CAPTURING THE PAST: THE KHOISAN IN FILMS AND MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

By

Birgit Hansen

16268301

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree MSocSci

In History

In the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

At the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Supervisor

Dr. G. Paleker

Date of submission

November 2022

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DECLARATION

Full name: Birgit Ursula Hansen

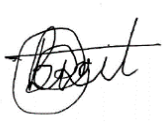
Student Number: 16268301

Degree/Qualification: MSocSci

Title of thesis: CAPTURING THE PAST: THE KHOISAN IN FILMS AND MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

I declare that this thesis is my own original work. Where secondary material is used, this has been carefully acknowledged and referenced in accordance with university requirements.

I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of university policy and implications in this regard.



16 December 2022

SIGNATURE DATE

ResPEthics Documentation **HUM016/1220** **04/02/2021**

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my gratitude to the following people who have been invaluable to the development of this research and my thought process: To the Iziko Museums of South Africa for providing me with access to their archives. To my supervisor Dr Nisa Paleker for her patience and guidance during this process, which was at times confusing and challenging. To my parents who supported me throughout this process even when it seemed to be stagnating.

Abstract

This thesis analyses the representation of the Khoisan in two very distinct visual media, film and formally curated exhibitions in the mid to late 20th century. Films and museum exhibitions are read in relation to the dominant tropes of the Indigenous Peoples of South Africa such as the myths of the 'noble savage' and the 'children of nature'. The visual media analysed in this research include four films and two exhibitions. The films are as follows, two documentary films produced by John Marshall *The Hunters* (1957) and *N!ai the Story of a !Kung woman (*1980). The Hunters supports the trope of the 'noble savage' through its romanticising of hunting, while *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* counters the common tropes defining the Khoisan in their contemporary context of dispossession. The two remaining films, *The Gods must be Crazy* (1980), and *The Gods must be Crazy 2* (1989), written and directed by Jamie Uys perpetuate the trope of the primitive, timeless 'bushmen'. These two fictional films discuss themes of modern civilisation versus nature and define the Khoisan as part of the natural world unsuited for modern civilisation. The exhibitions analysed here are *Bushman Diorama* (1959-2001), displayed at the South African Museum and *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of Bushmen* (1996) curated by Pippa Skotnes. The diorama presents life-casts of 'bushmen' figures in a traditional scene, perpetuating the idea of 'primitive affluence'. In contrast Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of Bushmen critiques the stereotypical representation of the Khoisan through an examination of the encounters between them and Europeans. These visual media are analysed and discussed as visual texts focusing on their modes of representation and the meanings generated by these representations.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature review

Introduction

The First Peoples of multiple countries have been the topic of study for centuries; sparked by European exploration and later colonialization, interest in the First Peoples has generated a range of both scholarly and popular literature and visual media. The Khoisan[1] of southern Africa generated a particular interest for those who were far removed from the colonial frontier. This interest was fuelled by the European explorers, missionaries and colonial officers who brought back stories about the wild southern African frontiers and its 'savage' inhabitants. As more and more contact was made with the Khoisan, different perceptions began to develop amongst the European populace. These 'bushmen'[2] were imagined at times as a vanishing people slowly going extinct, at other times they were viewed as bestial or noble, as savage, or naïve. These views were perpetuated and spread through visual depictions, such as sketches and photography, and through the writings of European explorers and missionaries.[3] Although there have been shifts in ideology and thus perceptions of the Khoisan, some discourses and stereotypes are still evident in visual and marketing media and exhibits. This research analyses the visual representations of the Khoisan in films and museum exhibitions during the mid-to-late 20th century.

With the advent of European colonialism, increased interaction between the European settlers and the First Peoples of South Africa was inevitable. Initially this interaction was based on trade of livestock and general labour. However, as stock farmers moved further into the interior during the mid-18th century the nature of this interaction changed. The constant spread of the Europeans further into Khoisan territory, and the competition for the natural resources caused by this spread led to resistance by the Khoisan in the form of a guerrilla war. The retaliation by the settlers and stock farmers on the frontier was often swift and violent. The use of Commandos, armed groups of settler farmers, in this retaliation quickly decimated the

[1]. The term Khoisan will be used throughout the thesis; however, Khoikhoi and San may be used for historical clarity. The term Khoikhoi is used as an umbrella term for the indigenous groups that practiced pastoralism. Additionally, San is an umbrella term for the indigenous groups that practiced hunting-and-gathering. Khoisan is used as a generalised term for the indigenous communities of South Africa.
[2]. The word 'bushmen' is used here in its historical understanding and usage. The term 'bushmen' is a derogatory term referring to the San and at times also the Khoikhoi, however the Khoikhoi are more often referred to as 'hottentot' in historical texts.
[3]. P. S. Landau, 'With Camera and Gun in Southern Africa: Inventing the Image of Bushmen, c. 1880 to 1935', *in* P. Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town, 1996, pp.129-141.

population.[4] The encounters on the frontier were not only violent, but there were also attempts by the settlers and missionaries on the frontier to 'civilise' the Khoisan. These 'civilising' activities usually only had temporary success. The end of the 19th century brought the defeat of the Khoisan, their population almost entirely decimated and many living as labourers on settler farms or in abject poverty.[5]

Throughout these interactions and clashes between the Khoisan and the Settlers the perceptions of the 'bushmen' continuously evolved as interest in them spiked in the colonial metropoles and in Europe. The fascination that those in Europe had with Africa and its 'savage' inhabitants, fuelled the spread of information and myths about the Khoisan. A common motif in the representation of 'bushmen' was and continues to be the idea of the 'noble savage'. This interpretation usually viewed an indigenous person as being 'un-corrupted' by civilisation, thereby being innately 'good' and naïve about modern society. In direct contrast to this was the common frontier narrative of the Khoisan as lazy and deceitful. Additionally, they were often viewed as a 'primitive' people, a relic remaining from a bygone era, who were on their way to a natural extinction. This in turn established the idea that the 'bushmen', specifically their anatomy and cultural artefacts, needed to be preserved for future study. These were common depictions of the Khoisan, and while they defined them as beings of lesser intelligence or morality, they were far kinder than some other depictions which defined them as 'savage beasts'. During periods of great violence against the Khoisan, and strong retaliation on their part, they were often shown as violent, barbaric parasites, which needed to be exterminated. The 'bushmen' were very often equated with animals, whether it be in the sense of preservation or conserving a dying people, or with the idea of exterminating animal, 'vermin'. As the 'bushmen' became objects of scientific study the idea of a 'true bushman' became more prevalent. This led to them being depicted as being 'out of time' or ahistorical; this was especially prevalent in the 20th Century. They were shown in media outside of their impoverished circumstances and surrounded by nature and dressed in skins.[6] Thus the predominant discourse of the 19th and 20th centuries rendered the Khoisan both ahistorical and decontextualized.

---

[4]. N. Penn, 'The Destruction of Hunter-Gatherer Societies on the Pastoralist Frontier: The Cape and Australia Compared', *in* M. Adhikari (ed.), *Genocide on Settler Frontiers: When hunter-gatherers and commercial stock farmers clash*, Berghahn Books, New York, 2015, pp. 159-164.
[5]. N. Penn, '"Fated to Perish": The Destruction of the Cape San', *in* P. Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, pp. 81-91.
[6]. P. S. Landau, 'With Camera and Gun in Southern Africa: Inventing the Image of Bushmen, c. 1880 to 1935', *in* P. Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, pp.129-141.

Research Objective and Research Questions

The primary aim of this research is to provide a comparative analysis on how the Khoisan have been depicted in select films and museum exhibitions. In analysing the representations of the Khoisan, this research explores two very distinct visual media; film and formally curated exhibitions, in relation to dominant tropes of the First Peoples of South Africa. Films and museum exhibitions are read and analysed as visual texts in this research and an important aspect of the analyses will consider the modes of representation, meanings, audience reactions and reception.

The study analyses visual media that was created and on display from the mid-twentieth to the end of the 20th century.The films *The Gods must be Crazy* (1980) and *The Gods must be Crazy 2* (1989) written and directed by Jamie Uys, as well as two documentaries *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* (1980)and *The Hunters* (1957)both of which were directed by John Marshall, are analysed as case studies. The study also analyses two museum exhibitions that featured the Khoisan, namely the *Bushman dioramas* at the South African Museum which were on display from 1960 to 2001, as well as the *Miscast* exhibition curated by Pippa Skotnes, which was on display in 1996.

Research Questions

1. How are the first peoples of southern Africa, namely the Khoisan, depicted in film and museum exhibitions?
2. What is the dominant trope represented in both films and exhibitions?
3. How has the depiction of the Khoisan changed throughout the 20th century in the selected visual media? And what has informed and shaped this change?
4. How do formally curated museum exhibitions and films differ in their representations of the Khoisan?
5. How do the audience interpretations of these representations differ between the two visual media? And how do the intentions of the curators, or creators differ?

Rationale

This research compares two different visual media representations of the Khoisan, those in film and formally curated exhibitions. Both media are inherently based on a viewer's interaction and enjoyment of them, each having similar yet distinct impacts on their audiences. While there have been discussions of the Khoisan in films and museum exhibitions separately, they are

very rarely discussed comparatively as distinct visual media, each with its own representational language. Given the visual impact of both film and exhibits it is important to understand how they each represent the Khoisan and how representations are received by audiences. This research thus contributes to existing scholarship on First Peoples as well as visual media studies.

Literature Review

One of the most important sources used in this research is the book that accompanied the *Miscast* exhibition. *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, edited by Pippa Skotnes, the curator of the exhibition. The introductory chapter by Pippa Skotnes provides an overview of the curation of the exhibition, the material culture included and the significance of its creation. According to Skotnes this exhibition represents relationships; it illustrates the connection and encounters between the Khoisan and the European settlers and the consequences of these encounters. The main aim of the exhibit, according to Skotnes, was to critically explore the term 'bushman', and to discuss the relationships that ensured its creation. In doing so she attempted to critique how the Khoisan have previously been exhibited by western institutions, and to create interest in Khoisan material culture.[7]

There are multiple other chapters within this book that are useful in this research, for example those that focus on the Khoisan as they are represented in museums and tourist attractions, such as the chapter titled "Trophy Skulls, Museums and the San" by Alan Morris. This chapter discusses the acquisition of Khoisan remains, by amateur collectors, scientists, academics, colonial administrators and even missionaries during the colonial period. These remains were used as tourist attractions and scientific specimens. He uses multiple case studies to emphasise the fact that the Khoisan were viewed as nothing more than a part of nature, like all other animals of southern Africa. Morris argues that these remains, be they trophy skulls or skeletons, should be viewed as historical documents instead of as scientific samples. His argument states that the remains will be able to tell the story of those colonised as well as the story of the colonisers. This is a reasonable argument especially when discussing the remains of which the origins are known; the case studies used in this chapter are mainly those of known remains.[8]

[7]. P. Skotnes, 'Introduction', *in* P. Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, pp.15-23.
[8]. A. G. Morris, 'Trophy Skulls, Museums and the San', *in* P. Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, pp. 67-79.

However, many remains that exist in museum archives both internationally and in South Africa do not have the necessary context to provide detailed historical information.

Other chapters that are useful to this study focus on the history of the Khoisan and their interactions with the European settlers throughout the colonial era. The chapter by Nigel Penn titled "Fated to Perish: The Destruction of the Cape San" provides an overview of the history of the Khoisan and their encounters with European settlers and stock farmers. In this chapter he discusses life on the colonial frontier for both the Khoisan and the settlers. In this discussion he touches on the guerrilla war that took place in the late 18th century and the different tactics used by the Khoisan and the settlers. Penn also provides a discussion of the European belief in the supposed inferiority of the Khoisan and provides a reasonable argument for the Khoisan never fully surrendering to colonial rule despite their dire straits. He concludes that the defeat and genocide of the Khoisan was due to both the military superiority of the settlers and their more utilitarian view of the world when compared to the more spiritual view of the Khoisan.[9] This chapter is useful in that it provides a brief overview of the struggle on the frontier, which had a great impact on how the Khoisan were perceived by the colonists.

Another chapter that has been identified as important thus far is titled "With Camera and Gun in Southern Africa: Inventing the Image of Bushmen" by Paul Landau. It provides a greater understanding of the image of the 'bushmen' that we have today and how this idea developed over time. Landau discusses the role of the camera in shaping the image of 'bushmen', with his main argument being that photography ensured that 'bushmen' would forever be trapped in the same discourse which focused on the preservation and conservation of animals. They were linked with the 'natural' and far removed from the civilised, which is a view that still holds today. A secondary argument that Landau makes is that photography helped change the European understanding of a 'bushman' from that of a wild savage to an image of a gentle and innocent people; this, however, was always dependent on the bias of the photographer and the general evolution of the mythology surrounding the Khoisan.[10]

In addition to the book accompanying the *Miscast* exhibit, there have been discussions, analyses and reflections written on the exhibit. One such reflection was written by Stuart Douglas and Jennifer Law, "Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast:

[9].N. Penn, '"Fated to Perish": The Destruction of the Cape San', *in* P. Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, pp. 81-91.
[10]. P. S. Landau, 'With Camera and Gun in Southern Africa: Inventing the Image of Bushmen, c. 1880 to 1935', *in* P. Skotnes (ed.), *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, pp.129-141.

Negotiating Khoisan history and Material Culture"" which discusses the exhibit by analysing the motivations of the curators, public reception of the exhibit as well as the effect it had on the newly-established democratic South Africa of the mid-1990s.[11] Through this they examine how the representation of indigenous people is politicised, specifically with regards to artistic licence and cultural property. The main critique of the *Miscast* exhibit is that in its attempt to challenge the assumption that 'bushmen' are a reminder of ancient times, it further ingrains the idea of 'bushmen' as 'noble savages'. However, instead of being the 'noble savages' removed from society, they are represented as victims of western ideological practices, a harmless people who have been betrayed.[12]

Another book that proves useful to this research is edited by Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives.*[13]While this book is mostly focused on the indigenous populations of the Americas some of its chapters do provide some necessary theoretical understanding of the general representation of indigenous populations in museums. According to Sleeper-Smith one of the main themes that is common in European representation of indigenous peoples is the homogenisation of their cultures. Another common theme that she identifies is the idea that indigenous populations are always described in terms of inferiority. This belief in inferiority of indigenous populations influenced how the indigenous populations were represented in exhibitions. Objects were decontextualized and were framed to tell an evolutionary tale of binaries, with western societies being the highly developed and indigenous societies being primitive.[14] The book is divided into separate sections, each discussing a different aspect of museums, their representation of indigenous populations and indigenous perspectives on these representations.

The book also contains a chapter that is written from a South African perspective which is useful to this thesis. This chapter written by Ciraj Rasool entitled "Ethnographic Elaborations, Indigenous Contestations, and the Cultural Politics of Imagining Community", discusses the current and historic tension that characterise the understanding and representation of Khoisan culture. He discusses the closing of the *Bushman Diorama* at the South African Museum,

[11]. S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, pp. 85-108.
[12]. S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating Around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan History and Material Culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), pp. 85-108.
[13]. S. Sleeper-Smith *et al.*. *Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln. 2009.
[14]. S. Sleeper-Smith, 'Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives', *in* S. Sleeper-Smith (ed.), *Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives*, pp. 1-8.

providing some context and information that motivated its closure as well as public response to it, including the conferences regarding the Khoisan legacy that occurred simultaneously. In addition to this the chapter examines the history of ethnography in South Africa as well as the suspect acquisition of Khoisan remains and the repatriation of these remains. This chapter therefore provides a better understanding of the closure of the *Bushman Dioramas* as well as the political ideas of the Khoisan at that time.[15]

An influential source for this study discussing the *Bushman Diorama* is a Master's thesis by Robyn-Leigh Cedras. The thesis is titled *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. The thesis is a study of life-casts and their display within museum spaces, with a specific focus on the South African Museum.[16] She also attempts to place the practice of creating life-casts into historical context with a closer focus on indigenous perspectives. The third chapter of her thesis is of particular interest as it focuses specifically on the display of the life-casts and the use of dioramas for this purpose. This chapter discusses the creation of the dioramas as well as the creation of other Khoisan exhibitions in the South African Museum. She describes the inaccuracies that are present in the diorama, such as the temporal confusion that is part of the exhibit. While the exhibit states that life-casts were created in the early 20th century, the display itself is not given a date, but the surrounding exhibits are all archaeological in nature which emphasises the idea that the diorama represents an image of early man. Another issue Cedras mentions is that the women in the diorama are not dressed accurately. Finally, she also argues that the display change from a glass case to a diorama in 1960 perpetuated colonial ideologies under the new identity of nationalism and ethnology.[17]

A mini dissertation written by Siona O'Connell, is also influential in the discussion of representations of the 'Bushmen', and in particular, the Bushman Diorama. It discusses the representation of the Khoisan in photography. The mini dissertation is a self-reflexive engagement with her seven-month long art program at !Khwa ttu: San Culture and Education Centre, with ethics and ownership of photographs as a main point of discussion. As the co-

[15]. C. Rasool, 'Ethnographic Elaborations, Indigenous Contestations, and the Cultural Politics of Imagining Community', *in* S. Sleeper-Smith (ed.), *Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives*, pp. 106-126.
[16]. R. L. Cedras, *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2016.
[17]. R. L. Cedras, *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2016. pp.71-101.

curator of an exhibition, the discussion emphasises agency, ownership and the creation of spaces and opportunities for the voices and opinions of the !Khwa ttu Reference group and their interpretation of the depictions being discussed. The dissertation is influential to this research as it contains a chapter on the Bushman Diorama with particular emphasis on the Khoisan response to the exhibition. O'Connell argues that the life-casts in the diorama represent the abuse that Khoisan bodies were subjected to for the colonial gaze. The responses of the participant !Khwa ttu Reference Group and O'Connell's own impressions are useful for the discussion on criticism and reception of the diorama.[18]

Other journal articles that have been used discuss the films featuring the Khoisan. Lauren van Vuuren has published numerous articles discussing the films used in this research as well as others. One such article, namely, *"And He Said They Were Ju/Wasi, the people"* provides an overview of the films directed by John Marshall, including *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* (1980) and *The Hunters* (1957). One of the arguments van Vuuren makes is that Marshall's films reveal the interaction between the filmmaker and those they are recording and the effect it has on the film. Illustrating that the tropes of the 'bushmen' can be imposed onto the film by the filmmaker. Van Vuuren states that although Marshall was attempting to subvert the common tropes, especially that of a prehistoric people without history, he still contributes to the idea of 'bushmen' as 'noble savages'.[19] This source on John Marshall and some of her other works provide a better understanding of the films themselves as well as the issues and triumphs she has identified within them.

Lauren van Vuuren's PhD thesis, *The Great Dance: Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film: Representations of the Bushmen, 1925- 2000,* is an influential source for this research as it investigates the change over time in the interpretation and representation of the Khoisan in documentary films over seventy-five years. Most of the films discussed in her thesis provide contextual information on the shift in representation of the Khoisan; however, two of her chapters are significant to this research, as they analyse both John Marshall documentaries identified in this research. Van Vuuren's discussion explores the relationship between the idea of the 'bushmen' as pristine primitives and their rapid decline into poverty due to dispossession. An additional aim of her research is the consideration of film as a primary source for historical research in the South African context. She discusses the role of documentary films in

[18] S. O'Connell, *No hunting : finding a new f. stop for the bushmen,* (Dissertation), University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 2008.
[19]. L. Van Vuuren, ''And He Said They Were Ju/Wasi, the People': History and Myth in John Marshall's 'Bushmen films' 1957-2000', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35(2), 2009, pp. 557-574.

reinforcing the prevalent myths of the 'bushmen' and illustrates that the prominent discourses within documentary reflections of popular and academic interests. Additionally, the thesis assesses the construction of knowledge by documentary films and its influence on popular culture.[20]

Keyan Tomaselli, has authored multiple articles and chapters on the media and its representation of the Khoisan. Two of these works will be discussed here, the first is titled *"…We Have to Work with our own Heads" (/Angn!ao): San Bushmen and the Media* which discusses the ways in which the Khoisan interact with film makers and react to films about them. Tomaselli states that many of the discussions on films featuring the Khoisan tend to exclude the opinions of the Khoisan. He argues that the media often do not wish to record the present conditions of the Khoisan, rather they wish to record the stories that they are familiar with from films and books, producing repetitive and recycled tropes and representations. This often forces the Khoisan to portray the expected image in order to earn an income, in other words play up to the stereotypes as a means of survival. The implication of this is that commons stereotypes are subverted in the process of amplification. However, throughout the source Tomaselli puts greater focus on the views and interpretations of the Khoisan, in place of those of academics and producers.[21]

The second source by Tomaselli focuses specifically on the *The Gods Must be Crazy* films. In *Rereading the Gods Must be Crazy Films* he discusses Jamie Uys's film style and the themes which are common in his work. These include the relationship between people and technology, hostile environments, the 'Disneyfying' of animals, and white myths regarding the area and its people. Unlike many works discussing the *Gods* films Tomaselli argues that the films do not wholly reflect the ideologies of apartheid, but rather a combination of the various cultural, economic and political myths that were developed over the course of the 20th century. The article also provides a discussion of the commodification of the Khoisan, specifically by Uys, through furthering the myths of a people untouched by modern society. The main argument is centred around the idea of the films being racist by some but not others. Tomaselli argues that those who are aware of the development of the myth of the naïve Khoisan are more likely to read racism in Uys's films, however those who are not aware of the myths tend to enjoy the

[20] L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000*. (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005.
[21]. K. G. Tomaselli, '"…We Have to Work with or own Heads" (/Angn!ao): San Bushmen and the Media', *Visual Anthropology*15(2), 2002, pp. 203-220.

films. However, he does state that the films may create inaccurate perceptions of the San for those who have no prior knowledge.[22]

In contrast to Tomaselli, '*Apartheid cinema and indigenous image right*' by Brendon Nicholls discusses the *Gods* films in the context of Apartheid ideologies and its inequalities. Nicholls argues that the films are complicit in furthering the ideals and values of the apartheid government, and that the common myths about the Khoisan helped Uys exploit the San actors in the films. A crucial point of his argument is that the slapstick comedy employed in the film serves to 'disarticulate' black bodies. Nicholls identifies the example of Uys adding more clicks to the Khoisan dialogue as proof of this. He also points to the comedic elements of the actions and movements of black characters in the films. Due to the ethnographic nature of the narration these actions are seen as a cultural habit, thereby impeding black agency that would otherwise be expressed through the voice and movement. However, the article ends with a suggestion for a methodology that could argue for Khoisan part ownership of the film, due to N!xau's dialogue being unscripted and thus he may have had some unacknowledged rights to the script.[23]

Another source that has been identified is a book titled *Ethnic Minority Media: An International Perspective* edited by Stephen Harold Riggins.[24] While it does not in any way discuss southern Africa and its indigenous populations it does provide an understanding of differing indigenous perspectives. For example, the chapter titled "Broadcasting in Aboriginal Australia: One Mob, One Voice, One Land" shows the ways in which indigenous film and representation differ when filmed by people of different cultural backgrounds. This is contrasted with how the image of indigenous culture and people changes when they are filming and representing themselves.[25]

In order to compare the two distinct visual media, it is necessary to include sources that discuss the analysis of museum exhibitions and films. One such source is *The Politics of Exhibiting Culture: Legacies and Possibilities* by Shelley Ruth Butler.[26] This source provides a discussion of the critical and optimistic perspectives in the practice of exhibition culture. According to

[22]. K. G. Tomaselli, 'Rereading the Gods Must be Crazy Films', *Visual Anthropology* 19(2), 2006, pp. 171-200.
[23]. B. Nicholls, 'Apartheid cinema and indigenous image rights: the "Bushman myth" in Jamie Uys's The gods must be crazy', *Scrutiny2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa* 13(1), 2008, pp. 20-32.
[24]. S. H. Riggins *et al.,* 1992. *Ethnic Minority Media: An International Perspective.* Sage Publications, Newbury Park. 1992.
[25].M. Meadows, 'Broadcasting in Aboriginal Australia: One Mob, One Voice, One Land', *in* S.H. Riggins (ed.), *Ethnic Minority Media: An International Perspective,* pp. 82-101.
[26]. S. R. Butler, 'The Politics of Exhibiting Culture: Legacies and Possibilities', *Museum Anthropology* 23(3), 2000, pp. 74-92.

Butler critical museology views museums in the context of domination, questioning the depiction of other cultures and peoples in western exhibits. Butler argues that museums are institutions where material culture is catalogued and displayed for consumption without discussion or dialogue between the curators and cultures on display taking place. She identifies *Miscast* as an attempt at critical museology. The optimistic perspective views museums as institutions of education, which are there to facilitate debate and discussion in a multicultural environment. This source also provides discussion of the different ways that audiences interpret and engage with exhibits, thus arguing that museums are spaces where culture and identity can be defined and discussed.[27]

A source focusing on the theoretical discussion of museums, their purposes and practices is a book by Michael Ames. *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums* is a critical analysis of museum practices that argues that museums must constantly evaluate themselves, while also paying more attention to the world around them, including its social, economic, and political structures. Ames discusses the clash between professionalism and current issues; this clash is obvious with issues where the museum as an institution is complicit in the oppression of indigenous cultures. As governmental institutions often depend on political funding and a focus on revenue it is difficult for museums to provide a critical viewpoint that would spotlight the issues under which they themselves operate; this is at times against the common public interest. Ames also argues that museums are increasingly put under economic pressures, which has led to a change in public relations and a greater focus on audience satisfaction. This has led to museums to become part of the consumer society, competing for customers. The book also discusses the importance of engaging with Aboriginal communities in the displaying of their cultures, also contending that despite the imbalance of power relations museums must continually review and reconstruct their views of non-western cultures as objects of study. However, this must be done while being cognisant of common imperialistic assumptions and the postmodernist belief that knowledge is relative.[28]

The final source on museology is written by Eileen Hooper-Greenhill titled *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture.* This book aims to create an understanding of how museums play a part in shaping consciousness and creating knowledge, while also discussing how the audience relates to this knowledge. Hooper-Greenhill argues that a multi-disciplinary approach

[27]. S. R. Butler, 'The Politics of Exhibiting Culture: Legacies and Possibilities', *Museum Anthropology* 23(3), 2000, pp. 74-92.
[28]. M. M. Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*. UBC Press, Vancouver, 2014.

is necessary when analysing museums; one needs to account for the collection, what it is and the process of collection, which requires various forms of historical and collection management skills. There must also be an understanding of the role of the museum as a cultural institution, as well as its role as an educational institution in the production of knowledge, which involves disciplines such as education, sociology and history amongst others. The book compares the modernist museum model with the post-modern model prominent in the late 20th century, emphasising the fact that the visitor in a modernist museum was seen as a passive observer taking in the 'objective' knowledge provided by the museum, while more recently the visitor is viewed as an active participant that has his/her own individual perspective.[29]

Sources that discuss the analysis of film, specifically historical film, be it mainstream or documentary, are very applicable to this research. An author that has written multiple works on the analysis of film as a historical source is Robert Rosenstone. The book *Visions of the Past: The challenge of film to our idea of history* is a collection of Rosenstone's essays where he discusses his interactions with historical films and his analysis of them. The works in this book show that film can be a means through which we can think about and relate to history. This book contains a discussion of the definition and practice of historical films, be they documentaries or dramatizations, critical textual analysis of individual films, as well as a few essays on films outside of mainstream media. Rosenstone makes two important claims that are suggested by the various essays. The first claim is that films and books require different methods of analysis and that one cannot use the methodology of one to evaluate the other, and the second is that historical films can at times be much more complex to analyse than written texts due to the many elements that encompass it, such as the soundtrack and other accompanying sound as well as the composition of a scene.[30]

Bill Nichols is another author who has written on the analysis of historical films; however, his discussion of documentary films is of particular interest for this research. His article titled *The Voice of Documentary* proves useful in understanding and analysing the Marshall films. In this article Nichols examines the strengths and weaknesses of four dominant styles in documentary film making, namely the direct-address style, *cinema verité*, interview style and the self-reflexive style. He argues that each style attempts to solve the limitation of the dominant style preceding it, with the self-reflexive style being the least problematic in our current context. His

[29]. E. Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture.* Routledge , London, 2000.
[30]. R. A. Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past: The Challenge of Film to or Idea of History.* Harvard University Press, London, 1995.

discussion centres around the 'voice' of documentaries, expressed in different ways in each style; 'Voice' being not the actual voice of the filmmaker, but rather how the film conveys its point of view using various cinematic techniques.[31]

Methodology

This thesis applies qualitative analysis of primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include the films *The Gods must be Crazy* (1980), *The Gods must be Crazy 2* (1989), *The Hunters* (1957) and *N!ai the Story of a !Kung woman* (1980) as well as newspaper articles and archival documents. These films are all readily available in the public domain. The films are available in the University of Pretoria library and on various streaming platforms. Each of these films will be closely analysed to determine how they portray the Khoisan, which tropes they invoke and which they attempt to subvert. The film analysis takes a three-pronged approach; analysis focuses on the film as text, the film in its production context and finally audience reception. The production context of the film includes the production history itself, but also the period of production and how the broader context surrounding it helped shape the film. Audience reception is especially important due to the significant impact films often have on public perceptions, these perceptions are analysed through film reviews and audience commentary in newspapers and on digital platforms. Finally, the content of the films is not to be overlooked as the main message is conveyed through it.

Museum exhibitions as visual texts are also be used as primary sources. These exhibitions are the *Bushman Dioramas* exhibited at the South African Museum from 1960 to 2001, as well as the *Miscast* exhibition in 1996 at the South African Gallery. An analysis of museum exhibition requires focus on both the exhibition itself and the context surrounding it, beginning with the aim of the curator and others involved in the production of the exhibit, as well as the purpose behind the objects chosen for display. This information is not always available for historic exhibitions such as those being studied here, however it is possible to gain an understanding from archival material regarding the display. Due to the historic nature of these exhibitions, they are analysed through the use of photographs, marketing posters and catalogues among other surviving archival material.

This is then followed by an analysis of the display itself. This analysis consists of various aspects that work in conjunction to convey the message of the exhibit. These aspects as

[31]. B. Nicholls, 'The Voice of Documentary', *Film Quarterly* 36(3), 1983, pp. 17-30.

identified by Moser[32] include the importance of location, how the display uses space, its layout and how the design, colour and lighting of the area surrounding the exhibition affects its message. Display types is another important aspect, and these include the objects that are included in the display, such as the casts included in the *Bushman Dioramas.* The final important aspect is the exhibition style employed in the exhibits; this style indicates how the objects in the display communicate with the audience. There are many types of styles, such as themed or object-led exhibitions, and didactic or discovery-based exhibitions. The analysis of these various aspects in combination allows for a greater understanding of the messages being conveyed by the exhibitions. Finally, audience reception is important to the analysis of museum exhibitions, as it shows whether the message the display was meant to convey was understood by the audience as intended.[33] As the exhibitions studied here are historic, audience reception is analysed using media reports and visitor accounts where available.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1- The introduction discusses the research objective, literature review, methodology, and rationale.

Chapter 2- provides an overview of the history of the Khoisan and their encounters and interactions with European settlers. This chapter also includes the development and evolution of the different tropes and images of 'bushmen' as well as the development of the term itself.

Chapter 3- discusses the two documentary films by John Marshall. How the Khoisan are portrayed in these documentaries is examined by focusing on the choice of scenes Marshall included, the landscape shots included in the films as well as analysing how the Khoisan interact with the camera and the filmmaker. Which tropes these films subvert or embody is discussed.

Chapter 4- discusses the two *The Gods Must Be Crazy* films and analyses how they represent the Khoisan. This is done by focusing on the roles that are being portrayed by the Khoisan, their environment, their dress as well as their actions throughout the film. This chapter will also analyse how these films embody the trope of the 'noble savage'.

[32] S. Moser, 'The Devil is in the Detail: Museum Displays and the Creation of Knowledge', *Museum Anthropology* 33(1),2010, pp. 22-32.
[33]. S. Moser, 'The Devil is in the Detail: Museum Displays and the Creation of Knowledge', *Museum Anthropology* 33(1),2010, pp. 22-32.

Chapter 5- analyses the *Bushman Dioramas* and the *Miscast* exhibition the *Bushman Dioramas*. The chapter begins with a discussion of the reasons for the creation of each exhibit as well as the contexts of their creation. This is followed by how each exhibition was arranged, what sort of visual artefact was included, what information was being conveyed or not conveyed and the public reception. Finally, each exhibit is discussed in terms of which tropes they embody.

Chapter 6: The concluding chapter draws together the various elements of the main argument.

Ethical Considerations

This research complies with the Ethical Guidelines of the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities. In the first instance the research proposal will be submitted for ethical clearance to the Research Ethics Committee. In the second instance, the research will be conducted in an ethical manner, ensuring research integrity and originality with due respect given to the intellectual property rights of all scholars and research used in this project.

This research is text-based and does not intend to use oral interviews as additional sources of information. Thus, no human subjects are involved in the research process.

Chapter 2: Historical stereotyping and exploitation of the Khoisan

Indigenous populations have often been viewed as 'other', outside of the realm of western or 'civilised' understanding. This was especially true during the colonial era. The perception of the 'other' was most often negative with indigenous populations being described as beasts or uncivilised savages. Even when the attitudes and opinions were positive this element of the 'other' remained. Positive perceptions of indigenous populations were often focused on a romanticised primitive past that should be longed for and protected. In the case of South Africa, the discourse surrounding its indigenous population, the Khoisan, was rested in animalistic terms, as savage beasts, or parts of the natural world in need of protection. These stereotypes of the Khoisan did not follow a linear chronology, rather European perceptions changed and adapted in response to accounts of encounters between the Khoisan and colonists, as well as ideological shifts regarding the 'other'. Perceptions were also not consistent across the colonial world; the ideas and views of those in the colonial metropoles and in Europe were by no means shared with those on the frontier.[34] Nevertheless, while the different stereotypes of the Khoisan may have overlapped at times or become incongruously negative or positive, there were several stereotypes that were commonly used and often appeared in the accompanying discourse.

The stereotyping of the South African indigenous populations began with the Portuguese, long before Dutch settlers came to the Cape. The Portuguese did not aim to settle at the Cape and only used it as a waystation to resupply their ships on their way to the east. In 1488 Bartolomeu Dias rounded the Cape; it was as they were attempting to land and restock that they encountered the Khoisan who attacked the ships with rocks and arrows, preventing them from landing. This encounter created a negative impression of the Cape and its peoples as dangerous, in the minds of the Portuguese, an impression only made worse by future encounters. One such encounter between the Portuguese and the Khoisan occurred during an expedition led by Vasco Da Gama; beginning quite amicably it eventually devolved into a skirmish in which Da Gama himself was injured. Despite this, further interactions between Da Gama and South African indigenes were amicable. The belief in the savagery of the Cape was cemented when Francisco De Almeida and his men fought with a Khoikhoi group in reprisal for the attack on a Portuguese foraging party eventually leading to the deaths of 65 Portuguese. These initial, violent

[34] . E. Bregin, 'Representing the Bushmen: Through the Colonial Lens', *English in Africa* 27 (1), 2000, pp. 37-45.; A. E. Voss, 'The Image of the Bushman in South African English Writing of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *English in Africa* 14(1), 1987, pp. 21-40.

encounters led to the Cape being viewed as a treacherous place whose inhabitants were to be feared.[35]

Prior to Dutch settlement in 1652 interactions between the Khoisan and seafarers were usually the result of necessary trade. The reports based these interactions often remarked that the Khoisan were 'barely human', as there was no evidence of farming or settlement. The lack of European markers of civilisation led to the Khoisan being seen as 'savages' even at times accused of cannibalism. The predominant perceptions of the Khoisan at this time were based on physical descriptions given by sailors. They were described as small, foul-smelling and ugly; the foul smell was caused by their practice of using animal fats to protect against insects and the weather. The Khoisan language, consisting of multiple click sounds, was often described in animalistic terms and, at times they were accused of not having a language at all. Nevertheless, there were some positive accounts during this period remarking on their mild nature as well as their willingness to trade, and emphasis was placed on their ability to adapt to the environment they lived in. . These positive notions however were few and far between and had very little influence on public opinion of the Khoisan.[36]

Perceptions of the Khoisan changed with the establishment of a Dutch settlement in the Cape under the rule of the Dutch East India Company (hereafter known as the VOC). Dutch rule in the Cape existed under various guises from 1652 until 1806 with a brief interruption of British rule from 1795 until 1803. At first the Cape was not meant to be a Dutch colony, but rather a refreshment station for the VOC ships sailing to, and returning from the East, no land was to be seized. This ruling was quickly overturned as in 1657 the VOC concluded that the best way to meet the agricultural needs of the company was to allow independent Dutch farmers to cultivate the land surrounding Cape Town. This eventually led to colonial expansion and the dispossession of the Khoikhoi, the San, and the Xhosa who also inhabited the land of the Cape.[37] Nevertheless, in the beginning, the policy employed by the VOC was commercial in nature with no aims for colonial settlement. This was reflected in their dealings with the Khoisan. They were to be treated as independent trading partners who were not to be forced into labour or conquered.[38]

---

[35]. M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. pp. 27-36.
[36]. P. Harries, 'European Images of the Khoisan', *The Journal of African History* 46(1), 2005, pp. 153-154.; M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. pp. 49-54.
[37]. M. Adhikari, *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide: The extermination of the Cape San peoples*. pp. 28-33.
[38]. D. Johnson, 'Representing the Cape "Hottentots," from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa'. *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40(4), 2007, pp. 527-528.

This changed as the VOC's need for cattle and arable land grew. The slow expansion of settlers and stock farmers into Khoisan land led to rising tensions with livestock raids committed by the Khoisan. These tensions continued to increase and resulted in three so-called frontier wars. The first occurred from 1659-1660; in this the Khoikhoi were led by a man named Doman, who was once an interpreter for the Dutch. While the Khoikhoi made significant headway by capturing most of the farms surrounding Cape Town, they were unable to storm the fort to which the Dutch had fled leading to their defeat. Another major attack occurred in 1673 under the leadership of Gonnema. A group of Dutch hippopotamus hunters had been killed in the attack, and the Dutch responded with a swift and violent reprisal. Finally, an attack in 1693, under the leadership of another former interpreter Klaas, also led to a humiliating defeat. The expansion of Dutch settlement and the success against the Khoisan ensured that the settlement soon became a colony.[39]

The writings of the early period of Dutch settlement portrayed the Khoisan in a very negative light, particularly in response to the raids and attacks. They were described as 'brutes' and 'beasts', and often compared to animals. This identification with animals was unlike that of the naturalists who would come later; rather it was in the sense of savage beasts. According to Johnson, the Khoisan "were being inscribed in the great chain of being as intermediaries between man and beast, with allegedly 'beast like' qualities repeatedly attributed to them."[40] In the order of the universe that the great chain of being represented, the Khoisan were according to popular belief barely above animals, this was due to their lack of permanent settlement and reliance on nature. Consequently, they were seen as inferior to Europeans and many other nations, a theme that would appear in different forms throughout South African history.[41]

This negative perception was the most common one during this period, overshadowing any positive descriptions. Yet positive descriptions still existed; more often than not these descriptions focused on the physical prowess of the Khoisan, their ability to hunt, survive in arid landscapes, as well as their medical understanding. As positive as this perception sounds,

---

[39]. M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. pp. 54-66.; D. Johnson, 'Representing the Cape "Hottentots," from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa'. *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40(4), 2007, pp. 527-528.
[40]. D. Johnson, 'Representing the Cape "Hottentots," from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa'. *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40(4), 2007, p. 528.
[41]. D. Johnson, 'Representing the Cape "Hottentots," from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa'. *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40(4), 2007, pp. 527-529.

it nonetheless remains rooted in the 'natural' discourse in which the Khoisan ability to forge a symbiotic relationship with nature is foregrounded to the exclusion of everything else. Some, such as Father Guy Tachard, a Jesuit priest, was complimentary of Khoisan morality; he stated that despite their lack of knowledge regarding Christianity they were generous and loyal. He also made note of the fact that while integration of the Khoisan into settled society would be difficult it would not be impossible, and in doing so it would "turn the Cape Colony into a highly attractive place".[42] Tachard's discussion of the usefulness of the Khoisan to the colony was a common thread in the writings of this era. Many of the 'positive' characteristics identified were often in relation to how they could serve the colony, be it as traders or servants. As time passed and more land was seized by the ever-moving frontier the Khoisan were no longer seen as trading partners and the only utility the Khoisan seemed to have was that of servants. But the belief that the indigenous population was inherently lazy and unwilling to do work due to their love of freedom, made them undesirable servants.[43]

There were many writers who had a significant impact on how the Khoisan and the Cape in general were viewed. Peter Kolb was one such writer. He was an astronomer who travelled to the Cape to chart the stars. While in the Cape he wrote an account of his time and experiences there, which included discussion of the Khoisan. His book *Caput Bonae Spei Hodiernum* published in 1719 was the first book solely on the Cape; previous writings had often been part of a greater travelogue.[44] It was also the first book to discuss the Khoisan as more than just a footnote, devoting a whole chapter to the study of them and their culture. Previous writings had remarked on them in passing or in general discussions of the natural environment. In his book Kolb offered a much more sympathetic discussion of the Khoisan; he was not pleased with the many contradictory accounts regarding them and sought to rectify this. He approached his study of the Khoisan scientifically, attempting to study the different aspects of their culture that seemed to correspond to aspects of European culture. These included amongst others marriage, religious practices, commerce, and societal structures.[45]

Kolb's discussion of the Khoisan was much more sympathetic than that of previous commentators. He refused to take on the common belief that they were without religion or

[42]. M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. p. 67.
[43]. M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. pp. 66-74.; D. Johnson, 'Representing the Cape "Hottentots," from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa'. *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40(4), 2007, pp. 527-532.
[44]. M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. pp. 79-80.
[45]. M. L. Michaud, *Thinking Language Politically: Cultural Representation and Alterity in the European Enlightenment*. (Doctoral Thesis) Princeton University, Princeton. 2012.

spirituality and used their ceremonial practices to underline his argument. He stated that these practices proved that the Khoisan believed in a god even if it is not the Christian god. An interesting aspect of Kolb's study was his attempt to find the genealogical origin of the Khoisan. He claimed that they were the descendants of Jews and Troglodytes, who had gradually lost their connection to their original cultures as they moved from place to place. His belief that the Khoisan were descendants of the Jews was based on the partial castration that he and other travellers witnessed, which he understood to be a rite of passage to manhood. Despite being the most sympathetic writer of his time Kolb still condemned the Khoisan for their unwillingness to give up their nomadic existence and become more 'civilised'.[46]

Kolb's book was well received, however, many disagreed with his conclusions. One such critic was Otto Fredrik Mentzel, who asserted that Kolb's comparison between Jews and the Khoisan was ridiculous and had no basis in reality. Mentzel stated that the Khoisan were not related to anyone, claiming that "they split from the rest of humankind immediately after the Babylonian confusion of tongues, or … they are the descendants of shipwrecked children, which explains why they are so childlike"[47]. He also critiqued Kolb's assertion that the disputes between different Khoikhoi tribes were caused by cattle ownership. Mentzel's own discussion of the Khoisan tended towards the negative, despite stating that they were honest and faithful people. He believed that the Khoisan were stupid, lazy and far too content with their lot in life. Mentzel also claimed that anything the Khoisan tried to create was crude and they were unable to improve upon anything made before. He reiterated the writings of earlier travellers by pointing to their supposed lack of religion and incomprehensible language. Mentzel believed that if the Khoisan were educated by Europeans they would be lifted out of their 'pitiful' lives, however, he stated that the settlers in the Cape seemed disinclined to do so. However, Mentzel did insist that as the original inhabitants of the Cape the Khoisan had a right to the land.[48]

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was also influenced by Kolb's writing, using it to help establish his own theories of a developmental history of mankind. In his book *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1755) he identified three stages in human development: "Natural man living in solitude, man as part of a primitive hunting society and finally egoistic civilised man"[49]. He believed that man was happiest in the middle stage of development, and that it would have been better if humans had never left that stage. Thus, Rousseau believed that the Khoisan were

[46]. S. Huigen, *Knowledge and Colonialism: Eighteenth-Century Travellers in South Africa*. pp. 33-58.
[47]. S. Huigen, *Knowledge and Colonialism: Eighteenth-Century Travellers in South Africa*. p. 55.
[48]. M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. pp. 83-86.
[49]. S. Huigen, *Knowledge and Colonialism: Eighteenth-Century Travellers in South Africa*. p. 57.

instances of the happiest stage of human development, as well as being contemporary examples of European ancestors.[50] He believed that the environment was the greatest influence on the Khoisan and that they were entirely adapted to survive it. According to Rousseau: "The savage's self-preservation is almost his sole concern; his best developed faculties must be those devoted mainly to attack or defence: to overpower prey or to avoid becoming the prey…"[51]. Rousseau focused on their physical prowess, claiming that their physical abilities were much more advanced when compared to those of Europeans. He believed that without the pressures that plagued those in 'civilised' society the 'primitive savage' led a happier life with his needs being fulfilled by the environment around him.[52]

Rousseau was a major influence on later French writing on the indigenous population of southern Africa. Francois Le Vaillant was one such author, however unlike Rousseau he had first-hand experience in the Cape. Le Vaillant was a popular travel writer whose writing often seemed fantastical or catered to the beliefs and ideologies of his audience. He followed the primitivist beliefs espoused by Rousseau in his discussion of the Khoisan, claiming that their life in nature guaranteed an egalitarian society that Europeans had lost many years ago. His discussion was also often contradictory; while he portrayed the Khoisan as kind 'children of nature' and claimed that they were happier, he also created a hierarchy of 'civilisation' with European society as its zenith. Those whose societies more closely resembled that of Europe ranked higher on this scale.[53] Le Vaillant had a negative view of the settlers and the colonial regime. He stated that the VOC gained rule over the Cape through violent and coercive means and that the Khoisan had an inalienable right to the land. His description of the Khoisan was in line with that of the 'noble savage', living a nomadic life in a country where nature provided for them, leading a morally egalitarian life. He believed that contact with white settlers caused their corruption, nevertheless he still attempted to find a way in which the Khoisan could be integrated into colonial life.[54]

---

[50]. S. Huigen, *Knowledge and Colonialism: Eighteenth-Century Travellers in South Africa*. pp. 54-58.
[51]. Quoted in: D. Johnson, 'Representing the Cape "Hottentots," from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa'. *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40(4), 2007, p. 532.
[52]. M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. pp. 112-118.; D. Johnson, 'Representing the Cape "Hottentots," from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa'. *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40(4), 2007, pp. 532-533.
[53]. S. Huigen, *Knowledge and Colonialism: Eighteenth-Century Travellers in South Africa*. pp. 119-145. D. Johnson, 'Representing the Cape "Hottentots," from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa'. *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40(4), 2007, pp. 534-537.
[54]. M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. pp. 118-125.

The British took control of the Cape in 1795. Their rule lasted until the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, with a brief period of Dutch rule from 1803 to 1806. The British inherited an unstable society from the Dutch, with indigenous uprisings by the Khoisan, rebellions by the Xhosa, as well as Dutch settler hostility towards the British. Still, the early period of British rule was a period of expansion, with the population of free settlers and slaves almost doubling. Britain favoured a humanitarian approach to dealing with indigenous populations. They wished to gain the loyalty of the Khoisan and attempted to do so by reviving the Hottentot[55] Corps, which consisted of Khoikhoi volunteers, and these corps served as a backup to the British garrison. This became a means of livelihood for many dispossessed Khoikhoi.[56] Another way in which this 'humanitarian' concern arose was through their interaction with Khoisan on the frontier. Unlike the Dutch who allowed and sometimes sanctioned the exterminatory practices of the Commandos on the frontier, the British attempted to find a different way to 'eliminate' the Khoisan; they used assimilationist practices. To remove the 'savage' they believed they had to turn the Khoisan into pastoralists and labourers, as this would bring them closer to the European ideal of 'civilisation'.[57] These benevolent ideologies were epitomised by John Barrow who was a travel writer during the first British occupation of the Cape.

Much of Barrow's writing was focused on emphasising the need for British rule to continue or to be reinstated, depending on the year, in the Cape. He presented a negative discussion of the Boers, condemning their treatment of the Khoisan as well as those in their employ, be it slave or servant. Barrow made three journeys into the South African interior in which he studied the landscape, flora, fauna, and those who lived there. His discussion of the Khoisan was more benign than many accounts. He stated the Khoikhoi lived in a 'wretched state', while the San were 'wild savages'. He blamed both conditions on the violence and exploitation of the settlers. "They were driven out of their own country, their children seized and carried into slavery, by the people whom they now commit their depredations, and on whom they naturally take every occasion of exercising their revenge."[58] Barrow believed in the chain of being, popularised by Russeau, and with it a human hierarchy in which the English were at the top. This hierarchy was divided into those who were 'civilised' and those who were 'uncivilised'. It was influenced

[55] A term referring to the Khoikhoi
[56]. M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. pp. 131-135.
[57]. M. Adhikari, *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide: The extermination of the Cape San peoples*. pp. 60-77.
[58]. M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. p. 135.

by the physiognomic discourse of the 18th century, in which external beauty indicated intelligence and a good moral character, where external beauty was defined by the European facial structure. According to Barrow, the Boers occupied the bottom of the 'civilised' typology while the Xhosa represented those at the top of the 'uncivilised' hierarchy. Despite this, his opinion of the Xhosa was much more positive than his opinion of the Boers. Although his writing defended the Khoisan, he still ranked them low on this hierarchy. [59]

Barrow's defence of the Khoisan against previous and contemporaneous criticisms, as well as his negative view of the Dutch colonists was rooted in the humanitarian ideology, which emphasised the value of human life and promoted reduction of greater human suffering through benevolent assistance. However, this ignored the suffering and dispossession that the Khoisan endured under British rule. Barrow was a strong proponent of this ideology, seemingly having played an influential role in its development. This ideology viewed those who were sensitive to the suffering of others as being virtuous. It evolved in such a way that sympathy for others and a distaste for cruelty became signs of a 'civilised' society. This ideology eventually had an influence on English colonial discourse, guaranteeing the British colonies would follow a humanitarian approach to the 'other', hence the assimilationist policies regarding the Khoisan. Barrow viewed Dutch colonists as being bereft of such sympathy and therefore being the opposite of what a 'civilised' man should be. He emphasised the need for English rule in the Cape, claiming that they could inspire the indigenous population to become valued, contributing members of society.[60] However later authors, such as Reverend John Phillip, were no more impressed with British treatment of the Khoisan than Barrow was with the Dutch.

Reverend John Phillip was committed to creating a better life for the Khoisan, Xhosa and the enslaved. He became the superintendent for the London Missionary Society mission in South Africa in 1820 and agreed with Barrow that colonial policies regarding the Khoisan were the cause of their suffering. He was a strong advocate for the belief that all men were born equal, and this was reflected in his campaigning for the removal of discriminatory regulations against the Khoisan, and for them to be recognised as subjects of the Crown. He believed that if the constraints on the Khoisan were removed, they would be able to, through education, grow both spiritually and to a place where they could contribute to their society. This education was attempted by introducing Khoisan to the 'civilised' life of British society at mission stations.

---

[59]. S. Huigen, *Knowledge and Colonialism: Eighteenth-Century Travellers in South Africa*. pp. 147-168.;M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. pp. 135-139.
[60]. S. Huigen, *Knowledge and Colonialism: Eighteenth-Century Travellers in South Africa*. pp. 147-168.

The instruction at these stations would include "Christianity and regular church attendance, prudish sexual mores, schooling and literacy, modesty, Western-style dress, and life in well-ordered communities epitomised by the neat rectangular house of the mission stations".[61] Phillip disagreed with the proclamations of 1809 and 1812 that were supposedly there to protect the Khoisan, as they did not work as intended. The first was meant to ensure that the Khoisan could complain of mistreatment, however this often backfired, and the abuse continued or worsened. The latter allowed for the children of Khoisan employees to be forced to apprentice under their parent's 'master' until the age of 18. Reverend Phillip lobbied for reform, which eventually culminated in the creation of Ordinance 50 of 1828.[62]

Ordinance 50 repealed the earlier discriminatory proclamations that only applied to the Khoisan, thus also affirming their right to own land. According to the ordinance the Khoisan were protected from any forced service, thereby ending the forced apprenticeship of children. This did not mean that they were seen as, or treated as equal to, Europeans and it did not lead to any meaningful change in their treatment. Even though they were now able to own land they were not able to obtain it, as most traditional land had already been lost to the colony and they could not afford to buy new land. Therefore, their livelihood was still dependent on wage labour, usually on settler farms. The legal rights of the Khoisan may have changed, but the societal structure, racial stereotypes and longstanding labour relations were keeping them subjugated.[63] Despite the prevalent ideology for this century being humanitarian in nature, the Khoisan were still viewed as inferior and 'uncivilised'. The ideology was also inherently contradictory, asserting that the Khoisan were forced into their 'wretched' lives due to Dutch colonialism and should be protected from this, yet still expected them to comply with English colonial rule and become valued contributors to society.

European interest in the 'other' during the colonial era led to further exploitation of indigenous populations. They were taken to Europe or other metropolitan areas to perform as living ethnological exhibitions. These exhibitions, which have often been referred to as 'Human Zoos' were meant to exhibit the indigenous persons in their 'primitive natural habitat'. These exhibitions often focused on representing the indigenous person in animalistic terms, as the

---

[61]. J. Laband, *The Land Wars: The Dispossession of the Khoisan and AmaXhosa in the Cape Colony*. Penguin Books, Cape Town, 2020, p. 156.
[62]. M. Jack, *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope*. pp. 165-170.; J. Laband, *The Land Wars: The Dispossession of the Khoisan and AmaXhosa in the Cape Colony*. pp. 156-157.
[63]. J. Laband, *The Land Wars: The Dispossession of the Khoisan and AmaXhosa in the Cape Colony*. pp. 156-157.; V. C. Malherbe, 'Colonial Justice and the Khoisan in the Immediate Aftermath of Ordinance 50 in 1828: Denouement at Uitenhage', *Kronos* 4(24), 1997, pp. 77-90.

missing link between man and beast.[64] In some exhibitions they were simply showcased as strange or exotic humans. Sara (Saartjie) Baartman, one of the most well-known Khoisan exhibited in Europe, was exhibited and described as an exotic example of South African 'natives', in order to sate the European interest in the colonial 'other' from southern Africa. One of her exhibitioners emphasised her "extraordinary shape and make… stressing her value as an object of great curiosity, and [argued] that she would make the fortune for any person by exhibiting her".[65] Sara Baartman's ethnographic shows, where she was known as the 'Hottentot Venus', began at the beginning of the 19th century and ended with her death in 1815. She became a well-known person in Europe, viewed as an ethnographic marvel. Eventually towards the end of her life she gained the interest of Georges Cuvier who viewed her not as an ethnographic example, but rather as a scientific object. Cuvier eventually dissected her body after her death. It was only through the exhaustive efforts of the Griqua National Conference, a non-profit organisation aimed at keeping Griqua heritage alive, that her remains were repatriated to South Africa on May 3rd, 2002.[66]

Ethnographic exhibitions changed in the mid-nineteenth century, due to the negative shift in public opinion of the Khoisan during this period. "The dominant image of the Bushman from about 1850 until the 1920s is of a barely human duplicitous cruel savage".[67] The general style of ethnographic exhibitions shifted from multiple exhibitions consisting of individual performers to the formal display of families and groups of people who were considered savage, or primitive examples of contemporary human ancestors, much more reminiscent of Zoo enclosures. According to Sánchez-Gómez "the three main models or varieties of the modern ethnic show [were] commercial ethnological exhibitions, colonial exhibitions, and missionary exhibitions" .[68] Each exhibition model had specific aims for its display, yet they were all contingent upon the depiction of indigenous peoples as exotic or savage.[69]

---

64. B. Lindfors, 'Introduction', *in* B. Lindfors (ed.), *Africans on Stage: Studies in Ethnological Show Business*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1999, pp. vii- xii.
65. R. Holmes, *The Hottentot Venus: The Life and Death of Saartjie Baartman Born 1789- Buried 2002*. p. 57.
66. R. Holmes, *The Hottentot Venus: The Life and Death of Saartjie Baartman Born 1789- Buried 2002*. *pp*.; Z. S. Strother, 'Display of the Body Hottentot', *in* B. Lindfors (ed.), *Africans on Stage: Studies in Ethnological Show Business.* pp. 1-61.
67. A. E. Voss, 'The Image of the Bushman in South African English Writing of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *English in Africa* 14(1), 1987, p. 26.
68. L.A. Sánchez-Gómez, 'Human Zoos or Ethnic Shows? Essence and contingency in Living Ethnological Exhibitions', *Culture & History Digital Journal* 2(2), 2013, p. 3.
69. L.A. Sánchez-Gómez, 'Human Zoos or Ethnic Shows? Essence and contingency in Living Ethnological Exhibitions', *Culture & History Digital Journal* 2(2), 2013, pp. 1-25.

Commercial exhibitions were mainly focused on gaining profit and were managed by private entrepreneurs. These types of exhibitions were held most frequently; resembling a carnival or a freak show they attracted audiences with the exotic 'other' performing dances, chants, and strange rituals. Most indigenous performers in these commercial exhibitions were not kidnapped and held against their will, nevertheless they likely did not agree to live under the oppressive and at times unhealthy conditions . They were very often confined to the showgrounds or lodgings and were not allowed to move freely around the towns they were exhibited in.[70]

The other two models of ethnographic exhibitions were not run by individuals and usually not for profit. The colonial exhibitions were either organised by the public administration or a private institution sharing colonial aspirations. The goal in these exhibitions was to illustrate the success of the colonial enterprise in bringing the wealth and values of Europe to the colonies. These also served the purpose of furthering colonial ideologies and agendas by providing supposed proof of the inferiority of the colonised and showing that there was a need to continue their civilising mission in the colonies. During the interwar years the presentation and performances of the indigenous populations, including the Khoisan, changed. They no-longer aimed to demonstrate the need for the civilising mission, rather they were staged to confirm the success of the mission; of course, this was not the case for all exhibitions as many still espoused the strangeness of the 'native'. Finally, missionary exhibitions exploited and exhibited those who converted to Christianity, providing irrefutable proof that it was possible to 'civilise' the 'other'. The performers in these exhibitions became living proof that anyone, despite their 'depraved' background could be baptised and become part of the larger Christian community.[71] An exhibition in which two Khoisan children, described as 'Earthmen'[72], performed, serves as an example of the success of the civilising mission. "Hardly less interesting are the two Earthmen exhibited [at Linwood Gallery in Leicester Square] who have made great progress since their arrival in England, and are really becoming 'quite civilised', as we heard a lady remark the other evening upon witnessing the devotion manifested by the girl to the collection of 'coppers' from the visitors."[73] The general belief at this time was that the

[70]. L.A. Sánchez-Gómez, 'Human Zoos or Ethnic Shows? Essence and contingency in Living Ethnological Exhibitions', *Culture & History Digital Journal* 2(2), 2013, pp. 4-7.
[71]. L.A. Sánchez-Gómez, 'Human Zoos or Ethnic Shows? Essence and contingency in Living Ethnological Exhibitions', *Culture & History Digital Journal* 2(2), 2013, pp. 7-20.
[72] A term used to refer to the Khoisan, at times interchangeable with 'bushmen' and at others referring to a specific supposed subgroup.
[73] Anon, 'The Aztec Lilliputians', *Morning Chronicle*, 18 June 1855, p. 5.

Khoisan were ‘uncivilised’ and thus did not understand anything about the 'civilised’ world, as such a marked interest in the ‘coppers’ by the girl indicated to the audience that the Khoisan girl was being ‘civilised’, by behaving in a way that was comprehensible to the European sensibility.

Frequently these ethnographic exhibitions drew the attention of the public due to their sensationalist marketing and a European interest in the ‘other’, both due to scientific curiosity and curiosity about people of strange and unknown lands. For the public, these exhibitions served three main functions, either to amuse, educate, or inform the audience; these could occur to different degrees in every exhibition. Thus, a group of performers could be examples of a ‘native village’ one week and a circus act the next.[74] The Khoisan were of particular interest to the public due the belief that they were a living remnant of ancient ‘stone age’ people. Thus, when going to one of their performances the audience could supposedly see how their ancient ancestors lived. The focus on the Khoisan as ‘living ancestors’ furthered the colonial hierarchical ideologies, with the Khoisan providing the example of the least ‘civilised’ form of man. These exhibitions were successful in furthering the belief in the ‘savage native’ and thus also gained support for the imperial ambitions of Europe.[75]

Opinions on the Khoisan were conflicting and often differed between audiences and exhibitors. Charles Dickens, after attending a ‘bushmen’ exhibition in 1847 had an overwhelmingly negative reaction, expressing disgust at the ‘bushmen’ on display. His response was not unique during this period, as the colonial policy for the Khoisan the time was eliminationist, and the supposed ‘depravity’ of those on display justified this policy. “I have not the least belief in the Noble Savage … I call a savage something highly desirable to be civilised off the face of the earth …” [76]. The Khoisan were viewed as expendable due to their alleged ‘lazy’ nature, and thus not useful and productive enough to survive. This period and the soon to be emerging social darwinist approach marked an end to the idea of the 'noble savage’, at least for a time. As the early 20th century progressed opinions and stereotypes worsened. After the turn of the

[74] P. Blanchard *et.al*, ‘Human Zoos: The Greatest Exotic Shows in the West: Introduction’, *in* P. Blanchard *et.al.* (eds.) *Human Zoos : Science and Spectacle in the Age of Colonial Empires.* pp. 2-18.
[75] N. Durbach, ‘London Capital of Exotic Exhibitions from 1830 to 1860.’, *in* P. Blanchard *et.al.* (eds.) *Human Zoos : Science and Spectacle in the Age of Colonial Empires.* pp. 81-89.
[76]. Quoted in: D. M. Brown, ‘The Noble Savage in Anglo-Saxon Colonial Ideology, 1950-1980: ‘Masai’ and ‘Bushmen’ in popular fiction’, *English in Africa* 10(2), 1983, p. 59.

century eugenics, scientific racism and social Darwinism strengthened and legitimised earlier racist beliefs.[77]

Social Darwinism and eugenics defined the early 20th century, as they cemented the idea of a hierarchy of races. Darwin's theory of evolution, had gained traction, cementing the idea that certain species only existed due to natural selection. His theory was then applied to the social dimension, thus creating an evolutionary scale for human society.[78] Eugenics and other forms of scientific racism have their beginnings in social Darwinism. The idea that negative and undesirable traits were inheritable was disconcerting and it was believed that if the 'breeding' of these traits was not curbed it would lead to the downfall of society. This created the belief that the betterment of society was reliant upon encouraging reproduction amongst those of 'worthy' characteristics and preventing reproduction amongst those with undesirable traits. Undesirable traits could include, lower socioeconomic standing, disabilities, or belonging to a supposedly 'uncivilised' people. This often led to extermanationist ideals, aiming to 'cleanse' society of those deemed undesirable, as was the case in Nazi Germany.[79] Social Darwinism provided justification for the colonialism and its subjugation and persecution of the 'other'. Nevertheless, as the 20th century progressed the opinions and stereotypes surrounding the Khoisan once again took a more positive leaning.

During the mid-to-late 20th century there was a return to the belief that the Khoisan were a harmless people; peaceful, egalitarian, and close to nature. During the Angolan war, the South African Defence Force (SADF) made a concerted effort to recruit Khoisan. The main reason they were recruited was due to the belief that they were natural trackers, because of their inherent understanding of and symbiotic relationship to nature. There was also the belief that the Khoisan had unique physical abilities, such as being "able to survive long periods on minimal food and water, the Bushman [had] an instinctive, highly developed sense of danger".[80] The focus on the physical abilities of the Khoisan resembles the animalistic descriptions of earlier periods. 'Bushmen' have consistently been understood and depicted as

[77]. D. M. Brown, 'The Noble Savage in Anglo-Saxon Colonial Ideology, 1950-1980: 'Masai' and 'Bushmen' in popular fiction', *English in Africa* 10(2), 1983, pp. 55-60.; A. E. Voss, 'The Image of the Bushman in South African English Writing of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *English in Africa* 14(1), 1987, pp. 22-33.
[78] J. A. Rogers, 'Darwinism and Social Darwinism', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 33(2), 1972, p. 265
[79] D. Paul, 'Darwin, Social Darwinism and Eugenics', *in* J. Hodge, & G. Radick, (eds.) *The Cambridge Companion to Darwin*, ed. by Jonathan Hodge and Gregory Radick. pp. 214-237.
[80]. R. J. Gordon, *The Bushman Myth: The Making of a Namibian Underclass.* p. 2.

pre-modern, a romanticised view which placed them into a more peaceful past without the trappings of modernity.[81]

The *Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980) films as well as the *Bushman Diorama* (1950-2001) of the South African Museum exemplify this focus on primitivism and the noble savage in the mid to late 20th century. They introduced their respective and often overlapping audiences to the Khoisan as examples of an ancient pre-modern society, with an inherent connection to and understanding of nature far beyond that of 'civilised' society. The representation of the Khoisan in these distinct media represents the Khoisan as 'children of nature' naïve and cut off from 'civilised' society. This is also true for John Marshall's documentary *The Hunters* (1957) which follows a Khoisan hunting party tracking a giraffe. In contrast, John Marshall's later documentary and *N!ai the story of the !Kung woman* (1980) and the gallery exhibition *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of Bushmen* (1996) contradict these romanticised depictions of the Khoisan; rather, they discussed the influence that colonialism and apartheid had on Khoisan communities, providing a reflexive critique of past representations.

[81]. R. J. Gordon, *The Bushman Myth: The Making of a Namibian Underclass. pp.*.; S. Robins, 'Land Struggles and the Politics and Ethics of Representing 'Bushman' History and Identity', *Kronos* 15(26), 2000, pp. 56-63.

Chapter 3: Romanticisation to Advocacy

Documentary films have had a significant role in furthering the mythmaking of the Khoisan; the belief that documentaries are inherently factual gives credence to any claims they make. Throughout his career as a documentary film maker John Marshall played a part in both the creation of the myth of the 'noble savage' and in subverting it. The films discussed here, *The Hunters* (1957) and *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* (1980) -hereafter *N!ai* - are representations of two points in his career. *The Hunters* was the start of his film making journey and arguably the production that conformed most to common tropes of the Khoisan. The premise of *N!ai* on the other hand was in essence a subversion of these myths, demonstrating the gradual shift that had been happening in Marshall's own ideology. This shift is also clear when looking at the themes that are prevalent in both films. *The Hunters* focuses quite significantly on becoming a man and the power of being a hunter, while *N!ai* emphasises the negative impact of white rule and the changes in their lives from the hunter-gatherer lifestyle of N!ai's youth and the forced sedentarism in Tsumkwe.

Marshall was one of the pioneers of observational ethnographic filmmaking, a forerunner of direct cinema, which emphasised the importance of the filmmaker being non-interventionist. This required that the filmmaker be as unobtrusive as possible, ensuring that the presence of the camera did not skew the actions of those on film. The purpose of this was to capture reality as if the camera had never been there. The aim of direct cinema was to portray people and events that were usually ignored by society and presenting them for the viewer to make their own conclusions; as such the films produced were supposedly very ambiguous in nature with no influence from the camera work or editing. The development of direct cinema occurred during the late 1950s and 1960s with *The Hunters* being an antecedent to its methodology . However due to technological limitations in the 1950s *The Hunters* contained re-enactments and reconstructions of scenes, interventions that became less common in documentary filmmaking as the technology improved.[82]

Despite the believed objectivity of direct cinema the approach has been critiqued since its inception. These critiques are based on the inherent influence a camera has on those who are being filmed, and the constant intervention that constitutes the filmmaking process, contradicting the stated purpose of this approach. The lack of acknowledgement regarding

[82] L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. pp. 154-156.

these interventions has labelled direct cinema as idealistic and misguided. The editing process and the choices made during filming have a direct effect on the final film product and as such it is impossible to create a film record that depicts reality as it is without mediation. Marshall believed that the meaning of direct cinema was derived during the editing process – where most structural changes are made, thus depicting the filmmaker's interpretation of reality. Nevertheless, despite the implicit meanings produced, direct cinema is still defined by a distinct lack of direct commentary or argument. Essentially direct cinema is based on the belief that a film should be defined by the subject matter rather than the subject matter being forced to conform to the film's strategy.[83] As Marshall stated, referring directly to the mythologising of the Khoisan, direct cinema "resists the imposition of mythic projections".[84] However this is an idealistic view of film in general, as film is an artistic means of expression and thus uses the subject matter to create its message. This is the case in Marshall's *The Hunters* where he uses this approach but still imposes a romanticised interpretation of hunting onto it.

John Marshall's strength as a filmmaker lies in his reflexive approach of including the influence of the camera in his films. His inclusion of shots that show the subject's shyness or hesitance to being filmed makes his work seem all the more real.[85] Marshall was only 18 when he first interacted with the Khoisan, therefore his ideals regarding the Khoisan and filming were heavily influenced by his father Laurence Marshall, who saw film as a record which should remain true to what was seen. John Marshall shot most of his footage throughout his family's extended expeditions in Nyae-Nyae in the Kalahari, between 1950 and 1961. The footage shot during these expeditions was included in all of John Marshall's productions on the Khoisan, including both *The Hunters* and *N!ai*. During these expeditions he had extensive contact with the Ju/Hoansi, a San group that forms part of the *!Kung* language grouping, who feature in almost all his works regarding the Khoisan. Most of the footage for *The Hunters*, as his first work, was shot during his family's research trips in the 1950s, as was much of the footage of N!ai's childhood in *N!ai*. This focus on film as a record and the context of salvage anthropology, a practice based on the belief that the Khoisan traditional culture was declining

[83] L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. pp. 155-157.
[84] J. Marshall, 'Filming and Learning', *in* J. Ruby (ed.), *The Cinema of John Marshall,* Harwood Academic Publishers, New York, 1993, p. 104.
[85] K. G. Tomaselli, *Myth, race, and power : South Africans Imaged on film and tv*, pp. 96

and should be documented before it disappeared forever, in the academic understanding of the Khoisan had a strong impact on *The Hunters* and later to a lesser extent *N!ai*.[86]

The Marshall family's interest in the Khoisan began almost on a whim, according to John Marshall. After years of absence from his family, due to war, Laurence Marshall wanted to take a trip to get closer to his son. John Marshall having had an interest in stories of colonial exploration and adventure chose Africa. Laurence Marshall had previously been invited to look for the 'Lost City of the Kalahari' and decided that the search for an undiscovered city would be the perfect adventure for his son. Out of interest and to see if they could serve a practical purpose while searching for the lost city, Laurence Marshall approached the director of the Peabody Museum at Harvard University and suggested that they look for 'wild bushmen', as it was believed that the traditional culture was nearing extinction. This trip, as described by Marshall, was truly an adventure with strange animals and 'strange' people. None of the travelogue-type footage that Marshall took during his first trip was included in his films. Nevertheless, this first trip led to many other expeditions by the Marshall family, all sponsored by the Peabody Museum, during which they grew much closer to the Ju/Hoansi of Nyae-Nyae, who were still living as hunter-gatherers during the 1950s.[87]

The expeditions themselves were ethnological in nature with the aim of creating and preserving a record of a people who, it was believed, would soon vanish. Although the Khoisan living in Nyae-Nyae were still living mostly as hunter-gatherers they were some of the last to do so as most had already fallen victim to commandos or assimilationist tactics. The continuous loss of culture due to colonial expansion and – sometimes forced – westernisation concerned anthropologists and they aimed to document such cultures before they disappeared or were entirely transformed. Even though they had no formal training in anthropology the Marshall family agreed with this assessment and wished to document the 'bushmen' culture before it vanished. In total the family embarked on eight expeditions into Nyae-Nyae, the first ensuing in 1950 when Marshall was 18 years old. It was throughout these trips that John Marshall collected most of the footage that he would later use to create *The Hunters*, *N!ai*, and multiple other documentaries.[88]

---

[86]. J. Marshall, 'Filming and Learning', *in* J. Ruby (ed.), *The Cinema of John Marshall*, pp.
[87] J. Marshall, 'Filming and Learning', *in* J. Ruby (ed.), *The Cinema of John Marshall*, pp.
[88]. I. Barbash, *Where the Roads All End: Photography and Anthropology in the Kalahari*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2016, p. xxv.

The collective works of the Marshall family had a considerable influence on the perception of the Khoisan in the 20th century. Prior to their expedition, interest in the study of the Khoisan had waned, as was indicated by the lack of anthropological interest in their first exhibition. The Marshall family expeditions made the Khoisan relevant once again and renewed ethnographic interest in their culture. They were successful in countering the negative image the world had of the Khoisan, shifting views from the 'wild savage' to those of a harmless people. This shift was aided by the decreased threat that the Khoisan posed to the colonial authorities and the increased focus of the west on the natural beauty of Africa to which the idealised 'bushmen' were connected. The images of the Ju/Hoansi[89], and occasionally the /Gwi, that the Marshall family produced showed a people that were self-sufficient and happy with their lot in life, an image that was easily accepted by the western populace and the ruling government of Southwest Africa. However, unlike previous ethnographic work on the Khoisan, the images produced were engaging and unusually candid, very different from the awkward, at times scientific images that had been taken in the past.[90] The footage and images taken during the eight Marshall expeditions created an ethnographic record spanning 50 years, portraying a people in transition, shifting from a declining hunter-gatherer tradition to a fraught modernity. This collection is archived at the Peabody and Smithsonian Museums.[91]

Throughout the expeditions John Marshall grew close to the Ju/Hoansi group that he was studying and especially with ≠Toma who became his mentor, to the extent that ≠Toma and his family were frequently the focus of Marshall's works. Marshall wrote: "≠Toma was my mentor and Lorna Marshall's best informant… From ≠Toma I learned as much about observing as I did about hunting and gathering. ≠Toma taught me how to watch, listen and suspend judgement."[92] ≠Toma, as a mentor and close friend to influenced Marshall's view of the Ju/Hoansi, shifting it away from the more anthropological understanding of the 'other' to the familiarity of friendship. This quote clearly shows the high regard with which John Marshall viewed ≠Toma; he even influenced some of the practical aspects of filmmaking that Marshall was learning at the time. His regard for ≠Toma is also clear throughout *The Hunters* in which ≠Toma and the other hunters are idealised. This is emphasised by ≠Toma's face being framed in a striking close-up shot during the title sequence. Much of this idealisation of hunting and

[89] A Khoisan group belonging to the *!Kung* language group, which features in most of John Marshall's productions.
[90]. I. Barbash, *Where the Roads All End: Photography and Anthropology in the Kalahari*, pp.xxv, 107.
[91]. M. Durington, 'John Marshall's Kalahari Family', *American Anthropologist* 106(3), 2004, pp. 589-590.
[92] J. Marshall, 'Filming and Learning', *in* J. Ruby (ed.), *The Cinema of John Marshall*, pp. 53

the hunters themselves in his first film is likely due Marshall's youth and his excitement throughout the first few expeditions; his later short films were more inclusive of other aspects of their lives.[93]

Marshall's youthful awe of hunting is evident throughout the plot of *The Hunters* which follows a group of Ju/Hoansi men as they hunt, track, and finally kill a giraffe. This hunt, undertaken by ≠Toma, //Ao, Kxao, and /Qui, is shown to be long and arduous taking many days with barely anything to show for their efforts. When they finally shoot the giraffe, they must track it while the poison in the arrow slowly kills the large animal. They track the giraffe over five long days and are frequently baffled by the tracks left behind. Nevertheless, after following the animal through trees and pans they eventually catch up with it. They then attempt to kill it, which is equally as difficult. The clearly sick giraffe fights and kicks while the men attempt to stab it until it eventually collapses and is killed with a spear to the heart. Then three of the men begin to skin it while another goes to gather reinforcements to carry the meat back to camp. After the giraffe is skinned and its meat carried back to camp it is divided amongst the entire community. This is followed by feasting and a retelling of the magnificent hunt around the fire.[94]

The Hunters emphasises an intrinsic knowledge and connection with nature, romanticising the practice and cultural prominence of hunting. Throughout the film, interaction with nature, and the skills and grace of the hunters is emphasised, depicting them reading nature around them in order to determine the location and health of the giraffe they are tracking. Additionally, the hunt is defined as a rite of passage to manhood, with boys practicing hunting through play. Hunting is elevated above all other subsistence strategies. Hunting as a subsistence strategy is elevated above gathering, a task traditionally performed by women. This genders the activities and imparts upon them a westernised understanding of gender roles, where the man is seen as the provider. The emphasis on hunting in the film mirrors the western belief in the manliness of hunting to provide for one's family. The hunters in the film are depicted as individuals each with their own traits and skills; individualised depictions of Khoisan were unique at this time as most documentary films provided a generalised view of the community. While the community as a whole is important as shown by the division of the hunt to all community members, Marshall stresses the point that community is comprised of individuals with unique traits and skills that benefit the entire community.

[93] L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. pp. 104-106.
[94]. J. Marshall, *The Hunters.* 1957

The opening sequence of *The Hunters* is focused on nature; animals and plants are shown to be surviving in what is clearly a very arid environment. Amongst these shots the viewer is introduced to the *!Kung*. Two men appear on screen accompanied by the first asynchronous sound of the film: a traditional *!Kung* melody. This melody only plays when these men are visible while shots of nature itself are accompanied by silence or a muffled song. This subtly shows that the Khoisan influence their environment, they are not simply responding to it but living in symbiosis with it. The opening sequence ends with a close-up shot of ≠Toma. This is a low angle shot of his face as he gazes into the distance, making him seem powerful and pensive as the title of the film appears on screen.[95] This shot of ≠Toma is in stark contrast to most cinematography of the Khoisan at that point in time; instead of being portrayed as small he is the largest thing in the frame, seemingly towering over everything except for the landscape itself.[96] The prominence of ≠Toma in this shot presents him as the most powerful figure, only dwarfed by the natural landscape of the Kalahari, thus implying that he himself is part of the natural world but not ruling over it. It also reflects ≠Toma's importance to Marshall specifically. Given ≠Toma's role as mentor and guide it would not be implausible to argue that *The Hunters* offers a doubly mediated representation. In the first instance, the Khoisan, the hunt and the community and culture are mediated through ≠Toma's rendering to Marshall and in the second instance, those representations are mediated through Marshall's narrative structure.

Following the title sequence the narrator introduces the viewer to the Kalahari, describing it as a "bitter land [that is] far from generous, the land provides a livelihood only to those that know it well".[97] This cements the link between the Khoisan and nature, they are the only ones who are familiar enough with it to survive. However, unlike earlier documentaries of the Khoisan, the phrasing of this introduction does not imply an inherent understanding of the Kalahari but rather knowledge and skills gained through experience and transferred from one generation to the next. The narrator, who is Marshall himself, continues to describe the difficulties of living in the desert, emphasising the nomadic lifestyle and the lack of rain and water. As this narration occurs we see a group, identified as the Ju/Hoansi, travelling across the landscape and collecting water from a water hole. The ownership of waterholes is discussed, and permission is needed to drink from them, however, this is usually perfunctory. Other aspects of subsistence

[95] J. Marshall, *The Hunters* 00:00:00 – 00:03:05. 1957.
[96] L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. pp. 95-96.
[97] J. Marshall, *The Hunters* 00:03:43 -00:04:03. 1957.

are also discussed, such as food collection and hunting. Women are shown digging in the veld as Marshall describes what gathering entails, once again emphasising the difficult life in the Kalahari. Finally hunting as the 'work of men' is introduced and is discussed for the rest of the film.[98] There is a clear distinction made between the work of men and women; gathering, as the work of women, is given a necessary and objective overview while hunting in contrast is described through awe-filled language. This distinction is antithetical to the true importance of hunting in hunter-gatherer subsistence as gathering forms the larger part of their diet with hunting providing only 20% of the required nutrition. In this way, the work of gathering is devalued in contrast to hunting. The first words regarding hunting by the narrator are rather poetic: "by the keenness of their eyes, the spring of their sinews and the swiftness of their limbs men hunt meat for their families and all the people that live together".[99] The poetic phrasing of this statement when compared to the much more concise explanation of gathering emphasises the romanticisation of hunting that is present throughout the film.

The way in which hunting is portrayed throughout *The Hunters* is reminiscent of the romanticised belief in a 'primitive affluence' based on living simply in symbiosis with nature, without the trappings of modern society. Marshall himself later called it a "romantic film by an American kid and revealed more about me than about the Ju/Hoansi".[100] Thus, while the film creates a fairly accurate picture of hunting as an activity, the romanticised nature of its representation reflects Marshall's own youthful interpretation. The importance of hunting within the community and to being a man is emphasised by the prominence of hunting in the lives and games of young boys. In the film young boys are depicted practicing hunting while the narrator describes the importance of learning through experience and practice. Practicing hunting is portrayed as a bonding experience in which the boys learn through their failures and debate among themselves. A young boy is depicted 'hunting' a beetle with a small bow and poison tipped arrows. T the narrator points out that while play is not practice it does embody the feeling of being a hunter; "the sense of power in being a man".[101] As the importance of hunting and its methods is discussed it becomes clear how important hunting is to the identity of men; it is only through hunting that boys become men.[102]

[98]. J. Marshall, *The Hunters* 00:03:44 – 00:07:00. 1957.
[99]. J. Marshall, *The Hunters* 00:07:00 - 00:07:09. 1957.
[100]. J. Marshall, 'Filming and Learning', *in* J. Ruby (ed.), *The Cinema of John Marshall*, pp. 59
[101] .J. Marshall, *The Hunters* 00:09:30 - 00:09:33. 1957.
[102] J. Marshall, *The Hunters* 00:07:10 - 00:10:50. 1957.

Following the general overview of hunting and its importance the film shifts and becomes much less generalised, as it zooms in on a specific hunt. This hunt is important as the group has been without meat for a month, illustrating the harsh life of those in the Kalahari. According to Tomaselli, the hunt shown in the film resonates with western sport hunters, they see their own emotions while hunting reflected back at them from the screen. The long process of tracking, stalking and finally killing and butchering the giraffe is relatable to the sports hunter. "I feel proud of my skills and abilities just as the *!Kung* do, I am touched by [the animals] death and feel guilty over any unnecessary pain and suffering, just as the *!Kung* do in this film … In this movie I understood and FELT a brotherhood with archaic man".[103] Here the sports hunter views the film as an example of primitivity and imposes his own ideology onto it. Similarly, Marshall's interpretation and editing of the film conveys his own awe filled interpretation and respect for the hunters.[104]

John Marshall's respect for, and familiarity with, the four hunters in his film is demonstrated by the way he introduces them. Unlike previous documentaries on 'bushmen' he acknowledges each of the hunters individually. These introductions are positive and begin with ≠Toma, with whom Marshall was very close. He describes ≠Toma as a leader who was "vigorous and able. He was a man of many words and a lively mind. One who had travelled to the edges of his world. He had a little of the clown in him…he was the perfect man for a job [headmanship] that brings no rewards and often only earns worry".[105] The other hunters are described just as expressively with //Ao the beautiful dreamer, /Gui the optimistic marksman, and Kxau the forthright and humble medicine man. Each of these descriptions is accompanied by footage of them showing the mentioned traits and framed from a low angle similar to that of the title sequence.[106] These descriptions illustrate Marshall's idealisation of the hunters and ≠Toma specifically. In addition to idealising the hunters Marshall mythologises the hunt itself.

The hunt takes place in the wilds of the Kalahari a land that is shown to be dry and unforgiving, leaving the community without meat for a long time. Its vastness is emphasised as the hunters move through it; while the hunters are in the foreground the backdrop is a desert extending across the horizon. This makes it seem as though the hunters are isolated from all other sentient

[103] . Quoted in K. G. Tomaselli, 'Another Look at John Marshall and the Ju/'hoansi: Reassessing a Documentary Lifetime', *Visual Anthropology* 34 (2), 2021, p. 123.
[104]. K. G. Tomaselli, 'Another Look at John Marshall and the Ju/'hoansi: Reassessing a Documentary Lifetime', *Visual Anthropology* 34 (2), 2021, pp. 120-123.
[105]. J. Marshall, *The Hunters* 00:13:01 -00: 13:30. 1957.
[106]. J. Marshall, *The Hunters* 00:13:03 -00: 21:49. 1957.

life. This implied isolation, in conjunction with the unforgiving nature of the Kalahari, emphasises the competence and expertise required simply to survive. It is implicit throughout the film that the required abilities have long been lost to the 'civilised' world. The hunt itself is mythologised, resembling a mythic quest with the hunters' persistence in tracking the giraffe. The hunters, as in most heroic quests, encounter difficulties and pitfalls. They cannot find any trace of the giraffe and must persist in their hunt, eventually locating her once again. The death of the giraffe is the climax of this quest, the result of a dangerous and possibly deadly fight with a desperate animal. The hunters have triumphed over the giraffe; however, they do not disregard her sacrifice, thanking her for feeding their community.

During the 1950s when *The Hunters* was released, the views on 'bushmen' were slowly beginning to change. They were no longer seen as savages but rather as harmless children of nature, thanks in no small part to the work of the Marshall family itself who, with their expedition, generated an interest in the Khoisan that had not existed before. This and the lessened threat posed by the Khoisan to the government allowed for further study of them. However, this extended contact between the Ju/Hoansi, the Marshalls and other western influences is not presented at all in the film. The lack of evidence regarding acculturation is based partly on the fact that the Ju/Hoansi lived in southern Nyae-Nyae which was far enough removed from colonial administration to not be influenced by it. This does mean that the film only portrays a small portion of the Khoisan population, nevertheless the film has often been used to understand the culture of the 'bushmen'.[107]

The hunt as portrayed in the film is fictitious, while the film may seem to follow one hunt, it was compiled from multiple hunts spanning at least three years. This reconstruction was mainly due to technological difficulties, as some shots needed to be re-enacted to get different angles and footage from other hunts was necessary to fill out the story. The fact that the film is a reconstructed narrative does not mean that it doesn't have value; it still recreates an event that has meaning for those involved. It shows the skills required to survive and be successful on a hunt. The importance of these skills is emphasised as the small group of four hunt and track the giraffe through the landscape.[108] Although they face a many difficulties following the giraffe's spoor, they still succeed in tracking it. Through looking at the dung of the giraffe they are able to ascertain how hurt the giraffe actually was. They examine the dung, "noticing that

[107]. L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. pp. 107-112.
[108]. L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. pp. 107-112.

there was nothing white in it, nor did it smell of poison, the poison was not yet in her viscera".[109] The hunt illustrates the significant knowledge that is required to survive in the harsh environment of the desert. The narrator explains that through their tracking of the giraffe the hunters begin to understand her and her nature; they connect with her. This links to the often-romanticised idea of 'children of nature', a part of nature that should not be removed from it.[110] The Khoisan, as 'children of nature' have knowledge and skills, and in some depictions even inherent abilities that allow them to survive and even thrive in the wild. These romanticised abilities are inaccessible to 'civilised' humans as they have long been lost to modernity. According to this trope the inherent connection with nature that the 'bushmen' possess makes them wholly unsuitable for the modern 'civilised' world.

The Hunters finds its closure around the fire and not in the climactic end of the hunt. The hunt itself is isolating for the hunters; the days of tracking the giraffe, while ultimately rewarding, are spent removed from their community. The hunters themselves also rarely interact with each other during the hunt, focused on the task they have set themselves. The return home is in contrast, a flurry of activity and interaction, as the meat is collected and distributed. This illustrates that while the hunt itself is graceful and skilful, it would mean nothing if not for the community it serves. The return to the community and the joyful interaction between its people imparts purpose and meaning to the hunt. Once the meat has been distributed the story of the hunt is told around the campfire; these scenes are framed to not only include the storyteller but also the audience. The viewer is privy to the retelling of the hunt with the added benefit of the community's reactions as a backdrop, thus creating an understanding of the hunters within the context of their community. Furthermore, this emphasises the humanity of the Khoisan, as the telling of stories and social interaction captured by the camera is intrinsically human in nature.

This closure is contrary to most ethnographic documentaries that follow a punch-line structure, where the film ends at the climax; in *The Hunters* this climax would have been the death of the giraffe. However, in reality this is usually not where events end, life continues even when the camera is no longer recording. This drags the film back to its original focus, survival in the Kalahari.[111] The retelling of the hunt is an animated scene that highlights the close relationships within the community. The narrator translates the story of the hunt for the viewer, however no synchronous sound is included which calls into question the validity of the translation.

[109] . J. Marshall, *The Hunters* 00:39:51-00:39:51. 1957.
[110]. J. Marshall, *The Hunters* 00:39:51-00:42:05. 1957.
[111] K.G. Heider, *Ethnographic Film*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 2006, pp. 74-83.

However, recording synchronous sound was difficult until the 1960s.[112] Thus, the use of asynchronous sound and narration was the only option truly available to Marshall for this film, and in his other endeavours of creating a record of the Ju/Hoansi. The film ends with the group dispersing after the story of the hunt was told, illustrating that the lives of the group do not end with the film.

The technological limitations, the use of different shots and the lack of synchronous sound, that Marshall faced while shooting had a definite impact on the structure of the film. How Marshall overcame these limitations shows his own mythmaking, of both himself and the Khoisan; Marshall as an adventurer and innovator and the Khoisan as one of the last remnants of hunter-gatherer societies. In this way Marshall constructs a story rather than merely creating a record. Through the use of narration and the lack of synchronous sound Marshall imparts his own interpretation onto the images on screen. However, Marshall unlike other documentary filmmakers of the time had a close relationship with the community. Therefore, while he did impose his own fantasies onto the hunt his narration of thoughts and knowledge were based on his interaction and questioning of the hunters. One scene, in which ≠Toma picks through bird's nests gathering the chicks, serves as a clear instance of this. In the narration accompanying this Marshall conveys ≠Toma's thoughts.[113] "As he opened the nests he thought about the game, with good food here and good water, why had they moved?… ≠Toma thought it possible that the game had moved south, most of the old spoors they had crossed that morning had pointed south".[114] The thoughts Marshall relayed for, and at times imposed onto the hunters throughout the film emphasise their impressive understanding of, and skill in the natural environment. This narration, while very descriptive also evokes the poetic approach of the whole film. This poetic nature of the narration is the main mechanism for mythologising the Ju/Hoansi. Thus, Marshall's fantasies are imparted onto the filmic record, colouring it with his own understanding of the Ju/Hoansi culture and their practices. Nevertheless, his interpretations were informed by his interactions with the community and these also influenced the film.

Through the influence of Marshall's own fantasies onto the hunt he colours the viewers understanding of events with his own perceptions. Marshall himself stated that the pictures and recordings he took, especially those involving hunting, were framed in a way that would best represent his thoughts and feelings of the event in question. Nevertheless, he claimed that the

[112]. J. Marshall, 'Filming and Learning', *in* J. Ruby (ed.), *The Cinema of John Marshall*, pp. 34.
[113]. B. Nicholls, 'Audio visual reviews: The Hunters', *American Anthropologist* 82 (1), 1980, pp. 228-229.
[114]. J. Marshall, *The Hunters* 00:18:30 – 00:18:50. 1957.

footage used was real in the sense that the Ju/Hoansi were never told what to do and were simply engaging in normal hunting practices. The romanticisation was a result of Marshall's filming and editing techniques. "The ideas and feelings evoked in the film and its story, however, are largely my own. While I was shooting I ignored much of what was going on that was important to the hunters". [115] Marshall explains that the editing of the film focused on advancing the story and the true context, and the importance of the events to the hunters was largely neglected. Marshall's pursuit of a gripping storyline of hunters struggling against nature, also impacted the hunt itself. The hunt for the giraffe was a true event, "although ≠Toma actually shot her [the giraffe] first from a moving jeep".[116] However, their persistence even after multiple days of failure in tracking the giraffe was likely for the film's and John Marshall's benefit.[117] The time and effort spent tracking the giraffe, which in other circumstances would have been deemed futile, exemplifies one of the main criticisms regarding the Marshall expeditions, namely the impact that the expeditions had on the filmic record and on the Ju/Hoansi themselves.

Despite the poetic nature of the film and its mythologised representation of the hunt and the Khoisan, the film is still a good presentation of an important subsistence strategy. *The Hunters* quickly became one of the most popular ethnographic documentaries on hunter-gatherer societies and was frequently screened in American universities, well into the 1980s.[118] Scenes from the film were often used as stock footage in other films. This continuous intertextualising of Marshall's film stripped it of its original purpose and meaning and contributed to the larger idea and mythology of bushmen. In this way also, distinct Khoisan groups were fused into a generalised category of Khoisan or 'bushmen', in which group differences and practices were rendered invisible. The footage of *The Hunters* was also later used by Marshall himself in filming *N!ai.*[119]

It was only with the release of *The Gods Must be Crazy* (1980), a comedic feature film on the Khoisan, that the academic corpus began to question Marshall's representation of the Khoisan in his first film. This was not helped by the pseudo-ethnographic nature of *The Gods Must be*

[115] J. Marshall, 'Filming and Learning', *in* J. Ruby (ed.), *The Cinema of John Marshall*, p. 55.
[116] J. Marshall, 'Filming and Learning', *in* J. Ruby (ed.), *The Cinema of John Marshall*, p. 55.
[117] J. Marshall, 'Filming and Learning', *in* J. Ruby (ed.), *The Cinema of John Marshall*, pp.54-56.
[118]. K.G. Tomaselli, & A. Shepperson, 'A Confusion of Cinematic Consciousness: Southern Africa on Film in the United States', *Safundi: The journal of South African and American Comparative Studies* 1(3), 2000, pp. 5-6.
[119] K. G. Tomaselli, 'At the Other End of the camera: Film through history in John Marshall's documentaries', *Studies in Documentary Film,* 1(2), 2007, pp. 127-132

Crazy films, making comparisons between Uys's and Marshall's films inevitable, especially in academic circles. Marshall quickly began to distance himself from *The Hunters* and spent much of his later career advocating against the mythic representation of the 'bushmen' that he himself had a hand in creating.[120] None of his projects between *The Hunters* and *N!ai* were as poetic nor were they created with a story in mind. They were mostly short films representing activities and events in the daily lives of the Ju/Hoansi.[121] In 1958 Marshall was removed from Nyae-Nyae and banned from returning to Southwest Africa for twenty years. Marshall did not know the reason behind his banishment of two decades. He only discovered the official reason after appealing to the Administrator General, M. T. Steyn of Southwest Africa, for access to 'Bushmanland'. He was banished, due to an accusation of having fathered a child with a Ju/Hoansi woman, thus breaking the regulations set forth by the Immorality Act, which illegalised sexual interaction between non-married people of different races. The intervening years affected the Ju/Hoansi significantly and these effects are what influenced Marshall to create *N!ai*.[122]

There were many changes between the 1950s and 1978 when Marshall returned to Nyae-Nyae, the most significant being the Ju/Hoansi's move to Tsumkwe. In the 1950s the South African government endeavoured to strengthen its position in Southwest Africa against international resistance to its continued colonisation. The South African administration set out to create colonial infrastructure along its border regions including Nyae-Nyae, this was the first time that the Ju/Hoansi were directly affected by colonial administrative decisions. Claude McIntyre was appointed 'Bushman Affairs Commissioner' of Southwest Africa in 1959, setting up a government station in Tsumkwe. Tsumkwe was chosen as his settlement due to its central location in relation to other 'bushmen' settlements. McIntyre had an interest in the Khoisan for several years, having accompanied the Marshall family on their first expedition into Nyae-Nyae.[123] He enticed the Ju/Hoansi to Tsumkwe with promises of work, rations, medical care and agricultural training; they came willingly. McIntire believed in the administrative goal of

[120] K. G. Tomaselli, 'At the Other End of the camera: Film through history in John Marshall's documentaries', *Studies in Documentary Film,* 1(2), 2007, pp. 127-132.
[121]. L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. pp.154-160.
[122] J. Marshall, 'Filming and Learning', *in* J. Ruby (ed.), *The Cinema of John Marshall,* pp.106-107.
[123]. L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. pp. 160-161.

'civilising' the Khoisan, that if they could be taught agriculture and to understand private property they would flourish.[124]

McIntyre's ideals of creating a self-supporting Khoisan settlement were never realised. His administration "between December 1959 and 1969 [was] described as the time of sedentary [settlement], animal husbandry, mission, and alcohol".[125] Those who settled there lived under the ever-vigilant eye of missionaries and the government; the acculturation of the Ju/Hoansi had begun and not to their benefit. The influx of a cash economy caused strife amongst the community with far reaching and permanent consequences, with money taking the place of traditional practices such as bride service. Traditional marriages took place when the children were still young, and the boys would then hunt and live with his bride's family in bride service. The sudden flow of cash into the previously egalitarian society caused division amongst them. There were those who had money and those who had nothing. Things took a turn for the worse when McIntyre left the post; the position was never held by one person for very long with little to no development being initiated. The position required very little experience and the lack of governmental interest made any initiative difficult to implement ensuring that they did little more than hand out rations and welfare.[126] Thus, despite the administrative rations and livestock, Tsumkwe was a harsh place to live, "the settlement is characterized by overcrowding, conflict and a host of other social problems like alcoholism, malnutrition, exceptionally high infant mortality rates, apathy and general alienation".[127]

During this time the Ju/Hoansi and other Khoisan groups experienced another significant blow to their livelihoods. Apartheid policy was being applied in Southwest Africa and with it the Group Areas Act. The Odendaal Commission recommended to the government that a homeland for the Khoisan be established in 1964. The establishment of 'Bushmanland' led to the loss of most of the traditional Ju/Hoansi territory and many of their waterholes. The significant loss of territory meant they would no longer be able to practice hunting and gathering effectively and they became increasingly dependent on the administration. Traditional social practices and values were forever changed as they were forced to adapt to the new system. New class divisions emerged which led to increased conflict, with the government intervening in these disputes. According to one Ju/Hoansi woman, "the only problem was the anger: the Ju/Hoansi

[124]. R. J. Gordon, *The Bushman Myth: The Making of a Namibian Underclass*, pp. 175-176.
[125]. Quoted in: K. G. Tomaselli, 'Another Look at John Marshall and the Ju/'hoansi: Reassessing a Documentary Lifetime', *Visual Anthropology* 34 (2), 2021, p. 125.
[126]. R. J. Gordon, *The Bushman Myth: The Making of a Namibian Underclass*, pp. 175-176.
[127]. R. J. Gordon, *The Bushman Myth: The Making of a Namibian Underclass*, p. 176.

fought with each other … and they'd take them to jail, where they'd just sit. And they beat them in jail".[128] Another factor that influenced the settlement and created further disputes was the recruitment of Khoisan into the South African Defence force.[129]

When Marshall returned in 1978, ending his banishment, he was met with a very different Nyae-Nyae than that of his youth. The difficult situation of the Ju/Hoansi, and their living conditions in Tsumkwe induced feelings of outrage, which were the motivating force behind the creation of *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* (1980). *N!ai,* as a documentary, was ground-breaking, it was very different from any other documentary about the Khoisan. It was biographical in nature and included the views and interpretations of an indigenous individual, which had never been done before. Unlike his approach in *The Hunters* Marshall was no longer attributing thoughts and ideas to the Khoisan, allowing them to speak in their own voices. Its focus was not the idyllic nature of the Khoisan but rather their dispossession and how colonial pressures led to their impoverishment. It was the first film to present a contemporary portrayal of the Khoisan. *N!ai* portrays a nostalgic longing for the hunter-gatherer lifestyle, reflecting N!ai's own longing for her childhood which seemed better than her life in Tsumkwe.[130] The film presents the conflicts that arose within Tsumkwe and discusses the difficulties N!ai faced due to her relationships with filmmakers and anthropologists. It highlights the problems in the settlement and contrasts them with a nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle, by including footage from the earlier Marshall family expeditions.

N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman begins with a black screen explaining the difficulties facing the Khoisan of Nyae-Nyae in the 1970s and stating that the filming for this feature began in 1951 when the *!Kung* were still independent. The footage begins in Tsumkwe with people lining up for their meagre rations. This is followed by a voice over as N!ai explains what life was like before the white people came. N!ai introduces herself as N!ai, 'N!ai short face', and sings a song that her sister had sang to her about her face as the scene shifts to young N!ai singing. This is followed by footage from the Marshall collection of the Ju/Hoansi in the 1950s while in the voice over N!ai explains what life was like during her childhood in Nyae-Nyae, both the happy and the sad, of how plentiful it was despite its difficulties. This is interspersed with a narrator explaining some of the information that N!ai does not mention, such as the

[128]. R. B. Lee, *The Dobe Ju/'hoansi,* Harcourt College Publishers, Fortworth, 1993, p. 161.
[129] L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. pp. 160-165.
[130]. L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. p. 153.

specifics of hunting. N!ai discusses her engagement and marriage to her husband as a child and her hesitance surrounding the marriage. She discusses their difficult relationship, and we see them laughing about these difficulties in more contemporary footage. She discusses childbirth and her family, with all the trials that she and the other women faced.[131] The biographical focus on N!ai and her stories of her family and life humanise her, and by extension all Khoisan. It demonstrates that the Khoisan, even when living as hunter-gatherers, had similar worries and experiences as the rest of the world.

The scene shifts to the administrator's office in Tsumkwe with the white administrator and his wife. The administrator sits behind a large desk. We are told that there were 800 *!Kung* living in 25 square miles. The problems that those of Tsumkwe face are shown, including the racist attitudes of the white administration who believe them to be lazy. The conflicts between those settled there are depicted with little narration. These conflicts include lack of money and food, to the extent that others accuse N!ai of hoarding her money gained through interactions with anthropologists and filmmakers. She discusses the lack of food and the need to hunt despite the danger of imprisonment as any hunting was deemed as poaching. The disregard of the administration to tradition is further emphasised by the budget which the game warden outlines, including items such as education and trance-dancing for which footage is included. There is a juxtaposition between the promise and the provided, this is highlighted by the lacklustre healthcare that is available. Footage of a clinic is shown as a doctor dismisses the worries of a mother about her baby's cough. The mother then turns to traditional medicine in hopes of saving her baby, but the baby later dies.[132]

The South African Defence Force was present in Tsumkwe during the 1970s and thus in the film, their recruitment and training of Khoisan men and the complex reactions that individuals have in response to them is depicted. Other influences on the community are also shown such as an extended sequence of behind the scenes filming of *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980) discussed in the following chapter, showing the patronising attitudes of filmmakers and the distinct contrast with what was being filmed and the reality of the situation. Westernisation is indicated through a church service where most of the community are in attendance. N!ai provides her own interpretation of the parable that was discussed in the service. The film ends with a tearful goodbye as N!ai's uncle joins the SADF promising to return with rations as N!ai

[131]. J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:00:00 – 00:24:42. 1980.
[132] J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:24:42 – 00:35:49. 1980.

sings sadly of death and hatred, saying "don't look at my face"[133], which contrasts directly with the song at the beginning of the film. The screen fades to black as she smiles sadly at the camera.[134]

Marshall's concern for the Ju/Hoansi living in Tsumkwe and his subsequent creation of *N!ai* aligned well with a shift within the discipline of anthropology during the 1960s and 1970s. This shift led to discourse regarding the representation of indigenous people and their own self-identification. Anthropological works became much more interpretive and aware of the overall political context surrounding the people being studied. This 'crisis of representation' was accompanied by an increased emphasis on the self-identification and determination of indigenous peoples; they were now afforded the opportunity to explain their own understanding of their cultures and the events that influenced them.[135] This shift is exemplified in *N!ai* where N!ai herself takes the main speaking role. Much of the film is narrated by her with some accompanying narration by John Marshall. Her words are translated through subtitles and into spoken English through a voice-over by Letta Mbulu, a renowned South African jazz singer.[136] The narrative is driven through N!ai's own words; throughout the film her views on the circumstances in Tsumkwe and her interpretation of life in a hunter-gatherer community are contrasted.

The first half of the film juxtaposes life in Tsumkwe with N!ai's life as a child in Nyae-Nyae. Through this dichotomy Marshall makes the implicit point that the hunting and gathering lifestyle was superior and kinder than the hopeless conditions in Tsumkwe. The scenes in Tsumkwe depict a community that is all but destroyed with poverty, alcoholism and anger running rampant; in contrast the scenes of N!ai's childhood seem idyllic, depicting a strong supportive community where food and laughter were not a scarcity. This dichotomy is further demonstrated by N!ai's own understanding of life before and in Tsumkwe:

> "Before the white people came, we did what our hearts wanted. We lived in different places, far apart, and when our hears wanted to travel, we travelled. We were not poor. We had everything we could carry. No one told us what to do. Now the white people tell us to stay in this place. There are too many people. There's no food to gather. Game

[133] J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:56:48. 1980.
[134] J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:36:43- 00:57:00. 1980.
[135] L. Van Vuuren, 'And He Said They Were Ju/Wasi, the People: History and Myth in John Marshall's 'Bushmen Films' 1957-2000', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35(3), 2009, pp. 565-568.
[136] T. A. Volkman, 1982, 'The San in Transition. Vol. 1: A Guide to N!ai. The Story of a !Kung Woman', Occasional paper no. 9, *Cultural Survival and DER*, p. 11.

> is far away, and people are dying of tuberculosis. But when I was a little girl, we left sickness behind when we moved."[137]

There is a romanticisation of hunting and gathering in N!ai's narration, comparing her life in Tsumkwe with her life as a child; her past compares much more favourably. In this N!ai's own nostalgia plays into Marshall's implicit argument against the dependency of the Khoisan on white administrators. It also feeds into his own nostalgia for the loss of the Nyae-Nyae of his youth.[138]

Through its romanticisation of hunting and gathering N!ai's nostalgia indicates that it still forms a large part of how the Ju/Hoansi identify themselves and how they relate to the world at large. Throughout the film the events in Tsumkwe are interpreted by N!ai through her own cultural understanding. For example, when discussing a parable of the woman at the well, she interprets it from her own perspective, replacing a well with a waterhole.[139] This indicates that much of her own self-identification is still based on being a hunter-gatherer. She is nostalgic about hunting and gathering, not only because life is worse in Tsumkwe than it was then, but also because it forms a considerable part of how she and her community identify themselves. It is important to note that while the nostalgia in *N!ai* may romanticise the hunter-gather past it deromanticizes the Khoisan, making it clear that they are part of the modern world and thus subject to its whims. This is a significant shift from previous and contemporary representations of the Khoisan as 'primitive' and unsuited for the 'civilised' world, *N!ai* explicitly counters this trope.

The film reveals the conflict and tension that living in Tsumkwe had created for the Ju/Hoansi, the lack of food available to them and the ban on hunting which caused strife within the community. The Ju/Hoansi were very dependent on the administration of Tsumkwe by the time the contemporary footage was filmed, relying on the administration for food rations and monetary compensation. This inevitably causes conflict between them and in one scene an argument breaks out between N!ai and other residents, who accuse her of hoarding food and being selfish with her money. This situation was made worse through anti-hunting laws that the state put in place which deprived the Khoisan of their traditional subsistence strategy. A scene in which N!ai's cousin hunts on horseback and explains that he needs to hunt to feed his

[137]. J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:01:56-00:02:33. 1980.
[138]. L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. pp. 164, 175-176
[139] J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:47:30 – 00:51:25. 1980.

community is juxtaposed with a game warden explaining that those hunting are breaking the law and will be punished for it.[140] What becomes clear in this juxtaposition is Marshall's exposition of the prejudice that the white administration had against the Khoisan and the blind eye that they turned to the struggles of the community.

The ways in which the Khoisan were stereotyped or viewed by white administrators, tourists, and soldiers alike during the 1970s and 80s is explicitly focused on throughout the film. The audience is first introduced to the white administrator in Tsumkwe by a shot of him sitting behind a large desk handing out welfare cheques. A shot of the man with his wife sitting behind a large desk, makes him seem large and imposing while simultaneously making those he is giving money to seem small and meek. This represents the unequal power-relations between the Khoisan at Tsumkwe and the white administration. The Khoisan living under South African rule are seemingly powerless and subject to the regulations and stereotypes that the white administration places upon them. In a following scene the administrator calls most of the 'bushmen' lazy and a drain on the system, excluding the rare few that work for him personally. In his belief that they were lazy he ignored the significant problems that were endemic in the community, viewing any problems as a consequence of the communities own deficiencies.[141] This is also the case for the doctor, who ignored a mother when she tried to explain that her baby was sick and blamed its cough on the fires that they build in the huts; due to his negligence this baby later died.[142] The inclusion of the interviews and the actions of the white administration represents the belief that the problems of colonialism are of the Khoisan's own making rather than the exclusion and othering they faced alongside their loss of land and way of life. Further impacts on the community are illustrated by the recruitment of their men into the South African Defence Force, due to their almost mythologised tracking abilities, demonstrating that despite significant changes in circumstance the tropes surrounding the Khoisan still impacted them significantly.

During the filming of *N!ai* there was a significant militarisation of the Khoisan in the war against the Southwest African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO). SWAPO was fighting for the liberation of Southwest Africa from South African control, prompting the SADF to militarise the Khoisan due to their knowledge of the land and ability to survive. Marshall presents the recruitment of the Khoisan into the SADF as exploitative and extremely damaging not only to

[140]. L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. p. 170.
[141]. J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:24:42- 00:25:54. 1980.
[142]. J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:32:54 – 00:33:45. 1980.

individuals but also to the community. The introduction of the military in the film is also the first time that Marshall is heard speaking outside of the narration. He asks in a rather panicked voice how long they will stay with the army, to which the officer replies that they will remain for the rest of their lives.[143] The film emphasises the exploitative nature of the relationship between the South African Defence force and the Khoisan. The Khoisan were mythologised in the army's rhetoric regarding their tracking and survival abilities, which was important in the context of the gorilla war waged by SWAPO. The South African military attempted to westernise the 'bushmen' to an extent but not completely as they wanted them to keep specific Khoisan customs, such as tracking.

> "The SA Defence force should apply the Bushmen's age-old talent for survival warfare to the task of out-manoeuvring the enemy at short range… only the times have changed, only with the bow and arrow having been replaced by rifles." [144]

The exploitative nature of their recruitment is emphasised in the film as two soldiers taunt a Ju/Hoan artist attempting to get him to join the military. They point out the money that he will make and when he refuses, they mock him. The military is also shown to be dropping off food and supplies to the community, which was likely a way of ingratiating themselves with the community while reinforcing the benefits of joining. Finally, the adverse and saddening effects on the community are shown as N!ai's uncle, one of the prominent hunters of *The Hunters* film is recruited and joins the army to get money and food for his family.[145] This is an emotional scene in the film, as although he promises to return it is unclear if he ever will. It is especially poignant due to earlier footage of him teasing and laughing with N!ai during her childhood, a scene that charms the viewer making them relate with him. The viewer has created an emotional connection with him thus personalising the moment and including the viewer in the community's apprehension.

The scenes focused on military actions in *N!ai* show more than just exploitation by the SADF, they also show how the Ju/Hoansi, and by implication all Khoisan, oriented themselves in the political climate surrounding them. They viewed themselves as neutral forces, enemies of neither side, irrespective of recruitment into a military force. When asked whether he is afraid that SWAPO will retaliate because they are joining the SADF ≠Toma responds saying:

---

[143]. J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:55:45 – 00:55:55. 1980.
[144]. R. Lee, & S. Hurlich, 'From foragers to fighters: South Africa's militarization of the Namibian San', *in* R. Lee & E. Leacock (eds.) *Politics and history in band societies,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1982, p. 336.
[145]. J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:37:44- 00:55:58. 1980.

"SWAPO won't kill us ... We'd share the pot with SWAPO."[146] This implies that while they may be joining the military out of necessity, for food and money, they would just as easily help SWAPO or preferably stay out of the conflict all together. The idea of sharing the pot with SWAPO indicates a certain kinship; SWAPO is fighting an oppressive force that they have in common. They are not each other's enemy; however, the Khoisan are still in danger simply due to being on the front line. SWAPO's chief representative at the UN accused South Africa of using the Khoisan as shields allowing them to walk in front of patrols and taking shots for the soldiers following behind. "The bushmen being traditionally hunters are being used by South Africans as trackers. In the process they become victims of landmines and guerrilla ambushes. […] Their population being small, our concern is that they might be exterminated."[147] This confirms ≠Toma's belief that SWAPO would not willingly hurt them.

The disregard of the military towards their trackers was well hidden from the South African public and was spun by the South African press as a humanitarian effort. The allowances for traditional practices in Tsumkwe are similarly styled by the administration. The discussions of Ju/Hoansi culture and traditions by the administrators and the game warden are patronising. When describing the practicing of trance dancing, they frame it as a gift to the community. When interviewed the game warden discusses the budget for Tsumkwe stating that there is an allowance for recreational activities, which he calls "special treats". [148] This is representative of the paternalistic relationship between the white administrators and the Khoisan, their traditions and culture are diminished. The administration treats these important cultural practices as akin to fun activities given to school children for good behaviour.

The idea that these events are for the benefit of the Khoisan is laughable as directly following the warden's statement tourists are shown photographing and filming a trance dance where N!ai is supporting her husband /Gunda. This foreshadows a proposal by the Department of Nature Conservation in the 1980s to create a nature reserve in an effort to 'preserve' the 'bushmen'. It aimed to turn part of the Nyae-Nyae area into a nature reserve, with no livestock or development of any kind. In this scenario the Ju/Hoansi would feature as a cultural exhibit, dressed in traditional clothes, dancing, and pandering to tourists wishes. This initiative was strongly opposed by the Ju/Hoansi; that way of life had been destroyed and performing in a

[146]. J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:53:10- 00:53:37. 1980.
[147]. R. Lee, & S. Hurlich, 'From foragers to fighters: South Africa's militarization of the Namibian San', *in* R. Lee & E. Leacock (eds.) *Politics and history in band societies,* p. 340
[148]. L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. pp. 173-174.

plastic stone age for government profit would not ensure their survival. Years of protest and opposition, both locally and internationally ensured that this scheme never came to fruition.[149] The administration was focused on assimilation and westernisation; however they did allow tradition and culture when it benefitted them, as is illustrated by the tourists present at the trance dance. This was mirrored by the SADF and its recruitment of the Khoisan for their tracking skills. The coercion and subtle recruitment of the Khoisan also shows the contradictory nature of the 'civilising' mission. The administration at Tsumkwe through practices of assimilation and acculturation, such as church attendance and banns on hunting, attempted to transform the Khoisan community and lifestyle into one that more closely resembled the western norm. However, this assimilationist goal was tempered by their commercialisation of the 'strangeness' of the 'bushmen'. Hence the contradiction in the 'civilising' the belief in assimilation and westernisation is mitigated in the face of tourist interest.

In addition to tourists, administrators, and the military influencing life in Tsumkwe, N!ai identifies film crews as also causing discord in the community. She mentions that because of the money she makes through filmmakers such as John Marshall, she is disliked by her community. This is emphasised by the ending of the film where N!ai says "don't look at my face"[150] N!ai was frequently singled out during her childhood by photographers and filmmakers due to her beauty which continued to provide an income throughout her life, however it also ostracised her from her community.[151] Thus, by saying "don't look at my face" she is lamenting the trouble it has caused her. This is demonstrated in multiple scenes; one in which she gets accused of hoarding her money and another where her daughter is accused of promiscuity, the latter almost turning into a physical altercation.[152]

During the timeframe in which *N!ai* was filmed, N!ai was acting in another more fictional production called *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980). This fictional film contradicted everything that *N!ai* was arguing; it presented a paradisical Kalahari and a community of 'bushmen' living untouched and 'uncorrupted' by the modern world. In *N!ai* Jamie Uys, the director of the *Gods* films, is shown directing N!ai acting as the wife of 'Xi' the main character in the film while she is tending to their shelter. The scene shown is that of a hunter returning from his mission and being greeted by his young son. The white crew, wearing dust masks shout directions at

[149]. R. B. Lee, *The Dobe Ju/'hoansi,* Harcourt College Publishers, Toronto, pp. 162-163.
[150] J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:56:48. 1980.
[151] L. Van Vuuren, *The Great Dance : Myth, History and Identity in Documentary Film Representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2005. p. 166.
[152]. J. Marshall, *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* 00:41:56 – 00:46:21. 1980.

the actors, without really explaining anything. The Khoisan are treated as props necessary for the fulfilment of the filmmaker's artistic vision. The scene as portrayed does not mimic the true tradition and custom of the Ju/Hoansi, for example the returning hunter would not be greeted with great welcome, rather the hunter would quietly join the group.[153] As discussed in the next chapter *The Gods Must Be Crazy* was an incredibly successful South African comedy, with critical and public acclaim. It had a considerable influence on the way in which the Khoisan were viewed by the greater international public. It overshadowed almost all public influence *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* would have had, despite its public release as part of the PBS Odyssey series. Instead, Marshall's film was mainly received by the academic community and influenced their understanding of the Khoisan.[154]

Despite its public influence being overshadowed by Uys's film *N!ai* has been credited as Marshall's best work, achieving multiple awards such as the Blue Ribbon at the American Film Festival and the Grand Prize at the International Film and Television Festival of New York.[155] This was due to its shift to a new, more biographical representation of the Khoisan and in being much more reflexive and less mediated in terms of N!ai's own lived experience. It also represented a shift in John Marshall's own ideological purpose. His advocacy work with the Ju/Hoansi intensified following the release of the film. He spent most of the 1980s in Namibia creating new initiatives that were intended to establish farms, fight for land rights, and water resources. These initiatives include the Ju/'hoan Bushmen Development Foundation of Namibia, and the Ju/wa Farmers' Union. Additionally, he lobbied for the inclusion of cooperative land ownership into the Namibian constitution following its independence from South Africa in 1990.[156]

Marshall's commitment to the betterment of the Ju/Hoansi community did not wholly prevent the criticisms of exploitation that were being levelled at ethnographic filmmakers. These criticisms were mainly focused on the Marshall family expeditions of the 1950s and 60s and how they may have affected the lives of the Ju/Hoansi. The most prevalent criticism asserted that the Marshall family created inroads into the community which enabled the government to

[153]. T. A. Volkman, 1982, 'The San in Transition. Vol. 1: A Guide to N!ai. The Story of a !Kung Woman', Occasional paper no. 9, *Cultural Survival and DER*, pp. 19-20.
[154]. C. Anderson, 'Beyond ethnographic film: John Marshall and the Marshall Family Kalahari Project', *Ethnographic Cinema* 40(42), 2019, pp. 54-55.
[155] C. Anderson, 'Beyond ethnographic film: John Marshall and the Marshall Family Kalahari Project', *Ethnographic Cinema* 40(42), 2019, p. 54.
[156] C. Anderson, 'Beyond ethnographic film: John Marshall and the Marshall Family Kalahari Project', *Ethnographic Cinema* 40(42), 2019, pp. 54-61.

take control of Nyae-Nyae. Other, at times contradictory, criticisms either accused the Marshall family of extending their traditional way of life artificially or that the Marshall family's contact with the Ju/Hoansi led to the destruction of tradition.[157] These criticisms did not stop Marshall from championing the rights of the Ju/Hoansi. He fought adamantly against government ambition to turn the Khoisan into protected 'wildlife' where they were meant to live traditionally, which never came to fruition both due to protests from the Khoisan and the fact that much traditional knowledge had been lost. In addition to his advocacy Marshall created a six-part film series called *A Kalahari Family* (2002), that documented the community's survival and the progression from a hunter gatherer lifestyle to life in Tsumkwe and beyond, the last of the footage being from the early 2000s. At the end of the series, despite the attempts at advocacy and grassroots development, ≠Toma's family and much of the *!Kung* were still living off government rations and while farms are being rebuilt, they face an uncertain future.[158]John Marshall continued his activism for the San, and his friends, like ≠Toma until his death in 2005. He saw his efforts in creating *A Kalahari Family* not as a summation of his and his families work but rather a way in which he could support the Ju/Hoansi.[159] There was a significant shift in Marshall's work following his return to Tsumkwe in 1978. Previous work such as *The Hunters* was much more observational and ethnographic, with the story relying heavily on Marshall's and the viewers interpretation of what was being depicted. *N!ai* was a significant departure from the norm with regards to indigenous documentaries. Its biographical nature, and the inclusion of N!ai's own views contrasted significantly with most contemporary films.

As his earliest work *The Hunters* was the most romanticised, showing an idealised natural hunter-gatherer community exerting a strong influence on subsequent films and documentaries on the Khoisan and extending stereotypes and discourses of the innocence of a 'natural' people caught in a time warp, untouched by modernity. It also shaped the views of administrators and tourists that the Khoisan were a people lost in time that ended to be preserved. The hunters thus firmly entrenched a romantically mythologised people who stood outside of time and were thus ahistorical. It was with *N!ai* that Marshall began to shift from this discourse, showing the Ju/Hoansi in Tsumkwe living in squalor. The film also documented the racist and ignorant

[157] C. Anderson, 'Beyond ethnographic film: John Marshall and the Marshall Family Kalahari Project', *Ethnographic Cinema* 40(42), 2019, pp. 55-56.
[158]. C. Anderson, 'Beyond ethnographic film: John Marshall and the Marshall Family Kalahari Project', *Ethnographic Cinema* 40(42), 2019, pp. 56-62.
[159]. C. Anderson, 'Beyond ethnographic film: John Marshall and the Marshall Family Kalahari Project', *Ethnographic Cinema* 40(42), 2019, pp. 62-63.

nature of the South African administration which contradicted the earlier representation of the Khoisan living outside modernity. In contrast N!ai explicitly brings the 'bushmen' into historical time showing the impact of a colonial administration which marginalised and dehumanised them. *N!ai* and his later work helped shift academic and public understanding of a people lost to time that needed to be preserved to a people trying to survive in a changing world against greater odds. Despite this shift in Marshall's later work, which can arguably be read as partial attempts to rectify or mitigate his earlier complicity in entrenching particular 'bushmen' tropes and discourses, these stereotypes did not disappear entirely as evident in the films discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Civilisation versus Nature

Feature films have a significant impact on shaping public perceptions, prejudices and attitudes about specific topics depicted on films. Despite their lack of verifiability and general pandering to public whims and perceptions, films are an important source in historical research. Especially as popular and social media and film influence history and historical understanding directly. Due to its ability to visually render aspects of life and history it is an appealing source of education and entertainment for the masses.[160] Bearing the role of film in history, this chapter focuses on the *Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980 and 1989) films by Jamie Uys. These films had a substantial influence on the perceptions of the Khoisan both nationally and internationally. These films perpetuated a romanticised view of the Khoisan as a primitive, naïve but ultimately peaceful people. A main theme in both films, produced by the Mimosa production company, is the juxtaposition of nature and civilisation, with the main Khoisan character being a representative of nature throughout. The Khoisan character as 'the child of nature' is contrasted with the other characters who each represent distinct parts of 'civilisation'. Much of the film emphasises the idea that the 'bushmen' live in complete harmony with nature; all conflict that the Khoisan character experiences occurs when he encounters something not of the natural world, something that has been created by 'modern' man. This link with nature is further emphasised by nature documentary style narration that only occurs when Khoisan characters are visible on screen. Jamie Uys through his films and press releases perpetuated the myth of the Khoisan as peaceful creatures of nature, remnants of an ancient more idyllic time. Despite the international sanctions and boycotts on South Africa during the 1980s, both films were extraordinarily successful nationally in South Africa and internationally. This success helped spread the idea of the idyllic 'bushmen' further than ever before, leading to increased cultural tourism, activism and legislation influenced by the imagined Khoisan presented in the films.

Both *The Gods Must Be Crazy* films were filmed and screened during the Apartheid era, the first releasing in 1980 and the second in 1989. Apartheid ideology was an underlying influence on both films, despite Uys's vehemence that there was no pollical message within the films. Uys was a respected auteur in the South African film industry with connections to the National Party government.[161] The apartheid system was segregationist and discriminatory, informed by

[160] R. Rosenstone, 'History in Images/History in Words', pp. 1178-1179
[161] B. Nicholls, 'Apartheid cinema and indigenous image rights: the "Bushman myth" in Jamie Uys's *The gods must be crazy' Scrutiny2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa* 13(1), 2008, pp. 20-15.

the belief that white and black[162] races should not exist together. Practically this resulted in a system of government where black races in South Africa were denied the same rights as the minority white population. Every aspect of South African society was segregated, additionally the right to vote was only afforded to the white population, thus ensuring that there was no direct way to remove white minority rule. This was a hierarchical system where infrastructure was segregated but not of equal quality. Within this hierarchy white people were most favoured, and the coloured and Indian population favoured over the Black African population, although all Black communities were neglected. This discriminatory and oppressive ideology informed the lives of all South Africans until the system's end in the 1990s.[163]

Throughout the four decades that the National Party was in power the goal of a fully segregated South Africa was furthered through harsher laws and legislation. The creation of new legislation was often in response to opposition and resistance or due to contradictions in the system itself. Towards the end of the apartheid era South Africa became a police state focused on surveillance and control through the use of the military and police force.[164] The *Gods Must Be Crazy* films were produced during the 1970s and screened during the 1980s, a time marked by resistance and reform within South Africa. This precarious political situation was further destabilised by the Border War. This war, which occurred between 1966 and 1989, was a complex conflict that transpired primarily outside of South Africa. Much of the conflict took place in Southwest Africa (now Namibia), Zambia, and Angola. This war was also closely linked to the Angolan Civil War as well as civil unrest in Mozambique, with both conflicts directly and indirectly provoked by the apartheid state to destabilise its neighbouring countries.[165]

It was this climate of violence, petty reform, and large-scale change that informed the production, screening, and reception of the *The God Must Be Crazy* films. The first film was produced amid the Border War and the beginning of violent internal resistance to apartheid. The second film was released as the negotiations for a new South Africa began. Thus, each film and its production and reception was informed by the broader political, social and economic climate in South Africa. Despite Uys's claim that *The Gods Must Be Crazy* was

[162] Black here is used as a generic term to refer to all non-Caucasian South Africans, and where relevant historical terms such as Indian, Coloured and African or 'native' will be used.
[163]. G, Nattrass, *A Short History of SOUTH AFRICA*, pp. 169-185.
[164]. N. L. Clark & W. H. Worger, *South Africa The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, Routledge, New York. 2013, pp. 37-52.
[165] G, Nattrass, *A Short History of SOUTH AFRICA*, pp. 198-209.

apolitical there were choices made throughout the production of the film that indicate that the contemporary political situation shaped and impacted the film. The first *Gods* film was listed as having been produced in Botswana in order to avoid the cultural sanctions that had been implemented against South Africa; these sanctions would have prevented the screening of the film outside of South Africa. International sanctions were applied due to the continued oppression and segregation of South Africa's black population. During the late 20th century technological advancement in the media took a great leap forward allowing for the media to have a greater influence on global thought. International news, politics, propaganda, and entertainment became increasingly prevalent allowing for more detailed and frequent reporting on South Africa. This led to growth in global anti-apartheid activism demanding boycotts and sanctions against South Africa. Despite this and the protests organised by various anti-apartheid groups the film was hugely successful.[166].

Uys was one of the most prolific auteurs in a segregated national film industry. He collaborated with the most successful creators in the industry, including composers, production companies, cinematographers, and even other directors. According to a Social Network Analysis performed by Senekal and Stemmet; Jamie Uys was the central hub of the South African film industry. As this hub he was connected to people who frequently collaborated with others, linking him to almost all the players in the industry. As such Uys played a key role within the industry.[167]Jamie Uys's influence in the industry extended to negotiations with the government; he was instrumental in the establishment of a state subsidy scheme in 1956. This scheme secured financial support from the apartheid state for the establishment of a 'national' film industry. It is important to note here that this 'national' film industry was racially determined and comprised of films in Afrikaans and English for a white audience. When Bladon Peake, a British filmmaker, queried the creation of a scheme with the government he was told to build an organisation specifically to negotiate with the state. This organisation was the Motion Pictures Producers Association (MPPA), and Jamie Uys served as its first chairman. This scheme was a major boon to the South African film industry and provided much support to the Afrikaans film industry. The scheme was amended many times until its dissolution in 1992. Most notably in the early 1970s a new scheme was created to provide financial support for films made specifically for black audiences. This new scheme, known as the 'B-scheme' was

[166]. N. Burki, '*The Gods must be Crazy*, or the Rhetoric of Apartheid: A (re)evaluation of Jamie Uys's Film in the Context of French Anti-apartheid solidarity', *Critical Arts* 34(1), 2019, pp. 87-88.
[167]. B. A. Senekal & J. Stemmet, 'The gods must be connected: An investigation of Jamie Uys' connections in the Afrikaans film industry using social network analysis'. Communication 40(1), 2014, pp. 13-19.

not meant to be used by black creators, rather it was aimed at white filmmakers who were making films to be consumed by black audiences.[168]

The subsidy instituted in 1956 was based on box-office success, films had to reach a certain threshold of profit to qualify for the subsidy which would then pay back a percentage of the production costs. As such, this scheme favoured creators like Jamie Uys who produced many commercially successful films. The role of the subsidy was two-fold; it was there to provide support for the industry but would also allow the government a measure of control over the industry itself. The subsidy would allow the state more control over the films that were being produced; only those films that adhered to the rhetoric of apartheid would receive financial support. This control was also exerted through censorship of films. Initially censorship only applied to imported films but with the implementation of the Publications and Entertainment Act in 1963 local films would also have to adhere to the rulings of the Publications Control Board. Films that did not adhere to the censorship rules set out by the board would need to be edited to be screened. The rules regarding censorship and how it would be applied changed throughout apartheid rule. Despite the changes the political basis of censorship did not shift, as it provided the state with a mechanism to control film content and thus exert influence on audiences. As such cinema played a powerful ideological role in selling of apartheid, portraying it as a natural way of life.[169]

This however does not mean that creators were a passive force in the system, many producers and directors became unofficial propagandists of the state. Jamie Uys, due to his leading role within the industry was a noteworthy influence on the spread of Apartheid ideology. While providing suggestions for the state subsidy Uys also argued that film would be a great tool to sell apartheid. He based this on America's ability to spread their own culture through film, arguing that South Africa would be able to do the same.[170] This indicates that apartheid ideology was present in his films, if only implicitly. The influence of this ideology is present throughout the '*The Gods Must Be Crazy'* films. His vital role in the industry and his connections to the state ensured that Uys enjoyed considerable state support and approval for his films.[171] State officials often attended his premiers. The prime minister and other members

[168] J. Maingard, *South African National Cinema*, Routledge, New York, 2007, pp. 125-129.
[169]. K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film,* pp. 13-50.
[170] G. Paleker, *Creating a 'black film industry': State intervention and films for African audiences in South Africa, 1956-1990.* (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2009.
[171]. B. Nicholls, 'Apartheid cinema and indigenous image rights: the "Bushman myth" in Jamie Uys's *The gods must be crazy' Scrutiny2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa* 13(1), 2008, pp. 21-22.; K. Tomaselli,

of his cabinet were present at the premiere of *The Gods Must Be Crazy,* indicative of Uys' close ties to the apartheid state. The presence of state officials at such a high priority premier implied that the South African film industry approved of, and supported, the regime. This approval of the film industry for the apartheid regime was short lived, as at the premiere of *The Gods Must Be Crazy 2* Jamie Uys and Mimosa films honoured president P. W. Botha resulting in an outcry from others in the industry. The film's release coincided with escalating international condemnation of the apartheid regime. The sanctions and boycotts impacted the South African entertainment industry significantly, effectively stunting it without international participation. This also impacted the critical reception of the second film, where the first film had received rave reviews from national and international critics, the second was snubbed. Due to his insistence that he was apolitical and the insensitivity towards the plight of the industry Uys lost the support of his own industry.[172]

Uys was a versatile filmmaker, frequently writing, editing, producing and directing as well as acting as cinematographer. As the ultimate force in the creation of his films Uys was the determinant factor influencing storyline and representation. Uys's fascination with the Khoisan was piqued while filming *Beautiful People* (1974), a wildlife documentary, in the Kalahari. He wanted to create a feature on the 'bushmen' that was not simply a documentary. He wanted to combine the feeling of a documentary with entertainment and humour. The discourse regarding the production of the film, especially the parts concerning Khoisan actors, was frequently fabricated by Uys in his press releases and interviews. He claimed that he had "spent three months crisscrossing Africa's Kalahari Desert searching for the right Bushman to play the leading role in his film".[173] He claimed to have hunted for the perfect face taking pictures of every Khoisan he encountered and marking down their location. Ostensibly this is how he found his star in N!xau; according to Uys he was chosen due to his almost regal stature and natural charisma.[174] In reality N!xau had been working as a school cook since 1976 in Namibia.[175]

'The Cinema of Jamie Uys: From Bushveld to 'Bushmen'', *in* J. Blignaut & M. Botha (ed.), *Movies - Moguls - Mavericks: South African Cinema* 1979-1991, p. 223.

[172]. K. Tomaselli, 'The Cinema of Jamie Uys: From Bushveld to 'Bushmen'', in J. Blignaut & M. Botha (ed.), Movies - Moguls - Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991, pp. 222-224

[173]. J. Klemesrud, ''The Gods Must Be Crazy' – A truly international hit', *The New York Times,* 1985, p. 15.

[174] J. Stemmet, 'Sage and Screen: Jamie Uys as filmmaker part 2: The Mimosa Films phase, 1966-1996', *Ensovoort* 3(1), 2017, pp. 7-8.; J. Klemesrud, ''The Gods Must Be Crazy' – A truly international hit', *The New York Times,* 1985, p. 15.

[175] T. A. Volkman, 'Out of South Africa: THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY', *in* L. Gross, *et al* (ed.), *Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film and Television*, 1991, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 240-242.

During much of his career Uys worked for his own production company. The *Gods* films as well as a few preceding films were produced under the banner of the Mimosa Films production company, however Uys had a stake in this company and was thus influential in its development and in all productions. As head of the company Boet Trotskie was the producer for the *Gods* films and managed most of the monetary aspects, leaving Uys to focus solely on creating the films. Thus, with the help of his producer and a technical team of six Jamie Uys embarked on creating the first *The Gods Must Be Crazy* film, one of his most expensive productions. Paying no heed to budget or timelines, as those were Trotskie's concern, Uys took almost three years to film all the scenes. Most of the scenes took as many as twenty takes to complete, and Uys was still editing close to the release date. This lack of adherence to timelines made it difficult for Mimosa Films to pre-sell to the international market, potentially missing out on a significant profit. Despite this challenge Trotskie was able to drum up international interest in the film, ensuring the film's success before the editing process had even been completed. He did this by taking a short segment of the film to the Cannes Film Festival in 1979. This segment was well received and gained international backing for the film from multiple countries. It took almost four and a half years and a heart attack for Uys to complete the project. The editing itself took months, as Uys was doing it himself; this was compounded by the efforts to produce the soundtrack that was composed by John Boshoff. Finally, the film was completed after Mimosa Films hired an outside editor following Uys's heart attack. The first film was finally released in South Africa in September 1980, with further global releases occurring in the following years. Its re-release in the USA in 1984 was followed by almost instantaneous commercial success.[176]

The success of the first film and the international buzz it created was very appealing to Hollywood. Hollywood production powerhouses demanded a sequel to the film, offering anything necessary for its production, be it top level actors or production teams. Although Uys had never been fond of sequels, the development of *The Gods Must Be Crazy 2* was announced in 1983. Mimosa Films provided Uys with the monetary backing to make what he hoped to be his biggest film to date. There was also hope that due to the financial support and the help he could hire, that the film would be completed timeously; this was to be a pipedream. It took him until March 1985 to come up with a plot hook, and until November to have a final script. He

[176]. J. Stemmet, 'Sage and Screen: Jamie Uys as filmmaker part 2: The Mimosa Films phase, 1966-1996', *Ensovoort* 3(1), 2017, pp. 7-8.; B.A. Senekal & J. Stemmet, 'The gods must be connected: An investigation of Jamie Uys' connections in the Afrikaans film industry using social network analysis', *Communicatio* 40(1), 2014, 1-19.

would drop a New Yorker from the heavens instead of a coke bottle, thus he needed to find an American actress to be the female lead. He finally found this lead in Lena Ferugia a New Yorker who had been residing in South Africa at the time. With its national release in October 1989, this sequel took five years to produce. The far-removed filming locations meant that the production team, significantly larger than that of the first, and the cast would need to travel approximately 1000 kilometres between locations. As filming began in 1986, Boet Trotskie sold the unseen film at the Cannes Film Festival. The only actor to reprise his role in the film was N!xau, who would portray Xixo, however, this would not be the same character as in the first film. All other roles were filled by new actors. Filming was sporadic, as most of the outdoor scenes were influenced by the weather and by the change in seasons. Thus, filming was still taking place well into 1988. The inclusion of large-scale stunts, such as a bushfire, meant that some scenes would need to be perfect in one take. Other scenes took upwards of thirty takes to be acceptable. Finally in 1989 special effects-work began at the Pinewood Studios in England and the picture was finally completed.[177]

Both films were successful and reached a wide international market, thus they both had considerable influence in shaping the global perception of the Khoisan. However, the myths regarding the Khoisan were not simply confined to the films themselves. The marketing of the films themselves also lent credence to the prevalent myths. The press releases of both *The Gods Must Be Crazy* films perpetuated the idea of the naïve hunter-gatherer; the idea of a 'bushmen' who has no knowledge of the modern world, frozen in time, hermetically sealed from all 'modern' influences. Instead of keeping the mythologising in the films and being truthful about how the Khoisan were living in the 1980s Uys used his press releases and interviews to emphasise this mythical image. When discussing how he supposedly found N!xau, his star, and plucked him from his hunting grounds his emphasis is even more apparent. During an interview with the *New York Times* in 1985, Uys claimed that when he approached N!xau to work in his film he was hesitant as "he didn't understand, because they have no word for work …[but when] the interpreter asked 'Would you like to come play with us for some days?' [to which] the bushman agreed".[178] This professed lack of knowledge about work and the use of the word 'play' emphasised the childlike innocent nature of the Khoisan that Uys was aiming for in his films, showing that they were able to be innocent without the stressors of work and the

[177]. J. Stemmet, 'Sage and Screen: Jamie Uys as filmmaker part 2: The Mimosa Films phase, 1966-1996', *Ensovoort* 3(1), 2017, pp. 8-10.; Mimosa Film Group, 2021, http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/Archive/Film/6/the-gods-must-be-crazy-ii-, access 22 August 2021.
[178]. J. Klemesrud, ''The Gods Must Be Crazy' – A truly international hit', *The New York Times,* 1985, p. 15.

responsibilities that plague modern society. In this same interview when discussing the Khoisan of the Kalahari in general he stated that "they don't have a sense of property. They don't know about ownership. If I put my jacket down one of them would put it on. They share everything".[179] This perpetuated the idea that ownership was a foreign concept to the Khoisan, when in actuality ownership featured in their cultural frame of reference, as was the case with waterholes or group land ownership. This statement is meant to show the distinct difference between the Khoisan and 'civilised folk', but Uys did not view the lack of property as negative. Rather according to his interviews, he believed that this way of life was preferable to that of 'civilised people' who would "kill one another over a diamond, because of its scarcity in value".[180] This nostalgia for a lost time of 'natural living' is prevalent throughout the films and its marketing. Nevertheless, in using the Khoisan as the means to represent this more innocent way of living he perpetuated a stereotype that was ignorant of the contemporary conditions in Khoisan settlements and that painted a false view of the issues they were facing.[181]

N!xau became the poster-boy for Uys's portrayal of the Khoisan. Throughout multiple interviews Uys stated that before meeting him, N!xau had only met a handful of white people. However, the Kalahari had seen white academics, missionaries, and administrators for years. During the filming of the first film, the South African Defence Force was a significant presence in the Kalahari and Tsumkwe, a town of which N!xau was a resident and that served as a filming location. However, unlike Uys's descriptions of a paradisiacal natural world Tsumkwe was more akin to a slum.[182] The denial of the contemporary issues and the emphasis Uys placed on the 'childlike bushmen' was present throughout the marketing and press releases for both films. When discussing the Khoisan children he hired for the second film, he claimed to have followed the same steps as when he was searching for N!xau. Supposedly searching the entire Kalahari, he focused on "finding the two most beautiful children"[183]. Yet it is likely that the children were simply from Tsumkwe and thus just as easy for Uys to find as N!xau.

---

[179] J. Klemesrud, ''The Gods Must Be Crazy' – A truly international hit', *The New York Times*, 1985, p. 15.
[180] J. Klemesrud, ''The Gods Must Be Crazy' – A truly international hit', *The New York Times*, 1985, p. 15.
[181] K. Tomaselli, 'The Cinema of Jamie Uys: From Bushveld to 'Bushmen'', *in* J. Blignaut & M. Botha (ed.), *Movies - Moguls - Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, pp. 216-222.; K. G. Tomaselli, 'Rereading the *Gods Must be Crazy Films', Visual Anthropology* 19(2), 2006, pp.171-174.
[182] T. A. Volkman, 'Out of South Africa: THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY', *in* L. Gross, et al (ed.), *Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film and Television*, 1991, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 240-247.
[183] K. Tomaselli, 'The Cinema of Jamie Uys: From Bushveld to 'Bushmen'', *in* J. Blignaut & M. Botha (ed.), *Movies - Moguls - Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, p. 216.

Another myth about the Khoisan that played a significant role in Uys's marketing strategy was the unchanging nature of the 'bushmen'. During his press release in 1989 Jamie Uys asserted that despite the success of the first film N!xau continued to live in a traditional way and that he had no understanding of money, simply letting it float away in the wind. Uys claimed to have paid N!xau a monthly retainer to ensure that he did not waste his earnings frivolously. The idea that N!xau did not know what to do with money allowed the company to pay him next to nothing when considering the monumental profits that the films made. It also presented the Khoisan as a people stuck in time. This contrasts directly with the assertion made by N!ai, in *N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman* (1980), that the money provided by the filmmakers had led to jealousy and contention within the Tsumkwe community, negatively impacting the contemporary society. Thus, Uys's assertion that N!xau does not understand money emphasises his exploitation of the Khoisan. He asserted that "their technology goes back thousands of years, but it is a technology that harmonises with the migration of animals, the waxing and waning of the moon…".[184] This statement exemplifies the themes of timelessness and harmony with nature that Uys repeatedly focused on. Not only are the Khoisan, in his portrayal, living ancestors, but they are also part of the natural world. Unlike the 'civilised' world that adapts nature to its will their technologies reflect nature, and they adapt to it. [185] These press releases falsified and mythologised the Khoisan for the rest of the world. The films themselves, while they are harmful to the Khoisan, do not claim to be portraying reality, therefore the press releases were much more insidious as they claimed that the Khoisan were still truly a people untouched by 'civilisation', free of modern trappings.

This myth is prevalent in the plot of the first film. *The Gods Must Be Crazy* begins as a quasi-documentary. A narrator, whose tone is reminiscent of a nature documentary voice-over, introduces the viewer to a group of 'bushmen'. The narrator makes it clear that they are the only people who can survive in the harsh environment of the Kalahari. These cheerful people are shown foraging and hunting for their food and living peacefully without conflict, in utter harmony with nature. The narrator describes them as "the most contented people in the world"[186] with no knowledge of the rest of the more 'civilised' world. This harmony is soon disrupted when a careless pilot drops an empty glass Coke bottle into the Kalahari below. This

[184] Quoted in: K. Tomaselli, 'The Cinema of Jamie Uys: From Bushveld to 'Bushmen'', *in* J. Blignaut & M. Botha (ed.), *Movies - Moguls - Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, p. 216.
[185] K. Tomaselli, 'The Cinema of Jamie Uys: From Bushveld to 'Bushmen'', *in* J. Blignaut & M. Botha (ed.), *Movies - Moguls - Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, pp. 215-222.
[186]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 00:02:43-00:02:44. 1980.

bottle spells the end of peace for this group of 'bushmen'. At first the bottle proves useful to the group, it functions as a multi-tool for tanning leather, crushing roots, and creating music. However, there is only one, so previously unfamiliar emotions begin to emerge in the group. Anger, possessiveness and jealousy begin to tear the group apart, eventually resulting in violence. The group attempts to bury the bottle; however, it gets dragged back to the settlement by a hyena during the night. With their attempt being unsuccessful Xi, portrayed by N!xau ǂToma, resolves to return the Coke bottle or as they call it 'the evil thing' to the gods by throwing it off the end of the earth.[187]

The plot consists of three storylines that eventually converge and resolve simultaneously. Xi's quest is one of these plots. A romantic thread begins with a female journalist, Kate Thompson, who abandons her illustrious career to teach in a village in Botswana. She shares her storyline with a bumbling woman-shy biologist, Andrew Steyn, working in the Kalahari, who is sent to pick her up at the bus stop when she arrives. He immediately makes a fool of himself and is upstaged by a macho safari guide. The two men compete for her affections throughout the film. Another integral character to both the romantic storyline as well as Xi's is Mpudi, a coloured mechanic who serves as a comedic sidekick to Andrew Steyn and who is the only one able to communicate with Xi. The final subplot involves a group of entirely ineffective guerrilla fighters, led by Sam Boga, who are trying to overthrow an unnamed and supposedly bungling black government. However, they are unsuccessful leading to a last-ditch effort to cross the border during which all the storylines converge.

As Xi travels to the end of the world he encounters more of the 'civilised' world, and his lack of knowledge about the rules that govern this new world soon get him in trouble. He stumbles upon a herd of goats and shoots one with his bow and arrow. As these goats are someone's private property, a concept of which he has no knowledge, he finds himself quickly arrested and jailed. This is the point at which the different threads begin to weave together. Mpudi is called in to act as a translator for Xi at his trial. Mpudi is adamant that Xi will not survive if he is imprisoned. Mpudi appeals to Steyn that they need to help Xi. Eventually they can get Xi freed on the condition that he work as a wage labourer for Steyn for the remainder of his sentence. Xi assumes this role easily and makes himself useful through his tracking abilities.[188]

[187]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 00:00:00-00:15:04. 1980.
[188]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 01:07:16-01:14:44. 1980.

Meanwhile the coup has failed, and the revolutionaries are fleeing across the border. To gain safe passage across the border Sam Boga and his men kidnap Kate Thompson and her school children. They serve as hostages and allow for safe passage across the border. They begin marching along the countryside with infrequent stops for rest and food parcels that Boga bargained for. This is where all the storylines converge. While surveying a herd with Steyn, Xi spots the marching group. After alerting Steyn they come up with a plan to save the children and Ms. Thompson. The biologist provides Xi with a tranquiliser, as well as with a tiny bow and arrows that are dipped in the drug. Due to his small stature Xi can infiltrate the guerrilla group by posing as a young girl. He then uses the tiny bow and arrow to shoot the guerrilla fighters and incapacitate them. This is mostly successful and eventually with the help of Steyn, Ms Thompson, and a safari guide who occasionally appears as a romantic rival for Steyn, the enemy is defeated, and the children are saved. The romantic storyline resolves itself with a kiss. Xi is finally able to complete his original mission, he throws 'the evil thing' off the edge of the world. Finally free of the burden that the Coke bottle posed Xi returns home to the Kalahari.[189]

There are multiple themes that are apparent in the *Gods* films, many of these themes were commonplace throughout Uys's film career. Tomaselli identifies three main themes that have shaped Uys's films and specifically the *The Gods Must Be Crazy* films. These themes include, "The hostile desert, relationships and Technology… Disneyfying Animals and People… [and] White myths about People, Places and Animals".[190] The hostile desert played a significant role in the film *Dirkie* (1969)[191], as lethal and unforgiving to the child who is lost in it. However, while the desert does play a role in the *Gods* films it is not lethal or particularly dangerous; the danger there are the people, and not all people, but those caught in the traps of modernity and alienated from their 'natural' state unlike the bushmen who are attuned to nature and live in and with their natural habitat. In the first film the true danger is posed by the terrorists and in the second it is the poachers who drive the conflict. This subversion of his common trope continues with the role of technology. Instead of technology such as cars and planes being the means of rescue as they were in *Dirkie*, modern technology in the *Gods* films is used as a comedic prop. The technology available is notoriously unreliable, which is juxtaposed against the extreme competence that Xi shows while navigating the Kalahari. This also adds to the

[189]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 01:17:43-01:45:03. 1980.
[190]. K. G. Tomaselli, 'Rereading the Gods Must be Crazy Films', *Visual Anthropology* 19(2), 2006, pp. 175-178.
[191] *Dirkie* tells the story of a young boy lost in the Kalahari with his dog following a plane crash. The plot follows Dirkie as he traverses the dangerous desert as well as his father as he searches for his son. Dirkie encounters a pair of bushmen that initially help him, however due to a misunderstanding the relationship quickly sours and they become another danger within the Kalahari.

film's larger discourse of 'civilised moderns' out of place in the natural world as opposed to the 'untainted-by-modernity bushmen' glorying in his natural element. The Disneyfication of animals and people refers to the anthropomorphising of animals and puts emphasis on the affinity that the 'bushmen' have with these animals as well as the desert. This theme in Uys's works underlines the respect and interdependence that the 'bushmen' have with nature. The animal deserves just as much consideration and respect as a human. Finally, the white myths play a significant role in the *Gods* films. These include the implication that Black liberation movements are villainous and incompetent.

This representation of Black liberation movements feeds into the 1970s apartheid discourse of 'total onslaught', in which a significant element was the seeming threat posed by newly independent African countries. 'Total onslaught' was the belief that the Soviet Union wanted to usurp apartheid rule in South Africa, implementing a communist black proletariat in its place. This fear was augmented through the growing resistance in South Africa, such as the Soweto uprising of 1976. Furthermore, neighbouring countries had gained their independence and no longer served as buffer zones between South Africa and other African countries more inclined towards socialist agendas. In order to combat this communist threat and the rising internal unrest, the government, led by P. W. Botha, implemented a policy of 'Total Strategy'. This strategy involved using political, economic, ideological, and psychological tactics to fight the onslaught of communist ideology.[192]

The 'Total Strategy' was the basis of the Border War narrative propagated by the apartheid government. At its crux the Border War, fought in Southwest Africa, Angola, and Zambia, was a battle for Southwest African independence from South African control. This struggle for liberation was spearheaded by the Southwest African People's Organisation (SWAPO) and its military wing the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN). Compounding this internal conflict was Angola's war for independence from Portugal. As Angola was one of the last remaining buffer zones between South Africa and the rest of Africa, the South African government provided military support to the Portuguese leadership in Angola. The conflict was further defined by the surrounding ideology of the cold war, with Cuba and the Soviet Union vying for a communist Angola. South Africa, fearing that its hold of Southwest Africa would be lost if the communist People's liberation Army (MPLA) took control of Angola, provided military support to the opposition the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

[192] G, Nattrass, *A Short History of South Africa*, pp. 204-214.; T. Simpson, *History of South Africa From 1902 to the Present*, pp. 249-254.

This influence of the cold war in this conflict is represented in the second *Gods* film, where a Cuban and a UNITA soldier engage in bumbling conflict throughout the film. South Africa was unsuccessful and the MPLA gained control of Angola in 1975. This provided SWAPO with an ally, allowing them to set up military bases in Angola. However, the MPLA victory did not last long, and a civil war broke out. The war had multiple resurgences and finally ended with the Tripartite accord in 1988, which ensured that all foreign involvement in the Angolan civil war would cease. Following this the UN recognised SWAPO as the legitimate rulers of Southwest Africa and granting them independence in 1990. This conflict is represented in the first film as a terrorist group, likely representing SWAPO, representing the main villain of the story.[193]

The first *The Gods Must Be Crazy* film depicts many myths regarding the Khoisan. These myths all revolve around the belief that the Khoisan are timeless, living ancestors who have no need or want for modern life. From the first nature-documentary-like voice-over, the audience is introduced to the Khoisan through descriptions of their contentedness with their lives and their isolation from the rest of the world is stated outright. The documentary-style opening of the film gives the impression of an objective and academic discussion of 'bushmen' subsistence. This opening sequence, complete with an upper-class English tone, is reminiscent of early ethnographic films such as John Marshall's *The Hunters* (1957). This narration emphasises immediately that they are 'other' when compared to the rest of the world. They are described as the only people able to survive in the desert of the Kalahari, additionally their moral and societal differences are accentuated. They are shown to be entirely naïve about the world outside of the Kalahari with no knowledge of common societal structures, such as police, judges and bosses. Their lives are depicted as idyllic, they are shown as content to live in harmony with nature where "they believe that the gods put only good or useful things on the earth for them to use, [where] nothing is bad or evil".[194] Johns argues that this ethnographic opening harkens back to a Hegelian version of Africa. According to Hegel Africa is a place without history. "Much like the 'small, gentle, graceful' community represented on screen, Hegel's Africans exist within an insular womblike land of childhood".[195] Thus, there exists an implication within the film that the 'bushmen' must be protected from outside influences, to

[193]. K. G. Tomaselli, 'Rereading the Gods Must be Crazy Films', *Visual Anthropology* 19(2), 2006, pp. 175-186.
[194]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 00:02:54-00:03:03. 1980.
[195]. T. Johns, 'Laughing Off Apartheid: Comedy at the Twilight of White Minority Rule', *Journal of Narrative Theory* 39(2), 2009, p. 219.

keep them safe and happy.[196] Exposure to the modern world would lead to the introduction of 'modern failings' such as violence, anger, and jealousy, ultimately destroying their peaceful existence. This destruction is evidenced in the film through the Coke bottle and the chaos it causes.

The thoughtless action of throwing the Coke bottle out of the plane is shown to impact Xi and his group immensely. Prior to this they are shown playing games, conversing, and happily surviving on what surrounds them. The aspect of their society, as it is represented, and that the Coke bottle most impacts is the sense of ownership. The narrator states that "the one characteristic which really makes the bushmen different from all of the other races on earth is the fact that they have no sense of ownership at all, where they live there's really nothing you can own".[197] This idea is shattered with the introduction of the Coke bottle. The choice of a Coke bottle as the item that brings ruin to the Khoisan community is not incidental. As one of the most recognisable brands on earth it can be seen as a symbol of the global modern society. Thus, it is not simply a bottle falling from the heavens but rather the first breach of the modern world into this more primitive ahistorical society. This introduction of modern society is at first seen as very useful, a gift from the gods, strange and beautiful. It seems at first to be an asset to the community, able to cure snakeskin, make music and pound roots. It is an item with infinite uses, "the most useful thing the gods had ever given them, a real labour-saving device".[198] On screen, the viewer is once again shown daily tasks that the 'bushmen' complete, however this time using a Coke bottle, which seemingly makes the tasks easier to complete and with more efficiency than seen at the beginning of the film. We see that modern technology, even something as innocuous as a glass bottle, has already 'improved' their lives.

This improvement does not last; the curse of this device is that there is only one available which inevitably leads to conflict and jealousy, something that is supposedly unknown to the group. Every time the Coke bottle is in use, we see someone else grabbing it and taking it away leaving the one who was using it incredulous; the facial expressions of the group that had been so peaceful and happy now show irritation and anger. The culmination of this leads to a physical confrontation between two women that ends with one being hit over the head with the bottle; it also has a more insidious use as a weapon. This final violent action leads to a shift from the bottle as a useful thing to 'the evil thing'. There is also a significant difference in how the

[196]. T. Johns, 'Laughing Off Apartheid: Comedy at the Twilight of White Minority Rule', *Journal of Narrative Theory* 39(2), 2009, pp. 219-220.
[197]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 00:04:56-00:05:06. 1980.
[198]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 00:10:18-00:10:23. 1980.

family is portrayed as a group. Where in the beginning there was constant movement, laughter and talking, they are now still and silent around the fire. The stark contrast between these two states shows the significant impact that the Coke bottle, and thus the modern world, had on the group, illustrating the point that contact with the outside world does more harm than good to the Khoisan community. The negative consequences of the introduction of the bottle significantly outweigh its uses. Xi recognises this, as is evident by his quest to return it to the gods.

This clash between the 'civilised' world and the 'primitive' one of nature, is evident throughout the film. The audience likely expects the 'civilised world' to be shown as better and more affluent, but Uys turns this expectation on its head. Instead, the Khoisan are described as happy and content, while the modern lifestyle is described by its negatives. 'Civilised man' is portrayed as being trapped by the trappings of modernity, constantly having to follow arbitrary rules and regulations that do not add anything to their lives. Modern lives are constrained by time and the regulations of work and society. This is in complete contrast to the 'bushmen' who live their lives at a slow pace without the stresses of the modern world. This juxtaposition between nature and civilisation is exemplified when the film abruptly switches from a wide-angle landscape shot of the Kalahari to one of a big city, most likely Johannesburg. The background sound also changes; it moves from the peaceful sounds of nature to a fast-paced soundtrack. As the narrator describes the ailments of 'civilised man' the film switches rapidly between different shots of people completing different tasks, such as work and school. This feels rushed and restless in direct contrast to the slow-paced shots that show the tranquillity of the Kalahari. This difference is further emphasised when we are introduced to the journalist Kate Thompson, who is shown in a loud and busy office space seemingly trying to complete multiple tasks at once. These busy scenes and rapid shot changes illustrate how overwhelming this modern world is.[199] Kate Thompson's exasperation with the city and her decision to teach in the Kalahari stresses this idea that the simple life in nature is better than that of the city.

Despite her wish for a slower life Ms Thompson is unequipped for her brief trek through the Kalahari to the village. In contrast Xi and the rest of his family show hyper competence in the wild. They can survive in the harshest conditions. Xi has no trouble on his quest through the desert. He can find food and water and has no conflict with the animals he comes across. This changes when he starts interacting with more of the modern world. When he encounters the

[199]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 00:05:23-00:08:14. 1980.

first 'civilised' person, there is immediate humorous conflict caused by his confusion about a gun. The man he encounters is obviously terrified and runs away. Xi's naivety in this situation becomes clear when he blames the man's fear not on the gun but rather on the Coke bottle.[200] This naivety makes the familiar unfamiliar to the viewer, as was done with the bottle, and does so in a comedic way. It is comedic as the audience has insider knowledge of modernity and its technology; thus, the audience knows 'better', making Xi's confusion and naivety funny. Through this Uys others the Khoisan, as the audience with its insider knowledge will never truly relate to Xi who is framed as an outsider to modernity. The other characters in the film, those representing civilisation, are much more relatable to the audience, thus the audience might internalise the paternalistic interaction between them and Xi. Xi's reactions to modern technology are not the only way that technology is used for comedic effect. Throughout the film all technology in the Kalahari is uncooperative and difficult for the main characters, the main culprit of this being Dr Steyn's jeep.

Xi's lack of knowledge about the modern world eventually loses its charm when he is arrested for killing a goat. His lack of understanding regarding private property and the language barrier between him and the officer causes confusion and he is shot. Instead of walking along the periphery of the other characters' stories, as he had been up until this point, he is now directly involved in the modern world, subject to the rules and regulations he has no understanding of. During his trial it is once again made clear that he has no understanding of concepts such as guilt.[201] His isolation from the modern world has impacted him significantly once he begins interacting with it. The loss of innocence that began with the Coke bottle has reached its peak; his competence in nature has given way to complete incompetence in civilisation.

Nevertheless, there are those who are willing to help him; first and foremost is the coloured mechanic Mpudi who served as the interpreter during his trial. Mpudi serves as a sort of mediator in the film. Tomaselli argues that he represents a state of in-betweenness, he mediates between the 'natural' world of Xi and the more mechanical 'modern' world. As such he is the only one aside from the narrator who understands both the rules of 'civilisation' and those of 'nature'. This is also evident as he is the only one who can make the technology function in the desert.[202] Mpudi is how the viewer discovers that Xi's short prison sentence may as well be a death sentence, emphasising that he is a being of nature who does not belong in the 'civilised'

[200]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 00:42:31-00:43:15. 1980.
[201]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 01:08:16-01:10:55. 1980.
[202]. K. Tomaselli, 'The Cinema of Jamie Uys: From Bushveld to 'Bushmen'', *in* J. Blignaut & M. Botha (ed.), *Movies - Moguls - Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, pp. 212-213.

world. Once again there is a distinct othering of the Khoisan; they are described as being completely unknowable. Mpudi states: "Nobody knows the bushmen; nobody ever goes into the deep Kalahari"[203], showing that they are as unknown to the world as the world is to them. The film emphasises that this separation and isolation should be kept as it is. This othering in the film is substantiated by the constant narration of Xi's actions and words. This narration removes Xi's agency to represent himself, thus placing him at the mercy of those who mediate his representation, namely, the omniscient narrator as well as Mpudi.

The direct address narration throughout the film is the main vehicle through which the Khoisan are 'othered'. While all the other characters speak for themselves in a way that the viewer can understand, the documentary-like narration ensures that the audience views Xi as something who is different and needs to be 'interpreted' for the modern audience. The narrator thus mediates the audience's understanding of Xi, his actions and his people. This narration can also be seen as paternalistic; the 'bushmen' never speak for themselves in the film. The viewer is not provided with subtitles or voice dubbing, which would have given Xi a semblance of autonomy –although, given Uys's misleading press releases, these translations would likely have been exaggerated or outright false. Instead, the audience is confronted with a narrator who tells them what is being said in addition to describing what is viewed on screen. Thus, the viewer only understands Xi through the narrator's descriptions of him. The omniscient narrator 'guides' the viewer's understanding of both the visual and auditory elements of the film. Meanings are thus created for the audiences, instead of audiences given the freedom to create their own meanings. Paternalism also plays a role in the storyline itself when Steyn and Mpudi decide to interfere with Xi's prison sentence on his behalf. Xi cannot speak for himself so Steyn and Mpudi compromise with the warden to make Xi a convict labourer under Steyn's employ, without discussing this with Xi.[204] While this decision does help Xi and saves his life according to the film, his own agency is entirely absent in it. Therefore, Xi only has agency when he is in nature, where he belongs according to the film. This idea is reminiscent and reinforces the apartheid idea of separate development.

There is no reference made to apartheid or South Africa itself in the film. Instead as Nicholls argues, the use of the Khoisan community authenticates apartheid ideology itself. He states that the 'bushman' in the film represents a 'black subject' who is compliant with oppression. The film uses the 'primitive bushmen' as a representation of the general black community,

[203]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 01:11:19-01:11:23. 1980.
[204]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* 01:13:02-01:14:07. 1980.

illustrating how unsuited for the modern world he is, how ill-equipped he is to rule himself in the more urban setting.[205] This point is reiterated by Johns where he likens Xi's journey to that of the migrant labourer in South Africa. "For in order to legitimate the movement of black labour from the country to the city and back, the apartheid regime had to remind everyone that, though African bodies could visit the city, the mind of the African, represented by the 'bushmen's' limited world view (at least according to the film's shop-worn ethnographic account), always stayed put in the bush".[206] Xi's journey into the 'civilised world' in which he does not belong, where Steyn needs to make decisions for him, and then his journey back to the 'natural world' where he gradually regains his agency, emphasises the idea that there is an inherent lack of compatibility between Africans and the urban lifestyle.[207] This is further highlighted when Xi completes his quest to rid the world of the Coke bottle and returns home having gained no new understanding of the outside world despite his extensive interactions with it. His return to innocence and naivety is promoted in the second film when he tells of his adventure but is unable to really explain anything.

The Gods Must Be Crazy 2 (1989) begins, as with the first film, with an introduction to the 'bushmen' by the narrator. We see them living and thriving in harmony with nature. Completely isolated from the outside world they are the only people who can survive the arid landscape without the need for surface water, whereas outsiders would need to bring their own. This includes the threats that exist on the fringes of the great landscape of the Kalahari. The 'bushmen' are not aware of the threat of poachers who are hunting elephants for ivory, nor the war that is being fought along its borders. N!xau once again plays the Khoisan hero of this story. Xixo, meaning older than Xi, is the only member of his community who has any knowledge of the outside world, although he still retains his naivety regarding it. As with the first film there are multiple subplots that eventually converge as the different conflicts begin to resolve. Xixo's quest begins much more abruptly than that of the first film, it also contains a sense of urgency that was absent in the first film. This urgency is due to the inadvertent kidnapping of his two children, who become trapped on a poacher's truck while investigating its water tank. The children, an older girl Xisa (Nadies) and her younger brother Xiri (Eiros)

[205]. B. Nicholls, 'Apartheid cinema and indigenous image rights: the "Bushman myth" in Jamie Uys's The gods must be crazy' *Scrutiny2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa* 13(1), 2008, pp. 20-32.
[206]. T. Johns, 'Laughing Off Apartheid: Comedy at the Twilight of White Minority Rule', *Journal of Narrative Theory* 39(2), 2009, p. 223.
[207]. T. Johns, 'Laughing Off Apartheid: Comedy at the Twilight of White Minority Rule', *Journal of Narrative Theory* 39(2), 2009, pp. 222-224.

are ferried away with Xixo giving chase as soon as he discovers what has happened to them.[208] This adventure frequently brings Xixo into contact with all the other characters allowing him to influence their lives, however unlike in the previous film Xixo weaves in and out of the other storylines, never truly impacting them.

The subplots of this film frequently converge and diverge only truly uniting at one point. One of these plots follows an accomplished lawyer from New York, Dr Ann Taylor (Lena Ferugia), who has travelled to Africa to present at a conference. On a short flight, with the help of a flirtatious ranger, to experience the Kalahari, Dr Taylor meets a zoologist Dr Stephen Marshall (Hans Strydom). Her flight is quickly commandeered by Dr Marshall when a call comes in about a sick giraffe. The two thus fly away together leaving the ranger behind, unaware of the quickly approaching storm. The storm catches up with them, flinging them deep into the Kalahari with no knowledge of where they are or how to get home. With their only hope being the miniature plane now stuck in a tree, Ann and Stephen work on removing it and eventually succeed. The plane is airworthy, and they attempt to fly away, however due to a mechanical difficulty Stephen is accidentally left behind. With no knowledge of how to fly the plane and only simple instructions from Stephen to go on, Ann flies in the wrong direction and they get separated. Eventually succeeding in landing the plane, Ann is now lost and alone in the Kalahari with Stephen following behind.[209]

A secondary plot follows two soldiers, a Cuban and an African. These two play an amusing cat and mouse game in which they take turns holding each other at gun point. Both soldiers aim to bring the other back to their bases somewhere in the Kalahari, however the Cuban soldier is hopelessly lost, and the African soldier's base is a long distance away. Xixo is one of the driving forces behind this constant shift in their balance of power, each time he interacts with them it changes. Meanwhile Ann has found a water pump and soon also encounters Xixo, with whom she makes a connection despite not understanding him. This is one of the major plot convergences as Xixo and Ann then encounter the soldiers who take turns using Ann as a human shield against the other, eventually leading to the Cuban soldier becoming the prisoner of war. During this confrontation Xixo, satisfied that Ann is no longer stranded alone, leaves to continue following the tracks left by the truck holding his children. Ann having no other option joins the soldiers in their journey. Ann takes control of the situation as the group of three stop to syphon gas from the remaining jeep, Ann showing the confidence of a New Yorker,

[208]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy II* 00:00:00-00:09:17. 1989.
[209]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy II* 00:10:22-00:40:55. 1989.

holds both soldiers at gun point. With her newly gained authority she forces the soldiers to drive back to where she left the plane. Stephen is having less luck while attempting to follow the trajectory of the plane and becomes severely dehydrated collapsing on a dune. This is where Xixo soon finds him. Xixo helps him by burying him in the sand and giving him water. Xixo encounters the group of three again and leads them to the incapacitated Stephen and two of the subplots converge for the rest of the film.[210]

As these plots unfold, the white poachers, who have unknowingly kidnapped Xixo's children, become lost due to their own incompetence. As the other plots progress, they become increasingly disoriented and late for their ivory delivery. The erratic driving caused by their attempts to find their way makes things difficult for the children as they fall into the water tank, almost shoot themselves and are eventually separated when Xisa falls off the truck. When the poachers finally realise that they have been going in the complete wrong direction they stop the truck and Xiri is able to climb off. Both children are now following the tracks attempting to reunite. While heading back along the tracks Xiri is stalked by a hyena which he successfully outsmarts for a while by making himself seem taller using a bit of tree bark. However, the truck heading back along its tracks to the original route almost runs Xiri over and breaks the bark. No longer having something to protect himself from the hyena he runs to hide between a collection of rock outcroppings. Xisa continues to follow the tracks back to her brother after almost getting run over by the truck as well and realising her brother is not on it.[211]

The truck then has its third encounter with a 'bushman'; Xixo having seen the truck climbs on hoping to find his children, however, instead of his children all he finds is elephant tusks. When he is eventually discovered and almost run over, he is taken captive because he has seen too much. Finally, all the storylines converge when Ann, Stephen and the soldiers encounter the poachers. As Ann is asking the head poacher, known as boss, for petrol, Xixo makes himself known and the group is soon captured along with him. While the poacher in charge leaves to contact his superiors, the group quickly outwits the other poacher after he shoots himself in the foot. They all attempt to escape including the second poacher who fears retaliation from his boss. The boss, seeing this, begins to chase them into the bush and sets it alight trying to lure them out. This fire is no match for Xixo who creates a fire barrier that saves them and allows them to regroup. As they recuperate, the second poacher tells Xixo where he last saw the

[210]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy II* 00:49:05-01:14:47. 1989.
[211]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy II* 01:02:25-01:12:44. 1989.

children and Xixo leaves to get to them. The rest of the group then trick and capture the remaining poacher. [212]

Thereafter the storylines begin to resolve. The soldiers help Ann and Stephen back to the plane and use the jeep to boost them into the air. Ann and Stephen fly the plane back to the conference and kiss as they land, baffling the search and rescue team. Both soldiers decide that they no longer want to capture each other. The African soldier shows the Cuban the way back to his jeep and gives him enough petrol to make the trip back to base. The African soldier, having arrested the poachers, drives off to bring them back to his base for sentencing. After removing the threat of the hyena Xixo and his children are happily reunited and make their long way back home.[213]

The subplots in the second *Gods* film intertwine and unwind frequently. In place of three distinct plots that slowly begin to connect, as those of the first film, there are multiple strands that simultaneously weave and unravel as the story progresses. Another difference in the second film is that the instances of direct address narration are less prevalent. Throughout much of Xixo's interactions with the other characters the audience has no idea what is being discussed. There is occasionally voice-over narration, usually when he interacts with a main character or when his impression of a character is conveyed. This is the case when he first meets Dr Ann Taylor; his conversation with her is translated as is his impression that she is illiterate- she cannot read the tracks the soldiers left behind.[214] Xixo and his children's actions are only accompanied by narration when the audience would have no way of knowing what was happening without it; his reading Dr Stephen Marshall's tracks and determination that he "is in a bad way" is an example of this.[215] When the audience can infer what is happening from the actions themselves the narration is absent. This lack of constant narration affords Xixo and his children more agency than Xi was awarded in the first film. However, the 'bushmen' are still presented as separate from all the other characters in the film, they continue to be unknowable. The audience does not understand what is being said, unless it is translated through the narrator, as there are no subtitles. As such Xixo becomes an unknowable entity who interacts and influences the storylines of every other character, rushing off without them knowing or learning anything about him.

[212]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy II* 01:16:37-01:29:25. 1989.
[213]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy II* 01:31:57-01:35:44. 1989.
[214]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy II* 00:58:15-0:59:41. 1989.
[215] . J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy II* 01:06:54-01:27:10. 1989.

Xixo touches on each character's story, influencing it but he never truly connects with any of them. This is symbolic of the 'bushmen' as complete outsiders to modern society; it is completely indecipherable to them, and the 'bushmen' are a mystery to modern humans in return. He is completely unaware of the conflicts going on around him, be it the more obvious conflict between the two soldiers or the more subtle one of the zoologist and the lawyer. Tomaselli suggests that this represents the ultimate innocence of the 'bushmen' as they are naïve of civilisation itself.[216] Their contented isolation is a theme that is very apparent in both films. Their innocence regarding the rest of the world is noticeably clear in the opening scene. The narrator repeatedly emphasises their 'peaceful' and 'happy' isolation and their ability to survive where others could not. Despite his experiences on his adventure to the end of the earth Xixo has only slightly more knowledge of the outside world than most do. He still seems to have no real understanding of violence and anger. He describes the two soldiers shooting at each other as playing, not understanding the danger that it poses, despite having been shot in the previous film. When telling the story of his journey around the fire Xixo "finds it difficult to describe the beings who live outside of the Kalahari. He always ends it by saying that the heavy people are persons who seem to know some magic that can make things move and even fly…".[217] Thus, despite his experiences and the knowledge that he may have gained his understanding of them remains as naïve as it was before the first film.

Despite his naivety or perhaps because of it Xixo and the 'bushmen' in general stand as a direct contrast to the villain of the film. Unlike the first film where the terrorists pose no real threat to the peaceful Kalahari and 'bushmen' harmony with it, in the second film the Kalahari itself is under attack from the sinister force of the poachers. *The Gods Must Be Crazy 2* focuses extensively on the idea that the Khoisan are one with nature, they are able to read the tracks left behind as if they were a book. Although they may be hunters, the Khoisan interact with the animals around them with the same respect afforded to humans, and more importantly, they kill for survival rather than profit as in the case of the poachers. The 'bushmen' in the film understand that they live their lives in a symbiotic relationship with the animals of the Kalahari. They only kill to survive and never exploit the environment for their own personal gain. This conflicts directly with the motives of the two ivory poachers. Xixo's astonishment and confusion that the 'heavy people' had left the elephant to rot and only taken the tusks illustrates

[216]. Tomaselli, K. 'The Cinema of Jamie Uys: From Bushveld to 'Bushmen'', in J. Blignaut & M. Botha (ed.), *Movies - Moguls - Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, p. 206.
[217]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy II* 00:01:41-00:01:52. 1989.

this ethical conflict. From Xixo's point of view the elephant would feed multiple families for a long time while the poachers in contrast see only the tusks as useful as they carry a monetary value. The danger the poachers pose to the Kalahari is further emphasised when the children discover the many elephant tusks on the back of the truck. The narrator explains that "it takes the gods more than a man's lifetime to make a full-grown elephant and it horrified them to see that so many had died".[218] However, despite the children's horror and Xixo's confusion about the dead elephant there is no direct action taken against the poachers nor is it mentioned by the Khoisan characters again. They remain, as the film's overarching mythos predicts, cut off from the rest of the world and powerless in the face of the larger forces of the modern world.

Xixo and the other Khoisan are outsiders looking in throughout the film, although they occasionally interact with the other characters, they never really impact them, nor are they impacted in return. The only times Xixo seems to be the insider while the audience and all other characters are the outsiders with little to no knowledge is when he is surviving in nature. There is a distinct focus on ecological balance and respect for nature in the second film. The decreased narration and focus on Xixo and his children's abilities in the wild attest to this. There is also significantly less focus put on Xixo's lack of technological know-how, instead his competence to thrive in nature is focused on. Where Dr Marshall, despite his experience in the Kalahari, soon succumbs to dehydration Xixo survives, chasing a truck for two days without difficulty. However, Xixo is not the only character in the film with expertise in the wild, his children are extremely proficient for children. After climbing off the truck Xira, the little boy, sees hyena tracks and can infer from them that there is a hyena close by.[219] When compared to the actions of the non-Khoisan characters in the film Xira's capability becomes very apparent. Xixo's skill does not only help him survive in the desert but also those he interacts with. When he discovers the dehydrated Dr. Marshall, he saves his life by burying him in sand and scrounging up water for him. His competence is further shown when he saves the group from burning by creating a fire barrier. Without Xixo's abilities the group would have perished in the Kalahari.

There is emphasis placed on the incompetence of the outsiders and the dangers of the Kalahari for anyone who is not 'bushmen'. Uys, in his press release states that "Xixo has a lesson to teach all the so-called civilised people whose paths keep criss-crossing in this, his corner of Africa. Their technology and experience count for nothing when exposed to the natural

[218]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy II* 00:08:43-00:08:51. 1989.
[219]. J. Uys, *The Gods Must Be Crazy II* 01:04:33-01:05:34. 1989.

forces".[220] This statement is exemplified in the film through Xixo and his interactions with every other storyline. He acts as the driving force behind each storyline and whenever he encounters one of the other characters there is a major shift in that subplot. He leads Dr Taylor to the soldiers, which progresses her story just when she was at a loss as to what to do next. Xixo saving Dr Marshall bring the two groups together uniting him and Dr Taylor. This ensures that the characters now have a clear goal in mind, to get back to the plane. Xixo is also the force who creates the climax for each of these storylines; he gets captured by the poachers and in his attempt to escape alerts the group that something is amiss. This ensures that the poachers are eventually apprehended and that each character is returned to where they belong, including Xixo and his children. Xixo and his children returning home to their peaceful harmony in nature is their return to innocence, remaining as isolated from the knowledge of the outside world as they were before.

The *Gods Must Be Crazy* films were phenomenally successful both in South Africa and internationally. The first film stayed in theatres for much longer than anticipated, running for almost a year in Australia. Despite the international outcry against apartheid and protests against the film itself, it became the longest running foreign film to ever be screened in the United States at the time. Nationally the film was a hit, within days of its release it had broken all previous South African box office records. They had to continuously increase the film's run time in theatres to accommodate the high public demand to see the film. In addition to destroying previous box office records, the film made a record-high five million US dollars in South Africa alone, which covered the total cost for the film.[221] Mimosa Films opted to not sell *The Gods Must Be Crazy* to major Hollywood distributors, rather they chose to sell it to each country individually, which ensured great financial returns.[222]

The film's initial release in the United States in 1981 had not gone as hoped, opening, and closing in theatres without much notice. However, in the rest of the world it was far more popular. Internationally the film earned more than 90 million US dollars following its release in 1981, Japanese audiences alone accounted for almost half that profit. Following this extended international success, the film was acquired by 20th Century Fox and began screening again in New York in 1984. This rerelease was a triumphant and lucrative return for the film

[220]. Quoted in: Tomaselli, K. 'The Cinema of Jamie Uys: From Bushveld to 'Bushmen'', in J. Blignaut & M. Botha (ed.*), Movies - Moguls - Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, p. 210.
[221] J. Klemesrud, ''The Gods Must Be Crazy' – A truly international hit', *The New York Times*, 1985, p. 15.
[222] J. Stemmet, 'Sage and Screen: Jamie Uys as filmmaker part 2: The Mimosa Films phase, 1966-1996', *Ensovoort* 3(1), 2017, pp. 7-9.

into US theatres. *The Gods Must Be Crazy* "earned $28000 its first week and $33000 in its 21st. At the 68th Street Playhouse in New York, the movie earned $14796 its first week and $27468 in its 28th",[223] the playhouse itself grossed one million dollars the first year of screening the film. The increase in profits as the run time continued was unexpected and had only happened rarely in US cinema.[224] In addition to a significant international run time and commercial success the film also gained critical acclaim, winning awards from multiple festivals in different countries. The film earned awards throughout its international run, including in 1981 the *Switzerland Festival International du Film de Comedie pour: Grand Prix* award, the *Norwegian Film Festival: Grand Prix,* as well as the *London Film Festival: Outstanding Film of the Year* award. In the years following, the film achieved awards such as *France's Chamrousse Grand Prix* (1982) and *Southern California's Motion Picture Council: Golden Halo Award of Special Merit* (1984).[225] However, the film was not as unanimously well received as the financial and critical success may indicate.

Protests and boycotts against the film occurred both nationally in South Africa and internationally. These were due to its implicit support of apartheid and the criticism that the film was patronising and degrading. *A New York Times* article in 1984 stated that "the film's initial sequences, in which the simple …manners and mores of the bushmen are shown on the screen accompanied by a rather coy voice over narration, are terribly patronising…there may also be something a tiny bit patronising about the black Marxists".[226] Nationally, the film was boycotted by black audiences, due to its racist connotations. Internationally the film was protested and picketed, the most notable example of this occurred in New York. According to the *Rand Daily Mail* in 1984 "A South African Solidarity Committee spokesman Mr Gerald Home said [on the previous day] that 20th Century Fox, the distributor, had been warned that the film would be picketed. He called the film 'incredibly racist' and added: 'if we don't take a stand now against such a film more will appear'…A Manhattan cinema owner … said he planned to ignore the protests".[227] The protests in New York and throughout the world were accompanied by critiques of the film denouncing it for its racist undertones and implicit support

[223] A. Harmetz, ''God's Must Be Crazy' Top Art-Movie List', *The New York Times*, 1985, p.13.
[224] T. A. Volkman, 'Out of South Africa: THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY', *in* L. Gross, et al (ed.), *Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film and Television, 1991*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 240.; A. Harmetz, ''God's Must Be Crazy' Top Art-Movie List', *The New York Times*, 1985, p.13.
[225] Mimosa Film Group, 2021, http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/Archive/Film/1/the-gods-must-be-crazy, access 22 August 2021.
[226] V. Canby, 'Film View; Is 'the Gods Must Be Crazy' only a comedy?', *The New York Times*, 1984, p. 21.
[227] R. Walker, 'US boycott on Uys film by anti-apartheid group', *The Rand Daily Mail*, 1984, p. 2

of the apartheid system. [228] For example, the Poitique Africane called the film a "convoluted justification of apartheid ideology… it comforts the theory of separation… for the happiness of the primitives".[229] However, despite the negative connotations and the politically incorrect message the film still has a good audience review today, scoring high in audience satisfaction on movie rating sites. On IMDB it rates at a 7.3 out of 10 and on Rotten Tomatoes it holds an 84% audience score.[230] Thus most of today's audience still finds the film enjoyable to watch.

The second film was not as successful as the first, however it did still lead to significant box office returns, both nationally and internationally. The film eventually gained a gross worldwide box office return of just over six million US dollars. However, despite the public's continued enjoyment of the films Uys's critics were less enthused. Unlike the first film, *The Gods Must Be Crazy 2* did not achieve multiple awards, rather it was only nominated for one. The nomination for *The Stinkers Bad Movie Awards – Worst Picture* (1989) sums up the critical reviews of the film quite well.[231] Vincent Canby writing for the *New York Times* in 1990 describes the film as "desperately simple and not very funny",[232] other critics have described the film as lacking in character development and plot.[233] The general global shift away from a paternalistic paradigm regarding indigenous peoples removed any legitimacy that the *Gods* films may have had. This shift is evident in a review for *Entertainment Weekly* published in 1990; in this review the author points out the ways in which the film fell flat when compared to the first. He states that the film is "witless and crude, and patently offensive…and I'm afraid [Uys's] antiquated views of the Bushmen, who are treated by the movie as overgrown children, can no longer be regarded as innocent folly".[234] Despite the negative critiques of the second film, both *The Gods Must Be Crazy* films remain amongst the most successful and well known South African films. They even spawned further sequels made in Hong Kong, including a film called *Crazy Safari* about Chinese vampires and 'bushmen'.[235]

---

[228] N. Burki, '*The Gods must be Crazy*, or the Rhetoric of Apartheid: A (re)evaluation of Jamie Uys's Film in the Context of French Anti-apartheid solidarity', *Critical Arts* 34(1), 2019, p. 8-10.
[229] N. Burki, '*The Gods must be Crazy*, or the Rhetoric of Apartheid: A (re)evaluation of Jamie Uys's Film in the Context of French Anti-apartheid solidarity', *Critical Arts* 34(1), 2019, p. 9.
[230]. IMDB, 2022, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0080801/, access: 15 December 2021.; Rotten Tomatoes, 2022, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the-gods-must-be-crazy, access: 15 December 2021.
[231]. IMDB, 2022, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0097443/?ref_=tt_urv, access: 5 January 2022.
[232]. V. Canby, 'Review/Film; Sequel to South African's 'Gods Must Be Crazy'', *The New York Times*, 1990, p. 14.
[233]. D. Nusair, 2004, https://www.reelfilm.com/gods2.htm, access: 6 January 2022.
[234]. O. Gleiberman, 1990, https://ew.com/article/1990/04/27/gods-must-be-crazy-ii/, access: 14 January 2022.
[235]. V. J. McLennan-Dodd, & K. G. Tomaselli, 'Made in China: The Gods Go East', *Visual Anthropology* 18(1), 2005, pp. 199-228.

Films do not exist in a vacuum; they are influenced by the context surrounding them and they can also have profound influence on the world. The *Gods* films, as the most internationally successful films that include Khoisan characters had a considerable influence on how the world viewed them, as such many members of the audience take the primitivist images of the Khoisan for granted. This imagery however is not real, and as a work of fiction it does not need to be, however, Uys's insistence in the press that this imagery was real created further damage. Uys played up the romantic myth of the 'bushmen' in his publicity, all the while ignoring the conditions that the Khoisan lived in during the eighties. In the 1970s 'Bushmanland' was designated as an official homeland, severely restricting their movement, and leading to overcrowding in the more established towns. The Khoisan actors were not hunter-gatherers, barely anyone living in Tsumkwe -a filming location- at that time really was. The conditions they lived in were abysmal, with overcrowding and poor sanitation leading to illness and high rates of depression. Ignoring these conditions in favour of a romanticised myth is what truly harmed the Khoisan community.[236]

Robert Gordon stated regarding the first *Gods* film that "some films can kill"; he qualifies this by explaining that "the film unleashed a veritable vortex of television and film crews on what was officially known as 'Bushmanland'".[237] The film also inadvertently advanced the Department of Nature Conservation's proposal to transform part of 'Bushmanland' into a game reserve. They would allow the Khoisan to remain if they hunted and gathered traditionally, and they would not be allowed to keep livestock or engage in another non-traditional behaviours. Cited as a means to save the 'bushmen' it was likely only a ploy to increase tourism to the area; tourists would flock there to see a real 'wild bushman'.[238] This proposal thankfully was never fully realised thanks in part to a campaign led by John Marshall. This Anthro-tourism would have trapped the Khoisan, specifically the! Kung, into a manufactured stone age. The Kagga-Kamma Private Reserve hosted a similar tourist attraction in the 1990s where a band of 'bushmen' the ǂKhomani performed for tourists in a mock village. This was voluntary, although other options for employment were minimal, and they received a percentage of the visitors' entry free into the reserve.[239] When discussing the effects of films like *Gods 1* and *2* the

[236]. Volkman, T. A. 'Out of South Africa: THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY', in L. Gross, et al (ed.), Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film and Television, 1991, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 241-242.
[237]. R. J. Gordon, *The Bushman Myth: The Making of a Namibian Underclass*, p.1
[238]. R. J. Gordon, *The Bushman Myth: The Making of a Namibian Underclass*, pp. 1-4.
[239]. K. G. Tomaselli, '"…We Have to Work with our own Heads" (/Angn! ao): San Bushmen and the Media', *Visual Anthropology* 15(2), 2010, pp. 212-214.

manager of Kagga-Kamma explained that "Most people have the wrong ideas of what Bushmen are like today…they think that the Bushmen live like in the movie".[240] The success of the *The Gods Must Be Crazy* films thus facilitated the spread of the idea of the timeless, primitive, and innocent 'bushmen'. There is a danger in this because dispossession and harsh living conditions of the Khoisan could easily be blamed on the fact that they cannot live as the idealised hunter-gatherer, ignoring the real socio-economic struggles they face.

The *The Gods Must Be Crazy* films had a significant effect on the global understanding of the Khoisan. Both films perpetuated the trope of the ahistorical 'children of nature' that have little to no knowledge of the 'civilised' world and are never impacted or affected by it. The substantial success of the first film, and to a lesser extent the second, led to increased public interest in the Khoisan. This led to increased efforts to create policies that ostensibly were to protect and preserve the Khoisan but were focused on the development of the tourism industry. Both films juxtapose nature and civilisation, illustrating the divide between the two. The Khoisan characters are representatives of nature and unable to grasp or survive in the 'civilised' world, while the 'civilised' characters are unable to survive in the desert. This promotes the ideology of separate development by demonstrating that the Khoisan characters are better off and happier, never interacting with the 'civilised' world.

[240]. K. G. Tomaselli, 'Rereading the Gods Must be Crazy Films', *Visual Anthropology* 19(2), 2006. p. 192.

Chapter 5: Exhibiting the Khoisan

Museums, exhibitions, and dioramas have long had the ability to influence the knowledge and narratives that shape public knowledge and perception about the subjects on display. The presentation of exhibitions and displays is predicated upon the museum's own cultural and ideological traditions. In the following chapter two exhibitions are analysed for their representations of the Khoisan and Khoisan culture and how these representations have shaped public perception. The first of these is the *Bushman Diorama* (1959 – 2001) exhibited at the South African Museum. The diorama depicts the Khoisan in a scene of 'primitive affluence'; life-sized casts of 'bushmen' were exhibited in a faux Karoo, completing daily tasks. The next exhibition, displayed in 1996, was a commentary on the diorama and other exhibitions like it. Curated by Pippa Skotnes *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of Bushmen* (1996), critiqued the stereotypical representations of the 'bushmen' and examined contact and encounters between Khoisan and Europeans that gave rise to particular conceptions and discourses of the Khoisan.

The museum displays or exhibitions and what they represent as well as the Khoisan tropes they perpetuate are influenced by a variety of factors including the contexts and history of the objects displayed, the political and ideological influences within the museum, and the aims and motivations of the curator. The interaction between these aspects provide insight into the political, social, and intellectual values and meanings of the exhibition.[241] It is also important to note that the meaning of objects is frequently recontextualised, especially as societal norms and political contexts change. The context of the original creator of an object may be different to the context of the future collector or curator. As time progresses objects are continually recontextualised as they are used in different exhibitions. The recontextualization of objects involves the imposition of a new interpretation of its meaning and history; both the curator of a particular display and the viewer thus create their own meaning. Consequently, displays also function as mechanisms for the dissemination of stereotypes and misinformation, as the ideological position of the curator and the institution influence the portrayal of an object.[242]

Museums began as 'Cabinets of Curiosities', where objects of natural and cultural interests were displayed in private collections. With the rise of European exploration and of scientific inquiry in the late 15th century, these collections began to grow, thus necessitating institutions specialising in caring for these objects. With the growth of literacy and urbanisation associated

[241] S. Moser, 'The Devil is in the Detail: Museum Displays and the Creation of Knowledge', *Museum Anthropology*33(1),2010, p. 24.
[242] M. M. Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*. pp. 139-150.

with the industrial revolution, museums became centres of learning and knowledge.[243] Additionally these museums created new systems of classification with objects being grouped by age, theme, and evolutionary stage. Public interest in and access to museums was limited by the nature and early functions of museums, which were focused more on preservation and study. However, by the 18th century museums emerged, and were influenced by increasing public interest in what museums were doing. Museum collections and exhibitions began to reflect the museum public's interests, values, and beliefs. Thus, museums became spaces of 'truth' where a 'objective' reality was portrayed.[244] Museums, thus frequently function as both a reflection of the ideologies of the society surrounding them, and as spaces for the contestation and revision of these ideologies. This is especially true when it comes to museums displaying the 'other'. As the stereotypes surrounding the Khoisan shifted from 'savage native' to scientific object, to the naïve child of nature, their portrayal in exhibitions also changed.

The *Bushman Diorama* was perhaps the most notable exhibition displayed at the South African Museum (SAM). Its creation and each iteration of display are irrevocably connected to the institutional history of the museum itself. The South African Museum was founded by Lord Charles Somerset in 1825 in Cape Town, South Africa. It was modelled after other colonial institutions of its time such as the British Museum of Natural History. The intellectual roots of these institutions were formed during the Enlightenment and shaped by the belief that science and reason were necessary for the advancement of knowledge and the discovery of a universal truth. This intellectual movement was well suited to the colonial ideals of progress and expansion. Mirroring the British Museum's directive to discuss all facets of knowledge, the South African Museum was originally mandated to record South Africa's natural world and its indigenous cultures. This shows that at its inception the museum's understanding of the Khoisan was couched in naturalistic terms. Its interpretation of the objects and artefacts collected was steeped in the colonial belief in a hierarchy of being where indigenous societies, such as the Khoisan, were more closely related to animals than 'civilised' humans. The ideology of an institution influences every aspect of a display, from the collection and curation to its desired audience. The institutional ideology of the SAM at the time of its establishment and the creation of the 'bushmen' life-casts was based on an understanding of the Khoisan as a disappearing race. It contained a sense of urgency to create an archive of the 'species' before it was too late. This urgency created a costly ordeal for the staff at the SAM; they travelled to

[243] M. M. Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*. pp. 16-18.
[244] M. M. Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*. pp.15-21.

areas in the Northern Cape to gather and create this archive, with a focus on social and physical anthropology, collecting both objects and human remains.[245]

The creation of the life-casts in the first decades of the 20th century, which would later be displayed in the *Bushman Diorama,* was informed by a scientific rigor and an ideology shaped by western paternalism and racial and cultural othering. The figures and human-remains of indigenous populations during this era were displayed as scientific curiosities with cultural understanding taking a back seat. The main goal of life-casting the 'bushmen' was not for display or diorama purposes, rather it was part of an endeavour to preserve a physical record of the 'pure bushmen'; within this discourse the Khoisan are framed as a scientific curiosity of a 'lost' world akin to dinosaurs. As specimens of a vanishing world in which the human-environment symbiosis was fast disappearing as a result of industrialisation the Khoisan became fossilised in time and space in a more tangible manner. Louis Péringuey, the director of the SAM at the time the life-casts were made, contacted multiple officials to determine where the most 'pure bushmen' could be found. His efforts in procuring these 'relics', which included human remains, were promoted by the Colonial Office and he was aided by the Secretary of Native Affairs and all their subsidiaries, including convict stations.[246]

In 1908 Péringuey arranged for a taxidermist, James Drury to travel to various areas including Kanye and Prieska, to gather examples and data of the Khoisan 'type'. He requested that Drury only focus on those who were healthy and athletic, and those who fit Péringuey's ideal of the 'natural bushmen'. He requested that the clothes of the chosen models be brought with, as long as they were completely traditional with no western influences. His request for 'bushmen' who were healthy and not starved or underweight shows the effort that went into ignoring the poverty-stricken San who had been affected by colonialism. Furthermore, the fact that western academia defined the criteria for 'pure bushmen' indicates that Khoisan identity was not defined by cultural descent but by external discourse, further removing any cultural agency from them. Péringuey also asked that special casts be made of genitalia, as these were a particularly sought-after curiosity. Drury began by casting busts and measuring other features, however over the seventeen years that were spent on this project the models were subjected to

[245] R. L. Cedras, *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2016. pp. 17-18.
[246] R. L. Cedras, *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2016. p. 32.

intimate photography, measurement, and casting. These models were very often coerced by an authority figure to subject themselves to this treatment.[247] What is evident from this account is the extreme othering that frames Khoisan as outside the human realm. Their very bodies, including genitalia, were scientific curiosities to be studied. The process of dehumanisation is given a patina of 'nobility', the pursuit of scientific knowledge. It also speaks to both a literal and metaphoric violence on Khoisan bodies. As O'Connell argues, the casts themselves became "evidence of a direct violation of and violence on the Bushman body". [248]

Before the creation of the *Bushman Diorama* the life-casts were displayed as ethnographic specimens, with none of the social and cultural aspects of their lives included in these early displays. The purpose of these displays was not to show culture but rather to present a certain 'racial type'. At the beginning the figures were usually displayed naked, however if clothing was included it had to be as 'natural' as possible. There was to be no trace of western influence or culture on them, thus perpetuating the idea of racial primitiveness. It was only later in the 1930s that there was an inclusion of cultural artefacts. Margaret Shaw, a museum ethnologist, displayed the life casts in groups alongside material culture items such as beads, utensils, and pottery. Under Shaw's leadership the new display, which was situated in the Ethnography gallery constructed in the 1930s, focused less on racial typology and more on the Khoisan as an example of a primitive past. The casts were displayed in a room with copies of rock paintings and examples of stone tools and other stone-age paraphernalia. The casts remained as timeless examples of the 'other' until the creation of the diorama in 1959.[249]

The focus of the museum on preservation and study of the 'bushmen' was echoed by the colonial administration. The Bushman Preservation Committee, founded in 1937, included members of parliament, the church, and the South African Museum. It sought to return the remnants of the Khoisan to their 'natural habitat'. Exhibitions such as the life-casts and Bain's live 'bushmen' shows, were framed as spreading awareness of a disappearing people. There was also a heavy focus on studying and documenting the supposedly 'primitive' race before they went extinct. In reality this mission to 'preserve' the Khoisan was motivated by political,

[247] R. L. Cedras, *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2016, pp. 49-50.
[248] S. O'Connell, *No hunting : finding a new f. stop for the bushmen,* (Dissertation), University of Cape Town, Cape Town., 2008, pp. 82.
[249] R. L. Cedras, *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2016. pp. 50-60.

commercial gain, and the beliefs of racial pseudoscience. The pseudoscience, especially with the rise of Afrikaner nationalism and the victory of the National Party in 1948, was based on racial typology which framed cultural and physiological traits as being inherent to a given race. The discovery of early hominid remains in Java in 1891 and the discovery of Australopithecus Africanus in 1924 in South Africa furthered this idea. They believed that these diverse types of humans represented different stages in the evolutionary ladder. This made the study of material culture, and thus its exhibition, intrinsic to the determination of the evolutionary stage of a group. These pseudoscientific beliefs became the foundation of apartheid ideas of separate development and the supposed inferiority of certain races. This racial typological belief categorised 'bushmen' as a primitive race, who were either barbarous or naïve and needed to be controlled or protected by the government and isolated from modern society. [250]

Margret Shaw, under the directorship of Alfred Compton, planned the *Bushman Diorama* in the 1950s. This diorama was intended to provide an environmental and cultural context for the casts as scientific racism had been mostly discredited. The diorama aimed to reposition the conceptual understanding of the 'bushmen' from a racial type to a cultural one. Thirteen Khoisan life-casts were placed into a 'recreated' Karoo. The rocks and plants created a convincing facsimile of the area, the placing of material culture, like ostrich egg flasks and quivers provided visual detail to the scene. The most eye-catching figures were two hunters with bows and arrows and a woman reclining under a shelter. Four figures were walking in the background into the veld; three older women were also included, one pounding a root bulb and the other two simply watching. One man was seen reaching for a club while another was cleaning animal skin. Towards the front of the exhibit a man was holding fire sticks attempting to kindle a flame. All the casts were clothed only in loincloths and aprons made of animal skin. The figures themselves remained the primary focus and the lack of clothing drew attention away from the details of the Karoo camp scene.[251]

The diorama, displayed behind a glass pane, seemed to present a scene in the daily lives of a Khoisan group which the viewer could only glimpse as an outsider looking in. This made the Khoisan seem amorphous and different to the audience. It encouraged and sustained a voyeuristic gaze onto a seemingly otherworldly community. The objects and material culture

[250] R. L. Cedras, *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2016. pp. 60-69.
[251] P. Davison, 'The Politics and Poetics of the Bushman Diorama at the South African Museum', *ICOFOM Study Series*, 46 (1), 2018, pp.81–97

displayed in the diorama were not collected from the same period as the life-casts, nor did they come from the same areas. Rather, the objects were chosen to project the illusion of a contemporaneous reality. Additionally, no context or time period was provided to the audience, establishing the idea that this was a contemporary scene of the Khoisan, neglecting the true living conditions of the Khoisan. The diorama presented a convincingly natural, but artificially constructed world. This reinforced the illusion of the Khoisan as ahistorical primitive people. There was no attempt to combat the prevailing stereotypes of that time. Any reference to colonial history, the dispossession of the Khoisan and their resistance to colonial encroachment was not included in the diorama. This absence is significant as it sustained the argument, of 'children of nature', who need to be saved from extinction.[252]

With the rise of apartheid and the shift in state ideology, drastic changes occurred in the organisation of the South African Museum, and the collections concerning colonial history were transferred to a new site which soon after became an independent institution, the South African Cultural History Museum. This shift was representative of the segregationist ideology that defined the apartheid system.[253] Significantly, the collections that remained at the SAM were the anthropology collections, which included the 'bushman' casts, Khoisan material culture and the natural history collections. This physical representation emphasised the ideological link between the Khoisan and nature. The implicit link with nature and the political context of Apartheid became a contentious issue with critics of the diorama.[254]

Throughout its stay at the SAM the *Bushman Diorama* was the museum's biggest attraction. This popularity was exploited and encouraged. The life-casts were featured on all promotional material, including postcards and tourist guidebooks. According to Davison writing in 2001, a study conducted in Cape Town and surrounding areas discovered that "even people who have never visited the museum associate it with the 'preserved Bushmen'".[255] The intrigue and attraction with the life-casts was a result of the life-like human scale representation; it mimicked an encounter with another culture with a people who were at once familiar but also 'other'. People responded positively to the naturalised setting and the realistic casts. They were

[252] P Davison, 'Typecast Representations of the Bushmen at the South African Museum', *Public Archaeology*, 1(1) 2001, pp. 4-5.
[253] P Davison, 'Typecast Representations of the Bushmen at the South African Museum', *Public Archaeology*, 1(1) 2001, pp. 3–20.
[254] P. Davison, 'The Politics and Poetics of the Bushman Diorama at the South African Museum', *ICOFOM Study Series*, 46 (1), 2018, p. 86.
[255] P Davison, 'Typecast Representations of the Bushmen at the South African Museum', *Public Archaeology*, 1(1) 2001, p. 4.

drawn to the setting and its representation of a romanticised, idyllic past created an encounter with the exotic.[256] The casts provided a safe and sanitised version of such an encounter, allowing the visitor to look and discuss without reproach. The diorama created an imagined world, where the Khoisan on display were as they had always been, rather than the diverse disposed group they actually were.[257] It also presented the viewer with a facsimile of a life similar to that of their stone age ancestor which emphasised western civilisational progress. In the 1970s, given the clear popularity of the life-casts, a travelling exhibition was created. Fiberglass recreations of the life-casts were displayed in museums throughout Europe. The idea of 'preserving the bushmen' and their way of life was perpetuated, ignoring the harsh reality under which indigenous populations in southern Africa lived.[258]

In the 1980s with criticism against the museum mounting, changes were made to the diorama. The core of these criticisms was the Eurocentric representation of black people that the South African Museum perpetuated. By the early 1980s the apartheid government had introduced racialised 'power-sharing' through separate parliamentary bodies for Coloureds and Indians. The Tricameral Parliament divided museums into those for Own Affairs and those for General Affairs.[259] The South African Museum was declared a General Affairs museum. This separation ensured that museums could no longer claim to be neutral spaces of knowledge, with only African dioramas and life-casts being displayed alongside natural history exhibits. The museum needed to begin collaborating with the wider community, as they were not representing the wider concerns of the communities they were meant to serve.[260] The life-casts functioned as artifacts of a racial typological ideology long since discredited. The incorporation of a natural setting into the diorama aimed to create a cultural backdrop, however the figures remained as the scientific specimens they were intended as. To mitigate this the museum created an "About the Diorama" showcase adjacent to the exhibit, which was meant to create awareness of the context and history of the life-casts. This attempt at contextualisation was

[256] P. Davison, 'Typecast Representations of the Bushmen at the South African Museum', *Public Archaeology*, 1(1) 2001, pp. 4-5.
[257] S. O'Connell, *No hunting : finding a new f. stop for the bushmen*, (Dissertation), University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 2008, pp. 79, 85.
[258] P. Davison, 'The Politics and Poetics of the Bushman Diorama at the South African Museum', *ICOFOM Study Series*, 46 (1), 2018, pp. 86-87.
[259] P. Davison, 'Museums and the Reshaping of Memory', *in* S. Nuttall & C. Coetzee (eds.) *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1998, pp. 149-450.
[260] P. Davison, 'Museums and the Reshaping of Memory', *in* S. Nuttall & C. Coetzee (eds.) *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, pp. 149-150.

ultimately unsuccessful as it was only of interest to those with an interest in museology or issues of representation.[261]

The inclusion of the exhibit in the Natural History Museum, and its location close to exhibitions on evolution assimilates the Khoisan into nature, likening them to the animals exhibited in other dioramas in the museum. According to Karp and Wilson, the composition of the diorama, with subservient women in the back and dominant men in the front, was reminiscent of the composition of most animal dioramas.[262] Furthermore, the diorama exoticised the 'bushmen' generating a public perception of the Khoisan as 'other'. It cemented the inherent inequality and power imbalance of gazing at difference,[263] reprising the 'Human Zoos' of the 19th century. Museums function as arenas of memory and power, thus they either enforce or counter the dominant political ideologies, framing how people view themselves and each other.

Much of the criticism against the diorama has been based on its naturalised ahistorical representation of the Khoisan, as well as the violation and violence as part of their creation. During 2008, as the future of the diorama was being discussed by the South African Museum, O'Connell and a group Khoisan, from !Khwa ttu: San Culture and Education centre, visited the closed off diorama. The comments of the group centred on the objectivation of the models used for casts. They were concerned that the casts were nameless, questioned if permission had been given and were distressed to learn that the casts had been used in other reproductions. This is evidentiary that the subject position of the viewer influenced their reactions to the display. For the Khoisan viewers these life-casts were representations of their identities and cultures as constructed by western conception.[264] However, the diorama was usually favourably regarded by the public, including those of Khoisan descent. This may be because the diorama does not frame the Khoisan as victims; it may also have been due to the nostalgia for, and evidence of an ancestral past that the diorama represented. The popularity and critical interest in the diorama were further used to bring interest to and advance Khoisan land claims.[265] At least in this way, the contemporary Khoisan community was able to exert some agency.

---

[261] P. Davison, 'Typecast Representations of the Bushmen at the South African Museum', *Public Archaeology*, 1(1) 2001, p. 8.
[262] I. Karp & F. Wilson, 'Constructing the Spectacle of Culture in Museums', *in* B. W. Ferguson, R. Greenberg, & S. Nairne (eds.) *Thinking About Exhibitions*, Routledge, London, 2005, pp. 188-189.
[263] S. O'Connell, *No hunting : finding a new f. stop for the bushmen*, (Dissertation), University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 2008, p. 85.
[264] S. O'Connell, *No hunting : finding a new f. stop for the bushmen*, (Dissertation), University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 2008, pp. 86-87.
[265] P. Davison, 'Museums and the Reshaping of Memory', *in* S. Nuttall & C. Coetzee (eds.) *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, pp. 158-159.

The shift to democracy during the 1990s strengthened the criticisms against museums and their ideological role during the apartheid era. In an attempt to counteract these criticisms, the SAM implemented two main interventions. The first was the "About the Museum" display mentioned above, which attempted to contextualise the diorama and inform visitors about the bias integral in its creation. They did this by displaying multiple panels, each discussing a different period in the creation of the life-casts, such as a panel describing Drury's casting process in 1911, explaining that it was an attempt to preserve the 'bushmen' that they thought were becoming extinct. The other panels provide photographs of the models for the life-casts, and others showing previous displays of the life casts. The second intervention, implemented a few years later in 1993, was created for the whole Ethnographic Gallery and titled *Dilemma Labels*. This intervention was created by Bryan Krafchik, who was an anthropology student at the University of Cape Town and aimed to raise awareness of the issues surrounding ethnographic displays. The intervention was meant to be on display for six months only, yet it remained on the museum floor until 2013. This intervention was specifically meant to combat the criticism that the museum was distorting black culture and history by using a Eurocentric perspective. The *Dilemma Labels* however, framed the colonial ethnographic depiction of African culture as being out of touch and representative of a previous era, thereby not addressing the contemporary repercussions caused by these depictions. It did not address the colonial and ideological position of the museum and its role in the creation of these displays.[266]

The changing political context also influenced the structure and staffing of the museums. There was extensive discussion on the role of museums in transformation and the redressing of discrimination by creating a multicultural space. The later 1990s also saw a major transformation in the South African heritage sector of. In 1996 the *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* was published, advocating for the restructuring and re-evaluation of national museums. This was approved by the Cultural Institutions Act of 1998 aimed to combine all national museums under two umbrella institutions, one based in Pretoria under the name of Ditsong Museums, and the other based in Cape Town named the Iziko Museums of South Africa, which were meant to lead the ideological shift in the museum sector. This change in museum structure also allowed for the integration of the colonial history collections with the

[266] R. L. Cedras, *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2016. pp. 106-109.

ethnographic collections, creating the Social History Collections Division.[267] This shift was also a response to an address by Nelson Mandela on Heritage Day in 1997 in which he commented "that most museums in South Africa 'represent the kind of heritage that glorified mainly white and colonial history' and deplored the depiction of African people as lesser beings in some natural history museums".[268]

The debates surrounding the diorama were not limited to the political and academic sphere; in an attempt to include the opinions of the cultures represented in the diorama a conference on *Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage* was held in Cape Town in 1997. Hundreds of people of Khoisan ancestry were invited to discuss the diorama and to contribute to the debates surrounding it. Their contributions were mainly positive, commenting on the life like nature of the figures. Critics of the diorama mentioned that it was an oversimplified representation of the past and that it did nothing to address the concerns of contemporary indigenous people, nor did it provide any information on the difficulties faced by indigenous communities throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Far more pressing to those attending the conference, were the debates surrounding land rights. This demonstrated that identity politics and power relations were a significant factor. The term Khoisan, which has often been used to refer to the Khoisan as a single cultural grouping, is a collective term for multiple cultural and language groupings. This was evident during the conference, as many Khoikhoi and San groups do not self-identify as Khoisan, and there were differing opinions from various Khoisan groups. For example, the ǂKhomani San led by Dawid Kruiper affirmed their cultural identity through their link to nature, and as such they approved of the natural depiction of the diorama. Kruiper stated "I am an animal of nature. I want people to see me and know who I am … A Bushman is a jackal, an animal of nature, and the Bushman has the intuition of a jackal".[269] This link with nature also functions as a resource for heritage tourism which supports the livelihood of many ǂKhomani San.[270]

With rising accusations that the diorama dehumanised those who had already suffered racial oppression, the new Chief Executive Officer of Iziko Museums Jack Lohman announced the

[267] P. Davison, 'The Politics and Poetics of the Bushman Diorama at the South African Museum', *ICOFOM Study Series*, 46 (1), 2018, pp. 87-89.
[268] P. Davison, 'The Politics and Poetics of the Bushman Diorama at the South African Museum', *ICOFOM Study Series*, 46 (1), 2018, p. 87.
[269] P. Davison, 'Typecast Representations of the Bushmen at the South African Museum', *Public Archaeology*, 1(1) 2001, p. 9.
[270] P. Davison, 'Typecast Representations of the Bushmen at the South African Museum', *Public Archaeology*, 1(1) 2001, pp. 8-10.

closing of the *Bushman Diorama* in April of 2001. However, the diorama was not to be dismantled, rather it was archived and its future in the museum was discussed, although no consensus was ever reached.[271] The closing of the diorama followed the *National Khoisan Consultative Conference* in Oudtshoorn in April 2001, which called for consultation with the affected Khoisan groups and called for the repatriation of human remains and the legal rights of indigenous people to their own knowledge and property. There was also an attempt at this conference to unify the Khoisan groups, however this was met with opposition from the ǂKhomani San as well as other San groups. Those in opposition were also against the closing of the diorama, claiming that its closure would lead to the neglect of Khoisan history in the public domain. The physical closure of the diorama became a media event. The CEO of Iziko Museums stated that this was a symbol of change, and that the diorama may be recontextualised and reopened following an extensive process of discussion and consultation. Despite multiple discussions and workshops the only decision made classified the life-casts as human remains, which ensured that they could no longer be exhibited on ethical grounds and the diorama was dismantled in 2011.[272]

The *Bushman Diorama* and its stereotypical representation of the Khoisan inspired Pippa Skotnes, an artist and lecturer at the University of Cape Town, to curate an exhibition examining the typical representation of 'bushmen' in museums. This temporary exhibition, *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of Bushman* (1996), was exhibited at the South African National Gallery and aimed to address the history of representation and violence resulting from encounters between the Khoisan and Europeans. The exhibition critiqued the way in which colonial Europe represented their subjects, specifically their focus on physiology and its link to society and culture.[273] Speaking of the *Bushman Diorama*, Skotnes stated that "Most South African museums include sections on 'the Bushman'. These are usually devoted to revealing them as timeless, ahistorical hunter/gatherers, cast all but naked and set in dioramas, which show a pristine landscape in which no foreign intrusion is evident."[274] She wanted to 'recast'

[271] R. L. Cedras, *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2016, p. 116.
[272] P. Davison, 'The Politics and Poetics of the Bushman Diorama at the South African Museum', *ICOFOM Study Series*, 46 (1), 2018, pp. 90-93.
[273]. R. L. Cedras, *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2016, pp. 111-115.
[274] Exhibition text quoted in: S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, pp. 85-108.

the public identity of the Khoisan, one that was aware of the historical context of oppression and persecution.[275]

The exhibition had a significant impact on the South African public as its display coincided with a pivotal point of South African history. In an attempt to redress and reconcile the wrongs of the apartheid era the ANC-led democratic government established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Commission restricted itself to the last three decades of apartheid for its creation of public accountability. Thus, this did not include the human rights violations that most significantly affected the Khoisan, leading to a perception that the ANC was privileging African suffering. This influenced the interpretation of *Miscast* as the exhibition was in its own way an excavation of the persecution of the Khoisan, forcing the audience to confront the violence and persecution of the colonial era. This was especially relevant to the inhabitants of Cape Town, as it was the original colonial outpost and point at which colonists disembarked, thus it represents the beginning of decades of oppression and suffering. Changes were also occurring within the field of museum studies. There was a global shift to critical reflexive museology with museums discussing the politics of domination and identity, focusing on how the west had up until that point exhibited the 'other'. This shift in museum theory was reflected in *Miscast*, as it critiqued western exhibition practices on the Khoisan, and the culpability of scientists, museums, and academics in subjugation and genocide. A secondary aim was to redefine the way in which Khoisan material culture was viewed; she wanted to instil the importance of their inherent aesthetic and cultural value. The two aims of this exhibition as well as the concurrent shift in political power led to multiple, complex responses and generated further debates on power relations and identity politics.[276]

As with most exhibitions *Miscast* had multiple layers of meaning which are influenced not only by the displays but also by the chosen venue, the political and social climate surrounding the exhibit, and Skotnes' own goals in its curation and production. The general design of the exhibition mimicked an archive, filling the rooms with newspaper and file clippings, storage boxes, and artefacts. Contrary to her previous work, which included the production of original artwork, Skotnes focused entirely on the curation of archival material.[277] This focus on archival

[275]. S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, pp. 85-108.
[276] S. R. Butler, 'The Politics of Exhibiting Culture: Legacies and Possibilities', *Museum Anthropology* 23(3), 2000, pp. 74-92.
[277] R. L. Cedras, *In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum*. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town. 2016, pp. 113-114.

material was meant to critique the ethnographic narratives of the colonial era especially their display and power within museums and exhibitions. Although no new artwork was produced by Skotnes for this exhibition, she was able to structure and design the curated material to convey the message of *Miscast*; essentially the entire exhibition became an 'installation-artwork'. The meanings of the exhibit were conveyed through striking displays that aimed to shock and intrigue the audience. Additionally, many displays were designed to draw the audience into the exhibit, compelling them to position themselves in relation to the exhibition. For example, mirrors were set up between storage shelves in the main hall creating a visual illusion that forced the visitor to position themselves within the archive on display.[278]

Displayed at the South African National Gallery (SANG), the exhibition spanned three interconnecting rooms, each with its own theme. The most striking material was displayed in the central hall of the gallery. The centrepiece of the hall was a circular rack of rifles chained together, illustrating the theme of the room. Every display was centred around the persecution of the Khoisan and the roles played by colonial institutions. Situated at the corners of the rifle display were pedestals, each containing a model of a severed head. These were casts made from trophy heads of Khoisan claimed by those who killed them. At the time of the exhibition the real severed heads were still held in collections in Europe.[279] The rifles and heads reference exterminationist ideals of early settler colonialism. During this period the Khoisan posed a threat to the colonial government as they resisted the expansion of the Cape colony. Additionally, they were seen as a danger to frontier farmers and their livestock and were thus hunted down by the so-called commandos.[280] Furthermore, the idea of 'trophy heads' reinforces the European practice of animalising, and thus dehumanising the Khoisan. The 'trophy heads' concept and the practice of displaying them echoes the hunting-for-sport-and-pleasure practices of European culture.

The subjugation of the Khoisan was further emphasised by a series of underlit pedestals arranged in an arc between the rifles and the door. Resting on each pedestal was a resin cast of a body part; these were arranged in no particular order and included limbs, torsos and

[278] S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, pp. 85-108.
[279] P. Lane, 'Breaking the Mould?: Exhibiting Khoisan in Southern African Museums', *Anthropology Today* 12(5) 1996, pp. 5-6.
[280] M. Adhikari, *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide: The extermination of the Cape San peoples*. pp. 28-33.

genitalia.[281] The focus of this display was not the genocidal aspirations of colonial authorities, but rather the objectification of the Khoisan by anthropologists, anatomists, and the institutions they represented. It critiqued the objectification of the Khoisan; the underlit body parts literally illuminated the obsession that scientists had with the Khoisan body. The use of body parts rather than a full human cast, emphasises the dehumanisation and dismemberment of the Khoisan as scientific objects. However, the subtle messaging of this display was not clear to all visitors and some accused Skotnes of continuing the humiliation and objectification of the 'bushmen', an interpretation that was antithetical to the main purpose of the exhibit.[282]

Instruments used by craniologists for dissection and measurement were displayed in glass cases on either side of the main doors. These instruments were used to determine the 'evolutionary type' of a person, in this case the Khoisan. Their inclusion illustrates that there was an explicit and scientific practice that informed the racial ideals of the colonial era. Next to these cases, displayed along the wall were storage shelves filled with storage-boxes, with more boxes stacked to the side of each shelf. The storage boxes were individually labelled, some simply stated "Human Remains Not Suitable for Display"[283] while others provided a date and description of a historical event or a European-Khoisan encounter. [284] The mimicry of an archive emphasises the complicity of museums and archives in the objectification of the Khoisan. The labelling of the boxes with stories and descriptions removed the anonymity of the contents, thus creating subjects rather than objects.[285] Although the Khoisan are humanised through this display it does not provide them with agency regarding their own history, as each story discusses an encounter between Europeans and the Khoisan, thus they are passive recipients of history compared to the active agents of their own history. To the sides of the boxes, on either side of the room, piles of dismembered body parts were displayed. These piles were representative of the destructive colonial process as they were reminiscent of both mass graves and discarded human remains of scientific study.[286]

---

[281] P. Davison, 'Typecast Representations of the Bushmen at the South African Museum', *Public Archaeology*, 1(1) 2001, p. 6.
[282] S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, pp. 96-102.
[283] P. Lane, 'Breaking the Mould?: Exhibiting Khoisan in Southern African Museums', *Anthropology Today* 12(5) 1996, pp. 6
[284] P. Lane, 'Breaking the Mould?: Exhibiting Khoisan in Southern African Museums', *Anthropology Today* 12(5) 1996, pp. 6-7
[285] S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, pp. 98-100.
[286] S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, p. 96.

Above the displays in the main hall on the rear wall was bold red writing half a meter tall. It stated: "There is no escape from the politics of knowledge".[287] This quote emphasised that everything we know is influenced by the politics of the past and the politics of the present. In the context of the main room, it indicated the influence that colonial administrators and scientists have had on the stereotypes and representations of the Khoisan. Underneath the quote on the back wall large monochrome photographs were hung. Taken during 19th and 20th centuries, these photographs were juxtaposed with others depicting those that worked with the Khoisan, such as anthropologists, anatomists and administrators. The inclusion of photographs of European academics and administrators seemingly equalises them, both the Khoisan and the European are on display. This equalising creates two possible interpretations, the first is that it objectifies the European as the Khoisan was objectified in these images. The second interpretation uses the historical subject position of Europeans as a means to subjectify the Khoisan. However, the apparent equalising is superficial and limited to objectification of both as the exhibition in its entirety amplifies the unequal power relations between the two groups. There was no set style to these images; it was a mixture of historical photographs taken in the field, and more professional studio portraits. These photographs were captioned with "most of them lived their last year - some their whole lives – in a state of dispossession, poverty, hunger or subject to the cruelty of strangers".[288] This illustrated the lack of agency that the Khoisan had over their own lives, frequently subject to the whims of others.

The central feature of the second exhibition room was a collection of more contemporary photographs of Khoisan going about routine tasks. These photographs are part of a collection by Paul Weinberg titled *Footprints in the Sand.* The collected photographs span a number of years with the oldest taken in 1984. The photographs, in contrast to those in the previous hall, do not show the pristine 'bushmen'. Rather these images show Khoisan living their daily lives within the modern world, even when hunting and gathering they are still dressed in western style clothing. The photographs also illustrate the conditions under which the Khoisan lived. Thus, these images in conjunction with the displays of the main hall aimed to erase any belief in the pristine image of 'noble savage' that the audience may have harboured. [289] The floor of the second and third hall was covered with tiles that were screen-printed and sealed and

[287] Quoted in: P. Lane, 'Breaking the Mould?: Exhibiting Khoisan in Southern African Museums', *Anthropology Today* 12(5) 1996, p. 6.
[288] Display caption quoted in: P. Lane, 'Breaking the Mould?: Exhibiting Khoisan in Southern African Museums', *Anthropology Today* 12(5) 1996, p. 7.
[289] S. Jackson and S. Robins, 'Miscast: The Place of the Museum in Negotiating the Bushman Past and Present', *Critical Arts*, 13(1) 1999, pp. 83-84.

displayed images of 'bushmen'. These images included drawings and scientific photographs of the Khoisan, colonial documents, photographs of incarcerated 'bushmen', as well as many more instances of display and persecution.[290] Visitors were forced to walk on these representations of the Khoisan creating a physical interaction with the display.

The final room was devoted to the display of Khoisan material culture. One side of the room had two video displays, each showing archival footage of Khoisan communities on a loop. Next to these displays was a table on which A3-sized binders filled with archival documents were available for perusal. Separating this section from the rest of the room were partitions. These were covered with pages from the exhibition texts, 18th and 19th century photographs overlaid the proof, and the photographs themselves were covered with tracings of rock art. The placement of rock art as the topmost layer emphasises the importance of Khoisan history and culture. This can be read as an attempt to assert the Khoisan identity over the racially and ideologically inflicted tropes of the 'bushmen' of western conception. The walls of this room display reproductions of regional rock art with one original, contemporary artwork displayed among them. The original work, showcasing an eland, was painted by a Qwaa a Naro artist. These images represented the artistic and cultural achievements of the Khoisan, collectively and as individuals, emphasising their own self-identification and determination.[291] Furthermore one can interpret and understand the inclusion of a more contemporary piece as an attempt to counter the ahistorical understanding of a people fixed in time.

The other end of the room contained fifteen display cabinets, each labelled in green with the name of an individual with only two of them being labelled as anonymous. Most of the cabinets bore the names of Khoisan individuals, however two were Europeans. The two anonymous cases were identified by date and filled with fragmented materials. The first was filled with scraps of letters, books, labels and quotes, dated as 1812-1815, likely referring to a European. The second was dated as 1752-1759 and contained twenty-one eye casts, reminiscent of masquerade masks, of anonymous 'bushmen'.[292] The contrast between the contents of the two display cases is telling. The one likely referring to a European contains personal items such as letters and books, while the one referring to the Khoisan is very depersonalised. The eye masks

[290] S. Jackson and S. Robins, 'Miscast: The Place of the Museum in Negotiating the Bushman Past and Present', *Critical Arts*, 13(1) 1999, pp. 84-85.
[291]P. Lane, 'Breaking the Mould?: Exhibiting Khoisan in Southern African Museums', *Anthropology Today* 12(5) 1996, pp. 7-8
[292] S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, pp. 98-99.

displayed are simply more archival material of the Khoisan collected for display. To the side of the much more personal, named cabinets, was printed text with the top portion of this text dedicated to information on the named individual, either biographical or contextual information. The rest of the text was dedicated to a list and description of the material within the cabinet display. Material culture was not presented uniformly, rather than one type of artefact being contained within one case, they were spread out between them furthering the personalised and individualised image of these cabinets.[293]

The two named European cabinets identify two people who sympathised and championed the cause of the 'native'. The first of these, displayed in the smaller of the two cabinets, is Louis Anthing who served as the magistrate of Namaqualand in the 1750s. The second, much larger case identified Lucy Lloyd, a linguist who studied San languages and transcribed folklore, personal stories and oral histories into text.[294] Lloyd was also one of the central figures of the exhibition; the exhibition catalogue was dedicated "to the memory of Lucy Lloyd".[295] Anthing and Lloyd were both singled out within the exhibition due to their championing of the Khoisan cause, and thus aware of the persecution of the 'bushman'.[296] Furthermore Skotnes states that the dedication to Lloyd is due to her extraordinary achievement in the creation of an archive, despite being ignored in favour of the achievements of Wilhelm Bleek. However, this focus on Lloyd as a noble humanitarian figure contradicts the central premise of critiquing colonialism and the institutions and people complicit. Although Lloyd championed the rights of the Khoisan, she was still a part of the colonising force, thus she played a dual and contradictory role as both a saviour and an oppressor.[297] Moreover the focus on Lloyd and her oppression within the male-dominated scientific community of the colonial era detracts from the focus on the Khoisan. Nevertheless, the inclusion of Lloyd is important as she serves as evidence against the totalising discourse that all white people saw the Khoisan as lesser beings.

The larger size of the Lloyd case in relation to the other cases is significant. The collection of thirteen named cases represents a "symbolic last supper in which individuals have been

[293] S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, pp. 98-100.
[294] S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, p. 100.
[295] Skotnes, P. *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town, 1996.
[296] S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, p. 100.
[297] S. Jackson & S. Robins, 'Miscast: The Place of the Museum in Negotiating the Bushman Past and Present', *Critical Arts*, 13(1) 1999, pp. 73-75.

sacrificed in the interests of pervasive displays of a collective racial type".[298] Within this metaphor of the last supper, Lloyd is featured as a heroic 'Jesus figure', and simultaneously as a secondary victim of the oppressive institutional forces that the Khoisan had to face. Lloyd represents a heroic figure fighting for the survival of a culture she believed was nearing extinction. However due to this framing of Lloyd, the Khoisan are relegated to victimhood. Much of the exhibit relies on the viewer to read the subtle nuances of the displays, however not everyone has the skills required to do so. None of the displays portrayed the Khoisan as empowered and free of suffering. Even the contemporary images, taken by Paul Weinberg, depict a people suffering from the consequences of apartheid and colonialism. If read literally the exhibition represents the Khoisan as victims of circumstance, once again removing their agency.

Many of the displays, such as the floor covering, involved the viewer in the past oppression of the Khoisan. The floor covering, for example, forced the audience to step on images and newspaper clippings depicting the scientific and political subjugation of the Khoisan. As the entire floor of two rooms was covered it was impossible to avoid stepping on it, and through stepping on these depictions the audience is symbolically 'stepping on' and further victimising the Khoisan. However, this undertone to implicate the audience in further oppression did not consider the diverse backgrounds and cultures of the audience. Many of Khoisan descent commented that the exhibition was meant for white people, and they did not need to relive the humiliation of their ancestors. [299] During the opening ceremony Mario Mahongo of the !Xu group stated: "I do not want to walk on this floor, because I am walking on my people. Their suffering is too important. It should have been shown on the wall".[300] They viewed it as further violence and humiliation against their ancestors and their culture. In response to the controversy created by the exhibition, Yvette Abrahams, a historian at the University of the Western Cape, organised a conference to address the impact of the exhibition. On the 14th of May 1996 at this conference a visual response to critiques of the floor covering was staged. Skotnes placed a large, printed newspaper photograph of herself at the entrance of the conference room, and participants would be forced to walk across it to participate in the

[298]S. R. Butler, 'The Politics of Exhibiting Culture: Legacies and Possibilities', *Museum Anthropology* 23(3), 2000, p. 87.
[299] P. Davison, 'Museums and the Reshaping of Memory', *in* S. Nuttall & C. Coetzee (eds.) *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, pp. 158-159.
[300] S. Jackson and S. Robins, 'Miscast: The Place of the Museum in Negotiating the Bushman Past and Present', *Critical Arts*, 13(1) 1999, p. 85.

discussion. Interestingly, many white participants were hesitant to step on the photograph.[301] This illustrated the link between identity, which was greatly influenced by the societal structures of the apartheid era, and audience interaction with the displays.

Another concern raised by Khoisan communities was based on Skotnes' 'authority' to represent their history. As a white woman, they argued, *Miscast* was simply another instance of a white person representing a black person without their true input. They charged her with cultural appropriation and continuing to 'other' the indigenous population of South Africa. Additionally, when asked to remove the casts from their underlit pedestals Skotnes declined but offered to add their objections to the exhibition. Reacting to this pronouncement Yvette Abrahams, a member of the !Hurikamma Cultural Movement stated: "I could not believe what Skotnes had just said. Our deepest emotions were to be turned into instant art. The response to our attempt at empowerment was to immediately disempower us by, yet again, making us part of the objects on exhibit".[302] Not taking the objections of the represented community into account does give credence to the idea of appropriation. However, it is just as likely that Skotnes believed that the casts were integral to the messaging of the museum.[303] This does raise the question of who has the right to represent whom, do artists have the right to represent people and cultures that are outside of their own culture? Skotnes addressed this concern by stating that the aim was never to provide a 'true' representation of the 'bushmen' but rather to illustrate the already skewed representation already present in museums and archives.[304] Framing the aim of the exhibition around prior flawed representations provides Skotnes with some leeway in her own portrayal of this representation.

While many were uncomfortable with some of the more interactive displays, the reactions were not uniform, nor did they adhere to racial lines. For example, the reactions of the Khoisan representatives from Schmidtsdrift ranged from indifference to indignation. Many of the reactions were linked by an unease relating to the displays and their messages. Douglas and Law argued that the Khoisan were trying to digest a version of their own history in which their ancestors were being used to depict the European understanding of their ancestral other, while ostensibly this exhibition was to show the horrors of the past it did not truly do so for the

[301] S. Jackson and S. Robins, 'Miscast: The Place of the Museum in Negotiating the Bushman Past and Present', *Critical Arts*, 13(1) 1999, pp. 84-85.
[302] Yvette Abrahams quoted in: S. R. Butler, 'The Politics of Exhibiting Culture: Legacies and Possibilities', *Museum Anthropology* 23(3), 2000, p. 85.
[303] S. R. Butler, 'The Politics of Exhibiting Culture: Legacies and Possibilities', *Museum Anthropology* 23(3), 2000, p. 85.
[304] E. Bregin, 'Miscast: Bushmen in the Twentieth Century', *Current Writing*, 13(1) 2001, p. 101.

'bushmen' descendants. The exhibit calling out and airing past colonial transgressions made it difficult for the Khoisan audiences to relate, as the message was not truly meant for them but rather the audience that had thus far only seen the image of the primitive affluent bushman, an audience that was mostly white. The creation of an exhibition of the Khoisan not truly being for them but rather for the consumption of another culture further victimises them. They could not call out the past injustices for themselves, due in part to lack of resources and connections, and thus the exhibition was created by a white woman whose own interpretations and artistic vision coloured the displays, her interpretation may not have aligned with those of Khoisan descent. This unease is also attributable to certain prior knowledge and skills that a viewer must possess in order to truly appreciate the message of *Miscast.* These skills were locked within the ivory tower of academia. Only a portion of society had access to the education necessary to understand the academic culture of representation which the exhibit criticised.[305]

In response to the varied comments, especially from descendant communities, a forum was held following the opening of the exhibition, on April 13th, 1996, at the National Gallery. This forum, while aimed at discussing the national and localised significance of *Miscast*, acted as a platform for Khoisan representatives to air their grievances. These did not necessarily have to be related to the exhibition itself. Invitations were extended to different representatives of the Khoisan in southern Africa. The debates and discussions of the forum continued until the exhibition was closed five months later. One of the issues raised in this forum was the display of Khoisan nudity, body parts and the profiting from Khoisan suffering. Mansell Upham a representative for the *Griekwa Nasionale Konferensie* (Griqua National Conference) a non-prof organisation aimed at revitalising the Griqua heritage, described the exhibition as "a reconfirmation of academic and intellectual hegemony and self-gratification". [306] However, the exhibition was also praised for creating a detailed and emotive record of the suffering of the Khoisan. Skotnes was also lauded for tackling difficult issues; speaking of the floor display a spokesperson for the Khoisan Representative Council stated that the shock and horror of the display was necessary to recover the memory of the past and its identities.[307]

This forum provided a rare opportunity for Khoisan voices to be heard. The attendance of Khoisan representatives was sponsored by the exhibition organisers, as such this was one of the only times that multiple representatives from the distinct cultural organisation were able to

[305] S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, pp. 102-104.
[306] E. Bregin, 'Miscast: Bushmen in the Twentieth Century', *Current Writing*, 13(1) 2001, p. 100.
[307] E. Bregin, 'Miscast: Bushmen in the Twentieth Century', *Current Writing*, 13(1) 2001, pp. 99-101.

interact face to face, as many of these organisations lacked the resources to organise larger inter-organisational gatherings. Thus, functioning as a staging ground for identity politics and the furthering of political agendas. Due to the publicity generated by the exhibition it functioned as a platform for political issues. This included demands for the ANC government to address indigenous land claims as well as the efficacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as it only focused on the thirty years prior to the move to democracy, thus essentially ignoring the suffering of the Khoisan entirely.[308] Another political issue raised was the reassertion of the Coloured identity as Khoisan descendants, especially the Griqua were the "last vestige of unbroken and uninterrupted Khoi heritage and … [thus had] never relinquished their sovereign rights as an indigenous nation recognized by International Law."[309] In this way the publicity around the exhibition provided a political platform for legitimating the claims of the Griqua. Although their own history was excluded from the exhibit, the evidence of victimisation and oppression in South Africa's past served to strengthen their argument.[310]

The debates around, and interpretations of, the exhibition were also influenced by the ǂKhomani San, who arrived on opening day wearing traditional loincloths and garnered as much attention as the exhibit itself.[311] A significant portion of the ǂKhomani San, led by Dawid Kruiper, are traditionalist and identify within the archetypal definition of 'bushmen'. Their presence in traditional dress complicated many of the assertions made by academics and the exhibition itself. For example, the assertion made by Robert Gordon that the myth of the 'noble savage' is false and perpetuates the belief that the Khoisan are inherently linked to nature is false and further victimises the Khoisan. The ǂKhomani San contradict these assertions as they survive on the fantasy of the pristine 'bushman' living in symbiosis with nature. Their arrival at the exhibition led to a media frenzy, indicating that the entrancement with the image of the 'pure bushmen' had not yet abated.[312] The ǂKhomani San live off tourist interest in observing traditional culture in its 'natural' setting, essentially creating a plastic stone age in which tourists can interact directly with the Khoisan.[313]

---

[308] E. Bregin, 'Miscast: Bushmen in the Twentieth Century', *Current Writing*, 13(1) 2001, pp. 101-102.
[309] S. Jackson and S. Robins, 'Miscast: The Place of the Museum in Negotiating the Bushman Past and Present', *Critical Arts*, 13(1) 1999, p. 91.
[310] S. Jackson and S. Robins, 'Miscast: The Place of the Museum in Negotiating the Bushman Past and Present', *Critical Arts*, 13(1) 1999, pp. 88-91.
[311] S. Douglas & J. Law, 'Beating around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan history and material culture"', *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), 1997, p. 102.
[312] S. Robins, 'Land Struggles and the Politics and Ethics of Representing "Bushman" History and Identity'', *Kronos*, 15.26 (2000), 56–63.
[313] S. Jackson and S. Robins, 'Miscast: The Place of the Museum in Negotiating the Bushman Past and Present', *Critical Arts*, 13(1) 1999, p. 92.

The ǂKhomani San were not in control of the land that they were performing on, the Kagga-Kamma Nature Reserve. One of their central goals of attending the exhibition and its surrounding debates was to further their petition to the government for land in which they could create a Khoisan-headed tourist destination, thus having control over their own livelihoods. This bid was successful and in 1999 they were transferred the title for a 40 000-hectare section of the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park. The ǂKhomani cultural landscape serves as a tourist destination, including a 'living museum' where the visitor can see the traditional way of living of the Khoisan from their descendants.[314] In addition to serving as an example of traditional 'bushmen' for the media at the opening of *Miscast* the ǂKhomani San also thanked the National Gallery and the exhibition for creating a space in which the different Khoisan groups could interact, making it easier to preserve the languages and cultures that may have otherwise been lost.[315]

Nevertheless, the traditional dress of Dawid Kruiper and his people at the opening of the exhibition was criticised by many of the other Khoisan groups attending. The !Hurikamma cultural group released a statement critiquing the exhibition and commenting that they were shocked "by the spectacle of a half-naked clan sitting on the steps of the gallery"[316]. This statement speaks to the complex nature of identity politics regarding the Khoisan, and more generally post-1994 South Africa. Most, such as the !Hurikamma Cultural Group, speak Afrikaans and their world view is influenced by Christian sensibilities. The complex nature of colonial interactions and modern societal structures ensures that nobody can embody their own culture entirely making the politics of identity that much more complex.[317] This creates a dichotomy between two major Khoisan identities: those who identify as Khoisan descendants but have predominantly adopted and adapted western cultural values, and those who still follow traditional practices like the Kruiper family. This dichotomy was one of the main influencing factors when it came to relating to and interpreting the exhibition.

Miscast was exhibited during one of the most significant turning points in South African history, the shift to democracy following the 1994 elections and coinciding with the establishment of the contentious Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This made the South

[314] ‡Khomani San, 'About Us', <https://www.khomanisan.com/about-us/> [accessed 21 November 2022].
[315] S. R. Butler, 'The Politics of Exhibiting Culture: Legacies and Possibilities', *Museum Anthropology* 23(3), 2000, p. 87.
[316] Quoted in: E. Bregin, 'Miscast: Bushmen in the Twentieth Century', *Current Writing*, 13(1) 2001, p. 87.
[317] S. Jackson, & S. Robins, 'Miscast: The Place of the Museum in Negotiating the Bushman Past and Present', *Critical Arts*, 13(1) 1999, pp. 82-83.

African public much more open to addressing and confronting issues of representation and oppression. However, due to this, the exhibition also functioned as a stage for various political agendas, and discussions on identity. Using shock and techniques implicating the visitor in the events on display, Skotnes was able to represent the interactions between Europeans and the Khoisan. However, the exhibit seemed to be made for a specific audience, namely those with prior knowledge of museum practices and those who had preconceived notions of the 'bushmen' and did not truly take the views of the Khoisan into account.

Museums and related institutions have had a significant impact on the ways in which the Khoisan were represented and viewed by the larger public. These representations were often influenced by the surrounding socio-political and intellectual context. Therefore, as the Khoisan became less of a threat to the colonial government, their representations in museums shifted from dangerous 'savages', to the 'noble savage'. This is especially clear when analysing the changing 'bushman' displays of the South African Museum, beginning as scientific casts attempting to preserve the 'typology' of a people thought to be going extinct and ending with the final iteration of the diorama displaying 'children of nature' living in the Karoo. Another major shift in the representation of the Khoisan also coincided with, and was influenced by, a major shift in South African politics. The shift brought with it questions about representation and the role of museums as ideological institutions. This also led to the creation of the *Miscast* exhibit which commented on the *Bushman Diorama* and other issues surrounding Khoisan representation. *Miscast* created a lot of controversy due to the surrounding political debates being one of the first exhibitions to address issues of representation. Both exhibitions had a significant effect on shaping public opinion about the Khoisan, one keeping to the idea of 'primitive affluence' and the other forcing a shift to a more victimised contemporary Khoisan.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Films and museum exhibitions are two different forms of visual media governed by different conventions and rules. Both visual mediums have been used as primary sources in this research, read and analysed in terms of their representations of the Khoisan and what these representations mean. Film as historical source has been analysed in terms of both its context of production and exhibition, as context of production informs and shapes meaning, while context of exhibition and reception emphasises the role of film in history, shaping public perceptions and attitudes. A similar methodological approach has been adopted to the analyses of the two museum exhibitions on the Khoisan; the context of production and the reception of these exhibitions again illuminates the larger contextual factors shaping meaning as well as the impact of the exhibitions on public perceptions and attitudes. However, the two mediums differ significantly in the kind of audience experience they offer. While the film audience are mostly passive observers, exhibitions, offer limited space for active engagement.

This was especially the case in the *Miscast* exhibition where the curator relied on active audience engagement to co-create a sense of complicity first, followed by discomfort and outrage. Adhering to the theoretical precepts of critical museology as argued by Butler,[318] the Miscast exhibition actively engaged with contexts of domination but without the self-reflexivity raised by questions of appropriation and ownership. However, both exhibitions have generated significant debate and controversy, as have the films. Public debate and controversy are essential to politicisation, critiquing and thereby informing and educating. In this sense, both these visual mediums have contributed significantly to shifting discourses on what O'Connell refers to as the 'image-Bushman'. The 'image-Bushman' is defined by O'Connell as the construction and perception of the Khoisan in contemporary and historical media and literature. It conforms to and perpetuates the common tropes regarding the Khoisan throughout it use in colonial literature and media today. [319]

This research has sought to critically engage with the visual representation of the Khoisan, analysing these representations in the context of the most common tropes that were entrenched or critiqued. The Khoisan have been subject to a significant othering in western discourses, representing the primordial 'other', and living relics of a time long passed. The belief in their

[318] S. R. Butler, 'The Politics of Exhibiting Culture: Legacies and Possibilities', *Museum Anthropology* 23(3), 2000, pp. 74-78.
[319] S. O'Connell, *No hunting : finding a new f. stop for the bushmen*, (Dissertation), University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 2008, pp. 20-21.

primitiveness remained even as opinions of the Khoisan continuously alternated between negative and positive. The shifting of these perceptions was influenced by the changes in colonial aspirations and policy, with significant transformations occurring as hierarchies of race and racial superiority developed. They were at times viewed as a timeless, naïve people whose culture and society were slowly vanishing due to encroaching modernity, and at other times as 'savage beasts' who needed to be exterminated or civilised. The representation of the Khoisan in the select films and museum exhibitions analysed in this research adhere to or critique the stereotypical portrayal of the Khoisan in the mid to late 20th century, a period during which the idea of the 'noble savage' was prominent. The belief that the Khoisan, and other indigenous people, although 'primitive', are harmless and peaceful in nature.

Each of the visual medias engaged with in this research, namely film and formally curated exhibitions, were studied in relation to the dominant tropes engaged with. These two mediums have a major influence on the shaping of popular culture and perceptions, although films generally have a much larger scale of influence than exhibitions do based on the mass appeal of the cinema. Therefore, films exert a significant degree of influence in shaping the public's understanding of a particular group or culture. The influence of a certain medium on the audience's perception of the topic discussed is also reliant on the believed reliability of the medium to portray an objective or accurate 'truth'. For example, a major motion picture production has a much larger audience, however, the knowledge that the film is a fictional portrayal limits the number of people who believe that the portrayal is accurate. In contrast a documentary film or museum exhibitions have a much smaller audience, but these mediums have long been assumed to display accurate representations of the 'truth'. Thus, while the major motion picture has a further reach and thus has the ability to influence more people, documentaries and exhibitions have the ability to convince the majority of their smaller audiences that their representations are more accurate.

The Hunters (1957) provided a romanticised view of hunting and perpetuated the idea of 'primitive affluence'. The Hunters, produced by John Marshall, was one of the most popular documentaries on the bushmen as it was comprised entirely of footage shot by the Marshall family during their expeditions into Nyae-Nyae. The documentary mythologised the act of hunting, overemphasising the importance and prominence of hunting as a subsistence strategy. As it documents the hunt for a giraffe it stresses the fundamental knowledge and connection to nature required to succeed at the task. However, unlike the Gods films it is not implied that these skills are inherent to the Khoisan, as there is extensive footage of boys practicing hunting

through play. Hunting is romanticised throughout the documentary largely due to Marshall's own youthful awe of their skills, as he attributed his own fantasies onto the Khoisan. The link to nature that is inherent in most stereotypical representations of the Khoisan is illustrated in this film through the hunter's ability to understand and connect with their prey, they thus have a connection to nature that is beyond the abilities of a 'civilised' human. However, the documentary succeeded in humanising the Khoisan, as the hunters themselves are not described as a group but rather as individuals with personality traits and skills. This ensures that the audience does not view the hunters as objects but as subjects with lives that the viewer is not privy to. Unfortunately, due to is popularity within academia scenes from the film were often used as stock footage in other productions. This stripped the footage of its context and the individualised understanding of its actors and used to create a generalised understanding of the Khoisan, ignoring the distinction of diverse groups and languages. Thus, *The Hunters* played a significant role in mythologising the Khoisan in the academic sphere especially due to the recontextualization of its footage.

John Marshall's later film *N!ai: the Story of a !Kung Woman* (1980) was filmed after 20 years as Marshall was banned from entering Southwest Africa throughout that time. During his period of absence significant changes had occurred in Nyae-Nyae, the residents were no longer living a traditional hunter-gatherer lifestyle and were living in squalor in Tsumkwe dependent on government rations and subsidy. This was a far cry from the community he had encountered during his family's expeditions. *N!ai* counters previous depictions of the Khoisan, as its focus is not on the preservation or protection of the Khoisan but on their contemporary reality. It is biographical, framing its discussion around N!ai contrasting her childhood in the Kalahari with her adulthood in Tsumkwe. This biographical focus served a dual purpose, the first the inclusion of an indigenous voice and interpretation into the films and the second was to give greater credence to the nostalgia for a hunter-gather past that underlines the film. Its message emphasised on the dispossession of the Khoisan and the effect colonial pressures had on their community. This dispossession is highlighted by the continual switching between N!ai's childhood and Tsumkwe. The conditions and occurrences in Tsumkwe are contrasted by idyllic scenes from her childhood illustrating that the hunter-gatherer lifestyle would be preferrable to life in Tsumkwe. The biographical focus allows the audience to gain an interpretation of the world through N!ai's eyes, as her understanding of the world is influenced by her identity as a Khoisan. This emphasises the fact that hunting and gathering is not simply a subsistence strategy, but rather an integral part of N!ai's identity.

The influence of external forces on the Ju/Hoansi is represented by the presence of an administrator, game warden and the SADF in Tsumkwe. Each external force mentions a common stereotype which informs their treatment and illustrates their prejudiced views of the Khoisan. The exploitative nature of these external forces is an important theme in the documentary. Their focus is on assimilation and westernisation, with school and weekly church attendance; however, traditional practices are still accepted in special circumstances, specifically those where it would benefit the administration. The tourists photographing a trance dance is a prime example of this. Additionally, the inclusion of external forces such as the SADF provides insight into the way in which the Khoisan view themselves in their surrounding political climate, specifically as neutral forces beholden to neither side of the surrounding conflict. Thus, *N!ai* deromanticizes and humanises the Khoisan, providing their interpretation of events and the presentation of the conditions in Tsumkwe it is hard to believe in the primitive timeless 'bushmen'.

The bulk of Khoisan representations during the 20th century perpetuated the idea of the 'noble savage', much of which has not been discussed in this research.[320] The specific films and exhibitions analysed within this thesis do not represent the true scope of media regarding the Khoisan, however the case-studies identified were amongst the most influential and popular for the period. The most commercially successful of these were the *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980 &1989) films directed by Jamie Uys, which presented the Khoisan as a primitive, peaceful people completely cut off from the modern world. Using the style of a slapstick comedy these films juxtaposed the natural and modern world, with the Khoisan character representing the natural world. This dichotomy of technological modernity juxtaposed with the natural world functions as a framing device which places the Khoisan as entirely otherworldly, attuned to the nature and animals. Both *Gods* films followed a similar plot structure and represented the Khoisan in similar ways, the most prominent of which was the tainted nature of the 'civilised' world and the necessity to protect the innocent 'bushmen' from its destructive and evil influences. This framing entrenched a complex discourse with contradictory impulses; the evils of technological modernity are decried, yet modern society continues to inhabit this tainted world. The flipside of this was the need to 'protect' an 'unspoiled' race, a race which recalled the human primitive past. This discourse offers a nostalgia for the primordial, the

[320] Other visual representations of the Khoisan that match the scope of this research include films such as: *People of the Great Sand Face* (1986) by Paul Myburgh, *In God's Places* (1997) by Franz Prinz, *The Great Dance: A hunter's story* (2000) by Craig Foster and Damon Foster. Other sources not within the scope include the writings of Laurens van der Post which frequently featured the Kalahari and its inhabitants.

vanished world of the human ancestors. In this framing, the Khoisan are stuck in an evolutionary time-capsule and attempts to 'preserve' their natural way of life are attempts to keep them in the time-capsule. The ideology of apartheid influenced the film significantly, as an underlying message of the film was separate development and allowing the Khoisan, who in the film were representative of the Black population, to live outside of and removed from the modern world. The Khoisan and the long-standing stereotypes surrounding them were very well suited for this purpose.

The global reach of these films, especially that of the first, ensured that much of the international community believed the Khoisan to be a timeless primitive people who would never truly be able to understand and interact with the 'civilised' world. The films themselves however would not have been able to make such a significant impact due to their comedic and fictional nature. Assumptions about the Khoisan were cemented by the press releases surrounding the films. In these press releases Uys, through amusing anecdotes and 'frank' statements, cemented the mythical images depicted in the film. He described the Khoisan as childlike with no understanding of concepts such as work and money. Another trope emphasised in his press releases, which was also a major theme in his films, was the unchanging nature of the Khoisan. He claimed that despite the contact and interaction N!xau, the lead actor in both films, had with the modern world he still did not understand or care about its trappings. Thus, the popularity of the films combined with the mythologising present in their marketing campaigns spread the belief in the timeless 'children of nature' to such an extent that a nature reserve was proposed to save the 'wild bushmen' from extinction.

The idea of the 'child of nature' was also perpetuated, although to a lesser extent and much more subtly, by the *Bushman Diorama* (1950-2001) at the South African Museum. The casts used in the diorama were remnants of a time of scientific racial typology and a fear that the Khoisan as a race were nearing extinction. The creation of the diorama itself was an attempt to create a cultural and environmental context for the life-casts, which up until that point had simply stood as anatomically accurate examples of a race. Placing these figures into a facsimile of the Karoo surrounded by recontextualised material culture endeavoured to shift understanding of the Khoisan from a racial type to a cultural one. The diorama displayed by a glass pane seemed to present a scene in the daily lives of a Khoisan group which the viewer could only glimpse as an outsider looking in. This made the Khoisan seem amorphous and 'other' from the audience itself. Additionally, no context or time period was provided to the audience this establishing the idea that this was a contemporary scene of the Khoisan, the

contemporary lives of the Khoisan. This preserved the idea of the timeless 'bushmen' thriving in nature, as remnants of a time long passed. The link to nature was further emphasised by the original mandate of the South African Museum, which aimed to record the natural history and the indigenous cultures of South Africa. This link was reinforced when the museum was declared a General Affairs Museum, and cultural material of settler groups was moved to a separate institution, leaving only natural history and indigenous cultures. This implicitly linked the diorama with the other dioramas featured at the museum featuring animals, thus dehumanising the Khoisan.

The *Bushman Diorama* was the museum's biggest attraction with the casts featured on all promotional material, to the extent that even those that had never visited were aware of it. This was due to the size of the life-casts and thus the dioramas' ability to create an encounter with the 'other'. It also presented the viewer with a depiction of a life similar to that of their stone age ancestors. Despite criticisms of its ahistorical representation of the Khoisan, the diorama was popular and well regarded by the public, including those of Khoisan descent. This is likely due to the nostalgia for a past or lifestyle that no longer exists, however the lack of periodisation remained an issue. During the 1990s attempts were made to mitigate the criticisms regarding its presentation of the Khoisan through contextualising the exhibit and providing displays discussing the history of ethnology and ethnography. These were not successful, and critics continued to accuse the diorama of oversimplifying the past and furthering stereotypes. The criticisms of the display also created a platform for the discussion land rights and identity politics, a common occurrence with both films and exhibitions when they depict underrepresented communities.

Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of Bushmen (1996) was created as a critique of the Bushman Diorama, it aimed to change public perceptions of the Khoisan and to illustrate that they are part of the modern world and not relics of a bygone era. It presented a discussion of the encounters between the Khoisan and Europeans and how these impacted the lives of the Khoisan. Additionally, it was designed to mimic an archive and critiqued the practices that influenced the stereotypical representations of the Khoisan. This was done through shocking displays meant to create discussion, and to force visitors to address the horrors of the past. Additionally, through its mimicry of an archive the exhibition critiqued the roles played by scientists, academics and administrators in the persecution and objectification of the Khoisan. *Miscast* also attempted to shift the perception of the Khoisan by incorporating contemporary images and works of the Khoisan, removing the idea of the timeless 'bushmen'. Other displays

aimed to include the audience in the oppression of the Khoisan, such as the floor display which forced the audience to walk on images of the Khoisan.

The exhibition caused much controversy leading to multiple forums and discussions on the displays, criticisms of the exhibition included that it portrayed the Khoisan as victims and perpetuated the appropriation of their culture. Many were not pleased that she was dispelling the idyllic view perpetuated by the diorama, as that at least created a positive view of the past. The exhibition itself functioned as a stage for political agendas and discussions of identity. *Miscast* had far reaching effects with regards to Khoisan politics and identity and it succeeded although controversially to counter the stereotypes of the 'bushmen'.

Stereotypes and discourses on the Khoisan have shifted significantly, especially in post-1994 South Africa. This is most evident in the Miscast exhibition, as the name itself suggests. Where the 'natural', loin-cloth-wearing 'Bushman' now appears is in the re-appropriated and self-curated images of Khoisan descendants like the Kruiper family seeking to market themselves to tourists. Arguably, a historically oppressive and dehumanising discourse has been reclaimed for the benefit of at least some Khoisan descendants.

Reference List

ADHIKARI, M. 2010. *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide: The Extermination of the Cape San Peoples.* UCT Press, Cape Town.

AMES, M. M. 1992. *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*. UBC Press, Vancouver.

ANDERSON, C. 2019. 'Beyond ethnographic film: John Marshall and the Marshall Family Kalahari Project'. *Ethnographic Cinema* 40(42). pp. 1-63.

ANON. 'The Aztec Lilliputians'. 18 June: 1855, *Morning Chronicle*, p. 5.

BARBASH, I. 2016. *Where the Roads All End: Photography and Anthropology in the Kalahari*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

BLANCHARD, P., BANCEL, N., BOETSCH, G., DEROO, E. & Lemaire, S. 'Human Zoos: The Greatest Exotic Shows in the West: Introduction', *in* BLANCHARD, P., BANCEL, N., BOETSCH, G., DEROO, E. & FORSDICK, C. (eds.) 2008. *Human zoos : science and spectacle in the age of colonial empires.* Liverpool University Press. Liverpool. pp. 1-49.

BREGIN, E. 2000. 'Representing the Bushmen: Through the Colonial Lens'. *English in Africa* 27 (1). pp. 37-54.

BREGIN, E. 2001, 'Miscast: Bushmen in the twentieth century', *Current Writing*, 13(1), 87–107.

BROWN, D. M. 1983. 'The Noble Savage in Anglo-Saxon Colonial Ideology, 1950-1980: 'Masai' and 'Bushmen' in popular fiction'. *English in Africa* 10(2). pp. 55-77.

BURKI, N. 2019. 'The Gods must be Crazy, or the Rhetoric of Apartheid: A (re)evaluation of Jamie Uys's Film in the Context of French Anti-apartheid solidarity', *Critical Arts* 34(1). pp. 87-98.

BUTLER, S. R. 2000. 'The Politics of Exhibiting Culture: Legacies and Possibilities'. *Museum Anthropology*23(3), pp. 74-92.

CANBY, V. 1990. 'Review/Film; Sequel to South African's 'Gods Must Be Crazy'', *The New York Times*, p. 14.

CANBY, V. 1984, 'Film View; Is 'the Gods Must Be Crazy' only a comedy?''. *The New York Times.* p. 21.

CEDRAS, R. L. 2016. In the Halls of History: The Making and Unmaking of the Life-casts at the Ethnography Galleries of the Iziko South African Museum. (Master's Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

CLARK, N. L. & Worger, W. H. 2013. *South Africa The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*. Routledge, New York.

DAVISON, P. 1998. 'Museums and the reshaping of memory', *in* NUTTALL, S. & COETZEE, C. *Negotiating the past: The making of memory in South Africa*. Oxford University Press, Cape Town, pp. 143–160.

DAVISON, P. 2001. 'Typecast Representations of the Bushmen at the South African Museum'. *Public Archaeology* 1(1). pp. 3–20.

DAVISON, P. 2018. 'The Politics and Poetics of the Bushman Diorama at the South African Museum', *ICOFOM Study Series* 46(1), pp. 81–97.

DOUGLAS S. & LAW, J. 1997. 'Beating Around the Bush(man!): Reflections on "Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan History and Material Culture"'. *Visual Anthropology* 10(1), pp. 85-108.

DURBACH, N., 2008, 'London Capital of Exotic Exhibitions from 1830 to 1860.', *in* BLANCHARD, P., BANCEL, N., BOETSCH, G., DEROO, E. & FORSDICK, C. (eds.) 2008. *Human zoos : science and spectacle in the age of colonial empires.* Liverpool University Press. Liverpool. pp. 81–89.

DURINGTON, M. 2004. 'John Marshall's Kalahari Family'. *American Anthropologist* 106(3). pp. 589–594.

GLEIBERMAN, O. 1990, https://ew.com/article/1990/04/27/gods-must-be-crazy-ii/. Access: 14 January 2022.

GORDON, R. 1981. ': N!ai, The Story of a !Kung Woman . John Marshall.'. *American Anthropologist.* 83(3). pp. 740–741.

GORDON, R. J. 2018. *The Bushman Myth: The Making of a Namibian Underclass*. Routledge, New York.

HARMETZ, A. 1985. ''God's Must Be Crazy' Top Art-Movie List''. *The New York Times*. p. 13.

HARRIES, P. 2005. 'European Images of the Khoisan'. *The Journal of African History* 46(1). pp. 153-154.

HEIDER, K.G. 2006. *Ethnographic film.* University of Texas Press, Austin.

HOLMES, R. 2007. *The Hottentot Venus: The Life and Death of Saartjie Baartman Born 1789- Buried 2002*. Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg.

HOOPER-GREENHILL, E. 2000.*Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture.* Routledge, London.

HUIGEN, S. 2009. *Knowledge and Colonialism: Eighteenth-Century Travellers in South Africa*. Brill, Leiden.

IMDB, 2022, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0080801/, Access: 15 December 2021.

JACK, M. 2019. *To the Fairest Cape: European encounters in the Cape of Good Hope.* Bucknell University Press, Lewisburg.

JACKSON, S. & ROBINS, S. 1999. 'Miscast: The place of the museum in negotiating the Bushman past and present'. *Critical Arts* 13(1). pp. 69–101.

JOHNS, T. 2009. 'Laughing Off Apartheid: Comedy at the Twilight of White Minority Rule'. *Journal of Narrative Theory* 39(2). pp. 211-240.

JOHNSON, D. 2007. 'Representing the Cape "Hottentots," from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa'. *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40(4). pp. 525-552.

KARP, I. & WILSON, F. 2005. 'Constructing the spectacle of culture in Museums', *in* Ferguson, B. W., Greenberg, R. & Nairne, S. (eds.) *Thinking About Exhibitions*. Routledge, London.

‡KHOMANI SAN. 2022. 'About Us', < https://www.khomanisan.com/about-us/.> Accessed 21 November 2022.

KLEMESRUD, J. 1985. ''The Gods Must Be Crazy' – A truly international hit', *The New York Times.* p. 15.

LABAND, J. 2020. *The Land Wars: The Dispossession of the Khoisan and AmaXhosa in the Cape Colony*, Penguin Books, Cape Town.

LANE, P. 1996. 'Breaking the Mould?: Exhibiting Khoisan in Southern African Museums'. *Anthropology Today* 12(5). pp. 3-10.

LANDAU, P. S. 'With Camera and Gun in Southern Africa: Inventing the Image of Bushmen, c. 1880 to 1935', *in* SKOTNES P. (ed.) 1996. *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*. University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town.

LEE, R. B. 1993. *The Dobe Ju/'hoansi.* Harcourt College Publishers, Fortworth.

LEE, R. & HURLICH, S. 'From foragers to fighters: South Africa's militarization of the Namibian San', *in* R. LEE & E. LEACOCK (eds.) 1982. *Politics and history in band societies*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

LINDFORS, B. 'Introduction', *in* LINDFORS, B. (ed.) 1999. *Africans on Stage: Studies in Ethnological Show Business*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington.

MAINGARD, J. 2007. *South African National Cinema.* Routledge, New York.

MALHERBE, V. C. 1997. 'Colonial Justice and the Khoisan in the Immediate Aftermath of Ordinance 50 if 1828: Denouement at Uitenhage'. *Kronos* 4(24). pp. 77-90.

MARSHALL, J. 1957. *The Hunters.* Film Study Centre Harvard University.

MARSHALL, J. 1980. *N!ai: The Story of a !Kung Woman.* Documentary Educational Resources.

MARSHALL, J. 1993. 'Filming and Learning', *in* RUBY (ed.), *The Cinema of John Marshall.* Harwood Academic Publishers, New York.

MCLENNAN-DODD, V. J. & TOMASELLI, K. G. 2005. 'Made in China: The Gods Go East'. *Visual Anthropology* 18(2-3). pp. 199-228.

MEADOWS, M. 'Broadcasting in Aboriginal Australia: One Mob, One Voice, One Land', *in* RIGGINS S.H. (ed.) 1992. *Ethnic Minority Media: An International Perspective.* Sage Publications, Newbury Park

MICHAUD, M. L. 2012. *Thinking Language Politically: Cultural Representation and Alterity in the European Enlightenment*. (Doctoral Thesis) Princeton University, Princeton.

MIMOSA FILM GROUP, 2021, http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/Archive/Film/6/the-gods-must-be-crazy-ii-, access 22 August 2021.

MORRIS, A. G. 'Trophy Skulls, Museums and the San', *in* SKOTNES P. (ed.) 1996. *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*. University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town.

MOSER, S. 2010. 'The Devil is in the Detail: Museum Displays and the Creation of Knowledge'. *Museum Anthropology* 33(1), pg. 22-32.

NATTRASS, G. 2019. *A Short History of South Africa*. Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg.

NICHOLLS, B., 1980, 'Audio visual reviews: The Hunters'. *American Anthropologist* 82(1). pp. 228–229.

NICHOLLS, B. 2008. 'Apartheid cinema and indigenous image rights: The "Bushman myth" in Jamie Uys's The Gods Must Be Crazy'. *Scrutiny2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa* 13(1), pp. 20-32.

NICHOLS, B. 1983. 'The Voice of Documentary'. *Film Quarterly* 36(3), pp. 17-30.

NUSAIR, D. 2004, < https://www.reelfilm.com/gods2.htm>. Access: 6 January 2022.

O'CONNELL, S. 2008. No hunting : finding a new f. stop for the bushmen, (Dissertation). University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

PALEKER, G. 2009. *Creating a 'black film industry': State intervention and films for African audiences in South Africa, 1956-1990*. (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

PARSONS, Q. N. 1988. 'Franz or Klikko, The Wild Dancing Bushman: A Case Study in Khoisan Stereotyping'. *Botswana Notes and Records* 20(1). pp. 71-76.

PAUL, D. 'Darwin, Social Darwinism and Eugenics', *in* HODGE, J. & RADICK, G. (eds.) *The Cambridge Companion to Darwin*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. pp. 214-237.

PENN, N. 'The Destruction of Hunter-Gatherer Societies on the Pastoralist Frontier: The Cape and Australia Compared', *in* ADHIKARI M. (ed.) 2014. *Genocide on Settler Frontiers: When hunter-gatherers and commercial stock farmers clash*. University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town.

PENN, N. '"Fated to Perish": The Destruction of the Cape San', *in* SKOTNES P. (ed.) 1996. *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*. University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town.

RASOOL, C. 'Ethnographic Elaborations, Indigenous Contestations, and the Cultural Politics of Imagining Community', *in* SLEEPER-SMITH, S. (ed.) 2009. *Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives*. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln.

RIGGINS, S. H. *et al.* 1992. *Ethnic Minority Media: An International Perspective.* Sage Publications, Newbury Park.

ROBINS, S. 2000. 'Land Struggles and the Politics and Ethics of Representing 'Bushman' History and Identity'. *Kronos* 15(26), pp. 56-75.

ROGERS, J.A. 1972. 'Darwinism and Social Darwinism'. *Journal of the History of Ideas* 33(2). pp. 265-280.

ROSENSTONE, R.A. 1988. 'History in Images/History in Words: Reflections on the Possibility of Really Putting History onto Film', *The American Historical Review* 93(5). pp. 1173–1185.

ROSENSTONE, R. A. 1995. *Visions of the Past: The Challenge of Film to our Idea of History*. Harvard University Press, London.

ROTTEN TOMATOES, 2022, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the-gods-must-be-crazy. Access: 15 December 2021.

SÁNCHEZ-GÓMEZ, L.A. 2013. 'Human Zoos or Ethnic Shows? Essence and contingency in Living Ethnological Exhibitions'. *Culture & History Digital Journal* 2(2). pp. 1-25.

SENEKAL, B. A. & STEMMET, J. 'The gods must be connected: An investigation of Jamie Uys' connections in the Afrikaans film industry using social network analysis'. *Communication* 40(1), 2014, pp. 1-19.

SHAW, M. 1959-2001. *Bushman Diorama*. [Exhibition]. The South African Museum, Cape Town.

SIMPSON, T. 2021. *History of South Africa From 1902 to the Present*. Pinguin Books. Cape Town.

SKOTNES P. 1996. *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*. University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town.

SKOTNES, P. 'Introduction', *in* SKOTNES P. (ed.) 1996. *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*. University of Cape Town Press, Cape Town.

SKOTNES, P. 1996. *Miscast Negotiating the Presence of Bushmen.* [Exhibition]. The South African National Gallery, Cape Town.

SLEEPER-SMITH, S. 'Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives', *in* SLEEPER-SMITH, S. (ed.) 2009. *Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives*. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln.

STEMMET, J. 2017. 'Sage and Screen: Jamie Uys as filmmaker part 2: The Mimosa Films phase, 1966-1996'. *Ensovoort* 3(1). pp. 1-27.

STROTHER, Z. S. 'Display of the Body Hottentot', *in* LINDFORS, B. (ed.) 1999. *Africans on Stage: Studies in Ethnological Show Business*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington.

THÖRN, H. 'Solidarity Across Borders: The Transnational Anti-Apartheid Movement', *Voluntas* 17(1), 2006, pp. 285-301.

TOMASELLI, K. 1989. *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film.* Routledge, New York.

TOMASELLI, K. ‘The Cinema of Jamie Uys: From Bushveld to ‘Bushmen’, *in* J. BLIGNAUT, J. & BOTHA, M. (eds.). 1992. *Movies - Moguls - Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*. Showdata, Cape Town. pp. 191-231.

TOMASELLI, K. G. 2002. ‘“…We Have to Work with or own Heads” (/Angn!ao): San Bushmen and the Media’. *Visual Anthropology* 15(2), pp. 203-220.

TOMASELLI, K. G. 2006. ‘Rereading the Gods Must be Crazy Films’. *Visual Anthropology*19(2), pp. 171-200.

TOMASELLI, K.G. 2007. ‘‘At the Other End of the camera’: Film through history in John Marshall’s documentaries’. *Studies in Documentary Film* 1(2). pp. 123–136.

TOMASELLI, K.G. 2021, ‘Another Look at John Marshall and the Ju/’hoansi: Reassessing a Documentary Lifetime’. *Visual Anthropology* 34(2). pp. 101–133.

TOMASELLI, K. & SHEPPERSON, A. 2000. ‘A Confusion of Cinematic Consciousness: Southern Africa on Film in the United States’. *Safundi: The journal of South African and American Comparative Studies* 1(2). pp. 1–16.

UYS, J. 1980. *The Gods Must Be Crazy*. Mimosa Production Company.

UYS, J. 1989. *The Gods Must Be Crazy II*. Mimosa Production Company.

VAN VUUREN, L. 2005. *The Great Dance : myth, history and identity in documentary film representation of the Bushmen, 1925-2000*. (Doctoral Thesis) University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

VAN VUUREN, L. 2009. ‘‘And He Said They Were Ju/Wasi, the People’: History and Myth in John Marshall’s ‘Bushmen films’ 1957-2000’. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35(2), pp. 557-574.

VOLKMAN, T. A. ‘Out of South Africa: THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY’, *in* GROSS, L. *et al* (ed.) 1991. *Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film and Television*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 236-247.

VOLKMAN, T. A. 1982. 'The San in Transition. Vol. 1: A Guide to N!ai. The Story of a !Kung Woman'. *Cultural Survival and Documentary Educational Resource*, Occasional paper (9) pp. 1-26.

VOSS, A. E. 1987. ‘The Image of the Bushman in South African English Writing of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries’. *English in Africa* 14(1). pp. 21-40.

WALKER, R. 1984. ‘US boycott on Uys film by anti-apartheid group’, *The Rand Daily Mail*. p. 2.