

Ju/'hoansi Lodging in a Namibian Conservancy: CBNRM, Tourism and Increasing Domination

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Abstract

Following Ingold's dwelling perspective, the world comes into being because an organism/person is continuously interacting with his/her environment through bodily activity. Ingold contrasts dwelling with building; in the latter, people construct the world cognitively before they can live in it. In this paper, we add the concept of 'lodging' to refer to a situation in which people live in an environment that contains increasing dominating powers. Under the influence of conservation and the implementation of a Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programme, with a strong focus on tourism, the environment of the *Ju/'hoansi* Bushmen of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy in Namibia has changed dramatically. In this paper, we use various examples to show how the environment has become more dominant, often in very subtle ways. We argue that the *Ju/'hoansi* do not dwell as they used to, but lodge instead in an environment that is increasingly influenced by CBNRM and tourism activities. Some of the *Ju/'hoansi*'s agency has become limited to acquiescing; they passively adapt to and cope with the changes in their environment, while others have shown a more active adaptation strategy.

Keywords: *Ju/'hoansi*, Nyae Nyae, Namibia, CBNRM, dwelling, lodging, conservation, tourism, Bushmen

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, we use the term 'hunter-gatherers' to refer to the *Ju/'hoansi* Bushmen¹ of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy in northern Namibia, but today most of the *Ju/'hoansi* do not (only) live anymore by hunting and gathering; the changing environment, that plays a crucial role in this paper, makes for various other types of livelihoods, including cash income from tourism, agriculture, government jobs, drought relief, and so on. We use the term to refer to a hunter-gatherer ontology that is based on older days, before modernisation set in. For

an understanding of the worldview of hunter-gatherers, the ontological dichotomy between culture and nature is not very apt. In their thoughts and practices there is no separation of the self and nature where the mindful subject has to cope with a world full of physical objects. However, this does not mean that in the hunter-gatherer worldview they are 'one with their environment', nor does it mean that in our analysis this is the case, e.g., compared to others who are not. After all, they make a living through a complex, conscious and two-sided interaction with the environment, which is what since Ingold we call 'dwelling' (2000). Their human condition is based on an active, practical and perceptual engagement with their dwelt-in world.

According to Ingold, such an 'ontology of dwelling' can help us better understand the nature of human existence. In other ontologies that contain a bigger role for cognitive sciences, such as most western cultures, the mind is detached from the world and before any engagement in the world—it has to build an intentional world as a basic cognitive project. Such a vision is primarily one of mental representation which

Access this article online	
Quick Response Code: 	Website: www.conservationandsociety.org
	DOI: 10.4103/cs.cs_15_30

is then implemented in the material world, the view Ingold, following Heidegger, calls 'building'. The hunter-gatherer way, 'dwelling', focuses not on construction but on engagement; it is not a way of creating a view 'of' the world but rather of taking up a view 'in' it. In 'building', people construct a world 'before' they live in it, meaning that people see themselves and their environment as separated 'a priori' entities that interact. In 'dwelling', there is a continuing engagement of people with their environments and the environment is an agent with which hunter-gatherers maintain a complex relationship in order to survive. Personal relationships are built up and maintained with various elements of the environment all the time (Ingold 2000). So, hunter-gatherers view the world as an integrated entity, integrated with themselves as well, so the notion of 'nature' as separated from 'culture' does not provide an insight into these cultures, since "nature seems to be a set of agencies, simultaneously natural and human-like" (Bird-David 1992: 29–30). Therefore, it makes sense that hunter-gatherers construct their material wants from their intertwined natural and social environment, with which they have a sharing relationship. All social relations and structures are part of the total environment, an approach that fits in with a general ecological view since any environment for any animal includes individuals of the same species (Ingold 1992: 53–54).

Following from the two very different analytical worldviews of 'building' and 'dwelling', our aim in this paper is to explore an intermediate worldview that fits contemporary changes in the environment of (mostly former) hunter-gatherers, a worldview we have dubbed 'lodging' (Koot et al. 2016; cf. Koot 2013). This concept refers to people who are confronted with a given environment or with changes within it that do not result from their interaction with that environment. Therefore, they have less control (when compared with 'dwelling'), and some of them simply feel as if they have no choice but to acquiesce, coping with the new environment in a one-sided adaptation, whereas others show a more active adaptive response. Whichever way, central in 'lodging' is the domination of new stakeholders in the environment. In 'lodging', agency is reduced because ownership is denied, and the various aspects of the environment are now further beyond control, or even influence. Put simply, restrictions posed by the environment have become more dominant over life processes, whereas in 'dwelling' it used to be the interaction with the environment that was decisive. Relations of dominance in this environment now dictate one's range of responses. In this paper, we approach such changes in conservation and tourism that take place in the ecological and socio-political environment of the *Ju/'hoansi* of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy in Namibia. More specifically, we analyse the Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programme in the Nyae Nyae Conservancy. The Namibian model of communal conservancies has been described as ideal to be followed elsewhere, while it has also received serious criticism, the latter in particular about the 'empowerment' of the local populations (Gargallo 2015: 213).

It is important to realise that these notions—'dwelling', 'building' and 'lodging' are of course ideal types that can

illuminate differences, and thus clarify explanations. But they do run the risk of covering up the complexities and diversities in a society (Kenrick 2002: 197–198). However, for our analysis of the hunter-gatherer predicament, they are helpful. Also, concepts such as nature and society are politically loaded, and it is the concept of 'lodging' that highlights crucial imbalances in power (Ingold 2005: 503). 'Lodging' adds to 'dwelling', the very dimension that has become crucial to (former) hunter-gatherers in modern times: that of being dominated and left out in the margins of power. 'Lodging', in a way, is 'dwelling' at a determinant other's abode, and therefore with a reduction in agency, which we consider the individual's capability to influence the course of events by his/her conduct (see Giddens 1984: 9). This reduction forms a crucial factor in our analysis. An agent can alter the course of events and we shall see this faculty of agency erode, but not disappear completely; as mentioned earlier, there are also active adaptations within the new range of responses with the *Ju/'hoansi*.

In the next section, we provide a short description of the methods and the historical context of the development of nature conservation, tourism and the CBNRM programme in Nyae Nyae. This will be followed by various case situations that show how our concept of 'lodging' takes place in daily reality. Next, we relate these results to our broader discussion on building, dwelling, lodging and nature conservation. Finally, in our conclusion we argue that today, the former 'dwelling' ontology of the *Ju/'hoansi* can better be described as 'lodging'.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Nyae Nyae Conservancy is a geographical area (see Figure 1) as well as a legal body representing the people living in this area. It is characterised by its relative isolation, significant funding from donors and the relative homogeneity of the *Ju/'hoansi* living there. Nyae Nyae is the second largest conservancy in Namibia and one of the areas where the *Ju/'hoansi* still have a decent land base of 8992 sq.km., after the South African administration reduced this to approximately 10% of the original 91,000 sq.km. Still today, the low population of about 2,300 inhabitants makes it a suitable environment for wildlife, in which about 36 human settlements are spread out throughout Nyae Nyae. Tsumkwe, an important administrative centre in the region, is not officially a part of the Conservancy (Bieseke and Hitchcock 2011: 12–13, Gargallo 2015, Hitchcock and Sapignoli 2016: 109, see also paragraph 2.1).

In the past, the *Ju/'hoansi* have often been perceived in the West as the 'standard' hunter-gatherers and therefore they have received a disproportionate amount of attention from writers, film makers, photographers, academics, donors and NGOs. All in their own way, such visitors changed something in the *Ju/'hoansi*'s environment, but the inhabitants' own perspectives often remained little exposed. Until today, the image of the *Ju/'hoansi* often continues to be framed by the same people who retain most of the control over the studies,

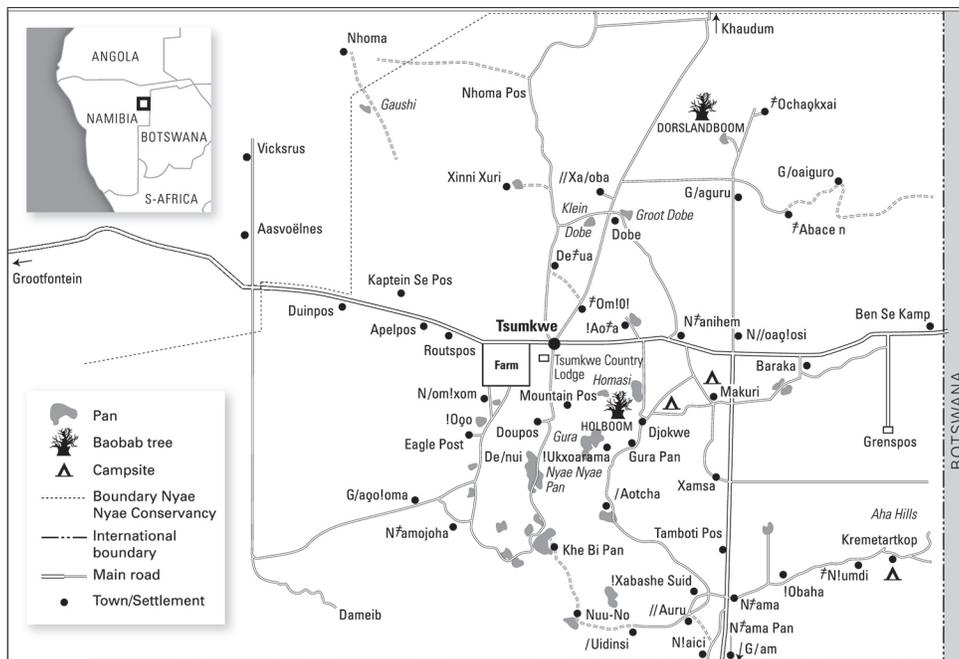


Figure 1
The Nyae Nyae Conservancy
 (Source of the map: Koot 2013: 70)

images and interpretations (Suzman 2001: 39; Tomaselli 1999: 131), not least in nature conservation and related (eco) tourism projects.

The findings in this paper are mainly based on a two-month period of ethnographic fieldwork in 2010 by Koot and on secondary sources. Earlier, Koot has been involved with Bushmen in Namibia since 1998, first as an M.A. student in Anthropology and later, between 2002 and 2007, working at a community-based ecotourism project with (mostly Hai//om) Bushmen people in Tsintsabis (Koot 2012, 2013, 2015; Hüncke and Koot 2012), a few hundred kilometres to the West of Nyae Nyae. In these days, he has already made several trips to the Nyae Nyae Conservancy. The fieldwork in 2010 consisted of participant observation in conservation and tourism activities and 45 interviews, including those held on fieldtrips into the remote corners of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy. Interviews in these distant settlements often had the character of group discussions, in which the inhabitants gathered to listen and speak. Interviews in Tsumkwe were mostly with state officials, tourist workers, and of course many local *Ju'hoansi*. The interviews were held in Afrikaans or English and in some cases they have been translated from *Ju'hoansi* by a *Ju'hoan* assistant. Within the settlements of the Conservancy, in addition to these interviews, Koot participated in tourism activities (e.g. a traditional ceremony at the Living Hunters' Museum in //Xa/oba, or a guided tour to the Aha Hills) and spent several days at the community-run campsites such as Djokwe, Makuri and Aha Hills. Moreover, in Tsumkwe he stayed at the Tsumkwe Country Lodge campsite, which enabled him to observe happenings there closer, as well as to have many informal conversations and interviews with staff.

The rise of nature conservation in Nyae Nyae

In the 1950s, around 1000 *Ju'hoansi* were estimated to be living in Nyae Nyae in about 37 communities. In 1953 the area came under the responsibility of South African administration that wanted to transform the Bushmen into subsistence farmers or wage earners (Suzman 2001: 40), attempting to 'civilise' them. Under this pressure, they were left with no choice but "to transform deep cultural patterns in a single generation" (Marshall and Ritchie 1984: 39), in which many adopted the standard set by South African colonists who promoted modern life by focusing on settlement, personal property and agriculture (Gordon and Douglas 2000: 175–176). In 1959, an administrative centre was established in Tsumkwe and many *Ju'hoansi* gave up hunting and gathering and got jobs. Moreover, agricultural training and medical care were introduced and many *Ju'hoansi* were attracted by the food and water resources in and around Tsumkwe, but Tsumkwe became a settlement characterised by poverty and social dissatisfaction (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 9–10). Some activists and anthropologists tried to encourage cattle husbandry among the *Ju'hoansi*. Their efforts were at least partly successful, but during the war of independence in the 1980s, they met with opposition from South African wildlife officials and the South African Defence Force (SADF) who wanted to restrict the *Ju'hoansi* to traditional hunting techniques so that they could develop a game reserve (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 12–18; cf. Marshall and Ritchie 1984). It was announced in 1976 that Eastern Bushmanland would become a nature conservation area and the fact that many *Ju'hoansi* had left to Tsumkwe made this area more attractive for this as it now looked vacated. However, increased military activity in the area,

the establishment of the *Ju/'hoansi's* first Community-Based Organisation (CBO)—the Ju/Wa Farmers' Union in 1986 (later to become the Farmers' Cooperative, the predecessor of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy)—and the return of many *Ju/'hoansi* to their traditional territories in the years 1982–1984 prevented this from happening (Bieseles and Hitchcock 2011: 17–22; cf. Suzman 2001: 41). Some were allowed to hunt on the reserve with bows and arrows and gather with digging sticks, but most of them would be moved outside the reserve (Lee 2005: 96; Marshall and Ritchie 1984: 10–11). Moreover, they would not be allowed to keep cattle or cultivate gardens, their children would be taught at school how to hunt and gather and 'hunting bands' would be organised and supervised by bush rangers. This latter activity would provide the opportunity for a special class of tourists to be flown in to overnight campsites, and conservation officers, including eight *Ju/'hoansi* who would do nature walks with them (Marshall and Ritchie 1984: 11; Tomaselli 2005: 115–116).

The *Ju/'hoansi* of Nyae Nyae were left with two options: Either living 'traditionally'—in the definition of the outsiders—on a game reserve, an option for only a few of them, or leaving the area. In a letter to the administration, the *Ju/'hoan* leader in these days responded that they "do not want a nature reserve [...] When the whites wanted to make a nature reserve [...] they did not tell us that no cattle, no gardens, nothing will be allowed in the reserve" (Marshall and Ritchie 1984: 12–13). To prevent the establishment of the game reserve, many *Ju/'hoansi* returned from Tsumkwe to their traditional lands until the 1990s with the support of NGOs and donors (Bieseles 1993; Suzman 2001: 42). This has played a crucial role in the creation of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy later in 1998; by moving back to their lands already in the 1980s, they were in a better position to claim the land after the Namibian independence in 1990 (Bieseles and Hitchcock 2011). In this process, the *Ju/'hoansi* proved to be well-organised and the Ju/Wa Farmers' Union—that in turn was supported by the Ju/Wa (Bushman) Development Foundation, the predecessor of the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDNFN)—has played a crucial role here. The Union was set up with outsiders' help but it also showed that the *Ju/'hoansi* were relatively well organised compared to other Bushmen groups and therefore they also attracted donor support (Bieseles 1993; Marshall and Ritchie 1984: 7–10). This organisation into legal bodies at an early stage has helped them to gain a certain level of power.

CBNRM in the Nyae Nyae Conservancy

Instead of becoming a game reserve, Nyae Nyae became a communal conservancy in 1998, which was also an important year because the *Ju/'hoan* Traditional Authority (TA) Tsamkxao ≠Oma was recognised by the Namibian government. Better known as 'Chief Bobo', he has broad support among the *Ju/'hoansi* and is assisted by seven councilors. He describes his goal as "to connect the community and the Conservancy and the government" (Chief Bobo pers. comm. 2010). In

many cases this has worked out well, and he also seems to be a respected leader, playing a central role in the (sometimes unquestioned) allocation of grazing land to individuals.

Throughout the years, donors such as USAID and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) US,² through the WWF Namibia, have played an important role in the advocacy of CBNRM, and conservationists state that the main aim of CBNRM is conservation and that community development and ecotourism are included as a means to this end (Sullivan 2002: 160–161). While CBNRM operates at grassroots level, it is not a grassroots strategy, but is based on global agendas and the financial rewards are often very limited. While CBNRM was never intended to serve as the only form of income generation for communities, it was always envisaged as providing wages for some and indirect benefits for others, expanding the number of income-generating options (Suzman 2001: 137–138). Since CBNRM's focus is mostly economic and less on social and/or cultural benefits, it incorporates neoliberal economic thinking about markets (Taylor 2008: 49). In Namibia, many NGOs, ministries, private operators and donors tend to support CBNRM as a way to promote conservation and tourism, but community involvement is limited; for local people, CBNRM is often one of the few opportunities to acquire rights to natural resources, increase control over their land and gain income through tourism (Hohmann 2003: 246), because the land is nowadays legally owned by the government, with communities receiving rights of occupation (LAC 2006: 28).

The driving forces that implement policy tend to mask local differences and aspirations by a communalising rhetoric, thereby 'displacing' people in such a way that "[d]isplacement [...] becomes something more subtle than the physical eviction of peoples from their land" (Sullivan 2002: 159). Such a type of displacement is, of course, very compatible with the idea of 'lodging'; CBNRM programmes and policy are influenced by the interests of conservationists, tourist and hunting operators, and tourists themselves (Sullivan 2002: 165). The agenda on which communities can participate are often shaped externally by NGOs, presented to poor rural communities and based on democratic credentials as their sole option, and justified by sustainability (Butcher 2007: 99), whereas NGOs are strongly influenced by donor agendas and in cooperation with various ministries. In Nyae Nyae, especially the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) plays a crucial role in relation to the CBNRM programme, for example, because they decide the hunting quota. In these agendas for Namibian conservancies, there have often been unrealistic and generally unvoiced expectations that African communal area residents should live with dangerous wildlife on their land, while trying to increase the populations of these species (Sullivan 2002: 180). As we will show in this paper, this threat continues today and that danger tends to be underestimated by the tourist agencies, who think more in terms of photo-ops than the actual damage these animals can inflict. Conservation can result in a human-wildlife conflict and the costs of this are not always sufficiently covered by the benefits of tourism (Spenceley 2008: 180), such as jobs and income generation. *Ju/'hoansi*

in Nyae Nyae are worried about the impact of elephants on their water points (cf. Hitchcock 2006: 247) and the stable supply of water throughout Nyae Nyae has led to an increase in the number of elephants and this is likely to continue. Their ongoing presence in the area where they only used to appear seasonally is bad for the woodland's diversity and can endanger people's lives, but they are good tourist attractions (Humphrey and Wassenaar 2009: 52).

For Bushmen hunter-gatherers too, CBNRM is associated with social exclusion and/or discrimination within communities. Marginalised groups have fewer chances of participating than others in decision-making processes due to language difficulties and age, while inside the community some feel excluded because their social and economic benefits from CBNRM activities are fewer than those of fellow members. Elites within a community—in many hunter-gatherer groups a relatively new phenomenon for which they do not have a cultural slot yet—do not generally share the benefits equally and the views of the more marginalised community members are often ignored. The degree to which communities have control over their land and resources is limited in southern Africa by the nature of government land legislation, conservation and the institutional capacity of CBOs is often insufficient (Hitchcock 2004: 221–226). Indigenous groups are incorporated into a larger and more powerful market-driven economy, dominated by international organisations and the nation state. In this process, they have to cope with the loss of their economic autonomy to outside control (Lee 2005: 23; Tadesse 2005: 2–4).

Today, the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDNF) is the main NGO supporting the Nyae Nyae Conservancy. They support the people's wish for farming as well as income-generating opportunities (cf. Bieseles and Hitchcock 2011: 226) but throughout the years it seems as if the support for agriculture had become less to make way for conservation and tourism initiatives (cf. Bitter Roots 2010). However, this has recently changed again since the European Union has funded a climate change programme of the NNDNF, in which one of the main focuses is to fight climate change through the “[a]doption of more productive farming techniques such as conservation agriculture” (NNDNF 2015). The latter implies an agricultural “approach to managing agro-ecosystems for improved and sustained productivity, increased profits and food security while preserving and enhancing the resource base and the environment” (FAO 2015). In addition, the climate change programme pays attention to fire management, water development and the capacity building of farmers (NNDNF 2016), and the NNDNF has now been raising funds for a grazing specialist in order to see if, and how, livestock could be introduced. Moreover, a separate entity, the Community Forest Management Committee, has been established which deals with forestry-related issues (Bieseles and Hitchcock 2011: 225) in the same area, and which has led to the establishment of the Nyae Nyae Community Forest in 2013.

There is some tension between the Traditional Authority Tsamkxao ≠Oma and the NNDNF about a fee he receives for

‘fuel’, and this struggle for financial control has led various local groups to believe that the NNDNF makes most of the decisions, thereby supporting their TA. While the fee for fuel is provided for visits to the settlements in Nyae Nyae, the NNDNF has blamed him of using it for meetings in Windhoek (Gargallo 2015: 223–224). Tensions such as these clearly relate to agency, and therefore also to ‘lodging’, which, in our view, is the concept that covers most of these relations of dominance versus the loss of agency. However, it is not an all-encompassing concept for Nyae Nyae; the *Ju'hoansi* have shown agency, decision-making and resistance, in various ways. Therefore, it is important to realise that the *Ju'hoansi* have been turned into lodgers not in a strange place, but in what used to be their own. And it was this latter tension that led to resistance among the *Ju'hoansi*, which has resulted in some expatriates being fired by the *Ju'hoansi* (Garland 1999: 88; cf. Bieseles and Hitchcock 2011: 153–167). Moreover, the establishment of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy Management Committee has in many ways increased the amounts of projects in which the *Ju'hoansi* can take decisions, at least partly, and use their agency.

RESULTS

Private initiatives

Today, CBNRM offers opportunities for some, while for others it restricts and delays people's private initiatives. The NNDNF has an advisory role in relation to the Conservancy, but in our interviews various people complained of the dominance of NGOs in general (particularly the NNDNF), as well as donors and consultants. Decision making tends to be influenced by outsiders, although it is important to note that the Conservancy in the end always makes its own decisions. For example, one of the freelance tour guides in Tsumkwe—who had been working with tourists for years—wanted to start his own campsite with special activities. However, he sees that the Conservancy, as an institution, does not really understand tourism yet has the authority to give permission for individual projects, and thus takes decisions slowly because of meetings at various levels. He believes that the Conservancy's decisions on such issues are influenced—not made—by the NNDNF, who in turn would be influenced by WWF Namibia. Even if permission is granted by the Conservancy it is possible, for example, that they choose another project location, which can be demotivating. This shows that CBNRM also shifts agency; the Conservancy Management Committee has experienced an increase, but this particular individual feels very constrained. Another example concerns a suggestion by the former manager of the Conservancy to convert the buildings at Baraka, the old NNDNF headquarters, into bungalows for tourists from Botswana, based on the idea that it is close to the main road and accessible to 2 x 4s. Then the NNDNF advised waiting for the expert's report, the *Tourism Development Plan for Nyae Nyae & N≠a-Jaḡna Conservancies*³ (Humphrey and Wassenaar 2009; cf. Van der Burg 2013: 62) where there was no

recommendation as such to be found. In this report, the findings and recommendations were based mostly on interviews with accommodation managers and tour operators, government employees, NGOs, trophy hunters, anthropologists and investors. In the report it is suggested that the *Ju/'hoansi* need to act 'authentic' to become part of the tourism world. Of the forty-four respondents in Nyae Nyae and N \ne a-Jaqua together, only eight were local Bushmen and as far as could be retrieved only two *Ju/'hoansi* from Nyae Nyae were interviewed, from the settlement Kremetartkop (Aha Hills) (see Humphrey and Wassenaar 2009: 97). Indeed, in our interviews, NNDFN employees explained that they encouraged the Conservancy to follow the recommendations of this report, which was written to prepare for Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) funding. MCA was a very popular US government-fund for the Millennium Challenge Corporation in these days, in which Nyae Nyae was one of Namibia's 'target conservancies' for tourism support (see MCA 2009).

Foreign staff

In 1994, Elisabeth Garland (1999) arrived in the area for a three-month consultancy on tourism. She noticed a lot of expatriate staff and saw projects fall apart when these people left. In these days, the NNDFN staff consisted mainly of white foreigners with the intention of turning over the control of development programmes and funds to the Nyae Nyae Farmers' Cooperative. According to Garland, the NNDFN's vision in its early years was based on a few key assumptions. One of these was that the *Ju/'hoansi* were seen as culturally not ready for their modern circumstances, based on western representations of them as 'Stone Age' people. Moreover, politically a representative democracy was considered the best way forward, whereas they were traditionally seen as a group without political organisation based on local kin groups, reflecting western norms for a legitimate model of labour and for the liberal idea of a democratic political society (Garland 1999: 83–85).

Today, however, the situation has changed, but many *Ju/'hoansi* still complain about the NNDFN's dominance (cf. Van der Burg 2013), although it should be noted that NNDFN has no formal decision-making power for the Conservancy or the people living there. Moreover, today there are no foreign staff members working in the field anymore (there is one in the office in Windhoek today and there were two in 2010 when Koot did his fieldwork); development field workers in Nyae Nyae are all Namibians. Nevertheless, a former manager of the Conservancy explained that the advising role of the NNDFN often turns into informal decision-making, because they can overrule the Conservancy.

So in the 1990s, when Garland arrived, the expatriate staff told her that all existing tourist ventures should be incorporated in the Farmers' Cooperative's control and individual entrepreneurs should be discouraged from beginning new projects if not working through this centralised body, so that revenue from tourism could be equally distributed to the entire

population of Nyae Nyae. Hardly interested in tourism, the *Ju/'hoansi* complained about a lack of control over revenue from the projects and access to vehicles. Apparently, there were many paternalistic talks among white expatriates who noted the irresponsibility of the *Ju/'hoansi* (Garland 1999: 85–91). However, as has been remarked in former colonial settings, paternalism tends to bring out its correlate, filialism, the definition of oneself as dependent on the other, and continuously subject to the other's approval (Van Baal 1989: 262). This is what lodging does; it turns people into lodgers, who have to ask permission from the landlord to put up a new poster on the wall. This does not, however, deny the long and complicated process of creating the Nyae Nyae Conservancy, in which the *Ju/'hoansi* themselves have played a crucial role and which in itself can be seen as a success story in many ways, also showing their agency in this process (see Biesele and Hitchcock 2011). But lodging shows how the introduction of the CBNRM programme, and tourism in particular, has also contributed to a changing set of relations that many of the *Ju/'hoansi* have to adapt to.

Changes in tracking

Since the start of the Conservancy in 1998, tourism has been seen as a way of valuing the *Ju/'hoansi*'s 'authentic' traditional skills. For example, "tracking skills, which were dying out, are gaining new value for tourist-guiding" (Ashley 1998: 331). In this line, we argue that, in the case of new values for traditional skills, we should be careful not to act as if we are talking about the *same* skill. The goals of tracking today have changed when compared to the 'traditional' (dwelling) days, since tracking is now being used within the contemporary context of the CBNRM programme. While in the past tracking was an important activity of the hunt with the goal of acquiring meat, today it has become a financial resource too, and also a means of—indirectly—acquiring food or other things. When comparing 'traditional' tracking to the role of tracking today, we focus here in particular on tracking in safari tourism, because tourism plays such an essential role in the CBNRM programme in Nyae Nyae. In safari tourism, wildlife is spotted mostly from a vehicle⁴ and often on a daily basis. Earlier, tracking and hunting took place on foot (feeling, smelling, hearing) and, according to Liebenberg (2009), animals such as lions, leopards, cheetah and wild dog were then rarely seen by *Ju/'hoansi* hunters because they would actively avoid them and because these animals are rare and nocturnal. Therefore, these hunters used to base their knowledge of these animals mainly on the tracks they saw instead of by seeing the animals, and this makes it more difficult for subsistence trackers to get to know the tracks of 'tourist animals'. On top of this, trackers from the tourism industry often use guidebooks as a reference. It should be noted though, that at the Little Hunter's Museum in //Xa/oba, tracking activities take place in which the focus on subsistence hunting is explained to tourists.

Recently, the Conservancy worked on a tracking project in six villages in the south-eastern corner of Nyae Nyae to identify

traditional master trackers from the older generation who could pass on their knowledge to youngsters (Alpers 2009). In itself, this is another project that shows the Conservancy's agency. However, at the local level, a main concern was that some of the elders were struggling with poor eyesight. For this reason, two of the elders made too many mistakes and one of them refused to admit this. Other elders agreed that he was right even though at first they had a different opinion. The man was not included in the training programme for younger trackers due to these mistakes but the next day this led to tension among the remaining elders who feared they might be the next to fail. Then the white South African tracking expert of a company called CyberTracker, who was in charge of the group, decided to let them discuss the tracks together and come up with a consensus and they consistently gave the right answer. In another case, the trackers gave the 'wrong' answer collectively, but then they were shown a guidebook and admitted their mistake (Liebenberg 2009).

This comparison between 'traditional' tracking and tracking in safari tourism, together with the example of the master trackers, demonstrates three points. First, it clarifies a change in the meanings that have been attached to tracking: Tracking now affords something different because the skill itself has changed due to changes in the environment (using a car, a guidebook, the type of animal being tracked, the purpose of the track). Second, it shows a submissive attitude by the *Ju/'hoansi*, which can be seen in their nervousness and acceptance of white authority over 'their own tradition' (either by a person or, indirectly, the authority of a book). Without denying any of the tracking qualities of the man in charge or the writers of guidebooks, it is clearly *them* who now decide what is 'right' and 'wrong' when tracking. Therefore, they dominate important parts of the environment, including ideas about traditional skills. The *Ju/'hoansi* now need to adapt to this new, very subtle, type of domination. Third, the example shows that indigenous knowledge is much more situational, relational and ad hoc, part of a lived-in environment and not a pre-existent mental grid (Van Beek and Jara 2002: 76; Van Beek 2011: 189). Earlier, tracking could not be seen apart from hunting, and not with guns and binoculars, but with spears, bow and arrows, traps and poison, and that presupposes a completely different type of engagement with game, and hence also with their tracks. Hunting was dangerous, exhausting, boring and very hazardous, all that present hunting is not.

Hunting then and now

Today, most people in Africa who are defined as hunter-gatherers risk arrest and imprisonment if they engage in subsistence hunting due to colonial and postcolonial conservation laws (Hitchcock 2001: 139). In contrast, commercial hunting (or consumptive tourism) has been introduced and widely promoted; joint ventures are being signed between conservancies and trophy-hunting operators. In Namibia, conservancies also have concessionary rights to start joint ventures for hunting, for which the Ministry of

Environment and Tourism (MET) awards hunting quotas (thus holding the ultimate power over wildlife) (Hohmann 2003: 211). Just like (non-consumptive) tourism, trophy hunting generates substantial revenues for local communities in Namibian communal conservancies. An important difference, however, is how these revenues are generally used. Whereas non-consumptive tourism activities create mainly salaried jobs at lodges, trophy hunting creates important income for conservancy management committees to cover their operating costs and some meat for the community. It is then obvious that these revenues flow to different stakeholders within the community; the communal conservancy management committees and thereby the overall community (trophy hunting), or individual employees (non-consumptive tourism) (Naidoo et al. 2016).

For hunter-gatherers hunting was a social activity, not only amongst the hunters but also with the environment, whereas today conservation projects in southern Africa revolve around a limited number of large mammals (Sullivan 2002: 176–177). Considering the meanings attributed to wildlife by many local groups and especially hunter-gatherers, wildlife has greater importance than simply its nutritional or monetary value, something that is often overlooked in conservation policies (Taylor 2002: 471). The Namibian MET Minister considers tourism and in particular trophy hunting an important contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Product that instigates development with trainings and employment (Nandi-Ndaitwah 2012: 4). Economically she is probably correct, so in that sense she can be considered one of the landlords of the *Ju/'hoansi*. In fact, according to Naidoo et al. (2016: 634), the Nyae Nyae Conservancy is currently profitable for a large part because of trophy hunting, whereas in case of a simulated trophy hunting ban the Conservancy would become unprofitable. However, it is too easy to assume that the well-being and social uplifting of rural people will follow automatically after a community generates income from trophy hunting, because other dynamics of empowerment and domination seem to be at least equally important.

In addition to the already mentioned economic benefits, trophy hunters often cooperate with the MET and with community game guards of the Conservancy by reporting problem animals and poaching activities. However, trophy hunting is a modern activity based on new power relations, instead of something that Bushmen are connected with because of their traditions of subsistence hunting. It is a western, mainly white, phenomenon, based on an idea of a wild and romantic Africa, in which modern technologies such as guns and cars are crucial. In trophy hunting, Bushmen take the place of assistants. Contemporary benefits such as meat handouts cannot match the process of the hunting experience in the environment that contains humour, joy, songs and stories (Sullivan 2006: 119–120).

Nevertheless, unlike in many other places in Africa, the *Ju/'hoansi* of Nyae Nyae are still allowed to hunt as long as they use traditional weaponry: Bows, arrows, spears and clubs. The only people who are allowed to use guns for

hunting are trophy hunters who enter the area with a hunting safari company. This created some frustration amongst the *Ju/'hoansi* in the 1990s because they were troubled by the wildlife, especially elephants and lions, and were not allowed to kill the animals. They felt discriminated against when they realised that people who could afford to pay large amounts of money were allowed to hunt these animals (Hitchcock 1997: 111–116; Hitchcock 2001: 139). However, trophy hunting does create agency for the Nyae Nyae Conservancy Management Committee, who can choose the hunting operators through a bidding process. Moreover, the Conservancy is a communal conservancy with one of the highest incomes in Namibia, almost N\$ 3 million in 2010, approximately half of which comes from trophy hunting (Gargallo 2015: 218).

In 2010, some *Ju/'hoansi* worked with an elephant hunter at a hunting camp nearby G/aguru. They explained that they had never been happy working for the man because he treated them so badly, but worked for him anyway due to a lack of other opportunities. In their opinion, this hunter was chosen by the authorities, the Conservancy Management Committee and WWF Namibia simply because he paid the highest amount for the concession, which is stimulating the broader CBNRM project. So, what we see here is how new stakeholders with their own interests—in this case financing the broader CBNRM project—influence the level of agency for the particular group of *Ju/'hoansi* who worked for the elephant hunter. This group accepted its circumstances, not knowing how to improve the situation. To give the full picture; another hunter who sub-leases from the elephant hunter is well-respected and provided various opportunities for the *Ju/'hoansi* who worked for him, including performing traditional dances or selling crafts to hunting tourists to make some extra money. So, despite a set range of responses by more dominating stakeholders, some *Ju/'hoansi* were able to adapt to that, whereas others would acquiesce.

Tsumkwe Country Lodge

The Tsumkwe Lodge had been bought in 2007 by the private sector tourism operator Namibia Country Lodges (NCL) and has subsequently been renamed Tsumkwe Country Lodge. In these days, the image of the lodge was based on traditional Bushmen culture, which was also symbolised in their logo in which a figure walking with bow and arrow resembles the primordial image of Bushmen. Therefore, it was especially interesting that most of the *Ju/'hoansi* staff left the lodge in the first three months after NCL had bought it. We have been told two reasons for this: dissatisfaction with their salaries (that had been cut) and a bad relationship with the new management. Furthermore, there was already a lot of frustration among the *Ju/'hoansi* and the Conservancy about the lodge not paying the agreed N\$30, per tourist entering Nyae Nyae, something that had still not been settled in 2012 (Van der Burg 2013: 37), showing how local control was very limited. And although NCL intended to employ more *Ju/'hoansi*, there never was a formal obligation for them to do so; in fact, it was something

that the NCL wanted to keep out of the contract. Nevertheless, the lodge manager, who was employed by the NCL, explained in 2010 that they had “identified a big problem” which was that the *Ju/'hoansi* culture was “starting to die out” (lodge manager pers. comm. 2010). In response, various NCL employees wanted to build a community centre where *Ju/'hoansi* children would be taught their traditions by elders from the settlements.

Today, NCL has pulled out and the lodge building is owned by a charity named The University Centre for Studies in Namibia (TUCSIN) (Giraud pers. comm. 2014). It is still running as a tourist lodge and it employs *Ju/'hoansi* and other staff again.

DISCUSSION: NATURE CONSERVATION, BUILDING, DWELLING AND LODGING

Our findings support what Biesele and Hitchcock (2011: 26) explained: “in spite of the rhetoric about public participation and the benefits of tourism [...] eco-tourism programmes [...] serve to dispossess poor local people and have only limited social and economic benefits as well as many risks.” Just like indigenous people all over the world, *Ju/'hoansi* are dominated by others outside their local communities who make decisions for them (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 27). Their environment is one in which their agency is becoming severely limited, because the socio-political side of that environment increasingly tends to dominate them. Of course, this does not necessarily apply to all *Ju/'hoansi* in Nyae Nyae; The Conservancy Management Committee for example, seems to have experienced an increase in its agency. And of course, the increase or decrease in agency also depends on the particular relation that some of the *Ju/'hoansi* have with the various types of external actors within the CBNRM and tourism initiatives. Overall, it seems as if the role of NGOs in particular (and in their slipstream consultants and donors who in their turn influence the NGOs) has grown relatively big, whereas the traditional authority's role in CBNRM is relatively limited, although he plays an important role in land allocations. The private tourism sector has played an important role too, in particular in relation to the Tsumkwe Lodge and the employees there, although they also do not seem to have taken up a large position within the community, as the NGOs clearly have.

Based on the building perspective, intervention in nature is similar to the idea of production in which human producers transform nature, leading to the creation and production of our own, human, environment. In this way, the world “is rather presented as a spectacle. They [humans] may observe it, reconstruct it, protect it, tamper it or destroy it, but they do not dwell in it” (Ingold 2000: 214–215). Scientists who talk about the global environment tend to see humans as being detached, positioning humanity outside of the environment. This is because the global environment is simply too big to relate to as an environment (Ingold 2011: 96). In the twentieth century, thinking and acting in both anthropology and conservation was based on the nature-culture dichotomy, as if they are oppositional contrasts. Today, more mutualistic frameworks

are emerging, whereas there is a growing attention in social theory for the cultural and political baggage that comes with imposing natural states on environments that were historically characterised by an engagement between human beings and their environment (Campbell 2005: 280). However, a hunter-gatherer perception of the environment differs fundamentally from the so-called scientific environmental conservation today as it is advocated by many western NGOs wanting to protect wildlife, with, if it comes in handy, local culture. Scientific conservation is rooted in the view of a separate nature, subordinated to the world of humanity, leading to the idea that merely by inhabiting it, (civilised) humans are bound to alter an environment from its 'natural' state. We may think of such environments as a wilderness, meaning that they exist in a genuine natural condition, abstained from human influence (Ingold 2000: 67). And if, in this view, humans are 'allowed' in this natural Eden, they tend to be presented as people of nature and even as the 'ecological stewards' of nature. This is crucial in (eco)tourism (Fennell 2008), which is an important strategy in nature conservation in general and in the CBNRM programme of Nyae Nyae in particular. Indigenous hunter-gatherers, such as the Bushmen people, conform to this idea, but only if they behave as 'authentic' people (Gordon and Douglas 2000; Koot 2013, 2015, 2016; 2017, In press).

However, the consequences of nature conservation for hunter-gatherers are enormous because land and animals are sealed off and human intervention is banned. It is no coincidence that in some wilderness areas hunter-gatherers are tolerated because they are seen as being the true inhabitants of a pristine environment. In scientific conservation, to the embarrassment of some conservationists, hunter-gatherers do not fit, except as a part of the wildlife, of the protected nature. Based on a dwelling perspective, hunter-gatherers regard themselves a part of the environment, which is incompatible with the principles of scientific conservation. The latter is founded on a building perspective, with the actors outside the ecosystem. The way that hunter-gatherers consider themselves as custodians of their environment is very different from the scientific notion of conservation and the two should not be confused. Hunter-gatherers do not consider themselves responsible for the survival of wildlife species, since in their one world, humans are insignificant and only a small part. They need to keep up a dialogue with their environment by maintaining a balance in their relationship with its various powers and looking after it through direct engagement with the parts of the environment (Ingold 2000: 68–69; cf. Fennell 2008).

From this point of view, rhetoric about hunter-gatherers as if they were the 'true conservationists' does not make sense, but this is widespread amongst stakeholders such as NGOs, governments and donors and more than anywhere in tourism (Gordon and Douglas 2000; Koot 2013, 2015, 2016; 2017, In press). Programmes such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Park-People project and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) are based on assumptions of material losses for local people due to conservation practices and therefore some benefits of conservation, such

as income from tourism, should be returned to these people via development programmes for alternative livelihoods and income generation. This material substitution for losing access to one's environment means, at best, that people's environmental needs are now considered an instrumental matter, ignoring people's environmental engagements that contain social action and matters of identity and power (Campbell 2005: 291). Phenomena such as fences that block local people's movements, wildlife populations that are a threat, access restrictions, quota limits and so on all have an impact on the political and social environment of these local populations. In interactions with officials and bureaucrats they are often unskilled, and if they do not cooperate with this new regime and the rules and regulations that come with it, they risk eviction, loss of livelihood or even criminal prosecution (Ingold 2005: 506–507).

Today, various Bushmen apply to formal instead of traditional law, or they want to open a bank account for their monthly salary because it means they do not have to share it with family members. Such examples show a continuously changing life-world, which does not automatically mean that the modern takes over the traditional, but simply that (immaterial) values of modernisation are integrated into Bushmen communities, just as (material) rifles, cars, cement houses and electricity have been. As Barnard (2002: 19–20) already explained, "[t]he foraging^s mode of thought is not dead" and therefore "it should be the goal of those non-foragers who are in power over foragers and former foragers, both to respect foraging values and to work towards a social order based on a merging of conflicting ideologies". This can be seen, for example, when indigenous people distinguish themselves by compromising with the dominant groups and their ideals. In many cases, Bushmen have no problem claiming to be the best ecologists in the world (Sahlins 1993: 19). From an indigenous perspective in modernisation, it makes sense to claim it in this new situation of lodging because it will increase one's agency in relation to the new dominating forces and actors. Whether it is true or not that (s)he really is 'the best ecologist' no longer matters, it is *the idea* that (s)he is the best ecologist that counts. This is a choice based on regaining agency because their "inventions and inversions of tradition can be understood as attempts to create a differentiated cultural space" (Sahlins 1993: 20). So although lodging is a strong perspective to describe current changes in the environment, the *Ju/'hoansi* should not be regarded powerless. They will always have a certain level of agency, although this tends to decrease instead of increase, and move in different directions.

CONCLUSION

Today, outside powers increasingly dominate the *Ju/'hoansi*'s environment. Instead of dwelling, the *Ju/'hoansi* are lodging in an environment that is dominated by a CBNRM programme. Of course, CBNRM is not the only influence in the area, but in this paper we have concentrated on this programme because at first sight it is so closely related to the idea of dwelling, depicting,

as it does, hunter-gatherer communities living in their environment, engaging with all its elements, while taking care of it in the meantime. As we have shown, however, 'dwelling' is not applicable to CBNRM, and we believe that the ideal type 'lodging' is a better concept to describe today's situation of community-based conservation initiatives, because it includes the very power relations that are lacking in the dwelling perspective. Of course, the transformation from dwelling to lodging is historical as well as political. In this, interaction with powers in the *Ju/'hoansi's* environment diminishes, and they respond by either acquiescing or by adapting, but in a situation where the rules and regulations have been pre-decided to a set range of responses, thereby reducing agency for most. Meanings of various 'typical' hunter-gatherer activities (such as tracking or hunting) have now changed (and continue to change) under the influence of outside forces.

Such changes are based on new relationships that have evolved in their environment, for example with a private tourism operator, trophy hunters, tourists, the government, NGOs, expatriates, donors and consultants, who all in their own way dominate a part of the *Ju/'hoansi's* environment, mostly based on goals and values in the global political economy. This happens very subtly, covered under a veil of development rhetoric, and it can only happen because power relations have changed during the last century and new laws in favour of conservation (and in its slipstream tourism) got introduced. *Ju/'hoansi* have to adapt to these new powers, and often they seem to lack the means and connections to start something by themselves. In fact, decisions need to go through the Conservancy, who have their own decision-making power, but of course they also are influenced by NGOs and donors. Therefore, a formal increase of power for the broad community does not necessarily result in increased agency for individuals or smaller groups (families or settlements) within that community. And while many people living in Nyae Nyae feel restricted by some CBNRM activities, these also provide benefits. CBNRM clearly brings certain developments and favours conservation, but constrains, or at least shapes, other possibilities such as agriculture or private entrepreneurialism. In addition, the programme tends to create bureaucratic and hierarchical structures that most marginalised *Ju/'hoansi* ignore because they do not have the cultural capital and tools to handle them. They often do not seem to dwell anymore, but to lodge; they first of all need to meet their landlords' approval.

NOTES

1. We use the term 'Bushmen' instead of 'San' because in our experiences in southern Africa the former hunter-gatherer people we stayed with mostly used the term Bushmen as well, if not referring to their particular groups, such as *Hai//om*, *Ju/'hoansi* or *Khwe*. Moreover, we do not believe that the 'politically more correct' term 'San' would in any way reduce the racism these people have experienced throughout the years (cf. Gordon and Douglas: 6).
2. Although these two donors have played very important roles throughout the years in the support of CBNRM in Nyae Nyae,

there have been other important ones, such as the Kalahari Peoples Fund and MCA-Namibia or Redbush Tea. More recently, the European Development Fund of the EU has been supporting the work of NNDFN.

3. The N̄a Jaqna Conservancy borders Nyae Nyae to the West.
4. In some cases, however, people go on walking tours.
5. We agree with Barnard (2002: 6) that 'foraging' is not necessarily synonymous with 'hunting and gathering', but that it is in fact a wider term. However, that discussion goes beyond the scope of this paper.

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