

## The politics of separation: the case of the OvaHerero of Ngamiland

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*A number of OvaHerero, fleeing the German war of extermination in 1904, crossed from German South West Africa (Namibia) into the Bechuanaland Protectorate and settled in Ngamiland. These OvaHerero came under Tawana overlordship, but retained their cultural identity and even a large degree of their political structures. Initially destitute and unfamiliar with Bechuanaland conditions, they became richer over time. Although proposals for a return to Namibia, including one involved with Tshekedi Khama's campaign against the incorporation of South West Africa into South Africa, were not realized, the desire to return remained. Politically the Ngamiland OvaHerero were associated with SWANU more than SWAPO.*

In spite of the distance separating the OvaHerero of Ngamiland and those in Namibia,<sup>1</sup> there has been a continued desire on the side of the Ngamiland OvaHerero to go back to Namibia. The strength of this desire has varied through time due to political and economic pull and push forces. From the Namibian side, the fundamental issue has been the political relations between the various Namibian Administrations and the OvaHerero of Namibia. As long as Namibian Hereros remained on bad terms with the various colonial administrations, the OvaHerero of Ngamiland could not be welcomed in the land of their birth. From Bechuanaland's side, (hereafter Botswana), a fundamental push force has been the economic status that the OvaHerero managed to achieve in Ngamiland. Additionally, the failure of the Batawana to culturally and politically absorb the OvaHerero between 1904 and c. 1930, when the latter were economically weak, also provided grounds for such a possibility.

From the Namibian point of view, the study of the pull forces, that is, colonial administration policies, fall generally into three periods. The first was the German era (1904–1915) during which the political relations with the OvaHerero were bitter, and a very insignificant number of OvaHerero from Ngamiland trickled back. From Ngamiland's point of view, this (1904–1915) was the time when the OvaHerero were still economically weak and almost totally dependent on the Batswana. The second period falls generally between the First World War and the Second World War when Namibia was mandated to the Union of South Africa as of 1920. Again, there were poor political relations between the OvaHerero of Namibia and the administration. During this time, the Union administration was busy creating reserves for the Africans. From the evidence very few OvaHerero in Ngamiland went back to Namibia. According to Kamberipa, Hosia Kavikunua and Jarera Tjamuaha were such men.<sup>2</sup> In Ngamiland at most by 1930 most OvaHerero had gained economic independence from Batawana and began pressing to return for reason that will be outlined later. But because of the political relations between the Namibian OvaHerero and the Union administration, they were refused admission into Namibia.

After 1946, South Africa's policy remained unchanged despite submissions to it about the desire of the OvaHerero to return. This policy continued more or less unchanged until 1976. Meantime in Ngamiland the OvaHerero were becoming even stronger economically. After 1976, South African policy changed. There emerged a political marriage between the OvaHerero of Namibia (in general) and the South

African administration. This at last opened the way for the Ngamiland Ovaherero to go back to Namibia. Meanwhile, in Botswana, the government apparently tired of trying to make the Ovaherero stay and announced a green light on 24 October 1983<sup>3</sup>: hence (at the time of writing) the anticipated mass movement to Namibia.

The study is based almost entirely on Namibian and Botswana archival records and oral sources, as little has been published on the topic. The term Ovaherero has been used to denote the two Ovaherero speaking groups, namely the Ovaherero and Ovabanderu, who originally came from Namibia after the German-Herero War of 1904.

On 12 January 1904 the Ovaherero in Namibia began a revolt against German occupation forces. This was followed by an order for the extermination of all the Ovaherero by the Germans on 4 August of the same year. The revolt was a product of incompatibility of German imperialism and the sovereignty of the Ovaherero nation. The systematic expropriation of Ovaherero land and cattle by German settlers, especially between 1873 and 1903,<sup>4</sup> inhuman treatment of the Ovaherero by the Germans and other settlers, and the gross injustice that characterized German courts,<sup>5</sup> are evidence of the settlers' greed for land and their disregard of a peoples' freedom, traits characteristic of all agents of imperialism. The struggle that ensued ended in the Battle of Hamakari which took place in the present Waterberg district. The battle was the most decisive, and, as calculated by the Germans, it opened the way to the aim of genocide.<sup>6</sup> The defeated Ovaherero were forced by circumstances to flee into the arid Omaheke desert in the easterly direction. "Their way north was barred by a German Unit... Southern [route] was prevented by German troops. Only Von de Heydes unit could be penetrated."<sup>7</sup> As envisaged by Von Trotha (the German Commander in Namibia) and his camp, "the arid Omaheke was to complete what the German army started, i.e. the extermination of the Herero nation"<sup>8</sup>

The hopes of the German imperialists for the complete extermination of the Ovaherero were disappointed. Some Ovaherero managed to escape the arid conditions of the Omaheke despite the heavy death toll that they incurred in the desert. The survivors, who numbered 16,000 of the original 80,000,<sup>9</sup> fled out of the Omaheke in four directions. The largest group filtered back into Hereroland despite the heavy campaign against the Ovaherero.<sup>10</sup> This group, which went in "dribs and drabs and in a state of acute fear," numbered between 8000 and 9000.<sup>11</sup> At that point, they did not have a defined leader owing to the repressive conditions under which they had lived, but this is the group which was later to be led by Hosea Kutako as Care-taker. The second group under subchief Daniel Kariko from Okombahe<sup>12</sup> went northwards into Ovamboland. According to Bridgman this group numbered less than one thousand.<sup>13</sup> The third group went east and entered Botswana at Xau-Xau. This group was led by the Paramount Herero chief (Omuhona Omunene) Samuel Maharero. It is not known exactly when Maharero entered Botswana but it seems he spent sometimes in Botswana before he arrived at Tsau on 15 November 1905.<sup>14</sup> The other Herero group that entered Botswana and later settled with Samuel Maharero at Tsau, was one led by Traugott Tjetjoo, Justus Kavezeri, Frederick and Willie Maharero. It seems however that this group did not participate in the battle of Hamakari of 11 August 1904. It is possible that they only took part in the earlier revolt and then crossed over via Rictfontein to a place called Quagganai in Botswana. It is also probable that it is the group which "requested that they be allowed to enter British territory"<sup>15</sup> as early as 2 March 1904. The above group and that of Samuel Maharero are the only two which settled in Ngamiland, and hence form the subject of the study. However, there was yet

another which in 1905 was reported to be around Lehututu.<sup>16</sup> There is so far no evidence to suggest that this group ended up in Ngamiland. Possibly they ended up at Tsabong, where there is a Herero population at the present day. Such was the manner in which the German War of extermination scattered the Ovaherero.

A question still remains as to why some Ovaherero decided to come over to Ngamiland instead of other places. This study attempts an explanation in terms of "pull" factors in Ngamiland as against other places. Firstly, people who ended up in Ngamiland mostly came from the aristocratic layer of the Herero Nation. As Dreschler observed, "the best known Herero leaders" were among the group that went through Rietfonteing. The other of course was the Samuel Maharero group. These groups did not have an easy chance of returning to their fatherland because of the prices which were levied on their heads:

I [Von Trotha] say that anyone who delivers any of the chiefs at my headquarters, as a prisoner will receive 1000 marks. Whoever brings Samuel Maharero will receive 5000 marks.<sup>17</sup>

Secondly, these Ovaherero went to Ngamiland because there were already trade relations between them and the Batswana. On this point Kameripa explained that "even before Kahaka left [in 1896] there were trade relations".<sup>18</sup>

Additionally oral traditions recall a pre-war (1904) marriage between a certain Sekatora and a Herero lady.<sup>19</sup> If Sekatora was Tawana then this could be an additional factor, but so far this has not been confirmed.

Thirdly the presence of some Ovaherero in Ngamiland by 1904 is likely to have been a factor. On this point Hewitt noted that "some Ovaherero hoped to establish themselves in the vicinity of Lake Ngami."<sup>20</sup>

Finally, oral tradition recalls that "as long as their chief had not been captured or killed, then the Germans could not claim to have conquered them and that land remained theirs."<sup>21</sup>—an argument in favour of Ngamiland, which was relatively safe from German encroachment, against locations closer to home. After they had fled, the various Ovaherero gradually resettled, rebuilt their herds and eventually by the 1920s began to reassert themselves politically against the dominant Batawana.

Most Ovaherero families arrived in absolute poverty. Only the very few were able to complete their journey with even one beast as a pack animal.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, the Ovaherero central political structure, well established before the 1904 war, was temporarily shattered by the dispersal that followed. As scattered groups in a new land, the Ovaherero scratched out a meagre existence by becoming dependents of the major community in Ngamiland, the Batawana.

During the early phase of resettlement, roughly between 1905 and 1915, the Ovaherero survived in one of three ways. These emigrants who had lineage relatives among the Kahaka and Kandu Ovaherero (who had been in Ngamiland since 1896) often joined their fellow countrymen.<sup>23</sup> The second group worked as wage labourers or "herdboys" for Ghanzi Boers. According to Maveipi Katjimune, her father Zuvakovandu Tjetjoo was one such man. After acquiring stock Zuvakocandu moved to Ngamiland where his brothers wanted him to settle "so that they could bury each other."<sup>24</sup> The third group consisted of the most hardpressed, who exchanged wild fruits and berries such as Ozobe (mokgompata) for sorghum with the Batawana and probably Bayei. A. Manasse illustrated the extreme hunger and ignorance of local conditions affecting this group: "out of ignorance some Ovaherero even tried to swallow mabele

while in the raw state."<sup>25</sup>

Gradually, however, these three groups of destitute Ovaherero found more reliable ways of supporting themselves. In the years following 1915, a great number of Ovaherero placed themselves individually at the service of the Batawana mixed farmers as herdsmen. The Batawana practised arable and pastoral farming in an economy that was dominated by a feudal mode of production. Once accepted the individual Ovaherero herdsmen brought in his *Otjiuana* (lineage group—plural *Oviuana*). These Oviuana were given various forms of remunerations ranging from milk to beasts, depending on the wishes of the Batawana feudal lords. Where trust was developed between the Ovaherero Oviuana as serfs and their respective feudal lords, a *Otjiuana* would be entrusted with a number of cattle to keep at a separate cattlepost (*Ohambo*), run entirely by the *Otjiuana* but belonging to the feudal lord.<sup>26</sup> This arrangement benefited the Ovaherero by providing a perennially reliable means of subsistence in milk and other remunerations which were due to them. It seems the Batswana feudal lords generally regarded the Ovaherero Oviuana as good pastoralists and believed that herds multiplied better in their hands than in those of Bayei, Basarwa, Bakgalagadi and Basubia. This would be probably why, "Ovaherero Oviuana were in demand among Tawana pastoral circles."<sup>27</sup> This is also why Ovaherero were treated better than other herdsmen. As Usaona noted,

The Ovaherero were allowed to skin and eat cattle that died in their custody while they were at the *Ohambo* (cattlepost), whereas the Bayei were expected to carry the whole carcass to the village where the owner will be.<sup>28</sup>

Usaona went on to indicate that "in most cases the herdsmen were each given two beasts annually, one for tax and the other for clothing."<sup>29</sup> It was from these cattle that the Oviuana eventually accumulated stock and gradually separated from Batawana feudal lords to form their own "cattleposts"—the *Onganda*. Thus at this point the feudal relations that existed between various Oviuana and Batawana such as Keemenao, Meno, Megalakwe, Gaborekwe, Ledimo and others, gradually came to an end.

This socio-economic trend was reflected in the political sphere. Initially the Ovaherero were obliged to accept Tawana over-lordship. The degree of acceptance was shown in the following areas. Firstly the Ovaherero had to turn to the Batawana for land, (which continues up to present according to Kangaja Tjirongo). This is why "the Ledimos control land in Xangwa while Mr. Tjirongo (a Maherero) is the headman there."<sup>30</sup>

Secondly, the Ovaherero provided labour for community projects such as the building of the present kgotla at Maun.<sup>31</sup> This over-lordship was however resented by the Ovaherero, as expressed by Chief Munjuku II:

that they [Batawana] even wanted sectional headmen to be above us [Ovaherero Chiefs] the reason being that, "tlou fa e tlodile molatswana ke tlowana": meaning that as long as we were refugees we could not be Chiefs.<sup>32</sup>

The Ovaherero had their own political structure, which the Batawana had to work through. When the Batawana chieftancy issued directives to the Ovaherero, it did so through their leaders (*Ovahona*) namely Kazoninga Kahaka of Makakung, Hijaviposa Kandu at Sehita, Jaos Hijambandje at Kgantshang and Keharajo Kahimemua at Lake Ngami. Below the *Ovahona* came the lineage heads (*Oveni vo Viuana*) who

represented the last political stratum. Similarly, the Batawana found that Ovaherero society was culturally and judiciary self-contained. The failure of the Batawana to dominate and control Herero culture can be best summed in Schapera's words that "the Ovaherero had a strong culture of their own and great contempt of their hosts."<sup>33</sup> Schapera gives no explanation for such a degree of cultural resistance, but one may suggest that the Ovaherero managed to keep their cultural primarily because of their religion. The Hereros, who practice circumcision, have strong religious objection to marriages or sexual relations with non-Herero. This is on the grounds that the child of a non-Herero and a Herero cannot drink from the sacred Calabash (*Ondjupa ja muaha*) which milk is supposed to be healing. Secondly such a child could not be taken to *Okuruuo* (the sacred fire) even if he had misfortunes (*Omaui*) which were often attributed to the gods (*Ovakuru*). (Such an explanation implies, of course, that the Ovaherero found no need to modify these codes.) Secondly, the Ovaherero settlement pattern (at least until after the 1960s) has mostly remained one of small nucleated settlements, which often consisted of no more than a tjuana. This means that the possibilities of interaction were minimal if not virtually non-existent. The serf-feudal lord relations that existed could also have acted as a cultural barrier where the destitutes were regarded as untouchables. Nevertheless, despite this general pattern, it should be noted that there were exceptional cases of marriages (and probably pre-marital relations) between Ovaherero and others.

On the judicial side, Schapera noted again the manner in which the Ovaherero disregarded Tswana Courts: "the Ovaherero of Dauga (6 miles from Maun) and Nokaneng (near Tsau), both 80 miles from Sehitwa, took their cases to Hijaviposa at Sehitwa instead of taking them to Tswana courts at either Maun or Tsau."<sup>34</sup>

Meantime, political links with Namibia were maintained. Oral traditions indicate that the political structure of the Ovaherero of Bechuanaland continued to be attached to that of their relatives in Namibia. It is probable also that the Namibian Ovaherero kept close contact with their compatriots in exile. According to Maveipi katjimune for instance, a Motswana royal (Mogalakwe) gained a reputation of kindness among the Ovaherero. On his death, the Ovaherero reported that, "a word came from Namibia that Mogalakwe had entered the Kingdom of God,"<sup>35</sup> a privilege that hitherto has been extended to the Ovaherero and their families only. The significance of the tradition is that the "word" came from Namibia and not Botswana where things were happening. This suggests that for the statement to be authentic it has to come from the homeland.

Meanwhile in Ngamiland soon after 1930 relations between some Ovaherero and Batawana were characterised by mutual understanding and consultation, which were products of proximity of settlements. This led to a faction of Ovaherero advocating total submission to Batawana overrule. This group was led by Katjee Tjamuaha and Tjautumaha Tjetjoo, though they later changed their opinion. This group ended up in a Batawana regiment—*Matsayakgang*. As indicated earlier this was the thirties, a period which highlighted the socio-economic transformation of the Ovaherero in general.

In their process of accumulating stock, the Ovaherero were doing very well. In addition to the methods of acquiring cattle mentioned above, some Batawana alleged that the Ovaherero were cattle thieves. In his letter to the High Commissioner Chief Mathiba complained that

the Damara (Ovaherero) have always been known to be expert thieves and although it is extremely difficult to catch them on the act, the fact remains that not only the Batawana but also the Europeans inhabitants of Ngamiland continue to lose cattle and never found again.<sup>36</sup>

In response however the Ovaherero allege that it was the Batawana who were thieves: hence their saying *Ovatjauana veno Ovinea ko ngombe*. This saying, which is from Ovaherero traditional songs *Omuhiva* means that Batswana (Batawana) are deceitful when it comes to cattle business. Regardless of the veracity of the allegations, one can discern a sub-text to the immediate issue. Firstly, there was tension as argued throughout the paper. Secondly, the Ovaherero had acquired cattle and thus the basis of trust between feudal lords and serfs had given way to mistrust. Changing relations of production gave rise to a periods of marked contradictions between the Ovaherero and their Batawana hosts. This was characterized by a series of incidents that took place before the Second World War. The following are the most cited.

The Mphahela system<sup>37</sup> was regarded by the Ovaherero with great contempt and taken as a form of confiscation of their herds. This reached a climax when a certain Hijambore of Xangwa threatened to shoot Rebookgama Segolodi when the latter attempted to use armed force to get a certain beast which the owner did not want to give away. An oral tradition that developed around this states that "Mungira Ovatjana Ve zuve Ngombe Ondjeo"<sup>38</sup>—"The white faced ox had to moo in order for the Tswana to understand."

Other well remembered incidents include the forced eviction of some Ovaherero from what they regarded as their lands, which was often accompanied by the burning of their kraals and crushing of calabashes. For example, around 1937 Morubela Ledime drove away Katjikoroha from Bolatswanamane. This also happened to Kapapu Uapimbi the same year and place. Also in 1937 Radikapane burnt Mr. Kakoocha Katjimune's kraal. Another incident that is commonly cited is the imprisonment of Ovaherero Vahona (Chiefs) in particular Kazoninga Kahaka and Jaos Hijambandje<sup>39</sup> who died in 1938. Another major incident involved the shooting of 370 cattle belonging to the Ovaherero found at Xubi near Xangwa in 1938.<sup>40</sup>

Up to this time however, there was no organized and collective endeavour among the Ovaherero to go back to Namibia. On the contrary they were only asking that they be moved to Crown Lands (Botletli)<sup>41</sup> permission for which was refused until much later. Up to now it was only the production matrix that was disturbed and hence the misunderstandings. Williams correctly analysed the situation in saying that "the trouble between the two people started when the Damaras (Ovaherero) who are excellent cattlemen became wealthy and powerful. They adopted the attitude of disregard to orders and rules of the Batawana."<sup>42</sup>

In spite of the misunderstandings, the Ovaherero remained in Botswana. Only a small minority at any time were prepared to go back, and this had been true ever since 1904. This situation can be best explained in Katurii' words that "despite the hardships there was no will... to go back, the Ovaherero knew that the conditions in Namibia were just as bad."<sup>43</sup>

The tension continued but meantime the Second World War broke out whereupon the tension subsided and was put aside.

After the Second World War, "Countries which were administering the League of Nations mandates agreed to enter into trusteeship agreements with the United Nations."<sup>44</sup> This was however did not include South Africa, which on the contrary proposed to incorporate the whole of Namibia into itself. The rejection of the proposal eventually saw South Africa refusing entrance into the Trusteeship Council. South Africa went ahead and in 1946 announced that the territory would be incorporated following a referendum. This move was heavily opposed by the Ovaherero of Namibia

to such an extent that on 18 March 1946 Hosea cabled the United Nations saying "We want our Country to be returned to us ... Please let the United Nations be informed again that in South West Africa and Bechuanaland we want to be under the Crown... We deny the incorporation of the Country into the Union of South Africa."<sup>45</sup>

As Mary Benson puts it "the prospect of being incorporated in the Union was soon known to those Hereros who had been given sanctuary by Khama in 1905."<sup>46</sup> Realising this danger, the Ovaherero in Botswana submitted a formal request through the Protectorate administration that they be allowed to return to Namibia. This request was backed by Tshekedi Khama and forwarded to the South African government. It came to be regarded as "*Orutjindo rua Kagisano*" meaning a peaceful return. This peaceful return which was heralded by Tshekedi was mainly due to the external factor of incorporation. As warned by Hosea Katoko in his letter to Frederick Maharero, that "The heritage of your fathers' orphans... is about to be taken from them... as we are scattered... despite pressing duties there come with all haste to us, come quickly to us"<sup>47</sup>

In backing this request Tshekedi was willing that all Ovaherero and their property acquired in the Bechuanaland Protectorate (especially the Bamangwato Reserve) be given the right to go: "Bangwato people are quite willing that the Herero and their property... be given every facility to go to South West Africa."<sup>48</sup> It seems that the main aim was to increase the numbers of the Ovaherero in Namibia in a bid to beat the referendum. Additionally Tshekedi, who was well informed on South African politics (probably more than other chiefs), also wanted Namibia to become free in order to provide Botswana with access to the sea.<sup>49</sup> This move was also supported by five other Batswana chiefs for similar reasons: "apart from their proximity to South West Africa, the Bechuana Chiefs held that they had a duty to see that principles implicit in the mandate were made effective because of the 14,000 Hereros living displaced in Bechuanaland"<sup>50</sup>

Among the Ovaherero, problems of their production relations with the Batawana provided an additional incentive for moving. So at this juncture almost all were willing to go back to Namibia.

The application was however refused by the Union government, mainly because the Ovaherero in Namibia were on bad terms with the administration of the time. As they put it, the application was "motivated by the desire to increase the voice and influence of dissident elements in the territory."<sup>51</sup> They further buttressed their argument saying "The land at present available in this territory (Namibia) could not suffice for their (Ovaherero) absorption."<sup>52</sup>

Thus the "*Orutjindo rua Kagisano*" failed. The Ovaherero of Ngamiland had no choice but to remain where they were and continue to bear their hardships.

In 1950-52 for example "a hundred beasts were plundered by Naledi Mogalakwe from Kakooha Katjume's kraal, on grounds that it were his father's cattle."<sup>53</sup> In 1957, 108 cattle belonging to Ovaherero were shot at Xau-Xau.<sup>54</sup> Under these conditions the Ovaherero continued to live Ngamiland. By the late 1950s, they posed very little threat to the Batawana administration. In 1957, the District Commissioner reported that "There has been no active opposition to tribal administration by the Damaras (Herero), however they are still occupied with their campaign to return to South West Africa."<sup>55</sup>

In 1958 the Ovaherero sent a delegation to Hosea Kutako in Aminius with the approval of Tshekedi Khama. Its purpose was to negotiate for their return to Namibia. It consisted of Munjuku Nguvauna, Tjautumaha Tjetjoo, Taave Kahaka and Kamue Tjozongoro. In Namibia Hosea explained to them that "the country was not

independent and there was a struggle ensuing."<sup>56</sup> Instead, the delegation was redirected to go to Pilikwe, in Botswana, where they were to meet the Rev. Michael Scott.<sup>57</sup> The delegation went there to meet another delegation from Namibia, sent by Hosea Kutako on a different mission. This one comprised Rev. Karuaera, Aaron Kapere, Augustus Tjikazu, Kambandi Vitore and Mr. Tjueza. Their mission centered on the liberation of Namibia.<sup>58</sup> This marked the period that can be said to be the formative phase of modern nationalist movements.

The first liberation movement was the Ovamboland People's Organisation (OPO) which was led by Sam Nujuma.<sup>59</sup> This party was based mainly among the Ovambo and hence failed to influence the Ovaherero of Ngamiland in any way. A month later in May 1959, another Nationalist movement, the South West Africa National Union (SWANU) was formed under the leadership of Uatja Kakueta, Jariretundu Kozonguizi and the Herero Chiefs' Council. Four months later in September an internal election was held within SWANU, which brought the chiefs' council into the executive.<sup>60</sup> A year later OPO. changed into a "National Organization" for all population groups.<sup>61</sup> The new organisation, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) was inaugurated on 19 April 1960. This new organisation did not enjoy significant support from the Ovaherero, particularly not from the chiefs' council. It did not have any marked support among the Ovaherero of Ngamiland even though Swapo officers such as Peter Nanyemba (former and late defense Secretary) and Marxton Joseph campaigned for support among the Ovaherero of Ngamiland. It was only a handful of the young generation who joined, often in pursuance of opportunities such as academic advancement.<sup>62</sup>

For reasons beyond the scope of the study, there occurred a major split within SWANU, whereupon the older and more conservative members of the chiefs council decided to form the National United Democratic Organisation (NUDO) in 1964, under the old and influential Ovaherero chief representative Hosea Kutako. His being President of the Organization ensured it of support of almost all Ovaherero in Ngamiland.

Only the Mbanderu wing of the Ovaherero remained attached to SWANU. To this end branches were established in various parts of Ngamiland, with Tjautumaha Tjetjoo at Lake Ngami, Mboroveva at Makakung and Kandjanatazombua at Xangwa.<sup>63</sup> During this time, "the back to Namibia" talk was replaced by interest in the independence movement.

Events continued almost in the same manner until 1976, when the internal parties of Namibia met and formed the Democratic Turnhalle alliance (DTA). At its inauguration, the DTA set 30 December 1978 as the date of independence. Interestingly, NUDO joined with all its membership, even those in Botswana, while SWANU stayed out. Whether legally or not, the Ovaherero of Ngamiland continued to be members. From information acquired confidentially the Ovaherero of Ngamiland were even organised to go and cast their votes, which thing some of them did. Someone observed that those were "votes against communism."<sup>64</sup>

With the inauguration of the DTA. and the subsequent establishment of Second Tier governments under DTA., there came a period of political marriage between the Ovaherero and the South African government. This gave rise to the new wave of "Back to Namibia" which underlies the recent border crossing incidents of the 1980s.

Thus it can be seen that continued political relations between the Ovaherero of Ngamiland and those in Namibia were a result of the economic forces which shaped the social, cultural and political forces characterized the period under study.



The economic status that was achieved by the Ovaherero laid the basis for political misunderstanding as shown, which had a spill-over effect on the social and cultural relations. The hostilities that characterized relations between the hosts (Batawana) and the guests (Ovaherero) caused incidents of harassment of the guests by the hosts. The guests, who were in the minority, developed what Anwar (writing about Pakistanis in Britain) identified as the "minority group status". He argues that "ethnic relations, obligations, values and traditions became a reflection of the home culture": hence the continuity and the uniformity of such relations, which are used to "maintain group cohesiveness and sustain identify." Anwar summarises the whole situation in the following manner: "Foreigners, minority group status and discrimination by the indigenous population are additional factors which contribute to the strengthening of ethnic traits and also lead to ethnic mobilization."<sup>65</sup> Another thing which stands out from this study is the degree of political vulnerability that characterizes such displaced and disgruntled political groups as the Ovaherero of Ngamiland.

## Notes

George Manase died tragically in an accident soon after completing his degree. The essay was completed in 1984 and was supervised by Fred Morton.

<sup>1</sup> The territory has been known by varying names. Before 1856 it was known in the Cape as Transgariep (across the Orange river). In this study it is referred to throughout by its modern name of Namibia. See B.T. Mokopakgosi: "Imperialism and War: Examining the first phase of German rule in Namibia", (M.A. dissertation, Johns Hopkins, 1983).

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Jashua Kamberipa, Windhoek 29 July, 1983.

<sup>3</sup> *Botswana Daily News* 26 October 1983 No. 132

<sup>4</sup> Horst Dreschler *Let us die fighting* (London, 1980) p.6

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 155

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p.156

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p.155

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p.155

<sup>9</sup> Helmut Bley *South West Africa Under German Rule* (London: Heinemann, 1971) p.150.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p.163

<sup>11</sup> I. Goldblatt *History of South West Africa: the beginning of the nineteenth century* (Cape Town: Juta, 1975) p. 133

<sup>12</sup> Horst Drechler *Let us die fighting* p. 167

<sup>13</sup> . Jon M. Bridgeman *The revolt of the Hereros* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1981) p.131

<sup>14</sup> Botswana National Archives (BNA) HC 11/1: Williams to High Commissioner 21 Nov 1905 Tsau.

<sup>15</sup> BNA RC 10/18 Rodwell to [addressee not shown] 9 March 1904 Mafikeng.

<sup>16</sup> . BNA H11/1 Acting Magistrate to Resident Commissioner Tsau 1905.

<sup>17</sup> Goldblatt *History of South West Africa* p.136

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Joshua Kamberipa, Windhoek 29 July 1983; Interview with Maveipi Katjimune, Maun 14 October 1983

<sup>19</sup> . Interview with Usaona and Mbarahi Kaari Kwarabe, Hyena Veld, 21 December 1983

<sup>20</sup> BNA RC 10/18 Rodwell to [addressee not shown] 9 March 1904.

<sup>21</sup> Extracts from UN Reports on South West Africa. Given to me by J. Kozonguizi 20 June 1983, Windhoek; Michael Scott *A time to speak* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958) p.229

<sup>22</sup> . Interview with Kangaja Tjirongo, Maun 17 Aug 1983; also Horst Dreschler *Let us die fighting* p.166; Isaac Schapera *Notes on some Herero Genealogies* (University of Cape Town, 1945) p. 39.

- <sup>23</sup> Interview with Maveipi Katjimune, 14 Oct 1983, Maun
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>25</sup> Interview with A. Manasse, 14 Oct 1983 Maun
- <sup>26</sup> Interview with Kangaja Tjirongo 17 Aug 1983 Maun; interview with Tjipapi Manasse 9 Aug 1983; Government Archives Windhoek [G.A.W.] A50/101: Sgt 58 South West Africa Police to Officer in Command Police District No. 4 Grootfontein, 1935
- <sup>27</sup> Interview with Maveipi Katjimune 14 Oct 1983 Maun.
- <sup>28</sup> Interview with Usaona 21 Dec 1983, Kwarabe.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>30</sup> Interview with Kangaja Tjirongo 17 Aug 1983, Maun
- <sup>31</sup> . Kambara Kahaka: The statement was made by Mr. Kahaka when he was demanding that the late Letsholathebe II be his witness that he was a citizen of Botswana and that he was entitled to a passport
- <sup>32</sup> . Interview with Munjuku Nguvauna 20 June 1983 Epukiro (Namibia)
- <sup>33</sup> Isaac Schapera *Some notes on Herero genealogies* p.2
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* p.2
- <sup>35</sup> Interview with Maveipi Katjimune 14 Oct 1983 Maun.
- <sup>36</sup> BNA S48/1 Mathiba to High Commissioner Maun.
- <sup>37</sup> Mphahela System: This was a form of tax collected by Batawana from the Ovaherero. It was demanded in form of a beast invariably chosen by the Collector. According to Ovaherero informants, there was no explanation given for this form of tax. The word Mphahela literally translated means "just give me".
- <sup>38</sup> Interview with Kangaja Tjirongo 17 Aug 1983 Maun.
- <sup>39</sup> Interview with Kangaja Tjirongo 17 Aug 1983 Maun; interview with Wellem Katuri 16 Aug 1983 Maun
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>41</sup> BNA S214/1/1-2 Resident Commissioner to Herero Delegation 5 December 1939 at Maun.
- <sup>42</sup> BNA S214/1/1 William (DC) to Sir William Clarke (RC) 19 June 1939 Maun.
- <sup>43</sup> Interview with Wellem Katurii 16 Aug 1983 Maun.
- <sup>44</sup> *Namibia The facts* (London: International Defence and Aid Fund, September 1980) p.11.
- <sup>45</sup> *To be Born a Nation* (London: SWAPO Department of Information and Publicity/ Zep Press, 1981) p. 167
- <sup>46</sup> Mary Benson *Tshekedi Khama* (London, 1960) p.153.
- <sup>47</sup> Michael Scott *A time to speak* p.219
- <sup>48</sup> . BNA S126/2 Tshekedi Khama to Sir E. Baring (HC) 10 Aug. 1947.
- <sup>49</sup> Interview with Dr. Z. Ngavirue 29 June 1983 Windhoek
- <sup>50</sup> Mary Benson *Tshekedi Khama* p.153
- <sup>51</sup> . G.A.W. A50/101 Department of External Affairs to Government Secretary of South West Africa 3 November 1947.
- <sup>52</sup> G.A.W. A50/101 W.J.B. Slater (Acting Secretary for South West Africa and Chief Native Commissioner) to Headman Hosea Kutako, 11 November 1947.
- <sup>53</sup> . Interview with Maveipi Katjimune 14 Oct 1983 Maun.
- <sup>54</sup> BNA 568/9 District Commissioner Maun to Government Secretary Mafeking 11 February 1958.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>56</sup> Interview with Munjuku Nguvauna 20 June 1983 Epukiro; interview with Dr. Z. Ngavirue 29 June 1983 Windhoek; interview with Rev. Karuera 22 June 1983 Windhoek.
- <sup>57</sup> Michael Scott *A time to speak* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958) p.219 Michael Scott was invited by Chief Tshekedi to come and stay with him after having learnt of his anti-apartheid activities "Soon after I was released from Gaol in 1946, I was invited by Chief Tshekedi Khama..."
- <sup>58</sup> Interview with Rev. Karuera 22 June 1983 Windhoek
- <sup>59</sup> Ruth First *South West Africa* (Gloucester, 1975) p.200.

<sup>60</sup> . *Ibid.* p.201

<sup>61</sup> . *Ibid.* p.201

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Sakaria Shikomba 21 June 1983 Windhoek

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Kangaja Tjirongo 17 Aug 1983 Maun

<sup>64</sup> Informant asked not to be identified.

<sup>65</sup> Mohammed Anwar *The myth of return: Pakistanis in Britain* (London: Heinemann, 1979) p.13.