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Introduction

In November 2017, President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe stepped down after ruling the country for 37 years. He was replaced by his former deputy, Emmerson Mnangagwa. In January 2018, when Mnangagwa had been in power for only two months, he announced that white farmers – including those who had previously been evicted from their farms under Mugabe's fast track land-reform programme (FTLRP) – could once again obtain 99-year land leases.[1] When the FTLRP was established in 2000, it triggered new negotiations of belonging and disputes around territories and boundaries, not only between black and white but also among different groups of black Zimbabweans.[2] In February 2018, after Mnangagwa's announcement, Cyril Ramaphosa of the African National Congress (ANC) became president of South Africa. He revealed plans to accelerate the South African land-reform policy through the expropriation of white-owned land, without compensation, to benefit black South Africans. Significantly, commentators suggest that this expropriation is likely to damage the South African economy;[3] what 'the economy' means to different groups of society remains contested. It is often assumed that the increasing popularity of the relatively new, radical South African party the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), established in 2013 by its leader, Julius Malema, has pushed for this change at the ANC, under whose leadership the budget for land reform has so far never exceeded 1 per cent and

1 D. Kumbuka and G. Marawanyika, 'Zimbabwe's New President Eases Land Laws for White Farmers', Bloomberg Businessweek, New York, 13 January 2018, available at https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-01-31/zimbabwe-eases-land-laws-as-mnangagwa-courts-investment, retrieved 22 March 2018.

2 J. Mujere, 'Land, Graves and Belonging: Land Reform and the Politics of Belonging in Newly Resettled Farms in Gutu, 2000–2009', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38, 5 (2011), pp. 1123–44.

3 S. Black, 'South Africa's New President Wants to Redistribute Land from White Farmers', *Business Insider*, New York, 21 February 2018, available at http://www.businessinsider.com/south-africa-cyril-ramaphosa-wants-to-confiscate-white-farmers-land-2018-2?international=true&r=US&IR=T, retrieved 22 March 2018; M. Nkosi, 'Is South Africa's Land Reform an Election Gimmick?', BBC News, London, 11 August 2018, available at https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-45099915, retrieved 20 August 2018.

the process has slowed down since 2007. For the EFF, however, the expropriation of land without compensation is their 'first non-negotiable cardinal pillar'.[4]

The political dynamics of land and belonging cannot be seen apart from the rise of neoliberal capitalism in recent decades, which has thrived in the region, with market logic superseding the social justice orientations of post-colonial ideologies and ever larger inequalities being created. Thus, against the background of these increasing inequalities, the question of who the land belongs to – and, equally important, who belongs to the land – is more relevant than ever in independent, post-apartheid southern Africa.

Such questions of belonging in relation to land are of central significance also to the 'indigenous' people of southern Africa, who articulate their indigeneity in many ways: perhaps none more potently than through their struggle to demonstrate their unique connections to and interdependence with the land within these neoliberal contexts. Most notably, the indigenous San (or 'Bushmen') have to resist continuing pressure in order to maintain access to land and natural resources. In the Etosha region of Namibia, for example, Hai//om San contest their 'voluntary' evictions from Etosha National Park, probably enacted for commercial reasons, while simultaneously being pressured to move away from their lands in other parts of northern Namibia by more powerful actors who are determined to privatise these lands.[5] In Botswana, the G//ana and G/wi San and Bakgalagadi of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) continue to be cut off from most government services. This is the latest strategy in the Botswanan state's sustained campaign to evict residents from the protected area, despite the San having won four court cases affirming their right to continue to reside within the CKGR.[6] Despite such 'victories', indigenous people across southern Africa continue to experience rates of impoverishment and marginalisation that are among the highest globally. Against this paradigm, indigenous communities are engaged in active struggles for land and its resources, each to this end variously mobilising and articulating notions of belonging.

In this part-special issue of the *Journal of Southern African Studies* (*JSAS*), we explore these dynamics by situating the politics of belonging and indigeneity under neoliberal capitalism within contemporary and historical contexts through drawing on ethnographic data from South Africa and Namibia. Our goal is to highlight the role of land and nature in the dynamics of belonging and indigeneity in this region. In the conference panel from which this special issue derives,[7] it became evident that the sites at which these concepts collide are microcosms of the challenges faced globally as we continue the fraught process of decolonisation, while coming to grips with a changing climate and increasingly complex, interdependent global political and economic systems. In the contemporary global environment, ever more liberal democracies are turning into authoritarian states, a process in which excessive articulations of belonging and non-belonging play a crucial role.[8] The unprecedented scale of global engagements has had the concomitant effect of stimulating heightened politics of belonging as people fight for recognition of their rights to various

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4 Nkosi, 'Is South Africa's Land Reform an Election Gimmick?'.

5 S. Koot and R Hitchcock, 'In the Way: Perpetuating Land Dispossession of the Indigenous Hai//om and the Collective Action Lawsuit for Etosha National Park and Mangetti West, Namibia', *Nomadic Peoples*, 23, 1 (2019), pp. 55–77; for a similar situation, see also C. van der Wulp and S. Koot, 'Immaterial Indigenous Modernities', elsewhere in this issue.

6 M. Sapignoli, *Hunting Justice: Displacement, Law, and Activism in the Kalahari* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018).

7 This discussion has its origins in the first international conference of POLLEN, the global Political Ecology Network, named 'Political Ecologies of Conflict, Capitalism and Contestation' (PE-3C), at Wageningen University, the Netherlands, in July 2016. More specifically, we collaborated in a full-day panel called 'The Political Ecology of Belonging and Indigeneity under Neoliberal Capitalism', convened by Koot. For more information about POLLEN, please see http://politicalecologynetwork.com/.

8 A. Mbembe, *Een Politiek van Vijandschap* (Amsterdam, Boom, 2017).

material, political and existential resources. As such, this special issue pertains to dynamics and challenges that are grounded within, but extend beyond, southern Africa.

In this introductory article, we begin by outlining the particularities of neoliberal capitalism *vis-à-vis* land and nature in southern Africa, with a focus on the two countries featured in this special issue: South Africa and Namibia. Subsequently we elaborate on the conceptual and empirical underpinnings of belonging and indigeneity, through which we emphasise their connections, convergences and disparities in relation to nature, land and neoliberal capitalism. Finally, we turn to the ways in which each of the contributions of this special issue extends our understandings of these phenomena in the particular southern African contexts in which we work.

Neoliberal Capitalism, Land and Nature in Southern Africa

South Africa

Capitalism in southern Africa emerged alongside colonialism, mostly emanating from South Africa. By the 1920s, a general paradigm in South African society was that the English whites represented capital, industry and liberal capitalism, while the Afrikaners accrued wealth mostly through the acquisition of land. In contrast, black groups were heavily constrained by these colonial settlers, who endeavoured to reduce the former to collective labour power.[9] After the demise of apartheid in 1994, the country followed the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) and World Bank's neoliberal strategies, with the result that the divisions of apartheid have been perpetuated economically in lieu of an official racial apartheid.[10] For example, in post-apartheid South Africa, the new government, led by the ANC, turned to a neoliberal capitalist political ideology, thereby breaking with its former social democratic approach. The focus changed to deregulation, privatisation and trade liberalisation, which have to date led to uneven development, huge disparities in wealth and ever higher concentrations of power in the capitalist classes.[11] Ironically, the free market has in many ways resulted in the exact convergences of class and wealth that the liberation struggle sought to overturn.

It is crucial to note, however, that the neoliberal transition from state-driven to market-driven institutional arrangements should not be regarded as absolute; the state and the market in South Africa are strongly connected and dependent on each other, so that 'pure' market-based initiatives often still depend on state intervention for their implementation,[12] a phenomenon that has led to 'state capture', in which unscrupulous business interests dominate government decisions and activities.[13] Despite claims to achieving racial and social equality and redistribution, programmes based on so-called 'black economic empowerment' (BEE) have, to date, primarily served the interests of the corporate sector (dominated by whites) and a small subsection of politically connected black individuals, instead of the majority.[14] Take, for example, the current growth of land privatised in so-called 'wildlife estates' in the Kruger to Canyons area. This is based on pure economic

9 D.T. Goldberg, *The Threat of Race: Reflections on Racial Neoliberalism* (Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

10 P. Bond, *Elite Transition: From Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa* (London, Pluto Press, 2000); see also D. Huizenga, 'Articulations of Aboriginal Title, Indigenous Rights, and Living Customary Law in South Africa', *Social and Legal Studies*, 27, 1 (2017), pp. 3–24.

11 R. Peet, 'Ideology, Discourse, and the Geography of Hegemony: From Socialist to Neoliberal Development in Post-Apartheid South Africa', *Antipode*, 34, 1 (2002), pp. 54–84; D. Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005).

12 D. James, 'Citizenship and Land in South Africa: From Rights to Responsibilities', *Critique of Anthropology*, 33, 1 (2013), pp. 26–46.

13 See E. Aardenburg and A. Nel, 'Fatalism and Dissidence in Dukuduku', elsewhere in this issue.

14 R. Tangri and R. Southall, 'The Politics of Black Economic Empowerment in South Africa', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 34, 3 (2008), pp. 699–716.

gain: investors buy large tracts of land that can then be 'developed' by constructing houses on discrete plots, which can, in turn, be sold. These estates provide for those who can afford it, and the main attraction is to live 'in nature', surrounded by wildlife, while simultaneously enjoying a luxurious lifestyle. What arose during Koot's ethnographic fieldwork in this context is that the residents did not see themselves as *belonging to* the place so much as *owning* the place, taking pride in their ability to buy themselves into this opulent lifestyle. In the end, most people living at the estate do not have historical ties to the area, they do not have their ancestors buried there, and nor do they relate their being there to connections to specific mountains, rivers or other features of the landscape. Furthermore, in Hoedspruit, one of the central towns in the Kruger to Canyons area, some property developers and inhabitants of the wildlife estates have suggested that, in order to preserve its 'unique' character, it is preferable that (mostly black) labourers servicing the town should live 30 kilometres or more away from the town. Pursuers of such policies have so far played a key role in preventing the local municipality from building larger social housing projects in and around the town. In the eyes of some – notably, not all – of the developers and inhabitants of Hoedspruit, the labourers do not 'belong' there beyond their function as labourers.

Privatisation and the free market can thus have the power, it seems, to overrule and direct senses of belonging; as one respondent explained, programmes such as BEE can, ironically, have counter-productive effects, making whites richer. This (white) man explained that he had been in the police force until 1994, but did not feel that his prospects were good because of his skin colour and the empowerment programmes for black Africans. Consequently, he started his own company, which now earns him about fifty times as much as he would have made if he had stayed in the police force on a public service salary. He cynically thanked the South African government for pushing him in the right direction to make him rich. However, this same respondent articulated his fear that land and property (including his business) would soon all be taken away by the Ramaphosa government, who would sell out land and property to large Chinese investors to fill their own pockets.

And although this man's fear might not be realistic to some, it is very likely that land matters will change in South Africa in the years to come: as already mentioned in this article, the pressure on the state to accelerate land reform is currently high. South Africa's land reform rests on three pillars: first, 'restitution', based on claiming back dispossessed land or compensating claimants financially; second, 'redistribution' to broaden access of ownership of land for production through a 'willing seller–willing buyer' principle; third, 'tenure reform', in which people's right to own and control land are secured. From 1994 to 2006, the government purchased farms based on the 'willing buyer–willing seller' principle, but the transfer of land has progressed slowly (estimations of the area transferred vary between 9 and 24 per cent). This led the ANC to intensify policy in 2007, abandoning the 'willing buyer–willing seller' principle in favour of expropriation, which is constitutionally supported as long as there is 'just and equitable compensation'. However, this new strategy was not followed through and therefore led to little progress, and, despite an attempt to 'reimagine' land reform in 2011, is has so far been perceived to be slow and frustrating. Under pressure from the more radical, left-wing EFF, this has led to increasing interest in a strategy of 'expropriation without compensation', resolved by the ANC in December 2017, who continually claim to base this on sound economic and legal principles.[15] Based on different perceptions on what 'land justice' in the end entails, different articulations of belonging are expressed by the many groups that are involved in these processes. In fact,

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15 M. Qobo, 'Reflections on Recent Developments on South Africa's Land Reform Debate', paper presented at a conference titled 'The New Land Question', hosted by the Integrated Land Management Institute at Namibia University of Science and Technology, 18 July 2018; Black, 'South Africa's New President'; Nkosi, 'Is South Africa's Land Reform an Election Gimmick?'.

this 'might be more concerned with allowing renewed imaginations of autochthonous belonging […] than simply handing over land to would-be farmers'.[16]

In Namibia, the dominant economic trend since 1990 has been to implement neoliberal policies, practices and reforms within state institutions. Ironically, the former liberation and current ruling party, the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), had fought for 30 years prior to 1990 with the aim of implementing a socialist economy. Today, however, these principles are mostly ignored as Namibia opts for development based on free market mechanisms, thereby extending the legacies of colonialism economically, to the benefit of the country's old and new political and economic elites. This has created resentment among the marginalised and among former liberation fighters, owing to the perpetuation of enormous disparities in the distribution of wealth.[17] A former freedom fighter recently expressed such a view in the national newspaper, *New Era,* writing:

> [m]any of my comrades who were forthright believers in Marxist-Leninist theory and ideology and total annihilation of capitalism and imperialism are being lost either through death or taken out of the system by diehard capitalists. Some of us who were ideologically advanced could hardly be understood and appreciated by the capitalist elites because of our pro-poor social policies and the way we used to interact with the masses of poor proletariat and peasants.[18]

This ideological shift in the political economy can in part be explained by the country's dependence on the South African market; South Africa is both the source of most manufactured goods in Namibia and the main destination for its exports.[19]

Within this economic milieu, Namibia's indigenous people reap the fewest benefits. They include the San, Nama, Ovahimba, Ovazemba, Ovatjimba, and Ovatue (Ovatwa). Together they represent some 8 per cent of the total population of the country, which was 2,484,780 in 2018. The Namibian government defines these groups as 'marginalised communities' and provides assistance through the Marginalised Communities Division in the Office of the President.[20] The San number between 27,000 and 34,000 – representing 1.3–1.6 per cent of the national population – and include the Khwe, the Hai//om, the Ju/'hoansi, the !Kung, the !Xun, the ≠Kao//Aesi, the Naro, and the !Xóõ. The vast majority of the San in Namibia live below the poverty datum line.[21] Yet the San have made some progress in legal cases to protect their land and resource rights, as seen in the cases of the N≠a Jaqna and Nyae Nyae Conservancies.[22] More generally, the implementation of neoliberal conservation is often

16 O. Zenker, 'Land Restitution (Old and New), Neotraditionalism, and the Contested Values of Land Justice in South Africa', in J. Johnson and G.H. Karekwaivanane (eds), *Pursuing Justice in Africa: Competing Imaginaries and Contested Practices* (Athens, Ohio University Press, 2018), p. 259.

17 J. Friedman, *Imagining the Post-Apartheid State: An Ethnographic Account of Namibia* (New York, Berghahn, 2011).

18 New Era, 'The Present Socio-Economic System and Politics in Namibia', *New Era*, Windhoek, 27 October 2017, available at https://www.newera.com.na/2017/10/27/the-present-socio-economic-system-and-politics-in-namibia/, retrieved 11 April 2018.

19 H. Melber, *Understanding Namibia: The Trials of Independence* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014); Friedman, *Imagining the Post-Apartheid State.*

20 Division of Marginalised Communities, Office of the President, Guidelines for the San, Ovatue, and Ovatjima Education Support Programme (Windhoek, Office of the President, 2017).

21 U. Dieckmann, M. Thiem, E. Dirkx and J. Hays (eds), *'Scraping the Pot': San in Namibia Two Decades after Independence* (Windhoek, Legal Assistance Centre and Desert Research Foundation of Namibia, 2014).

22 C. van der Wulp, 'Transformation of Communal Lands: Illegal Fences in the N≠a Jaqna Conservancy' (MA dissertation, Wageningen University, 2016); Namibia High Court Judgment on Nyae Nyae Conservancy and Nyae Nyae Community Forest case against illegal grazers, 10 August 2018.

presented by its practitioners as progressive.[23] However, the creation of so-called 'communal conservancies' and community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) programmes are predominantly based on market mechanisms: namely, nature-based tourism or trophy hunting, whose goals are to preserve biodiversity and simultaneously enhance local development opportunities. These neoliberal strategies tend to mask inequalities and different (especially local) viewpoints and the many constraints that these strategies also contain.[24]

Namibia recently held a second national conference on land that addressed the future of commercial, urban, and communal land, and generated 169 resolutions at a cost of N\$15 million (N\$14.59 = US\$1).[25] Notably, no final decisions were made on the issues of foreign ownership of Namibian land nor how to handle the questions surrounding communal land, particularly given the rapid privatisation that is occurring in some parts of the communal land in the country, which represents some 35 per cent of the total surface.[26] As the Namibian president, Hage Geingob, recently stated, the 'willing buyer–willing seller' principle (see the section on South Africa above), which dominated Namibia's land reform strategy since independence, has not delivered the expected results. Therefore, and in the name of peace and stability by avoiding inequalities that are too large, he now suggested that, by 2020, the country needs to transfer 43 per cent of its land (15 million hectares of arable agricultural land) to blacks who had been previously disadvantaged.[27] It is then very likely that the politics of belonging, to which we turn next, will thrive again in a country that has now embraced the global neoliberal project.

Belonging

To belong is to have a sense of connection; it implies familiarity, comfort and ease, alongside feelings of inclusion, acceptance and safety. The way people belong to place is often informed by political strategies, conscious and unconscious, through which access to various rights and resources are sought and contested. Land has long been among the most highly valued of resources, and nowhere has this been more evident than during the liberation struggles across southern Africa. Claims to belong frequently invoke unique relationships to the land and nature,[28] which, in neoliberal contexts, are simultaneously constructed as highly commodified resources. One of the aims of this special issue is to interrogate how it is that people create strategies of belonging to the land and nature in such highly capitalised contexts. Such strategies do not necessarily take place only as a direct relation to a particular geographical piece of land. In fact, for virtually all of southern

23 See, for example, H. Angula, G. Stuart-Hill, D. Ward, G. Matongo, R. Diggle and R. Naidoo, 'Local Perceptions of Trophy Hunting on Communal Lands in Namibia', *Biological Conservation*, 218 (2018), pp. 26–31; R. Naidoo, C. Weaver, R. Diggle, G. Matongo, G. Stuart-Hill and C. Thouless, 'Complementary Benefits of Tourism and Hunting to Communal Conservancies in Namibia', *Conservation Biology*, 30, 3 (2016), pp. 628–38.
24 S. Koot, 'The Limits of Economic Benefits: Adding Social Affordances to the Analysis of Trophy Hunting of the Khwe and Ju/'hoansi in Namibian CBNRM', *Society and Natural Resources*, 32, 4 (2019), pp. 417–33; J. Silva and N. Motzer, 'Hybrid Uptakes of Neoliberal Conservation in Namibian Tourism-Based Development', *Development and Change*, 46, 1 (2014); S. Sullivan, 'The Elephant in the Room? Problematising "New" (Neoliberal) Biodiversity Conservation', *Forum for Development Studies*, 1 (2006), pp. 105–35; see also van der Wulp and Koot, 'Immaterial Indigenous Modernities', elsewhere in this issue.
25 'Editorial … Land Resolutions Need Swift Implementation', *The Namibian*, Windhoek, 12 October 2018 (the exchange rate given is for this date), available at https://www.namibian.com.na/182243/archive-read/Editorial–Land-Resolutions-Need-Swift-Implementation, retrieved 15 November 2018.
26 *Namibia Land Statistics Booklet, September 2018* (Windhoek, Namibia Statistics Agency, 2018).
27 'Namibia Joins the Pledge for Land Reform', *Sunday Times*, Johannesburg, 1 October 2018, available at https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/africa/2018-10-01-namibia-joins-the-pledge-for-land-reform/, retrieved 13 November 2018.
28 Gressier, *At Home in the Okavango*.

Africa's diverse ethnic groups, belonging is based on a connection to nature and the land as both an economic and a political strategy.

One such ethnic group is white southern Africans,[29] who remain the most powerful ethnic grouping from an economic point of view. Take, for example, white belonging that takes shape as the 'unexpected'; prototypical land claims are those of the formerly evicted who now want to return to their land, but this is something that is generally not considered a problem of whites. In South Africa, however, some white farmers have also lodged restitution claims based on a history of land dispossession (though usually compensated).[30] Moreover, consider the white Namibians who work in the tourism industry and construct belonging through articulating a strong connection to the mostly essentialised local indigenous San people as people of nature.[31] Or what about the coloured and white farmers of the highly commodified famous *rooibos* plantations in South Africa? Both groups struggle to express an 'authentic' sense of belonging, but have creatively, and in somewhat different ways, been able to identify more with the plant than with the land.[32] The last two examples are important reminders not to reduce the politics of belonging to place as only a politics of land. And neither do we see belonging as solely a positive politics; it is mobilised just as frequently in processes of exclusion that are shaped, more often than not, by dynamics of neoliberal capitalism. Take the key issue of labour and its consequent processes of (rural–urban) migration,[33] which keenly demonstrate that 'inherent to belonging is always the potential for its opposites: insecurity, alienation and exclusion'.[34] As Mosselson demonstrates, the politics of belonging are integrally related to other economic push and pull factors, with immigrants stereotypically regarded as a threat to an often already limited pool of work; economic migrants, temporary workers, asylum seekers and illegal migrants are then seen as those who do not belong and, as a consequence, are all too frequently confronted with xenophobic violence.[35]

Belonging is thus multi-faceted, meaning different things to different individuals and groups, and it operates on multiple levels. Yuval-Davis suggests that 'neither citizenship nor identity can encapsulate the notion of belonging. Belonging is where the sociology of emotions interfaces with the sociology of power, where identification and participation collude'.[36] At its most intimate, belonging – and perhaps, more explicitly, its absence – is powerfully felt in the subjective realms of individual emotion. This in turn extends to the level of the social, via connections with others that take place on different scales, from within the home and community right through to the nation, where the politics of belonging often play out around ties of ethnic or civic citizenship. Intrinsic to the concept, then, is the

29 S. Ives, *Steeped in Heritage: The Racial Politics of South African Rooibos Tea* (London, Duke University Press, 2017); Gressier, *At Home in the Okavango*; D. McDermott Hughes, *Whiteness in Zimbabwe: Race, Landscape, and the Problem of Belonging* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); S. Koot, 'White Namibians in Tourism and the Politics of Belonging through Bushmen', *Anthropology Southern Africa*, 38, 1–2 (2015), pp. 4–15; Y. Suzuki, *The Nature of Whiteness: Race, Animals, and Nation in Zimbabwe* (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2017); O. Zenker, 'South African Land Restitution, White Claimants and the Fateful Frontier of Former KwaNdebele', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 41, 5 (2015), pp. 1019–34.
30 Zenker, 'South African Land Restitution'.
31 Koot, 'White Namibians in Tourism'.
32 Ives, *Steeped in Heritage*.
33 See also A. Njwambe, M. Cocks and S. Vetter, 'Ekhayeni', elsewhere in this issue.
34 Gressier, *At Home in the Okavango*, p. 213.
35 A. Mosselson, '"There is no Difference between Citizens and Non-citizens Anymore": Violent Xenophobia, Citizenship and the Politics of Belonging in Post-Apartheid South Africa', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 36, 3 (2010), pp. 641–55; see also J. Hickel, '"Xenophobia" in South Africa: Order, Chaos, and the Moral Economy of Witchcraft', *Cultural Anthropology*, 29, 1 (2014), pp. 103–27; and J. Sharp, '"Fortress SA": Xenophobic Violence in South Africa', *Anthropology Today*, 24, 4 (2008).
36 N. Yuval-Davis, 'Borders, Boundaries and the Politics of Belonging', in S. May, T. Modood and J. Squires (eds), *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Minority Rights* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 2004), p. 216.

relationship between self and other, where the latter can be an individual, family, community, society, nation or place. It is through the collective identities formed at these various levels that belonging is most often articulated. Thus, '[w]hat it means to belong, and the routes to finding belonging, vary between individuals and groups and are affected by numerous variables, including history, politics and economics'.[37] Equally enmeshed in the discourses and practices of belonging are the identity politics' triumvirate of class, gender and ethnicity; such politics of belonging are often 'less a defense of the local than efforts to exclude others from access to the new circuits of riches and power'.[38] Seen as such, belonging can be regarded as an expression of globalisation, as the accelerating flows of images, goods and people are accompanied by articulations of cultural convergences or differences at the local level.[39]

The increasingly transnational character of capitalism thus seems to promote the mobility of people, goods and images, on the one hand, while increasing boundaries, state protectionism and xenophobia on the other. Since the growth of neoliberal capitalism after the Cold War, models of the market with political and economic liberalisation as its main strategy have become dominant.[40] Therefore, belonging cannot be considered in isolation from the influences that the growth of neoliberal capitalism has brought about; in fact, the on-going promotion of economic growth in the global south as *the* path to develop can simultaneously 'erode a sense of national belonging',[41] owing to the ever stronger influence of powerful global players and the values attached to them. Furthermore, decentralisation and democratisation, two crucial neoliberal strategies that support greater leeway for the market, have often paradoxically triggered a further obsession with belonging; questions around who belongs where, and based on which criteria, have now become worldwide concerns.[42] In fact, recent developments have shown that democratisation in much of Africa has instigated an obsession with ethnic citizenship and autochthony, so that 'political liberalization leads, somewhat paradoxically, to an intensification of the politics of belonging […] and a general affirmation of roots and origins as the basic criteria of citizenship and belonging'.[43] As a consequence, socio-economic and material conditions are invariably imbricated within the politics of belonging, which are automatically also the politics of inclusion and exclusion.[44] This makes belonging a relational concept first and foremost, based on attachments to a particular group, place, religion, mountains, rivers, old homes, graves or other local phenomena. It is also always relative because it bears the danger that one can be masked as not really belonging, especially when taking into account the fact that, throughout history, people have been mobile and therefore invent and reinvent homes continually.[45]

In southern Africa, the wave of democratisation that took place in the early 1990s seems to have inspired, quite unexpectedly, the exclusion of certain groups, who are regarded as belonging less than other citizens. Parallel to this, global development agencies and major

37 Gressier, *At Home in the Okavango*, p. 16.
38 P. Geschiere, *The Perils of Belonging: Autochthony, Citizenship, and Exclusion in Africa and Europe* (London, University of Chicago Press, 2009), p. 26.
39 P. Geschiere and F. Nyamnjoh, 'Capitalism and Autochthony: The Seesaw of Mobility and Belonging', *Public Culture*, 12, 2 (2000), pp. 423–52.
40 *Ibid.*
41 F. Coronil, 'Toward a Critique of Globalcentrism: Speculations on Capitalism's Nature', in J. Comaroff and J. Comaroff (eds), *Millenial Capitalism and the Culture of Neoliberalism* (London, Duke University Press, 2001), p. 73.
42 Geschiere, *The Perils of Belonging*.
43 Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 'Capitalism and Autochthony', p. 423.
44 Mosselson, '"There is no Difference"'.
45 D. James, '"After Years in the Wilderness": The Discourse of Land Claims in the New South Africa', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 27, 3 (2000), pp. 142–61; Mujere, 'Land, Graves and Belonging'.

donors, such as the World Bank and the IMF, started to show a drastic distrust of the state, which was evermore regarded as a barrier to development. The politics of belonging and exclusion resulting from neoliberal processes of democratisation and decentralisation have been blatantly evident within the political ecology of nature conservation. In Cameroon, for example, the World Bank and the World Wildlife Fund supported a new forest law and new-style development projects that raised questions around who was autochthonous, even in areas where demographic pressure on natural resources was low.[46] However, advocates of neoliberal strategies often focus on 'tradition' and belonging, which creates an interesting paradox: if market mechanisms are presented as the solution to a wide variety of problems, how can this be combined with trust in 'communities' and their 'chiefs' as the foundation for development and nature conservation? This 'local' focus creates questions of belonging: who does (or does not) belong to the communities, and who are excluded (by the chiefs) or discriminated against?[47] So, as a result of global changes due to the hegemony of neoliberal globalisation, 'peoples and natural resources that have been treated as external domains to be colonized by capital increasingly appear as internal to it, subjected to its hegemonic control'.[48] This has today resulted in what Tania Murray Li, based on her fieldwork in Indonesia, called the 'global conjuncture of belonging', in which trends at first sight unrelated can turn the politics of belonging into a pressing issue.[49] This is also the case for so-called indigenous people, who articulate a very specific type of belonging.

In relation to indigenous people (to whom we turn next), such trends often include the loss of biodiversity, ecological knowledge and cultures.[50] Furthermore, the privatisation of former state functions and industries in Africa have pushed for 'free' markets and trade for multinational corporations, thereby often replacing communal ideologies with neoliberal ideals focused on entrepreneurial individuals and profit maximisation.[51] Western models of land tenure and credit, such as freehold mortgage systems of credit, can conflict with 'traditional' African ideologies about land and the attachment to it.[52] Yet powerful states, the World Bank and the IMF have implemented international capital to open access for important natural resources in the name of 'efficiency' and 'good governance', leading to the stark dominance of technical and economic systems in justifying policies that mask political and moral concerns.[53]

Indigeneity

The San, who are often considered the 'real' indigenous people of southern Africa, continue to endure the region's highest rates of impoverishment, landlessness and political alienation. Their experiences encompass the exclusion 'from particular forms of recognition (citizenship rights, equal rights before the law, rights to education, representation, and so on)', which, Akhil Gupta argues, constitute 'structural violence' owing to the fact that 'the

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46 Geschiere, *The Perils of Belonging*, p. 72–6.
47 Geschiere, *The Perils of Belonging*; see also D. Hodgson, *Being Maasai, Becoming Indigenous: Postcolonial Politics in a Neoliberal World* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2011); Aardenburg and Nel, 'Fatalism and Dissidence in Dukuduku' elsewhere in this issue; van der Wulp and Koot, 'Immaterial Indigenous Modernities', elsewhere in this issue.
48 Coronil, 'Toward a Critique of Globalcentrism', p. 65.
49 T.M. Li, 'Articulating Indigenous Identity in Indonesia: Resource Politics and the Tribal Slot', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 42, 1 (2000), pp. 149–79.
50 *Ibid.*
51 Hodgson, *Being Maasai, Becoming Indigenous*.
52 Mujere, 'Land, Graves and Belonging'; see also Koot and Büscher, 'Giving Land (Back)?', elsewhere in this issue.
53 J. Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (London, Duke University Press, 2011).

violence is impersonal, it is built into the structures of power'.[54] Despite a lack of formal recognition of the unique histories of the region's indigenous people, the governments of Botswana, Namibia and South Africa are attempting to assist indigenous (mostly San) communities as 'marginalised' or 'disadvantaged' through various state-sponsored programmes, such as the CBNRM initiative described above.[55]

While material resources are far too frequently scarce, as Richard Lee pointed out, indigenous people have 'what migrants and the children of migrants (i.e., most of the rest of us) feel they lack: a sense of belonging, a sense of rootedness in place. It is this longing to belong that has become one of the most valued ideological commodities in the era of late capitalism'.[56] However, the refusal of Namibia, Botswana and South Africa to recognise officially the unique status of the region's original inhabitants, via their policy position that 'all of the people in their countries are indigenous',[57] has led some of the descendants of colonists – the white populations of southern Africa – to consider themselves 'indigenous' and to mobilise discourses of indigeneity within their claims to belonging.[58] Such claims are staked through notions of birth, citizenship, political dominance or environmental and economic stewardship of the land. In this way, capitalist structures and mechanisms (for example: territorial boundaries, labour capitalisation) and practices (for example: land privatisation, agriculture, trophy hunting, ecotourism and resource extraction) are affecting ideas of indigeneity – and raising the stakes – resulting in growing contestation over resources and the conceptualisation and categorisation of indigeneity, which are subject to heated debate both within the public sphere and among scholars.[59]

In 2003, anthropologist Adam Kuper advocated abandoning the category 'indigenous peoples' on the basis of its mobilisation in essentialist terms. He warned of its stigmatising potential through its use as a euphemism for ideas of the primitive. Kuper challenges the global movement for indigenous rights as proposed by various NGOs, anthropologists, the UN, the World Bank and conservationists. His main claim is that, for indigenous peoples to be able to receive rights and land in today's world, they first of all have to claim an essentialised, 'authentic' identity and culture associated with spiritualism rather than materialism, in which they show that they are in tune with nature. Such conventional reasoning is often used to justify indigenous land claims,[60] based on an imagination of the indigenous people as primordial.[61] Yet the term's mobilising currency remains a powerful tool in a fight for empowerment in a context of highly constrained resources, resulting in its continued use among activists and academics alike. Olaf Zenker compellingly argues that autochthony discourses are constructed as either individualised or collectivised; the latter entails a strong sense of group identity and shared descent legitimising claims to a territory, which in turn provide the (somewhat backgrounded) individual his or her rights, as is the

54 A. Gupta, *Red Tape: Bureaucracy, Structural Violence, and Poverty in India* (London, Duke University Press, 2012), p. 20.
55 M. Sapignoli and R.K. Hitchcock, 'Indigenous Peoples in Southern Africa', *The Round Table*, 102, 4 (2013), pp. 355–65; Hodgson, *Being Maasai, Becoming Indigenous*; see also R.B. Lee, 'Indigenous Rights and the Politics of Identity in Post-Apartheid Southern Africa', in B. Dean and J.M. Levi (eds), *At the Risk of Being Heard: Identity, Indigenous Rights, and Postcolonial States* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2003), pp. 80–111.
56 Lee, 'Indigenous Rights and the Politics of Identity', p. 84.
57 Sapignoli and Hitchcock, 'Indigenous Peoples in Southern Africa', p. 356.
58 A. Kuper, 'The Return of the Native', *Current Anthropology*, 44, 3 (2003), pp. 389–95; Ives, *Steeped in Heritage*.
59 See, for example, the debates and special issues in *Current Anthropology*, 45, 2 (2004) and 47, 1 (2006); *Anthropology Today*, 16, 4 (2000) and 20, 2 (2004); and *Social Anthropology*, 14, 1 (2006).
60 Kuper, 'The Return of the Native'.
61 R. Sylvain, 'Essentialism and the Indigenous Politics of Recognition in Southern Africa', *American Anthropologist*, 116, 2 (2014), pp. 251–64.

case in ethnic models of citizenship.[62] Indigeneity is a rather specific form of collectivised autochthony characterised by the presence of four widely accepted, though far from indisputable, criteria: namely, first-comer, non-dominance, cultural difference and self-ascription.[63]

The growth of neoliberal capitalism throughout the region has thus increased rather than reduced inequalities, rendering assertions of belonging or indigeneity ever more claims for the control of land, resources and nature. Indeed, of the politics of belonging in Africa, Hilgers describes how the 'manipulation of belonging and the act of investing in this capital are ways, among others, of securitizing the conditions of life'.[64] Claims to indigeneity are increasingly mobilised to legitimise claims to land, and, in this way, indigeneity and belonging have become inextricably entwined. The sense of legitimacy stems not only from long histories with a particular tract of land, but also with ecological stewardship. The global indigenous peoples' movement tends to present indigenous people as the authentic bearers of ecological wisdom, despite the fact that many also engage with capitalist practices, such as agriculture, tourism, logging and mining. None the less, the dominant narrative, which certainly has significant historical precedent, is that they are victims of capitalist processes and outside intruders from whom they must be protected. Therefore contemporary struggles to receive the advantages of modernity for indigenous people are often 'greened'; indigenous people have learnt very well to use western environmentalist language in presenting themselves (much as they frequently are by others).[65] This can be seen as what Murray Li (building on Hall) calls a 'positioning', which 'draws upon historically sedimented practices, landscapes and repertoires of meaning, and emerges through particular patterns of engagement and struggle'.[66] Such positionings are articulations that appear in continually shifting fields of power between the nation states, the UN, international NGOs and transnational advocacy networks. They are affected by 'development' interventions, capitalist intrusions, the heritage of colonialism and more modernist influences that are leading to representations as 'indigenous people'.[67]

In line with the ever-increasing commodification of nature, neoliberal capitalism's reach has led to the commodification of human beings too, whereby bodies are transformed into labour resources subject to market mechanisms. As such, the value of both natural resources and people have been reduced to capital, and supranational criteria play an increasing role in the creation of collective identities.[68] When treated as collectivities, indigenous rural populations and the commodified land they occupy are easier to manage by environmental and development institutes such as the World Bank.[69] The instrumental attribution of collective identities as indigenous was imposed by paternalistic officials during colonial times and continues today via a new set of experts who decide who can and cannot engage with the opportunities and risks that the market brings. One of the ironies of the San's dispossession is that, despite the global fascination with their reputed unparalleled

62 O. Zenker, 'Autochthony, Ethnicity, Indigeneity and Nationalism: Time-Honouring and State-Oriented Modes of Rooting Individual–Territory–Group-Triads in a Globalising World', *Critique of Anthropology*, 31, 1 (2011), pp. 63–81.
63 S. Saugestad, *The Inconvenient Indigenous: Remote Area Development in Botswana, Donor Assistance and the First People of the Kalahari* (Uppsala, Nordic African Institute, 2002); see also van der Wulp and Koot, 'Immaterial Indigenous Modernities', elsewhere in this issue.
64 M. Hilgers, 'Autochthony as Capital in a Global Age', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 28, 1 (2011), p. 49.
65 A. Barume, *Land Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Africa* (Copenhagen, IWGIA, 2014); Hodgson, *Being Maasai, Becoming Indigenous*; T.M. Li, 'Indigeneity, Capitalism, and the Management of Dispossession', *Current Anthropology*, 51, 3 (2010), pp. 385–414.
66 Li, 'Articulating Indigenous Identity in Indonesia'.
67 Hodgson, *Being Maasai, Becoming Indigenous*.
68 Coronil, 'Toward a Critique of Globalcentrism'.
69 Li, 'Indigeneity, Capitalism, and the Management of Dispossession'.

knowledge of and connection to natural ecosystems, forced relocations of indigenous communities are in many instances precipitated ostensibly in the name of environmental conservation. However, it is abundantly clear that, more often than not, 'conservation' is inseparable from the commodification of nature in the pursuit of tourist dollars, and the San are often in lower-order positions in tourism lodges and somewhat excluded from opportunities to engage with this market other than through crafts and guiding activities. Moreover, the growth of private nature reserves has arisen in tandem with an increase of tourist lodges, which is another important contemporary strategy to capitalise on land.[70] These days, such initiatives are driven increasingly by the private sector, commodification and market mechanisms.

In attempting to access land and other resources and rights, indigenous people themselves also strategically collectivise in pursuit of their goals. Deborah James describes how an 'inclusivist and communalist discourse, which originally emerged in the course of a struggle against a long history of coercive state planning, masks the sectional and individual interests that can be served when land restitution is pursued'.[71] In an essentialised manner, indigenous activists speak with authority about the environment, conveniently linking this with their indigenous identity.[72] Leaning on international discourses of indigeneity, the San in particular have focused on essentialised 'cultural' features that often exclude socio-economic and political factors.[73] However, although the San should also be regarded as an underclass of farm labourers, squatters or domestic servants,[74] their representation as primordial through a focus on essentialised cultural values and practices can often also be understood as a reaction to their socio-economic and political circumstances and therefore as a response to changes occurring under the influence of contemporary neoliberal capitalism. Interestingly, by embracing their image as people of nature,[75] they have come to represent all that is *not* modern, *not* capitalist.

In indigenous tourism, for example, a 'Western-based economic rationale remains the primary motivation for engaging in the business'.[76] As a consequence, the San of southern Africa, under the influence of nature conservation and tourism, now often present themselves in ways in keeping with the 'Bushman brand', which they also use to their benefit.[77] Of course, this is only the indigenous response to an increasing neoliberalisation of 'ethnicity' through the commodification of identities in southern Africa more generally.[78] And although our focus in this special issue is on southern Africa, the idea that a particular group of indigenous people can be seen as a brand, or defines itself as a brand, is certainly

70 See also Aardenburg and Nel, 'Fatalism and Dissidence in Dukuduku' elsewhere in this issue.

71 James, '"After Years in the Wilderness"', p. 144.

72 Suzuki, *The Nature of Whiteness*.

73 R. Sylvain, '"Land, Water, and Truth": San Identity and Global Indigenism', *American Anthropologist*, 104, 4 (2002), pp. 1074–85.

74 E.N. Wilmsen, *Land Filled with Flies: A Political Economy of the Kalahari* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1989).

75 D. Fennell, 'Ecotourism and the Myth of Indigenous Stewardship', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 16, 2 (2008), pp. 129–49; S. Koot, 'Cultural Ecotourism as an Indigenous Modernity: Namibian Bushmen and Two Contradictions of Capitalism', in H. Kopnina and E. Shoreman-Ouimet (eds), *Handbook of Environmental Anthropology* (New York, Routledge, 2017), pp. 315–26.

76 T. Hinch and R. Butler, 'Introduction: Revisiting Common Ground', in R. Butler and T. Hinch (eds), *Tourism and Indigenous Peoples: Issues and Implications* (Oxford, Butterworth-Heinemann, 2007), pp. 1–14.

77 S. Koot, 'Contradictions of Capitalism in the Kalahari: Indigenous Bushmen, their Brand and *Baasskap* in Tourism', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 28, 8–9 (2016), pp. 1211–26; S. Koot, 'The Bushman Brand in Southern African Tourism: An Indigenous Modernity in a Neoliberal Political Economy', *Senri Ethnological Studies*, 99 (2018), pp. 205–22; N. Mboti, '"Soetwyn": Visuality, Cultural Tourism, Desire Paths and the ≠Khomani', *Visual Anthropology*, 30, 1 (2017), pp. 22–44; see also J.L. Comaroff and J. Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009).

78 Comaroff and Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*

not unique to the region. Recently, the Maasai of Kenya started a legal procedure to protect their 'cultural heritage' legally, which has been used by more than 1,000 companies, including Calvin Klein, Jaguar Land Rover, Ralph Lauren and Louis Vuitton, while a group of aboriginal Australians are struggling to create protocols that oblige companies who use their images or ancestral lands for marketing or other commercial purposes to pay a fee to them.[79] In the cases of the San and the Maasai, the indigenous people have not only been exploited under neoliberal capitalism, they have also actively responded and tried to benefit from it. If they embrace their image as people of nature, as a modern and commodified version of the 'noble savage', indigenous people can use their agency creatively; they commodify their 'spectacularisation' as people of nature.[80] This does not deny various ethical issues: that many indigenous groups remain marginalised, that inequality thrives, and that there is a dire need to acknowledge 'other' worldviews by different groups of people on earth more generally. But our point here is that, today, diverse worldviews have been infused with neoliberal capitalist values,[81] leading to a variety of responses and consequences. Recognising this also reminds us of the dangers of essentialising indigenous people and exaggerating difference, while in reality people – all people – are (and always have been) continually subject to change.[82]

The Articles

The articles in this special issue are a series of ethnographic case studies among diverse communities in southern Africa on the intersections of belonging, indigeneity, nature and land in relation to neoliberal capitalist developments. Whereas the first two are about the San, the last two focus on issues of belonging in other cases.

Stasja **Koot** and Bram **Büscher**'s article, 'Giving Land (Back)?', demonstrates that the famous land claim of the South Kalahari Bushmen (or '≠Khomani') has not achieved its development objectives. While it is a central piece of the puzzle, land restitution is no magic bullet and does not erase socio-economic issues; in many cases, it even exacerbates them. Through engagement with the transnational indigenous movement, first come communities are 'becoming indigenous', and finding a language through which to articulate their experiences in an effort to redress past and present disadvantage. Koot and Büscher's description of the invention of the ≠Khomani San as a collective is a clear example of this, showing how the hybridisation of different worldviews has created a gap in communication; a 'relational model' on land, which is focused on a continual engagement with the total environment, at first seems to contradict a 'genealogical model', which is much more objectified, looking at people as static groups, and also at land as a static flat surface that needs to be used productively. Clearly, these meanings of land and the people's own status as indigenous differ considerably, but, they argue, such meanings have been infused with neoliberal values and ideas, creating a much more hybrid indigenous politics.

In the article 'Immaterial Indigenous Modernities' by Christa **van der Wulp** and Stasja **Koot**, the issue of (illegal) privatisation (of land), and therefore of land ownership, plays a key role. These days, neoliberal capitalism provides for ever more land privatisation, which is done illegally in this case by putting up fences in communal areas. This has mobilised the

79 D. Pilling, 'Warrior Tribe Enlists Lawyers in Battle for Maasai "Brand"', *Financial Times*, London, 19 January 2018, available at https://www.ft.com/content/999ad344-fcff-11e7-9b32-d7d59aace167, retrieved 23 March 2018.
80 See also J. Igoe, *The Nature of Spectacle: On Images, Money, and Conserving Capitalism* (Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 2017).
81 See also Koot and Büscher, 'Giving Land (Back)?', elsewhere in this issue.
82 See, for example, J. Clifford, 'Indigenous Articulations', *The Contemporary Pacific*, 13, 2 (2001), pp. 468–90; Kuper, 'The Return of the Native'.

San of the N≠a Jaqna Conservancy, Namibia, to present themselves as the 'traditional community' of San people of the area, thereby avoiding the trap of going against the Namibian Constitution, which fails to acknowledge the existence of indigenous people in its country. Nevertheless, this strategy to present themselves as a traditional community also shows important similarities with the global politics of indigeneity, albeit hardly with ideas about genealogical ancestry, which so often tend to dominate such cases.[83] This is because most San are also relatively new to N≠a Jaqna. In fact, in N≠a Jaqna, the San's cultural difference (their 'San-ness') has proven crucial to winning in court against the much more powerful illegal settlers. This determination has prevented further privatisation but has not, to date, led to a solution for the fenced lands that had already, illegally, been *de facto* privatised. As it turns out, winning a court case is only one (albeit important) step, but governments and other actors consistently struggle to implement the outcomes of the case to the satisfaction of the indigenous groups.

Moving away from the San, issues of belonging of course also prevail in the other two articles. In Elizabeth **Aardenburg** and Adrian **Nel**'s 'Fatalism and Dissidence in Dukuduku', issues of identity politics in relation to land are being investigated. The history and contemporary situation show the importance of the role of traditional authorities and how the people of Dukuduku lack a coherent identity. They do so among themselves, but also in relation to the land. Ecotourism initiatives have favoured some, but left many others poor, whereas mining initiatives that have been supported by the traditional authority have been foreclosed in support of nature conservation. Narratives of identity, often articulated in relation to these neoliberal conservation and development initiatives, are perpetuated and reproduced and show how different people show different responses. Through an analysis of these responses as fatalist or dissenting, based on Douglas' 'cultural theory', Aardenburg and Nel show the importance of such responses. Even those whose response is fatalist continue to tell about their losses, whereas those who actively dissent contest and complicate arrangements after settlement.

In the final article, by Avela **Njwambe**, Michelle **Cocks** and Susanne **Vetter**, migration takes place in pursuit of education, joining partners or family members or in search of work, among other reasons. The article looks at the crucial Xhosa concept of *Ekhayeni*, the relation that urban migrants have with their rural family home. They migrate between Cape Town and Centane, in the former Transkei, driven by relational, cultural and economic factors that together shape important narratives for these migrants about attachment to place and belonging. In this, the landscape of home in the rural areas remains crucial for the migrants, despite the limited economic possibilities there. Memories of experiences and contemporary activities in nature are central to this. Altogether, this belonging is historical, spiritual, ideological and commodifying. The latter is specifically based on belonging to the city and the economic gains for which one goes there.

Together, the articles demonstrate that the historical questions of land, nature and belonging have become ever more complex and contested under the influence of neoliberal capitalism. In addition to the question of who the land belongs to, it is equally important to ask who belongs to the land, what this 'belonging' is based upon and how it is articulated, as the relevance of belonging in democratic states only seems to increase. Current global trends show how aggression, fascism and militarism are on the rise, based on articulations of inclusion and exclusion, of those who belong and those who do not, entwined with a large variety of capitalist interests. Achille Mbembe captures well what is at stake when we talk about belonging in dire times: as long as the earth is divided into states, most of which now embrace neoliberal capitalism as their dominant ideology, exclusion and difference continue to be 'a

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83 See also Koot and Büscher, 'Giving Land (Back)?', elsewhere in this issue.

politics of the state which, by clearly distinguishing between its own citizens – those who are seen to belong – and the rest, keeps at a firm distance all those who are not seen to belong'.[84]

The four articles demonstrate that indigenous identities are highly politicised and best understood, in de la Cadena and Starn's words, as 'a process, a series of encounters; a structure of power; a set of relationships; a matter of becoming, in short, and not a fixed state of being'.[85] In this part-special issue, our aim is to show how these processes, these acts and articulations of becoming, take place in an ever-increasing neoliberal capitalist society in southern Africa.

Acknowledgements

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84 Mbembe, *Een Politiek van Vijandschap*, pp. 65–6; the English translation of this book is not yet published, so the quote comes from A. Mbembe, 'The Society of Enmity', *Radical Philosophy*, 200 (2016), available at https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/article/the-society-of-enmity#fn2, retrieved 13 November 2018.
85 M. de la Cadena and O. Starn, 'Introduction', in M. de la Cadena and O. Starn (eds), *Indigenous Experience Today* (Oxford, Berg, 2007), p. 11.