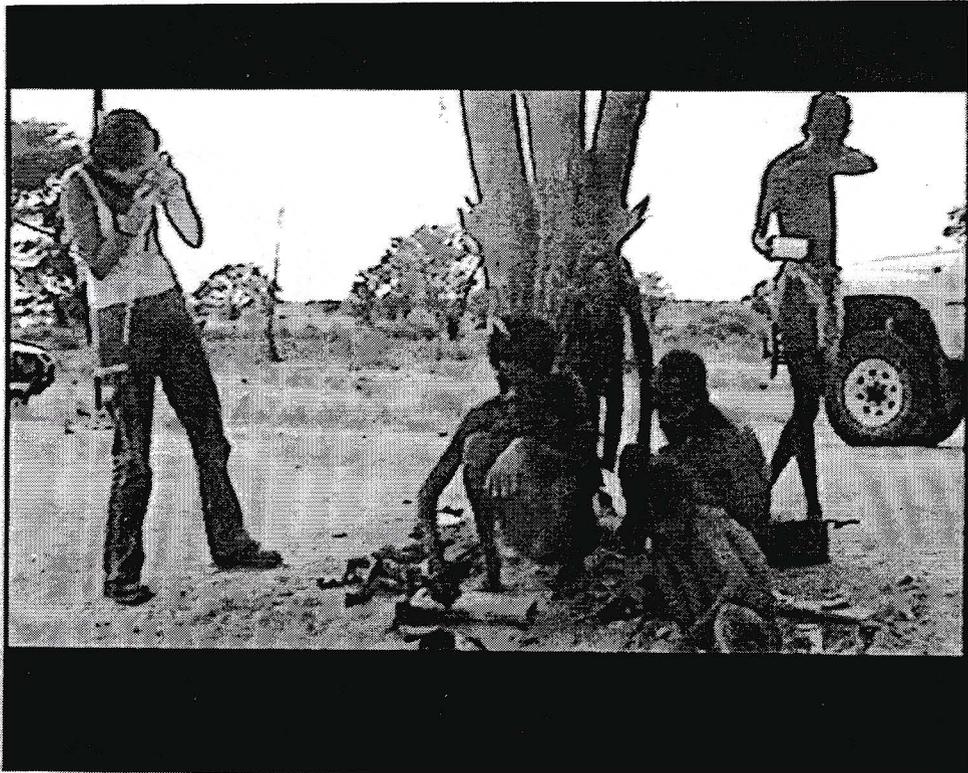


**Reading Modern Ethnographic Photography: A Semiotic Analysis of  
Kalahari Bushmen Photographs by Paul Weinberg and Sian Dunn**

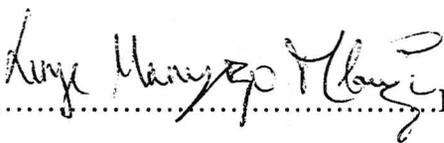


**Linje Manyozo Mlauzi**

**Thesis Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the  
Degree of Master of Arts in Culture, Communication and Media  
Studies, University of Natal, Durban.**

## Declaration

I, Linje Manyozo Mlauzi, do hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work, and that all other people's works have been fully acknowledged. I further declare that I have never before submitted this work for an award of a degree to any University. The dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the Degree of the Master of Arts in Culture, Communication and Media Studies, in the Faculty of Human Sciences, University of Natal, Durban, South Africa.

Signature:  Date: 11 April 2003

Linje Manyozo Mlauzi  
University of Natal  
December 13 2002.

**Cover photograph:** Sian Dunn photographing #Khomani Bushmen craft sellers, Witdraai, Northern Cape. Photo is a clip from a documentary film, *Reading Photographs in the Kalahari* (Manyozo, 2002).

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## **Acknowledgements**

The past two years have privileged me to be part of a multicultural family within Culture, Communication and Media Studies (CCMS) Programme at the University of Natal. The National Research Foundation (NRF) funded research exercise for this dissertation was the apex of my study. I wish to thank my supervisor, Professor Keyan Tomaselli for the high standards he sets for CCMS students, such that even when we find it extremely hard to cope, we always rejoice at the quality of the work we produce and this dissertation was no exception. I thank Elaine Binnedell and Nhamo Mhiripiri (for their insightful suggestions and mentoring); Sherieen Pretorius, Nelia Oets, Vanessa Dodd (for the Afrikaans-English translations); Damien Tomaselli and Timothy Reinhardt (for videoing my interviews); Barbara Buntman, Vanessa Dodd and photojournalists Paul Weinberg and Sian Dunn for allowing me to use their works in this study.

For record purposes, I wish to acknowledge CCMS's Programme Administrator, Susan Govender's kindness as being a major contribution to the development of CCMS. Despite her extended family and work demands, Ms. Govender always goes beyond her job description to make foreign students feel comfortable and at home. Vanessa Dodd also deserves special mention for her priceless generosity in translating my interviews when she had her own interviews to conduct for her MA study. I shall always remember. Many thanks to Upington Protea Hotel, Molopo Lodge in the Kalahari and the community members in the Kalahari, who gave us access into their fears, hopes and frustrations.

The study is a completion of my old mother's dream, a dream to go to 'far away lands and acquire the white man's education'. This dissertation therefore, is a celebration of that dream as well as a reminder to my family of Linda and Benjamin Manyozo that, despite racial, ideological and intellectual differences, the dignity and respect for humankind should always dominate our motivations for relating to other people.

## **Abstract**

Indigenous communities, like the Bushmen of the Southern Kalahari, always attract visitors who 'go there' to experience the 'life out there'. Travelling in their 4x4s, these visitors also bring cameras and take pictures of their interactions with subject communities as evidence of 'having been there'. For academics and journalists, these pictures are meant to illustrate their presentations of 'what is actually there'. Both types of photographs are known as ethnographic photography.

This study asks and attempts to answer the question: how do we study ethnographic photography? As much as photographers attempt to portray their subjects realistically, their representations are often contested and criticised as entrenching subjugation, displacement and dehumanisation of indigenous peoples through 'visual metaphors' and other signifiatory regimes. This discussion reconsiders the concept of imaging others, by offering an analytical semiotic comparison between Paul Weinberg's anchored and published photographic texts of the Bushmen, on the one hand, and Sian Dunn's unpublished, inactive texts of the ≠Khomani Bushmen, on the other.

The discussion is an attempt to understand documentary photographers, processes of producing of images, the contexts in which they are produced and how the communities that are represented make sense of them. Concerns with the objectivity of representation go beyond the taking and consuming pictures of other cultures. This study is, therefore, grounded in cultural, social and ideological factors that shape the production and consumption of photographic representations of and from other cultures.

## **Outline of chapters**

*Chapter One* introduces the motivations and objectives of the study. It traces the history of the subjects of Weinberg's and Dunn's photography, the ≠Khomani as well as a brief history of their dispossession and the wider representational implications. The chapter then introduces the randomly sampled works of photographers, Weinberg and Dunn.

Finally, it introduces the hypothesis and outlines major questions, which the research attempts to answer.

*Chapter Two* provides a theoretical and literary exploration on and around representation in relation to photography. It draws on Stuart Hall's (1997a; 1997b; 1997c) notion of the circuit of culture and representation. Language, in Hall's sense, implies any form of expression through which cultural members represent or say meaningful things about their world. This study appropriates Hall's conception of language to refer to the visual language of photographs. Representation, therefore, is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through visual language (Hall, 1997a; 1997c). The chapter also introduces the South African debate on representation and the major questions it raises regarding aesthetics and ethics of imaging other cultures. Basing the argument on the contested notion of spectacle, the discussion sketches the development of modern ethnographic photography from colonial hegemonies to Weinberg and Dunn.

*Chapter Three* examines the reception of Bushmen photography, whilst drawing on field experiences and how academics and non-literate societies read photographs. An individual photograph is a singular record of a moment in time, which enables one to possess the world in the form of images and thus experience the unreality and remoteness of the real (Sontag, 1999: 85). The chapter analyses indigenous people's reception of their photographs and why ethnographers take pictures. It also critiques my self-reflective video documentary, *Reading Ethnographic Photography in the Kalahari* (Manyozo, 2002) and critically analyses my methodology during interviews and my observations of Dunn.

*Chapter Four* concludes the discussion by critiquing methodologies and exploring the challenges of producing and consuming ethnographic photography. It attempts to provide a model for writing ethnographic photography. The discussion critiques the problems of employing photo-elicitation methods, particularly in societies where indigenous people have been turned into cultural performers in front of cameras, raising questions over what is real and what is staged.

## Chapter One

### The Bushmen, Paul Weinberg and Sian Dunn

#### 'Being there' (in the Kalahari)

Sitting beside a roaring fire and watching a huge television at Molopo Lodge, I reflected on what I thought had been an unfruitful evening. Together with a student colleague, Timothy Reinhardt, I had, upon invitation, visited Dawid Kruiper that night so he could tell us stories. He had emphasised the night time because "if stories are told during day, then the participants, both the storyteller and the listeners would lose their pubic hair" (Dawid Kruiper, 2002: Interview). That evening, we had arrived at his place in Nelia Oets's car, only to find that Dawid and all the other ≠Khomani Bushmen were drunk and disagreeing over what I could not understand. He was lying in the only grass hut with about ten other ≠Khomani, singing and smoking.

Due to the pain of an ankle sprain, Nelia left us there and drove three and a half kilometres back to our campsite for an early sleep. Elsie and Silikat Van Wyk would successfully massage the sprain the next day. Being a cold night, we were invited to sit in the open-air kitchen (which also doubles as bedroom at night) with seven or eight ≠Khomani and warm ourselves around a fire. Dawid Amam (a relation of Dawid Kruiper) whispered into my ear in broken English, that Dawid was too drunk and not in a mood to tell stories. Dawid's son, Jon, also known as !Xele, was an unnamed subject of Paul Weinberg's (1997: 58) *In Search of the San* (Photo 14). He came and told us (in broken English again) that his father would still tell us the stories and he would just need to remind him. Time seemed to be racing and I felt Dawid was not going to honour his word, having invited us that morning. Nobody seemed agitated about 'appointments', because here, promises are made and can broken at whim.

Fifteen to twenty minutes later (which seemed like two hours), Dawid finally appeared but did not come into the kitchen. He ordered his relatives to make a fire outside, where

he spent another five minutes smoking and talking to someone. Amam whispered again that we had to wait until he invited us and finally Jon came to myself and colleague, Timothy Reinhardt and said, “you can now go to listen to the stories”. Here, Dawid was not the same cheerful person we had seen in the morning. He took his time to puff what we discovered later to be the ‘Bushman tobacco’, *marijuana*. Dawid then kept repeating that he was going to tell us “a very big story, a story that happened in the beginning, a story of a springbok, a jackal and a farmer who had betrayed them”. The story “takes place when the sun goes down and the moon goes up”. Dawid then shifted to talk about his son, Doppies, as the heir apparent.

Around us, there was so much shouting, singing and arguing coming from the house and now, the kitchen, worsened by the fact that everyone wanted to talk and be understood at the same time. Apparently, a packet of something had gone missing and everyone wanted to know where it was. Amam whispered something into Jon’s ear and the latter went near his father to pick up a plastic packet that was partially buried in the sand near Dawid Kruiper’s knee. Amam took the packet into the house and there were more songs. Later, as we made our way back to the campsite, Amam stressed the importance of *marijuana* to the ‘Bushman’. Dawid then demanded R35 for the stories (which we did not pay) and a day later, his son Jon, would demand R20 from a colleague, Vanessa Dodd and myself (which we did pay) as a payment for an interview. As the fires died down and the moon came up, Dawid was again incoherent and kept repeating things over and over. Jon whispered to us that his father could not tell any stories. I was interrupted in my thoughts by the noise of the pushing of chairs and other furniture.

Two middle-aged men I had seen driving Dawid Kruiper in a new white Nissan 4x4 that morning brought me to the present. They were drinking beers and requested me to shift my chair so they could sit around the fire. I shifted my chair and there we were, in a semicircle, staring at nothing in particular. They wondered why the barman had not changed the television channel to CNN or BBC. Turning to me, one gave a chuckle and then said, “so, what are you doing here in the Kalahari?” I introduced myself and my project.

The study emerges out of the criticism of Paul Weinberg's documentary photography of the Bushmen, based on the notion of spectacle (Bester and Buntman, 1999: 57). It asks and attempts to answer the question: how do we study still photographs of indigenous cultures like the Bushmen? As much as photographers attempt to portray their subjects realistically, their representations are contested and criticised as often entrenching the subjugation, displacement and dehumanisation of indigenous peoples through 'visual metaphors' and other signifying regimes (Bester and Buntman, 1999: 53, 58; Gillard, 1995; Heider, 1976; Tomaselli, 1999). My study (re) considers the concept of imaging others, by drawing on Stuart Hall's (1997) work on representation and the circuit of culture, Jay Ruby's (1991, 1996, 1997) conceptualisation of ethnography, Christian Metz's (1974) object-copy relationship, and Mary Price's (1994) model of the photograph as a strange, confined space.

The enquiry plans to offer an analytical semiotic comparison between Sian Dunn's unpublished, inactive texts of the ≠Khomani Bushmen, on the one hand and, Weinberg's (1996; 1997) anchored and published, photographic texts of the Bushmen on the other. An activated text is one where the interpretant is generated by an interpreter (Tomaselli, 1999). An activated text employs 'realism operators' to increase the believability of a text such as a photograph (Fiske, 1979). Since I was not present with Weinberg when he took his photographs, I studied another observer of the ≠Khomani Bushmen. I observed photographer Dunn, as she negotiated and took photographs, an observation, which, included myself videoing her activities. My interest in representation thus lies in understanding the production of images, the contexts in which they are produced and how the communities that are represented make sense of them. Finally, I will compare these indigenous perspectives with those offered by theory and Weinberg's critics (Bester and Buntman, 1999; cf. also Weinberg 2000; Bregin, 2000).

Back at Molopo Lodge, the two men introduced themselves as photojournalists working for *Sarie* magazine who had come to photograph and interview Dawid Kruiper. I remembered that Dawid Kruiper had, that morning, hinted about photographers and how they "fuck around a lot with 'Bushmen'" (2002, Interview). He had mentioned

photographers who kept instructing him on what to do, how to walk on the veld or to put on traditional dress and sit on the pan and how all of this had driven him crazy. Exhibiting what I thought was white guilt, the journalists began to complain of the growing poverty among the Bushmen and how the government had not done much for them. A day later, whilst seated around the fireplace and watching television in the evening, I met one of the journalists, who got so drunk that he had to ask for assistance to light a cigarette and fell down when he tried to walk. As he lay on the floor, struggling to wake up and speaking incoherently, I remembered him giving me a lecture a day before on how the alcohol store outside the Molopo Lodge was finishing off the Bushmen. I also recalled their question: “what are you doing here in the Kalahari?” I laughed.

During field work, communication problems hindered my progress because though I was physically present and could observe activities and behaviour first hand, my real sense of ‘being there’ was second hand and had to be negotiated. The language had to be translated and explained to me by Keyan Tomaselli, Vanessa Dodd, Sherieen Pretorius and Nelia Oets, who became windows through which I could experience ‘firstness’. Thus my experience was of a ‘second hand firstness’. Drawing on Charles Peirce’s trichotomy of signification, Tomaselli developed a phaneroscopic table to explain how we make sense of things around us. The phenomenology used to describe the first order of signification during encounters is “being-there” (Tomaselli, 1999: 37). In my case, though I was present during the encounters (with the Bushmen), the meaning of these encounters and the experience or the intelligibility had to be translated for me. Thus, my “being-there” could only make sense to me in a second hand kind of way.

Weinberg’s and Dunn’s photographs opened up and created spaces through which I could interact with the ≠Khomani Bushmen, enabling me to share their hopes and fears. For instance, we could not slaughter a sheep at Blinkwater farm in April 2002, due to the wind, as Belinda and Vetkat Kruiper argued that “we cannot do anything against the wind. We can only wait ’til tomorrow”. Tomorrow turned into days, and eventually the sheep was not slaughtered as the wind kept blowing. I also shared their fears when, five months later, on September 11, during a ≠Khomani Art Exhibition in Durban, Vetkat

indicated that he was not happy to sell his art. He argued that he feared he was, in fact, selling his soul. This study is an attempt to put these hopes, fears and all my observations into the perspective of reading photographs of indigenous people, which, for practical and technical reasons, cannot carry people's memories and attitudes.

## **Photojournalism of Weinberg and Dunn**

Photojournalism is a branch of journalism whose practitioners aim at visually portraying the depth and extent of realities and events (Kraus, 1998a). There are extant controversies over the ability of photographers to being mainstream journalists resulting to categorisation of photojournalists into two groups: "those with the skills and ability to know what photos are relevant or photojournalists that are button pushers" (Kraus, 1998b). Photojournalists claim they are able to use cameras in portraying hidden truths, thus their documentaries have titles such as, '*Chronicle of a Quite Cuba*', '*Under a Chinese Cloud*' or '*Inside the Doll's House*' (emphasis mine; Cordesse, 2001; Bauer, 1997; Beznoka, 2000). To photojournalists therefore, photography is an experience of learning, researching and understanding new and complex realities (Weinberg, 2000b: 10; 2002, Interview).

Photojournalists also argue that all the ethical and esthetical rules that apply to mainstream journalism do apply to photojournalism as well. Disputing against the contention that photojournalism is just about "grab shots", photojournalists maintain that images should first "capture the attention of readers", motivating them "to read the story" (Kraus, 1998b). Again, just like mainstream journalists, photojournalists aim at "keeping their eyes open for an angle that will portray the event in a more appealing fashion" (Kraus, 1998b). Stories and subjects could be about ordinary people in ordinary situations but photojournalists aim at analysing the situation, looking for things to make photos interesting even if it means adding props, thus images are partially a photographer's construction (Kraus, 1998b; Weinberg, 2002: Interview).

Questions over authenticity, methodology as well as meaning of visual images loom large in photojournalism. David Kraus (1998a) notes that a photojournalist should go to great

lengths in avoiding shooting straight on camera flash, as the practice spoils the ambience of the scene, making it look unnatural. Technological advancement has also enabled the manipulation of images to make them soft or course for purposes of exhibition or publication. The objective is to make images evoke emotional impact, like famine images from Ethiopia and Sudan whose publication resulted in monetary donations pouring in from sympathisers (Sweeney, 1998).

Weinberg and Dunn shot the photographs chosen for the study. Paul Weinberg is a South African documentary photographer and social activist who continuously visits and photographs indigenous communities in Southern Africa, particularly the Bushmen. His exhibition on the Bushmen titled 'Footprints in the Sand' (1996) culminated in a book called *In Search of the San* (1997) and *Once We Were Hunters* (2000a). He has worked with academics, NGOs, developmental workers, human rights activists, lawyers and other travellers on the issues of land dispossession and social dislocation regarding the Bushmen (Weinberg, 2002: Interview).

Weinberg's other published works include *Shaken Roots* (1990) and *Back to the Land* (1996). Still, he refuses to see himself as a Bushmen expert, arguing that 'in the spirit of openness and creativity, there is so much to learn from each other' (2000b: 9). This study focused on the photo documentary, *In Search of the San* (1997) and his published exhibition, 'Footprints in the Sand', which are about how the lifestyles of dispossessed and dehumanised Bushmen have changed (Weinberg, 2000b; 2002: Interview). The publications also depict the challenges Bushmen face in a modern world, their relationship with the land and their struggles to come to terms with the transience of their culture (Weinberg, 1997). *In Search of the San* has generated many debates, notably among academics and the Bushmen themselves, as later sections of the study will demonstrate (Bester and Buntman, 1999).

### **Sampling and selecting photographs for the study**

I selected fifteen photographic samples from Weinberg's exhibition, 'Footprints in the Sand' (Skotnes, 1996) and the published photo documentary, *In Search of the San* (1997).

Since Weinberg has worked in all the three countries that share the Southern Kalahari, I chose seven photographs from South Africa, six from Namibia and two from Botswana. In my sampled collection of 80 photos, there are more photos from South Africa, followed by Namibia and then Botswana. There are 61 photos in *In Search of the San* and 19 in the exhibition, 12 of which appeared in *In Search of the San*, under slightly different headings.

Sian Dunn, on the other hand, is a Rhodes University photojournalism graduate, who was working for the *Highway Mail* freesheet. She had interviewed Belinda Kruiper for the paper, and during the interview, Belinda invited her to visit Blinkwater (Dunn, 2002: Interview). Dunn then talked to Tomaselli, whom she had “known to be interested in Kalahari and the Bushmen for a some time” (2002: Interview). She joined the April 2002 troupe and took photographs at Witdraai, Welkom and Blinkwater. Her photos are of the #Khomani.

I randomly selected five photos from Blinkwater, three from Welkom and seven from Witdraai and Andriesvale in total; fifteen photographs from Dunn’s collection of about 250 photographs, as study samples. As with Weinberg’s case, I chose more photos from Witdraai because Dunn had taken more photos there, as compared to Blinkwater, followed by Welkom. For the purposes of this study, I have named the photos. The naming of the photos was done by taking into consideration the activity that took place during the photographic encounter.

The term ‘randomly selected’ should be clarified here for it may also imply I might have selected the photos subconsciously – through closing my eyes and then haphazardly selected photos to be studied. It must be emphasised here that I consciously and reflexively selected those photos that appealed to me for what seemed to be their apparent challenge or support to the dominant paradigms in visual anthropology. Photo number three, ‘wedding for 36 couples’ (Weinberg, 1997: 71) depicting a western Bushman wedding challenges the dominant paradigm of the Bushman living in primordial times, untainted with civilisation and still hunting. The picture’s syntagmatic composition: the

marriage certificate in the hand of the man, the dressing itself-the man's suit and the lady's white wedding dress speak up for the changing Bushman. Other dominant features that I looked for when reflexively choosing the pictures were anonymity (of women in particular), gendering and differentiating, apparent visual intrusions (where subjects do not seem to be willingly participating in the photographic process), half dressed subjects and variations in captioning same photographs. The critical examination of these features has been adequately addressed in *Chapter Three*.

### **Motivation and rationale for study**

My interest in the Anthropology of Visual Communication developed in August 2001 when I registered for the Visual Anthropology/Documentary Film course in the Culture, Communication and Media Studies Programme (CCMS hereafter). As a class, we enjoyed watching ethnographic documentary films like *Nanook of the North*, *The Axe Fight*, *In the Land of the Head Hunters* and *The Great Dance*. During the same period, I also noticed the accumulation of, and seeming indifference to, photographs from various Kalahari field trips, taken by researchers and students (Emmison and Smith, 2000: 2).

Whilst contemplating what to do with the photographs, I talked to Belinda Kruiper, a young woman from Cape Town, married to a ≠Khomani, Vetkat Kruiper, who lives at Blinkwater. In October 2001, Belinda had come to Durban for an exhibition of Vetkat's art and also as a CCMS advisor on issues of representation related to the Kalahari communities. Belinda has helped CCMS set up trusted relationships in her community by translating between the two groups and by hosting staff and students on their farm during CCMS research trips. My discussions with Belinda opened up questions over ethics and aesthetics in representing other cultures. I wanted to discover the ≠Khomani perspectives on how they and their Bushmen culture are photographically imaged, and to what extent they tolerate that imaging.

With questions on photographic representations in mind, I accompanied Tomaselli, photojournalist Dunn and other CCMS students to ≠Khomani Bushmen communities of the Kalahari in the Northern Cape in April 2002. Dunn was to take pictures, which she

would use to hold an exhibition in Durban about life in the Southern Kalahari (2002, Interview). I also developed an interest in searching for a method for studying Dunn at work, to explain the processes of getting, producing, editing and interpreting photographs of indigenous peoples. The research team's conversations dwelt on Rory Bester's and Barbara Buntman's (1999) criticism of Weinberg's documentary photography on the Bushmen. This criticism neglected to assess the Bushmen perspectives on the way they are imaged and presented by Weinberg.<sup>1</sup>

During the April fieldwork, Tomaselli talked to a #Khomani woman, Rosa Meintjies, focussing on a black and white photocopy of her family photograph, taken by Donald Bain from an unknown, early photo book (Bain, 1930). The photograph of Rosa's deceased relatives standing next to each other did not provide nomenclatural identification of subjects. It only identified the photo as 'Plate 63, the Family of #cu'. In a spontaneous moment of photo-elicitation, much as occurred with Piet Draghoender's lament in the video documentary, *Kat River-The End of Hope* (Pieres, 1984; Tomaselli, 1996), Meintjies tearfully activated a long history of dispossession, of ancestor remembrance, and genealogy, by explaining the significance of the photograph, which to us had, until that emotional moment, merely been an inactive text.

At 71 years, Piet Draghoender, an Eastern Cape Afrikaans-speaking coloured peasant farmer, lamented about the dispossession of his land under apartheid in the Ciskei Bantustan around 1983-84. In the video, *Kat River-The End of Hope*, Draghoender showed the interviewing crew the certificate granting his family the land by Queen Victoria as well as the war medals awarded to his ancestors who died fighting for the British in the 1800s. Having been asked about the boundary of his farm, Draghoender "immediately possessed the camera, using it as an active agent" to address the absent authorities that were about to take his land (Tomaselli, 1999: 144-145)<sup>2</sup>. Similarly, Rosa

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<sup>1</sup> Weinberg has photographed many different groups of the Bushmen in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa; whilst Dunn only worked among a small group of the Bushmen known as the #Khomani.

<sup>2</sup> Tomaselli's usage of the notion 'possessed the camera' needs elucidation. Both Draghoender and Rosa never physically grabbed hold of the camera and recorded their speeches. The subjects however felt comfortable with the researchers such that they were able to open their hearts, during which they momentarily forgot about the cameras in front of them.

possessed the camera to lament the loss of Bushmen freedom and dignity due to dispossession, arguing, “I want to tell the Professor [Tomaselli] that in those days, we actually *lived*” referring to the deeper essentialist notions of satisfaction with life (Manyozo, 2002). Rosa’s regret about no longer being able to ‘live’ concurs with Ou Regopstaan Kruiper’s complaint about the fences, as marking the end of Bushmen freedom, noting “it kills my soul to see that everything is closed with no land, no water, no meat” (White, 1995: 30).

Rosa’s reading of the photo indicated that active interpretation of photographs is a convergence. It is a convergence of photographs as cultural texts, the circuit of culture (Hall, 1997a; 1997c) of the photographed, the circuit of culture of the photographer, the circuit of culture of the reader and the circuit of culture of the context in which the reading is taking place. A circuit of culture is an environment in which cultural members produce, circulate, consume, reproduce and identify with meanings through their usage of texts and submission to values (Hall, 1997a; 1997c). A further circuit of signification/interpretation was imposed by myself when I documented this event on video.

Further library research pointed me to Weinberg as one of the few photographers who have published their ethnography on the Bushmen. Again, just like the photocopy of Bain’s photo of Rosa’s parents, Weinberg’s photos are black and white. The field experiences thus increased my interest in investigating the concerns and considerations in reading ethnographic photography and helped me to focus on key issues: what is the difference between the use of Dunn’s inactive (raw) texts and Weinberg’s anchored (selected, edited, explained for and published) texts in eliciting spontaneous indigenous historical information? What ethical considerations regarding researchers’ relationships with subject communities need to be taken into account when interpreting photographs? For whom do photographers publish or exhibit their photographs? What is the degree of fit in interpretation between interpretations of specific photographs as offered by Weinberg, Bester and Buntman and those depicted? To investigate these concerns, I joined Tomaselli’s ongoing NRF/URF-sponsored project, *Semiotics of the Encounter*,

which also involved other students (Dodd, 2003 forthcoming; Reinhardt, 2003 forthcoming; Crowe, 2003 forthcoming; Dyll, 2003 forthcoming; Oets, 2002; Lange, 2003 forthcoming; Saetre, 2003 forthcoming).

My study seeks to contribute to the building of a matrix of new methods and analyses relating to observer-observed relations being developed by staff and students who are part of the project. The study will assist media studies students to appreciate the processes through which cultural and media industries (print and electronic media) construct and shape opinion by producing images of other cultures. Though concerns with objectivity of representation may imply the need for vigilance when taking pictures of other cultures, the imaging project transcends picture taking. The divergence in the media coverage of the Zimbabwe land reform program, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or the Iraqi and United Weapons inspectors for instance, are some examples of that struggle for control of images of people and countries. This study is therefore grounded in the interest in cultural, social and ideological factors that shape the production and consumption of photographic representations of other cultures.

### **Research methodology**

Can indigenous people read photographs (Collier and Collier, 2000: 115)? To answer this question, the study embarked on a qualitative research exercise. As a field of enquiry, qualitative research transcends various disciplines and subject matters (Echevarria-Rafuls, nd.). Qualitative research is a multi-method approach and focuses on understanding and illuminating meaning (Echevarria-Rafuls, nd.). In the two one-week trips I made to the Southern Kalahari, research was accomplished by employing photographs as research tools.

As research tools, photographs elicit more quality information than other methods because they enable the informant to have a point of reference (Emmison and Smith, 2000). Photographs act as communication bridges between researchers and subjects as they function as starting and reference points for discussions (Collier, 2000: 99). They

invite open expression as informants take the lead in enquiry and are relieved of the stress of being the subject of interrogation (Collier and Collier, 2000: 106).

### *Observation*

Qualitative observation is fundamentally naturalistic in that it occurs within the context of occurrences and experiences of those being observed. It draws observers into the phenomenological complexities and realities of the participants' worlds (Echevarria-Rafuls, nd.). In April 2002, my observations involved videoing the process of Dunn's photography and the observer-observed relationship during interviews and other interactions. I also captured the subjects going about their daily chores, like cooking, carrying water, making and selling their art as well as smoking *marijuana*.

During these observations, I also applied semiotics as a research method, by focussing on understanding the explanations for some activities and behaviours. After a day of making and selling crafts at Witdraai roadside near Molopo Lodge, Dawid Kruiper's family were already drunk at night and were singing and shouting at the top of their voices. Elsie Van Wyk, Silikat's wife, produced an outstanding work of art and gave it to Vanessa Dodd (CCMS researcher). However, she also had financial problems and said that Vanessa must also assist her with R20. Despite the monetary assistance, Vanessa emphasised that the artwork remained a gift. Silikat, Elsie and other ≠Khomani waited for a moment for when the white researchers were taking a stroll (without me, a black person) to ask for a loan of R60, which they promised to pay back when Nelia (Oets) came and bought their crafts two days later. Whilst interviewing Anna Swarts, a subject in Weinberg's *In search of the San* (1997), Jon Kruiper called Nelia, my translator and, in my absence asked her to drive two buckets of water in her 4x4 to his place because it was far away. Khobus Witbooi refused to give us 'important information' on both Weinberg and Dunn's photographs "until the Professor (Tomaselli) arrives". We could not hold an evening braai at Blinkwater because there was wind during the day; animals are not slaughtered in the wind. All these experiences shed light on the contemporary ≠Khomani Bushmen communities and have been critically analysed within the framework of reading ethnographic photography.

### *Interviews and Focus Group Discussions*

I employed photo elicitation methods during interviews, where photos of Weinberg and Dunn were used as research tools: engaging the ≠Khomani communities at Welkom, Blinkwater and Witdraai in talking to the photographs. Noting the historiography of photo elicitation as a research method from its development by John Collier in 1956, through Ximena Bunster (1978), Paolo Chiozzi (1989), Fadwa el Guindi (1998) to the present, Douglas Harper (2002:13) argues that photo elicitation involves inserting a photograph into a research interview. Images evoke deeper elements of human consciousness, thus photographs enable informants to structure and restructure their memory (Harper, 2002).

I conducted individual interviews and focus group discussions using Weinberg's and Dunn's photos as research tools and was aided by translators. In the photo-elicitation exercises, I talked to people who both featured and did not feature in Weinberg's photography. This study will also examine the shortfalls of photo elicitation methods in light of my field experiences: from the choice of photos to be used in research, the research questions, the research environment and self-reflexivity (Ruby, 1980).

It should be mentioned here that during research, there was a thin line between interviews and focus group discussions where in the course of interviewing one person, other ≠Khomani would come uninvited and started answering questions. For instance, whilst preparing to interview Silikat Van Wyk by the roadside where he sells his artworks, Silikat's wife, Elsie, sister in law, Tina and other ≠Khomani craft sellers came and started answering questions that were directed to Silikat. It is thus very difficult to situate the nature of the Kalahari discussions; most were interviews that dissolved into a focus group discussions or may be it was a focus group interviews.

The discussions began by browsing through the photos and I asked the ≠Khomani to identify subjects and places. They would argue in !Nama language (like at Welkom) and then explain to Nelia in Afrikaans, who would then explain to me. I would enquire about how the photography was conducted and whether they had seen or heard of the book. I

also asked other questions (Appendix). Secondly, I would give them Dunn's photos, which they could identify easily, resulting in some who had not been photographed to request to be photographed (Dodd, 2003). Generally, Dunn's photos did not generate much discussion as compared to Weinberg's. My study attempts to explain this phenomenon in terms of the differences in the two sets of ethnographies in terms of the form, colour, and periods in which photographic acts were conducted. Some researchers have recommended the production of ethnographic photography in black and white, arguing such depictions are deep and enable people to recall memories easily (Brandes, 1997: 12; Weinberg, 2002: Interview). I also interviewed professional photographers, Weinberg and Dunn and amateur photographers like Jody Cockie van Schalkwyk (Jody hereafter). Jody, together with her son Nino, visited Blinkwater for spiritual healing (van Schalkwyk, 2002: Interview). Damien Tomaselli and Timothy Reinhardt helped me record some discussions on video, submitted as part of this study. My focus group interviews with ≠Khomani subjects and structured interviews with Dunn, Weinberg and Jody were recorded, transcribed and have been critically examined. Further analysis has also focussed on the observational videos made during the two field trips in April and July 2002.

### *Document analysis*

Document analysis involves analysing documents that often are official or personal in nature (Echevarria-Rafuls, nd.). This method provides for the simultaneous contrasting of multiple data sources, such as when primary data (e.g., interview transcripts or participants' journal entries) are compared to interpretative data (e.g., researcher's journal entries, theoretical memos, or field notes).

### *Critical analysis of literature and photographs*

The study has drawn from Fiske (1979) and Tomaselli (1999) and Tomaselli and Shepperson (1991) by employing a Peircian semiotic analysis to Weinberg and Dunn's photographs. The analysis involves comparing the selection, the captioning, the paradigmatic and syntagmatic arrangement of the photos and the resultant ideological or power-relation repercussions.

### *Self-reflexivity and Auto ethnography*

Drawing on Jay Ruby (1996), the research was also undertaken as a personal experience and thus presentation of findings in this discussion shall involve auto-ethnography. Developed by Ruby, reflexivity as praxis enables researchers and producers of texts to “systematically and rigorously reveal their methodology and themselves as being instruments of data generation” (1980). This admission of assumptions alerts both subject communities and audiences, which enable them to have ‘second-hand’ field experiences into which I framed my own (Wieczorek, 1998).

### **The Bushmen: A history of dispossession**

The San and the Khoekhoe peoples are aboriginal to Southern Africa (Crawhall, 2001:6; White, 1995: 29). Khoesan peoples and their descendants were hunter-gatherers until they acquired domesticated animal stock over 2000 years ago. Hunting and gathering persisted in South Africa until colonial conquest decimated the people and their lands, which were seized by colonialists of both European and African origin (Crawhall, 2001:6) There have been extensive economic and political interactions between the Bushmen and other Khoe and Bantu speaking immigrants like the Basters (White, 1995: 33). Today, the Khoekhoe are commonly known as the Khoi pastoralists though they are not a homogenous group. They are also known as the San or the Bushman and have different subgroups like the Basarwa, Ncoakhoe, Ju!’huansi or the ≠Khomani (Crawhall, 2001; Douglas, 1995; White, 1995; Simoes, 2001; Tomaselli, 2000; 2001; 2003).

Being imaged and imagined to be the first peoples, the Bushmen pose a problem for academics over what they should be called (Douglas, 1995: 65; Simoes, 2001). Academics have argued over the political correctness of the various Bushmen names in relation to the contentious notion of ‘indigenous’ but, Bushman, Bushmanness, San and Sanness are just “ambiguous resources and rhetorical flags”, which are rallied and mobilised for “political purposes” (Douglas, 1995: 66; White, 1995). Without denying the existence of the Bushmen, Douglas points out the ‘ideological versatility’ and the dangers of attempting to ‘recuperate’ the notion of ‘first people’ in relation to the term ‘Bushmen’ (1995). He cautions that recuperation of the Bushmen as primitive and

pristine peoples is an attempt to enter “the realm of dangerous diluted sewerage poison” (1995: 73-74). The term ‘San’ originated with the Khoi pastoralists but the Dutch colonial settlers referred to the San Bushmen as Bosjesman (Deacon and Deacon, 1999).

There are therefore controversies over what constitutes an appropriate name for these indigenous peoples of the Kalahari (Simoës, 2001; Douglas, 1995; Gordon, 1992; White, 1995). This discussion acknowledges that the term ‘Bushmen’ is variously used to describe a people, a people’s experience, heritage, identity or a people’s interaction with colonial settlers (Gordon, 1992; Wilmsen, 1996; Simoës, 2001; Tomaselli, 2003; Jolly, 1996; Von Stauss, 2002; White, 1995). My study, however, chooses to use Bushmen to refer to the Kalahari peoples who were hunted, killed, exhibited and disposed by colonial, apartheid and modern African governments. Where it refers to the Northern Cape Bushmen, it will employ the term ≠Khomani or ≠Khomani Bushmen (Simoës, 2001).

The arrival of Jan van Riebeeck in South Africa 1652 marked the beginning of oppression in Southern Africa, bringing along colonisation, conflict, land seizures and new diseases (Crawhall, 2001:7; Gordon, Rassool and Witz, 1996). Yet, even before 1652, indigenous African cultures in Southern Africa also engaged in many conflicts over land, natural resources and hegemonic superiority. These conflicts were bloody and often resulted in the capture and exchange of slaves (Omer-Cooper, 1987; Walker, 1957). The Dutch arrival however, brought a racist aspect to colonisation. During the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, European settlers “were permitted to hunt” the Bushmen like animals (Crawhall, 2001:7). Crawhall’s terminology of “were permitted” attempts to re-write history by removing agency from the colonialists. Yet the hunting and killing of the Bushmen was systematically built on their flawed racist moral philosophy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Tomaselli, 1999).

According to apartheid policy, the Bushmen were not to be part of apartheid South Africa’s cultural history, but were, instead, to remain anthropological curiosities, sharing museum space with animals, rocks and plants (Schmidt and Boshoff, 2001:4). The colonialists and settlers hunted them down as they considered them vermin, while on the

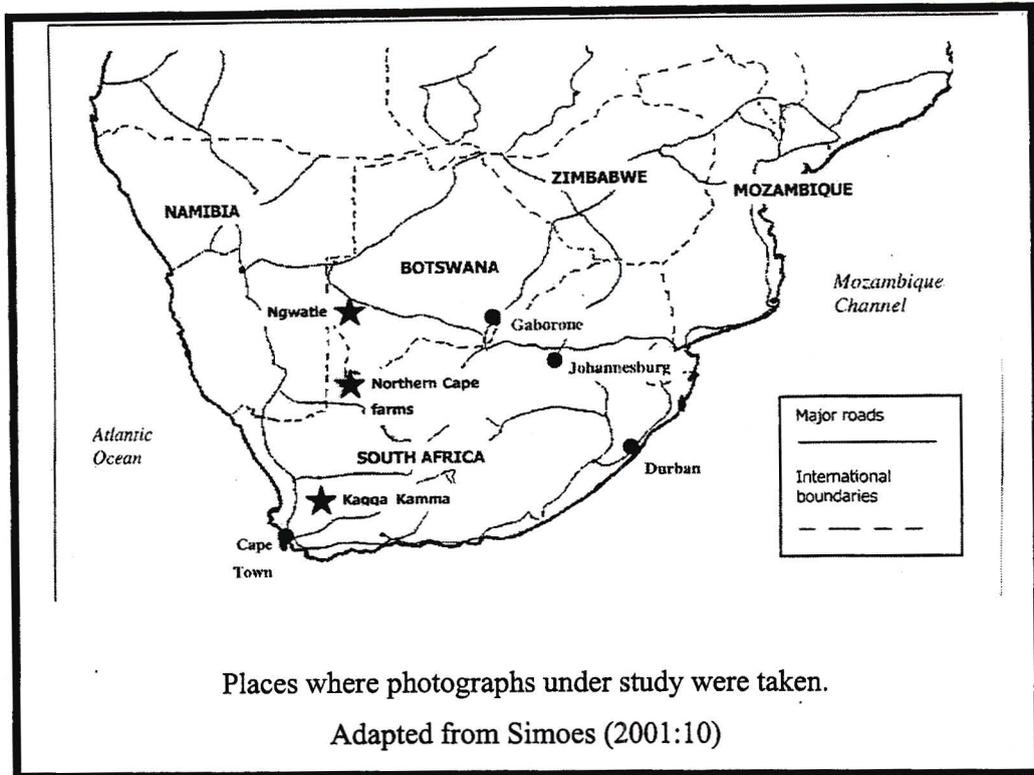
other side, other indigenous Bantu tribes looked down upon the Bushmen. Due to extensive genocide campaigns and demand for slave labour, the Bushmen retreated to the deserts and dry savannahs of South Africa, Botswana and the Kalahari. Over the years, it has been believed that they are a vanishing tribe and culture (Weinberg, 2002:11; 'The Riverbed Children' at <http://www.geocities.com/blinkwater/background>).

Most Bushmen ceased to use their ancestral languages and switched to Afrikaans and !Nama, the *lingua franca* of the Southern Kalahari. It is worth emphasising however, that Afrikaans is not the Bushmen's mother tongue, but they learnt it from working for Afrikaans-speaking farmers, from the military and from working with rangers in the Kalahari Gemsbok Park (Crawhall, 2001:8; White, 1995: 31-33). This cultural genocide did not eliminate indigenous languages and Ouma !Una observes that "the Boers did not want us to speak our language and to do our Bushman things, so we spoke quietly among ourselves" (quoted in Schmidt and Boshoff, 2001:5). The South African San Institute (SASI) with funding from UNESCO and in collaboration with local communities, has managed to trace N/u Bushmen language speakers who had assimilated with surrounding communities for fear of victimisation and stigmatisation (Crawhall, 2001:5).

From the 1920s, much of the Southern Kalahari was turned into privately owned parks, game reserves and leased out to mining companies like De Beers, without any special guarantees for the Bushmen (Crawhall, 2001: 38). Some Bushmen escaped to urban areas while the remaining ones had to endure degrading treatment. In 1991, the core surviving ≠Khomani Bushmen of ±Hanaseb ethnicity led by patriarch !Guam !Gaub Regopstaan Kruiper, came to settle at the tourist resort of Kagga Kamma near Ceres in the Western Cape.

With the assistance of a human rights lawyer, Roger Chennels, the ≠Khomani launched a land claim in 1995 and were partially successful in 1999, with the transfer of 36,000 ha to the community by the then Deputy Vice President Thabo Mbeki (Crawhall, 2001; Friedman, 2002:36).

## The study area



The research for this study focused on the ≠Khomani Bushmen and coloured communities of Witdraai, Welkom and Blinkwater farm. Apart from being just being land, these areas no longer have animals, save porcupines and rabbits. This is a factor, which has created many problems regarding a scramble for natural resources amongst today's ≠Khomani. Farm infrastructure has collapsed and the community has no motorised transport (Friedman, 2002: 36). In 2002, it cost R300 to hire a *bakkie* (van) to drive to the Askham Clinic, 56 kilometres away (Dodd, 2003). There is virtually no livestock as most of it has been sold or poached. The water pumps are broken and some community members occupy farmhouses earmarked for community tourism initiatives. Worse still, there are growing suspicions of people mismanaging money intended for community initiatives, as observed by Dodd:

As we sit in the sand beside the fires, copies [of Rupert Isaacson's book, *The Healing Land*] are passed around and everyone notices the price tags still stuck to the back covers. The people want to know what happened to the R180

and R195. Dawid [Kruiper] asks '*Is daar nie deel vir my nie?*' (Isn't there something for me?) [...] *Geld is die wortel van alle kwaad* (money is the root of all evil), he tells me. Dawid thinks that people are stealing money from the Bushmen to get themselves to the top of the tree: '*Hoekom moet 'n Boesman 'n goue gans eier wees?*' (Why must a Bushman be a golden goose egg?) (Dodd, 2003).

Seeing a copy of *The Healing Land* (2001), Tina Swarts speaks to researcher Vanessa Dodd (2003) about the prevalent social problems in the community:

Tina begins to tell me how '*hartseer*' (heartsore) the people [≠Khomani Bushmen] are because they '*het niks gekry*' (got nothing) from the book. Rupert promised them money, which they never saw. [As a result] they do not have money to send to their children to school, and this is Rupert's fault. Tina's brother, Dals Kruiper committed suicide by throwing himself in front of a vehicle. He wouldn't have done it if the money had come.

Suspensions of 'Bushman money being swindled' by community leaders in collaboration with greedy outsiders dominate conversations in the community.

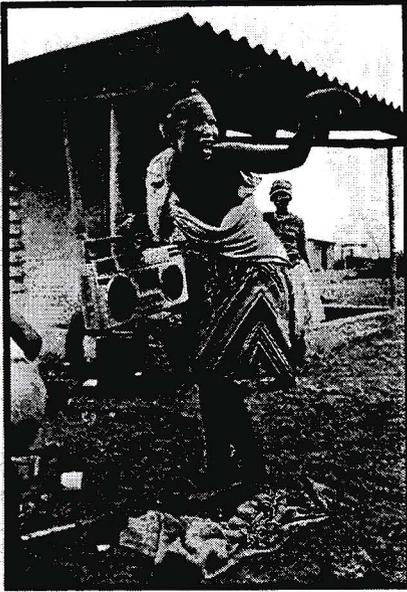
During a lunch break at Molopo Lodge in April 2002, Belinda Kruiper asked Tomaselli how to identify and request the Scorpions Police Unit to investigate corruption among the community leaders. Belinda could have been hinting at the Communal Property Association (CPA), which allegedly mismanaged community finances and borrowed money using the community land as a mortgage, resulting in attempts by those owed to take away community land (Friedman, 2002: 36). Added to these problems are alcoholism, wife beating, theft, tuberculosis, physical and mental abuse, lack of co-operation with traditional leaders and poverty (Steyn, 2000: 12).

Today's Bushmen are split between three approaches to life: those wishing to practice traditions and wanting to live as hunter-gatherers, those wanting to adapt to modern ways and those wishing to live both the pre-modern and post-modern lives. This Kalahari debate has had an impact on academics as well as photographers. For photographs and films, traditionalists have romanticised the image of these people as frozen in time and still clinging to their hunter-gather ways, as evidenced in *The Gods Must be Crazy* or *The*

*Great Dance* (Dodd, 2003). Revisionists, on the other hand, have attempted to portray the changes that have taken place within the Bushmen communities.

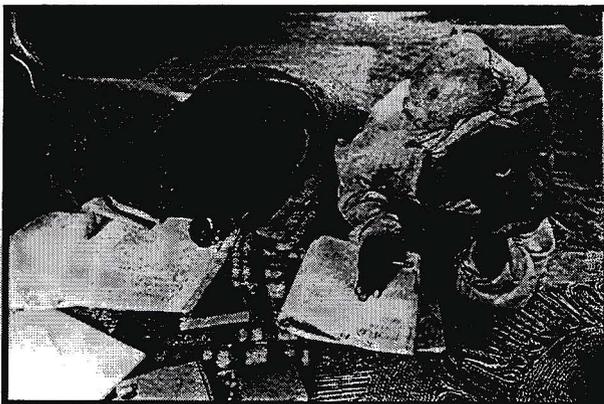
## Introducing the photographs under study

### Paul Weinberg's photographs



**Photo number one** (below, left) is titled, 'Weekend festivities, Tjum!kui Namibia' (Weinberg, 1997: 57). It also falls under a different caption of 'Weekend, Bushmanland, Namibia' in 'Footprints in the Sand' (Weinberg, 1996: 333). Similarly, a photo of a vast desert with a small silhouette of a woman under the title, 'Anna Swarts in the Kalahari, northern Cape, South Africa' (Weinberg, 1997:29) is also labelled 'Anna Swarts collects roots, outside the Kalahari Gemsbok Park' in 'Footprints' (Weinberg, 1996: 337). An anonymous Bushwoman and background subjects dominate photo number one. In her right hand, is a radio cassette player and the other is hanging empty in mid-air. She is probably

dancing, outside a brick house with corrugated iron sheets as a roof. Visible below the radio cassette are two pairs of men's legs. These men are eating food from a plate whilst using a water bucket as a table. Leaning against the veranda, is a middle aged woman watching our dominant character, who is dressed in western clothes – grey cloth wrapped around the shoulder and armpit, a striped skirt and barefoot. The ground is littered with a cloth, cups, shoes and wooden splinters. Juxtaposed with this picture, is another picture of a woman smoking from a !Xuli. The Bushmen at Welkom argued that the woman is dancing because she is high on dagga. No other caption



indicated the dimension of the festival, names of subjects, whether the woman was outside her house and her relationship to the other subjects.

**Photo number two** (left), 'Class in progress, Kagga Kamma, South Africa' (Weinberg, 1997: 76) has as subjects, two

≠Khomani Bushman young girls of about seven or eight sitting on a mat. The one on the left is

leaning on her chin, and is concentrating while the other one is busy writing down Afrikaans names for days. On the mat are crayons and also an arm, hair and legs of the third person, who is female and white. The photo provides no names and details of the classroom, like who the white teacher is, her identity, her position in the society and how she came to participate in this 'informal school set up' (Weinberg, 1996: 338).

**Photo number three** (below, left), entitled 'Wedding for 36 couples, Schmidtsdrift, South



Africa' (Weinberg, 1997: 71) contains seven subjects and a small white dog. A newly wed Bushmen couple stands outside a brick building, holding hands, with the man wearing a black suit and carrying a marriage certificate and the woman in white. Behind them on the veranda, are five people: a

couple, a white lawyer and two other men leaning towards the register on the table. Again, just like many of Weinberg's photos, the subjects have no names, no details of the wedding, the church and the dominant characters facing the camera.

**Photo number four** (right) is 'Bushmanland, Namibia' (Weinberg, 1996: 336). This depicts an anonymous Bushman family sitting outside their two houses, one of which is still under construction. The man is servicing a bicycle, which he has partially dismantled as he carries a tyre and pump with a dog sniffing his

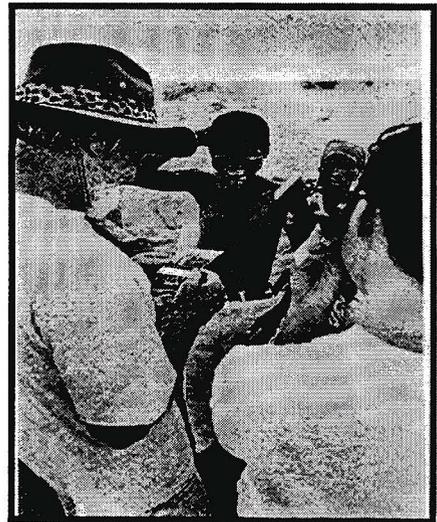


legs. Two children sit behind the dog in a circle with two other adults and a woman carrying a baby wrapped in a cloth. In the middle, are buckets and the cups being exchanged, hinting that they are sharing a traditionally prepared drink.



**Photo number five** (left), 'Meeting of the Nyae Nyae farmers' co-operative, /Auru, Namibia' (Weinberg, 1996: 78) depicts a crowded room of Bushmen men and children, with a woman seated in the centre, wearing a headband and cautioning a child who must have been making trouble. One of the men, seated and leaning against a wall, is using his hands to gesticulate and the other two men look to be listening hard. Again, neither the names nor details of the meeting and the portfolio of the talking man in the co-operative are given.

**Photo number six**, (right) is entitled 'Jamie Uys recruits actors for a Thai advertising film, northern Cape, South Africa' (Weinberg, 1997: 14). This depicts Uys holding photographs which probably have just been shot by the Thai photographer on his right. The Thai photographer is still photographing the ≠Khomani, Hotnot and his wife in front of them. Both Uys and the Thai photographer are wearing white shirts while Hotnot remains without a shirt with his wife's head visible next to him.



**Photo seven** (below), entitled 'Dusk, //Auru, Namibia' (Weinberg, 1997: 37) below, is probably



of a Bushmen family dressed in western clothes. A man without a shirt, looks at himself in the glass while combing his hair, just after a bath. The woman in the background throws out some water from a bucket. Absent from the picture is the house and, like other of Weinberg's pictures, this one does not reveal names of subjects and their

relationship to each other.

**Photo eight** (right) comes from a ≠Khomani community and is labelled ‘Ou Regopstaan Kruiper and his helper in his shack outside the Kalahari Gemsbok Park, South Africa’ (Weinberg, 1997: 24). A white hand shakes hands with Regopstaan (Vetkat’s and Dawid’s father) as a ≠Khomani woman looks on. Weinberg does not name the woman beside Regopstaan, but from the accompanying text, the white hand belongs to Roger Chennels, a lawyer who has been representing the San Khomani in their land claims.



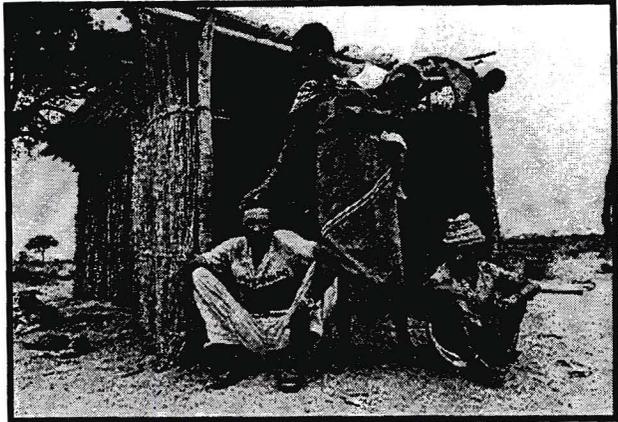
**Photo nine** (left) is a medium close up of an ‘!Xo Bushman soldier, Schmidtsdrift, South Africa’ (Weinberg, 1997: 21). He is smoking his pipe, dressed in military shirt and beret whilst looking up at the photographer. The wide background is a vast desert partially covered with shrubs.

**Photo ten** (right) is ‘Making an ostrich necklace, /Aotcha, Namibia’ (Weinberg, 1997: 40). It is also labelled as ‘Making crafts, Bushmanland, Namibia’ (Weinberg, 1996: 336) and depicts two adult Bushmen women who are seated, with one of them carrying a child of about two on her back. The photo also features in *In search of the San* as ‘making an ostrich necklace, /Aotcha, Namibia’ (Weinberg, 1997: 40). This overdressed woman (in western clothes) has, in front of her, a bottle and a big steel cup. She is working on what looks like a white necklace. The other woman, wrapped in a blanket and looking older, as noted by the wrinkles on the hands, is holding her face with two hands as she faces her younger counterpart. She also



appears to be shielding her face from the photographer. The yard is littered with grass, wood, steel pots and, in the background, are two huts, made of mud and grass. A blanket is drying on a pole in the background.

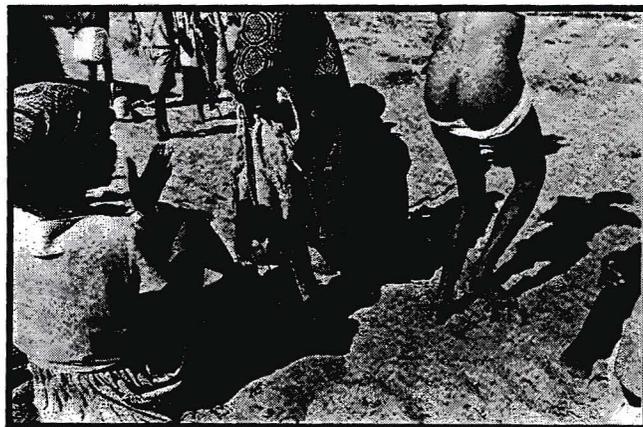
**Photo eleven**, (right) is labelled 'Kgau/'ana with his family, !Ao='a, Namibia' (Weinberg, 1997: 41). It depicts an anonymous Bushman family of four, dressed in western clothes, outside their grass-house. The husband and the son are seated, while the mother, carrying a child on her back is standing, touching her husband's head. He is wearing a 'vote



mother is eating one half of a melon, using a small stick while the daughter is eating the other half with her hand.

SWAPO' T-shirt. In the background, are a dog and a pair of shoes.

**Photo twelve** (left), 'Dibe Sesana and her child eating tsama melons, Malopo, Botswana' (Weinberg, 1997: 48) depicts a Bushman mother and child seated on the sand. It is viewed from the perspective of someone standing. The



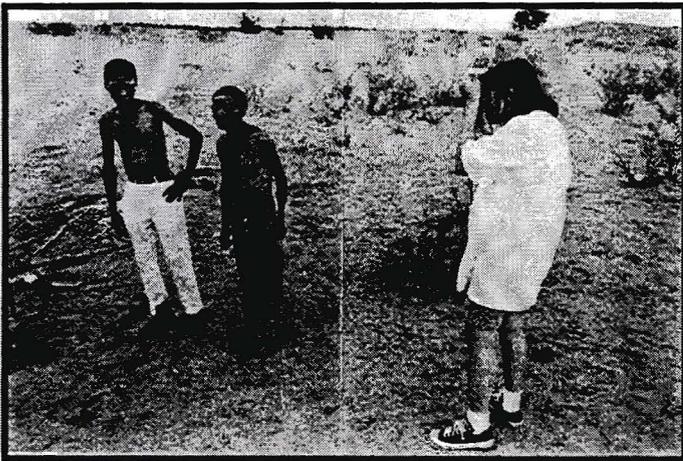
**Photo thirteen** left, entitled, 'Puberty dance, Xade, Botswana' (Weinberg, 1997: 61) depicts a half back-view of a Bushman woman dancing with a bare bottom. Another one is seated and clapping hands, with a partial view of a woman looking like she is walking away. A woman on the right is sitting

and holding her knees. Another woman's back faces Weinberg while visible in the background are partial views of some four people.

**Photo fourteen** (right), is 'Soccer, Kaggga Kamma, South Africa' (Weinberg, 1997: 58), with two anonymous ≠Khomani boys on a sandy landscape, dressed in western clothes facing each other: one is kicking a ball while the other has his arms on his head, probably waiting for the ball to reach him.



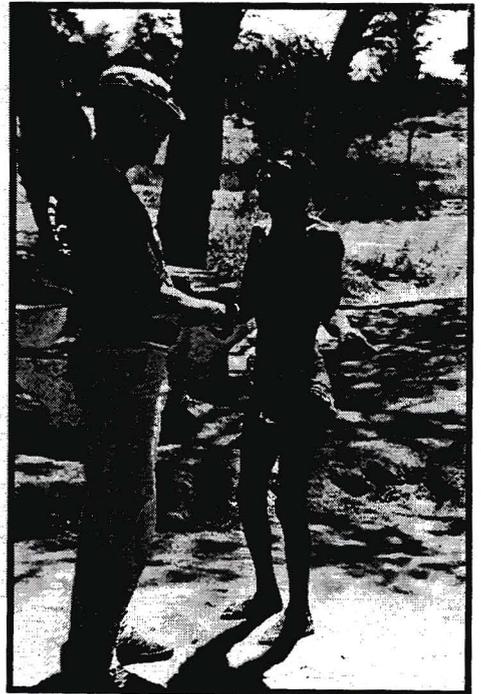
**Photo fifteen**, entitled 'A member of a Thai film crew photographs ≠Khomani, Kalahari, South Africa' (Weinberg, 1997: 72-73), features a wide landscape, with two men without shirts facing away and a white woman in white takes a picture. The ribs of both men are visible. On the sand next to them, lie broken



shovels and sticks.

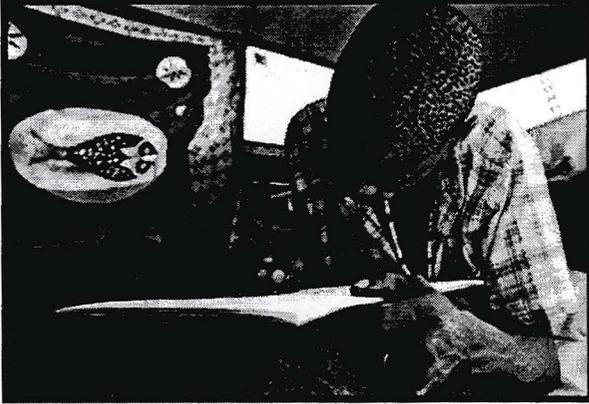
### **Sian Dunn's photography**

**Photo sixteen** (right) is 'Goeiemore Professor, goeiemore Jakob', featuring Tomaselli and a ≠Khomani, Jakob Malgas, at Andriesvale. They greet each other while engaging in eye contact. This was soon after Vanessa Dodd's interview and Malgas made sure the 'Professor' talked to him. Meanwhile, Malgas's wife, Lena was already in the car talking to Dodd. As with the other pictures of Dunn, I named the photos depending on the activity that took place and my understanding of those activities during Dunn's April 2002 photographic process.



Both Jakob and Lena were drunk that morning and were on the roadside selling their crafts so as to make more money.

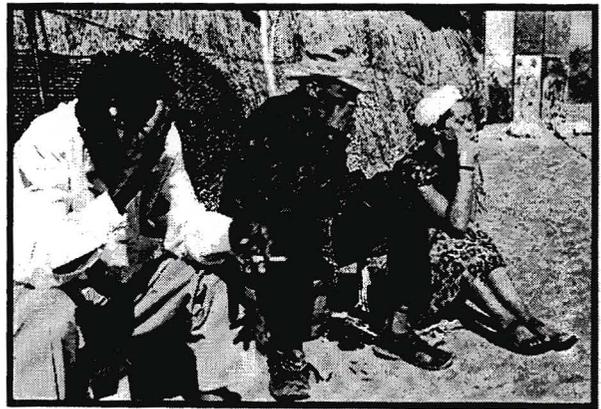
**Photo seventeen** (left) is 'Drawing' depicting Vetkat drawing his art in the grounded VW kombie, which



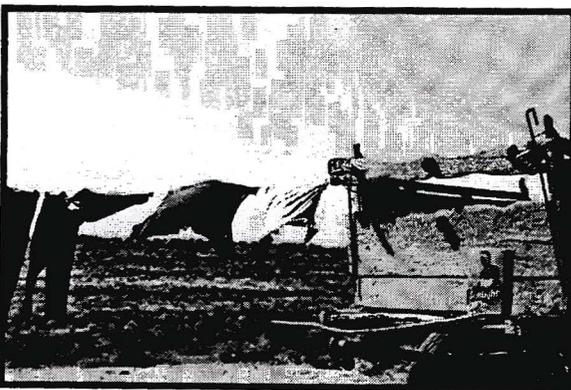
also serves as one of the bedrooms for him and his wife Belinda. This is at Blinkwater. On this particular day, Dunn had remained behind to observe the slaughtering of the sheep, which never happened. The rest of the research team had gone to Eren farm, where Tomaselli and Dodd were visiting a ≠Khomani woman, Rosa Meintjies.

**Photo eighteen**, is titled 'Listening to the wind' and was taken at Blinkwater. In the picture, Vetkat,

wearing a hat and a black jacket is seated between his wife Belinda and Oom Hansie. Belinda and Vetkat are facing forwards and away from the cameraman. Oom Hansie and Vetkat are holding cigarettes. Oom Hansie is facing downwards, holding his head, as if he is at a loss for words. This was in the morning after the CCMS research team's arrival and our hosts were not sure whether we were going to slaughter a sheep due to the wind.



**Photo nineteen**, 'The wind and the sheep' (below, left) depicts Jody's and Uri's clothes on a washing line



at Blinkwater being blown by the wind. The back of the cart trailer holds a packet of sunlight washing powder.

This is at Blinkwater and, later that day, Belinda and Vetkat could not slaughter a sheep because the wind was blowing. Asking Belinda why a sheep could not be slaughtered in the wind she said, "it is nature and you don't fight nature. We cannot do anything against the wind; we just have to wait." Jody was a young lady

from Cape Town who had visited Belinda in April, 2002. Uri, on the other hand, is Vetkat's younger brother who stays with the family at Blinkwater.

**Photo twenty** (right) is 'Belinda's and Vetkat's kitchen' at Blinkwater, showing clothes hanging on a wire. There are also some things hanging from the roof, among them a porcupine, captured by Uri who also uses the kitchen as his bedroom. This was the very day the CCMS team arrived at Blinkwater and had the porcupine together with Irish potatoes for supper.

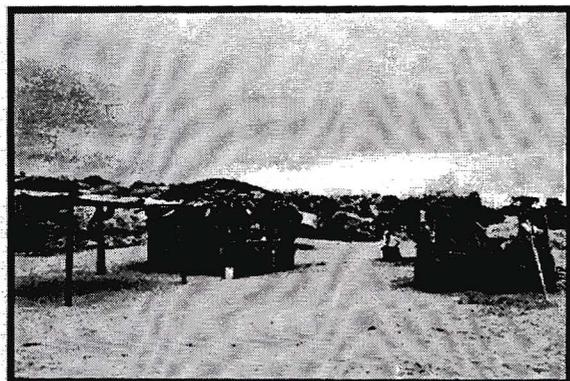


**Photo twenty-one** (below, left) is 'The last interview' taken at Andriesvale, featuring Vanessa Dodd, a student in Cultural and Media



Studies, wearing sunglasses and talking to Jakob Malgas, in the presence of Jakob's wife, Lena and two other coloured children who came to listen to the interview, uninvited. Lena is drunk and thinks she is Nelson Mandela's wife, singing Brenda Fassie's 'Vulindela' at the same time. This was our last day of research and we had to drive to Upington.

**Photo twenty-two** (left) labeled 'The Bushmen have gone to sell art' taken at Witdraai, depicts an almost



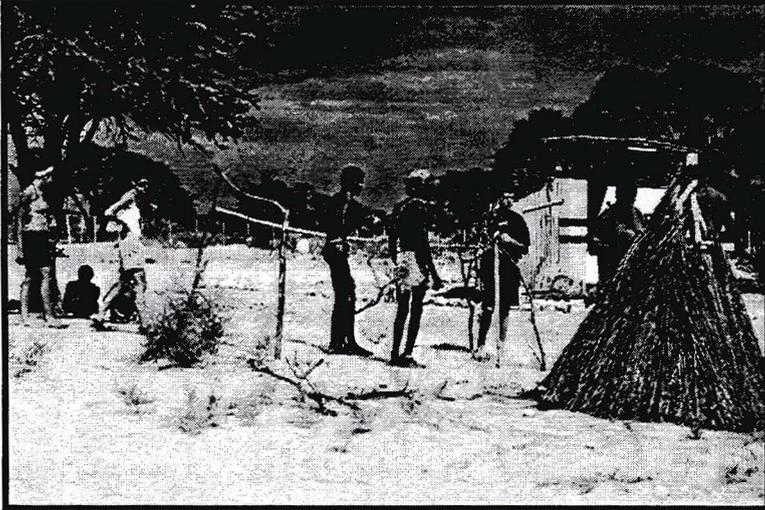
empty homestead belonging to Dawid Kruiper who, with many members of his family, is not around, having gone to the roadside, three and a half kilometres away, to sell art or to wash clothes. In the open-air kitchen, Belinda enquires of Dawid Amam (not clearly visible) and

Dawid's daughter as to the whereabouts of Dawid, who it is established, has gone to chair a CPA meeting near Molopo Lodge.



**Photo twenty-three** (right) 'Wisdom and respect' depicts a medium close up of the two old 'Oumas', !Una Rooi and Ouma Kheis standing and leaning

against each other outside the stone house at Andriesvale. A Zimbabwean CCMS student, Nhamo Mhiripiri and Tomaselli visit the yard to make afternoon appointments with other people. Tomaselli makes sure he is present in the compound because these old women would refuse to be photographed by 'strangers', considering this was Dunn's first trip.



**Photo twenty-four, (left)** 'Selling Art' captures a wide shot of Johannes Kaartman and his father, Hans. They negotiate with white tourists at Witdraai, just opposite Molopo Lodge regarding the sale of their crafts.

**Photo twenty-five (below, right),**

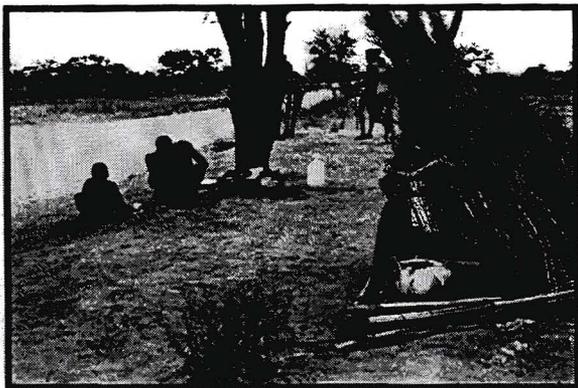
labeled 'Wondering' depicts a drunk Lena leaning on her knees, not knowing what is going on around her, even thinking she was Nelson Mandela's wife. This was at Andriesvale. In the background are Vanessa Dodd and Lena's husband Jakob discussing issues of representation.



**Photo twenty-six, (left)** 'Don't say goodbye now' was taken at Andriesvale. It depicts a drunk Lena standing at Tomaselli's car door so we

could listen to more of her stories.

**Photo twenty-seven, (right) 'Finishing touches',** taken at Witdraai, is a wide shot of some #Khomani winding up decorating art with others still selling in the background. On the right of the picture, is a traditional 'Bushman house' constructed for marketing purposes and inside this hut are western clothes and shoes belonging to the traditionally dressed #Khomani.

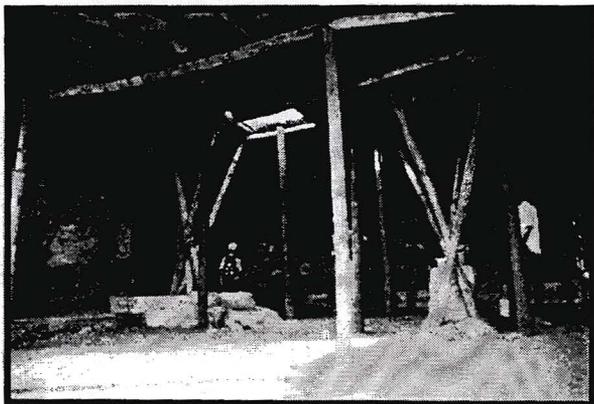


**Photo twenty-eight, 'Learning filming' (left)** depicts Linje Manyozo (myself) demonstrating to Johannes Kaartman how to use a video camera on his father Hans, and another Johannes at Witdraai.

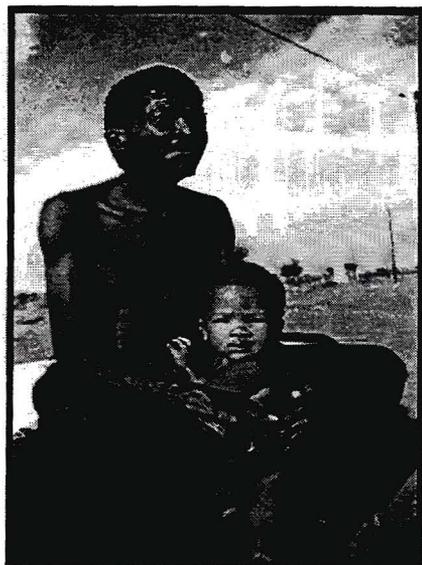


**Photo twenty-nine is 'In the red house',**

(below, left) an inside shot of the famous red house, at Welkom. This house once belonged to Dawid Kruiper. Inside, are Nhamo and Nino (Jody's son) admiring the artwork and graffiti on the walls. This house was a famous tourist attraction for many years because it was occupied by Dawid Kruiper, long regarded as the #Khomani's spiritual leader.



Finally, **Photo number thirty, 'Philemon Kariseb' (right)** portrays Philemon himself, without a shirt, seated on a metal bed and holding his naked niece, //Thosi, at Welkom. Passing over him, is an electricity line and in the background, are modern pit latrines built of corrugated iron sheets.



## **Summary**

Save for Weinberg's photos on the sick Regopstaan Kruiper and the meeting of the Nyae-Nyae farmers and Dunn's photos of Vetkat's art and the kitchen at Blikwater, all the photographs being examined were taken outdoors. This orients us to the Bushmen's life outside their houses. Again, except for Dunn's kitchen photograph, people are always the focus of all the selected photos. The purpose of the fieldwork was not to compare what is in the photos with the 'reality' within the subject communities. It is also important to point out that in analysing ethnographic photography, it is essential to indicate what is not in the photographs, what was left out and how it might have changed the story and meaning (Brandes, 1997: 6). Using the above-described photos as research tools, this study embarked on fieldwork to establish the experiences that accompanied the photographers during their fieldwork, realising that the taking of good ethnographic photographs is very difficult (Weinberg, 2002: Interview).

## **Chapter Two**

### **Representation in Bushmen Photography: A Theoretical Exploration**

This section examines the concepts of representation within the framework of ethnographic photography. It draws on Hall (1997a; 1997b; 1997c) and Johannes Fabian (1990), particularly their works on representation, othering and their conceptualisation of levels at which societies come to represent things through signs. These areas are vital, as this discussion falls within the broad paradigm of othering; how different cultures see each other and how we interpret some cultures' perceptions of other cultures, as evident in written and visual ethnographies.

#### **Ethnographic photography**

There are existing differences among academics regarding the appropriate way to describe photography on other cultures, hence the dissimilar terms; visual ethnography (Duffield, 1998:2), ethnographic photography, photographic ethnography or ethnographic/photographic documentary (Heider, 1976; Faris, 1996; Ruby, 1996; van Maanen, 1988; Ball, 1997 and Brandes, 1997). I decided on ethnographic photography, explicating it as one where, consciously or subconsciously, photographers take pictures of other cultures, both as "factual evidence" (Webster, 2000: 1) of having been there and for elucidating the written, audio and visual evidence of 'what is actually there' (Worth, 1996). Ethnographic photography is situated within the relationships between researchers and subjects, be it a one-day relationship, five-years or a continuous interaction.

Visual anthropology exists as a practice in paradox (Ball, 1997). The disciplines of anthropology and photography came into existence in the nineteenth century and evolved separately from one another. The use of photography by anthropologists in the field took place from anthropology's inception. It was part of the anthropologists' attempts to document and analyse what they were experiencing out there (Ball, 1997; Ruby, 1973). Ethnographers study cultures and translate their observations both for outside and

indigenous communities. The traditional method for achieving this goal has been through written texts, through which ethnographers enable others, who did not experience indigenous life, to experience the ethnographer's empirical experiences and observations. The problem lies in the empirical nature of the ethnographer's visual documentation, which consequently brings up questions of ethics and aesthetics regarding the observation, translating and presentation of experiences. How should audiences transcend this representational evidence of actual, specific human beings and their observable behaviours to come to an understanding of them as a people? Who should audiences believe: the abstracted, personal interpretation or the immediate, visible representations of specific people at a specific place and time? How are photographic methods and their resulting products valuable to anthropology, and what do the ethnographer, his/her audience, or the people studied have to gain from such a seemingly problematic practice (Ball, 1997)?

The ethnographer plays the central role in determining how and what to record of his/her subjects, how to interpret and refine the information s/he has gathered and how to present the information to his audience effectively (Ball, 1997; Weinberg, 2002: Interview). Indigenous research subjects play a minor function in the ultimate result of the ethnographic article. The literate world of academics and media industries, however, plays a decisive role in determining the ethnographic value of some of the research aspects over others (Ball, 1997; Weinberg, 2002: Interview). In studying other cultures, photographs taken by anthropologists, journalists, tourists, and travel writers are ethnographically useful as raw data, since photographs taken by academics are indistinguishable from those taken by non-academics (Ruby, 1996). The difference emerges, in the packaging - the writing and production of this data, resulting in theoretical ethnography (sociologists, visual anthropologists, anthropologists) and non-theoretical ethnography (journalists, travel writers, tourists).

Responding to criticisms of representing other cultures negatively, photographers have attempted to search for the 'authentic', a realistic method of representing their subjects, by trying not to tamper with the camera and the pro-filmic event (that which occurs in

real time in front of the camera), the photograph and its meaning (Metz, 1974). Attempts have ranged from handing over technology (cameras) to the subjects, to 'stealing' or 'snapping' images. This dilemma over authenticity brings up a number of questions for consideration, since questions of voice, authority and authorship are serious issues in imaging others (Henderson, 1988). This concern about how to make photographs carry true meanings of 'what is out there' and how to make photographs tell the stories in simple terms probably led Fabian to argue that the traditional problem of representation has been its accuracy, "the degree of fit between reality and its reproductions in the mind" (1990: 207).

### **The problematic of accuracy in ethnographic photography**

One afternoon, a North American anthropologist, Julianne Newton, living among the Indians of Mexico snapped a picture of Tia Maria, an old Indian woman who she always found knitting in a store, seated in the same chair. Tia Maria did not know she had been observed, let alone photographed. As a surprise gift, Julianne brought the photograph some days later to show the woman. This angered the woman, because, she argued, she did not dress up for the photo. She suggested that she be photographed again, this time dressed in a nice dress, not knitting and sitting on a large couch (Newton, 1998: 58-59).

Newton's 'snapped' photo (of Tia Maria) can be seen as having captured what she termed an 'authentic moment' (Newton, 1998: 59) or what Jean Rouch defines as a 'moment of truth', a 'privileged moment' (Rouch in Fulchignoni, 1989: 270). Tia Maria's first photo is thus a visual document in which Newton's presence did not shape the content of the photo, although she had the power to possess, dominate and construct how the old woman was imaged (Newton, 1998: 59). On the other hand, the collaborative photograph between Newton and Tia Maria showed the old woman, who had now assumed authority over her image, engaging in a 'visual embrace' or Rouch's 'necessary contact' with the photographer (Rouch in Fulchignoni, 1989: 268; Newton, 1998: 59). This photo could also be considered an 'authentic document' of how Tia Maria wanted to be seen, a part of her character. A similar exchange and request for a 'good photograph' occurred in the Southern Kalahari, at Eren farm, Witdraai, just outside Kalahari Gemsbok Park. Here, the

CCMS research team visited a ≠Khomani woman, Rosa Meintjies and her brother Abraham. Dodd and Tomaselli had just interviewed them, the proceedings of which, I had recorded on video (Manyozo, 2002). Throughout the discussions, Meintjies was wearing a torn black T-shirt with red spots and a dirty old skirt. She was also smoking. When Dodd requested some shots of the homestead and the people, Rosa suggested we wait for her to put on her traditional Bushman dress, but the team assured her she was fine. Such experiences bring up controversial questions about what constitutes and how to identify 'authentic moments' as well as classify others as less authentic. They also create controversies over the definition of reality: which is the authentic reality-the photographer's or the subject's? How real is realism (Tomaselli, 1999: 151)?

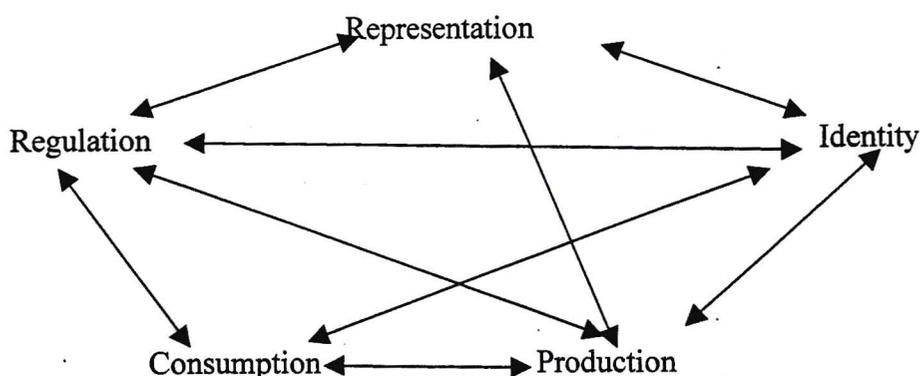
Building on Fabian's concerns with the accuracy of representations, interviews with the ≠Khomani about Weinberg's and Dunn's photographs revealed that much as photographs provide ingenious visual evidence of a particular pro-filmic event, the dimension and depth of their relevance as visual documents are contestable. One beholds what he wants or chooses to see. The implication is that five different cameramen, who simultaneously observe children playing will see, choose to see and produce five very different versions of playing children. What factors would lead to the production of five different versions of the same event?

### **[Re]thinking representation**

The concept of representation has many meanings. From a Latin linguistic perspective, the concept denotes the bringing into presence of something that was previously present, but presenting it in a different way (Goody, 1997: 31). Representation would thus imply presenting again something not present. Philosophically, representation implies a prior assumption of difference between reality and its doubles (Fabian, 1990: 207). The main problem with representation, however, lies in the tension between re-representation and presence (Fabian, 1990: 208). What is this tension or problem of accuracy?

Representation is grounded in the cultural intuitive processes through which meaning is produced, identified and made meaningful. It is also one of the key practices that

produces and maintains culture (Hall, 1997c). Hall's conceptualisation of culture, therefore, centres on the production and exchange of meanings. He introduces the concept of 'circuit of culture', which he elucidates as an environment in which a community of people produces, circulates and consumes meanings through texts and values. Hall's 'environment' is a developed concept of 'system of culture' (Ruby, 1973). Ruby argues that an anthropologist belongs to different "cultural systems"; the home system and the field system. Ruby's *system*, which is also Hall's *circuit*, is Tomaselli's *con-text* (1999: 34) and has five stages, which are in themselves, processes that interpolate at different levels: representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation.



Language is the medium through which thoughts, ideas and feelings are represented in a culture (Hall, 1997c: 1-2). Language sustains dialogue between participants, enabling them to build up shared understandings as well as collective memories, thus facilitating their interpretation of the world in roughly the same way. A culture therefore depends on its participants to share interpretations and meaningfully make sense of their world. The generated meanings then organise and regulate social behaviour (Hall, 1997c: 2-3).

In the circuit of culture, these meanings are constantly being produced and used to form identities through consumption and circulation. This enables cultural members to represent themselves and their worlds similarly. Taking on a social constructionist stance, Hall builds up two processes of representation through which language functions as a cultural signifying practice. The first process is one through which reality, that is objects,

people and events are correlated with a set of mental conceptual maps. The second process involves constructing a set of correspondences between mental conceptual maps and a set of humanly constructed signs. Mental conceptual maps are crucial in representation for they enable cultural members to construct and interpret signs in a shared way. Hence Fabian correctly asserted, that one problematic of representation is the degree of fit between reality and its reproductions in the mind (1990: 207). Fabian's "reproductions in the mind" are Hall's 'mental conceptual maps', which have cultural origins. This implies that people can see something flying in the sky, but will have to negotiate on what it really is. Some may contend it is a bird whilst others will argue it is an airplane (Varela, 1996:156). Varela's hypothesis is that the translation of reality into edible or sensible form requires cultural interpretation, which itself is grounded in Fabian's "reproductions in the mind" (Fabian, 1990: 207). Being social constructs, meanings are dynamic because of what Bronslaw Malinowski (1945:1-3) termed "culture change dynamics", the process by which the existing order of society is transformed into another through evolution and diffusion.

### **Photographic representations**

Setting up a camera before subjects, the visual ethnographer could see many things. He could see what he thinks is going on; he could see what is actually happening; he could see what the subjects want him to see; he could see what he wants the subjects to make him see or he could see what he wants to see and refuse to see what he is supposed to see. Realising the extant 'confrontations' between reality and the 'imaginary', Rouch proposes the creation of visual pictures that are simultaneously truth and fiction, by revealing the subjectivity of the ethnographer, leading to the production of the 'truth of the cinema'. This is the same as Worth's 'snapshot realism', which amounts to a subjective science (DeBouzek, 1989: 304; Feld, 1989: 234; Rouch in Fulchignoni, 1989: 271; Worth, 1996: 20). 'Truth of the cinema' takes into account the social constructionist nature of the process of collecting images and packaging them, whereas the 'cinema of the truth' results in producing 'something truer than reality' (Rouch in Fulchignoni, 1989: 268). Drawing on Rouch's terms, we can talk of the 'truth of photography' and 'photography of truth'. Thus ethnographers should not be concerned with searching for

authentic behaviour or representations (photography of truth), but rather how the performed realities or Newtons's visual theatres (1998:59) are accommodated within the lens of the camera (the truth of photography).

Photography is a method of both seeing and looking within a 'strange confined space' (Price, 1994). A camera is different from an eye in that a camera does not think, but depends on the hand and the eye to create the two dimensional pictures from a three dimensional object (Price, 1994; Webster, 2000: 1). Photography does not involve a thought-out process but what Price terms a 'flash of recognition' (1994: 86), which Pierre Bourdieu terms 'arbitrary selection' (Bourdieu, 1997:162). In the process and practice of photography, the key issues are the hand, mental ideas, mechanical instrument and result (Price, 1994: 29). The mind and hand act as one in the creation of the picture and the eye is dominant in the way a photograph is conceived, as argued by Price:

The eye sees, the segment of reality is framed and isolated by a synaptic leap between eye and reality, the exposure of film to light by means of the instrument camera is activated, the transcription to film occurs; the agency of the hand is comparatively minor [...]. Taking a photograph seems to eliminate the agency of the hand. This capture of a picture is not a thought-out process but the button is pressed to that instant called the flash of recognition (Price, 1994: 29, 30, 86).

A photographer therefore transcribes what he sees as memorable, remarkable, moving, sensational or typical, all of which constitute the process of seeing by interpretation (Price, 1994: 87). In carrying a camera, a photographer does not only gaze at things, objects and events in front of him but also classifies and arranges them in order of importance. Introducing the concept of 'nonsign-events', Larry Gross describes the events that himself and Sol Worth had ignored or coded transparently during their ethnographic sojourns among the Kayapo of Mexico (1985). He described sign-events as those objects and events that had evoked an interpretation. Depending on its context and the context of the observer, an event was assigned sign value (Gross, 1985). Similarly, in travelling with Tomaselli in the Southern Kalahari to Ngwatle communities in Botswana, student researcher and photographer, Darryn Crowe admitted that he "thought with his camera and framed his experience, thereby locating himself through the same construct"

(2003 forthcoming). Crowe's 'framed experience' leads us to Susan Sontag's conception of photography as an "acquisition in several forms" which she describes thus:

In its simplest form, we have in a photograph surrogate possession of a cherished person or thing, which gives photographs some of the character of unique objects. Through photographs, we also have a consumer's relation to events, which are part of our experience, and to those, which are not. [...] A third form of acquisition is that, through image making and image duplicating machines, we can acquire something as information rather than experience. [...] Photographic images are [thus] the medium through which events enter our experience (Price, 1999: 81).

Much as Sontag strongly emphasises "our experience" as the crux of photography, she quickly contends that photography is not dependent on an image-maker, noting that though the photographer carefully "intervenes in setting up and guiding the image-making process, the process itself remains an optical-chemical one" (Sontag, 1999:82-83). Both as a process and experience, photography "imprisons objects by making them stand still" (Price, 1999: 85-86) and "safely motionless". Thus it makes images of reality accessible (Landau, 1996: 133). Photography therefore enables us to depersonalise our relation to the world, allowing us to participate, while confirming alienation as Sontag (1999: 87) again expounds:

Like a pair of binoculars with no right or wrong end, the camera makes exotic things near intimate; and familiar things small, abstract, strange, much farther away. [This is because] one is 'here' not there. [...] In the real world, something is happening and no one knows what is going on to happen. In the image world, it has happened and it will further happen in that way.

A photograph is also conceptualised as a discursive space (Krauss, 1999). It is seen as a set of practices, institutions and relationships through which man attempts to address the extant tension between reality and his perception of that reality through photographic images (Krauss, 1999: 207). Photographic experiences or Pierre Bourdieu's 'photographic acts' enable photographers to capture aspects of reality through arbitrary selection and transcription terms (Bourdieu, 1999: 162; 164). A photograph is thus a still life composition, a message without a code that introduces an awareness of having-been-

there, thus assuming an illogical conjunction between the 'here-now' and the 'there-then' (Barthes, 1999a: 39).

Drawing on Barthes's concept of 'here-now' and 'there-then', Christian Metz argues that representation is an exhibition of a pro-filmic event, in this case, a pro-photographic event (1974: 4). Photographic representation, therefore, enables photographers to present somebody's presence on their behalf because they (the subjects) are neither here nor there. During presence, which Fabian (1990:209) defines as the context in which subjects and objects share time and place, a pro-photographic event is encoded on to film and is later transcribed into a picture. This picture assumes a form, or Barthes's 'mythical status' (1999b: 51).

The picture simulates reality. Thus as an icon, it induces effectual and incessant participation in a "distant spectator thereby recreating a mode of presence that is believable" (Metz, 1974: 4-5). For instance, looking at pictures of Nelson Mandela gives people a feeling of knowing who Mandela is. That feeling of knowing Mandela (even though we have never met him), assures us that we could recognise him if we met him in a street. This is Metz's sense of believability. Fabian's concern with accuracy therefore can be applied here to argue that the problem with representation is the tension between pro-photographic presence and photographic sign events (1990: 208). A photograph therefore constitutes reality's double - a visual *simulacrum* of a photographer's impression of reality (Metz, 1974: 4; Fabian, 1990: 207). In taking a picture, a photographer depicts what looks to him like reality in a particular epoch.

Drawing heavily on Barthes, Metz (1974) introduces the notions of an object-copy relationship and real unreality, arguing that when we look at a photograph, we do not see reality or presence in front of us, but we see a presence that has once been there. Here the photograph attains the role of a copy and assumes a role of a re-production of the real object, which, in essence, it is not, thereby creating real unreality. For example, looking at a photograph of the #Xhomi leader, Dawid Kruiper, one sees something that looks like Dawid himself, but if we were to touch it, 'our hands would close on an empty light'

not a soft skin. Thus, the real Dawid did exist as a pro-photographic event at one time, but what we see now is unreal because Dawid has now been produced and re-produced by deliberation and our awareness of what is here on this picture (Metz, 1974: 5-6). The photographer had deliberately (due to mechanical and practical constraints) left the real pro-photographic presence of Dawid behind. In its place, the photographer captured the shadow of his presence, pasted it onto film and then developed it into a picture, thus giving the viewer a false sense of having been there, having seen a pro-photographic Dawid.

What the viewer of a photograph sees is someone's imaged statement about reality without a context: no sound, no smell, no background noise, no fires and no dagga. The photograph is a negotiated reality without the experience that surrounded Bourdieu's photographic act. Looking at a photograph, the viewer does not see a reproduction of reality, as reality cannot be reproduced, but an interpretation of reality that is based on absence (Goody, 1997; Worth, 1978). For instance, in looking at Dawid's photograph, we actually see what is not in the photograph; we are looking at an absence of the real Dawid. The facial wrinkles, the dreadlocks, the dirty blue jacket and the dagga joint in Dawid's mouth are all absences; they are not 'here-now', thus Dawid becomes a culturally organised system of photographic icons that remind us of the pro-photographic Dawid in the Kalahari. This raises questions as to whether photographs constitute representations or absentations.

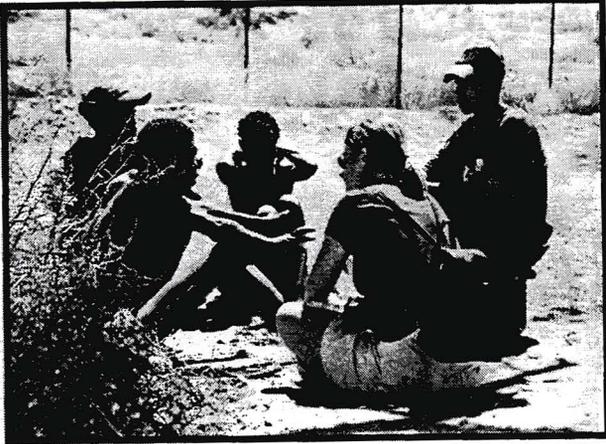
### **Photographic experience in ethnographic photography**

Ethnographic photography involves the use of image-making techniques to study and present outsider perceptions of indigenous cultures through pictures. The concept of outsider is contentious and shifting, as modern ethnography involves people studying their own cultures. Ethnographic photography is centred on the observer and observed. Visual culture rests on, among other things, the "articulation between viewers and viewed" (Evans, 1999:4). Evans's "articulation" is the relationship that impacts on picture-taking processes and eventually the quality of the resultant photographs. The concept of human visual behaviour refers to the interaction between the photographer,

photographed and the camera (Newton, 1998). Drawing from 19<sup>th</sup> century psychiatric studies, Newton argues that people engage in photographic behaviour by behaving differently in front of cameras (1998: 60). For instance, in an interview on Durban's East Coast Radio, Lara Plumstead, an evicted participant of M-NET's first *Big Brother* reality television game show, argued that though she kissed a boyfriend during the show, she could not have consented to sex, explaining, "under those cameras, never, never" (*Breakfast Show*, 2001: 24 September).

Drawing on Tia Maria's request for a second and authentic photograph, Newton introduces various concepts to describe the viewer-viewed encounters noting that, for "every occasion for taking a snapshot involves a relationship" (1998: 61). A photograph is also an index of the relationship that once existed between different cultures. A photographer and his subject interact through visual behaviour and the photograph is thus a visual record of that interaction through which the reader of the photograph interacts with the imaged subject. This reader-imaged subject relationship is also largely affected by how the observer interacted with the observed during the process of photography (Newton, 1998:65). When subject and photographer embrace or have intimate reciprocal interactions, the resulting equivalent is a visual embrace. When one snaps or steals a subject's picture, the resulting photograph becomes a visual theft. Other interactions are visual gift, visual encounter, visual document, visual theatre, visual cliché, visual lie, visual intrusion, visual assault, visual rape and visual murder (Newton, 1998: 65). Newton then recommends that the perspective, direction of the action and intensity of the interaction, as factors of visual behaviour, need to be considered carefully when participating in a photographic event.

The circuit of culture model enables individuals to produce and share meanings and knowledge of the world with other cultural members in similar ways. When an observer enters and participates in a photographic event or experience, he does so, not purely as an individual, but as a member of a particular circuit with outstandingly different perspectives of the world from that of the observed. No matter how many circuits of culture we add to this photographic experience, they do not create a new circuit of



culture. Rather, they create a space through which members from different circuits of culture can interact. In photo 21 below, there is no Newton's visual embrace between the subjects and Dunn, the photographer but rather between Dodd and Jacob, who were discussing Rupert Isaacson's *The Healing Land*. Lena, Jacob's wife, was drunk (below,

right) and could not comprehend the interview. She was not consciously aware of the photographic process. When Tomaselli finished talking to her husband Jacob, after Dodd's interview, Lena greeted Tomaselli, asking incoherent questions, and again managed to follow us to



Tomaselli's car. Dunn's other photo below shows this. In the photo on the left, also taken



by Dunn, Nhamo, on the right did not want

to give Lena any attention because she had blocked the doorway and was going to continue speaking so long as she had an audience. Here, she smelt of alcohol. Next to Nhamo was Dodd who leant forward to give Dunn a space to 'shoot' Lena. As for myself, I was in the front seat waiting for Tomaselli to take off because we were all tired. However, he could not because Jacob, outside the camera frame and leaning on the front window, had so many things to tell 'Prof.' (All photographs above, courtesy of Sian Dunn).

Does Lena's picture (above-right) demonstrate visual theft or visual intrusion? It is difficult to tell, because Jacob gave permission to 'shoot' and as head of the family, we

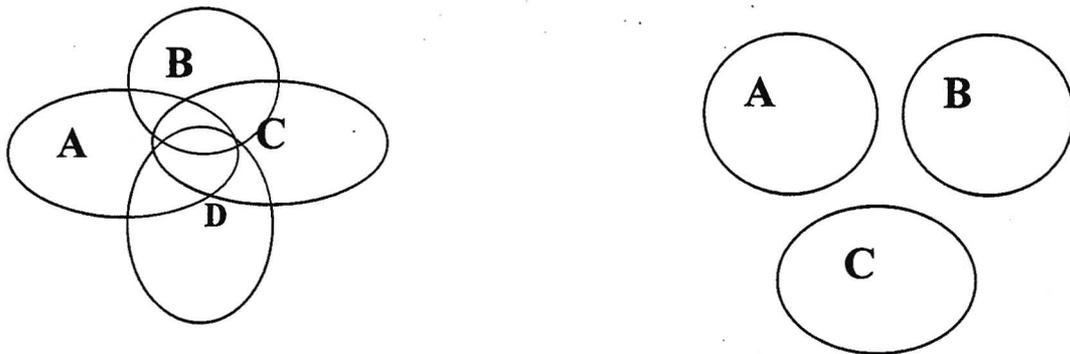
(photographer Dunn and myself with a video camera) assumed he made that decision on behalf of his wife as well. In the second photo (above left), however, there appears to be Rouch's necessary contact or Newton's visual embrace between subject and photographer. In reality, however, there was none, for Lena was drunk to the extent that she thought of herself as Nelson Mandela's wife. The concept of visual behaviour therefore, poses a problem because it does not address the compromise and tensions of both visible and invisible circuits of culture that shape a particular encounter like Dodd's interview with Jacob. Lena and two ≠Khomani boys were also present at the interview and the photo indicates many circuits of culture: Dodd's, Jacob's (also Lena's and the boys') and the photographer's as visible circuits. Then there was Tomaselli's circuit of culture, which is absent from the image as well as the encounter. He had not yet come out of the car, knowing the interview would be disrupted, as Jacob wanted to talk to him. Tomaselli's absent presence therefore contributed to Dodd's encounter with Jacob as photographer Dunn observes (2002, Interview):

[In studying these photographs of Jacob and Lena], I think one has to see them in context with the rest, not in isolation, because Jacob, the whole time [throughout Dodd's interview] wanted to talk to Prof. [Tomaselli] and he was happy to finally [after the interview] to talk to him and didn't want him to leave.

Absent from both the pro-photographic event and resultant image, Tomaselli's circuit of culture was present and helped to create the space in which Dodd and Jacob interacted. His circuit of culture shaped the nature of the interview and consequently the photographic event because Jacob and Lena knew they were talking to and being photographed by 'Professor's students'. Without the ≠Khomani being assured that we were Tomaselli's students, no fruitful interviews were conducted in July 2002. With Sherieen Pretorius, as an English-Afrikaans translator, I conducted focus group discussions with Khobus Witbooi, Isak Gooi, Jacob Tieties, Elsie Kariseb and Geoffrey Kruiper on photographic representation. Tomaselli was still in Durban and was to come four days later. In the midst of the interview, Witbooi asserted that "we are going to tell you more things when the Prof. comes. Because he is not here, it's not good to say everything" (FGD I, 2002). Later that day, Silikat Van Wyk told Damien (Tomaselli's son), that "you are a white man but your father is a black man". Damien wondered what

his father had done to “these people so as to trust him so much”. I knew then that, though black like them, the ≠Khomani could not trust me outside the circuit of ‘Professor’s students’. Damien’s presence as ‘Professor’s son’ did not improve the situation, making me question what the Bushmen could have observed which made them think we were not behaving like ‘Professor’s students’.

The three circuits of culture belonging to myself, the three white students and the San ≠Khomani could not negotiate and establish some space in which we could discuss photographs until Silikat and Khobus indirectly indicated our ‘outsideness’ and consequently their perception of our circuits of culture as those of outsiders. The diagram on the left illustrates the encounter depicted in photo 21, in which Dodd interviews Jakob. A,B,C and D illustrate the four circuits of culture belonging to the research team, Jakob, Lena and the two Bushmen boys and the absent Tomaselli. The diagram on the right demonstrates the tension and the failed negotiation between the various circuits of culture of the ≠Khomani, ‘Professors’ students’ and the absent Tomaselli himself. The two diagrams attempt to elucidate these phenomena.

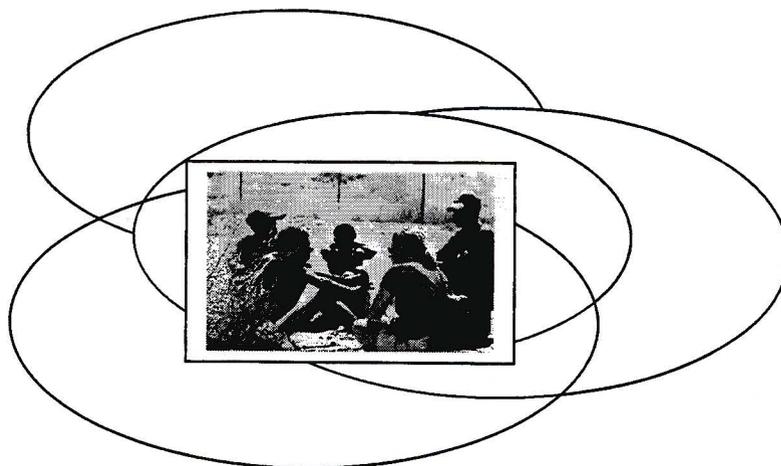


In the communities of Witdraai, Welkom, Eren and Blinkwater, there is what the people there perceive as the ‘professor’s circuit of culture’. As researchers, it was easier to be identified as ‘professor’s students’ than ourselves, for Tomaselli has had a longstanding relationship with them. It could perhaps be because of what Anna Festus, SASI’s field officer explained, that “Prof. is a big man with a young heart”. Perhaps Festus was referring to humility or Tomaselli’s mode of interpersonal relationships. I would not know. Dodd (2002) mentions Johannes Kaartman who, upon seeing Tomaselli in the

community, tells his friends, “here is the Prof. who takes and sends back photos and please take some more”. The real background to Johannes’s statement is that Tomaselli does not carry a camera, a notebook or a pen to record his interactions within the community. He does not *personally* take or distribute photographs. Yet Johannes and others are aware of Tomaselli’s backstage organisational work: bringing the students who take pictures, paying for development of further copies that are taken and distributed and bringing the students, who distribute the pictures. This is the community’s understanding of Tomaselli, which, perhaps Witbooi and his friends could not identify us with during the less successful focus group discussions at Witdraai in July.

### Summary

Photography as a process, practice and experience enables the photographer to enter into a relationship with the photographed. The photograph becomes a visual record or document of the relationship that existed between the researchers and their subjects. This interaction also involves the circuits of culture of the subjects, researchers and photographers. The nature of these circuits of cultures is visible or invisible depending on the on the nature of negotiation between outsiders and indigenous people. In the case of Dunn’s photography, which I observed through the lenses of a video camera, I also added and imposed my circuit of culture: a Malawian, black, MA student at Natal, married with a child. The location of the resultant ethnographic photograph is the *confluence* of the various circuits of culture. The photograph becomes a result of the tensions, negotiation and compromise among the visible and invisible circuits of culture as elucidated in the diagram below.



## **The notion of ‘Spectacle’: Photographic colonisation of the Bushmen**

The concern over the problematic of spectacle has been a major issue in representation thus bringing out questions of aesthetics, ethics and objectivity in how indigenous cultures are seen, observed and represented. The notion of spectacle is thus concerned with concepts of difference, stereotyping and otherness (Hall, 1997b). Building on his earlier work of representation, Hall introduces the concept of the ‘spectacle of the other’, elucidating how stereotyping and othering are manifested in popular culture genres like music and videos. Representation is distinguished from depiction at both levels of praxis and conception, with the focus being on feeling, attitudes, emotions, fears, and anxieties as well as capitalising on collective memory or ‘common sense’ (Hall, 1997b: 226).

In the first orders of meaning, there is a literal, denotative meaning of pictures (Hall, 1997b; Tomaselli, 1999; Fiske, 1987). As an icon simulating reality, a pictorial text uses words to increase the believability of the text. At this stage, a picture is just a depiction, showing what is or should be ‘out there’ (Tomaselli and Shepperson, 1991). In the second and third orders or levels of reality however, the pictorial text undergoes a transformation or metamorphosis, from the iconic level to the indexical and symbolic levels, during which producers and readers of texts attempt to fix, situate or contextualise the visual signified. This process of fixing and situating constitute what Peirce terms *being* and *becoming*, when signifying subjects (producers or readers) develop their experience through the sign (pictorial text) into a communicable entity (Tomaselli and Shepperson, 1991). *Becoming* through texts constitutes a representational practice, thus representation is largely a praxis (Hall, 1997b: 228; Tomaselli and Shepperson, 1991).

In pictorial representations of other cultures, issues of difference, sexuality, ethnicity and gender come into play. Producers of pictorial texts of other cultures emphasise indigenous bodies because, as Hall argues, these images are “naturalised as instruments of skill and achievement” (1997b: 231). He gives an example of many messages based on stereotypes that accompany images of black people in popular texts like films, magazines and advertisements. When read in context, these images *accumulate* meanings

of difference and otherness, during which, they subvert or reinforce the entrenched stereotypes about the *blackness*.

The notion of difference is drawn from structural linguistics, which classifies things in binary opposites, for example this is black because it is not white. Hall's Saussurean-Bakhtinian argument is that *difference* enables us to construct meaning "through dialogue with the other" (1997b: 235). Thus by considering the concepts of signified racial difference, commodity racism, staged racial difference, stereotyping, fantasy and power, fetishism and disavowal, we are able to classify positive and negative images with respect to how they empower or dis-empower subject communities. The organised perpetuation and naturalisation of negative fantasies about indigenous cultures constitute what Hall terms the 'spectacle of the other' (1997b).

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Africa played a role in the growing trade of ethnological show business where indigenous bodies were displayed for education, commerce and curiosity (Parsons, 2000: 13). This was the age of Social Darwinism and African exploration. It was a period of growing Western imperialism and colonisation, which was also compounded by biological confusions about the inferiority of indigenous Bantu Africans, suggesting they were closer to animals than humans.

Sara (Saartjie) Baartman was the first known Khoi person to become a victim of European physical anthropology, the objective of which was to understand primitive anatomies (Morris, 1996). Her Khoi ancestry as well as her huge figure made her a sight for curiosity. She was taken to England in 1810 to have her anatomy studied for her extraordinary steatopygia and, as an exhibit, she became known as a 'Hottentot Venus'. She was extensively examined and exhibited in Europe until her death in 1815, aged 25 (Morris, 1996). After her death, Baartman's body was cast in wax, dissected and the skeleton fully re-articulated and exhibited for tourists (Morris, 1996: 70). Thus, even in death, Baartman became an object of European spectacle. Sarah remained the property of a French museum and, after lengthy legislative and political negotiations, Baartman was finally brought to South Africa and then buried in August 2002. After Baartman's death

in 1815, more Bushmen were captured and taken to Europe for examination and exhibition. Bushmen skeletons were exhumed from graves, collected and transported across the globe. As the demand increased, they were literally hunted, killed or kept in poor conditions to facilitate sickness and death. The bodies were decomposed quickly so as to recover the skeletons (Morris, 1996: 73).

Alongside the educational curiosity about Bushman bodies, lay entertainment objectives. The Bushmen were captured and taken to Europe to dance in theatres. For instance, Franz Taaibosch, nicknamed 'Clicko, the dancing Bushman', appeared in England and France in 1913 and remained a performer until his death in New York in 1940 (Parsons, 1999: 13). Attempts to liberate Taaibosch from his manager resulted in his being taken away to Ireland then Cuba and finally to America. He was the best known Bushman until the appearance of N!xau, the star of the 1980s film, *The Gods must be Crazy* (Parsons, 1999: 13).

Curiosity about Bushman bodies also led to the search for the 'authentic Bushman'. This search and longing for the authentic bushman manifested itself in two ways: the setting up of museum dioramas and photographs. As representations, of "external reality", colonial photographs helped "establish concepts of order and interpretations of an alien environment" (Webster, 2000: 1). Colonial photographers used "juxtaposition, moralising and comparison" to place the alien African world in a "comprehensible European context" (Webster, 2000: 1-2). Focussing on the photography of Dr. Wilhelm Bleek, Christopher Webster (2000: 4-5) traces the influence of colonial photography in Social Darwinism, arguing that such photography was akin to zoological studies. In attempting to read such photography, Webster advises:

[In colonial photography, subjects] are surface reflections of a group of people to whom the medium of photography and its attendant portraitist, art historical baggage, was foreign. As an alien structure outside of understood cultural systems, the relationship between the viewed and the object-the photograph- is distant and cool. The fact that the camera and the photograph, with its complexity of readings, was of European origin is significant when reading is attempted (Webster, 2000: 8).

The South African Museum Bushman exhibitions gave false impressions of the Bushman living in a timeless, peaceful landscape against the historical reality in which they were waging final desperate battles against white settlers who would later dispossess them (Schmidt, 2001: 4). Engaged in the diorama and political correctness debate, some have argued for the maintenance of the Cape Town diorama for historical education (Skotness, 2000: 38). Even ≠Khomani Bushmen leaders like Dawid Kruiper liked the diorama “for instilling pride in Bushman heritage” (Simoes, 2001: 157; Gordon, Rassool and Witz, 1996: 268-269; White, 1995: 17). Other Khoisan leaders welcomed the closure, arguing that the diorama representations were “vulgar” (Tromp, 2001: 29). How vulgar was the diorama? Belinda Kruiper noted:

I spoke about [representations] earlier on - that Vetkat (my husband) and I went to a museum (SA Museum in Cape Town). [...] Vetkat stood there looking at the display of a Bushman herdsman on his land and I didn't realise what he (Vetkat) was going through. It's only afterwards when we got home (Blinkwater Farm, Kalahari) that he got very ill. He was in a spiritual state and he kept on saying about him being nothing but just an example, 'we are just examples'. Two days later I asked him, 'what really upset you?' and he said 'you see, I was standing on one side of the glass, breathing but there I was, looking at myself, on the other side of the glass but was not breathing'. He (Vetkat) kept on saying he was not happy because it was not right (Belinda Kruiper, 2001: Interview).

Photographs were also used to feed European curiosities and fantasies about Bushmen. In the Southern Kalahari, foreign travellers left their metropolitan homes, travelled to the wild interior and experienced trials and adventures. They saw the Bushmen (Jones, 2001: 8) and took most of these photographs. Initially, these photographs, together with the discourse that contextualised them, were part of the colonisation process. Economic and political control can never be complete or even effective without mental control. To control people's minds is to control their tools of self-definition in relation to others (Wilmsen, 1996:186).

Mental colonisation results in alienation, loss of historical memory and identification with colonial identities on the part of the colonised. (Wilmsen, 1996). After being subjected to colonial representations of themselves, the Bushmen naturalised these representations. Instead of seeing themselves, they saw themselves as representations of

their culture (Buntman 1996: 278). This attitude of seeing themselves as representations manifested itself in Vetkat's observation of the Bushmen being examples as he stood in front of a Bushman diorama.

Photographic imaging of the 'authentic' Bushman has changed over the years due to the different political and intellectual climates; photography has largely affected Europeans' imagination and understanding of indigenous Africans (Landau, 1996: 129). The 18<sup>th</sup> century traveller, Peter Kolb repudiated the romance of savagery in his description of Bushmen but his illustrations betrayed his text by ennobling Bushmen, which points to the contemporary tensions between texts and pictures (Landau, 1996). Picturing, was thus part of the English empire's attempt to classify, and thus consequently, control the world. Photographic colonisation was also boosted by the advancement in camera technology.

The notion of 'shooting' a picture then came into use and photography naturalised the 'possessibility' of those indigenous spaces (Landau, 1996). Photography by travelling Europeans can be compared to their experience of guns; hence photographers could shoot with both cameras and guns (Landau, 1996: 132). Like a gun, the camera made its subjects "safely motionless", thus shooting was made "hygienic" (Landau, 1996: 133.) Drawing on military terminology, Paul Landau describes colonial photography. He compares a camera to a gun in that both were used to make subjects stand still, arguing that the "photographic cartridge" removed the "mess from the hands of the operator". The notion of "hygienic" describes the colonial mentality that they (photographers) were not to blame for the power relations embodied by and the repercussions of the resultant images because the camera was conceptualised as a "truth-telling" equipment (Landau, 1996: 132-133) and the photograph as "factual evidence" (Webster, 2000:1). Colonial photography, therefore, placed the Bushmen people and animals in a common place and justified their removal to the home of the observed (Landau, 1996: 140; Webster, 2000: 4). The camera and the gun therefore, "isolated, stilled and rendered objects discrete from their environments" (Landau, 1996: 141; Barnard, 1996).

In 1885, an American showman, G. Farini, visited the Kalahari to capture Bushmen for sideshows, to look for a ranch and to search for diamonds. He admitted to having found Bushmen and shooting them with a camera. Finally, he shot them with a gun. The contradiction lay in the fact that though Bushmen were hunted down and killed as predatory bandits and parasites by white settlers, they were not pictured as dangerous for western audiences (Landau, 1996: 136). From the 1920s and 1930s the use of photography in indigenous societies grew and Landau distinguishes the two strands of photography: ethnographic photography and amateur, naturalist pictorialism (Landau, 1996: 139).

In recent times, Bushmen photography has been carried out by tourists, journalists, researchers and government officials, and in most cases, the subjects themselves do not see the photos (Weinberg, 2002: Interview; FGD I, II, III, 2002). Photos are taken for different purposes, but generally, they are used as a proof of 'having been there' or 'what is actually 'out there'. Jody explained after she took an evening shot of her son, Nino playing a guitar next to Vetkat:

[I was] taking the photographs here because I feel that I want to do justice in explaining to someone in words what I saw out here, what I experienced out here [...]. I want people to actually see it [...]. Talking photographs is a way interacting and making the interaction more personal [...]. Photographs are memories of times gone by (Van Schalkwyk, 2002: Interview).

Unlike colonial photographic practices, which ignored the participation of subjects as equal partners, most modern ethnographic photographers strive to base their photography on ethical principles. They place emphasis on access, consent, returning pictures and long lasting relationships between researchers and subjects (Henderson, 1988; Weinberg, 2002: Interview). Giving them back their photos enables the ≠Khomani and other Bushmen to look at themselves. This moves them to be happy, more open and even to ask for more photos to be taken (Dodd, 2003). Elsie Van Wyk and Johannes Kaartman requested more photographs because they were happy to see themselves (FGD I, II, III, 2002).

My field interviews and conversations established ≠Khomani Bushmen perceptions of western photographic representations and their relations to other groups of people, which both the traditionalists and revisionists ignore (Barnard, 1996: 247). The notion of spectacle, therefore, is grounded in the relationship between subjects and researchers where the latter have a hegemonic attitude towards the former. Spectacularisation of subjects may occur without photographs, because in its simplest form, a spectacle is a hegemonic attitude we have about other people such that our relationship to them is governed by this attitude. Images like photographs can only manifest this attitude or the mental images. Thus in studying the notion of spectacle, emphasis should not be only on photographic texts but also on photographic acts surrounding photographic texts.

### **The South African representation debate: Bester/Buntman versus Weinberg/Bregin**

There are two schools of thought on the Kalahari representation debate: the traditionalists or isolationists and the revisionists or integrationists (Barnard, 1996). Traditionalists perceive the Bushmen as remnants of the hunter-gatherers who have been isolated – and that the only way to correct colonial dispossession and dehumanisation of the Bushmen is to give them back their land and leave them alone. On the other hand, revisionists see the ≠Khomani as an impoverished underclass in a larger social system, who are finding it hard to cope with demands of modernity. They believe that the solution to Bushmen poverty can be found by developing the areas and skills of Bushmen.

Employing structuralist semiology as a method of textual analysis, Rory Bester and Barbara Buntman (1999) attempted to read Weinberg's photographic documentary exhibition, 'Footprints in the Sand' (1996), which formed the basis of the published version entitled *In Search of the San* (1997). They based their analysis on the notion of 'spectacle', which derives from structuralism. Focussing on Weinberg's photographic styles and aesthetics, Bester and Buntman questioned Weinberg's attitude towards and his relationship with subject communities (1999).

Focussing on *In Search of the San* (1997), this section critiques Bester and Buntman's reading for two reasons. The first is that 'Footprints in the Sand' (from where I selected one photo for critical analysis) was only part of *In Search of the San* which could have been in print when Weinberg participated in a Cape Town exhibition titled 'Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushman'. Weinberg did not want to reveal much about his upcoming book and thus decided to exhibit a small slice of it. *In Search of the San* however contains much more of a written account explaining Weinberg's field experiences, which add more meaning to the photographic documentary. Secondly, I refer to *In Search of the San* because Bester's and Buntman's article on Weinberg's photography appeared in 1999, implying they had access to both the exhibition information and Weinberg's book which had come out by then. Their bibliography indicates they had access to the published version of the book. This discussion therefore assumes Bester and Buntman made inter-textual referential applications between the exhibition and published book and that their reading, which mainly focussed on photographic aesthetics applied to Weinberg's published photo documentary as well as some of his other works.

Bester and Buntman focused on the exhibition 'Footprints in the Sand', beginning, in their criticism, by providing a brief history of the Kagga Kamma private game reserve of the Cedarberg mountains, from which some exhibition photos were taken between the 1980s and 1990s. Bester and Buntman make footnote acknowledgement of the return of some land to the ≠Khomani community outside Kagga Kamma (1999: 50). They also give a brief history of projects on Bushmen representation, noting that most of these were motivated by fantasies. They thus argue that these representational fantasies of 'bushmanness' have become a 'bushmania', which is driven by politicians, academics, philanthropists and the tourism industry (1999: 52).

Bushmania has made the Bushmen a Khoisan spectacle', which has induced and entrenched their dispossession, displacement and exploitation over centuries (Bester and Buntman, 1999: 52). Without examining the revisionist and traditionalist ethnography debate, Bester and Buntman nonetheless seem to place Weinberg among the revisionists

charging he attempted to evince the Bushmen as a disadvantaged South African minority marginalized within corporate capitalism (1999: 52; cf. Buntman, 1996). As if concurring with Bester and Buntman's classification, Weinberg himself argues:

[Visiting Kalahari] I expected to meet people living in harmony with nature, practising their hunter-gatherer lifestyle unaffected by the modern world. Instead I encountered communities whose ties with the land had been loosened, living in a state of trauma and under degrading circumstances [...]. The once 'harmonious', 'egalitarian', 'hunter-gatherer' culture no longer appeared to be 'at one with nature'. It was this sense of dislocation, the sense of a distance between my expectations, and the reality of what I saw that drove me to continue to explore the situation of the 'contemporary San [...]. These images reflect cultures in transition (Weinberg, 1997: 1; 1996: 340)

This 'cultural transition' has been induced and worsened by both colonial and post-colonial land appropriation and exploitation by both black and white people. This exploitation moved Weinberg to focus on "poignant issues – the struggles for land, water and schooling" (Weinberg, 1999; 2002: Interview). In attempting to show the transition and the growing poverty amongst modern-day Bushmen, Weinberg is just being "adamant" because such struggles are "traditionally beyond the scopes of documentary practice" (Bester and Buntman, 1999: 53). Sampling a picture of a "!Xo soldier at Schmidtsdrift" (photo nine) who had worked in the mines, Bester and Buntman acknowledge Weinberg's photos as bringing an "unexpected facet" of contemporary Bushmen lives. Such "unexpected facets" contribute towards "a consciousness of Khoisan empowerment" but not a source of "actual empowerment" because social documentary practice reduces itself to a process through which the cultural values of the photographer are imposed on the photographed (Bester and Buntman, 1999: 54). On the one hand, Weinberg's photography is thus recommended for its advocacy for the case of the 'suffering Bushmen', sensitising the outside world about 'what is out there in the Kalahari'. On the other hand, Bester and Buntman argue that his photography makes no contribution to the self-esteem of the Bushmen themselves because it was Weinberg, not the Bushmen themselves, who took those photographs. The experience of observing Tomaselli's discussions with Rosa on Bain's photograph of her parents tell a different story. Rosa never knew about the photograph until Nigel Crawhall of SASI discovered it in Bain's book, copied it and gave it to her. This copy of Bain's photograph of her

parents, unnamed in Bain's book, invoked many memories for Rosa. This copy was glued to an A3 paper together with three colour photographs taken by a *National Geographic* team that came to South Africa in 1999 during the return of some land to the ≠Khomani Bushmen. Looking at the photographs, Rosa talked to Tomaselli about the individuality of each of the subjects - what had happened to them and their relationship to each other. Then when asked what the photos meant to her, she unexpectedly lamented:

[These photos] mean a lot to me in my heart, because when I look at them, I think of my grandmothers and ancestors. I love the photos of my three grandmothers, my great grandmothers because when I look at them, I get courage. I really get courage. When I look at them, then I think I must go further. They show me [...] that my blood is close to uncle Dawid Kruiper's blood because our blood is one. I want to tell Professor [Tomaselli] that when we lived in the [Kalahari Gemsbok] Park, we really lived. This fig tree in the photograph....it means a lot for me Professor. I love my people. I love my grandmothers (Rosa Meintjies, April 2002: Interview).

Drawing on Su Braden (1983: 2), Bester and Buntman further reject possibilities of genuine collaboration between photographers and subjects, resulting in participatory representation. They claim this is because the person behind the camera always appropriates the identity of the person in front of the camera. Again, Bester and Buntman reject Weinberg's photos for neglecting to "address the Bushmen voices" so that they "become part of the photographic history of Bushmania informed and overshadowed by the myth of the Bushman" (Bester and Buntman, 1999: 57). In their dismissal of Weinberg's representation, Bester and Buntman footnote an exhibition 'How We See Each Other' held at the SA Museum in July 1997 as a successful attempt at participatory representation. They suggest the success is because the photos were taken by the indigenous Okambahe of Namibia with the assistance of anthropologist Rick Rohde (Bester and Buntman, 1999: 94). Bester and Buntman neither provide examples of self-representations like the Kayapo in South America (Turner, 1990) nor do they examine outsiders' photographs of the Okambahe and compare them to the self-representations to establish the differences.

According to Bester and Buntman, Weinberg's photographs produce a 'double act of subjugation', producing victims for an audience expecting subjugation (Bester and

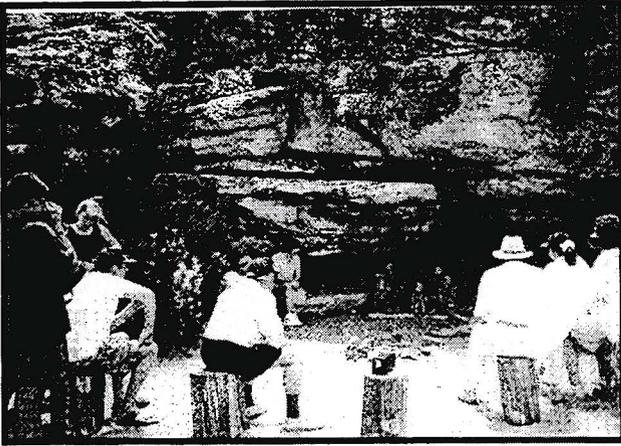
Buntman, 1999). Weinberg's images are seen as visions of disempowerment, creating 'victimologies' as they do not portray socio-political and historical changes within ≠Khomani communities. Bester and Buntman argue that:

[Weinberg's subjects] are fixed in an ethnographic present, present (ing) a seamless and singular reality of victimisation without any sense of the process of Khoisan struggles to assert their political identities and develop economic independence. [The photographs] re-romanticise people [thus] conforming to the aesthetising convention of humanity dwarfed by nature. [All this because the Bushmen] do not participate in visual discourse. [They are] a silent minority, who show no resistance to the identity which has been created for them (1999: 57-58).

What do Bester's and Buntman's observations about Weinberg's photos reveal? They do not provide the historical context of 'bushmania' or the spectacle but still find Weinberg guilty of perpetuating 'victimologies'. They speak of 'Khoisan identity' (1999: 50) as if it fixed or exists and, that with careful analysis, we can come across it. Buntman herself uses the term 'misrepresentation' referring to Bushman photographic images, implying there must be one way of representing people (1996: 279). Bushmen are seen as victims, who do not participate in the formulation of how they are seen, as "it is not clear how much the Khoisan themselves participate in the process of making representations" (Bester and Buntman, 1999: 54) This raises the question of why Bester and Buntman never attempted to find out from the Bushmen on how much they participated in producing their representations. This makes one wonder whether they talked to the Bushmen at all.

Bushman voices are disregarded in interpreting Weinberg's photographs, yet Bester and Buntman do not satisfactorily demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of ethnographic photography or the role of a documentary photographer (Weinberg, 2002: Interview). Though they reject Weinberg's representation, they do not suggest how the Bushmen should be photographed so as to 'realistically' present that complex reality and at the same time empower the Bushmen themselves. They also do not suggest steps that could be taken towards achieving objective photography. Buntman's photograph (below) of their (Bester and herself) interaction with the Bushmen in the picture (Buntman, 1996: 279), ironically demonstrates her inability to move away from 'Weinberg's bushmania'.

The photograph, taken from the viewpoint of tourists, depicts tourists, mostly dressed in



white and sitting on tree logs looking at a Bushman family huddled together near a cave. This family is dwarfed by the rock formation like the Kagga Kamma Park advertising brochure (Buntman, 1996: 273), which was rejected as colonising through othering and differentiating (Buntman, 1996: 275). Such representations, Buntman

had argued, “set the Bushmen families like people in a museum, a diorama whereas the visitor remains a spectator”. (Buntman, 1996: 275). Yet Buntman’s photograph demonstrates the distance between the visitors in the photo and their Bushmen subjects. Just like Weinberg’s photograph of Anna Swarts collecting roots (1997: 29), which she had dismissed as disempowering for diminishing Anna and dominating her with the environment, Buntman diminishes her Bushmen, making them almost invisible and anonymous. It is thus ironic that she is unable to turn away from ‘Bushmania’, the making of a spectacle of indigenous people thus she herself participates in ‘disempowering Bushmen’. Both Buntman and Bester are trapped in ‘white guilt’ and think that by rejecting Weinberg’s photographic representations for ‘perpetuating Bushmania’, they might redress the despicable damage apartheid and corporate capitalism have done to the Bushmen communities.

Their criticism of Weinberg’s photography ignores the historical context of the Bushmen, the context in which Weinberg carried out his photography, the influence of ethnographic filmmaker, John Marshall, who introduced Weinberg to working in Bushmen communities and the context in which they were reading those photos (Tomaselli, 1999). More importantly, Bester and Buntman do not seem to be aware of the limitations of photographs as ethnographic documents as well as research tools and cannot differentiate inactive from activated photographic texts. They also overlook the extant tension in Weinberg’s photo documentary between the photos themselves both as inactive or

activated texts. Though activated after being edited, explained for, published or exhibited, Weinberg's photos still remain inactive texts, for the lack of context surrounding the photographic act and the ambiguity surrounding for whom they were produced.

## **Weinberg and Elana Bregin**

A photojournalist is a storyteller with a camera (Weinberg, 2002: Interview; Kraus, 1998a). Storytelling has a very long tradition and is about 'contradictions', 'nuances', 'rhythm' and 'different perceptions' (Weinberg, 2000b: 9). Storytelling requires openness, creativity and the "generosity of the spirit for the storyteller and the observer", reasons Weinberg cites for his refusal to be considered an expert on Bushmen representations (2000b: 9; 2002: Interview). Regarding *In Search of the San* as well as 'Footprints in the Sand', Weinberg (1997) contends that his objective was to photograph the people of a dispossessed culture, whose community ties with the land had been loosened and who were living very degraded lives. Placing his argument within the revisionist paradigm, Weinberg notes that:

The essence of my work has been to photograph a culture in transition. Formerly people who were hunter-gatherers with nomadic lifestyle, the vast majority of the San, the only survivors of an intensive genocide campaign, now live in Namibia and Botswana in very difficult and harsh conditions. Most are dispossessed but still continue to live on the land, adapting their hunter-gatherer ways to the demands of the modern world. [My work] looks at how their lifestyles have changed and the challenges and obstacles face in the modern world [and] their struggles to come to terms with the transience of their culture (Weinberg, 2000b: 9).

How did Weinberg attempt to show the 'struggles', the 'transience' the 'dehumanisation' or the 'demands of the modern world'? He observes:

I always spend time first getting to know people, working closely with NGOs and organisations that work with the community [which finally] decides whether I can photograph and what I intend to do with my photographs. [...] I always present my case to as many people as possible so that they are aware of my presence and the implications of the work (Weinberg 2000b: 10).

*In Search of the San* was funded by the Norwegian Church Aid and it introduces the Bushmen providing a comprehensive historiography on the people's culture, ethnicity,

outsider's stereotypes, relationship with other tribes, their displacement, forced incorporation into the modern capitalist economy and the resultant predicaments (Weinberg, 1997: 6-9). It is in the context of this written history that Weinberg attempts to present in pictures in the rest of the book, from Namibia, Botswana and South Africa. From page 28, *In Search of the San* features full or half page photographs with captions identifying places and in some cases, individuals. From page one to 27, Weinberg provides a detailed chronological review of the actual places he visited and also the encounters with individuals. For instance, under the heading 'Kxoe revisited, 1996', he notes:

It's Boxing Day, December 1996, and Kibi George is suffering from a hangover. Since I last saw him, things have changed. He is buoyant about the imminent signing of a contract with the Namibian President, Sam Nujoma, authorising the de-proclamation of the game reserve and allowing the joint management of conservancies. 'We want to benefit from our resources', he says, although he concedes that there isn't much game left. [...] I am sitting under the same tree where I talked to his great uncle a number of years before (Weinberg, 1997:19).

Written ethnography locates Weinberg within the discourse of his encounters, his sense of 'being there' in the Kalahari. The photographs, on the other hand, show snippets of life in the Kalahari, with captions that identify places, sometimes activities, but rarely subjects individually. Thus, readers are unaware whether the subjects Weinberg mentions in the written sections are the same un-named subjects in the photographs. In *Search of the San* (1997) was thus a summary of Weinberg's work from the exhibition, 'Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen' (1996). 'Footprints in the Sand' as presented in *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen* (1996) takes the same format of *In the Search of the San* (1997).

The published presentation ('Footprints in the Sand') begins with an anonymous old Namibian Bushman playing a musical instrument, a *gullaci* (Weinberg, 1996: 331), followed by a photocopy of the 1918 letter, correspondence from Namibian colonial officials which reveals despicable treatment of some Bushmen who were awaiting a death sentence and were referred to as 'wild creatures', 'wild things with no idea' in which the writer confesses to have 'a limited knowledge of natives' (Weinberg, 1996: 334). The

published 'Footprints in the Sand' then provides undated photographs of hunting, gathering roots, playing *dongu*, making crafts and feeding livestock in Namibia and South Africa. In some instances, Weinberg identifies subjects individually, like in the case of Jamie Uys and Hotnot 'discussing a next day's shoot' (1996: 340).

Responding to Bester's and Buntman's dismissal of Weinberg's documentary photography as perpetuating popular colonial representations, Weinberg and Elana Bregin (2000) reject the dismissal as an "exercise based academic ideology". They suggest that "academics have tendencies of dismissing works by non-academics". Though having done extensive photographic work on indigenous societies in Southern Africa, Weinberg himself refuses to be categorised into the 'pigeon hole' of an ethnographic photographer but insists he is just a documentary photographer as 'ethnographic photography' has some negative connotations of being what Bregin terms 'too prescriptive' (Bregin, 2000: 86; Weinberg, 2002: Interview). Weinberg thus insists 'he would like to be loose and open-ended' in his approach towards photography.

Referring to representation, Bregin points out Bester's and Buntman's problematic of seeing things in binary positions; white/oppression or black/victimisation, for instance, and raises the question whether the criticism was directed at the photographs or Weinberg himself. She questions Bester's and Buntman's attempt to authoritatively 'fix' the Bushman image by dictating the appropriate way in which they should be photographed and viewed. This ignores the 'complex negotiations of identity' that the Bushmen engage in during their struggle for survival in a modern and post-modern world (Bregin, 2000: 86). Along similar lines, in a subsequent interview, Weinberg (2002, Interview) asked some questions relating to the process of photography and the photographs themselves as he held Buntman's photograph discussed earlier:

I am I wrong? Are they right or Am I right? Who's the judge? It's a very hard thing to say apart from pointing out the differences. We have to acknowledge that certain things happen when you photograph the Bushman like setting up photographs. Set up in a sense that photographers dress them up like hunters. This is presented today as 'today's Bushmen' who have their land back and are hunting. One has to ask: Is that a true representation or is it an enactment? Is it what goes on or just a fantasy? Such pictures do not conjure up authenticity for me. [But] photography is just an experience and process of giving meaning to what we deem important.

The Bregin/Weinberg school therefore conceptualises photography as Rouch's 'subjective science' which involves creativity, which itself involves a personal projection, 'perceptual selectivity' and the blending of truth and fiction (Bregin, 2000: 87; DeBouzek, 1989: 304). Bregin's and Weinberg's response to Bester's and Buntman's criticism of Weinberg's photography also raises some issues regarding photographic representations: what is the difference between depiction and representation? If each photographer has his own style, 'mindset', 'technical priorities' and 'prerogatives' (Weinberg, 2002: Interview), is ethnographic photography a fluid field? How do we identify and agree on images that frame the Bushmen as a spectacle? Bester's and Buntman's criticism was based on "ignorance about the process of taking photographs or being a photographer or trying to survive as a documentary photographer, about the methodology, his style, intentions, approach and commitment to subject matter" (Weinberg, 2002: Interview).

### **Questions arising from the debate**

The South African debate on representation of ethnographic photography demonstrates an extant tension within academia but more importantly between photographer-practitioners and academic researchers. The general feeling is that academia is attempting to colonise, subjugate and prescribe how the practitioners are going to work (Bregin, 2000; Weinberg, 2002 Interview). Academics are suspected of being "good at setting up traps for practitioners, looking for mistakes and then knocking them down in the building of their careers, rather than being humble and understanding the contexts in which practitioners work" (Weinberg, 2002: Interview).

The debate demonstrates the extant confusion over the notions of depiction and representation, in which the former is always used for the latter. Depiction has some 'picturing' within it, thus it involves the creation of written, captured or recorded visual images in differentiating *this* image from *that* one. Representation is a theory-based argument that develops out of certain depictions with similar set of attributes. The implication is that, as icons, Weinberg's photo texts could have faithfully depicted what the photographer observed out there in the Kalahari in a particular epoch, thus the photo

texts could have *simulated* the reality. Yet, the process of selecting photos for exhibition and publication involves *preferring* some from others as well as activating them to enable the photos as icons to become photos as indices. This process constitutes representation as it involves setting up an argument. Thus, true iconic depictions can result in questionable symbolic and indexical representations depending on how the argument has been formulated, as later sections of *Chapter Three* attempt to demonstrate.

The debate also raises questions regarding the span of a photographic process: when does photography begin and when does it end? What is the role of the camera in photography? Borrowing from Dziga Vertov (1929) and Robert Flaherty (1922), Rouch introduced the notions of 'cine-eye', 'cine-ear', 'cine-hear', 'cine-trance' and cine-think'. He argued that during his filmmaking processes in the field, the camera gained consciousness, thus becoming both a participant and principal actor (Feld, 1989: 234). Thus to Rouch, issues of participant-observation, feedback, staging reality, seizing improvised life, editing and deliberate self-reflexivity, constitute the process of photography (Feld, 1989). Rouch's picturing process (be it film or photography) begins before the camera comes out of the bag and continues long after the camera has disappeared from the scene - even after the subject communities have seen their pictures. Rouch's photography is a long process, which can take as long as sixty years. In some cases, you need 'generations of researchers' because photography is the 'art of patience' and the 'art of time' (Feld, 1989: 234; Rouch in Fuchilgnoni, 1989: 268).

The Bester/Buntman versus Bregin/Weinberg debate also raises questions on how photographers should present their findings. The dismissal of Weinberg's photography and his rejection of the dismissal as being based on ignorance about documentary photography demonstrate the need for auto-ethnography and self-reflexive writing by documentary photographers (Weinberg, 2002: Interview). These styles of writing will enable readers of photographs to grapple with the contexts in which photographers framed their experiences. The dilemma over the structure and method of presenting these contexts is the subject of *Chapter Four*.

## Chapter Three

### Reading Weinberg's and Dunn's Photography

The question of how we read photographs is very challenging as it involves establishing where to begin the reading as well as what to look for in these photographs. Without prescribing some 'dos' or 'don'ts', this chapter seeks to illuminate the process of the reading of Weinberg's and Dunn's Bushmen photography. This section also attempts to make a distinction between reading depictions and reading representations. As demonstrated in the preceding chapter, experiences or encounters between the photographers and photographed loom large in the nature of the resultant photographs, determining whether the photos become visual embraces, visual documents, visual thefts or visual theatres (Newton, 1998).

These researcher-subject experiences, which Tomaselli terms the 'nature of semiotic interaction' are classified into three categories: encounter, experience and intelligibility (1999: 37). This formulation is very important because, as Hall (1997:3) argues, it is participants in a culture who give meaning to people, objects and events. Photographs, however, are products of more than one culture: of subjects, researchers, photographers and other cultural circuit members present. Much as ethnographic photography is technically produced in one culture, its consumption spreads to many cultures. Mostly, however, the subjects are the last to consume their photos and in most cases they do not consume them because they do not see them. In studying ethnographic photography therefore, priority has to be paid to how subject cultures perceive the representations others make of them. The problem begins, however, in some academics' reliance on structural semiology as the ultimate method of photographic textual analysis, as noted by Tomaselli (1999: 29):

[In] formalist semiotics derived from Western philosophical assumptions, which tend to imprison researchers with the 'text' – the representation is only studied. The result is that context, the political, economic, social and historical processes out of which specific texts [like photographs] arise are suppressed from analysis. The text-context relationship is thus also eliminated from study.

Reading photographs should therefore be a process. Thus Tomaselli calls for 'experiencing' photographs, or entering into an encounter or experience with Bourdieu's photographic act or process, as the first step in the process of making photographs mean (Tomaselli, 1999).

Ignoring these encounters, readers of photographs have no sense of the photographic acts. This results in establishing hypotheses built on fantasies about what photos might mean.

### Understanding the nature of pictures as texts

Contending that texts are particular realisations of codes, Tomaselli distinguishes between the dimensions of “the text as a product and the text as the interaction between the reader and signs encoded into messages” (1999: 33). He defines the text as a product as an inactive text, which is produced, distributed and circulated by cultural industries like a television channel (Tomaselli, 1999: 33). The text as an interaction is also known as an activated text, and is created, by both producers and their readers. Since texts are activated when they are interpreted, Weinberg’s photographs can be said to be activated texts, because Weinberg himself was interpreting his understanding when he took the pictures, framing the interpretation and captioning them. His publications detail his personal experiences as a photographer and some people he meets. He however, did not reveal much about his activation or how he went about interpreting event and pictures. Through exclusion, Weinberg deliberately excluded his photographic acts which he terms “moments of time” or “decisive moments” which “he constructed, was aware and part of”, during which he had to negotiate

and “compromise” in order to take “good photos with a craft” (Weinberg, 2002: Interview). Such being the case, it is difficult to establish whether the old woman in photo ten (right), ‘making ostrich necklaces’, was hiding from Weinberg’s camera; or why the women in photo thirteen (below right) seemed



not to be participating in the puberty dance. Only one was clapping her hands. The one on the right was holding a knee and thus she was not clapping. Another one, wearing a jersey was walking away and the woman seated next to her looked away from the camera. Other missing details of Weinberg’s ‘decisive moments’ of photography include how, he, a man, was allowed into ‘women’s things’ and why he chose to conceal the faces of the women. He did not conceal the faces in the



next photo, 'gemsbok dance' (Weinberg, 1997: 61). Thus though present outside his photos, Weinberg is deliberately visually absent from his photos. Dunn's unpublished photographs are also inactive texts, without detailed analysis of the photographic acts. The exhibited photos at the Westville museum exhibition were never activated and thus Dunn's photographic acts remained concealed. For instance, whilst filming the proceedings, a young white lady admiring some of Dunn's photographs, was fascinated by the half-naked muscular and handsome man dressed in traditional bushman clothes and wanted to know his name before she bought the picture. I told her that he was Khobus Witbooi. It is possible that those who bought these pictures were going to activate them with their fantasies about the Bushman and Kalahari. Since most photography conceals the photographic encounters, "analysis should situate both producer subjectivities and intentions and reception within their respective web of conflicting historical, social, economic, political and psychological discourses out of which texts arise" (Tomaselli, 1999: 34).

A person who consciously and carefully examines photographs is a sophisticated reader and does what an 'ordinary reader' does non-reflectively:

A conscious and careful reading differs from an ordinary reading in its deliberate thoroughness [...]. Ordinary readers just take a quick look, add it all up and say, 'oh, yeah, that's striking or sad or it really captures the essence of that thing'. But they don't know what went into the adding up or capturing or just how these operations were conducted. A conscious and careful reading takes time. The reader goes over every part of the picture, registering explicitly what's there, what point of view it represents (where the photographer put the camera), the time of the day, the things that were left out but perhaps hinted at by the framing of the image (Becker, 1998: 6).

Becker's observation distinguishes two kinds of photographic readings and proposes a careful critical analysis in understanding "how these operations were conducted" (1998: 6). The insistence on taking a careful and repeated view of "every part of the picture" however, points to the problem with modern structural semiologists, like Bester and Buntman (1999) who read into photographs to find 'true' meanings. Thus their focus is on discovering 'photographs of truth'. To help his sophisticated reader, Howard Becker (1998: 4) attempts to develop a methodology for presenting ethnographic photography and to avoid what Tomaselli (1999: 32) terms "discrepant decoding" by suggesting proper captioning and montage arrangement where each picture discloses a link to the next. With the assistance of captions or Fiske's (1979: 52) "realism operators" and the montage arrangement, Becker hopes the sophisticated reader will come across meaning placed into photographs by the careful photographer. He will

do this by “reading what is in the frame as the result of deliberate choices the photographer made which combine to produce the final effect” (1998: 6).

Just like Bester's and Buntman's reading of Weinberg's photos and Wienberg's photography itself, the problem with Becker's suggestions, is their “indeterminacy” (Tomaselli, 1999: 35) about what readers can and should learn from photographs. Photographs cannot show a culture. A culture is too diverse and dynamic to be framed. Rather, photographs are documents on the fragments of photographers' perceptions of an activity or event within a culture at a point in time. Photographs can shed light on what may have been going during a photographic act but can never show what continued to happen afterwards. By placing them at the centre of interactions with the subject communities, photographs enable researchers to reconstruct past perceptions of reality situated within the relationships that went on between the-then observers and observed during those photographic acts.

This brings us to Ruby's (1991) concern with questions of voice, authority and authorship in relation to photographic texts. Ruby questions whether researchers, photographers or filmmakers speak for, speak about, speak with or speak alongside. Though Ruby (1991) does not propound the do's and don't's of representation, he advocates speaking alongside, for he highlights the notion of partnerships and collaboration, dismissed as impossible by Bester and Buntman (1999: 58; Buntman, 1996).

### **Entering into photographic experiences in the Kalahari**

Within the communities, I expected Tomaselli to carry his notebook and pencil as he walked around or talked to people about the *semiotics of the encounter*, the title of his project. To my surprise, he walked around the place, visiting different farms, discussing what happened in between his visits, who was sick, who had gone where, why the children were not going to school, the people's aspirations for the future, general welfare and the people, in turn, would ask him to buy their art, invite him for an evening on the farms, ask for transport and complain to him about who they thought was stealing their money.

Belinda and Vetkat Kruiper told Tomaselli about their plans to open up a garden in Blinkwater, to grow some vegetables and how their friend Mary Lange (from Durban) would provide the seeds. They briefed him on socio-economic and political tensions within the

community. Vetkat revealed his fear of the uncertainty of the 'Bushman's future'. One wonders whether Vetkat's love for art is a means of escaping this fear. This is the fear that Dunn, Buntman or Weinberg could not photograph. Dunn could only photograph me, Jody and Belinda preparing supper, during which I broke the cooking stick. She photographed the research team waiting for supper while Vetkat played love music for Belinda. She also photographed Vetkat painting and Vetkat's brother, Uri preparing a porcupine for supper, which moved Vetkat to complain about the "animals getting finished". As we sat around the camp light waiting for Belinda to dish out food, Dunn placed the camera on the tripod in front



of Vetkat and left it there while she did other things. There, we sat in a circle, camera directed at Vetkat. Waking up the next morning, we had breakfast and again, the cameras were already out and just in front of Vetkat. Four months later, the ≠Khomani and the coloureds of Welkom would look at the picture and say Oom

Hansie (on the left) and Vetkat (centre) were saying in their hearts "what are we supposed to do with these people?" (FGD III, 2002).

Belinda and Vetkat organised an evening get-together with the community at Welkom. Welkom was chosen because it is a bigger and densely populated community than the sparsely populated Blinkwater. It was practically easier to drive families to Welkom, where Tomaselli and Belinda were, to thank the communities for their support to students and staff of CCMS during research project. The women prepared their Bushman bread in the fire on the sand and it was eaten with meat. Around the huge fire, we sat with the community, talking to them about their history, concepts of development, plans and aspirations. Being night, we could not write and thus felt helpless. Dodd and Nhamo had recording machines, Dunn had her camera, I had my video camera and Tomaselli had nothing. Belinda, known and respected (because of Vetkat and her negotiating skills) talked to all who were present, telling them about 'Prof.' and his students and other things I could not comprehend (as it was in Afrikaans). She then asked them all something. The people nodded their heads and some said 'ja, nie probleem' (no problem). Belinda turned to us and explained we could talk to the people and take pictures as we waited for the food.

At Blinkwater, Jody and her son Nino were our companions during our stay. We all became the Kruipers' extended family. Evenings were spent around the fires, before and after the meal during which Vetkat played music on his guitar. During day, we visited Silikat and Elsie, Rosa Meintjies, Dawid Kruiper, the old Oumas, and other ≠Khomani whose names I may never remember. Tomaselli continued his chatting interviews whilst Dodd and Nhamo recorded their interviews. Dunn finished her films and we were ready to go to Durban, which had become a home for us, the foreign students.

In Durban, Dunn and Tomaselli organised for extra copies of the photographs to be taken back to the community. Meanwhile, I had my dissertation topic; I would study how to read photographs of Weinberg and Dunn. Tomaselli organised a small get-together of students and friends interested in Visual Anthropology to present papers on our different observations. Some, like us went to the Kalahari, others had gone to cultural villages in the other parts of the country; some visited community tourism reserves in the North of Durban and this provided us an opportunity to question and comment on each other's projects.

April turned into May, which rushed into June and finally it was July 2002: Preparations for the second trip to Kalahari began. Dodd, Tomaselli and Lange organised a collection of warm clothes for the children in the Southern Botswana. Tomaselli bought soccer balls for the Bushman community in Ngwatle, Botswana. 'Prof.' had also just remembered to collect Belinda and Vetkat some spare parts for their VW Kombi at Blinkwater, which the Kruipers sometimes used as their bedroom. I wondered if there would be enough space for all the students in the car.

July 2002 arrived. Sherieen Pretorius and Damien Tomaselli would also be visiting Kalahari, so together with another Visual Anthropology student, Timothy Reinhardt, the four of us departed for the Southern Kalahari on 10 July. Tomaselli's entourage would follow four or five days later. Originally, Nelia Oets was to translate my interviews, because I do not speak Afrikaans, the language of the ≠Khomani in the Northern Cape. Nelia translated the SASI interview and then sprained her ankle. In came Sherieen who translated and moderated the interviews for me, when in some cases, too many people were talking at the same time. Damien learned to use the video camera in five minutes and became my cameraman. Timothy had an extra video camera, and, just like myself in April 2002, was unsure of what he wanted

to do in the Kalahari. Yet he became very helpful in shooting some interviews when Damien went dune surfing with Sherieen.

Still injured, when Nelia came back, she became our mother at the tent, on top of translating some of my interviews. She dropped us off at Dawid Kruiper's place for stories one night, stories we were not told because Dawid was too drunk, but the experience was rewarding. It enabled us to experience the ≠Khomani's evenings of smoking, drinking and singing noisily. In the following days I conducted my last interviews within the community on people's perceptions and insight into Dunn's and Weinberg's photographs. Tomaselli's troupe arrived. Most of them were sick and we stayed with them for three days and left them making preparations to leave for Ngwatle, Botswana.

In the two field exercises (April and July 2002) both my experiences and observations of experiences took place at three levels. The first one was the camera observation, by which a researcher chooses and classifies what parts of interactions are important for consideration. With a camera, one always looks at interactions in terms of the dissertation, the film or the exhibition they want to make. By being choosy, one is only aware of the interactions in terms of what happened visually; but one misses most of the dialogue, the context, what's taking place on the sides as well as what could have happened. The second form of experience is the eye observation, whereby the researcher, without being distracted by a camera or recorder, enters into a new space with subjects; a space, which is a product of negotiations of different circuits of cultures and enables them to share fears, joys and hopes.

Without a camera, a tape recorder, a notebook or pencil, Tomaselli benefited from this space during his interview with Rosa Meintjies. Dodd had just finished her interview, which she had recorded, and we were about to go. Tomaselli asked Rosa some questions, and to answer him properly, she went into the house, bringing out five photocopies of Bain's photographs of her deceased parents, some trees and old 'Oumas' during Mbeki's historical return of some Bushman land. Tomaselli focused on the photos to discuss social class and the community's historiography using photo elicitation methods that resulted in Rosa's lament about the Bushman loss of dignity and land. Thus, though Tomaselli's photo elicitation focused on what was seen in the photos like why the old Oumas looked sad, the discussions led to the hidden parts of history in Rosa's memory (Harper, 2002: 18). Photo elicitation methods therefore

enabled the subjects to structure and restructure their collective memory through the questions on and about the photographs. During these conversations, the photographs speak alongside the subjects and the researcher.

Then there is the third experience; that of observing another observer, like my videoing of Dunn's photography. Dunn would spontaneously choose what was the important part of the interaction or activity in front of her. I would record her photographing, but also after examining whether that was necessary.

### **Studying Dunn at work: A self-reflexive analysis of my video, *Reading Photographs in the Kalahari*.**

*Reading Photographs in the Kalahari* is a 33-minute ethnographic documentary film I made as a critique to my video observations of photographer Dunn and her methodology. The video comes in the wake of the South African representation debate, which has demonstrated academics' lack of an understanding of both documentary photographers and their methodology (Weinberg, 2002: Interview). The process of studying Dunn and producing the video was carried out under Tomaselli's *Semiotics of the Encounter* project. Thus the video supplements my written dissertation and is vital in showing the context in which Dunn's photographs were taken. In anthropological filmmaking, there are three conceptual struggles towards producing films: filmmaking for research purposes, filmmaking for aesthetic purposes and filmmaking for educational purposes (Rollwagen, 1993: 4). *Reading Photographs in the Kalahari* was made for both research and educational purposes.

The video structures and thus reveals how my subjectivity affected my observations of Dunn as well as my own investigations into Dunn's photography. Drawing on Fabian (1990), Ruby introduces the notion of reflexivity in which he emphasises the need for anthropological filmmakers to reveal their methodology and 'epistemological assumptions'. This exposes how they affected the design of the research process and arrived at particular conclusions (Ruby, 1980). Leaving for the Kalahari in April 2002, I had no clear picture of what I wanted to do for my Master's dissertation. Throughout the journey, I feared I might not find a topic in time or not find one at all. Before departing, Tomaselli and Dodd had made photocopies of articles by Bester, Buntman, Weinberg and Bregin and distributed them to the students. I got my

copies, and when we left for the Southern Kalahari of the Northern Cape, I busied myself with these articles. During fuel stops along the way, I hauled out the department's video camera and there, I had, at last found something interesting to do. Back on the road again, Tomaselli asked me what I thought of the articles. I was not sure where to begin because Weinberg's works, which were the focus of the arguments, were not clearly known to me at that moment. In the hotel, at Upington, I browsed through the articles and when we hit the road the next day, I finally had something to say: Bester and Buntman seemed not to understand Weinberg's methodology and Weinberg does not want to reveal his methodology.

In the Kalahari, every time we drove around the farms, I had to get out to video Dunn, who was eager to collect many shots, of the red dunes, the water pumps, the ostrich nests or the roadside ≠Khomani craft sellers. Ignoring the high temperatures and scorching sun, Tomaselli would stop to park on the roadside and Dunn would go some distance into the vast landscapes searching for her shots. Seeing me sitting in the back of the car not intending to get out, Tomaselli would remind me about 'observing a photographer' and I would get out of the car, put the camera in front of my eyes, point it towards Dunn, and press the record button, not being fully conscious of what she was doing in front of me. Getting back into the car, I would rest in the back seat wondering at what Dunn had been photographing. The fieldwork was soon over, but I was not sure whether I understood what Dunn had been doing in the community and whether I had learnt anything from her.

In July 2002 I used Dunn's and Weinberg's photographs as research tools in my discussions on representation with ≠Khomani communities in the Northern Cape. All this time, I could not understand why the community would not say much about Dunn's photography while at the same time dwelling a lot on Weinberg's photography. This time, I was conducting the discussions through translators and Damien Tomaselli and Reinhardt were videoing some of the discussions. Tomaselli and other students were still in Durban, and when Silikat and Khobus hinted at our 'outsideness', I began to realise that any research is grounded in relationships with subject communities. Watching the videos of Rosa's lament to Tomaselli in Durban, which Dodd had translated for me, I discovered how affected Tomaselli was by Rosa's lament, by his clasping of his hands, by the short and almost repetitive and sometimes rhetorical questions and loss of words. Thus the video also reveals much about Tomaselli's methodology because it is within it that Dunn was able to situate her photography and all

other students have situated their studies.

*Reading Photographs in the Kalahari* begins by introducing myself, how I selected my photograph samples, observed Dunn, interviewed Dunn, Weinberg and the ≠Khomani communities and other experiences of interacting with the community at night, when liquor and dagga exchanged hands. The video moves to and fro in the Kalahari, connecting the interviews and speeches in Durban to the realities and practicalities of fieldwork. The narrative, read by myself, because the video was talking about me, is in the first person singular:

My name is Linje Manyozo Mlauzi. I am a Malawian student in Media studies here at the University of Natal, South Africa. My Master's degree research attempts to develop methodologies for studying and understanding both documentary photographers and ethnographic photography. What is ethnographic photography?

Indigenous communities like the Bushmen of the Southern Kalahari always attract many visitors who usually bring along their cameras. Tourists take pictures of places and people as evidence of 'having been there'. For academics and journalists, they take pictures of their encounters and experiences for illustrating their presentations on 'what is actually out there'. All these pictures are called ethnographic photography. How did I attempt to study ethnographic photography on the Bushmen?

First, I randomly sampled photos from modern documentary ethnographies of Paul Weinberg and Sian Dunn, which I would use as research tools during discussions with some subject communities, from which the photographers took their photos.

Second, I joined Professor Keyan Tomaselli's 'Semiotics of the Encounter' project, which for the past few years has involved visiting Bushmen communities and collaborating with them on issues of representation. During the April 2002 field trip, my objective was to develop an understanding of how documentary photographers work, by observing Dunn at work. My observations of Dunn included videoing her activities. Her photographs were for an exhibition in Durban during which some Bushmen artworks were also exhibited.

Within the same period, Tomaselli and Dodd talked to a ≠Khomani Bushman woman, Rosa Meintjies whilst employing photo-elicitation techniques to discuss challenges faced by modern day Bushmen of South Africa.

In July 2002, with the help of translators, Vanessa Dodd, Nelia Oets and Sherieen Pretorius, I was back in the Northern Cape, carrying with me copies of Dunn's April 2002 inactive photos as well as Weinberg's activated and published photographic texts. I used these photos as tools during interviews and focus group discussions with the Bushmen as I tried to establish their perceptions of how they are imaged.

Finally it was time to write, theorise field experiences, observations and edit my videos, a critical and semiotic analysis of which enlightened me on crucial areas of representation.

Now I know that one cannot read photographs per se but rather they can read photographic depictions or photographic representations.

I also understand that reading photographs is a convergence of photographs as cultural texts, the circuit of culture of the photographer, the circuit of culture of the reader and the circuit of culture of both the context and preconditions in which the reading is taking place.

As a convergence, reading photographs enables readers to establish not the 'photography of truth' but rather the 'truth of photography'.

## Constructing the video

The video editing process, using the Multimedia Language Centre, involved setting up some clips to fill in what I could not go back to Kalahari and record again. All the shots supporting the dialogue explaining going back to Kalahari in July 2002 were taken in April 2002. The video shows the CCMS team of Dodd, Nhamo, Tomaselli and Dunn setting up camp at Blinkwater as the July trip, when actually the July 2002 troupe camped outside Molopo Lodge and none of the people in the video were part of the first troupe (Tomaselli and other students followed us four days later).

Aesthetically, the video was blackened on both the top and bottom parts to create a filmic mode. Yet this was also designed to conceal the dates appearing on some shots, which Marit Saetre took of me in the department. In the studio, I realised I could not successfully hide the dates because it would interfere with the quality of the picture (dissecting subjects), so I opted to conceal the actual dates not the date itself. Thus, a viewer sees stub of the date over the black belt but cannot tell what date it was.

The video opens with a drunken Lena's music, which I recorded when Dodd was talking to Jakob. The recording of this music was both accidental and partly unethical on my part and Dunn. Dunn herself had come out of the car much quicker than myself to see if she could photograph Dodd's interview. Tomaselli stayed in the car, probably knowing Jakob wanted to speak to him (thus avoiding disrupting Dodd's interview). Coming out of the car, I found Dunn still waiting and asked if she had finished photographing. She did not know whom to ask permission from because Dodd was in the midst of an interview and Lena was too drunk. I turned on my camera facing Dodd's interview and zoomed in.

Without my headphones, I could not hear the low sound from the interview. Since I was focussed on the interview, I did not hear Lena singing next to me - a song I used as a soundtrack to the closing parts of the video. Dunn then went close to the interview and sat down for a few moments. Then I saw her taking pictures. "Should I also ask for permission?" I asked her, thinking she had asked for and had been granted permission. She replied, "I am not sure, but I think it's okay". I then went closer to the scene and started shooting. In her drunken state, Lena was or may not have been fully aware of the photographer in front of her, snapping her pictures as she danced and sang ('Wondering', photo 25). The importance of

revealing this context is that in the presence of Tomaselli, who is respected in the community, Dunn and myself overlooked asking subjects for consent to photograph them or the activities they were doing. Yet the incident also reveals the awkward situations photographers find themselves in when an event suddenly happens and there is no time to ask for permission, say in the case of trance dances.

There were also, however, positives from my observations of and relationship with Dunn. While Tomaselli talked to ≠Khomani art sellers, Dunn and myself reversed our roles momentarily as she observed me teaching Johannes Kaartman how to use a video camera ('Learning filming', photo 28). Looking at that particular photograph, one may ask questions regarding who asked whom to do the videoing? Why did the Bushman accept or ask to use the video camera? Revealing the context of the photographic context in which Johannes wanted to "see what the video looks like" demonstrates that the Bushmen do have power over the production of their images and are not always victims as Bester and Buntman stipulate (1999).

In the video, *Reading Photographs in the Kalahari*, I distinguished my shots from those of Johannes by transforming his to black and white. Johannes filmed his father, Hans, first then the rest of his colleagues who were selling art. As I worked with Johannes, Dunn observed and captured us on her camera. The same video camera also opened up common ground between observers and observed in July 2002 when Reinhardt and I visited Dawid Kruiper's family one night. The ≠Khomani asked if they could operate the camera. Though it was night and I feared the camera could get damaged, I allowed them to film others and us. I passed on the camera to someone I did not know. I could not see properly in the dimly lit kitchen. The ≠Khomani began to quarrel, asking the filmmaker to film them. Feeling jealous of his friend, Amam shouted repeatedly "this man does not understand the camera" (Manyozo, 2002). Thus, both my observations and critical analysis of Dunn and her methodology could not be justified without critically analysing how I conducted myself with the video camera in the subject communities. Revealing conducts during photographic encounters enables readers to determine the power relations that existed between observers and observed and to what extent that relationship shaped the outcome of the photographic depictions or representations. Dawid Kruiper's refusal to be videoed drunk and while telling us stories also enlightened me to the frustrations documentary photographers go through as they search for their visual stories.

## **Indigenous peoples and their photographs: Reading depictions**

I conducted three focus group discussions and eight interviews, excluding my observations of relationships, behaviours and the videoing of Dunn's photography. I conducted interviews with Dawid Kruiper, one each with SASI field officers – Anna Festus and Gertrude Sauls, Sagraan Kruiper and Gert Swarts, Jon Kruiper, Dawid's son, Jakobus Malgas, David Amam, Anna Swarts, Jody and Belinda Kruiper. I also engaged in informal, Tomaselli-like chat interviews with some community members at the groceries and the liquor store. I also conducted two focus group discussions (FGD hereafter) at Witdraai, where Sherieen was the translator, and one at Welkom, about 46km from Witdraai, where Nelia was the translator.

My subjectivity also contributed to the nature of the research exercise and the results that emerged from the interviews. Much as Weinberg's book is at Molopo Lodge, almost all informants professed to never having seen their pictures. The informants also expected benefits from the research team, ranging from money, help to transport water and tobacco. Modern-day Bushmen have renegotiated and recreated their identity based on the economic and political relationships they have had with other cultures, which Hylton White identifies as "fictive identity" (White, 1995: 27). The Bushmen therefore could have told me what they thought I wanted to hear so that I could feel sorry for them and do something about it. For instance, Nelia Oets (2002) recalls being asked to buy Silikat's artwork because he wanted to send his child to school. Questions like 'can you recall what happened during the day or time of photography', 'how do you look at the photograph now' and answers like 'I never knew about the photograph', 'I am very angry to see my photograph in this book' or 'the photographer came and took the photos without consulting me' could demonstrate the desperation by Bushmen to be paid for their images and stories. My questions could also have been understood as an attempt by 'Professor's students' to help them be paid by 'photographers who fuck around with the Bushmen'. Either way, I attach my interview schedules as an appendix so that readers can establish for themselves the measure of my subjectivity that shaped the nature of the data I collected from the field.

The objective of the focus group discussions and interviews was not to have the participants recollect past histories only, but rather to see how they could use the photos and the extent to which they could do that. The focus groups also had participants who were subjects in Dunn's photography and thus were eager to see themselves and those they knew. Thus Dunn's

photography opened up a space in which we could address even Weinberg's black and white photography. The discussion started by passing around Dunn's photo album and Weinberg's published copy *In Search of the San* for participants to browse through as a point of departure in the discussions. Usually, they would discuss some things in !Nama language, arguing and pointing to the pictures and Nelia Oets (in the case of Welkom discussion) would ask them what the argument was about. They would explain this to her in Afrikaans and finally she would explain to me in English. She notes in her diary (2002: 6):

But things were not just negative. At one stage, I accompanied Linje to Welkom to act as interpreter. It turned into a lively and rewarding interview. It was wonderful to see the delight of recognition when they saw themselves or some acquaintance in the photographs that he showed them. Often they would exclaim, 'We used to do that! We used this or that as well before we had electricity'. 'Look at this one dancing, he is really drunk!' 'Look at how sad this one looks. It was after his mother had died. You can see the pain in his eyes'.

Weinberg's photographs generated much discussion on 'what used to be' and 'their hope for the future'. They longed for the freedom to hunt, but at the same time wanted the government to build clinics or schools in the area (FGD II, Witdraai, 2002). Looking at the building of the grass house in 'thatching a hut, Molapo, Botswana' (Weinberg, 1997: 24), Witbooi explained the vulnerability of the grass huts to fire, explaining that at one time, he lost his home and complaining that the temporary hut he was putting up in was not very nice (FGD I, Witdraai, 2002). On the photos of the different homes, they noted that tourists no longer have access to see 'real Bushmen lives' because what they do on the side roads is not real – "it's just business" (David Amam and Philemon Kariseb, Personal Communication, 2002) This was in reference to the traditional dress and small grass houses on the roadside.

Weinberg's book shows that "the people in their hearts want to remain traditional" (Dawid Kruiper, 2002: Interview). Pointing out the difference in colour between Dunn's and Weinberg's photography, Dawid argued that Dunn's colour photos signify change, which he thinks has been for the worse. He gave examples of contraceptives women take from the hospital which made them sick, arguing that the children born from "these women taking contraceptives" relied on clinical care and thus easily fell sick. While looking at the photo of a woman collecting roots in Botswana (Weinberg, 1997: 49), Dawid noted that Bushmen never needed hospitals because they did not eat western food, which made people sick. Dawid looked at the two sets of photographs, shook his head and revealed, "Ja, photographers fuck

around a lot with Bushmen” (Dawid Kruiper, 2002: Interview). Immediately he gave an example of *Sarie* magazine photographers who, he argued “told him things”, prescribing how they wanted him to pose for their photos, ‘which he had found boring’ and argued that the resultant photographs were “their idea” (Dawid Kruiper, 2002: Interview). Dawid’s notion of ‘their idea’ reappeared frequently in other interviews with some subjects of Weinberg’s photography.

Responding to the Bester/Buntman criticism of having used his photography to subjugate Bushmen, Weinberg (2000b: 10) defended his approach, contending that:

[...] I always spend time getting to know people, working closely with NGOs and organisations that work with the community [which] holds meeting to decide whether I have the right to photograph and to find out what I intend to do with my photographs. I always present my case to as many people as possible so that they are aware of my presence and the implications of the work.

While some ≠Khomani dismissed Bester’s and Buntman’s rejection of Weinberg’s photographs (FGD II and III), some subjects of Weinberg’s photographs questioned Weinberg’s photographic ‘moments’. They raised critical questions in ethnographic photography. Whose story does a photographer have to tell? Who owns the photos a photographer takes in the field? Weinberg and Dunn talk about “my photographs” (Weinberg, 2000b: 10; 2002: Interview; Dunn, 2002: Interview)? How should photographers take pictures?

Photography is a photographer’s personal experience commenting on his subjectivity thereby conforming to what Darryn Crowe terms ‘a photographer’s visual diary’ or Weinberg’s ‘visual journey’ (Crowe, 2003 forthcoming; Weinberg, 2002: Interview). Being more of a photographer’s personal experience, some photographers propound remuneration for taking photographs and acquiring information from subjects (Crowe, 2003). Crowe’s concern with remuneration comes from one experience in the Ngwatle community, Southern Botswana in which he confesses (2003) that:

The old lady [Verby’s mother] reached out her hand and smiled, a reward was needed, I fished into my bag and produced three packets of tobacco [and] she took them and smiled. She returned her hand to me at which point Gibson explained that, that was all we were going to be giving her; there were other people with whom we wanted to share the tobacco. The old lady was not interested in tobacco; she wanted ten Pula (about R15).

After Gibson explained that [money] was not going to be forthcoming, she began to shout at me and tried to snatch my camera.

What Crowe does not elaborate on is why Verby's mother got angry. Many ≠Khomani expressed their bitter feelings about how their stories and images have generated respect and economic gains for those that take them. 'Bushman', therefore, become Dawid Kruiper's 'golden goose egg', which outsiders are stealing to "get themselves to the top of the tree" (Dodd, 2003). Talking to an old woman, Mite, Crowe (2003) recalled her arguing that she would share her stories and 'Bushman culture' with people who had cars and "drove away with their stories and sold books and made money out of her".

Mite's observation that people made money out of her stories was reflected in an interview experience with Dawid Kruiper's youngest son, Jon. Jon is a subject in Weinberg's photography, whose photo is identified only as 'Soccer, Kagga Kamma, South Africa' (Photo

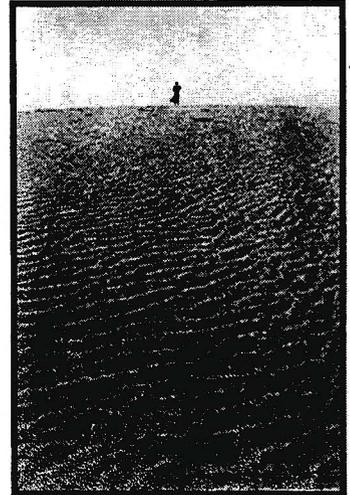


14). The photo does not say anything about the two subjects, him and his deceased cousin, Jan Waliep, their personalities as "people with stories in their heads, history, life and motivations" (Jon !Xele Kruiper, 2002: Interview). Staring hard while moving his right index finger across the photo, Jon recalls Jan, a son to Buk, Dawid Kruiper's younger brother.

Jon recalled that Jan died in a car accident in which his father, Dawid sustained fractures to his leg and never fully recovered. Pointing to the ball on his foot in the photo, he observed that Weinberg's photo did not reveal that the ≠Khomani children were playing soccer with coloured children. He expressed his anger that 'the photographer' had only asked permission from the then "manager at Kagga Kamma, Michael Daiber to take photos, but never us" (Jon Kruiper, 2002: Interview). Though the Weinberg's book is on sale at the Lodge, where the bushmen are restricted permission, save to buy liquor, Jon disappointedly stated he never knew 'his' photo (contradicting Weinberg's concept of 'my photos) was going to be published in a book, arguing that was the first time he had ever seen it and that the book did not tell his story (Jon Kruiper, 2002: Interview). Responding to Jon's concern with the omission of coloured children, Weinberg observes that "these are the choices a photographer has to make in the field, in leaving out some things while considering others" (2002, Interview). Yet the

question remains: how did the omission of the coloured children change or not change the photo's story or Weinberg's objective of showing a culture in transition?

Jon's observation of not being asked for permission was reinforced by Sagraan Kruiper, an unidentified subject in Weinberg's book, 'Khomani in the Kalahari, South Africa' (Weinberg, 1997: 68). Sagraan Kruiper is playing a guitar and dancing with a friend, Hendrik Kruiper (Sagraan Kruiper, 2002: Interview). Anna Swarts (2002: Interview) also argued she was never asked for her photo right (Weinberg, 1997: 29), recalling it was taken without her knowledge. She did, however, recall that Weinberg brought the copy of the photo a few months later and that this had upset her because she would have "liked to be bigger not smaller than the environment as Weinberg had portrayed me, but she was still happy because of the memories of the dunes the photo brought to her" (Anna Swarts, 2002: Interview). She argued the photo does not show *her* – because she is unrecognisable and diminished (Anna Swarts, 2002: Interview; Weinberg, 2002: Interview). Swarts argued that though the photo did not tell 'the whole the story' by focussing on 'collecting roots', she was nonetheless happy to have a copy of it. The copy reminded her that she also visited the dunes mostly to think about her dead husband and her children in Kagga Kamma where they were staying and facing many problems. Sagraan Kruiper, mentioned earlier, did not even remember the 'photographer', speculating it could have been a 'Dr Waal' from Cape Town (brother of the then owner of Kagga Kamma). He could not recognise Weinberg in a photo and noted that 'whoever took the photograph' simply found them dancing and singing and 'snapped' a picture without introducing himself to them. Sagraan angrily argued he was not impressed with seeing 'his' (not Weinberg's photo) in a book, noting that if he were to meet Weinberg, he would ask him "who gave you the right to take my picture and secondly, to put it in a book" (Sagraan Kruiper, 2002: Interview)?



Weinberg's snapped photographs could be seen as constituting Newman's visual theft, visual theatre, visual intrusion or visual documents, a claim Weinberg rejects (2002, Interview; 2000b: 10). They were evidence of outsiders' intrusion, thus visual thefts to the subjects but at the same time became visual documents of 'days gone by' to other subjects who were not photographed. The focus group discussions at Welkom and the Witdraai looked at the photos

as elicitors of memories of history. The ≠Khomani identified, named and discussed Weinberg's unnamed photographs. They remembered and noted that both Hotnot and his wife had died (Weinberg, 1997: 2). They named the man in 'making arrows, Kagga Kamma, South Africa' (Weinberg, 1997: 47) as Albert Bladbeen who still stayed at Kagga Kamma, though David Kariseb's wife, Maria, argued Bladbeen had died (FGD III, 2002).

The eating of melons (Photo 12) reminded them of the good old days when no one looked after them, unlike now when they were too dependent on the outside world for tourists and development initiatives. The melon debate shifted to the fences surrounding the Welkom residences and they noted that it was like being in prison, shielded from animals they lived with, "that's why we destroy the fences and steal animals from Gemsbok Park" (FDG III, 2002). Looking at the woman smoking a pipe, the ≠Khomani named the smoking pipe as the !Xuli (1997: 56) and noted that the woman in photo one is dancing whilst carrying a radio because she has just smoked dagga, which David Amam confessed, "is very good for the Bushman". Philemon Kariseb and Maria Kruiper identified and named Jon Kruiper and Jan Waliep as the subjects in 'playing soccer, Kagga Kamma' (Photo 14), proceeding to detail the accident, which claimed Jan, and other lives. They could not, however, identify the figures of the night dancers (Weinberg, 1997: 68).

The ≠Khomani identified and named Hotnot and his stepfather Jan Witbooi being photographed by a Thai woman (Photo 15). They noted that the picture was taken on Koffiefontein farm as they recognised the tree in the background (behind the photographer's head). Reading of the environment and the weather also took place with the Anna Swarts photograph (Weinberg, 1997: 29), in which, Silikat van Wyk, after negotiating with his wife, Elsie and brother in-law, Gert Swarts, argued the picture was taken around August, "for there are some clouds in the sky and must have been a very windy day because of the pattern of the lines wind had left on the sand" (FGD II, 2002). The ≠Khomani identified and named Kalai, Buks' daughter (Photo two). After smoking breaks, we focussed on Bester and Buntman's criticism and Dunn's photography.

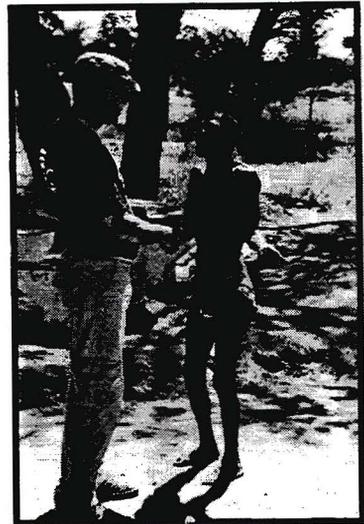
The ≠Khomani noted that Weinberg's photos showed 'some things' about their life. Asked about Bester's and Buntman's arguments against the photos, they argued that the "professors

got it wrong” and that “Weinberg was right”. Silikat, for instance, noted he felt like the !Xo soldier in Schmidtsdrift (Photo nine) because both of them were sad. He argued, just like him, the man was not happy because of the changes and broken promises that had negatively affected their lives (FDG II, 2002). The ≠Khomani identified and named subjects as they browsed through an album of Dunn’s photographs. Looking at a photo of Oom Hansie, Vetkat and Belinda (photo 18) Dawid Kariseb Kruiper and Philemon Kariseb argued that the three subjects deliberately distanced themselves from Dunn’s photography. Philemon noted that Oom Hansie, with his head in his hands and Vetkat were asking in their hearts, “what are we supposed to do with these people” (FGD III, 2002)? The ≠Khomani looked at Philemon Kariseb’s photos with baby Austen Kariseb, (also known as //Thosi) and noted that he had been unhappy at the time of photography. Philemon himself noted that he could have been sad because he had just lost his wife and faced challenges in caring for the children, but “looking at the photo today, maybe I was wondering whether I was going to see *my* photo” (FGD III, 2002).

The ≠Khomani observed the once famous Dawid’s pink house (Photo 29), which was crumbling, and noted that though it was Dawid’s idea, a white man helped out in building it. Abraham Malgas and Philemon Kariseb noted that the house had a wide opening and the shape is asymmetrical and ‘not definable’ just like the ‘Bushman’s ways’, which were not like other cultures and they felt proud to be different (FGD III, 2002). Then they laughed at Vetkat’s short hair (photo 17), recalling that, once he had gone to harvest bees, which had stung him, and because of his short hair his head had become swollen and had looked funny. Vetkat’s and Belinda’s kitchen (Photo 20) reminded them of porcupines, as the carcass of one hung by a pole. They observed that with restrictions placed on hunting, they could only capture small animals like porcupines or rabbits, whose skins are too small to meet the demand for raw materials for their crafts.

The final observation was of the photo where Tomaselli and Jakob Malgas are greeting each other, which Weinberg would identify as ‘just snapped’- lacking technical style, due to the failure of the photographer to manage the environment and light (Weinberg, 2002: Interview). I explained that there is a method for studying photographs called semiotics, that some academics would take a photo like that and would argue that Keyan is looking down on Jakob, that the photo shows that researchers subjugate their subjects, that Keyan is trying to

be Bushman and other issues related to unequal relationships between subjects and researchers. Looking at the photo, passing it around and conversing in !Nama and then Afrikaans (for Nelia), the ≠Khomani and the coloureds argued that Jakob and Keyan were engaged in Newton's (1998: 58) visual embrace, eyes locked in contact, noting these were friends who had not met for a long time. Dawid Kariseb observed that Jakob was "holding the hand of the professor very warmly" because he knew him and that Tomaselli respected him (FGD III, 2002). Their observations concurred with Dunn's observations regarding the photographic encounter surrounding the photograph in question (2002: Interview):



I think you have to see this photo in context with the rest. You can't just take this isolated shot. [Because], Jakob, the whole time, wanted to speak to 'Prof.' and he kept saying 'when are you coming to see me' and he was happy to talk to him. [...] You can't just ignore that. [...] I would hope people get to know the faces in the photos and through that, maybe, understand how the community works".

Dunn's insistence on 'seeing photos in context' is shared by Weinberg (2002, Interview) who insists that photos tell a 'story which is in a complex language' and that one has to unpack it by learning and understanding 'how the moments of time were constructed and recorded by the photographer'. This call for considering the photographic context poses a problem for Weinberg's photography, which some ≠Khomani Bushmen subjects argued had not involved them in the production process. Concurring with Dunn and Weinberg, Mikko Lehtonen (2000: 117) introduces the concept of 'preconditions', arguing, that preconditions are 'social, cultural and textual' and have an effect on the 'subjectivity of the people producing or consuming meanings'. Dunn's 'context' is Weinberg's 'moments of time' and also Lehtonen's 'preconditions' which all fall under the Tomasellian notion of 'con-text'. Meanings are cultural, contextual and con-textual (Tomaselli, 1999: 34). Con-text is the historical environment in which a text is produced and perceived (1999:36).

Weinberg's and Dunn's photography revealed past histories and more importantly, the relationships between photographers and their subjects, which had an important influence on the nature of ethnographic photography. Weinberg and the subjects perceived these

relationships very differently. While Weinberg (2000b; 2002: Interview) thought he had consulted them properly, the Bushmen felt he had not taken their needs into account sufficiently (Anna Swarts, 2002: Interview; Jon Kruiper, 2002: Interview; Sagraan Kruiper, 2002: Interview). The ≠Khomani's attempt to explain what they saw in the photograph however amounted to mere examination of the photographs as depictions: they were reading the depictions or reading the photographs as iconic indices. They saw the fires in the pictures and connected them to the fires in front of them noting that, the photos "were telling the truth" (Silikat Van Wyk during FGD II, 2002). The question is: is giving photos to indigenous peoples and having them explain the depictions, all that is required in reading ethnographic photography? What about the singing Bushmen and the drunken Dawid Kruiper at Witdraai? What about the failure to eat meat at Blinkwater because of the wind? What of Elsie's gift to Vanessa but at the same time requesting an assistance of R20? What of Jon Kruiper's insistence to be paid for the interview he had with me? What about my experiences in observing and videoing Dunn at work? What about my thoughts of Weinberg's and Dunn's photographs? The next section attempts to connect these experiences into a semiotic analysis of Dunn's and Weinberg's ethnographic photography

### **Common features of Weinberg's and Dunn's photography**

Semiotics is the study of how meaning occurs in language, pictures, performance and other forms of expression (Tomaselli, 1999: 29). Meaning thus, is a product of encounters and negotiations between people, who are affected by ideologies and other beliefs. This definition differs from semiology, which draws much from Ferdinand de Saussure's structuralism, and focuses on classifying signs into categories and analysing resultant meanings whilst decentring the human subject. Semiotics, however, focuses on establishing how representations like photographic texts embody and conceal their conflictual histories (Tomaselli, 1999: 29). This does not imply that one can read into photographs and discover ideologies or cultural contradictions within the culture that produced them. Rather, both as a research and an analytical tool, semiotics empowers researchers to ask questions about production processes, power relations and social struggles. This section therefore seeks to make critical comparisons between the two sets of photography on issues of paradigmatic and syntagmatic arrangements, possible interpretants and how photographic practices and images are sites of ideological and power struggles between imaged cultures, imaging cultures and even image-consuming cultures.

In Fiske's orders of meaning, both Dunn's and Weinberg's photographs portray snippets of representations in the Southern Kalahari. We see the Ju/'huansi Bushwoman dancing (photo one), ≠Khomani learning (photo two), other Bushmen groups getting married (photo three), negotiating collective action (photo five), smoking (photo nine), lying sick (photo eight), carrying out their daily chores and interacting with outsiders (photos 16-30). In Fiske's first order, words or captions are used as realism operators for their ability to increase the realisticness and believability of an image (Fiske, 1979: 52). The question, however, is: to what extent did Weinberg and Dunn employ realism indicators to locate, name and identify photographic signs? To answer this question, the study considers examining the photographs through the second order of reality to establish connoted meanings, associated myths and symbols.

### **Anonymity**

As highlighted in preceding sections, Weinberg did not name most subjects, save for few instances, where he sometimes identified men or white people only. Though partially activated, Dunn's photography at the Westville exhibition remained anonymous, save for some captions identifying actual places like Blinkwater, Witdraai or Welkom, as evidenced by a woman's request for the identity of Khobus Witbooi. Similarly, Weinberg's photos are only labelled 'class in progress, Kagga, Kamma', 'wedding for 36 couples', 'meeting of the Nyae-Nyae farmer's co-operative', 'bushmanland', or 'dusk'. Thus time, weather or activity take precedence over the identity of subjects in the photos, dominantly imaged as they may be. As part of this study, the ≠Khomani were asked to identify and provide names for the subjects in the photo as has been discussed in passing. Unnamed and unidentified in Weinberg's and Dunn's photography, today's Bushmen become Vetkat's 'examples' in people's stories, or "inmates" in a photographer's "gaol" without names, without histories, without hope and without fear (Webster, 2000: 11). Thus, the reader, who has never been to the Kalahari only knows about these people from what captions explain, thus orienting and directing readers to particular interpretations (Brandes, 1997: 4).

In modern academic set-ups, copyright is a major issue, where authors strongly appeal for acknowledgement of their contribution to particular creative works. Photos in *In Search of the*

*San* can only be used with permission and have to be acknowledged. On the CD-ROM of her photos, left with CCMS, Dunn inscribed that 'all photos are by Sian Dunn'. Dunn and Weinberg want to be acknowledged individually for their contribution in taking photographs but do not feel the necessity of acknowledging the individuality of the subjects who made their photography possible, a trend set by colonial photography, in which the Bushmen were seen as a collective bunch.

## **Gendering and differentiating**

Gendering and differentiating imply the imaging of others by naturalizing our attitudes about them or activities done by them. (Hall, 1997b). In Africa, kitchen work and childcare are associated with women and men are associated with 'masculine things' like hunting. Thus, if the focus of pictures is on women doing 'kitchen work', or men doing 'men's work', then the pictures can be said to be gendered. Gendering is not gender discrimination because the latter involves power relations in our attitude and relation to other groups of people. On the other hand, differentiating involves classifying similar species differently because we think one object is more important than the other. Thus, if a picture of white and black men working only identifies one of them only, then one can argue that the picture entrenches differences, not racism.

Regopstaan Kruiper lies dying in his hut (photo 8) and he holds a hand of a white man, who the written ethnography (Weinberg, 1997: 24) identified as Roger Chennels, a lawyer who had represented the Bushmen in their land claims. Next to Kruiper and looking very concerned is a woman who Weinberg's text identifies only as 'Kruiper's helper'. During my field research, her name was established as Dogho also known as Katrina. They identified and named the unnamed woman captioned in 'listening, Kagga Kamma, South Africa (Weinberg, 1997: 23) as Sana Kruiper, the daughter of Buk's, Dawid's brother.

The forgotten women who are both visually present but also contradictorily visually absent are all over the photographs. They are in 'puberty dance' (photo 13), making an ostrich necklace' (photo 10), 'Kgau/'ana with his family' (photo 11) and 'Weekend festivities' (photo 1). Similarly, Dunn's two hundred and fifty photographs donated to CCMS are just files on the computer. During her photography, Dunn had a paper and took people's names, but when

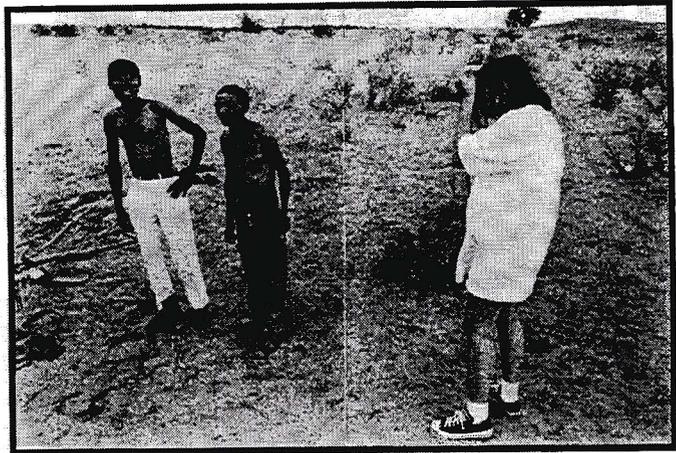
we distributed the photos, some of the names became mixed up. Weinberg's photography suffers from the same problem of identifying subjects, though he insists it is a style he chose to identify subjects and details of the photography (2002, Interview). Featuring subjects without names and other explanatory captions was a major practice during colonial photography (Webster, 2000).

Women are also othered through the activities they do in the pictures by being depicted doing 'women's jobs': Caring for men and the sick (photo eight), next to the homes, fireplaces or pots as if they always belong here (photos, 1, 4, 7, 10, 18, 22 and 23) and carrying or feeding children (photos 10, 11, 12). Dunn inverted the myth of the woman as the home carer by photographing Philemon Kariseb carrying the naked //Thosi at Welkom (photo 30), which was not coincidental as Philemon takes care of the domestic chores, including cooking for his children, since his wife died early in 2002.

### **Newton's visual intrusions**

Lack of eye contact between photographers and subjects as an indicator of an absence of familiarity, creates visual intrusion and in its worst case is visual theft (Newton, 1998). While the ≠Khomani may have expressed some disappointment with how Weinberg conducted his photography (Sagraan Kruiper, Jon Kruiper, July 2002), Newton's ideas are important to consider in examining whether subjects deliberately absented themselves from the photographic act. For instance, photo eighteen depicts three people (Vetkat, Hansie and Belinda) looking lost in their own world by their holding the chins and for Hansie, looking down covering part of his face with the photographer right in front him. They might have given permission to 'Professors's students' to use the camera during this period, but it should also be noted that since we arrived a day before, Dunn had, the whole evening - before, during and after dinner - been putting her camera in front of the hosts. Doing the same thing the next morning, these people could not have openly reiterated Dawid Kruiper's sentiments that 'cameramen fuck you around', but may be they could have been thinking, "what are we supposed to do with these people?" (FGD III, 2002) Similarly, photo ten shows two Namibian women, one working on an ostrich necklace while the other one watches her friend at work, but again, just like Hansie at Blinkwater, she has her head in her two hands and faces sideways. The photographic act surrounding photo fifteen (below, right) also raises questions

regarding photographer-subject relationship, where a Thai woman is taking a picture of two ≠Khomani, Hotnot and his stepfather Jan Witbooi, who Weinberg does not name. The subjects, without shirts, do not face the Thai woman and Weinberg who is in front of them. The subjects' pose and gestures as well as the photograph itself makes one wonder for what kind of advert the Thai woman was recruiting the subjects.



Again, the absence of the details of the photographic experience leaves a lot of concerns unaddressed: were the subjects paid? Why are the subjects not wearing shirts? Coming back to Bester and Buntman's question of empowerment: how different is this picture from Buntman's photograph during her fieldwork, discussed earlier (Buntman, 1996:279)?

### **Emphasis on bodies**

Sitting inside a car with Dunn outside the shops at Andriesvale, whilst waiting for Dodd and Tomaselli to interview a white community volunteer worker, I observed some ≠Khomani and coloureds, dressed in blue and orange overalls at work. They were offloading huge boxes and packets from vehicles and taking them into a wholesale warehouse. I asked Dunn whether she could photograph the scene but she insisted that it 'was not what she was looking for'. After the interview, we drove to Witdraai, where she proceeded to shoot the Bushmen selling their craft and wearing traditional clothes.

This experience continued in another form on the morning of the next day, when we visited Khobus Witbooi at his craft stand. As Witbooi talked to Tomaselli and Belinda, Dunn was busy photographing the body of Witbooi himself - medium close-ups, the back-views or the bottoms without critical attention to the environment. Probably unnoticed to Dunn (until Tomaselli pointed it out) were Witbooi's western clothes and the fashionable All-Stars basketball canvass shoes hidden in the trunk of the tree near his stand. Nearby, was a carcass of what was once a Toyota Corolla, in which Witbooi's bicycle was hidden and which was also used as Witbooi's changing room. Likewise, Weinberg focused on bodies and human

activity throughout his ethnographic journey; photographs one to fifteen contain subjects and the labelling describes the activities.

Fiske's third order of reality deals with the ideological aspect of representation where critical analysis through intertextuality enable researchers to establish the structures, institutions and political atmosphere of cultures surrounding the production process of a particular sign (Fiske, 1979). Thus the study critically questions the arrangement of paradigms and the syntagmatic layouts in the photos. The woman's reliance on the radio-cassette for weekend celebrations (photo one), the marriage certificate which is in a man's hand (photo three), the sunlight powder packet at Blinkwater (photo 19), Johannes's videoing (photo 26) the rings on Philemon's and Vetkat's fingers (photos 17 and 30) all demonstrate the ability of capitalism to penetrate into all parts of the world and how much formerly traditional societies depend on it for survival.

My directing of Johannes in using the camera (photo 26), the aesthetic distance between the photographers and the ≠Khomani subjects (photo 15) and the lack of details surrounding the puberty dance (photo 13) are some factors raising questions as to whether the postcolonial photographic space is dominated by hegemonic attitudes and techniques. Photo fifteen of the photographic act of the Thai woman demonstrated the cultural, linguistic and economic distances between the subjects themselves and the two photographers, if Sagraan's accusations and Dawid Kruiper's feelings about photographers are anything to go by. The sitting in the sand and eating of melons by Sesana and her daughter in photo 12 in an empty landscape could suggest Weinberg's constructed attempt to demonstrate the water problems in Malopo (Botswana). Yet one wonders what role does the woman's husband Roy, plays in this struggle (Weinberg, 1997: 26). Does the picture again domesticate women just like the others discussed earlier on?

Questions regarding postcolonial spaces between subjects and researchers could also be raised with regard to photo 13 where a woman has pulled down her underpants in what Weinberg (1997: 60) terms, a puberty dance. Apart from the woman clapping her hands, the other women around her seem to be avoiding taking a part in this scene. One, on the very right, has her arm around her knee, implying she is not clapping. Two women, partially shadowed by shadows have turned away and one is in the process of walking away. The photograph raises

question regarding whose puberty? Where are the other people in the community? What is the puberty ceremony like? The photographs may not reveal this, but the editing out of other body sections makes one wonder whether this woman just performed or demonstrated for Weinberg what women do during puberty ceremonies, a behaviour Newton would have referred to as visual theatre (1999). The focus and emphasis on bodies in modern ethnographic photography is no different from colonial photography and, as a result, other important events like relationships, gestures, bones of dead animals hanging on doorsteps, separating women's clothes from the men's on the drying wire and other behavioural issues happening around the bodies are granted scant consideration by photographers

### **Variations in captioning photos**

Photo six also appears in the 'Footprints in the Sand' under the caption 'Jamie Uys discusses the next day's shoot with 'Hotnot', outside Kalahari Gemsbok Park' (Weinberg, 1996: 340). The photographer tells us two different messages about the same photograph: that Jamie Uys was recruiting and that he had already recruited. Yet if Uys was discussing 'the next day's shoot' it means he was well known to Hotnot, as they were working together. If Uys was recruiting new actors for his film, there is a likelihood that Hotnot and him were not well known to each other. Unlike Tomaselli's and Jakob Malgas's visual embrace (Photo 16), Hotnot is facing downwards as he is being photographed, humbly touching his head with the right hand. He is seen using his left arm with his head slightly lifted in the 'Footprints' version, revealing he was continually using his hands to touch his head, in an apparent uneasiness. Uys, rather than appearing to face Hotnot in the discussions, is looking at pictures from the Thai camera woman, on Uys' s right side who has been photographing Hotnot and his father (photo 15). Could it be perhaps that Hotnot felt overwhelmed by the photographers who have been photographing him with his stepfather?

Other variations also appear in other photos. 'Anna Swarts in the Kalahari, Northern Cape, South Africa' (Weinberg, 1997: 29) also is captioned as 'Anna Swarts collects roots, outside the Kalahari Gemsbok Park' (Weinberg, 1996: 337). The different details are collecting roots, in the Kalahari and outside Kalahari Gemsbok Park. 'Weekend festivities, Tjum!kui, Namibia' (Photo one) appears as ' Weekend, Bushmanland, Namibia' (Weinberg, 1996: 333) the different details being Bushmanland, festivities and Tjum!kui. 'Soldiers about to be demobilised, Mangetti, Namibia' (Weinberg, 1997: 31) is also captioned 'Passing out,

Bushmanland, Namibia' (Weinberg, 1996: 332) the difference being between passing out and soldiers about to be demobilised. It should also be noted that Bushmanland does not show the differences in the names on places Weinberg visited. Thus, it would appear that readers of the same photograph would have different concepts of places and activities described therein. Lack of clarity on what actually was happening during photographic acts demonstrates Weinberg's uncertainty over his memory regarding what he thought might have been happening.

## Summary

Representation is a very contentious business and raises a lot of questions, particularly in photographs where questions of who does the 'shooting' and who gets empowered by it arise. This becomes more contentious when a culture that has been dehumanised, dispossessed, hunted like animals and killed is photographed by outsiders, who happen to be whites. Yet issues of deliberately perpetuating disempowerment and victimologies as raised by Bester and Buntman (1999) could be farfetched considering the economic, social and cultural stress under photographers work.

There are serious observations made regarding gendering, othering, and the focus on bodies as if the environment does not tell stories and have possible ideological implications. Most of these things are avoidable in ethnographic photography. If photographers were more reflexive in increasing the details of realism operators to provide the context of the photographic act, a brief story of subjects and even an account of the photographer's own feelings about the whole process, including the encounter with the subjects itself. The importance of some questions of representation cannot however be overlooked, considering the implications such representations have for modern South Africa's development endeavours. For instance, Weinberg chose to describe a photo of a confidently smiling man by stating 'Dawid Kruiper tells a story, Kagga Kamma' and on the photo of a serious looking woman, identified as Sana Kruiper by the ≠Khomani (FGD III, 2002), he only indicated 'listening, Kagga Kamma' (Weinberg, 1997: 23). Women, though visually present are culturally absent in most of Weinberg's and Dunn's photos (she neither provided names for her photos, nor did she name the subjects in her exhibition).

## Chapter Four

### Ethical Predicaments in Reading Ethnographic Photography

#### Towards a cooperative and reflexive photography

Having looked at the process of reading ethnographic photography, this study poses questions regarding the predicament of participatory representation. Visual records produced by investigators and those under study are questionable in the wake of the collapse of the observer-observed dichotomy. This results in the need for a third kind of visual record: collaborative representation (Banks, 1995). Collaborative representation is achieved by working with social actors in the production of visual representations. This is because initially, when visual representations are produced by the investigator, there is a danger of the content taking priority over the context (Banks, 1995). In still photography, more sensitive or reflexive representations are harder to accomplish (than in films) and consequently, investigators choose to create some marriage of text and image (Banks, 1995).

Collaboration can be achieved at various levels. Visual anthropologists can work with subject communities in the whole process of producing visual texts. Banks (1995) suggests this is like asking a craftsman to pause in the process of production at various stages in order to photograph the process, which Newton (1998) contends, constitutes visual theatre. Collaboration may also involve similar attempts towards subject-generated or indigenous media as shown by Sol Worth and John Adair working among the Navajo in the 1960s. Their objective was to evaluate 'how and for what purpose, the Navajo would use technology after learning basic production skills' (Tomaselli, 1999). Another kind of collaboration involves working together with indigenous peoples on a project that "simultaneously provides information for the investigator while fulfilling a goal for the subjects like through photo elicitation and focus group discussions" (Banks, 1995).

Collaborative representation therefore challenges western and commercial depictions of indigenous peoples. It empowers subjects and often reveals some aspects of daily lives unseen by outsiders (Tomaselli, 1999: 169). Though this has been the case during production processes of films such as *Ghetto Diaries* or *This is Clifford Abrahams, This is Grahamstown*,

Sheila de Cuyper (1998: 3) argues that cases of collaboratively produced photographic ethnography are rare, as most photographs are snapshots, taken as records and keepsakes, very rarely constructed with conscious intent and are usually analysed after the encounters. For example, during his photographic experiences during communal religious festivals in India, Banks recalls being asked to photograph particular people, like a pre-posed 'photograph of the woman' who had paid for the feast (1995).

One challenge of collaborative photography is the act of interpretation and who does the interpretation, in cases where researchers do not know the language (Michaels, 1991: 262). In the Southern Kalahari for instance, it would not be wise to have Belinda as a translator during Dawid Kruiper's interviews because of the extant tensions between Dawid and his brother Vetkat and the accompanying suspicions. Michaels' (1991) note on interpretation is crucial as I discovered on a research tour to the Limpopo province in July 2001, where our team of three were to research community attitudes and perceptions regarding Masebe Nature Reserve. During the focus group discussions, a translator simply summarised the anger of a woman who was shouting at the top of her voice about land and the incompetence of the Community Property Association of which the translator was an executive member, as was discovered later. At one place in Mabetha village, an 'all-knowing' translator began to answer questions for the subject, and when I insisted he translate the questions, he got angry and retorted, 'I know everything in this village my friend and most of these people will just agree with me and I am saving your time'.

It is also a challenge for photographers to establish what should or should not be photographed as sometimes, there lacks clear distinctions between private and public spheres. This brings up another challenge: the difference between traditional and contemporary media (Michaels, 1991: 264). In terms of rights, some indigenous societies have mortuary customs of destroying property of deceased people or avoiding using them, such that one cannot photograph them. Photographers should not enter communities with cameras blazing and instead allow for negotiations first (Michaels, 1991). In interviewing Jon Kruiper for instance, he asked us not to use the video camera until he was ready, during which time he lectured on the appropriate name for the 'Bushmen', the loss of their land, their mistreatment by the western and corporate world and questioned his personal benefit from the interview. Jon stressed all his points by writing in the sand, erasing and writing to emphasise particular

points regarding money. In the middle of the interview, he commanded us to begin videoing. He demanded R20 which was paid by Dodd (which I refunded as it was my interview) and it took us a while to realise that among the ≠Khomani, information is a natural resource, and thus it is regarded as highly, protected (informants are careful in releasing information) and it is expensive. Hence “some reparations are necessary” for “taking away our stories and driving with them away in *bakkies*” (Crowe, 2003). The advice however remains:

So relax. Get to know people. Socialise and sometimes leave the camera locked up, protected from your temptations. Be willing to lose some great shots in order to discover what [indigenous people’s] interests in visual representations might be. [...] People may be far more concerned that you take pictures in the right way than you take a lot of pictures. They may be concerned that you stand in the right place and in the correct relationships that you frame and capture the best shots. [...] Involve [them] in the entire process of visual production, not merely isolating them in front of the camera, to produce a visual product in which they have no say, which in fact, they don’t even see. [...] Review procedure at every stage of production process is recommended [which] means review and selection of contact sheets, assistance in captioning or sequencing [before] publication (Michaels, 1991: 273-274).

Though these suggestions are beneficial to both subjects and researchers, Michaels does not seem aware or does not want to mention that in most cases, indigenous peoples will demand payment for collaboration as our aforementioned experiences in Kalahari demonstrated. In the case of Weinberg, he emphasised that he practiced co-operative photography (2000b; 2002: Interview). In speaking back, Anna Swarts (2002), Jon Kruiper (2002) and Sagraan Kruiper (2002) insisted that they were not consulted nor did they know that the photos were for a book. Dunn’s photography of Lena, much as it was carried out in the presence of Tomaselli and Lena’s husband, Jakob, could have been disrespectful considering the drunken state she was in. It could be for this reason that Dodd, in returning photographs back to the community, opted to leave out the drunk Lena’s photographs arguing ‘I have left these and taken others because these (drunken Lena) photos are not empowering’ (Informal conversation, 2002). My videos as well could also constitute intrusions in many ways like during Dodd’s interview with Jakob Malgas in the presence of a drunken Lena where I ‘stole’ the picture of the conversations by opting for a wide shot as I was not sure how Lena would react to being filmed.

### **Attempting to write ethnographic photography**

Discussions in the previous chapters have raised some objections to modern ethnographic

photography: lack of and indeterminate captioning (where the same picture is supported by different captions in different publications), lack of naming subjects, lack of details on place, time, context and nature of relationship during photography, lack of revelations on photographers or investigator's subjectivities during photography and reasons for taking particular photographs. This section therefore attempts to write and present ethnographic photographs on photographs of Elsie Van Wyk, Vetkat Kruiper and Dawid Kruiper's home.

## **Elsie Van Wyk**

Photographer: Vanessa Dodd, white South African, 25.  
Date: 16 July 2002, around 11 am.  
Place: Witdraai, just outside and opposite of Molopo Lodge, Southern Kalahari, South Africa  
Other researchers: Linje Manyozo, 27, black and Malawian.  
Additional information: Linje and Vanessa are 'professor's' students, as Tomaselli is known here

### **Photographic encounter**

Linje and Vanessa were distributing Sian Dunn's April 2002 photographs, (Tomaselli paid for the reproduction of copies) within the community. Silikat, Elsie's husband was happy to see himself, so too were the other ≠Khomani. Elsie was, however, not in any of the photographs and immediately grabbed Vanessa's arm asking her to "please take my photos, so that next time, I can see myself". Vanessa asked where Elsie wants the photos taken and she suggested right there. Vanessa took three photos, in one of which, Elsie's posed with Silikat. Elsie has a sister, Tina and a brother, Gert and all of them sat on the roadside making art and craft to sell to the tourists. This photograph was taken right on Elsie's and Silikat's stand.



### **Elsie and researchers**

Dodd, first met Elsie in July 2001, outside Dawid Kruiper's pink house at Welkom and she

noted (2003):

I sit and listen to Belinda, Elsie and Maria talking. They are just like women everywhere. There is a funeral the next day and they are complaining about how nobody helps them with the work that it involves and discussing what they will wear. Belinda offers to lend Elsie a skirt. Elsie seems upset that Belinda has a new scarf, while Elsie herself has nothing new. I suggest to Belinda that next time we come, we should bring dresses for the women. Belinda thinks this is a good idea: the women need dresses because they need to feel feminine. Elsie grabs my hand and reminds me of my promise as we are leaving. She wants something that is just for her, in a package, marked 'Elsie'. It seems easy to lose one's sense of individuality and beauty here

In April 2002, Dodd was on Tomaselli's trip to Kalahari and noted (2003):

I was struck by how little has changed since our previous visit in July 2001. The settlement at Welkom has now been provided with electricity, and insects thus plague the houses and cooking is still done outside on the fires because there is no money to buy stoves. Dawid Kariseb tells us it costs R300 to hire a *bakkie* to drive to the clinic at Ashkham, 56 km away. There is no taxi service. Every activity here depends on weather. Sian, a photographer who accompanied us, was to spend a day at Blinkwater where we were camping on the sand dune, taking photographs and [observing the process of] slaughtering sheep. Then the wind began to blow and everyone went to sleep. Time and things have different meaning in the desert. [...] Silikat, Elsie's husband tells me he is struggling because he is no longer able to hunt for bone, leather and other materials to make crafts and that he is touched that I want to buy something for my mother because his mother is dead and that all he has left to sell of his crafts are these hanging things for R50. I buy one. I ask after Elsie and he takes me to greet her.

She has no idea who I am until she connects me with the parcel and the dress she receives. Then she is very friendly, introduces me to her family who are gathered washing clothes (I forgot that people without washing machines still washed things!) and graciously ensures that I feel free to send another parcel any time I want. I sense that the question of cash may be on coming and explain that I am now broke after buying Silikat's thing for my mother. She thanks me and says she would like my mother to come and visit too.

In July 2002, Dodd (2003) noted of Elsie:

When I first met Elsie last year, she told me she wanted me to send her a parcel with her name on it. She dreamed of something we take for granted. [...] This time I bring her a jacket, and she is delighted

and tells me she wants to give me a *pakkie* also because I always give her a *pakkie*. Shortly, she presents me with a necklace she has made and a rock painted by Silikat, then tells me she needs R20 to buy food. I try to explain that I'll give them R20 because they are my friends and I know they need it, but the necklace and the stone are my gifts. Whatever. [...] On another occasion, Silikat tells me he had a dream about me and the seven stars and my Bushman name is 'Morning Star' and look, here is a necklace with stars on it for only R20. [...] Elsie's sister, Tina, whom I've never interviewed previously, wants to speak with me as soon as they see the copy of *The Healing Land* in my hand. Tina and I sit down on the bank beside the road, and she begins to tell me how heart-sore they are because they have got nothing from the book. Rupert promised them money, which they never saw, and now they are sad and unhappy. They do not have money to send their children to school and this is Rupert's fault. Tina's brother, Dals Kruiper, committed suicide by throwing himself in front of a vehicle. He would not have done it if the money had come.

Another researcher on the trip, assisting mainly with translation, Nelia Oets, noted regarding the July 2002 trip (2002:6-7):

[Silikat] and his wife Elsie were the two people who really manage to turn my myth [childhood fantasies about primordial Bushmen] upside down and inside out and yet in some strange way still uphold it. They went out of their way to exploit me and my means. I had to help them with money for their daughter's school fees. Please, would I buy just one more necklace so they could buy her some clothes for school? Please could I help them [by driving] take some water to their dwelling [as] it is far to walk. And then, when I arrive at the appointed location, they are not there with others, whom we [with Tomaselli] we take home.

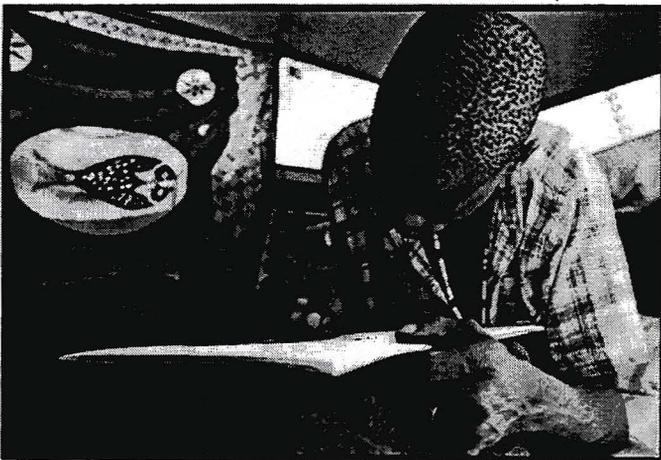
They [Silikat and Elsie] arrive an hour after dark and then want us to do the trip all over again. After that, they started coming to our campsite late every afternoon to once again ask for some favour or some money [and sometimes] I would hide in my tent [but] I didn't feel too good about it. Somehow they had become my friends and don't we also intrude into their lives with all our questioning? [...] Once I was alone in the camp and Elsie came stumbling towards me, falling down on the sand right in front of me. She begged me to take her to the clinic, because Silikat had apparently been stabbed (of course my money was the issue) and she didn't want to go along in the police van because she can't bear to see her husband bleeding. I was slightly despondent but would have taken her if one of the employees at the lodge didn't pass by and told me that there was nothing wrong with Silikat [as] he had just met him at the bottle store. I then told Elsie in so many words that I thought we were friends, that I didn't take kindly to friends lying so blatantly to one another and please, would she just leave. In the end, Groot Koos, the manager at the lodge with two helpers [came and] rescued me. I was very

amused. Here was Elsie, a petite Bushwoman who apparently needed a very big guy to remove her along. As she was leaving, swearing and screaming at them, I told her not to worry [as] tomorrow we could be friends again.

Later, Nelia confessed (2002:7):

I have torn some ligaments in my ankle the day before I left for Witdraai. This was diagnosed by one of my friends in Upington who is a medical doctor. When Elsie and Silikat asked to see what had happened to my foot, they very much made the same diagnosis just by touching and pressing around my ankle. Elsie then started to massage my foot, while Silikat was cradling my ankle in his hands and told me silly little stories to take my mind off what Elsie was doing. It was extremely painful but as a trained physiotherapist, I knew that what she was doing was the very best treatment possible. My friend had studied for six years, I had studied for four years and here are these two people, literally out of the bush, knowing just as much as we do.

## Vetkat Kruiper



Photographer: Sian Dunn, white South African.

Date: 4 April 2002, morning.

Place: Blinkwater farm, Southern Kalahari, South Africa

Other people present: Belinda Kruiper, Jody and her son Nino, all Cape Townian coloureds.

Additional information: Sian was a 'professor's' student

## Photographic encounter

Sian had remained behind after all of us had gone to visit Rosa, Silikat and other ≠Khomani at Witdraai. She had remained behind to photograph the process of buying sheep, slaughtering and preparing it, but because of the wind, nothing was done. In the end, she only managed to observe Vetkat working on his art in the broken down coombie. Vetkat Kruiper is a brother of traditional leader, Dawid and married to Belinda. He stays at Blinkwater farm with his family and younger brother Uri. They have no children. Vetkat hated the SA Museum

diorama in Cape Town (before it was closed down). As he looked at the Bushmen representations he thought he was looking at his other self, which could not breathe. There are some tensions with his relatives for his marrying Belinda, 'an outsider' but who contradictorily, is very much respected in other sectors. Sometimes, Vetkat played guitar after supper and joints of 'Bushman tobacco' were passed around to everyone seated around the fire. Vetkat is also a spiritual person with very strong beliefs in traditional ways. He confessed that eating a porcupine cleanses the stomach of bad things and at the same time improves men's sexual performances (PC, Westville, 11 September 2002). I remembered eating porcupine when we visited Blinkwater, but ate it, just like any other food.

### **Vetkat and researchers**

Nelia Oets reminiscences of her visit to Southern Kalahari (2002: 3-4):

In July 2001, I met Tomaselli at Witdraai [where] we interviewed some Bushmen and other (mostly white people) who were or had been involved with the Bushmen in some way or another. My first impression was that these people mostly saw themselves as experts who all had these great ideas of how to save the Bushmen from 'themselves' [but confessed that] it was an impossible task because the Bushmen 'were the way they were': unpredictable, unreliable, lazy and ungrateful. The myth kicked into action. [...] During this time I also conducted interviews, spoke to Vetkat and Silikat, both stoned out of their minds on dope. Vetkat seemed to make no sense at all. He was telling me about his sad childhood, growing up in a family that treated him like as the *vrot eier* until somebody else eventually took care of him.

Vetkat spoke of his art and actions as not being from himself but from some other higher force or source. He also emphasised the issue that people should have respect for one another. As time passed and I got to know him better, many of the things that he tried to articulate that day have become clear in follow up casual conversations. Vetkat's philosophy is underscored by the idea of respect and his favourite dictum: *Kom soos jy is* (Come as you are). I like to be around him. It often feels as if though he is speaking to you through his silences. [...] Vetkat has chosen to distance himself from the community and its politics to live a life of hardship but still close to nature. In his own way, he is a philosopher and though he does not talk much, one manages to glimpse some of his insights by just sitting silently with him around the fire, in the sun or on the dune and listening carefully to the odd remarks that occasionally slip out.

On September 11, 2002, Vetkat, accompanied by Belinda, was present at his exhibition in

Westville, Durban. He was happy to socialise with the researchers who had visited him at Blinkwater. He reminded us of the porcupine and how cold Blinkwater was back then. Vetkat seemed absentminded when Tomaselli gave a speech during the proceedings and when his name was mentioned in acknowledgement, he had to be reminded that people wanted to see him. Belinda remarked that Vetkat was actually in the Kalahari. In an informal conversation with Mary Lange and myself, Vetkat expressed his worry that he had to sell his art and he felt that it was like selling his soul, until Mary reminded him that art is love and in fact he was sharing his love with Durbanites.

### **Dawid Kruiper's homestead**

Photographer: Sian Dunn

Date: 6 April 2002

Other researchers: Keyan Tomaselli, Linje Manyozo, Nhamo Mhiripiri and Vanessa Dodd, Belinda Kruiper.

Place: Witdraai 'veld', Southern Kalahari, about 3 km from Molopo lodge.

### **Photographic encounter**

We had come to interview Dawid Kruiper after an appointment only to be told he had gone to a CPA meeting at Witdraai, near Molopo Lodge. The place looks deserted because most



family members had gone to the roadsides to make and sell their art. Dawid's place is different from the roadside Bushmen houses build as part of marketing strategies, selling both the art and the primordial (White, 1995) Bushmen for tourists and other cultural consumers. The small house on the left was full in

the evenings with drunken and singing ≠Khomani. It was almost impossible to find Dawid there during day because he was always attending numerous meetings or just visiting different families. Sometimes, deliberately, Dawid absented himself to 'take a breather' from the journalists and photographers who want to hear his stories more so considering that

'photographers can fuck you around a lot' (Dawid Kruiper, 2002: Interview). The woman sitting outside the house (Dawid's daughter) and the young man (Dawid Amam) in the kitchen with Belinda are dressed in western clothes, unlike the roadside Bushmen who are in traditional dress.

## **Summary**

By including the context and con-text surrounding particular photographs, a researcher or a photographer is able to begin the process of activating photographic texts, enabling readers who were absent during photography to have a feeling of 'secondness' in experiencing Bourdieu's photographic encounter. This includes keeping diaries of information as it happens, even on what we consider to be useless at the time. After the photographic experience, we could also reflect on the photographic act and record our impressions of the event. The process of reading photography should include indigenous perceptions and their interpretations of their observations (of the contents of the photographs). This is a challenge, more so considering that most photographs are not products of 'well-thought decisions' but rather 'flashes of recognition'.

## **Epilogue: Resolving the Bester/Buntman versus Weinberg/Bregin debate**

The representation debate raised critical issues regarding the length of the photographic process, the contradiction and misconception over the thin line between depiction and representation, notions of spectacle and photographic self-reflexivity and auto-ethnography. As iconic texts, Weinberg's and Dunn's photographs *depicted* the transition, the struggle and everything else that goes on out there in the Southern Kalahari. Yet, the whole process of photography, the relationship with the subject communities, the importance of the projects to community life, the lack of continual photography and feedback, the anonymity of photographic subjects, lack of community participation (in case of Jon Kruiper, Sagraan, Kruiper, Anna Swarts), the focus on bodies and the gendering of pictures all contribute to the spectacularising the Khomani. Assembled together, all these factors led Vetkat Kruiper to shed tears because him and his 'people are nothing but just examples'. Weinberg may not be far from the truth in suggesting that the Bushmen are the most photographed people in the world (2002, Interview). The people may get paid for participating in their being imaged, thus selling out their traditions, skills and achievements to cameramen, but the lack of commitment

from both academics, researchers, tourists and documentary photographers contribute to creating Vetkat's 'examples' out of the Bushmen.

The study has attempted to establish the differences between depiction and representation in that representation involves the habit or experience of being and becoming by subjects, photographers and readers in developing what Tomaselli and Shepperson categorise as 'communicable experience' (1991: 7). The deliberateness with which producers or subjects consciously formulate a dialogue out of the depictions with similar set of attributes within particular categories (Tomaselli and Shepperson, 1991: 8, 14). In reading depictions, one attempts to establish how an icon simulates reality; in other words, a reader of an iconic text looks for 'what is supposed to be in the text'. Within representations, a reader of the iconic sign elevates himself to indexical and symbolic levels, during which he attempts to ascertain *implications* of the extant paradigms and syntagms.<sup>1</sup> In the Kalahari photography debate, by not considering the voice of Bushmen in how they perceive images of themselves, Bester's and Buntman's dismissal of Weinberg's photography only made sense at the depiction level of photographs as icons. On the other hand, the Weinberg's and Dunn's photographic experiences and acts raised questions over Vetkat's concern with outsiders making examples out of Bushmen. Perhaps, even academics' concern with Bushmen as research subjects could also fall under the 'example'. Outsiders develop their careers based on what they take from Kalahari whilst the people themselves struggle for land and other natural resources within the ruthlessness of growing corporate capitalism.

I have come back from the Southern Kalahari. I am writing up my dissertation and editing a video as part of the examination requirements. Hopefully I will get my degree next year. Yet there are still two crucial questions about my motivation for getting involved in this whole saga: What were we doing there in the Kalahari? What is there for the Bushman? I wonder if my trip to Kalahari was for academic purposes only and I fear that the people I knew are just research subjects on my way up. I have fears that if that is the trend, then 'what is there' for the Bushman? Maybe they are right to demand money for interviews.

At the same time, however, I feel that I want more of the Kalahari. The beautiful landscape was noisy with silence and sitting on the dunes one admired the tranquillity there, the

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<sup>1</sup> I thank Arnold Shepperson for his insightful clarifications over the differences between depictions and representations.

drunkenness, the fighting, the dagga, the singing, the suspicions, the fears of loss of land and fears of being forgotten by the 'developers'. It is within this context that photographers Weinberg and Dunn took their photos in the eighties, nineties and the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These photos were then developed in the noise of the cities and consumed in the noise of the cars and manufacturing industries, away from the silence. This study was an attempt to take back these photographs to where they originated; from the silence, from the place where people sleep and cannot kill animals when the wind is blowing.

The subjects of these photographs were able to talk to photographers, to researchers and most importantly, to themselves as they peered at their images. The study has demonstrated that active interpretation of ethnographic photography involves photographers, investigators, subject communities and careful consideration of the context in which photographic encounters shaped the photographic acts. Weinberg's photographs raised a number of ethical questions regarding visual intrusion, theatre, theft and documents. Yet their importance as visual records of societies in transition cannot be overlooked. Similarly, although Dunn's photos were initially inactive, the process of activating them in the Kalahari enabled us to examine our role in and relationship with the community. Though these photos fell into the category of primordial representations, were gendered and lacked depth (due to insufficient realism operators), their messages remain clear: that even in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, with part of their land returned, the Bushmen are evidence of the hypocrisy of corporate capitalism whose obsession with profits marginalises many peoples throughout the world.

It must be settled however, that reading photographs involves the critical analysis of the photographer, date, and photographic technology used to produce the image. This analysis must stretch from the subject(s) and location, to the artifacts represented in the image. Thomas Kavanagh (nd.) notes that this process, particularly that of identifying the artifacts represented in the image, involves a continual cross-referencing between photograph(s) and artifacts, often resulting in the revision of attributions of both artifact and photograph. The problem with photographing the ≠Khomani is that most photographers focus too much on searching for the 'authentic' or rather, in Rouch's terms, they search for 'photography of the truth' rather than the 'truth of photography'.

It should also be pointed out that taking good photographs is a craft and very difficult

(Weinberg, 2002: Interview). Much as professional photographers can take better pictures because of their ability to manage the environment, non-professional photographers can collaborate with indigenous peoples in the kind of photography they want. These photos can be explained by providing the context and con-text within which the photography took place. Academics should also be humble enough to work with non-academic practitioners in photography, recognising the difficult circumstances under which photographers work and incorporating them in the academic programmes of ethnographic photography, rather than being too critical of the quality and importance of photography knowing well that they could not produce better works. This can only serve to decrease the tensions between the academy and the practitioners not only in photography but other development communication fields as well.

The foregoing study has suggested that ethnographic photography would become easier to read if a photographer carried out some research so that the photographs should become products of a clear understanding of how indigenous societies work. Though it is a challenge to employ photo-elicitation techniques in subject communities using recently taken photographs by a photographer associated with you (as a research team), taking photographs back to subjects increases the trust between researchers and the indigenous communities. It must be mentioned, however, that the subject matter of a reader of ethnographic photography cannot be clearly defined as there are many things happening during the photographic act: what the photographer thinks is going on, what the subjects know is going on and hope the photographer can see and what is actually happening. Reading photographs requires an understanding of these processes as well as the relationships that defined photographic acts. This cannot be done with a researcher sitting in his office fantasising about testable hypotheses.

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Date	Nature of Conversation	Subject(s) and Gender	Social Position	Place
3-04-2002	Semi-structured and audio recorded interview	Coekie Jody Van Schalkwyk Levy (Female)	A Cape Townian coloured housewife visiting Belinda and Vetkat with her son, Nino	Blinkwater, Southern Kalahari
23-08-2002	Structured and video recorded interview	Sian Dunn (Female)	Photojournalist	Westville Durban
8-11-2002	Structured and video recorded interview	Paul Weinberg (Male)	Human Rights Activist and Documentary photojournalist	Durban
11-07-2002	Semi-structured and video recorded interview	Anna Festus and Gertruida Sauls (Female)	SASI Field Officers	Upington, Northern Cape
12-07-2002	Focus Group Discussion I	Khobus Witbooi, Isaak Gooi, Jakob Tieties, Geoffrey Kruiper and Elsie Kariseb (Female)	≠Khomani Bushmen artists	Witdraai, Southern Kalahari
12-07-2002	Focus Group Discussion II	Silikat Van Wyk, Elsie Van Wyk, Tina Swat, Andries Kruiper, Gert Swart and Shaun Witbooi	≠Khomani Bushmen artists	Witdraai, Southern Kalahari
13-07-2002	Semi-structured, informal and video recorded interview	Dawid Regopstaan Kruiper (Male)	≠Khomani traditional leader	Witdraai
14-07-2002	Focus Group Discussion III	Abraham Malgas, Jokkie Malgas (son), Bettie Malgas (Jokkie's wife), Shyron Ben (Bettie's grandson), Klein Dawid Kariseb Kruiper, Maria Kruiper (wife), Philemon Kariseb, Aunt Eva de Waal, Maureen de Waal	≠Khomani Bushmen and coloureds	Welkom
15-07-2002	Semi-structured and video recorded interview	Sagraan Kruiper (Male)	≠Khomani Bushman	Witdraai
15-07-2002	Semi-structured and video recorded interview	!Xele Jon Kruiper (Male)	≠Khomani Bushman	Witdraai
15-07-2002	Semi-structured and video recorded interview	Jakobus Malgas (Male)	≠Khomani Bushman	Witdraai
15-07-2002	Semi-structured video recorded interview	Anna Swarts (Female)	≠Khomani Bushwoman	Witdraai

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## Appendix 1: Interview Schedules

### I. Schedule for photographers: Weinberg and Dunn

- What have you been doing in the Kalahari and how did you find the experience?
- What is the difference between photographing in Durban and photographing in the Kalahari?
- What and whose stories do your photographs tell?
- How did you make a choice of shots in the Kalahari? What was the context in which you took the photographs?
- To Dunn: What is the exhibition about?
- To Weinberg: Bester and Buntman accused your photography of subjugating and disempowering the Bushmen through what they termed a 'spectacle'. Yourself and Elaine Bregin responded in the 2000 edition of *African Arts* rejecting their criticism, which you argued was based on misunderstanding of the nature of ethnographic photography. How does one like me study photographs of indigenous people? How do we recognise a spectacle?
- How do you look at the relationship between academics and practitioners in development communication (musicians, artists, photographers, filmmakers)?
- What is your opinion of your photographs?
- How far did your subjects know about your objectives?
- Some academics can take a photograph like this one (Photo 16) in which Keyan Tomaselli and Jakob Malgas are greeting each other and apply a textual analysis method known as semiology or semiotics. For example, with this photograph, they can argue that Keyan as a white person is imposing himself on the Bushman, trying to be Bushman and things like that. How would you read this photograph or how would you want people to read it?
- If you had to go to Kalahari to take more photographs with the same subjects, what would you want to do differently?
- To Weinberg: Jon Kruiper, an unnamed subject in your photograph, *Soccer, Kagga Kamma* (Weinberg, 1997: 58) says that during the photographic process, the two Bushmen subjects in the photograph were playing soccer with coloured children but looking at the photo, they do not see the coloured children. If it is true, how did the

exclusion of the coloured children change or not change the message or story you were trying to tell?

- What new things did you learn about the Kalahari and its peoples?
- To Jody: I saw you taking photographs of Nino (her son) playing a guitar next to Vetkat Kruiper. What was the photograph for? Why should we take photographs when we come here? What are you going to do with the photographs you take here?

## **II. Schedules for focus group discussions**

**Task:** Introductions. Explain the objectives of the project and what you expect to achieve at the end of it all. Introduce Weinberg and Dunn. First, Let them browse through Weinberg's photographs.

- For purposes of records, we need to know each other. Self-introductions. Ask them to introduce themselves.
- Some of these photographs come from here? Remember the photographer? How many people do you know or remember from the book? You know their names?
- Weinberg himself says that the photographs were meant to show the changing society of the Bushman, how they have been moved off their land and the problems they face in the modern world. Explain whether you agree or disagree with him.
- Some academics however have dismissed Weinberg's work because they argue "documentary practice always imposes the values of the photographer over the subjects". They also argue that these images may show some truths about what goes on here but are the images disempower the Bushmen. What is your opinion of these two different ideas?
- All of us must know Jakob Malgas. Now, some academics can take a photograph like this one (Photo 16) in which Keyan Tomaselli and Jakob Malgas are greeting each other and apply a textual analysis method known as semiology or semiotics. For example, with this photograph, they can argue that Keyan as a white person is imposing himself on the Bushman, trying to be Bushman and things like that. When you look at this photo, knowing Jakob and Tomaselli, what does the photo say to you?
- I want you to apply your semiotics in interpreting these photographs and anything you can remember about the photograph and subjects.
- What part do Bushmen take in photographic processes?

- How would you want the Bushmen to be represented in photographs?
- **Dunn's photographs:** Let them browse and repeat some steps.
- What is the difference between these two sets of photographs (Weinberg's and Dunn)?
- Does that difference change the way you are seen by the two photographers?
- For both sets of photographs, how are men and women represented?
- For subjects in both Weinberg and Dunn's photography: Tell us how the photography was taken, beginning with the arrival of the photographer. How do you feel seeing yourself in this photograph? You have copies the photograph? What does the photograph mean to you? Is there anything in the photograph that you feel should have been included? Have you seen this photograph before?
- Let us see if we can go through the photographs and then identify people, events and places.
- What is your opinion of photographers and the Kalahari?
- How would you distinguish between a bad photograph and a good photograph? Or a good photographer and a not-good photographer?
- What is the way forward now?

## Appendix 2: Permissions to Reproduce Photographs

**From:** "Paul Weinberg" <pwein@iafrica.com>  
**To:** "Linje Manyozo" <201508163@stu.und.ac.za>  
**Date:** 12/11/02 6:14am  
**Subject:** Re: Please, please, please: Permission to use photographs

Hi Linje - you have permission to use the photos....sorry to hold you up.

Regards

Paul

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Linje Manyozo  
**To:** pwein@iafrica.com  
**Date:** 11/22/02 10:55am  
**Subject:** Advice on Permission

Hello Paul

I am in the midst of confusion here: editing both my documentary and dissertation and haven't had time to reflect on the most important things. Keyan has just given me some corrections on the dissertation and has (very importantly, so) pointed out the need for permission in using photos for study. I am requesting your permission to use the following photos in my study.

Weekend festivities (57),  
Class in progress, Kagga Kamma (76),  
Wedding for thirty six couples (71),  
Bushmanland, Namibia (Footprints, 336),  
Meeting of the Nyae Nyae farmers, Namibia (78),  
Jamie Uys recruits actors (14),  
Dusk, //Auru (37),  
Ou Regopstaan Kruiper (24),  
!Xo soldier, Schmidtsdrift (21),  
Making an ostritch necklace (40),  
Kgau/'ana with his family (41),  
Dibe Sesana and her child eating tsama melons (48),  
Puberty dance (60),  
Soccer, Kagga Kamma (58),  
A member of a Thai film crew (72-73)

I hope I am not asking too much. Keep well and thanks for everything. Smile,

Linje Manyozo  
Culture, Communication and Media Studies

**From:** "Barbara I. Buntman" <barbie@icon.co.za>  
**To:** "Linje Manyozo" <201508163@stu.und.ac.za>  
**Date:** 12/11/02 7:18pm  
**Subject:** Re: Request for Permission to use Your Photograph

Dear Linje,  
Yes, you may use the image "'Tourists meet Bushmen' (Buntman, 1996: 279) from an article in MISCAST (Skotnes, 1996)" for your dissertation. Is the copy in MISCAST adequate for your purposes? It is not a problem that you have contacted me in this way. Your topic sounds interesting and I would be interested to read what you have written.  
Good luck

Barbara Buntman  
Art History  
The School of Arts  
University of the Witwatersrand  
Johannesburg  
PO Wits, 2050  
South Africa

----- Original Message -----

From: "Linje Manyozo" <201508163@stu.und.ac.za>  
To: <barbie@icon.co.za>  
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2002 9:37 AM  
Subject: Request for Permission to use Your Photograph

> Hello Barbara:

> Dear Barbara:

>

> My name is Linje Manyozo, a Media Studies student, University of Natal, > in the Culture, Communication and Media Studies Programme. I am writing > up a dissertation on ' Reading Modern Ethnographic Photography: A > Semiotic Analysis of Bushmen Photographs of Paul Weinberg and Sian > Dunn'.

>

> This letter, a copy of which I emailed your office at Wits, is a > request from you (as a copyright holder) to allow me reproduce your > picture, 'Tourists meet Bushmen' (Buntman, 1996: 279) from an article in > the MISCAST (Skotnes, 1996). I would greatly appreciate a written > acknowledgement so I could attach as an appendix. Please. I did talk to > Ms Busi Damane, who I explained my situation and assisted me by giving > me this email address. I hope it didnt offend you. But I cant do > anything now without the permission. (being a foreigner here, I have > been so naive to think about copyrights until Keyan Tomaselli refused me > the go ahead till I get permissions from authors). Please. Please.

>

> Thank you,

>

> Linje Manyozo

> CCMS, University of Natal

> Department phone: 031-260-2505 In care of Susan Govender.