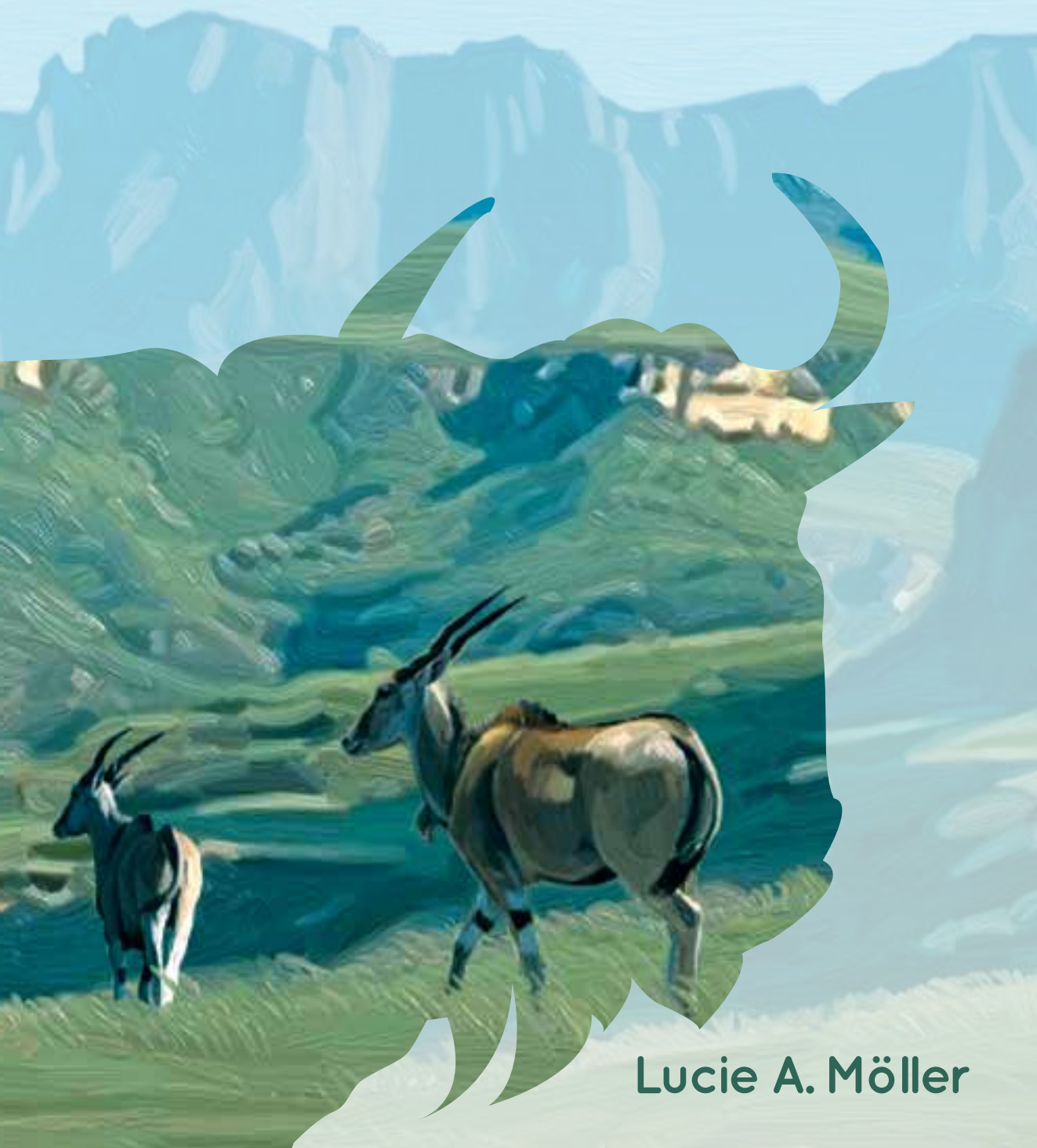


# *Of the same breath*

INDIGENOUS ANIMAL  
AND PLACE NAMES



Lucie A. Möller

*sb*

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*sb* **SUNBONANI  
SCHOLAR**

*Of the same breath – Indigenous animal and place names*

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# ABBREVIATIONS

ANUK: Aus Namaland und Kalahari

DACST: Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology

DGSM: Director-General (Directorate) of Surveys and Mapping

EC: Eastern Cape Province

LAT: Latitude

LONG: Longitude

MP: Mpumalanga

NC: Northern Cape

NP: Northern Province (now Limpopo)

NPNC: National Place Names Committee

NW: North West Province

PLAC: Database Place Names of Southern Africa

PLNM: Place Names Manual and Database

RZA: Reizen in Zuid-Afrika

SAGNC: South African Geographical Names Council

S-G: Surveyor-General (also used as SG-SWA)

SWA: South West Africa (now Namibia)

USBGN: United States Board on Geographic Names

UNGEGN: United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

USGAZ: United States Gazetteer of Southern Africa

VRS: Van Riebeeck Society

VRV: Van Riebeeck Vereeniging

WC: Western Cape

---

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# INTRODUCTION

Some of the hunter-gatherer Bushmen (San)<sup>1</sup> place names demonstrate the use of various basic naming devices, such as onomatopoeia (names or words created by sound imitation, here meant as imitation of animal and bird sounds), as well as imagery and description referring to physical characteristics or habits of these creatures. Onomatopoeia, description and imagery thus constitute the primary manifestations of onymic (name) formation, and are believed to have impacted on the evolutionary processes of language development and the act of naming. Where naming motives and patterns are concerned, a shift from common nouns (appellatives) to proper names can be observed, showing many animal names being included in names allocated to features of the landscape.

Successive migration into the sub-continent of southern Africa<sup>2</sup> and habitation of the region by Khoikhoi, Bantu and European peoples, as well as subsequent physical, social and linguistic contact, resulted in the assimilation and acculturation of these speakers and the changes to their proper names. This is illustrated inter alia in the many place names deriving from naming elements employed inter-linguistically in the users' naming activities, as well as the diversity of languages spoken in the southern African region. This acculturation influenced the interwoven tapestry of naming, i.e. displaying animal and place names in the many different voices from which they originated and the shared heritage they formed.

As the title of the book suggests, this study investigates place names that incorporate the often forgotten, and sometimes fossilised, remnants of indigenous animal names, focusing on the traces of Bushman and Khoikhoi sound-imitative (onomatopoeic), descriptive and metaphoric elements. It also focuses on some comparable names in the Bantu languages, and refers to the scientific zoological and ornithological terminology in which these names have been retained.

The overt theme is thus the presentation of indigenous animal names from various languages and how they appear in southern African toponyms or place names. While exploring the animal names, initially only in the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages, an underlying notion or sub-text emerged from the interlayered language interactions that took place as names developed and changed through time, and how they were transferred from one language to another, whether by adoption, adaptation,



hybridisation, translation or some other linguistic processes. It was soon realised that the cross-linguistic transfer of name elements or components into the common heritage of southern African place names, was much more complex in its interlinked reference systems, both in content and in the context of language contact.

In the search for the origins and etymologies of names, the narratives and legendarisations of the speakers became evident in the explanations provided, and often had to be considered within the pre-historic and pre-literate setting of cultural rituals such as the mimicking of animals in song and dance, folklore (storytelling, folktales), myths, phrases and other forms of expression. This was explored within an approach of onomastic, specifically paleo-toponymic studies. In other words, this study of names as found in ancient language layers, recognises the oral transfers and recorded words for animals, and those referring to land features, topographic entities, and so forth. It is also the study of names in often deeply embedded or underlying sub-structures of earlier Bushman forms of names, as recorded in the earliest transcripts of the incoming explorers. For example, the name for a type of 'jackal' as *!gaushi* in the place name Cossey; the cheetah as *t'gwassou*, *choassouw* and *χoasao-b* in Gosacha and Quassadi (qv).

What motivated this research was a fascination with the names and the namers who had bestowed them. The inspiration came from the sudden recognition that there was more to the 'unexplainable' place names, the names of 'unknown origin', and that the ancient words of the Bushman languages could hold the key to many of these opaque names. The hope and expectation with this study is, that in these names, one may find a re-sounding, a resonance of earlier, ancient voices to be listened to anew in name studies.

The intention with the book was that these names be recognised and restored, that it may be dedicated to all speakers of disappearing voices. It is not meant only for the serious linguists or onomasticians, but for all who have a genuine interest in the cultural legacy of names bestowed by these earliest namers. From this linguistic (cultural) level of names, one may find a reconnection to the natural world of the namers and the animals that they knew intimately well, and named as such. Along with this, a connection was sought to the animals, as presented in the animal names – to draw this 'breath of voices' through to the place names where they still echo within the many voices of the namers, and the animals themselves, and where so many of them have already vanished from our continent or are in the process of becoming extinct.

The approach was to work from a multidisciplinary and interlinguistic context, recognising the multi-layered and multi-lingual content of some names, often discovering new comparable elements, synonymous words, and equivalent name pairs or cognates. It became obvious that this kind of onomastic study, together with a scientific approach to both the natural world of animals, their characteristics, behaviour and habitats, required the same comparative approach, because most of the recordings were done from a perspective of uninitiated observers, or visitors to a newly discovered country. This was a land of wondrous animals and plants; a region inhabited by a previously unknown people, all living within this context of a highly divergent group of namers, and with whose negotiated collaboration in pronouncing, explaining and translating the names, the descriptions of these animals and their names could be understood.



Marching women, Ekuta cave, Erongo Mountains, Namibia [A. Viereck]

The subject matter of this book is varied, complicated and not without its challenges. It grew from some forty years of research on names, and a previous article or two, into a theme so divergent and challenging, that it became an all-encompassing, enriching experience. It necessitated opening up to many unexplored avenues of onomastic study, to that of zoology and other scientific fields of study; folk-etymological adaptations, earlier folklorist explanations and unusual points of view. A crucial discovery was in the detailed recordings in sources of how the early Bushman and Khoikhoi names for animals demonstrated their prowess of observation, the way the ‘first namers’ perceived certain animals and their ‘sounds’, which, in turn, provided new insights into the animals and their behaviour.

On an onomastic level, the essential notion, thus, was that onomatopoeia is a basic way in which words, particularly the names of animal and birds, are formed by imitation of the actual sounds made by those animals and birds, i.e. their ‘voices’. This was one of the naming devices, along with imagery and description, identified as underlying the forming of some names and lexical items that were conventionalised into words of a language, and possibly, also contributed to the origin of languages. The aim was to demonstrate the origins of some of these words, expressions and names, as captured in place names that point to many language threads in their various forms, and that these represent a shared, common heritage in the plethora of names from the Bushman, Khoikhoi and other indigenous languages, including Afrikaans. Within this context, an understanding was gained of the intricacies of the naming motives and formatives (i.e. from mere sounds to language utterances with agreed upon ‘meaning’) that were used in the naming processes, and of the value of the findings as a contribution to our understanding of these namers and the names they allocated. The evidence of these naming activities of the ‘first namers’ was found in abundance in the animal and place names of this region that spanned the whole of southern Africa.

On a linguistic level, a broader sub-theme emerged and developed into the notion that the language contact situations contributed to the relatedness of names in some African languages. Apart from the shared onomatopoeic and other naming triggers that existed among the languages, there were many adopted or borrowed ‘loan words’ that were adapted and translated into the receiver languages of the newcomers. These linguistic processes are explained in the Glossary and discussed in Chapter One with examples throughout the book. This chapter also deals with the onomastic and linguistic theoretical background, including a discussion of the language groups and language aspects involved in naming.

In the other chapters the animals are introduced with the many names bestowed on them by the Bushmen, the Khoikhoi and the newcomers from the north, the Bantu, and still later the Europeans, who recorded many of these names. The decision to assign certain animals to chapters and sections in the present book and to categorise animals together that do not belong to the same order, class or family, was based on linguistic grounds more than on taxa. Animals are sometimes grouped together as a species, family or tribe, but sometimes not strictly so. In other words, not necessarily by scientific zoological standards, but based on linguistic and / or onomastic considerations, according to how they were perceived (*cf.* Chapter one, par.1.5.2). The overall consideration here was usually the common name, often

in translated form, that had an underlying imagery or similarity, or pointed to some comparable behaviour pattern which may have prompted the common name. For instance, the swine-like, the horse family, the wildebeests, hyenas or wolves, bats as 'mouse-like' creatures, and others.

As the research progressed, it became clear that spelling and writing variations occurred because the writers came from differing mother-tongue backgrounds – the Portuguese, Dutch, French, English, German, and so forth. However, it was accepted that the initial recordings of animal names from the Bushman or Khoikhoi languages were as close to the verbal utterances as could be achieved, keeping in mind the writers' competence to graphically represent sounds and phonemes, although no standardised system had been developed for the click sounds, tonal aspects, and so forth, and how these should be transferred into the translated versions. It all depended on their skills to render the sounds of the animal names in writing, and to translate these words and names from an oral context, i.e. from the mouths of the interviewees through an interpreter to a translator, and then into written words for a language without a written form.

These names could be verified through comparison with cognate words, once they could be recognised in some of the oldest recorded place names, especially those accompanied by explanations provided by the speakers themselves, or those in translated form. The earliest recordings of words, metaphoric expressions and translated names provided the means by which they could be retraced. These were found to be the most reliable, since they were the closest to the real pronunciations, and had been correctly represented in writing; indicating actual sounds (onomatopoeia), or sound-initiated differentiations (as with clicks), and other expressions of meanings. All this could be achieved by the recorders, at a time when these animal and place names only existed in a few of the spoken languages left, and for which no writing nor orthographies had, as yet, been developed. It was also necessary to ensure that the earliest explanations provided as semantic backgrounds were, in fact, true, that the translated interpretations during interviews were correct, and that they could be verified against recorded words and names in lists and dictionaries compiled by newcomers who had writing skills.

To ignore these oldest renderings of the names would imply disregarding the first contacts the namers had with literate listeners, and at a time when the people still spoke these languages. Over time, much has been legendarised to such an extent that the real meaning of the original names no longer shine through. Since these

words and names have been changed and modernised according to the orthographic renderings of modern languages, as standardised today, many components in place names are almost totally unrecognisable and some have become devoid of meaning.

Of the remaining languages that have not become extinct, not many are spoken anymore, so that even the few Taa, Kx'a, and !Kwi (such as the !Kung, !Xun or !Xóǒ and Ju/'hoansi) speakers (as recently researched by Snyman (1974), Traill (1996), Boden (2011) and many others as presented in published works and on the Internet, for example, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taa\\_language/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taa_language/)), have become intermingled to such an extent that few speak the 'old' languages or remember much of these languages, their expressions, and names, as recorded in the previous four to five hundred years.

In addition to linguistic analyses and etymologies, this research has unearthed significant and meaningful data, including some of the oldest recordings of animal names retained in zoological taxa today, criteria for onomastic research based on the origins of these names as interpreted from original languages in first hand recordings, reports on observations as made by the earliest namers of the named animals and information on the animals' behaviour patterns. A hitherto unsuspected layer of Bushman influence on animal and place names has been revealed, based on onomatopoeic, metaphoric, descriptive and other onymic motives and processes. It is hoped that a new appreciation of the namers and their names, will be brought about, as these are affirmed to be original and reliable designations.

These names were recorded and documented with dedication, thereby revealing the subtleties and expressiveness of the languages. The lexical items as recorded, and the interpretations of these words and names, also place names, were derived from the explanations as they were provided to the incoming foreign recorders. The indigenous people reported to these scribes, their own concepts of their origins, their natural world, the entities and objects of their daily life – all as part of an oral transmission that retained its fluidity of expression, even in the difficult situation of translating it to the writers. They were providing a glimpse into their natural habitat and that of the animals; an insight into their interdependence with the fauna and flora in it; how this formed a conceptualisation of their cosmic world in which everything had a name. It also demonstrated their lexical prowess, the retracing of their own existence, history and heritage in an oral manner (Von Wielligh as discussed in Van Vuuren 2016:1-86).

This oral history already reflected the cultural milieu of a divergent, intermingled and acculturated group of peoples by the time the first foreigners arrived. Their accounts of why and how the allocation of these names came about, retold in their own 'voices' within myths and legends as well as in place names, demonstrate a complex phonemic system with clicks and sound clusters, unheard of before by the foreigners. These narrations of their own 'name giving', recorded by various writers and collectively published by Dorothea Bleek (1929, 1956), and as recalled in Bushman folklore and orality, depicting many animal forms even as images of therianthropic beings in their rock art (*cf.* W Bleek and Lucy Lloyd 1857, 1911, 1932; D Bleek 1936, 1940; Deacon and Deacon 1999:174; Van Vuuren 2016:25-27, 127), is what calls for recognition and appreciation of their cultural contribution, and for the continued restoration and preservation of their animal and place names.

Recognition of the 'first people' as namers, contributes to the appreciation of their place names, and becomes a focus to analyse and illustrate the interconnected tapestry of animal names in the different local indigenous languages. It shows how, when other languages came into the region, some of the animal and place names were altered, but at the same time, incorporated in another linguistic context, thus providing us with clues to the oldest preserved comparative names, albeit often only in translated forms. Recovering this Bushman and Khoikhoi nomenclature from almost forgotten designations for both animals and places, may hopefully lead to the restitution of these names to the cultural heritage of the originators, and with it, a form of restoration of the historic, linguistic and onomastic heritage of these peoples. This may aspire to what is stated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996:5), namely that the languages such as the Bushman, Khoikhoi, Nama and other indigenous minority languages, should be recognised, restored, respected and preserved.

Recognising the historicity of the Bushman and Khoikhoi oral sources indicates how these have inspired many authors in southern Africa over the years, to delve into the possible origins and meanings of, *inter alia*, the languages, the place names, folklore, the myths and legends and other aspects of their cultural life.

The written sources of the Bleeks and Lucy Lloyd, captured as digital archive (<http://lloydbleekcollection.cs.uct.ac.za/researchers.html>), are the most comprehensive on the Bushman and Koranna life-style, folklore, lexicon and languages, apart from studies by Meinhof (1929, 1930), Westphal (1962, 1963), Maingard (1964),

Engelbrecht (1936), Traill (1978, 1996) and many others. Dorothea Bleek, for instance, interviewed different Bushman groups herself and lectured for 15 years on the Bushman languages. She compiled two dictionaries on the various languages and dialects, and provided the most detailed and extensive word lists – classification of some 30 languages and dialects with an indication of the speakers and their areal distribution. Though other sources have also provided a wealth of documented information on these aspects of languages, words, names and place-names, no other scholars have matched her contribution.

On another level, the focus on animal behaviour patterns, habitat and distribution as recorded by zoologists and other scientists, added a new dimension and appreciation of the animals themselves. In this respect, a renewed interest was kindled by the studies done on mammal behaviour by world-renowned scientist, Richard Despard Estes (2012), and other sources, such as the Roberts (1954), Skead (1987) and Walker (1996) books on animals that contained indigenous names for these animals (enabling comparisons of animal names between languages), to observations and recordings on the documented former wide distribution of these animals in southern Africa before the decimation of these life forms and the silencing of their voices began.

The idea of preservation of an early vocabulary (found both in animal and place names) and of the local, indigenous cultures as a shared heritage, together with the rapidly disappearing biodiversity of the planet, may have been motivating thoughts here. This relates in a very real sense to what Edward O. Wilson expressed in his *Foreword* to the book by Estes (2012:xi), *The Behaviour Guide to African Mammals*: “If you know an animal’s behaviour well, you know its essence. ... To monitor the daily routines and life cycles of selected mammals is to engage the African wilderness intimately, to savor millions of years of evolution and the last stronghold of the ecosystem in which humanity itself originated – as a mammal species... The greater the number of resident people and visitors who understand the African environment at the level of animal behaviour, the more likely is the environment to be saved. ... To know a subject well, esthetically as well as actually, is to assign it greater value. Like art and historical associations devoted to the preservation of culture, groups of naturalists act to protect this equally precious and far more ancient part of humanity’s heritage”.

This viewpoint is endorsed by the author of the present book, and may have crystallised in the focus, here, on the origins of names from different indigenous languages, and

the similarities of such names, as found in the various contexts of the southern African continent, i.e. on the cultural and linguistic levels of the study area.

The recording of these names in reports and other archivalia, and with it the conveying of historical facts on fauna and flora and their natural habitats, indicating how they were before, and the testimonials about the last animal shot, or sightings of the presumed last specimens of certain animals, was not only a warning of an imminent decline, but was becoming an irreversible reality (cf. Roberts 1954; Skead 1987; Walker 1996; Branch 1998; Estes 2012).

The behavioural patterns, including vocalisations of these animals, were felt to be on some instinctive level, intertwined with and reflected in the song and dancing rituals and naming actions of the 'first peoples' as ancestral namers. These 'naming' actions, including the first recognisable naming elements or onymic formatives in the later recorded words, myths, folklore and place names, were possibly initially expressed as sound imitations, as argued by Westphal (1962:30, referring to Roman Stopa 1935): "The uniqueness of the clicks in the languages of the world and the apparent primitivity of the non-Bantu peoples who spoke click languages led several linguistic theoreticians to suppose that clicks were fundamental and original human noises and that they were perhaps basic to all languages of the world." In the present study, these actions are recognised as possibly some of the first human sounds utilised to imitate the vocalisations and other aspects of non-human, i.e. animal behaviour patterns, as reflected in their names and in place names.

Other characteristic features of the animal, such as appearance, colour, spotted or striped, large or small, were often conceptualised as 'pictures' and presented as images in their rock art, but often also depicted in various descriptive ways. In naming, it is illustrated by the powerful imagery, the visualisation and metaphoric capabilities of these namers, for example, the cheetah seen as the 'painted runner', the rhino as the 'near-sighted-one', the elephant as the 'trampler'.





Rock-painting in the Jatow cave, Erongo, Namibia [A. Viereck]

In bringing together some of these ancient references to animals with the modern scientific interpretations of their behaviour, their names and the place names in which these animal names appeared as components, the oldest sources often proved most reliable. Many of these names were rediscovered in consulting the Bleek and Lloyd archives (<http://www.lloydbleekcollection.cs.uct.ac.za/researchers.html>), the Dorothea Bleek dictionaries, the Roberts book on *Mammals of South Africa* (1954), where numerous indigenous names from the Bantu languages were recorded, with CJ Skead's work on the *Historical incidence of the larger mammals of the Western and Northern Cape Vol 1* and the *Eastern Cape, Transkei and Ciskei Vol II* (1980, 1988, 2011), and GS Nienaber's *Hottentots* (1963), in which Afrikaans animal names were recorded alongside some of the oldest recordings of these names from the Old Cape dialects, Griqua, Koranna and Nama.

A link was sought between the animal names, as found in historically recorded texts with the name components, as retraced in place names, and as they appear in written contexts today. It was evidently not easy to establish exactly how the process of naming (onymic formation) developed within a complex multilingual situation, where acculturation of the namers and trans-language exchange processes of borrowing, adaptation and translation (possibly with a good measure of code-switching between speakers, cf. the *hlonipa* custom), had occurred over many hundreds or thousands of years with other language groups entering the area. As

Van Vuuren (2016:59) mentions: “That acculturation took place between Khoi, Bushmen and Nguni (such as the Zulu, Xhosa and Swazi) cultures is by now well established ... Thus a reading of traditional cultures, customs and beliefs within a comparative framework across linguistic divides is richly rewarding”.

Acculturation between these early San, Khoikhoi and Bantu speakers may have led to many animal and place names with comparable vowel and other phonemic similarities, revealing close language contact between the early namers. The aim was to determine how similar naming elements or formatives, when compared to equivalents in other languages, often indicated derivations of, or borrowed, or cognate forms. Another goal was to verify the etymologies of the names according to established onomastic methods. Some examples of these methods are using the ‘sound-meaning’ method, comparing topographic cluster formations, geographical and linguistic affirmation of the entity named, its name in various languages, its phonological form (pronunciation according to the IPA), and to the various orthographic representations often confusingly different, especially in the case of less transparent, opaque components.

In this study on animal names, it emerged that there were many fossilised words not found elsewhere in the vocabularies as recorded in the standard works on the Khoikhoi languages, that these were actually from Bushman and could, in some cases, be recognised as pure sound imitations or metaphors; also that these may have been misinterpreted by ‘later comers’. These words and names are a shared heritage, because these animal and place names are inter-linguistically linked, reflecting heliographically on and into each language in which they occur, or have been borrowed and adapted from. They were often translated from and into languages that came into contact, adapted both phonologically and grammatically and re-interpreted on a folk-etymological level. These names have been adjusted and preserved through the processes of borrowing and translation over many years, yet their origins from a keen observation of nature, from storytelling, characters as spiritual and mythical beings, continue to fascinate scholars. A quote from Van Vuuren( 2016:165-166) may illustrate this, where she comments on the technique of the ‘*dwaalstories*’ (cf. Eugene Nielen Marais’ *Dwaalstories*, 1927), that are described as “stories that originated in the animal tales of the San, where each animal spoke his own language... and that were translated into Afrikaans... the stories have no clear narrative threads and little meaning, except for the word sounds, but they stimulate the imagination ...”.

When analysing the colloquial, local usage of animal names in some languages or literary texts recorded from the oral traditions of the Bushman and Khoikhoi, and from reports of the acculturation that happened with incoming peoples in these contact situations, as well as in studies on the orality of the local people of an area, it became obvious that where these animals were observed and named, their names featured in place names too. Where local knowledge contained in the colloquial names was documented, it allowed us to gain new insights into the indigenous customs, beliefs, myths, legends and naming activities, reflecting their history and depicting their social and cultural heritage.

In Bleek's *Comparative Vocabularies of Bushman Languages* (1929: *Introduction*, 1-4, 8, 10), she elaborated on the Bushmens' ability of story telling, of communicating with much gesticulation, pointing, imitation, also sound mimicking (onomatopoeia). The intricacies of their vocabulary and ability of self-expression were equally highlighted throughout her works in the collection of Bushman folklore and mythology; words, phrases and songs, the explanations of dance and other rituals, religious, astronomical and other concepts.

Van Vuuren (2016:32-33) further noted that the transfer of complex thought and knowledge about plants, insects and other animals was already evident in the storytelling and mythology of the San as recorded by the Bleeks, Lucy Lloyd and G.R von Wielligh. It was a necessary skill to acquire for a 'primitive' society living so close to nature. In being able to gather information and sustenance from it, they were enabling themselves to survive in an otherwise 'hostile' environment. It required of small family groups, even if comprised of only a few individuals, that this knowledge be transmitted to ensure the 'wholeness' of a stable and strong societal base, within a social context where elders were the 'teachers', re-enacting within the orality of their culture the myths, stories of how animals behaved, even 'spoke in their own language'. In this manner they were teaching the younger generation about their environment, the customs and beliefs, of the natural life and dangers around them. In other words, all the knowledge necessary for survival. It is in this natural environment, and in the circle of a close familial and cohesive social milieu that the words and names for animals, plants and all other entities, also abstract concepts, were created or evolved from various experiences within this setting. Van Vuuren quotes Barnard (2012:7; 146-148): "The intimate, intricate knowledge is turned into myths of origin while at the same time relaying precise information about the behaviour of insects and animals, an astounding feat".

Although this ability of the indigenous peoples had been recorded from the earliest reports of travellers to the southern African continent, and has been extensively researched and disclosed in some reports on languages, intra- and inter-linguistic contact situations (as in the works of the Bleeks, Lucy Lloyd, Traill, Boden, Skotnes, and G.R von Wielligh as indicated by Van Vuuren, 2016); their intricate inter-relatedness to nature as highlighted in numerous anthropological and other scientific works (see Bibliography) was only gradually researched by name scholars. The full impact of the inter-linguistic contact within the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages and their contribution to the naming of animals and places, however, remained mainly unexplored in onomastics.

Acknowledging and illustrating the extent to which these speakers had already experienced the loss of their disappearing languages, and that of the land and the natural world around them; of all that they had depicted in their 'pictures' (rock paintings), described and named in myths, legends and stories, the fauna and flora, the features of their environment such as the surrounding plains, mountains and rivers, and their dependence on the animals in a shared landscape, became a palette for this study. Their language and cultural heritage is still encapsulated in their oral traditions, in their naming and in the authentication of their place names as recorded, and that is, where the *spoor* of evidence may still be traced.

This research brought an awareness of their intrinsic role and contribution of a cultural and spiritual legacy of names, something that not only reminds us of the transience of life in all its forms, but fills us with awe to this day. The fragility of human and non-human existence is captured in their art and these names. Their explanations of animal names and interpretations of their behaviour, were often presented with humor, often with great respect and reverence for the animals. And perhaps *that* is the wonder of their continued 'absent presence' (Van Vuuren 2016:iii), that with their naming activities and within their names, specifically place names, just as in their rock art, this legacy of their cultural and spiritual life lives on, has, in fact, been immortalised.



Family on the move, Jatow caves, Erongo, Namibia [A. Viereck]

# PART ONE

## Naming





# CHAPTER ONE

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## Language threads in naming

### 1.1 Background to the vocabulary of animal names

The earliest inhabitants of southern Africa, of whose languages we have any written record, are the Bushmen (San) and the Khoikhoi. These autochthonous peoples, and possibly their predecessors, gave common names to many wild animals and birds by observing them closely and naming them according to their appearance, colouring, behaviour and vocalisations. Their distinctive characteristics, especially the sounds emitted by them, were often emulated by the early speakers in the names they gave them. The animal names were then, over time, allocated to places which they recognised by the occurrence of these animals and birds. The result was a vocabulary of common nouns, rich in sound-associative and descriptive elements, drawn from a variety of Bushman and Old Cape Khoikhoi languages and dialects; its diversity further highlighted in its application to toponyms in which its adoption, adaptation and translation by speakers of other languages becomes apparent (Pettman 1931:13-17; Raper *et al* 2014:ix-xviii, xxii). The place names, therefore, already highly diverse in origin, illustrate a socio-cultural and linguistic heritage interlocked in the coinage and usage of these common names in southern Africa.

The aim of this research was to rediscover traces of Bushman and Khoikhoi onomatopoeic, descriptive and metaphoric naming motives and patterns in southern African animal names, as relating to typical animal behaviour. Furthermore, the aim is also to link some of these common names to toponyms and names in other African languages, thereby highlighting the interlinguistic contact that occurred over many thousands of years (Werner 1925:117-129).

The research entailed finding cognate Bushman and Khoikhoi words for components in toponyms that initially seemed opaque or semantically bleached, but were found to apparently refer to names of animals, birds, reptiles and insects, in their root elements. In this way, they were linked to the oldest recordings of such words and names. Analysis



of these toponyms indicated that some elements or components may have been formed by sound-associative, descriptive or metaphoric processes, and, as indicated in the fieldwork and findings from research done by various researchers over many years, were explained as onomatopoeic or descriptive references to certain animals and birds. The relevance of the zoological and topographic information included in the explanations had to be ascertained, also that these names had indeed been coined by the Stone Age hunter-gatherers as ‘first namers’, the Khoikhoi herders and later Iron Age agro-pastoralists, as gleaned from the sources on the Bushman, Khoikhoi and Bantu languages.

### 1.1.1 *Early naming motives and formatives*

In southern Africa some place names, when initially analysed in their structural and etymological or ‘semantic’ origins, seem to display certain sound-associative or onomatopoeic components reminiscent of animal vocalisations, or are descriptions of sounds and behavioural patterns that may be recognised in the common names referring to these animals. More directly, some emulated, imitated or mimicked animal behaviour, e.g. the vocalisations and other behavioural traits of animals, can be reconciled with the descriptive elements pointing to these characteristics, even to some metaphoric associations in the names of animals, as found in toponyms. These elements have been recorded and documented from the earliest travels to and into Africa, i.e. by the Portuguese, French, Dutch and English seafarers, by the explorers and missionaries, soldiers and administrators. The toponyms created from such common noun references to the fauna therefore abound in the region.

Rediscovering sound-associative naming patterns in ancient name forms for both animals and birds in Bushman, Khoikhoi and Bantu languages, has shed some light on this type of nomenclature, as well as on many of the toponyms that were previously regarded as unknown, problematic to explain as to origin and meaning, or would require a “thorough knowledge of the native languages” (Botha 1926:29-30). In some cases, the indigenous words in toponyms can be traced back to the original Bushman cognate words or common names of animals used on a wider scale within the Khoi-San and Bantu languages spoken in southern Africa.

Bushman influence on place names in other languages may be traced and demonstrated by employing the comparative ‘sound-meaning’ method (Heine & Honken 2010:11), by comparing such place-name elements with possible Bushman

equivalents or cognates that correspond to them semantically and phonologically, “using regular sound correspondences as a basis for tracing phonological and morphological features” (Heine & Honken 2010:32). Semantic correspondence is also essential, since “relying only on phonological correspondence may result in folk-etymological, mythological, analogous and other possible misinterpretations” (Raper & Möller 2015:389-399).

The names were initially used in the category of common nouns or ordinary appellative references to the specific animals as species or sub-species, references which were later applied to place names, that is, utilised by ‘evolutionary onymic processes’, and through acculturation, i.e. socio-physical, cultural and language contact situations, they were adopted, adapted, hybridised and translated as “primary toponymic formatives” into other languages (Raper & Möller 2015:389). They continue to operate as more than just paleo-linguistic relics or obsolete elements in place names.

A few of these common nouns used as animal names, have become international onymic coinage, first in the earliest travel journals and reports back to the European countries, then as accepted terminology into the taxonomic ‘species-specific’, or species type descriptions. They were consolidated as terminological, common name designators, used internationally in scientific works on mammals, reptiles, birds and insects.

In imitating animal vocalisations, the later Stone Age and early Iron Age people acquired and developed a unique vocabulary referring, very specifically, to the fauna and flora around them. The focus here is on some common animal names, mainly from Bushman and Khoikhoi, but also some Bantu names, that evolved through toponymic creativity, and within language contact situations, to the status of full-fledged toponyms, i.e. applied to topographical features and used in a variety of other languages. The evolutionary processes by which or wherein the common nouns referring to animal vocalisations and other behavioural traits, metaphoric and descriptive elements, were transferred or employed as references to place names, were linked, naturally, to the entities or places of the region where these animals were seen, or known to occur in great enough numbers to warrant the naming of a place after them (Botha 1926; Pettman 1931; Nienaber 1963; Skead 1973, 1987, 1993; Nienaber & Raper 1977, 1980; Möller 2014). It may also be assumed that these names and toponyms are not only evidence of the earliest evolutionary onymic and toponymic processes, but that they are also examples of socio-physical, cultural

and linguistic contact between, and with other language speakers. They have been found as fossilised phonological and morphological components, albeit often only as partially adapted and hybridised elements, but often enough as full translations in the toponymic heritage of southern Africa.

This onomatopoeic creativity, both in naming motives and patterns, may reflect the first formative onymic elements in some of the first namers' toponymic activities. When these names are analysed to determine their possible origins, and a comparison is made with cognate words, common nouns and names of animals in other African languages, the evidence documented from interviews and fieldwork, and other research into the earliest recordings of these unwritten, pre-literate languages, is astoundingly similar. Documentation of these names, such as those done on Bushman and Korana by Wilhelm Bleek (1857, 1870-1875; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WilhelmBleek/>); also together with Lucy Lloyd (<http://www.lloydbleekcollection.cs.uct.ac.za/researchers.html/>); and her *Lists of Koranna names of animals and plants* (published in 1932 by LF Maingard), elaborated on by Dorothea Bleek with further fieldwork and compilation of vocabularies and dictionaries (1929, 1956), C Meinhof (1929, on Bushman grammar); those on Khoikhoi and Nama by the earliest explorers, philologists and missionaries such as JG Kroenlein (1861, 1889), J Olpp (1876, 1884), C Meinhof (1909, 1929, 1930), GS Nienaber (1963), Fr. Rust (1969), later by GS Nienaber & PE Raper (1977, 1980), WHG Haacke & E Eiseb (2002), etc.; and some of the Bantu languages as done on Zulu by JW Colenso (1884), AT Bryant (1965), TJR Botha (1977), CM Doke & BW Vilakazi (1953, 2005), CM Doke, DMcK Malcolm and JMA Sikakana (1958, 2005); on Northern Sotho by LJ Louwrens (1994); on Herero names as done by i.a. H Brockmann (1941), J Irle (1917), Fr. Rust and J Göllnitz (1942), APJ Albertyn (1984); extensive fieldwork on Herero and Damara by K Binding and T Tjihapiu (1980-1984); and the zoologists and ornithologists such as A Roberts (1954, 1978), CJ Skead (1973, 1987, 1993), Richard Despard Estes (1991, 2012), Clive Walker (1996); orthopterists like Daniel Otte (1974, 1994, 2009, 2012, 2014, etc.), and many more; botanists such as J Watt and G Breyer-Brandwijk (1962) and CA Smith (1966), all contributed to a better understanding of the animals, plants and the possible onymic processes that could be deduced from these works, too. The zoologists' recordings of animal and insect behaviour and their indigenous names reveal a compelling set of data indicating common nouns or 'root words' derived from such onomatopoeic renderings of animal sounds, metaphoric associations and descriptive elements applied to the names of animals that were then transferred into the toponymic stock of southern Africa.



Figure 1.1.1: Two hunters in Namibia [Daniel Otte]

### 1.1.2 *The diversity of languages and cultures in naming*

The concept of diversity of languages within a system of a shared heritage, as relating to toponyms with onomatopoeic, descriptive and metaphoric elements, implied that a closer look be taken at how and where these toponyms originated; from which possible languages, and the context in which these languages operated. Broadly speaking, the context here relates to speakers of different languages and from different eras, e.g. from Stone Age hunter-gatherers, the Bushmen or San (see comments on the term *San* by Raper 2012:4-6; Van Vuuren 2016:155), to the Khoikhoi who became pastoralists within the contact situations with incoming Bantu speakers (Stopa 1970, 1972; Snyman 1974; Louw 1974; Jenkins and Tobias 1978; Traill 1978); to Iron Age agro-pastoralists (including some sections of the eastern Khoikhoi), the Bantu and so on, as indicated by Louw (1974:45-47); Mountain (2003: 18, 22-24) and many more. Regarding the San and Khoikhoi (including early Khoe-Kwadi) peoples and their languages, it is generally accepted that the San were the autochthonous people already established in the region of southern Africa to parts of Central Africa before the Khoe-Kwadi and Bantu speakers entered the area. (Cf. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taa\\_language/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taa_language/); the DoBeS project, i.e. the Documentation of Endangered Languages; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khoisan\\_languages\\_historical.PNG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khoisan_languages_historical.PNG)).

Bleek identified 29 different Bushman languages and dialects, and documented words and phrases from these in her *Comparative vocabularies of Bushman languages* (1929) and *A Bushman Dictionary* (1956). She classified the Bushman languages

and dialects into three groups namely the Northern, Central and Southern groups (1927, 1929, 1956). (See maps on language group distribution below). Westphal (1962:33; 1963:243, 248) added the western branch of Bushman languages known as *G/wi*, (also written as */gwi*, *!wi*) and their speakers; and other Bushmen described as living to the west of the Waterberg, south of the Limpopo and called the *Masele* also known as '*Vaalpense*' (apparently because of their "mixed Bushman and Black descent" according to Schlömann, 1898:66-70; cf. Van der Ryst 2003:42-52), who were also distinct from the //Xegwi or Batwa of Chrissiesmeer.

Other authors such as Jenkins and Tobias (1978:53) indicated the differences and similarities between the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages, and accordingly, after the 1971 agreement at the interdisciplinary symposium on 'The peoples of Southern Africa', suggested: "to call the former languages 'Bushman' and the latter 'Hottentot,'" and recommended that the usage "be confined to this cultural linguistic usage". They also noted that "further study of the varied languages in these groups may lead this classification to be modified with time". This happened soon enough with 'Hottentot' becoming unacceptable and linguists reverting to using the term 'Khoikhoi' for the language as well.

The notion of language families and the distribution of Bushman, Khoikhoi and Bantu languages in southern Africa has long vexed linguists as well as anthropologists. Whether the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages are members of the same language family or not, is therefore still being disputed today. These languages and dialects have been grouped, by various writers, into categories with models of diagrams and tables indicating the main languages as recorded over more than 400 years, those extinct or becoming moribund, and those still being spoken by small groups today (Snyman 1974:29-31, with maps redrawn from Westphal 1962; see also ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khoisan\\_languages\\_historical.PNG/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khoisan_languages_historical.PNG/); [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taa\\_language/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taa_language/)) and Starostin (2008), for later categorisations.

As to the origin, historical background and / or relatedness of the Khoikhoi and the San languages, the debate still remains open and has not yet been clarified to satisfaction, even scholars who have worked on the subject for many years, not necessarily agreeing (Westphal 1962; Snyman 1974; Louw 1974; Jenkins & Tobias 1978; Traill 1978, 1996, 2007; Nienaber 1963, 1989). That the collective languages and dialects of both the Bushman and Khoikhoi language groups belong to 'click languages', though, is accepted. <sup>3</sup>

The usage of the reference term Khoisan, Khoesan or Khoi-San, is not acceptable either to the Khoikhoi nor the San, although it is usually applied in contexts by linguists as a general term that refers to a collective grouping of the Khoi-San speakers, for linguistic purposes only, as in this text, though it is not necessarily meant to refer to a homogeneous group of speakers nor as a people (Raper 2012:2-3). Various anthropologists and linguists, such as Westphal (1962); Snyman (1974), Jenkins & Tobias (1978) and Traill (1978, 2007), have argued, though, that even on a linguistic level, the term 'Khoisan' is not tenable, yet, for lack of alternatives, it continues to be used.<sup>4</sup>

The Khoikhoi languages also differed greatly and groups from different areas could not understand each other readily, although Louw (1974:46, quoting I & J Rudner 1970:105) argues the opposite. From an anthropological viewpoint, it would seem possible, and it is argued, especially in the light of recent DNA findings, that the people may have originated from the same, ancient, proto-family group, but that the Khoikhoi living in the eastern and southern areas became agro-pastoralists and part of the agrarian cultures sooner because of earlier contact and acculturation with the incoming Bantu. Snyman (1974:29) suggests that the "term Khoisan be used in a non-linguistic sense to signify all those people who were found without an iron-smelting and iron-working tradition".

The incoming Khoe-Kwadi or Kwadi-Khoe peoples who spoke various Khoe and Kwadi languages entered the area where Bushmen roamed, and it can be accepted that the linguistic acculturation began from that time. It is not clear whether the Khoe/Khoikhoi languages are of the same family as the languages of the Bushmen. Some sources clearly divide Bushman and Khoikhoi languages into two or more separate families, and some regard them as the same family; others again argue that they should not be regarded as related languages. Snyman (1974:33), for instance, argues: "One cannot simply state that two languages belong to different groups without pointing out differences in comparable language items ... the Bushman and Hottentot languages should not be regarded as related languages ... The fact that the Bushman languages differ from the Hottentot languages is clear. In addition it is obvious that the establishment of a genetic relationship between the Bushman languages seems remote". Traill (1978:144) states that the languages spoken by the Khoikhoi and San are widely divergent and different from each other, so much so that there is no unanimity on the question of whether these languages are in fact related to each other (Traill 1978:147; 1996:161-183).

A criticism to this classification by Westphal (1962) and Snyman (1974) because of a lack of conversion rules, came from Traill (1978:139), who argued that it does not alter the fact that words in some 'obviously related' dialects are 'overwhelmingly and obviously similar' (Traill 1978:145). Although it has been postulated by some scholars that the Khoikhoi and San languages are linguistic relatives of each other (Louw 1974:46; Traill 1978:137, Starostin 2008), the grammatical systems of these languages manifest such great linguistic diversity that "it is not possible to provide a general 'grammar of the Bushman languages,' nor is it possible to refer to 'typical characteristics,' since they do not exist" (Traill 1978, 139).

Snyman (1974:29-33) also disputed a direct relationship between the Khoikhoi and Bushman languages: "...the Bushman and Hottentot languages should not be regarded as related languages...", yet, in his set of comparable words, he chose words that are strikingly similar in phonology, sometimes identical or very similar, with only the gender suffixes differing. Or, as has been observed by many scholars and from many related linguistic and onomastic studies: the orthographic renderings by various writers may have caused the differences in words to appear notably greater than they actually were. Snyman further suggests "that [even] the establishment of a genetic relationship between the Bushman languages seems remote" (Snyman 1974:33). Yet, some studies suggest with equal strength that there may have been a link between the dispersion (diaspora) of the speakers (and by implication, their languages), as indicated by gene frequencies and serological studies (Jenkins & Tobias 1977:52); mitochondrial and DNA studies of today, that may indicate a genetically related group of clans with an ancestral language(s) from which all other languages derived (Atkinson 2011, as reviewed by Nicholas Wade in *The New York Times*: A1, with Map).<sup>5</sup>

In this study both viewpoints are reflected, and the languages of the Bushmen are discussed under the general term 'Bushman,' and the Khoikhoi languages under Old Cape dialects, Khoikhoi, Khoekhoegowab (formerly Nama), Koranna and Griqua, depending on examples and the sources quoted. Whether the Khoi-San languages are descended from a common ancestral language or not, is irrelevant to the present study.

On the notion of Bantu language families and Bantu languages and how they migrated from an area of Central Africa's Great Lakes into the south-eastern and south-western regions of southern Africa, several typologies have been suggested over the years. If the projected typologies of *inter alia* Guthrie (1948,1971) and



Greenberg (1955, 1963 with his method of "mass comparison"; as of 1987 replaced by the term "multilateral comparison") on the African languages were regarded as classical typologies of the African and / or Bantu languages, one has to acknowledge that they have to some extent been refuted (Greenberg mainly by Westphal, 1962, Ringe 1993, Campbell 1997), and therefore remain a subject of debate to this day (Cf. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guthrie\\_classification\\_of\\_Bantu\\_languages/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guthrie_classification_of_Bantu_languages/); [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph\\_Greenberg\\_Language\\_typologies/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Greenberg_Language_typologies/)). A number of new typologies have been suggested by other authors since then.

The southward-migrating branches of the Bantu moved into the areas of the southern sub-continent of Africa more or less some 3000 to 2000 years ago into regions now called Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and so forth. The southern branch of the Bantu languages consist of about 4 major language families and 15 different languages in South Africa ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages\\_of\\_South\\_Africa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages_of_South_Africa)). The western branch of the Bantu or *i(si)Ntu*-speakers, comprising the Herero, Mbanderu, Ovambo, Ondangwa, Kalanga or Karanga, Lozi, Yei (also written as Yeyi, which appears to have developed from a different lineage) and others, e.g. those that moved into the western and northern regions of the sub-continent and into the Angolan area, all encountered the Khoikhoi and the Bushmen or San, who had been established in the region long before the influx of the Bantu, as well as one of the earliest groups of people in the area, the Damaras. The Eastern-Bantu branch including the Nguni, Sotho, Tswana, and so on, also moved into areas already inhabited for millenia by the Stone Age peoples, the Bushmen and Khoikhoi, finding them right down to the coastal areas of the Eastern and Western Cape and along the interior, over the Drakensberg range, and into the far western regions of the Northern Cape.

A look at the various classification models and categorisations into the various ethnic groups gives an indication of the differences and similarities, or convergences on the subject of language families, groupings of different speakers, and so forth. The presentation of these earlier typological classifications of the African languages, including the Bushman and the Khoikhoi languages and dialects as click languages, and on the other hand the Bantu languages, within modern thought, can be accessed further from websites as quoted above and in the bibliography.

Within this context of language families and possible ancestral proto-languages for certain language processes, an anonymous reviewer commented that "knowing what language families the earliest and later languages of southern Africa belong to



is essential for understanding the linguistic and onomastic processes” as discussed in the text, for example “where mention is made of language contact, resulting in the adoption, adaptation, hybridisation and translation of many of the designations” and where these interlinguistic actions took place. “The equally important process of linguistic change from a proposed ancestral root, whereby gradual change, including marked periods of sound shift, changes a ‘proto-language’ into the later quite distinct languages spoken by peoples who have separated geographically from the original site of the proto-language. Such separate languages, derived from the same ancestral root, show their genetic relationship through a significant number of sets of cognates: words with the same or similar meaning and the same or similar shape...When apparently completely different, as in Southern Sotho *poli* and Zulu *imbuzi*, both meaning ‘goat’, the difference can be explained by predictable sound-shifts and morphological structure”.

The Bushman words for ‘goat’ as recorded in the various languages are written as *biri*, *piri*, *huri*, *burri*, *buli*, *puri*, *pudi*, *pu:li*, *vufi*, and some phonologically underscore the Zulu *mbuzi*, whilst Southern Sotho *poli* relates to Bushman *podu*, *poli*, also written as *poree* (the variation of *r* and *l* evident) and used interchangeably as a variant of *b-(e)ri-* (Nienaber 1963:179). Nienaber, quoting Tindall (1857), points to the variation in e.g. gender suffix indications either as *-p* or *-b* in the normal word ending or ‘Auslaut’ position, but omitted here, which could indicate the earlier Bushman origin in the expression which pre-dates the Nama, also the wide-spread differences in the vowel pronunciations. These variations are, of course, all cognates to the same root word of which no postulated, ‘fixed’, ancestral proto-type can as yet be determined.

Since the focus of this study is on the oldest words for animals as recorded from the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages, and on how these names were rediscovered in the toponyms of the region, the comparison drawn to Bantu examples is mainly to indicate the interlinguistic and onomastic processes of onomatopoeia, adoption, adaptation and translation at work. That some names are compared with equivalent or related names in the Bantu languages, is therefore part of the verification and validation process. As part of the argument, how the language speakers came into contact, how acculturation took place also on the level of expressions, words and names, and how these were adopted and translated into the incoming languages to form a toponymic landscape unique to the region, that is indeed the relevant topic here, and forms part of the main thrust of this study.

There is, however, no certainty as to whether there was only one ancestral language or to which language or language group the ancestral “root language” could be retraced. Discussing the question of language contact or genetic relationship, Heine & Honken (2010:7) state that, in linguistic reconstruction, “there is no viable means of separating inherited from borrowed material”. Hitherto, no-one has investigated the interlinguistic shifts between Bushman and Bantu languages relating to animal names, except Boden (2011) referring to some !Xoon place names in the southern Omaheke region. On the basis of comparisons of different words, the interchangeability or variability of vowels, consonants, clicks and phonemes may be determined. One of the objectives of the present study is precisely to determine these patterns, or at least to provide material for future research to do so.

It should also be noted that sound shifts are only predictable and retraceable in a retrospective manner, where these ‘predictable’ processes may be recognised within a comparable context. The few examples from the text where this may have occurred, may illustrate that even here there is no predictable fixed sound-shift-formula; the lemmas may illustrate an underlying embeddedness of related sounds, phonemes, click adaptations, grammatical or syntactical adjustments, or indicate orthographic variations, rather than initial sound shifts, having taken place after adaptation had occurred. In each case in this study, it had to be pointed out that it is not always as clear-cut as one would assume.

Most words and names from the Bushman languages have become obsolete, together with the languages from which they originated, of which most are now extinct. These ancient word and name forms are often only recognisable as relic components in place names and retracing them remains difficult, albeit often only as faint *langue* footprints left by the speakers of these languages. Another complication is that there is not always a clear indication of whether the word was initially derived from an ancestral root word, or whether it was borrowed, became a ‘loan word’ through acculturation, and that adaptation began by the ‘borrowers’ or ‘receiver’ language speakers. Eventually the speakers of the originating languages themselves ‘interpreted’ the words into the receiver language, who with the newly acquired language skills of the ‘borrowing’ languages, could explain the concepts as well (perhaps even with some code switching to make the application clear, although this is not seen as a fundamental process here), or by adapting to the phonological, grammatical and structural system of the receiver languages, and by translating these words and names themselves into the receiver languages.

An illustration of ‘predictable’ sound correspondences (as between Khoikhoi and some Bushman languages, or between the Nguni, Sotho, Tswana and other Bantu languages), that would prove how the development of individual lexicons in different genetically related languages, from an ancestral lexicon, could serve as ‘proof’ of the notion of language families and how these lexicons developed, is not the focus here. Although this may have emerged as another sub-text to be considered, it too falls outside the field of the present study and is not pursued further. How apparently identical words that refer to the names of animals, may or may not be derived from or be cognates of ancestral equivalent words, *is* pursued further, however.

One could argue that a certain set of words can prove the above hypothesising around genetic or linguistic relatedness or not; the fact remains that scholars of divergent fields do not agree on the subject. Various models have been projected, mostly based on previous classifications of the Bushman language families and the speakers; the languages themselves are more difficult to categorise. Not all categorisations are quite satisfactory, although some consensus has been reached by scholars over the years. The decision by the present author to keep to Bleek’s classification was taken because Bleek herself did extensive fieldwork, recorded thousands of words, and compiled comprehensive word lists from her predecessors and compiled two dictionaries on these documented records. These works are the only ones that incorporate words from the array of Bushman languages possibly still spoken at the time, and in a manner that standardises in usable form (with indication of IPA pronunciation in each case), the spelling and styling of words that were recorded by previous writers in a variety of conventional, unconventional and idiosyncratic ways. From the Bleek dictionaries, the lexical and onomatopoeic elements could be compared and traced in the oldest recordings of place names.

The focus of this book is on the animal names and how they originated from various motives, onymic triggers or formatives that evolved into words or common nouns, and were subsequently employed creatively as names, as they are recognised in toponyms to this day. The focus is thus not on the actual evolutionary development of the languages themselves, but on the words and name elements from a variety of possible ancestral ‘proto-languages’, since there might not have been only one ancestral root or proto-language. As demonstrated, modern thoughts on this subject grew and changed dramatically over the past four hundred years, and several other models of proto-languages and the grouping of the speakers were proposed as stated above (cf. *Bibliography*). There may have been various proto-languages

in different regions, e.g. even the Bantu languages may have come from different ancestral proto-types, compare the Sotho, Nguni and Tswana languages that differ greatly. The Bushman languages comprised at least some 30 languages and dialects; many of them extinct today – so a comparison of sound shifts or similar sounds in other languages proves extremely difficult. The Khoikhoi languages are a divergent group as can be seen from the Korana, Griqua, Nama and various Old Cape dialects. Linguists, anthropologists, historians and other scholars have written extensively on this subject, and indicated that not all these speakers could necessarily understand each other. Traill (1978:147; 1996:163, 177), for instance, had concluded that the “languages were mutually unintelligible” though Louw (1974:46) had differed on this, and Traill later (1996:174-175) elaborated on this aspect by explaining that translation was often conducted through bilingual Bushmen, Khoikhoi or other indigenous people speaking !Ora, Griqua or the Cape Dutch language. Nienaber (1963) makes the distinction that the oldest Cape Khoikhoi or Hottentot dialects, as these had been observed and recorded since the sixteenth century, could be divided into the Kaaps, Kaap-Saldanha (western) and the ‘Oostelike Kaapse dialekte’ (i.e. the eastern dialects of Khoikhoi). These speakers were already intermingled with and influenced by incoming foreign language speakers, e.g. the Bantu, and became acculturated mainly with the Zulu and some Xhosa speaking clans in the eastern regions (Louw 1974:46-47), and later with the Europeans such as the Dutch and Afrikaans speakers leading to wide-spread bilingualism among the Bushmen and Khoikhoi (Nienaber 1963:177, 189-191; 1989; Traill 1996:161-183; Van Vuuren 2016:39, 66, 76-77).

The explorers and philologists who recorded the toponyms of the region, some of whom also documented the original words, common nouns and other onymic elements in great detail for posterity, made, by way of translations of these place names into various languages, the names and their namers known to international communities. As the names continued to be used, adapted and applied, they became an



Figure 11.2: Men running, Jatow cave, Ameib Erongo, Namibia  
[A. Viereck]

onomastic activity in a shared, common heritage, a verification of the diversity of languages in the region, and a validation of the ideal of social cohesion within the framework of onymic creativity. Examples of such toponyms that are elucidated in the text are i.a. Leeu-Gamka, Houms River; Bobbejaanskrans < Nerahoas; Nonikam > Eulenruh; Elephantenberg < Otjozondou; Otjihorongo > Kuduberg; Koedoespruit > Mosukhudutzi; Kwaggafontein > Wildeperderant; Levhubu, (u)Mzimvubu; Hlangampisi > Slangapiesberg; Ovitorewe > Zebraberge, and many more.

The study of some naming motives and patterns as found in these place names that were either created originally, or had loaned and adapted elements from other languages, elucidated the toponyms derived from an interlinguistic situation in southern Africa. From the earliest recorded words from the Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects (as early as 1595 according to Nienaber 1963), that were often found to actually be derivations from words or expressions in Bushman languages; from Khoekhoe or Nama (now known as Khoekhoegowab, Haacke & Eiseb 2002), Damara, Ovambo, Herero; Lozi, the Nguni languages; Northern and Southern Sotho; Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Yei and other African languages; and lastly the European languages, the onymic processes could be traced and compared.

## 1.2 On the spoor of animal and place names

### 1.2.1 *Evolutionary processes in naming*

Arbitrary coining of common nouns as compared to onomatopoeic creation of names for animals; also those formed by so-called 'action' words, or verbs, together with or versus the 'thing', object or designated feature to be named, became a contentious point of departure for the arguments surrounding such naming practices. Several original coinings of names had to be analysed and discussed in more detail, phonologically, morphologically, semantically and otherwise, to be able to understand from the provided etymologies, e.g. the underlying motives and reasons for these onymic formations, and apart from possibly other naming motives and patterns, e.g. metaphoric or descriptive, to approach these too with an open mind. Examples such as the verb /*ne* meaning 'to measure', led to the noun formation indicating an animal: /*nera-b*, 'baboon' with the metaphoric implication, "the one who measures his strides" (Kroenlein 1889).

Although it is generally accepted in evolutionary or developmental language studies that words or lexemes are "almost wholly based on pure or arbitrary convention"

(Robins 1968:13-14), and that “...signs and the like tend to represent in a stylized way the things to which they refer, the words of a language relate to items of experience or to bits of the world in this way only in the proportionately...small part of the vocabulary called onomatopoeic. The connection between the sounds of words like cuckoo, hoopoe, and such imitative words...and the creatures making such noises or the noises themselves is obvious; and in a wider set of forms in languages a more general association of sound and type of thing or event is discoverable”.

This study is focused on presenting a set of common nouns and toponyms in which such onomatopoeic or sound-associative renderings of animal names, as applied in the creation of these earliest toponyms, do occur. In the process, some other linguistic motives and naming patterns were discovered, such as the ‘special animal language’ demonstrated by repetitive consonantal and vowel patterns, e.g. the blue-crane’s song as *rururu*; others with descriptive and metaphoric renderings and onomatopoeic transfer of common nouns with semantic adaptation into other languages, e.g. *garaxi*, *garatsi* > *graatjie* in Afrikaans, ‘thin-tailed meerkat’.

That words in languages are normally formed arbitrarily, i.e. created from a selection of arbitrary ‘creative’ utterances or vocalisations, is generally accepted. But, that they may also derive from sound imitations, hand and digital signs, other indicative devices, e.g. to point and gesticulations to designate animals, birds and other ‘living’ creatures with very ‘vocal’ names, possibly contributed to some of the first to be formed by sound and sign imitations (Stopa 1970, 1972). These reusable utterances and signs became over time, a set of agreed upon and accepted conventions, and were incorporated into the spoken language. Gelb (1965:2-3, 11) mentions *inter alia*: “A combination of language and gesture has played an important role in the ritual proceedings of all times and places. The restrictions imposed upon the use of language by natural and artificial conditions, has resulted in the origin and development of systems of communication based on gesture and mimicry...”. And further to the expression of ideas into visual signs (as in some Bushman rock paintings): “In the beginning pictures served as a visual expression of man’s ideas in a form to a great extent independent of speech which expressed his ideas in an auditory form...”.

Pettman (1931:10) also commented on the possible creative motives and means of the earliest namers for allocating toponyms: “Broadly speaking the place names of primitive peoples consist largely of word pictures descriptive of natural scenery and

physical features”, and as example he refers to the name and locality of Cape Town as //Hui!gais, i.e. as “the place which rears its head on high – the reference being to the overshadowing Table Mountain” (according to Kroenlein 1889), and with it, the interpretation by Theophilus Hahn of the Table Mountain as the one ‘veiled in clouds’ as with a cloth.

The above quotations do not restrict the argument on the development of the names and signs (vocal and otherwise), that were used to designate living creatures, e.g. mammals, birds, reptiles, arachnids and insects. Those distinctive designatory and identifying functions, as used in all nomenclature, e.g. to point out, gesticulate, imitate or mimic and to vocalise, the object observed, experienced or heard, are representative of most noun or word formations in all languages and especially in the so-called pre-literate languages, e.g. as in onomatopoeic names depicting sounds or vocalisations of animals, and giving descriptions of their behaviour and habits. Naming that ‘thing’, ‘das Ding an sich’, is a theoretical concept here just as applicable as in poetry, one may argue. As these imitated sound references were then used and reused more often, primarily for survival and hunting purposes, they became conventionalised and allocated as designations for certain places where these animals occurred.

Sound imitations of animal vocalisations may, then, in these instances, be seen as one such form of the primary sound > ‘word’ > to common noun > to name formation, as evolutionary process of language development. From these onomatopoeic and descriptive creations, the words and especially the nouns were formed, and from these were derived the toponymic references or nomenclature to point to specific topographical features, geographical locations of a region, e.g. Kuduspruit as ‘place of the kudu antelope’; Levubu as ‘river of hippopotami’, Madubaduba as the ‘plains where giraffe gallop’; Otjimbingwe as ‘place of the leopard’; Seolwanetutjane, ‘rock ledge or mountain of the swallows’, and many more.

On the ‘origin of language’ and the relation of that with sound emulations or mimicry, Robins (1968:13-14) further argues that: “There has been a good deal of speculation on this, usually taking the form of trying to infer out of what sort of communicative noise-making fully fledged languages in all their complexities gradually developed. Imitative exclamations in response to animal noises, onomatopoeia and more general sound mimicry of phenomena, exclamations of strong emotion, and calls for help have all been adduced”. He concludes: “Linguists, however, tend to leave this sort of theorizing alone, because it lies far beyond the reaches of legitimate

scientific inference'. One may, in this case, assume that Robins, apparently, did not study the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages in more detail.

Various theories on humans' ability to produce vocal utterances and the development of language have been put forward and disputed over the years, from Max Müller in 1861 and Charles Darwin in 1871, to those of Henshilwood (1996) and others more recently on the Middle Stone Age symbolism in southern Africa, as well as other modern anthropologists, archaeologists and linguists. A discussion of these theories and findings may be accessed at the website [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origin\\_of\\_language/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origin_of_language/).

A totally different approach to language acquisition and, with it, the formation (either as increase or decrease from) of the complex set of phonemes in 'primitive' languages to a reduction in more recent languages, juxtaposed to the genetic spread of these speakers to other regions of the world, has been put forward by i.a. Dr Quentin Atkinson, biologist at the University of Auckland, New Zealand as referred to above. He uses many (up to approximately 100 or more) different, identified phonemes in the various Bushman languages as a comparable set to match the genetic spread of DNA patterns to the spread of languages from the Bushmen origins in southwestern Africa to the rest of the world. (A discussion on the research of Atkinson by Nicholas Wade in a review article in *The New York Times* is available at (<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/15/science/15language.html>). Although many linguists do not necessarily agree with Atkinson or accept his mathematical projections of phonemic decline associated with the spread of the DNA diaspora, there may be a link, as already suggested in this study as well, to the possible earliest very diverse phonemic substructures of the languages, particularly in onomatopoeically formed words, that we know were spoken by Stone-Age man in Africa and discussed by numerous authors (Stopa 1972; Traill 1978, 1996, 2007; Raper 2012, Van Vuuren 2016, etc).

When it comes to the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages of southern Africa, where a number of common animal names were found to have been created in this manner, and used in toponymic formatives, and were utilised and retained as terminological name labels in other languages and the scientific zoological taxonomy or categorisation of species names, some examples may be put forward as evidence to counter argue some of these theories and Robin's statements.

It may be assumed that in early evolutionary language development, i.e. in the original designations of animals via sound emulations that became conventionalised, some



common names were created that may be traced back to these earliest phonological imitations of vocalisations and other behaviouristic habits of the animals. Therefore, from these earliest phonemic clusters or sound-associative and morphological creations based on the cries, roars, calls and other vocalisations and behaviour patterns of animals and birds, a fixed nomenclature had developed, and alongside this, the toponyms referring to these animals.

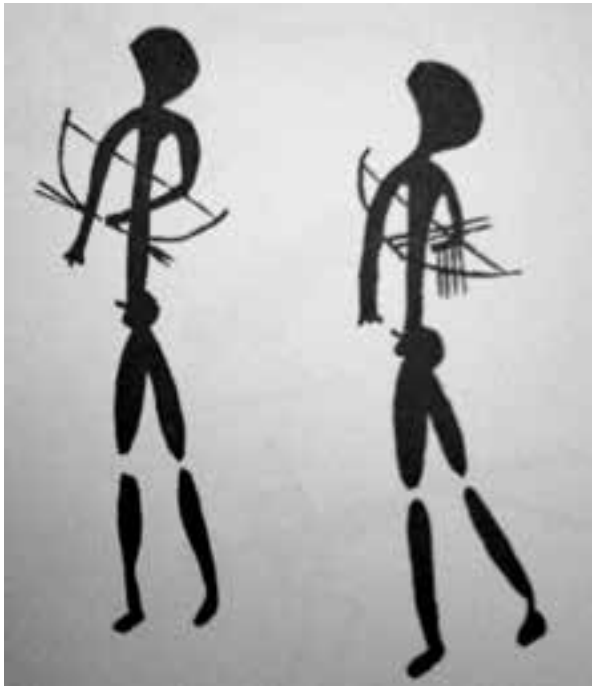


Figure 1.2.1 Two Bushmen hunters, Omandumba-West, Erongo, Namibia [A. Viereck]

It may be postulated that the nature of these onomatopoeic renderings contained in such names, were purely sound-associative and not, as in other descriptive animal names, used with other associations to refer to colouring or markings or other species-specific features, which, of course, also occur profusely in toponyms. These common nouns and the toponyms were thus not necessarily taken from descriptive words, phrases or other elements initially, but directly represented the sound sequences of the animals' vocalisations. Sometimes metaphoric associations were formed from such vocal or descriptive elements referring to or containing an element that indicated the peculiar characteristic or behaviour of an animal, i.e. as in its locomotion, territorial border markings, fighting, rutting, foraging activities

or other movements of such an animal, sometimes also relating to sounds it makes during these activities. Onomatopoeic naming may therefore be seen as a possible early or evolutionary language and onymic formative, feeding into the linguistic and onomastic processes in its most basic form, and contributing to interlinguistic and cultural exchange.

### 1.2.2 *Problems in comparing onymic formatives*

Comparing sound-associative and metaphoric names, i.e. especially onomatopoeic animal names to their orthographic representations or other onymic origins within the scope of the written word, and then analysing them according to type of onymic formatives or motives, is not without its problems.

These imitative sounds that became onomatopoeically coined and descriptive names for the animals, were initially only used in the spoken language, i.e. in '*le langue*' of the Bushman and Khoikhoi speakers, and it is noticeable that the emulations or expressions, when vocalised, were often indicated by sharp clicks before and during the making of these sound sequences, that is, in the utterance as a whole. The problems that arose with the recording and orthographic representation of these often very difficult to represent sounds with clicks, phonemic clusters and suction sounds into written language, i.e. the orthographic renderings as etched onto paper, were realised from the earliest times when the written forms of utterances and words were developed. Most explorers, missionaries, philologists, administrators, historians and later linguists, had commented on their efforts to represent the unusual sounds and utterances. Dorothea Bleek on her fieldwork expeditions requested words and phrases or expressions given by various speakers, often of different languages or dialects, to be repeated several times for distinction, clarity and precision of representation (Engelbrecht, *Introduction to Bleek's Dictionary*, 1956:4-5).

From the outset it was realised that this type of research, to link onomatopoeic nomenclature, or opaque elements and components to the common names and to toponyms, is not always clear-cut. The assessment and verification as to accuracy of orthographic representation, especially with regard to adaptations and translations, would depend largely on the explanations given of the origins and meanings, as attached to these names. Any assumptions or conclusions made, would, of necessity, often remain only approximations of the possible link between the names of certain

animals and the vocalisations made by them, as well as the concomitant names given to them. This was taken into account when comparing the name with the explanations provided, and the possible sound associations made with the animals by early namers.

The view taken here, (though it may be a precursory postulation of the occurrence of this naming motive, and a premature assessment of the naming processes and etymologies of names in general), is that some toponyms may well be linked in this manner to animal vocalisations, or that they were created by means of descriptive or metaphoric association. It was acknowledged that according to the names, as recorded in the existing dictionaries on the Bushman, Khoikhoi and other indigenous languages in southern Africa, and the toponyms that were derived from these postulated sound imitations, were the best representations in writing of what the Bushman actually called these animals. In most cases, though, the sounds may still be recognised: the same sounds that the Bushman imitated and coined in the common names for these animals. It illustrates their prowess at observing, discerning, identifying and naming. It also sheds light on the naming motives and patterns of some toponyms derived from this form of onymic activity, and on language contact in onymic activities from earliest times.

Apart from these problems to recognise and assign a sound-associative element to the orthographic representation, or to compare the full word as common name to the known name of the animal (semantic meaning set aside in these cases as may be expected), and to link it to the toponym, presented problems of another kind, i.e. to describe how it relates to the real world as observed by the namers.

For obvious reasons the practical problems experienced by authors relating to the recording of animal names from pre-literate languages with click sounds and many other complex phonemic structures, tonal indicators, and so on, into orthographic systems devised for European languages, had to be taken into account. Also to be considered was the recognition that the perceptions of the hunter-gatherers as 'first' namers, and the Iron Age pastoralists who arrived later, had to be carefully noted within the context of their experiences of, and dependence on, these animals and their environment, and relating these to the animals and entities they named in the real world, but also within their possible experiences of these animals on another level, perhaps the sub-conscious level, or in the shamanistic 'dream-world' which may have led to many metaphoric conceptualisations of animal behaviour or appearance in their names.

### 1.2.2.1 Writing the names

First, it is not known for sure how these sounds in the names were reproduced or vocalised exactly by the first namers, the Stone Age Bushmen or perhaps even earlier namers, and then represented in writing by the explorers, travelers and missionaries, philologists and other linguists, when recording these. The 'strange' phonemes with glottal stops, ejective croaks, pharyngeal scraping and other phonological sound clusters, especially the clicks, stops, suction, aspirations or effluxes, and tonal features accompanying these sound clusters, had to be carefully negotiated by listening to repeated utterances of them, and indicating in writing the 'words' and 'names' referring to these animals (Bleek 1929:8; 1956:4-5).

Although Bleek employed and adjusted the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) as a convention for the Bushman languages and dialects, she stated emphatically that the difficulty in representing these sounds in writing of languages that had not yet been orthographically developed to the full, i.e. had not been standardised at the time, was one of the greatest difficulties. Various philologists had recorded and indicated the clicks and their accompanying sounds differently. She used the IPA also as a form of standardisation, together with the clicks developed over many years by her acknowledged predecessors (Bleek 1929:1-4; 1956: *Introduction* i-vi and *Index* to references). Another problem is that great differences in pronunciation existed between the various language groups, and even among members belonging to the same language group, as Bleek noted in both her major works.<sup>6</sup>

### 1.2.2.2 Experiences and encounters

Secondly, it was necessary to consider that different language groups had different experiences and encounters with the same animals that they named by sound association or otherwise, and that the contact they had and the observations made, depended largely on their specific environment (what animals were encountered most frequently in the regions in which they lived as hunter-gatherers, or how this landscape was vital to those that moved across it with their herds of cattle and goats).

### 1.2.2.3 Contact situations

Thirdly, the physical, biological, social and cultural contact between various language groups soon led to an exchange in language expressions and naming. In this too, their dependence on the natural world once again played an important role in such contact situations, leading to altered social constructs, acculturation and an indeterminacy of

references (Lee & De Vore 1976). Boden (2011:35, 52-55) observed this phenomenon with regard to alternative naming of land forms, e.g. the names were determined by who or what moved into or out of their areas of hunting, and of having to survive with these new incomers in their known habitat. On the level of social, cultural and language contact, it soon became clear how the nomenclatures of the 'first namers' were being adopted and adapted by these newcomers, but also *vice versa* adopted and translated by themselves. It has been pointed out by various historians, linguists, anthropologists and other authors, that the Bushmen and Khoikhoi from as early as 1690 had acquired the Cape Dutch (later Afrikaans) language, and that some had become fully bilingual by the nineteenth century (Nienaber 1963; Traill 1996, 2007; Van Vuuren 2016).

#### 1.2.2.4 Variations and similarities in animal naming patterns

An important fact on the variations in the onomatopoeic naming patterns, is that most animals and birds exhibit a variety of social behaviour patterns, or other actions and vocalisations for different situations. Therefore various names were allocated in different languages, though close onomatopoeic similarities do exist in animal naming patterns where close contact between namers took place at one time. For example, in southern Africa the gorgeous bush shrike (*Telephorus quadricolor*), is named *konkoit* in Afrikaans. This may well be a loan word from the Malay language for a type of bird, the Black-naped oriole, called *Boorong koonjiet koonjiet*, transferred with Malayan slaves via the Dutch trade and slave routes to and from Malacca, Malaysia and Indonesia during the seventeenth century. It is called *ugongoni* by the Zulu speakers, also a close onomatopoeic rendering. This is a case in point, where the vocalisation of a bird is so distinctive, that one may ask how it is possible that more than one different language group (even across oceans), applied the same sounding name.

#### 1.2.3 Research questions and challenges

The onomatopoeic nature of some animal names in the Bushman languages became apparent while doing research on place names with a marked Bushman or Khoikhoi substructure, or in which some word components or particles of words could be traced to either pure sound imitations or seen as deriving from previously existing, i.e. 'archaic' forms in other contexts, e.g. metaphoric visualisations and imaginative descriptions.

While drawing up the place names list derived from some animal names, and verifying it with the cognate or equivalent words and meanings provided, also in other languages such as those names from Damara, Nama (Khoekhoegowab), Herero, Ovambo, Yei (Yeyi), Lozi, Swazi, Tsonga, Xhosa, Zulu; the Sotho languages and Tswana, Venda, Shangaan, and others, and during the process of making lists of apparently cognate names in other languages, the author was struck by how many may have a sound-associative basis relating to the animals' true vocalisations. Apart from those that directly or partially described other outstanding characteristics, features or habits, e.g. animal actions for territorial or habitat marking, defence mechanisms of the animals, and the like, the names derived from their vocalisations became very prominent.

The challenge was to analyse and verify whether the explanations provided for interpreting the animal names or components thereof, said to be derived from these vocalisations and toponyms (as they were recorded at the time), were accurate in relation to how they appear now. Apart from using the 'sound-meaning' method, and comparing possible or predictable sound correspondences, even sound adaptations or sound shifts, these methods of interpretation posed the problem of how these elements were to be evaluated, and how the different links were to be followed to validate these assumptions.

### 1.3 Searching for root elements of naming

The research method entailed finding solutions to these questions of whether animal names were indeed formed by onomatopoeic, descriptive and metaphoric elements. It furthermore entailed securing ways to resolve the problem of finding links to earlier and other sources of origin, verifiable etymologies and explanations, and their correlation with, or reference to the current forms of the names and toponyms within the adapted, hybridised and translated forms as they exist today.

Toponyms deriving from onomatopoeic, descriptive and metaphoric animal names reflect some of the onymic and toponymic evolutionary processes that may have played a role in how the speakers created these animal names. An attempt was made to understand and analyse how the Bushman and Khoikhoi emulated the acoustics of some of the animal sounds by means of very specific articulatory processes, both in their applications to common nouns for the animals and in their allocation as toponyms.

### 1.3.1 *Analysing the elements of naming*

The analysis and verification focused on:

1. whether the elements were indeed sound-associative, descriptive or metaphoric in origin;
2. whether they could be retraced from the written records of equivalent or cognate words and common names in Bushman, Khoikhoi, Bantu or other languages;
3. which specific Bushman language, or other, e.g. Khoikhoi language they derived from or had been adapted into;
4. to which entities they were allocated, and with this
5. whether these place names indicate something of the animals' distinctive behaviour and habitat, or the frequent occurrence of such named animals, reptiles, insects and birds in the region;
6. and, additionally, how some ancient Bushman and Khoikhoi names, used as species or sub-species references in the zoological taxonomy, could be revisited to find their onymic roots, i.e. either as onomatopoeic, descriptive or metaphoric renderings within these earlier versions of the names.

An analysis of some of the animal names, as presented in toponyms, are discussed as relating to the sounds that some of these animals make, or how they were described in accordance to their most distinctive features.

### 1.3.2 *The allocation and recording of indigenous animal names*

Some of the animal names, as traced back to their origins and found to be present in toponyms, are discussed according to recorded words and phrases, to illustrate how the possible imitations or emulations of animal sounds by the early Bushman and Khoikhoi, may have been applied. In other words, an attempt is made to understand, analyse and illustrate how the animal sounds were possibly articulated, reproduced or formed within the unique set of clicks, phonemic clusters and other utterances in the various Bushman languages and Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects, to acoustically represent the animal sounds (e.g. by repetitive sounds). At the same time, the emulation of the behaviour of the animals and the distinguishing sounds they make, is described, cf. Van Vuuren (2016:131), where she mentions this

“specific adapted language spoken by each animal species”. Additionally, the study looks at how, within an imagined or vividly ‘pictured’ concept, when describing their appearances, actions or other behavioural habits, the animals’ names, in a certain sense, became metaphors.

It was noted how these utterances eventually became adapted into other forms. For example, first as common nouns (as *!aɽu* for ‘cheetah’, or as used in descriptive phraseology, for example, *!aru-#gao-!na*, i.e. being like the cheetah, *!arub*, the ‘shy’, ‘cowardly’ or ‘cautious’ one), that were then allocated or applied as toponymic references. Also mentioned is the orthographic rendering of these names, i.e. the capture in writing of these utterances, by comparing various examples of phonological and grammatical language features or phrases and sentences in which these names were used as expressions (e.g. ‘*so maer soos ’n graatjie*’, i.e. as thin as a meerkat’s tail), relating to the same animal name, or often derived from verbs describing an action that became a common noun. In some cases, the relic cognate components in which the sound shifts and the clicks and other phonemic adaptations were found, demonstrated the diversity, yet also the similarity or commonality of these designations. It also highlighted how they were recorded, with great dedication, into writing using alphabet letters, or the IPA-signs or other systems of signs, e.g. numerals or combinations of letters of the alphabet and other symbols, that sometimes were totally diverse, before the eventual standardisation of the clicks (Bleek 1929:12-13; 1956:1, Nienaber 1963:87-95). For example, for the indication of pressed vowels or “vowels with pharyngeal roughening”, as Bleek called these, the sign  $\epsilon$  after the vowel was used. She also used the single quotation mark ‘ and double quotation mark ’’, and so on, to represent clicks, croaks, accompanying effluxes to the clicks and other phonemic clusters. In the appellative ‘*hartebeest*’, the click was indicated variously as *thammas*, *k’kamma*, *tkamma*, *t’~kamma*,  $\Delta$ -*kamap*, *k’hammas*, *caama*, *camaa*, */khama-b*, *//chama-s*, *//χamab*, *#kama*, *!kama*; or in the case of name references to the ‘lion’ in Khoikhoi, as *chamma*, *gamma*, *x-kamma*, *t’gamma*, *x-kamma*,  $\chi$ ami, and so on.

Even within these initially confusing orthographic systems, many recordings of these names had, at least, been preserved in some written form, the orthographical representation often found to be as close as possible to the original utterance as designation of the animal’s name. These could be traced back in the applicable toponyms, with semantic comparison often found in the translated form of the name. The key to these difficult-to-interpret, etymological or ‘semantic’ contents of



the names were, actually, often rediscovered in the mere sound association, i.a. as a realisation of the original emulations or imitations of the animals' behaviour.

### 1.3.3 Finding naming formatives

That some toponyms underwent an evolutionary formative process depicting various layers of initial appellative adaptations, loss of clicks and other phonological and morphological adjustments, often redefined by trans-language exchange, intercultural contact and folk-etymological renderings, complicated the analysis.

Although some of these toponyms thus initially appeared semantically 'empty', they were found to contain animal names with sound-associative elements, or to be descriptive or a metaphor depicting the animal's behaviour pattern. Since the names originated from the oldest languages spoken in the region, that are still known to us through recordings of words, phrases, full sentences, rhymes and folktales of the Bushman and Khoikhoi, these links were followed in the primary sources available. Extensive use was, therefore, made of Dorothea Bleek's *Comparative Vocabularies of Bushman languages* of 1929 and the 1956 *A Bushman Dictionary* (in which she often documents words and descriptions reflecting the Bushmens' unequalled knowledge of, and ability to imitate animals). In addition to this, references were made to the word lists on animal and plant names collected by Lucy Lloyd from the Korana (in Maingard 1932), the Khoikhoi (Namaqua) lists and dictionaries of J.G. Kroenlein (*Wortschatz der Khoi-Khoi* 1889) and Fr. Rust *Deutsch-Nama Wörterbuch* (1960), Kroenlein and Rust *Nama Wörterbuch* (1969); C.G. Botha (1926) and C. Pettman (1931) on place names in general, but including large sections on animal names from all languages. Also included here would be G.S. Nienaber's book on Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects recorded up to 1815 (*Hottentots*, 1963) and CJ Skead's zoo-historical publications (1973, 1987, 1993).

Kroenlein, in his Khoikhoi dictionary (1889), already pointed out in his explanations and discussions of certain words designating animals, that they were cases of sound-associative formations. These words and phrases recognised and recorded from the oldest Khoikhoi or Nama words and phrases referring to animals, were either definitely "*Tonnachahmungen*", in other words, evolutionary sound imitations and associations or onomatopoeia, and that others had been created by metaphoric insight of some action derived from a verb related to the animal's behaviour, e.g. /*nera* 'to measure something', and how the verb /*ne* was applied as an appellative

by addition of the gender, either the female singular *-s* or masculine singular *-b* for the male. Therefore, */nerab* described the baboon as “the one who measures his strides”. This is further validated by the way his interviewees explained such words and phrases to him as being the sound the animal makes, or some reference to its most obvious characteristic or features, sometimes quite a conspicuous behaviour pattern. Examples of this are the cheetah’s timid-heartedness, therefore that even a person may be called ‘*gepardherzig*’, i.e. being shy or cowardly; or the verb *ngola*, ‘to draw’, which may be related to the cheetah’s name as *χoa-são*, the ‘painted one’; or from the rhino as *!nabba*, i.e. the one ‘stamping with hooves’; the quail as *!gáwari-b*, *!náwari-n*:’ from the verb *!nawa*, heard as a sound imitation of ‘wings flapping’ (“*Wachteln – Tonnachahmung des Flügelschlags*”), and many more such examples. The cognate Bushman verb *//kwa\_//kwa* that produced the common nouns *kwai*, *kwa-na* for a certain type of quail, became known in Nama as *!gawa* and *!nawa*.

Nienaber, in his *Introduction* to his work *Hottentots*, focuses mainly on the naming procedures of the Nama language speakers, but compares these to Griqua, to a certain extent. He also compares them to Korana (1963:77, 86-88, etc.), as well as those that he called the Old Cape dialects (“*die ou Kaapse dialekte*”), for example, those spoken in the vicinity of Table Mountain and the Cape Peninsula, as well as those up to the Saldanha region and the eastern dialects of Khoikhoi as far as the early travellers, up to the year 1815, had gone. He discusses some specific word examples as not being of Nama origin (1963:221, etc.), but usually infers that they are exceptions to the rules of ‘Nama word formation’, and could be dialectal forms of other Khoikhoi languages, or from Bushman.

His work on Khoikhoi, an extensive compilation from other sources, provides a list of Afrikaans words and concepts with equivalents recorded from the various Khoikhoi languages in different regions, including some toponyms in their earliest recorded forms. He documented words and place names from sources as early as 1488, 1510, 1566, 1595 and 1626, and a few from earlier references to the Portuguese and Spanish navigators, and other sources such as the Dutch and English (1963:2-7). He gives the equivalent words and citations from the original sources, followed by a discussion in Afrikaans, often explaining the difficulties in matching the originally recorded words to similar words in Nama, Korana, Griqua, and so forth. As these words are based on the oldest recordings, he points to the possible origins of these words from the Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects and related languages. The dialectal forms that don’t conform to the Nama grammatical or other language patterns, as Nienaber pointed out, are lately being identified as often

stemming from the Bushman languages spoken even before the Khoikhoi entered the area. These unconforming ‘dialectal forms’ may now be seen as deriving from a mix of Khoikhoi or Bushman origins, and/or other Cape Khoikhoi dialects, long extinct. One may ask: what language, for instance, did the early ‘*Strandlopers*’ and ‘*Watermans*’ speak? These people were not herders, but some of the earliest coastal or shoreline hunter-gatherers, quite probably speaking a fluent language as well. Their words and phrases, which were recorded and collected during interviews with the inhabitants of the Cape up to Saldanha and those from the Eastern regions, represent an invaluable source to retrace the origins of words depicting animal names and original forms of toponyms derived from such names.

Nienaber, as pointed out above, also noted that many of the Khoikhoi and Bushman designations of animals were indeed onomatopoeic in nature (quoting i.a. Krönlein and others). In other words, the naming, in many cases, relates to sound imitations made by the early inhabitants and speakers of these languages. How this evolved exactly, may not be fully understood, but is a case for future paleo-based studies in onomastics and linguistics, especially phonetics, which is, however, not the main focus of this book.

Some remarks by Roman Stopa (1972:58) were taken into consideration in the argumentation of a sound-associative base for many animal names, where he comments on the close relationship of the phonetic and semantic connection in these earliest Bushman language forms:

“1) Bushman constitutes the most primitive now accessible type of man, culture and language; ...[i.e. available in recorded form in dictionaries that we are able to analyze and compare with other languages – *author’s comment*]; and

2) Etymological studies on Bushman allow in many instances to penetrate into the original connection between sound and meaning”.

That older and other types of languages may have existed for many centuries in the same region, is possible. Yet, for the purpose of this study, it is necessary to remain mindful of the fact that, although Ur-Bantu is often cited in the etymologies of e.g. Zulu, Northern Sotho and other Bantu language words (Doke & Vilakazi 2005; Doke, Malcolm & Sikakana 2005; Louwrens 1994), and that it has been quoted as possible etymological source in several word explanations by these authors, i.e. to occur in root elements or components of words, the existence of an Ur-Bantu proto-

type language is still considered to be hypothetical. It may, therefore, be postulated that the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages are indeed the oldest languages in southern Africa, of which we have any recorded evidence of onomatopoeic utterances or traces of names containing such elements (Kroenlein 1889; Nienaber 1963; Stopa 1970; Van Vuuren 2016:131; <http://www.lloydbleekcollection.cs.uct.ac.za/researchers.html/>).

That these words, mainly appellatives, common nouns, adjectives and verbs, indeed also functioned as toponymic formatives becomes clear from this and previous onymic and toponymic research. As Nienaber (1963:190) pointed out: “In the List of Words various words were found that are still an active or fixed part of the Afrikaans language, South African English, South West African German vocabulary, and these words have been further passed on for example also to English outside of South Africa. Furthermore, it is evident (just to focus on words) how many place names are reminiscent of these words, place names of which the meaning has sometimes become opaque, but our List of Words provides an opportunity to solve some of them” (*author’s translation*).

#### 1.3.4 Testing the ‘sound-meaning’ method

The behaviour of certain animals is so unique and distinctive that the Bushmen (San) regularly imitated it in their common names. Apart from mammals, reptiles, birds and insects having been allocated many different names in the various Bushman languages, some names appear to be more onomatopoeic or sound-associative in nature than others.

In the search for satisfactory explanations for cognate animal names and translated place names, it meant applying or testing the ‘sound-meaning’ method as proposed by Heine and Honken (2010). Compare, for example, the eland bull being named in Bushman i.a as *!ka*, *≠kanthi* and *k’omathi*. Its Khoikhoi name *!kani* has been explained as descriptive, referring to its tawny yellow-grey colouring: “*halbgelb, halbgrau*” (Kroenlein 1889:198), yet, the names *≠kanthi* and *k’omathi* may have been allocated as sound-associative renderings, and as *!kani* may be a variant form of these, the explanation given by Kroenlein may not be the only plausible interpretation. The name of the Khomati River derived from *k’omathi*, is indeed a translated form in the Afrikaans *Elandsrivier*. The other names allocated to the antelope by the Bushmen are also possibly renderings of a sound-associative name, i.e. they seem to be more onomatopoeic in origin, e.g. *!nē*, *!ni* *!!nā*, *//ni* and *//nîŋ*

(Bleek 1956:713). This name with its phonological and orthographic variations, may have been a reference to a knee-cap clicking habit, since the words for ‘to click’ are closely related, phonologically, compare //nain̩ and /i/i̩ (Bleek 1956:704). Its name may thus originate from its habit of knee-cap clicking, described by Estes (2012:190) as sounding ‘castanet-like’.

Furthermore, the songs and calls of birds, especially, have been onomatopoeically described (Roberts 1982; Sinclair *et al* 1993; Koopman 1990:67-87; Koopman 2002:233-248); some smaller mammals have equally been named after some distinctive action or behaviour, like the porcupine, identified by !kwa!kwa, a reference to the rattling of its quills; the supersonic bat sounding its bell-like ringing, aptly named in one of its references as ˘mnkin̩; the frog as ˘!gā:, //ga:ba. The sounds of insects such as bees, flies, crickets, grasshoppers and locusts, were often depicted by voiceless fricatives, or voiced and nasalised sounds, consonantal or other phonemic clusters and softer clicks. Some were combined with nasalisation, glides and other tonal indicators, in names like ˘zo and ˘dzo, zwazwa, dzoā dzoā, dzwā dzwā for flies; gwāgwā for the green wasp; a beetle that buzzes and flies over the water is called !no!nonohe (Bleek 1956:482). The softer ‘glide-type’ of fricative *sh* or *f* as in the word *tf̩i tf̩i* that was used to emulate and name the common cricket; appears also in the name *tf̩im* or *chim* for a type of locust. Some of their names are clearly indicated as imitation of the stridulations, the rasping action of legs and wings against the insects’ bodies. The hunter-gatherer Bushmen, as namers, keenly observed and imitated all these mammals, birds and insects. Not only did they imitate the animals, but they had, in fact, developed a special language of animals, as recorded by Bleek and Lloyd (1936:163-199 and explained in Van Vuuren (2016:131): “...with the /Xam concept of a specific adapted language spoken by each animal species, in which the consonants are shifted, or extra consonants are added to fit the shape of each animal’s mouth or beak. This type of onomatopoeia is unknown of in any Western language”.

Bleek in the *Introduction* to her *Comparative Vocabularies of Bushman* (1929:8 - 9) commented on the San peoples’ sense of observation and ability to imitate the animals, especially as part of their hunting and ritualistic performances: “Many dances are imitations of animals: Bushmen are good mimics...dressing up to imitate animals for hunting, dancing and sorcery”.

## 1.4 Area of research

The area of research is the region of southern Africa, including Botswana, the Kgalagadi, the Okavango regions; Namibia, Lesotho, South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, and so forth. This is the area that the Bushmen or San inhabited from earliest times, probably not only in succession, but alongside and together with the earlier inhabitants, e.g. the Early Stone-Age and the 'Boskop' peoples; the early Damara of the central regions of Namibia and Damaraland; other southern African tribes and clans, possibly their predecessors, such as the earlier homo sapiens like *Homo Habilis*, *Homo Erectus*, and so forth. Perhaps, even as the recently discovered hominid and Naledi fossils and such may yet prove, who inhabited the area during an overlap of time (Schreeve 2015:30-57).

This is also the landscape that was still densely populated by wild animals: carnivores and other primates, large and small mammals, antelopes, birds and reptiles, on which they were all equally dependent for sustenance. All these 'first speakers' of the languages were also hunters and gatherers, living off animals, the vegetation of the area, the fruits, roots and other bulbs of the veld.

The landscape or the region in which these hunter-gatherers lived, and to which the later herdsman the Khoikhoi, as well as the Ovambo, Mbanderu, Herero, and other Bantu tribes like the Nguni, Sotho, Tswana and others moved into, was of varying geomorphological appearance. In the north of Namibia, it was mainly savanna grasslands and bushveld; along the Angolan border almost tropical and rich in water features such as waterfalls and pools; the Okavango delta with its myriad of waterways and swamps; even the dry rivers or *omurambas* of Namibia were part of their hunting terrain. In the rest of the southern continent they also roamed freely and hunted animals of all sorts. The desert regions to the south of the Kunene, all along the coastal regions of Namibia, the Skeleton Coast, the Huanib, Hoarosib and down to the great Namib desert regions, the Kuiseb Valley to Swakopmund and Walfish Bay, were harsher, yet both humans and animals adapted to surviving these conditions. In the northern regions of South Africa, the northern Cape, with the Gariiep as one of the great rivers, the Kalahari, Karoo and other desert or semi-desert regions, life was equally so – a constant struggle.



Figure 1.4 Aloe dichotoma, Kuiseb Valley

## 1.5. Evaluation and presentation of animal names in toponyms

### 1.5.1 *Interpreting and evaluating the data*

While researching the origins of place names for the new *Dictionary of Southern African Place Names* (Raper *et al* 2014), and for this study; sifting through lists of place names and words for animals from a variety of languages of the southern African region, it was noticed that many toponyms contained components, often only remnants of onomatopoeic, descriptive or metaphoric animal and bird names that could be traced back to earliest Stone Age naming forms or designations for such animals. The search for the etymologies of the place names, together with the provided explanations of animal behaviour, gave the key that such names were often original coinings stemming from the Bushman languages; some with adopted or adapted versions from and into the Khoikhoi, Bantu and European languages.

To identify and discuss the variety of toponyms deriving from such common names for animals, from the now often unrecognisable elements in the present forms of

the toponyms, was quite a challenge. They had to be traced via words, common nouns or rudimentary sound-*cum*-name formations (often not appearing in any translated forms), recorded from the earliest historical and linguistic documents, and described, for example, as early ‘Cape Khoikhoi’ dialectal forms. These words were sometimes indicated as being from ‘possible’ Bushman origins, or were documented in these earliest recordings simply by region, thus stemming mainly from Khoikhoi dialects spoken there, that is, many common names were found in adapted, hybridised or translated forms, but not hitherto recognised as true Bushman coinings. Fortunately, some of them were recognised and recorded as such, and could be retraced in translated place names. From the examples that were found in the data of reallocated name changes that took place since 1994, and the explanations offered, the origins of some could be verified in place names.

Many of the adapted and translated names opened fresh interpretations of the earlier forms of the same name. The key to these interpretations lay in the acceptance that the San were probably the oldest namers from whose languages, words and phrases still existed in recorded form, and secondly, that names from Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects and Bantu languages resulted in the many currently existing toponyms with these words, morpho-syntactic components or phrases still evident in them. These toponyms often consisted of adapted, revised, hybridised or translated components and forms in other languages.

The place names are indeed reflections of the peoples’ creative linguistic activities, onymic and toponymic motives, and patterns of naming over many thousands of years could be traced in this manner. New research studies, for example those done for the new dictionaries on southern African place names, could therefore be expanded with more information from insights into possible Bushman origins and renderings of animal names as found in toponyms. This Bushman influence of naming on other languages and their place names, e.g. in Afrikaans, English, Herero, Sotho, Tswana, Tsonga, Xhosa, Zulu and so forth, (cf. Raper 2007a & b; 2008, 2009, 2011a, b; 2012; Raper *et al* 2014; Raper & Möller 2015), was therefore incorporated here as illustrative examples in several discussions.

### 1.5.2 *Presentation of data*

In this study the data on animal names and examples of toponyms containing such common names of animals and the elements of sound association, descriptions or metaphors, were collected from fieldwork done *inter alia* on different languages



spoken in the region and the words as gleaned from the available sources as indicated above.<sup>7</sup> The data is presented here as outcome of a preliminary investigation, and are placed within the framework of these different indigenous languages and in the context of the specific geographical and multicultural area of research.

The animal names are listed first according to broader family or species type, thus examples are discussed in each section according to the animal species, e.g. from the class of mammals the carnivores such as the Felidae or cat family, i.e. the big cats such as lion, cheetah and leopard, as well as smaller wild cats. Other carnivores such as hyenas, aardwolf, other wolves; the dog or Canidae family like the wild dog, jackal and foxes, and so on, follow this. Smaller mammals such as the Viverridae – meerkats, mongooses, honey badgers and the bats (Chiroptera) are listed and discussed next. The primates, baboons and the vervet monkeys; other mammals such as the hooved non-ruminants including the rhino, hippopotamus, elephant and the ‘swine’ family; from the ruminant mammals – the Bovinae family, e.g. cattle and buffalo; from the Giraffidae only the giraffe is discussed. From the antelope family, the larger antelope such as eland, gemsbok, sable, kudu, waterbuck, lechwe; as smaller antelope steenbok, klipspringer, duiker and oribi; from the horse family, the zebra, quagga and wild asses; the wildebeests, blesbok, bontebok and hartebeests are approached, and lastly, birds, reptiles, arachnids and insects. It must be noted, though, that the focus of this study is not to give a zoological account of all species and their names, nor to give a precise taxa or classification of all species as used in scientific works on the subject of animals. Some animals are, in fact, grouped together more on the basis of their names in certain languages than according to families, tribes or species. For example, under the ‘swine-like’ section, not only the Suidae family is mentioned, but references to various animal species all called ‘varke’ in Afrikaans are selectively included to highlight the folk-etymological processes at work.

Grouping together certain animals according to linguistic designations and cultural significance (for example to the language users), instead of strictly into scientific classifications per taxa, was prompted because the names in some languages were based on the observed, physical appearances and behaviour patterns. For example, in Dutch and Afrikaans, the scaly pangolin, aardwolf or *Proteles cristatus* and ant-bears are all indicated as ant-eaters ‘*mierenvreter*, *miervreter*’; in the cat family the leopards and cheetahs as the ‘spotted lion’, the ‘tigers’ or ‘*tiers*’; the wolves as ‘*wolwe*’, and other hyena-likes; the horse family of zebras, wild asses, as ‘*wilde esels*’

and ‘*wilde paarde*’. The various bovine of many kinds and some antelope tribes, like the *wildebeests*, *hartebeests*, *wilde beeste*, and so forth, are all called ‘*beeste*’; the ‘swine-like’ or porcine animals in Afrikaans are depicted as ‘*varke*’; because all have endings with ‘*-vark*’, e.g. *aardvark*, *vlakvark*, *ystervark*, *krivarkie*, and so on, or the names for bats in Khoikhoi as some kind of ‘flying mouse’ although they do not belong to the class of ‘rodents’.

The above statements may also have been the underlying consideration for grouping certain animals together who otherwise do not belong to the same order, family, tribe, species or sub-species, but were put in one section because they were perceived in former times as being of the same kind, or similar in behaviour. As a result of these common traits and habits, they were aligned often with onomatopoeic overtones, as metaphoric concepts and descriptive names, or through the ignorance of the early visitors to the country, the newcomers to the region who asked about the names of these animals, may have misinterpreted or mis-translated the names, thereby giving rise to many misnomers in the process. Often the names or features of the animals gave rise to new names, or their names were folk-etymologically adapted as if being of the same kind.

Within these sections of animals the place names are discussed next, each lemma as referring to or containing some component of the animal names above, and where possible according to each of the above-listed animal classifications, such as family, tribe or species, and where applicable, to the onymic formatives that may have been applied.

### 1.5.3 *Toponyms derived from animal names*

While comparing the cognate words for the animals’ names in various Bushman, Khoikhoi and Bantu languages of origin, and analysing the explanations or meanings as provided by fieldworkers, dictionaries and other sources, what emerged was a complex set of toponyms, displaying a diversity of languages interacting, and often, some possibly shared onymic formatives at play.

The data revealed that these toponyms may in their further formation and application have undergone processes of adoption, adaptation, often hybridisation and translation. This sometimes led to totally new interpretations of their origins, and how, or by which processes, these place names may have been formed. The toponyms

under discussion derived mainly from the following primary naming motives and patterns, or may be divided into the following ‘theoretically’ based categories:

- (a) those containing original references to the initial common nouns, the names of the animals or birds as coined by the Bushmen, Khoikhoi and Bantu-speakers
- (b) onomatopoeic, descriptive or metaphoric renderings contained in partially preserved common names, or those with only traces of such elements in some components of the toponyms
- (c) toponyms adopted and adapted into other languages, including hybrids and translations.

## 1.6 Onomastic and linguistic criteria

The linguistic verification process was further applied by working through the existing and definitive dictionaries on Bushman words recorded from at least 29 Bushman languages and dialects, as recorded and documented by Dorothea Bleek from her many predecessors and from contemporary sources of word lists and other studies of philologists on expressions and phrases; some already indicated as components in place names.

### 1.6.1 *Distribution and classification of Bushman languages*

A map drawn after Bleek’s initial map of 1929 is included to illustrate the wide distribution of Bushman speakers, and also includes her expanded findings from her 1956 *Dictionary*, indicating the distribution of the various Bushman speakers in regions of southern Africa, and the languages that she identified and classified, namely as the northern groups N1, N2, N3, and so on; the southern groups as S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6 with dialects, and the central groups as C1, C2, C3 with dialects. This map encompasses the languages and dialects spoken across the whole of southern Africa and the neighbouring countries in former times, and the few remaining ones up to the time of her final research, completing her lists from older source records (e.g. as from 1908 to 1948), but also from those of her father (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WilhelmBleek/>), and together with Lucy Lloyd and other co-workers’ collections (cf. <http://lloydbleekcollection.cs.uct.ac.za/researchers.html>). This first map was drawn after her fieldwork trips while doing recordings of such languages

and the words that could be established as coming from those area-specific Bushman languages still being spoken at that time.

These recordings include the numerous sources she had used, and the works of her predecessors, like Lucy Lloyd and her father, Wilhelm Bleek (1857, 1870), Passarge (1907) and many more (Bleek 1929: Introduction, Map opposite page 1; 1956: Introduction by J.A. Engelbrecht and the *Index to References*).



Figure 1.6.1 (a) Map indicating distribution of Bushman languages  
[D. Bleek 1929: Opp. p.1]

The classification of the various Bushman languages, according to the regions where the Bushman language speakers were found, and their distribution according to these regional descriptions, was extended by Bleek from her initial book (1929) to include the following categorisation list in *A Bushman Dictionary* (1956). According to this list the origins of words could be searched by language and region, and within this framework, the natural distribution of the animals could also be assessed fairly accurately, such as the often extinct species, or those that have disappeared from their former wider habitats in specific regions, e.g. the spotted hyena, the cape mountain zebra, the cheetah, the black rhino, and so forth.

The rationale behind this categorisation of languages and the usefulness of it for toponymic research was explained by Raper (2012:12-14) and Raper *et al* (2014:xiii). Since there are similarities in the roots of recorded words and similarities in clicks and grammatical structures in the different Bushman languages (Traill 1978:145), the San tribes have been classified or categorised into three major groups on the basis of these similarities, namely the Southern, Central and Northern Group (Bleek 1929:i, iv; 1956:iii-iv). Bleek and other scholars write the names of these Bushman speakers and their languages that begin with a click, with a lower case for the ordinary alphabetical second letter, e.g. /kam-ka!ke. To avoid confusion between these ethnonyms, names and other words, the names for the language groups and the languages spoken have therefore been written in this study with an upper case letter after the click, e.g. /Xam. The classificatory designations for these languages, e.g. S1, C1, N2, and so on, are placed between brackets to avoid misinterpretation should these designations occur so close to other words as to be confused with them.



Figure 1.6.1.(b) Distribution of Bushman languages, after D. Bleek 1929, 1956  
[with permission from Raper 2012]

Bushman language groups according to regional distribution (Bleek 1956:iii-iv).

*Southern Group*

S1:	/Xam	Old Cape Colony, south of Orange River.
S1a:	//N̥ a dialect	Oudtshoorn, Langeberg in Griqualand West and southern Gordonia
S2:	//N̥ !ke	Gordonia and Griqualand West
S2a:	≠Khomani	Northern Gordonia
S2b:	//Kxau	Near Kimberley
S2c:	//Ku //e	Near Theunissen
S2d:	Seroa	Near Bethanie, southern Free State
S2e:	!Gā !ne	Eastern Cape north of Kei River
S3:	Batwa (//Xegwi)	Lake Chrissie, Mpumalanga
S4:	/Auni	Between Nossob and Auob (Auhoup)
S4a:	Khatia, Xatia	East of Nossob River, S. Kalahari
S4b:	Ki /hazi	West of Auob, S. Kalahari
S5:	Masarwa, (Sesarwa)	Kakia, Southern Kalahari
S6:	/Nu //en	Upper Nossop and Auhoup
S6a:	/Nusan	South of Auhoup, Namibia

*Central Group*

C1:	Hie, Hietjware, Masarwa	Near Tati, Zimbabwe
C1a:	Sehura	South-west of Ngami, Botswana
C1b:	Mohissa	East of Ngami, Botswana
C2:	Naron, //Aikwe	Near Sandfontein, west of Oas, Namibia/Botswana border
C2a:	Tsaukwe	West of Ngami, north-east of Naron, Botswana
C2b:	Hukwe	Caprivi region, north of the Tsaukwe
C3:	Hadza, Hadzapi	At Lake Eyassi, north of Mkalama, Tanzania

*Northern Group*

N1:	//K <sup>h</sup> au-//en, Auen	Oas-Ngami road to 19° E Long., Northern Kalahari
N1a:	Nogau	Omuramba-Epikuro and Naukluft, Namibia
N2:	!Kun̥, Kū, Kung	Ngami to Grootfontein to Okavango
N2a:	Hei //kum, Heikum	Near Etosha Pan, Namibia
N2b:	a dialect	Near Ukuambi
N2c:	a dialect	Near Ukualuthu
N3:	!O !kun̥	Eastern half of Central Angola

### 1.6.2 *Diverse linguistic contexts*

Later studies on Bushman languages have indicated other, more recent categorisations of speakers and languages, but the toponyms revealing animal names as selected for this study, predate these later studies (Raper 2012:14), and the Bleek's and Lucy Lloyd collection of Bushman words is still the most detailed and comprehensive of all lists up to 1956 and subsequently. In this discussion Dorothea Bleek's categorisation and nomenclature are adhered to as regards these language groups, as well as regards the specific language(s) from which the words for animals were gleaned, also which of these were possible etymological triggers or formatives that are found allocated in toponyms.

This study takes cognisance of the fact that the above-mentioned later studies on the dispersed San into remaining small groups of speakers of Tuu (including Kx'a, Taa and !Kwi) languages indicated other areal and linguistic distributions of both extinct and existing languages. The classification of the Bushman groups of languages now called the Tuu, showing postulated demographics of a few remaining Taa, with !Xoon speakers; !Kwi with only N//ng speakers; the Kx'a groups of speakers, i.a. with the Kung, !Xu, and Ju/'hoansi and a few other speakers, may be accessed at i.a. sites such as [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taa\\_language/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taa_language/). On the Kwadi-Khoe family group (including Khoekhoe or Khoikhoi, Nama or Khoekhoegowab, Korana, Griqua and some extinct language groups, cf. par. 1.1.2), recent studies have proposed different language group classifications ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khoisan\\_languages\\_historical.PNG/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khoisan_languages_historical.PNG/); see also Starostin (2008, 2013) and [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Khoisan\\_languages&oldid=717392325](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Khoisan_languages&oldid=717392325)).

Most of the Bushman-speakers of these languages may have been regrouped into areas where they did not previously reside, and as indicated by modern-day research discussed as intermingled and assimilated with Khoe and Bantu speakers. It is also noted that, because of social and linguistic acculturation, the Bushman languages vanished, by their acquiring second languages and becoming bilingual especially with Khoikhoi and Dutch speakers (as pointed out by Von Wielligh quoted in Van Vuuren 2011:39, 66, 77; Traill 1996:175-183), so much so that in adapted place names their expressions, words and names became almost unrecognisable. This linguistic acculturation is probably the main reason also, as pointed out by various researchers, i.a. Westphal (1962, 1963), Snyman (1974), Nienaber (1963, 1989); Traill (1996, 1998); Boden (2011); Raper (2012, 2014), Van Vuuren (2016), that the existence of or usage of these languages could not always be verified in all cases, and

that different categorisations emerged, i.e. from an era post 1956. The distribution of these speakers changed dramatically in the post 1929 to 1956, and later years. Bushman speakers were often displaced and relocated because of farming, game parks, diamond and other mining activities (more recently in Botswana once again), and on the Namibia-Angola and South Africa borders because of the Angolan war (the 'Bosoorlog').

Websites where these later distributions are further illustrated and indicated on maps may be accessed from those of /N/a'an Kusê (Naankuse), SASI and UNAM sites; as well as the specific sites for Khoi-San, Kwadi-Khoe or Khoekhoegowab, and the Tuu languages as mentioned above.

Language distribution as indicated in recent studies and illustrated on maps according to modern thought, is usually based or redrawn from earlier maps in various sources and previously published works by linguists on the subject of the Khoi-San languages' areal distribution (see also par. 1.1.2 and above websites). What was often taken as a departure point, is Bleek's classification (as indicated in the second map above, 1956); added to the discussions, as for instance in Greensberg's revised classifications (1955, 1963), together with Westphal (1963), Snyman (1974) and Traill's own research (1978, 1986, 1996:175-183). This is also illustrated in the map that was retrieved from Wikipedia: "Khoisan languages: Distribution of major Khoisan languages in southern Africa. (This map includes some extinct languages)".

Other discussions on the Khoe, Khoesaaan or Khoi-San languages usually include some phonological pronunciation tables of various clicks, consonants, vowels and other sounds, but these studies usually follow other systems for transcribing words and terms in the orthography of the DoBeS system developed more recently (Boden 2011:71). The pronunciation of vowels, consonants and clicks in the Bushman languages had already been extensively indicated by Bleek (1929:13; 1956), and was fully discussed by Raper (2012:14-22) who included Traill (1978:137-138) and Snyman (1974: 28-44) with their map of distribution areas of Bushman and Hottentot languages (as based on Westphal's 1963 work and census surveys), as well as Weich's work (2004:iii), who all presented their different interpretations, elaborations and alterations to certain clicks, consonants and vowels. In this study, where the recorded animal and place names are the main focus, and the orthographies of various writers over time are compared, especially in toponymic clusters, the orthography of Bleek is usually the most reliable key to verifying the semantic content.



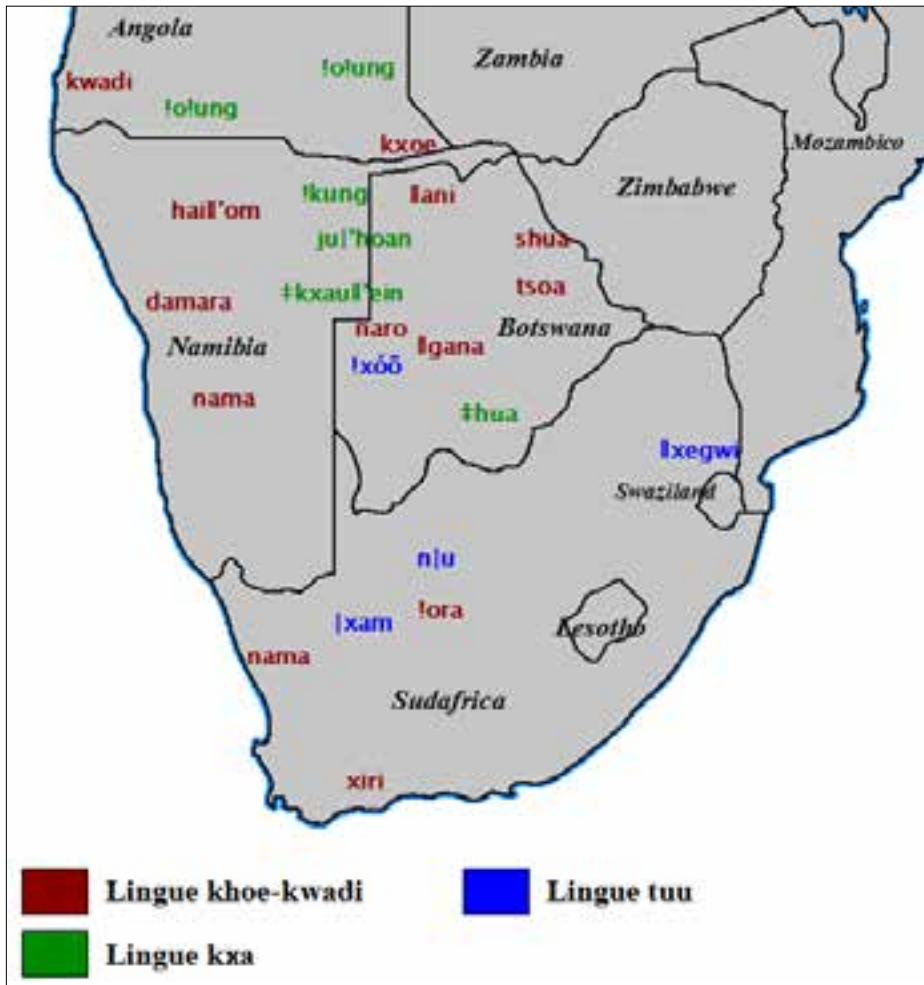


Figure 1.6.2 Map: Khoisan languages [Wikipedia: By Remulazz - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=17376722>]

A comparison of the many possible phonemes or associated sound clusters as found in animal names, with some of their adapted counterparts in Khoikhoi or Bantu languages, is very difficult. The pronunciation of the basic Bushman clicks and other sounds to form phonemes as found in words or components of names (that may have been composed or deduced from these adapted phonemic clusters), may be found in the table below as redrawn from Bleek (1929: 12-14, 1956). This table includes a summarised discussion by Raper (after Bleek and others, e.g. Doke, Dornan and Traill), to indicate the position in the mouth where these sounds are produced.

Table 1.6.2 (a) Bushman consonants and vowels [From Raper 2012:20-22]

Consonant/vowel/ Phoneme	Pronunciation
a	low front vowel, pronounced as French <i>a</i> in 'papa'
b	ordinary voiced bilabial plosive, not common in Bushman languages, perhaps only in borrowings; tends to slide into v among the !O !kung
c	voiced alveolar plosive, sometimes a variant of t; dsh, dzh, dj all standing for the same sound; ds = dz, German s being voiced in these cases; Dornan's j = dzh
e	close e and open ε, neutral ə; occurs in diphthongs ei, we; e is the front half-close vowel, ε the front half-open vowel
f	unvoiced labio-dental fricative, not a Bushman sound, spoken by tribes living among Bantu speakers
g	voiced velar explosive; exchanges with k and t in the second syllable; occurs after all clicks except the labial
h	glottal fricative, much used as an initial sound, after k, t, and all clicks
j	palatal fricative, more like a semi-vowel in the second syllable; occurs chiefly in languages with Bantu influence
k	unvoiced velar explosive, often interchanges with t, and in endings with g
h	aspirated unvoiced velar explosive
kx'	ejective velar affricate
k''	ejected k (glottal croak)
l	lateral consonant, not a Bushman sound, occurring in languages exposed to Bantu influence. Often a foreign l is changed to r
m	nasal bilabial. As with other nasals, it occurs alone, with syllabic value, often as the form n or ŋ before labials. In the second syllable it often interchanges with b
n & ŋ	nasals, often interchanging; has syllabic value and forms a word or syllable without a vowel

Consonant/vowel/ Phoneme	Pronunciation
o	half back-close vowel (pure vowel)
ø:	half open back mixed vowel (written as c back to front)
p	unvoiced labial plosive; not a Bushman sound; Bantu influence as initial, Khoikhoi influence in endings, interchanging with b
r	voiced alveolar consonant, spoken with only one vibration, or sometimes strongly trilled
r̥	voiced flapped retroflex consonant, sounding under circumstances like d, r or l
l̥	flapped lateral consonant, enunciated with a single flap of the tongue, between rolled r and liquid l
r̃	nasal r, between r and n
r̃ or [rl] (l over r)	a sound between r, l and n, occurring only in the second syllable
s	unvoiced alveolar fricative. When it stands at the end of a word, a following vowel has been dropped
ʃ	unvoiced prepalatal fricative, often merely a variant of s. Can combine with the velar fricative x as ʃx, and is often found after t as tʃ, often a variant of ʃ to ts
t	unvoiced alveolar or dental explosive consonant, often interchanging with k in Southern languages
th	aspirated unvoiced alveolar or dental explosive consonant
ts & tʃ	alveolar affricate
u	back close vowel (variously heard as back close u or back half-close o); forms part of the diphthongs au and ou, also ua, ue, ui, but in these cases it often glides into w
v	voiced labial fricative, not a Bushman sound, only in languages exposed to Bantu influence; generally found in second syllables interchanging with b, as daba, dava 'child'
w	Pronounced like English w, often distinctly a semi-vowel, interchanging with a short o or u, as in oa:si and wa:si 'all'

Consonant/vowel/ Phoneme	Pronunciation
x or χ	unvoiced velar fricative; approximates the German ch, being made further forward in the mouth before i, and e, slightly further back before a, and far back before o, and u
z	voiced alveolar fricative, occurring after d as dz
ʒ or ʒ̣	voiced prepalatal fricative, pronounced as the s in treasure; follows d as dž

A table illustrating the pronunciation of the basic six clicks with accompanying release or effluxes with examples of animal names is also included below.

Table 1.6.2 (b) *Bushman clicks and accompanying effluxes as exemplified in some animal names [selected from i.a. Bleek 1929, 1956; and Traill 1978:138]*

Effluxes	Dental	Alveolar/ Cerebral	Palatal	Lateral	Bilabial
Voiced 'g', 'b'	/gāi 'antbear'	!go:ba 'antbear'	≠gu: 'silver jackal'	_/gora 'baboon'	Obwō 'cat'
Aspirated 'h'	/hu/hu 'baboon'	!hau 'hyena'	≠habi 'baboon'	_/ho <sup>̄</sup> e 'black crow'	Oho: 'buck' Ohō 'duiker'
Nasal 'n' or ŋ	n/gami 'springhare'	n!gaa 'jackal'	n≠'hwi 'dog'	n//waan 'baboon'	Oŋwa 'wild cat'
Fricative 'x'	/xo 'gemsbok'	!xai 'hippopotamus'	≠xani 'lizard'	//xama 'hartebeest'	Oxa: 'daughter'
Ejective 'k'	/k <sup>h</sup> a:se 'snake'	!k <sup>h</sup> e 'hartebeest' !k <sup>h</sup> aru 'leopard'	≠k <sup>h</sup> wana 'elephant'	!k <sup>h</sup> wa: 'antbear'	
Glottal 'or'	!ape 'pauw'	!a <sup>h</sup> u 'cheetah'	≠'hwi 'dog'	!a: 'Cape fox, silver jackal'	O <sup>h</sup> o: 'wild cat'

### 1.6.3 *Tracing original etymologies*

While tracing the possible ‘meanings’ and etymologies of animal names, the diverse linguistic contexts were found to be key to the variations in explanations of origins. The idea was to work from the toponyms as recorded from maps, official records and other documents, and analyse how these toponyms were presented in the earliest recorded orthographies of the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages, comparing cognate words and later spelling versions or variants of these animal names, and tracing them back where possible, either through the onomatopoeic or descriptive component in the place name, or from the adapted forms or components in the adopted words and common names in other languages to their present form.

The findings would depend mainly on deductions and conclusions made possible from the explanations provided with the recorded words or expressions, and from a variety of languages and written sources giving the origins and meanings attached to these names.

It is also acknowledged that animals had been given many different names (the lion has no less than 30 names in the different Bushman languages, as well as a documented *hlonipa* name, but it may be accepted that in most cases of onomatopoeic names, the sounds may still be heard and recognised as the same ones that the Bushman and Khoikhoi imitated and coined in the names for these animals. The animals still use the same communication strategies they always did.

### 1.6.4 *Interlinguistic contact as key to solving etymologies*

The toponyms that contained components that seemed unexplainable, were often the most rewarding once the Bushman or Khoikhoi or Bantu language origins of the words could be traced by analysis of these toponyms.

The task, therefore, was to resolve some of the questions around the interconnected etymologies of the names and toponyms. In other words, to demonstrate that the examples of toponyms under discussion contained words or elements that were indeed sound-associative, descriptive or metaphoric in origin (sometimes from different languages); that they were retraceable as such from the earliest recordings of these common names in the Khoi-San and Bantu languages that still contained the sound emulations, or descriptive and metaphoric associations; and were allocated to places as toponymic designators. Lastly, the challenge was to illustrate from

which specific languages or language contact situations they may have originated and how they had been transformed into toponymic designations, i.e. coined as animal names that were allocated to entities that indicated something of the features or characteristics of these animals or to the presence of the animals and birds at that place.

### *1.6.5 Reconstructing original forms and folk-etymological adaptations*

It became evident that, in some adapted versions of place names, especially in those with click adaptations, or other phonological and morphemic variations, the original ‘meanings’ may have been forgotten, or that legenderisation and folk-etymology may have played a role in the explanations given at a later stage. As the original four to six most commonly found clicks in the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages became adapted into other languages, and may have been lost in the later, adopted versions of the names, and totally in the translated versions, it made it more difficult to reconstruct original orthographic forms and etymologies. Yet, by a process of reconstruing the original references, meaning or semantic context from the hybridised and translated versions, the original components of some such toponyms were found. In most cases, these could be reconstructed and repostulated from cognate ‘words’ or elements from closely related language groups and dialects from which they may have originated; or alternatively from other language families, e.g. from Khoikhoi, including Nama, Griqua and Korana; the Bantu and European languages, and so forth, from which they apparently derived, or into which they were loaned or adopted or transferred.

This could be verified linguistically with cognate words as documented in the earliest recorded forms of such words used for animals, for geographical entities and other features of the terrain as depicted in a variety of languages of the southern African region. This provided the basis to link the diversity of languages that were involved, and in which the animal names and toponymic elements could be traced back. This aspect is discussed under the specific examples of animal names as presented according to species, and the toponyms derived from them.

### 1.6.6 *Uniformity of naming strategies*

The method employed to find examples of toponyms and data on animal names with references to the specific animal's behaviour patterns, from a variety of languages, implied compiling a comparable set of onymic, and specifically toponymic, data from the various languages in which these names occurred. What became obvious was that this onymic and toponymic data revealed naming motives and patterns that were not necessarily uniform or comparable in all languages, but that a certain measure of conventionalisation did take place. Often the visualisations of an animal's peculiarities led to the same distinguishing characteristics to feature in some form of the names given. Quite often there were exceptional visualisations of these peculiar characteristics or habits that gave rise to unique metaphoric conceptualisations of the animals and with it, the immortalisation of the animal's name in a toponym, e.g. Neranisib explained as 'baboon's birth place'; Girinaris > Jakkalsfontein > Schackalsquelle; Quassadi > Kwassadi > 'the painted runner's river > Luipaardskloof; Levubu / Umzimvubu > 'river of hippopotami'; Bollatlokwe 'sound of ostriches', Dimptšhe 'place of many ostriches', Metsimptšhe as 'ostrich pan'.

It was significant to notice that when it came to the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages of southern Africa, where a number of animal common names were found to be created in this manner, and used as onymic and toponymic formatives, some of them are still being utilised and retained to this day as designations for these animals in other languages, e.g. *chacma*, *kudu*, *kwagga*, *quagga*; and also as terminological 'name labels' in the scientific zoological taxonomy or categorisation of species names of mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. From all this, some examples may be put forward as evidence to evaluate the statement that words and names are mostly formed 'arbitrarily' as argued by Robins (1968:13-14, 23-26). Some may indeed have been formed descriptively and onomatopoeically, i.e. closer to the real sounds as heard from the animals themselves.

It may be assumed that in early evolutionary language development, the origins of some common names or a set of references that became a full nomenclature that refers to animals, may be traced back to these earliest phonological emulations or imitations of the vocalisations and behavioural characteristics of mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. Therefore, from this plethora of possible phonemic clusters or sound-associative and morphological creations, a fixed nomenclature or vocabulary for animals developed, as well as toponyms containing such references.



Figure 1.6.6 Fighting kudu bulls, Numas ravine, Brandberg [A. Viereck]

### 1.6.7 *Evolutionary linguistic and onomastic naming processes*

It is thus accepted that the nature of some of these onomatopoeic renderings contained in animal names were purely sound-associative and were not, as in other descriptive names, used with other associations to refer to the animals' behaviour or species-specific features, e.g. metaphors, which occur in place names as well. These common nouns and the toponyms were thus initially, not necessarily taken only from descriptive elements or conventionalised words, but directly represented the sound sequences of the animals' vocalisations. Other names sometimes contained associative metaphoric elements, visualisations of movements or 'actions'; and by utilising a descriptive verb, or what is known as an 'action' word, referring to that peculiar characteristic of the action or behaviour. For example, in their locomotion, in territorial border markings, rutting and fighting strategies, foraging activities or the herding motions of animals, sometimes also relating to sounds they make during these activities, e.g. the eland's knee-cap clicking; the ostrich's booming roar as *!gum*; the puff adder's name as 'water's waves', or as a 'rain's thing'.

Onomatopoeic and metaphoric, as with descriptive naming, may, therefore, be seen as one of the evolutionary linguistic and onomastic processes in its most basic and fascinating form, whereby words, names and toponyms were created. It is probably futile to try to reason one's way around the questions of whether onomatopoeic naming was the first step in onymic activity, or that it may be the primary naming motive or pattern, before the descriptive or metaphoric naming patterns emerged. This type of arguing is not tenable, because of the lack of written records from earlier stages of language and onymic development prior to that of the Bushman



and Khoikhoi languages of which there are at least fairly complete recordings. Gelb (1965:11-13, 27) noted: “Just as speech developed out of imitation of sound, so writing developed out of imitation of the forms of real objects or beings”, we know little of the earliest indigenous language developments in southern Africa prior to the Late Stone Age Bushman, except for the rock art, stone engravings and widespread symbolism in these artistic expressions as found in rock-shelters and cave drawings (e.g. at Blombos, Die Kelders, in the Drakensberg, Brandberg, and so on), and therefore this falls beyond the scope of this study.<sup>8</sup>

### 1.6.8 *Establishment of a paleo-linguistic vocabulary*

Based on the examples of words, common names and place names gathered from various languages of the region and from fieldwork done by early researchers, the corpus of data on animal names and the toponyms they relate to, was compared and analysed according to phonological and morphological cognates. In other words, it was analysed according to linguistic criteria, and on the toponymic level it was assessed with regard to naming motives and patterns, i.e. as relating to toponymic criteria. This led to the postulation of the idea that some of these animal names, and the toponyms derived from them, could be seen as relating to, and be evaluated as part of the paleo-linguistic and paleo-onymic language development of the ‘first peoples’, i.e. the late Stone Age Bushmen, the Khoikhoi and their predecessors, and that, as such, they functioned as first namers. This led to the conclusion that their nomenclature specifically was already well-established by the time the newcomers entered the territory, as it relates to animals and things of the natural world, as well as to the naming of topographic features where they resided.

## 1.7. Topographical verification: Place names in context

Together with the linguistic verification processes, the topographical verification, both in application and reference to the named feature, was established on i.a. topographical and topocadastral maps, for example, those from the Directorate of Surveys and Mapping (1988-1998) and the Surveyor-General-SWA. n.d. Index and Topo-cadastral series of maps 1:50 000, 1:250 000. Also used, were those indicating the routes followed by explorers and natural scientists, missionaries and so forth, e.g. Arrowsmith (1838) on Alexander’s route; Thomas Baines’s map (1864) of his exploration route: ‘Walvisch Bay to Thounce, or Stink Fountain’; Schinz (1884-

87, 1891) and other botanists and naturalists. In addition to these the author consulted maps from the time of the '*Kolonialgesellschaft*'; the '*Kriegskarten*' ('war maps'); maps of administrators or troop leaders ('*Truppenleiter*'), e.g. Von Francois (1890), Leutwein, Lindequist, Streitwolf, and many more, who drew maps of their expeditions indicating strategic transport and railway lines, stations, towns and harbours (Sprigade & Moisel 1904, 1914; Möller 1986:476-480).

## 1.8. Indigenous names of animals in zoological taxonomy

Some Bushman and Khoikhoi names of animals have survived to this day in the scientific world, and quite a few have been retained in the zoological, taxonomic classification systems of animal species' names.

Comparing categorisations of the animal kingdom into species and sub-species, one finds common names from the earliest Bushman languages, or those allocated by other indigenous language speakers, still being used as designations, for example, the *kudu* sub-species names as *Tragelaphus imberbis*, the '*lesser kudu*' and the *Tragelaphus strepsiceros*, the '*greater kudu*' (Estes 2012:180, 182); the red or '*rooi*' *hartebeest* indicated by Roberts (1954:282) as the *Alcelaphus caama*, now *buselaphus* and almost extinct now, of which a sub-species is still called *Buselaphus caama*; the savanna baboons (*Papio cynocephalus ursinus*) as *chacma* baboons. The *wildebeests* are variantly known as *gnu* or *gnou* in both designations, e.g. the common black *wildebeest* (sub-species name *Connochaetus gnou*, but sometimes also indicated as *gnu*), and the blue *wildebeest* (*Connochaetus taurinus gnu*); the *nyala* (*Tragelaphus angasii*); the dwarf antelope *oribi* (*Ourebia ourebi*); the *cape mountain zebra*, called the South African *quagga*, extinct since the previous century, except for some DNA-reproduced specimens in the Mountain Zebra National Park near Cradock in the Cape. Lastly, in the category of birds, names such as the *kori* bustard, its Afrikaans variant *gompou*; the *knor-* or *korhane*; the barn owl, known in Afrikaans as *nonnetjiesuil* (possibly from Bushman *!nōnna*); the *bokmakierie*, and so forth, are surviving Bushman and Khoikhoi names as emerge from the citations below.

# PART TWO

## Mammal names



The mammals, including carnivores, the primates and the hoofed mammals, are presented in the following chapters (two to seven) with their names, as taken mainly from the Bushman and Khoikhoi, but also from the Bantu or other indigenous languages, and discussed in each chapter, together with the place names in which their names could be traced.

## CHAPTER TWO

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### Carnivores, their names and toponyms derived from them

#### 2.1. The cat family – Felidae

The great cats are introduced as the first of the carnivores: Lions, cheetahs and leopards; then the smaller cats, such as the caracal, the serval and other African wild cats, e.g. the *vaalboskat* (*Felis lybica*); also the small spotted cat (*Felis nigripes*), the black-footed cat, colloquially called the *swartpoot* in Afrikaans, also called *kleingekolde kat*.



Figure 2.1 Lioness yawning [Daniel Otte]

##### 2.1.1 *The lion*

The lion (*Panthera leo*), ‘*leeu*’ in Afrikaans, was identified in many of the Bushman languages as ‘the one who roars by making deep bellowing sounds from his chest’. The common names that reflect this are i.a. *xam*, *hu:m* and *ho:um*. These variant

onomatopoeic renderings of its name are actually all examples of sound-associative formatives, recorded from various Bushman languages by Bleek (1929:54, 1956:732). Examples of this would be *xam* in the /Nu //en (S6) language, Auen (N1) and Kung (N2); as *!kxam* and *xamba* in Naron (C2); *kham*, *kxam*, *hu:m* and *ho:m* from Hie (C1), as *\_//khā* in /Xam (S1); and from the !O!kuj (N3) words *xam*, and *//kwaemma* respectively; and *xami*, *!xgam* in Nama. This whole range of names gives a very accurate emulation of its loud roar.

According to the documented evidence of Bushman and Khoikoi references to the lion, the unmistakably distinctive roaring was the onymic motive and onomatopoeic formative that became its name. The African lion, coined from earliest time by this name derived from its call: “to keep the pride in contact with its members”, “to warn potential rivals and to establish territorial dominance” (Estes 2012:374), is reflected in many southern African toponyms.

Nienaber listed in his book on Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects (*Hottentots*, 1963:369-370) some of the oldest names recorded for the lion, some with place names identified by various explorers as referring to this great African cat. These names for the lion in Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects (some recognised as Bushman), were documented i.a. by Ten Rhyne in 1673 as *gamma*, *tgamma*, *chamma* and spelling variations thereof. The earliest recorded toponyms reflecting the lion’s name are i.a. Chamasab, Chamasaris, Chamasas(is), Chamates, Chamaites, Chamchawib, Chamdaos, Chamgab, Chamgabi, Chamgudommi, Chamika, Chamob and Chamkubus (Nienaber 1963:369-370, Nienaber & Raper 1977:275-282).

These names all originated from the same root designation for this carnivore, *xam* (written initially as *cham-* or *gam-* by the scribes at the Cape), which the San and Khoikhoi coined from the sound it emitted (Bleek 1929:54, 1956:388, 732). Bleek compares it to the same sound made by the ostrich, the one who “presses air from his lungs and bellows”, from the verb *!gum* that means ‘to roar’, ‘to bellow’ (earlier recorded by Lucy Lloyd (1932: 320) as “*!gumm na /amip*, the ostrich booms”), and that the ostrich and the lion both carry this name because they make this ‘roaring’ sound. Bleek further quotes: “*a !gum: o a tu...*”, meaning: “thou lion dost roar with thy mouth and lungs”. The lion’s roaring is recognised as absolutely distinct from the softer growling of the leopard, or the cheetah’s high pitched cry as *!nkwi:*.

Among the many toponyms recorded with one component containing the lion’s name, are numerous translations, e.g. Chammago, ‘Leeuwenrivier’ (Beutler 1752),

Koeamkamka, 'Leeuwenkloof'; Gamsrivier, Gamka, both meaning 'lion river' or 'Leeurivier' in Afrikaans (Swellengrebel 1776), and the tautological Leeu-Gamka.



Figure 2.1.1 (a) Male lion growling [Daniel Otte]

Beutler had already mentioned the following of the Chammago, in his report of 1752 (RZA III 330): '*quamen wy by de Leeuwenrivier, in het Hottentot Chammago genaamt*'. It was also recorded as Gamoprivier and Kamop (*inter alia* by W. van Reenen on his travels across the Gariep to Namibia in 1791). The river mentioned in these journals apparently referred to the same name for the 'lion' emulated as *xam*, a sound-associative formative indicative of the occurrence of many lions. Only the orthographic renderings differed in each explorer's documents, e.g. Chammago, Gamka or Chamtkarivier, Gamop, Kamop and Xamob translated as Leeuwenrivier or Lion River (Mossop 1935:46-47, 160). Alexander writes of this river in 1836 (I, 53) initially as Kamies, then in 1838, (I:227) he gives it as: "we reached the banks of the Kamop or Lion river".

The Gammo or Xamo River, lying at Lat. 26° 43' and Long. 37° 45', with variant spellings and the indicated location, together with the translated name, were given as descriptions by Brink and Rhenius in their journals (Mossop 1947), and are probably the same river as the Gamop or Xamob above. Both spelling versions *Gammo* and *Xamo* were attempts at representing the fricative *x* as efflux with the click sounds as found in the Bushman names *xam*, *!kxam* and *//kwaemma* for a 'lion'.

Although the name Leeukloof, given in earlier sources as alternative for Koeamkamka, has been variously explained as a partially translated name, initially



into the Dutch Leeuwenkloof (Raper *et al* 2014:241, 271). The Leeubos River was explained as translating the Khoikhoi name Chammago. It is the northern tributary of the Krom River, which it joins 11 km west-south-west of Humansdorp in the Eastern Cape. The Afrikaans Leeubos is from the Dutch Leeuwenbosch, ‘lion bush, lion thicket’ (Nienaber & Raper 1977:281), now retraced as Bushman in origin: the component *cham* from Kung (N2) *xam*, Naron (C2) *xamba*, and the *go* from !O!kun (N3) *!ò*, or from /Xam (S1) *᠘ho, ᠘bo, ᠘po*, meaning ‘bush’ (Raper *et al* 2014:68, 271). All forms with *cham-* are apparently variant spellings of the name for the lion as indicated under *xam, xammob*.

In Namibia, numerous features refer to the lion, probably because these great cats have survived longer in their natural wild habitat there. As indicated for the Khoikoi language, the lion is known as *χámi*, recorded by Kroenlein (1889:45), who lists many place names in Namibia with this formative: *χámis Löwenthal*, ‘lion valley’; *χám-/asas Löwenquelle*, ‘lion fountain’; *χám-//gab Löwendurst*, ‘lions’ thirst’. Bleek’s recordings of ancient Bushman words for ‘lion’, and the variants of this name, indicate its origin from the hunter-gatherers, as the cognates *xam, hu:m* and *ho:um* prove. It is also found in the toponym Houms River.

The Houms River, translated as Leeuwenrivier or Leurivier and Löwenfluss, was described by the cartographer Carl Brink (Mossop 1947:30-31, 159) as: “*dragende wyders de naam naar de menigte Leeuwen, die zig daar omtrent ophouden*” (Houms, ‘it bears this name for the large number of lions which occur there’). The long-drawn diphtong –ou: representing the sound sequence of the roar of lions, was emulated exactly in the name *houm* and *ho:m* as recorded from the Hie (C1) language by Bleek (1929:54).

The toponym !Gam-domi (also recorded as /Gamgu-domi) is indicated as a locality at the confluence with the Leurivier, flowing in the Okombahe district, north-west of the Erongo Mountains and east-south-east of the Brandberg, indicated on a map by Köhler (1959:47, map opp. p. 114). The name !Gam-domi occurs in a cluster with other Khoi-San names such as /Houm-di-//gams ‘lion’s fountain’ from the same onomatopoeic Hie (C1) formative *houm*.

Many of the original Bushman and Nama toponyms in Namibia that refer to the presence of lions, were preserved in hybridised forms or partial translations into Herero, Ovambo, Afrikaans, English and German and other languages. Afrikaans names, such as *Leudrink, Leulaagte, Leeunes, Leurante, Leurivier* occur



often; in German, translations such as Löwenberg, Löwenbusch, Löwenquelle; English Lions River, from Herero the names Okatjongeama and Otjongeama both indicating the ‘place of lions’ (Albertyn 1984:66). The settlement with the Herero name Otjongeama, in fact, lies on the Leeurivier and confirms the presence of lions and the origin of both these Herero names that are cognate with the /Xam (S1) //kwaemma, “lion, name used by early race” as recorded by Bleek 1956:597). The component *-ngeama* is reminiscent of the Nguni word *ingonyama* as in the toponym Ngonyameni, a “small tributary of the Tsomo River in the Cape Province” (Pettman 1931:137).

Raper *et al* (2014:369) comment on both the names Ngonyameni in Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape: “The name is of Zulu origin and means ‘place of the lion.’ A railway’s motorbus stopping place between Matatiele and Maclear with the name Ngonyameni has the same meaning.” The stem (*n*)gonyam is a derivation or adaptation from a Khoi-San word cognate with the Hie (C1) word *!ho kham* ‘a large maned lion’ (Bleek 1956:398), from //Ku//e (S2c) the word *!goiŋ* ‘lion’ (Bleek 1956:385), and as in the above /Xam (S1) //kwaemma (as recorded by Lucy Lloyd, quoted in Bleek 1956:597), where Lucy Lloyd explained the use of the name //kwaemma as: “...the early race of people were those who called the lion’s name with (*U*)kwaemma”. The *U* here may have been a typing error or misrepresentation of the click // in /Xam, or was heard as used in the Bantu pronunciation of the word.

Bleek (1956:477, 597, 694) mentions in probably one of the oldest recorded hlonipa (*‘hlonipha’* in Zulu) practices relating to animal references, that the coining of the name *!ne* by the Kung (N2) and !O!kuŋ (N3) speakers, was to be used for the lion as synonymous for its name *xam*, and that this was done to ‘avoid its real name’. The original recording of this practice regarding the lion’s avoidance name, was done by Lucy Lloyd (quoted in Bleek), and the explanation offered by interviewees was: “... (in) our country the lion takes offence about its name (if it is mentioned)”, in other words you do not call the lion by its name, therefore it is to be called *!ne*, “name used to avoid its real name” (Bleek 1956:256, 477).

Kamkusi is a railway siding 22 km south of Beit Bridge, on the route Waterpoort – Messina in the Limpopo province. The name, said to be of Venda origin and to mean ‘infested with lions’, is a derivation from a concurring component *kam* that would be cognate with the Hie (C1) *kxam*, *kham* and *xam*, and the Khoikhoi *xami*,

'lion'. The many toponyms in southern Africa that refer to the lion, either in adopted, adapted (derived) or borrowed form from Bushman, Khoikhoi and/or Bantu into Afrikaans or English forms, e.g. Xamka, Bollatau, Taung; Leeufontein, Leeukop; Lions River, Lions Head, and so forth (Raper *et al* 2014:271), are an indication of the former wide distribution and range of lions in the territory. Their absence would result in a terrible silence.



Figure 2.1.1 (b) Lion face [Daniel Otte]

### 2.1.2 *The cheetah*

The cheetah or hunting leopard, '*jagluiperd*' in Afrikaans (*Acinonyx jubatus*), enters the page with an elusive and almost forgotten form of its name. In one of the oldest recordings of the toponym Quassadie, also recorded as Kwassadie River, the metaphor of the 'painted one' was associated with its early indigenous name  $\chi oa-s\ddot{a}o$ . In the interpretation of it as such, its name sprang to life again. The toponym Quassadie, however, was later translated as Luipaardskloof. This old name of the cheetah,  $\chi oa-s\ddot{a}o$ , may also be the onymic formative in place names like Gosacha translated as Tjigerrivier; Ngoliloe as taken from *ngola* 'to draw', and a few more.

While analysing toponyms containing possible references to lions, cheetahs and leopards, the toponym, Quassadie with spelling variants Quassidie, Kwass(i)adie River, and so forth, presented a challenge to its interpretation. It was indicated as an old name of a river, kloof and farm in the Western Cape (Nienaber & Raper 1980:688-689; Raper *et al* 2014:264). Due to the uncertainty expressed in its origin, its meaning and linguistic formatives, and because of its many variant forms

appearing on maps and in other sources, further investigation was prompted. This toponym, with its origin shrouded in previous attempts at interpretation, and the apparent metaphor in one of the explanations, opened the way for a new approach towards a possible origin from a Bushman language.



Figure 2.1.2 (a) Young cheetahs [Daniel Otte]

The explanation given of the word for the named carnivore, sparked the question: which of the big cats was actually meant here? This *'luipaard'* and the river and kloof that was named after it, gave a totally new realisation of the San speakers' onymic prowess, to describe in original, metaphoric visualisation, the animals they observed and named.

The origin of the name Kwassadie < Quassadie, the stream flowing through the ravine into the Rivieronderend 7 km east of Stormsvlei, Riversdale area, was initially explained as being from Khoikhoi and named after the leopard (*Panthera pardus*). Originally though, it was alluded to as deriving from the oldest recorded words for a *'tijger'*, i.e. from *t gwassou* (Witsen 1691, RZA I:216), *tquassouw* (Valentyn 1705:107a), *t~quassouw*; later as *choassouw*, *goassaauw* for *'tier'* or *'leopard'* (in Nienaber 1963:480). However, an observation by the missionary Johannes Olpp (1884:16) in his book *Angra Pequena*, quoted by Nienaber and Raper (1980:689), linked the oldest documented form *t~gwassou* to the name *Xoa-são*, where it was described as meaning *"der gezeichnete Renner – der Tiger"*, *'the painted runner' – the 'tiger'*. This explanation as provided by Olpp, elucidated the metaphoric *'refined interpretation'* of its name as *Xoa-são*, the *'etched one'*, *'the painted one'*.

Often the confusion in analysing the origins of toponymic formatives arose because the explanations given did not always make a clear distinction between the ‘spotted lion’, the ‘great tiger’, the ‘real tiger’, the ‘cheetah’ and the ‘leopard’; they were all called ‘*de tijger*’, or ‘*tier*’. In this case it was not the ‘angry, snarling and spitting one’, it was the ‘cautious, shy and timid one’. And so the real origins often eluded us, until this *Xoa-são* as ‘the painted runner’ (‘*der gezeichnete Renner*’), with his metaphoric name, entered the debate on the meaning of this place named Quassadie. The cheetah was the only cat able to appear as the ‘one with an etched face’, and as being ‘the fast runner’, thus according to Olpp ‘the painted runner’.

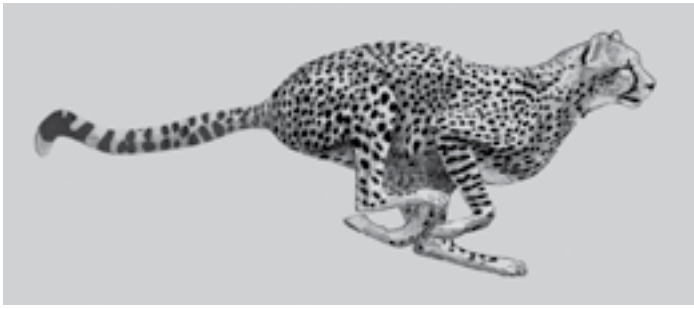


Figure 2.1.2 (b) Cheetah sprinting [Daniel Otte]

Another verification for the word *xoa-são* as the ‘etched or painted one’, came from an earlier quote, i.e. by Sir Thomas Herbert’s recording in 1626 of the word *guasaco* for ‘a quill’, as a pen to etch, write with, and explained as ‘a scratch thing’ by Nienaber (1963:418). Herbert was asking his interviewees the word for a ‘pen’, which in his case was probably the quill of a goose feather (resembling, or perhaps indeed a real ‘porcupine quill’). His interviewees referred to this ‘quill’ he was using to write down the words, as a ‘scratch or etching quill’. The explanation by Nienaber (1963:418) that it is from the same root word for the later recorded Nama version of *xoa* ‘to write’, the whole to be understood as *xoasa-co*, literally a ‘scratch quill’ used for etching, drawing, but also in the sense of ‘a pen is like a quill’. In fact, *xoa* means ‘to scratch, etch’; *xoas* is the noun meaning the ‘etched or etching’ (Kroenlein 1889:50; Rust 1960:37).

Bleek (1956:751) documented the similar concept in the verb *\_soa*, *xa* and *//gou* i.e. ‘to scratch’. The component *co* is an orthographic adaptation of a word from the /Xam (S1) language */ku* for a ‘quill’, emphatically, as that which is a ‘scratch tool, a quill’, in the form *//kotən* as Bleek (1956:747) noted with the usual *o* and *u*

variability. This is another verification of the same metaphoric visualisation of ‘the one with the scratched or etched face’, the cheetah, thus the metaphorically coined ‘painted runner’.



Figure 2.1.2 (c) Cheetah male [Daniel Otte]

This earliest recorded word for a ‘quill’ as a scratch, etching tool, and the derived name of the ‘tier’, in this instance the hunting leopard or cheetah, and Olpp’s fine-tuned interpretation, provided the key for interpreting the metaphoric rendering of the name for the cheetah in the Bushman languages. The same concept via a further description was found in Kroenlein (1889:50): *χόά-* ‘*graviren*’ that means ‘to etch’, and in Rust (1960:76) of the Nama expression *χοα (-são)* as ‘*kratzen, zeichnen*’ – ‘to scratch, draw’. From this Olpp correctly interpreted ‘the etched or painted runner’ as the cheetah. Imagine this ‘etching’ of the cheetah’s face with the characteristic black line running down as ‘tear duct’ from the “anterior angle of the eye’ across its face ‘to the edge of the lip...ending in the region of the upper canines”, as described by Roberts (1954:181). It is known today, that the cheetah’s elongated, dark eyeliner or tearduct evolved to prevent reflected sunlight from entering the eye and blinding the cheetah especially during a chase (*Wildest Africa*, NatGeo Wild programme, 31 August 2016). The descriptions above illustrate the Bushmen’s visualisation of the ‘etched, painted or adorned face’ of the great cat, which became metaphorically named ‘the painted runner’.

This gave the confirmation that the toponym Quassadie, Kwassadie River, was actually a reference to the cheetah with its etched face as *Xoa-são*, and not the later interpretation of it as a Khoikhoi designation, with unexplainable endings *-di* or *-*

*die* being interpreted as possible references to a female leopard or the plural of many leopards, the ‘*tiers*’.

This old metaphor for the cheetah gave the answer to the uncertainty surrounding the origin of the place name, Quassadie. The interpretation of the full form of the toponym from *t~gwa-ssoudi* (deriving from *xoa-são* + *di* or *ti*, indicated in the earliest explanations as to its origin), thus literally ‘etched, painted, [runner] river’ to Quassadie, could now be verified as ‘the painted runner river’ or ‘the cheetah river’; wherein the first component *tgwa* is cognate to the word  $\chi$ oa or /*kwa*: $\xi$ , ‘to paint, adorn, write’ from /Xam (S1), already recorded in the previous century by Wilhelm Bleek; thus the ‘painted one’ (Bleek 1956:741). This was later documented in Dorothea Bleek’s dictionary (1956:328), where she also indicates /*kwá* /*kwā* !*ho* as ‘write’, a word synonymous to *xoa* from Korana as recorded by Lucy Lloyd, which corresponds exactly with the recording of Herbert in 1626 for *goasaco*; the !*ho* also /*khu* synonym for /*ku* from Auen (N1) (Bleek 1929:68); and as observed in the utterance: ‘... $\bar{/khw}i$ :  $\bar{/khu}$  ...’, a ‘porcupine’s quill’, recorded from ≠Khomani (S2a) and documented by Bleek (1956:314, 747); these words and *co* being cognates. In the first examples with /*kwa*: $\xi$ , /*kwá* /*kwā* !*ho*, acting as reference to a porcupine’s quill as a ‘writing thing’, a ‘scratch thing’ or a pen, the adapted forms are written as *choa* and *goa* (Nienaber 1963:418). Incidentally, the name for the porcupine’s quills was also created onomatopoeically as  $\bar{/!kwa$  !*kwa* (Bleek 1956:747); this because of the loud rustling sound when the quills are suddenly being opened by the porcupine with a rush backwards to attack an opponent.

The second component *sa*, *sao-* of the toponym Quassadie could equally be derived from the action verb ‘to run’ (perhaps metaphorically the action of a pen seen as ‘runner’, ‘cursor’) from *\_sa*, and *fa* in the Batwa (S3), Hadza (C3), Kung (N2) and !O!kun (N3) languages. The third component of the toponym *-di* is the fluvial embedded generic from *ati*, *ti* meaning ‘water’, *tji* and also /*i*: meaning ‘to flow’ or referring to ‘running water’, thus indicating the river that flows through the kloof.

It was only 200 years after Herbert’s recording of the pen as an ‘etching quill’, and recordings of the ‘*tijger*’ as *tgwassou*, *choassou* and *xoa-são* later documented also as *kxao* from Hie (C1) (Bleek 1929: 52), that mention was made of the name *t~gwa-ssoudi* as a possible reference to ‘the leopard’, which in Korana and Nama, is actually known as the /*garu-b*, in Bushman i.a. as !*káru*. It could be concluded, that component by component, this toponym Quassadie, fitted the Bushmen metaphoric visualisation of the cheetah as explained by Olpp. The original ‘etched’, or ‘painted

runner' had just been forgotten; had perhaps become extinct in those parts of the Cape. Skead (1987:174-175) mentions reports that describe the occurrence and hunting of cheetahs in the nineteenth century south of the Orange (Gariiep) River, and of reports on sightings and skull finds in the Albany and Middelburg districts. He quotes from Hewitt's book (1931:34): "Cheetahs...became extinct in the Albany district about the year 1888 ..." and that "in the last thirty years cheetahs have been killed in the open country of the Middelburg, Cradock and Colesberg districts", from which he calculates that cheetahs may have occurred in these areas up to the beginning of the twentieth century.

In an article by D. Furstenburg (2004:6-11), the cheetah's features and earlier distribution are discussed. On the webpage, two maps (dated 2007, 2009) are included showing the past natural distribution and later distribution as well as the localised reintroductions of the cheetah's range (<http://www.wildliferanching.com/content/cheetah-acinonyx-jubatus>) (Retrieved August 2015).

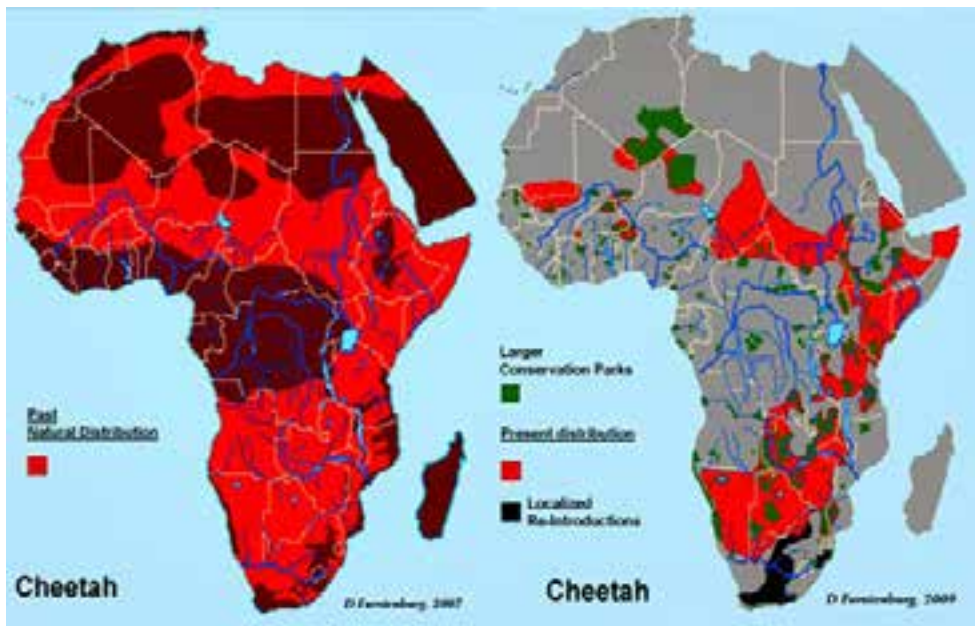


Figure 2.1.2 (d) Maps by D. Furstenburg

The cheetah, known for its speed as the fastest mammal on the planet, is indeed 'the runner' since it runs twice as fast as the leopard. And the hunter-gatherers knew this, therefore they named it for this characteristic behaviour. Together with this,



the cheetah's other outstanding feature is the etched face. The leopard, although beautifully adorned with rosette-like spots, has no specifically striped or etched face, and no pronounced tear lines. The leopard, while hunting, relies on stealth, and will rather lie in ambush and wait, whereas the cheetah relies on its running speed, to chase and hunt down prey with its exceptional acceleration of 0 to 96 km/h in 3 seconds, recorded as the fastest runner of all land mammals (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheetah>, accessed 12 July 2015).

Another place name that contains the same toponymic root as formative element *χoa-são* is “Gosacha...anders genaamt Tjgerrivier”. It may equally refer to the cheetah, not the leopard. It was recorded as early as 1752 by Beutler (RZA III 1752:322, quoted in Nienaber 1963:480). It is associated with the cognate words *t-gwassou*, *χoa-são*, and with the designation for the cheetah *χoa-são* since it relates to the metaphor of the ‘painted, adorned runner’. The written form of the toponym was already adapted to *gosa-* by Beutler with the fluvial generic *cha* or *ga* indicating the river, this as in /*k'a* from the /Xam (S1) language.

Another possible confirmation of the concepts *xoa* and *\_soa* as deriving from the verb ‘to draw, to etch’, was found in Pettman’s recording (1931:16) of the name Ngoliloe in the Tsolo district, Cape Province. He explains the name as follows: “Ngoliloe...(from Southern Sotho, *ngola*, to engrave, to draw)...there are a number of Bushman paintings there,...and when they saw them the Bakuena said: ‘the shades have written here’, and so the place came to be called Ngoliloe”. The verb *ngola* is perhaps an adapted form in the toponym, cognate with *xoa*, derived from the composite *xoa\_soa*, corresponding with Bleek’s recording (1956:171) for the verb ‘to scratch, to draw’ as *\_soa* from the !O!kun (N3) language, providing also the Nama variant *sao*, ‘to draw’ as was argued in *χoa-são*, for the toponym Quassadi. She also gives the example sentence to illustrate the use of the verb: “*a \_soa tsom, ka !kòe*...(he) scratched pictures, scraped in”; this *!kòe* corresponding exactly with the sound sequence of the final component of *ngoliloe*, thus *ngola* deriving from *< \_soa + li*; and *-loe* deriving from *< !kòe*. Both of these cognates could therefore, in the same vein, correspond with the name for the cheetah, here though as the ‘place of etchings, paintings’. Alternatively, an argument could be put forward that Ngoliloe could have been derived from the word for the cheetah in Zulu: ‘ingulule’; with the *o* and *u* variations becoming evident in the adaptation process, i.e. *ngo* as *ngu*. Occurrences of the cheetah in the Eastern Cape were rare in later years



after the incoming Nguni agro-pastoralists and the *trekboers* entered the region (Skead 1987:321-322).

Perhaps coincidental, but in the vicinity lies the mountain, Apryntjies or Prentjiesberg, some 10 km from Ugie in Griqualand East, its name perhaps translated either from Ngoliloe or the Xhosa name Mngqazana. As Prentjiesberg in Afrikaans, it obviously refers to its many San paintings. Its meaning according to Raper *et al* (2014:420) is ‘mountain of little pictures’; “this Afrikaans name was presumably given because of the hundreds of Bushman paintings in rock shelters or overhanging cliffs”. The Xhosa name, Mngqazana, is said to be that of a chief, but it may also relate to the drawings in the mountain when the reduplicated vowel endings *a* in both are considered: *mgqaza* as from Bushman *xoasa* and *xoa \_soa*.

Another explanation of the cheetah’s name as  $\chi$ oa-sǎo in the Khoi-San languages was documented with a twist in the tail. Lucy Lloyd (quoted in Maingard 1932:313) gave the interpretation from Korana as provided by her interviewee, Piet Lynx: “ $\chi$ oa-sǎo-*b* is the real ‘*tier*’ and has a white end to its tail, and is longer.” This, then, is another confirmation of the words  $\chi$ oa-sǎo as reference to the cheetah, also known and explained or indicated as a ‘*tier*’.

Other names documented for the hunting leopard viz. cheetah by Bleek (1929:52, 1956:704), are *!afu*, *!kx’afu*, *!k”auru*, *//halu*, *!kau* and *khao* or *kxao* in the Hie (C1) language (this name is retained in Tswana and Northern Sotho as *lengau*); */kwanxu* from /Xam (S1). It is also retained as *!kx’arru* or *!k’aru* from the /Auni (S4) language that relate to the form in Nama as *!arub*. Kroenlein (1889:32, 80) explains this name with the distinction: “*!arúb – subst. der Leopard*” (meaning the hunting leopard or ‘*jagluiperd*’), and describes it as ‘the timid, cautious one’ (“*der Zaghafter*”, from the expression *!aru-!na* ‘to be timid hearted’). Rust (1960:26) under ‘*Gepard*’ (German for ‘cheetah’) describes it in the same way: “*Gepard: !arub; gepardherzig, d.h. feige: !aru-≠gao-!na*”, the meaning to be understood as being ‘shy, cowardly’; in the case of the cheetah, it probably means ‘cautious’. The leopard, on the other hand, is described as the *!hurudub* ‘the great tiger – snarling very much and angry’ (Kroenlein 1889:80, 183, “*der grosse Tiger, sehr viel schnaubend und böse*”).

Apart from this, the cheetah was onomatopoeically distinguished in the Bushman languages by emulating its high pitched cries, particularly of the young (and mother calling to its young), as Bleek recorded (1929:53): *//kóú* from /Auni (S4); *//kwe*, *//kou* in /N!ke (S2); *~//kwi* in Sesarwa (S5) and /Nu//en (S6). This component

appears in many other African languages for the cheetah, e.g. in Karanga *didingwe*, Sotho *nkwe-šilo*, Venda *dagaladzhe*. In the Nguni languages, e.g. Zulu and Xhosa though, a similar name is applied to the leopard: *ingwe* or *inkwe*, but also *ingulule*, Doke and Vilakazi (2005:72) indicating it only as the cheetah here, and *i(li)hlozi*, *inhlozi* for a ‘variety of leopard said to be larger than the *ingwe* and with the spots forming a complete circle; panther’ (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:336). The spots of the cheetah are indeed ‘closed’.

The phonological correspondence between *-ngwe* and *//kauë* and *!koe:ba* seems possible, the *we*, *auë* and *oe:* variant orthographical representations of the same phoneme, while those between *-ngwe* and *//kwe:* (and *ˀ//kwi*) are obvious, almost identical. There seems, though, to have been a misinterpretation at some stage. In the cases of *//kwe:* and *ˀ//kwi* for ‘hunting leopard’ or ‘cheetah’ became *-ngwe* for ‘leopard’ (or it may indeed have been a fine distinction between the sound imitations of its call); while *!hurudub* was documented as ‘leopard’ in Bleek (1929:52), and in Kroenlein (1889:183a, already as ‘*grosse Tiger*’). This, then, became *gulule* (*ingulule*) ‘cheetah’; the Zulu voiced velar explosive consonant *g* supplanting the retroflex explosive click with aspirated velar efflux *!h*, and the voiced alveolar lateral *l* supplanting the voiced alveolar rolled *r*.

As stated in the beginning of this discussion, many names were interlinked, yet applied differently to the two ‘*tijgers*’ in different languages. The name of a village Ngwavuma derived from the river name Ingwavuma in KwaZulu-Natal, said to refer i.a. to the ‘growling of the leopard (or cheetah)’, was initially indicated by Pettman (1931:137) as “from Zulu *ingwe*, tiger, cheetah – *Cynaelurus jubatus*”. It is thus seen as a possible folk-etymological and phonological adaptation derived from *ingwe*.

Significant in all onomatopoeic cases with the component *nkwi* and *ngwe*, is the dominant sound association with the high front vowel *i:* pronounced with higher pitch and tone as acoustic indicator. Indeed, the cheetah, especially the young cubs, make this high pitched cry: *nkwi:-nkwi:* when in distress. Estes (2012:381) mentions that the cheetah’s vocalisations include “chirping or yelping, churring, growling, snarling, moaning, bleating and purring...” and ‘mother calling cubs’ sounds like ‘*ihn, ihn, ihn*’ (probably more like the *nkwi* and *nkwe* of the Bushman rendering of this sound), but that they also ‘growl and hiss’ and ‘cough in fright’, and of course, “contented cheetahs purr like huge house cats”.

### 2.1.3 The leopard

The leopard (*Panthera pardus*) is known by various names in the Bushman languages, and its name features equally often as the lion's in southern African place names. Some contain only partial or adapted references to the leopard or 'tier', and as explained above, may actually have referred to the cheetah in some cases. Yet, some toponyms seem to reflect the leopard's distinctive vocalisations, as in the recorded common names for this carnivore. The leopard's many names in the Bushman languages are documented in Bleek (1929:52, 1956: 737) as i.a. //kauë from /Xam (S1); !hāū from Sesarwa (S5); !khum from Auen (N1); !hau, -k'au and nkau from Kung (N2); !'hm from !O!kun (N3); uwe from Hie (C1) and -!koe:ba from Naron (C2). Some of these are obvious onomatopoeic renderings and were freely adopted or adapted into other languages as well, e.g. *lengau*, and *ngwe* and *nkwe*.



Figure 2.1.3 (a) Young leopard tongue display [Daniel Otte]

Some of these designations begin with a click and have long drawn out vowels *a*, *e*, *u* and diphthongs *auë*, *au*, *um*, representing the higher-pitch calls of the young. The low panting growl, however, might be recognised in the designation /*garu* and !*hurudub*, probably the only of its vocalisations ever heard, since the leopard is otherwise a silent and stealthy predator. Yet, when confronted or wounded, this cat becomes a 'snarling, very angry wild tiger', as recorded by the earliest explorers.

The term 'tier' is an older form of reference to both the leopard and the cheetah in southern Africa. In the leopard's case it is a description of its fierceness and cunning. It was, however, often used in interviews to refer to both the cheetah and the leopard.

The onomatopoeic, or sound-associative renderings of its name, is illustrated in the close resemblance in the forms //kwe and ˘//kwim and ngwe, whereas the name //kwi, //nkwi with a high tone indicating the high pitches, is usually a reference to the cheetah's young cubs more than to the leopard's.

As the explanations offered very often did not clearly indicate which leopard or 'tier' was actually meant or named, many etymologies remain obscure. This transference is highlighted where it is discussed in the Zulu toponym eNngweni in KwaZulu-Natal (Raper *et al* 2014:370), which means 'place of the leopard', from *ingwe* 'leopard'. It is the name of a railway siding 7 km north of Hluhluwe, on the route Durban – Golela, and is said to be of Zulu origin. The stem *-ngwe* (from Ur-B. *ngwi*, according to Doke & Vilakazi 2005:566) bears a strong resemblance to //N!ke (S2) //kwe: and Sesarwa (S5), /Nu //en (S6) ˘//kwi, but those are words for the 'Hunting Leopard, *Felis jubata*' as indicated by Bleek (1929:53), or 'Cheetah, *Acinonyx jubatus jubatus*' as classified by Roberts (1954:181). The 'cheetah' in Zulu is recorded as *ingulule* (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:72), as discussed above under Cheetah.

Of the two words for the leopard in the Nguni languages, *ingwe* or *inkwe*, the *ngwe* form is also found in Herero as *ngue*, *ngwe*, cognate with the /Xam (S1) //kauë, the Herero *nguwe* and the Naron (C2) *!koe:ba* (Bleek 1929:52). In comparing the designation //kauë with *ngwe*, the close onomatopoeic resemblance of the names is recognised, since, as in Bushman, it appears to emulate the yelping of the young cheetahs and leopards. This *ngwe* sound may have been the one sound-associative element transferred to other receiver or adoptive languages, since variations of this form occur in several other African languages as well.

Toponyms from the Herero language depicting the leopard are equally numerous: Okongwe, a settlement in Damaraland, Namibia, some 55 km south-east of Khorixas, refers to the "place of the leopard (*Panthera pardus*)", adopted from /Xam (S1) //kauë and //kwe for 'leopard' (Bleek 1929:52).

Many appear in adapted forms, e.g. in Herero toponyms, such as Otjimbingwe, Otjivanda-Tjongue, and in translations as those into German, e.g. Leopardenfluss, others in Afrikaans as Luiperdsfontein, Tierkloof, Tierberg, and so forth, illustrating the leopard as a popular naming motive.

The Herero name of Grootfontein is Otjivanda-Tjongue, said to mean 'hill of the leopard' or 'leopard flats' (Raper *et al* 2014:399). The component *Otji* is the Herero

prefix; the component *vanda* is comparable with the Hadza (C3) word *han !a* for ‘hill’ (Bleek 1956:57); the component *tjo* may be Herero, or derived from a cognate with the Naron (C2) term of relationship, in this context perhaps a possessive ‘of’ (Bleek 1956:232). The component *ngue* is cognate with the *ngwe* above; or the Naron (C2) words *!goe*, *!koe:ba* and *!oe*, as well as the word *≠hoe:nab* ‘leopard’ (Bleek 1956:384, 731), although the component *ngue*, more likely from the //N̄ *!ke* (S2) word *//kwe*, actually denotes the ‘hunting leopard’ (Bleek 1929:53).

Northern Namibia is still a natural habitat for both the leopard and the cheetah in the wild, and efforts to save them and educate farmers and rangers alike have long been underway. This is what has been reported by M and R van Vuuren from the /N̄ /a’an Kusê, the NamibRand Nature Reserve, Omaheke region, Kulala Wilderness Area, Namibia; and as indicated by Lisa Ritter and M Smith in their Geological Survey Map of Namibia (Fuller 2011:66-69).

Numerous toponyms allocated and used by the Ovambo speakers in Namibia refer to the leopard, some possibly derived from the same Bushman root designations *//kauë* in /Xam (S1) and *!koe:ba* in Naron (C2), also cognate with or translating to *!nkwe*, *ngwe* as examples of vowel variation of *auë*, *oe*: > *we* as explicated in the toponyms Onangwe, Onguwe, Ongwediva ‘waterhole of the leopard’, Uukwiwongwe – “the figtree, resting place of the leopard” (Albertyn 1984:90).



Figure 2.1.3 (b) Leopard in tree [Daniel Otte]

Many other variant forms of the names for the leopard were documented by Bleek (1956:737), e.g. *!k"auru*, *!k"au*, *!kaue*, *//kawe*, *kaue*, *//kautə*; and the forms */garu* and *!k'aru* from /Auni (S4), which relate to the Nama name */garu-b*.

Apparently */garu-b* as in the Nama name means ‘spotted’, explained as “*getüpfelt*” by Kroenlein (1889, quoted in Nienaber 1963:225). It is known by various other designations in the different Khoikhoi languages. Rust, in his *Deutsch-Nama Wörterbuch* (1960:39), indicated under the noun */garub* ‘Leopard (*genannt Tiger*)’, and differentiated this from the word for the cheetah ‘*Gepard*’ as *!arub*. In Nama it is mainly called */garu-b* and *!hurudub*.

The low growl of the grown leopard is described by Estes (2012:368) as sounding like “someone sawing wood”, and these “growls are repeated in 6 minute bouts especially if two males shout at each other from their territorial boundaries”. This sound may be the one closest to the other names designating the leopard, especially in */garu* and *!k'aru* from Bushman. Nienaber (1963:480) gives early recorded versions of the leopard’s names as */garu* in the preserved onymic creation in Khoikhoi *garu-b*, but clearly evaluates it as descriptive of the appearance and colouring, much in the same vein as ‘spotted’ is explained in the descriptions for a ‘bontebok’, and the quails and other birds that are all seen as having a ‘spotted’ appearance. Compare Le Vaillant’s name for the leopard (1780-85: 43, quoted by Nienaber 1960), as *garou gamma* from this description of it as the ‘spotted lion’, (“*der gepünkelte Löwe*”, ‘*die gevlekte leeu*’), also as the ‘great spotted tiger’ (“*der getüpfelte, grosse Tiger*”).



Figure 2.1.3 (c) Leopard, specimen at the Voortrekker Monument

The designations for the leopard as *!k̄aru* and */garu* appear in various adaptations of place names (Nienaber & Raper 1977:389-399), for example, Garuanib, named after the ‘tiger’s spotted appearance’. The aforementioned designations are also evident in “*Tigerpüunkteling*” according to Kroenlein-Rust (1969: 77, quoted in Nienaber and Raper 1977:387); Garub (der Grosser Tiger Berg), Garubeb (‘*tierplek*’, ‘tiger’s place’), Garuburus (the ‘tiger’s bank and waterhole’).

Garub is the name of a mountain and a river in Namibia, between Lüderitz and Keetmanshoop, just 35 km northwest of Aus and 11 km north of the railway siding. It was translated into German as Grosse Tiger Berg (‘Great Tiger Mountain’). For ‘leopard’, Kroenlein (1889:80) gives */garub*, ‘*der Tiger*’ (“*der Tiger ist ein gar böses, wildes Tier*”, ‘the tiger (meaning leopard) is a very aggressive, wild animal’), and on p. 183 he distinguishes the animal named here as *!hurudub* ‘*der grosse Tiger*’. Bleek (1929:52, 1956:704) also recorded these names for the leopard (*Felis pardus*) in /Auni (S4) as *!k̄aru* and as *!hurudub* in Nama.

Garuburus, a ridge with a waterhole in Namibia, was explained by the Bushman language speaker, FK Krenz (fieldwork in 1979), as meaning “*Tiger-Bank-Loch*” (the ‘tiger bank waterhole’). This explanation of the Nama place name was accepted by Nienaber and Raper (1980:299), and appears to be another telescopic view and adaptation of an earlier Bushman designation derived from */garu (-b) //urus*, meaning literally: ‘leopard bank waterhole’. In Bushman languages a ‘bank’ is indicated as *!ku* corresponding with the component *bu*, but more accurately with a word for a ‘hole’, recorded as *phuru*, *tu*, */huru*, *//kauru* and *//kerru* (Bleek 1956:695). The first four are directly cognate with the component *-buru*, the *-s* being the feminine singular indicating the ‘waterhole’ in Nama. Bleek (1929:47) also gave the /Xam word *tu:* and a Naron word *//hūs*, as well as the Nama word *\_//arob* for ‘hole’; all being close cognates when comparing the root vowels.

The name Gomgurib, for a mountain range near Sesfontein in the north-western parts of Damaraland, was explained as being from Damara and meaning ‘the leopard mountains’ (Surveyor-General-SWA. n.d. Photo 2/15, sheet ‘Sesfontein’ 1913 BA, Damaraland). The name was derived from the clearly onomatopoeic Auen (N1) word *!khum* or the !O!kun (N3) word *!hm*, translating to the *gom-* of the first component for ‘leopard’. The second component *-guri*, from the Khoi-San word *!guri* also *!khuri* used for ‘mountain range’ in the concept of ‘higher elevated’ or ‘higher lying region’, ‘high place’, is cognate with Old Cape Khoikhoi dialectal and Nama words (Kroenlein 1889:136, Rust 1960:32), and occurs in several place and



ethnic names (Nienaber 1963:309-310). The adaptation to the place name here in Namibia into Damara occurred via Nama, the *lingua franca* at the time.

Other African wild cats discussed here include the caracal, the serval, the African wild cat, the small spotted, black-footed and other wild cats.

#### 2.1.4 *The caracal*



Figure 2.1.4 Young caracal [Daniel Otte]

The *caracal* (*Felis caracal*, *C. caracal*), known as the ‘*rooikat*’ in Afrikaans, the *serval* (*Felis serval* or *sylvestris*) called the ‘*tierboskat*’ in Afrikaans, the *African wild cat* (*Felis lybica*) or ‘*vaalboskat*’ in Afrikaans, and the *small spotted cat* (*Felis nigripes*) or ‘*klein gekoldekat*’ or ‘*swartpoot*’ in Afrikaans (Walker 1996:104-110), have all, to a certain extent, been named onomatopoeically in Bushman, and their names have been allocated to some toponyms, albeit in translated forms.

The *caracal* (*Felis caracal*) or *lynx* is recalled by its descriptive name in Afrikaans place names, such as Rooikatkloof, Rooikatvlei in the Western Cape. Rooikatkloof is a ravine in the mountain overlooking the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens. The name, Afrikaans for ‘lynx ravine’ refers to the *Felis caracal* (former *Caracal caracal*), named ‘*rooikat*’ in Afrikaans, also recorded in 1777 as ‘*Lynx caracal*’ (Raper *et al* 2014:440). Very early recordings are those from Witsen (1691 RZA I:221) as *k’ha* ‘*een rode wilde kat, felis sylvestris*’, and from Kolbe (1708 I:431): *k~hâ* ‘*felis sylvestris rubra*’, which all describe its reddish, tawny colouring. The ‘*rooikat*’ or *Felis caracal* was recorded by Bleek (1929:55) i.a. in the nomenclature of the /Xam



(S1) language with the names /*kui-g, !nwiʃ*; from Naron (C2) *!kāūba*; from Sesarwa (S5) *k”a ʘpwi* and from /Nu//en (S6) /*ka ≠wi*.; and from Auen (NI) as *≠wi*: (Bleek 1929:27).

Its Persian name *ca-ra-cal* (in Turkish it appears as *karakulak*), which means ‘black-tufted ears’ (Webster’s 1961:334), was accepted as species name, *caracal*, into the scientific taxonomy, and points to another of its distinctive features.

Alternatively, in Bushman, the caracal (or ‘*rooikat*’ in Afrikaans), may have been named after its growling cry or ‘miaau-ing’ as in the second component of its name /*km-g !nwiŋ* recorded from the /Xam (S1) language, /*ka ≠kwi* in the /Nu//en (S6) and as ʘ*pwi* and *≠wi* in Sesarwa (S5). It has also been documented from Naron (C2) as *≠gimi* by Schinz in 1891 (as quoted in Bleek 1956:647). The ʘ of ʘ*pwi* indicates the bilabial or lip click heard as the beginning of, or suction of a soft sounding kiss, the sound emulating the cats crying, miaauwing or other vocalisations. The words *≠wi* and *≠gimi* appear to be more or less the same sound sequence used as references or imitations of the cry of the caracal in its name. Its purring or low growling is perhaps best reflected in the Hie (C1) common name for this cat as *kuru*, whereas the African wild cat or black-footed cat, is called i.a. *guri dzwa* in the same language.

Even the domesticated cat is, almost universally, imitated by humans when called: ‘miaau, mweeu, mwieuu’, or ‘mush-mush, mwish-mwish.’ This same sound mimicry is found in some of the recorded Bushman common names for wild cats as well. In Bleek (1929:27, 55) in the names she recorded for wild cats, a variety of common names are found. The examples that most definitely indicate a sound-mimicking effect, are those reflecting the high-pitched call or cry, or scream (indicated by sharp clicks and the high pitched tone of the *i*). In addition to these are the purring sounds they all make, indicated by consonantal cluster formations like *nw rr* and vowel reduplications such as *o o, e e*, as in the verb *!nwororo* ‘to purr’ which is documented by Bleek (1956:746) as recorded from the Kung (N2) language, and also by Lucy Lloyd (quoted in Bleek 1956:489) as “/nwa ti !nwororo...the cat purrs”. Some examples may illustrate these sound imitations as they occur in cases of the names in Bushman for the serval and other African wild cats.

### 2.1.5 The African wild cat

The African wild cat (*Felis lybica*), ‘*vaalboskat*’ in Afrikaans, may have been the toponymic motive immortalised in the place names Katberg, the Katberg Pass,

Katrivier and Kat River Settlement, all in the Eastern Cape (Raper *et al* 2014:192, 228). As a translation from the indigenous name Hunca; probably with folk-etymological adaptation from the Hukwe (C2b) word *unu* for ‘grey wild cat’ (Raper *et al* 2014:42-43); the name literally means ‘cat river’, so named after the wild cats encountered there.

Its other names have been recorded by Bleek (1929:27) as: ǀmwa from //N!ke (S2); ǀpo:o from /Auni (S4); ǀpo: from Sesarwa (S5). A Zulu place name that may relate to these names is Izingolweni, also explained as “place of wild cats, *Felis lybica*” as indicated by Raper *et al* (2014:209). The original root word here, as in the component *ngolwe*, would be *ngo* which could have derived from, or be cognate with ǀpo: and ǀpo:o. The Xhosa name Zibodla, that of a tributary of the Ngqungqu River, which it joins 4 km south-west of Mqanduli in the Eastern Cape, is said to be derived from *zibodla*, ‘African wild cat’, *Felis sylvestris lybica*. The component *bo* is cognate with the Sesarwa (S5) and the /Nu //en (S6) ǀbwō, ǀpo:, ǀpo-o and ǀō, ‘wild cat’ (Raper *et al* 2014:555), and the *dla* perhaps cognate with /kà as in /Xam (S1) recorded in Bleek (1929:70).

Alongside this are names for the wild cats resembling the ordinary sounds of a cat as ‘miau’ as in *niau*, and obvious imitations like ǀmwa from //N!ke (S2); /nua: and /nwa from Kung (N2) as found in the Xhosaised toponym Hunca above. Alternatively, names imitating the growling as in *!nwerre* are also found, for instance, as represented in the Herero name *orukuenjaere* that was specifically recorded for the caracal though, the “*Luchs, Rotkatze*” by Göllnitz (1942:41); or the spitting sound as in *kʷa-ǀpwi* (from Sesarwa S5) which they emit when disturbed or threatened, were also encountered in many common names.

Names such as these could have acted as onymic formative or root words in other toponyms such as Ngcwengxa in the Eastern Cape, a Xhosa name for the Katrivier (Raper *et al* 2014:367). The name is also encountered as iNcwenxa and is thought to be an adapted Khoi-San name, meaning ‘cat river’, perhaps referring to the Cape wild cat, *Felis lybica*. The component *ngcwe* is cognate with the !O !kung (N3) *≠noe*, ‘wild cat, cheetah’, and the /Xam (S1) *!nwerre*, ‘tiger cat’, and the component *ngxa* with *!kaā*, *≠ka*; ‘river, riverbed’.

Furthermore, sound imitation may be recognised in common names for this cat from the /Xam (S1) such as: *-//gwattən*, plural *//gwa//gwara*. This is said to indicate the plural form, but more likely the reduplication may have been intended to

emulate the growling or the very distinctive habit of thrashing with the front paws on the ground when disturbed or cornered. It could also possibly originate from the accompanying low growl, alternatively from their purring, the sound that is so distinctive of all cats.

But, these sound-imitative common names *\_//gwattən* and *\_//gwa//gwara*, may well also indicate the sound and movement made by cats when noticing a potential prey in anticipation of chewing and crunching it with their canines and jaws (imitating this action), and feeling as though they've already caught it. As they move and grind their teeth, in this anticipatory catch and chewing behaviour (Estes 2012:360-362), the sound produced may have led the Bushmen to coin the common name as referring to the extraordinary behaviour observed in the cat family.

In some names given by the Bushmen for cats, Bleek (1929:27, 55) indicated in the names for the *caracal* or '*rooikat*', the reference to the reactive, defensive attack action with tapping forepaws, accompanied with the 'hissing or spitting sound' possibly imitated in words for 'to tap' such as: */kaε /kaε; /kuiˀg; !nwiŋ* from /Xam (S1); but also with lower pitch indications of the growl as in the following names: *kuru* in Hie (C1) -*!gau* in Auen (N1); and *!kāūba* in Naron (C2); these all translating to the sound of a low growl.

### 2.1.6 *The serval cat*



Figure 2.1.6 Serval cat [Daniel Otte]

The name *!nwerre*, recorded for the serval cat (*Felis serval*) from /Xam (S1), although as Bleek (1956:488) calls it, the ‘tiger cat’ (*‘tierboskat’* in Afrikaans), equally emulates either its soft growling or purring.

### 2.1.7 *The small spotted cat*

The small spotted cat (*Felis nigripes*), *‘kleingekolde kat’* in Afrikaans, also called *black-footed cat* or *‘swartpoot’* in Afrikaans, being a very elusive and solitary cat, is not often spotted or observed in the wilds, and although endemic to the region, has a limited range of habitat in the dryer western regions of southern Africa, as in the Cape, Northern Cape, in the Kalahari, Botswana, and Namibia (Estes 2012:360-361, Walker 1996:110). It is possible that the Katjiesberg in the Western Cape was given this name because of the occurrence of these cats there.

The *‘swartpoot’* cat’s name has been recorded as *≠nu≠aibeb* in Damara and Nama, referring to their black paws, *≠nu* being a word for ‘black’; in Tswana it is called *sabalabolokwane*; in Sotho it is *tsetse* (Walker 1996:110-111). In Bushman it has been recorded only under ‘wild cat’ (Bleek 1929:27), and bears many names, as the following indicate: *\_//gwatn*; *\_//gwa//gwara* from /Xam (S1); as *\_//nwa* in Auen (N1), */nua* in Kung(N2), as *≠noε* in !O !kun (N3); and as *guri dzwa* in Hie (C1) and */nwaba* in Naron (C2). It seems as if the black-footed aspect was the dominant feature observed, as in the variations of the word for black represent: *≠nu*, *\_//nwa* and *≠noε*, and so on, and the vicious nature of this small *felis* species, as voiced in the *\_//gwatn* and *\_//gwa//gwara* perhaps. In the name *Izingolweni*, the component *≠noε* as found in !O !kun (N3), may equally have been derived from the Bushman name of this cat.



Figure 2.1.7 Black-footed wild cat [Daniel Otte]

Discerning which exact ‘wild cat’ was named in toponyms is not always clear; all were described as ‘wild cats’ (*wilde katte*), the ordinary African wild cat (*Felis lybica*), or the black-footed or the small spotted cat (*Felis nigripens*), often the serval or ‘*tierboskat*’ (*Felis serval*) as well.

## 2.2 The family Hyaenidae: hyenas, aardwolf and other ‘wolves’

The hyenas, *aardwolf* and other ‘wolves’ (*Hyaena hyaena*, *H. Crocuta crocuta*, *Hyaena brunnea* and *Proteles cristatus*) are discussed here as one section of carnivores often referred to as ‘wolves’. In Afrikaans designations such as ‘*bruin wolf*’ or ‘*strandjutwolf*’; the ‘*swart wolf*’ and ‘*gestreepte wolf*’; the spotted as the ‘*gevlekte wolf*’; the ‘*aardwolf*’ or ‘*maanhaarjakkals*’, all refer to specific sub-species of the Hyaenidae family.

Estes (2012:323-348) gives a clear sub-categorisation of the Hyaenidae family: The *striped hyena* as *Hyaena hyaena*, with a wide-spread habitat from the eastern parts of mid-Africa to the northern territories around the Mediterranean and up to India; the *brown hyena* as *Hyaena brunnea* (the ‘*strandjutwolf*’), with its much smaller distribution in only the southern parts of the continent of Africa, yet fairly wide-spread in the western (Namibian) and northern wild regions of southern Africa. He also provides a clear sub-categorisation of the *spotted hyena* as *Crocuta crocuta*, more widely distributed all over Africa, though greatly exterminated in southern Africa and very limited outside of national parks, and the ‘*aardwolf*’ or ‘*maanhaarjakkals*’ that is actually not a *hyaena*, but in a class of its own, specified as the *Proteles cristatus*. As a result of its close resemblance to the striped hyaena, it is seen as a ‘miniature’ version of it, and classified with them in the same family. Bleek (1929:48-49) identified this ‘striped hyena’ as the *Proteles cristatus*, i.e. the ‘*maanhaarjakkals*’ in Afrikaans, partially correct thus, and its names in Bushman as *ʔku*: from /Xam (S1); /k<sup>^</sup>m in //N!ke (S2); and /k<sup>^</sup>:lite in Sesarwa (S5).

### 2.2.1 The brown hyena

The brown hyena (*Hyaena brunnea*) was known in some Bushman languages, e.g. in the /Xam (S1) language as *!guka*, also *!gwāi* (with nasalisation), and as */xāi* in //N!ke (S2) and Sesarwa (S5); as */kāin* in /Auni (S4); as *ʔgwi* in Kung (N2); and as */gwi* in Kung (N2) and *!O!kuŋ* (N3); as *!go* in Auen (N1), as *≠nutsa*, *nutʃa* and */nutʃwafa*

in the Naron (C2) language of Botswana, and as *≠heirab* or *≠heiras* in Nama (Bleek 1929:48; 1956:674). Nienaber (1963:534), however, indicates the brown hyena from recordings in the Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects as *≠hira-s* ‘die gewone strand(jut)wolf’.

In other Bantu languages, e.g. Ndebele, Xhosa and Zulu, it is known as *impisi*; in Tswana as *tlonkana* and *phiritshwana*; and in Nama and Damara as *≠hiras* (Walker 1996:90, who also recorded the Bushman name as *nutsa*). The *brown hyena* is thus clearly indicated by Bleek with the slightly different vowel cluster or diphtong as *≠heirab* or *≠heiras*, thus not as in Nama *≠hiras*.



Figure 2.2.1 Brown hyena [drawing by PJ Smit in Roberts]

### 2.2.2 The spotted hyena

The spotted hyena (*H. Crocuta crocuta*). The names documented for the *spotted hyena* are just as numerous. Bleek (1929:48) documented names for the spotted hyena, such as: //nauit̪ən and /xauru in /Xam (S1); !no:e in //N̩!ke (S2) and Sesarwa (S5); !gi: in /Auni (S4); kanja in /Nu//en (S6), and *≠hiras* in Nama (see also Nienaber 1963:534), and further forms like *isa* from the Hie language (C1); !gau in Naron (C2) and !kʷau in !O!kuŋ (N3). Bleek (1929:48; 1956:69, 651, 726) also documented other forms of names for the spotted hyena as found in some Bushman languages. Among these are //goaʌŋ from /Xam (S1); ʔ!kau from Auen (N1); !khum from Kung (N2), !kāū from !O!kuŋ (N3) and *≠hīras* from the Heikum (N2a) language; the form !gi: (as the above ʔ/gwi in Kung (N2) for the brown hyena); /gwi in !O!kung (N3), and *issa* from the Sehura (C1a) as synonymous with *isa* in Hie (C1). These last forms of the names are perhaps, phonologically, more similar to or approximating the Nguni name *i-mpisi*.

The spotted hyena's alternative names, too, given as *guka*, *nuka*, *n'huka*, */nuga-b*, */koka* as documented from as early as 1673 to 1805 for the Eastern Cape Khoi-San dialects, and *t'juhnkam* (see 'Thounce later!) and *gau-b* for the Western Cape dialects (see Nienaber 1963:534-535), show this often confusing identification of which 'wolf' was actually referred to.

In the Bantu languages the *spotted hyena* is known as *impisi* in Zulu, Swazi, Ndebele and Xhosa; but is also referred to as *ncuke*, and with variation in Xhosa as *ngcuka*; the older recording as *inchuka-cheya* (Roberts 1954:167, 170, is thus, in accordance with the Bushman form); in Shangaan as *mhisi*; in Sotho and Tswana as *phiri*; Venda as *phele*, in Nama and Damara as *gara* ≠ *hiras* (Walker 1996:86). Compare examples of toponyms in southern Africa such as Mataphela in the Limpopo province, a sandstone hill 14 km west-north-west of Pafuri. The name is derived from the Venda designation *phele* for the spotted hyena (Raper *et al* 2014:310).

In the Eastern Cape Ngcuka is the Xhosa name for the Wolf River, tributary of the Keiskamma River, which it joins 6 km south-west of Keiskammahoek. The name is derived from Xhosa *inchuka*, now *ngcuka*, 'brown hyena', *Hyaena brunnea* called 'wolf' in South Africa, where there are no true wolves. The English name Wolf River is a translation. The Xhosa word *ngcuka* is derived from Khoikhoi *nuka* (1775-76), *n'huka* (1788), 'wolf (hyena)', cognate with /Xam (S1) *!guka*, 'hyena' (Raper *et al* 2014:367). It is noted that Roberts (1954:166-170) indicates this first component of the name for both the brown and for the spotted hyena, but then with the distinction as *nchuka-cheya* for the *spotted hyena*.

The Ngwempisi River in Mpumalanga is a tributary of the Great Usutu, rising west of Leyden and flowing mainly east to the confluence about 6 km south-west of Sidvokodvo. Ngwempisi is a composite name, said to be derived from the two animal names in Zulu, namely *ingwe*, 'leopard', and *impisi*, 'wolf' (Raper *et al* 2014:370). The explanation for the etymology of the name and its unusual formation was originally given as referring to a '*tier wolf*', or '*tyger-wolf*'. It was noted that the leopard was also referred to as *tijger*, *tyger* in Dutch, and *tier* in colloquial early Afrikaans. Kolbe (1727:204-205) already gives a description of the '*tyger-wolf*', literally 'tiger-wolf', also known as the '*tierwolf*' in Afrikaans, and it is identified by Boshoff and Nienaber (1967:643) as the hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*). The Zulu word *ngwempisi*, thus, could literally mean 'leopard-wolf'. Since in Dutch and Afrikaans, the word *tyger* or *tier* was (and is) used for the leopard, but in combination '*tygerwolf*' or '*tierwolf*' (as indicated by Kolbe and numerous other authors, see below), it specifically referred



to the hyena, so that the meaning of *ngwempisi* can also be read as ‘tiger-wolf’. The unusual naming pattern, though, of two animals being referred to in one name, in this case apparently not in a tautological composite, opened the argument of why these names occurred regularly where more than one language is or was spoken in the area. As will emerge from the discussion, this river name, indicated as being ‘very old’, was actually a reference to the ‘hyena’ only. The river-name Ngwempisi is quite possibly also an adaptation of something else – an older Bushman layer of naming, meaning ‘river of the hyena’ or ‘hyena (river)’.

It is a known fact that, in Dutch, the ‘hyena’ was called ‘*tyger-wolf*’, and this animal was described in detail by Kolbe (1727: 204-205) in his chapter “*Over de Tyger-wolf*”, where he distinguishes it from the *Thos* and *Lupus* family of jackals and wolves, or as adapted in early Afrikaans as *tierwolf*, (Boshoff & Nienaber 1967:643) “*ben.[aming] n.a.v. kolle en strepe*”; ‘named after the spots and stripes’, seeing it as having characteristics of both the leopard ‘*tier*’ and the ‘wolf’ or ‘hyena’. Also Skead (1987:412) explains this initially confusing colloquial nomenclature: “Although references to ‘hyenas’ or ‘wolves’ are fairly common, sure identifications of the species can seldom be made. It is possible that both the brown and the spotted hyena occurred in the Ciskei, but the likelihood is that the spotted hyena was the commoner”...“In cases where the term ‘wolf’ is used, it is sometimes difficult to know whether an author is referring to hyenas with which the term ‘wolf’ or ‘*tierwolf*’ is usually associated, or to the wild dog.” He further mentions that “In 1833, F.G. Kayser, a German missionary, wrote of the Pirie Mountains in the eastern Amathole range...that the kloofs were the ‘hiding places of wolves, tigers and wild sows’, his wolves being hyenas”.

The references in these divergent sources confirm that the term ‘*tierwolf*’, used as a reference for the hyena, acted as an underlying motive in this name, i.e. was literally understood as referring to a ‘*tierwolf*’ with the meaning ‘hyena’, i.e. as ‘hyena or wolf river’. The other reading of *ingwe+mpisi*, which implies that it came from a composite of two animal names in Zulu, *ingwe* ‘leopard’ and *mpisi*, ‘wolf’, is not tenable (though as indicated above, it is accepted that the *ingwe* was also referred to as ‘tiger’, ‘*tier*’ in colloquial early Afrikaans).

The correct interpretation was in fact the ‘*tierwolf*’, i.e. ‘hyena’, and can thus be accepted as explanation in the folk-etymologically adapted toponym. The explanation, that it apparently referred to “an incident in which cattle were killed by an unidentified creature, some said it was a leopard, others maintained it was a



‘wolf’ or hyena, hence the name” (PLAC database, 1982-2000), should not be totally dismissed, since both animals are known to take domestic livestock as prey. The naming pattern, i.e. to name two animals in one toponym, is unusual, and therefore different interpretations do occur in a few other cases as well. (Compare iDlangampisi below, where alternative Bushman origins are proposed, i.e. the first component stemming either from //goaanj, an early word recorded for the ‘hyena’, rendering that name as a tautological construct, or from a generic !goa, ≠gnoa ‘mountain’ (Bleek 1956: 737), eliciting a Nguni naming pattern or construct ‘mountain of the hyena’).

The interpretation that the name Ngwempisi simply refers to the ‘river of the hyena’ is supported by another possible analysis of the components of the name. This is discernable where the (i)N of *Ngwempisi* is read as the normal Zulu class 5 prefix added to *kwe* folk-etymologically adapted to *ngwe* (then read as ‘leopard’), and the *n* functioning either as consonantal nasal bridging sound or as grammatical construct. The component (*n*)*gwe* as it currently appears in the name, was deduced from (*n*)*kwe*, a relic from the Hie (C1) Bushman word *kwe* for ‘river’ (Bleek 1929:70; 1956:749, 112). *Mpisi* is ‘hyena’, therefore ‘river of the hyena’, a composite name which falls into the Zulu naming pattern where the generic term precedes the specific. The toponym is thus an adaptation into Zulu and comparable to other examples such as (u)Mlambongwenya, ‘river of the crocodile’ (Raper *et al* 2014:328); uMzimnyati, ‘river of the buffalo’ (Raper *et al* 2014: 519), and many more.

Place names reflecting the names of the hyena therefore are many, but not all contain sound-associative elements referring to its high, cackling laugh or other behavioural sounds; some are metaphoric or descriptive in nature. A few toponyms reflect the multilingual context and the diversity of languages that interacted on the names, often leading to folk-etymological adaptations, hybridisations and translations. One such example is the name of the mountain iDlangampisi, also recorded variously as Hlangampisi, KwaMandlagampisi and Slangapiesberg, situated in the Wakkerstroom mountain range just west of Piet Retief (eMkondo) in Mpumalanga. From this cluster of toponyms, where the original feature named was either the mountain or the river with its source in the mountain range, a few variations of earlier folk-etymological creations and later corrupted forms emerged. The different explanations given for its etymology or ‘meaning’ in the various languages are related either to the hyena as predatory hunter and scavenger, perhaps even to vultures, or to the name of an impi; and in the Afrikaans name, to snakes and some kind of monkeys. Its name not only refers to the occurrence of hyenas in the region, but illustrates many possible layers of language interplay. With the variation in prefix and class markers attached to the

name, and the different interpretations linked to this, it required further research into its possible Bushman and / or Zulu origins.

Various explanations offered by fieldworkers were that the mountain was ‘the gathering place of the hyena’, the ‘feeding place of the hyena’ or ‘power of the hyena’ (Möller 1989, questionnaires to game wardens and park rangers; PLAC database 2000). The toponym was then either recorded as Hlangampisi, ‘gathering of the hyena’, from *hlanga* to ‘gather’ or ‘come together’, or IDlangampisi, ‘feeding place of the hyena’, from *idla* ‘to feed’, or ‘to eat’. From this set of names, the later KwaMandlagampisi, i.e. ‘power of the *mpisi* or hyena’ was construed, said to refer to the name of a regiment or ‘*impi*’ calling themselves ‘*mPisi*’, ‘the hyenas’.

Another explanation offered by an anonymous reviewer (though it has not been encountered in any written sources thus far), was that the Zulu noun *idlanga* for ‘vulture’ may have been the origin of the first component. The Zulu noun *i(li) dlanga* (Doke & Vilakazi 2005: 547), together with the name for the hyena as *mpisi*, would then have been employed to form the composite oronym. This notion of ‘two scavengers’ sharing a mountain site (implied in the above explanation), forged into the unusual combination of *-dlanga* and *mpisi* in one name, i.e. ‘vulture-hyena’, could only have led to further speculation on the origin or meaning of the mountain’s name, unless the underlying phonological structure of the name together with the meanings given could be verified. This often occurred where different languages came into contact, or from cognate words or word elements being applied in a tautologically composite name.

It becomes less confusing when considering possible earlier Bushman cognate words as onymic formatives in the origin of this toponym’s variant forms, as presented on maps and in questionnaires from fieldwork. Considering that it is the name of a mountain or hill, the underlying onymic root words depicting an oronym would translate into something like ‘mountain of the hyena’; the Bushman word, according to Bleek (1956:57), for ‘mountain’ or ‘big hill’ is *han-!a* from Hadza (C3), the word adapted into Zulu as *dlanga*, from a voiced fricative *h* to a voiced lateral phonemic cluster *dl*, and the cerebral click *!* of *!a* adapted to the homorganic softer voiced velar *g*, thus producing *ga*.

The mountain name IDlangampisi, therefore, seems to have undergone multilingual toponymic metamorphosis, resulting in the four versions of the name as cited above. It is another example of reinterpretation of an obsolete generic term from Bushman

leading to an apparent tautology. Since it is the name of a prominent mountain, it may be assumed that it had already been named in the Later Stone-Age era, i.e. long before other language speakers arrived, translating and adapting it because of its 'unknown' generic and loss of meaning. Analysis of the component *dlang* shows that it was either adapted from a proto-type generic such as *han-!a*, or from *!goa*, *≠gnoa* 'mountain' (Bleek 1956: 737) as suggested earlier, thus 'mountain of the hyena', or that the *//goaan* already stood for 'hyena' as argued below, in which case it was correctly translated adding to it the name *mpisi*, that resulted in the tautology 'hyena + hyena'. In the toponym these words were grammatically adapted by Nguni prefixing which led to different interpretations. Phonologic adaptations occurred by softening of the clicks *!*, *//* and *≠* to *dl* or *hl* and eliding the *oa* of the phonemic cluster *oaaŋ* to *ang* (since juxta-positioning of two vowels does not occur in Nguni).

Yet another interpretation was that only one animal served as motive for the naming, the hyena, and indeed in a dually constructed name as discussed below. This entails acknowledging a tautological rendering of the name of the hyena, as etymology, from both languages, Bushman and Zulu, in the composition of the oronym where the first word is Bushman for hyena, *//goaaŋ* adapted to *dlang*, and the second word is the translated form in Zulu, *mpisi*, rendering the tautology. The reason to investigate this origin further from a possible Stone Age Bushman layer was prompted by related words referring to the hyena and its scavenger habits, namely from the /Xam (S1) and Batwa (S3) languages, which, as indicated by Bleek (1929: 1, 7; 1956:iii), were in earliest times more widespread in the whole of southern Africa, and also spoken specifically in the area where this mountain lies. Bleek (1956:556; 1929:35) documented the verb *\_//ka:ˀŋ*, which means 'to eat raw' (as in 'raw meat', or carrion), and relates it to another name for the hyena in the /Xam (S1) language, namely *//goaaŋ* (Bleek 1956:532), derived from the same concept of the 'carrion eater' *//ka:ˀŋ*. This led to several phonologically and orthographically adapted words, e.g. *guaap*, *gwaap* and *gou*, contained in several Khoikhoi place names, where the word for the 'hyena' as 'wolf' (as it was regularly described by Afrikaans, Dutch, German and English speakers), was used in the translation process (see below discussions of Guaapvlakte, Gwaapseberg and Goubepkop as examples of such adaptations).

It is therefore quite possible that *//goaaŋ* underwent sound adaptation to *dlang*- in the Nguni languages, e.g. Swazi and Zulu (both spoken in the specific area where the mountain is situated), and was grammatically adapted by applying the required class prefixes and other necessary morpho-syntactical adjustments in Nguni to appear as

component in the names of several indigenous toponyms, of which the above is one such case. The discussion under the words for *ncuke*, /*nutsa*, also relates to this concept in Zulu, where the name *ncuke* as a variant name for *mpisi* is discussed by Doke and Vilakazi (2005:227, 666) as referring to a ‘devourer of meat’. Of course, all carnivores eat raw meat, but the hyena are known to eat ‘carriion’ as well, long after its expiry date!

The lateral fricative click sounds //k or //g in the above words //ka:~η and //goaη were seen as adapted in the Nguni languages to the fricative –dl- in the component –*dlang-*, and the *oa* elided from the phonemic cluster *oaη* to *ang* of the adapted tautological toponym (i)-Dlang-a-mpisi. To reinforce the argument towards ‘eating, feeding on raw flesh, meat’ or as ‘eaters of raw meat’, the word for ‘meat’ in Bushman is recorded as i.a. ǀpwai, or ǀpwe which approximates the root component *mpi* of the name *mpisi*; the final *i* added as a compulsory vowel ending in the Nguni languages, or functioning as a ‘borrowed’ or loaned element in the words *mpisi*, from names for the hyena in Bushman languages, e.g. *isa* or *issa*, for ‘hyena’. Another possibility is that the last component *si* was functioning as an embedded fluvial generic, adapted as primary toponymic formative from the /Xam ~/i: ‘to flow’ (Bleek 1956:292), thus indicating a reference to a nearby ‘river’ in the vicinity of the mountain.

Furthermore, on the different meanings that have been assigned to this toponym, the soft phonemic cluster *hl*, the unvoiced alveolar lateral fricative according to Doke and Vilakazi (2005:307), as in *hlanga*, had probably already been sound-adapted from the dental click from the /Xam (S1) word /k’wā, ‘to gather’, thus interpreted as *hlangampisi*, or as *dl* in the version *idla-nga-mpisi*, as provided by interviewees during fieldwork, the –*dlang-* from \_//ka:~η = ‘to eat raw meat’. It contains the same nasalisation pattern; with the lateral fricative click //k adapted to the cluster *dl*, indicated as the voiced alveolar fricative in Doke and Vilakazi (2005:150) as in *dlanga*, but then often pronounced as the voiceless fricative *hl* as in *hlanga* of the Nguni name, hence the interpretation ‘to gather’, or ‘gathering place of the hyena’.

The Afrikaans-speakers in the area heard the name as *Hlangampisi* and the phonemic cluster *hl* was heard as *sl*, a combination of the unvoiced alveolar fricative or voiceless sibilant *s* with the voiced glide *l*. Consequently, by folk-etymological processes, *hlang(a)* was interpreted as, and changed to, *slang*, ‘snake’, the *a-mpisi* to *apies*, therefore coining a totally different connotation of animals to the name, i.e. changing its meaning and toponymic appearance. It was therefore adapted to a name understandable in their own language, Slangapiesberg, i.e. the imaginary

‘snake monkeys mountain’ which makes no sense at all, since there is no such animal. Strange though it appears, the various speakers could not detract from the fact, that the hyena were ‘devourers of raw meat, carrion’, and the mountain name recalls their feeding or gathering place.

Estes (2012:341-342) recorded that “*Crocuta* is one of the noisiest African animals”. Its calls are both “highly distinctive and remarkably varied, with 11 recognizable different but interacting calls. As with lions, spotted hyenas use distance calls to establish or maintain contact and a variety of other vocal signals for close-range communication. They presumably recognise one another individually by their calls” (and of course their pasting habit on grass). Estes discusses each vocal behaviour under the “whoop, the characteristic distance signal, a rising o-o-o call”, the ‘fast whoop’, the ‘low whoop’ and the famous ‘giggle’, and adds the yell, growl, rattling growl, the grunt, groans, whine or whinny and soft squeals of the hyenas.

The *brown hyena*, being the more elusive and shy of the two species, has invariably probably played a lesser role in the naming of onomatopoeically coined toponyms. Although most of its vocalisation compares with the spotted hyena, the brown hyena’s overall whooping, growls, whines and yelps and other contact calls are much softer, therefore it is perceived as a mostly silent animal. Estes (2012:326, 334) notes that, as part of its anti-predator behaviour, it does growl louder, yelps and whines. This may have been emulated and later represented onomatopoeically as found in some of the names for this animal, where the high frontal nasalised vowels *āi* and *ī* as in the components *-wāi*, */xāi*, and */kāin*, and *˘/gwi* occur.

One may look into the origins of toponyms like Phirwane in the Pelgrim’s Rust area, in the Lydenburg district, situated in the Mpumalanga province, said to be from Northern Sotho and to refer to the hyenas (in general). However, it may be derived from Tswana *phiritshwana*, a reference to the name of the ‘brown hyena’. Some of the Tswana names retained this root word of the ‘wolves’ or hyenas’ name in toponyms like Kwa-Phiring, a dam near Mafeking, some 35 km west of the town and said to mean ‘place of wolves’. Furthermore, Magagaaphiri, a settlement near Taung in the North West, is said to mean ‘he who cares for wolves’ (USGAZ 1992, PLAC Database, NWP-PLNM, 1982-2000).

Another example is a watercourse called Phiring, the stream rises at Thabalia-Tloka and extends north-westwards to join the Southern Phuthiatsana 22 km east of Maseru in Lesotho. The name, of Southern Sotho origin, is said to mean ‘place of

hyena' (Raper *et al* 2014:412), and is indicated as referring to the 'spotted' hyena and thus derived from the word *phiri*. See also Pirintsho/Pirintshu in the Eastern Cape and Piritona (Raper *et al* 2014:415) having the same root onymic formative.

One may also compare the toponym Timhisini, name of a hill in the Mpumalanga province, some 4 km south-east of Olifants camp in the Kruger National Park. The name is of Tsonga origin, meaning 'place of spotted hyenas', derived from the word *mhisi*, and this component *mhisi* approximating the Hie (C1) *isa*, and the Zulu *impisi*, 'spotted hyena' (Raper *et al* 2014:498).

The forms *!guka*, for the spotted, and *≠nutsa* and *nutfa* for the brown hyena from Bushman may have been the onymic root for an adopted loanword into the Nguni languages where it was adapted into the Bantu languages as in Xhosa *inchukecheya*, *isinquka*, in Zulu as *incuke*. In this case, however, the name *incuke* is linked to or explained as a kind of '*mpisi*', thus also the name for the spotted hyena. These alternative names *isinguka* and *incuke* for the hyena in both Zulu and Xhosa, are given for the spotted hyena and are thus another example of language transference as in the case of the name for the cheetah and leopard as *inkwe / ingwe*. Yet the word *incuke* remains the common noun for 'brown hyena' too, apart from its association with *impisi*. This according to Doke and Vilakazi (2005:128) derives from *i(izi)ncuke* < *cuke*: as 'hyena', and is described as referring in general to "any wild devouring beast of prey", or any "voracious eater". This descriptive, metaphoric rendering in its designation as 'the wild, devouring beast of prey', 'the voracious eater', the 'carrion eater' may also have originated from the Bushman languages, as in the case of *\_//ka:ŋ* and *//goaŋ*.

As indicated in the Naron (C2) language a cognate is found in the brown hyena being called */nutfafa* and *≠nutsa* (Bleek 1956:674). The Nguni name, therefore, appears to be either an adopted form from one of these Bushman languages, or was a later loan word into the Bushman languages from the Bantu languages that may relate to its habit of preying on and eating carrion, earning it the name 'the devourer, or voracious eater'. This common name, describing perhaps not only its nature as a beast of prey, a scavenger, but probably also referring to its ability to smell prey and carrion from a distance, is thus not associated as such with its vocalisations, but descriptive of its ability 'to smell'. The high pitched laughing, cackling or whooping sound is better illustrated in the common names where the peculiar vocalisations of the spotted hyena are imitated in Bushman as *!gi, //nauitən* and *≠hīras* in Khoikhoi

(Bleek 1929:48), whereas the *brown hyena* is named *!gwāi*, */xāi*, and */kāin*, and *ˀgwi* – with a different vowel pattern.

Where the name of the *brown hyena* was indicated as *≠hira-b*, even *≠nu:be ≠hīras* from recordings in the Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects as indicated by Nienaber (1963:534-544), and explained as the ordinary brown hyena, “*die gewone strandjutwolf*”; also as: “*der schwarze Wolf mit Streifen*”, ‘the black wolf with stripes’ (Kroenlein quoted in Nienaber), it may be accepted that the distinction and distribution was not yet as clearcut as established later on. Kroenlein (1889:163-164) and Bleek, though she indicates the brown hyena specifically as the *≠nu:be ≠hīras* too (1956:651), both equate *≠hira-b* and *≠hira-s* with *≠heira-b* and *≠heira-s* in the Nama language as synonyms.

One may therefore assume that perhaps this was a reference not only to the brown hyena, but could have been meant as a reference to the real striped *Hyaena hyaena*, or to the ‘*maanhaarjakkals*’ as well, since all three are darker, even black in shading, and have distinctive stripes on their flanks and legs according to Estes (2012:328, 331, 344). Yet it should be taken into consideration that as indicated by Estes, the striped hyena does not occur in southern Africa, as the brown hyena and the *aardwolf* does, and may therefore have been mistakenly named as occurring here. Bleek (1929:48-49) identified the ‘striped hyena’ as a separate species, as the *Proteles cristatus*, i.e. the ‘*aardwolf*’ or ‘*maanhaarjakkals*’ in Afrikaans, and its names in Bushman as *ˀku:* from */Xam* (S1); */k^m* in *//N!ke* (S2); and */ka:lite* in Sesarwa (S5). She also clearly distinguishes the brown hyena as *≠heirab*, and *≠nu:be ≠hīras*; the spotted hyena with names like *!gi:*, *!gau* and *≠hīras* in Khoikhoi.

The spotted hyena with the different name *≠hīras*, also bears the alternative names as *guka*, *nuka*, *n’huka*, */nuga-b*, *ngua*, */koka* in the Eastern Cape Khoi-San dialects (Nienaber 1963:534), and *t’juhnkam* and *!gau-b*, *gau-b* for the Western Cape dialects. This may approximate the name *//goaʌŋ* from */Xam* (S1) as explicated by Raper *et al* (2014:169) in the name Guaap Vlake, a depression in the Calvinia district, Northern Cape, apparently also correlating with the Wolfrivier, which flows southwards in the vicinity. Toponyms with the component ‘Wolf-’ (which was regularly used to refer to *hyena*), are numerous. The Guaap Vlake is said to have “a name translated from the Khoikhoi name *Guaap*, also recorded as *Gwaap*; 8 km to the south-east is *Gwaapberg*. The South African ‘wolf’ is actually thus the hyena, and considering



Wolfrivier, ‘wolf (hyena) river’, to translate *Guaap* reveals the component *guaa* to approximate the Hukwe (C2b) *ngua*, ‘spotted hyena’, cognate with the /Xam (S1) //goaʌŋ, ‘hyena’. The final consonant *p* of the name *Guaap* or *Gwaap* is the Khoikhoi masculine singular locative” (Raper *et al* 2014:169). This cluster of names may well be a confirmation of the origins of these place names in the area.

Furthermore, where the spotted hyena is, as indicated above, known in some Bushman languages i.a. as *!gi:* from /Auni (S4); and *≠hīras* from Heikum (N2a), the *!gi:* and *≠hīras* (as the above *ˀgwi* in Kung (N2); */gwi* in !O!kung (N3) for the brown hyena) (Bleek 1929:48; 1956:69, 651, 726), these latter names appear to be more cognate with the Nguni name *impisi*. Yet, the sound-associative phonemic structures with the long-drawn front vowel *i*, especially with the nasalisation indicated, possibly emulating the hyenas’ high pitched social cackling calls (also called ‘laughs’), are similar to those as found in the name derived from the verb *kxʌiŋ*, *tʰkaing* ‘to laugh’. Alexander (1838:113 quoted in Nienaber 1963:535), explained the toponym Einhiras as “the Hill of the Laughing Hyena”. This toponym directly deriving from the verb ‘to laugh’ *kxʌiŋ*, *tʰkaing*, and the word for the spotted hyena from the onymic formative as in /Auni (S4) *!gi:*, Heikum (N2a) *≠hīras* and Khoikhoi *≠hiras* (Bleek 1929:48; 1956:651).

Other Bushman names for the *spotted hyena* found in toponyms are *!gau* and the variants *gau-un* and *!khum* from Kung (N2), *!kʰāū* from !O!kuŋ (N3) (Bleek 1956:726), */u:n* from /Nu//en (S6) (Bleek 1956:359), and *//nauītən* from /Xam (S1) (Bleek 1956:617). The place name ʾThounce (documented by Stow [1905:141], quoted in Pettman 1931:13), refers to a watering place or fountain south-west of Lake Ngami in Botswana, and is indicated by Stow as “the fountain of the hyaena”. This fountain or watering hole was explained with the variant or different, but probably related meaning, given by Thomas Baines in its translated form on his map (1864: sheet 1, quoted in Möller 1986:477), of his exploration “route from Walvisch Bay to ʾThounce, or Stink Fountain”. This brings in the idea or concept of the ‘stinking waterhole’ (probably from putrid or brackish water), or ‘place of the stinking ones’, i.e. the hyenas. It comprises the specific element ʾthoun, possibly derived from the above variant names for the spotted ‘hyaena’, especially */u:n*, *tʰjuhn-kam*, *!kʰāū*, *gau-un* and combined with the generic *-ce* derived from the word *//xwe* from the Auen (N1) language that means ‘a well’ or ‘waterhole’ (Bleek 1956:639). Yet, a word for a ‘waterpool’ or ‘waterhole’ was documented also as */ou* by Bleek (1956:769), which confuses the interpretation as to which component exactly referred to the fountain



or which one to the hyenas. Was it meant as ‘fountain or waterhole of the hyena’, or ‘hyena fountain’ or the ‘stinking fountain’? The last two examples would conform to the normal toponymic naming pattern in the Bushman languages, though many had already been structurally adapted on the morpho-syntactical levels to the Bantu naming patterns as well. Another word weighing into the argument is the Kung (N2) designation for ‘fountain’, also as concept ‘to flow’, given as  $\neq n'hau$  in Bleek (1956:672, 719, 769).

This interpretation may be seen as sound-associatively connected to the Bushman names as indicated above. Alternatively, as describing a distinctive feature of the hyenas as the ‘smelly, stinking ones’, since another link to the noun ‘smell’ is given by Bleek (1929:76) in  $s\ddot{a}u$  ‘to smell’; and ‘to stink’ is indicated as  $ts\ddot{o}$  as recorded from the Naron (C2) by Bleek (1956:218); and ‘to smell’ was documented by Bleek (1929:76) as  $!khau$  from /Xam (S1),  $//aun$  from //N!ke (S2). These all correlate on the phonological level with *thounce*, thus, with the interpreted meaning as ‘stink fountain’, whether because of, or with the description perhaps of the ‘stinking hyenas’ there, or not, it remains a confirmation of its Bushman origin.

In the far northern territories of Namibia on the border with Angola, the Wolf-omurambo or Wolwelaagte is cross-referenced as Mbungu-omuramba (Stassen 2015:325, 711), and explained as ‘wolf river’, or ‘wolf plain’ (this last interpretation acceptable in the light of an *omuramba* in Herero usually referring to a ‘dry river’). It runs eastwards and is joined by other tributaries like the Mbungu River from the south-west to join the Okavango River just south of Musese. There is also a fountain to the south of the river, Mbungufontein, called ‘*Wolwefontein*’ by the Dorslandtrekkers (Stassen 2015:325, 340-341). This name *mbungu-*, used here as an adapted toponym in the Ovambo language, approximates the above Bushman variants  $!khum$  from Kung (N2),  $!k^{\text{?}}\ddot{a}u$  from !O!kun (N3) (Bleek 1956:726). The verification of its origin may be found in its adaptation in the nasalisation of the *mbu* and *ngu* syllables in the toponym that accord with the phonemic structure of the Bushman names above, and possibly also with  $/u:n$  from /Nu //en (S6) (Bleek 1956:359), all referring to the *spotted hyena*.

The many Afrikaans toponyms with the reference *wolf-*, *wolwe-*, appearing as Wolfskop, Wolfsvlakte; also in Wolwekop, -berg, -kloof, are all, as mentioned above, said to refer to hyenas. Nienaber and Raper (1980 371) give  $!gau$  as the Nama word for ‘wolf’, thus cognate to the Bushman words such as  $//aun$  from //N!ke (S2), and so forth, indicated above, or  $!khau$  from /Xam (S1), perhaps for the concept ‘to stink’.

Toponyms with these ‘wolf-’ specific components abound, for example in the very old name Wolvengat (now Wolfgat) in the Western Cape (formerly also known as Viljoenshof). It is Afrikaans for ‘wolf-hole’, ‘wolf’s lair’, and probably refers to the spotted hyena. There is another Wolfgat as well, a town in the Bredasdorp district (Raper *et al* 2014:547).

One could argue that the whole toponymic cluster with Wolfrivier, Wolfskop that exists in the Calvinia district of the Northern Cape, as well as the farms adjacent to the river, e.g. Wolf River, are given as Afrikaans and English translations of the various forms of the original Nama or Khoikhoi toponyms Guaapvlakte and Gwaap(se)berg (‘Wolf Mountain’). These are explained as Wolfberg in Nienaber and Raper (1980:371; Raper *et al* 2014:547), as well as Goubeekop, all derived from the word *!gau-lāb* (the *au* and *ua* variation not unusual, see several references in Nienaber 1963). One could, as discussed earlier, also look at the phonologically similar designation *//goaan*, i.e. that the toponyms may even be derived from this cognate word for ‘hyena’. From Wolfskop, south-west of Pofadder in the Northern Cape (and the other similar forms with *wolf-* here), one may conclude that they are either direct translations of the Khoikhoi (Nienaber & Raper 1980:363), or deriving from an older source, e.g. the Bushman designations.

A village in the Free State, called Wolwehoek, lies some 15 km southeast of Sasolburg and 43 km east of Parys. The name is Afrikaans for ‘wolf corner’, the term *wolf* as commonly used to refer to the hyena (Raper *et al* 2014:547). Another cluster of toponyms with the wolves as onymic activator is around Wolwekraal in Mpumalanga, also a village on the original farm Wolwekraal (previously written as Wolvenkraal). Fourteen kilometers south-west of Mdutjana is another place with the same name in Afrikaans, probably referring to either the brown or spotted hyena as ‘wolf’, with the generic term *‘kraal’*, indicating a settlement or populated place. This name has now been replaced by Maphotla. There is another place called *Wolwekraal* on a portion of the farm Wolwekraal that was renamed in Northern Sotho as Borolo, situated in the magisterial district of Mbibane (Raper *et al* 2014:548). The Auen (N1) word for ‘brown hyena’ is *!go* that approximates this form of the name.

Since it was confirmed by local people that all references to the ‘hyena’ as ‘wolves’ (as they were colloquially called in English and Afrikaans), were either to the brown or the spotted hyena, a remark by Nienaber (1963:543) on this topic of which name referred to which type of wolf, may be relevant: “*Sowel hier as in die variante...het ons met ’n samestelling in Nama te doen...nl. die !gau-b, ook die naam vir die gevlekte*

*hiëna, of tierwolf, soms weerwolf genoem, en verder toegepas op die strandwolf of strandjut (Shortridge)*”. This has been translated [by the author] as ‘Here as well as in the variants...we are dealing with a composite in Nama...namely the !*gau-b*, also the name for the spotted hyena, or *tierwolf*, sometimes called werewolf, and further allocated to the brown hyena or *strandjut*’.

An unusual toponymic relic exists in the name Algoa Bay, via the Portuguese Bahia dos Lobos, referring in translated form to the bay of Port Elizabeth as the ‘Bay of Wolves’ (Raper *et al* 2014:28). The origin possibly from an early designatory reference to the brown hyena (Bleek 1929:48) as !*go* in the Auen (N1) language and //*goaan* in /Xam (S1); also *ngua* from the Hukwe (C2b) language, all retraceable in the *goa* component of Algoa. The brown hyena, as indicated above by Nienaber, is also known as the ‘strandjutwolf’ in Afrikaans, i.e. the scavenger of the shorelines.

As hyenas in southern Africa were generally called ‘wolves’, i.e. ‘*wolwe*’ in Afrikaans, just as the leopard and cheetah were both called ‘*tier*’ or ‘spotted lions’ for a very long time, the exact hyena type referred to, could not be verified in all cases. It has to be accepted therefore that in many cases, the references may also have been to the wild dogs (Skead 1987: 411-412), or even the more elusive and shy ‘*aardwolf*’.



Figure 2.2.3 Aardwolf [drawing by P J Smit in Roberts]

### 2.2.3 The aardwolf

The *aardwolf* or ‘*maanhaarjakkals*’ (*Proteles cristatus*) that is actually not a *hyeana*, but in a class of its own, is described as a ‘nocturnal forager’ of mainly termites, insects and smaller prey (Estes 2012: 346). Due to its close resemblance to the

striped hyena, it is specified as a smaller *hyena* and classified with them in the same family. Estes (2012: 347) describes its vocalisations as growls, grunts, barks, and that the “cubs are said to make a clicking noise very like the warning clicks of termites”. Bleek (1929:48-49) identified the ‘striped hyena’ as the *Proteles cristatus*, correctly, thus, as ‘*maanhaarjakkals*’ in Afrikaans, and gave its names in Bushman as  $\sim/ku:$  from /Xam (S1);  $/k^{\wedge}m$  in //N!ke (S2); and  $/k\grave{a}:lite$  in Sesarwa (S5). In Ndebele it is called *inthuhu*; in Siswati *ngci*; in Tswana *thukwi*, *mmabudu*; in Venda *tshivingwi*; in Nama and Damara *gīb* (Walker 1996:84). Many toponyms containing the specific reference ‘wolf-’ may in fact refer to this carnivore.

## 2.3 The dog family, Canidae: wild dogs, jackals and foxes

### 2.3.1 The wild dog

The wild dog (*Lycaon pictus*) is somewhat misplaced between being called a ‘painted wolf’ and a ‘wild dog’. It is also known as the Cape wild dog or Cape hunting dog, ‘*wildehond*’ in Afrikaans, and has been depicted as the ‘wild dog’ in the earliest recordings of its indigenous name in the Old Cape dialects by Witsen (1691, RZA I:221) as “*likanaä, een hond, canis*”; by Valentyn in 1705 as *likhanèe*, and by Kolbe (1708 I:430) as *likh~anee*, all as quoted in Nienaber (1963:307). This ‘*canis, een hond*’ was then interpreted by Nienaber, following Wandres and others, as possibly being a ‘loan word’, however, without stating from which other language or languages it possibly derived.



Figure 2.3.1 (a) Wild dogs stalking [Daniel Otte]

It was alluded to that this unusual name in Khoikhoi probably referred to a specific type of dog. This *likanaä* or *likh~anee* (note the nasalisation tilde indicated by Kolbe), was already represented in writing closely and correctly to the name in some African languages. It was indeed found to have an indigenous origin from certain African languages, whereas other names for it have been linked to the older Bushman forms as documented in Bleek (1956:711, 528). An interesting link between the oldest recorded names as above, and the African names for this wild dog, lies in the description of it as a ‘blotched, painted or spotted dog’. A similar sounding name or word has been traced to the Bushman languages, and the same sound-associative or cognate words have been recognised in some of these African designations for ‘wild dogs’.

This confirms the former wide distribution of this highly endangered carnivore in Africa, indicated in Estes (2012:410-418; Walker 1996:46) as stretching right up to Egypt and the Eastern coastal regions of Africa to the dryer areas of Botswana and northern Namibia, the wild regions of Zimbabwe and otherwise, only in wildlife sanctuaries as De Wildt, at Hoedspruit or larger game parks as the Kalahari Gemsbok and such. However, in some, they were destroyed again to preserve the other game that formed their main prey, since the reasoning, at the time, was that they tended to over-hunt these animals. In their original wild and natural habitat, though, they would trek over great distances and therefore were seen as migratory animals, actually managing and maintaining a natural selection and preservation of the medium to smaller mammals.

Names for the actual ‘wild hunting dog’ have been documented by Bleek (1956:528, 711) as follows: //garu, ‘wild dog’, *Canis pictus* from Naron (C2) and //garuba indicated as the alternative or synonym. For ‘wild dog’ she also indicates (1929: 34) ~xeru from /Xam (S1), !kwiñ (plural !kminjn), also //xu~ri from //N!ke (S2), /han from /Auni (S4), \_xai from Sesarwa (S5), ≠khi: from /Nu//en (S6); wild dog – /gwa from Auen (N1), ~ ≠kwe from Kung (N2) and !O!kuñ (N3). She indicates *aba* from Hie (C1), \_auko from Naron (C2); for ‘dog’ *arib* and, for ‘wild dog,’ *!goub* is indicated in Nama. Other names for ‘dog’ were recorded by Bleek (1929:34, 1956:467, 579) as !kwiñ with the emphatic form as !kwinyan, plural !kwiñ!kwiñ variant !kwijnan, also //kwi and //kwīn.

Names for both the ordinary ‘dog’ and ‘wild dog’ were recorded by Bleek as: *!ko* from Auen (N1), *≠k ō ō* from /Auni (S4) (1956:436, 439, 663). Also indicated in Bleek (1956: 602) is: *!kwi !k”a-a-no* meaning ‘dog’ derived from Hadza (C3), a language spoken in Tanzania (former Tanganyika). It was stated by Bleek that the particular ‘dog type’ was brought with or introduced by the Isanzi people (Jamoniya), a tribe coming from the area of the Hadzapi or Hadzeba from the region of Lake Eyassi, lying to the north of Mkalama in Tanzania.

Some Bushman names for the ‘wild’ dog are found under the lemmas indicating ‘dog’ in general with further explanations and explanatory notes, e.g. as *!khwi*, *!kwi* from /Xam (S1) for ‘tracking’, ‘follow the spoor’, ‘finding the spoor’, ‘stalking’, and so on, which all hint at the wild dog’s prowess at stalking prey and enemy dogs or predators. Together with this idea of a ‘hunting dog’, it is possible to relate these concepts of ‘tracking’ and ‘stalking’ as found in the cognate words *!khwiŋ*, *!kwiŋ*, *!kuiŋ*, *!wiŋ* as recorded by Lucy Lloyd from the /Xam (S1) and documented in Bleek (1956:433).

The links to the other African languages were found in the names recorded by Roberts (1954:196-196, after Shortridge I:181), i.a. in Xhosa *ixhwili*; in Zulu *inkentshane*; in Sotho *lenkanyane*; in Swazi *budzatja*, *inkentjane*. They were found in the Ndebele name *iganyana*; in Tsonga *hlolewa*; in Southern Sotho *lekanyane*, *mokoto*; in Tswana *leteane*, *lethalerwa*, *lekayana*; in Northern Sotho *lehlalerwa*, *letaya*; in Venda *dalerwa* and in Karanga *mumi*, *bumi*. The Herero name for the *lycaon* or wild dog is *ohakane* as recorded by Göllnitz (1942:41).

Roberts describes the ‘rallying call’ of the wild dog as “a wild sort of whinnying which is so eerie that when once heard can never be forgotten”, though they also give a sudden short bark as ‘whoof’ when suddenly alarmed, much as the domestic dog. This eerie signalling call may relate to some of its more onomatopoeically coined names in Bushman such as the *≠khi*: and *\_xai*: forms of its name.

Walker (1996:46) indicated indigenous names for the hunting dog or wild dog as follows: in Zulu *inganyana*, *nkontshane*; in Lozi *liakanyani*, that seem to be cognates or very similar in their phonological forms to, or to have the same origin as the above-mentioned common names as recorded from the Old Cape dialects. These names included *likanāa*, *likhane*, *likh~anée*, which are also comparable to the names as in Sotho *lenkanyane*, Southern Sotho *lekanyane*, Tswana *lekayana*, *leteane* and Zulu *inkentshane* (cf. Roberts, 1954). It is striking that these cognates are also

phonologically and semantically similar to the Hadza (C3) word //kwi //k”a-a-no referring to a certain type of dog. In Doke and Vilakazi (2005:134) they indicate the general term for ‘dog’ in Zulu as *inja* and for Cape hunting dog *i(li)xhoza*, but for ‘wild dog’ also *i(li)nkentshane*. It will be noted that the click adaptations and vowel endings differ according to the phonological systems and orthographies of the relevant languages. The links in these names as recorded by Roberts and Walker could thus be traced via the names for this carnivore in African languages, back to Bushman names as well.

In addition to the above names, Walker (1996:46) gives the following names, i.a. from Tswana *letlhalerwa*, from Sotho *tlalerwa*; from Venda *dalerwa*, from Shangaan *hlolwa*, and from Nama and Damara *!gaub*, from Swazi *budzatje*, from Shona *mhumhi*, and from Yei *umenzi*. The Nama and Damara name is very close to the Korana name as recorded by Lucy Lloyd (1932:314) for the “*Lycaon venaticus*, hunting dog,...*Lycaon pictus*” as *!gauup*. Bleek (1956:364) has the cognate */xauru*, a noun for ‘wild dog’, as a synonym for */xaru* from the /Xam (S1), also a recording quoted from Lucy Lloyd.

The general references to the ‘dog’ in various African languages elucidated the Bushman names of the ‘wild dog’ as well, and it could be deduced that the ‘wild dog’ in particular, may have been referred to via other composites, hybrid formations, or where they have been preserved in some toponyms, as illustrated in the following examples.

These few toponyms may illustrate the various names for this wild hunting dog, which may be confirmed as coming from the African languages with a possible Bushman link, e.g. INduli yamaXhwili in the Eastern Cape is the name of a hill 10 km east-north-east of Port Alfred. The name is of Xhosa origin and means ‘hill of the wild dogs’, *Lycaon pictus* (Raper *et al* 2014:200). It appears that the Xhosa name has preserved one of the oldest names for ‘dog’ in the Bushman languages such as //kwī, //kwi, recorded by Bleek (1956:467, 579). These names relate to the words *!kwi*, */khwin*, *!khwiŋ*, *!kwiŋ*, *!kuiŋ* and *!wiŋ*, as indicated above.

A toponym in the Mpumalanga province, Mahavanini, may have elements of these Bushman names in its structure. It refers to a tributary of the Nwaswitsontso which it enters 12 km south-south-east of Kingfisher camp. The name is said to be of Tsonga origin and to mean ‘place of wild dogs’ (Raper *et al* 2014:292). The component *havan* may be cognate to */haŋ*, the /Auni (S4) word for ‘wild dog’, alternatively to



/gwa from the Auen (N1) word (Bleek 1929:34), with the *ini* indicating the locative suffix, possibly from */i:*, ‘a river’ or */tʃi:* a generic indicating ‘water’. The last vowel may also be a compulsory locative ending added to the Bantu toponym. This name may, however, have been adapted from the Ndebele form of the name for the wild dog, *iganyana*, since, in Tsonga, its name is *hlołwa*.

Another indigenous name that contains a clear reference to these wild hunting dogs is Mahlalerwa in the Limpopo province. It refers to a hill 11 km north of Bakenberg, in the Mokerong district. The name is said to be of Northern Sotho origin and to be derived from the totem animal of the inhabitants of the area (Raper *et al* 2014:292), i.e. “place of the people of the wild dog”. The name of the ‘wild dog’ has been recorded as *tlalerwa* in Sotho, and as *dalerwa* in Venda.

Mahlolweni in the Limpopo province is the name of a tributary of the Luvuvhu River, entering it 12 km north of Punda Maria. The name, Tsonga for ‘place of wild dogs’, was apparently given in 1968 by a game warden, J Kloppers, because he encountered a pack of these creatures in the vicinity (Raper *et al* 2014:293). Indeed, the Tsonga name for the wild dog was recorded as *hlołwa* by Roberts, whereas Walker (1996) indicated its name as *hlołwa* in Shangaan, both languages being spoken in the area. Another toponym, Wildehondekop in the Free State, refers to a hill of 1 575 m, some 16 km west of Wepener and 25 km east-south-east of Dewetsdorp. The name is Afrikaans and means ‘wild dog hillock’, referring to the Cape wild dog or hunting dog, formerly widespread throughout the country (Raper *et al* 2014:543).



Figure 2.3.1 (b) Hunting dogs chasing zebra [Daniel Otte]

### 2.3.2 The jackals

The jackals: *Canis mesomelas*, *C. adustus*, *Vulpes chama*, and so forth. The various types of jackal, as named by the Bushmen, are documented in Bleek (1929:49-50,



1956:279), i.a. as /*girib* from Nogau (N1a) and Naron (C2); /*gi:ri:mi:* from Kung (N2) for the black-backed jackal (*Canis mesomelas*, ‘*rooijakkals*’ in Afrikaans). For the Cape fox or silver jackal (*Vulpes chama*, ‘*silwerjakkals*’ or ‘*silwervos*’ in Afrikaans), Bleek recorded i.a. /*gire* from the Hie (C1) language (1929:50; 1956:279). Another name for the Afrikaans ‘*bakoovos*’, ‘*bakoorejakkals*’ or ‘*draaijakkals*’, is the Bushman word *koes* from which according to Pettman (1931:14), the names Koesberg in the Free State and the Kosi Pan are derived. Borchers (1861:74) ‘who visited the pan in 1802 as a member of the Truter-Somerville Expedition to the Bechuanas, wrote in his Autobiography: “Proceeding to the Cossey we saw...several of the bastard jackals differing from those in the Cape Colony. ‘Cossey’ means this animal” (Pettman 1931:14). For a discussion of the origin of the name Koesberg, see Raper *et al* (2014:244), where the reference is to the Cape fox *Vulpes chama* as  $\Theta$ posa from /Auni (S4), or from the Sesarwa (S5) *!gaushi* (which is phonologically similar and thus cognate with ‘*cossey*’ and *koes*), or the !O!kun (N3) *go* for jackal, in this case, the *Canis mesomelas*.

It may be noted that Bleek (1929:49) only gives the variant forms for the ‘*Canis mesomelas*’ (black-backed jackal or ‘*rooijakkals*’) as  $\Theta$ posa in the /Auni (S4) language, and *po* as from the Kung (N3). Both of these languages are spoken widely in the regions visited by Borchers, between the Nossop and the southern Kalahari and from Grootfontein to the Okavango. Though, for the ‘fox’, she (Bleek 1956:719) does indicate the common nouns as i.a. //*ko:a* and //*k”oa* which may also relate to this sound-associative name, but probably more common in the Khoikhoi and Nama languages of the region, or among the Tswana of the former Bechuanaland area (now Botswana).



Figure 2.3.2 (a) Black-backed jackal [drawing by P J Smit in Roberts]

Nienaber (1963:317, 318-319) lists the oldest recordings of names from the Cape Khoi-San dialects (1691, 1705, 1708), such as names for the Cape or silver jackal (the *Vulpes chama*) i.a. as *tensie*, *t~kensie*, *tenlie*, *kenlie*, and for the black-backed (*Canis mesomelas*) ‘*swartrugjakkals*’ (Canidae: *Thos mesomelas*, Roberts 1954:196); in Korana the cognate /*kei-eb* and Nama /*gi-b*, /*gai-s*, and /*gaë-b*, that seem to be cognate with *geirab*, *gairib*; whereas the ‘*aardwolf*’ (‘*maanhaarjakkals*’) is indicated as /*gaë-b*, *ghaipjakkals*, also as /*gi-b*, *t’geu-eeb* (1773, 1805). This animal though, as discussed in the previous chapter, is actually of the species *Proteles cristatus* (thus included in the Hyaenidae family, but listed separately in a class of its own). The black-backed jackal (*Canis mesomelas*), also known in Afrikaans as the ‘*rooijakkals*’, was recorded by Le Vaillant (in 1780-83) as *^dirip* i.e. /*giri-b*.

These names for the jackal, indicated as originating from the various Cape Khoikhoi languages, have now been established by Raper *et al* (2014:211), as probably being original Bushman onymic formatives, all cognate with words in the various languages of the Bushmen and Korana. The difficulty in identifying which species was meant in each case, when all were called ‘jackal’ or ‘*jakkals*’, or foxes, ‘*vosse*’, soon became obvious. It often led to confusion when place names were encountered in which the jackal was not clearly specified, same as in the cases with designations such as ‘*tier*’ and ‘*wolf*’ and the like.

A sound-associative link may be postulated from the description of the jackal’s vocalisations in names or designations, such as in Nama /*geira-b*, /*giri-b*, and the cognate Bushman designations as taken from Bleek (1929:49-50) for the *Vulpes chama* /*giri* as //ai from !O!kunj (N3), //nwoi in //K’au//en (Auen) (N1), and for the black-backed jackal as /*gi:ri:mi*: and /*kire:-p* (from Kora as documented by Lucy Lloyd 1932:313), and the /*giri*, /*kire*: (Bleek 1956:279). These names all seem to be derived from the same observations made of the jackal’s behaviour, i.e. from the root verb /*gai* ‘to sing together’, here possibly within a metaphorical concept of ‘yowling’ as ‘singing’. However, they are probably closer to ‘yowling, yelping together’ (Kroenlein 1889:240; Bleek 1929:31), as in *k’ai* from //K’au//en (N1), *k”xai* from Naron (C2) and *ˀgei* from Nama, that is cognate to /*gai* ‘to yowl, sing together’, and from this verb also the closely related concept ‘to dance’, cognate with *!xai*, *tfxai*, *ˀgi:*, as in the Naron (C2) language.

The explanation of the jackal’s name from the phrase ‘yowling together’ to an onymic formative, was from observations made by locals, and recorded as such by Schultz (1907:283, quoted in Nienaber 1963:318): “/gai: *durcheinandersingen*: die Schakale

*umschweifen heulend ein gefallenes Tier oder den Lagerplatz an dem sie Fleisch wittern*”, i.e. ‘to sing together, simultaneously: the jackals yowlingly circle a fallen animal or the lair where they feed on meat’). This conceptualisation or visualisation of the jackals also came to fruition in the explanation given of the toponym Giyani, i.e. that it means ‘to sing and dance together’.

The jackals’ vocalisations are discussed by Estes (2012:388) under the family Canidae, i.e. under the foxes, jackals and wild dogs because of the similarity of sounds emitted by this family, i.a. their howling and yipping. He mentions that “Canids possess the richest repertoire of calls of all carnivores...probably the whining and especially the howling which is common to all wolves, and canids, evolved from barking by fusion of rhythmic barking strophes into a continuous string of sounds”... that “has an infectious effect on members of the same family or pack”. Their young pups yelp or yowl when abandoned or distressed, and it sounds like a continuous ‘girri, girri, girri’ (Shamwari NatGeo-Wild-programme, DSTV, August, 2015).

The original Bushman onomatopoeic name *giri* or *kili* for the ‘*rooijakkals*’ is found in many sound-associative place names, especially in Namibia often adapted into Nama or Khoikhoi and translated into other languages. Giriguhoas at the Mile 7 station on the old pipeline between Walfisch Bay and Rooibank, is known in Afrikaans as Jakkalshoek. It refers to the plural form /*girigu* with //hò-, meaning ‘corner’ in Khoikhoi (Nienaber & Raper 1980:327); taken originally from Bushman /*giri*, /*gire* as in Hie (C1), with variations /*gira* and /*geri* from !O!kun (N3), whereas *geirab* is the Khoikhoi according to Bleek (1956:278).

A hillock situated east of Aus in Namibia is named *Girinaris*, once again indicating different languages in contact. This name was documented by Schultze in 1904 as: “*die Insel des Schakals, und Schakalskopje*”, ‘island of the jackal, and jackal’s hillock’ (1904-5:166, ANUK, quoted in Nienaber and Raper 1977:419, 1980:327). The name, reflecting the Bushman origin, was first adapted into Nama /*giri*-*naris*, then translated into Dutch and Afrikaans and allocated to a station as Jakkalskop (from the Dutch form Jakaalskopje), then into German as Schakalskuppe.

Other names recorded in Namibia for the various jackal species are from Nienaber and Raper (1977:418-9), for example Giribes Vlake (‘jackal plateau’) with a fountain near Sesfontein, is from Khoikhoi (via Bushman *giri*); Girib Ost is a farm name with the meaning ‘place of the jackal’; Girichas (now Jakkalsfontein) was documented as early as 1869 by the missionary J. Olpp, and explained as meaning Schakalsquelle

(‘jackal fountain’), by which name it was previously known in German. A post office, Girieis, in the district of Keetmanshoop in Namibia, takes its name from an earlier farm name meaning ‘the place of the jackal’. Girigams meaning ‘jackal waters’ indicated on the old *Kriegskarte*, documented by Theopolis Hahn in 1879 as lying on the Omaruru River, west of the Spitzkoppe, equally refers to the jackals in the area.

Toponymic references in Afrikaans to the black-backed, side-striped and Cape fox or silver jackal are numerous, some in translated form, some in hybridised toponyms. These references are found in place names such as Jakkalsberg, Jakkalsdraai (Dipodi), Jakkalseiland and Jakkalskop (Raper *et al* 2014:211), Jackalbosch, Jackal’s Fountain and Jackals Laaghte in the Eastern Cape (Skead 1993: 259).

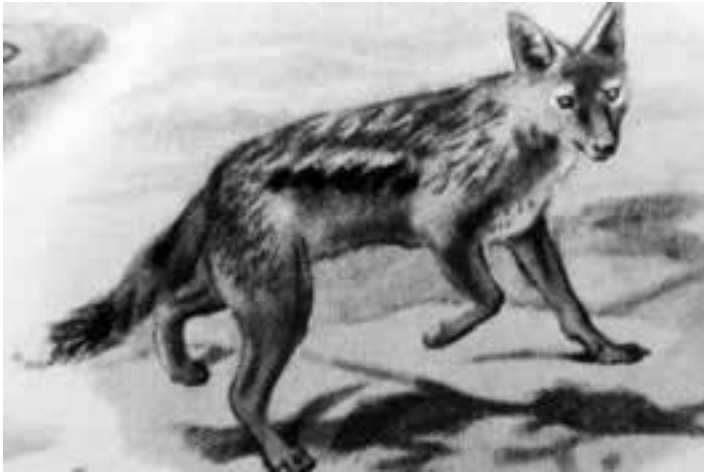


Figure 2.3.2 (b) Side-striped jackal [drawing by P J Smit in Roberts]

The side-striped jackal (*Canis adustus*, Estes 2012:384), ‘*witkwasjakkals*’ in Afrikaans, because of its white-tipped tail (Roberts 1954:198-199; Walker 1996:54), was more widely distributed in southern Africa, but is now restricted to northern and eastern Africa, though some packs in Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe still survive. Bleek (1929:49-50) gives its names as *!gwa/na* in the Auen or //K’au//en (N1) language in the northern Kalahari (which is its natural distribution range), and as *n!gaa* in the Hie (C1) language. These names appear to be very close in phonemic structure to the *chama* of the *Vulpes chama*, or as Bleek (1929:50: 1956:393) recorded it sometimes as ‘chama’, ‘camma fox’ and ‘silver jackal’ in the scientific sub-species name. Where it is called by the common name in other Bushman languages as

*/geriba*, e.g. in the Naron (C2) language, and as */geirab* in Khoikhoi, it also relates to sound imitation as discussed above.

Jakkalsdraai, a village in the North West province, 90 km north of Vryburg, has been renamed Dipodi, said to mean ‘goats’. The Afrikaans name means ‘jackal bend, jackal turn’. The indigenous replacement from Tswana seems to be an adaptation of a Bushman designation meaning ‘jackal bend’, of which Jakkalsdraai was already a translation. The Bushman common names for the side-striped jackal are i.a. *po* from Kung (N2) and !O!kuṅ (N3) and Hukwe (C2b) recorded by Bleek (1956:158) as found in *Di-po-di*. The first component *Di* is the Tswana plural class marker; the component *po* is also cognate with the /Auni (S4) *᠓posa*, ‘jackal’, the final component *di* corresponds to the Auen (N1) word */gĩ*, ‘to bend’ (Bleek 1956:728, Möller 2014:128-129, Raper *et al* 2014:211).

Concerning the variation in usage for the names of the jackal as either *po* or *᠓posa*, the lip click (usually transcribed as *mp* or simply *p*), and the application of the symbol *᠓* (also occurring in other words for the jackal as indicated above), Bleek (1956:682) made this observation about the alternative lip click *᠓* used. She states, “In /Xam folklore it is only used in the ‘special speech’ of the Jackal, replacing all other clicks and all consonants...In the Batwa language it occurs in a few words”. She gives an example of this symbol in the quote *᠓ba:εauε-wa*: which was explained as ‘the cry of the jackal’ from the /Xam (S1) language (the jackal’s name as *//wa*, recorded early by Wilhelm Bleek (Bleek 1956:719) appears in the final segment of this quote). Compare also Van Vuuren’s comments (2016:131) on the special language of animals, as recorded by Bleek and Lloyd (1936:163-199) and quoted earlier in full: “a specific adapted language spoken by each animal species, in which the consonants are shifted, or extra consonants are added”, that becomes specifically clear in the names of the jackal.

Yet, it was noticed that both the black-backed and the silver jackal are called *phokoje* in Tswana, the language of the area where this place name, Dipodi, was reallocated. Language contact and the exchange of common names clearly played a role in that this *pho* of *phokoje* may well relate on the phonological level to the Bushman designation for the side-striped jackal as *᠓po*. It may also relate to the Zulu common name *mpungushe*, where the initial soft click in the phonemic cluster *mp* was retained, but the rest adapted with vowel variation, i.e. between *o* and *u* and this adaptation into the region of the higher back vowel, and the second component *gushe* cognate with the Sesarwa (S5) word *!gaushi*.

The name for the side-striped jackal *po*,  $\bar{p}o$  appears without the lip click in Kung (N2), !O!kunj (N3), and in Naron (C2) (Bleek 1956:158), but see Bleek's note above of the possible interchangeability of this click. The similarities in phonological structure appearing in the various names from African languages become obvious, even as cognate segments, deriving from the same ancestral root words, especially when comparing older recordings of these names to the components retained in the toponyms of the regions where these languages are spoken.

The different names for the jackals in other southern African Bantu languages have been extensively recorded by Roberts (1954:198-199, 200). According to his classification of the various jackal species, as follows: The *Thos* or *Canis mesomelas*, black-backed jackal, 'rooijakkals' in Afrikaans, is named in Xhosa *impungutye*, in Zulu *impungutshe*, *ikhanka*, in Swazi *impungutje*, in Ndebele *ikhanka*, in Tsonga *phungubya*, *hungudzwa*, in Northern Sotho *phukubjê*, in Tswana *phokoje*, in Venda *phunguhwe*, *phungubwe*, in Karanga *mungubge*, *gava*.

The name Mapungubwe, that of "a hill of archaeological significance 1,5 km south-east of the junction of the Limpopo and Shashi rivers, now a famous heritage site in the far northern Limpopo province" (Raper *et al* 2014:304), takes its name from a reference to these 'jackals', *Canis mesomelas*; the name is derived from Venda *phunguvhwe* or *phungubwe*.

Two separate *Thos* or *Canis mesomela* types of jackal of a lighter shade have also been recorded in Namibia, one restricted to the Namib coastal regions only, the *mesomelas achrotes*. The other, *mesomelas arenarum*, is distributed widely in the inland regions of Namibia into the Kalahari, Ngamiland and Botswana according to Roberts, but no indigenous names were provided. The *Thos* or *Canis adustus* or side-striped jackal, 'vaal-' or 'witkwasjakkals' in Afrikaans, and with its white-tipped tail, is called *impungutshe* in Zulu as well, in Ndebele it is *igowa*, in Tsonga – *hlathi*, in Karanga – *mungubge*.

### 2.3.3 Foxes or 'smaller jackals'



Figure 2.3.3 Cape fox or silver jackal [drawing by PJ Smit in Roberts]

Foxes or 'smaller jackals', i.a. comprise of the silver jackal, Cape fox (*Vulpes chama*); bat-eared fox (*Otocyon megalotis*). The smaller *Vulpes cynalopex chama* (Roberts 1954:200) called the silver jackal, Cape fox or 'silwerjakkals', is called *unga* in Ndebele, in Zulu *i(li)khanka*, in Northern Sotho *motlhose*, *motlakaro*, in Southern Sotho *mopeme*, in Tswana *phokojê*, *thlose* or *losie*, in Venda *dabe*, in Karanga *hava*, *gava*.

Jakkalsberg is a mountain in the Richtersveld of the Northern Cape on the south bank of the Orange River, 62 km north-east of the mouth of that river, and 30 km north-north-west of Khubus. It means 'jackal mountain' in Afrikaans, and takes its name either from the *Vulpes chama*, the Cape fox 'silwerjakkals', or, more probably, from the widely encountered bat-eared fox in the region, the *Otocyon megalotis*, known in Afrikaans as 'draaijakkals' or 'bakoortjakkals' (Pettman 1931:137; Raper *et al* 2014:211). The Afrikaans name 'draaijakkals' may have been given because of its habit of backtracking on its spoor, i.e. it "has developed extraordinary skill in doubling upon its tracks in a like manner to its prey" (Roberts 1954:202).

The second component of the scientific name of the Cape fox or silver jackal, *Vulpes chama*, is derived from the Bushman designation for it in adapted form from several languages. The segment *chama* or *caama*, is adapted from the Naron (C2) *!khamab*, and the Heikum (N2a) *!khama /girib* (recorded by Schinze, Bleek 1956:424); also



*\_//a:ba*, and *\_//ab* are the words in Khoikhoi (Bleek 1929:50; 1956:424). This type of ‘jackal’ is known in /Xam (S1) as *!gwi:tən*, *!gwita* (Bleek 1956:393), and as */gire* in the Hie (C1) language (compare */gi:*, */gwai*, */gwi:* ‘dance’), */kili* in Naron (C2) and Tsaukwe (C2a), with the *r* and *l* variation activated here (Bleek 1956:316). (Note, for instance, the phonologically similar name of this ‘fox-like’ jackal in the Nguni languages as *i(li)qili* recorded in Doke & Vilakazi (2005:186)). It is also known as *//noi* in Auen (N1) and *//ai* in !O!kuṅ (N3) (Bleek 1929:50). The first two names given as *\_//a:ba* and *\_//ab* are also preserved in the scientific name *chama*, whereas the last mentioned names */gi:*, */gwai*, */gwi:*, */gire* and */kili* are imitative of its vocalisations. These are reflected in the long drawn out *i:* vowel and the diphthong *ai*, reminiscent of their yowling, yelping and dancing, and their howling at dusk and dawn.

The smaller jackal or fox type, the *Otocyon megalotis*, long-eared or bat-eared fox, ‘*bakoorjakkals*’ in Afrikaans, also called the ‘*draaijakkals*’ (because of its twisting and turning habit when hunting small critters). It is even called the ‘*miereter*’ since it is known to forage keenly on specific harvester termites, but also feeds on small rodents, grubs and insects. It is called the *udlamhloshwana* in Zulu (it is possibly also the ‘fox’ described as the ‘*uhlotshana oluthile lwe mpungushe*’ [a ‘small fox, a certain kind of, or jackal type’] in Zulu according to Doke and Vilakazi 2005:186). In Tsonga it is *xilwanandau*, in Tswana *tlhose* and in Northern Sotho *motlhose*, thus, in the last two instances, the same name is used as for the silver fox. The Nguni, Tswana and Sotho names reveal derived forms from a possible cognate root word. These names correlate closely with the /Xam (S1) names with variant spellings as *//ko:a* and *//k”o:a*; *//kwa:* and *//k”wa:* for ‘bat-eared fox’ (*Otocyon Lalandi* or ‘*Löffelhund*’ [the German name ‘spoon hound’ a reference here to its ears looking like spoons – *authors comment*] as still documented by Lucy Lloyd and quoted in Bleek 1956:596, 606, 719).

Ga-tlhose is a hillock and a settlement approximately 48 km south-south-west of Kuruman in the Northern Cape. Kwa-Kgaratlhose is the name of a pan and settlement some 120 km north-west of Vryburg in the Northern Cape.

Both of these toponyms are said to refer either to this specific jackal species in the last components of the toponyms, i.e. the bat-eared fox, named *motlhose* in Northern Sotho, in Tswana *tlhose* or *losie*, or to the silver fox which bears the same name, and not necessarily to the ‘*muskejaat*’- or ‘*musseljaatkat*’ (*muskeljaatkat*) or pole-cat, as explained by the DGSM fieldworkers (PLAC Database NC-PLNM 1982-2000).



The Tswana toponym, Kwa-Kgaratlhose, is said to mean ‘crown of the jackals’ (PLAC Database, NWP-PLNM, 1982-2000). In its third component, it is derived from the same root word *tlhose* in Tswana; the first component *kwa* is comparable to the //Xam (S1) word written as //kwa:, //k”wa; //ko:a and //k”oa, meaning ‘bat-eared fox’. The adaptation of it as *kwa* into the Tswana component *Kwa* of the toponym, in all probability borrowed via the Bushman names as indicated above, indicates a derived common noun cognate to the Tswana, Sotho and Nguni root words for the fox, thus rendering a tautological construct as a whole.

The second component or middle segment of the name *kgara* is comparable to the Kung (N2) word /*kara*, also indicated as *garikgari* by Bleek (1929:49: 1956:44), as the name of the black-backed jackal (*Canis mesomelas*), resulting in a triple tautological reference to the ‘jackal’ or ‘fox’ by translation of its name. This argument would support the etymological explanation of it being a tautological formation of the name as toponymic construct. This implies a reference from the different languages to the different jackal species that are often confused because of their similar appearance, foraging habits and size, and that were combined here in one toponym, thereby rendering ‘the crown of the jackals’ on a metaphoric level.

The alternative explanation is that *kgara* can be seen as deriving from //Xam (S1) *ka*, *ga*, in this case, relating to the possessive particle meaning ‘of’ (Bleek 1956:74, 739), and to the extended Tswana possessive and determinative indicator *ga ra*, ‘of the’ which is expressed in the toponymic formation *kgara* + *tlhose*, ‘of the jackals’.

The explanation of ‘crown of the jackals’ can thus be accepted as etymology (note the plural form ‘jackals’ already indicating that more than one type of jackal may be the motive). In this case, the *kwa* is read as an adaptation from the Auen (N1) word //ka for ‘hat, cap, headdress’ (Bleek 1956:546, 723), and the Kung (N2) word \_//khā for ‘a skin cap’ recorded by Doke (quoted in Bleek 1956:572, 702), in the sense thus of wearing it as a ‘crown’.

The component *tlhose*, as in the toponym Ga-tlhose above, may thus be accepted as referring to the bat-eared fox. Although Kwa-Kgaratlhose, that was explained as ‘crown of the jackals’, possibly contains the name of the *Canis mesomelas* as /*kara* or *garikgari* as well, and the name of the bat-eared fox as *tlhose*, this would bring the argument of a tautological creation into play where the composite toponym could be interpreted as referring to both the black-backed jackal and the bat-eared foxes.

If the explanation of the segment *kwa* as a ‘cap’ or ‘headdress’ is accepted, the reference to the caps or hats made from the fur and tails of these foxes, worn as ‘crowns’, ‘head dresses’ or ‘head coverings’, can be seen as having served as an onymic motive. These caps were often made, not only from the fur and tails of foxes, but also from that of the wild musk cat, called *!axarab*, */gamirob* in Nama, identified as a ‘*Stinkkatze*’ by Rust (1960:59). Apart from the wild cats, even the ‘*tierboskat*’ or servals’ pelts were used. As Kolbe (1779:45) describes these practices of cap or head-dress making among the Khoikhoi, these accessories were preferably tailored from lambs wool and cat skins: “...*de musjes...van Lammer en katvelle*”, “*niet alleen schaaap, maar ook Tyger, en Tyger-bosch-kat-vellen*”.

On the other hand the component *kgara* could be directly derived from an original reference to a species of genet, indicated by Lucy Lloyd (1932:313) in Korana with the word //*karo:p*, i.e. the ‘*Genetta felina*’, the ‘small spotted genet’ or ‘musk cat’. This brings us to the etymology offered for the origins of these names, namely recalling that Ga-tlhose was explained as referring to the ‘*muskeljaatkat*’.

An alternative explanation given of the name, was that it refers to the meerkats, the *Suricata suricatta*, and these are called *gara-b*, *xara* and *xara:gi*, which could relate to the component *kgara* in the name Kgara-tlhose. These explanations could, however, not be supported in the light of the etymology provided as ‘crown of the jackals’, which could be verified by words from both Bushman and Tswana, as discussed above.

## 2.4 Smaller mammals, family Viverridae, Mustelidae

The family of Viverridae includes i.a. meerkats, genets, civets and mongooses, and the family Mustelidae includes i.a. the weasels, honey badgers or ‘*ratels*’, and polecats; and lastly, from the order of Chiroptera, i.e. the bats. The various names for these mammals in Dutch and Afrikaans are *mier-* or *meerkatte*, *muske(l)jaatkatte*, *muishonde*, *ratels* and *vleer-* or *vlermuise*, and are often indicated by these terms in references to toponyms.

### 2.4.1 Meerkats

Various types of meerkats have been named in the Bushman languages. Bleek (1929:58, 1956:735) draws a clear distinction between the two types that she indicated as *Suricata zenick* or *S. tetradactyla* and *Cynictis pencillata* (*sic*). The thin-tailed

meerkat, or 'stokstertmeerkat' in Afrikaans (*Suricata suricatta*), is known as *graatjie*, as opposed to the yellow mongoose or bushy-tailed mongoose, the 'rooimeerkat' or 'geelmuishond' in Afrikaans (*Cynictis penicillata*) (Walker 1996:68-73). These species are both commonly known in Afrikaans as *mierkatte* or *meerkatte*. The *Cynictis penicillata* and sub-species of *paracynictis* meerkatte and mongooses (*muishonde*) have a wide-spread distribution in Africa, whereas the *Suricata suricatta* is restricted in distribution and more endemic to the Northern Cape, Kalahari, Namibia and Botswana. Roberts (1954:152-153, 164-166) classified the *Suricata suricatta* as the 'graatjie-' or 'stokstertmeerkat' in Afrikaans, and gave the indigenous names (after Van Warmelo) as *letoli* from Southern Sotho and *letôtôtô* from Northern Sotho, but he also gives 6 sub-species. Walker (1996:68-69) further gives the indigenous names as *xarab* and *!nai xarab* from Nama and Damara for the 'graatjie meerkat'.

The thin- or slender tailed meerkat, indicated by Bleek (1956:275, 735), where she classified it as the *Suricata zenick* (Roberts 1954 *Suricata suricatta*), although in her *Vocabulary* (1929:58) she still had it under the *Cynictis pencillata* (*sic*). It is variously known in some Bushman languages as the *xa:ra* in /Xam (S1); *xara:gi* in the Naron (C2) language, *xa:ra* in Auen (N1); *!gei* in the //N!ke (S2) language, and as *//hyri* in //Xegwi or Batwa (S3); */ō* in /Auni (S4), and as *tfamgaba* in Naron (C2) and Tsaukwe (C2a). For 'mierkat', Bleek (1956:225) also documented the gender difference and plural forms of the animal name *tfamga* from Naron (C2), namely as *tfamgaba* for a male mierkat, and *tfamgadzi* which designates 'many mierkats'. The *Suricata zenick* or *tetradactyla* Bleek indicated (1929:58) with names like *!kao* in /Xam (S1); *//k<sup>^</sup>nsi* in // N!ke (S2); *//n<sup>^</sup>hábe* in Batwa (S3); *≠nwa* in /Auni (S4); *//nau* in /Nu//en (S6); *dzwōa* in Auen (N1); *kxano* in Hie (C1) and *//nauba* in Naron (C2). In Bleek's Dictionary (1956) they are often simply indicated as 'mierkat' with no specific distinction as to the species, although the name */he:\_se:* from the //Kxau (S2b) language is definitely indicated as the yellow mongoose or 'geel mierkat', thus the *Cynictis penicilatta* (Bleek 1956:288).

Some place names such as Graatjiegat and Graatjiegat se Bult recall these meerkats in their original name form as adapted from the Bushman and Khoikhoi. Nienaber (1963:381-382) gives the name for the 'meerkat' or 'graatjiekat' in Nama as *xara-b*, but highlights that the Naron (C2) and Auen (N1) (*//K<sup>^</sup>au-//en*, according to Shortridge) form of the name *xara:gi*, was already well-known and well-documented. This *xara:gi* is probably the closest cognate to the above two toponyms. Graatjiegat is the name of a locality 45 km from Kamassies in the Northern Cape. A hill nearby

is called Graatjiegat se Bult, also written as Graatjiegatsebult (PLAC database NC/NWP, 1982-2000). In Raper *et al* (2014:162) it is explained as an Afrikaans name that means ‘meerkat’s burrow’. Although it is explained as an adaptation from the Khoikhoi name for this animal as *garagi*, *xara:gi*, the origin actually lies in the older Bushman designation for this type of thin-tailed meerkat, derived from /Xam (S1) *xa:ra* or Naron (C2) *xara:gi*, folk-etymologically adapted to ‘*graatjie*’, as indicated above from the documented words in Bleek (1956:257, 735).

In the case of Graatjiegat, Nienaber and Raper (1977:283-284) indicated the spelling variants of the toponym as Charagegous, Garagegous; but quoted the correct form, closer to original Bushman, from Kroenlein’s recording (1861:321 Quellen, vol. 11). It was recorded as “...the place name ‘Xarage-#gous’ (*Meerschweintrog*)”, about 9-10 hours on horseback from Berseba”, the ‘*Meerschwein*’ is actually a reference to the ‘*meerkat*’, the full name probably something like ‘fountain of meerkats’, or ‘at the meerkat colony’, i.e. the ‘meerkats’ burrow’. They further noted that Claudius, in 1685, gave the name as ‘*chara*’, Gordon (1777 ms I:55) gave it as ‘*gradow*’, and ‘Shortridge had already heard the name *xara:gi* from the Naron at Sandfontein’ [*author’s translation*] on the border of Botswana and Namibia, and that its name survives in Afrikaans as the *graatjie-meerkat*. The component *-tjie* is not the diminutive, but an adaptation of the last component of the name *xara:gi*, and this affirmed the *Suricata suricatta*, also known as a specific type of ‘stokstertmeerkat’ (Roberts 1954:151-152), as an onymic formative in this toponym.

This ‘thin-tailed meerkat’ which Bleek (1929:58) still called the *Cynictis pencillata* (sic) in 1929, but later 1956 indicated as the *Suricata suricatta*, indeed got the original descriptive name because of its physical features with its thin stick-like tail, its behaviour and specific habits. The name *xara:gi* was adapted into Khoikhoi and transferred through folk-etymological adoption into Afrikaans as an equally descriptive name: ‘the thin-tailed one’, namely the ‘*stokstert-*’ or ‘*dun-stert-meerkat*’. Possibly from this designation, and the image of a thin-tailed ‘sweet likeable little beast’, “*dit soet en minnelyk beestje*”, according to Claudius in 1685 (Nienaber 1963:281), a meerkat, seen as having a ‘stick-like’ tail, would the metaphoric saying in Afrikaans have originated: ‘*Hy’s so dun soos ’n graatjie*’ (‘He is as thin as a rake – in this case a ‘*graatjie*’ or ‘*meerkat*’).

### 2.4.2 The yellow or bushy-tailed mongoose

The bushy-tailed or ‘*waaierstert meerkat*’ (*Cynictis penicillata*, Estes 2012:307-310), is similarly recalled in a number of ancient toponyms, e.g. Eses (Nienaber & Raper 1977:82). It is the name of a watering place in the far Northern Cape, approximately 45 km east of Port Nolloth, said to be derived from the word /*eb* (*Cynictis penicillata*), the meerkat, that is often found as naming motive in the toponyms of the area. Shortridge (1934:141-145, quoted in Nienaber and Raper 1977:331-332), identifies it as the ‘*waaierstert meerkat*’; the last component *-es* is the locative, indicating the “place of the *waaierstert meerkats*”. It is, therefore, not a reference to the pole-cat or ‘*muishond*’, as the initial comparison indicates. Nienaber (1963:395), quotes the word as *eP* from Thunberg (1772-73II:87), transcribed into modern Nama as /*ē-b* after Kroenlein (1989:66), i.e. the “*Mäusehund, Iurob bei den Bergdamara*”. Walker (1996:72-73) also gives the name /*apa /ēb* for a ‘*geel meerkat*’ or ‘*rooi-meerkat*’.



Figure 2.4.2 Two yellow mongooses [Daniel Otte]

The ‘yellow mongoose’, also called the ‘bushy-tailed mongoose’, as identified by Roberts (1954:151), is restricted in distribution to the Eastern Cape, but apparently became distributed further inland and taken over by another form more like those occurring in the Eastern Karoo and the Free State. According to Walker (1996:72) they are now fairly wide-spread over most of Southern Africa, Botswana, Namibia and the Caprivi. Some indigenous names have indeed been identified as indicating this ‘yellow-’ or ‘bushy-tailed mongoose’, also known as the ‘*waaierstert muishond*’ in Afrikaans. It is called *pipi* in Northern Sotho, *mosha* in Southern Sotho, *ramoswe* and *motodi* in Tswana. Compare the place name Eses as confirmation of its widespread distribution right into the above-mentioned regions.

Other references to the meerkats as naming motives, appeared in toponyms like Kwa-Tseloane which is the Tswana name for a ‘small type of meerkat’, and refers to a hill near Vryburg in the Northern Cape (USGAZ 1992, PLAC Database NC-PLNM, 1982-2000).



Figure 2.4.3(a) Genet resting [Daniel Otte]

### 2.4.3 The genets, *muskejaat-* or *muskeljaatkat*

Bleek (1956:720) recorded *//nalla* for 'genet', and further indicates *!o:se*, *!ko:a* for the 'pole-cat', '*muishond*' in Afrikaans (Bleek 1956:744). See Roberts (1954:130-131) for indigenous names of the genets, he compares the large spotted genet and the small spotted genet, and gives separate names for pole-cats. For the small spotted genet (*Genetta felina*), or '*kleinkol muskejaatkat*', he documented the indigenous names as follows: Xhosa *inyhwagi*; Ndebele *insimba*, Tsonga *nsimba*, Southern Sotho *qoakō*, Northern Sotho *tšhipa*. For the large spotted genet (*Genetta tigrina*), or '*grootkol muskejaatkat*' in Afrikaans, the indigenous names given are *inyhwagi* in Xhosa and *tšipa* in Southern Sotho.



Figure 2.4.3 (b) Large spotted genet [Daniel Otte]

Nienaber (1963:395) documented words for the genets from recordings done of early Cape dialects, i.a. by Witsen (1691:221): “*kòuvv, een muskeljaat kat*”; by Valentyn (1705:107b) *koewó-o* and by Kolbe (1708:431), the same word written as *kouw~oo*. He discusses it as being an early form as indicated later in Wandres as //*aro-b*, and in Nama as //*gamiro-b*, “*Moschuskatze oder Stinktief*”, also from Lucy Lloyd as recorded from Korana (in Maingard 1932:313) as //*karo-p* ‘musk kat’. This name for the ‘musk cat’, Afrikaans ‘*muskejaatkat*’, ‘*muskeljaatkat*’, later variations, such as ‘*mussel-* or ‘*misseljaatkat*’, could perhaps have been named thus after its pungent smell.

The toponym Gamirogas, explained by Nienaber and Raper (1980:279-280) as “place of many small stars”, may, in fact, refer to this same little mongoose species, since the dental click is exactly the same as in //*gamiro-*. The *-gas* could refer to the “many, abundance of *muskeljaat* cats” or simply, act as the locative indicator ‘place of many genets’, ‘*muskeljaatkats*’, or ‘musk cats’.

The toponym Gaseneirob which was indicated by fieldworkers to Nienaber and Raper (1980:45, 302-303) as a reference to a “small animal that steals eggs at night”, may, in all probability, also refer to the same type of ‘*muskeljaatkat*’, or a ‘*muishond*’, the musk or pole-cat.



Figure 2.4.3 (c) Genet [Daniel Otte]

#### 2.4.4 Mongoose family

For the family of Viverridae or mongoose family Roberts (1954:129-163) included the sub-family of Herpestinae, including the *H. Ichneumia*, and all species of ‘*mongooses*’, as well as the civets and genets of the sub-family Viverrinae. Roberts quoted some indigenous names for them, as well as Afrikaans names, e.g. such as for the pole-cat, skunk or ‘*stinkmuishond*’ (*Ictonyx*-species) of which he documented



among many others, i.a. the *Kaapse* ‘*stinkmuishond*’, and the Kalahari- or ‘*swartstert-stinkmuishond*’. Walker (1996:66-67) indicates the Tswana name for this genet as *tshipa*, in Northern and Southern Sotho as *tshipo*, in Shangaan as *nsimba*, in Ndebele as *insimba*, in Swazi as *insimba*, in Lozi as *sipa*, in Yei as *unsiimba*, in Shona and Venda as *tsimba*, in Nama and Damara as *!noreb*.

Of importance to this study are the names of the above sub-species as recorded from Bushman by Bleek (1929:49; 1956:726), i.a. for the *ichneumon* (*Herpestes ichneumon*) which she documented as *˘/ni:* from /Xam (S1); *˘/khi:* from Kung (N2); */ko:ba* in Naron (C2).

For the *polecat* or ‘*stink muishonde*’, she further documented (1956:20, 437, 491, 493, 744), i.a. *˘da* from Kung (N2), describing it as *Ictonyx kalaharicus* (Roberts 1954, Shortridge 1934), also as *da, da:e*, from Lucy Lloyd (1932); and *!ko:a* for the ‘striped *muishond*’, polecat (*Zorilla striata*), synonymous to *!kw’a:* from /Xam (S1), *!o:se* from Naron (C2), *!urob* from Heikum (N2a). Walker (1996:56) indicates this same name *!urob* for the polecat as being used in Nama and Damara. (See also Kroenlein 1989:66 for this recorded name). Walker indicates the indigenous names in Zulu as *qaqa, ngankakazana*; in Ndebele as *iqaqqa*; in Tswana, Venda and Northern Sotho as *nakedi*, in Swazi it is known as the *licaca*, in Lozi as *kangamba* and in Shona as *ehidembo*. From this it appears that there may be cognates, or at least a sound-associative link, between the Bushman forms *!ko:a, !kw’a:* and the Nguni forms as *qaqa, iqaqa* and *licaca*.

The toponym Tshanganya in the Limpopo province, referring to a tributary of the Tshutshe River, which it joins 2 km south of Phalaborwa, is said to be from Tsonga origin, meaning “place of the white-tailed mongoose, *Ichneumia albicauda*, Afrikaans *witstertmuishond*”, recorded in 1889 as *Herpestes grandis* (Raper *et al* 2014:504). Due to the fact that it relates to the indigenous names as indicated above, it is unlikely to have been named after the banded mongoose, as indicated by some sources.





Figure 2.4.4 Banded mongoose [Daniel Otte]

Toponyms that may refer to the polecat or *stinkmuishond* are rare, but compare the name Qaqana found in the Eastern Cape that refers to a tributary of the Ncora River which it enters 30 km north-east of Cofimvaba, and is said to recall this animal. The name is derived from the Xhosa *iqaqqa*, ‘polecat’, Afrikaans *muishond*, *Ictonyx striatus*. The Xhosa name *iqaqqa* is thought to be similar to Khoikhoi *!axaro* for the ‘polecat’ (Raper *et al* 2014:424), confirming the other indigenous and Bushman cognate names for this carnivore as indicated above.

References to the polecat or ‘*muishond*’ in toponyms occur in translated form from Dutch, originally, then in Afrikaans as the name Muishondbaai in the Western Cape illustrates. It refers to a cove on the west coast of the Cape Peninsula, 7 km west-north-west of Cape Point. The name, meaning ‘polecat bay’, refers to the Cape polecat, *Ictonyx striatus*, for which the Afrikaans common name is ‘*Kaapse stinkmuishond*’. Another one is Muysmonds River in the Eastern Cape. Of Dutch origin, the name is thought to mean ‘polecat river’, also referring to the Cape polecat.

Reference in toponyms to the ordinary ‘*muishonde*’ occur more frequently, i.a. Hlwehlwe in Mpumalanga, the name of a tributary of the Mlondozi, which it joins 9 km north-east of Lower Sabie. The name is said to be from Tsonga for the large grey mongoose, *Herpestes ichneumon*, called the ‘*groot grysmuishond*’ in Afrikaans. This name was allocated in 1959 by game ranger J Kloppers (Raper *et al* 2014:187).



Figure 2.4.5 Honey badger [Daniel Otte]

### 2.4.5 Honey badger or ratel

The honey badger (*Melivora capensis*) is called ‘*ratel*’ in Afrikaans, and toponyms that refer to this animal are found in translated forms in Afrikaans as Ratelfontein, Ratelkloof, Ratelkop (Raper *et al* 2014:430, 440). The Bushman name for this fierce little animal, the honey badger, is indicated as *lenjebi* as recorded from the Hie (C1) language by CM Doke (as quoted in Bleek 1956:130, 695), which also occurs in Tswana and Northern Sotho as *lenyebe*. For the ‘*ratel*’, Bleek (1956:747) further indicates inscriptions such as: *!ga:rub*, *!garub*, *!ka:o*, (which seem to be cognate with the names for the ‘*muskejaatkatte*’ or *genets* above, as recorded by Nienaber 1963:395), and further variants such as *ˀ!khōu*, *//haob*, *//hau*, *//hou*, *//kao*, and *≠nī:sib* in Heikum (N2a) according to Bleek (1956:672).

Some names may relate to its fierceness, others to its appearance or behaviour either as a fast runner or as the ‘honey eater’. The word for ‘honey’ was recorded by Bleek (1929:47, 1956:725) as i.a. *denee*, *dini* and *\_danifa*. Therefore, whether the name *≠nī:sib* or one of its components relates to this, could not be established, yet, although the indigenous name for the ratel was recorded in the area of Inhambane, Mozambique as *sididi*, and in Tsonga it is known as *xidzidzi*, which may approximate the above recorded words for ‘honey’, thus the ‘honey badger’.

Other names from the African languages for this little mammal that is widely distributed all over southern Africa, are found in Roberts (1954:203). For example, Xhosa *inchelesi*; Zulu *insele*; Swazi *insele*, but also *umalalafinyele* (which may correlate in its last component with the Bushman name *lenjebi* documented in Bleek from Hie); in Ndebele *ikxoxo*; Northern Ndebele *ulinda*, *umantswane*; Tsonga *xidzidzi*; Southern Sotho *sêlê*; Tswana *mmamogwê*; Northern Sotho *magôgwê* and Venda *tshisele*. Walker (1996:58-59) gives indigenous names for the ratel very similar to

those recorded by Roberts, i.a. as *sere*, *tsere* from Shona; *ulinda* in Ndebele; as *nsele* in Zulu, and Swazi also has the form *insele*. In Venda, it is *tshiselele*, in Shangaan it is known as *shidzidzi*; in Tswana as *matswani*, *matshwane*, in Northern Sotho as *magôgê*.

The toponym Magwagwe, given as the Tswana name of a settlement near Vryburg and Kuruman, and said to mean ‘place of many *ratels*’ (PLAC Database, NWP-PLNM, 1982-2000), is derived from the Tswana *mmamogwê*, or Northern Sotho *magôgwê*.

## 2.5 Bats and mice

Another mammal, the bat (Order Chiroptera, Roberts 1954:53-105), defined in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English* (Allen 1990:91) as ‘any mouse-like nocturnal mammal’, has been included here for the metaphoric visualisation in its Khoi-San name as a ‘kaross-wearing flying mouse’. Since this name is presented in various Khoi-San languages with this very descriptive metaphor, it is grouped here with mice of the order Rodentia. Another possible interpretation of one of its names, is that the origin may be from a sound-imitative coining of its name. The bat has been documented under various names in the Bushman languages by Bleek (1929:19, 1956:696) i.a. as *kukute*, also as *mukingi*, and under the compound name *guritsi-!gubes* in the Nama language. In Nienaber (1963:503-504) it is indicated from recordings of Old Cape Khoikhoi dialectal forms by Le Vaillant (1780-83) as */nouga-bourup* ‘bats; *vleer muyse*’ (*bourup* a variant to be read in Nama as *duru-b* for ‘mouse’ or ‘rat’ according to Nienaber). In the Bushman languages, Bleek (1956:737) indicated i.a. words such as *thuru*, *туру* and *tsi-tsô* for ‘mouse’. The first component may be equated to Auen (N1) and Kung (N2) words */no*, */noo*: for ‘skin’ as recorded by (Bleek 1956:348), also quoting Dokes *~/no:*, *~/nowa*, and Lucy Lloyd’s references */nò:* and */nowa*, all referring to ‘skin’, or ‘like skin’ and ‘hide’, thus cognate to the Khoikhoi */nouga* as ‘skin-like, or ‘skin-wearing’-‘mouse’.



Figure 2.5 (a) Cape longhaired bat [drawing by PJ Smit in Roberts].

In Khoikhoi, the composite name form is given as the *soretsi-//gube-s*, *gurutsi-//gube-s*; and as *sertsi-!gubes*. Kroenlein (1889:301) gives *soretsi -//gubes* as the Nama form and *gurutsi-!gubes* as the Bergdamra form of the name. Schultze (1907:234) gives the explanation that the component *//gube-s* of the form *soretsi -//gubes* is the word for ‘*agterkaros*’, which is said to be descriptive of its skin hanging from its shoulders, over its back and spine down to its feet like the covering of a woman’s *kaross* hanging down to her knees. The second component is thus a description of its wings covered with skin, as a kind of ‘hanging piece of clothing.’ The names for a ‘*kaross*’ in Bushman were recorded (Bleek 1956:548, 729) as *!khu*, *!ku<sup>~</sup>ba*, which are cognate to the Nama form, and, for ‘a skin cloak’, she gives *//kabba* from *!O!kung* (N3). Although words similar to the element *-tsi-* in the first component *sore-tsi*, *guru-tsi*, *ser-tsi* (and variations thereof), are also found in words from Bushman languages for ‘blanket’ and ‘*kaross*’, such as *tsi<sup>~</sup>≠a* and *tfi<sup>~</sup>!a* from Auen (N1), *tfi-≠a*: and *tfi-!kwi*, the first component of the name is not clearly understood yet.

As indicated, this same designation may have been a descriptive, but also metaphoric visualisation of the bats as a kind of flying ‘mouse’ or ‘rat’ with a blanket or *kaross* attached to its body, as described in the Khoikhoi and Bushman names for this mammal. In fact, as reflected in the Dutch and Afrikaans designations for this mammal, this same concept of a ‘*vleer muis*’, ‘*vlermuis*’; German ‘*Fledermaus*’ from Old High German *fledarmus*, < *fledaron* ‘to flap’, ‘to fly’ and *mus* ‘mouse’ (Wahrig 1986/89:438), is equally incorporated in all the names given by those who saw, in the bat, a similarity with a ‘flying mouse’. As quoted above, the variants *bourup* or *duru-b*, equated by Le Vaillant and Nienaber to the word for ‘mouse’ and ‘bat’ as well (Nienaber 1963:394-395), together with Bleek’s *thuru*, are clearly all cognate forms.

The first component, which is more difficult to explain, is *guritsi-* or *soretsi-* and may relate directly to the body parts of the bat. Bleek (1956:81, 697) indicates under words for ‘behind’ and ‘backwards’ (as synonym for ‘behind’), the words *guri eho* and a synonym *gureho* both from the Hie (C1) language, also *guri η//gwa* with synonyms *gore*, *goreng* for the ‘spinal cord’ (‘backstring’) also from Hie (Bleek 1956:51). She further recorded (1956: 216) for “the hinder part” from Hie (C1) the word *tsi*, also used to refer to ‘shoulder’. Or it could be derived from the verb ‘to pin down’, as in the verbal expression of it used in the example sentence relating to the making of a kaross: “/no ka ˘tsi, ka tʃi-≠a:, ka ˘≠ge..., the skin pin down and a kaross sew” (Bleek 1956:216). Thus, the Nama compound word, recorded as *guritsi*, is cognate with the Bushman word *guri-* for ‘behind’, ‘back-’, ‘the hinder part’, emphasised with a verbal suffix *tsi*, to indicate that it gives the appearance of being pinned to the body of the bat, e.g. its shoulders. This proves the interpretation by Schulze of the name of the bat as wearing a kind of ‘*agterkaros*’ (*guritsi-//gube-s* with the Nama inflections indicated here), as another metaphoric visualisation by the Bushmen namers.

Bleek (1929:50) also gives an alternative word for a large ‘*kaross* (skin cloak)’ as ˘!nwiŋ from /Xam (S1) which, when read as resembling the above name *mukiŋgi* for a bat, would mean the ‘one with a kaross’, or ‘kaross-wearing’, or ‘kaross covered flying mouse’.



Figure 2.5 (b) Giant fruitbat [drawing by PJ Smit in Roberts]

In Namibia in the district of Otjiwarongo, the farm name Ondiri, also written as Onderi, was adapted into both the Herero and Ovambo languages and explained as referring to “*eine Fledermaus*”, i.e. ‘a bat’ (Köhler 1958:102, Albertyn 1984:74). The word *mukiŋgi* for bats, may on the other hand, be read as sound-associative, where *-kiŋgi* may also correlate with *diri* (as in the Herero name *O-ndiri*), perhaps all just referring to a kind of ‘kaross covered flying bat’. Alternatively, it may have been an attempt at emulating the high pitched bell-like pinging sound of bats as described

by Daniel Otte (from orthopterist's recordings, email to author, July 2014). The components *ki + ngi* adapted phonologically to *ndi + ri*, may in this specific case be accepted as another sound-meaning explanations of a name, and found in the retraceable cognates in the various languages.

Other names for bats in the Bushman languages are the variants //goa//goa, //gwa//gwa and //noro-kodzodzo, //nuru-kodzodzo. The first component //noro and //nuru of the last two examples, is cognate to //turru, duru, whereas the second and third components at least, may all resemble in sound, the wing movements of the fast flying bats while swooping out of cave overhangs. This same kind of sound imitation name forming, whereby the wing movements, or the sounds made by this action are captured, is found in names for other 'flying' animals like birds and insects, e.g. flies and beetles (cf. par. 10.2.2, 10.2.8). Note has been taken of the repetitive syllables as probably sounding imitative, although it has been stated in some cases that the 'special kind of language' of the animals, also in describing the animals by onomatopoeia, was used by the Bushman in their folklore. This was discussed by Van Vuuren (2016:131 quoting from Bleek and Lloyd 1936) and, of course, in the naming of animals; or that it may actually refer to pluralisation, i.e. the plural form indicating the swarms of these animals as the 'many' (Bleek 1929:39).

The toponyms Vlermuisgat and Vlermuisklip could be translated or originally coined Afrikaans names. Vlermuisgat situated in the Western Cape, is a cave on the west coast of the Cape Peninsula, 2,6 km north of Noordhoek and 2,5 km north-east of Chapman's Point. The name is Afrikaans and means 'bat cave', literally 'bat hole', said "to refer to *Myotis tricolor*, the Cape hairy bat (Roberts 1954:79-80), which occurs in the Cape Peninsula" (Raper *et al* 2014:531). The Vlermuisklip is situated near Vredendal, Western Cape, where Lutzville was established (Raper *et al* 2014:283).

The words for the ordinary *mouse* as *duru-b*, *gube-s*, are discussed in Nienaber and Raper (1977:81, 317-318, 323). Toponyms are indicated, such as Durub, Duruchaus, Duruous, Doeroebees, all indicated as 'mouse fountain' or 'mouse place'; the variant Turudaos, as 'mouse poort, road or spoor', and Hiskhoma as the 'mouse nest' (Nienaber & Raper 1977:550). Bleek (1929:59) indicates the mouse i.a. as *туру* in Hie (C1); as /nu<sup>˜</sup>hi in Naron (N2), and as *durub*, *bous* in Nama, which all confirm the origins of the above place names clearly, as from Bushman. The component /hi<sup>˜</sup>-s of Hiskhoma may be comparable to the component <sup>˜</sup>hi in the Naron (N2) word /nu<sup>˜</sup>hi for mouse, possibly a partial adaptation or hybrid form.

## CHAPTER THREE

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### Primates: baboons and vervet monkeys

#### 3.1 Chacma or savanna baboon

Bushman common nouns for the chacma baboon (*Papio cynocephalus ursinus*) are numerous, among the documented ones with possible sound association are /ho /ho, /hu /hu from /Xam (S1); //ku\_//ka from //Nǀke (S2); /gori from /Nu //en (S6); \_gora from Auen (N1) and \_goraba from Naron (C2); //xori-b, //ogore, /goreba, /nera from /Auni (S4); /hūŋ, //kūŋ, //ka and /ka\_//ka from /Nu//en (S6). Those relating to *chacma* are names such as //ka and /ka\_//ka and *choa kamma* (Valentyn 1705:107a in Nienaber 1963:202). The names //k<sup>3</sup>warre and //xettǎn from /Xam (S1) as documented by Lucy Lloyd and Bleek (1956:609, 645) as unusual names for the baboon, often described them as being smaller than the /hu/hu ('baboon'). Also recorded are names such as *dzwere* (*dzwene*) from Hie (C1), and many more languages (Bleek 1956:695). In the Bantu languages some onomatopoeic names for the baboons have been recorded, such as those in Zulu *unohoha* (Bryant 1965:21) and *unohaḥ, unohhohha* (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:28). All the above names contain some sound-associative elements, referring to the vocalisation calls made by the baboons.

The name /nera, originally from the /Auni (S4) and ≠Khomani (S2a) languages, and adapted into other forms like ~/norab and ~/nerab into Khoikhoi and Nama (Bleek 1929:18), is a metaphor allocated to the chacma baboon. The common descriptor here is the word /nera. According to Kroenlein, who documented the name from interviews (1889:252), this component /nera-b, designating the baboon, was derived from the verb /né- 'to measure', employed as a noun /nera-b describing the baboon as: "Der Messer seines Schrittes" ('the one who measures his strides'). This metaphor was explained to Kroenlein during his fieldwork as: "Have you not seen how the baboon, imitates what man does, how he measures his strides?" The metaphoric view of the baboon supports the naming motive as alluding to the way the baboon walks, and is found in cognate designations and in toponyms containing the name

*/nerab* and derivations thereof. It features in quite a number of toponyms listed in Nienaber and Raper (1977:79, 539; 1980:43) that relate to this old Bushman onymic formative, albeit in some guises.

Toponyms like Heeraau or Bobbejaansbloed, from */nera* and */ao-b* meaning ‘baboons’ blood’; Narguab in Namibia translated as Pavianskranz (Möller 1986:369); Nerap, a farm on the Molopo River, district of Kuruman, explained as ‘place of baboons’; Nerahoas, a locality with a long rock-ledge adjoining a kloof, deriving from */nera-//hoa-b* ‘baboons rock’, translated as Paviaanskluft (Kroenlein-Rust 1969:288), now Bobbejaanskrans, ‘baboons’ ledge or rock’ (Nienaber & Raper 1977:886). In addition to this is Neranaisib, elucidated by Friedel Krenz (fieldwork 1979) as originating from “ */nera* = ‘*der Pavian*’, *!naisib* = ‘*Geburtsort*’, i.e. ‘birth place of the baboons’, ‘baboons’ birth place’ (Nienaber & Raper 1980:632). The toponyms originating from this cluster containing the root metaphorical name depicting the baboon, were applied both in the Bushman languages and Khoikhoi. They refer to the wide distribution of this ape, and occur all over the country.



Figure 3.1 (a) Chacma baboons [Daniel Otte]

Among the numerous other common names for the chacma baboon mentioned earlier, some definitely display onomatopoeic references, e.g. */gori* from */Nu //en* (S6); *//xori*, *//xori-b*, *//ogore*, *//ogere*, */goreba*, */goraba* from Naron (C2); as they were documented from these Bushman languages by Bleek (1929:18; 1956:695).



De Flacourt documented, as early as 1655, the name for the baboon as *haricam*, also as *gorne* (Nienaber 1963:202), and several forms of this name have been recorded thereafter, i.a. as *choa kamma* by Valentyn (1705: 107a in Nienaber 1963:202) as indicated above.

It is not always clear which ‘*aap*’ or ‘*bobbejaan*’ was meant in all instances of the oldest recorded names, though, apparently, most seem to point to the *chacma* baboon. This confusion persisted for a while, as to which ‘apes’ were meant, especially in the light of some vocalisations as emulated in the common names in other African languages and in Bushman for both vervet monkeys and baboons. Examples of this include //ke, !!ke, nkwe, !ku, !kalku, //k”warre and //xettan (Bleek 1929:18; 1956:695). As Estes observes (2012:478-493): “The most remarkable fact about communication among monkeys (and apes) is the sameness of their signal system”. Still, it should be accepted that the original namers distinguished very accurately between these ‘apes’ on the one side and ‘monkeys’ on the other (those with the long tails).

The many emotional and highly graded vocal signals of the apes, baboons and vervet monkeys have been tabled by Estes (2012:515, as modified after Hall and DeVore 1965). Many of the main categories of shouts and calls reflect in Bushman names, among others, the dominance, threats and warning calls, the loud bark with a wide open mouth, the fear grimace, and so forth, indicated as ‘wáa-hoo’; as !ka, \_!ku !ka, choaka > *chacma* (acoustically very dramatic and sound imitated as ‘boggom’ in Afrikaans, described in the classic, world-renowned books by Eugene Nielen Marais *The Soul of the Ape, My friends the Baboons* and *Burgers van die berge*).

The *chacma* baboon emits this sharp bark when alerted or sounding the alarm, which in some Bushman names was indicated by a sharp cerebral click ! or lateral click // sounding something like smacking *chac-chac* called ‘yakking’ (Estes 2012:489). As such, their name was recorded in writing as *haricam*, *choa kamma*, that was later written as *chacma*, which, to this day, is retained in the taxonomic terminology of the sub-species name. When alarmed or distressed, they begin screeching and screaming louder in high staccato, and often in some form of confusion take to the trees and rock ledges, barking ‘wahoo’ and subsiding with ‘uh-uh uh’ and other calls. From this clearly were emulated names like the /ho/ho, /hu/hu from /Xam (S1); /hūŋ, //kūŋ, //ka and /ka\_/ka from /Nu //en (S6) versions of Bushman names.



Figure 3.1 (b) Baboon mother with young [Daniel Otte]

Toponyms derived from such onomatopoeic names are, *inter alia*, Kogaseep, 'baboons' rockledge' (from Old Cape dialect words *t'kôga* + *sib* written later as *-seep* (Nienaber & Raper 1977:742). Similar adapted forms and translations occurred within the language contact situation with Xhosa, as illustrated in names such as Incwama and Bobotyana (the last one an adaptation from Afrikaans '*bobbejaan*'). The Xhosa Incwama relates directly to the Bushman form *!choa camaa* as recorded in 1655 by De Flacourt, and already containing the sound-associative components indicated above.

Other Bushman names for the baboon that may relate to their wide range of vocalisations are, according to Bleek (1929:18; 1956:695), i.a. *burutu*, *dzwene* and *dzwere* from Hie (C1), perhaps also relating closely to other sound-associative elements referring to their */hu /hu* shouting, screaming or chattering.

Many place names referring to the baboons were recorded either in original colloquial creations, such as Aapkrans and Bobbejaan se Preekstoel situated in the Waterberg, one named for the usual nightly shelter used as sleeping quarters under the krantzies, the other for its resemblance to a baboons profile. The local name for this primate also occurs in the many translated forms, such as Bobbejaansberg and Bobbejaanskrans, and so forth (Raper *et al* 2014:27-28, 40). These translations referring to the *chacma* baboons, indicated as */ka\_ /ka* in the /Nu//en (S6) language (Bleek 1929:18), */hu* and */hu/hu* from the /Xam (S1) and //N!ke (S2) languages

(Bleek 1956: 290, 291), the Zulu onomatopoeic *unohoha*, *unoha[h]*, and so forth, are obviously all sound-associative.

Raper discusses the Zulu names of geographical features such as rivers and mountains in his publication *Bushman (San) influence on Zulu place names* (2012) in detail. Noting, in this regard, Nicolaisen's (1976:173) assumption on the earliest 'stratum' of settlement and the earliest languages spoken (2012:9), he keeps in mind that these names denoting such features, count as some of the oldest to have been coined by the 'first namers'. In southern Africa, these names often clearly demonstrate an underlying substructure adapted from earlier Bushman origins. The river name Hluhluwe in KwaZulu-Natal, is according to Raper (2012:68), derived from such an earlier Bushman origin, and is "said to be derived from the Zulu word for a type of creeper growing on the river banks, 'thorny rope' (*Dalbergia armata*), called 'bobbejaantou' in Afrikaans. *Bobbejaantou* is Afrikaans for "baboon rope, monkey rope", and this reflects the direct translation of the name. The name of the plant 'baboon rope' is, thus, directly associated with the Zulu and Bushman forms of the name, and clearly so through the translated Afrikaans common noun '*bobbejaanstou*'. See Smith (1966:133-135) for an extensive discussion of the various types of '*bobbejaantou*' creepers, where he quotes Thunberg 1773 "*Incolis, Bavian's tou*"; Lichtenstein 1803 "*een reusagtig rankgewas...hier Bavianentouw genoemd word*"; from Campbell 1813, "called by the natives bavian's tow or baboon's rope", and Burchell, also 1813, "*flexibles funiformes vocatae sunt babiaan's touw*".

This does not imply that the plant name was onomatopoeically coined, but was adopted indirectly from an onomatopoeic origin of the baboon designation as /*hu* /*hu*, to be coined via translation to a plant name, specifically to the thorny creeper known as the 'baboon' or 'monkey' rope. In the first component, it is a direct reference to the baboon as /*hu*/*hu*, i.e. '*bobbejaan*', together with another possible cognate form in the last component, to the '*tou*' i.e. 'rope' or 'cord', from Bushman Hie (C1) *gwii*. Raper further explicates the phonological adaptation as: "the Zulu unvoiced alveolar lateral fricative *hl* approximates the Bushman unvoiced alveolar fricative click /, showing *hluhlu* to be comparable to /*hu*/*hu*..." He concedes, however, that "(T)he final component of the name *Hluhluwe*, which is the name of a river, is more likely to be a generic term meaning 'river'." To support this argument he quotes from Döhne (1857:141), Colenso (1884:229) and Botha (1977:85) to indicate the spelling variants recorded for this name Hluhluwe, and its fluvial generic encapsulated or embedded in the name as *we*, *be* and *bwe*, which, according

to Raper, is comparable with the recorded words from the Hie (C1) language *kwe* for ‘river’, from the Auen (N1) //xwe for ‘waterhole’, and so forth (Bleek 1929:90). He brings this into focus with the adapted Zulu spelling variations of the name with the generic and concludes: “The Zulu river name and the Afrikaans common name for the *Dalbergia armata* or *bobbejaantou* thus seem to be derived from the Bushman words for ‘baboon’, while the former takes a Bushman generic term, the latter possibly a Bushman word for ‘rope, cord.”

Nienaber (1963:221-222) mentioned that the word *choakamma*, as recorded also in 1691 by Witsen for ‘baboon’, has become obsolete, but was obviously onomatopoeically coined after their call. This name, not originally Khoikhoi, was probably adapted from the Bushman language, the //N̩!ke (S2) word //kū //ka, and /ka-/ka from /Nu //en (S6) as above, and was employed as a sound-imitative name, mimicking the barking of baboons by the early Bushmen, just as the Zulu words *unohha* and *unohhohha* are onomatopoeic in nature.

The correspondence with *chacma* becomes clear, i.e. between *choa* heard as /ka or //kū//ka, and *kamma* as /ka-/ka. In their sound-associative relation, *choa* and *chacma* < //kū//ka or /ka-/ka, as in the written form *choakamma*, are all imitative formatives. It is this component of the common name that was retained in the zoological taxonomy as sub-species name for the savannah baboon or *chacma* baboon and the toponym Choakamma.

In the toponyms Gomee and Gorne, the onymic formatives and naming motives become clear: they are all named after the same chacma baboons: Gomee and/or Gorne (recorded as early as 1752 by Beutler, quoted in Nienaber 1963:221), were discussed in Nienaber and Raper (1977:446), indicating that the word *gommi* or *gomee* (a variant spelling) relates to ‘baboon’. In the form *Gomee* (seen as a misspelling of the variant *Gorne*, the recording by Beutler), the variant common name for the baboon can be retraced via *\_/gora* from /Xam (S1); */goraba* from the Naron (C2), */goren*, */gori* from /Nu//en (S6); and *\_/gora* from the Auen (N1) language, all, as indicated earlier, documented by Bleek (1929:18; 1956:281-282).

In the translated cluster of names comprising Baviaanskloof and Baviaansrivier (Nienaber & Raper 1977:446; 1980:551), the form of Gomee or Gorne is the root toponymic formative appearing here in the Afrikaans translations.

Baviaansrivier in the Eastern Cape (Raper *et al* 2014:28), apparently, also relates to the Komdodau Pass and Komdoruggens, as does the Baviaanskloof. The Baviaanskloof (famous for its nature conservation, forestry reserve and mountain biking trails), situated north-west of Port Elizabeth, is a translation of the form *Komdomo* (also appearing as Komdodau Pass, Komdosruggens and Komdosberge). This *komdo*-, and *Komdomo* is derived from *gomee* or *gommi* ‘baboon’ with *dao* as a generic indicating the ‘*kloof*’, ‘pass’ or ‘*poort*’. It appears as similar adaptation of the form *Gomee*, or *Gorne*, thus forming a toponymic cluster in the south Eastern Cape, referring to the many baboons there.

Another variant Bushman common name for the baboon, //nwaan (Bleek 1956:695), may relate to the Shona and Xhosa adaptation of the toponym Bhobhotyana. Although it is said to actually derive from the Afrikaans *bobbejaan*, as in so many Afrikaans toponyms containing the component *Bobbejaan(s)*-, the resemblance of the Bushman name for the baboon does raise the question: Where does the Afrikaans ‘*bobbejaan*’ actually come from?

### 3.2 The vervet monkeys

The vervet monkeys (*Cercopithecus aethiops*), colloquially known in Afrikaans as *aap*, *apies*, *blou-apies* have their names recorded as components in names such as Aapjesboom in Sekhukhuni; a gorge near Mbibana called Aapkloof and Apieskraal at Thabazimbi, all in the Limpopo province (USGAZ SG\_NP, SG\_MP 1992). According to Bleek (1956:736) the vervet monkeys are called in some of the Bushman languages *nkau*, *nke* (also *nkwe*), //ke and !!ke. Indeed, their sharp alarm calls are reflected with the cerebral click ! and the lateral click //, and often with a nasalised ñ and the nasalised double rr, accentuated with the explosive glottal croak as in the name //k”wařre from /Xam (S1) (Bleek 1956:609); or as the sharp cerebral clicks in !!ke-!!ke indicate. Estes (2012:505-507, as quoted from Struhsaker 1967d, Seyfarth and Cheney 1986), gives an elaborate discussion of the vervet monkeys’ vocalisations: especially the ‘woof-wa calls’ and “*aarr* and *rraugh*, as tooth-grinding”, and the “*aarr-rraugh* with covered teeth”. Their high-pitched vocal reactions are clearly demonstrated in the predator alarm calls as *uh* and *nyow*, found in the common names *nke* and *nkau* as given to them.

The sound of this behavioural action is imitated in //k”wařre, one of the names for the vervet monkey, as represented in the /Xam (S1) language. A place name where this onymic formative occurs is, i.a. Tshwane, translated into Afrikaans as Apiesrivier. In

this toponym, the original formative //kʷařře is pronounced or heard with rolled rr's, though articulated as a sound between these and the nasal n. It also underwent an adaptation in the softening of the initial click and croak //kʷw to the phonemic cluster as tshw, and adapted with the double řře pronounced more as ne. From the noun nkwe several toponyms emerged with adaptations into Sotho and Tswana. For example, Tshwenyane 'place of little monkeys' (Raper *et al* 2014:122, 506), and in Northern Sotho Ga-Tshwene for a mountain in Mpumalanga; Kaditshwene in the North West Province, also said to refer to 'place of baboons'.

## CHAPTER FOUR

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### The hoofed mammals: non-ruminants

Animals known as the ‘hoofed mammals’ contain orders of the non-ruminants such as the Perissodactyla (rhinoceros and zebras, horses, and so on), Artiodactyla (swine and hippopotamus), and the Proboscidea (e.g. elephants) as described by Estes (2012:209-259), as well as ruminants such as the bovines, the horse family, zebras, wildebeests, antelope, and so forth, that are each discussed under a separate chapter and heading. The non-ruminants are presented first in separate sections from the larger representatives to the smaller versions, e.g. the swine family.

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#### 4.1 Rhinoceros: black rhino and white rhino

Of the odd-toed ungulates, the rhino, both the black (*Diceros bicornis*) and the white rhino (*Ceratotherium simum*), appear in this order of the hoofed mammals and non-ruminants. They are named as the family of the Rhinocerotidae, and stand alone. They have been locally described by the Bushmen and Khoikhoi according to their outstanding features as the ‘one horned ones’ (although they basically have two horns, one just shorter); as ‘the one who will toss up’; the ‘ones with thundering hooves’, and otherwise as ‘the short-sighted ones’.

Bleek (1929:70) makes a clear distinction between the names for the black rhino (*Rhinoceros bicornis*) as recorded i.a. from Kung (N2) as  $\sim$ /khi; as *kxii* from Hie (C1), as /xi: from Auen (N1); as  $\sim$ //xei from !O!kuṅ; as //xoa:kən from /Xam (S1), and as *dju:* from Sesarwa (S5). For the white rhino (*Rhinoceros simus*) she documented !goba from Sesarwa (S5); *gaba* from Hie (C1); *!naba* from Naron (C2),

Auen (N1) and Kung (N2), as well as *!navas* from Khoikhoi (Bleek 1956:472). In some African languages these names have become linguistically interchanged, often causing confusion to which rhino exactly is being referred to, as emerged from the provided explanations.

Several toponyms from different languages refer to the above-mentioned characteristic of both the white and black rhinoceros, e.g. Dwyka River, Kwakwatsi, Nababeep, Nabasberg in Raper *et al* (2014:104, 260, 357); Nabasiep and the Nababiepsrivier, and toponymic cluster formations and derivations of these. Further names are Renosterrivier or Rhinoceros River, Rhino Peak, Renosterkop, Swakop, Tshukudu (Raper *et al* 2014:434-435); and in Herero, the Okongavaberg, Omirambawazongava and Ovikoro-yozongava.

The Nabasiepberge, also known as the Swartberge in the Northern Cape (Sensuskaart / Map 1891, sheet 2816 Alexander Bay, in Nienaber and Raper 1977, 1980:596-597), is explained as derivation from “*!nawa = Nashorn*” as in Rust (1960:45), to be compared to Nababeep, ‘Renoster Mountains’. Also Nabaseep, a spellingvariant of Nabasiep, referring to a farm in the Northern Cape province, district of Calvinia, from the Nama *!nawa* or *!naba*, was therefore known as ‘Renosterplek’, the ‘place of rhinoceros’.

A toponym derived from the common Bushman names */khi* or */xi* is found as the Dwyka River. This is a tributary of the Gamka River and flows southwards to join the Gamka 37 km west-south-west of Prince Albert, from there forming the Gourits River. The geological Dwyka Series takes its name from this river (Raper *et al* 2014:104-105). One explanation for the name is based on the argument that Rhinoceros River was recorded as an alternative name for the Dwyka, and that *Dwyka* means ‘rhinoceros river’, as indicated by Engelbrecht (1936), quoted from Barrow in Nienaber (1963:429). In 1797 Barrow recorded an old Khoikhoi word *dwy* for ‘rhinoceros’ and gave the explanation for the place name ‘the Dwyka or Rhinoceros river’. Steedman in 1831 (II:7, also quoted in Nienaber 1963:428), gave it as *dwee* (read *dwii*) in the same place name recording as ‘Dweekie or Rhinoceros River’. Wangemann in 1873 recorded it as Tweke, identified by Engelbrecht correctly as ‘The Dwyka’. The Bushman words involved here are from !O!kuᵛ (N3) *ˀ//xei*, from Hie (C1) *kxii*, Auen (N1) */xi:*, and Kung (N2) *ˀ/khi*, all confirming this as a plausible explanation. The element *ka* means ‘river’; it was recorded as early as 1691 as *kà*. On modern maps, the name appears as Renosterrivier.



In the /Xam (S1) language the black rhino is called //xoa:kən, and variants //xwa:gən, //xwaka: (Bleek 1929:70; 1956:638). This relates to early root words or onymic formatives in the names depicting the black rhino, i.a. //xoa and //xwa. The Swakop River in Namibia is presumed to derive from this designation, since it was indicated on early French maps as ‘*Rivier des Rinoserosse*’ (Van Reenen in Mossop 1935:265; Skead 1973:215), and elucidated by Raper *et al* (2014:482), where it was argued that the original designation given as //xwaka-ob or -ub, was adapted into Nama *tsoagau-b* and further to Swakop. This French name was a translation of the earlier Khoikhoi form of the name derived from the Bushman designation for the black rhino as //xwaka. Other spellings for Swakop as recorded by Skead (1973:215) include Tswakop, Schwackaup, Schwagaup and Tsoa-xoub that show the orthographic adjustments over the years. The component Swak- (also written in germanised forms as *Schwack-* or *Schwag-*), is an adaptation of the above mentioned word for ‘rhinoceros’, //xoa, //xwa. Bleek (1929:70) gives the /Xam (S1) word //xoa:kən for the ‘*Rhinoceros bicornis*’, further consonantalised as //xwagən, also //xwaka:g in one given example (Bleek 1956:638), the “unvoiced lateral fricative click with fricative efflux, //x, interpreted by various recorders as Ts-, Z-, Sch-, S-” (Nienaber & Raper 1977:1011), and the velar variant phonemes /g/ and /k/ normalised as /k/ in Swakop. It was noticed how close, on a phonological level, “the lateral click // of //xwag- corresponds to the variant component *Schwag-*, and //xwak- to *Schwack-*, the voiced and unvoiced velar effluxes respectively reflected in the early German written recordings of the name” (Raper 2007:128-129). The final syllable ən denotes emphasis, as in the word *kakən*, the emphatic form of the word *ka* (Bleek 1956:78). The last components -op or -aup and oub, are fluvial generics depicting the river, as in Gamop, Nossob, Auob, and others.

Another toponym Kwakwatsi, translated as Renosterrivier, is said to stem from Southern Sotho (Gildenhuis 1993:76). Yet, this allonym seems to originate from the same /Xam word //xoa:kən (Bleek 1929:70), //xwagən, //xuaka, //xwaka:-g and //xwa-ka (Bleek 1956:638), all referring to the black rhino, *bicornis*. The component *Kwakwa* may be cognate with this /Xam word for ‘rhinoceros’, yet the second component -kwa could be cognate with the /Xam word for ‘water’ *!khwa*, and the Kung (N2) word *k’oā* for ‘waterhole’ (Bleek 1929:90). The component with the fluvial generic -tsi is comparable to the Kung (N2) demonstrative *tsi* ‘this (one) here’ (Bleek 1956:227, Raper *et al* 2014:260), or operates as the fluvial generic *tfi* and *tsi*, here indicating either the ‘river’, i.e. to flow, or ‘to be wet, damp’ (Bleek 1956:229).

The common name in all these components, //xoa:kən, is a possible sound-associative link to the animal's gruff snorting. The common names with /khi or /xi, probably emulating the acoustics of calls of distress of its young calves. Apart from this, both rhino types are known to make squealing sounds, grunting and snorting. According to Estes (2012:229-231, 232-233) the black rhino is known to make a low, guttural or short, snorting grunt through its nostrils; at all other times, unless alerted, it keeps very silent. The white rhino is known to make a definite gasp-puffing as a fright or alarm signal, but also loud wailing and squealing in distress, and gruff squealing and snarling when chasing rivals or predators.



Figure 4.1 (a) Black rhino and calf [Daniel Otte]

The white rhino is called !goba in !O!kuŋ (N3); !naba, !nabba in Auen (N1) and Kung (N2), and !gaba in Hie (C1); in Nama it is !navas (Bleek 1929:70). The earliest recording of its name was naua by De Flacourt (1655:61, quoted in Nienaber 1963:428), and various spelling version by other writers were t'nabba, nabba, nawap, also tuabba recorded in 1705, and adapted variants such as gabah were also documented. They all originated from, or are synonymous variants of the same onymic formatives as in the earlier Bushman designations !naba and !nawa, whereas the form t'uabba is possibly from the original Sesarwa (S5) word dju:, which acted as toponymic formative in several names.

The problematic and possibly misguided interpretations of the designations for the black and the white rhino may stem from the following: The form t'uabba recorded in early 1705 by Valentyn and in 1708 by Kolbe, was said to refer to the

'black rhino' (Nienaber 1963:428). This form is possibly derived from the onymic formatives *t'ua*: *t'uabba* (but not necessarily from *!nabba*, which is from another language and seems more likely to have been coined independently), yet they have been equated with *!nabba*. Bleek (1956:472) herself commented on the transfer of the name *!nabba* from the Auen (N1) and Kung (N2) languages as previously used, onto the white rhino as follows: "This is evidently the name of the white rhinoceros, while */khi*, or */xi*, is that of the black; since the extinction of the former, both words are used for the latter". Ex.: "*!nabba //goo* --- male white rhino, *!nabba*...the (one-horned) rhinoceros's horn is one. *!nabba ti e //na kei* ...the (black one-horned) is a great beast". The confusion with the words or names for rhinos was here, as in other cases with the *apes*, *wolves*, *tiers*, *jackals*, *wildebeests* and so forth, not uncommon.

The adaptations from this cluster of similar names with *!nabba* and *nawa*, *gaba*, being compared to *t'ua*, though, may have been early misinterpretations, or simply recorded differently in writing as *t'ua* > *twa* > *//xwa* even to *gaba*, or the other way round. In the case of *t'uabba* (with the masculine ending *ba* of the Khoikhoi languages), and the Hie (C1) language, it is also difficult to decide whether it relates to, or is cognate to *!nabba*, as the case is argued in Nienaber (1963:428-429), although they seem comparable on a phonological level.

These variant forms are recalled in the toponym Nawaptana, translated by Wikar in 1779 as Renosterkop, a hill south of the Augrabies Falls (Molsbergen 1922, quoted in Pettman 1931:34). Kroenlein (1889:248), recording the name as *!nawas* in Nama, already stated that the Nama verb *!nawaba* is an onomatopoeically conceived expression derived from, or indicating the action of the rhino 'to stamp with the hooves on the ground', "*mit dem Huf(auf dem Boden) aufschlagen (Tonnachahmung)*", i.e. sound imitation. This is a common threat and distinctive alarm action of these massive animals, and was not lost on the Bushman, nor in their naming motives.

Gnabas is an old name for the Witberg. This toponym was explained by Nienaber and Raper (1977:420) as deriving from *!naba*-s, and explained as "place of the rhino... that associates it with the rhino and its horn", i.e. "*renosterplek... [wat] aansluit by die renoster met sy neushoring*". This view was taken from *//na-b* for 'horn', not from the full Bushman word *!nabbas* for the rhino with his 'stamping of hooves'. This is a different view, focusing on the 'one long-horn' of the Bushmen's possibly descriptive naming motive of the horned animal with the thundering hooves. Yet the lateral click // in the word for 'horn' is different, it is not indicated by ! the cerebral click. However, as has been pointed out, the clicks were often not indicated very clearly

or consistently in the earliest recordings, and may have differed in the different languages. It therefore may or may not support the explanation of the name as the ‘one-horned one’, as this too is its outstanding feature.

Another hill, known as Nabaghakou or Renosterkop, takes its name from the same root word with its variant forms for the white rhinoceros as indicated by Bleek, e.g. *naba* from Kung (N2) (Bleek 1956:142); *!naba* from Auen (N1), Kung (N2) and Naron (C2) (Bleek 1929:70); *!nabba* (again from N1, N2, C2 as in Bleek 1956:472); *≠nabba* from Naron (C2) (Bleek 1956:669). The oronymic generic for ‘mountain’ is indicated from Bushman words as either deriving from //*xau*: and *!gou* from /Xam (S1) Bleek (1956:633); *!kau*, *!kou* from //N!ke (S2); *~!kau* from /Xam (S1) (Bleek 1929:59); or for ‘hill’ from /Xam (S1) *\_/kao* (Bleek 1929:46); also recorded as //*xau*:, *!gou*, */kaεo*.

Nabahi or Renoster Hoek, also Rhinoster Hoek, meaning ‘rhinoceros corner’, is the name of a wooded area and farm in the Eastern Cape. The Afrikaans name is a partial translation of Nabahi, an early Bushman name recorded in 1779 by Robert Jacob Gordon as *naba.hi*, meaning ‘*renoster bos*’. The little river tSaap Camma flowed out of this wooded area (according to Gordon ms. 5:126), and above the entry *naba.hi*, Gordon wrote the explanation ‘*rinoster bos*’ (rhinoceros bush). The first component is cognate with Kung (N2) *naba* ‘white rhinoceros’ (Bleek 1956: 142), and as in the variant forms of it as indicated above. The component *hi* compares with the Naron (C2) word *hi* for ‘bush’ (Bleek 1956:61), also ‘plant, wood’, found also as *hii*, in Nama *heib* (Bleek 1956:61). Renosterbos is thus the direct translation of Nabahi. In the farm name Renoster Hoek the component Hoek (corner), implies that it is merely a portion of the original ‘bush’ (Nienaber & Raper 1977:828).

In Namibia the hybridised name of the Okongavaberg refers to a mountain 1,646 m high, situated some 43 km north-east of Okahandja. The generic term *berg* is Afrikaans for ‘mountain’. The component *Okongava* is Herero, the locative *Oko* with *ngava*, which means ‘place of rhinoceros’ (Raper *et al* 2014:390), the component *ngava* approximates the Naron (C2), Auen (N1) and Kung (N2) word, *!naba*, the Hie (C1) word *gaba* and the Nama word *!navas* ‘rhinoceros’ (Bleek 1929:70). In the Herero name, the nasal velar cluster *ng* represents the Khoi-San click with nasal efflux *!n*, while the voiced bilabial consonant *b* correlates with the voiced dentilabial consonant *v*.

The name Omirambawazongava is another Herero name, that of a farm in the Windhoek district. This composite name in the plural form refers to the 'dry river bed of the rhinoceros'. The component *omiramba* is explained as plural for *omurambo*, which means 'river' (Timotheus Tjihapiu, recorded during fieldwork with Binding, 1980-1984). The component *ngava* corresponds to Bushman words recorded by Bleek (1929:70) for the rhinoceros, i.a. *!naba* and *≠nabba* in Naron (C2) (Bleek 1956:669). The Nama word *!navas* (Bleek 1929:70) resembles the Herero word *ngava*, and indicates the *b* and *v* variability in these different languages. The area name Ovikoro-yozongava as used in the northern parts of Namibia, specifically the Damaraland, Kaokoland region, possibly refers to, or is derived from, that of a geographical feature. In other words, taken from a mountain name with the same meaning 'rhino against the mountain' (Surveyor-General-SWA. n.d. Photo 1/85, sheet 'Giribesvlakte' 1913 AB, Damaraland and Kaokoveld).

In Tswana and Northern Sotho, the white rhino is called i.a. *tshukudu* (Walker 1996:130), compare the toponyms Kwa-Ditshukudu, name of a stream near Mafeking with the meaning given as "it is the plural form of rhinoceros" (PLAC Database-NWP-PLNM, 1982-2000), and Tshukudu, according to Pettman (1931:137), who recorded it as: "Bachukuru (Sech., *chukuru*, pronounced *chukudu*, a rhinoceros)". This place name probably derives from or relates to the form *dju*: from the Sesarwa (S5) language, the speakers formerly residing in the area of Kakia in the south of Bechuanaland (now Botswana), sharing cultural and linguistic exchange of terminology over millenia with the Tswana and Northern Sotho speakers. This name probably also relates to the form *t'uabba* (Nienaber 1963:427-428).

Although the names for the white and the black rhino are sometimes interchanged in other African languages, e.g. *tshukudu* is used in Tswana and (Northern) Sotho for both the black and the white rhino. With other distinctive names for the white rhino being *mogohu* and *kgetlwa*; in Venda, it is called *tshugulu*; in Ndebele *umhofu* (Walker 1996:128-130). The black rhino is called by the 'same sounding' name *sukulu* in Lozi, in Yei *unshunguzu*, and so on, whereas the black rhino is called *ubhejane* in Zulu and Ndebele (Walker 1996:128). These similar sounding names in the African languages, resounding in Bushman languages for names of both the black and the white rhino, are clearly more related to these forms.

The other variant name used for the white rhino is *mogoe koep* in Khoikhoi, and recorded as *mogohu* in Tswana and Northern Sotho (Roberts 1954:241). This variant name *mogohu* compares exactly with the *mogoe koep* recorded by Borchers

(1801:70) quoted in Nienaber (1963:428), and as cursorily explained as a possible description of its ‘near sightedness.’ This proposed etymology of the name, is indeed acceptable when acknowledging that its root onymic formatives were derived from Bushman words such as the following, e.g. from the verb ‘to see’ as *mu*: synonymous to *moe* from Naron (C2), *moo* from Hie (C1) (Bleek 1956:139). The word *mu* or *moe*, in its broader sense also referring to ‘sight’, ‘eyesight’, ‘visible’ (Bleek 1956:768); relates to the concept of ‘seeing, to recognise’ and was recorded as *mu≠en* (Bleek 1929:72). The word for ‘near’, ‘to be near’, and the concept of ‘nearby’ or ‘close by’, was given i.a. as *!guu*, */ku* in Hie (C1); */ku*: in Naron (C2) (Bleek 1929:60), that may compare with *dju*: for ‘rhino’ from the Sesarwa (S5) language (Bleek 1956:26,710). This encompasses the idea or description of ‘near-sightedness’, already comprising the first component *mogoe* in the common name; and with the component *koep* possibly related to or derived from *kupana*, *kupane* from Hadza (C3), giving it as the concept ‘to be near’, ‘approach’ (Bleek 1956:107, 737). This is then phonologically similar or comparable to the *koep* of *mogoe koep* of the Borchers’ 1801 recordings. These words and descriptions of the ‘eye’, ‘to see’, ‘visible’, ‘to be near or nearby’, all confirming the interpretation of the rhino as the ‘near-sighted one.’

The whole name, initially commented on by Nienaber (1963:428) as being difficult to explain and standing totally isolated from the Nama, could be traced to the original Bushman root words, and via exploration of the names for the rhino in the Tswana and Northern Sotho languages, were revealed by correlating cognate words to the phonological and semantic levels of these names, thus tracing it to its likely onymic formatives. It was retraceable from words and phrases in the Bushman languages referring to words, etymologies of words, expressions, and so forth, relating to ‘eyes’, ‘to see’, and the concept of ‘nearby’, and by concluding to the derivation of ‘near sightedness.’ This, all-in-all, confirms the interpretation of *mogoe koep* as a descriptive name for the near-sighted rhino, previously seen as unexplainable.



Figure 4.1 (b) Rhino hunt, rock painting on farm Nauzerus, Namibia [A. Viereck]

## 4.2 The family Hippopotamidae, *H. amphibius*

The hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*), with its strong territorial dominance drive, is quite vociferous, especially when marking its territory of available grazing and selected pools of water. The dominant bull is prone to aggressively defend its pools and its pod. The indigenous names of many places recall this mighty mammal. Its names in the African languages as indicated by Walker (1996:140-141) are i.a.: *mvubu*, *mvuvu* in the Nguni languages; in Ndebele *imvubu*; Shangaan and Tsonga *mpfubu*; Venda *mvuvu*, Shona *mvuu*, Lozi, Tswana and Northern Sotho *kubu*; in the Yei language as *umvuva*. All these names appear to be pronunciation and spelling variants of the same sound-associative Bushman designations *nguvu* and *kubu*.

In the Bushman languages the designations for the hippo as recorded by Bleek (1929:47) are among others *nguvu* from !O!kun (N3) and *kubu* in the Hie (C1) language. This is clearly an early form of sound imitation of the loud snorting, low grunting or humming sound they make while in the waterpools. Estes (2012:224) recorded: “The resonant honking call made by submerged hippos is one of the most familiar and impressive African wildlife sounds (but on land hippos are notably silent)”...“The way hippos use their exhaled breath to express threat and alarm is described...as accompanied by water-scooping and head-shaking” with “lunging, roaring and grunting”. Clive Walker (1996:140) mentions the “loud bellows [that] erupt when fighting”, and gives a description of how this heavy animal can lunge forward in attack mode. This was clearly observed by the early namers, the Stone Age hunter-gatherer Bushmen, and imitated in the common names, such as *nguvu* and *kubu* adapted and probably transferred to the other African languages.



Figure 4.2 (a) Hippopotamus in pool [Daniel Otte]



Many place names refer to the hippo's sound-associative designations, names such as Levubu, Luvhuvhu, Mzimvubu and the Umzimvubu River as 'home of the hippopotamus' (Raper *et al* 2014:355). Many appear in translated form, such as Zeekoeivlei, Zeekoeihoek, Zeekoeigat. These recall the wide-spread occurrence of the hippo in major rivers and pools, lakes and marshes, from the Cape right to the Kgalakadi wetland and its swamps.

The toponym Bakubung refers to a game farm and bush lodge in the North West Province; it is also the totem name of the Bakubung, recalling the people's clan name as 'people of the hippopotamus', derived from their totem animal.

The origin of the river name, the Luvuvhu in Limpopo in the Vhembe district, is *inter alia* explained as 'there used to be many hippopotami in the river'. It is said to stem from Venda and is a correction of the spelling from Levubu, adapted from Bushman *nguvu* and *kubu* the reference to the hippo.

Okozongutu is the name of a farm in the Okavango district and was explained by (Albertyn 1984:66) as "*Dit is 'n plek waar seekoeie (Hippotamus amphibius) in vroeër jare voorgekom het*", meaning "place where many hippos occurred in former times". The component *Oko-* is the Herero locative or class marker, *zo* is the Herero plural marker, and the component *ngutu* is cognate with the !O!kunj word *nguvu* for 'hippopotamus' (Bleek 1929:47).



Figure 4.2 (b) Rival male hippos displaying tusks [Daniel Otte]



### 4.3 The African elephant

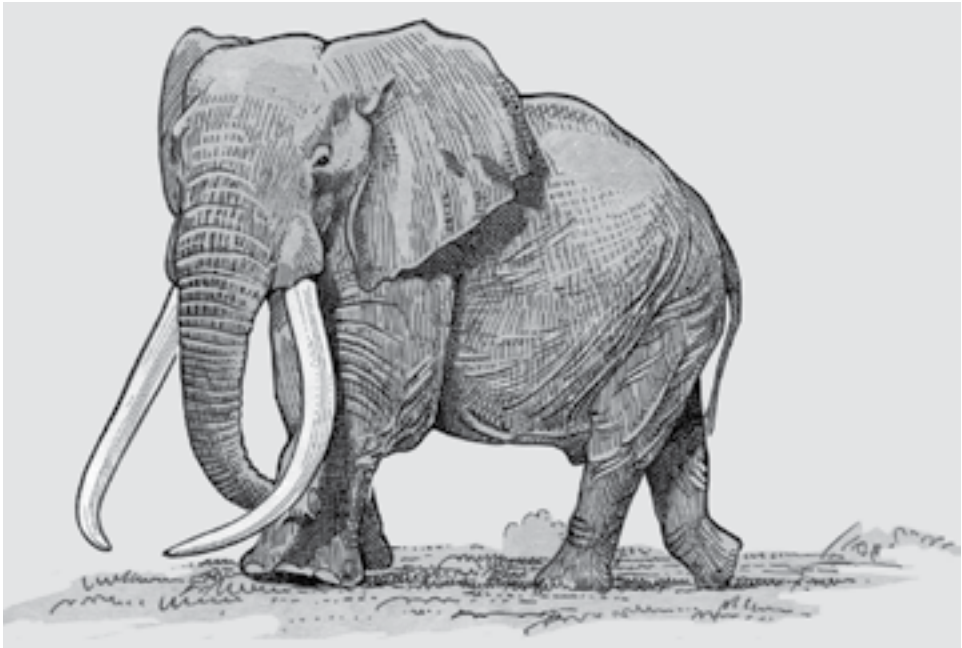


Figure 4.3 Elephant Bull [Daniel Otte]

The African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) belongs to the non-ruminant mammals, Order of Proboscidea, family Elephantidae (Estes 2012: viii, 259). It has been variously named by the Bushman, Khoikhoi and other African language speakers. Numerous places where this great pachyderm roamed in former times, bear witness to its impressive presence. The different names for the elephant are found as onymic formatives in Afrikaans, English and all African languages. The many toponyms reflect its former well-represented distribution over a widely diversified area all over Africa in habitats from the dense bush to the desert regions: Elephantenberg (the Elephant Mountain), the Elephantenfluss (Elephant River) and Elephantenpad (Elephants' Path) all in Namibia (Möller 1986:255); with Raper *et al* (2014:391) listing Olifantkliphooft, Olifantsdrif, Olifantshoek, Olifantsvlei, and so forth. At least five rivers in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the Western Cape bear the name Olifantsrivier, while names such as Gingindlovu, UMgungundlovu and Endlovana appear in KwaZulu-Natal. Pettman's recording (1931:137) of Indlovukazi, the female elephant, epitomises the queen, or queen mother, seen as metaphor for the

highest position after the king. Many other toponyms referring to elephants, either as adaptations or translations, will emerge from the discussion below.

The oldest versions of Khoi-San names as found in Nienaber (1963:405-406) are *caho* (De Flacourt 1655), and variants *choa*, *xhoa*, *t'koaab*, *twoba*, and from Schrijver in 1689 (in Mossop 1931, VRV 12: 225) who reported "... we came to a river called *Thuata*, ... that is the Oliphants Revier ...". These versions of the name for this large mammal, gleaned and translated from early Cape dialects (most of them already intermingled Khoi-San languages), were probably adopted and adapted from Bushman as documented by Bleek (1956:714), from such words as *be//k"au*; and *≠k"wana*, */xwa* from the //N!ke (S2) language, *chaauw*, */xwa*, *xchua*, *tfowa*, from the Hie (C1), and so on. The phonological similarity in the vowels is obvious, only the initial or introductory clicks or consonants, and accompanying phonemic clusters differing, i.e. *choa*, *xhoa*, *t'koa* and *twoa* cognate with *tua* as in the toponym Tuhata, and the form *tfowa*, thus, *bek"aa* > *(be)chaauw* < */xwa* > *xchua* > */xwa* as in Kwacoo (Nienaber & Raper 1977:1026) are all cognate forms.

Nienaber and Raper (1980:45) listed further recorded toponyms like Choantsas, Goabis and Hoantabis in Namibia, all referring to the occurrence of large herds of desert elephants there.

The name of the elephant appears in the Bantu languages i.a. as follows: in Zulu as *indlovu*; in Xhosa as *ndhlovu*; in Shangaan and Tsonga as *ndlopfu*; in Tswana and Sotho as *tlou*; Venda as *ndou*; in Ndebele as *ndhlovu* and *nkubu*; in Shona as *nzou*, *zhou*; in Lozi as *tou*, and in the Yei language as *unjovo* (Walker 1996:114).

A typical reactive behaviour pattern of the elephant to trample on and crush anything that is perceived as threatening, may be found in the common names for the elephant in the Bantu languages. In Zulu for instance, the verb *dlovoza* means 'to trample on, tread on, crush under foot' (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:511, 160), and this may relate to the Zulu name for it as *indlovu*, the noun *-dlovu* a derivation from the Ur-Bantu *-yoyû* for 'elephant', and as such also adapted into the other languages. The other verb for 'trample', *dlova*, also indicated as *dlovo*, and its idiomatic applications in the sense of a rough, savage person or animal, that, with its reduplicated form, *dlóvo-dlóvo*, indicates the action of 'trampling underfoot', also seems very close to the Yei *unjovu* and the Lozi *tou* as well as the Tswana *tlou*, which appear as diphthongs without the intervowel consonantal divider, *v*.

The elephant's name, throughout the various Bantu languages, continues to be indicated with the *ou* phoneme as in *ou*, *ovu*, *opfu*, and so forth, with the initial clicks softened or adapted to the voiceless dental *t* or with a glider *tl* in some cases, and variations written with voiced and nasalised *nd*, *ntl*, and the sibilant phonemic constructs of *nz*, *zh* and *j*. Whether this relates to a sound-associative naming pattern, or recalls or emulates its behaviour or high trumpeting call, is not so clear, though. On the phonological level it appears viable, as the name may be an imitation of the sound replicated in the nasalisation of *d* as *nd*, accompanied with long-drawn diphthongs *ou*, *oa* and *au* in the names. The elephant's trumpeting is called *khonya* in Zulu (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:516), this intransitive verb describing it as the “*khonya*, (*okwendlovu*)”, the ‘trumpeting of the elephant’.

The Batloung of the Tswana, called the “Elephant singers” associated with this animal's totem name, *tlou*, reduplicating it in their heralding or clarion call as: ‘*tlou tlou*’ (Dierks 1960). This clearly has the same conceptualisation of the animal as the ‘trumpeter’. Alternatively, the vision of ‘the trampler, the crusher of enemies’, is also viable, following the same reduplicated form of the name as in the Ur-Bantu and Zulu references to this behaviour pattern of the elephant. It does appear to be cognate to some of the Bushman forms with the *oa* and *ou* variations of the name for the elephant, e.g. *!koah*, *koa*, *tfowa* in Hie (C1); */xwa* in Naron (S2) and *be//k”au* in Hadza (C3) (Bleek 1929:36; 1956:17, 714), adapted, but retaining the lateral // as *thl*, *tl* in *tlou*.

Other names for the elephant in Nama and Damara are *≠khoab* and *≠korab* (Walker 1996:114), that relate to the name forms like those recorded by Bleek (1929:36) from the Bushman languages as *≠xoä* from */Xam* (S1); */xwa* from *//N!ke* (S2); *tfowa* from Hie (C1); *≠koäba* from Naron (C2); *≠ko:* from Kung (N2), and the variants *≠koa*, *!koah*, *≠kxoa* and *koa* (Bleek 1956:663). The cognate words of *≠koa* are retraceable in the first component of the Namibian place name *≠Khoan!kub*, translated from the khoikhoinised form into Dutch as *Olifantskloof*, German as *Elephantenkluft* (‘elephants’ pass’). The forms *≠xoä*, *≠koäba* possibly emulating its trumpeting distress calls and screams more closely, indicated with the extended ä or a high tone as replicated in some of the common names. This name could therefore have originated from an emulation of the elephant's loud trumpeting calls. Older versions of the above Bushman names indicated as *be//k”au*; and *≠k”wana* by Bleek (1956:714) (which may have been used as a totem name by the Bechuanas as well), and *!nōārāka* as in *Olifantsvley* (*!nōārāka*, cognate with *khora-b*, and *!kwa* with the

above *!koah* in Bleek, and the *≠khoab* and *≠korab* as recorded by Walker), are all indicators of the interrelatedness of the languages in southern Africa, and the names they allocated to this great mammal.

It is not certain how the first pronunciation of these onomatopoeic names for this animal actually sounded, and it may be speculation, but it is possible that it was named for what it is best known: its behaviour pattern to trample and crush, as well as its loud trumpeting call when alarmed or threatened. Neil Murray (quoted in Walker 1996:116) reports that: “The elephant often charges to the accompaniment of a blast of high-pitched trumpeting – caused by forcibly expelling air from its trunk – which sounds like an orchestra of outraged demons...”.

In the Herero toponym Otjozondjou (Raper *et al* 2014:399), the last component recalls one of the most well-known forms of this pachyderm’s names, variously adapted as *ndau*, *ndou*, *djou* into the Herero and Ovambo languages, reflecting the same adaptation patterns as in the other Bantu languages, e.g. Zulu, Tswana, and so on, as discussed above. This name of the fountain refers to the gathering of elephants at the large waterholes as indicated by Albertyn (1984:13), who recorded it as Otjosundjou. Elephantfontein equally received its name for the many elephants and wild game in the area around the Etosha Pan which was the meeting-place of big-game hunters and the Dorslandtrekkers who passed that way on their trek into Namibia and through to Angola (Stassen 2014:343-344).

In KwaZulu-Natal also, many place names occur with references to the elephant, e.g. as the names of the king’s residences, villages and other places of importance. Gingindlovu near Eshowe in the Mtunzini district, for example, means ‘place of the big elephant’ or possibly the ‘swallower of the elephant’, “first applied to one of Cetshwayo’s military kraals nearby”, and refers to “Cetshwayo’s victory over his brother Mbulazi in 1856” (Raper *et al* 2014:153).

The toponym UMgungundlovu in KwaZulu-Natal, the name of Dingane’s capital in Zululand, is also an alternative Zulu name for Pietermaritzburg. It is said to mean ‘place of rumbling of the elephant’, referring to Dingane who, after killing Shaka, adopted the title of ‘The Elephant’ which Shaka had borne (Raper *et al* 2014:515). Endlovana with the meaning as ‘place of the small elephant’, is another such onymic creation in KwaZulu-Natal.

That the toponyms with references to the elephant, formed from basically the same root words or cognates in Bushman and Khoihoi, as well as numerous African languages, deriving from Ur-Bantu forms, demonstrate how unmistakably this animal was observed. Its names may not necessarily illustrate a sound related formative, but the emulation of the long drawn-out, low rumbling sound that the elephants make to communicate with others over great distances, or its loud trumpeting call, or its behaviour of being the trampler, the crusher of enemies, may have been the onymic formatives in its naming.

#### 4.4 The swine family, Suidae and other porcine mammals

The wild swine or porcine ('pig-like') animals, for example the bushpigs and warthogs, and others such as the antbears, called 'aardvark' or 'erdvark' in Afrikaans (although in a class of their own, order Tubulidentata, sp. *Orycteropus afer*), as well as the pangolin, *Manis temminckii* ('ietermagog' in Afrikaans), the porcupine, *Hystrix africae-australis* (called 'ystervark' in Afrikaans), and the hedgehogs, *Atelerix frontalis* ('krimpvarkies' in Afrikaans), are discussed here in one section. This is done due to the fact that they have all been incongruously named in Afrikaans as some sort of pig in composites with 'vark' such as: 'aardvark', 'erdvark', 'bosvark', 'krimpvark', 'vlakvark', and so on, but aptly named so according to some peculiar appearance, habit or behaviour. In other languages other naming motives and onymic formatives may have played a role, e.g. their vocalisations, their typical feisty nature, or some other characteristic.

##### 4.4.1 The antbear

The names for the nocturnal termite forager, the antbear ('aardvark, erdvark' in Afrikaans), were recorded by Bleek (1929:16, 69) from words in the Bushman languages as i.a. *si k'ai* from /Auni (S4); *si'kai, si'ai* from the Ki/hazi (S4b) language (Bleek 1956:169, 693); from /Nu //en (S6) as *ˀ//k'wa:* and *//go:de;* from Hie (C1) as *go* and *//xamee;* from Naron (C2) as *!go:ba;* and *ˀ/gāi, \_gari* in Auen (N1); and as */xeru* in Kung (N2). It has also been documented as *hoa* from the Kung (N2) language by Bleek (1956:65).



Figure 4.4.1 Aardvark [drawing by PJ Smit in Roberts]

Nienaber (1963:204) documented for Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects from the various earliest sources the common names for this animal as *kèhou* (Witsen 1691:223); *k~ihou* (Kolbe 1708:431) and *^goup* (Valentyn 1705: 107b), also *!kxuwu-b*, *//koom*, and in Nama it was recorded as */kuwub*, *das Erdschwein*”, according to Rust (1960:18; Kroenlein-Rust 1969:254). Wandres (1918: 30) and Schultz (1907:594), both quoted in Nienaber (1963:204), give it as *kχuwu-b* and *kχubu-s*; from Korana, Engelbrecht (1936:35) gives “*!goχoma-b*, *miere-eter*, *het ’n lang stert*” (‘ant-eater, has a long tail’). On his visit in 1815-1816 Latrobe (1818:310) refers to it as an ‘earth-hog’, giving a clear description of it as a “singular creature...about as large as a common pig”, and writes about its ant-eating and extensive hole digging habits.

Toponyms that refer to the antbear’s name as recorded above are numerous, e.g. Koeboegas that was translated as Aardvarkvlakte (Nienaber & Raper 1980:43-48, 533), and initially explained as meaning “valley or plains of many antbear or aardvark”. The origin seems to lie in the root word */khubu* or */khuwu-b* recorded in Nama for ‘antbear’ and as explained above. The component *≠ga-s* actually refers to the ‘plains’ or ‘valley’, thus indeed the ‘Antbear Valley’ or ‘Aardvark Plains’. Certain ants are called “*guwirub*, Ameisen” as recorded by Rust (1960:3), and this may relate to the name that Bleek (1929:16) documented for ‘small ants’ from Hottentot (Khoikhoi, Nama), namely *≠guwiraxa*, although they have many other names in the different Bushman languages according to the type and whether they were edible (termites) or were flying ants (also termites), black or red, and so forth. Perhaps this *≠guwiraxa* acted as the onymic formative and is the etymological cognate to the recorded names, e.g. *!kuwu-b*, */kuwub* and other Nama forms like */ububub*.

Obobogorab is the name of a farm 200 km north of Upington, named after the antbear and means ‘place where the antbear digs for water, a ‘gorra’ is a waterhole’ (“*plek waar die erdvark water grawe, gorra = watergat*” as explained by HC Botha, interviewed in 1973 and quoted in Nienaber and Raper (1977:953)). A ‘*graafwatergat*’, or ‘gorra’ is a specific waterhole dug by either animals or humans in dry riverbeds to obtain water. The name ‘obobo’ has been explained as being sound-imitative of the grunting sounds made by pigs, in general, while foraging (explanation given by FK Krenz 1974, quoted in Nienaber and Raper 1977:954). This animal, as Krenz indicates, is known as either /ubub, or /ububub; but also as /obobo, which he then elucidates as an onomatopoeic rendering of the name.

The antbear’s or *aardvark*’s name in Zulu is indicated by Doke and Vilakazi (2005:15) as *isambane* and *isimbamgodi*. In other Nguni, as well as Sotho languages, for example in Swazi, Ndebele and also in Shona, it is indicated as *sambane* or *isambane*; in Shangaan, slightly different with the initial fricative *x* as *xombana*; in Venda it is *thagalu*; in Tswana and Northern Sotho it is called *thakadu*; in Lozi *takalo*; in the Yei language it is *ungengu*; and in Nama and Damara it is /*khuwub* (Walker 1996:112). A strikingly similar name to the Nguni names is the Herero designation recorded by Göllnitz (1942:40) as “*Erdferkel: ondjimbandjimba*”, revealing the same root onymic formative as in the Nguni names, *mba* ‘to dig’, but here in reduplicated form, meant either as plural indicator or emphatic form. However, *Erdferkel* would translate as “*aardvark(ie)*”, i.e. a small antbear.

The name for the antbear as *˜//kʷa*: documented by Bleek (1929:69) from the //N!ke (S2) language, appears to have in its onymic formation, cognate or comparable elements with the verbs //*xa*:, //*ka*:, //*kale*, and //*ka:laa* in Sesarwa (S5); *kaba* in Seroa (S2d); *tsaho*, *tswakho* from Hie (C1) *tsapale* from Hadza (C3), all with the meaning ‘to dig’, and these appear to be adapted from or into the Bantu names as *thagalu*, *thakadu* and *takalo* above. In the same vein, the component *-mba* as in *is(i)sa-mbane*, *xo-mba-na* of the Nguni and Sotho names, where the component *mba* is said to mean ‘to dig’, the etymology of the antbear’s name is confirmed. The same applies to the Nama and Damara words for the antbear, where the /*khu* of /*khuwub* is cognate to Bushman *˜gu* from Auen (N1) (Bleek 1956:49, 710) which also means ‘to dig’, thus producing the name of the antbear as ‘the one who digs’: /*khuwu-b* (the *-b* a masculine singular ending or suffix).

The reduplicative syllables in the Nama, Damara, Bushman, as well as in some of the Bantu language equivalents of the antbear’s name, were sometimes reflected



differently in the explanations given, and implied that they could be indicative of its vocalisations. For instance, its grunting sounds, or from its habit of digging holes into the termitaria to feed on the termites or to use the holes as refuge and lairs. Its compound name *isimbamgodi* is in fact indicative of its actions to dig holes, i.e. a reference to ‘the one who digs (and lives) in the hole’, i.e. from the Zulu word *i(si)* (a class 7 prefix) + *mba* ‘dig’ + *um-godi* a ‘hole’; and indeed this last component of the name *-godi* is cognate with the Bushman word for the antbear. This has been recorded as *//go:de* from the /Nu//en (S6) language, as well as *goirri* for ‘hole’ in Bushman, that was used as a synonymous word in the name for this animal. Comley and Meyer (1997:62) describe in detail how the antbear can dig more than one hole a night: “Aardvark are responsible for the majority of the larger burrows found in the bush and, in the soft sands of the Kalahari, can dig a different hole each night. They often have two or three holes under construction at the same time. Their burrows provide refuge for warthog which may only inhabit areas where these burrows are present”.

Beervlei in the Western Cape, 20 km north of Willowmore is discussed in Raper (*et al* 2014:29; Raper 2014:41) as a translated Afrikaans name of Seahre Valley. This Seahre is interpreted as relating to the same Bushman renderings of *si k'ai*, *si'ai* from the Ki/hazi (S4b) language (Bleek 1956:693); with */ore*, */hore* from /Xam (S1), a generic referring to the ‘vley’ or ‘valley’. The name for the antbear was recorded in the *Vocabulary* of (Bleek 1929:16) as *si'kei*, and various other names for it like */xeru* as listed above for the ‘aardvark’; the full form *si'aihore* was later elided to *seahre*. Beervlei is also known as a translation from the Bushman name Udigauga, and as such to be read as ‘antbear *vlei*’. This name may be further elucidated as possibly incorporating the idea of its prey. Other references to certain types of ants as */?un*, */uni/uni* and */nu/uni* (Bleek 1929:16; 1956:693), may well relate to the first component in this toponym Udi-gauga, with *uni* and *udi* seen as close cognates, and taking cognisance of the usual *n* and *d* variation of nasalised alveolar consonants; then *udigau-* may be seen as the ‘ant-eater’ or ‘antbear’. As first component in the toponym it has been adapted from, and is cognate to the name of the ants; with the second component *gau-* then conceivably similar with *go* from Hie (C1), *!goba* (C2); with *//go:de* as recorded from the /Nu//en (S6) language for ‘antbear’, (which again, could be related to the component *-godi* of the Zulu name for the antbear or *isimbamgodi*, as the ‘one who digs a hole’, ‘the one in the hole’).



On the other hand, Udigauga may have been named after the ‘anteater’, specifically the ‘scaly anteater’ or pangolin that is known by the names *go*, *gu*, and //hau (Bleek 1956:693), and then perhaps described to the interviewers as a somewhat similar animal. The comparison to another ‘ant-eating-bear’, though much smaller and not exactly comparable in appearance to the real antbear, rather, one with ‘armour-plates’. Unless it was derived from the name for the porcupine, in which case the names would be equally fitting, e.g. !xō, //gau, //gau:xo, //gau:xu from /Xam (S1) (recorded by Lucy Lloyd, documented in Bleek 1956:529, 744), thus phonologically even closer. The last component, –ga, of the toponym functions as the generic for the topographic feature described as a ‘depression’, ‘marsh’ or ‘vlei’.

#### 4.4.2 *The scaly anteater or pangolin*

The scaly anteater or pangolin (perhaps the earlier described ‘mieren-vreter’, *Manis temminckii* of the family Manidae, though each one of these ant-eating mammals is a highly specialised forager of different types of ants), is otherwise known in Afrikaans as the ‘*ietermagog*’, and has been recorded by Bleek (1929:16) as //hau, hui from the Kung (N2), /kyi from //N!ke (S2); \_//kom from /Auni (S4); //xamee from Hie (C1), and as !nobeba from the Naron (C2) language. According to Walker (1996:32) in Ndebele it is called *inkakha*, in Shona *haka* and *hambakubvu*, in Sotho and Tswana *kgaga*, though Boshoff and Nienaber (1967:297) indicated an earlier variant spelling as *khâakâ* from Tswana. In Venda it is given as *khwara*, in Shangaan it is called *shikwaru*, in Swazi it is *finyete* and in Lozi, *nake*, in Yei it is *ukaka*, and in Nama and Damara it is known as the //khommi. In the last component of the Shona name, we find an echo in the sound of the Damara and Nama names for the antbear, namely as /khubu and /khuwu.

The Afrikaans name *ietermagog* for this scaly antbear or anteater opens various possibilities of interpretation and etymologising. Boshoff and Nienaber (1967:297) see the components of the Afrikaans adaptation as ‘*iete-* naas *ete-/ette*’ in the first component, and –*magô* or *magog/-magol/-magou(g)*’, an animal name referring to the scaly anteater. This component *iete-* may appear to be sound-associatively linked or parallel to some eastern Bantu names such as the Swazi *finyete*, perhaps even to the above //N!ke /kyi. The second component could be read as a cognate to words as recorded by Bleek (1956:744) for anteater as !xo, //gauxo and its variants, with the *o* and *u* vowel variations demonstrated here. The *a* and *o* of *mago*, possibly derived from an *au* phonemic cluster pattern, or as explicitly apparent in the

variant form of //gaxox; (as has been seen with the lemma ‘ystervark I’, discussed in Nienaber (1963:538-539), giving from Witsen (1691:216) *ghoukou*, from Valentyn (1705:107b) “*ghoekoe, een egel, yzer verken*”, and from Kolbe (1708:431) *ghouk~ou*, which Nienaber equates to the Nama “/kuwu-b, *das Erdschwein*”. It was, however, named by both Valentyn and Kolbe as “*een egel*” (as in German, the ‘*Igel*’ would refer to a ‘hedgehog’, ‘*krimpvarkie*’ in Afrikaans, and not a scaly anteater or a porcupine).

Alternatively, the name in Bushman languages as *go, gu* and //hau in /Xam (S1), may be seen as a common name derived from the same root words or components, used widely across Khoikhoi and other African languages, and that in its etymological development and adapted forms, may be seen as either loaned or adapted or both, and applied across languages as a name for this animal. Although this animal had a wide distribution and occurred all over the southern African regions, it was seldom seen during daylight and therefore not often reported on in early records, according to Skead (1987:323). Yet, he mentions two significant reports, one by ffolliott and Liversidge (1971:60) quoting “Ludwig Krebs, a German collector for the Berlin Museum, on what surely must have been a pangolin. This was about in 1825 and possibly in the Tarkastad or Queenstown area: “They [i.e. the Tambookies] further described to me a scaly animal like a tortoise of which I confirmed the existence later’... if the assumption that the animal was somewhere near Tarkastad or Queenstown is correct, this is the most southerly record found for the species”. Furthermore, EL Layard’s report from 1861 read: “The Scaly Anteater is not now found in the Colony, and it appears to be rarely met with, even beyond it.” This anteater was well-known to the indigenous people, but also almost hunted to extinction, just as the antbear or *aardvark*. Its name, however, as coined in all the Bushman, Khoikhoi and African languages was fairly well-documented and preserved in place names as well.

It appears, in all probability, then, to be an adaptation of the Bantu or Tswana forms, e.g. from Tswana *khāakā* (the earliest documented form by Burchell 1811-12), and as ‘*Izermagouw*’ by Kirby in 1896 both as quoted in Boshoff and Nienaber (1967:297). Under a discussion of its appearance with its scaly armour giving the appearance of a tortoise, Boshoff and Nienaber continue their etymological reasoning along the lines of its appearance and eating habits: “*sy pantser laat aan ’n skilpad dink*” (cf. Krebs’s description above in Skead 1987), and its habit of rolling itself up into a ball as an armadillo does; and its behaviour as reminiscent of the *aardvark*, the ‘*mieren vreter*’, and so on, in its habit of breaking up an anthill or anthole, like a *ratel*

(the ‘*magogwe*’ in Tswana), breaking up the bees’ honeycomb. These behavioural actions may all have played an onymic role in its unusual name.

It is not clear whether the *-ma-* in the second component is the plural marker of the Bantu languages, or merely a connecting phoneme, a ‘link’ between *iete-(r)* and *-gog* or *-gouw* or *-gauw*. There may even be some pointers or clues in the origin of its name, i.e. to its prey, e.g. to the Tswana word for ‘a kind of wingless insect’, as being called *lechocho*, singular, *machocho* plural. This, in all probability, a reference to the harvester termites or the black ants that it prefers to eat. Perhaps its name was derived from the words for these insects, note Boshoff and Nienaber (1967:263) under *gogga*: “*soms goggô / verklein tot (diminutive) gog / go*”. Their etymology given as a general description for insects and “*klein (veral grieselige) ongediertetjies*”, i.e. any kind of ‘small critterlike creatures’. They explain it as stemming from Nama quoted from Kroenlein (1889:49-50), as  $\chi o-\chi o-n$ , both the reduplication and the final plural *-n* indicating the collective form. Kroenlein continues to explain the root of this word as deriving from the noun  $\chi o-b$ , i.e. the cheek or side of the face, and  $\chi o\chi a$  as a rounded cheek (in this image one can visualise the big round eyes and round cheeks of locusts clearly in the description; some crickets also have this rounded face). The  $\chi o-\chi o-n$  is indicated as a collective for all small creeping or slithering creatures, it even refers to a ‘*Spuk*’ or spook. Bleek (1956:124, 675, 727) recorded words from the Auen language (N1) for some unidentified ‘insects’ as *k”oεa*: and locusts as *≠’o’ε* from /Nu//en (S6); and termites or ants as indicated above, that may be similar to this form.

Place names that refer to this type of anteaters are, i.a. *Ietermagô* and *Khwaru*, both situated in the Limpopo province. *Ietermagô* is a locality and borehole 14 km north of Mahlangeni in the Kruger National Park. The name is derived from the Afrikaans *ietermago* also spelt *ietermagog*, a “name for a pangolin or scaly anteater” (Raper *et al* 2014:195).

*Khwaru* is a tributary of the Malopenispruit, flowing through the Kruger National Park, their confluence being 11 km north-north-east of Phalaborwa. The name is also encountered as *Kwaru*, and is derived from the Tsonga word *khwaru* that refers to the pangolin or scaly anteater. The component *khwa* approximates the //N!ke (S2) word //k:wā and probably the Kung (N2) word *hoa* for ‘antbear’ as well (Raper *et al* 2014:235).

#### 4.4.3 The bushpig

For a bushpig (*Potamochoerus porcus*) known as the ‘bosvark’ in Afrikaans, common names recorded by Walker (1996:136) include from Xhosa and Zulu *ngulube*; in Shangaan it is *khumba*, *ngulube m’hlati*, i.e. ‘pig of the bush, forest or trees’. In Sotho it is *kolobe*, *sodi*, *ya-thab kholobe*, i.e. ‘in/of-the-bush, pig’; in Tswana it is *kolobe ya naga*; in Shona *humba*, *nguruve*; and in Lozi *ngili*; in Yei *unkutula*, Nama and Damara, *!garohāgub* (the *hāgub* referring to the ‘pig’).



Figure 4.4.3 (a) Bushpig [drawing by PJ Smit in Roberts]

Place names that may have a connection to this notoriously aggressive pig, include in translated form, the Afrikaans *Bosvark*, the name of a farm and a small settlement in the Limpopo province near Messina (PLAC Database-NP-PLNM 1982-2000). The names with variations of the form *kumba/ khumba* are found i.a. as *Kumba*, a stream in the Letaba area of the Limpopo province; as *Khumba*, a stream on the South Africa-Mozambique border at Phalaborwa. Another *Khumba*, is the name of a private game reserve and lodge in the Limpopo province; the same root word appears in *Khumbambinai* in the Kruger National Park in the Mpumalanga province, also the name of an intermittent stream and locality, near Phalaborwa; as *Khumbekop*, a hillock in the Soutpansberg area in Limpopo, and as *Khumbu*, a hill in the Sibasa area on the Limpopo-Mpumalanga border (PLAC Database-NP-PLNM 1982-2000).

All of these names apparently derive from the Shangaan and Shona names *khumba* and *humba*, and probably originate from words such as those given for ‘pig’ in

general, as emerged from some examples of designations with these component words as etymological root words. As some names are not clearly explained according to their etymologies, and some may have been confusingly applied to either the bushpig or the warthog, a few are grouped together here.

Ka-Tinguva, a name of a stream in the Phalaborwa region, approximately 22 km north of Phalaborwa, may refer to either the bushpigs or the warthogs (*Phacochoerus aethiopicus*) that occur widely in the area. This place name stems from the Tsonga language, where the component *t-inguva* may relate, or be a close cognate to the Shona *nguruve* (as well as to other variants *ngulube*, *nguluve*), and so forth.

Yet, in some languages the warthog, is also simply called 'pig' or *nguluve*, compare Tinguluveni in Limpopo, a tributary of the Malopenyana, which it enters 13 km north of Letaba. The name was explained as meaning 'place of warthogs' (Afrikaans *vlakvark*), derived from Tsonga *nguluve*, 'warthog', cognate with the !O!kun (N3) *ngulu*, the Hie (C1) *kolole* and *kolobe* (with o and u variation appearing in the adaptation), and the Zulu *ingulube*, 'pig' (Raper *et al* 2014:498).

In the Bushman languages the wild pig or 'boar', for instance, was named */kwa* in the Auen (N1) language according to Bleek (1956:328); a warthog was called *!gari* in the same language (Bleek 1956:77), although it also carried many other names.

For the pig in general, the common names that Bleek (1929:65) recorded were *˜/ho* from the !Xam (S1) language; *ngulu* in the Auen (N3) and !O!kun (N3) languages, and *kolole* in the Hie (C1) language. These names, and variations thereof in spelling and composition, are reflected in the Bantu languages as well, such as the Nguni, also in Tswana and Northern Sotho as indicated above. In Zulu and Xhosa, all pigs, whether wild or domesticated, are called *ingulube*; in Northern Sotho and Tswana they are called *kolobe*, and possibly deriving from an Ur-Bantu root word, or the older forms in the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages.

The reference to the river or watercourse named *Bakolobeng*, was used several times in the reports and diaries of Robert Moffat and David Livingstone to refer to a large settlement of the *Bakolobeng* people in the far Northern Cape (Schapera 1974:3, 49, 168-171). Today it designates a post office 32 km north of Delareyville in the Northwest province. The name, meaning 'place of the Kolobe people', is derived from the Tswana language (SAGNC 2012) and refers to the totem of the tribe, the 'wild pig'. The Tswana word *kolobe* was derived from the Hie (C1) word for pig,

*kolole*, *kolobe* (note the *l* and *b* variation in the names), and probably referred to either the wild bushpigs or warthogs. It is also cognate with the !O!kung (N3) word *ngulu* which correlates directly with *ingulube* in Zulu (Möller 2014:135).

In Nama, a pig is called *hagub* (Rust 1960:55); note the component *-gub* (cognate with the names *ngulu*, *gulube*; where the *gu-b* is cognate with *ngu-* and *gu-*, (the components phonologically close enough to be seen as cognate). Thus, *!go:ba*, a Bushman name for the ‘*aardvark*’, too, may be seen as cognate to this root word. The *aardvark* is seen as the one digging or living in the hole, and as found in other African languages, e.g. in Zulu, the name is probably derived from an ancestral, earlier, common verb, as indicated for the examples discussed above and deriving from verbs in Bushman for ‘to dig’. Therefore, the *-guba*, as this indicates i.a. ‘to dig up’, describes the swine-like animal’s habit of digging into termite mounds, whereas other swine forage by digging roots, bulbs and grubs out of the ground.



Figure 4.4.3 (b) Bushpig grooming [Daniel Otte]

#### 4.4.4 The warthog

The warthog (*Phacochoerus aethiopicus*), already referred to in some earlier examples with the bushpig, is known in Afrikaans as the ‘*vlakvark*’. This derives from its main habitat being the plains or ‘*vlaktes*’, and for its roaming of these plains, and the *vleis*, especially those swampy areas, digging for roots of sedges and reeds, bulbs and grubs, and so forth, although it thrives in all kinds of open areas as well as bush habitat. It is another one of those widely distributed but misnomered types of wild pigs and boars of the bush. Although it has been depicted as the cuddly,

cute *khumba* in the Hollywood make-over of the *Lion King*, it is a feisty fighter even against its arch-enemies, the lion and the leopard.



Figure 4.4.4 Warthog with young [Daniel Otte]

It is keenly recalled in toponyms like Sinxago in the Eastern Cape, a tributary of the Tsitsa River, which it joins 28 km north-north-west of Tsolo. The toponym is derived from the Xhosa word *inxagu*, for the ‘African warthog’. “The Xhosa name *inxagu* is comparable to the Khoikhoi word *'kougou*, recorded in 1780, *!kougou*, *≠kougou*, ‘wild boar’, ‘warthog’, ... cognate with the Kung (N2) word *tsaru*, ‘warthog’ ” (Raper *et al* 2014:464-465).

Many Tswana place names with components referring to the warthog or wild pigs are found in the North West Province, e.g. Kolobagatsi, a hill near Marico; the meaning given as ‘a large pig’. A few places bearing the name Kolobeng are i.a. that of a stream and settlement, also in North West in the Rustenburg area (PLAC Database-NWP-PLNM 1982-2000), and all refer to pigs or the porcine family.

#### 4.4.5 *The porcupine*

The porcupine (*Hystrix africae-australis*) called ‘*ystervark*’ in Afrikaans, appears in the Dutch and Afrikaans form in many toponyms in southern Africa. For example, Ijzervark and Yzervarkpunt now Ystervarkpunt in the Western Cape; also encountered as Ystervarkkop, Ystervarkpan situated in the far northern and western regions of the Cape province, and Ystervarkvlei, a depression in the Northern Cape, 50 km south of Pofadder, most of these probably as translations of indigenous references. Raper *et al* (2014:552-553) explained this last name as ‘porcupine swamp’,



a translation from the Khoikhoi Nougab, from *nou*, *!noa*, ‘porcupine’ and the *-gab*, ≠gab a generic for ‘swamp’, ‘vlei’ or ‘depression’.

The common name for the porcupine has been recorded in various Bushman languages (Bleek 1929:67), such as: *!xo*: from the /Xam (S1); as *!kō* from !O!Kun (N3); *!noi* from Auen (N1) and *!noab* from the Heikum (N2a) language, a synonym of *!noe* (Bleek 1956:479), but also as *ˀ/kwi*: from the //N!ke (S2) language (Bleek 1956:334). In Walker (1996:44) the common name in Damara and Nama is given as *!noab*; in Tswana and Northern Sotho it is *noka*; in Zulu, Shangaan, and Venda it is *nungu*; in Yei *unungu*; in Swazi it is *ngungubane*; and in Lozi it is *sinuku*. Some of these names appear to be phonologically very similar, and considering the *o* and *u* vowel variation, and the *oa*, *oe*, *oi* and *wi* phonemic structures in the Bushman languages, seem to be related to the Bushman root words. At the same time, others in the Bantu and other African languages may have derived from a different origin in Ur-Bantu.

Place names that contain one or more of these common names, or spelling variations thereof, are found in the North West Province and derive from Tswana, such as Manoko. This is the name of a hill near Taung, meaning ‘dwelling place of the porcupine’; and Manokwane, name of a settlement 5 km east of, and of a post office approximately 15 km south-east of Taung, explained as ‘place where porcupine lived’ (PLAC Database-NWP-PLNM 1982-2000). In Raper *et al* (2014:301-302) the origin of this name was further elucidated as follows: “This appears to be an early adaptation from a Bushman name where the word for ‘porcupine’ is recorded as *!noa*, *!noe*, *gue*, *umkwe*, *!ko:a*, and *!kō*, all correlating with *nokwane*, with the *ma-* a Tswana prefix for ‘the place of’ *nokwa*, and *-ne* possibly a demonstrative or generic indicator”. Witsen (1691:220) recorded *ouwāa* for “*een yser varcken; genus porcorum*”, and indicated it as one of the early Cape Khoi-San designations for this animal. Also Le Vaillant (1780-83:366) indicated the recorded form as *V-nou ap* (cognate to the above *!noa*) for the “porcupine; *yzer-varke*” (both quoted in Nienaber 1963:539).

This form may correlate with the forms *gue*, *gwee*, *umkwe* and ≠*nwe* for ‘porcupine’ as documented by Bleek (1956:744) in her comprehensive dictionary. She further documented words for the porcupine from the various Bushman languages, i.a. as *gue*, //gau and //gauxo, //gauxu from /Xam (S1); *!ko:a*, *!noab*, *!noe*, *!noi* from Naron (C2) and *!u:m* from the Auen (N1) language, and many more. The words with *oa*, *oe*, *oi* and *ou* diphthongs may have been the underlying onymic formatives, possibly onomatopoeic in origin, and allocated as designators in the Khoikhoi toponyms



Noatsaus and Nougab as indicated in Nienaber and Raper (1977:79-82; 1980:43-48). These names were discussed under the specific lemmas as originating from Khoikhoi, but may, in fact, in the root words, have originated from Bushman renderings of this animal's names, i.e. Noatsaus from *!ko:a*, *!noab*; Nougab from the *nou*, *!noe* and *!u:m* words. These became, as so many other names and onymic formatives, Khoikhoiised in the toponyms.

Nienaber (1963:538) also gives the various versions of names for the 'ystervark' or porcupine as *ghoukou*, *ghoekoe* and *ghouk~ou* in Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects (compare the forms discussed above), and mentions that the name in Zulu is 'ingungumbane'. Doke and Vilakazi (2005:358) give both *ingungumbane* and *inungu*. These relate to the reference of the porcupine in the Swazi language where it is called *ngungubane*, and the cognate versions of its name in other languages, such as in Zulu, Venda and Shangaan as *nungu*; as *unungu* in Yei and *sinuku* in Lozi, as *noko* in Northern Sotho and Tswana; and in the Nama and Damara languages as *!noab*.

Another place name that refers to the porcupine is Dinokwe in Botswana, a railway siding in the Central district, some 25 km north-east of Mmamabula, 68 km due west of Parr's Halt, and some 4 km north of the Tropic of Capricorn. Raper *et al* (2014:93) write: "Of Tswana origin, the name means 'place of porcupines'...The component *di* is the Tswana plural class prefix; the component *no* is perhaps comparable to the Ki /hazi (S4b) /ò, 'porcupine', the /Xam (S1) *!xo:*, and !O!kun (N3) *!kō*, 'porcupine', Heikum (N2a) and Naron (N2) *!noab*, *!noe*, *!noi*; the component *kwe* cognate with the Kung (N2) *kwe*, 'place.'"

The name Baderukwe in the Limpopo province also refers to the porcupine. It is, according to Raper *et al* (2014:23) the name of a "non-perennial tributary of the Letaba River flowing through the districts of Lulekani and Phalaborwa to enter the main stream 11 km south-south-east of Mahlangeni, in the Kruger National Park. The name is of Tsonga origin, said to mean 'resting-place of porcupines', an explanation said to be appropriate to an alternative name for the stream, Badanungu". Bushman cognates for components of the name include the Hie (C1) word *gwee* and the Sehura (C1a) *umkwe*, 'porcupine', and the Naron (C2) *//gwe* and *//k'we*, 'lie down, sit, stay'.

Nienaber (1963:538-9) documented for the porcupine under the lemma 'ystervark II' from the Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects as recorded by Witsen (1691:220) *ouwäa*. This variant form is possibly cognate with recorded words like *gue*, *gwee*, *umkwe*

and *nwe* as indicated in Bleek (1956:744), since the German pronunciation and rendition in writing of *wä* is the same, or very similar to the forms *ue*, *wee*, *gwe* and *nwe* as in the above words. The variant words and spelling forms as *ghoukhou*, *ghokhoe* and *ghouk~ou*, are equated with the *V-nou-ap* (the *V-* read as palatal *ʃ*, thus *ʃnou-ap*) as recorded by Le Vaillant (1780-83:366), which Nienaber further relates with Nama *!kou* for ‘wild’, meaning ‘wild pig’, and as having the same origin. He discusses the Nama or Khoikhoi words of */kuwu-s* and */kuwub*, “das Erdschwein (holländisch yzervark)” according to Olpp (1886:78), as related to these forms as well, but also to */kuwu* referring to various species of animals belonging to the swine sort. Nienaber concludes that the forms all apparently derive from the same root word *!noa-b* meaning ‘grey’, and mentions how the sudden opening of quills gave the appearance of a grey and black striped attack weapon and reminded the people of the ‘old grey one’. Though this interpretation may have some bearing on the behaviour of the animal, and may be descriptive of its quills, the colour is not necessarily the onymic formative found in these names of the animal.

In Bushman, the ‘quills’ of the procupine were referred to as *\_//kotən* in */Xam* (S1) (Bleek 1929:68, under *quills*), and the ‘rattling of quills’, called *ˀ!kwha ˀ!kwha*. This indicates a sound imitation as close to reality as could be imagined, and a part of it is found represented in its common name as descriptive element (see *!xo* and *!kō*). This rattling of the quills is exactly the sound heard when the porcupine is disturbed and charges backwards to impale its attacker. Under the verb ‘to rattle’, inscriptions such as */ka/kā*, *//karara*, *//nakka*, */kérītən*, and the repetitive or duplicated syllable formations as in *sakənsakən*, *wattənwattən*, *xurukən* (Bleek 1956:747), support this sound-associative naming of the procupine as the ‘one who rattles his quills’. The noun for ‘rattles’, given in the plural form, has the same repetitive sound-associative naming patterns given in examples such as */kxre:ki*, */kʰare* and *//kaurukə*, just as the *o – o* and *tʃ – ʃi* phonemes in *tʃorofi* illustrate.

Nienaber (1963:538-539) further noted that the recording of names for the swine-like family was not always very accurate, and that people referred to certain of these animals in the different regions by different names, not necessarily by differentiation of the sub-species, as *antbear*, *aardvark*; *bushpig*, *warthog*, and *porcupine* even. Alternatively they used the same name, sometimes for different animals by employing the same designation referring to anything ‘swine-like’, thus mostly just as *ghou*, *nou* or *ouwa* */nou* or */uwu*, */obo*, *!nou* (compare also Tswana and Sotho *kolobe*, Zulu *ingulube*). It was just as confusing as in the case of the other wild animals, as in

the references to the '*tier*', '*wolf*', '*jakkals*', 'rhino', the '*wildebeest*'; referring to cattle and buffalo as '*wilde beest*' (or at least describing them as such, perhaps more or less in the concept of 'wild beast' (see Nienaber 1963; Skead 1987), and many more. In these cases, where the species type was cursorily indicated to the interviewers and not described in detail or distinguished more accurately, perhaps assuming the interviewer would, in any case, not be able to distinguish more accurately the 'wild animals', led to many toponyms not necessarily being understood correctly either.

## CHAPTER FIVE

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### Hoofed mammals: bovines, giraffe and antelope

#### 5.1 Sub-family Bovinae: cattle and buffalo

##### 5.1.1 *Cattle, bulls and cows*

Bushman origins for the names of domesticated cows may be few and probably all adopted as loan words from the cattle-herding Bantu peoples, for example, the Herero and Mbanderu, the Ovambo, Nguni, Sotho, Tswana, and so forth. The buffalo, of course, they knew well enough from the savanna grasslands of Africa and probably named the cattle and cows with the same designation since they were, in many respects, very similar. Sound-associative elements of naming these bovines have been found in the references to these animals in various Bushman and Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects and languages. Nienaber (1963:345) states clearly in the oldest recordings of the names for 'cow' as recorded by Lancaster (in 1601:63), "*moath* for oxen and kine" from the Cape dialects, that are "*Klanknaboosend van die geloei*", that is, onomatopoeically coined after the bellowing of bovines like buffalo and cattle. Other words recorded quite early are the forms by Witsen (1691:216, RZA I) *goies*, *gojes*; and *t'Goös* by Sparrmann (1775-76:350). This form and the Eastern Cape dialectal versions recorded by Winkler (1788:45) as *kgōs* (correctly written in Nama as //gō-s according to Nienaber, and indicated as the very early concept for cows), are the closest to the retained components in place names. Also the variant form *goumas*, as Le Vaillant recorded it (1780-83:366) in the eastern Cape; and from Kroenlein (1889:107-108) who recorded *goma-s* from Nama, and the same word *gomā-s* that is found in Korana as well as Griqua (Nienaber 1963:346), all underpin the sound-associative names for cows that bellow and moo.

These are retraceable in place names such as M'lapakgomo. The three spelling variations of the name M'lapakgomo are found with different explanations given for the origins, but all relating to cattle. The river, settlement and post office named as

M'lapakgomo, are situated in the area of Mhala, 15 km north-east of Thulamahashe, Limpopo province. The settlement and post office take their name from that of the river, from early on known as M'lapa Kgomo, explained as meaning 'healing of cattle' and said to stem from the Northern Sotho language (SAGNC schedules, 2012). A similar name for a settlement appears in Mpumalanga with spelling Mlapakgomo which lies in the Bushbuckridge magisterial district. The meaning of this name is given as "A place with no grazing land for animals" (SAGNC, 30 May 2008). It was earlier indicated as a river and stream with the above spelling as two words, listed in the US Gazetteer database, with the rivers as original geographical feature type (United States Board on Geographic Names, USGAZ 1992). The components, once compared to other versions of references to cattle, and to cognate words for cows, indicating the bovines in the place names, are found to relate to the concept and explanations as provided, i.e. as 'grazing of cattle' or 'healing of cattle'.

Another toponym containing the bovine name is found in Kgomo-Kgomo, a post office 14 km west of Makapanstad, in the Moretele magisterial district of the North West province. The explanation given of the origin of the name is that it derives from the Tswana language, and that at the time when the land was initially bought, each person had to pay with one cow, hence kgomo-kgomo (SAGNC schedules 2008-2012). Lebowakgomo is a town 44 km south of Polokwane (Pietersburg). The name is derived from the Northern Sotho word *leboa* which means 'north' and *kgomo* that refers to 'a head of cattle' (Raper *et al* 2014:270), i.e. the 'northern cattle' or 'cattle of the north'.

The Bushmens' designations for 'cow, cattle' (Bleek 1929:30) are: *xoro*, *xama* in the //N!ke (S2) language; *gome* //gai in Sesarwa (S5); *gume* //kai in /Nu //en (S6); *gomi-di* in Auen (N1) and *\_gomi* in !O!kun (N3) and the reference to a 'trek ox' in Kung (N2) is *gumi* (Bleek (1956: 51). Compare the argument below of *gumi* being adapted in the Zulu colloquial expression of *jamludi* as the concept of a 'red ox', specifically the 'blood-red trek ox'. These recorded common names for cattle, or cows, are all likely to originally derive from the Khoekhoe as *gomab*, from Bantu languages such as the Herero designation for cattle i.a. *ngombe*; the Nguni named them *izinkomo*, Northern Sotho and Tswana have *kgomo*. These probably derived from an Ur-Bantu origin, and were used as loaned words in Bushman and Khoikhoi, since the Bushmen were not cattle herders, and the Khoikhoi perhaps not initially. It points to the diversity of the languages involved in naming such 'beasts', and when it came to the animals they depended on mostly – the herders on their cattle and

goats, the hunters on the wild animals – a common designation for a domesticated animal may have been conveniently adopted.

The names from the different languages of origin though, often relate to the Bushman designations for a ‘wild beast’ counterpart, often depicted as similar in appearance with descriptions given, or when a sound imitation was the onymic formative. As sound mimicry, with the call of cows usually indicated as a ‘lowing’, a ‘mooing’, or grunting, it is not too difficult to establish a pattern of naming motives here. Although it may not relate to an exact onomatopoeic pattern, it still appears as a wide-spread common name across most African languages, thus strengthening the assumption that it derived from the underlying sound-associative elements.

In Namibia many Damara, Nama and Herero place names indicate cattle, for example, Gomatum explained as ‘the cattle river’ in Kaokoveld, in the Orupembe region (S-G SWA n.d. 1:50 000 map sheet 1812 DD, photo 10/31 and 11/36) and Gomakukaus, a Damara name explained as ‘ox fountain’, the feature situated in the Damaraland/Kaokoveld region (S-G SWA n.d. 1:50 000 map sheet of Gomakukaus 1913 DB, photo 8/13).

Some toponyms in Herero with a relic form *ongombe*, cognate with recorded words from the Bushman versions of names i.a. *gome //gai*, *\_gomi* and *gomi`di*, are retained in names like Ongombekatjimane, referring to the ‘old cow, old cattle’; Ongombeomuriu meaning ‘cattle neck’; Ongombombero as ‘cattle poort’; Otjosongombe explained as a ‘good cattle place, farm’ (Albertyn 1984:67), all containing the Herero locative or class prefix *O-* to indicate the feature named (Brockmann 1941).



Figure 5.1.1 Cattle herd [Daniel Otte]

### 5.1.2 Buffalo

Another bovine sub-species type, that occurs widely on the African continent, especially in wooded, savanna and even swampy areas, is the African species of buffalo, the *Syncerus caffer*. The earliest recordings by Witsen (1691 RZA I:221) indicate it as “*t’aouw een buffel*,” and Thunberg (1772 II:89) gives it as *kaw* (both quoted in Nienaber 1963:235-236). Bleek (1956:44, 276, 287, 303, 701) documents various recordings of the common names for the buffalo, and specific variations as *gau* and */gaub* from Hukwe (C2b), */gau* and */kau* from Kung (N2) synonym with */gau* and */gaub* as in Hukwe; */hao* from the Hie (C1) language; and from Nama */gao*, */gaobsib*. The */gau*, */hao* and */kau* are all perhaps indicative of the bovines’ lowing, mooing.



Figure 5.1.2 Lone buffalo [painting by WW Hooper, owned by author]

Another name of the buffalo (used also for the designations of ‘ox’ and ‘bull’), is from the Bushman word *si !xadi* in /Nu//en (S6) as documented by Bleek (1929:64), also recorded as *!xudi* from the /Xam (S1) language (Bleek 1956:502, 701), both languages from the Southern group of speakers, and already signalling the wide occurrence of the *a* and *u* vowel variation. This name is cognate with the word *gumi* (synonym *gume*, *gome*) for ‘ox’ from the //N!ke (S2) and Kung (N2) languages, with variant appellative forms, *gum*, *gume* for ‘cattle, cow’ and in the wider sense of ‘beast’ as in Afrikaans ‘*bees*’; and the Nama *gomab* (Bleek 1956:51, 741). The spelling form of the name as *!xudi* is an early recording by Wilhelm Bleek (quoted in D. Bleek 1956:502), and appears as a close cognate for similar designations for bulls, oxen

and so forth, reminiscent of the Nguni word *inkunzi* for ‘a bull’. The word *si !xadi* is comparable to more than one of these designations referring to the bovine class of cattle in Bantu, e.g. as in “*inkabi*, 1. ox, bullock 2. castrated animal” (Doke and Vilakazi 2005:574), and for buffaloes words such as *nyati*, *inyathi*, *inyatsi* illustrate.

A red ox or bull, i.e. with reddish-brown hide, was called by the Bushmen and Khoikhoi a  $\neq\text{g}\bar{a}$  ‘red’ + *!xudi* ‘buffalo’, the  $\neq\text{g}\bar{a}$  relating to *jalu*, where *jalu* is understood as both ‘blood’, and stands for the colour red (Bleek 1929:22; Raper 2012:74). These descriptions were translated into Afrikaans at an early stage, since most Bushmen and Khoikhoi around the Cape Peninsula (and as far north and east as the Dutch had moved as *Vryburgers* in exploring the interior, and the *trekboere* had gone for grazing), had already, as early as the 1690’s, begun learning Dutch as a second language and with it the emerging Afrikaans as their communal second language (Nienaber 1963:21, 30-31; Traill 1996; Van Vuuren 2016:66, 76-77). They had thus become Afrikaans-speaking by the seventeenth century, and especially later, as farm-workers and specifically as herders or ‘cow hands’.

The translation from an original Khoi-San  $\neq\text{g}\bar{a}$  *!xudi*, as ‘red ox’, or ‘red buffalo-like beast’, alternatively, derived directly from *gumi* for ‘ox’, specifically ‘trek ox’ in Kung (N2), that was adapted with loss of clicks to *jamludi/ janludi* (note: with retaining the nasalization of the component  $\neq\text{g}\bar{a}$ ), to the Afrikanerised (‘*verAfrikaanste*’) form of it as *Janbloed* (with folk-etymological adaptation from  $\neq\text{g}\bar{a}$  *!xudi* or *jalu-di* > *janludi* > *Janbloed*). This was a natural process of derivation and translation as any of the myriad of other such folk-etymological and idiomatic adaptations. The word for ‘red’ in Bushman is *!gā* from Auen (N1), *!ga:* and  $\neq\text{g}\bar{a}$  from Kung (N2), as indicated by Bleek (1929:69; 1956:644, 748). This reference to the colour ‘red’, realised in a metaphoric sense as ‘blood’, (as Bleek indicates elsewhere, under *atama* for ‘blood’ (1956:2), “it is red, red like blood”), could well be interpreted as deriving from *!gā:* or  $\neq\text{g}\bar{a}$  + *!xudi*, thus the ‘blood-red coloured ox’. However, the concept and root words are more ancient than any other folk-etymological derivation of these names. The explanation of the name as discussed by Raper (2012:74), that the name for a ‘red ox’ was actually a reference to a ‘blood cow’, derived from the !O!kun (N3) word for ‘blood’ *jalu* + feminine ending *-di*, could indicate another underlying etymology and may be traced back to ancient beliefs and token symbols. It recalls the original designations of the ‘blood cow’ in ancient mythologies, seen and revered as symbolic of divine warm waters,...the incarnation of the fertile potency in certain ‘waters’...[i.a. such as ‘blood’- *author’s comment*]. This quote, as discussed by Van



Vuuren (2016:181, 185), referring also to the symbolism in the ancient Veda texts and how it was used as metaphor in the poem *Vuurbees* by DJ Opperman, providing a comparable context to the rock art and symbolism of the San. Where this colour was used to depict the aurochs, it was also applied as a mixture of blood and red ochre in rock paintings of the 'first artists' in cave shelters of Africa as well.

The name of the buffalo is found in many place names (see Raper *et al* 2014) under compound, hybrid and often translated forms of toponyms in Afrikaans and English beginning with Buffalo Bay, Buffelsdrif, Buffelskop, Buffelsrivier, and so forth, but also in toponyms with retraced old Khoikhoi and Bushman names. For instance, Doega (Doegadraai) traced in a toponymic cluster formation with "*Buffels Kop Fontein*", explained as: "*Verafrikaanste uitspraak...In Boesmantaal is die D met 'n slag van die tong uitgespreek'...“Die naam Doega is oorspronklik 'n Boesmanwoord vir die streek...“* (‘An Afrikanerised pronunciation...In the Bushman language the D was pronounced with a click of the tongue’..‘The name Doega is originally a Bushman word for the area’), with the interpretation as: “place of many buffalo” (Nienaber & Raper 1980:44, 243). Another example is Gausob, a tributary of the Chamob River in the district of Keetmanshoop, recorded by Brink 1761 as “*aan de Buffel rivier*”, explained by Mossop as stemming “...from /*gaob*, the Buffalo” (Nienaber & Raper 1977:397). These toponyms both contain the elements referring to early Bushman formatives /*ga*, /*gau*, /*gao*, /*hao* and /*kau* and the Nama /*gao*, /*gaobsib* for ‘buffalo’ as indicated above.

Indigenous names for the buffalo are indicated in Walker (1996:202) i.a. in Northern Sotho as *nare*, Venda and Tswana *nari*; Ndebele, Shangaan, Shona, Zulu, Xhosa as *nyati* and *inyathi*; Swazi as *inyatsi*; in Lozi as *nali*; in Yei as *unyati*; and in Nama and Damara as /*goab*. (See above the other Khoikhoi forms, for example, /*gaobsib* of the same root word, but with *o* and *a* vowel variation). The designation *si !xadi* (variant *!xu-di*) compares phonologically to *i-nya-ti* of the cited Bantu languages, indicating an early adoption either from the Bushman designation for a buffalo, or derived from an Ur-Bantu origin.

In Namibia some toponyms from Herero indicate cognates with *si !xadi* in /Nu//en (S6) (and the variant form *!xudi*) as *-njati* (compare again Bantu *inyati*). Otjozonjati for example is explained as “*plek van baie buffels*” (Albertyn 1984:67), ‘place of many buffalo’. It illustrates the close language contact, or some form of possible trans-lingual exchange within the areas of both wild and domesticated animal designation.

Estes (2012:199) records the vocalisations of the buffalo as very important herding calls, though less vociferous than domesticated cattle: “Many of the calls bear a resemblance to the lowing of domestic cattle..., but are generally lower-pitched”. The danger signal is a “drawn out *waaa* sound” and he describes a variety of herd grunts, bellows and honks like ‘*guuu*’, to indicate signals of moving the herd in the same direction. This ‘*guuu*’ compared to *!xu*, by assimilation derived from the ‘moo’-ing they emit, just as cattle, may have given them their sound-associative names. Perhaps this form, also as *!xudi* and *nyati*, with the *a* and *u* variation in the first syllable, and softening of the click with the fricative efflux *!x*, relates onomatopoeically to its name in the various Bantu languages, and quite probably also to some of the Bushman names as *gau*, */gau*, */hao*, */kau*, *!kau* and Khoikhoi names for it, e.g. */gao-b*, *!tkau*, */ao*.

On the other hand, the aggressive behaviour pattern of the buffalo as the one who gores and tramples, may have been the onymic trigger in the allocation of its name in some of these Bantu languages. This, it could be argued, was possibly derived from the transitive verb *nyathela* that describes the action ‘to trample’ as indicated in, e.g. Zulu (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:511, 622), which was then applied as the common noun *inyathi* referring to the ‘buffalo’; also possibly from Ur-Bantu *-ati*, *jnati*.

## 5.2 The giraffe, family Giraffidae

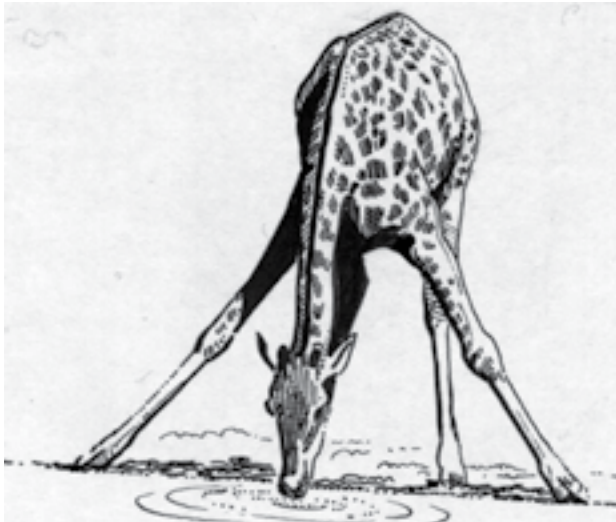


Figure 5.2 (a) Giraffe drinking [Daniel Otte]

### 5.2.1 *The giraffe*

The giraffe, *Giraffa camelopardalis*, Afrikaans 'kameelperd', is part of the subfamily of bovines and ruminant family of Giraffidae (Estes 2012:viii, 201-207) to which the okapi, though highly restricted in areas in mid-eastern Africa, also belongs. The giraffe was apparently named in some Bushman languages, probably metaphorically, for its peculiar way of walking, its gait resembling a kind of "rocking movement of water" (Pettman (1931:14). He indicated that Lake Ngami in Botswana (discovered in 1849 by Oswald, Livingstone and Murray), may have been named after this animal from the fact that it occurred there in large numbers and that the name was an 'attempted reproduction' or corruption of the Bushman word *N≠ami* "the Lake being the haunt of these animals". However, he admits, quoting Dornan (1925:24) that this word actually stems from the Kalahari Bushmen: "It is derived from *gabee*, the Bushman name for the giraffe". Also quoting Chapman (1868:311), he confirms this view "...that 'ngami' is derived from *n'ghabe* (the Sejeje term for a giraffe from *n'ghabba*, to rock – the rocking motion of the giraffe being assimilated to the rocking of the waves, which in former times, they assert, were large and powerful enough in a storm to throw the hippopotamus ashore". Thus according to Pettman, the word 'ngami' meaning a giraffe, is not a reference to, or derived from the Khoikhoi word //gami meaning simply 'water'.

In fact, the word *gabee* is from the Hie (C1) Bushman language, related to or cognate with the variant forms *n'gabbe*, *!nabe* from Naron (C2) according to Bleek (1929:42). She also indicates (1956:720) for 'giraffe' the variant words *gnabe*, *jabe*, *njabe*, *njabe*, *!nei-b*, but also *ainj* or *aing* from the Mohissa (C1b) speakers, who lived east of Ngami in Botswana (Bleek 1956:687). These words were employed as onymic formatives in place names, such as Naib, Naibhaos, Naichanab and other variants Naihab, Naisees and Naibu, all in Namibia or in the Northern Cape, and as indicated below, all read as 'place of giraffe' (Nienaber & Raper 1977:839-840, 841-842; 1980:608). The toponym *!Neei!hou* or *!Nei!honi* (recorded by Kroenlein 1854:81, Quellen vol. 10, quoted and discussed in Nienaber and Raper (1980:732)) was translated as Kameelrivier, and refers to a river situated in the district of Gibeon, Namibia. The Khoikhoi form of the name is *!nai* and *!nei-b*. These toponyms are all indicative of the former wide-spread occurrence of these tall animals.

This common name of the giraffe appears in other toponyms e.g. Nainaub with variants Neinaub, Neikaub and Neiaob (Nienaber & Raper 1980:44, 629-630), also situated in Namibia, close to the Erongo Mountain and in the vicinity of Okombahe.

These toponyms with the meaning ‘*kameelnek*’, or ‘giraffe’s neck’, referring to the mountain slope or rock formation there (Nienaber & Raper 1980:600-601), just as Naidauskuppe, ‘giraffe’s poort and hill’, as well as Neikhoes near Swakopmund, and Neibes, ‘giraffe’s fountain or watering place’, are all derived from the same Khoikhoi words *!nae*, *!nai* or *!neib*, cognate to the Bushman *!nabe*. In the Herero name Okombahe, i.e. ‘place of the giraffe’, found in the above-mentioned toponymic cluster of names with Nainaub, and so on, the word for ‘giraffe’ *mbahe* or *ombahe* appears to be also cognate to *!nabe* and *gabee*.

The name of a farm Kameelpan in the district of Gobabis in Namibia, is said to be derived from the large, natural lake on this farm (‘*waterpan*’ in Afrikaans), measuring 2000 by 800 meters, and known for the numerous giraffe that come to drink at its shores (Albertyn 1984:10). Lake Ngami with its Bushman name indicated by Skead (1973:115) as Inghabe, explained as ‘giraffe’, is also indicated as Tlannis, Tl’anee, with the *tl* as an older orthographic rendering of the lateral click // in the Bushman languages. This is another case of the root words going back to ancient languages of the area designating the presence of giraffe in the area.



Figure 5.2.1 (b) Giraffe at Omandumba-West, Erongo Namibia [A. Viereck]

The toponym Giraffenberge refers to the mountain range south-west of Ohopoho and south of the Tönnesenberge in the northern region of Kaokoland, Namibia (Map SWA- 1: 1 000 000 1972), and is indicated in the report of the Carp Expedition (1952:99, quoted in Möller 1986:276-277). This name is in all probability a German

translation of an indigenous name and refers to the large numbers of giraffe that frequented the area, especially the valleys between these mountains.

The Ovambo and Herero toponyms Onanduli in Ovamboland, and Onduri in the district of Outjo, that also refer to the giraffe (Albertyn 1984:88), is derived from another adopted Bushman word for ‘giraffe’, e.g. from /Xam (S1) *!nwi*, *!nui*, *!nu:i* or *!nu:ī* (Bleek 1929:42). This word or name for the giraffe, operating as onymic formative, was adapted into Herero and Ovambo with a shift of the click *!n* to *nd*; and insertion of the *l* and *r* in the Ovambo and Herero names respectively, at the same time reflecting a consonantal shift, or consonantal variability between the *r* and *l* in the pronunciation.

Another example of a toponym possibly derived from Bushman designations for the giraffe, that may contain an undertone of sound association, is Madubaduba, a name replacing the Afrikaans name of the farm Kameelrivier A in the Mpumalanga province north-east of Marble Hall. It was said to be from Northern Sotho and explained as ‘various tribes residing there together’. However, the Venda and Ndebele names for the giraffe as *thuba*, *thuda* and *htundla*, which seem phonologically closer to *duba* than the Sotho or Tswana word *thuthla*, and the Auen (N1) word for camel or ‘giraffe’, i.e. *ˀgu* (Bleek 1929:26), confirm the original explanation on the fieldwork schedules, where the name was indicated as referring to the “sound of galloping giraffe” (PLAC, MP\_PNM 2000). Together with the Afrikaans translation of the place name in olden times (probably more than 100 years ago), and the reduplication in the name, this seems a possible sound-associative name of the giraffes’ galloping.

According to Pettman (1931:138), the name “Mororothutlwa, a large saltpan in the Kalahari” is derived from the Tswana *morota*, meaning ‘immense’ and *thuthlwa*, ‘giraffe’. Although the etymology seems to interpret the component parts of the toponym as ‘immense’ or ‘large’ giraffe, it needed further investigation. The name, unless meant as ‘immense or large saltpan of the giraffes’, or ‘large saltpan where giraffe roam’, may simply mean ‘the giraffes’ saltpan’.

Three variant words for a ‘giraffe’, namely *tsòkwana*, *’klogo* and *’toa* indicated in Bleek (1956:688, 689, 720), may be cognate with the Tswana and Sotho *thutlwa*, the Shangaan *nthutlwa*; Venda *thuda/thuba*; Ndebele *htundla*; and Lozi, where it is known as *tutwa*. The Ndebele and the Zulu speakers call the giraffe *ndlulamithi*, the Swazi have *indlulamitsi* (Walker 1996:142); these last two names a metaphor for ‘the one who reaches beyond the trees’. Clearly the Tswana and Sotho words are

phonologically comparable to the component in the toponym Mororothuthlwa, and all these cognate forms are possibly derived from, or have been adopted from the same root words into the various languages, or are loan words.

In the Sesarwa (S5) language, spoken by a group in the Kafia area in the south of Botswana, the word for 'giraffe' is /xuä, //khō; in Auen (N1) it is ≠koä, and in Kung (N2) it is ≠koá (Bleek 1929:42). These words may have been understood as the toponymic formatives of the place name Mororothuthlwa. The first component *mo* is the locative prefix or determinative, the component *roro* could derive from //khō and ≠koä, and conceivably be similar to the variant words for a 'giraffe' as 'klogo from the Sehura (C1a) language, and 'toa from Auen (N1) indicated in Bleek (1956:688, 689, 720), that may have led to an alternative interpretation of the name. When this 'klogo is compared to the component *-roro*, containing the click adaptation from the initial position 'kl, and arguing that it was probably adapted to the reduplicated phoneme with the roller *r*, it becomes a more feasible argument to compare the names.

Yet, the initial explanation given of it as an 'immense pan', probably a 'large salt pan' may hold, bearing in mind the age or long existence of these salt pans and their names as equally longstanding, therefore deriving from an older origin than the current language strata. In other words, that they possibly derive from different Bushman words, favours this alternative interpretation. In the toponym Mororothuthlwa, the components had been phonologically and / or folk-etymologically adapted into Tswana and the reasoning that it sounded like the Tswana and Sotho word *thuthlwa* for a 'giraffe', was indeed an indication of the large numbers of giraffe there. Because there are similar sounding words for 'giraffe' in the Bushman languages, this too was misleading the interviewers and interpreters. That giraffe occurred there in large numbers was quite possible, but incidental to the allocation of the name. The component *-roro* was more probably derived from Bushman //kho or //kolo meaning 'large', 'immense', as indicated by Bleek (1956:730, 282). The click adaptation from the lateral retroflex //kho and //ko to the reduplicated form with the roller *r*, as in *-roro-* also articulated with retroflex or backward suction against the palate, or in the same position against or between the alveolar region and the palate, this retroflex phoneme became easily interchangeable, thus //kholo became *roro*.

The second component, *thutlwa*, may have originated from a totally different source, initially coined by the Bushmen and the Khoikhoi as a topographic reference to the depression, i.e. describing the 'saltpan' with the proper generic. The generic of the

place name is thus appropriate to the geographical feature. The /Xam (S1) word for 'salt' is /u: (Bleek 1956:358), and was probably replicated or adjusted in the specific component *thu-*, whereas the word //kwe for 'saltpan' from //N!ke (S2) (Bleek 1956:99, 750) supported the visualisation of this place as an immense area, probably accommodating great numbers of giraffe. In the component *-tlwa*, the word for a pan was derived from the composite word *dzuawe* or *dhuawe*, from the Hie (C1) language, a word that actually means 'saltpan' (Bleek 1956:741). These could thus all have been the original onymic formatives, the name, then, to be interpreted as the 'immense saltpan', not referring to or depicting the 'immense giraffes' only, but also the actual feature, the 'saltpan'. Bushman words for 'large' or 'big' are i.a. derived from a verb 'to be large' //kolo from Hie (C1) (Bleek 1956:730, 282). The name could thus be explained as an adaptation: the *mo* is the locative prefix or class marker in Tswana; the component *roro* with the click adjustment into Tswana from //kolo to *roro*, and the *thuthlwa* an adaptation from *dzuawe*, *dhuawe*.

Another Bushman word for 'salt' from the /Xam (S1) language, is  $\text{̣} \neq ko:$ , and this may be cognate to or could have been related directly to the *roro* component of the toponym, with the reduplication indicating the emphatic form as 'immense salt pan'. This would bring the explanation of Pettman, describing it as 'immense', into focus again, since a word for 'immense' in Hie (C1) is *ndo tʃotʃo* (Bleek 1956:144, 726).

The name Mororothuthlwa (in this spelling) had been explained by some fieldworkers (Tjihapiu, questionnaire Binding 1980-1984) as deriving from 'the sound of galloping giraffe over the pans', and it may have been a good example of a sound-associative name. This gives rise to another possible interpretation of the etymology of the toponym, that the root component *roro* may derive from the Kung (N2) word *!koro* 'gallop' and *!ko'ro* 'to gallop' as recorded by Bleek (1929:41; 1956:443). In Nama *!ore*, is a verb meaning 'to gallop'. This could then verify the idea of 'galloping giraffes' over the 'immense saltpan'.

Apparently the toponym Madikwe (originally referring to a river and locality, now a town in the North West province), was according to Pettman (1931:138) interpreted from Tswana as "to go round, like a solitary giraffe turned out of a herd", or "lone giraffe bull that keeps to a small area, going in circles". Pettman went further to equate Madikwe as well as Madique, to Marico, and drawing on Andrew Smith's report of the name, that these may, possibly, be seen as derivations of the same original onymic formative, i.e. stemming from a word referring to the 'giraffe'. Along this line of argumentation, the etymology could have been traced back to the root



words //k<sup>h</sup>o or ≠koä or //k<sup>h</sup>o /xuä as adapted forms in the last components –co, or –kwe and –que (the oä pronunciation reflecting as *we*, *que*). Yet, it does not agree with the usual Bushman naming pattern, and, as elucidated in Raper *et al* (2014:288), this interpretation of Pettman is disputed; they explain the name as the ‘goat byre’ or ‘bokkraal’. This is based on the translated Afrikaans farm name Bokkraal (probably here with some folk-etymological adding of the generic ‘kraal’ – it being a farm, instead of ‘river’), on which the river Madikwe rises. It, therefore, forms part of the topographic and toponymic cluster of the area and confirms the interpretation by Raper *et al* which is based on the /Nu//en (S6) word *mari* for ‘goat’ (Bleek 1929:42) as in the original name Marico. In the place name, Madikwe, adapted as Marico, it is possible that the synonym *koe* for *kwe* as referring to a ‘place’ was adapted to *co* (Bleek 1956:112).

The toponym Ga-Morwe has been explained as referring to the clan name of a Hurutshe chief and forms part of a cluster of farms which includes Kameelrivier B, as discussed by Möller (2014:127-128; Raper *et al* 2014:145, 221). It would appear that Kameelrivier is a translation of Ga-Morwe. The component *ga* of Ga-Morwe is cognate with a word for ‘camel’ *\_g!aaε* from ≠Khomani (S2a) (Bleek 1956:374, 702); and the component *mo* is probably also an adaptation of the word for ‘camel’ from Sesarwa (S5) as //kō, ‘camel, originally giraffe’ as indicated by Bleek (1956:582). The component *rwe* is an adaptation of the word *kwe*, ‘river’ from the Hie (C1) language (Bleek 1956:112). This may support the idea that it referred to the clan name of the chief Hurutshe as ‘the people of the giraffe’.

### 5.3 The antelope family and other ruminants including subfamilies and tribes, e.g. Neotragini, Reduncini, Hippotragini and Tragelaphini

#### 5.3.1 *The eland*

The eland (*Tragelaphus Taurotragus oryx*), largest of the antelopes, was probably the most favoured by the Bushmen as their main source of meat, and as such had been given many descriptive and possibly onomatopoeic names. In their hunting of this otherwise very silent antelope, they came to know its behaviour, its favoured habitats and action-sounds very well. The eland bull has variously been named



in Bushman as *!ka*, *≠kanthi* and *kʷomathi*. Its Khoikhoi name *!kani*, that has been explained as referring to its tawny yellow-grey colouring: ‘*halbgelb, halbgrau*’ (Kroenlein 1889:198), may, in fact, be descriptive, but other interpretations may be possible for the other two Bushman renderings of its name indicated above. Some of its other names seem to be onomatopoeic in origin, e.g. *nyn*, *!nē*, *!ni:*, *!!nā*, *//ni:* and *//nîŋ* (Bleek 1929:36; 1956:713). These names with their phonological and orthographic variations, may have been a reference to either a knee-cap or ankle tendon clicking action, since the words, actually the verb ‘to click’, are closely related in sound, compare *//nainŋ* and */i/iŋ* (Bleek 1956:704). Its name may thus originate from its habit of knee-cap clicking.



Figure 5.3.1 (a) Eland antelope at Didima [Daniel Otte]

Estes (2012:190) gives an interesting account of this behaviour pattern of the antelope, i.e. its habit of clicking described as sounding ‘castanet-like’. According to him, it has not been established whether it is indeed made by “a tendon slipping over the carpal (knee) joint”, or the knee-cap, the hooves or some muscle or tendon in the ankle. In any case, the sound is unmistakably heard as a loud ‘clicking’. Although made mainly by male dominant bulls, some older cows may imitate this behaviour. “The sound can be heard for hundreds of meters on a still night. By advertising the presence of a moving gray male, clicking helps regulate eland social relations”.

The loud cerebral clicks *!*, *!!* and other clicks too, such as the alveolar palatal *≠* and the lateral *//* and the glottal croak ” with *k*” as used in some Bushman names, may

refer to this, or may be seen as emulating the eland's social behaviour with this clicking. The rendering of both descriptive and imitative, possibly onomatopoeic names like *!kā* from /Auni (S4), *≠kanthi* (a name that refers specifically to the eland bull), *˜!ni*: from Auen (N1) and *//ni*: in !O!kun (N3), *//niŋ* Kung (N2); *kʷoma* and *kʷomati* from the Hie (C1) language, may well relate to its habit of knee-cap clicking. It has been stated, however (Kroenlein 1889:198), that the name *!kani* for the eland refers to its tawny-grey colouring. Compare other names for the eland as recorded in Bleek (1929:36; 1956:713) where the eland is called *gei*, *-ghei*, or where the name was documented as *//ni*: or *//niŋ* as found in toponyms, such as Qinira, possibly combining it with this visualisation of the eland.



Figure 5.3.1 (b) Eland herding [Daniel Otte]

The variant toponym Caninga in the Eastern Cape is the Khoikhoi name of the Qinira River (Nienaber & Raper 1977:272, Raper *et al* 2014:425). The meaning of Caninga is given as ‘eland’s river’; here with the same original word for ‘eland’ *!kani* or *!kani-!ga*. Qinira, then, is the adaptation, with the *ra* as the fluvial generic. Other variants of this toponym include Geneka, Kinigha, Kwinegha, Quinera and Quinegha. The variant forms may be explained by different words deriving from the Bushman languages for ‘eland’, having been combined, such as *!kā*, from /Auni (S4), and from Heikum (N2a) *!khan*, with, from Auen (N1) *˜!ni*:, from Kung (N2) *//niŋ*, from !O!kun (N3) *˜//ni*:. The full form retains the nasalisation as Ca(n)-in-ga, with the final *ga* as with *ra*, the fluvial generic meaning ‘river’, also a toponymic formative from the Bushman languages.

The toponym Canca se Leegte is that of a locality and farm in the Western Cape, also of an intermittent watercourse south-east of Riversdale (Raper *et al* 2014:61)

and may reflect this sound-associative element. In the name *Canca*, meaning ‘eland ridge’; the component *Ca(n)* is cognate with the /Auni (S4) *!kā*, and Heikum (N2a) *!kani* for ‘eland’, and the component *ca* with the //N *!ke* (S2) word *≠kā*, for ‘ridge, *krantz*’. As Kroenlein (1889:198) indicated, the eland is described as *!kan-!ga*, a ‘half yellow, half grey’ antelope therefore called *!kani*. Yet, the second component *ca*, the generic term, could be derived from *≠ka*: (without the nasalisation and deriving from the Naron (C2) language (Bleek 1956:653), which means ‘flat land, or plain’. This is depicted in the Afrikaans hybridised form of the toponym *Canca se Leegte* or ‘*se Laagte*’ as this relates to a ‘depression, low-lying emptiness, void or valley’. The word ‘*leegte*’ is a dialectal variant of ‘*laagte*’ and literally means ‘emptiness or void’. It, therefore, forms a descriptive reduplication in the toponym.



Figure 5.3.1 (c) Eland bull [Daniel Otte]

Other toponyms relating to the eland are *Kanibes*, *Ghansies* and *Gantouw*. These toponyms stem from the oldest recorded names for the antelope. De Flacourt (1655:55) recorded the word *cana* for the ‘eland’, and Thunberg later (1773:86 in Nienaber 1963:264) recorded *Kanna*, and also *KeNS*, which relates directly to the Bushman *!ñe* from Kung (N2). The last name *Gantouw*, was explained and translated as *Elandspad* (now Sir Lowry’s Pass). The component *touw*, also *dauw*, refers to a ‘pass’ or ‘road’, or ‘*pad*’ in Afrikaans. Also written as *Candauw*, this pass in the Hottentots Holland Mountains fits the description of ‘the elands road or pass’, from Bushman origins *!kā* and *!kani*, via Khoikhoi, with *daauw*, i.e. ‘*elandspat*’ or ‘elands’

pass', as Pettman summarised the name (1931:39) after Jan Hartog's recordings in his '*Landtocht*' in 1707 (Nienaber & Raper 1977:271).

The name of the Komati River in Mpumalanga is derived from the other name of the eland, namely *k"omati*, recorded from the Hie (C1) language (Bleek 1956:656, 713). This too may contain an onomatopoeic element of the eland's behaviour of knee-cap clicking, and as such functions as primary toponymic naming motive here. The Afrikaans translation of the name still exists as Elandsrivier.

From the Herero language: Ozongorongombe (also written as Ozongarangombe), is the name of a village in Hereroland, Namibia. The name means 'grazing place of the eland' (Tjihapiu, fieldwork questionnaire, Binding 1980-1984). As the eland is described as the most silent of all large antelope (Estes 2012:190), it may have been named in Herero for other peculiar features and behaviour, i.e. for "bounding away instead of running fast like a gazelle". The component *ngoro* or *ngara* was explained as 'grazing', and *ngo(m)* as 'eland'. This possibly corresponds with recorded names of the eland as *k"oma* of the Hie (C1) language; *!gum* in /Nu//en (S6), and may relate to *dū* in Sesarwa (S5) and *\_du:ba* in Naron (C2) as well (Bleek 1929:36; 1956:713).

### 5.3.2 *The greater kudu*



Figure 5.3.2 Greater kudu [Daniel Otte]

The common names for the greater kudu (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*) have been recorded from various Bushman languages and dialects by Bleek (1929:51; 1956:730)

as /kuau, !xau, !nuhā: and !n<sup>^</sup>ha. Even the name *kudu*, *koedoe* in Afrikaans, is adopted from the Bushman onomatopoeic designation of the antelope in the Kung (N2) language, i.e. from /kuau, !nuhā. All the ‘translated’ and hybridised place names with ‘*koedoe*’ and ‘*kudu*’, refer to the antelope’s common name from an onomatopoeic adaptation, i.e. to imitate its ‘habit of snorting’, or the ‘deep hoarse bark’, as Walker (1996:198) elucidated: “their call is a loud bark...almost a grunting sound”. Estes (2012:182) details its vocalisation as: “The kudu’s gruff bark is one of the loudest noises antelopes make. Males also grunt loudly when rutting and fighting, and make a suppressed whine during courtship”.

Other names of the kudu are found in Khoikhoi and Nama of which Nienaber (1963:344-345), apart from the well-known *coudou* and *cuhduh* and *t’coudous*, mentions the following: *gaip* (recorded by Le Vaillant in 1780-83:366) and *chaib* (Lichtenstein in 1805:312); *geip* (by Borchers in 1801:70) and *xei-ba* and *xaib*. The name form as *xei-* (as documented by C. Wandres 1918:34, quoted in Nienaber), is an indication of the sound it makes, the meaning given there as: “*blasen, schnauben*”, (‘to snort, blow through the nose’). Nienaber further discusses these designations as apparently having vanished from most of the Khoi-San languages, specifically Nama, and, that confusions with the earliest recordings of this name as not necessarily being of Khoikhoi origin, may have contributed to its loss. Furthermore, it could only be found among the Bushmen as designation for this antelope who otherwise named it *cuhduh*, *t’coudou* and *coedoe* (Nienaber 1963:344-345). Early adaptations such as Koodoobosch (bush) and Koodoosdam still preserved these forms.

Toponyms, such as Chaib (Xaib), Chaibis (Nienaber & Raper 1977:274), and Chaihommi and Xaihommi (as Kuduberg), all derived from the Bushman names referring to the kudu, have been equally preserved in adopted and adapted and translated forms as discussed in Nienaber and Raper (1980:218).

The name for a *kudu* in Herero, Himba and other local indigenous languages of the area in Namibia, are i.a. *ohorongo* (Göllnitz 1942:41) or shortened as *o-rongo*; and are closely related to the Shona *nhoro*; in Lozi it is *tolo*, Shangaan has *hlongo* and in Swazi it is *shongololo*; Sotho, Tswana and Venda name it *tholo*. In Namibia quite a few places named after the *kudu* could be traced, e.g. Ombonga (possibly derived from or cognate with the forms *rongo* or *hlongo* as indicated). It is an area name in Kaokoland that is apparently derived from the Himba (Herero) language, and is the name for ‘a kudu bull’ (SG-SWA, n.d. map sheet Okakora 1712 BD). Another cluster of toponyms is realised in the name Otjihorongo as ‘place of the

kudu'. Köhler (1959:38) discusses the mountain name Otjohorongo, and indicates it as lying close to a river named Ondonduja Tjohorongo. This river flows, after its confluence with the Ondonduja Tjiperongo (indicated as the "lesser or small kudu river"), into the Ondundo-ja-Ruzeva, south of Okavaku in the Omaruru district, and specifically the Otjihorongo reserve as mapped and described by Köhler (1959, 3<sup>rd</sup> map opp. p. 114).

A settlement near the source of the Ondonduja Tjiperongo, is called Otjiperongo, and is also said to refer to 'the kudu'. Since the Damara and Bergdama have, for many years, been the major population group in this area, it is not certain whether these names originated from certain Bushman languages and had been adapted via Damara or via Herero from those languages.

The following toponyms referring to the kudu were discussed by Möller (2014:121-122) where the sound-associative similarities and the antelope's names were brought into focus. The Koedoespruit in the Limpopo province flows into the Mosukhudutzi, which flows into the Middle Letaba. The Afrikaans name Koedoespruit is a translation of the indigenous form of the name, as 'river of the kudus', derived from the Bushman common names for the antelope as /kuau, !xau and !xāū in /Xam (S1), !nwa in Auen (N1), !nuhā: and !n^ha in Kung (N2) (Bleek 1956:730). Bleek also indicates, apart from the above quoted common names, other Bushman words for the kudu as: *doa*, *du* and *!dke* (1956:769). The component with *tzi*, elsewhere as *ti* and */i* (Bleek 1929:39, 90), is a reference to the fluvial generic, understood as 'river', i.e. 'flowing water', often adapted into Northern Sotho as *metsi*.

Apart from the above quoted toponyms, there is the place called Modketzi, known in Afrikaans as Koedoes, indicating the same reference to the antelope's common names in Bushman, especially the variant name *!dke* as root component in the restored place name. These cognate onomatopoeic components are, thus, often found only in the relics of very old place names.

### 5.3.3 *The gemsbok*

The gemsbok (*Oryx gazella*), from the tribe *Hippotragini*, the horse antelopes, with sub-species including the roan and sable antelope, has been variously named in the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages. Bleek (1929:41; 1956:720), for instance, recorded different names for the gemsbok antelope: *!kwi* from /Xam (S1); *!kai* from //Nu!ke

(S2); also /xa from /Auni (S4), //x<sup>^</sup>m in Sesarwa (S5); /xam from /Nu //en (S6); //kha from Kung (N2); !kau from !O!kuṅ (N3).

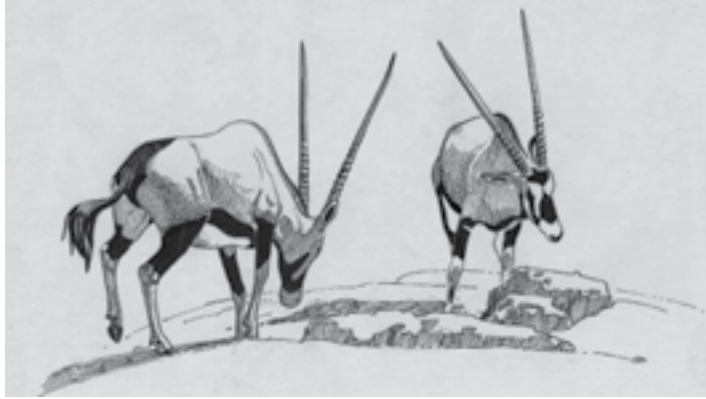


Figure 5.3.3 Gemsbok at a waterhole [Daniel Otte]

Afrikaans and German place names, often adapted or translated from the name of the gemsbok, abound in Namibia. Toponyms with the first component Gemsbok may all be derived from, or be an adapted loan word from the Bushman languages for this 'gazelle', and allocated as onymic formatives. Compare toponyms such as Gemsbockquelle, the name of a waterhole and fountain in the Uniab River area in Kaokoland, Namibia (Leistner and Morris, 1976:132), named as such by German explorers and surveyors who mapped the whole area (Möller 1986:275). There are two different references to the name Gemsbocktal. One is a valley in the district of Karibib (Redecker, questionnaire 1982, quoted in Möller 1986:276), and another, also a valley, lying between the Bakenberg and Doppelkopf in the Klinghardt Mountain range in the district of Lüderitz in Namibia. Apparently the latter was named by Georg Klinghardt himself or Dr E. Reuning who surveyed and photographed this mountain range, in the process giving names to the hills and valleys, often asking the indigenous people the meaning of the names of features. According to Kaiser (1926:279), the place name Gemsbocktal refers to the herds of gemsbok that *trekked* (moved) to that area during years of drought.

An interesting interpretation and possible translation of an earlier name or descriptive word from the Bushman or Khoikhoi languages for this large 'gazelle'-type of desert antelope was found in the metaphoric, but imaginative name Eenklipbokrivier in the Northern Cape. It is the name of a non-perennial stream rising 24 km south-



south-west of Springbok and extending south-westwards to join the Buffelsrivier. The name Eenklipbokrivier is Afrikaans for ‘one stone-buck river’, the name refers to the Cape oryx or *gemsbok*, *Oryx gazella*, described by Kroenlein (1889:195) as “//kaisis, subst. der Klippbok (*Gemsbok der Wüste*)”, thus translated as “the gemsbok of the desert” (Raper *et al* 2014:109).

Another toponym that could be associated with this image of the gemsbok as a ‘stone-buck’ is Klipbokberg in the Northern Cape. This is a mountain just south of Buffelsbank, 40 km west of Springbok. The name is Afrikaans for ‘stone-buck mountain’. Apparently the reference *klipbok* is the common name for the *gemsbok* or *Oryx gazella*; whereas the *klipbökkie* is the *klipspringer* or ‘stone-jumper’, *Oreotragus oreotragus* (Raper *et al* 2014:239). Whether //kaisis, clearly cognate with *!kai* in //Nu!ke (S2); *ˀkai* in //N!ke (S2) (Bleek 1956:655), and *!xai:bi* in Sesarwa (S5) with meaning a ‘little gemsbok’, and synonymous with *!xum* (Bleek 1956:496) and other such variants, are the root words for the possibly adapted *gems-*, derived from a word for ‘stone’ or ‘sand’ perhaps, could not yet be verified.

The name Gemsbok, in the Western Cape, refers to a railway station some 46 km east of Laingsburg, in the vicinity of Gemsbokfontein. Both the railway station Gemsbok and the locality Gemsbokfontein take their name from this Cape oryx, or gemsbok in Afrikaans. The Gemsbokrivier, also in the Western Cape, is an intermittent stream rising in the Koedoesberge and flowing westwards and then north-westwards to join the Ongeluks River. The name is Afrikaans for ‘Cape oryx river’, referring to the ‘gazelle’-like antelope (Raper *et al* 2014:150).

Most famous of all references to the gemsbok is the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park, situated in the Northern Cape and established as a ‘game reserve between the Auob and Nossob rivers, bordering on Namibia in the west and Botswana in the east’ (Raper *et al* 2014:218), especially to preserve the fauna and flora of the desert regions in that part of the world. It is accessible from Upington and from Mata-Mata, and was proclaimed as a national park in 1931 to protect the game in and around the Kalahari region, in which it is situated.

The Kwang Pan in Botswana is a depression in the Kgalagadi district, on the border between the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park and the Gemsbok National Park, about 75 km south-east of Union’s End. The name has been explained as ‘gather’, or ‘to sit in the shade’ (Raper *et al* 2014:262). It may, alternatively, be a direct reference to the gemsbok in the first component of the name *kwa-* with *ng* the locative suffix,



thus describing it as the ‘gemsbok pan’, adapted from words for this gazelle of the region, such as /*xa* from /Auni (S4), //*x*<sup>^</sup>*m* from Sesarwa (Kakia, S5); /*xam* in /Nu //en (S6); //kha in Kung (N2); !*kau* !O!kuŋ (N3) indicated by Bleek (1929:41; 1956:720).

Further toponyms containing these cognate name forms, that can be traced back to a Bushman origin, and that may illustrate that the names are actually references to the gemsbok, are, for example, Mabuasehube Game Reserve in Botswana in the Kgalegadi district, abutting the Gemsbok National Park in the west. It was incorporated into Botswana’s Gemsbok National Park in 1992, and in 2000 it became part of the Kgalegadi Transfrontier Park. The name, also spelt Mabuasehube, is of Ngologa origin and is said to mean ‘red earth’, ‘red soil’. There is also a pan with the same name, and that was explained as ‘*gemsbok pan*’. It could therefore, not only refer to the red soil of the region, i.e. the Kalahari sand, but also contain components that refer to the gemsbok or *Oryx gazella*, for example, !*xum*, //*x*<sup>^</sup>*m* as indicated above.

Another name said to refer to the oryx is Nonkaikop in the Northern Cape. It is a hill 871 m above sea level, 30 km south-south-east of Onseepkans. The name is also encountered as Nongcaip se Kop. The expression ‘*se Kop*’ is Afrikaans for ‘hill (hillock) of’. The name is taken from that of the locality, formerly an *outspan*, which was recorded as Honceip in 1779. In this case, it is said to be derived from Khoikhoi and refers to the ‘black gemsbok’, ≠*nu* /*gaib* (Raper *et al* 2014:375).

#### 5.3.4 *The sable antelope*

The sable antelope (*Hippotragus niger*) is named ‘*swartwitpens*’ in Afrikaans; in Swazi and Zulu, it is called *impalampale(a)*, in Shangaan *mhalamhala*, in Shona it is *mharapara ngwarati*. In Tswana and Lozi, it is called *kwalata*; in Northern Sotho and Venda *phalafala*; in Ndebele *ngwaladi*, *umtshwayeli*; in Nama and Damara it is known as the ≠*nu* !*na* /*gaeb*. Bleek (1956:750) gives names from Bushman as *hau* and *koa* from Hukwe (C2b), *solupe*, *solupi* from Hie (C1), both these sets of names from the Central Group, but often indicated too in the north-eastern languages spoken mainly in the Botswana and Kalahari regions.

The toponym Mhalamhala, in Limpopo, refers to a tributary of the Mphongolo in the Kruger National Park, some 32 km south-south-east of Punda Maria. It was earlier reported that this watercourse had no name, and that officials of the Kruger National Park applied this designation. The name is of Shangaan origin and means

'sable antelope'. The name is also borne by a hill 14 km east of Letaba, by a hill 24 km north of Skukuza, and by a tributary of the Bondzweni, 18 km east of Letaba (Raper *et al* 2014:323).

### 5.3.5 *The lechwe*

The lechwe (Tribe Reduncini, *Kobus leche/lechwe*) belongs to the aquatic antelopes, and like others of its kind, may have designations in some of the Bantu and Bushman languages that are examples of sound imitation or names associated with their specific behaviour patterns. Some of these renderings (resembling sounds) may be found in the reduplicative syllabic composition of their names. The *lechwe*, seen as a kind of, or associated with the 'waterbuck', has been referred to, in some sources, as 'waterbuck', '*basterwaterbok*' and '*waterkoedoe*' (they are in fact from the same family of *Kobus* antelope). Walker (1996:190, 196), however, categorises the 'red lechwe' with the Afrikaans name where it is called the '*basterwaterbok*'; the '*waterkoedoe*' correctly as the *sitatunga* (*Tragelaphus spekii*), and the '*waterbuck*' (*Kobus ellipsiprymnus*), is recognised as the larger and more wide-spread, real '*waterbok*'. Known in Afrikaans also as '*kringgat*' because of the round white stripes on its hind shanks (Walker 1996:188).

Estes (2012:vii, 91-114) gives clear categorisations to the various divisions under the *Reduncini* tribe including the reedbucks, kob, lechwe, waterbuck and rheebeck. Though the tsesseby was initially named in this respect as another one of the 'waterbuck', it clearly is not. (See discussion under Tribe *Alcelaphini*, wildebeests). Yet, just as in the case of other names for animals, where no clear distinctions were made to the interviewers initially between the different species, it happened here as well. The names were used interchangeably, or one group of speakers from one language used a name for an antelope that was known in another language by the same name.

Bleek (1956:769) recorded under entries for 'water-buck', this antelope as being called *gwelun-gwele* in the Hie (C1) language; as *kurandom* in the Hukwe (C2b) language (1956:107). The Hukwe-speakers live specifically in the lechwe's typical habitat of the Caprivi region, north of the Tsaukwe speakers that lived north-east of the Naron speakers west of Lake Ngami and Bechuanaland (now Botswana). Note the apparent cognate component *-gwele* with the name *lechwe*. She indicated the words *letfu*, *lutfo* in Hie (C1) for 'sassaby' (tsesseby) as synonymous with *lechu*,

and where she described it under 'sassaby', she also gave the form as *lutfu* (1956:53, 130). These variant forms seem to be cognate, or, at least, phonologically similar. Where under *letfu*, she indicates the form *leche*, also from the Hie (C1) language, it may be assumed synonymous or either cognate with, or very close to and perhaps identical to the adaptation as *lechwe*, *le chwee*, and the forms from other Bantu languages, e.g. *letshwee* in Tswana, and in the Lozi language *lizwii* as recorded by Walker (1996:190-191).

A word for water in the Batwa (S3) language is *fa*; in Naron (C2) it is *tfafa*, and *tsaa* in Hie (C1). These words could possibly relate to the names of the waterbuck as root onymic formatives, indicating indeed the 'buck residing at', or 'of the water'; also the verb 'to water' as *tfi*: from Auen (N1); and *tfafi* from the Sesarwa (S5) language, may be original root onymic formatives. These different words for 'water' and the concept of water were probably incorporated in or associatively linked to the names of the antelope.

The distribution of this aquatic antelope, the *lechwe*, is indicated as: "floodplains bordering swamps in the Southern Savanna, centered in Zambia...Angola and Botswana" (Estes 2012:102-3). It also occurs mainly in the swampy regions of the southern African countries, such as the far northern borders of Namibia and right up into some mid-Africa countries. In Botswana and these northern regions of Namibia, in the Okavango and in parts along the Kunene River, it tends to live out most of its day in the water, only fleeing to higher ground or onto bosses when hunted, where leopards and lions often lie in wait.

The greatest number of red lechwe live mainly in the floodplains and swamps of the great Okavango Delta of Botswana with its lagoons, and along riverine areas and marshy banks of the Caprivi, Angola and Namibia (Estes 2012:103). It constantly traverses with its splayed feet, from resting on higher ground, to the watery masses of the delta area, the rivers and reed beds to feed on soft grasses, sedges, tendrils and roots of water plants. Walker (1996:190) notes: "When alarmed, it bounds through the grass-covered *melapo* (lagoons) with strong splashes...". Estes (2012:102-106) makes the same observations: "...hooves adapted for swampy terrain, elongated with wide splay and naked pasters, are its main survival kit". Their fleeing behaviour when alarmed or attacked by predators, is characterised by the activity made with these hooves: wildly splashing and jumping in all directions through the water, from the floodplains or lagoons onto higher ground or to hide between thick reeds. Ironically, their main habitat of grazing and breeding in floodplains and marshy

areas, may have led to them being especially vulnerable to lions and other predators, such as leopards.

This may, as indicated above, suggest a possible origin for the name: that it derives from the sound that their splayed hooves make while fleeing the predators and hunters. Indeed, it is an apt name, which may be interpreted as imitating this habit of bounding through the mud and plant material of the swampy areas. The sound association of the name lies in the component *chwe* or *chwee* (*tjwe-tjwe* a sort of suction sound through water), which, possibly, gave rise to the onomatopoeic name.

Estes concludes on the lechwe's behaviour (2012:102-106) that other vocalisations of the antelope that have been recorded are whinnying grunts and soft whistling when calling to each other, these vocalisations are "stimulated by other moving or calling lechwes", and that no particular "loud or high whistling sounds" are made when alarmed (Estes 2012:104). More than that is not yet known because of this elusive antelope's very shy nature.

These distinctive behaviour patterns of the lechwe may, thus, have triggered a sound-associative phonemic representation of the name ascribed to them by the early Stone Age hunters. The origin of the name in Bushman as *nutse* and *leche*, in Lozi as *lezwii*; in the other Bantu languages where they are called *le chwe*, *letshwee* as in Tswana, or *le chwee*, and in Yei as *unjya*, illustrates the possibility that this is indeed a sound-associative name, applied across various language groups and allocated to their distinctive way of fleeing.

The name of the *lechwe* may, thus, quite possibly have been formed from these sounds emulating the sucking sounds made by its elongated, splayed hoofs through plant tendrils as the antelope takes flight through the water, thus: *tfo*, *tfu*, *chwe* or *chwee*. The assumption that the name of the *lechwe* derived from this distinctive behaviour, seemed a possible conclusion. How this relates to toponyms of the region has not yet been established.

### 5.3.6 *The waterbuck*

The true waterbuck (*Kobus ellipsiprymnus*), 'waterbok' in Afrikaans, is another one of these antelope frequenting areas near water. Bleek did not distinguish it by name, except for the above-mentioned *gwelun-gwele* in the Hie (C1) language and the *kurandom* in the Hukwe (C2b) language (Bleek 1956:107, 769); unless one accepts

that the names she indicated above for the *lechwe* were, possibly, synonymously accorded to the waterbuck as the 'buck residing at the water'.

In the Bantu languages it is known as the *phiva* in Zulu and Swazi, *pitlhwa* in Tswana and Sotho, *mhitlwa* in Shangaan, *phidwa* in Venda, *isidumuka* in Ndebele, *dumukwa* in Shona, and in Nama and Damara it is //gampiris. The forms from the Bantu languages may correlate in the components *-ka*, *-va*, *-tlhwa*, *tlwa*, *dwa* and *kwa* with the toponym Eeshowa in Ovamboland in the northern regions of Namibia (Albertyn 1984:84), said to refer to the waterbuck in the area.

The name in Nama and Damara as //gampiris opens the possibility to compare it to the name for the 'waterbuck' or 'waterbok' as translations, where //gam is 'water', the *-piri* compares with *-biri* in //N!ke (S2) and in /Nu//en (S6), *bri-*, *piri* for 'buck' and 'goats'; the *p* and *b* variation evident. The name for this waterbuck as //gampiris, then, is literally to be read as 'water-buck'. To note here, is that the waterbuck is not a small buck, but a heavy antelope, adults reaching a mass of 200-250 kg, the *piri* and *biri* variables usually indicating the smaller 'bokkie'-types, also 'goats' in the Nama language. In Nienaber and Raper (1977:79, 262-263) no specific references to the waterbuck are found either, only in their discussion of the general term or references to the domesticated goats or 'bokkies', 'skaapbokke'; otherwise as 'goat-like bokkies', or sometimes the wild antelope, as small 'bokkies', and so forth. They discussed i.a. place names in Nama, such as Birinhub (as a name in the Northern Cape, but also as reference by the Khoikhoi to the former Bechuanaland ('Goatland', the 'land of the goat herders')). In addition to this is Biritigous, a settlement of Topnaars near Walfisch Bay, of which the explanation by the informant Paul Diamond in 1969 as 'Bokkiefontein', can now be accepted; this from *biri* for 'goat' or 'bokkie'; and /ous for 'fountain'.

The name of the *waterbuck*, however, could so far only be found in a few place names, in possible references such as Phiva, a settlement in the Barberton district, Mpumalanga, derived from this designation *i-phiva* from the Zulu and Swazi languages, and as in other Nguni languages where it is known as *imbavana*, *impivane*, *iphiva* for 'waterbuck' (Raper *et al* 2014:36). It may also be recognised in such variants as Bivana and Pivaan or oPhivane; and in the forms *isi-dumuka* from Ndebele and *dhumukwa* in Shona, occurring in the toponym Ka-Dumukwane situated in Mpumalanga, on the border with Limpopo (DGSM Digital gazetteer 1982-2000; PLAC Database, MP 1982-2000).

### 5.3.7 *The bushbuck*

The bushbuck (*Tragelaphus scriptus*), in Afrikaans ‘*bosbok*’, keeps mainly to dense bush and riverine areas but also inhabits savannah areas and some parts of the bushveld in great numbers, e.g. as in the Waterberg. Place names that refer to this antelope are i.a. Bosebokhoek, the Bosebokrand or Bushbuck Ridge area of Mpumalanga and so forth. Its name may have been the motive for the name Rolle in Mpumalanga, a railway station 20 km south-east of Acornhoek, on the route to Kaapmuiden, and a settlement there. The name is said to be derived from Northern Sotho *serolle* for ‘bushbuck’ (Raper *et al* 2014:439). The same word, as an adaptation, is found in Thabakgolo, ‘mountain of the bushbuck’, situated in the Bushbuck Ridge area (Raper *et al* 2014:492). This name may have the same link in the component *kgolo* from the Northern Sotho *serolle*, and Tswana has *serolo-bo-tlhoko* as name for the bushbuck.

Of the place name Timbavati, one explanation was given as “place of many bushbuck” (Raper *et al* 2014:497). This root component *mbava* is comparable to other names in the indigenous languages as spoken in the area, for example, Shangaan *mbvala* and Venda *mbavhala* for ‘bushbuck’. Walker (1996:192) also gives the following names for the bushbuck in other Bantu languages as: *imbabala* in the Nguni languages, Lozi *mbabala*, in Yei it is *ungulungu* and in Nama and Damara *!garapiris*.

### 5.3.8 *Reedbuck*

Reedbuck (*Redunca arundinum*) in Afrikaans called ‘*rietbok*’. A few place names with references to some indigenous names of this antelope have been preserved. Walker (1996:164) gives the names as: *ntlangu* in Xhosa, *nxala* in Zulu, *inhlangu* in Swazi, *nhlangu* in Shangaan, *umziki* in Ndebele, *lekwena* in Sotho, *sebugatla* in Tswana, *dahvu* in Venda, *mutobo* in Lozi, *unvwi* in Yei, *bimha* in Shona, *≠ā!aris* in Nama and Damara. The place name Chayanhlangu in Mpumalanga refers to a tributary of the Munyauni, which it joins about 6 km west of Tshokwane in the Kruger National Park. The name is of Swazi and Shangaan origin and said to mean ‘strike the reedbuck’. This was apparently the nickname of the game ranger Johan Kloppers, given to him because a reedbuck ewe ran against his vehicle in 1957, stunning itself (Raper *et al* 2014:69). The name *unvwi* in the Yei language correlates with the name of the river Munyauni, the main watercourse. Hlanguphalala in Limpopo is a tributary of the Phugwane River, which it enters 18 km north-north-west of Shangoni in the Kruger National Park. The name is said to be Tsonga for

‘gathering place of reedbuck’ (Raper *et al* 2014:185). Yet it appears to correlate rather with the concept or expression of: “gathering place of both the reedbuck and the impala”, since the names of both the antelopes appear in the toponym. It may thus be a composite name with both a reference to the reedbuck as *hlangu* and the impala (‘*rooibok*’) as *phala*, since both these antelope occurred there in great numbers. The reedbuck antelope “generally inhabits areas of grassland and floodplains, favouring reedbeds alongside permanent water. A shrill whistle, often heard at night, is uttered when alarmed” (Walker 1996:164).

### 5.3.9 *The springbuck*



Figure 5.3.9 Three springbuck [Daniel Otte]

The springbuck antelope (*Antidorcas marsupialis*), called ‘*springbok*’ in Afrikaans, have a few descriptive names in Bushman and Khoikhoi that may be seen as both descriptive of its colours or a visualisation of its behaviour. In the Khoikhoi language they are called i.a. //gû, //gub, but are also associated with the word //hurib, i.e. a noun for ‘waves of the sea’, depicting the white crest of these waves. This word is used descriptively in a metaphoric sense to refer to the white stripes on the springbucks flanks and tail-ends; a concept of the buck as they take flight and jump through long grass, giving the appearance of wave crests whipped up by the wind. Kroenlein (1889:181) was given this explanation by his interviewees: “Do you not see, how those springbuck have lifted their white back stripes as they flee in graceful leaps and bounds?”...“The springbuck has many similarities with the waves



of the lake or sea when the wind whips them up, so that on them too, the white stripes appear” (*author’s translation*).

The reference to, or description of the colour of the springbuck as comparison to ‘waves, water waves’, has the same root designation from the Bushman and Khoikhoi words //gû, //gub, /hurib. Is it possible that these words have a common component that is a metaphoric visualisation (wherein the springbucks’ white flanks or sides are associated with the word for waves, e.g. as in the white whipped crests of waves), or is it a description of the movement of the antelope when running, fleeing or bounding across the veld? Jumping in leaps and bounds especially when in flight over hindrances like fences, or through long grass or thick bushes (compare the Afrikaans names ‘springbok’), and that this was seen by the early name givers as a ‘wave like’ movement? That the springbucks, like waves, are moving in and out of long grass, and that this may have been associated with the movement of water, bubbling waves as over rocks in rivers?

River names that may relate to this visualisation, i.e. a metaphoric association of the water waves having the likeness or appearance of something seen as leaping away rapidly as the habit of this antelope is, may have been coined thus after the antelope. The /Xam (S1) have a name for the springbuck ǀpwa (Bleek (1929:79), and the elements of *pha* and *pho* could have been used interchangeably as in other similar onymic and toponymic formative cases, and the *a* and *o* variation is not unusual either.

The Bushman have many other descriptive names for the springbuck (Bleek 1929:79), like /kōã from the //Xegwi or Batwa (S3) language; /goa from /Nu //en (S6) and /kxaie from the Hie (C1) language that correlates well with the Khoikhoi name form, /haëb, also written with the alveolar click as ≠hāëb in Nienaber (1963:465-466), thus indicating some uncertainty as to its origin either from Griekwa or Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects. This name has been described by Kroenlein (1889:157) as a noun that refers to the ‘springbuck gazelle’, and is apparently specifically used to compare someone’s skinny legs to the thin legs or bones of this gazelle.

The first toponym referring to this animal that springs to mind is that of the town Springbok in the Northern Cape, some 565 km north of Cape Town. This is the principal town of the Namaqualand district, and it was initially called Springbokfontein, a translated form of the Khoi-San name Guchas “which means ‘springbok spring’ after the antelope,...the component *gu* cognate with the Auen



(N1) *!gub* and the Khoikhoi *//gūb* ‘springbok’; the component *chas* from *≠ā* as in /Nu //en (S6), or *≠hā* from the Auen (N1) language” (Raper *et al* 2014:475).

The second well-known designation of this antelope’s name is found in the toponym Springbok Flats (Springbokvlakte in Afrikaans). These flats are a depression between Pretoria and Bela-Bela, extending towards Modimolle (former Nylstroom) and beyond, that was known for its abundance of these antelope in earlier times (Raper *et al* 2014:475; Maps DGSM 1988, 1:250 000, 1:50 000). It also occurs in several Khoikhoi place names, such as Goedom (*//gudomi*, as ‘springbokkeel’ i.e. ‘springbuck throat’); as well as Gumchuchanub and Gougo derived from *//gū* or *//gou* (Nienaber & Raper 1980:45, 342, 365).

The components *gu*, *//gū* and *//gu-b*, are possibly also represented in the second component of the Tswana name Maputsane, alternatively it could have been derived from the name for the springbuck calf *᠓pwa* of the /Xam (S1) language (Bleek 1929:79). It is the name of a settlement near Kuruman in the Northern Cape, and its name was explained as a reference to the ‘many *springbokke* there’ (PLAC Database NC-PLNM, 1982-2000).

Another toponym with the meaning of ‘place of *springbok*’ is Tshepeng, a shallow pan or depression some 65 km north-west of the town Vryburg in the Northern Cape, with the form *tshē*- also occurring in the toponym Tshetshwana. This toponym refers to a settlement near Vryburg, referring to ‘small springbok’ (PLAC Database NC-PLNM, 1982-2000). Bleek (1929:79) gives *≠exa* from Kung (N2) for ‘springbuck’ that was adapted into the Tswana components *tshetshwa* with the diminutive *na* as indicator of ‘small’. Alternatively, the *tshē* in the Tswana name was derived from the word *≠hā-eb* for springbuck in Nama, with the palatal click *≠* concurring with *tsh*, and thus indicative of the close phonemic cluster relation that led to more than one variant onymic formative, actively engaged in the designation of the antelope and the toponymic or name allocations in the region.

Ovambo and Herero names referring to the antelope that still occur there in great numbers, also the springbuck, particularly in the northern regions around Etosha and naturally elsewhere on open grassland, abound in Namibia. The names of the springbuck are derived from various of the onymic formatives, the same as in the other Bantu languages. One such example, exemplifying, once again, the interchangeability of names, is Omenje in the Omaruru district where these antelope occurred (Albertyn 1984:70). The place name in this form, derived from an appellative for some kind of ‘buck’, is *menje*, said to refer to the *springbok*, but in

this form seems to be more cognate or similar to the reference to a *steenbok*, as the Shangaan name *shipene*, and the Shona *mhene*, illustrate. It may have been derived from a common onymic ancestor, or from the Bushman *≠kwenja*, but possibly also from /*kaie* and the Khoikhoi *!hä-e-b* that all refer to this white-striped and fleet-footed antelope.

### 5.3.10 *The impala*

The *impala* (*Aepyceros melampus*) is called 'rooibok' in Afrikaans. Toponyms referring to this antelope, or that may be considered as stemming from the presence of this antelope in large numbers as naming motive, are i.a. Lephhalale and Phalala in Limpopo, Rooiboklaagte, Rooibokpan, Rooibokrivier, and so forth. (Raper *et al* 2014:440).

The name of the antelope is found in the name of the river known as Palala River or Phalala. It is known in its translated form in Afrikaans as Rooibokrivier, and this name refers to a tributary of the Limpopo that rises in the Waterberg some 40 km north of Nylstroom. It enters the main stream between the Mokolo and Mogolakwena rivers (Raper *et al* 2014:404, 411). It also serves as the name of the region and a post office, and is the root component in the town name Lephhalala (Raper *et al* 2014:273-274).

The impala, a medium-sized antelope still occurs there in great numbers on game farms, but not as much in its natural habitat of earlier times. In the toponym the root word or lexeme is *phala* also *pala* as in the Hie (C1) language, cognate with the Hukwe (C2b) *gala*, *galla*, etc. referring to the 'rooibok', the component *ga* comparable to the word *!ga*, 'red'. The final component *la* a fluvial generic as found in many river names such as Pongola, Tugela, and so on.

In the Lebombo range in Limpopo one of the peaks is called Mhala; it lies 14 km north-north-west of Olifants camp in the Kruger National Park. The name is derived from Tsonga *mhala*, 'impala', 'rooibok' in Afrikaans, cognate with the Hie (C1) *pala*, 'rooibok'. In Namibia one finds Ombalala, with the *p* and *b* unvoiced and voiced variation discernible, said to refer to the impala or 'rooibok' (Albertyn 1984:87).

Mhalayathlaha in Mpumalanga is a tributary of the Sand River, the confluence 8 km north-east of Skukuza. Tsonga for 'the impala that gores', the name was given because a wounded impala attacked a senior game ranger, Colonel Rowland-Jones (Raper *et al* 2014:323).

A settlement in the Bushbuckridge magisterial district in Mpumalanga is known by the Tsonga name Nqumathini. This name replaces the Afrikaans name Rooiboklaagte for the settlement on the farm Rooiboklaagte. Bushman words for impala include *guun* and *!jou*, from the Kung (N2) language (Bleek 1956:400, 727), comparable to the Tsonga word *nqhu*. The designation for a *rooibok*, or impala, in Bushman could well have been translated into Afrikaans by the local speakers of the Bushman languages themselves, and have been an early adaptation into Tsonga. This original meaning was, then, probably forgotten or lost (Raper *et al* 2014:379). It is apparently also called *ñgu* in some early dialects of Bushman, but the name then pronounced distinctly with a more nasalised sound (with a tilde on the *ñ* indicating a more nasalised form of *n*). This apparently is a good representation of the animal's loud grunting snorts when threatened, as Walker (1996:170) notes: "They have acute hearing and have been known to frighten elephants by uttering loud snorts when alarmed by the approach of humans", also in its call when initiating a fight. It is said to be more pronounced as a sound made through their nostrils.

Other names to compare are from Botswana according to Phalagae (2015, UNGEGN Newsletter): Palapye (with variant spellings as Phalapgwe, Palachwe, and Phalatswe), and Mahalapye that are all derived from the references to the 'rooibok' or impala. She further relates that both names are derived from the Kgalagadi dialects and the Kalanga language. According to Bulpin (1986:784-785) both Palapye and Mahalapye were named from the number of impala antelope which once roamed the area. For both names he also indicates the alternative spellings Phalatswe and Mhalatswe.

Palapye is a village in Botswana and lies to the north-west of the Tswapong Hills, 50 km south-east of Serowe and 70 km north-east of Mahalapye. According to Bulpin (1986:785) it is also a railway and agricultural centre, situated near the coal mine at Morupule, 6 km to the west. The name was transferred from a former capital of Chief Khama that was abandoned in 1902. The name is said to be derived from *phalatswe*, 'the whistling of an impala' (Raper *et al* 2014:404), or from *phalabgwe* 'rock of the impala'.

Mahalapye is also known as Mhalatswe. This village, and, with it, the agricultural and railway centre and station, derives its name from the impala antelope which once frequented the area in large numbers. The village lies 200 km north-east of Gaborone and 150 km south-west of Francistown (USGAZ NP-Botswana, 1992). The name is thought to be of pre-Tswana origin and to refer to *impala*, or else to mean 'you settled on the rock'. In the former explanation, the component *hala* is

cognate with the Hukwe (C2b) *gala, galla, pala*, ‘impala, *rooibok*’, displaying the variation of the initial consonant (Raper *et al* 2014:292). An observation by Bulpin (1986:784) may concur with the second interpretation, since he describes the village as lying about 45 km east of “the old Ngwato capital of Shoshong, now much smaller in size but containing relics of stone walls and signs of mining and smelting”.

In the Afrikaans descriptive name of the impala as ‘*rooibok*’, it may indeed be a direct translation of the Bushmans’ description of the antelope’s colour. According to Bleek (1956:748) the Bushman words for ‘red’ appear as *ga, taakue, /geje* in the Hie (C1) language, and this may approximate or be cognate to the components in the names Mahalapye and Palapye. In her vocabularies Bleek (1929:69) further notes for ‘red’ words like *ˀkie* from /Xam (S1), /*kamse* Batwa (S3); /*kanja* Sesarwa (S5); *ˀgane* from (S6); *!gã:* from Auen (N1); *!ga:, !gaa* from Kung (N2); /*nuo-a* from Naron (C2) and /*ava* and //*gani* from Nama. Similar words for ‘red’ recorded by Bleek are *ŋ//kxaba* from //Kxau (S2b); *≠gã* from Auen (N1) (Bleek 1956:644), all comparable with *pa(la), ga(la), mha(la)*. The forms with the *a*-vowel clusters all seem cognate with the earlier forms *gala, galla*, which also displays the voiced velar consonant *g*, which may correspond with other names that she recorded for the impala, namely *a:ras* and *k”ara*. The component *la* of *pala, gala, mhala* is cognate with the Hadza (C3) word *txla:* for ‘buck’ (Bleek 1956:245, 701), the whole component or reference *pala*, in the above toponyms, thus ‘red buck’.

These words may all have undergone sound shifts and click replacements, click softening or other phonemic adaptations. The Tswana place names translating exactly from the Hie and Hadza words; the other forms with *!ga:, /ava; gala, a:ras* and *k”ara* all cognate to the *pala, phala* as explicated in the components of the toponyms. Phalaborwa may thus, in its first component, actually refer to the *impala* and be included here.

## 5.4 The smaller and dwarf antelope

### 5.4.1 *The steenbok*

The steenbok (*Raphicerus campestris*) has been known by many names in the Bushman and Khoikhoi languages. These were recorded extensively by Bleek (1929:80; 1956:357, 759) as *!koen* in /Xam (S1) and //N!ke (S2); as *!xo:* in Batwa (S3); as *≠kō* in /Auni (S4); as */gai* in Sesarwa (S5); as */gi:* in /Nu //en (S6); as */au,*

/ou, /ho, /hõ in Auen (N1); as /ou in Kung (N2); as ʔhum in !O!kuŋ (N3); as *gaie*: in Hie (C1); as *!geiba* in Naron (C2); as ≠gai in the Tsaukwe (C2a) language (Bleek 1956: 644). In Khoikhoi she indicated it as *!áris*. Bleek (1956:585) recorded variants such as //khoini from /Xam (S1), of which the synonyms are /koenje, /koinje; !kenja, ≠kwenja, this latter being synonymous with the /Auni (S4) !koenja as indicated in Bleek (1956:667). These names, pronounced distinctly with a more nasalised sound indicated with the tilde on the õ or with the *n*, are possibly a good representation of the animal's whistling call when initiating a flight as indicated by Estes (2012:43, 62).



Figure 5.4.1 Steenbok silhouette [Daniel Otte]

Some of the names for the steenbok in the Bantu languages as recorded by Walker (1996:158) often sound similar to some of the Bushman names, indicating either trans-language or another form of language interaction. He recorded the following names for the antelope: Zulu *qhina*, Xhosa *shabanga*, Ndebele *ingina*, Shangaan *shipene*, Shona *mhene*, Swazi *lingcina*, Sotho *thiane*; Yei *ughwi*; Lozi *kabu*, Tswana *phuduhudu*, Venda *phuluvhulu*; in Damara it is *!airis* and the Nama is *!aris*.

When these different designations are compared and grouped together with the different Bushman names for the antelope, according to the Bushman speakers distribution as documented and categorised by Bleek into a Northern, Central and Southern group of speakers, the similarities become even more obvious.

A list of the names as gleaned from Bleek (1956:759) are sorted below and compared to the name equivalents in some Bantu languages. It is included here to elucidate the possible close language contact that may have influenced the borrowing as loan words, adaptation or other transference or interlinguistic exchange processes.

This process could have resulted in the underlying onymic formative being used in various references, i.e. even in the interchangeability of names for antelopes of the same smaller kind. For example, in Tswana, the oribi is also called *phuduhudu* but with the distinction of *kgamane* added to the name; the *grysbok*, blue *duiker* and common *duiker* are all called *phuti* in Tswana and Southern Sotho according to Walker (1996:146-156).

From the Bushman Northern group: /*au*, /*ou*, /*ho*, /*hō* (Auen N1); /*ou* (Kung N2); /*hum* !O!kuŋ (N3) – names with the diphthongs *au*, *ou*, and so forth, that may compare to the Bantu as in Lozi *kabu*; Tswana *phuduhudu*; Venda *phuluvhulu*, Ovambo *pundia*.

From the Central group: *gaie*: in Hie (C1); *!geiba* in Naron (C2), variants *ga*, *≠gai* in Tsaukwe (C2a) and other dialects.

From the Southern group: *!koen*, *!koenja*, *≠kwenja*, //*koini* in /Xam (S1) and //N!ke (S2); *!xo*: Batwa (S3); *≠kō* /Auni (S4); */gai* Sesarwa (S5), (and in various dialects), */gi*: (/Nu //en (S6) – comparable to Bantu names as in Sotho *thiane*, Ndebele *ingina*, Zulu *qhina*, Xhosa *shabanga*, Swazi *lingcina*, Shangaan *shipene*, Shona *mhene*.

Toponyms referring to the *steenbok* often appear in adapted or translated forms, many occurring in Afrikaans translations. These translations were either given by the Bushmen and Khoikhoi, who had become well-versed in Afrikaans, or by the Afrikaans speakers, but some may be acknowledged as originally coined by the Afrikaans speakers themselves. These are i.a. Steenbok se Berge in the Northern Cape; Steenboksberg, -fontein, -vlakte, and so on; and the Steenboksrivier from the earlier Dutch Steenbokken Rivier, that was a translation of the earlier Khoikhoi name Gawdachama also situated in the Western Cape. This name, dating from 1707, was said to mean ‘steenbok river’, referring to the occurrence there of the antelope. The component *gawda*, corresponding to the Old Cape Khoikhoi *gauda* recorded in 1695, may be indicative in the component *gau*, and indeed be cognate with Bushman words for the *steenbok* such as *\_/au*, *≠kō*, /*ou*, /*ho* and /*ou* above. The component *chama*, presumably corresponding to the Old Cape Khoikhoi *kamma* recorded in 1691, refers to ‘water’ and functions, here, as fluvial generic indicating the specific ‘river of the steenbok’ (Raper *et al* 2014:476). The same cognates are found in the place name Goobies (Nienaber & Raper 1980:45). These toponyms are all indicative of the wide-spread presence of these dainty antelope, the ‘steenbokkies’. The ‘steen’ in steenbok could be derived from a reference to stone in Bushman, e.g. *\_!kau*,

//*khuru* described as a ‘sharp stone’ (Bleek 1929:80), and could have been adapted to *phudu* in the Bantu languages’ reference to this antelope, and been translated to ‘steenbokkie’ in Afrikaans.

The following places recall a different form of reference to the steenbok in the component or word *!aris* from the Heikum (N2a), as recorded in Bleek (1956:759) and Nama *!aris* for ‘steenbok’ (Bleek 1929:80; 1956:759), where she indicated the words *gaie*: in Hie (C1), *≠gai* in Tsaukwe (C2a) and */gai* in Sesarwa (S5), that may relate to these cognate forms and may have acted as the root onymic formatives in the toponyms under discussion.

Aries in the Northern Cape, for example, is a settlement some 38 km north-west of Riemvasmaak and 6 km south-south-east of Fincham Mine. The name, of Khoikhoi origin, is said to mean ‘steenbok spring’, from *!aris*, ‘steenbok’ (Raper *et al* 2014:17).

The name Arribeas, that of a farm approximately 40 km from Kakamas in the Kenhardt district, means ‘place of many *steenbok*’. According to B. van Vreeden (1961:166) quoted in Nienaber and Raper (1977:82, 220), the name is derived from the same Nama word *!aris*. Equally, the name Ariesfontein in the Northern Cape refers to a railway siding 30 km east-north-east of Lime Acres, on the route Koopmansfontein – Postmasburg and has the same origin from the Khoikhoi *!aris*. The generic element *fontein* is Afrikaans for ‘spring’, ‘fountain’.

Even the name of the Kariega River in the Eastern Cape contains in its first component *karie-*, an adaptation of the Khoikhoi *!ari* (-s) for ‘steenbok’. The river arises some 37 km north-west of Uitenhage in the Great Winterhoek Mountains and flows northwards and eastwards to its confluence with the Sundays River 8 km west of Kirkwood. The farm Steenbok Vlakte, adjoining the farm *Kariega*, has a name translated from the Khoikhoi name *Kariega*. The component *≠ga* means ‘flat’, in Afrikaans *vlakte* (Raper *et al* 2014:226).

Some Tswana place names may contain elements or components cognate with or derived from the Bushman words *!koen* in the /Xam (S1) and */ou*, */ho* in Auen (N1); */ou* in Kung (N2); *ʔhum* in !O!kung (N3) as discussed above from Bleek. Phuduhutswe or Steenbokspan is such an example. It is a depression situated in Botswana in the Kgalegadi district, 150 km east of the border of Namibia and 70 km south of the Tropic of Capricorn. The name for the ‘steenbok’ in Tswana,

as indicated earlier, is *phuduhudu*, and the toponym, thus, means ‘steenboks pan’ (Raper *et al* 2014:413).

#### 5.4.2 *The oribi*

The *oribi* (antelope type *Ourebia ourebi*) is another of the smaller antelope often called dwarf antelopes; in Afrikaans it is called ‘*oorbietjie*’. Its name is used as toponymic motive and formative in many place names, i.a. names such as Oribi Flats, Oribi Hill, and the Oribi Gorge in KwaZulu-Natal (Raper *et al* 2014:396). These toponyms also refer to a suburb, a nature reserve with a ravine some 20 km long and up to 300 m deep, cut by the Mzimkulwana River, 20 km north-west of Port Shepstone.

Meinhof (1909:118, quoted in Boshoff and Nienaber 1967:465) gives the form as *!gore-bi*, an adaptation from the Khoi-San or Bushman original onymic formative, appearing in Bleek (1956:740) as *jaie*, *kwin tšep*, *vu* in various Bushman languages. Nienaber (1963:409-410) under *oorbietjie* (an Afrikaans adaptation of the indigenous name *oribi*), mentions that this name has disappeared in the Nama languages, but gives documented variations of the name of the antelope as *ourabi*, *orabi* (*vide jaie*), *orebi*, *ourebi*, *oribi*, both retained in the scientific sub-species name, and all derived from the Khoikhoi *!gorebi*. Estes (2012:57-62, 67) explains the vocalisation of the *oribi* as: “A sustained, high sharp whistle represents a higher state of alarm than a series of short (*is-is-is*) whistles. When caught or wounded, and sometimes when pursued by another oribi, an oribi bleats”. This ‘whistling’ and ‘bleating’ may have been heard and emulated as *jaie*, and *kwin* (both with high front vowels), adapted to *orabi*, possibly where *ja-ie* > (o)-*ra-bi*, with *j* and *r* variation in the consonantal phonemic adjustment.

Another example illustrating folk-etymological adaptation into Afrikaans, is the toponym Oorbietjiesfontein, a railway siding in the North West province, 7 km west of Hartbeesfontein, on the route from Klerksdorp to Ottosdal. The name means ‘oribi fountain’, referring to the *Ourebia ourebi*, recorded in 1783 already as *Antilope ourebi*. Nienaber concludes on the Afrikaans loan word adapted to “*oorbietjie*: -oribie, soort klein antilope, ook aangeteken as *orabie*, *gnometie*, en *erwetie* (by ouer skrywers)”, that is: it ‘was also recorded as *orabie*, *gnometrie* and *erwetie* by older writers’. These forms already indicate the *w* and *b* variation in the earlier recorded and adapted Khoi-San names.



In the Tswana language the name for an *oribi* is given as *phuduhudu kgamane* (Walker 1996:146), in Yei it is *untungu* and in Lozi it is *kamunda*.

The origin of the toponym Maphiniki was initially not quite clear. It is the name of a settlement near Thlaping Thlaro in the northern parts of the North West Province, approximately 45 km north-west of Kuruman. According to the fieldwork questionnaires of the DGSM it is said to refer to this small antelope, the 'oribi' (PLAC Database NW-PLNM, 1982-2000). Yet, interestingly, the names once again seem interchangeable, since the name for the *oribi* in Tswana is given as *phuduhudu kgamane*. Perhaps this *phiniki* is a dialectal variant derived from the name *phuti* for the common duiker, that has a wide-spread distribution in the region; or from *phiti* or *phuti* for the blue duiker in Tswana and other languages. Or that *phiniki* was adapted from the reference in Bushman to the common duiker *Opyn* as named in the Sesarwa (S5) language (Bleek 1929:35); but that is well-known as the *mpunzi* in Swazi, Zulu, Xhosa and Ndebele.

Apparently different versions of the word for 'small' or 'little' could be brought into this argument to sustain its relevance as a designation to a small type of antelope, i.e. dwarf antelope. It may thus simply be a description of the size of antelope that the place name refers to. Some of the antelope names already contain this root onymic formative for 'small' or 'little' in their composition, albeit sometimes adapted, e.g. as in *Opwainki* in //N!ke (S2) for 'little' (Bleek 1956:685). This is synonymous to *Opwa* from the /Xam (S1) and Sesarwa (S5) languages; *Opari* from Batwa (S3), perhaps realised in the names *orabi*, *aurabi*; also in the duiker antelope's name as *Opyn* in the Sesarwa (S5) language (Bleek 1929:35; 1956:713).

The most recognisable words in Bushman for 'small' that fit this concept of the dwarf antelope as 'little' in its name description, and as it appears in the toponym Maphiniki, would be *≠i*, *Opwoinki* both in //N!ke (S2) and /ki: from /Nu//en (S6) as recorded by Bleek (1929:76), since they are all phonologically and semantically comparable.

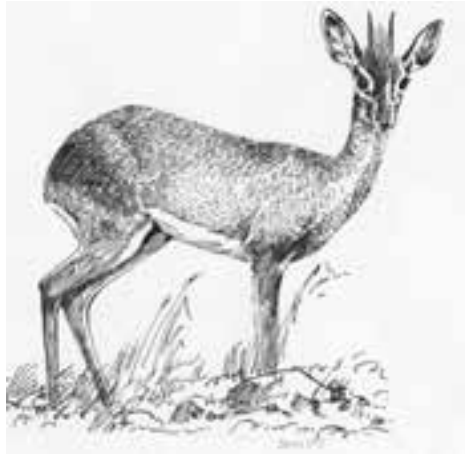


Figure 5.4.2 Damara dik-dik [Daniel Otte]

Comparing the components in the Tswana name Maphiniki as “place of the small (dwarf) antelope”, the oribi included, with the Bushman cognate words for ‘small’ and ‘little’, and with its various names in Bantu languages as discussed above, it could be argued that the second component *phiniki* approximates or is cognate to *᠋᠋pyn* and *kwin*. Also, the word *pa:ri* appears to relate to the dwarf antelope as in the words for *o-rabi*, *ou-rabi*. (Here, perhaps as in other cases, the confusion was not in identifying the correct dwarf antelope, but in identifying the correct concept that played a general, but an important role in the onymic formatives, as well as from which languages the names may have been derived. This interpretation of it as a ‘small’ antelope, can then be accepted as correct, also as indicated in the explanation given above to fieldworkers of the DGSM).

### 5.4.3 *The klipspringer*

The *klipspringer* (*Oreotragus oreotragus*) as named in Afrikaans, with a sub-species indicated as the Cape *klipspringer* which is called ‘*klipbokkie*’ (Roberts 1954:331), refers to its habit of living on cliffs and rocky outcrops, and of jumping from rock to rock (Estes 2012:52-556). According to Bleek (1956:249, 721) it is called *᠋᠋k’o* in /Xam (S1), *kululu* in the Hie (C1) language (Bleek 1956:106), and *uto:ntoin* in Kung (N2). It is known by its Tswana name *kololo*, which appears to be a close cognate with both *᠋᠋k’o* and *kululu* (with the *o* and *u* variation evident). In this form it was allocated as name for a game farm, lodge and conference centre Dikhololo, some 30 km north-west of Brits in the Northwest Province. This name, with its klipspringer

logo and picture of it posing on some stones or rocks, refers to the dainty antelope of the hillocks and mountainous regions of the area right up to the Waterberg and the Soutpansberg. The place name is derived from the /Xam  $\text{ˀ} //k\text{ò}$  (Bleek 1956:729), cognate with the component *kho* in the Tswana name.

Another place name that is a reference to this small antelope is Ingogo Heights in Kwa-Zulu-Natal. Pettman (1931:141) explains the name as deriving from the Zulu designation "... *iGogo*, Afr. *Klipspringer*, *Oreotragus saltator*". In Raper *et al* (2014:201) it is indicated as a locality some 20 km north of Newcastle, being the site of a battle during the First Anglo-Boer War (1881), and, that its name is derived from the name of the river Ngogo, originally named after the klipspringer (Raper *et al* 2014:368). In other Bantu languages the name is quite similar, e.g. in Shangaan and Venda it is *ngululu*; in Shona it is *ngururu*, in Ndebele it is *igogo*, in Swazi *ligoka*, in Northern Sotho *kome*; Nama and Damara use *//khâises* (Walker 1996:153). A place, described as a stoney outcrop on the route between Sabiesnek and Spitskop in the Mpumalanga Province, is called Logogote, and is said to take its name "from the number of *klipspringer* antelope which made their home there" (Bulpin 1974:142).

As indicated by Nienaber (1963:341) Witsen in 1691 already recorded this form of the name as "*k'gog-e, een klipspringer*", and argues that the name for this antelope which was widely used in various Bantu languages (quoting e.g. Xhosa and Zulu *igogo*, Swazi *ligoga*), had the 'Hottentot' word as basis and was, in other words, borrowed from the Khoikhoi. He continues to explain the meaning of the name as derived from *k'go* 'mountain' or 'stone' ('*klip*' in Afrikaans), and the component *g-e* or *goe* for 'sheep', thus 'mountain sheep' or 'stone buck' (*klipbok* in Afrikaans).

Perhaps the Klipbokberg in the Northern Cape is a reference to the *klipbokkie* which is known in Afrikaans as the *klipspringer* or 'stone-jumper' (Raper *et al* 2014:239), and not to the *gemsbok* or *Oryx gazella*, as previously read from Kroenlein (1889:195), referring to it as the "*Klippbock (Gemsbock der Wüste)*", yet, perhaps specifically to distinguish it from the other gazelles.

#### 5.4.4 *The duiker*

Of the other smaller antelopes, the *duiker* (*Sylvicapra grimmia*) is probably as wide-spread in its distribution as the steenbokkie and klipspringer, and shares some interesting onymic formatives with this class of small antelope. In Zulu, Swazi and Xhosa, the *duiker* is called *impunzi*, in Tswana and Sotho it is indicated as *phuti*

and the Lozi speakers call them *puti* as well, according to Walker (1996:156). These may be cognate to *mpu* and  $\Theta$ *pyn* (the bilabial click  $\Theta$  and efflux heard as *mp*, and the *y* pronounced as in French ‘du’ (Bleek 1929:35; 1956:713), for example, in the surname Du Plessis, which would render it as *mpun*. Other names recorded for the *duiker* by Bleek (1929:35; 1956:713) are: *nau* from /Xam (S1); *de-e* or *dee* from Hukwe (C2b); *lkei* from //N!ke (S2);  $\Theta$ *pyn* and //ko from Sesarwa (S5);  $\Theta$ hō from /Nu//en (S6); *xoa* from Hie (C1) and /*noufa* from Naron (C2). The words *de-e* of the Hukwa speakers and the *lke* and  $\neq$ *khe*: variants, could be seen as resembling its bleating call, thus quite possibly a sound-associative onymic formative.

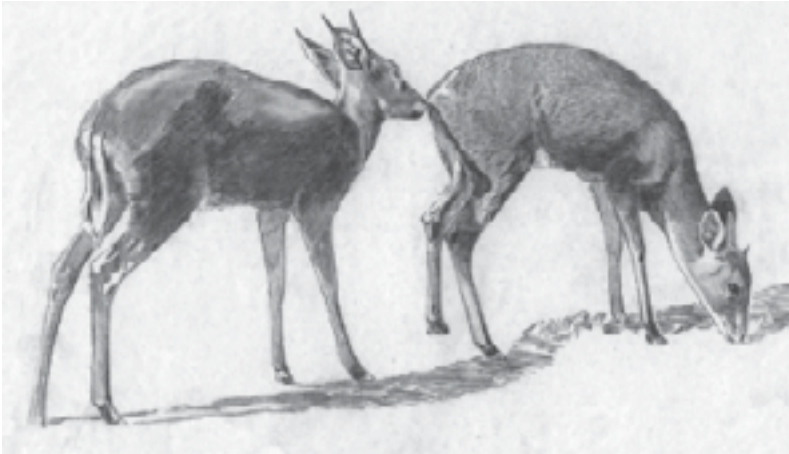


Figure 5.4.4 Grey Duikers [Daniel Otte]

References to the *duiker* in Ovambo in Namibia, where it is known as *-babi* or *bambi* are many, e.g. Ombabi (Albertyn 1984:87). The name of this small, shy antelope, as derived in Afrikaans from the word ‘duik’ to ‘dive away’ (Walker 1996:156) into the thickets as part of its fleeing habit, also occurs in many place names, either as original Afrikaans creations or as translated forms into Afrikaans, such as Duikerloop, Duikersdal, Duikershoek, Duikerweg, and so on (Albertyn 1984:8, 18, 31).

Place names containing Bushman and Khoikhoi words, referring to, or derived in some components from onymic formatives or names that indicate the duiker, are, for example, EPhuti in the Eastern Cape, a deep, large ravine entering the Blinkwater River 21 km west-south-west of Seymour and 10 km west-north-west of Lower Blinkwater, also encountered as Puti’s or Phuti’s Kloof, derived from Xhosa *iphuthi*, ‘the blue duiker’ (*Philantomba* or *Cephalopus monticola*). The component

*phu* approximates the /Nu //en (S6) word  $\theta h\bar{o}$ , or more likely the  $\Theta pyn$  from Sesarwa (S5) ‘*duiker bok*’ (Raper *et al* 2014:124, 422).

The *duiker*’s name as *mpunzi* appears also as naming motive in the following toponyms: Mzimpunzi, a stream that enters the Indian Ocean 23 km north-east of Port St Johns and flows 18 km south-east of Lusikisiki in the Eastern Cape. The name is said to mean “home of the *duiker*, from Xhosa *umzi*, ‘home’; *impunzi*, ‘*duiker*’.” (Raper *et al* 2014:355). The name of the IMpunzana, a tributary of the Cacadu River, which it enters 7 km south-west of Mqanduli in the Eastern Cape, is derived from Xhosa *impunzi*, ‘grey *duiker*’. This is cognate with the Sesarwa (S5)  $\Theta pyn$ , ‘*duiker* buck’, the component *zana* approximating the !O!kuŋ (N3) /*kana*, ‘to flow’, understood as ‘river’ (Raper *et al* 2014:198). The Mpunzi Drift is a ford in the Eastern Cape on the Mtamvuna River, 20 km east of Bizana. This name is also derived from Xhosa *impunzi*, a reference to the ‘grey *duiker*’. The generic term *drift* is Dutch and South African English for ‘ford’ (Raper *et al* 2014:349).

## CHAPTER SIX

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### The Equidae or horse family

#### 6.1 Zebras and kwaggas



Figure 6.1 (a) Zebra mare with foal [Daniel Otte]

Under zebras, wild asses and horses, Estes (2012:235-248) clearly distinguishes between the four different African species, including under the zebra types, such as Burchell's zebra, in Afrikaans *bontsebra* (*Equus burchelli*) or plains zebra; the *Equus zebra* or Mountain zebra (including references to the Cape mountain zebra (in Afrikaans *Kaapse bergsebra*) or *Equus zebra zebra*, and species of *Equus quagga* ('egte kwagga'), now extinct. These were earlier indicated by Roberts (1954:245-246) as the sub-species categories of *Equus zebra zebra*, *Equus montanus*, *Equus hartmannae* or Hartmann's zebra, also known earlier as the 'Damaralandse bergkwagga'; and the *Equus africanus* or African wild ass (Estes 2012:235). Skead (1987:872-876) described the differences between the Burchell's or plains zebra and the extinct quagga, their former wider distribution, and specifically the myths surrounding the earlier reports of distribution, appearance and occurrences of the latter in the Orange Free State or not, down to the Cape mountains, with full references and

quotation of sources, for example, Arbousset and Daumas (1846), Casalis (1889), who observed these animals in their local habitats.

Their vocalisations are explained by Estes in great detail (2012:235-238, 242-243): “Equus species share a repertoire of a half-dozen calls. There are two alarm calls; a *loud snort* and a quiet, *hoarse gasp, i-hah*, with open mouth”. The plains zebra’s loud barking call, he gives as *qua-ha*, (the often described *quaggaa* or ‘*kwagga*’-call in historical sources as quoted below); with the braying calls of the wild ass and Grevy’s zebra, as well as other sounds as ‘short squeals given when an animal is kicked or bitten’, but also during playfights and often when the stallions greet; also that “equids emit a *drawn-out squeal* when caught or injured. *Blowing* with loose lips, often heard in a grazing herd, is a sound of contentment”. He further remarks that the mountain zebra (*Equus zebra hartmannae*) is a more silent equid: “lacking the distinctive loud *qua-ha* contact call” (Estes 2012:247). This may well be the reason why they were also called by a different name, that of *dou*, *daou* and *dauw*.

In the scientific species names all the zebras are indicated by the onomatopoeic name *quagga* (Roberts 1954:251), but then with regional and sub-species specific names as indicated above. The Burchell’s or plains zebra (*Equus burchelli*) as it is called today, was also indicated in older sources as either *quagga* or *kwagga*. This designation probably derived from the Bushman names such as *kôha*, *khoga*, */habba*, *//kabba*, relating to the distinctive loud barking sound they emit; whereas the mountain zebra, Cape mountain zebra, *Equus montanus* or ‘*bontkwagga*’, was described as the ‘*egte wildepert*’, ‘real wild horse’. It was known to be less vociferous than the plains zebra, known by the names of *dou*, *daou* and *dauw* (in Xhosa still known as *dauwa*), and as indicated by Bleek (1929:94) as *\_ha-ba*.

Under wild ass, ‘*esel*’, Nienaber (1963:266) explained it to be understood as “*wilde-esel*, *vide kwagga*”. Under recordings for the ‘*kwagga*’ Nienaber makes a clear distinction between references to the different species of the wild ass, ‘*wilde esel*’ or zebra as *quacha*, whereas the ‘wild horse’ ‘*wildepert*’ was called *dauw* (Burchell 1811 I:101) or *douqua*, recorded as early as 1660 by Jan van Riebeeck (1691 III:308), who referred to the ‘wild horse’ as the ‘*egte kwagga*’, ‘genuine quagga’ (Nienaber 1963:361-366).

Toponyms deriving from this *dou* or *dauw* are i.a. Dowghakou explained as ‘*bergkwagga*’ (Nienaber & Raper 1977:79, 321), the *dougha* either as full form for the Old Cape Khoikhoi dialectal name describing this species of zebra, or that *dow-*,

*dou-* is 'zebra' and the *-gha* refers to either a field, more likely to a mountain or hill, since Gordon in his travel journal (1792:40, ms 5) recorded it as a reference to a hill: "aan de andere kant [van Dasfontein in die Swartberge] hiet de heuvel *dowga 'kou*, 'veel zebras land'." The name explained as deriving from the recorded *dou* and *dauw* (by Jan van Riebeeck before 1660 already), and that Burchell specifically identified the *dauw* or the 'wilde paard' as the *Equus montanus* or mountain zebra.

Van Riebeeck (1660:308) compares these animals to 'mules...biting at the colonists like dogs' (quoted in Nienaber 1963:361-366). Burchell (1811:101, quoted in Nienaber 1963:364) mentions that: "the *Wilde Paard* named *Dauw* by the Hottentots" can be distinguished by its hooves: "The hoofs of animals destined by nature to inhabit rocky mountains...of a form very different from those intended for sandy plains; and this form is, in itself, sufficient to point out the *Dauw* as a separate species". He continues to say: "The *Zebra* and the *Wilde Paard* may be further distinguished from each other by the stripes".

The variant names for these equids as recorded by Bleek (1929:94; 1956:514) from the different Bushman languages may perhaps, apart from the above descriptive variations, be further read as onomatopoeic representations of some of these calls of the horse family. Very specific names were given to the different horse antelopes, the plains or mountain zebras, other wild horses or 'asses', often generally described by the Dutch as 'ezels', 'wilde ezels' or 'wildepaarden'. The name *quagga* (as general species name for both plains and mountain zebras), from its distinctive *qua-ha* call (Estes 2012:247), is obviously derived from the mimicked sound and reproduced in its various names in the Bushman languages, especially *koha*, *khoga* or //koəh. This imitates the very distinct sound they make when galloping, i.e. the rasping bark, a grunting guttural sound, heard as 'kwa-kwa, kwa-kwa'. The name *bieba*, and variations thereof, replicate or emulate the *bie-bie*, *bie-bie* call of the plains zebras, as well.

Another Bushman rendering of the name for the zebra, documented very early from the Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects as *!gore-b*, and recorded as *!kwore* and *gore* from the !Kung (N2) language by Bleek (1929:94; 1956:746), is reflected in the name *Goregas* or *Koregas* on the Homsrivier north of Warmbad in Namibia (Nienaber & Raper 1980:358-359). It was recorded by one of the first explorers into the interior, Willem van Reenen (1791, VRV 15:300), who in 1791 travelled as far north as Walfish Bay. According to Nienaber (1963:366) who, quoting the toponym from Van Reenen, argues that this toponym was derived from Khoikhoi or older Cape dialects as:



*!gore-#ga-s* (in Bushman comparable to *!kwore-xa*), and explained it as the ‘*kwagga-vlakte*’, ‘quagga or zebra plains’. This toponym correlates with the earliest versions of the name *!kwore* from the Bushman languages spoken in Namaqualand, and probably precedes the later adapted form *goreba*. It relates directly to *Goreguraabes*, the oldest name of Gibeon, explained as meaning ‘drinking place of the zebra’, “*Tränkplatz der Zebra*” (Kroenlein-Rust 1969:128; Nienaber & Raper 1977:452).

The alternative name of Gibeon, *Khachatsus*, is in its first component a reference to the *quagga*, e.g. *khacha* > *kwagga* / *quagga* (Nienaber & Raper 1977:452, 606), and can be interpreted as deriving from the /Xam (S1) //*kabba*, //*khoaəh* or its variants *kôha*, *khoga* (see also *Kohakoeka* below). The second component *tsu(s)*, *tsau(s)* in the Nama forms, is from the Bushman *ts'ʌxau* or *tsuxau* (‘water’s eye’) as in /Xam (S1), and /*gōāsa* from Naron (C2), referring to a ‘spring’ or ‘fountain’ (Bleek 1929:79); the whole name thus explained as ‘zebra drinking place’, ‘zebra fountain’.



Figure 6.1 (b) Two zebra, one head-resting [Daniel Otte]

The designation *kwagga* for zebra is found in numerous Afrikaans toponyms containing the specific component *Kwagga-*, for example *Kwaggafontein*, *Kwaggalaagte*, *Kwaggasrand* (Möller 2014:122, Raper *et al* 2014:259). These names

are derived from the designations *kwagga*, *quagga* recorded from the early Bushman languages by Bleek (1929:94; 1956:514), as for example *t'abba* and *//abba* from /Xam (S1). The entry for 'zebra' is given as *\_/habba*, *-/haba* also in /Xam (S1); as *//kabba*, *//khoaəh* and *koha* in the Hie (C1) and Sesarwa (S5) languages (Bleek 1929:94; 1956:746), which became, or were written in the earlier renderings of the taxonomic sub-species name, as *quagga* (Roberts 1954:246-247).

Many of the Afrikaans names with *kwagga* as first component may, in fact, have been translations of earlier indigenous names, for example, Kwaggafontein in Mpumalanga which was indicated by the SAGNC (schedules, 2012) to be replaced by the indigenous name Somaphepha. This name could have been derived in its second and third component from the Shangaan and Tsonga name for the Burchell's zebra as *mangwe* as recorded by Walker from that region (1996:132), or it could be analysed as a reversal to the older form, of which Kwaggafontein was a translation. As such, it is comparable with the words *som* or *soma*, possibly derived from the /Xam (S1) *!kwomanj* (Bleek 1956:468), either for 'riverbank', an 'embankment' of a river, but has also been encountered as 'riverbed' or a 'deep river'; the second component with */gwe* from Auen (N1), or *//khoaəh* from Hie (C1) as indicated by Bleek (1929:94) for 'zebra' (Raper *et al* 2014:471). The composite name thus means something similar to 'embankment of, or riverbed of the quagga or zebra'. The name Soma for a place in the Eastern Cape, for instance, said to be from the Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects, also containing this first word *soma*, was translated as Dieprivier, 'deep river' (Raper *et al* 2014:471). This adds to the concept of the *som* or *soma* as a 'deep riverbed', from the word *!khōuwa* in /Xam (S1) which is cognate to the *!kwomanj* (Bleek 1956: 429).

In Namibia many more place names refer to the zebra or kwagga in adapted form in other languages, with a few retraceable to origins of onymic formatives as from the Kung (N2) *!kwore* and *gore*, adapted to the Herero name for the zebra as *ngoro*, *ngorlo*. For example, in the Herero Okozongoro, an area name in Kaokoland (SG-SWA photo 3/55, indicated on the questionnaire to map sheet 1813 AB 'Omungunda', 1:50 000), and Ongorussengu, 'zebra neck or pass', the *O* a Herero class prefix or locative, *ngoru* or *ngoro* designating 'zebra' indicating the *u* and *o* variation. This occurs in several other names such as in Ongoromutjiwa, explained by (Albertyn 1984:67) as '*sebra in die vanggat*', i.e. 'zebra in the trapping hole'. The Herero name Ovithorewe, where the *thorewe* was translated into German as Zebraberger (Möller 1986:448), refers to the same Zebra Mountains as discussed above. Compare the

component *thore* to the Nama and Damara references to this zebra as the *!goreb* (Walker 1996:134), where the names are found in the various Bushman, Khoikhoi, Damara and Herero languages with the same onymic formative *!gor-*, *!kwor-* and *ngor-*, confirming the component *thor-* as correctly translated.

On the Unjab River lies a fountain, the name of which was translated into German as Zebraquelle (Leistner & Morris 1976:567, SWA–maps series 1:500 000, n.d.; Möller 1986:449). It was initially thought that the component Unjab could refer to the ‘zebra’, which, as a derivation of *hā-b* or *\_hab*, meaning ‘zebra’ in Bushman (a possible elided form of *\_habba*), could be cognate to the component *\_njab*. Yet, apparently the Unjab, also found as Uniab River is explained in Nienaber and Raper (1980:745-746) as ‘palm tree river’, because, in the Nama form, the difference in clicks led to an alternative interpretation. Another name Zebraquelle in the region refers to a fountain that lies to the north of Sesfontein in Kaokoland – Damaraland. This region is possibly the same Okozongoro as discussed above. A waterwell near Khorixas known as Zebraapütz, ‘zebra waterhole’ or ‘well’, also refers to the Hartmann’s mountain zebras (*Equus zebra hartmannae*) that in former times used to occur there in fairly great numbers, but have been reduced to a large extent by the wars in the area to small groups surviving only in remote areas in the wild (Estes 2012:247).

## 6.2 Wild asses and ‘wild horses’

The occurrence of the ‘wild horses’, as they were sometimes called in southern Africa, is recalled in the toponym Wildeperderant in the Northern Cape, a mountain ridge west of Vioolsdrif and 63 km east-south-east of Alexander Bay. This name, Afrikaans for ‘wild horse ridge’, actually refers to the ‘wild horse’, *Equus capensis* that is now extinct, as different from the Burchells or plains zebras. It was recorded by the earliest explorers into the region, Beutler in 1752, Brink and Rhenius in 1724 mentioning the “*witte wilde paarden*” (as quoted in Mossop VRS, vol. 28, 1947:48-49), who already made a clear distinction in their recordings between the Mountain or Cape mountain zebra (the *Equus zebra zebra*), and the plains or Burchell’s zebra, but all named *quagga* colloquially. Mossop, as editor, explains in a footnote: “*Wildepvaard* meant the Zebra. *Muilezel* to P. van Meerhoff in 1662 meant the Quagga...on ‘Brink’s portion’ of the Gordon Collection map (VRS vol. 15 p. 289) is depicted a faintly striped Quagga, with the following information: – ‘A kind of grey (*vaal*) kwagga, faintly striped with somewhat oblong markings (*eenigsins lankwerpig*). This is the animal called *witpaart* in the journey of Hop’. But on a portion of the map, which

illustrates Col. Gordon's explorations...are illustrated (1) the Cape Quagga (2) Cape Zebra, and (3) a faintly striped animal which the mapper, probably Gordon, believed to be the progeny of the Quagga or Zebra".

These other '*witte wilde paarden*' and the '*wilde ezel*' and the 'wild horse' as the '*wilde paard*', are further explained by Nienaber (1963:529) as possibly the "*bont- of bergkwagga*", named *haqua* by the indigenous people, as it was recorded in 1660 by Van Riebeeck (1660:308 in Nienaber 1963:529). In Nama, it then became *hā-b*. He points out that the designation for *quaggas* often referred to both the '*wildeperde*' or the 'wild asses', but that what was of importance was that *quagga*, the onomatopoeic indigenous name, could refer to both the wild horse or the wild ass ("*Hier van belang is dat kwagga, die klanknabootsende inlandse naam, sowel die wildeperd kon wees as 'n (wilde) esel*").

Nienaber (1963:361) quotes the many recorded versions of the names for the '*kwagga*', referring to the forms found in Witsen (1691, II:222) as *quacha*, from Beutler's explorations in 1752 (RSA III:276, 323) he quotes *kohakoe* and gives indications of related place names: "*welk riviertje ter sake...wy de Quacharivier noemden*" ('the river in question...we named it the 'wild ass river'). Furthermore, "*Kohakoeka* (which clearly imitated the distinctive call of the zebra) *ofte Ezelsrivier genaamt*", lying adjacent to or in the vicinity of Paardenfontein, was described as being a tributary of the Fish River. Nienaber states (1963:364): "*Die naam kwagga is klanknabootsend*", then he gives a quote from the *Scientific African* (extracted by Pettman 1931): "The Quagga is so named onomatopoeically, being an imitation of the peculiar bark of the animal, sounding like *ouag-ga*, the last syllable being very much prolonged".

The place name EQwarha in the Eastern Cape is an example of a sound adaptation from the cognate form of *//kappa*, *//khoaəh* and *koha* in the Bushman languages like Hie (C1) into the Xhosa language. It is indicated as a "Xhosa name of Quaggasvlakte, 47 km north-west of Alexandria and 5 km south-west of Paterson. It is an adaptation of *quagga*, Afrikaans *kwagga*, *Equus quagga*, which once occurred there" (Raper *et al* 2014:125).

Another important aspect of the quagga's or zebra's vocalisation is the neighing or whinnying sounds, also made by the wild horses and wild ass (as indicated by Estes 2012:238). We find this represented in some Bushman names for the zebras such as *//kwi* in /Xam (S1) and *!i:* in Sesarwa (S5); *bie:* and *bi:eba* in Naron or *//Aikwe* (C2),

compare the words for 'horse' in Bushman according to Bleek's recordings of the equus species (1929:48, 94; 1956:725). Perhaps even the Tswana and Sotho name for the zebra as *pitse*; the Shona as *mbizi*, the Lozi *pizi* and, especially the Yei *umbiyi*, not only relate phonologically, but are cognate to these Bushman designations.

This sound emulated onymic formative may be found in comparable place names like the toponym Bonwapitse in Botswana, containing this Tswana name for the zebra, and said to mean 'where zebras drink' (Raper et al 2014:45). It is a reference to a valley and railway siding in the Central District some 17 km south-west of Mahalapye. It is said to take its name from the Bonwapitse River, which rises near Shoshong and extends in a south-easterly direction to meet the Limpopo 60 km west of Ellisras, now Lephale.

Some of the other common names for the 'horse-like' animals or equids in the various Bushman, Khoikhoi and Bantu languages seem comparable to the extent that they may have originated from the same onymic formatives. It is not clear in all cases though, whether these expressions were adopted from an earlier Bushman onomatopoeic description for the wild ass, the zebra and quagga, or that some may have been introduced to the Bushman speakers via trans-language onymic exchange. However, as these animals were described in great detail and their names recorded by the earliest explorers, Jan van Riebeeck in 1652, Beutler in 1752, Brink in 1761 and Rhenius in 1724, Willem van Reenen in 1791; Burchell in 1811-1812, and so forth, it does appear that they may be words adapted from various Bushman, and from the Khoikhoi languages, into other Bantu languages. These appellatives, or common noun descriptors are possibly older than those adopted and adapted loan words from the European languages into the lexicons of Bantu languages.

If the common names for these 'horse-like' animals or equids in the various Bushman languages are compared, it seems quite certain that these expressions were adopted from the earlier onomatopoeically coined Bushman words as descriptions for the wild ass, zebra and quagga into Bantu languages. Nienaber (1963:419-420) argues that these animal names were recorded meticulously by the earliest explorers to denote the zebra or quagga species, as the following examples illustrate: *acqua* by Ten Rhyne (1673:154, quoted in Nienaber 1963:419), *hakva* and *haap* by Thunberg (1773:85), *hahp* by Ebner (1811:342) and many more such variations. He also argued that this took place long before the indigenous peoples had any contact with the English or their domesticated 'horses', for these words to have been loaned and adapted into Bushman, e.g. from the English word 'horse', and to have been presented

as adopted words. The original coinings for the ‘horse-like’ or ‘wild horses’ already existed in the ancient languages, e.g. such as are found in Bushman *hā*, *ha*, *haa*, *ha:b* and *ha:sa* as documented by Bleek (1929:47, 94; 1956:55, 725), also confirmed in Snyman’s lists (1974:41), who recorded both Bushman *ha* and Nama *hab* as well.

Most of these names were actually documented by Bleek from a range of old sources, as well as fieldwork (1929:47, 94; 1956:55, 725), and where Bleek, for example, gives *\_haba* from the Naron (C2); *ha:sa* from the //N!ke (S2) and ≠Khomani (S2a) languages, and *hā*: from the /Nu //en (S6) language, it all indicates that these descriptive names for the ‘wild horse’ or ‘wild ass’ types, the zebras, may well have been original coinings. They were possibly only later adapted as loan words into other African languages. Yet, where Bleek argues that the word *ha:sa* is a loan word from the English ‘horse’, it may perhaps be accepted as an exception to the rule, though it too, is more likely to have been an original indigenous concept and coining referring to the ‘*wilde witte perd*’.

The earliest recorded words thus clearly show that they are original indigenous names for the horse types, derived from the sound associations made from the sighing or neighing of the wild asses, quaggas and zebras as equidae. These appellatives, or common noun descriptors are, therefore, much older than those adopted and adapted loan words from the European languages into the lexicons of African languages. The whole question of trans-language exchange, however, once again comes into the equation: which exactly are the receiver and which the donor languages?

A remark by Bleek (1929:47) that the above words or designations, e.g. *ha:sa* are loan words from the English ‘horse’ (compare Zulu *i-hashī*), is thus brought into question here. The counter argument is based on overwhelming evidence of early recorded words as presented above as well as from the Korana and Griqua languages (Smith 1835:281, quoted in Nienaber 1963:419) where the horse types are also indicated as *haap* and *haan*.

This viewpoint is supported in the light of observations and recordings made by Estes (2012:238) regarding the vocalisations of the horse family, specifically wild asses and zebras as ‘*i-hah*’. These designations may, as indicated earlier, originate from the sounds emitted by wild asses, horses or quaggas as social calls and in determining territorial dominance. That these animals often emit this call, i.e. their “hoarse gasp, i-hah with open mouth”, is a widely observed and common occurrence according to Estes (2012:238). This sound correlates exactly with the Bushman



*\_/haba* from /Xam (S1), *ha:sa* from //N!ke (S2) and *hā:* from /Nu //en (S6); just as *bi* and *bi:eba* Naron (C2) may be an echo of the whinnying calls of the horse types such as the zebra as well. The *hah* is reminiscent of, or resembles */ha* or */haba*. The *i* of *i-hah* is like the *bie* sound perhaps, comparable in its long-drawn and high front vowel, cognate also with *bi:eba*, all from the sighing as *i:ha*. The *-hah*, on the other hand, may be seen as cognate with the Bushman *hā:* and the *ha:sa*, *\_/haba* from /Xam (S1) as indicated above.

Compare also the discussion by Nienaber and Raper (1977:327) on the toponym Eias, Eyasa, or 'Yas, a water-well or water hole and farm adjacent to Schuitdrift, situated approximately "six miles from the Orange River" (Garib) in Northern Cape, where Gordon (1779 ms 2:22) is quoted as having translated "*Ei-aas graafwatertje*" as '*Eselsfontein*'. They explained the name from the Old Cape Khoikhoi word *ha-* interpreted by Van Riebeeck already in 1660 as referring to "*een wilt paert...van de Hottentoos genaempt...Haqua*". Thus the *quagga* and the *ha*, seen here as cognate with *Eiaa-* and *Eya-*, even with 'Yas and as variant pronunciations of *ha*, *hae*, *eya*, *eiaa*, these are all clearly onomatopoeic renderings of the reference to the gasping vocalisation as *i-hah*. They are interpreted here as pointing to the sounds made by the wild horses or *quagga*, since they too were referred to as '*wilde paert*' or '*wilde ezel*' by the Dutch.

This sound has also been recorded in the Zulu reference to *quagga* where Doke, Malcolm & Sikakana (2005:379), Doke and Vilakazi (2005, 1964:718) compare this *i-hashi*, and describe the animal as: "*inyamazane yase South Africa efana nedube* [i.e. the zebra]; *i(li)qwahhashi*". Two toponyms referring to the horse family are Tafalehashe with variant form Tafelashashi "plateau of the horses, situated in the Eastern Cape" (Raper *et al* 2014:486); and Thulamahashe in Mpumalanga, explained as "dust kicked up by running horses" (Raper *et al* 2014:496). In this case, most probably the zebra was meant, the two names said to come from the Nguni and Sotho languages respectively.

The etymology of the word zebra is given in Webster's (1961:2657) as deriving from Spanish *cebra*, Old Spanish *zebra*, *zebro enzebro* for wild ass, perhaps from the Vulgar Latin *eciferus* wild horse, Latin *equiferus* fr. *Equus* 'horse' + *ferus* 'wild'. Although unlikely, it is not certain whether the Bushman *bi:eba* was actually adopted from the European language speakers, and not the other way round in their usage of this established reference *zebra* (in Spanish, perhaps also Portuguese and Dutch), to the 'wild horse, ass'. The European seafarers may have transferred it from their

early travels and exploratory journeys at the Cape, into the indigenous Khoi-San languages, in which case, the zebra may have lost some of its indigenous stripes.

Toponyms containing the name *zebra* itself, are i.a. Zebra, a railway station near Cradock in the Eastern Cape, referring to the now extinct Cape Mountain zebra, and the Zebra Mountains ('Zebraberge' in German, Möller 1986:448) in the north of Namibia, in Kaokoland, describing its striped appearance as that of the zebra (Raper *et al* 2012:554). However, this is also because these zebras still occur there on the mountains and along the Kunene border with Angola, in small groups.

Another toponym, Okoukambe, refers to a village in Namibia some 30 km east-south-east of Aroams and 22 km west of the Botswana border. The name is an adapted Herero form meaning 'grazing-ground of (wild) horses' (Binding 1980-1984; Raper *et al* 2014:390). The component *kou* approximates the /Xam (S1) and //N!ke (S2) word *!au* 'ground' (Bleek 1929:44); *kam* is comparable to the Naron (C2) word //gam 'to graze' (Bleek 1929:44). The component *be* approximates the Sehura (C1a), the Naron (C2) and the Hukwe (C2b) words *bi*, *bie*, *bi:he* all referring to the 'wild horse, quagga' (Bleek 1956:16, 68). The neighing sound is quite possibly represented here in the Bushman common noun for the wild horse and the horse-like quagga, as *bi*, *bie*, *bi:he*.

Names in the various other Bantu languages are documented in Walker (1996:132). He refers to the recorded name of the Burchell's zebra in Zulu, Swazi and Xhosa as *dube*, *idube*; in the Yei language as *umbiyi*, in the Northern Sotho and Tswana languages it is called *pitse ya naga*, and in Lozi it is given as *pizi*. The phonemes *pi*, *bi* and *zi* reflect the original Bushman phonemic clusters *bi* and *zi*. According to Walker they "produce a high-pitched bark, neigh and squeal". This does reflect the neighing sound of its name as in the Bushman renderings *bie*, *bi:he*. It is in this reference to their neighing that the origins of their onomatopoeic names may be found, also in other languages of the regions, such as the above Bushman dialects, and the Yei and Lozi languages. The Mountain zebra and Hartmann's zebra (two distinct species), on the other hand, are called *ngorlo* (compare *ngoro*, *ngoru*, and *!goreb* in Nama and Damara, also *hambarundu* by the Herero, and according to Irle 1917:433, *ongoroue*), and these names may relate to the toponym Somabororo. In Bushman this mountain zebra was known as *dou*, or *daou* in the Old Cape Khoikhoi words recorded in the eastern regions, and therefore still retained as *dauwa* in Xhosa according to Walker (1996:134). He, like Estes, distinguishes the vocalisation as "Unlike Burchell's zebra, its call is a low, plaintive neigh". In the original sound-imitative name, the formative



*bi* and *bi:he* captured from its neighing and whinnying, as well as the sigh as *i-ha*, have remained, though *ha:sa* as possible loan word was soon lost in certain regions.

The place name Hlambamaduba, in Mpumalanga, refers to the tributary of the Sabie River, which it joins 6 km east-south-east of Skukuza. Said to be Swazi for “where quaggas bathe (roll in the dust)”, the reference is to the southern sub-species of the plains zebra, *Equus quagga burchelli*, since the true quagga, *Equus quagga quagga*, is extinct (Raper *et al* 2014:184). This toponym contains the Nguni name in the plural form *-maduba* of *idube* as found in both Xhosa and Zulu, whereas the Swazi would have to be in the plural form of *lidvubu* (Walker 1996:132), as discussed above.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

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### The Alcelaphini tribe: wildebeests, blesbok, bontebok, hartebeests, topi and tsesseby

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#### 7.1 The wildebeests



Figure 7.1 (a) Blue wildebeest cavorting [Daniel Otte]

The wildebeests incorporate a wide class of species known as ‘*wildebeeste*’ in Afrikaans, the main contenders being the sub-species categorised as the *Connochaetes taurinus gnu* (blue wildebeest), and *Connochaetes gnou* (black wildebeest or white-tailed Gnu), both often simply referred to as *wildebeest* or *gnu*, Estes (2012:150-158). The family also includes the *Alcelaphus* and *Buselaphus* sub-families of *hartebeests*, the *bontebok* and *blesbok*, even the *Damaliscus lunatus* including the *topi* and *tsessebe*. Roberts (1954:278) indicates the *C. gnou* as the black wildebeest, with indigenous names like Xhosa *inqu*. In Zulu, however, it is known as *inkonkoni* and *imbuthuma*,

which seems cognate with the Ndebele *imbudumo*; Northern Sotho and Tswana *pudumô*, also in Southern Sotho as *pudimo*. For the *C. taurinus* or blue wildebeest he indicates from the indigenous languages names such as Xhosa and Zulu *inkhonkoni*; given in Swazi as *ingongoni* and in Tsonga as *hongonyi*; in Northern Sotho and Tswana as *kgokong*, and in Venda as *khongoni*.

These two types of wildebeest, commonly mentioned in historical and scientific studies as the blue or 'brindled' and the black wildebeest, were widely distributed in the whole of Africa, and almost "equivalently distributed in the Highveld temperate grasslands and the arid Karroo" (Estes 2012:156). Nowadays, only the blue wildebeest still occurs in large herds throughout the African savannas, whereas the black wildebeest survives in "montane grasslands", reduced to fenced-in game and preservation areas or farms, for example, in the highlands of the Drakensberg and some farms in the Free State and Limpopo.



Figure 7.1 (b) Blue wildebeest (gnu) [Daniel Otte]

It has been noted that up to 7 or 9 distinct species of 'wildebeests' exist or may have existed before some became extinct, among them the golden wildebeest ('*goue wildebees*'); others of the species of brindled ('*gestreepte wildebeeste*') wildebeest. Examples of these are the sub-species *C.t. johnstoni*, *C.t. jearnsi*, and *C.t. albojubatus* or *white-bearded wildebeest* (Estes 2012:150-154), and many of the *hartebeeste*, *tsessebe*, *topi* and others (personal communication, G. Coetsee, Geluksfontein, Waterval, Waterberg district, 8 October 2015). This, perhaps, included the other *Alcelaphus* and *Damaliscus* species, although this could not be confirmed. The

common descriptive noun ‘*wildebeest*’, and the indigenous names *gnu* for the black or white-tailed, and *gnou* for the blue or brindled wildebeest, are still indicated in the taxonomic classification for each as sub-species. Skead (1987:876-878) gives a detailed description and classification of the black and blue wildebeest. He also provides archaeological and palaeontological records, of the “incidence along the southern Cape coastal areas” of both subspecies of wildebeest, and, as recorded “in the south and southwest Cape, starting from the western Cape and moving eastwards”, to the eastern Cape districts.

According to Estes (2012:135) both *Alcelaphus* and *Damaliscus* species of wildebeests (including the hartebeests), “produce similar quacking and grunting calls, but are not ‘noisy’ species”. Apparently the males of these species have completely different calls: “The black wildebeests’ hiccoughs carry a good 2 km, whereas most sub-species of *C. taurinus* give a series of metallic grunts (like the Hottentot *gnou* sound with the *g* aspirated)”.



Figure 7.1 (c) White-tailed gnu or black wildebeest [Daniel Otte]

This points to the fact that both names, *gnu* and *gnou* (*gaob*), derived from the oldest Bushman and Khoikhoi designations, were mimicked from the sounds the wildebeests make, heard when they are strutting and moving the herd along, grunting or snorting in unison: ‘genu-genu’. That the names *gnu* and *gnou* (*gaob* as variant) may be onomatopoeic in origin, was documented by various explorers and zoologists. Mentzel in 1787 (VRV:25, quoted in Nienaber 1963:527) specifically recalled this “Gnou, called ‘χnou’ by the Hottentots”... “It makes *wo* sounds or cries.

The one is like the bellowing of an ox, with a longdrawn ‘gnu’, the other like the call of a vulture, only louder”. This last reference is specifically used to indicate the black wildebeest (according to Shortridge as quoted and explained in Nienaber, 1963:527).

Bleek (1956:425, 771, 1929:92) makes the distinction between the two types of wildebeest in the recorded names from the Bushman, namely, that the black wildebeest (*Connochaetes gnu*) is called *!nu* (*gnu*) in /Xam (S1), and also *!no*. Bleek also makes the distinction that the blue wildebeest or (*Connochaetes taurinus*), which, among many other versions of the name, was documented as *!au* <sup>~</sup>/*ko* and its variant *!khau*: */ko* from /Xam (S1); *!gi* in Kung (N2), *-!gei* in !O!kun (N3), */gē:ba* in Naron (C2), and */ga:ob* in Nama. Nienaber (1963:526, 527-528) mentions that this *gnu* was recorded as *gaub* and gives the Dutch explanation of it as the ‘wildebeest’, specifically the ‘*blou wildebeest*’, documented later as */gao-b*.

The gnu or wildebeeste in general, known for making the above-mentioned snorting or grunting sounds, especially when alerted or just being watchful and ‘in agreement’ while browsing, call to each other in this way. Whereas the black wildebeest seems somewhat throatier, sounding more like a hiccough, for the blue wildebeest (*Connochaetes taurinus*), Walker (1996:172-174) gives a somewhat different description of their vocalisation as: “The voice is an abrupt, loud snort and they communicate with a loud, nasal ‘kwang’ sound”. He further confirms that their vocalisations are very distinctive, and the species name, originating from the Khoikhoi name *gnu*, is a reference to the sounds these animals make, i.e. “a metallic, ringing *snort*”.

The other indigenous names from the Bantu languages also indicate a sound association or onomatopoeic element with the designation for the blue *wildebeest*. For instance, in Northern Sotho and Tswana the name is *kgokong*, in Southern Sotho it is *khokong* and the Lozi name is *kokoñu*. In the Nguni languages like Ndebele, Zulu and Xhosa it is indicated as *nkonkoni*, *nkhonhoni*; the Shona and Swazi use *ngongoni*, in Venda it is *khongoini* and in Shangaan it is *hongonyi* (Roberts 1954:278-279; Walker 1996:172).

A stream in the Free State/Lesotho region is called Cocong. It was reached by the missionaries Arbousset and Dumas on their journey of 1836 and, according to Dreyer (2001:77), explained as: “little stream named Cocong (*Gnu*)”. *Gnu* is the name for the *wildebeest* in general, *Connochaetes gnu* indicates the black wildebeest (Estes 2012:156), but for *C. taurinus* (apparently given here as explanation for the

name Cocong), in the Southern Sotho language, the name khokong is a reference to the blue wildebeest. Also, as indicated earlier, in the Zulu language as well as in some other Bantu languages, the blue *wildebeest* is known as *inkonkoni*, *inkhonhoni* and *ngongoni* (Roberts 1954:279, Walker 1996:172). The blue *wildebeest*, *Connochaetes taurinus*, on the other hand, was sometimes indicated as the ‘common wildebeest’, *gnu* (Estes 2012:150), but, in Khoikhoi, more likely as *gnou* or */ga:ob*. For example, in Korana the words *ghow* and *ghau* were recorded in 1801 and 1805 respectively (Nienaber 1963:527). A /Xam (S1) word for the blue wildebeest, *Connochaetes taurinus*, is *!au/ko* (Bleek 1929:92), which correlates with the component *Coco* of the river name (note the similarity here with the almost exact Northern Sotho and Tswana rendering of the name as *kgokong*). The final *ng* is the locative suffix comparable with the !O!kunǀ (N3) demonstrative *ŋ* ‘this one here’ (Bleek 1956:141). The Nama word for the blue *wildebeest* is given by Nienaber with a dental click as */gaob*, whereas Rust (1960:28) gives *gaob* for ‘Gnu (*Wildebeest*)’, thus, without a click.

A hill in Botswana is called Dikgokong, it lies in the South-East District, some 30 km east-south-east of Mochudi and 60 km east-north-east of Gaborone. The name is from the Tswana name *kgokong*, acting here as onymic formative in the toponym to render: ‘place of wildebeest’. The component *di* is the added Tswana prefix; the component *kgoko* approximates the /Xam (S1) *!au/ko*, ‘wildebeest’; *!khau:/ko*, ‘blue wildebeest’ (Raper *et al* 2014:92).

A railway station, 15 km north-north-west of Taung on the route to Vryburg, is called Pudimoe. The name is said to be an adaptation of the Tswana name for the town Pudumong in the North West Province, about 17 km north of Taung and 66 km south-west of Schweizer-Reneke. It apparently derived from the Tswana *pudomô*, ‘black wildebeest’, *Connochaetes gnou* (Roberts 1954:278), (although the Ndebele also have the cognate form *imbudumo*), plus the locative suffix *-ng*. This explanation of the form Pudimoe, thus has a bearing on the designation to the railway station alone, as it is an adaptation of recent date and clearly an attempt at Africanisation of a more ancient formative of the Bushman name as *gnu*, *!nu*, and */ko*, *!no*, and so forth. The name Pudumong then correctly explained as being derived from the Tswana *pudomô*, and to mean ‘place of the black wildebeest’, *Connochaetes gnou*. It formerly bore the adapted name Pudimoe, still in use for the railway station (Raper *et al* 2014:422).

Many translated toponyms into Afrikaans and English contain references to these antelopes. For instance, *Wildebeestkop*, *Wildebeestkuil*, *Wildebeestlaagte*,

Wildebeestpan (Pettman 1931:140). The Wildebeest Plateau for example, taking its name from the blue *wildebeest* (Raper *et al* 2014:543), lies at the confluence of the Mtshezana and Mabhunwini rivers in the eastern section of the Giant's Castle Game Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal.

Further place names containing references to the wildebeests are: The Inqu or Inxu, a tributary of the Tsolo River, 33 km south-east of Maclear, named after the black wildebeest, *Connochaetes gnou*, which once occurred there. The Xhosa name for this animal, and for the river, is *iNqu* (Raper *et al* 2014:543). According to Pettman (1931:14) it “is an adaptation in Xhosa of the Bushman name ‘gnu, the black wildebeest...; both Arbousset (p. 251) and Stow (p. 134) give this as a Bushman word”. This name, translated as the Wildebeest River from the Xhosa name *nqu* for this animal (thus presumably from *gnu* not from the alternative name for the blue wildebeest, *nkhonhoni*), clearly still retained the original onomatopoeic rendering of the name in Bushman. The *Little Wildebeest River* is known in Xhosa as *iNqwana*, the diminutive of *iNqu*. The Xhosa word *inqu* derives from the Bushman *gnu*, *!nu* or the Khoikhoi forms recorded early in this region as *t'gnu* (1775), *xgnou* (1787), *nxu*, ‘wildebeest’ (Nienaber 1963:527).

The name Okovimburu, that of a village in Namibia 10 km north-east of Omawewozonyanda, is said to derive from the Herero language and means: “place of gnu, or wildebeest” (Raper *et al* 2014:390), in other words, probably the common blue wildebeest. The component *buru* in this adapted Herero toponym, may relate to the sound sequence: ‘*gnu, gnu*’, emitted as warning call by black and blue wildebeest alike to their herd.

## 7.2. Other members of the Alcelaphini tribe

The tribe of antelope called the Alcelaphini, subfamily Alcelaphinae (Roberts 1954:277), also include the *Damaliscus* which contain the *blesbok* (*Damaliscus albifrons*) and *bontebok* (*Damaliscus pygargus pygargus* or *dorcas*), the topi and *hartebeest*, and are part of the medium-built ruminant antelopes as indicated by Estes (2012:133, 146-166).

The names in the Bushman languages for these antelope, belonging to the Alcelaphini tribe, are all quaint examples of either descriptions of their appearances, or renderings of sound imitation of their vocalisations, or other sounds resembling behaviour. Or the names may be descriptive of a specific colouring, as in other

languages. For example, the Afrikaans 'blesbok' or 'bontebok', the 'blue' or 'black' *wildebeests*, and some of these terms have been retained even in English.

The *blesbok* are described for the white spot on the antelopes' front faces, therefore 'damaliscus *albifrons*'; but the *bontebok* also for the white spotted shades on the shanks and sides, between the black or brown shadings depicting their distinctive colouring by which they are recognised. This, as with the impala as 'rooibok', the *springbok* as the 'white crests of waves' referring to their white flanks, have accordingly been given such descriptive and distinctive names in the indigenous languages.

The *blesbok* (*Damaliscus albifrons*) and *bontebok* (*Damaliscus pygargus pygargus* or *dorcas*) of the species family *Damaliscus*, are presented here as indicated by Estes (2012:133, 146-150) and Roberts (1954:284, 285, 286). This is because the names of these antelope are equally well represented as toponymic formatives, that illustrates, as a reconnaissance almost, their former wide distribution in the southern African region. Both *bontebok* and *blesbok* have been reintroduced in certain regions but, as Walker (1996:162) explains, they "had been perilously brought to the brink of extinction, but are now protected in private and state owned reserves". The *bontebok*, for instance, still has a very limited geographical range as it is confined to the southwestern Cape region. The *blesbok*, at least, roams more widely still in the highlands of the eastern Cape, Lesotho, through the Free State to the southern regions of the former Transvaal (Retrieved from [www.iucnredlist.org/Damaliscus/Bontebok/Blesbok](http://www.iucnredlist.org/Damaliscus/Bontebok/Blesbok)).

### 7.2.1 *The blesbok*

For the *blesbok* antelope Bleek (1956:698) recorded *karaka*, *koliŋte*, and for the words 'bles' as 'bald', or 'bare' (as in 'bare-headed'), she indicates  $\bar{\neq}ka$ : from /Xam (S1);  $\bar{\neq}kau$  from /Auni (N1);  $\wedge\acute{h}a$ : from Kung (N2) and *!gora* in Khoikhoi (Bleek (1929:19). Nienaber and Raper (1977:108, 372-373) discussed the component *gani* as 'bont' in names like Ganikeis, Ganntanas, Gantanas and Ganigubberge, all referring to the concept of 'bont' applied in some reference to a topographical feature, but not necessarily referring to the occurrence there of bontebokke or blesbokke.

A railway siding called Blesbok in the Eastern Cape, 32 km west-north-west of Molteno, on the route Rosmead–Stormberg takes its name from the *Damaliscus albifrons*, *blesbok* in Afrikaans. This name means 'bald buck' or 'blazed buck', referring to its characteristic white forehead, which also gave rise to the Latin term *albifrons*. In Gauteng the Blesbokspruit is named after this same antelope. It is a



stream rising between the town of Springs and Delmas and flowing south-west past Nigel and Heidelberg to its confluence with the Suikerbosrand River south-west of the latter town. The name, Afrikaans for 'blesbok stream', refers to the fact that the area around the source of this stream was a favourite place for hunting *Damaliscus albifrons* (Raper *et al* 2014:37).

EMzinoni in Mpumalanga is a township some 2 km from Bethal. The name is Zulu in origin, derived from *umuzi wezinoni*, 'abode of many *blesbok*', *Damaliscus albifrons*. This designation in Zulu, *-noni*, is cognate with the same root word or cognate forms of the Tswana and Sotho versions above.

In Botswana the settlement Mmatshumo in the Central District, some 35 km north-east of Orapa and 190 km west of Francistown, is said to take its name from Tswana for the *blesbok*, *Damaliscus albifrons*. Interestingly enough, though, the name for this antelope in the Tswana language is *nonê*; in Northern Sotho it is *nônô* (Walker 1996:160), which, to a certain extent, resounds in the Bushman and Khoikhoi designations for these antelopes as being spotted, blazed with a white face, or variously coloured with white-brown-blackish spots or markings. "The facial markings of the two sub-species are conspicuously different and help to distinguish the two" (Walker 1996:160-163).

The Bushman name */garu*, and *taru* (or *troe-troe*, *trougo*, explained in Nienaber 1963:225 as designation for the '*bontbok*', see below), seems a more probable explanation, since in some instances the names may have been used interchangeably, thus '*bontebok*' as '*blesbok*', as was discussed in similar cases. In this instance, the component *-thsumo* could be seen as deriving from *trougo*, or directly from the cognate root word */garu*.

Compare Blesberg (Raper *et al* 2014:37), known in Southern Sotho as Thaba Nchu, where the component *nchu* may be seen as cognate to the earlier mentioned *taru*, */garu*, *tshu*, or from a word for '*bles*' as either 'bald', *mahata* in Bleek (1956:695), as also in Mmatshumo above. In other words, seen as white-striped, or spotted with white marks ('*gevlek*' in Afrikaans).

### 7.2.2 *The bontebok*

The oldest recordings of the name for the '*bont(e)bok*' (*Damaliscus dorcas / pygargus*) are discussed by Nienaber (1963:225), from the recordings by Witsen (1691:216), as

“*trougos...bonte bocken*”; and by Valentyn (1705:107b) who gave the name ‘troegos’. Nienaber notes, “*As ons in trou- en troe ’n sametrekking uit taru- het, dan...is dit ’n variant van /garu, ‘bont’ of ‘gestippel’...*”, (‘If in *trou-* and *troe-* we have a compacted form of *taru-*, then it is a variant of */garu*, ‘many coloured’ or ‘spotted’). Compare Skead’s (1987:352) detailed quotes of descriptions of the bontebok’s colourings, taken from various sources such as Sparrman (1786:219), and Alexander (1840:383) who wrote: “There on the Bontebok Flats,...are seen troops of bounding deer of many varieties, the splendid bontebok, or painted antelope, with its colours of bay, purple, and white...”. Thus, as the Afrikaners aptly translated the name from the Khoi-San languages, it is assumed that the name in these languages also means ‘spotted’. Nienaber and Raper (1977:108) indicate the component ‘*bont*’ as referring to the colour and that it was applicable to the *blesbokke* as well, although there only more pronounced to its white ‘spot’.

Place names, such as Bontebokkuil in the Caledon region of the Eastern Cape (Botha 1926:96), the Bontebok Nature Reserve in the Eastern Cape, the Bontebokpark, Bontebokstraat, as well as Bontebokvlakte (Raper *et al* 2014:45) come to mind as well-known toponyms. These toponyms are indicative of its restricted distribution (Roberts 1954:285-286, Skead 1987:333, 338).

An indigenous name adapted from the San languages into Xhosa is Xolora in the Eastern Cape. It is “a mountain range, 1 447 m above sea-level, 10 km west-north-west of Stutterheim and south of the Bontebok Flats. Also recorded as *Coloru*, *Kologha*, *Xolorha* and *iXolorha*, the name is derived from Khoikhoi *torogo*, *troego*, *trougo*, and refers to the bontebok” (Raper *et al* 2014:551). This toponym is also a Xhosa adaptation from *t’orogo*, *t’orogu*, and the forms as *iColora*, *iColoru* reveal the retained dental click in the spelling with C. Compared with the word for ‘bok’ as *t’cho*, */xu-b* as Nienaber (1963:224-225) argues for ‘*bontbok*’, *trougos*, that the second component *-go-s* is cognate with the preceding *tcho* for ‘*bok*’; the *trou* is an indicator for the colouring as ‘*bont*’. For ‘spot’, ‘spotted’ Bleek (1956:675) indicated *≠u*: from /Xam (S1) as recorded by Lucy Lloyd, and for ‘coloured’ the word *≠u* from the Naron (C2) language, and although it seems related, may not be cognate to the name’s formative roots.

Another feature, referred to in Xhosa as EMathafeni in the Eastern Cape, is an “expanse of open, grassy country south of Bedford”. The name is of Xhosa origin and means ‘at the flats’ or ‘on the flats’. The Bontebok Flats near Cathcart are also known by this name in Xhosa (Raper *et al* 2014:115).

A name from the Southern Sotho language, Poding-tse-Rolo, refers to a township 3 km east of Philippolis in the Free State, the name meaning ‘place of *bontebok*’, *Damaliscus pygargus*. The legend goes that Griqua are said to have rewarded Moletsane and his followers for services to them by giving them bontebok. The name, also written Podingtserolo, is used to refer to Philippolis itself (Raper *et al* 2014:417). The underlying phonology appears to be similar, i.e. with the *l* and *r* consonantal variation occurring as in other examples, *roro* becoming *rolo* in pronunciation, e.g. compare also Somabororo.

### 7.2.3 *The hartebeest*

The *hartebeest* (earlier *Bubalis caama*, now *Alcelaphus buselaphus*), in Afrikaans ‘*rooi hartebeest*’, have been immortalised in place names such as Etyelembube, Hartebeestrivier, Kama, Kamkao at Kenhardt (“synonym of Harte R. or Hartebeeste River, also written as Kamkoa”, according to Skead 1973:74, 91), Kenhardt, Kahams River, and Nqamakwe or Hartbeeskop in the Eastern Cape (former Transkei, Skead 1973:74). In some Bushman languages the hartebeest is variously called *!k?e* in /Auni (S4); *!nae* in Sesarwa (S5); *!nai* in /Nu //en (S6) and *//kama* in Hie (C1); *//kamaba* in Naron (C2), also *//khoa* in /Xam (S1) and *//kamab* in Khoikhoi (Bleek 1956:583).

The oldest scientific designation for the hartebeest that was already derived from this name is *kama* (with variants and cognate forms as *caamaa*, *camaa* or *cama*). It derives from a possible sound sequence emulated from the vocalisations that the female and young emit as “similar [to] lowing calls, which can become very loud when a large aggregation is disturbed, causing separation of cows and calves... causing them to bleat, scream in anguish” (Estes 2012:135). Both *Alcelaphus* and *Damaliscus* species of wildebeests (including the hartebeest), produce similar quacking and grunting calls, but are not ‘noisy’ species. The males of these species have completely different calls.

Etyelembube is a name of a settlement in the vicinity of Lityelembube, a post office in Mpumalanga. Apparently named after a local mountain by the Swazi speakers, it is said to mean ‘stone of the lion’, from *itye* (*etye* being the locative form), and *le mbube* as from *mbubezi* for lion. The name of the settlement was allocated to replace the Afrikaans name Hartebeeskop (SAGNC 2006). This opens the possibility to reinterpret the original name as a reference to the *hartebeest* of which the earlier Afrikaans mountain name was a direct translation. As the name was said to be that

of a mountain originally, and that it had been known by this name for many years, it may be assumed to precede the other two names, and be from Bushman origin. Both the Swazi and the Afrikaans names would therefore be secondary. The component *tye*, where the *ty* represents a click, could thus be seen as cognate with the /Auni (S4) *!kè*, ‘hartebeest’ (Bleek 1956:583). The component *le* has the meaning ‘of the’, and the component *-mbu(be)* correlates either with the Kung (N2) */ku* for ‘hartebees’, or more likely as in the normal Bushman naming pattern, refer to the ‘rock’ or ‘stone’ or ‘hill’. It thus functions as generic term for the feature ‘hill’. Therefore, *-mbu-* and *-be* may be cognate with the words *zu:* and *ze* for ‘stone’ in the Batwa (S3) language (recorded and documented as late as the 1920’s and thirties in the area of Lake Chrissie and surrounding regions by Bleek herself). Alternatively, it may be cognate with *//kuru* and *!kwe* from the /Xam (S1) language; as well as with the word *!num* and *gnum* in Auni (N1), Kung (N2) and !O!kung (N3) (Bleek 1929:80; 1956:49, 759).

The topographical feature, once bearing the translated name Hartebeestkop, gave the clue that the original mountain name in a Bushman language was similar to Etyelembube, and this would prove that the name actually refers to the “hartebeest’s stone, rock, or hill”; or “stone, hill of the hartebeest” (Raper *et al* 2014:129). The adaptation of *!kè* to *tye*, from words like *ke* or *!k’ena* for ‘hartebeest’, is further comparable to a similar naming pattern as in the case of Ngamakwe and the toponym of Kenhardt on the Hartebeestrivier in the Northern Cape (see discussion below).



Figure 7.2.3 Hartebeest head, Jatow cave, Ameib Erongo, Namibia [A. Viereck]

In the early scientific name for the species, *Bubalis caama*, the original Bushman names are still preserved (the *Buba* reminiscent of *bube*, and in fact, Estes gives a common name of one of the sub-species names as the *bubal*, *Alcelaphus buselaphus buselaphus*). In the Hie (C1) language the name for a ‘hartebees’ is *//kama*, applied in the term *caama*, just as the Bushman word *gnu* is preserved in the designation

*Connochaetes gnu* for the ‘blou wildebees’ (Raper *et al* 2014:129). The Xhosa name for the red hartebeest is *ixhama*, in Zulu it is *inkolongwane*, in Ndebele it is *ighama*, Southern Sotho *khama* and Tswana also *kgama* (Roberts 1954:282). All these designations are cognate to the Bushman forms //kama, caama and //kama in Hie (C1), //kamaba in Naron (C2), ≠kama in Tsauwke (C1a), and //kamab in Khoikhoi.

On the other hand, the Southern Bushman dialects indicated the antelope with names like !kè in /Auni (S4), !nae and !nai in /Nu//en (S6), each represented with a sharp click with a nasal efflux before the initial diphthong or vowel sequence in the latter. This is presumed to be a clear sound imitation, or, at least, a resemblance to its sharp warning call (Estes 2012:135), properly emulated by the Bushmen as !k?e. This sound imitation is recognised in the first syllable of the name Kenhardt for the town that was established along the banks of the Hartebeestrivier. The Bushman living alongside this river were known as the “Hartebeest Rivier Boesmans” (Skotnes 2007:164 quoting letter of L Anthing; Van Vuuren 2016:73, map 1), and their names for this antelope !kè and !nae, were tautologically transferred into the first two syllables of the name as !kènae-, and eventually adapted into the present form of the name. This name was further adapted through folk-etymological processes of incoming persons, such as explorers, traders and missionaries, into a recognisable ‘family’ name, and transferred or presented as the name for the town, Kenhardt.

The locality of Ngqamakhwe or Nqamakwe in the Eastern Cape bears this name, said to be derived from the Xhosa language and to refer to the ‘hartebeest’ (Raper *et al* 2014:378). It is an adaptation from the Bushman designations, the component *nqama* from ≠kama from the Sehura (C1a) language (Bleek 1956:656), and the component *khwe*, *kwe* synonymous to *koe* as in Kung (N2), indicating a locative component. Therefore, ‘place of the hartebeest’; or more specific the oronymic generic ‘hillock of the hartebeest’, a reference to the ‘kop’, as captured in the Afrikaans translation Hartbeeskop. On the other hand, the designation to a river may have come into play here as the word *kwe* in Naron (C2) can also mean ‘river’ (Bleek 1956:733, 112).

The name of the hartebeest as *Bubalis caama* appears in various guises, such as the Khoikhoi name Kammaghaap for the Hartebees River in the Northern Cape. It is assumed that it originated from Khoikhoi //kamaga!ab, literally meaning ‘river of many hartebeests’, so that the Afrikaans name is a translation. The second component *ga-* is the plural indicator of ‘many’ and the last component *!ab*, the fluvial generic ‘river’. Recorded names for the hartebeest from the Bushman languages indeed show //kama from Hie (C1); //kamaba from Naron (C2), and ≠kama from Sehura (C1a)

(Bleek 1929:45; 1956:723), which are all in accordance with the first component of the place name.

#### 7.2.4 The tsessebe or sassaby

The *tsessebe* or *sassaby* is categorised with the tribe Alcelaphini, the *tsessebe* as *Damaliscus lunatus*. In fact, Roberts (1954:287) indicates the indigenous names for this Alcelaphini the '*tsesseby*' or variant form '*sassaby*' as he calls it, as 'basterhartbees' in Afrikaans, in Tswana as *tshêšêbê*, and in Northern Sotho as *tshêntshêbê*. The name as recorded in the various languages in which it illustrates forms indicating a close sound association, is a confirmation of its former wide-spread occurrence (See under *wildebeeste* and *hartebeeste*). Clearly the *tsessebe* is not the same antelope as the *lechwe*, nor the *waterbuck*. The *tsessebe* or *tsesseby* antelope, also recorded earlier as *sassaby* by Bleek and from the Bushman languages as *nutfo* and *ngutfo* (1956:766), is further indicated by her as synonymous with the variant *nutfu* from the Hie (C1) language (1956:150). Under '*sassaby*' she gave it as synonymous with *letfu*, *lutfo* in Hie (C1) referring apparently in this instance, to the cognate *lechu* for *lechwe*, and where she described this antelope under '*sassaby*', she also gave the form as *lutfu* (1956:53, 130). The *tsesseby* though, is a totally distinct antelope from the *lechwe*, and the distinctions in the names should be sought in the finer dialectical renderings of the vowel patterns in the names.



A painting of a colorful bird, possibly a Kingfisher, flying over a river in a forest. The bird has a blue back, a white breast, and a red beak. The river is a bright yellowish-white, and the surrounding trees are green and dark. The sky is a pale blue.

# PART THREE

Bird names



*Boorong koonjiet koonjiet* from the William Farquhar Collection [Courtesy of the National Museum of Singapore, National Heritage Board]



A number of bird names with Bushman onomatopoeic and descriptive origins were traced in southern African toponyms, for example, the ostrich, eagles, owls, blue cranes, the 'hamerkop', crows, chickens, kori bustards or *gompoue*, *korhane* or *knorhaans*, ground hornbills or 'bromvoëls', guinea fowls, partridges, quails, and many more.

Only a few names are included here to illustrate how such names described the observed and transferred sound associations of specific songs, or metaphoric associations in bird names. Koopman mentions in his work on Zulu onomatopoeic bird names (1990:67-87; 2002:235, 239, 243-244), how they are quite similar in description of the sound, or often relate in sound to Afrikaans and English names, and are sometimes similarly or independently named, yet all onomatopoeically coined. For example, the African *hoopoe*, known in Afrikaans as the 'hoephoep', which in Tswana is *pupupu*; the 'boubou' is known in Zulu as *ibhoboni*; the ground hornbill or 'bromvoël' in Afrikaans is called *ingududu* in Zulu. The 'hadida' in Zulu is *inkankane*; the grey *loerie* or 'kwêvoël' in Afrikaans is almost the same as in Zulu: *iklewu*; the babblers, known as 'katlagters' ('laughers at cats') in Afrikaans, are *ihlekehle* (interpreted as 'the one who laughs', 'makes a laughing sound') in Zulu. The crowned crane or 'mahem' is *unohemu* in Zulu; its Xhosa name a close call with the form *a(ma)hemu* or *mahemu*; the Kurrichane thrush is called *umunswi* in Zulu. The blackwinged plover in Zulu is known as the *ititihoya*, in Shona it is *kweriekwerie*; these last two examples clear sound-associative names, referring to its plaintive call.

Many Bushman names for small birds are listed in Bleek (1929:22) as: *si//gu* or *si//ku* or */k'arika* from /Auni (S4); and *†kari-on* from /Nu//en (S6). Although she does not specify them, she mentions in particular, the *keregeta*, *keregetabi* as "certain small birds" (Bleek 1956:87), and the *kwi ǀpwiŋkingan* as "small birds" (Bleek 1956:686), see also *bokmakierie* and others.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

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### Bird names as reflected in toponyms

#### 8.1 Ostrich



Figure 8.1 Ostrich running [Daniel Otte]

The ostrich (*Struthio camelus*, Afrikaans ‘*volstruis*’, cf. Sinclair *et al* 1993:138), is known by many names in the Bushman languages, *inter alia* *mptfu*, *tjwe*, *tue*, *twe*; also *!go*: and *!gom* (Bleek 1956:740). The first four of these Bushman names for the bird all correspond with designations for the bird in some Bantu languages, for example, in Zulu as *i-ntshe* (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:325), Northern Sotho *mptšhe*, and Tswana *mpfe* as well as *tlokwe*.

Many toponyms refer to this large, African bird, both as original creations, or derived from the various Bushman and Khoikhoi names of the ostrich, some seen as direct onomatopoeic emulations. Bleek (1929:63; 1956:740) further recorded ostrich names i.a. as *mptfu*, *kwe* from the ≠Komani (S2a) and Seroa (S2d) languages; //gwe: from Sesarwa (S5); !kui from Kung (N2), and for the male bird !go, \_!goe from Heikum (N2a), *kani* from /Xam (S1) and /amis from Khoikhoi.

This last name may correspond to what Nienaber (1963:507-508) documented from Ten Rhyne's recordings (in 1673:155) of the "*grotom courcour...a big bird, by which they generally mean the ostrich*". The names captured by Bleek as !khai, *kani* /amis and ≠gam, seem to be cognate with the names Nienaber lists from Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects and Nama equivalents as *cama* (recorded in 1655 by De Flacourt), *t'kammiep* (as recorded by Borchers 1801), and variants such as *ammy*, *ammi* and /ami-b from Korana, as documented by Meinhof (1930:25).

Some of the variant Bushman names (Bleek 1929:63; 1956:138) appear to be onomatopoeic in nature: *kwe* in //N!ke (S2); //gwe: in Sesarwa (S5); !khai, !kui in Kung (N2), emulating the chicks' and female birds' high pitched calls, indicated by the high front vowels e and i, and the diphthong sounds ai and ui, as opposed to the male birds' sonic names emulating the deep roar or bellowing by employing the full round vowels o and a, as in !go, \_!goe, \_!go: and !gom, ≠gam.

It has been recorded, as mentioned above, that the male ostrich bellows. Sinclair, Hockey and Tarboton (1993:138) describe its call as being a: "...nocturnal; a booming leonine roar". This vocalisation, being the strongest of its repertoire, was probably heard more often, and thus acoustically imitated in its name, a sound represented in writing as !gom or !gum. Bleek (1956:388) mentions under the lemma !gum 'to bellow', that both the ostrich and the lion carry this name because they make a bellowing, roaring sound from their lungs, both are onomatopoeically called *xam*, ≠gam, *ho:um* and !gum in some of the Bushman languages.

The names for the ostrich, indicated *inter alia* as *mptfu*, *mpse* and *mptšhe*, appear in toponyms such as Dimptšhe 'place of many ostrich', and Metsimptšhe 'ostrich fountain'. It may be concluded that the component *mptšhe* is cognate with the Bushman Auen (N1) word *mptsu*, *mptfu* for an ostrich, similar to the Tswana *impfe*. The plural form *di-* of the toponym Dimptšhe indicates 'many ostriches'. The place name Metsimptšhe, indicated as a replacement for Volstruisfontein, was actually translated by the Afrikaans speakers from the original indigenous name, and, thus,

means ‘waterhole or fountain of the ostrich’, or ‘ostrich fountain’. It is also the name of a nearby post office. The Northern Sotho component *-mptšhe* of these restored names contains an element that may, as argued above, be a reference to the sound that female ostriches and the chicks make, probably adapted from the Bushman names *kwe* from //N!ke (S2); //gwe: from Sesarwa (S5); and *ˀ!kui* in Kung (N2). The component *Metsi-* is a Northern Sotho adaptation of the Bushman *ˀ/ti* and *tʃi*, referring to ‘water’, a ‘fountain’.

These sound-associative descriptors for the ostrich appear in other languages as adapted forms, note the common name *mptfu*, as related to the *tue* and *twe* forms, also in the Tswana variant *impfe* (Bleek 1956:138), and the Northern Sotho *mptšhe*. The indigenous toponyms had already been adapted and assimilated from the appellative or common noun for the bird from Bushman into the other languages, and applied as references to the various places where these birds still occurred in their natural habitat.

An open pan and *oshana* in Ovamboland, Namibia, bears the Ovambo name, Sheemho, to be read as *she + e + mho*, and is explained as ‘*Volstruisoshana*’ in Afrikaans (Albertyn 1984:90), where *oshana* means ‘river’, thus ‘ostrich river’, or according to the typical Bantu language name construct ‘river of the ostrich’. In this case, the *she* could either refer to the *oshana* as in other Ovambo toponyms beginning with *sha*, *she*, *sho*, with the second component referring to the ‘ostrich’ *e-mho*, which correlates in adapted form with the Bushman name for the male bird *!go*, *ˀ!goe*. In such a case, it would not correlate with the adapted Tswana form of the common name *mptfu* for ‘ostrich’. Alternatively, the first component *she*, could be derived from the forms *kwe*, //gwe from the Bushman words discussed above, and cognate with *impfe* and *mptšhe* from the Tswana and Sotho languages, the adapted names of the ostrich. This toponym is another confirmation of its origin, in either of the etymological analyses, to be a derivation or loan word from an earlier Bushman form with the Ovambo name illustrating the click adaptations from *!go* to *mho*. Alternatively, it is a confirmation that the Tswana *impfe* was adapted to a softer sibilant form *she* approximating or resembling also the lateral click // of //gwe of the Bushman designation.

The place name Bollantlokwe, a post office in the North West province, 15 km south-west of Moretele, is said to refer to the ‘sound of ostriches’, and derives from the Tswana language (Raper *et al* 2014:43). It possibly derives from the Bushman words for the male bird *!go*, *ˀ!goe*, together with *kwe* from the ≠Komani (S2a) and

Seroa (S2d) languages; //gwe: from Sesarwa (S5); adapted into Tswana *tlokwe* as represented in the place name Bollantlokwe.

This name may be indicative of an imitation of the male ostrich making its bellowing sound in the phonemic renderings *bo-* as from *!go* and *!gom*, with the shift from a voiced click sound *!g* to a bilabial voiced implosive, perhaps pronounced with more aspiration as *bho-*. This may represent the ostrich's bellow, even its loud clucking sound, and may be equated to *bo* ('bellow, roar', an imitation) + *la* (of the) + *tlokwe*, 'ostrich'. The component *bo-* was also explained as a 'roaring, bellowing sound' in the explanation provided for the place name Bolla Tau, indicating a "sound made by lions of which there were many in times past" (SAGNC, 2012), hereby drawing on the similar sounded vocalisation of the lion and the ostrich. The components *tlo kwe* contain yet another reference to the onomatopoeic names for the ostrich, the *toe*, *tue*, *kwe* and //gwe as indicated above.

The name of the ostrich also appears in original Afrikaans toponyms, or translations such as Vogelstruisfontein (Brink and Rhenius 1724, 1761, quoted in Mossop 1947), Volstruisleegte (Raper *et al* 2014:532), Volstruispan, Volstruispoort and Struispoort.

This toponymic cluster of names (containing references to the ostrich) illustrates the diversity of languages in contact, and a situation where common names, deriving from an older Bushman designation, were revived in a set of reinstated toponyms.

## 8.2 Vultures

Vultures, such as the Cape vulture (*Gyps corprotheres*), called '*kransasvoël*' in Afrikaans, were recorded from early Cape Khoikhoi dialects by Le Vaillant during 1780-1783 as i.a. *v-ghaip*, *≠ghai-p* and *ghaip* (Nienaber 1963:20, 204, 475). Bleek (1929:89) documented this large bird of prey with names from the Bushman languages, such as *!kwi*: in /Xam (S1); in //N!ke (S2) it is known as */kwi*:. In Hie (C1) it is called *hi*; and in Naron (C2) it is represented as *k"ē ī*.



Figure 8.2 Vultures roosting [Daniel Otte]

In these common names the use of the high tone *i*: and the nasalised diphthong *ei*, illustrate the namers' acoustic emulation of the high piping cry or whistling call of the vulture. Other forms of imitative common names for the vulture are *≠nwe* and *≠nu̇e* and *≠nué* as documented from the Kung (N2) language (Bleek 1929:89). A place name that reflects this sound-associative formative is Lenwenwe, a name of a mountain and rock cliff in Mpumalanga (Raper *et al* 2014:273). The variant form Lenyenye, indicates possible toponymic adaptations from the above common names, especially from the Naron (C2) *k̚ē ī* with the strong nasalisation of the last high vowels *ē ī* adapted to *nyenyē*. Alternatively it could have been adapted from the above Kung (N2) words *≠nwe*, *≠nu̇e* and *≠nué*. The plural form of the raptor's name is indicated by Bleek (1956:122), as *k̚ē̄'i*, but also as *//kwa*. The verification of the toponym's origin is thus based on phonological similarities in both forms with strong vowel nasalisation and glottal croak representations in the written forms. The rock ledge was known as 'the place of the vultures'. It is also the name of a valley in the area of the Mopani district, 41 km east of Mooketsi, near Modjadjiskloof, said to be an old name that stems from dialects of Northern Sotho. Another explanation is that its origin may, possibly, be from a Bushman dialect and refers to the Cape vulture, thus *le* as 'place of', *nwenwe* as 'many vultures', since in the Kung (N2) language (Bleek 1929:89), the word for the 'Cape vulture' is *≠nwi*, *≠nwe* in *//N!ke* (S2), where *nwenwe* is to be read as a reduplication indicating the plural, 'many', with variants written as *≠nu̇e* and *≠nué*.

The name of a mountain some 7 km north-north-east of Willowmore and 6 km south-east of Perdepoort, in the Eastern Cape, is Aasvoëlberg. This name is Afrikaans for 'vulture mountain'. In the eighteenth century the mountain was known as De Qua, and it has been assumed that the component *De* was the Dutch definite article, 'the', and that the component *Qua* was derived from Khoikhoi words *kx'ao*, also Nama /*ou* (Kroenlein 1889:205). In the Kung (N2) language the name appears as *≠nūe* (Bleek 1929:89, 1956:206) for the 'Cape vulture', and the plural form is //kwa (Bleek (1956:122) which relates to the component *Qua* in the toponym. However, it seems more likely that the component *qua* approximates the Hie (C1) *!goa* for 'mountain', and the Naron (C2) *≠gnoa* which identifies a 'mountain, stone, or rock', and that the component *de* corresponds to a Bushman word for 'vulture', such as discussed above from the Kung (N2) language *≠nwe*, 'vulture', or the /Nu//en (S6) *!gwe* (Raper *et al* 2014:2). Alternatively, the *Qua* may relate to, or is cognate with the Bushman word //hou-k'o (Bleek 1956:768), heard as //kwa, written as *qua*, or otherwise, as indicated above, derived from the general name for 'vultures', *kx'ao*, //hou-k'o (Bleek 1956:206).

Some of its names like the /kwi: and k'e'i could be interpreted as imitative of its high-pitched cries and calls. The name //kwa as well, since this last *qua* or *≠nūe*, may be onomatopoeically conceived as deriving from other behaviour patterns of the vulture: that of breaking and devouring bones. Even its other recorded names as //araŋ, as in the toponym Xalanga in the Eastern Cape near Elliot and Cala (Raper *et al* 2014:550), and the //hou-k'o designation, may be indicative or descriptive of the acoustic effects of the sounds heard when the vultures, as is their habit, drop bones onto rocks, in order to break them to get to the marrow.

### 8.3 Owls and night hawks

The owl names were not always listed per specific species type from the Bushman languages in Bleek (1929:63-64, 1956:741), but simply indicated as 'night owls' or 'night hawks', smaller and larger types, e.g. as *!hū!hū* from /Xam (S1); *!nōna* and *≠hom* from //N!ke (S2). In the //N!ke (S2) language the word for the 'night owl' is specifically indicated as *!nōna* (Bleek 1956:481), and in the Hie (C1) language its cognate is *!khom* (here called a 'night hawk'); and *≠hom*: as 'a larger owl' from the Hie (C1) language (Bleek 1956:651). Other designations for larger owls are *!konuko* *ˀhu:ko*: from the Kung (N2) language, /*koŋa* from Naron (C2), *!hū!hūs* in Korana according to Lucy Lloyd (in Maingard 1932:316), and *!hūnos* in Khoikhoi (Bleek 1929: 64; 1956:442, 741).

All the names for owls have the distinctive long, nasalised vowels ū: and ō, *u:* and *o:*, and this may acoustically resemble the long drawn out, plaintive hooting calls of the owls at night. Or as indicated below, the softer snoring sounds they also emit while roosting, could be associated with these phonemic clusters. These sound-associative or onomatopoeic names could, thus, be regarded as early evolutionary onymic formatives, onomatopoeically emulating the snoring of the barn owls, or the hooting of night owls that are common to the region.

A place in Namibia, in the far south-western corner of Kaokoland Area I, north-east of Rocky Point, north of Möwebaai, south-west of Kaoko-Otavi and Otjikoko in the far east, goes by the name Purros. This name is said to be derived from the name *hurros* in Damara and Nama for the small night-owls that are often heard calling in the area (Albertyn 1984:29). This name as *purros* from *hurros* seems to approximate the above renderings of owl names in general with the *u* and *o* vowel-cluster formations, e.g. *!hu!hu*, *!konuko* *˘hu:ko:*.

The middle and smaller owl types (including the barn owl, *Tyto alba*), are known by the name *!nōna*. It is this common name that served as the toponymic motive and creative reference in the allocation of the place name, Nonikam (as will emerge from the discussion below), said to refer to the place where they were known to roost. This name also seems to contain the onomatopoeic element relating to what ornithologists describe as its “snoring” habit, although its most common call is described as an “eerie shreee” (Sinclair *et al* 1993:234).

The Bushmen were keen observers of mammals, reptiles, insects and birds alike. In all their common names for owls the subtle snoring or the louder hoot *hoo hoo* as *!hu!hu*, the distinctive owl vocalisations, are recognised. The explanation by the San people for *!hū!hū* as the ‘night owl’, was related as follows: ‘the owl is a thing that acts thus, when it knows that lions will return to us, the owl comes to scream opposite us’ (Bleek 1956:400).

This behaviour is confirmed by ornithologists. The barn owl is known, according to Roberts (1982:257), to make these “eerie calls...various ghostly sounds varying from snoring noises to loud screams”. This vocalisation, or high screeching when alarmed, also gave rise to the age old beliefs in folklore that associated this bird with death.



The area name Nonikam, comprising several farms in the district of Windhoek in Namibia (SWA Map 1:1 000 000, 1972), and a farm bordering it, that carries the German name Eulenuh, all bear the same onymic formative and motive, i.e. the name of owls. Research indicated that the name Nonikam is in fact Bushman in origin, and that the translated German version, *Eulenuh*, may be another example of different languages interacting in this region. The key was found in the translation, it also provided the solution to its analysis, in other words, that it may contain a possible embedded onymic formative, namely a reference to the Bushman common noun of a 'type of owl'. Thus the description of the place from *!nōna*, *≠hon*, the 'owls' plus the reference to their 'resting place' */kham*, */ham*, became the place name Nonikam, and Nonikam was translated as *Eulenuh*. This owl name suggested that subtle acoustics, as articulated in the original naming process, may have been actively employed as onymic formatives that underwent a semantic shift or, that the name was redefined and adapted by folk-etymology into something new: the appellative or common name, possibly for the same owl type as named in Afrikaans.

The interpretation was that the onymic formative for Nonikam was an onomatopoeic rendering from the common name of a type of owl known in Bushman as *!nōna*, *≠hon*, (and possibly *!hu!hu*), with the added generic */kham*, */ham* meaning 'to rest'. Together with this, the second component or generic of the name, *kam*, is cognate with the Bushman expression 'to rest', 'to retire', indicated as *!ham* or */nam* in the */Nu//en* (S6) language (Bleek 1956:343). Combined in the typical naming pattern of Bushman toponyms with a specific as first component, and the generic as second, it compares logically with each part of the place name Nonikam. The adjacent farm name, Eulenuh, translating Nonikam, thus also corresponds in every component with the meaning: 'owls' rest', 'roosting place of the owls'. As the Bushman cognates indicate, this name is, in fact, a direct translation from the original Bushman designation for the place.

The full name, thus, comprising the root words in a slightly adapted orthography as *noni + kam*, was retraced via the German rendering of the name, and component by component, gave the meaning as 'owls rest' or 'owls roosting (place)'. In this instance, the translated German toponym not only preserved the original Bushman designation, but provided the solution to an otherwise possibly misinterpreted, and partially replaced older designation (Nienaber & Raper 1977:903; Möller 1986:261).

If the German name was a mere coincidence, or transferred as toponym from Germany, did the owner of the farm really simply transfer that specific name?

Or did he indeed become aware of the original meaning of the name Nonikam, and accordingly, give his newly acquired farm (a section of the original area), the equivalent name with the same meaning, the ‘owls’ rest’ in German? This name, as discussed above, is more likely to be a direct translation from the original Bushmen’s designation for the place. The farm name Eulenruh was, in fact, allocated to this new cadastral portion of the area name Nonikam as a translation (Möller 1986:261).

This correspondence between the original name and its translation also led to proposing a possible link of the Bushman name *!nōna* to the sound-associative or equivalent Afrikaans common species name for the ‘barn owl’ as *nonnetjiesuil*, *nonnetjiesuil*. The Afrikaans *nonnetjiesuil* may have been derived very early on from the //N!ke (S2) *!nōna*, and folk-etymologically adapted into the Afrikaans designation. The Bushman toponym, with the German translation, thus provided a possible etymology of the Afrikaans common name for the barn owl, as well.

This sound-related or cognate designation could not be coincidental, nor ignored as a possible appellative shift (common noun transfer) from the Bushman designation for the owl *!nōna* to the toponym Nonikam, i.e. via an onomatopoeic formative that may stem from an observed behaviour of the owls as ‘snoring’, the ‘snoring ones’, together with the qualifying generic, to ‘roosting place’. In the Auen (N1) language the verb ‘to snore’ is given as //*konom*, and in Kung (N2) *≠xo≠xonu* (Bleek 1929:77), both close enough cognates to associate it with the various owl names, e.g. *!konuko* *ˀhu:ko*: as above.

This cluster analysis also explained which of the owl types could have had an association with the specific place Nonikam as their habitat or roosting place. It is known that the barn owl occurs widely in the whole of southern Africa (Sinclair *et al* 1993:234).

The toponymic cluster presented in this case (Nienaber & Raper 1977:903, Möller 1986:261), and the linguistically verifiable cognates in Bushman, allowed the conclusion that the owl *!nōna* was, in fact, the real naming motive and origin of the place name and enabled the etymological conclusion. This toponym confirmed the toponymic relevance of the evolutionary onymic and cultural naming motives, and naming patterns as found in some associated sound sequence renderings of many Bushman designations for mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. These are found in onomatopoeic nouns and toponyms referring to the fauna, often as adopted and adapted names also into other languages spoken in the region.

Not only did the Bushman onomatopoeic common name for a certain type of owl, the barn owl, act as a possible onymic formative in the Afrikaans language, that resulted in the sound-associative common noun *nonnetjiesuil*, but it was reinterpreted and ‘recreated’ so to speak, from Bushman into another language in this folk-etymological adaptation to a totally new concept and semantic content, although with the same reference to the barn owl. This ‘loaned’ Afrikaans designation for the barn owl was then reinterpreted by folk-etymology as deriving from the image of a nun’s habit; even legendarised as etymological reference to a ‘young girl’ as *nonnatjie* or *nonnie*. Now, however, it may perhaps be considered as yet another bird name in Afrikaans, formed by sound-associative renderings from an indigenous Bushman language.

The Afrikaans name for the barn owl as ‘*nonnetjiesuil*’, may thus have originated from the Bushman common name for this type of owl. It may be explained as folk-etymological adaptation, where it is associated with words for ‘a small girl’ ‘*nonnie*’, ‘*nonnatjie*’ or ‘*non*’, a nun, within the image of wearing a nun’s habit around the face. However, Boshoff and Nienaber (1967:449), discussing ‘*nonnie*’ and ‘*nonnatjie*’, do not specifically refer to this owl type as it being the etymology of the words ‘*nonnie*’ or ‘*nonnatjie*’. It seems more likely though, that the Afrikaans name for the owl, ‘*nonnetjiesuil*’, originated from the Bushman name for a ‘type of owl’ called *!nōna*. It would appear that the origin is closer to ‘home’, adopted into the Afrikaans language from the bilingual Bushman and Khoikhoi speakers’ name for the owl, rather than the long route via Dutch, Malay, Portuguese or Spanish or Latin!

It may further be taken into account, that it was not unusual for the local speakers, given the language contact situation and social intermingling between the early Dutch (and later Afrikaans) speakers with Bushmen and the Old Cape Khoikhoi language speakers of the region (of whom most soon learned Dutch, or early Afrikaans, as their second language according to Van Vuuren, 2016:iv, 2-3, 39), to borrow words and phrases from each other, right to the extent of acquiring each others languages fairly fluently. This interlinguistic contact, or trans-language exchange, became a major factor in the formative processes of coining new local names from the local nomenclature of the speakers in the area, therefore also in adopting names for animals and birds found in the area.

This naming motive established ‘*nonnetjiesuil*’ as a loan and adapted name from a locally spoken Bushman language. It therefore seemed viable that it had indeed originated from the Bushman sound-associative common noun for a type of owl *!nōna*, coined in Afrikaans as the *nonnetjiesuil*, the ‘barn owl’.

The close co-existence of a cluster of farm names and designations referring to the owls in the area, had prompted a closer look at the origins of both Nonikam and Eulenruh. Toponymically and linguistically the phonological sound patterns and the meanings given of the Bushman place name as ‘owls rest’, were found to correspond exactly component by component, i.e. they are structurally and semantically similar. Also in their naming pattern, as well as in their comparable word structures to other toponyms in the area, i.e. of Bushman designations relating to the common nouns for mammals (e.g. the ‘*graatjie*’, the ‘*taa*’) and quite a few bird types, the components of the toponyms could be classified as indirect, perhaps evolutionary, sound associated formatives, transferred by loan, with adaptation. This illustrates once again the very productive trans-language adoptive processes of word category or word class shift from appellative to proper noun, in this case of a Bushman bird name allocated to an area name, subsequently translated as German toponym, and at the same time functioning as proper name of the same bird type in Afrikaans.

Another owl name *!hū!hū(s)* from both Korana and /Xam (S1) (Bleek 1929:63), may, possibly, have been the onymic formative and naming motive, though variously adapted, in its allocation to the toponym Marubising, a settlement some 20 km north-east from Taung. It is said to be a Tswana name meaning “*baie uile plek*”, ‘where many owls occur, ‘place of many owls’ (PLAC database, NWP 1982-2000). The component *ru-bisi* may approximate the Bushman *!hū!hū*; *ma-* is a plural prefix ‘many’, *rubisi*, ‘type of owls’; *-ng* is the locative indicator for ‘place’. The component *-ru-* here, is to be read as cognate with Bushman *!hū* of the reduplicative name as *!hū!hū*, since the *h* and *r* are interchangeable. Alternatively, it may simply be a reference to a specific type of owl as recorded by Weich (2004:358), who gives the word for ‘owl’ in the !Xuhn (Kung) language as *!ulibu*, which approximates the first component *rubi-*, or an adapted onymic formative like *!uli* > (*r*)*ubi*, the cerebral click *!* adapted to the roller *r*, with the *ℓ-* sound somewhere between a glide and a fricative, shifting to the voiced bilabial *b* as explicated in the Tswana toponym Marubising. Another confirmation of this cognate onymic formative is found in Göllnitz (1942:40) who recorded from Herero a word *otjisiui* for ‘owl’, *otji*, class four prefix of *siui* ‘owl’ (Brockmann 1941:4, 8), with the click adaptation (*!* > *r* > *s*) into the phonological system of the Bantu language, Herero, but retaining the same vowel sequence pattern of *u-i* in the onymic root word as in *!uli-*, *rubi-* and *sui*. The method of ‘sound-meaning’ applied here to retrace origins of word components as put forward by Heine and Honkin (2010:11).

Near the Okakora mountain range in Kaokoland, Namibia, there is an area name (Oshirongo) called Ondjimbi, said to be derived from either the Himba or Herero language, and to refer to 'a type of owl' (DG-SWA nd. map sheet 1712 BD, Okakora). The *O-* indicates the locative 'place of', or class two prefix, the *ndjimbi* refers to the 'owl type'. This toponym can be compared with the Tswana name, Marubising, as discussed above. A phonological similarity can be established between the owl designations, i.e. between Herero, where 'owl' is indicated as both *otji-siui* (note the *-si-ui* components) and *ndjimbi*, in Tswana *rubisi*, and !Xuhn *!ulibu*. These root words all containing an older evolutionary onymic origin as in the case of *!u-li*, *ru-bi* and *si-u-i*, where this occurs as *u(l)i*, *u(b)i* and *(si)ui*. In the case of Ondjimbi, the vowel sequence *i-i* in *-ndji-mbi* approximates the *si(u)i* of *otjisiui*; with the *O* the Herero (Himba) locative or class prefix.

The name Maubane, that of an urban area and a tollgate on the road to Bela Bela or Warmbaths, some 50 km north of Pretoria in Limpopo, contains the reference to the 'night owl' or 'nightjar' and is from Tswana (Raper *et al* 2014:313). Roberts (1982:265) also indicates the name of this small owl as *mauba(ne)* and *le-uvauva*, which may have been regionally used either as *vauva* or *mauba*, with the usual *m* and *v* interchangeability in such words, or variability in the adaptation process, evident.

## 8.4 Blue crane

The Bushman names for the *blue crane* (*Anthropoides paradisea*) were recorded by Bleek (1929:31) as *!o:* in /Xam (S1); *ˀkauˀkauŋ*, */kwe:nˀkiˀi* in //N!ke (S2); *!nwaˀwa* in /Auni (S4); as *//nobe* in Auen (N1); */xonu/xonu* in Kung (N2); */garo /kwa* in Naron (C2). Lucy Lloyd (in Maingard 1932:316), recorded the name in Korana as *!hanumu !noap* 'krans vogel (*sic*), blue crane'.

The Cephanees Poort is the name of a mountain and a valley in the district of Middelburg in the Eastern Cape, with its Dutch name recorded as "Kraanvogels Valleij, [blue] crane valley" (Raper *et al* 2014:67). The name derives from the //N!ke name *//kwe:nˀkiˀi* for a 'kraanvogel' as indicated above. This bird type is endemic to the Eastern Cape, Karoo, grasslands of the Highveld and on the escarpment of the Drakensberg, though some specimens have even been appearing in the Western Cape and around Etosha in Namibia according to Roberts (1982:152, map), who also gives the common names in Southern Sotho as the *mokhokoli*, and in Xhosa and Zulu as the *indwa*. Another name in Bushman for this bird was recorded by

Bleek (1956:707) as *\_xu\_ru~xu~ru* from the //Kxau (S2b) language spoken by a small group of Bushmen near Kimberley.

The blue crane's call is recorded in Bleek (1956:160) as an exclamation *rrru*, *rerere* from /Xam (S1). Incidentally, in the search for this exclamation as *rrru* it was found mentioned that *rrru* and *rerere* (pronounced *ririri*) are both used for the 'blue crane's song', and this may relate to its name //kwe:n~ki~I, or closer still in the phrase illustrating its call *\_xu\_ru~xu~ru*. This song, called the 'Blue Crane's Song', is documented by Bleek from the fieldwork notes after the Bushmen rendition of it as: "the berries are upon my shoulder, berries are up here, r r r u are up here". Notice in this song of the bird the clear onomatopoeic process of adding consonants and clicks, thereby repeating in sound the bird's vocalisations. Compare van Vuuren (2016:131), on this topic of the 'special language of animals' as quoted earlier and as taken from Bleek and Lloyd (1936:163-199): "...the /Xam concept of a specific adapted language spoken by each animal species, in which the consonants are shifted, or extra consonants are added to fit the shape of each animal's mouth or beak".

This was also a typical speech pattern among the Bushmen, the 'added vocalisation' as utterances of the Bushman languages when indicating either emphasis, plurality or the diminutive, but also, purely utilising the sound value of their clicks and consonants in onomatopoeically coined names, songs and folk-tales or stories.

## 8.5 The hamerkop

The hamerkop (*Scopus umbretta*), 'hamerkop' from Afrikaans because of the shape of its feathered head, is commemorated in its Tsonga form in the toponym Ka-Manghondzwane. This toponym refers to a stream flowing about 2.5 km east of the Kruger National Park in the Limpopo Province. This indigenous name form could have its root word in some sound association with *nghondzwa*, or as description of the 'hammer-like profile of the head [that] renders this bird unmistakable' (Sinclair *et al* 1993:68-69). Its call as given by Sinclair: "A sharp 'kiep' in flight; a jumbled mixture of querulous squawks and frog-like croaks during courtship". Another toponym that appears to contain the same indigenous root word *nghondho*, is the composite Shisakashanghondho in Mpumalanga. It is a tributary of the Timbavati, in the Kruger National Park, about 27 km north-west of Satara. The name, of Shangaan origin, is said to mean "where the *hamerkop* makes its nest" or 'the *hamerkop* nest'.

The Afrikaans name *hamerkop* means ‘hammerhead’; the bird referred to is *Scopus umbretta* (Raper *et al* 2014:461).

The Zulu name for this bird (*u)thekwane* (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:789), is found in the toponym KwaThekwane, referring to a lake or pool some 24 km west of Barberton. The name of the pool recalls this ‘*hamerkop*’ bird (Raper *et al* 2014:264) since it means “at the place of *hamerkop* birds (*Scopus umbretta*)”.

## 8.6 Bustards, kori bustards or gompou

Kori bustards or gompou (Otididae). References to these birds occur in several place names. In the Bushman languages the birds have many onomatopoeic and different names, but the same names have invariably been used or interchanged by other language speakers. Examples include Afrikaans, Herero, Tswana, Zulu, and so on; at different times, adaptations and hybridisations have occurred. The kori bustard (*Ardeotis kori*) or *gompou* is from the Otididae family, that includes other types of bustards; it is restricted to Africa, and is described as the largest terrestrial bird that is able to fly. (Retrieved 15 August 2016 from <https://af.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/kori/gompou>).

The local kori bustard, known as the wild peacock or *gompou* in Afrikaans, is indicated by Bleek (1929:64) as the ‘*paauw*’, and she recorded its name from various Bushman languages as ˀku: from /Xam (S1), !num from /Nu//en (S6), !go:ba from Naron (C2); /gwi from !O!kun (N3) and !gwi from Auen (N1); and !huib in Khoikhoi. Lucy Lloyd (in Maingard 1932:315-316) recorded the name for this bustard as “*hhu: Eupodotis kori*, great *paauw*”. In addition to this, another bustard, apparently the *Otis nuba*, though she did not identify or specify it further, was recorded as the ≠ka //ka//kas, which seems to correspond more with the ‘*knorhane*’ as will emerge below.

The male *kori* or cock *paauw* is called ˀ!karri, !karri in /Xam (S1) because it is seen as a large, strong voiced bird (Bleek 1956:409). This name resounds most often in the common and scientific names, indicated as *kori* and !karri. The sound imitation lies in the long vowels *a*, *u*: and *o*:, and when compared to Sinclair *et al* (1993:152), who identify it as the *Ardeotis kori*, with its call as “A deep, resonant ‘oom-oom-oom’ given by the male during the breeding season”, confirming its onomatopoeic origin. This relates to the Afrikaans sound-associative rendering of the name taken from !go:ba and !num, or *kehoe*, and adapted to *gom* (+*pou*). This led to the adopted form *gompou* that is recorded equally often in official journals.





Figure 8.6 Kori bustard or 'gompou' [Wikipedia]

The Khoikhoi name for this bird as *!huib* is also sound-associative, and as so often, where a common noun is recorded by Kroenlein (1989:222), it is indicated as deriving from a verb, in this case from *!hui*. He explains this as the action of “*losbrechen ...explodiren, speien*”, thus a description of the ‘bursting, explosive, spitting’ sound, that was ascribed to the bird as its name because of its vocalisations. As Nienaber (1963:483) discussed the oldest recorded name for this *bustard* under the name for it in Afrikaans as the ‘*trapgans*’, from the earliest recording by Le Vaillant (1780-83:364-366) as the “*Δ-ou ip, bustard, trapgans*”. Nienaber also indicated its Khoikhoi name as being given “*met betrekking tot sy eksplosiewe geluid*”, ‘allocated because of its explosive vocalisation’.

In the other early recorded Khoikhoi names for this bird, Nienaber (1963:422) also documented under *pou* quotations from Witsen in 1691 *k̄choa ‘een paauw’*; Valentyn in 1705 *kehoe ‘een paauw’*; Kolbe in 1708 “*k~chou, pavo, een paauw*”. According to Wandres (1918:38, also quoted in Nienaber), the name is explained as: “... *wohl Rufnachahmung*”, i.e. perhaps a sound imitation of its call. The form *k̄choa* for the bustard is comparable to other words such as //*ko:a* and *!kwa* from /Xam (S1) for ‘*paauw*’, synonym *!karri* (Bleek 1956:583). This Bushman cognate of *!karri* with //*ko:a*, that became adapted as *khori* in Tswana (indicating the *a* and *o* variability), is retained in the taxonomic species name where it is listed (Roberts 1982:153) as the *kori bustard* (*Ardeotis*, or *Otis kori*).



Several toponyms have been recorded that include this emulation of its call. There is a farm Gompou in Namibia in the district of Gobabis near Sandfontein and the Botswana border. The farm was named after a *vlei* or pan where many of these *kori bustards* or *gompoue* were found (Leistner and Morris 1976:139, Albertyn 1984:9).

Poupan in the Northern Cape is an either originally bestowed, or a translated name into Afrikaans. It is the name of a railway siding 17 km south of Kraankuil and 18 km north of Potfontein, on the route De Aar – Kimberley. Afrikaans for ‘bustard pan’, the name refers to *Otis kori*, *gompou* in Afrikaans. The usual meaning of *pou* is ‘peacock’, but those exotic birds do not occur in that vicinity (Raper *et al* 2014:420). A few modern places commemorating the *gompou* (or *kori bustard*) are i.a. Gompou Street and Gompou Lodge in Pretoria.

## 8.7 Knorhane or korhane

Knorhane or korhane (*Eupodotis*). For the korhaans Nienaber (1963:354) listed the Afrikaans names *korhaan* and *knorhaan*, with the first component in both appearing to be onomatopoeic. These are derived from the original Bushman sound-imitative renderings of the names for the bird, with the addition of the Afrikaans gender indicator ‘-haan’, indicating its rooster-like appearance, i.e. as a type of ‘cock’ bird.



Figure 8.7 Knorhane or korhane [Wikipedia]

There are eight different types of *korhaan* listed in Sinclair *et al* (1993:152-157; Roberts 1982:153-160), among others the *Karoo korhaan*, known in Afrikaans as the ‘*vaalkorhaan*’; the whitebellied *korhaan* ‘*witpenskorhaan*’; blackbellied *korhaan*,

‘*langbeenkorhaan*’; northern black *korhaan* ‘*witvlerkkorhaan*’, the southern black *korhaan* ‘*swartkorhaan*’ and the red crested *korhaan* (perhaps the ‘*brandkop*’ of Bleek) as ‘*boskorhaan*’. Most of the *korhaans* make the distinctive *knor-* or *kor* sound, variously indicated as: ‘*kraak-rak, crrok-rak-rak, takwarat, kerrrak-kerrrak- kerrak*’.

The original indigenous common names for this bird all resembled this sound-imitative element that was recorded by Bleek (1956:729) *inter alia* as *khoara-khoara*. Bleek (1956:409) distinguishes various types of *korhaan* (of the *Eupodotis* species), and recorded different names from the Bushman languages, *inter alia* for the black *korhaan* (*Otis afra*) *kwa:ekwara* from /Xam (S1). For the ‘*brandkop korhaan*’ (*Otis* or *Eupodotis afra*, or *rufisticori*), *kwa:ekwaera* or *!kwara k”ėřri* in /Xam (S1), and *//ke:wa* in //N!ke (S2), alternatively *//kewa:*. The other species, the *vaal korhaan* (*Otis vigorsii*), is called *\_!kaokən* in /Xam (S1), or *!kaue !kauekən* and *!khu* in //N!ke (S2), *!ka:* and *\_!ka* in Kung (N2) and *!O!Kuŋ* (N3), also *-!ku//gaba* and *!ka* alternatively. These names could all be seen as reproducing or imitating its call.

Nienaber (1963:354) describes the naming of the birds as *korhaan* or *knorhaans* to be good examples of onomatopoeia as both names were indicated with a sharp initial click. This was already recorded in 1691 by Witsen as ‘*k’hackary – een korhaan*’; and by Kolbe (in 1708 I:430, both quoted in Nienaber 1963:354) as: “*kh~oek~ari... avis Africana*”; “*een vogel genaamt knorhaan*”. Nienaber describes the alternative indigenous names of the same bird under *korhaan II* as recorded by Le Vaillant in 1780-83 as: “*^haragap, French field duck; kor-haan*”; Lucy Lloyd (in Maingard 1932:315-316) who gave *harr-//ka-//ka-p*, but also the *≠ka //ka//kas* as mentioned above at ‘*kori bustard*’. Nienaber also presents variants such as *xaratsi-//ga-//ga-s* recorded by Schultz (1907:587), and a similar form *xartsi-//ga-//ga-s* (recorded by Rust 1960, Kroenlein-Rust 1969) with the reduplicated syllable at the end imitating the guttural call. He points out the difference between the two types of *Otis afroides* birds as the *vaalkorhaan* and the white-winged *korhaan*.

The Afrikaans rendering of the bird’s name occurs in the adapted place names *Korhaansdrif* (translated from *Haragas*) situated in the Northern Cape, and *Korhaanspoort* in the Eastern Cape north of Uitenhage (Raper *et al* 2014:248). The component *//haraga*, that is found in place names such as *Haragasdrif*, and *Harugas* the name of a bridge, about 1.5 km from *Ramansdrift* in the Northern Cape (Raper *et al* 2014:175-176), and *Garagas* translated as *Korhaansdrif* (Raper *et al* 2014:146-147), are all derived from the above onomatopoeic Bushman and Khoikhoi names referring to this bird type. The *vaal korhaan*’s (*Eupodotis vigorsii*) distribution is

widespread and it occurs in the regions of the Northern Cape and up to Namibia according to Sinclair *et al* (1993:154).

The indigenous common names for the korhaans have often been recorded by explorers and other travellers. Onomatopoeic renderings of the local name for the *boskorhaan* are i.a. *inkakalo* in Nguni, and in Tswana the name for the *vaalkorhaan* is *khoara-khoara*, this as a close cognate to the names documented by Bleek (1929:51; 1956:461, 729) as *!kau !kaukən* synonym of *!kaoken* and *\_kwakwara* from /Xam (S1). All these names, though, are clearly imitations of the distinctive croaking vocalisations of the birds.

Several place names in other languages refer to the korhaan or knorhaans. Etewe, also encountered as Otewe, is the Herero name of a settlement 20 km north-east of Aminuis in Namibia. Albertyn (1984:25) notes the spelling of the name Etewe as strange. In addition to this, Albertyn states that, if written in the full form, Etetewe would refer to the “*Swartkop-korhaan*”, (‘Black-headed korhaan’), a member of the family Otididae. However, it refers, presumably, to the black korhaan, *Eupodotis afroides*. This explanation seems to be correct. The initial vowels E and O of the variants Etewa and Otewa are Herero class prefixes; the component *tewe* is comparable to the //N!ke (S2) word *//kewe* or *//kewa*: ‘*korhaan brandkop*’ (*Eupodotis afra*, perhaps also the *E. ruficrista* as indicated by Bleek (1929:51; 1956:402, 571). The northern black korhaan is the *Eupodotis afroides*, the southern black *korhaan* is the *Eupodotis afra* (Sinclair *et al* 1993:156).

## 8.8 Ground hornbill, ‘bromvoël’

The name of the ground hornbill (*Bucorvus leadbeateri*), or ‘*bromvoël*’ as it is aptly named in Afrikaans for the distinctive deep reverberating sounds that it makes, is found in several place names, demonstrating its distribution in southern Africa. Of the nine different species of hornbills (all part of the ‘non-passerines’ such as the guinea fowls and the ostrich, and so forth), the ground hornbill is the largest (turkey equivalent in size), and probably the most vociferous with its loud call. Sinclair *et al* (1993:138) describe it as a “loud booming ‘oomp oomp’ early in the morning”, sounding like a roar or ‘brom’ or ‘knor’ in Afrikaans. It is emulated by the Bushmen in its common name, *kwakara*, as indicated in Bleek (1929:51) giving also *\_kwakara* from /Xam (S1); *!wa* in /Auni (S4); *\_!kamba* in Naron (C2); */gaba* in Sesarwa (S5);

\_lka: in !O!kuŋ (N3), and as *kʰokʰōsi* in Xhatia (Xatia) (S4a) according to Bleek (1956:124, 725).

A number of place names have been allocated with references to this bird type in the indigenous languages. For example, it is coined as *intsingisi*, *intsingizi* and *insingizi* in Zulu (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:223). In Xhosa it appears in the toponyms Intsikisini, INtsingizi and Ntsikisini (Raper *et al* 2014:204). The variant form of *insingizi* in Zulu is indicated as *ingududu* (Doke and Vilakazi 2005:273), which corresponds with the name for the ground hornbill in Tswana as *lerratakuru*, in Southern Sotho as *lekhotutu* (Roberts 1982:308). These clearly indicate a common cognate with the Nguni name and also relate to its vocalisations.

The few toponyms are all sound-associative or onomatopoeic renderings of the bird's common names, some possibly originating from or relating to the other Bushman names for the bird such as *kʰokʰōsi* from Xatia (S4a) as recorded in Bleek (1956:124, 725).



Figure 8.8 Hornbill [Daniel Otte]

To distinguish between the ordinary and smaller hornbills and the ground hornbill (which is the only and true '*bromvoël*'), is not difficult, as the smaller hornbills fall in a different family, the Bucerotidae, and the mere size and sounds differ greatly. The smaller hornbills mainly make tapping sounds like *tooak-tooak*, or have a high-pitched *chleeo*, *pheeo* note or a plain *waa-waa* (Sinclair *et al* 1993:258-260). This may relate to the recorded Bushman names indicated above, and to the names

of the red-billed hornbill as the *khokhoropo* in Tswana, the yellow-billed as the *mokhothopitzi* in Tswana (which is directly related to the Xatia name as above), and the crowned hornbill, which was recorded by Roberts (1982:306) as the *umkholwane* in Xhosa and Zulu (see also Doke & Vilakazi 2005:223). Their distribution, though, is in all cases fairly widespread in the northern and eastern regions of southern Africa, as well as in the neighbouring countries to the north-east.

## 8.9 Crows

Different crows (*Corvus gorax*) are for example the whitenecked raven (*Corvus albicollis*), known in Afrikaans as the ‘*withalskraai*’; the pied crow (*C. albus*) is the ‘*witborskraai*’ in Afrikaans, and the black crow (*C. capensis*) is the ‘*swartkraai*’ in Afrikaans (Sinclair *et al* 1993:292). All have been named numerously in toponyms, and from various languages, very often in adapted and / or translated form.

Many Afrikaans place names in South Africa and Namibia refer to the regular and wide-spread appearance of the three main species of crows in the region. Names, such as Kraaibos (‘crow bush’, indirectly, since it actually refers to a plant), Kraaifontein (Khoikhoi Kourkam), Kraaipan, Kraaines (Raper *et al* 2014:250-251), and many more from the indigenous languages such as from Nama, the toponyms Gorab, Gorabis and Koradaob. The toponym Gorab, with variants Gorabes and Gorabis, situated in Namibia, refers specifically to the black crow (*Corvus capensis*). Gorabis appears on the 1904 ‘*Kriegskarte*’ (‘War map’) of Sprigade and Moisel where it was indicated as a fountain and watering place (Nienaber & Raper 1980:356), the component *gora-* being cognate to both the Nama and Kung (N2) word /*kwara*. Nienaber and Raper (1980:558-559) further give Koradaob as an old name or original form of the farm name known in Afrikaans as Kraaipoort, from *gora-* ‘*kraai*’, ‘crow’ and *dao-* ‘*poort*’, or pass in English. Theophilus Hahn explained it in 1879 as a ‘watering place on the lower river confluence of the Kuiseb’ (Nienaber & Raper 1980:588). Kourkam is also ‘Kraaifontein’, and a German farm name, Krähwinkel, translated into Afrikaans as ‘*Kraaihoek*’, ‘crow’s corner’, is situated nearby, just north of Helmeringhausen in the Schwarzrand Mountains.

Further names from Khoikhoi are i.a. Ganaga and Gorantaoab. Ganaga according to Nienaber and Raper (1977:368-369) lies in the Western Cape. It was recorded by Col. Robert Jacob Gordon (1778 ms 3:130) as: “2 uur te voet zuid op na het wagen pad de ganaga of craje pad na de Caro van koude bokkeveld” (‘2 hours on foot from

the south up to the wagon road the Ganaga or crow's road (or pass) to the Karoo of the 'Koue Bokkeveld'). Nienaber and Raper explain the name as: "*kraaie-ryke-kloof, kloof waar kraaie volop is*". It is also the name of a river, a tributary of the Renosterrivier. A farm in the area is known as 'Kraai Rivier', situated south-east of Canaga Kloof.

The other name is from Nama and lies in Namibia, Gorantaoab (Nienaber & Raper 1977:451). According to Moritz (1972:7, manuscript on the Topnaars quoted in Nienaber & Raper 1977), it is a locality in the Kuiseb Valley area, and called "*Gorata-ôab* – Krähen brüten, kraaie broei", i.e. 'the place where crows breed', or 'breeding place of crows', from Nama *gora-b*, crow, with the *-n-* indicating the plural form and *ôa* – 'to bear, breed'; the final *-b* a locative suffix. Compare with Koradaob (perhaps only a spelling variant and not a different place name), both lying in the Kuiseb River area on more or less the same latitude and longitude degree square: Gorantaoab at S2314/2315, and Koradaob at S2315 BA, on the Kuiseb lower confluence, as indicated by Nienaber and Raper (1980:558-559) where they give the spelling variant as Goradaob, *dao* explained as '*poort*'.

From the Herero language, an overwhelming number of toponyms with components depicting the crow are found in Namibia. The components *Oka*, *Oko*, *Oma* and *Otji* in the toponyms discussed below, are all Herero class markers or read here as feature and locality indicators of toponyms, with the meaning 'place of', or 'locality of the'. The components *koara*, *kuara*, *kwora* and *kwakwa* in the toponyms discussed below, are adapted from either the cognate words for the pied crow (*Corvus albus*). For instance, *ʼxuru* from the /Xam (S1) language; *!kwara* from Kung (N2); *!kahabe* from Hie (C1); the Naron (C2) word *hoara* 'crow'; possibly also the word *ʼxuru* from the /Xam (S1) for the black crow and the !O!kun (N3) variant word *!nwala* for black crow (*Corvus segetum*, now *C. capensis*), and so forth (Bleek 1929:31; 1956:63).

Okakoara with variant form Otjikuara is a mountain and a farm name. Both are found in the district of Otjimbingwe in Namibia (Binding fieldwork, 1980-84). The name is said to refer to "the white breast of a crow...", which in this case is a distinctive white stripe in the middle of the mountain side, formed geologically either as white quartzite, or calcareous deposits of limestone on the mountain. It is metaphorically and descriptively associated with the pied crow (*Corvus albus*), the '*witborskraai*' in Afrikaans, that is widely distributed in Namibia. The natural feature of the white stripe gave rise to the motive for naming, and is therefore an indirect reference to the pied crow, indigenous to the area, and not to the whitenecked crow, nor to

the black crow which has no white-striped breast. This name appears to be an old adaptation of a loan word possibly from the Bushman common name for the pied crow ('*witborskraai*'), as  $\sim/xuru$  from the /Xam (S1) language (Bleek 1929:31). It would appear, however, that it might also have been adapted or taken from the name of the black crow, which in Kung (N2) is *!kwara*, in Naron (C2) as *hoara*; and in the !O!kun (N3) language it is *!nwala* (Bleek 1929:31). All three are very similar in phonemic realisation to the components *-kuara* and *-koara* in the Herero toponyms with the *l* and *r* consonant variability. The place name, though explained as being descriptive, has a definite sound-associative origin in the Bushman common name of this bird type.

Another place name emulating elements of the crow's call is: Okomakwora in Namibia in the area of Ovitoto. It is said to refer to the many crows occurring there. The noun form *e-kwara* refers to a single crow; *oma-kwara* is the plural form. The component *kwara* is derived from the same word in the Bushman languages as discussed in the above examples. Where other names for the black crow are given as *!kwara*, *//gwa* in Bushman, these names are all clearly sound-associative or onomatopoeic renderings of the croaking sound that the crow makes. In Nama or Khoikhoi it is indicated as *gorab* (Bleek 1929:31), and as emerged from the discussion above, cognate to the Korana names too.

Incidentally, this word *gora-b* is comparable to the Sanskrit word or common name for the Himalayan raven or crow where it is depicted as *gorra*, *gorax*, clearly a designation of the crow with its croaking or crowing calls. Perhaps the designation was taken as loanword into Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects already from Portuguese or Dutch at the time of the earliest seafarers' recordings. Alternatively, it is an independent onymic formative since the crow sounds the same to all people.

Otijkwarikwakwa has been explained as indicating the presence of crows (Binding fieldwork, 1980-84), and the components, as possible tautological sound-associative formatives of the toponym, seem to fit the crow's onomatopoeic names. This name has been included, since it was identified as referring to a specific entity, a hill (perhaps as variant spelling form), and appears in the same area of the above names, forming a toponymic cluster in the region.

Another name, Omakuara, containing a reference to this same type of bird, is registered as farm no. 142 in the district of Gobabis, Namibia. The name was explained by Koehler (1958:101) as follows: "*Omakuará, die Krähen*". Carl Rufus,



the owner, according to the Adressbuch (1939), noted the variation in the *koara* and *kuara* writing forms, which all appear to be adaptations from Bushman *!xuru* and *!kwara, kwarra*. The name of farm no. 151 in the Okahandja district, Otjikwara, shows the same spelling variations in form and origin, and is said to mean ‘place of crows’, from the Herero word *ekwara* ‘crow’ (Albertyn 1984:67).

## 8.10 Guinea fowl

The guinea fowl (*Numida meleagris*) is called ‘tarentaal’ in Afrikaans. For these wide-spread, typical African birds Bleek (1929:44-45; 1956:722) gives the following Bushman names, i.a. *!xo:le* from Sesarwa (S5); *\_!ka* from Auen (N1); *\_an`i* from Kung (N2); *!ganee* from Hie (C1); and */xanifa* from Naron (C2). This is where Lucy Lloyd identified them from Korana as the “*/ke/nus Numida meleagris, ... ‘tarentaal’, ‘guinea fowl’...*” (in Maingard 1932:315). Also the reduplicative name forms for the guinea fowl *//kannana*; *//kannatata*, were recorded by Bleek, clearly demonstrating the onomatopoeic high sounding alarm call, ‘krrrrtattata’, and this perhaps resounding onomatopoeically in the Afrikaans name ‘tarentaal’.

The Afrikaans name ‘tarentaal’ as in Tarentaalstraat in the Limpopo province (Raper *et al* 2014:489) may well be acoustically very close to this alarm call. It may thus, in its etymology, not necessarily be derived from a reference to the ‘wild fowls’ appearing east of the ‘Kaapse baai’ in ‘Terra Natal’: “*...en die voëls dan ook werklik Terra-Natal (vogels)/Ternataals(ch)e (hoenders) genoem is...*”), translated as ‘...and the birds then also really called Terra-Natal (birds)/ Ternataals(ch)e (chickens)’, as indicated in Boshoff and Nienaber (1967:636).

This etymology may have been the accepted theory at the time, yet even the Afrikaans name sounds more onomatopoeically coined from the calls of the guinea fowls with the rolling of the *rrr*-s. The distinctive alarm or territorial call to the rest of the flock as they congregate together in swarms, is sounded to each other as they roost in shrubs and trees at dusk. The other sounds indicated by Sinclair *et al* (1993:138) are “A loud krrdii-krrdii and kek-kek-kek-kek alarm note”.

Some indigenous names, such as *Impangele* in the Eastern Cape derived from the Nguni (Xhosa, and Zulu according to Doke and Vilakazi 2005:207) name of the bird *impangele*; and another similar place name from Zulu that refers to the settlement *Empangeleni* in the Mpumalanga province, are said to be both named after the guinea fowl (Raper *et al* 2014:119, 198). These may contain a sound-associative or



metaphoric element relating to its alarm call as documented by Bleek (1956:722) in the names *\_!kaε*, *!kanne* and *//kannana*, *//kannatata*, possibly also *˘/ke/nus* (Lloyd 1932), and phonologically adapted with click adjustment and softening from the cerebral and lateral clicks in Bushman and the dental in Korana to the Nguni form *mpangele*.

In Namibia, an area in the far northern Kaokoland is known by the Herero name Onganga said to refer to ‘a guinea fowl’ (SG-SWA n.d. questionnaire and photo 4/84, map sheet ‘Omungunda’ 1813 AB, 1:50 000). The Himba version of the area name Oronganga, has also been explained as “place of the guinea fowl” (SG-SWA n.d. photo 18/53 and questionnaire to map sheet 1713 CD ‘Okaerere/Otjisoko’). These two names, both contain in their second component the word *-nganga*, cognate with *-mpangele* in Zulu and Xhosa. These variant name forms for the ‘guinea fowl’ are similar to, or concur with the Bushman onymic formatives *\_!ka*, *\_!kaε* in Auen (N1), *!ganee* in Hie (C1), and the reduplicated onomatopoeic root word *//kannana* and *//kannatatta* from Kung (N2), all with the same meaning of ‘guinea fowl’ (Bleek 1929:44-45, 1956:557, 722).

## 8.11 Partridges and pheasants

Partridges (Francolinus family, francolins and pheasants) are called ‘patryse’ and ‘fisante’ in Afrikaans. Bleek (1929:64) documented for partridges *!gu!gubbi* from the /Xam (S1); *//k^re //k^re* from //N!ke (S2); *ʃi/guu* from Sesarwa (S5); from /Nu/en (S6) the word *//kau//nana* (appearing to be phonologically similar to the name of the guinea fowls as indicated above), and *\_!garu* from Auen (N1); *≠kau /kwi* from Naron (C2). Furthermore, in the *Dictionary* (1956:559, 741) Bleek documented Bushman names for these bird types as *˘//karri*, and for the *Namaqua partridge* in particular the names *!gaεru* in Auen (N1) (indicated here with a pressed vowel) and given as synonym for *!gu!gubbi* (Bleek 1956:377), and the synonymous name *si/ku* from Sesarwa (Bleek 1956:180). Most of these names appear to be onomatopoeic renderings of its vocalisations in one form or another.

Place names that may contain some of these elements of the sound-associative common nouns were traced back in Houdams and Housjop from Nienaber and Raper (1977). Houdams is a farm in Namibia, north of Helmeringhausen and Aruab. Heinrichs 1904, in *Vedder’s Quellen* (4 1904:153, quoted in Nienaber and Raper 1977:573) reported: “*Witkams auf die Farm !Houdams...*”, explaining that

the name *!Houdams* was derived from *!hou-* or “*!hau = das Feldhuhn in Scharen beim Wasser*” (Kroenlein-Rust 1969:192), meaning ‘the partridges in swarms at the water’, ‘partridge dam’.

Housjop, another adapted name, is the older name of the farm known as Patrysfontein (Nienaber & Raper 1977:574). This farm in the northern Cape, south from Griqua Town (Griekwastad), is translatable to ‘Partridge Fountain’ from Griqua */hous* for partridge, and *sou-b* or *(t)sau-b* for a water fountain or pit (‘*waterputs*’).

Another possible toponym recalling the francolins, perhaps in adapted form from either *//kau//nana* in */Nu//en* (S6), or *!gu!gubbi* in */Xam* (S1), is Kandalangod(t)i. This is the name of a village in the Ngamiland district, in Botswana, 10 km south-east of Etosha and 19 km north-east of Gumare. The name, which seems to contain elements of sound-associative formatives, is said to be from the Yei language and means ‘place of partridges’ (Raper *et al* 2014:222). Bleek (1956:741) gives, apart from the above names, also *gau kui*, *!gu !gubbi*, *!kabbi* and *kobo*. These may all relate to the onomatopoeic formative elements in the toponym. The spelling *Kandalengoti* is also encountered. These birds are well-represented throughout southern Africa in the translated Afrikaans toponyms, such as Patrysdraai and Patryslaagte, and so on. (Raper *et al* 2014:407).

An interesting name recorded for the *francolin* species from the */Xam* language is *kurrikurri*, which either refers to the redbilled francolin or Swainson’s francolin (‘*bosveldfisant*’ in Afrikaans), as they are endemic to Namibia, Botswana and the Kalahari regions. It appears that the red-necked francolin only occurs in the far northern regions of Namibia, whereas the Orange River francolin does occur widespread in Namibia and Botswana, right into the western parts of Limpopo and North West Province as well. Both the calls of the Swainson’s francolin as a “raucous *kraae-kraae-kraae-kraae* given by males at dawn and dusk”, and the rednecked francolin’s “loud *kwoor-kwoor-kwoor kwoor*” as recorded by Sinclair *et al* (1993:132-134), may have led to the name for these francolins in Bushman. The Herero names for these birds as recorded by Göllnitz (1942:51), seem to be onomatopoeic in nature as the redbilled francolin (“*Frankolin Rotschnabel*”) is called *onguari*, the rednecked francolin (“*Frankolin Rothals*”) is called *ongonguari*, and the “*Bergfrankolin*” is *okahikupirue*. Their calls are melodious enough to have been heard clearly as identifying the bird type.

## 8.12 The quail

The *quail*, Afrikaans *'kwartel'*, has been immortalised in the Afrikaans place names Kwartels in the Northern Cape (USGAZ 1992) and Kwartelrivier 'quail river' (Raper *et al* 2014:263), a "tributary of the Riviersonderend. The name refers to the African quail, *Coturnix coturnix*". The English name is found in that of a railway siding, simply called Quail, at Howick, on the route Pietermaritzburg-Estcourt in KwaZulu-Natal (Raper *et al* 2014:426).



Figure 8.12 Quails

As early as the eighteenth century, Le Vaillant (1780-83:367, quoted in Nienaber 1962:366-367) recorded the indigenous Khoi-San name as  $\Delta$ -kabip. The click indicated here, according to Nienaber, is the cerebral !, thus the common name should be written as *!kabi-p*, which is probably closer to the Bushman rendering of the name as *!kebbi*. This Khoi-San name for the quail or 'kwartel' was documented by Kroenlein (1889:248) as *!gáwari-b*, and with its plural form as *!náwari-n*, which he identified as "Wachteln", observing that the Khoi-San name was a 'sound imitation of the wing-flapping, the flapping of wings', ("*Tonnachahmung des Flügelschlags*"). Bleek (1956:746) who recorded the Bushman names of the quail i.a. as *!kebbi*; further documented names such as *k'oro* and *ma-kwai kwa-na* for these birds, which correlate with the Nama name. In this respect the names also clearly correspond onomatopoeically with *!gawa* and *!nawa* and *kwa-na*, i.e. phonologically approximating the cognate phrase *!naw !nawa*.

Sinclair *et al* (1993:140) represented the call of the blue quail as a “high pitched whistle sounding like ‘tee-t-ti’, also ‘kree-kree’ and ‘crwee-crwee...’ for the *Harlequin* and the common quail. In the Herero language their names as recorded by Göllnitz (1942:51) are very close to this sound: *okahikuinini* for the blue quail, and *okakuririmba* for the common quail. These vocalisations, and the components in the onomatopoeically created Herero names, as well as in the Khoikhoi and Bushman names above as *!kabi*, *!kɛbbi*, *kwai-* and *ma-kwai* and the variants, may have resembled the sounds effectively with the employ of the high front vowels *i* as in *hi-ni-ni*, *kuriri*, and the *a-i* > *ai* as identified by Sinclair *et al*.

### 8.13 Fowls or chicken

Fowls or chicken according to Bleek (1929:40) are called in some Bushman languages *kukūru* as in /Xam (S1) and variants *kukurusi* in Sesarwa (S5); *kuku* in Kung (N2); *ku\_ku* and *ku\_ky* in !O!kuŋ (N3), and *fi-//kwi*, synonym to *fikoi*, a ‘fowl, cock’ in Sesarwa (S5) according to Bleek (1956:180, 719). Most of these imitating the roosters’ crowing, the hens’ cackling and the chirping of the chicks. A confirmation of this is found in the toponyms Coerney and Hoender Craal (there is also a farm Fowls’ Den near Aberdeen, according to Skead (1993:184), though not in a topographical cluster with the above names). The Dutch place name Hoender Craal refers to a place in the Eastern Cape named *Coerney*. It was said to be the alternative name for the original Xhosa place name *ICitywa* (Raper *et al* 2014:188, 194) and appears to be a translation. This *ICitywa* River is said to be “the Xhosa name for the Coerney River” and said to refer to the “soft reddish clay” of the area. In fact, it was found to be another direct sound-associative adaptation from the original Bushman designation *fi-//kwi* for ‘fowl’ or ‘cock’ as indicated above.

This is another verification of the linguistic process of loan words with adaptation from an original sound association with the bird’s vocalisations, leading to the common name for ‘fowl’ with onymic shift to toponymic designator. In the Xhosa form it still appears as a pure onomatopoeic adaptation, also Coerney is derived from *kukūru*, *kukurusi* or *ku\_ky* that was then translated into Dutch. Additionally, another adopted Bushman name for ‘chicken’ in the //N!ke (S2) and Auen (N1) languages is *hunker*, *hunkeruŋ*. It is described and acknowledged by Bleek (1956:65) as being derived from the Afrikaans ‘*hoender*’ or ‘*hoonders*’, and according to Van Vuuren (2016:77-78), an obvious, homophonically adapted form of ‘*hoendertjie*’, referring to a ‘small chicken’.

## 8.14 The babblers or chats, orioles and shrikes

The *babblers* or *chats* (Timaliidae), of which the *Turdoides jardineii* babblers are a sub-species, are aptly named in Afrikaans as the *katlagters* ('cat laughers'). They may have received their name from a verb *kurri:ken*, *kurri:ten*, *kurri:ta* from /Xam (S1) that relates to the saying or phrase with the meaning "to laugh at" or "to mock" (as synonyms), with variant spelling forms occurring as *kwerrie*, *kwerriten* (Bleek 1929:52; 1956:730-736). Roberts (1982:378) recorded the indigenous names from Tswana as *sekhanokha*, and from Nguni as the *idhlekwana*, a reference to "the laughing ones".

Both the bare-cheeked babbler ('*kaalwangkatlagter*') and the southern pied babbler ('*witkatlagter*') are endemic to Namibia and Botswana. Their calls have been recorded by Sinclair *et al* (1993:296) as *kerrrakerrra-kek-kek-kek* and *kwee kwee kwee kwee*, respectively, the last one with a higher pitched babbling than the other species. The arrowmarked babbler ('*pylvlekkatlagter*') also occurs in parts of Botswana and the far north of Namibia at the Okavango and Caprivi, but is more widespread in the northern parts of South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Their loud call is typically a mixed chorus of several birds babbling together in a tree top, sounding *kwarra-kwarra kwarra-kwarra*, working the notes up into a crescendo till they fly off into the bushes again. Roberts (1982:378) recorded it as: "Normal call a grating churr which is uttered by all birds in a party one after the other. The effect is of a whirring, grating, crescendo of sound, getting louder and louder as each bird joins in and dying away as they stop one by one".

Many other bird names from Bushman have been formed onomatopoeically, for example, from the /Xam (S1) language the name /*k'oekatoitoi*, the *Campicola pileata* as identified by Bleek (1956:339, quoted from Lucy Lloyd and identified as *Oenanthe pileata*). It is classified and described by Sinclair *et al* (1993:308) as the "capped wheatear" under the wheatears and chats, with the Afrikaans name '*Hoëveld skaapwagttertjie*', whose "song is a loud, warbling with slurred chattering". Bleek (1956:461) recorded the name for a similar sounding bird as *!kwara k'ëři* also from /Xam (S1), although she only indicated it as 'bird', with the species name given as *Lamprotonis phoenicopteras*, which is actually a *Cape glossy starling* (Roberts 1982:523-528), and not a babbler.

The Gorgeous Bush-shrike (*Telephorus quadricolor*) called *konkoit* by Afrikaans speakers; in Zulu *ugongoni*, clearly got these onomatopoeic names from its call,

since according to Roberts (1982:512) its “Voice: (is) one of the pleasantest bush sounds, a cheerful ‘kong-kong-koit’ and variations”. Curiously, a colourful depiction of a type of bird, the black-naped oreolus, which occurred in Malaysia, found in a drawing made by Chinese and Malaysian artists between 1803 and 1818 under the commission of avid naturalist and artist William Farquhar (c.1771-1839), was called in the Malaccan (Malay) language the *Boorong koonjiet koonjiet* (Gleeson 1993:114). The Afrikaans name *konkoit* may have been derived from this Malay designation in the second component *koonjiet koonjiet*. It may also have been brought from Malacca in Malaysia to South Africa by the Dutch colonists, or the Malaysians themselves, via the trade and slave routes to and from these lands during the seventeenth century, and applied here to the same-sounding gorgeous bushshrike. In southern Africa it therefore seems to be called by both its Malayan, Afrikaans and Zulu onomatopoeic names. However, the routes of origins may have been totally different, and the appearance of the Malaccan variant seems to correspond more with the local olive bush shrike or oreolus species in its colouring. This shows how the vocalisation of a bird may be so distinctive, that more than one language group (even across oceans), may apply the same sounding name.



Figure 8.14 *Boorong koonjiet koonjiet* from the William Farquhar Collection  
[Courtesy of the National Museum of Singapore, National Heritage Board]

## 8.15 Bokmakierie

The Afrikaans name of the *bokmakierie* (*Telophorus zeylonus*) refers to a small bird described by Sinclair *et al* (1993:362) with its easily recognised loud and varied calls, but most frequently heard is the striking ‘bok-bok-kik’ call. It is described as a common resident and endemic to the western regions of Namibia and the Western and Eastern Cape up into the Free State and Lesotho, but further north rarely so.

The name indicates the same interlinguistic and cross-cultural exchange to adopt sound and word formations, for example, *bokmakierie* possibly from the sound-associative Bushman names for small birds as *koro-twi:tən*, *!korokən!korokən* from /Xam (S1) “a bird Telephonus, prob. the ‘backbakiri’ (*bokmakierie*)”; *≠kainjataro* also “a small yellow bird numerous in Bushmanland” from /Xam (S1); or *≠kari-on* and *≠karriron* from /Nu//en (S6) also for “a small bird”, all as recorded by Bleek (1929:22; 1956:443, 655, 698). Lucy Lloyd (in Maingard 1932:316) recorded the bokmakierie name from Korana as “*!xan !hwere:p Telephonus bicbakiri*. [Stk. II.33, *Laniarius gutturalis*; Lay. 161 or *backabiri*, *backabiri* shrike]”. This name is phonologically similar to the names recorded from Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects for the *bokmakierie* as *hoēp*, *orep*, *≠orep*, but also with a strong click as in the variants *!hoep*, and as *d’orèp* (approximating *!hwere:p*, and already with indication of the guttural ‘clicking’ sounds the bird makes) as recorded in 1783 by Le Vaillant (1783-84:72, quoted in Nienaber 1963:224).

Where the bokmakierie was recorded as being named thus in Khoikhoi, Nienaber mentions though that this name also referred to the ‘honeybird’ or ‘sunbird’, “*honingvoël*” as well, indicated as *≠hoé-p* or *!hoé-p* with a strong click sound. This name, however, (if it weren’t for the click) seems to resemble the name of the African hoopoe or *hoep-hoep* more! Other names for ‘little birds’ that sound onomatopoeically coined with consonantal reduplication of *t*, and the *k*, glottal stops or croaks, and the repeated vowels as *e e* or *a a*, are *k”ek”en*, *k”arika* from Sesarwa (S5), *≠kariron* from /Nu//en (S6). This is all taken from Bleek’s *Vocabularies* (1929) and *Dictionary* (1956) as documented from the oldest sources, otherwise through fieldwork done by Bleek herself (1929:22 and 1956:698).

The place name Bokmakierie refers to a settlement 20 km south of Musina (Messina), on the N1 highway to Mabuuka Jazz in the Limpopo province. It takes its onomatopoeically coined name from the *bokmakierie* bird. This common name

from Afrikaans, is derived from its characteristic call (Raper *et al* 2014:43), as does the name of the Bokmakieriestraat in Pretoria.

On another ‘note’, so to speak, Sinclair *et al* (1993:302) give sound-associative renderings of the name of a bird called the ‘groundscraper thrush’, Afrikaans name ‘*gevlekte lyster*’, with a wide distribution all over the northern and eastern parts of southern Africa right into Botswana and Namibia, except for the far western areas and the Cape arid regions. It is a fairly common bird and is classified as *Turdus litsitsirupa* under ‘thrushes’. The bird’s specific name is given as *litsitsirupa*, this is definitely a local, onomatopoeic creation from *tsi-tsi-rupa* that has been retained in the scientific taxonomy, since as Sinclair *et al* summarise: “This bird’s specific name (*litsitsirupa*) is onomatopoeic of its song: a loud, clear, and varied whistling phrase”.

The fiscal shrike (*Lanius collaris* species) called ‘*fiskaallaksman*’ in Afrikaans or ‘*Jan Laksman*’ colloquially, is called *kuru//kaaiten* in /Xam (S1), recorded by Lucy Lloyd and quoted in Bleek (1956:107) as name for this shrike. Sinclair *et al* (1993:358) describe its call as: “Harsh grating, a melodius whistled song jumbled with harsher notes, and mimicry of other bird calls”, much as the *Cape bul-bul*, the *Red* and *Black-eyed bul-bul* tend to do as well. The last two are descriptively known in Afrikaans as the ‘*swartoog tiptol*, *rooioog tiptol*’ (but known colloquially also by the equally descriptive names ‘*bottersterte*’ or ‘*bottergatte*’ in Afrikaans because of the yellow patch of tail feathers). The *fiscal shrike* is widely distributed over the whole of southern Africa and Namibia, as well as parts of Botswana, the Kalahari and Zimbabwe.



# PART FOUR

## Reptiles and Invertebrates



## CHAPTER NINE

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### Reptiles

Crocodiles (alligators), as well as leguaans (iguana), agamas, geckos; rock pythons, puff adders and other snakes; tortoises, turtles and frogs, and so forth, were all named by the Bushmen in illustrative ways.

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#### 9.1 The crocodile or alligator

The crocodile or alligator (*Crocodylus niloticus*, family Alligatoridae, including spp. *Caiman*), is called 'krokodil' in Afrikaans. In Bushman some common names for this reptile have been recorded by Bleek (1956:366-367, 692) as: /xwonnu ('alligator') and /xo/xono for 'crocodile' from Kung (N2), and tfenaa from Hie (C1) (Bleek 1956:228, 707). Since no real alligators occur in southern Africa, these terms, whenever used in explanations, both represent the Nile crocodile. The names appear to imitate the different sounds made by either adult crocs when blowing, roaring or hissing, and by the young hatchlings making their first croaking cries that are heard, distinctively as tfe-, ngwe- and ngwi- when cracking through their egg shells. These sounds made by the young, may have been emulated in the above names such as /xwonnu, /xo /xono and tfenaa.

The names in the Bantu languages, *kwena*, *ngwi* and variations thereof, may equally reflect the original Bushman onymic roots, or as approximations of the cognate forms as in Zulu for example where the common name for the crocodile is *ingwenya*. These names likewise then, are emulations of the young crocodiles' vocalisations. The reference to crocodilians in sound-associative formatives is found in toponyms like the Ngwenya Mountain in Swaziland; the Ngwenya River in KwaZulu-Natal (Raper *et al* 2014:370), and the Ngwenya Border Post in Mpumalanga between South

Africa and Swaziland. Ingwenyeni is another such toponym depicting the crocodile, whose name also acted as toponymic formative in Mzingwenya, a railway station in KwaZulu-Natal (Raper *et al* 2014:355-356). These last-mentioned Zulu toponyms all contain the component *ngwenya*, recorded for crocodile, and are phonologically comparable to the Bushman designation *tfenaa*, from the Hie (C1) language (Bleek 1956:228). As Doke wrote it: *chenaa* that became > (*i*)*ngwenya* (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:105).

The above-mentioned sound-associative toponyms with the crocodile as naming motive, may as indicated, relate to or resemble the croaky guttural cries made by the young when leaving the nest: *ngwe ngwe*, but may, of course, refer to other sounds made by crocodilians. Though the crocodile is generally silent when stalking, it is known to make many other loud noises such as rumbling or roaring, and males make a bubbling sound when submerged and performing as suitors during the mating season. This may possibly have led to it also being called */xo/xono*, *//hamma foro*, and *pampam* by the Bushmen (Bleek 1956:707), and as recorded under ‘alligator’ also as */xwonnu* (Bleek 1956:366-367, 692).

A place name in Botswana that reflects an adapted form of the Bushman name *tfenaa* for crocodile in the Subiya language, is that of a lagoon called Zibadianja in the Ngamiland district, some 10 km south-west of the Linyandi Swamp and 35 km west of the Chobe National Park. It is said to mean ‘pool of crocodiles’ (Raper *et al* 2014:555). The first component of the toponym *ziba* equates or is cognate with Bushman *djiba* for ‘pool’; the second and third component to be read as *dia-* ‘of the’, *-nya* ‘crocodile’, i.e. from *tfenaa* (> *ngwena*> *nya*). Interestingly, also the swamp name Linyandi, may refer to the same reptiles: *li-* a class prefix or the locative determinative as ‘place of’; *-nya-n-* ‘the crocodiles’, the *ndi* or *di* possibly either a plural indicator, or as in cognates *-i*, *ti*: and *tsi*, indicating the generic term for ‘swamp’.



Figure 9.1 Crocodile skull [Daniel Otte]

Other place names that contain the common name as reference are often found in translated forms like Crocodile River (Krokodilrivier) in the province of Mpumalanga, the name of a major tributary of the Komati. It rises north of Dullstroom and flows 306 km, mainly eastwards, to the confluence at Komatipoort. Named after the many crocodiles that reside in it. The Afrikaans equivalent *Krokodilrivier* is also borne by another major tributary, that of the Limpopo River in the western regions of the Limpopo province (Raper *et al* 2014:79). Pettman (1931:141) gives the indigenous equivalent as Magalakwena, which was more recently corrected to Mogalakwena (Raper *et al* 2014:334). It is said to stem from the Tswana form *bo-* or *mogala* meaning ‘fierce’, and *kwena* ‘crocodile’, cognate to the Hie (C1) word *tfenaa*. The name of the military kraal of the Zulu king Cetshwayo was named Umlambongwenya (Pettman 1931:141). It was also recorded as a river name, Mlambongwenya, that rises near Ingwavuma in the Lebombo Mountains and flows east towards Phongolo (Raper *et al* 2014:329), also referring to this great saurian reptile.

## 9.2 Leguaans, agamas and lizards

The references to, or explanations of a particular name for a place, were sometimes attributed, confusingly so, to those of the alligator, crocodile and leguaan. These reptilians have sometimes also been indicated with the designation ‘*kaaiman*’ or ‘*kaaimans*’ in Afrikaans place names, which appears to have been a colloquial usage of the term in certain regions. Compare for instance Kaaimansgat, Kaaimanskloof and Kaaimansrivier in the Western Cape. Some types of ‘*klipsalamander*’ and ‘*koggelmanders*’ (spp. *Agama*, family Agamidae) have often been called ‘*kaaimans*’ from the Dutch ‘*kaaiman*’, apparently from Portuguese or Spanish *caimão*, but more probable from the Carribean *acāyouman* (Boshoff & Nienaber 1967:316).

Agamas, lizards, ‘*koggelmans*’ or ‘*koggelmanders*’ and ‘*ouvolk*’, geckos and salamanders, the rock lizard or leguaan (often called *iguana* in older reports), ‘*likkewaan*’ in Afrikaans, all have been given many different names in the various Bushman, Khoikhoi and Bantu languages.

The rock lizard or leguaan is commemorated in several place names, for example, in Mbuluzi, name of a river on the route from Sabie to Khomatipoort, in the Mpumalanga Province, explained by Bulpin (1974:142) as “river of the iguanas”. The translated name Leguan’s Tank in the Eastern Cape is a reference to a “deep body of water 45 km north-north-east of Uitenhage. It takes its name from the

Nile monitor lizard, *Varanus niloticus*, called *likkewaan* in Afrikaans and *leguan* in English” (Raper *et al* 2014:272).

Another toponym, Shorobe, said to be a reference to the leguan, is that of a village in Botswana in the North East of Ngamiland district, on the edge of the Okavango Delta, some 36 km north-east of Maun. The name is from the Yei language, said to refer to the ‘monitor lizard’, *Varanus niloticus*; the component *shoro* is cognate with Hie (C1) *foro*, *foroba*, apparently ‘a male tree iguana, or leguaan’ (Bleek 1956:182). A name that sounds similar to the Hie (C1) word *foro*, is the /Xam (S1) word *ˀ//horu*, for a ‘*koggelman*’. Another name approximating these forms, is the Nogau (N1a) word *!goru* for a ‘lizard’ that is smaller than the ‘*koggelman*’ and eaten by children (Raper *et al* 2014:461-462).

Some species of *agama* or *lizard* were recorded i.a. as *\_!no:\_!no*, *≠xani* and */g^m //ke* in the !O!kun (N3) language by Bleek (1929:54; 1956:482, 565), *ngolole* and *//ka//ka*, ‘lizard, agama’, *//ka//kaba* a ‘male lizard’ in Hie (C1) and Naron (C2); and as *ˀ!kau*, *!khaˀu* in /Xam (S1); *ˀsi:gu:* in /Auni (S4); *//nomisa* from the Auen (N1) language (Bleek 1956:620), and *!nansi*, a ‘*kogelmander (sic)*, lizard’ (Bleek 1956:473) from ≠Khomani (S2a). She also recorded *tsāi* for an ‘agama, *koggelman*’ in the Auen (N1); and from the /Xam (S1) language *ˀ//horu* (Bleek 1929:54; 1956:211, 692, 732). These names may be descriptive of the small agama types, but she gave no further indication of sound mimicking or metaphoric associations. It seems though that they may have been phonologically adapted into Afrikaans, perhaps that ‘*geitjie*’ came from the !O!kun */g^m//ke*, and ‘*koggelman*’, ‘*kogelmander*’ perhaps from the Hie (C1) *ngolole*.



Figure 9.2 Magic figures (Agama, Chameleon), Aigub rocks, Upper Brandberg [A. Viereck]

Another type of ‘*koggelmander*’ (family Agamidae, various *agama* species, also called ‘lizards’), may have been represented in the toponym Naros in Namibia on the Ham River as recorded by Alexander (1836:181): “...and we outspanned at a fountain called Naros (lizard),...”. Quoted in Nienaber and Raper (1977:85, 868), who derive it from the Nama words as recorded by Kroenlein-Rust (1969:29) “*Eidechsenart, ‘Blaukopf’ genannt, auch ‘Regenbeter’...*”. In other words, it refers to a ‘lizard’ or agama type, named the ‘blue-headed agama’, also the ‘Rain prayer’, in Afrikaans known as the ‘*bloukopkoggelmander*’; the place name thus explained as ‘the fountain of the blue-headed lizard or agama’. Branch (1998:214-215) indicates a few agamas that actually have a blue headed phase, especially breeding males, who, while sitting on rocks or trees sunbathing, may even change their blue-headed colour to blend in with their habitat when threatened by predators, scuttling away to shelter between crags and crevices in rocks: “When danger threatens, they hug the rock; the bright head fades and becomes camouflaged against the lichen-covered rock. If this fails, they scamper off at top speed, leaping from boulder to boulder, to shelter in a deep crack”. The Bushman words for agamas or *koggelmanders* that may relate to this toponym Naros are /*kauo*, /*kha*ˀu from the /Xam, recorded by Bleek (1956:692, 732), also encountered as *taerrugu*, *taerru-gu*, *t’urugukən* in /Xam (S1) and as *\_waeru* from Auen (N1).

The toponym Naroogna, also written as Narogana, indicated as possibly an old name for Brandvlei in Nienaber and Raper (1980:47) was said to refer to the ‘*koggelmander*’ in Afrikaans. Yet, on discussing the toponym in Nama (on pages 620-621), they see it as a translation of the name Brandvlei, from “//haru – ‘brennen’, ‘brand’...” (as in ‘burning’ of corn or mealie pips and coffee beans; “*Korn oder Kaffee brennen: //naru*” (Kroenlein 1989:242, Rust 1960:12). In that case referring to an age-old custom to burn the wild coffee beans at this ‘vlei’. If the uncertainty around the explanation of the name was stated by Nienaber and Raper as ‘still open to correction’, it may be reanalysed again from another onymic root formative to find a confirmation of the earlier explanation of it as a reference to a type of ‘*koggelmander*’, thus that it may indeed have its origin in Bushman or early Khoikhoi dialects. It is proposed that the place name derived from Khoikhoi, but already as adapted from Bushman languages, e.g. from words for the agama such as /*kha*ˀu in /Xam (S1) and *\_waeru* from Auen (N1), and for lizard *taerrugu*, *taerru-gu*, *t’urugukən* in /Xam (S1) as recorded by Bleek (1956: 193, 242, 692, 732). Nienaber himself (1963:181, 497 quoting from Claudius 1685:100) stated: “...#*k-arou* x *n-arrou*...vir ‘verkleurmantjie’...”, (already noting the variability of the *k* and *n*), and under the

discussion of the lemma *verkleurmanneljje*: “Dit schynt een slag van *Chamelion te weezen...door haar (t.w. die Namaquas’) Narrou genaamt*”. This reptile was identified as the *Chameleo namaquensis* at the time, now written *Chamaeleo namaquensis* and described by Branch (1998:228, plate 96) as living “... in some of the hottest, most desolate regions”, which describes the location of Naroogna in the Northern Cape, Namaqualand as its natural, specific habitat. Le Vaillant (1780-83:367 also quoted in Nienaber 1963: 497), gives a variant spelling form as “V-karou-koup, ‘cameleon..’” recorded from the Eastern Khoikhoi dialects. These words phonologically and semantically approximate the component *naroo-* deriving from the above words for the type of ‘*koggelmander*’ or chameleon endemic to the area. In the toponym Naroogna the generic *-gna* is equivalent to /kā: (indicating the nasalisation in the last component of the name), and is taken from //N!ke (S2) as documented in Bleek (1929:89; 1956:768) for ‘*vlei*’.

In Afrikaans, a certain type of agama is also known, colloquially, as the ‘*vuur-* or *vlamsalamander*’. This may, in all probability, refer to the red phase of some types of lizard or a specific type of lizard or agama, as in the case of the Western Sandveld lizards (*Nucras tessellata*) of which the tail is crimson red and their distribution fairly wide in the sandy regions of southern Africa. The name of this type of agama lizard in Afrikaans, appears to be an apt translation as confirmed in words from Naron (C2), e.g. *\_karu*, \karu which means ‘to burn’ and ‘to flame’ (Bleek 1929:25,39; 1956:701); and the association with Naroogna as place name, validated hereby.

A toponym that refers to another *agama* species or larger type of lizard, is the name Gwavava, perhaps cognate to //ka//ka for ‘lizard, agama’ from Hie (C1) //ka//kaba (note the *v* and *b* variability), for a ‘male lizard’ from the Hie (C1) and Naron (C2) as above. This is the name of some hillocks about 12 km south-west of Skukuza in the Mpumalanga province, said to be derived from Tsonga, “referring to a type of large, grey lizard that frequents fissures in the rock, *Gerrhosaurus* species” (Raper *et al* 2014:171).

### 9.3 Snakes and rock pythons

In Bushman the general reference or common names for ‘snake’ are documented i.a. as //kyi, //keritān-ti in /Xam (S1); /k'au, /k'a:se in //N!ke (S2); *si /k'au* with a variant *sanja* from the /Auni (S4); from the Sesarwa (S5) *fi//kwi* and a variant *fi//kwoi*; from /Nu//en (S6) //gwi; the words *\_!gi*, *≠ni*: from Auen (N1); and from !O!kuṅ (N3) the



words /kãũ and /kwě; from Hie (C1) //gao, /gauo; from Naron (C2) !gau:ba, /kau:ba; and !ga:xa and \_/aob from Nama, and many more (Bleek 1929:77; 1956:180). In some, the imitation or emulation of the strong hissing or slithering sound, like wind through grass, is recognisable in the s and ʃ phonemes.

Bleek recorded common names /k'au from Batwa (S3), si/k'au from /Auni (S4) or from a similar form found in the Khatia (Xatia) (S4a) language in a region in the south of Botswana, east of the Nossob and the southern Kalahari. It is also recorded as fi//kwi and fi//kwoi in the Sesarwa (S5) language (Bleek 1929:77; 1956:180, 755), which served as onymic formatives *vide* Bushman cognate originators in several indigenous place names. Boden (2011:52), recorded the place name Sig≠x'ui-/i-n!au (Table 7 “Correspondences between West !Xoon and Herero place names”) in the modern orthography according to Haacke and Eiseb (2002). Boden gives the translation as ‘place of the snake’ which also contains the general term for ‘snake’ in the segment Sig≠x'ui- derived from fi//kwoi, and indicates the -n!au as a generic indicating ‘place’, though it resembles the word /k'au above denoting ‘snake’ as well. She argues that it is either translated from the West !Xoon into Herero, or imitated in construction from a Herero designation, since the name Okonyoka for this place means the same ‘at the snake’.

Another designation, closely related to the Herero form, derived from the common or general reference to snakes, *inyoka* in Zulu, is found in the toponym Enyokeni. It is a name for a post office, 34 km south-east of Jozini, in the Ubombo magisterial area and means ‘the place of snakes’ (SAGNC, 2012), derived from *nyoka*, *izi-nyoka*. In Zulu, this general designation for a snake equally originates from Ur-Bantu *yoka*, *-oka* > *amanyoka*, *ubunyoka* (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:627). To elucidate the origins and cognate words for ‘snake’ in the different Bantu languages the following may be added here from Doke and Vilakazi (2005) where they indicate the Ur-Bantu roots *yoka* or *oka* for snake, a proto-language source which is in the same family to which all the Bantu languages belong. It has also produced modern cognates for ‘snake’ in many Bantu languages of Western, Central and Eastern Africa, for example *ejoka* (Kwanyama), *nyoka* (Shona), *insoka* (Lamba and Bemba), *nyoka* (Swahili), *njoka* (Nyanja), *inzoka* (Bantu-Botatwe) and *noga* (Tswana).

In Raper *et al* (2014:191, 468) a number of place names containing references to snakes are lemmatised, while the whole family of snakes is included under the general term ‘*slang*’ for ‘snakes’, as in the farm name Schlangen in the Waterberg



Nature Reserve area in Namibia (Möller 1986:303-4), for the great number of snakes occurring there, some identified more specifically as referring to the pythons there.

Most of these toponyms were coined mainly in original Afrikaans, or as translated forms such as Slangberg, Slanghoek, Slangkop, Slangspruit and Slangrivier, with the Slang River Settlement. These are discussed as translated forms containing the original Bushman *t'kau* or Khoikhoi *qua-b*, general words for 'snake' in those languages.

In Namibia several toponyms contain elements of Bushman and Khoikhoi snake references as the identifiers, or specific terms, for example, Aotanab and Auberg and many more. Aotanab is a hill with a trigonometric beacon on its top elevation, lying west of Keetmanshoop. Originally this hill was named Sō-//noa-b (Nienaber & Raper 1977:204), first recorded on the map of Alexander (1836-7) as "Sonuwap Hill"; the component Sō, as yet unexplained, unless the phonological adaptations are taken into account, namely that the component *so* is comparable to the word for 'snake', /*ao*. In this word, the articulation of the dental click was heard and represented in writing by Alexander as a sibilant *S*, with the syllable peak of the pronunciation of /*ao* represented as the long-drawn *ō* to render the first component Sō of the place name. This word may be seen as comparable to Bushman *soupe*, referring to a "small blue snake" (Bleek 1956:629); the semantic source of the name for a type of snake may thus have been embedded in the component Sō. The component *noa(b)* of the name Sonoab and *nuwa(p)* of the variant Sonuwap is comparable to the Naron (C2) //nōa for 'kopje', 'rock', or to the /Auni (S4) //wa for 'hill' (Bleek 1956:620) and therefore poses no problem in the identification or description of it as generic component in the translated names Slangkop and Schlangenkopf. The old name was adapted to Sonuwap, Sonoab (Nienaber & Raper 1977:232), though they maintained at the time, that the new name did not translate the older form of the name. The Khoikhoi names Aotanab and Auberg, however, with the *ao* and *au* variability, also concur with the Bushman /*k'au*, *si/k'au* and /*kāũ* (this last one with clear nasalisation, reminiscent of the *Sonu-wap* toponymic construction above then as /*kā(n)u* + //wa-(*p*), 'snake hill'), cognate with Nama /*ao*. Both place names have the meaning of 'snake mountain', and the related morpho-structural and phonemic adaptation in the Nama names, together with the identifying term for 'snake'. It thus translates into /*kau-tana* > *ao-tana-b* > /*aub danab*, translated to Dutch and Afrikaans as Slangkop. The old farm name, translated into German as Schlangenkopf (Möller 1986:304), still retains the original naming motive and pattern in adapted

format, i.e. referring to it as ‘kopje’ as in the Dutch. The variant names Aubberg and Aubdanab or Aubtanab are references to the same topographical feature and reinforce the “image of the snake-head”, as explained by some informants during fieldwork (Nienaber & Raper 1977:86, 204, 232).

The place name Houtema, however, initially presented by Hartogh in 1707 (quoted in Nienaber 1963:458) as a place name “*na de bij ons soo genaamde Palmietrivier, door de Hottentoos genaamt Houtema, of Slangenrivier*”, is seen by Raper *et al* (2014:191) as a derivation of a reference to bulrushes rather than the many snakes occurring in the area (the initial explanation given). This name, then, may not necessarily be a descriptive comparison, or a metaphoric rendering of the winding curves resembling a large snake’s movements (previously given as explanation of the meaning of the name), as compared to the long winding Palmietrivier when viewed from an elevated viewpoint. Pettman (1931:142) discussed the name “Spuugslangfontein in Griqualand West which derives its name from the ‘*spuugslang*’ (spitting snake) or Rinkhals...” (*Hemachatus haemachatus*, Branch 1998:109).

The rock python (*Pythonia*, *Python sebae natalensis*), the only python on the sub-continent according to Branch (1998:58-60), is generally known as the ‘*luislang*’ in Afrikaans (because of its slow moving, cautious movements), i.a the *u(lu)monya* in Zulu (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:378). Le Vaillant in 1780-83 recorded the name of this snake as *kanou-goup* (as quoted in Nienaber 1963:458), and as explained there, it is to be read as *lanu-b* for the current Nama spelling, and as such, that it referred specifically to the python. As the following quote from Wandres (1918:38) illustrates, the size and habit of the snake to suffocate its prey, was greatly respected and feared: “*Riesenschlange Südwestafrikas, die sogenannte Beestlang, wird so genannt*”... “*Riesenschlange, Boa constrictor*”. (‘Giant snake of South West Africa, the so-called ‘cattle snake’ is named thus...‘giant snake’..’). The cognate name is also found in Lucy Lloyd’s Korana list of animal names (quoted in Maingard 1932:317), where she refers specifically only to the rock python or rock-snake as *!kãũ*. This word seems to correlate with the component */qx’aun-* recorded by Boden (2011: Table 1A “List of !Xoon Place names”, Map 98) in the modern orthography for the place name */Qx’aun-/i-!qhaa* (situated close to the border with Botswana, in the western region of the Omaheke). The name is explained as a reference to a “Natal. rock.python-Gen-water-inside”. Bleek (1956:680, 746) also recorded the word *≠xu* from Kung (N2) for ‘python’ which may relate to this onymic formative.

Other Bushman designations for the rock python are i.a. indicated by Bleek (1956:477) as *!na//ke:* and *≠ne:* from Kung (N2); as *//ke:tən* from /Xam (S1); *!goma* from Hie (C1), and as *!gobaʃa* from Naron (C2) in Bleek (1929:68; 77). These last two words may be comparable with the version of Le Vaillant's *goup*, and Bleek's general word for 'snake' documented by her from Khoikhoi as *\_/aob*, where the occurrence of the *o* and *a*, *o* and *u* variability is not unusual for early recorded words (Nienaber 1963).

The Bushman designations for the rock-python *!goma* from Hie (C1) or *!goba-ʃa* from the Naron (C2) languages as indicated above (Bleek 1929: 68; 77, 1956:280, 281,746), are cognate or related to this generic word in the Bantu languages for 'snake' where the similar vowel pattern of *o* and *a* is recognisable.

In other cases, the indigenous toponyms can be traced back to possible original Bushman cognate words or common names of the reptile, i.e. for 'python' or 'serpent'. Bleek (1956:653) gives for 'snake', 'serpent' the word *≠iŋ'a* from the Kung (N2), originally recorded by Lucy Lloyd. At this lemma, Bleek gives the explanation as recorded from interviewees: "...//hīŋ...the *≠iŋ'a*, the serpent of our country"... "the great serpent that lies at the grave we do not kill, because it is our other spirit, the spirit of the dead person".

The toponym KwaBhekumgcine may be compared with various forms of the concept and expression *gcine*, *gcina*, *gcinisi*; both idiomatic and otherwise as metaphoric in the sense of 'terminate, come to an end', 'to fasten, to secure, to bind, press down, finish', the 'Finisher', the last to come out', and so forth. The component *-umgcini* from the Nguni languages (Doke and Vilakazi 2005: 236), and as found in this toponym, may thus refer to the actions of the rock python in this metaphoric sense of 'fastening, binding'. The verb 'to fasten' in /Xam (S1) (Bleek 1929:37) is as indicated above *//hīŋ*, which correlates with the name for the rock python, and the Zulu concept in *gcine*, *gcinisa*, as 'fasten', to 'secure tightly'.

The name refers to a gorge and cliff in the uMgungundlovu district in KwaZulu-Natal (Raper *et al* 2014:257), and is known to be a dangerous place. The full Zulu name is a combination of three or more components: *Kwa + Bheka + umgcine* which is said to mean, or is paraphrased as: "seeing someone for the very last time". The legend goes that there is a cliff in this area which is believed to be "the home of a very large snake". If anybody goes in, that person never comes back alive (SAGNC, Dec 2011). This name Bhekumgcine appears to be a Zulu adaptation from, or relate

to phrases as discussed above, and used as: ‘Look out or beware of the big snake that fastens you up tightly’, and ‘suffocates’. The toponym had been adopted with click adaptation from the earlier Bushman designation to the python, as a dangerous, suffocating serpent, derived from words for ‘to fasten’; ‘snake’ or ‘serpent’ as the above //hĩŋ, with adaptation into (um)gcin(e) illustrate. It may stem from the word for a ‘snake’ in the Sesarwa (S5) language as well, the fi//kwi and //gwi from /Nu //en (S6), and \_!gi, from Auen (N1). Bleek (1929:77) documented for the common name of the python, i.a also  $\bar{\neq}ne$  from Auen (N1), and  $\neq ne$ : from the Kung (N2) language, this form is synonymous to the designation !na//ke: also from Kung (N2). It refers to the “boa constrictor, probably python” (thus ‘rock python’). These forms may equally be cognate in the metaphoric concept with the last component -umgcine of the Zulu toponym.

The python is called i.a.  $\backslash\neq ni$ ;  $\neq nĩ$  and the ‘great watersnake’  $\neq niŋ$  (some as recorded by Lucy Lloyd, documented in Bleek 1956:672, 769), whereas the cognate words referring to the python are also indicated as  $\neq nĩ$  or  $\neq ne$  (Bleek 1929:68), which correlate both with the -gci and -ne components of the Zulu place name.

Incidentally, as indicated above in the explanation of the meaning of the toponym, the phrase ‘to take away’ is also known by the word  $\neq ni$ : in the /Xam (S1) language, but without nasalisation, which indicates a difference in meaning. It may, alternatively, indeed be seen to bring in the concept of being ‘taken away’, ‘carried away’, since a word which was recorded as /hiŋ in Bushman (Bleek 1956:761), indicates ‘to take’; and ‘to be taken away’ is  $\neq ni$ : (Bleek 1956:672). The differences though in the clicks, clearly seem to discern it from the name of the python. On the same page though, the recorded names for the ‘great watersnake’, given with a falling accent or tone as  $\backslash\neq ni$ ;, but also  $\neq nĩ$  and  $\neq niŋ$  in the Auen (N1) and Kung (N2) languages, may relate to this interpretation of the name. It must be noted, however, that the variations in tone, click and nasalisation usually indicate the semantic differences, that is, distinguish the ‘reptile’ from this idea of being ‘taken away’, although it may intend precisely that, as the correct interpretation. Bleek (1956:477) further noted and recorded the belief of the Auen (N1) speakers: “...its (snake’s) tongue bites people ...” placing the synonymous !na: of !na//ke:, “the boa constrictor, prob. python syn.  $\neq ne$ ” in Kung (N2) as equal to !ne: ‘to bite’.

Metaphorically, this great snake, legendarised as the ‘great water snake’, was used extensively in coming of age rituals as a symbol of a maiden’s maturity, and used as a game by youngsters, the custom as recorded by Lucy Lloyd was documented by

Bleek (1956:672): “the Auen girls play at the great watersnake (game)”. This in all probability was a reference to a python, rock python, or other aquatic reptile. It may have been confused with the genuine *brown watersnake*, identified by Lichtenstein in 1823, and later categorised as the *Lycodonomorphus rufulus*, family Colubridae. It is described as occurring in the western and north eastern regions of southern Africa, mainly along riverbeds and swampy regions.

These animals all became legendarised in the concept or form of a ‘great watersnake’, as the one who ‘takes people away’. This associated meaning was ascribed to the toponym as explained by interviewees above: “the rock ledge where, when people go in, [they] are never seen again” (SAGNC 2012).

In Afrikaans a reference to the rock python was found in the toponym Luislangpan in the Waterberg district, Limpopo province. Rock pythons still occur there in fairly large numbers, especially in the mountainous areas around water courses and riverine areas. This name refers to a large water pan in the area (USGAZ, 1992, PLAC Database, NP-PLNM 1982-2000).

Another name for the python was recorded by Bleek (1956:671) from the Auen (N1) language as *≠ne* and synonym to *!na//ke* of Kung (N2) as discussed above, that was, however, indicated as a synonym also with *≠neko* that appears to be a close cognate to some of the names for the black *mamba* (*Dendroaspis polylepis*, Branch 1998:110), as indicated in Bleek (1956:671) *≠ne:igo* from the Kung (N2) language. The mamba, as the most feared snake, next to the puff adder and the spitting cobras, has also been referred to in place names like Mamba and Mamba River, a tributary of the Tugela River, as it rises near Osungulweni about 25 km west of Eshowe in Kwa Zulu-Natal. It is also the name of a railway siding in the Eastern Cape, 52 km south-west of Umtata (Raper *et al* 2014:299).



Figure 9.3 Cape cobra, juvenile (*Naja nivea*),  
[used with permission, property of William Roy Branch]

All cobras use spitting of venom as first offensive action. The name of the Mozambique spitting cobra, called *m'fezi* in Nguni (*Naja mossambica*, according to Branch 1998:108), shows close phonological resemblance to some cognate Bushman words associated with 'spitting'. The component *m'fe* is comparable to the noun *tfee* for 'spittle' (*'spoeg'* in Afrikaans, Bleek 1956:757), which in Zulu is *ama-the* (Doke and Vilakazi 2005: 460), as well as to the verb *tfe tfereho* 'to spit' from Hie (C1) and Naron (C2). This may well correlate with the *mfe* of the spitting cobra's name and its striking behaviour to defend itself. The 'snake' names in Bushman include /*k'a:se* in //N!ke (S2) (Bleek 1929:77), which is a possible derivation of the verb *tfa* in Auen (N1) (Bleek 1929: 78), and that provides a close cognate to the intransitive verb *tshaka* to 'eject saliva' (also given as '*fela amathe*' in Zulu); but means more exactly "to spit (as snake)" (Doke and Vilakazi 2005: 460).

The puff adder in the Bushman languages is discussed here as example of a metaphorically applied onymic formative. Apart from its other, often expressive sound-associative names, it is also called 'a rain's thing' in Bushman to which reference is made below.

The name of the puff adder (*Bitis arietans*), '*pofadder*' in Afrikaans, is found in toponyms like Pofadder and Kaitob se Berg, both in the Northern Cape (Raper *et al* 2014:218, 417). In both the Afrikaans and English common name *puff adder* and *pofadder*, the behaviour of this snake becomes evident, i.e. the blowing, the puffing, and the loud hissing sound that it makes, i.e. it is onomatopoeic in origin.

Other place names identified as referring to snakes in the Nama (Khoikhoi) language, are discussed in Nienaber and Raper (1977, 1980) as Gais, Kaip, and Keisberg, and these all relate to the original Bushman designations, such as from /Auni (S4) as *!ka !gãĩ*; and *gaii* from Hie (C1), and so on, used for the 'puff adder' or 'adders' in general. The Nama words or components in the toponyms Gaigasrivier, Gaitsabes, Geitsabis, Harankiep, Harankoop, Kaip, Kaitab, Keiskamma, Kheisberg and Keisberg, and so forth, all according to Nienaber and Raper (1977:86, 524), mainly refer to the puff adders or other type of adders like the side-winders or horned adders of the desert, known as '*horingmans*' in Afrikaans.

In a different but equally expressive way, the Bushman name had been coined, as the component *kai* in the name Kaitob se Berg may illustrate. The various names for the puff adder in the Bushman languages are given as recorded from i.a. the /Auni (S4) as *!ka !gãĩ*; from Hie (C1) it is *gaii*, and *!gai* and *!ka:*, all clearly imitating the

vociferous snake with its warning ‘puffing’ sound, with its loud hiss through a wide open mouth, especially at the onset of its attack, then exposing the long fangs before it strikes.

The San emulated this by employing an explosive retroflex click, represented in writing by a double exclamation mark !! (Bleek 1956:505). The single exclamation mark ! is indicated as ‘the cerebral or palato-alveolar click’ (Bleek 1956:368). These explosive clicks, and the long drawn out double vowel *aa* and diphthong *ai*, illustrate acoustically the puffing and explosive spitting in attack mode heard in the name *!ka*. Both these common names *!ka* and *!!gai*, also in combination, *!ka !!gāi*, articulate the sounds emitted by these extremely venomous snakes when threatened and striking.

This behaviour pattern was invariably observed and emulated by the hunter-gatherer Bushmen or San people in the names they allocated to the adders. Kroenlein (1889:104), describing the name of the puff adder in Nama as *!gëis*, also mentions that it originally derives from the verb “*!gëi, aufstossen, stossen*”, i.e. ‘to push up, break wind’; seen perhaps here as the same action and described as such, with the sound emulated as in ‘belching’. The puff adder’s vocalisations relate to its habit of first warning by hissing with a strong puff, then attacking from a coiled position with a strike so fast and violent it is emitted by an almost velar croak sounding like ‘breaking of wind’. In the Bushman languages, Bleek (1929:67) recorded the double jointed name for the puff adder from the Hie (C1) language as *!!gaii /gamfa*, and from the Naron (C2) language */gaufa*, where both the components contain the sound-associative sibilant *fa*, and the root metaphoric expression *!gëi* as *!!gaii* and */gau*: ‘the one that pushes [air] up, breaks wind’, i.e. ‘hisses and strikes at you’. Kroenlein (1889:104) gives an example sentence from his interviewees: “The puff adder is a peaceful snake lying by the roadside, but when you disturb or touch the adder, you will see how aggressive and poisonous she is” (*author’s translation*). The Bushmen and Khoikhoi clearly knew the danger of this reptile with its warning puff, speed of attack, deadly fangs and cytotoxic venom.

Another common name of the puff adder, metaphoric in concept and found in the /Xam (S1) language (Bleek 1929:67; 1956:746), as *!gu:kən*, relates to the Bushmen’s visualisation of natural phenomena. Bleek (1956:388) recorded some example sentences during her fieldwork describing the snake’s behaviour, and these contain the metaphorical references to the puff adder’s movements in nature, relating to this specific name. The name in this form is a comparison, or is linked to its activity during the rainy season: “the puff adder also is a rain’s thing”, the Bushmen say, “it



is wont to appear when the rain has fallen”. The Bushmen interviewees further gave the metaphoric association with the adder and its name, describing its movements as related to rain and water as: “rain’s puff adder ribs, i.e. water’s waves”. The falling rain is compared to the snake’s ribs as she moves, and is seen to resemble the rippling of waves, of water, but also as the puff adder itself when they explained: ‘*!gu:kən, !kǎuŋ !kǎuŋ*’...meaning the ‘puff adder’s ribs’ are like ‘water’s waves’, and the image of its rib-cage (the muscle movements), was, to them, like moving ‘ripples’ of water. The word for ‘ripple’ in Bushman is *!gu:*. Among the 41 words recorded from the Bushman languages for ‘water’ (Bleek 1956:749), there is also the related word indicated as *!gu:* for ‘ripple’ and it contains the same component applied for ‘puff adder’ and ‘water’, namely *!gu:-* (Bleek 1956:769).

The word for ‘wave’ is, indeed, the same as for ‘puff adder’ *!gu:kən* (Bleek 1956:769). This recalls, not only the puff adder’s movements of its sinewy muscles over the ribcage, metaphorically seen as the ‘water waves’, but may also be reminiscent of waves of sand, resembling the side-winding adders of the desert regions as associated by the Bushmens’ view of naming this reptile, the adder. These descriptions show the Bushmens’ keen observations and prowess at knowing the habits and behaviour of the animals.

The metaphor in the name of the reptile they knew so well, was confirmed by their employing the same word used for ‘water’, and the same root word for ‘water’s waves’ as components in the common name to describe the snake.

## 9.4 Frogs, bullfrogs and toads

The frogs are named in Bushman languages with various common nouns, some descriptive, some not. The most obvious sound-associative or onomatopoeic common names that spring to mind are *!gā:*, *//ga:ba* and *xwa:rrakən* (Bleek 1956:262).

The following toponyms refer to frogs: Maguwene in Limpopo, a tributary of the Pugwane River, which it enters 16 km north of Shangoni. Of Tsonga origin, the name is said to mean ‘where frogs croak’, ‘place of frogs’, the stem *guwe* approximating the Hie (C1) *kwee* and the Naron (C2) *!gwe:ba*, ‘frog’ (Raper *et al* 2014:291). Another place name referring to frogs is Makhutlwanini in Mpumalanga. It is the name of a tributary of the Mitomeni River which it enters 12 km north-east of Stolsnek. Of Tsonga origin, meaning ‘place of frogs’, the name is also “borne by a hill 4 km to the north-east of the confluence with the main stream” (Raper *et al* 2014:295).



Another interesting name from the Tswana language is the toponym Kwa-Matlametlong. It is the name of a settlement near Rustenburg and said to mean ‘place of the frogs’ (PLAC Database, NP-PLNM 1982-2000; SAGNC schedules, 2002-2008). Bleek (1929:41) gives for ‘frog’, i.a. from /Xam (S1) ʔgā: and  $\ne n^m$  (the  $\wedge$  pronounced as the  $u$  in ‘bun’, thus phonologically comparable with the *thlo*-component of the name). In addition to this is  $\ne wā$  from Kung (N2), which both seem to be cognate with the *tla* or *tlam* component in the above toponym, indicating the nasalisation in the bilabial *m*.

Several other place names refer to frogs, such as Makukutswana also in Mpumalanga, a tributary of the Timbavati River in the Kruger National Park, 5 km east-south-east of Kingfisher camp. The name is of Tsonga origin, meaning ‘place of frogs’ (Raper *et al* 2014:296), and the component *kuku* could be cognate with  $\ne n^m$ , also  $\ne wā$  from Kung (N2).

A mountain with pools at the foothills near Dzanani is called Kwakani, apparently a Venda or Tsonga form which may have been adapted from the Bushman designation. It is said to refer to the croaking noise of many frogs there at one time, cf. the Bushman names in /Xam (S1) as ʔgā:. Another place name, also in the northern parts of the Limpopo province, that of an intermittent stream near Thabamoopo, was called Gwaragwara (sometimes written as Kwerekwere). It is said to be from Northern Sotho or Pedi and explained as sound-imitative, given this name because of “the many frogs or bullfrogs (*brulpaddas*) occurring there in the waterpools” (PLAC database, 1984-2000). The components *kwa* and *gwa* could be cognate with the above ʔgā:, or  $\ne wā$  from Kung (N2).

The name iXoxo is a reference to a toad or large bullfrog, and the name refers to a branch of the Gonubie River, apparently named after the bullfrog, but was also the name of a Xhosa chief of the area (Pettman 1931:142). Pettman recorded Dutch place names such as Kikvorsberg, Kikvorsfontein; from the Afrikaans he quoted Paddafontein and Paddarivier. The Dutch word for a ‘frog’ is *kikvors*, in Afrikaans it is *padda*, and respectively used as toponymic motive and formative from the common names. Other toponyms containing this word *padda* are Paddagat and Paddakop, both in the Western Cape (Raper *et al* 2014:404); and there is a farm called Paddavlei in the Glencoe-Burnside area in KwaZulu-Natal.

## 9.5 Tortoises and turtles (Family Chelonians)

The small Southern speckled tortoises (of which the smallest tortoise in the world, *Homopus signatus cafer* is a subspecies), are called ‘*padlopertjie*’ in Afrikaans (Van Vuuren 2016:12, 28, 188). They occur mainly in Namaqualand, Richtersveld, and in the Western Cape from Piketberg to Calvinia (Branch 1998:27). Bleek (1956:21, 479) documented the common name *dam*, *damsa*, *damfa* and *dham* for small tortoises, and she, as did Van Vuuren, mentions that Bushmen woman dried and powdered the *buchu* plant (*Angathosma betulina*), which they carried in these small tortoise shells. A few larger *padloper* specimens have been identified, such as the Namaqua and Greater *padloper* (*Homopus femoralis*, see Branch 1998:26, Plate 6). Although Bleek recorded many names for ‘tortoises’ in general, for example //go: or ʔ!no from the //N!ke (S2) language, she does not give a specific Bushman name for all sub-species.



Figure 9.5 Greater padloper (*Homopus femoralis*),  
[used with permission, property of William Roy Branch]

For the giant mountain tortoise, she recorded the name *-/kapəm* (1929:87), and this tortoise may correspond to the *!nab* from Nama as explained by Kroenlein (1989:243) and Kroenlein-Rust (1969:278) to be: “*die grosse, die Riesenschildkröte*” (‘the large, the giant tortoise’). It may also be referred to as *!nā-b*, as it appears in the toponyms in Nakop and Nakab Nord in Namibia in the mountainous area of Warmbad, and discussed in Nienaber and Raper (1977:843, 1980:601-602). Nienaber and Raper further elaborated (1980:603) on these names Nakop and Nakab, as referring to “*’n groot skilpad, ’n bergskilpad. Daar was baie skilpaaie op die koppe by Nakop*”, this according to their informants, in other words, the name being derived from the reference to the ‘large mountain tortoises’. It is possible that this name was

derived from *-/kapə̃m* from */Xam* (S1); or from *//gwa:* in *Auen* (N1), also a word for ‘tortoise’; then adapted into the Nama *!na-b*. Also the toponym *Nahabip* derived from the same root word according to Alexander (1836-7, 154, quoted in Nienaber and Raper 1977:837): “South of Hubies was Nahabip, or Tortoise Mountains...”

The component *-/ka* in the Bushman name *-/kapə̃m* from */Xam* (S1) may furthermore be compared to the component *-thla* in the Northern Sotho name *Dithlagane*. This word *-thlaga* may thus refer to a ‘tortoise’ as in the cognates in the Bushman words *gwa* and *//gwa* in *Auen* (N1), *//koa* and *-/ho':a* as recorded by Bleek (1956:525). Along with this is *//gāna* and *//gwana* referring to a water pool and used as embedded and translated generic in the references to *Paayzynpan* (which was the former name of *Dithlagane*), and *Skilpadfontein* below. To strengthen the argument of an etymology of ‘tortoise’ as onymic motive in the names, another word in Bushman for ‘tortoise’ can be proposed, such as *gweitə̃n* in *!O!kung*. Bleek (1956:72) further quotes from Passarge the recorded common name for a tortoise as *jam*, synonymous with *dham* and *yam* from the *Sehura* (C1a) language. The Dutch place name *Paayzynpan* was allocated to a settlement in *Mpumalanga* and approved in 1968. This name is an adaptation as *paayzyn+pan* which was derived in its first two components from the above onymically related root words or cognate forms. The full name thus originates via the onymic formatives *gwai* or *gwei-* (*tə̃n*) (or even *\_/kapə̃m* as adaptation) + *jam* (or the syn. *dham* and *yam*). These Bushman words then became adapted and corrupted to the apparently ‘Afrikaans’ name *Paayzynpan*. The fact that this name occurs in the toponymic cluster with the post office name *Skilpadfontein* in the vicinity, confirms its etymology as initially derived from an older Bushman root word, or words, referring to tortoises. Therefore, another ‘sound-meaning’ association, and translated cluster group of names leading to this conclusion (Möller 2014:129; Raper *et al* 2014:403).

In the case of the ‘*veldskilpad*’, the Nama word *//khuri* was related to the toponym *Khuris* in the *Gobabis* area north-east of *Uichenas* in *Namibia*. Other Bushman words such as *≠uras* from */Auni* (S4); *ˀ//neisi* from */Nu//en* (S6); *ˀ//gi* and *dzi* from *Kung* (N2); *fibiri* from *Hie* (C1) and *\_/hurob* in *Nama* or *Khoikhoi*, could all relate to the toponym *Khuris* and to refer to the ‘*veldskilpad*’. However, F K Krenz (1977, quoted in Nienaber and Raper 1980:516), a *Namibian* by birth and knowledgeable in the fauna and flora of the region, specifically named it as deriving from the word “*//khuri-s – Wasserschildkröte*”, the ‘water tortoise’. See also Bleek (1956:766) for more ‘turtle’ words like *ˀtsi:*, *!ko* and so forth.

## CHAPTER TEN

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### Invertebrates

#### 10.1 Arachnids: scorpions and spiders

From earliest times the scorpions and spiders have been given names to describe them according to appearance and behaviour. Some of their names have been adopted as ethnic clan names, for example as the *Skerpioene* or */Hu-kx'ein* (Scorpions) and the *Spinnekoppe* or */Nüisin-//e'is*, also written as *Husingais* (Spiders). Examples of toponyms illustrating these arachnids are found in the early recordings of the Old Cape Khoikhoi names Hoekingeis and Husingais. The latter has been explained in early sources i.a. by Wikar (1779 VRV 15, 158, quoted in Nienaber and Raper 1980:126, 429-430) as *Spinnekopdraadkraal* i.e. 'spiders-thread-homestead/kraal'. The name for the spider was recorded by Claudius (1685:104, quoted in Nienaber 1963:464) as *houeb*, "*Deese spinnekop is van goud en silveragtige couleur word in sommige landen van de Namaguaas gevonden, die hem seer giftig oordelen en Houeb noemen*". Le Vaillant (1780-83:367) recorded the same name written as *^-hous* 'spider; *spen*'. Kroenlein (1889:178) specifically recorded the word */nüis* for 'spider' and "*/hüs, der Skorpion*", */hub* for a large scorpion (Rust 1960:57). Lucy Lloyd recorded for Kora (quoted in Maingard 1932:318) the name for this spider as */nui!xam*, but described it as a 'scorpion'. Nienaber and Raper (1980:430), discussing Husingais as *Spinnekopdraadkraal*, interpreted the name Hoekingeis, correctly as '*skerpioenkraal*'. This was gleaned from the travel reports of Wikar (1779:158) and Robert Jacob Gordon (1779, ms of the 4th journey) during their travels into the interior of the Cape up to the Gariep (Orange) River. Gordon recorded the name Hoekingeis for the clan of the Scorpions, and their homestead as "*synde Skerpioenkraal*". Kroenlein (1889:178) made a definite distinction of this name */hü, /hüs* or */hüs* "*der Skorpion*" from that of the spider indicated as */nüis* in Nama (Kroenlein 1889:263, Nienaber 1963:464-465). For spider in general, words documented by Bleek (1929:78) were i.a. *-/ku* from */Xam* (S1) and *//h^m* and *k"au kum* in Kung (N2); and she also indicated */nüis* for the Khoikhoi name.

The name  $\wedge$ -*hous* may, initially, have been used as a general term for both these creatures, or there may have been some confusion on the part of the translators and recorders. Alternatively, how the informants' information was given through in the interpreting process, as to exactly which arachnid they meant, that a description was given either of a scorpion (seen as a golden or silvery coloured arachnid), or that it was the name of a specific type of spider. Two place names in the Northern Cape, but below the Vaal River, refer to either the scorpion itself, or to the clan name. These are the above-mentioned Scorpions Kraal and Skerpioenpunt both in the vicinity where Gordon had travelled and made his observations (Nienaber 1989:501).

The *Solpuga*, indicated as the sun-spider, or in German 'Vogelspinne' because 'it ran so fast it seemed to fly', was documented as *gnarebi* by Claudius (Nienaber 1963:465), and as */kareda-b* by Rust (1960:58) for Nama. For a specific 'silvery spider' type, Bleek (1956:230) recorded from the Hadza (C3) language *tfindzako*, *pindzako*, and she recorded other spider names as indicated above like *!huru* and *//hum*, (Bleek 1956: 757), but without specifying the sub-species.

For the scorpion, Bleek (1929:72) also recorded:  $\bar{!}kana$ ,  $\neqkara$  from /Xam (S1), *!kəna*: from //N!ke (S2), *//kai* from /Nu //en (S6);  $\neqxai$ , *!ne!ne* from Auen (N1);  $\bar{\neq}xi$  from Kung (N2); *//kadi* from Hie (C1); and *//kariba* from Naron (C2), Tsaukwe (C2a) and Hukwe (C2b). The toponym Kariba (as in Kariba Dam, on the border between South Africa and Mozambique, also the Klein Kariba holiday resort near Warmbaths in the Limpopo province), is said to be a reference to the scorpion, as the words *//kariba* from the Naron, Tsaukwe and Hukwe languages demonstrate (these languages all spoken mainly north-west of the Botswana and Caprivi regions). In addition to this, the cognate word *//kadi*, stemming from the Hie (C1) language, apparently also indicates the scorpion. The above reference to */kareda-b* as recorded by Rust (1960:57) for a type of *Solpuga* or sunspider, may, as argued, actually have been a reference to a type of scorpion too, apart from other recordings such as */hub* for 'scorpion'.

For other spiders in general, Bleek (1929:78) recorded from the Bushman languages */homiŋ-ti*; *-/ku* from /Xam (S1); other words for spiders recorded by Bleek (1956:12, 757) are: *tam≠ka* in Auen(N1); *//h<sup>^</sup>m*, *k<sup>2</sup>au kum* in Kung (N2); *!kxoŋ*, *auu*, in Hie (C1), which refers specifically to the tarantula or 'bobbejaanspinnekop', in Afrikaans. The last four may relate to, or be cognate with the above *houeb* of Claudius, and the  $\wedge$ -*hous* of Le Vaillant. Furthermore, *//kxobe* from the Hie (C1) language and */nūis* or */hūs* in Nama (Nienaber 1963:450, 464-465) apparently

refer to the scorpion-like spiders. An example of this is the *Solpuga-species* also known as sun spiders or ‘red romans’; in Afrikaans they are known i.a. as ‘baardskeerders spinnekoppe’.

A few toponyms are said to refer to these arachnids (SAGNC schedules 2008), among others, Sehokho in Mpumalanga, which is a village in the area of the Mbibane magisterial seat. The name is said to be a reference to “a place infested with many spiders”, and stems from Tswana. It may relate to the Bushman word //kxobe from Hie (C1). A Herero name, Okosondje in Namibia, recorded as former name of Omaruru, is said to mean “place of scorpions” (Raper *et al* 2014:390). This may have been an adaptation of this same Bushman word //kxobe in the component –kosondje, or possibly from the word !ne!ne for ‘scorpion’ from Auen (N1) (Bleek 1929:72), though seen in the light of the explanation of it, perhaps seen as the scorpion-like spider, the *Solpuga*.

A reference to a specific type of spider is found in the name Shidzavane in Limpopo. It is the name of a locality 15 km east-south-east of Punda Maria. The name, bestowed in 1950, is of Tsonga origin and means ‘baboon spider’, *Harpactirella* species, the component *shidzava* cognate with the Hadza (C3) *tshindzako*, ‘silvery spider’ (Raper *et al* 2014:459).

An interesting find, in a reference to the spider’s web, was the word *boobi* (Bleek 1956:770). This word *boobi* could have a possible link as found in the English expression or words ‘booby trap’. And, that this saying may be traced back to, or lie in the transferred legacy of South African English to the international *lingua franca*, as that snare that you become trapped in. If ever there sprang an image to mind, with this saying and the Bushman name, that it is that of a spider’s web, a ‘boobi trap’, what with all those silvery strings being woven from the spinnerette as prey trappings. If ever there was a ‘booby trap’, it is the spider’s web!

## 10.2 Insects: family Insecta

Insects such as ants, bees, flies, crickets, cockroaches, grasshoppers and locusts, were often depicted descriptively according to their appearance. For example, the ants were described as small, large, black or red ants, flying ants or termites, and so forth. Alternatively, for the ‘noisier’ types of insects, such as crickets and grasshoppers, they were indicated either by colouring or by voiced and voiceless sounds, repeated

fricatives, consonantal or other phonemic clusters and softer clicks, some combined with nasalisation and other tonal indicators.

### 10.2.1 *Ants*

Ants were indicated by many names in Bleek (1929:16; 1956:693); the ‘small ants’ for instance as *≠guwiraxa* from Khoikhoi, Bushman cognate for *!gu:!gu:* from Kung (N2), which were found to correlate with the components, or have acted as onymic formatives, in the place name Udigauga (see above for discussion under ‘antbear’). The names of flying ants were given as *si*, *simesime* in the place name, Simi, the ‘Ant River’, and *se* in Seahre or ‘antbear vlei’ or ‘place of the antbear’; and ‘antbear’ was recorded by Bleek (1929:16; 1956:693) as *si'ai* and *si k'ai* from /Auni (S4). Another cognate to the word *si* for a type of “poisonous black ant” is *fifi*, synonymous to *fizwa* from the Hie (C1) language (Bleek 1956:180).

It appears that names for the small black ants and winged black ants in some Bushman languages are indicated as *\_/kū* and */nwa/nwana*, e.g. in the Auen (N1), as *!no~!no* in Auen (N1), also as *≠nana* in /Nu//en (S6) as recorded by Bleek (1929:16; 1956:354, 693), apart from other references to ants. The first two Bushman names relate to the same insect name for the small black ant called *intuthane*, *intuthwane* in the Zulu language (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:15, 609). The component *ntu* is cognate with *≠nu:* in Naron (C2) and Khoikhoi; also to Auen (N1) *\_/kū* and, in composite forms, all indicating the colour ‘black’, thus with the generic for ‘ant’ *≠nana* as in /Nu//en (S6), literally forming a composite meaning ‘black ant’. The component *thwane* also closely resembles the word */ga-ne* where Khoikhoi */ga:*, Naron (C2) *-/kwa* and /Xam (S1) *-Ǿpwa* are all adjectival references to ‘small’, ‘little’, also as components of names (Bleek 1929: 54, 76); thus it relates to the concept of ‘small black ants’. Alternatively, the name *intuthwane* can be interpreted simply as ‘black ant’ from *\_/kū* + *≠kana* (variant *≠nana* as above) both from /Nu//en (S6). Thus the components *≠nu:* or variant *\_/kū*, and *≠kana*, *≠nana* or */nwa/nwana*, have been adapted on the phonological and orthographical level to the Zulu words *intuthane*, *intuthwane*. When applying the ‘sound-meaning’ method, it becomes clear that these forms are, in fact, cognate, both referring to the ‘black ant’, the ‘small black ant’. It is not suggested here that *≠nana*, or the *-ana* of *-/nwana*, is cognate to the generic indicator *-ane* that occurs in numerous other references to biological entities (as in this Zulu name), unless it is also used as diminutive in this case. It is,

however, maintained that the words *≠nu:* or */kū* and */nwa/nwana* for ‘black ant’ or ‘small black ant’ are cognate to the name components in *intuthwane*.

Insect names sounding exactly like the buzzing, whining and humming that they often emit incessantly, have been recorded by most early philologists. For example, the *˘zo* and *˘dzo* for bees and beetles, and by repetitive syllables as in *zwazwa*, *dzoā dzoā*, *dzwā dzwā* for flies; *gwāgwā* for the green wasp; a certain beetle called *!no!nonohe*. The softer sounding glide-type of fricatives *sh* or *f* as in the word *tʃi tʃi* and others that were used as names to indicate the common cricket; and the name *tʃim* or *chim* for a type of locust, some of their names clearly indicated as imitation of the stridulations, the rasping action of legs and wings against the insects’ bodies. The Bushmen as hunter-gatherers, also of edible insects, and as namers, keenly observed and imitated all these smaller animals, birds and insects alike.

### 10.2.2 Bees

Bees were indicated by names with expressive fricative sounds in repeated syllables, as in: *˘zo ˘dzo*, *!gōū !gōū*, and *kwatən kwatən* which indicated the large kind (Bleek 1929:21), where the reduplication with nasalisation gives a good imitation of its buzzing sound. It may, however, also indicate the plural form, i.e. ‘many’ (as in a swarm).

### 10.2.3 Beetle

A certain type of beetle that “buzzes and flies over the water” is called *!no!nonohe* by the Kung (N2) speakers. This name was initially recorded by Lucy Lloyd and included in Bleek’s *Dictionary* (1956:482). The general term normally used for a beetle in the Kung (N2) language is *!no:* (Bleek 1956:479). The reduplication of the syllables in the name of this specific type of beetle that hovers over the water, clearly illustrates the onomatopoeic naming motive here as well.

### 10.2.4 Cockroach

The cockroach is named *!kukən !kukənɣutara* in /Xam (S1) (Bleek 1956:451, 705), which may also be seen as an onomatopoeic emulation of its whisking whiskers or whirring wings when flying. The form *//ko//korosi* was also documented from /Xam (S1) and *//N!ke* (S2), but this clearly seems to be a loan word, initially perhaps from the Dutch or English. In another lemma, this *//ko//korosi* was indicated simply as



a type of ‘beetle’ (Bleek 1956:696), but it definitely sounds more like the Afrikaans name ‘*kokkerot*’, or English ‘cockroach’, and may have been mistaken for a beetle-like animal. It is, however, actually a reference to the cockroach. The *Anthia thoracica* is a beetle indicated by Bleek (1956:590) as this //ko//korosi, and she indicates another as //gô the *Anthia manticora*. The borrowing could thus have gone either from Bushman to the Afrikaans or Dutch, or *vice versa*. The /Xam speakers belonging to the Southern group soon acquired many Dutch words and phrases, and later, in fact, became fluent speakers of early Afrikaans (Van Vuuren 2016:iv, 2-3, 39).

### 10.2.5 Flies

With the indigenous names for flies and blow-flies, the repetitive syllables imitating the nature of the sounds of their buzzing, became an obvious sound-associative naming pattern. Names recorded for these insects are i.a. *zwazwa* from the Auen (N1) language, *dzoã dzoã* from Kung (N2), *dzwã dzwã* from !O!kun (N3) as documented in Bleek (1929:39). Note the nasalisation in the last two cases, demonstrating a definite onomatopoeic rendering of its vocalisation. (Compare also the descriptive Afrikaans name, ‘*brommers*’, as indicative of the sounds they emit).

Afrikaans place names that recall these insects in translated form (Raper *et al* 2014:531) are i.a. Vlieëholteberg in the Northern Cape, that refers to a mountain some 17 km north-west of Steinkopf and 50 km east-south-east of Lekkersing. It actually means ‘flies hollow mountain’ or ‘hollow of flies mountain.’ Another example, also in translated form, is Vlieëpoortberg. This refers to a mountain situated in the Limpopo province, west-south-west of Thabazimbi between Witfonteinrant and Berg van Winde, which has the meaning ‘mountain of the flies pass’, or ‘flies pass mountain.’

### 10.2.6 Crickets

Some names for the crickets (*Grillus capensis*) clearly simulate sound imitations and seem to have been frequently formed by using consonants *k* and *t* in phonemic clusters together with other consonants, fricatives, and so on, and often the high front vowel *i*; others with softer sounding fricative gliders or spirants like *sh* or *ʃ*. In the names allocated to the common cricket (*Grillus capensis*), a name from the /Xam (S1) language was recorded by Lucy Lloyd and documented in Bleek (1956:667) as ≠kwiri-ti-tiken both in the singular and plural form. This designation unmistakably

demonstrates the imitating of the “sound produced by the stridulation action” of the crickets (Schoeman 1990:150). In the acoustically appropriate allocation of the vowels, the repeated high front *i*-vowel indicative of the high pitch, with the rasping of the stridulations represented in the consonantal fricatives *kwi-* *-ri-* *-ti-* *-ti-* and *-ke-* in the phonemic structure of this onomatopoeic example of a name. It is even more pronounced than the other name, orthographically demonstrated in the structure as *tfī tfī*, that was mentioned earlier. Once again, it is a name where the imitation of the rasping action of its legs and wings against the insect’s body was acoustically achieved. This is perhaps the most indicative onomatopoeic example of the Bushman speakers demonstrating their close observance and emulation prowess at imitating the animal life around them.

### 10.2.7 Grasshoppers and Locusts

The Bushmen have many words for the locusts and grasshoppers since these insects were an important and nourishing food source for them in times of drought or scarcity of game. Bleek (1956:230) recorded for ‘locust’ i.a. *!hau*, *!kau!kau*, *!xa:ratən*, all from /Xam (S1); *!hau*, *!gwi* (note the Zulu *i(li)diye*), and *//kwa//kwa* from the Auen (N1) language; and *//kāxu* from /Nu//en (S6). An equivalent Zulu name to these last two example of Bushman names, may possibly be found in the adapted form *i(li)ghwaqi* (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:271). From the Hie (C1) language Bleek (1956:230) documented the words *tfim* synonymous with *chim*; and the words *dzim* from Hie (C1); *!kumba* from the Naron (C2), and */gumta* and */ē/ēfa* from the Tsaukwe (C2a) and Hukwe (C2b) languages (Bleek 1929:55). In this last example the component with dental click / and nasalised *ē*, in the form */ē/ēfa* appears to be cognate with or strongly correlates with the Zulu word *intethe* as recorded by Doke & Vilakazi (2005:203).



Figure 10.2.7 Grasshopper’s view [Daniel Otte]

Toponyms recalling these insects from the order of Orthoptera are amongst others Tjiane in the Limpopo province. This is the name of a post office 75 km south-east of Polokwane in the Thabamooopo district, said to be derived from Northern Sotho and to refer to ‘a small locust.’ The place apparently has many locusts, especially in the dry season. The component *tji* is thought to be cognate with the Hie (C1) *džim*, ‘locust’ (Raper *et al* 2014:498), but has also been recorded as *tfim* or *chim* as indicated above. Yet other place names referring to a certain ‘locust’ type are Mkhonyo and Qonga in the Eastern Cape; the first is a tributary of the Ngxeke River, which it joins 23 km east-south-east of Engcobo. The name is “derived from Xhosa *umkhonyo*, ‘bladder-locust’, or *pneomora*, which makes a loud, repeated call on warm summer nights”. The component *khonyo* is cognate with the //Kxau (S2b) *kon !oes* or *kon !ko:e:s*, ‘locust’. The second name, Qonya, is that of a locality 27 km east-south-east of Engcobo. The name is also explained as deriving from Xhosa, the spelling of the word in this instance given as *iqonya*, but referring to the same type of “iridescent beetle that lives in thorn-trees, the bladder-locust” (Raper *et al* 2013:328, 425).

The Afrikaans toponym Sprinkaankolk, for a watering place and depression situated in the Northern Cape in the magisterial district of Calvinia, and Sprinkaanvlakte in the Northwest Province, recall in either translated form in Afrikaans, or as originally coined Afrikaans names from ‘*sprinkaan*’, a reference to these insects (the locust type, family Acrididae) that occur there in abundance during the dry seasons. These were often gathered as a solid protein supplement especially in the ‘*voetganger*’ (‘pedestrian’) metamorphosing stage of the locust’s development to adulthood.

### 10.2.8 Wasps

The Bushman onomatopoeic names or words for wasps, e.g. *!gāū!gāūa* and *gwāgwā* for the green wasp (Bleek 1929:90), have been found in the Herero name Omangongua. This name, of farm no. 38 in the Okahandja district, refers to ‘wasps’, in Afrikaans ‘*perdebye*’ (Albertyn 1984:66). The component *Oma* is “the Herero locative prefix or class marker; the component *ngongua* is cognate with the Kung (N2) word *!gāū!gāūa* ‘wasp’ (Bleek 1929:90) and the Naron (C2) word *gwāgwā* for the ‘green wasp’ (Bleek 1956:52). The nasalisation indicated by the tilde in the Bushman words is reflected in the nasal consonant *n* in the Herero name” (Raper & Möller 2015:404).

A variant form of this wasp's name is found in the Herero area name Oromangongwa near Sesfontein, explained here, though, as referring to the hornet, 'rooby' in Afrikaans (S-G SWA, n.d. aerial photo no. 2/17, mapping sheet 1913 BA 'Sesfontein'). This name seems to be derived from the same root words above, especially with the retention of the *-ngwa* component as in the *gwāgwā* variant with the nasalisation retained from Bushman. This name illustrates, once again, an onomatopoeic emulation of the wasp's buzzing.

# FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

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## Findings

The socio-physical and language contact, and with it, the cultural exchange between the Late Stone Age hunter-gatherers, the Bushmen (San) with the Damara, Khoikhoi, the Herero and Mbanderu, the Ovambo and other Bantu speakers, occurred for many hundreds if not thousands of years. Seen within this time frame, the linguistic and toponymic processes of semantic and category shifts, i.e. from appellative to toponymic formative elements, with adoption and adaptation of common nouns referring to mammals, birds, reptiles and insects, and allocating them to toponyms, must have gone back just as far, possibly from the Early to Late Stone Age, or even earlier. In addition to this, came the shifts of place names into other languages, thereby describing in shared speech utterances the features and other items in their surroundings. This, perhaps, already occurred in times of overlap as new archaeological finds may prove more and more, especially with the recent discoveries of the *Australopethicus A. sediba* and the *Homo naledi*-fossils (around Sterkfontein). Along with this, the associated hominid and homo sapiens cultural and traditional activities were demonstrated (Schreeve 2015:38, 39, 43-54), also of *Homo symbolicus* (Blombos Cave, Van Vuuren 2016: v). The Later Stone Age speakers, the Bushmen and early Khoikhoi, had already identified the animals and had often named the land forms and topographical features of their surroundings and places of habitation after these animals, and the acculturation process of sharing and exchanging of concepts and words. This, especially with the Khoikhoi and incoming Bantu speakers, continued to recent times (Traill 1978, 1996; Boden 2011:49-50).

Another example of these deeply embedded social and survival strategies for instance, is found in the *hlonipa* practice that has been recorded from numerous Bushman words, names, customs and practices, thereby including the knowledge of the named objects and the names they used for them. This practice does not only refer to them, but is used especially when observing certain 'avoidance' actions and customs (see Bleek 1956 under the references to familial relations, ethnic and personal relations; the hunting rituals, paying respect even to their prey; the

names for the lion, porcupine, jackal, praying mantis and many other animals). This must have continued through all the periods of invasion, occupation and subjugation by incoming peoples, right into the colonial period, with its heightened tempo of acculturation, translation of concepts, names, ethnonyms and toponyms taken down in written forms, documented and preserved for future generations. This would continue in the present time with its many name changes, a return to and reaffirmation of the former, or often old retraced versions of place names implemented again as newly allocated place names.

Even in this scenario, it still remains uncertain which of the phonologically, morphologically and structurally adapted common names, and in most cases toponyms of the type coined from sound-associative elements or onomatopoeic common names as discussed above, can strictly be called either *only* descriptive, onomatopoeic or metaphoric toponyms, and originating only in Bushman or Khoikhoi. Some clearly may, other cases remain unclear, or are merely descriptive in nature. This is because it cannot in all cases be ascertained with certainty which of the elements or components in a name were articulated similarly to the acoustical experience of the animals' vocalisations, or which were functional sound reproductions, i.e. to lure or appease an animal. Or, whether they were originally only descriptions, or seen as a metaphorically associated picture of some distinctive habit or behaviour of the specific animal.

Another factor complicating the analysis, was that it remains difficult, in most cases, to ascertain which of the components in a toponym came from the donor, and which from the receiver languages, especially as the names have, of late, been corrected to the new orthographic conventions of some African languages.

Nevertheless, in some of these cases of descriptive, onomatopoeic and metaphoric toponyms, where elements or components of animal vocalisations and behavioural patterns were imitated, i.a. occurred as a reproduced or imitated sound, it may be assumed that the precise articulation and emulated acoustics played a significant role in the onymic formation or coining of the name. Many common names and toponyms were of course purely descriptive, or were formed by metaphoric associations. What may also be assumed, is that many of these toponyms were adopted from the Bushmen and Khoikhoi as 'first namers', from their numerous different languages into the first incoming Bantu languages. It may further be assumed that they were taken over or translated as references to the same places already designated by the earliest, pre-literate 'first speakers'.

The above names reflect the diversity of the speakers and their languages that often had an influence on adopted words and names, but also on the place names as used by local people speaking various languages. Many place names are of course more compounded and complex in their phonological and morphological structuring, and therefore more difficult to interpret. Often such cases of indigenous toponyms can only be explained by tracing back the Bushman cognate words or common names for animals. Often, this was only by way of deciphering the possible adaptations that it underwent, or looking at its embedded components, or relics of sound emulations or descriptive elements, to recognise similar loan words, or the more obvious translation processes where the translated name provides the meaning or at least a partial semantic interpretation as in the case of hybrids and tautological names. Of these, as was demonstrated, there are many examples containing names of mammals, birds, reptiles and insects, as well as adapted and translated phrases and expressions that have become part of the colloquial usage in other languages ('*eiegoed*' as coined in Afrikaans).

Many other examples of Afrikaans folk-etymological adoptives were found during the research on onomatopoeic, descriptive and metaphoric animal names in Bushman and Khoikhoi languages. These indicated the same interlinguistic and cross-cultural exchange through adoptive word formations, possibly from the sound-associative Bushman names as discussed above. Examples of this are *bokmakierie*; the *gompou*, *kor-* or *knorhane*; *graatjie* for a certain species of meerkat, *geitjie* for a type of agama, but also as reference to a certain type of feisty woman; *gogga* for any type of critter or insect, *taa* for any 'wild, dangerous animal', and many more.

Similar related words and expressions were found in general designations to animals and people, assimilated in some cases into the other African languages from or into Bushman via language contact situations. For instance, an appellative or common noun adaptation (transferred from a lexemic class and with adapted and semantic shift) from Bushman to some of the Bantu languages, occurred in the sound-associative adaptation of the word for 'wild animal'. It may be explained as follows: in the Auen (N1) language the reference to 'any wild animal' is *≠ni-!koma*, in Naron (C2) it was initially recorded as */ni//kwana* (Bleek 1929:92), for Hie (C1) as *≠kam/ge*. In Kung (N2) it was recorded as *≠ne !komma*, *≠ne !kome*, plural *≠ni !komma-me* (Bleek 1956:672, 771). This appears to be similar with or to approximate a Zulu word that has the exact same meaning: 'a wild animal'. In the Zulu language this translates into *isilwane* as recorded in Doke and Vilakazi (2005:14). The sound shift

possibly occurred from a Bushman dental /*ni*, also the alveolar fricative click with nasalisation *≠ni*, that became, in Zulu, the unvoiced sibilant or alveolar fricative *s* in the first component of the word *isilwane* after the class marker *i-* as *si*. This is also apparent with the //k or !kw, the phonemic cluster of an initially indicated lateral click, that was adapted to the cerebral !; the //kw or !kw or ≠ka translating into a voiced lateral glider *lw* in the Zulu cognate word. Thus /*ni*//*kwana*, possibly also *≠nilkomma-me*, or alternatively *≠kam /ge*, became *isilwane*, both as concept of ‘any (wild) animal(s), or ‘stranger’ as may emerge below. In Zulu, this ‘wild life’ is expressed as “*izilwane zasendle*” (Doke & Vilakazi 2005:561). The word recorded in Naron (C2) as /*ni* //kwā indicated as meaning ‘stranger’, was “a word used for all non-Bushman races” (Bleek 1956:348), thus anyone not a ‘Bushmen’; and this may link it to the Zulu expression as well.

In Bushman a further designation for a *wild animal* that is “wild and that lives beyond the light”, is *≠naε*. Bleek (1956:669) gives a description in example sentences as to a reference that may include any animal as to its occurrence in the “dark and wild outside”. It was documented from the Kung (N2) and refers in this language to ‘wild’ dogs, anything that does not belong in the house (documented originally by Lucy Lloyd in 1870-1882, quoted in Bleek 1956:669). This also refers to its appearance as ‘not domesticated’, but truly wild, belonging “outside in the darkness”. A verb for ‘dark’ or ‘darken’ in the Bushman /Nu//en (S6) language is /*nwoi*. Another noun for ‘dark’ or ‘night’ is *≠nu:*, and ‘in the dark’ would be *≠nu:ka* recorded from the Naron (C2) language (Bleek 1929:32). The shortened common noun for ‘dark’ is *≠nu:* (Bleek 1929:32), and the colour ‘black’ is given as *!nu:* and *≠nu* (Bleek 1929:22). Both signify this concept of ‘dark’, or ‘darkness’ as well, applied in several designations for wild animals, either in their names, or when described as the ‘black’ or the ‘darker’ of a species. For example, as for the brown hyena *≠nube*, because of its darker flanks; the male ostrich described with its coat of black feathers; the black eagle as *≠nūe*; some names for black snakes and the black wildebeest as *!nu:*, perhaps even as *gnu*. This form with *!nu:*, *gnu* is opposed to *gnou* for ‘blue’ in the possibly intentional descriptive distinction of these animals’ names. However, note the click variation, the differences perhaps in this descriptive name, closer to a semantic shift from an original onomatopoeic name to the sound association shifted from or to the appellative descriptor, or *vice versa*.

Place names indicating onomatopoeic and metaphoric connotations and folk-etymology, or merely descriptive elements within the multi-language contact



situation, led to several examples of toponyms operating within the diversity of interrelated and interchangeable concepts and designations. This provided a substantial set of recorded words and common names for animals from various languages and cultures.

The postulation that the earliest place names given by the Late Stone Age Bushmen, as hunter-gatherers, could be verified from the records of words and common names, also from the documented explanatory phrases and sentences as provided by the early philologists, has been confirmed by this investigation.

The reference here to Stone Age Bushmen toponyms, and those place names given later by the Damara, the Khoikhoi, and by the Hereros as the cattle herdsman of these earliest times; illustrated that these place names contained onomatopoeic, sound-associative or phonologically related components as traced back, as well as the many descriptive, and some metaphoric associations, could also be verified in the same manner.

Usage of descriptive and onomatopoeic elements in place names were found to occur when the reference was important enough to include this sound imitation in the name. For example, that animals were found in abundance (or not) in an area, and could be identified as such very specifically; or kept in the vicinity of certain land forms; at the rivers, marshes, pools, vleis and depressions, in desert regions, sandveld or bushveld and savanna, often added to the motive for naming them. The animals could be recognised by their appearances, but also by their vocalisations. Examples of this include the barking of the baboons or kwagga; the snorting of antelope, such as the kudu, the neighing sounds of the zebras, kwagga and wild horses; the roaring of lions, growling of leopards or cheetahs; the hissing of snakes and crocodiles; stridulations of crickets and grasshoppers, the birds singing.

These descriptive words, metaphoric insights and sound imitations probably display the earliest word formations and were used initially as appellatives to refer to conditions of the natural world, the soil, sand, stony or marshy areas, geographical features, fauna and flora, edible or poisonous plants. Often the names are descriptive of their appearances as well, dark or light; the lay of the land or topography, the regional botanical abundance and animals to be found there.

This onymic activity or naming practice soon became a standard convention, and the words in either adapted or translated forms became interchangeable and were

eventually used on a much wider basis because of language contact. In this way common reference and usage, was thus equally well understood by most speakers in an area. These shared references and the process of acculturation and assimilation happened within or by language contact with the incoming peoples from the central African plains and Great Lakes areas. This includes, for instance, the Bantu-speaking peoples like the Swahili, the Nguni and Herero-speakers, the Karanga, Lobedu, Ndebele, Sotho, Tswana, Venda and Tsonga, the Yei and many more.

Later some names were translated and transferred into Afrikaans and English, and quite a few were accepted into the scientific taxonomy of mammals and bird species. They were often transferred into the international usage as well, and had in this way, become accessible to more than one language group in southern Africa, Africa to the north and the rest of the world.

The relevance of the study may point to the results found of collectively conventionalised onomatopoeic formations, descriptive elements and metaphoric concepts or insights, that may dispute the total arbitrariness of word and name creations and coinings. Thereby it may contribute to the aim of onomastic and toponymic research, even language studies. In other words, verifying the original meaning and referential function of onymic formatives, and the development of naming motives and patterns, i.e. the development of a widely shared whole toponymicon.

The research revealed that descriptive and onomatopoeic toponyms are evidence, not only of cultural and linguistic contact situations, the distribution of the various language speakers, of their social and cultural activities, but also their clan and totem associations with these animals. In addition to this would be their lifestyle or living conditions, organised hunting and gathering customs, and their eventual assimilation with other peoples of the region (Möller 2014:107, 135-137).

In the complex diversity of languages in the sub-continent of southern Africa, naming patterns and motives emerged that could be retraced, transferring a cultural legacy of place names in which toponyms become indicators, often metaphors and descriptors of the land, its people and their history, its fauna and flora. As such, the names may be treated as valuable shared heritage icons.

## Conclusion

With this study, something of the originality of the early namers, the Stone Age hunter-gatherers was discovered, and hopefully, it captured their keen observation and their prowess at imitating mammals, reptiles, insects and birds, and how they expressed it in the names they bestowed on them. This led to the development of a rich vocabulary of animal names, and from these, the earliest allocated toponyms in southern Africa that could be reevaluated according to their actual meanings and significance.

During this research, some evolutionary onymic and toponymic formative processes were revealed that had contributed to a shared heritage of both common names for the animals, and a unique toponymicon evolving from them. This illustrated the original naming motives and patterns of the early Bushmen, Khoikhoi and Bantu peoples.

The diversity of languages and cultures that came into contact in the region further contributed to this. Many examples of the Bushman onomatopoeic and metaphoric common names for animals, birds and reptiles, were used interlinguistically, often adopted with adaptations. Some were translated, hybridised and transferred into other African languages, into Afrikaans, German and English.

Furthermore, some of the original Bushman designations for animals were retained in the zoological taxonomy for certain sub-species. These, and the toponyms derived from them, reflect the sub-continent's former variety of wild animals that once roamed the region, but also point to those already extinct, or those on the brink of extinction.

The findings on Bushman onomatopoeic, descriptive and metaphoric formatives once again highlight the fact that toponyms are indicators, not only of the earlier distribution of wild animals and the namers who had a vast knowledge of this fauna, but also of their dependence on, close contact with and reverence for these animals. It may have shown something of 'man-as-namer', of the socio-physical and cultural life-styles of these namers. For example, their customs, hunting skills and such activities as the mimicking of these animals; the wide distribution of the various Bushman language speakers, and their eventual assimilation with other peoples entering the region.

Reflecting on the intercultural and interlinguistic diversity of languages, and the naming actions, wherein the exchange and transfer of onymic stock took place, the toponyms became not only referential designators, but descriptors of the land, its people and their history, thereby illustrating the toponymic creativity of these ‘first namers’.

Since it constitutes a valuable cultural legacy and research opportunity for future generations of name scholars, the namers and their names, especially the toponyms, should continue to be analysed. The reason for this would be not only to revere the speakers, but their languages and names as valuable socio-cultural, historical and economic assets. Such research may contribute to economic development and tourism, along with efforts of wildlife conservation, especially for those who have no voice in the matter, so to speak, and for the animals themselves.

As a young student or scholar is put ‘on the spoor’ of research into names that may have to be retraced and reconstructed from many sources, it then actually becomes a tangible and instrumental cultural asset to others as well. By enabling a younger generation of onomasticians and linguists to continue this type of paleo-toponymic research, the speakers of these languages may be recognised and acknowledged as ‘first namers’. This enabling would be done by focusing on the oldest versions of words, onymic formatives, names and toponymic designations that may be found in ancient, almost forgotten languages of the region.

If the names they allocated are not reasserted or given recognition, these too may be lost. Likewise, some of the animals that were named in toponyms because of their distinctive behaviour and their ‘voices’, may sooner than later, only be found in peoples’ pictograms or dioramas, in documentaries and in scientific works still using their name ‘labels’, or the names they once had.

This research effort may, hopefully, also support the idea of conservation on all levels, that the animals, as with their namers, should be acknowledged and protected, since they are, just as we are, of the same breath.

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# ENDNOTES

1. The term Bushman, Bushmen *vide* San: Bushman is used throughout to refer to the language. Regarding the use of the terms *Bushmen* for the speakers of this language and, as referred to more often as the *San* people, Raper (2012:4-6) elaborated on this sensitive issue indicating that: “The different tribes and clans started using the name Bushmen. But political correctness proclaimed this an insult and declared they should be referred to as San. Where Bushmen merely means they are ‘people of the bush’ (or close to nature), San was a Khoi word meaning ‘vagrants, people who have nothing’. And because of this misguided correctness we now use the more derogatory name for our first inhabitants’ (<http://www.southafric.com/forums/open-board/5901-whats-name.html>)”. Raper and Möller (2015:405), after having consulted various sources on the Internet, including those of the South African San Council, also concluded: “It would thus seem that, at one stage, Bushman was regarded as a derogatory name and the term San was preferred, but that recently Bushman has become acceptable again, and although the term Bushman is still regarded by some as offensive or derogatory, San is considered more so.” See also Van Vuuren (2016:155) quoting Gordon and Scholte *The Bushman Myth* (2000:4-8, 177), for a discussion on the rehabilitation of the term *Bushman*. The spelling Khoi-San (Khoe-San) is preferred to Khoisan in order to give equal acknowledgement to both language groups where this term is used as a convenient term of ‘general’ reference (see <http://san.org.za/history.php./SASI/> Written in the Sand: A history of San peoples of South Africa).
2. The references to ‘southern Africa’ are to be read as referring to the geographical region or area of the sub-continent of Africa, seen as the southern tip of the African continent. In other words, as a geographical region south of the equator, comprising regions or states. Examples of these are Angola, Botswana (former Bechuanaland), Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania (former Tanganyika), Zimbabwe and Zambia. It does not, as such, refer to the conglomerate of independent states in the area, unless one is specifically mentioned in particular, for example, South Africa.
3. A classification of Khoikhoi and Bushman languages in “Khoisan (Khoesaaan) languages in Africa” with a map, is available at the website: [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Khoisan\\_languages&oldid=717392325](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Khoisan_languages&oldid=717392325) (Retrieved September and November 2016). It reads: “Khoisan was proposed as one of the four families

of African languages in Greenberg's classification (1949–1954, 1955 revised in 1963). However, linguists who study Khoisan languages reject their unity, and the name "Khoisan" is used by them as a term of convenience without any implication of linguistic validity," ... "It has been suggested that the similarities of the Tuu and Kx'a families are due to a southern African Sprachbund rather than a genealogical relationship, whereas the Khoe (or perhaps Kwadi–Khoe) family is a more recent migrant to the area, and may be related to Sandawe in East Africa." ... "E.O.J. Westphal is known for his early rejection of the Khoisan language family (Starostin 2003). Bonny Sands (1998) concluded that the family is not demonstrable with current evidence. Anthony Traill at first accepted Khoisan (Traill 1986), but by 1998 concluded that it could not be demonstrated with current data and methods, rejecting it as based on a single typological criterion: the presence of clicks. Dimmendaal (2008) summarised the general view with, "It has to be concluded that Greenberg's intuitions on the genetic unity of Khoisan could not be confirmed by subsequent research. Today, the few scholars working on these languages treat the three [southern groups] as independent language families that cannot or can no longer be shown to be genetically related (p. 841). Starostin (2013) accepts a relationship between Sandawe and Khoi is plausible, as is one between Tuu and Kx'a, but sees no indication of a relationship between these two groups or with Hadza."

A schematic classification follows indicating both extinct and extant languages:

**Khoe:** Khoe languages

*The Khoe family is both the most numerous and diverse family of Khoisan languages, with seven living languages and over a quarter million speakers. Although little Kwadi data is available, proto-Kwadi–Khoe reconstructions have been made for pronouns and some basic vocabulary.*

**Kwadi–Khoe**

**Kwadi** (extinct)

**Khoe**

**Khoekhoe** This branch appears to have been affected by the Kx'a–Tuu *Sprachbund*.

**Nama** (ethnonyms Khoekhoen, Nama, Damara) (a dialect cluster including †Aakhoe and Haillom)

**Eini** (extinct)

**South** Khoekhoe

**Korana** (moribund)

**Xiri** (moribund; a dialect cluster)

**Tshu–Khwe** (or *Kalahari*) Many of these languages have undergone partial click loss.

**East** Tshu–Khwe (East Kalahari)

**Shua** (a dialect cluster including Deti, Ts'ixa, !Xaise, and Ganádi)

**Tsoa** (a dialect cluster including Cire Cire and Kua)

**West** Tshu–Khwe (West Kalahari)

**Kxoe** (a dialect cluster including †Ani and Buga)

**Naro** (a dialect cluster, including †Haba)

**Gllana–Glwi** (a dialect cluster including Gllana and Glwi)

*A Haillom language is listed in most Khoisan references. A century ago the Hai//om people spoke a Ju dialect, probably close to !Kung, but they now speak a divergent dialect of Nama. Thus their language is variously said to be extinct or to have 18,000 speakers, to be Ju or to be Khoe (their numbers have been included under Nama above). They are known as the Saa by the Nama, and this is the source of the word San.*

**Tuu:** Tuu languages

*The Tuu family consists of two language clusters, which are related to each other at about the distance of Khoekhoe and Tshukhwe within Khoe. They are typologically very similar to the Kx'a languages (below), but have not been demonstrated to be related to them genealogically (the similarities may be an areal feature).*

**Taa:** !Xoon (4200 speakers. A dialect cluster.)

**Lower Nossob** (Two dialects, l'Auni and l'Haasi. Extinct)

**!Kwi**

**Nllng** (A dialect cluster. Moribund)

**!Xam** (A dialect cluster. Extinct)

**‡Ungkue** (A dialect cluster. Extinct)

**llXegwi** (Extinct)

**Kx'a:** Kx'a languages

**The** Kx'a family is a relatively distant relationship formally proposed in 2010.

**Kx'a**

**‡'Amkoe** (200 speakers, Botswana. Moribund. A dialect cluster of N!aqriaxe, (Eastern) ‡Hoan, and Sasi)

**!Kung** (also !Xun or *Ju*, formerly *Northern Khoisan*) is a dialect cluster. (~45,000 speakers.) Jul'hoan is the best-known dialect.

*A map illustrating the occurrence and distribution of i.a. the Khoisan (Khoesaan) languages in Africa is available from the same website.*

4. Khoi-San is used as collective term to refer to the Khoikoi and Bushman (San) languages (see also Note 3 and par. 1.1.2 for modern classifications of these language families as retrieved from the Internet websites as listed). The Khoikhoi languages are indicated in the present book as referred to and used by authors as listed below and in the sources of the Bibliography, i.a. as Nama, Koranna, Griqua and Old Cape Khoikhoi dialects; Bleek's *A Bushman Dictionary* contains words from some 29 Bushman languages and dialects which she listed (Bleek 1956:iii-iv), indicating the extended range of smaller groups of dialects from her previous 1929 *Vocabulary*. In tracing Khoi-San cognates or equivalents for place name components in other African languages, Khoikhoi words are sometimes phonologically and semantically closer to the other African language components, sometimes the Bushman cognates are closer. For this reason Nama and Old Cape Khoikhoi cognates are included in this study where necessary. The modern orthographies of Nama and Khoekhoegowab of today, as defined and established by various writers, for example, by WHG Haacke and E Eiseb (2002), falls beyond the range of this investigation of animal names



in toponyms. Some comparisons have been drawn in though for this specific study, as for place names derived from animal names as discussed and written in G Boden (2011); Weich (2004), and on Internet websites.

5. Various debates on the ‘origin of language’ and the words within related or unrelated languages, and the emergence of various language families in Africa have been ongoing for many years (Heinrich Lichtenstein 1808, WHI Bleek 1869; Werner 1925: 12-14, Engelbrecht in Bleek 1956:i-iv, *Introduction*; Roman Stopa 1970, 1972, and many more (cf. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origin\\_of\\_language/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origin_of_language/)), and no agreement or universally accepted solution to the problem has as yet been reached. A recent study by QD Atkinson (2003-2011) on the distribution of phonemes in languages, led him to propose a new approach to the hypothesis on the origin and spread of languages as linked to the occurrence of phonemes in languages and the mitochondrial DNA studies that indicated humankind to have originated in south-eastern Africa, and, with it, the emergence of language. A map is featured in the journal *Science* (reviewed by Nicholas Wade in *The New York Times*, 2011), where a version of Atkinson’s article appeared and illustrates his hypothesis. Many linguists, though, are sceptical about this new approach involving the mathematical calculations and deductions made from these. Wade continues: “Dr. Atkinson’s finding fits with other evidence about the origins of language. The Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert belong to one of the earliest branches of the genetic tree based on human mitochondrial DNA. Their languages belong to a family known as Khoisan and include many click sounds, which seem to be a very ancient feature of language. And they live in southern Africa, which Dr. Atkinson’s calculations point to as the origin of language. But whether Khoisan is closest to some ancestral form of language ‘is not something my method can speak to,’ Dr. Atkinson said.”

(A version of this article appeared on April 15, 2011, on page A1 of *The New York Times* edition with the headline: ‘Phonetic Clues Hint Language Is Africa-Born’).

In another take on this question of language origins, local authors have pointed to the Bushmen (San) development of language from various sources. However, they have always emphasised the interrelated customs, rituals and beliefs around their interdependence on nature and animals, and how their expressiveness in language demonstrated complex thought and imagery, and was often unsurpassed. In quoting several sources Van Vuuren (2016:32-33) gives some clues on this subject: “On the question of when language evolved, it is clear that rituals (such as the communal initiatory dance) use non-verbal language

(gestures, the dance, tone and rhythm in music) to communicate”. When put in context, this view supports the main theme of the book, and underlines a comparison to what Werner (1925:9-10) in a somewhat dated expression, said along these lines about the grammaticality of these primitive languages: “The most barbarous language is, in its degree, an instrument of human thought, and as such, worthy of a careful and reverent scrutiny”... “we must not suppose that a ‘barbarous’ language,...is devoid of organic structure or grammatical rules. On the contrary, no language has yet been discovered which is without grammatical rules, and in many cases these rules are extremely complicated... we find that it [the language] proceeds according to certain fixed principles”. Of course many other writers on the most ‘primitive’ languages (as these were sometimes depicted in the earlier writings) such as Bushman and Hottentots or Khoikhoi, have concluded the same on the origin and complexity of the languages under discussion.

6. The differences in pronunciation of words especially the click sounds, and the variations in spelling of words from the Bushman languages as seen in recorded examples, are discussed in numerous works on Bushman, i.a. in Bleek (1929; 1956), Traill (1978; 1996), Weich (2004), Raper (2012-2014), the website and authors mentioned under Footnote 3 above, and many more. Bleek’s own expansion of the different language groups and their speakers, and changes and adjustments from the 1929 *Comparative Vocabularies of Bushman languages* to the 1956 *A Bushman Dictionary*, reflect these changes even to the ethnonymic references or names of language groups. Some examples of these are //k”au-//en to Auen, !ku, !kun to Kung, the /Nu//en and dialect /Nusan; the Khatia and ki /hazi; the //aikwe or Naron (also written //nharo or Naro by later authors) as distinguished from the Tsaukwe and Hukwe dialects of the Central Groups, and so forth, and each in their specific region. This already indicates the complexities of the finer differentiations between the languages and dialects, as well as the socio-physical and cultural intermingling, the interlinguistic relations transpiring in eventual inter- and trans-language borrowings or adoptions and adaptations (Bleek 1929:1-6; 1956: *Introduction* [i-vi]; Van Vuuren 2016).
7. For instance, the fieldwork and studies on Bushman, such as those conducted by Wilhelm and Dorothea Bleek as well as Lucy Lloyd, their lists and collections; on the Nama by Kroenlein (1861; 1889), Khoikhoi and Herero by Fr. Rust (1960; 1969); Klaus Binding with Timotheus Tjihapiu (1980-1984); Nienaber & Raper (1977-1980); Albertyn (1984); German toponyms, mainly translations, deriving

from Khoi-San and Herero origins in Namibia by Möller (1986); from studies into Zulu toponyms by Botha (1977); and into Bushman origins of toponyms and linguistic influences on other languages and their names by Raper (1972; 2012; 2014), Boden (2011); Raper, Möller and Du Plessis (2014), Raper and Möller (2015).

8. The role and function of pictograms, rock paintings, engravings and etchings on stones and other materials, functional, significant and artistic in their own right, are not included in this discussion. There is no other record of there existing any written forms of the languages spoken by the earliest inhabitants of southern Africa, except for the Bushman and early Cape Khoikhoi languages. Other exceptions include the reference to these pictographic communication forms, or the earliest attempts at graphic messaging; indicated by stone etchings, drawn lines and other stylised forms of graphic representation as discussed in Gelb (1965:11-13, 27); the earliest versions nowadays linked to Bushmen myths, rock art, ornamentations and so forth, and coined as 'Homo symbolicus' artefacts (from sources as quoted in Deacon and Deacon 1999, and in Van Vuuren 2016:2, 23, 204, 208, 210). Other references to and discussions of these graphic art-forms by Dorothea Bleek (Engelbrecht 1956: Introduction) in her series of articles "*Introductions and Notes to the Rockpaintings in South Africa* (London 1930), idem, illustrated the same concept. These articles also include "A survey of our present knowledge of rock paintings in South Africa" (*South African Journal of Science*, 1936), idem. and "*Notes to more rockpaintings in South Africa* (London 1940)".

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# GLOSSARY

Words and phrases as used in this book relating to Onomastics, specifically paleo-toponymic studies, are explained in more detail with short descriptions and examples to elucidate the specific use of the terminology. Other definitions and explanations are taken from the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1990) and *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language* (Gove 1961).

**adaptation:** the process whereby a word or a name or an element of language is adjusted, altered or modified, i.e. whereby the structure of a word or name in one language adapts to the structural rules of another language, involving the addition, removal or fossilization of various elements, e.g. on the phonological level of words and names (phonemic cluster and click adaptations), and on the grammatical level (as with prefixes and suffixes being added or omitted)

**adoption:** a process of borrowing words and other components (e.g. phonological elements such as clicks) of one language into another; often known as language 'borrowing', with the adoptive or 'borrowed' words being referred to as 'loan-words'

**allonym:** another name for the same place

**appellative:** common noun, common name that designates a class

**autochthonous (autochthons, autochthones):** the 'original or earliest known inhabitants of a country' 'indigenous peoples', often referred to as 'first peoples'

**clicks, suction sounds:** a sharp non-vocal suction, used as a speech-sound in some languages like Bushman and Khoikhoi, and adopted into some Bantu languages in southern Africa. The click or suction sound is articulated by air being sucked into the mouth with temporary closure by either using both lips, or made by pressing a portion of the tongue to various parts of the mouth (e.g. against the teeth, alveolar (gum), palate, sides of the mouth, the velar or guttural region) and withdrawing it suddenly

**cognate:** the term 'cognate' is used to refer to adoption as well as derivation (representing the



- same original word or root). The Webster's dictionary definition is used throughout: "... of a word: related in a manner that involves borrowing rather than descent from or as well as descent from an ancestral language – often used with *with*, sometimes with *to*" (Gove 1961: 440)
- colloquial: words or names belonging to the ordinary or familiar language usage, not formal or literary; usually of a region,
- designate: the act or process of designating, i.e. to specify or particularise
- designation: a name, description or title, also understood as the reference, a linguistic sign (letters, etc.) that serves as the name or distinctive mark of an entity or feature
- designatory function: names have such a function, they serve or act as signs or marks to specify, indicate, point to specific entities, features, persons or other 'things'
- embedded generic: a generic (term) not clearly recognizable in the current orthographic representation of the name, thus not obviously a generic but an element in the proper name acting like a generic, usually disguised as a grammatical element, sometimes as prefixes or suffixes or as locative suffixes or remnants of locatives, or relics adapted and adjusted from locative words, determinants, etc. [For example components such as *si*, *ti*, *tsi* and *tzi* adapted and adjusted as remnants of */ati*, from the verb */i* 'to flow', the fluvial generic */ati* and the above examples developed as onymic formatives and were adapted into other languages, thus actually concealing a generic term and still acting as embedded generics in a toponym. They are often misinterpreted as diminutives or determinants in the current forms of the name and are often indicated as such [e.g. the *ro* and *ra* suffixes in Khoikhoi names], but are usually recognizable from the original etymology given as explanations, and according to the similar sound and meaning, as well as the referential content or context of the name, i.e. what feature type the name refers to, it may be deduced from the current name form as embedded generic [e.g. Ngwempisi, where *ngwe* was derived from *!ke* or *kwe* meaning 'river' as 'river of the hyena']
- etymology: 'the historically verifiable sources of the formation of a word and the development of its meaning' (Concise Oxford 1990:403)

- etymological formatives: basic elements of language, both phonological (sound) and semantic (meaning) that are recognizable as the original forming agents of a word or name, often employed to create a new form of a word or name (hence also folk-etymology)
- evolutionary onymic formatives: those basic language elements e.g. sound and meaning, used in the earliest processes of naming, often by imitation (onomatopoeia), description, imagery, and used as ‘original’ creative name forming elements; the development of common nouns to proper names
- fluvial: relating to ‘river’, generic referring to flowing water, from Latin *fluvius*, [other generics relating to water features include *hydrographic*, *marine*, etc.]
- folk-etymology, folk-etymological adaptations: adjusted names and words adapted by popular modification by colloquial language users to make it seem to be derived from a more familiar name, word or phrase, i.e. something the users could relate to
- formatives: serving to form or fashion on a grammatical level; or acting as agent to form a word, a name, proper names
- generic(s): a feature type designator, characteristic of or relating to a class: general not specific or special, as in describing a thing, a feature or an entity as a class, e.g. *-berg* in *Spitsberg*
- geographical feature: distinctive or characteristic feature part of the surface of the earth; referring to natural features on the landscape, e.g. mountains, rivers, etc.
- hlonipa (Zulu *hlonipha*): terms and words used in avoidance language, i.a. to show respect, regard, etc. ‘substitute a fresh term for a word avoided’ (Doke and Vilakazi 2005:334-335)
- hybrid: a word or name composed of parts taken from different languages; of a dual nature, composite name with components from more than one language
- hybridisation: the creation or evolution of a name which involves various elements, both structural and semantic, from two or more languages; usually put together or appearing as one name
- hydrographic: relating to water features
- hydronyms: names of water features, names or generics referring to water

inter-linguistic: contact and processes between or among languages

intra-linguistic: 'on the inside', within the same language or related languages

land forms: a natural feature of the earth's surface; see geographical features

loan word: word adopted from a 'donor' language to a 'receiver' language with little modification; in the case of 'names' as loans, more or less the same, but often adapted on some phonological or grammatical level to the receiver language

nomenclature: a system of names for things; the terminology of a science; from Latin *nomen* name + *calare* call

onomastic: relating to names or nomenclature; derived from Gk. *onomastikos* *f.* *onoma* name

onomastics: the study of proper names

onomatopoeia, onomatopoeic: the formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named; names or words created by sound imitation and used as such (from Gk *onomatopoiia* word-making (Concise Oxford 1990:829)

onymic: aspects of a name, or elements relating to the name

onymic creativity: the way in which common nouns ('ordinary appellatives') become names of animals, birds, places (toponyms) and other entities through various processes. This process, which is much more than just a name giving process, encompasses the cognitive, emotive and linguistic competency to use onymic formative elements creatively from an evolutionary stage of such elements (sounds, gesticulations, descriptions and a specific conceptualisation, often put into another form, e.g. imagery, metaphor, etc.), put together to form a word, a name, a place name or toponym.

onymic formatives: name-forming elements that can consist of various linguistic components used in the creation or forming of a common or proper name. Such 'language' elements include sounds, phonemes, alphabetical letters, adjectives, verbs, common nouns, numbers, digits, other symbols and signs.

onymic processes: of name giving, including *inter alia* adaptation, adoption, hybridisation, translation [see explanation of each process under separate headings]

- opaque: not transparent, obscurity of meaning; used when names have lost their lexical or descriptive meaning
- oral, oral tradition: by word of mouth; spoken, not written but oral tradition of mainly pre-literate peoples
- orality: pertaining to the oral tradition, the cultural heritage transmitted by word of mouth, telling stories and myths and legends from generation to generation without a written record; orality as opposite of textuality
- ornithology, ornithological: scientific study of birds, relating to study of birds
- oronym, oronymic: names relating to geographical elevations, e.g. hills, mountains, rocks, protrusions
- orthography: from Greek *ortho* the right correct way of *graphia* writing, to write according to correct or conventional spelling
- orthographic representation: how it is written, represented in writing and spelling
- paleo-linguistics: study of ancient languages and their intrinsic linguistic processes
- paleo-onymic formatives: ancient name forming or creative elements in name giving
- paleo-onomastics: from Greek *paleo*, ancient, name studies
- paleo-toponymy, paleo-toponymic(s): study of ancient names for places, topographic features of a region, e.g. rivers, mountains, plains
- phoneme, phonemic structure or cluster: any of the units of sound (including clicks) in a specified language that distinguish one word or name from another
- proper name: name of individual things, features, persons, etc. as opposed to common name which refers to a class of things
- semantically bleached: ‘without meaning’; loss of meaning
- specifics, specific terms: those components in a name that describe the entity or features more specifically, e.g. ‘Lion’ in Lion River
- synonym, synonymous: a word or name with same meaning as another but written differently
- tautological names, tautology: ‘the saying of the same thing twice over in different words’; thus the parts of a name or words being repeated, often in translated form where the

- original name or word appears in a newly allocated 'double' form of the name with one part the translated form, e.g. Leeu-Gamka (*leeu* and *gamka* both meaning 'lion', the translated form added to the original in the place name)
- taxa: scientific names and classification of species, animals and plants into groups
- taxonomy: the science of the classification of living and extinct organisms (Concise Oxford 1990:1251)
- toponym: place name, name of a geographical feature, from Gk. *topos* place + *onoma* name (Concise Oxford 1990:1287)
- toponymy: study of place names
- toponymic clusters: place names within a given area or region, related on some level of comparison, i.a. either as translated forms (translation of the original name), hybridisation (partial translation of the name), or as adapted forms of the same original name, i.e. adjusting or modifying parts of the name into the adopting (receiver) language, thereby giving it a different yet still identifiable form, because of the same inherent or retained meaning
- translate: express the sense of a word, sentence, speech, book, etc. in another language
- translation: the process whereby the underlying meaning of a word or name in a certain language has been translated into another language and become a word or name in another language
- trans-lingual: across languages where languages are not of the same family, e.g. trans-lingual borrowings
- validation: make valid, confirm, ratify
- verification: the process or an instance of establishing the truth or validity of something
- zoology: scientific study of animals
- zoological terminology: terms used as pertaining to animals

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# INDEX - ANIMAL NAMES

This list provides an alphabetical selection of the animal names as presented and discussed in the text with their scientific zoological terminology (taxa) with the species name in the usual italicised Latinae. Equivalent colloquial names in Afrikaans have been included because the animals are often known locally only by these names, e.g. *aardvark*, *aardwolf*, *bottersterte*, *ietermagog*, *muishond*, *nonnetjiesuil*, *tier* and *wolf*. Terms such as *caama*, *chacma*, *geitjie*, *gogga* and *graatjie*; *kudu*, *m'fezi* and *mogohu* derived from Bushman, Bantu and Khoikhoi references to specific animals, have also been listed for the same reason.

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The place names relating to indigenous animal names as found mainly in the southern African region under discussion, are listed below. This list is not exhaustive or comprehensive in the sense of containing all the place names in which animal names may occur, nor representative of all the names of animals as occurring in the indigenous languages.

Included are place names that are discussed in more detail. Where the place names are grouped together in the text as spelling variations or appear as different translations of one name, or those grouped together as reference to one species of animal, the most commonly occurring or best known name was listed as relevant entry.

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*The vast empty spaces of South Africa and Namibia are suffused with codes to the past. To the casual traveller, the -laagtes and -leegtes flash and roll past our windows, unexplained and undiscovered, but to the informed, these ancient names unfurl a history as old as man himself. This is Simon Schama's "topography of cultural identity", which started with the San, and continues to this day. Lucie Möller's glorious exploration of these animal origins stands proud, with the work of Bleek, as a reminder and tribute to voices now silent. – Dave Pepler*

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*Of the Same Breath* opens the door to a better understanding of why and how the animals and places of southern Africa have been given the names they have today. The vast reaches of the information provided in this book have been drawn together to create a veritable cornucopia of answers to the old question of how names originated. In this linguistically thought-provoking book, readers will be guided through the origins of animal names and toponyms, from the coastline of South Africa to the northern border of Namibia, and from the mighty elephant to the humble grasshopper.

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