for example:

> as early as the 1850s, Oorlam commandos engaged in bloody stock raids in Kaokoveld, where the arid and rugged environment kept ovaHerero pastoralists decentralised and thus unable to mount a common defence. These raids pushed Kaokoveld ovaHerero as far north as Portuguese Angola [from where they had moved, some decades previously]. Among these raiders were the Swartboois who having moved north from near present-day Swakopmund, desired access to the large ovaHerero cattle herds.[85]

The so-called "ovaKuena" actors in these events tend to be standardised as 'the Swartboois of Franzfontein and the Topnaar of Sesfontein'.[86] 'Access to the Kaokoveld' is stated to have been controlled from the 1850s 'well into the 1890s' 'by the well-armed Swartboois and Topnaar commando groups from their settlements at Sesfontein and Fransfontein', these commandos also 'preying upon elephants and trading ivory'.[87] This violent raiding economy is described as being led from Sesfontein in particular, focusing on key places such Kaoko Otavi further north.[88] OtjiHerero-speaking pastoralists were reportedly pushed into an 'exodus' across the Kunene, and a retreat into a foraging 'Tjimba' lifestyle in the Baynes Mountains,[89] 'later returning to NW Kaokoland in 1920 as the Himba pastoralists'.[90] As 'refugees' requesting assistance north of the Kunene, from where ovaHerero pastoralist families had previously moved into Kaokoveld, they were named 'Ovahimbe' meaning 'beggars', the term now used as the ethnonym 'Ovahimba'.[91] Others reportedly moved southwards to Omaruru and Waterberg, or eastwards to Owambo.[92] The consolidating and militarised power of the Tswana-Herero Vita Thom and his associates in the raiding economy of southern Angola and north-east Kaokoveld constituted an additional factor, stimulating later movements south-westwards by otjiHerero-speaking pastoralists.[93]

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been claimed by ovaHerero, after 1820 and prior to Jonker Afrikaner (Kakuuoko) becoming established in the vicinity of Windhoek (A. Kaputu in Heywood *et al.* 1985: 91–92).

84 Owen-Smith (1972: 32–33), Green (1953[1952]: 38–39, 46)

85 Heydinger (2023: 90–91); also Bollig (1998: 164, 2009: 330) and Owen-Smith (2010: 52)

86 Hartmann (1897: 137), Bollig (1997: 11, 13). Note that the place name tended to be spelt 'Franzfontein' during the German colonial period, but 'Fransfontein' later on.

87 Bollig & Olwage (2016: 63); also Bollig (1997: 15–16)

88 Rizzo (2012: 33)

89 Bollig (1997: 16)

90 Powell (1998: 21) after Owen-Smith (1972: 32), Hall-Martin *et al.* (1988: 57–58) and Jacobsohn (1998[1990]: 14)

91 Bollig (1997: 16–17)

92 Rizzo (2012: 50–51)

93 *Ibid.*, p. 54. Oral history interviews by S. Sullivan and W.S. Ganuses confirm this particular narrative. Ruben Sanib and Sophia |Awises (Mai Go Ha, 24.10.2014) described how 'Oloxa' [Oorlog/Vita Tom] chased otjiHerero-speakers southwards from a place they referred to as ǂGâiǂgâisoma 'behind Opuwo'. Negotiations with the Nama leadership in Sesfontein led to those fleeing Oloxa to settle at ǂGubitas west of Sesfontein, now referred to in otjiHerero as Otjindagwe. The late August Kasaona (ǂGubitas/Otjindagwe, 11.11.2015) confirmed that: '[s]o they run because of the war. There was war among them and others they are related to. That's why they run from that place to Otjindagwe. […] when they came here they already knew some Nama people (*kuena*) in this place and they were accommodated in this place by Namas. […] they were given settlement in this place by Namas—their forefathers, grand, grand-fathers. They came with livestock, large livestock [cattle]'.
NB: All oral histories reported in this chapter were carried out by S. Sullivan and W.S. Ganuses.

Without doubt, raiding occurred and was on occasion very violent. At the same time, this period of history did not only involve vicious “Oorlam Swartbooi and Topnaar Nama” and victimised “Kaoko Herero”. We revisit these histories to convey their more variegated nature: how this period is understood and represented remains relevant for conservation in north-west Namibia today.

As a starting point, consider a site of multiple graves south of Sesfontein in the land area known by Damara/ǂNūkhoen as Aogubus, crossing the northern parts of today’s Etendeka and Palmwag Tourism Concessions (see Chapter 13). Oral history identifies these graves as those of ǁKhao-a Dama (ǂNūkhoe) individuals reportedly shot by Nama alongside an ovaHerero man called ‘Buku’, hence the name of the site ‘Bukuba-ǂnoahes’: see Figure 1.5.[94] In contrast, close to this site is a substantially marked grave of an Aogubu Damara/ǂNūkhoe man called |Ûsegaib: a prominent person who lived here with his three wives close to the spring known as |Aogu-ǁgams: see Figure 1.6. He was looking after goats belonging to Nama living in Sesfontein who came and built this large grave, bringing the pastor from Sesfontein to officiate at the burial.[95] Clearly circumstances and alliances were highly dynamic, comprising both violence and respectful reciprocal arrangements. Fluidity and complexity is similarly reflected in a tale of the heroic actions of ǂNūkhoe warrior Tua-kuri-ǂnameb. He is famed for chasing down and attacking ovaHerero kidnappers of ǂNūkhoe children at the spring ǂNaos, which now feeds the settlement of ǂGubitas/Otjindagwe, west of Sesfontein: see Video 1.1.

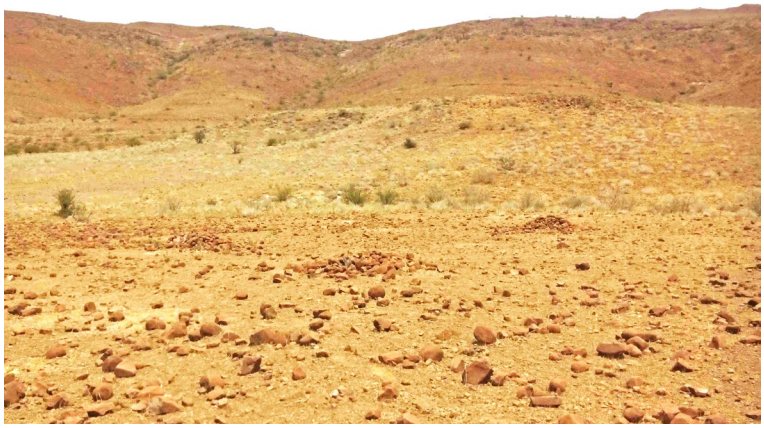

Fig. 1.5 Site of around 10 graves near Bukuba-ǂnoahes in the Aogubus land area, south-east of Sesfontein, reportedly of ǁKhao-a Dama individuals. Photo: © Sian Sullivan, 22.2.2015, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

Fig. 1.6 Ruben Sanib stands at the well-marked grave of the Aogubu Damara/ǂNūkhoe man |Ûsegaib, who herded livestock for Nama of Sesfontein near the spring of |Aogu-ǁgams south of Sesfontein, now in the Palmwag Tourism Concession. Photo: © Sian Sullivan, 22.2.2015, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

94 As reported in oral history interviews with Ruben Sanib, Bukuba-ǂnoahes, 22.2.2015, and Julia Tauros, Sesfontein, 19.5.2019.

95 Summarising Ruben Sanib, Bukuba-ǂnoahes, 22.2.2015.

Video 1.1 Ruben Sanib recounts the heroic actions of ǂNūkhoe warrior Tua-kuri-ǂnameb at sites that are part of the story. Video by Sian Sullivan (2015), at https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12434/7e9ca87f, © Future Pasts, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

As historian Lorena Rizzo writes, this period is characterised by 'Kaoko's instability and its shifting materiality as a territory and socio-political space', with mobilities blurring ethnic, geographical and economic colonial boundaries.[96] There are sources of complexity here that are worth making explicit: they have a bearing on contemporary concerns and biases as they play out today in conservation proposals and interventions in Etosha-Kunene. Indeed, excluded from most contemporary accounts of this period is the complexity of historical circumstances that shift the identities of those raiding in the north in the mid- to late 1800s, and add context about why later Swartbooi and Topnaar raiding occurred.

For example, the northwards migration by Topnaar and Swartbooi Nama occurred later than the 1850s and may for some have constituted *a return* to the north and to prior connections, rather than in-migration to an unknown area (as detailed in Chapter 12). If there were raids taking place this far north in the 1850s, they are unlikely to have been carried out by Swartbooi or Topnaar Nama specifically. Earlier Oorlam Nama raiding activity in north-east Kaokoveld was enacted by Oorlam leader Jonker Afrikaner who had form for raiding ovaHerero cattle in central Namibia (and vice versa).[97] In 1857, for example, 'Afrikaner Oorlams supported by the Rooinasie'—not Swartbooi or Topnaar Nama—undertook 'raids into Kaoko'.[98] In 1860, Jonker Afrikaner led an expedition of 40 wagons on a 'raiding expedition to Ovamboland', reportedly removing '20,000 head of cattle' and reaching lands north-west of Etosha Pan where ovaHerero resided.[99] These events no doubt contribute to assertions by ovaHimba in archive documents of an 'Ovambo-Hottentot' war that prompted southwards movements of ovaHerero from north-east Kaokoveld to central Namibia.[100] In these years, however, ǁKhau-|gôan/Swartbooi Nama were located in southern and central Namibia at a time in which Andersson's trading activities (led from Otjimbingwe) were 'bring[ing] him into direct conflict with the Namaland chiefs and especially the sovereign, Jonker Afrikaner', who claimed a monopoly on the cattle trade in central Namibia.[101]

In fact, in the 1860s Swartbooi were the only Nama faction to ally with ovaHerero leader Kamaherero against Oorlam Nama leader Jan Jonker Afrikaner.[102] This alliance strengthened when Andersson recruited ovaHerero, including from the Kaokoveld, to attack Jan Jonker and his followers.[103] In 1864, and with 2,500 men and a "national flag" designed with Thomas Baines from England, Andersson marched to Rehoboth to 'join forces with the Swartbooi commando

96 Rizzo (2012: 3–7, 15–16)
97 Lau (1994[1987]: 42)
98 Stals (1991: 80); Lau (1994[1987]: 117)
99 Siiskonen (1990: 101); also Henrichsen (2011: 88)
100 NAN SWAA 2513 A552 Minutes of meeting held at Ohopoho from 7 to 16.4.1952, pp. 3, 5.
101 Lau/Andersson (1987: 104), Henrichsen (2011: 132). In 1855, for example, Swartbooi were negotiating a contract with a prospector for the potential mining of copper in the Rehoboth area, south of Windhoek, hundreds of kilometres away from the Kaokoveld (Lau/Andersson 1987: vi-vii).
102 A son of Jonker Afrikaner. Jonker had died in 1861.
103 Lau/Andersson (1987: 99, 104), Wallace (2011: 69)

[…] to attack the Afrikaners and their allies', provisioning themselves from 'Bergdamara' *werfts* (settlements) along the way.[104] This historical Swartbooi-Herero alliance appears to be absent in the "Kaoko literature" on Swartbooi attacks on 'Kaoko Herero';[105] even though in 1876 Kamaherero iterates to Palgrave that '[t]he Rehoboth people [Swartboois] were always our friends and allies'.[106] Having fought against 'their immediate neighbours' (Jan Jonker Afrikaner and ǁOaseb—leader of Kai‖khaun/Red Nation Nama), the Swartboois fled Rehoboth, trekking towards Otjimbingwe on the Swakop River: 'just outside Rehoboth, they were surprised by an Afrikaner commando, had their cattle taken, their wagons burnt and several people wounded and killed'.[107]

As a consequence of this Swartbooi-Herero alliance, Swartbooi were forced to flee |Anhes (Rehoboth) under attack by a commando led by Jan Jonker Afrikaner,[108] the Afrikaners having previously also acted to prevent alliance-building between Topnaar Nama of the !Khuiseb and Swartbooi Nama of Rehoboth.[109] The latter eventually settled at Salem on the Swakop River, described in 1866 by Een as:

> now an abandoned mission station inhabited by a Namaqua or Hottentot tribe under a chief with the name Svartberg [Swartbooi], the only Hottentot tribe living in peace with the Damara [Herero] people.[110]

From Salem they moved north to !Am-eib in the Erongo mountains (Figure 1.7), where Abraham Swartbooi (!Ábeb !Huisemab) was the Swartbooi leader at the time of William Coates Palgrave's commission to the territory in 1876.[111] They make it known that,

> [t]hey desire to move into the Kaoko country, but are not allowed to do so by the Damaras [Herero], who are afraid of permitting the growth of a Namaqua power on their northern frontier, certain as they are that the Zwartboois would be joined by many of the others [*sic*] Namaquas.[112]

Given the lack of water at !Am-eib, the Swartboois speak of a desire to move to 'Zesfontein', with Palgrave trying to persuade them to stay at !Am-eib on the grounds that the Cape government will construct a dam for water provision—a promise that does not appear to have been met.[113]

Fig. 1.7 Swartbooi Nama huts at !Am-eib at the Erongo/!Oe‡gā mountains in 1876. Source: photograph 2685 from Special Commissoner William Coates Palgrave expedition, © National Archives of Namibia, used with permission.

104 Lau (1994[1987]: 133, and references therein); also see Henrichsen (2011: 217)
105 Owen-Smith (1972: 32–33), Bollig (1998: 164, 2009: 330), Heydinger (2023: 90–91)
106 Stals (1991: 52)
107 *Ibid.*, p. 134 and references therein; also Wallace (2011: 61)
108 Lau/Andersson (1987: 104), |Uirab (2007: 21–22)
109 Köhler (1969: 110)
110 Rudner & Rudner (2004[1872]: 37)
111 Palgrave (1969[1877]: 25, 73), Lau/Andersson (1987: 100, 104). Abraham was the son of Willem Swartbooi and Anna !Abes, m. to Sara |Hoa|aras and |Kurisas, and father with |Kurisas of Lazarus Swartbooi—see |Uirab (2007: 21–22).
112 Palgrave (1961[1877]: 25, 75); Stals (1991: 65)
113 *Ibid.*, p. 222

Regarding Topnaar Nama who became key actors in the Sesfontein area in the late 1800s: the chronicle of Otjimbingwe for 1864 documents that Topnaar living in the !Khuiseb valley joined forces with the Swartbooi, heading northwards with missionary Johannes Böhm, settling first at !Am-eib, south of the Erongo/!Oe‡gā mountains (Figure 1.7),[114] where Damara/‡Nūkhoen also resided.[115] !Gomen Topnaar from south of the Walvis Bay area relocated northwards under their chief |Uixab, half of their group staying 'in their original territory' (i.e. !Gomes/Walvis Bay).[116] It was reportedly only around 1880, when water at !Am-eib became scarce, that the Swartbooi and the Topnaar moved northwards reaching Okombahe (!A‡gommes), Anixab, Otjitambi and Fransfontein. They also moved into Angola, via the eastern Kaokoveld and the Kunene River crossing that became known as Swartbooisdrift, and back again to settle at Otjitambi near Kamanjab in the late 1870s.[117] It is in the 1880s that reportedly 'groups led by Petrus and Abraham Zwartbooi carried out numerous raids from the Brandberg and Otjitambi against Herero in north-western Hereroland and the Kaokoveld as far as the Kunene': in 'an attempt to compensate for poverty, loss of power and loss of autonomy' in a context of expansionary ovaHerero and their cattle-herds.[118]

Simultaneously, this was a moment when an escalating dynamic of "Herero-Nama" raiding across complex and dynamic alliances broke out.[119] In the second week of August 1880, a Nama cow reportedly went missing from Gurumanus [‖Gurumâ!nâs] water-hole, west of Rehoboth, where ovaHerero and Nama cattle-posts were situated; leading to ovaHerero beating a Nama they suspected of stealing, and precipitating an armed clash in which 'Namas got the upper hand, killed most of the cattle-herders and abscond[ed] with nearly 1,500 head of [ancestral holy] Herero cattle'.[120] On hearing this news in Okahandja on 24 August, Kamaherero reportedly 'gave instructions that all the Namas in Damaraland were to be killed in revenge': 20 were allegedly killed that night in the Nama village at Okahandja; a few days later 'an estimated 200 Namas had been killed by the Hereros'.[121] A heavy struggle followed between Jan Jonker—fleeing Windhoek for Rehoboth—and ovaHerero in the Auas mountains, with Windhoek attacked by ovaHerero, partially destroying the mission station including the home of Rev. Schröder.[122]

These and other events precipitated withdrawal of the Cape Government from the "Transgariep" (i.e. the territory north of the Orange River or !Garib) and an intensification of conflict in the region. Swartboois at !Am-eib made attacks on Otjimbingwe, being joined by Topnaars at Rooibank under Piet Haibeb, and making the mobility of incoming traders very unsafe.[123] In 1880 Kamaherero reported to Palgrave that 'Kaoko Damaras' (ovaHerero) have killed 'some [of] Zwartbooi's people' in the vicinity of Sesfontein;[124] in 1883 Swartboois reportedly attacked a number of Herero cattle-posts;[125] and missionary Riechmann, based at Fransfontein from 1891, reports raids from Otjitambi in the 1880s to Owambo in the north and ovaHerero in the south.[126] Damara/‡Nūkhoen in west Namibia also suffered in these troubled times. Hundreds are reported to have fled to Omaruru from 1879 due to starvation following drought-induced death of their cattle,[127] and at times multiple Damara/‡Nūkhoen were reportedly killed by ovaHerero.[128] These losses surely played a role in their

114 In Köhler (1969: 111), also Palgrave (1961[1877]), Stals (1991)
115 As documented through a visit to them by Galton and Andersson in 1850 (Galton 1890[1853]: 50).
116 Vigne (1994: 7)
117 Köhler (1969: 111); also Otto Charles |Uirab, Acting Chief of the Swartbooi Nama Traditional Authority, pers. comm., meeting with S. Sullivan and W.S. Ganuses, Fransfontein, 18.9.2023.
118 Henrichsen (2011: 171, 174), translated by Sullivan from German with the help of Deepl Translate.
119 Drechsler (1966: 21)
120 Esterhuyse (1968: 29 and references therein)
121 *Ibid.*
122 *Ibid.*
123 *Ibid.*, p. 31
124 Stals (1991: 328, 336)
125 Esterhuyse (1968: 36)
126 Riechmann (n.d.: 2)
127 Henrichsen (2011: 187)
128 Palgrave 1880 in Stals (1991: 329–30)

submission to recruitment as indentured labourers to households and farms in the Cape Colony from 1879 into the 1880s.[129]

This is the context in which Jan Petrus |Unuweb |Uixamab of the !Gomen/Walvis Bay Topnaar became established as “kaptein” in Sesfontein, having succeeded his brother Hendrik Anibab |Uixamab, successor to his father |Uixab who died in the south before they moved northwards.[130] Jan |Uixamab’s arrival in Sesfontein attracted ‘people from the surrounding areas, as the emerging settlement offered new economic opportunities’, causing a centralisation of people in Sesfontein.[131] ‘Intensification of agricultural production’ (including of tobacco), accumulation of livestock, and the appropriation of water and grazing resources generated employment in herding and in newly established gardens; and ‘[y]oung men were enrolled into commandos, with which they engaged in raids and hunting trips and supervised herds’.[132] Integration was combined with territorial expansion, through ‘intermarriage and participation in the stock economy through loans and the inheritance of cattle’, as well as through herding at stock-posts in the broader landscape.[133] Rizzo reports from interviews with Herero associated with Sesfontein that forced coercion is rarely mentioned, although she also argues that Oorlam organisation of the Sesfontein economy involved ‘enforced patronage and loyalties’.[134]

In the 1880s and into the 1890s the Nama population in Sesfontein expanded to close to 500 including dependents (as estimated by missionary Riechmann, based in Fransfontein), a pattern mirrored in Warmquelle and Otjitambi: thriving garden economies established in Sesfontein and Fransfontein complemented Nama herd concentrations in these areas.[135] Plaits of tobacco (called *!nora*) were used to barter for small stock and sometimes cattle;[136] aromatic *sâi* plants were collected by Damara/ǂNūkhoen in especially the Sirib mountains west of Sesfontein (Figure 1.8) for trade elsewhere; and Damara/ǂNūkhoen were recruited to collect ǂ*ao-haib* (*Caroxylon* sp. formerly *Salsola*) to make soap for washing the fabric clothes worn by the Nama (Figure 1.9). Franz |Haen ǁHoëb of Sesfontein provides a flavour of these circumstances:

> in the past people used to cook with this plant (ǂ*ao*) to make soap for washing […] they burnt the plant and took the ash to mix with cow fat, and they cook it and when it is ready for cutting they put it out, and when it is cool then they cut it with the knife into pieces and use this soap for washing the clothes. […] In the past it was only Nama people who have the material clothes that need washing. ǂNūkhoen just help, and learn from the Namas how to make the soap. They carried the wood [of ǂ*ao*] and they bring this wood and they cook that soap for the Namas. And the Nama people gave them food for this work. At that time ǂNūkhoen were only wearing skins which do not need washing with soap.[137]

Fig. 1.8 Sirib mountains west of Sesfontein/!Nani|aus, where aromatic plants were once gathered for *sâi* (perfume). Photo: © Sian Sullivan, 21.11.2015, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

129 Henrichsen (2008: 63–64); see Stals (1991: 357)
130 van Warmelo (1962[1951]: 41), Vigne (1994: 8)
131 Rizzo (2012: 32, 107)
132 *Ibid.*, pp. 32, 45, 107
133 *Ibid.*, pp. 32–33
134 *Ibid.*, pp. 45–46
135 *Ibid.*, pp. 32, 60, and references therein
136 *Ibid.*, p. 46
137 Franz |Haen ǁHoëb, Dubis, 9.5.2019.

Fig. 1.9 ǂ*Ao-haib* (*Caroxylon* sp., formerly *Salsola*) in the Hoanib River west of Sesfontein, formerly used to make soap for clothes washing. Photo: © Sian Sullivan, 21.11.2015, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

It might be argued that accounts of historical Nama viciousness and ovaHerero victimisation in the Kaokoveld start with two biases that linger in contemporary conservation engagements in Kunene. The first is a perspective of ovaHerero historical presence and Nama/Khoekhoegowab absence in the north-west, permitting the singular narrative outlined above of Herero displacement by incoming Nama 'hordes'.[138] A number of sources, however, indicate the presence of Khoekhoegowab-speaking peoples in north-western parts of Namibia prior to the mid-1800s, their lasting legacy being the numerous Khoekhoegowab names for rivers and springs throughout the region: Hoanib, Hoarusib, Gomadom, Sechomib, Khumib, !Uniab, ǁHuab and !Uǂgab for the westward flowing ephemeral rivers whose dense vegetation and subsurface water offer lifelines in this arid landscape; and Puros, Auses, Dumita, Ganias, Sarusa and Kai-as for places where springs made it possible for people to live and access important food and forage plants in this dryland area.[139] Indeed, wide-diameter (around 4 m) circles of hut anchor stones with a central fireplace and room divider have been found near the !Uniab river mouth (now within the Skeleton Coast National Park, SCNP) and dated to *ca.* 1,000-1,300; these are consistent with Nama/Khoe reed-mat hut construction[140] (as discussed in Chapter 12). Review of sources and oral history research also indicates the historical presence of Khoekhoegowab-speaking ǂNūkhoen as well as Hai‖om in many localities in Etosha-Kunene, contributing to the presence of Khoekhoegowab names throughout the area.[141]

The second connected bias is an almost complete absenting of Damara/ǂNūkhoen and ǁUbun histories in Etosha-Kunene, despite the presence of these peoples, sometimes in large numbers, as indicated in many historical sources.[142] Some academic analyses of "the Kaokoveld" seem to downplay the histories and perspectives of Khoekhoegowab-speakers.[143] As an example, Bollig and Heinemann-Bollig write that,

> ephemeral rivers of the western Kaokoveld have Damara names (*Hoanib*, *Hoarusib*, *Huab*, *Khumib*), despite the fact that mainly Himba or Tjimba settled along them (perhaps with the exception of the Huab [ǁHuab]). [Georg] Hartmann already used these river names. Since there was no Damara population

138 Owen-Smith (2010), Bollig (2020), Heydinger (2023)
139 Sullivan (2022)
140 Blümel *et al.* (2009: 136), J Kinahan (2020: 263)
141 Dieckmann (2007a), Sullivan & Ganuses (2020, 2021a), ǁGaroes (2021)
142 Reviewed in Sullivan & Ganuses (2020)
143 Bollig (2020)

> settled along these rivers at the time, it is possible that the travellers' Damara servants had entered these names in the travelogues.[144]

The Georg Hartmann mentioned here was a key actor in the circumstances of north-west Namibia under German colonisation, as considered in more detail in Section 1.3.1. He may indeed have deployed 'Damara servants' on his expeditions from Otavi to the Kaokoveld in the 1890s, but archival sources show that he definitely relied heavily on the knowledge of 'Swartbooi Nama' who guided him through this remote area and shared with him the known names of rivers and places in the region. For example, in a report by Hartmann to the colonial administration, which was building up to a suppression of the resistance by diverse Indigenous Africans in the so-called Swartbooi/Grootberg Uprising of 1897–1898 (see Section 1.3.2), it is a Johannes Swartbooi, based in the areas of Otjitambi and Fransfontein, who is named as a lead guide for Hartmann's Kaokoveld expeditions.[145] Multiple other sources document the presence of Khoekhoegowab-speakers in these areas of the north-west in the late 1800s, as reviewed in Chapters 12 and 13.

Indeed, historical and oral history sources indicate that a southwards movement of Nama pastoralists prior to the so-called "ovaKuena wars" of the late 1800s was itself precipitated by ovaHerero south-eastwards migration into central Namibia in around the late 1700s, reportedly stimulated by poor rains in Kaoko.[146] This expansion impacted Nama and Damara/ǂNūkhoen residing in these areas, cutting off '[t]he more northerly Toppners [ǂAonin] […] from all communication with those about Walfisch Bay'.[147] Thus, '[a]t the beginning of the 19th century the Topnaar are said to have reached the mouth of the Swakop (tsoa-xou-b)', their migration perhaps 'related to the advance of the Herero into the Kaokoveld':[148] accounts that iterate similar observations by Captain James Edward Alexander in 1837,[149] and anthropologist Winifred Hoernlé in the early 1900s:[150] discussed further in Chapter 12.

The erasure and delegitimising of the histories of Khoekhoegowab-speaking peoples in some analyses of Namibia's north-west contribute to contemporary marginalisation of Khoekhoegowab-speakers in Etosha-Kunene. It is arguably a reason why their concerns in relation to current conservation and land designations remain poorly understood or engaged with (see Chapters 3, 12 and 13).[151] In sum, German colonisation enters the scene at a time of immense fluidity and change in Etosha-Kunene, the implications of which reverberate into the present.

1.3 German colonisation

In the early 1880s, German businessman Adolf Lüderitz announced his intention 'to establish a trading-post along the South West African coast', simultaneously requesting 'German protection', confirmed by Imperial Chancellor Bismarck in 1884.[152] Lüderitz's representative, 20-year-old Heinrich Vogelsang, agreed a land purchase from Captain Josef Fredericks of Bethanie encompassing Angra Pequeña Bay (now Lüderitz in !Nami‡gûs Constituency) and adjoining territory: later extended down to the Orange River, this large area becoming known as "Lüderitzland".[153] Following a complex series of negotiations between Germany and Britain, in 1884 Germany annexed the

144 Bollig & Heinemann-Bollig (2004: 270, italics in the original)
145 Dr Hartmann's report to Lt. Ziegler [with instruction from von Lindequist to send to Berlin], Marked secret, 13.12.1897, NAN-ZBU 440 D IVf, vol. 1: 45–49. All NAN-ZBU 440 D IVf documents were transcribed from German Kurrent handwritten texts by historian Wolfram Hartmann, translated into English by Sian Sullivan with the help of DeepL Translator, the translations being checked by Hartmann.
146 Galton (1852: 144)
147 *Ibid.*, p. 157, ǁGaroes (2021)
148 Köhler (1969: 106); also see Moritz (1992: 5)
149 Alexander (2006[1838], vol. 2: 72–74, 102)
150 Hoernlé (1925); also see Budack (1983: 5) and Vigne (1994: 6)
151 Sullivan (2003), Pellis (2011)
152 Esterhuyse (1968: 47, 52); also Olusoga & Erichsen (2010: 38)
153 Esterhuyse (1968: 39–40)

territory, with some exceptions such as the Walvis Bay enclave claimed by Britain.[154] This new colonial state impetus had significant implications for land and society in Etosha-Kunene. Land, "natural resources" and people became incorporated into commercial enterprises linked to increasingly militarised state protection. The first German *Schutztruppe*—Protectorate troops of the German Colonial Company for South West Africa—arrived in the late 1880s and were reinforced in subsequent years.[155] Many Schutztruppe personnel derived from distinguished military families and Prussian nobility, and were later incorporated into the colony's 'land police' (*Landespolizei*).[156]

In this section we first outline processes of state incorporation, as these played out in Etosha-Kunene through treaties permitting commercial access to resources, as well as through intensified hunting and missionary activity. We then look at the radically disruptive impacts of rinderpest in the late 1890s, and its links in Etosha-Kunene to Indigenous resistance and the militarised suppression that ultimately made possible colonial appropriation of formerly inhabited lands. We conclude by considering the emergence of formal state policy regarding so-called game, and the establishment of "game reserves" in the wake of these disruptions.

1.3.1 State colonial incorporation: Treaties, hunting, missionaries

At the end of January 1885, an agent of Lüderitz called Waldemar Belck left Walvis Bay for 'the Kaokoveld', holding conferences at Otjitambi—a big waterhole north-west of Kamanjab—with the Swartbooi captain Cornelius Swartbooi (|Hôa-|arab !Âbemab[157]) for 'the purchase of their territory';[158] also claimed by Kamaherero.[159] Belck was joined by Ludwig Kock who had recently obtained 'a very favourable mining concession from Jan Jonker [Afrikaner]' further south.[160] On 19 June, Kock "bought" 'the Kaokoveld from Cornelius Swartbooi', excluding Okombahe (!A‡gommes/'Nattbout') and its grazing lands [which in around 1873 had been allocated to 'Berg Damaras'], for R200, with R10 to be received by the Swartbooi for 'every mine worked in the territory':

> [t]he border went from Omaruru to the mouth of the Omaruru River, along the coast as far as Cape Frio, from there to Swartboois Drift on the Kunene River and then via Nattbout [Okombahe/!A‡gommes] and Ameib [!Am-eib] to Omaruru.[161]

German scientist Waldemar Belck also conducted anthropometric measurements at Otjitambi.[162] Kock subsequently went 'to the section of the Topnaar tribe living at Sesfontein under Captain Jan Uichamab [|Uixamab]', receiving on 4 July 'a declaration from them in which they relinquished their claim to the Kaokoveld and acknowledged the contract of sale with Cornelius Swartbooi', from which would be excluded Sesfontein and its grazing lands 'which would remain the Topnaars' private property': the Topnaars received R100 for their rights, again with R10 for 'every mine worked in the territory'.[163] Lüderitz thus acquired 'the right of development and utilisation of all mineral resources' for the 'coastal strip' from 22°S (around the mouth of the Omaruru/‖Eseb River) to Cape Frio, 'while the captains reserved control over their places of residence and their pastures'.[164] As Rizzo writes, these treaties are the first written official documents through

154 *Ibid.*, pp. 46–62
155 *Ibid.*, p. 128, Drechsler (1966: 69, 95)
156 Gordon (2009: 39), Muschalek (2020[2019])
157 |Uirab (2007: 22)
158 Esterhuyse (1968: 95). Rizzo (2012: 32) writes that Belck finds Otjitambi occupied by Topnaar (!Gomen) and Swartbooi families under Jan |Uixamab's (!Gomen) leadership.
159 Henrichsen (2010: 104)
160 Esterhuyse (1968: 94)
161 *Ibid.*, p. 95
162 Förster *et al.* (2016: online)
163 Esterhuyse (1968: 95); also Rudner & Rudner (2007: 170)
164 Rizzo (2012: 63–64); also see Hesse (1906: 98), Esterhuyse (1968: 107), Rudner & Rudner (2007: 170)

which the north-west Oorlam Nama leadership formally expressed their claim to the north-west,[165] subsequent to Kamaherero's claim expressed to Palgrave in 1876, as per Figure 1.3. This 1880s process involved negotiation of 'a detailed territorial outline of the region', later drawn on in the establishment of colonial companies intended to control extractive possibilities, see Figure 1.10 below.[166] The Swartbooi/|Uixamab "sale" of rights to this large area of the north-west was contested by Herero Captain Manasse at Omaruru, in a meeting at Okahandja with Dr Göring of the colonial administration:

> [a]fter he had learnt of the sale of the Kaokoveld the previous July, Manasse had put his objections to this to the Kaiser. Although the territory was not being inhabited by the Hereros at that moment, it was [considered] Herero land and neither the Topnaars nor the Swartbooi Hottentots had any right to sell it. Dr. Göring tried to settle the matter by reprimanding Cornelius Swartbooi. He pointed out to the Swartbooi captain that he and his tribe had only settled at Otjitambi in the Kaokoveld in 1882 and therefore did not own the territory [although see Section 1.2.3 for background here]. It would have been much better if they had first obtained the permission of the Hereros at Omaruru before they had sold the territory. In the same breath Dr. Göring strongly advised Cornelius Swartbooi to place himself under German protection.[167]

By 1887, and under the leadership of Cornelius, the Swartboois had settled in Fransfontein where, from December 1891, they were joined by RMS missionary Heinrich Riechmann.[168] Riechmann tells of people he calls 'Bergdamara' (i.e. ǂNūkhoen) living in the larger area around Fransfontein who 'were resettled to Tsumamas, a fountain about 25kms east of Fransfontein [… also with] good soils for gardening and plenty of water'.[169] In the early 1890s, the RMS established a mission station at Tsumamas/Otjimbuima under missionary Friedrich Kremer especially for so-called 'Bergdamara' who came from *werfts* (dwelling places) in all directions: this was abandoned soon after for ǁGaub near Otavi, established as the future station for those settled at Tsumamas.[170] In the mid-1880s, the director of the Botanical Museum of Zurich (Hans Schinz) journeyed through German South West Africa (GSWA),[171] similarly encountering a number of 'Bergdamara' huts at 'Otjovasandu' (also ǂKhoabendus): he reports the area as rich in open water pools and pasture, with large antelope herds, springbok especially, caught in snares attached to trees and consumed alongside veld foods; a 'Bergdamara' bringing him a fur bag filled with berries.[172] In 1893, some groups of 'Bergdamara' (around 200 people) led by their leader !Naruseb [!Nauriseb[173]] arrived at Okombahe from Sesfontein, complaining that |Uixamab's people made war on them, and asking those at Okombahe to accommodate them.[174] In the late 1800s both Jan |Uixamab of Sesfontein and Cornelius Swartbooi of Fransfontein wrote to the Rhenish Mission Society (RMS) requesting missionaries (on which more below).[175]

Further east, William Worthington Jordan, a "mixed race" trader from the Cape, and Kambonde (son of Ndonga king Kampingana), reached an agreement with regard to a 25,000 km^2 concession of land for Trekboer in Angola associated with Jordan: the concession stretched between Grootfontein, Otavi, Etosha Pan (with Okaukeujo and Ombika as the western boundary), and the Waterberg.[176] Kambonde and his father ceded to Jordan a piece of land of around 957 geographical square

165 Rizzo (2012: 63–65)
166 *Ibid.*
167 Esterhuyse (1968: 107)
168 Riechmann (n.d.), |Uirab (2007: 22), Schnegg & Pauli (2007: 12), Rizzo (2012: 68)
169 Schnegg & Pauli (2007: 12), Schnegg (2007: 251–52)
170 Moritz (2015: 9)
171 Kranz (2016: 78)
172 Schinz (1891: 140–141)
173 As recorded in interviews in Sesfontein with Nathan ǂÛina Taurob (1995-96), Philippine |Hairo ǁNowaxas (1999) and Ruben Sanib (2015–2019).
174 Köhler (1959: 35)
175 *Ibid.*, p. 68
176 Dieckmann (2007a: 48) and references therein.

miles in the south-east corner of Ondonga's area, reportedly against the payment of 25 muskets, a "salted horse" (i.e. a horse with resistance to sickness[177]), and a cask of brandy.[178] This "Republic of Upingtonia" was proclaimed in 1885 with 46 Boers signing an agreement as citizens of the new Republic, and the land subdivided by Jordan although he 'retained the mineral and trading rights for the whole area'.[179] The farmers here had to cope with "Bushmen" attacks on a daily basis,[180] with at least two Upingtonia settlers (Todd and du Toit) being shot.[181] Like Manasse in relation to the Kaokoveld, when Kamaherero heard about the Upingtonia contract he also laid claim to the area, but without success.[182] In June 1886, Jordan was murdered in Ovamboland by '[p]eople of the chief Nehale of Ondangwa' (Kambonde's brother), rumoured to have acted on behalf of Kamaherero; after which the Republic of Upingtonia was dissolved and the area placed under German protection.[183]

In 1895 a Johannes Kruger was appointed by German governor Leutwein as 'Captain of the natives' of Grootfontein—namely 'Bushmen and Damaras and of all people who lived at Ghaub' [‖Gaub]—who were required to recognise German sovereignty.[184] At !Naidaus south of Etosha Pan, German Captain von Estorff re-negotiated a 'protection treaty' (*Schutsvertrag*) with a 'Captein Aribib', incorporating environmental permissions and restrictions:

> [t]he Bushmen cede to the German government the entire territory to which they believed up to now to have claimed. It extends from the area of Outjo up to the area of Grootfontein. The northern limit is the Etosha Pan. The southern limit is formed by the northernmost werfts of the Hereros. In return, the German government promises to provide the Bushmen with security and protection from everyone. The Bushmen may not be driven away from the waterhole !Naidaus, where they are presently. They are also entitled at all times and everywhere on their former territory to collect veldkos. In return, they promise not to oppose the settlement of German farmers, but to be of assistance to them and to remain on good terms with them. In particular they promise not to set grass fires. Captein Aribib vows to remain always loyal to the German government and to meet its requirements with good will. He receives, as long as he fulfils this obligation, an annual salary of 500 marks. For every grass fire noted in the area described in paragraph 1, 20-50 marks will be deducted.[185]

In 1893 the German colonial company for South West Africa (*Deutsche Kolonial-Gesellschaft für Südwest-Afrika*) transferred the rights it had acquired from Lüderitz (in 1885) to Hirsch and Co., later the Kaoko Land and Mining Company (*Kaoko Land und Minen Gesellschaft*, KLMG), reportedly for £45,000.[186] The KLMG's commercial rights were considered to involve the land depicted in Figure 1.10a—an area now lodged in popular consciousness as "Kaoko" or "Kaokoveld",[187] although this 'Kaoko identity' does not necessarily match Indigenous framings of this territory (see Chapter 13).[188] The company was represented by surveyor Dr Georg Hartmann in strategic alliance with German colonial governor Leutwein.[189] Hartmann thereby became a key actor in the fate and fortunes of

177 Vandenbergh (2010: 245)
178 Mouton (1995: 52); also Dieckmann (2007a: 48) drawing on Gordon (1992: 41)
179 Dieckmann (2007a: 48); also Mouton (1995: 52) and the detailed fictionalised account by historian W.A. de Klerk (1977)
180 Gordon (1992: 41)
181 Dieckmann (2007a: 48–49) and references therein
182 *Ibid.*
183 *Ibid.*, p. 49 drawing especially on Mouton (1995: 54) and Schinz (1891: 352); also Gordon (1992: 41)
184 Union of South Africa (1918: 148), Gordon (2009: 38)
185 ZBU W II.2043, cited by Gordon (1989: 145), original reproduced in Friederich (2009: 54–55). Also see Dieckmann (2007a: 66). According to Gordon (1998: 146) Aribib was later (1904) shot near Namutoni on the instructions of Owambo Chief Nehale, for killing ovaHerero at Namutoni during the German-Herero war, 1904–1908. Friederich, drawing on the memories of an elderly Hai‖om man, Jan ‖Oreseb, explains instead that an ǂArixab, seemingly the same person, was first chased by ovaHerero because he had supported the Germans in the war, and was eventually struck dead by the Herero (Friederich 2009: 59). Although a recipient of a pension from the German government, Aribib reportedly later joined the rebellion against expanding colonial rule (Rohrbach 1909: 142). For further discussion see Chapter 15.
186 Esterhuyse (1968: 92–93), Owen-Smith (1972: 29)
187 Hartmann (1897: 118)
188 Sullivan & Ganuses (2021a), Sullivan (2022)
189 Esterhuyse (1968: 202), Bollig & Heinemann (2002: 271), Rizzo (2012: 63–64)

the peoples of this area. His first 'Kaoko-Feld' expedition in 1894 travelled from Otavi to Otjitambi, along the Hoanib River to 'Seßfontein', and then to the coast; returning southwards on the gravel plains across the !Uniab and ǁHuab rivers to a meeting point at Sorris-Sorris east of the Brandberg; then back to the limestone concession area of the South West Africa Co., south of Etosha (also see Chapter 12).[190] His second expedition to investigate 'a route for transporting copper by rail from the Otavi area to the coast, and to explore the coast for a suitable harbour',[191] as well as to examine 'the whole coast of the ǂUgab-river north of Cape Cross to the Kunene mouth for guano and landing sites',[192] involved military personnel who in 1897–1898 were deployed to suppress insurgency in the north-west (see Section 1.3.2).

Hartmann's north-west expeditions drew attention to the prolific indigenous fauna and spectacular scenery of the area. On reaching the Kunene River via the Marienfluss, he writes:

> [t]he enormous abundance of game in the whole northern area was remarkable, it is a true El Dorado for the hunter for all antelope species up to the rare rooibuck [impala, *Aepyceros melampus*] and waterbuck [?], one sees ostrich herds up to 100 animals; the elephant appears in herds, the giraffe [*Giraffa camelopardalis angolensis*] in smaller troops, and the isolated rhinoceros. The traces of lions are numerous, they only clear the field where the elephant appears, and they move with the big antelope-herds which move around to the good grass-grazing pastures in the country.[193]

Eberhard Rosenblad, a Swedish navy captain who accompanied Hartmann's second Kaokoveld expedition in 1895–96 confirmed that:

> [t]he further north we went, the more plentiful became the supply of game. We encountered giraffe on several occasions. Here they occurred in herds, and then we had our fill of their delicate marrowbones. Gemsbok [*Oryx gazella*] were also plentiful.[194]

Rosenblad describes hunting elephant on a moonlit night, near Kaoko Otavi:

> [w]hen the elephants had finally had enough water inside as well as outside and prepared to move off, we selected the two biggest ones for sacrifice. They were shot behind their shoulders and did not get very far before they collapsed. […] When we reached the dead animals, we found that our booty consisted of two big males, but that their teeth—in this country the hunters usually use this word instead of "tusks"—were broken and also otherwise damaged.
>
> As the method of hunting that we had had to employ on this occasion was unsporting and could be regarded as unnecessary slaughter, we decided never to use it again. It is a different matter when you encounter the animals in daytime and in the open veld.[195]

The infrequent references by Hartmann and Rosenblad to their local guides suggests that they rendered somewhat invisible the presence of these key local actors, bringing to the fore their own agency and instrumentalising surveillance of the Northern Namib and the 'Kaoko-Feld'. The presence throughout the north-west landscape of local peoples is similarly glossed over (as well as strongly racialised). Nonetheless, Hartmann notes numerous peoples in these areas: 'Berg-Damara' in mountainous areas of the 'southern part of the Kaoko-Feld', as well as 'numerously at the Brandberg, on whose plateaus small independent tribes still live, practising small animal husbandry (sheep and goat breeding), and [also] north to the |Uni!ãb [!Uniab] and Franzfontein'; ovaHerero in the north-eastern Kaokoveld, their relatives migrating south-eastwards; and 'Zwartboois' and 'Toppnaers' Nama at Fransfontein and Seßfontein, feared by northern ovaHerero but who 'rendered outstanding services' as guides and '[a]t my instigation […] recognized German patronage in 1894'.[196]

190 Hartmann (1897)
191 Rudner & Rudner (2007: 6)
192 Hartmann (1897: 128)
193 *Ibid.*, p. 134
194 Rosenblad (2007[1924]: 85)
195 *Ibid.*, pp. 89–92
196 Hartmann (1897: 136–37)

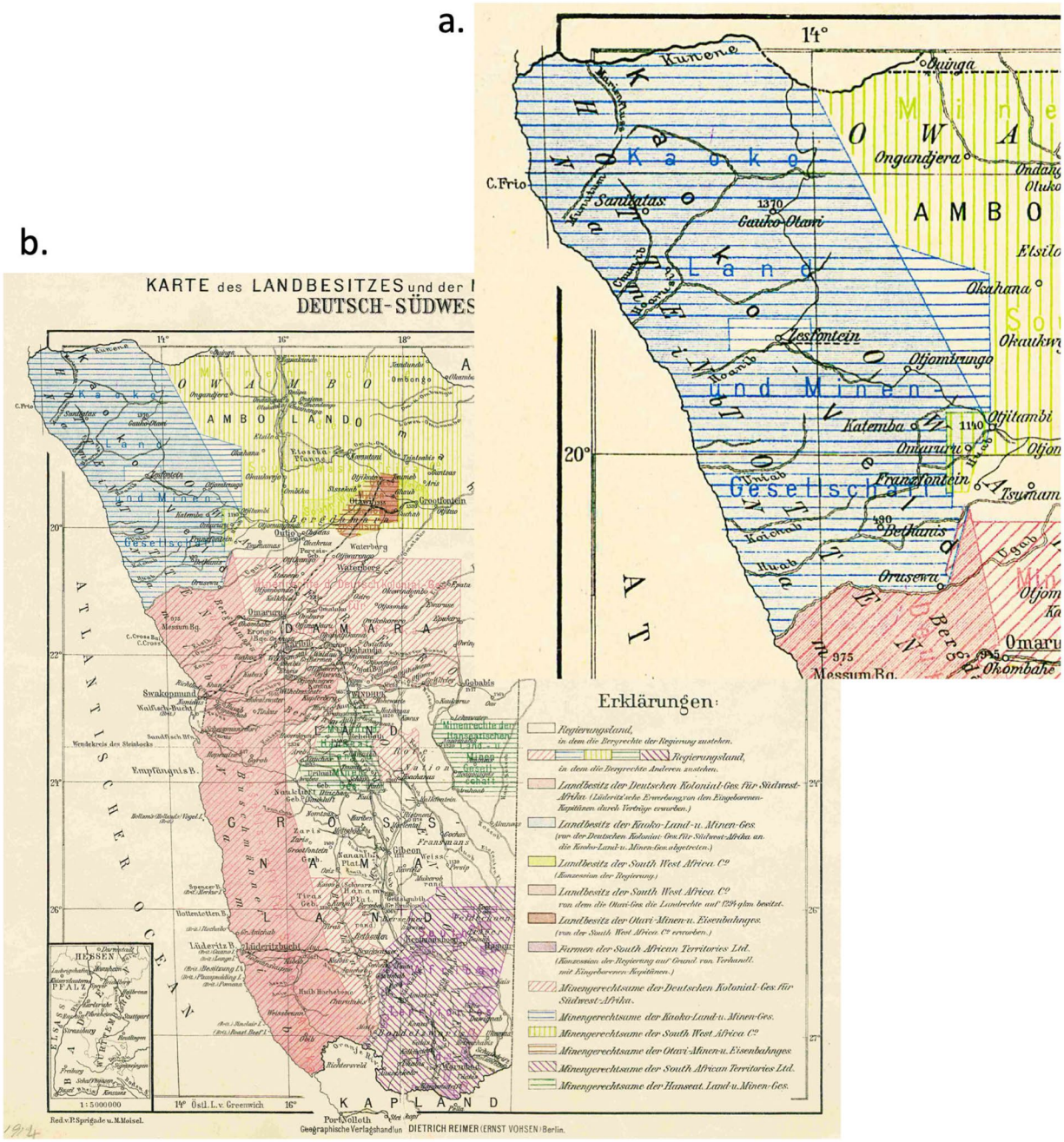

Fig. 1.10 'Karte des Landbesitzes und der Minengerechtsame in Deutsch-Südwestafrika' (Map of Land Ownership and Mining Rights in German South-West Africa), by Max Moisel and Paul Sprigade 1914, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz: a) detail of the Kaoko Land und Minen Gesellschaft area; b. full map. Source: Public domain image, via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Karte_des_Landbesitzes_und_der_Minengerechtsame_in_Deutsch-S%C3%BCdwestafrika.jpg, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

Indeed, in the vicinity of Sanitatis north of Sesfontein, Hartmann and Rosenblad were 'visited by the important chief Jan Ugamab [|Uixamab], who arrived from his headquarters at Zesfontein accompanied by about 40 of his subjects'.[197] The area 'south of Etosha, which was still full of elephants and other wildlife' is described as 'only inhabited by bushmen and few mountain-Damara'.[198] The German Colonial Handbook (*Deutsche Kolonial-Handbuch*) first published in 1896 provides an illuminating description of Nama settlement in the north-west in this year:

197 Rosenblad (2007[1924]: 89–92)
198 Hartmann (1897: 136–37)

> [t]he mat houses of the Zwartbooi Hottentots, of which there are about 450, form a wide circle around the spring [at Franzfontein]. The water is bright and clear, free of any bad taste; it is a little warm at the spring, but cools down quickly. The surrounding area is rich in bushes and trees to the south, east and west, and there are several small springs, some of which are good pastures. The view is limited by a low mountain range. Franzfontein offers a good passage through the mountains on the way north. A gate leads to Otjitambi (copper mine), inhabited by Zwartboois people, and to Zesfontein, the six-spring place, where a part of the Topnars, belonging to the Hottentots of the Walfischbai, is currently staying.[199]

A feature of colonial encounters with African peoples throughout Etosha-Kunene in the 1890s is the increasing use of photography to provide a visual record, with accompanying narratives illustrating how colonial actors sought to understand and delineate ethnic identities and to link these with specific localities. Figure 1.11 provides one set of images and their locations from this decade, including: ‘ovaTjimba’ in the far north-west of what is now Kunene Region; so-called ‘Bergdamara’ [ǂNūkhoen] close to the west of Etosha Pan; so-called ‘Bushmen’ [Hai‖om] north of Etosha Pan; ‘Swartbooi Nama’ [‖Khau-|gôan], south of Etosha Pan; and so-called ‘Seebushmanner’ [‖Ubun] at the Hoanib River mouth.[200]

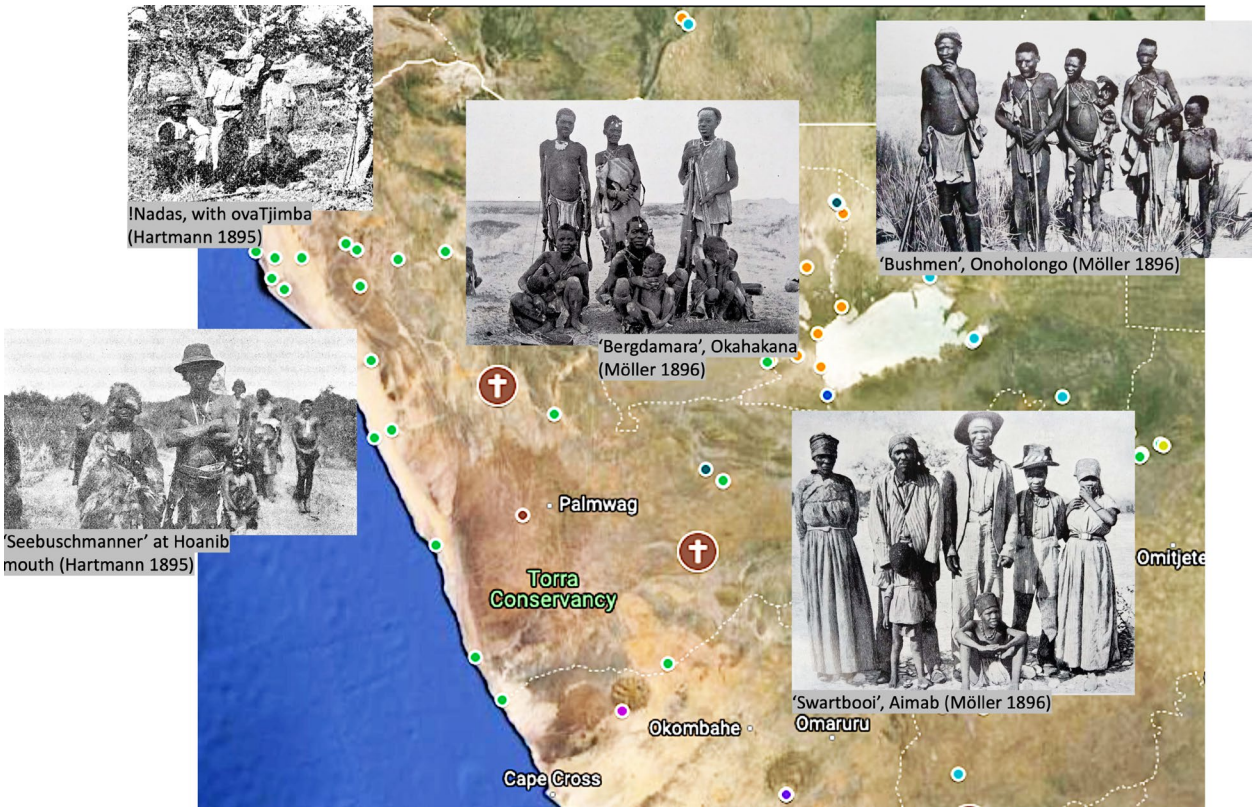

Fig. 1.11 Photographed encounters with diverse peoples across Etosha-Kunene in the 1890s. Sources: Hartmann (1897: 123, 129) and Rudner & Rudner [Möller] (1974[1899]: opp. 147, 162), out of copyright. Map prepared by Sian Sullivan using Google Maps (the coloured dots represent selected colonial travellers’ journeys, see Figure 1.2): Map data © 2024 Google, INEGI Imagery © 2024 NASA, TerraMetrics, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

Already in the mid-1880s, the German colonial government was also attempting to fix the northern boundary with Portugal, ‘yet neither country had any jurisdiction over the Ovambo’,[201] whilst borders between Kaokoland and the western Owambo kingdoms (Uukwaluudhi, Uokuolonkadhi, Ongandjera) remained open.[202] As had occurred in the 1860s further south (see Section 1.1.3), in the 1880s and 1890s, European hunters and traders became increasingly concerned about competition

199 Fitzner (1896: 214–15)
200 Hartmann (1897: 123, 129), Rudner & Rudner [Möller] (1974[1899]: opp. 147, 162)
201 Rudner & Rudner (2007: 8)
202 Bollig (1998: 166)

from Oorlam Nama also seeking to exploit the wildlife resources of the north-west. In the late 1800s, Axel Eriksson had a hunting camp south of the Kunene River and, like KLMG surveyor Dr Georg Hartmann in 1900, reports large Portuguese hunting parties crossing the Kunene into Kaoko,[203] competing with Oorlam hunters.[204] In these years Mossamedes, the most important harbour on the southwest Angolan coast, was the main outlet for ivory from north-western Namibia.[205] The '[s]cope and scale of Oorlam involvement in the underground trade [in southern Angola] would trouble the SWA colonial administration in the making',[206] encouraging moves towards its suppression. Between 1885 and 1907 Angola Boers took part 'as volunteers in ten expeditions against [so-called] insurgent natives', playing 'an important part in the subjugation of the remote territories of Angola to Portuguese authority'.[207] In 1890 Angola Trekboers fought Petrus Swartbooi and associates, and in a 'final clash' in 1893 Nama in Angola were 'soundly defeated and did not venture to cross the Kunene again': reportedly 37 Nama and two Trekboer were killed in this event.[208] Conflict such as this is perhaps a contributing factor that explains why David Swartbooi of Otjitambi signed a protection treaty with the German colonial government (Figure 1.12), even though his captaincy was not recognised by all, with Lazarus Swartbooi considered the leader at Fransfontein.[209]

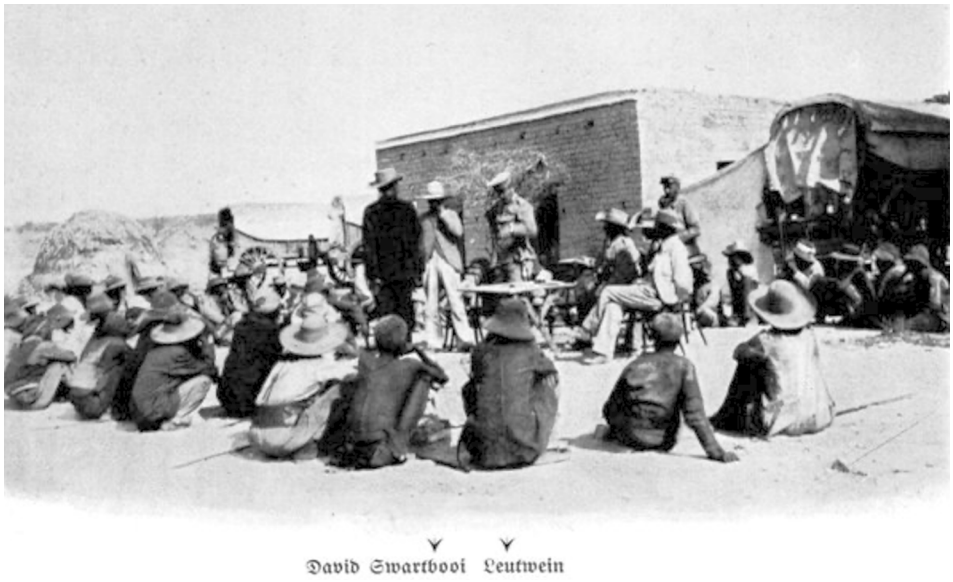

Fig. 1.12 'Negotiation with the Swartboois and Topnaars September 1895', Outjo. Source: Leutwein (1906: 66, out of copyright).

These are the dynamic colonial circumstances into which the critically disruptive 'agent' of rinderpest appeared in 1897,[210] precipitating heightened colonial control, intensified Indigenous insurgence, militarised colonial response, and ultimately systematic appropriation of land and livestock.

203 Rudner & Rudner (2006: 192) in Rizzo (2012: 40)
204 Wadley (1979: 13) after Rudner & Rudner [Möller] (1974[1899]: 33)
205 Bollig & Olwage (2016: 63) referencing Siiskonen (1990: 148)
206 Rizzo (2012: 43)
207 Rudner & Rudner [Möller] (1974[1899]: 181)
208 *Ibid.*, p. 179
209 Rizzo (2012: 64-65), GSWA (n.d.: 414)
210 cf. Kalb (2022: 90–97)

1.3.2 Rinderpest, colonial control and Indigenous resistance

The rinderpest epidemic arrived in the Horn of Africa in the late 1880s, 'possibly carried by Indian cattle imported into Eritrea by the Italian colonists'.[211] In June 1896, an import ban 'on all ruminants and their products' was 'issued by German military command', beginning attempts to halt this highly contagious disease, which affected cattle and other cloven-hooved animals such as buffalo and large antelope like eland and kudu.[212] Rinderpest is described as spreading 'through the country "like a tempest"': German authorities estimated that '50% of the country's cattle herd perished within the first six months of the panzootic and over the next year up to 90% mortality was reported among Herero herds in the central highlands'.[213] The death of some 90% of cattle in southern Angola pushed pastoralists further into the Portuguese colonial economy, including working as mercenaries with Trekboers as the Portuguese sought to contain rebellions of oshiWambo-speaking peoples in southern Angola.[214] This is the context in which leaders such as Vita Thom enhanced their regional power to become powerful headmen and raiders of livestock in the north-west in the early 1900s,[215] stimulating south-westerly movements of ovaHimba from north-east Kaokoveld (as documented in Section 1.2.3).

Following a conference on the rinderpest crisis convened in late August 1896 by the British Cape Colony at Vryburg (British Bechuanaland, now Botswana),[216] a "defense line" or *Absperrline* was established to control movement of livestock between northern "native" areas and southern and central European settlement areas.[217] This cordon consisted of a chain of military outposts, some of which became permanent after the pandemic ran its course, a situation with lasting effects for Indigenous inhabitants.[218] The 'northern district' centred on Outjo, where a military station had been established by Leutwein in 1895,[219] officially charged with controlling the spread of rinderpest and trade in livestock.[220] The four most north-western stations were located from west to east at Tsawisis in the west (south-east of Khorixas), Omaruru on thRiver, Kauas-Okawa/Okaua, to Okaukuejo (the largest station), from which it ran along the southern margin of the Etosha Pan towards the next station at Namutoni: see Figure 1.13.[221] A roughly 30 km neutral zone or 'no go' area was proclaimed north of the line, 'defined by the specific water holes that were banned from use'[222]—the clearance of which echoes to this day in visions of this area as a 'wildlife corridor' rather than a livestock-herding and inhabited area (see Chapters 3, 13 and 14). Additional 'military outposts along the east-west axis at Grootfontein, Otavifontein, Naidaus, and Fransfontein', began to 'sever any alliance between the Owambo and Herero regions'.[223] Fransfontein, which by this year had a mission congregation under missionary Riechmann of 460 people or half the Swartbooi of the area, was thus positioned *inside* the Police Zone. Sesfontein, which had gained the young evangelist Nicodemus Kido (also 'Gaseb') after a visit by Riechmann—as well as most of 'Kaoko'—was beyond this 'red line'.[224]

211 Olusoga & Erichsen (2010: 98–99)
212 Miescher (2012: 22); also Mackenzie (1988: 48)
213 Rohde & Hoffman (2012: 278)
214 Bollig (1998: 164)
215 *Ibid.*, Friedman (2014[2011])
216 Miescher (2012: 20)
217 *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 19
218 *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 33
219 Rudner & Rudner (2007: 169) and references therein
220 Rizzo (2012: 66)
221 Miescher (2012: 23–33), also Rizzo (2012: 59)
222 Miescher (2012: 26)
223 *Ibid.*, p. 22
224 Rizzo (2012: 59, 69)

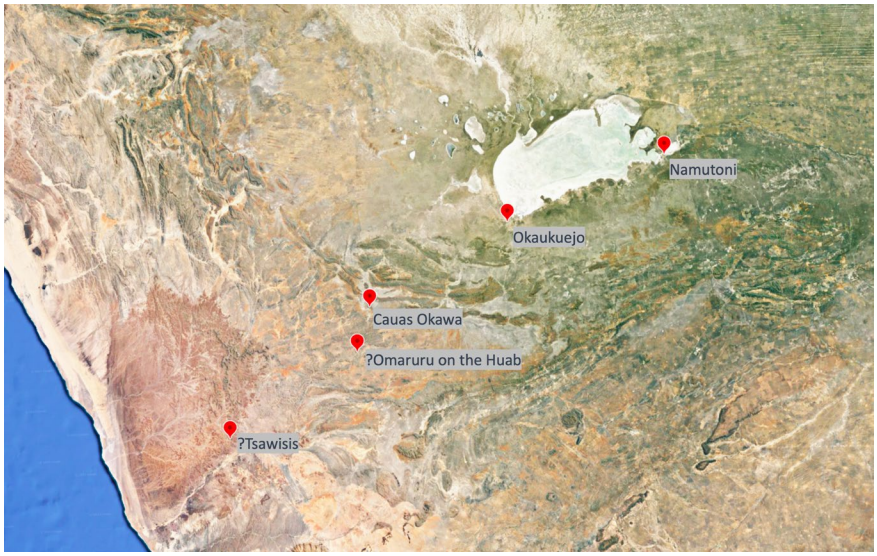

Fig. 1.13 The most westerly veterinary stations in the 'cordon' (red markers) established between November 1896 and February 1897. Map prepared by Sian Sullivan, using Google Maps: Map data © 2024 Google, INEGI Imagery © 2024 NASA, TerraMetrics, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

The establishment of these militarised veterinary posts sparked a process of separating indigenous herds north of this line from the herds of emerging settler farmers in the south of the country (see Chapter 2). Local support and 'auxiliary troops', and especially local knowledge of waterholes, were essential for the siting of outposts along the cordon, and was garnered especially from leaders such as David Swartbooi of Fransfontein, the 'Bushman chief' Johannes Kruger at ǁGaub, the ovaHerero chief Kambazembi at Waterberg, and traders such as Axel Eriksson.[225] It is reported that 50 Swartbooi men played an important role along the cordon 'because of their "great influence on the Bushmen and Bergdamara of these regions"'.[226] Outpost guards 'were instructed to maintain the "neutral zone" along the cordon, keeping it free of humans and animals, including killing all wildlife found in the zone'.[227] According to Deputy Governor von Lindequist, the northern parts of the protectorate (beyond this cordon) were to 'be treated as foreign territory',[228] excepting Sesfontein, for which the intention was to include this 'former centre of power' within the cordon.[229]

These military posts proved unpopular with local leaders and herders, who resented being controlled and told where they were permitted to move. Jan |Uixamab of Sesfontein, for example, 'refused to support the cordon's construction' and 'rejected the suggestion that he, his followers, and their livestock should temporarily leave Sesfontein and move south near Fransfontein'; also refusing 'to provide more than vague assurances that they would move their herds north to Warmbad (Warmquelle), south of Sesfontein'.[230] In Fransfontein 2,685 head of cattle were inoculated but it is unclear how many belonged to the RMS and how many to African Christians.[231] 'Divide and rule' practices deployed by the colonial authorities—specifically the replacement of David Swartbooi, Captain of Fransfontein, 'by his old rival Lazarus Swartbooi'[232]—exacerbated tensions in the region. Although herds may have survived through retreat to remote areas, the 'devastating toll' of the pandemic is suggested by residents of Sesfontein remembering, 50 years later, 'the destruction of their herds'.[233]

225 Miescher (2012: 25)
226 Deputy Governor von Lindequist quoted in Miescher (2012: 25)
227 *Ibid.*, p. 25
228 Quoted in Miescher (2012: 25)
229 *Ibid.*
230 *Ibid.* Clearly, they were being requested to remove their herds from the "neutral zone" north of the new cordon posts, meaning that prior to this instruction their herds must have been spread throughout this area. Also Rizzo (2012: 59)
231 *Ibid.*, p. 58
232 *Ibid.*, p. 67; Drechsler (1966: 101)
233 Miescher (2012: 33), after van Warmelo (1962[1951]: 53), based on interviews conducted in 1947.

Rinderpest was a gift to the consolidating colonial government.[234] The decimation of indigenous herds and the associated disintegration of African societal organisation opened the door for state appropriation of territory and livestock, facilitated by militarised state power. After initial successes, African resistance to colonial authority led by ‘a regional coalition of Herero and Oorlam leadership’[235] along the western cordon was defeated through an increasingly militarised campaign. Led by individuals such as Captain Ludwig von Estorff, who had gained knowledge of the area through being part of Hartmann’s second Kaokoveld expedition described in Section 1.3.1, this campaign stretched from Outjo to Sesfontein (see Figure 1.14). Hartmann himself submitted an advisory report to the colonial administration in December 1897, in which he supported an escalating military campaign to suppress the Swartbooi and their associates. As indicated in Section 1.2.3, it is clear from this report that he had been guided through the Kaokoveld in the mid-1890s by a Johannes Swartbooi in particular, who is mentioned repeatedly in Hartmann’s report.[236] Archive sources also show that at the very beginning of unrest in the area in late 1897, colonial leaders were articulating a clear desire for more land and access to water sources throughout the region: providing an ultimate reason for the disproportionate crushing of Nama and others in the area—whose main initial crime was the theft of horses and donkeys from the 4th Field Company of the administration stationed at Fransfontein.[237]

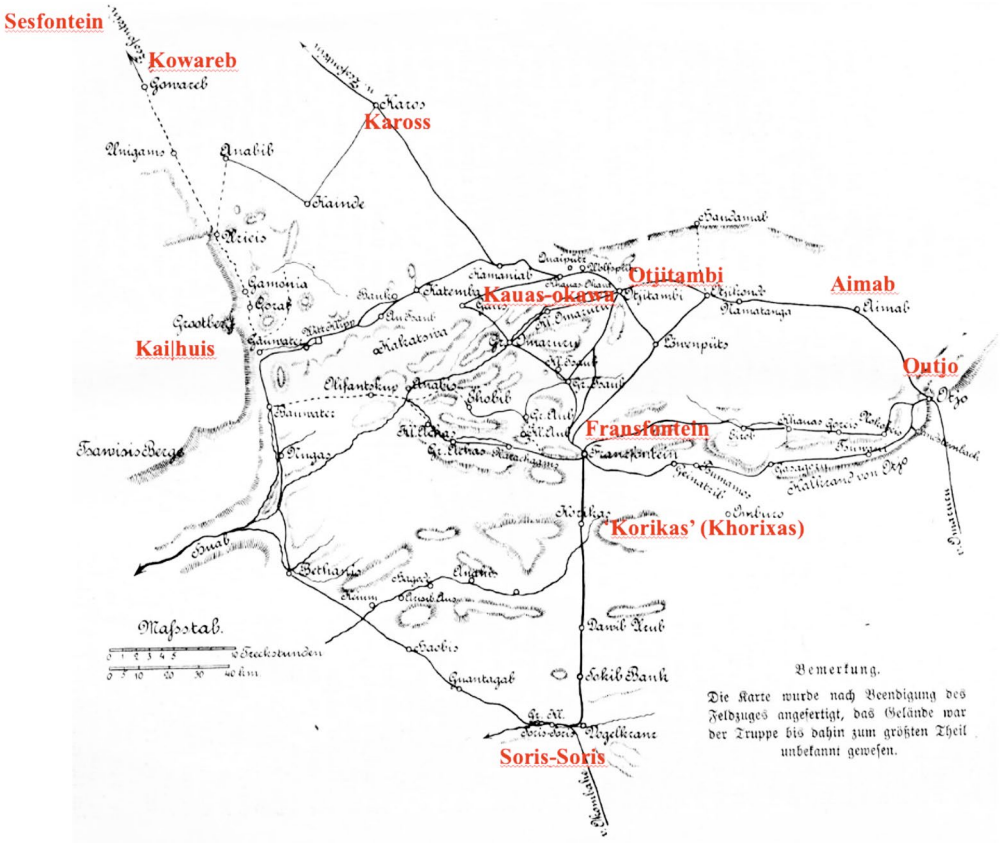

Fig. 1.14 Map of the area stretching from Outjo to Sesfontein connected via the Swartbooi / Grootberg Uprising and colonial military response in 1897–1898. Source: GSWA (n.d.: 417, out of copyright), adapted by Sian Sullivan, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

234 Drechsler (1966: 98)

235 Rizzo (2012: 66). Finnish missionary Rautanen reportedly intervened to prevent Owambo kings, including Kambonde, from participating in this ‘Swartbooi and Topnaar’ uprising (Eirola 1992: 82–84 in Rizzo 2012: 66).

236 Dr Hartmann’s report to Lt. Ziegler [with instruction from von Lindequist to send to Berlin], Marked secret, 13.12.1897, NAN-ZBU 440 D IVf, vol. 1: 45–49.

237 ‘[…] the Swartbooi Hottentots, after having shown themselves to be unreliable for some time, stole a number of horses and donkeys from the 4th Field Comp. at Franzfontein during the night of Dec. 2-3 with hostile intent against the Government’, von Lindequist to Otjimbingwe District Admin., 8.12.1897, NAN-ZBU 440 D IVf, vol. 1: 13. Also see Schnegg (2007)

In this colonial 'theatre of war', the German military campaign mobilised ovaHerero allies (who later became prominent victims of 'genocidal escalation'[238]) to crush one of the first Indigenous wars against the colonial government in a mountainous area of north-west Namibia known today as "Grootberg" (Kai |Uis), i.e. "Big Mountain". As recounted by Friedrich von Lindequist (governor of the colony from 1905), reporting Captain von Estorff's description of the support received in building towards military engagement here:

> [f]rom the people of the chief captain Samuel Maharero and Manesse of Omaruru, I have mustered about 100 men as quickly as possible. In Omaruru I intend to gather them all and then ride towards the theatre of war.[239]

The uprising involved a complex, multicultural alliance of peoples:

> I learned from the spy that the Kaisib detachment, composed of Topnars-Swartbois [Nama] and Bergdamaras [ǂNūkhoe], was about 35 men strong, well armed (partly with 88 weapons) and with several other weapons.[240]
>
> [and]
>
> According to the latest news from Omaruru, the Herero leader Kambatta,[241] who lives on the border of the Kaokofeld, has gone over to the enemy with about 70 men, but allegedly few rifles.[242]

In the course of this particular military and imperial campaign, diverse autochthonous Africans allied with and were mobilised against each other. The uprising met with a devastating defeat at the so-called "Battle of Grootberg" (Kai|uis) of March 1898, a locality now crossing the Etendeka Tourism Concession and ǂKhoadi-‖Hôas Conservancy areas of north-west Namibia. Some German military personnel lost their lives, as did those participating in the uprising; local leaders and fighters were executed;[243] and hundreds of people were deported to become forced labourers in the new colonial capital of Windhoek—intentionally opening previously inhabited lands for appropriation by settlers. By 1901, 39 settler farmers (11 German, eight 'Transvalers', seven 'Capelanders' and seven Englishmen) were reported for Outjo District.[244] Indeed, in 1895 governor Leutwein had already articulated an aim 'to expropriate the Zwartboois entirely in favour of the Kaoko-Land- und Minengesellschaft'.[245]

After this defeat '[s]ome coalition forces withdrew to Sesfontein, and others fled to Owambo or surrendered to the German military'.[246] The former leader David Swartbooi was deported to Windhoek; and in August 1898 Jan |Uixamab, leader at Sesfontein, surrendered in Outjo and handed over most of his weapons.[247] More drastic punishment was avoided due to limited military resources, but |Uixamab was forced into a protection treaty (*Schutzvertrag*) with the German colonial government, charged 1,000 head of small stock, and requested to hand in all arms and ammunition owned by himself and followers.[248] The KLMG began selling farms to German and Boer settlers with Jan |Uixamab of Sesfontein 'selling' 4,000 hectares constituting the farm Warmbad

238 Häussler (2019: 183)
239 NAN-ZBU D IVf, vol. 1: 157–59, von Lindequist to Foreign Office 2.2.1898, relaying combat report from Captain Von Estorff of 5.1.1898: 159
240 NAN-ZBU D IVf, vol. 1: 189–91, Officer [Hauptmann] Kaiser to Imperial Provincial Government, Windhoek, 3.2.1898 [received 19.2.1898]: 191.
241 A Kambatta is recorded as part of the ovaHerero leadership at Omaruru in the 1870s (Stals 1991: 223).
242 NAN-ZBU D IVf, vol. 1: 159, as above.
243 For example, 'I humbly inform the Imperial Governorate that Swartboi Hottentott Kuton was shot today after having been sentenced to death', NAN-ZBU 440 D IVf, vol. 1: 189–91, as above, p. 189.
244 Kruger (n.d.: 15, 37) in Dieckmann (2007b: 162)
245 Quoted in Drechsler (1966: 91)
246 Miescher (2012: 33)
247 *Ibid.*, p. 33, Rizzo (2012: 64, 67)
248 *Ibid.*

(Warmquelle) that was later taken over by Carl Schlettwein.[249] Sesfontein became a priority for a military station—Sesfontein Fort, now a high-end lodge run by a German investor—despite being located ‘nearly 150 kilometres northeast of the [veterinary] cordon’.[250] In 1902 the population of Sesfontein was reportedly reduced to 120 people, mostly women and children, although ‘the station commander conceded that he neither knew how many people lived in Sesfontein’s surroundings, nor what their economic activities consisted of, beyond growing maize and wheat in the local gardens’.[251] Letters from RMS evangelist Nicodemus Kido in Sesfontein report ‘cases of women being forced into sexual relations with German military personnel’,[252] and the Nama leadership reportedly began advising people to ‘start hiding in the field during the day and stay away from the military station’.[253]

More than 500 people were deported to Windhoek from the Fransfontein Swartbooi community where they were used as forced labour (see Figure 1.15); and 25 men ‘identified as followers of [ovaHerero leader] Kambatta’ were charged in Omaruru ‘as war traitors and sentenced to forced labour for several years’.[254] The fortunes of the people of Outjo District in around 1901–1904 were further impacted by smallpox and prolonged drought.[255]

Fig. 1.15 Captured Swartbooi Nama in Windhoek in 1899: Captain Christian Swart is thought to be the man standing on the right (Hartmann 2005: 33). Photo by August Engelbert Wulff, 1899. Source: Übersee-Museum Bremen, P00092), https://nat.museum-digital.de/object/1101015, CC BY-SA.

A key representation of African habitation in the years immediately following this uprising nonetheless provides some indication of the diversity of interspersed peoples occupying Etosha-Kunene—see Figure 1.16: ‘Topnaars (Aonin, Gomen)’ and ‘Zwartboois (Kaugoan)’ stretch from ‘Zesfontein’ towards ‘Outjo’; ‘Owatjimba’ are placed north and east of ‘Zesfontein’, with ‘Owaherero’ in a separate band from Karibib to Waterberg; ‘Bergdamara’ are grouped throughout the area from north-west of ‘Zesfontein’ southwards towards Okombahe and east towards ‘Gaub’; ‘Buschmanner’ are positioned south and east of Etosha Pan; and different Owambo groupings are mostly north of Etosha.[256]

249 *Ibid.*, p. 65. The Schlettwein family continue to own the farm Otjitambi which is run as a hunting lodge, from where trophy hunting safaris into Torra Conservancy further west took place until recently.
250 Miescher (2012: 34); also Külz (1909: 115), Rizzo (2012: 25)
251 *Ibid.*, pp. 25–26
252 *Ibid.*, p. 70; interview with Emma Ganuses, Sesfontein, 14.4.2023, plus multiple other personal communications. Also see Sullivan & Ganuses (2021b)
253 ǁHawaxab (2019: 1)
254 Rizzo (2012: 67)
255 Kruger (n.d.: 38), Rohde & Hoffman (2012: 278)
256 Weule (1910) in Lebzelter (1934: 107), also quoted in Inskeep (2003: 62–63)

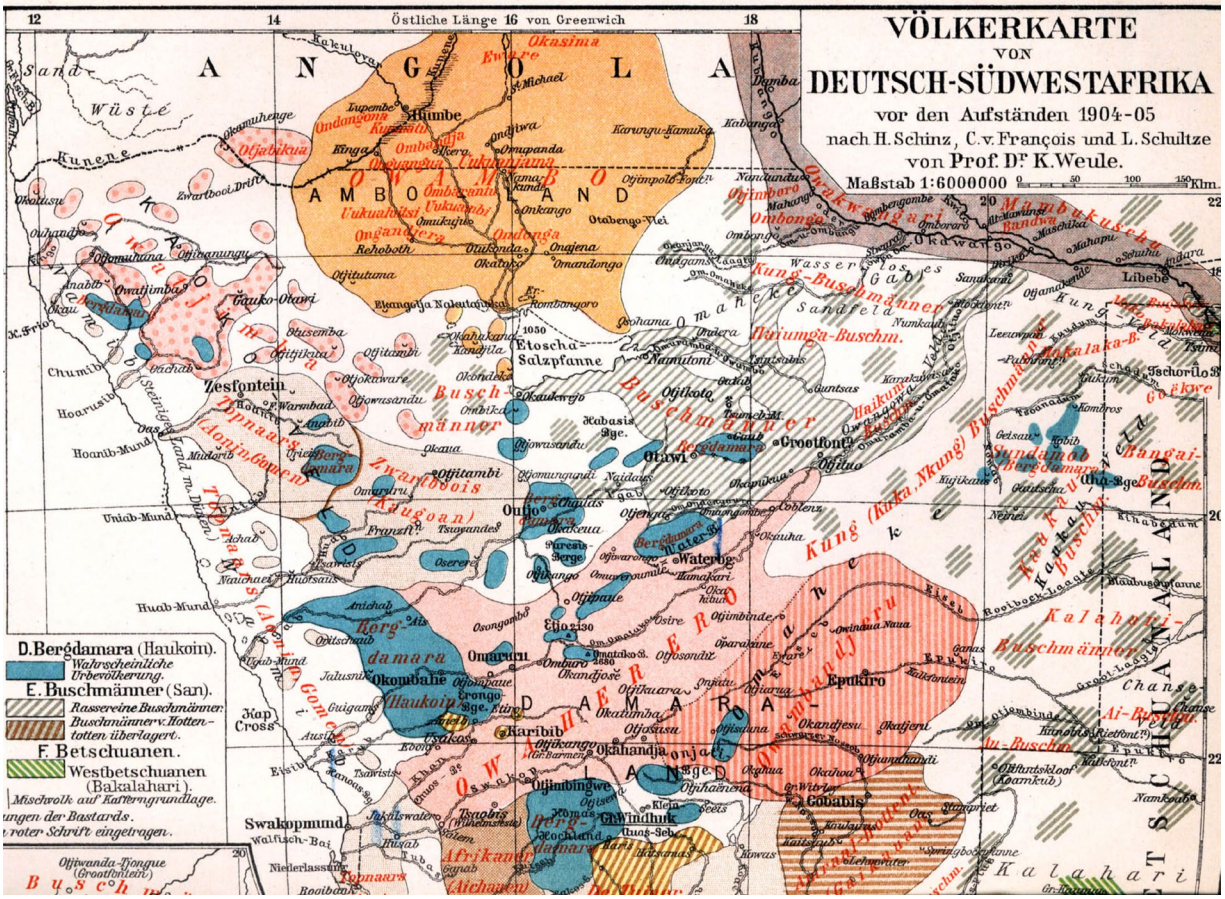

Fig. 1.16 Detail from 'Map of nations (Völkerkarte) for Deutsch-Südwestafrika before the uprisings of 1904–05', by Prof. Dr. K. Weule in Meyer (1909: no page number, out of copyright), CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

The so-called Swartbooi/Grootberg Uprising and its aftermath in the late 1890s prefigures escalating rebellion against colonial rule in the early 1900s, clearly linked with settler appropriation of land south of the 1897 veterinary cordon. Travelling through this consolidating "Police Zone" in 1903, Paul Rohrbach—appointed to lead a Settlement Commission for the German colony—clarifies his intent as the 'precise task of helping to found the beginnings of a piece of German-national history of development of the present in this still *history-less* country'.[257] He observes a settler farmer making a first attempt at constructing wire fencing for his farm, writing of the 'evidence of German struggle for the ploughable, home-bearing soil', and of attempts by white settlers and traders to acquire land and cattle from ovaHerero who had themselves appropriated the central pastures of the territory 100 years previously from so-called 'Bushmen and Klippkaffern [Damara/ǂNūkhoen]'.[258]

Capturing the spirit of settler colonialism in this moment, Rohrbach writes of 'the joyful feeling of witnessing how the advancing German settlement is boldly and vigorously taking possession of this truly new and promising land', and also of land speculation in the Grootfontein area by the South West African Company.[259] Rohrbach's celebration of the achievements of settler farmers on their vast farms—including former members of Schutztruppe protection forces as well as new settlers from Germany—was disrupted, however, by increasing resistance to land appropriation and colonial control.[260] Rebellion by Bondelswarts Nama in the south began in 1903 following the murder of Bondelswarts *Kaptein* Jan Christian by a Lieutenant Walter Jobst: following this incident,

257 Rohrbach (1909: 1, 29), emphasis added. All Rohrbach translations from German to English are by Ute Dieckmann.
258 Rohrbach (1909: 3, 18, 26, 35-36, 38). Also Union of South Africa (1918: 110), ǁGaroes (2021)
259 Rohrbach (1909: 42, 49)
260 *Ibid.*, pp. 154–55

Jobst, his sergeant and another soldier were gunned down.[261] Leutwein responded by declaring war on the Bondelswarts Nama, demanding military reinforcements from Berlin and heading a *Schutztruppe* force of 500 men to Warmbad where this initial 'Bondelswarts uprising' of October was crushed.[262] Attacks on settler farmers in the northern areas of Grootfontein and Namutoni—by 'wild Kungbush people', ovaHerero and 'Ovambos'—increasingly characterise Rohrbach's narrative into 1904.[263]

By mid-January 1904 the so-called Herero uprising had begun, leading to a massive colonial war in 1904–1908 that—through an 'extermination order' issued by incoming Governor Lothar von Trotha in August 1904—developed genocidally.[264] In February 1904, northern Owambo troops from Ondonga attacked the German Schutzruppe police station at Namutoni to the east of Etosha Pan.[265] Later in the year Witbooi Nama in southern Namibia, who, under severe pressure, had allied with the German colonial military,[266] also joined the war.[267] These circumstances are repeatedly evoked by Rohrbach (and others) as a justification for seizing land and cattle in increasingly punitive ways (as had happened from prior to the rinderpest epidemic[268]), so as to compensate white settler farmers for losses caused by Indigenous contestation of consolidated colonial rule.[269] Indeed, in the context of the warfare of 1904–1908, Rohrbach's role shifted to the leadership of a new Compensation Commission to oversee compensation for settler losses, mostly from land and livestock acquired from Africans.[270]

In a substantial act of 'so-called primitive accumulation',[271] Ordinances in 1907 issued by the colonial government in the wake of this escalating conflict thus made provision for 'the colonial state to appropriate vast parts of formerly African-owned land and stock'.[272] In this context, and echoing suggestions outlined above, the RMS urged the colonial government 'to forcefully remove the Zesfontein community to Fransfontein in order to raise the number of residents [at Fransfontein] and hence to guarantee the continuity of the mission work'.[273] This call prefigures a proposal decades later by ecologist Ken Tinley to remove Nama and other Khoekhoegowab speakers from the Hoanib valley to Fransfontein so as to create a protected area that would connect Etosha Pan with the coast (considered in more detail in Chapters 12 and 13).[274]

The scale of the impact of the 1904–1908 colonial war can be seen in estimated population reductions of 81% ovaHerero, 57% Damara/ǂNūkhoen and 51% Nama.[275] Today, forensic scrutiny of historical military orders and texts for evidence that would meet contemporary United Nations definitions of the crime of 'genocide'—itself positioned alongside, and differentiated from, 'crimes against humanity', 'war crimes' and 'ethnic cleansing'[276]—drives a heated discourse of recognition and reparation in international law. An expanding literature in Namibian history and historiography debates details of colonial military strategy and intent, iteratively revising prior interpretations.[277]

261 Olusoga & Erichsen (2010: 120–21)
262 *Ibid.*, p. 122, Silvester *et al.* (1998: 5)
263 Rohrbach (1909: 32),
264 *Ibid.*, pp. 159–61, 165–66, 177–78, Bley (1998), Häussler (2019: 187)
265 Rizzo (2012: 22); see also Külz (1909: 121) and Rohrbach (1909: 99-102)
266 Esterhuyse (1968)
267 Rohrbach (1909: 177–78)
268 Drechsler (1966: 94)
269 Rohrbach (1909: 114–16, 127, 132–33, 148–49, 150)
270 *Ibid.*, p. 189
271 Marx (1974[1867]: 667)
272 Odendaal Report (1964: 67); also Sullivan (1996: 14), Silvester *et al.* (1998: 17), Schnegg & Pauli (2007: 12), Kössler (2008: 234), Gordon (2009: 33, 41), Rizzo (2012: 21–22)
273 Rizzo (2012: 70)
274 Tinley (1971: 5)
275 Union of South Africa (1918: 34–35)
276 See https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.shtml
277 For example, Drechsler (1986), Lau (1995[1989]), Bley (1998), and multiple chapters in Zimmerer & Zeller (2008[2003]) and Hartmann (2019)

In the wake of this colonial war, further appropriations were enabled, shifting land and livestock to the growing colonial settler economy. Sesfontein's 'tribal property' (*Stammersvermögen*), for example, was expropriated with some financial compensation,[278] due to alleged involvement by the Topnaar leadership of Sesfontein in uprisings associated with the colonial wars further south.[279] A meeting took place in Sesfontein of a commission appointed to estimate 'the value of the community's possession in large stock, which the German colonial authority intended to confiscate', 'for sale at auction in Outjo to local European farmers'.[280] Having lost the land of Sesfontein to the German government, on the basis of regular lease payments the 'Sesfontein community' was granted right of residence[281] to the 31,416 ha 'farm Zesfontein' for use by the 'Topnaar Swartbooi Hottentot' for grazing purposes: this is the origin of the restricted '10km radius from the waterhole Zessfontein' visible on multiple maps and land designations until Independence in 1990.[282] Fransfontein experienced similar treatment:

> land and cattle was [s*ic*] confiscated, the community was allowed to keep 2ha of garden land and a maximum of 500 piece of small stock, five mission evangelists were allowed to keep their large stock, and the district commander reserved the right to determine where people would be allowed to reside and to work.[283]

Simultaneously, shortages of labour meant that by 1907, police and military patrols 'were rounding up Bushmen and allocating them to farmers as laborers', as well as to mines: 'a military patrol from the Waterberg rounded up some fifty Bushmen in the vicinity of Tsumeb and transferred them to the mines as laborers'.[284] Settler farm(er)s in Grootfontein and Outjo districts subsequently became the focus of stock thefts and murders by 'Bushmen', combined with attacks on Owambo migrant workers moving between these districts and north-central Namibia: a series of events that became known as the 'Bushmen plague', the 'Bushman Danger' or the 'Bushmen problem'. Between 1909–1914, police with soldiers thus 'undertook more than 400 Bushman patrols in the Grootfontein, Outjo, Rehoboth, and Maltahohe districts, covering some 60,000km^2'.[285] The punitive measures towards those living relatively independently of the emerging colonial state and speaking a language characterised by click consonants have led to anthropologist Robert Gordon describing these attacks as a forgotten Bushmen genocide.[286]

It is in the aftermath of these disruptions during the first two decades of colonisation that the colonial state introduced formal policy and legislation to govern wildlife in the territory.

1.3.3 Legislating colonial game preservation

Alongside and in the wake of the transformations outlined above in allocating and governing land, the German colonial state began to institute formal wildlife protection from commercial hunting alongside the establishment of Game Reserves. It is in these years that an increasing impetus towards strategies of purification, determining what should and should not mix, became part and parcel of formal governance: imperfectly separating people from nature, livestock from wildlife, and black from white (as considered further in Chapter 2).

In the post-Swartbooi/Grootberg Uprising years, commercial hunting was carried out increasingly by Europeans:

278 van Warmelo (1962[1951]: 37)
279 Rizzo (2012: 21) and references therein.
280 *Ibid.*
281 *Ibid.*, p. 20, and references therein.
282 van Warmelo (1962[1951]: 37), Fuller (1993: 66)
283 Rizzo (2012: 27)
284 Gordon (2009: 33)
285 *Ibid.*, p. 35
286 *Ibid*; also Gordon (1992: 58)

> [o]nly when the power of the Swartboois and Topnaar communities was broken by the German colonial forces did Kaokoveld's plentiful game become accessible to professional hunters operating mainly from southern Angola.[287]

In 1900, Georg Hartmann wrote in a secret report that informants in Sesfontein told him of 'Portuguese hunters, who usually spent several months (August to November) at Otjijandjasemo, a significant water-place in northern Kaoko' (south-east of Okongwati): they would 'enter the region with their ox-wagons or would cross the Kunene on horseback', depending on the water level.[288] Well-armed and 'supported by large numbers of African carriers and guides from southern Angola and from Kaoko'—not least through an alliance between the Sesfontein Oorlam leadership and the ovaHerero leader Kakurukouje[289]—they 'would shoot up to 100 elephants all over the area and collect their loot at Otjijandjasemo'.[290] In the early 1900s, Angolan Trekboers hunting 'in small groups of usually less than ten well-armed hunters' conducted elephant hunts on horseback, and shot around 300 hippos 'along the lower Kunene' for lucrative hippo-hide sjamboks (whips), leading to the almost complete demise of this population.[291] They reportedly came down as far as the Hoanib River to hunt elephant: 'names chiselled out on stones in the Khowareb Schlucht [east of Sesfontein] bear witness to these illegal hunting trips'.[292]

Already in 1886 Dr Göring, first appointed Imperial Commissioner for 'the SWA Protection territory', warned about 'reckless hunting' caused by demand for ostrich feathers, hides and ivory.[293] In 1892 the German colonial administration began to restrict ivory exports from south-west Africa's coastal harbours.[294] Regulations for commercial hunting were also issued in this year, such that anyone wishing to hunt with horses, draught animals or pack animals had to purchase an annual permit; with the hunting of female and young animals (for elephants and ostriches) prohibited, and an annual closed season set for ostriches (from 1 August to 31 October, extended to 31 November in 1896).[295] In 1902, the first government ordinance for controlling hunting was proclaimed—Ordinance Concerning the Exercise of Hunting in German South-West Africa Protected Areas (*Verordnung betreffend Jagd der Ausübung der Jagd in Deutsch-Südwest Afrika Schutzgebiete*)—reportedly signed by Governor von Estorff.[296] Joubert writes that,

> [c]ertain areas were closed to hunting (these areas were claimed as game reserves by Governor von Lindequist in 1907 [see below]), and it was furthermore illegal to set any form of traps or snares. The Territory was divided into districts (later to become magisterial districts) and each district had an official known as a District Chief. This District Chief had the authority to enforce hunting seasons of varying duration for various game species depending on circumstances in his district every year.[297]

As historian Marie Muschalek documents, hunting and nature protection laws were enforced in these years by policemen (the *Landespolizei*), who were also encouraged to acquire hunting licences for supplementing their diet with meat, and for gaining proficiency in aiming at moving targets.[298]

These regulations were intended to protect so-called game as a 'financial resource', and made provision 'for the potential establishment of game reserves, if the hunting regulations were not

287 Bollig & Olwage (2016: 63)
288 In Rizzo (2012: 39)
289 In 1900 Lieutenant Franke presented Kakurukouje / Kasupi with a gun that became known as *ombandururwa*, making him the agent for German administration in Kaokoland (Bollig 1997: 26, 1998: 170; Miescher 2012: 33); reportedly in the hope of encouraging him to venture to southern Angola in order to convince other Herero (Himba or Tjimba) to cross the Kunene into German South West Africa (Bollig & Heinemann 2002: 278; Rizzo 2012: 50).
290 In Rizzo (2012: 39-40, 49–50)
291 Bollig & Olwage (2016: 63–64) referencing von Moltke (2003[[1943]: 222, 289, 331, 43)
292 Schoeman (2007: 14)
293 Esterhuyse (1968: 108)
294 Bollig & Olwage (2016: 63)
295 von François (1899: 107), Joubert (1974: 35), Miescher (2009: 98)
296 Joubert (1974: 35)
297 *Ibid.*
298 Muschalek (2020[2019]: 101, 87–88, and sources therein)

sufficient'.[299] Indeed, travelling in the vicinity of Namutoni and Etosha Pan in late 1903, Paul Rohrbach observed that '[t]he whole southern side [of Etosha Pan] is to become a game reserve'.[300] Subsistence hunting continued to be allowed for Indigenous peoples—and in any case was very difficult to control—within what was understood to be "their territories". At the same time, colonial actors such as Rohrbach were already elevating colonial-settler relationships with wildlife over African practices.[301]

In 1909, some amendments were made to the 1902 game/hunting ordinance, making:

> provision for the Governor to give permission for any of the protected game to be shot for "economic or scientific reasons". A general closed hunting season from "November to the end of February" also came into force, although the District Chief still had the authority to shorten or lengthen the hunting season according to conditions in his district. One also had to obtain the permission of landowners to hunt on their land.[302]

Overall, though, this ordinance remained in force until the occupation of the territory by South African forces in 1915 in the context of World War 1, when E.H.L. Gorges was appointed Governor of the Military Regime,[303] and technically it was still in force until the new Union of South Africa legislation of 1921 (see Chapter 2).

It is in the wake of the German colonial war that a series of three 'Game Reserves' (*Wildschutzgebiet*) were proclaimed,[304] through Proclamation No. 88, issued on 22 March 1907 by the Imperial Governor of Deutsch Südwestafrika, Dr Friedrich von Lindequist.[305] Economic motivations were clearly articulated in the explanatory paper for establishing the Game Reserves:

> [e]verybody knows how much economic value game has in the country. In some cuisines, only game is served as fresh meat. Also the utility value of the skins for blankets and for making straps and whips is known to everyone. Unfortunately, it is impossible to make statistics, but if one wanted to calculate the many hundredweights of game captured in the country every year on the basis of average slaughter prices, it would be estimated to be more than 200,000 m [marks]. If you take this sum as an annual pension, the capital involved would mean a fortune of many millions of dollars that we have in our game stock. We all receive this pension free of charge from the country, and so our wildlife provides a very significant part of our common wealth, which every inhabitant of the reserve should be scrupulous about protecting, as it is in the interest of every individual. [...] The benefits that the game reserves would bring to the country would be as follows: centres would be created where game would have to be moved from the grazing areas there and would be brought to farms where it could be shot and exploited. African game is very variable and so the supply of game from the reserves could be extended to areas far from the reserves. [...] The reserves indicated as 1-3 include areas which, for the most part, are not, or temporarily not, suitable for farming. Farms which are located within the reserves or which would later be sold, for example, enjoy the exemptions of § 7.[306]

Of interest here is the emphasis on game as an economic resource: the focus was on possibilities for translocating game to settler farms 'where it could be shot and exploited', with a converse emphasis on keeping game reserve areas free of farming. Of the proclaimed reserves, Game Reserve No. 2 (Figure 1.17)—at the time, the largest conservation area in the world—stretched from Etosha Pan to the Skeleton Coast in the north-west, and included Kaokoveld (today's northern Kunene Region); thereby removing the option of settlement by white farmers in this area.[307] Hunting was prohibited in the Game Reserves 'without written permission of the district office'; vehicle traffic was also

299 ZBU MII C1 in Dieckmann (2007a: 74); also Bridgeford (2018: 12)
300 Rohrbach (1909: 57)
301 *Ibid.*, p. 67
302 Joubert (1974: 35)
303 *Ibid.*
304 Botha (2005: 174)
305 Bridgeford (2018: 12)
306 ZBU MII,E.1, in Dieckmann (2007a: 75–76)
307 Bollig (1997: 19). Game Reserve No. 1 was located north-east of Grootfontein including 'protected game in the Omuramba Omutako' and Game Reserve No. 3 was south of the Swakop River and east of the British enclave of

prohibited.[308] Lieutenant Adolff Fischer, commander of Fort Namutoni at the time, became the first warden of Game Reserve No. 2,[309] reporting in 1912 that lion were heard here again after their decline due to hunting.[310] It was later noted that,

> [i]nitially, the definition of Etosha’s boundaries made little impact on the movement of wild animals, except for the legal nicety that after crossing a mapped line they were not protected. Physically the boundaries consisted of surveyed points and, later, cleared fire-breaks along some of them. Migratory herds were therefore unrestrained in their movement along traditional routes.[311]

It is also unlikely that the diverse African peoples living throughout so-called Game Reserve No. 2 had any idea ‘that they were now inhabiting the world’s largest protected area’,[312] or that their mobilities were initially affected in any significant way by the Reserve’s proclamation specifically.

Fig. 1.17 Boundaries of Game Reserve No. 2 in 1907. Map: © Ute Dieckmann, data: Proclamations NAN, Atlas of Namibia Team 2022, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

At this time, the presence of Hai||om in the eastern parts of Game Reserve No. 2 was tolerated with the suggestion that more Bushmen from outside the reserve could be settled near Namutoni: the prohibition of hunting in this area applied only to hunting with guns, but not to the use of bows and arrows.[313] Diverse otjiHerero- and Khoekhoegowab-speaking residents also remained in the north-west part of the Game Reserve, as well as south of its southern boundary (see Chapters 13 and 14), as directly observed in the comprehensive tour of ‘Kaokoveld’ by Major Manning in 1917.[314] As Eugene Joubert writes, ‘nature conservation’ was clearly ‘actively practised’ during this period of German occupation, through ‘the formulation of hunting laws and the proclamation of game reserves’.[315]

Walvis Bay (Bridgeford 2018: 13), later becoming the Namib Game Reserve (Botha 2005: 182), and now the Namib-Naukluft National Park.

308 Bridgeford (2018: 12)
309 Dieckmann (2007a: 75), and references therein; also Berry (1980: 53)
310 Bridgeford (2018: 12)
311 Berry (1997: 4)
312 Bollig (2020: 109)
313 ZBU W II B.2, 15.10.1908 in Dieckmann (2007a: 77)
314 Discussed in detailed in Hayes (2000), Rizzo (2012) and Sullivan (2022: 5–7)
315 Joubert (1974: 36)

1.4 Brief conclusion

The shift from pre-colonial circumstances to colonisation and colonial land control—including for conservation—was clearly very dramatic. By the beginning of World War 1, Indigenous Namibians had been radically disembedded from the land, murdered in droves, or otherwise transformed into a proletariat that laboured for the new colonial regime.[316] Indigenous fauna had been very negatively impacted through commercial hunting primarily by colonists, facilitated by the availability of firearms. The management and governance of so-called game throughout the territory had been appropriated by the state, and placed into the hands of militarised police. These are the circumstances taken up by the incoming British Protectorate and South African administration after 1915, as considered in detail in Chapter 2.

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