

## Township tourism and the political spaces of Katutura

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### *Abstract*

*Contemporary postcolonial Namibia is experiencing an extension of the logic of camp biopolitics that stems from its colonial era. In this paper, the authors suggest that tourism is the conduit for this kind of development which takes on different contemporary forms in postcolonial configurations of biopolitics. In Namibia's township of Katutura, the marginalised poor are subject to mechanisms of camp biopolitics that supplement Agamben's conceptualisation of bare life. However, Agamben's approach to biopolitics ahistoricises and depoliticises space in ways that obfuscate the presence of a political subject. The article first introduces a framework of colonialism, camp biopolitics, and tourism which is then followed by an analysis of the practice of township tourism, particularly in Katutura. The next section reveals Katutura as a political space made up of active subjects who engage in various contestations.*

### Colonialism, camp biopolitics, and tourism

Agamben's conceptualisation of camp biopolitics is notorious and continues to provoke great controversy. Agamben argues that the fragmentation of society produces an indistinguishable grey zone between the inside and the outside, the social condition of being neither completely excluded nor completely recognised.<sup>1</sup> This zone is referred to as a zone of indistinction.<sup>2</sup> The camp is "the prototypical zone of indistinction"<sup>3</sup> where

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<sup>1</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Means without End: Notes on Politics*, Minnesota, University of Minnesota Press, 2000: 40. Also see William Walters, "Acts of demonstration: mapping the territory of (non-)citizenship", in: Engin Isin and Greg Nielson, (eds.), *Acts of Citizenship*, London, Zed Books, 2008: 182-206 (186f.).

<sup>2</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, California, Stanford University Press, 1998.

the state of exception becomes the rule and distinction between the rule of law and chaos disappears.<sup>4</sup> The state of exception “inaugurates a new juridico-political paradigm in which the norm becomes indistinguishable from the exception”.<sup>5</sup> In his analysis of Nazi concentration camps, Agamben claims that the camp is placed outside the rule of law to punish at random without consequences.<sup>6</sup> However, exclusion of camp inhabitants takes place from within the realm of law, through the legalisation of the camps, who are then denaturalised according to legal procedures. Diken and Laustsen refer to this process as a case of “inclusive exclusion”.<sup>7</sup> Camps manifest the logic of sovereignty as the camp inmate is a blatant case of life stripped of form and value, of the formation of what Agamben calls the *bare life of homo sacer*. Sovereignty here is understood as the power to decide on the state of exception. The bare life of homo sacer is a life that is not sacrificed but one that can be disposable, politically unqualified, and not worthy of being lived. Entirely excluded from a community of rights, the bare life of homo sacer enters a “zone of indistinction between sacrifice and homicide”, a camp of bare life existence without hope of justice; a “pure space of exception”.<sup>8</sup>

Scholarly attention needs to focus more on the European colonies where bare life and camp biopolitics were introduced as part of the colonisation process, and on how these processes have metamorphosed within postcolonial contexts. For Mbembe, colonial occupation entailed “writing on the ground a new set of social and spatial relations” which led to “the production of boundaries and hierarchies, zones and enclaves”.<sup>9</sup> The production of these spaces facilitated exercises of sovereignty and the introduction of camps. In the colonies, camps of all sorts, including death, concentration, and forced labour camps, became manifest through processes of inclusive exclusion. Sylvester notes that colonial practices aimed to manage and control bodies, and relied on biopolitics in these processes.<sup>10</sup> As Mbembe reminds us, “colonies are the location par excellence where the controls and guarantees of judicial order can be suspended – the zone where the violence of the state of exception is deemed to operate in the service of ‘civilization’”.<sup>11</sup> In fostering the exercise of biopower, he highlights how racism and the denial of a common bond between coloniser and colonised justified the

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<sup>3</sup> Bulent Diken and Carsten Bagge Laustsen, “The camp”, *Geografiska Annaler*, Series B, Human Geography, 88, 2006: 443-452 (451).

<sup>4</sup> Jenny Edkins, “Sovereign Power, Zones of Indistinction, and the Camp,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 25, 2000: 3-25 (6).

<sup>5</sup> Agamben, *HomoSacer*: 170.

<sup>6</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*; Bulent Diken and Carsten Bagge Laustsen, *The Culture of Exception: Sociology Facing the Camp*, London, Routledge, 2005: 26.

<sup>7</sup> Diken and Laustsen, *Culture*: 26.

<sup>8</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*: 83, 134.

<sup>9</sup> Achille Mbembe, “Necropolitics”, *Public Culture*, 15, 2003: 11-40 (25f.).

<sup>10</sup> Christine Sylvester, “Bare life as a development/postcolonial problematic”, *The Geographical Journal*, 2006: 66-77 (172).

<sup>11</sup> Mbembe, “Necropolitics”: 24.

lawlessness of ruling over colonies.<sup>12</sup> Exercises and expressions of sovereignty in the colonies created new borders and produced new divisions as a consequence of inhabiting and using space in particular ways. Here, space is more than “the raw material of sovereignty”.<sup>13</sup> It is the striation of space that is critical in this regard, in the way that Deleuze and Guattari discuss “striated spaces” in *A Thousand Plateaus*.<sup>14</sup> By comparison to smooth spaces, which are undivided, unmeasured, localised and unlimited, striated spaces are limited/bordered; they are crisscrossed with dividing and measuring lines. In striated spaces, one moves from point to point, from one region to another, with the lines serving as connections between points. Under colonial practices, the state apparatus constructs and inhabits striated spaces which in turn make them spaces of control and regulation.<sup>15</sup> This kind of striated space for relegating the colonised bears similarity to what Mbembe calls “a third zone between subjecthood and objecthood” and to what Agamben refers to as a zone of indistinction where the formation of bare life and camp biopolitics prevail.<sup>16</sup>

Diken and Laustsen argue that the camp is a prototypical zone of indistinction and was historically an exceptional space in which the life of the citizen was reduced to bare life.<sup>17</sup> Yet for these scholars, as well as for Agamben, bare life has happened increasingly everywhere.<sup>18</sup> For Diken and Laustsen, the production of bare life extends beyond the walls of the concentration camp. Rather than positing that that contemporary life is characterised by the cruelty of concentration camps, they argue that the *logic* of the camp tends to be generalised throughout the entire society. Following the work of Agamben, they stress that the camp is no longer an historical incongruity or an exception, but the principle of ordering, the *nomos*, of contemporary social space.<sup>19</sup> For example, Patel and McMichael argue that contemporary development practices perpetuate colonial, biopolitical projects and Minca discusses the contemporary forms of encampment and seclusion in enclavic tourist island resorts.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, Sylvester highlights how the postcolonial condition “retains the sovereign exception and thereby keeps assigning statuses that are despised, dispossessed and, as Agamben would

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.: 25.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.: 26.

<sup>14</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Minnesota, University of Minnesota Press, 1987: 480f.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Mbembe, “Necropolitics”: 26; Agamben, *Homo Sacer*.

<sup>17</sup> Diken and Laustsen, *Culture*: 4.

<sup>18</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*; Diken and Laustsen, *Culture*.

<sup>19</sup> Diken and Laustsen, *Culture*.

<sup>20</sup> Raj Patel and Philip McMichael, “Third Worldism and the lineages of global fascism: the regrouping of the global South in the neoliberal era”, *Third World Quarterly*, 25, 2004: 231-254; Claudia Minca, “The island: work, tourism and the biopolitical”, *Tourist Studies*, 9, 2010: 88-108.

describe these, 'bare'".<sup>21</sup> These scholars are highlighting the presence of contemporary forms of biopolitics within postcolonial spaces.

For Rabinow and Rose, Agamben views contemporary biopower as taking "the form of a politics that is fundamentally dependent on the domination, exploitation, expropriation and, in some cases, elimination of the vital existence of some or all subjects over whom it is exercised".<sup>22</sup> It may be suggested that tourism is shaped by contemporary biopolitical practices of exploitation and expropriation. Diken and Laustsen advance the argument, for example, that tourist zones exist as places without laws or prohibitions for the privileged visitor and can be likened to models of Agamben's camps.<sup>23</sup> Drawing on contemporary sites of exception, such as refugee camps, favelas, and gated communities, Diken and Laustsen argue that the camp has become the rule in the sense that society is increasingly organised according to the logic of the camp and its paradox of representing the fear of enclosure and the dream of belonging. Likening the tourist zone to camps may shed light on how tourism fosters sites of exception in postcolonial spaces in Africa.

Historically, travel to Africa has involved "the construction and consumption of African otherness".<sup>24</sup> According to Dunn, marketing postcolonial Africa as an exoticised destination fixes Africans within spatial and temporal sites. He highlights how the project of postcolonial travel and tourism reifies discursive constructs that "control African movement and freeze the meaning and boundaries of African spaces".<sup>25</sup> From this discussion, we can understand how tourism imposes a specific spatio-temporal regime. The freezing of boundaries may be likened to the concept of the frontier, an "imaginative project" that is capable of moulding places into "space[s] of desire".<sup>26</sup> It is a technology of governance that reproduces sovereign capacity and develops sovereign competence through acts of exclusion and exception.<sup>27</sup> Acting as a mechanism for the expansion of Western sovereignty, frontiers transform spaces into "transnational spheres of interest, control and conquest". They do so by utilising and mobilising discursive and representative strategies.<sup>28</sup> These strategies characterise postcolonial spaces as possessing certain attributes which allow state actors from the Global North, for example, to lay

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<sup>21</sup> Sylvester, "Bare life": 67.

<sup>22</sup> Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose, "Biopower today", *BioSocieties*, 1, 2006: 195-217 (198).

<sup>23</sup> Diken and Laustsen, *Culture*: 109-112.

<sup>24</sup> Kevin Dunn, "Fear of a black planet: anarchy anxieties and postcolonial travel to Africa", *Third World Quarterly*, 25, 2004: 483-499 (483).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*: 484.

<sup>26</sup> Anna Tsing, *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 2005: 32.

<sup>27</sup> Daniel O'Connor and Willem De Lint, "Frontier Government: The folding of the Canada-US border", *Studies in Social Justice*, 3, 2009: 39-66 (40f.); Mark Duffield, "Development, territories, and people: consolidating the external frontier", *Alternatives*, 32, 2007: 225-246 (232).

<sup>28</sup> See Uma Kothari and Rorden Wilkinson, "Colonial imaginaries and postcolonial transformations: exiles, bases, beaches", *Third World Quarterly*, 31, 2010: 1395-1412 (1397).

claim over them while successfully and simultaneously appropriating, disciplining, classifying, negating, idealising, or exoticising such spaces.<sup>29</sup> Such practices of sovereign power strengthen Rabinow and Rose's claim that contemporary biopower takes the form of a politics that is dependent on domination, exploitation, and expropriation.<sup>30</sup>

The tourism industry is not solely implicated in the extension of the logic of camp biopolitics. As politically powerful and influential actors, tourists engage in the construction of places and invest them with meaning.<sup>31</sup> Salazar argues that tourist constructions of places and spaces deny the mobility of locals because tourists relate cultural capital with locality which in turn pressures locals to "represent to tourists the lifeworld in which they live as developing little or not at all".<sup>32</sup> This point parallels Dunn's conceptualisation of the freezing of African spaces. Colonial and biopolitical strategies that operate in the tourism industry often aim to identify and contain populations. The immobility attributed to the Other shapes and restricts social life and cultural identities. As a biopolitical mechanism, tourism assists in the production of segregated spaces in postcolonies. For Minca, tourism is based on an extraterritorial status that is made possible by regimes of exception and the suspension of the norm.<sup>33</sup> In this regard, the extension of camp biopolitics in tourism fosters a view of inhabitants as being politically unqualified, undeserving, and unequal.

In drawing on the links between colonialism, biopolitics, and tourism, the next part of the paper offers an analysis of how the logic of camp biopolitics has been extended in contemporary postcolonial Namibia through practices of tourism. As a former colony of Germany and South Africa, Namibia provided the testing ground for Nazi camp biopolitics, and radical, racial segregation during its apartheid era. Today, it is one of the few countries that promote the unique experience of 'township tourism', a practice that aims to transform township inhabitants into bodies on display. Little scholarly research exists on township tourism generally, and on township tourism in Namibia specifically.<sup>34</sup> Taking note of Brown and Hall's insightful statement that "the 'business of fun' is still not taken seriously in many academic circles", the following section aims to contribute to the tourism literature by providing a critical analysis of the extension of camp biopolitics through practices of township tourism in contemporary postcolonial

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Rabinow and Rose, "Biopower": 198.

<sup>31</sup> Anne-Marie d'Hauteserre, "Politics of imaging New Caledonia", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38, 2011: 380-402 (390).

<sup>32</sup> Noel B. Salazar, "Tourism imaginaries: a conceptual approach", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39, 2012: 863-882 (876).

<sup>33</sup> Minca, "The island": 102.

<sup>34</sup> See Jarkko Saarinen, "Local tourism awareness: community views in Katutura and King Nehale Conservancy, Namibia", *Development Southern Africa*, 27, 2010: 713-724; Uta Papen, "Exclusive, ethno and eco: representations of culture and nature in tourism discourses in Namibia", in: Adam Jaworski and Annette Pritchard, (eds.), *Discourse, Communication, and Tourism*, Clevedon, Channel View, 2005: 79-97.

Namibia.<sup>35</sup> It also acknowledges the development of diverse political actors and political spaces in tourist sites, particularly in the township of Katutura.

## Touring Namibia's camp spaces

Tourism in Namibia is a significant and growing industry. The total number of tourist arrivals to Namibia in 2011 grew by 4.4% compared to 2010.<sup>36</sup> The industry is even acknowledged in Namibia's national development framework, *Vision 2030*, which highlights the potential and importance of tourism as a sustainable economic sector that can assist Namibia in "maintain[ing] [a] comparative advantage within the global market".<sup>37</sup> Outlining various tourism sectors within the country, such as nature-centred tourism and mining tourism, the *Vision* pays no attention to alternative forms of tourism prevalent within the country, such as township tourism.<sup>38</sup> Initially, there was hesitancy in post-independent Namibia to move tourism beyond the country's centres of political power and commerce (i.e. Windhoek, Swakopmund, Walvis Bay, and Tsumeb). However, since the turn of the century, and with inspiration from South Africa, township tourism has been increasingly marketed with Katutura as the centrepiece.<sup>39</sup> While Namibia is quickly establishing itself as a contender in this niche tourism market, little has been written on the topic. Namibian tourism literature focuses on community based tourism,<sup>40</sup> nature tourism/ ecotourism, community based natural resource management (CBNRM), communal conservancies,<sup>41</sup> the generation and distribution of tourism income in communal

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<sup>35</sup> Frances Brown and Derek Hall, "Tourism and development in the Global South: the issues", *Third World Quarterly*, 29, 2008: 839-849 (841).

<sup>36</sup> Republic of Namibia, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, *Statistical Report 2011*, [http://www.namibiatourism.com.na/uploadedFiles/NamibiaTourism/Global/Downloads\\_Modules/Research\\_Center/MET-%202011%20Tourist%20Arrival%20Statistics%20Report.pdf](http://www.namibiatourism.com.na/uploadedFiles/NamibiaTourism/Global/Downloads_Modules/Research_Center/MET-%202011%20Tourist%20Arrival%20Statistics%20Report.pdf) (accessed July 1, 2013).

<sup>37</sup> National Planning Commission, *Vision 2030: Prosperity, Harmony, Peace and Political Stability*, [http://www.npc.gov.na/vision/vision\\_2030bgd.htm](http://www.npc.gov.na/vision/vision_2030bgd.htm) (accessed March 25, 2013).

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.: 43f.

<sup>39</sup> David Weaver and Katharine Elliott, "Spatial patterns and problems in contemporary Namibian tourism", *The Geographical Journal*, 162, 1996: 205-217; Malte Steinbrink, Fabian Frenzel, and Ko Koens "Development and globalization of a new trend in tourism", in: Fabian Frenzel, KoKoens, and Malte Steinbrink, (eds.), *Slum Tourism: Poverty, Power and Ethics*, London, Routledge, 2012: 1-18 (5f.).

<sup>40</sup> Marina Novelli and Kathrin Gebhardt, "Community based tourism in Namibia: 'Reality show' or 'window dressing'?", *Current Issues in Tourism*, 10, 2007: 443-479.

<sup>41</sup> For example, see: Julie Silva and Alfons Mosimane, "Conservation-based rural development in Namibia: a mixed-methods assessment of economic benefits", *Journal of Environment and Development*, 22, 2013: 25-50; Susan Snyman, "Ecotourism joint ventures between the private sector and communities: An updated analysis of the Torra Conservancy and Damaraland Camp partnership, Namibia", *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 4, 2012: 127-135; Susan Snyman, "The role of tourism employment in poverty reduction and community perceptions of conservation and tourism in southern Africa", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 20, 2012: 395-416; Suzan Ilcan and Anita Lacey, *Governing the Poor: Exercises of Poverty Reduction, Practices of Global Aid*, Quebec, McGill-Queens University Press, 2011.

lands,<sup>42</sup> the socio-economic impacts of community–public–private partnerships in the tourism sector,<sup>43</sup> local tourism awareness,<sup>44</sup> tour operators' perspectives on tourism as a means to development,<sup>45</sup> and the gendering, representation, and/or commodification of cultural identity.<sup>46</sup> Additional research on Namibian tourism needs to focus more extensively on the growth and potential implications of township tourism, and the extension of colonial, biopolitical practices within this niche tourism sector.

From 1884 until 1915, German colonialists passed laws in Namibia (known then as German South West Africa) with the aim of expanding and securing borders and appropriating lives and livelihoods, ultimately leading to social divisions. These divisions were further embedded within the political, economic, and social framework of the country during South Africa's colonial rule and its corresponding apartheid policies between 1915 and 1990. Colonisation of Namibia involved governing populations through new forms of knowledge, institutions, and technologies that sought to re-constitute the territory as a new securitised colony and its subjects as new colonial subjects. Such territorialisation became part of the continued "subversion of existing property arrangements, the classification of people according to different categories, resource extraction, and finally, the manufacturing of a large reservoir of cultural imaginaries".<sup>47</sup> Imaginaries ascribe meaning to spaces, produce knowledge about places, and, as such, make actions possible.<sup>48</sup> Imaginaries of the Global South can shape people, places, histories, geographies, the actions of people, justify intervention, and produce spatialities of power.<sup>49</sup> Constructing Namibia as uncivilized, primordial, untamed, and untouched, facilitated colonial exploration, expedition, and discovery.<sup>50</sup> For example, to support its claims to the territory, and encourage non-German 'White' immigration, South Africa constructed Namibian spaces as "essentially uninhabited" which "naturalised the 'possessability' of [Namibian] spaces" and aided in making them

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<sup>42</sup> Renaud Lapeyre, "Governance structures and the distribution of tourism income in Namibian communal lands: a new institutional framework", *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, 102, 2011: 302-315.

<sup>43</sup> Renaud Lapeyre "The Grootberg lodge partnership in Namibia: towards poverty alleviation and empowerment for long-term sustainability?", *Current Issues in Tourism*, 14, 2011: 221-234.

<sup>44</sup> Saarinen, "Local tourism".

<sup>45</sup> Marina Novelli and Alexander Hellwig, "The UN millennium development goals, tourism and development: the tour operators' perspective", *Current Issues in Tourism*, 14, 2011: 205-220.

<sup>46</sup> Jarkko Saarinen and Maaria Niskala, "Selling places and constructing local cultures in tourism: the role of the Ovahimba in Namibian tourism promotion", in: Petri Hottola, (ed.), *Tourism Strategies and Local Responses in Southern Africa*, Massachusetts, CABI, 2009: 61-72.

<sup>47</sup> Mbembe, "Necropolitics": 25f.

<sup>48</sup> Kothari and Wilkinson, "Colonial imaginaries": 1397.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.: 1395.

<sup>50</sup> Charlotte M. Echtner and Pushkala Prasad, "The context of Third World tourism marketing", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30, 2003: 660-682 (675).

“rightfully available to colonization”.<sup>51</sup> These portraits of Namibia were distributed in publications and photographs in overseas advertising campaigns to the United States, Canada, Australia, and India and through South Africa’s leading travel journal, *South African Railways and Harbours Magazine*.<sup>52</sup> The practices of colonisation which took place in Namibia can be understood as encompassing ruling relations and exercises of sovereignty that had the capacity to decide who mattered and who did not, who lived and who died. Exercises of sovereignty striated space and excluded the colonised ethnic groups through processes of encampment, including extermination, segregation, forced labour, and consequently, the denial of citizenship rights.<sup>53</sup> For example, Shark Island, the site of the most notorious concentration camp in colonial Namibia, contained Herero and Nama prisoners whose bodies were used in forced labour for the building of the railway lines and later in the construction of the harbour. Camps such as Shark Island emerged through inclusive exclusion that embodied the logic of biopolitics. Camps in colonial Namibia are not a story of sacrifice – they can be understood, following Agamben, as being premised on the body of *homo sacer*, the person who can be killed lawfully but not sacrificed.<sup>54</sup>

Tourism perpetuates the social and spatial relations constructed during Namibia’s colonial era while at the same time, erasing or denying the brutality of colonialism and the atrocities that occurred within camp spaces. Shark Island is today a campsite available to tourists. It is promoted as an ideal destination where tourists can stay in Lighthouses or Chalets and visit the beach to see marine mammals and birds.<sup>55</sup> Shark Island is “treated as a recreational site for visitors [...] who seek to relax and enjoy themselves” despite the island’s history of extermination.<sup>56</sup> Tourists do not typically visit the island to honour “the fallen Namibian people who were brutalised and murdered there by Germany’s Imperial Force between 1904 and 1908”.<sup>57</sup> Although the “rich

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<sup>51</sup> Jeremy Silvester, Patricia Hayes, and Wolfram Hartmann, “‘This ideal conquest’: photography and colonialism in Namibian history,” in: Wolfram Hartmann, Jeremy Silvester and Patricia Hayes, (eds.), *The Colonising Camera: Photographs in the Making of Namibian History*, South Africa, University of Cape Town Press, 1998: 10-19 (14f.).

<sup>52</sup> Robert J. Gordon, “Backdrops and Bushmen: an expeditious comment,” in: Wolfram Hartmann, Jeremy Silvester and Patricia Hayes, (eds.), *The Colonising Camera: Photographs in the Making of Namibian History*, South Africa, University of Cape Town Press, 1998: 111-117 (112); Silvester, Hayes and Hartmann, “Ideal conquest”: 15.

<sup>53</sup> The denial of citizenship rights is understood as involving uneven access to, or the inability to make claims toward, rights.

<sup>54</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*.

<sup>55</sup> The Cardboard Box Travel Shop, “Shark Island: Luderitz – Namibia”, [http://www.namibian.org/travel/lodging/shark\\_island.html](http://www.namibian.org/travel/lodging/shark_island.html) (accessed June 15, 2013).

<sup>56</sup> Nambili Samuel, “Honour the Shark Island Dead”, *The Southern Times*, December 3, 2012, [http://southern-timesafrica.com/news\\_article.php?id=7847&title=Honour%20the%20Shark%20Island%20Dead&type=69](http://southern-timesafrica.com/news_article.php?id=7847&title=Honour%20the%20Shark%20Island%20Dead&type=69) (accessed June 15, 2013).

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

history” of the island is briefly alluded to on Namibian travel websites,<sup>58</sup> Silvester and Erichsen emphasize that the concentration camp on Shark Island, where Cornelius Fredericks, Samuel Isaak, and other prominent Herero and Nama figures died, has been largely forgotten.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, the colonial conquest of Namibia by German colonial forces is celebrated through monuments and memorials (for example, a memorial listing German soldiers now stands at the point where the Shark Island concentration camp once lay) that obfuscate the “sacrifices of those that led the anti-colonial resistance”.<sup>60</sup> Shark Island is not the only location in Namibia where tourism denies the violence of colonialism. On the site of what is believed to be the Swakopmund prisoner of war camp, tourists ride dune buggies over the graves of the prisoners who died there.<sup>61</sup> Also, Woermann Brock Shopping Centre in Walvis Bay stands on what is believed to be the site of a concentration camp once owned and administered by the Woermann Shipping Line. Opposite this site stands an antique shop that sells memorabilia of the Second and Third Reich to tourists.<sup>62</sup>

These examples suggest that colonial and biopolitical camp spaces are being transformed into contemporary zones of indistinction. For example, Shark Island is included in Namibian society as a rich tourist destination, but its colonial history is not fully recognised. Therefore, claims for recognition made by Namibians whose ancestors were brutalised there may be considered unqualified. In this way, such forms of tourism can foster sovereign power in postcolonial Namibia particularly as the ramifications of colonialism render the lives of many of these Namibians politically unworthy and disposable. Shark Island can be viewed as a tourist zone, not so much in the sense of Diken and Laustsen’s discussion of the tourist zone as a place without laws or prohibitions, but rather as a zone consisting of borders and striated spaces. To think of Shark Island as a tourist zone allows us to acknowledge how this space is regulated and how tourists are presented with limited and particular knowledges, histories, and images which facilitate the production of spatialities of power. According to Mbembe, the manufacturing of such images grants “meaning to the enactment of differential rights to differing categories of people for different purposes within the same space; in brief, the exercise of sovereignty”.<sup>63</sup> It is this same logic that can be found in the practice of tourism in many townships, including that of Katutura. As Belinda Bozzoli reminds us, townships were places where “severe oppression and poverty were experienced on a

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<sup>58</sup> For example, see The Cardboard Box Travel Shop, “Shark Island”.

<sup>59</sup> Namibia Wildlife Resorts, “Shark Island”, <http://www.nwrnamibia.com/shark-island.htm> (accessed June 15, 2013); Jeremy Silvester and Casper Erichsen, “Luderitz’s Forgotten Concentration Camp”, The Cardboard Box Travel Shop, <http://www.namibian.org/travel/namibia/luderitzcc.html> (accessed June 15, 2013).

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> David Adetayo Olusoga, “Namibia: Genocide and the Second Reich”, BBC Documentary, 2005, Online video, <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheAfrikanChannel/videos?query=Namibia+Genocide+>

<sup>62</sup> Olusoga, “Namibia”. This antique shop was present at the time of filming in 2005.

<sup>63</sup> Mbembe, “Necropolitics”: 26.

racial and class basis”.<sup>64</sup> For Mbembe, the township can be understood as “a sociopolitical, cultural, and economic formation” that historically was “a peculiar spatial institution scientifically planned for the purposes of control” and entailed “the denial of citizenship to Africans”.<sup>65</sup> We now turn our focus to township tourism in Katutura.

## Township tourism in Katutura

Katutura was formed under the South African colonial apartheid regime in 1959, a regime supporting certain presuppositions about biology that bound together thinking about nation, people, race, population, and territory from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century onward.<sup>66</sup> This regime entailed processes that aimed to secure racialised distinctions between people. Katutura’s formation involved the forced movement of Black people from their home location in the capital of Windhoek to the new location of Katutura, situated on its periphery and under a grid of security measures. These people opposed and resisted their relocation to the township which in turn led to massive violence.<sup>67</sup> The police and military-sanctioned forced migration resulted in beatings of poor and vulnerable Namibians and the censoring of their political voices. In this township, people were stripped of their former identities. They were also denied access to landed property and citizenship rights which had been established in previous decades. Furthermore, they were segregated along ethnic lines and subjected to constant surveillance. This included the requirement to have work and travel passes, and various other apartheid security rules which assisted in the creation of “controlled labour pools”.<sup>68</sup> This zone of indistinction between inclusion and exclusion – where residents were integrated into an exploitative labour system, yet denied citizenship rights – is an expression of sovereignty that operates as a striated space of control and regulation and embodies a logic of camp biopolitics.

The township of Katutura reflects the many changes that have taken place since Namibia gained independence in 1990, particularly the demise of rigid bounded social systems which have in turn provided the people in Katutura today with the opportunity to

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<sup>64</sup> Belinda Bozzoli, “Why were the 1980s ‘Millenarian’? Style, repertoire, space and authority in South Africa’s black cities,” *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 13, 2000: 78-110 (79).

<sup>65</sup> Mbembe, “Necropolitics”, 26.

<sup>66</sup> See Nikolas Rose and Carlos Novas, “Biological citizenship”, in: Aihwa Ong and Stephen J. Collier, (eds.), *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*, Malden, MA, Blackwell, 2005: 439-463 (443).

<sup>67</sup> Peter Katjavivi, *A History of Resistance in Namibia*, London, Currey / Paris, Unesco, 1988: 29; Colin Leys and John S. Saul, “SWAPO: the politics of exile”, in: Colin Leys and John S. Saul, (eds.), *Namibia’s Liberation Struggle: The Two-Edged Sword*, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 1995: 40-65 (42); Colin Leys and John S. Saul, (eds.), “SWAPO inside Namibia”, in: Colin Leys and John S. Saul, (eds.), *Namibia’s Liberation Struggle: The Two-Edged Sword*, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 1995: 66-93 (69).

<sup>68</sup> K.S.O. Beavon, “Black townships in South Africa: terra incognita for urban geographers”, *South African Geographical Journal*, 64, 1982: 3-20 (3).

traverse and negotiate its colonial frontiers.<sup>69</sup> However, given the fluidity of frontiers,<sup>70</sup> it is critical to be aware of the continuation of zones of indistinction as they form in and through tourism sites.

Tourists now have the opportunity to visit the township for its historical significance, its lively districts, and incidentally, its poverty. Diekmann and Hannam stress that within the last 20 years, poverty tourism has gained increasing popularity among tourists from the Global North who travel to developing countries in the Global South.<sup>71</sup> Although this practice may be labelled as “new”, it has its roots in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe when the upper classes would, as a recreational pastime, walk in the city and observe “the lower classes in a safe and detached manner”.<sup>72</sup> Contemporary poverty tours, however, have become more organised with bus tours that give “the tourist the ‘insights’ from a distant and safe perspective”.<sup>73</sup> This kind of tourism can create social, cultural, or political transformations and perpetuate the production of inferior and different Others.<sup>74</sup> According to Steinbrink, “the tourism-specific localization of the Other in the slum [and other poverty-stricken regions] (re-)produces a homogenizing and essentializing perspective” that “deproblematiz[es] and depoliticize[es] [...] social inequalities arising from the culturalist gaze”.<sup>75</sup> Within the context of Southern Africa, township tourism is a form of poverty tourism.<sup>76</sup>

The tourism literature discusses the practice of township tourism in largely positive terms. Generally, scholarly work advances that the sector is premised on a pro-poor ethos that not only offers economic opportunities to local inhabitants but also provides the setting with forms of political engagements that can be taken up by visitors.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Wade C. Pendleton, *Katutura: A Place Where We Stay: Life in a Post-Apartheid Township in Namibia*, Athens, Ohio University Press, 1996.

<sup>70</sup> Duffield, “Development”: 231f.

<sup>71</sup> Anya Diekmann and Kevin Hannam, “Touristic mobilities in India’s slum spaces”, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39, 2012: 1315-1336 (1319).

<sup>72</sup> Such walking tours of poor city neighbourhoods were practiced up until World War II and, for some, “represented an escape from social constraints [...] but also a place for well off upper class women to provide charity in order to raise their own self esteem” (ibid.).

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> The poverty tours practiced in Europe in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were based on the construction of the Other which is extended into contemporary practices today. See: Malte Steinbrink, “‘We did the slum!’ – Urban poverty tourism in historical perspective”, *Tourism Geographies*, 14, 2012: 213-234 (231).

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.: 217.

<sup>77</sup> Regina Scheyvens, “Poverty tourism”, ANU digital collections, *Development Bulletin*, 55, 2001:18-21 (18), [https://digitalcollections.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/9493/1/DevelopmentBulletin-55\\_2001.pdf](https://digitalcollections.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/9493/1/DevelopmentBulletin-55_2001.pdf) (accessed June 20, 2013); Irene Nemasetoni and Christian Rogerson, “Developing small firms in township tourism: Emerging tour operators in Gauteng, South Africa”, *Urban Forum*, 16, 2005: 196-213; Christian M. Rogerson, “Urban tourism and small tourism enterprise development in Johannesburg: The case of township tourism”, *Geojournal*, 60, 2004: 249-257.

However, some authors offer a more cautious and critical approach. Ashworth argues that township tourism is exploitative of the suffering of others.<sup>78</sup> Booyens stresses that township tourism can be likened to “pseudo-trips that do not reflect past or present realities”.<sup>79</sup> In the context of development, Booyens claims the practice should not be exemplified as a viable or responsible option, as it does not necessarily “ensure pro-poor benefits or enhance community development”.<sup>80</sup> Butler highlights how current forms and practices of township tourism “inadvertently confirm the spatial arrangements of apartheid” and maintain the binary opposition between Blacks and Whites.<sup>81</sup> Papen too argues that tourism has the potential to contribute to the “hierarchies and inequalities inherited from the colonial and apartheid past”.<sup>82</sup> We extend these arguments in the following section by demonstrating the diverse political spaces that are part of the practices of township tourism in Katutura.

Numerous private tourism ventures have sprung up in Windhoek and surrounding areas and offer township tours to foreign tourists. Currently, there are several tour companies located in Windhoek and two in Swakopmund that specialize in township tours.<sup>83</sup> *Orupuka Transfers & Tours*, *Face-to-Face Tours*, and *Mondesa Township Tours* are just three of the many ventures offering tours of Namibia’s townships.<sup>84</sup> These tour operators offer day trips to Katutura to tourists wishing to see “the real Windhoek”.<sup>85</sup> Although rates are negotiable,<sup>86</sup> township tours average about US\$30 for 2-3 hours.<sup>87</sup> There is no guarantee that tourists will purchase any goods from the township shops or stands, or that the revenue will be redistributed throughout the community by the tour

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<sup>78</sup> Gregory Ashworth, “Tourism and the heritage of atrocity: Managing the heritage of South African apartheid for entertainment”, in: Tej Vir Singh, (ed.), *New Horizons in Tourism: Strange Experiences and Stranger Practices*, Wallingford, CABI, 2004: 95-108.

<sup>79</sup> Irma Booyens, “Rethinking township tourism: Towards responsible tourism development in South African townships”, *Development Southern Africa*, 27, 2010: 273-287 (277).

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*: 273.

<sup>81</sup> Shelley Ruth Butler, Butler, Shelley Ruth, “Curatorial interventions in township tours: two trajectories”, in: Fabian Frenzel, KoKoens, and Malte Steinbrink, (eds.), *Slum Tourism: Poverty, Power and Ethics*, London, Routledge, 2012: 215-231 (223).

<sup>82</sup> Papen, “Exclusive”: 82f.

<sup>83</sup> Steinbrink, Frenzel and Koens, “Development”: 6.

<sup>84</sup> Estelle de Bruyn, “Township Tours-the other Africa”, *Allgemeine Zeitung*, May 23, 2008, <http://www.az.com.na/tourismus/reiseberichte/township-tours-the-other-africa.67399.php> (accessed March 29, 2013); Mondesa Township Tours, “Mondesa Township Tours Swakopmund”, <http://www.namibweb.com/mondساتours.htm> (accessed March 29, 2013).

<sup>85</sup> TripAdvisor, “Katutura Township Reviews”, [http://www.tripadvisor.ca/Attraction\\_Review-g293821-d1222872-Reviews-Katutura\\_Township-Windhoek\\_Khomas\\_Region.html](http://www.tripadvisor.ca/Attraction_Review-g293821-d1222872-Reviews-Katutura_Township-Windhoek_Khomas_Region.html) (accessed January 13, 2013).

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>87</sup> Xan Rise, “Kenya’s slums attract poverty tourism”, *The Guardian*, September 25, 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/sep/25/slum-tourism-kenya-kibera-poverty> (accessed March 29, 2013).

operators. Lip service is offered regarding the redistribution of resources,<sup>88</sup> however, operators are in the business to make a profit and provide tourists with an enjoyable experience.<sup>89</sup> Tourists travel in a tour bus throughout the various suburbs of Katutura, particularly the Single Quarters and Babylon, which are some of the poorest areas. The tour aims to offer “an overview of a typical shanty town”.<sup>90</sup> Tourists are encouraged to buy traditional food and drink from the local people, purchase “traditional” arts and crafts at the *Penduka Women’s Project*, see hairstylists and tailors, “tribal clothing”, “the local women who sell their homemade food”, as well as “get in contact with the locals.”<sup>91</sup> There are plenty of places in which the tourist can gain a perspective of ‘traditional’ Namibian life. For example, *Xwama Cultural Village and Traditional Restaurant* located in Katutura offers “traditional music, [and] ethnic decoration that takes you back to African roots.”<sup>92</sup> Here, the tourist can engage in “a truly Namibian and African experience” with “true local culture and amazing traditional Namibian and African food.”<sup>93</sup> If tourists wish to experience the daily life of the township, the *Katutura Host Incentive Program* allows them to stay with a family in a ‘traditional’ home and experience ‘traditional’ life, food, and customs at an affordable rate.<sup>94</sup>

As noted above, there is an emphasis on the notion of tradition which indirectly draws the tourist’s attention to the sights manifested in the daily lives and practices of ‘traditional’ residents. Tourists in this sense are encouraged to visually consume their surroundings. Sight is exploitative and does not add to the understanding of the complicated issues emanating from the township; it merely assists in the extension of the logic of camp biopolitics, a logic that Rabinow and Rose argue consists of exploitative and expropriative practices.<sup>95</sup> What is also occurring here is a voyeuristic consumption of poverty that undermines the dignity and privacy of local residents.<sup>96</sup> Nostalgic memories and the yearning for authenticity and tradition impose a spatio-

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<sup>88</sup> Ashley Smith, “Township tours: An authentic slice of Namibia”, *Namibian Sun*, August 31, 2012, <http://www.namibiansun.com/content/national-news/township-tours-authentic-slice-namibia> (accessed March 26, 2013).

<sup>89</sup> Yvonne Amukweya, “Namibia: Tourism in the Township by Kasie”, *Namibia Economist*, January 16, 2012, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201201180628.html>(accessed March 26, 2013).

<sup>90</sup> The Cardboard Box Travel Shop, “Windhoek Township Tour: Katutura – Namibia”, <http://www.namibian.org/travel/adventure/windhoek-township.html> (accessed January 13, 2013).

<sup>91</sup> NamibWeb.com, “Katutura Face to Face tours Windhoek”, <http://www.namibweb.com/katutura tours.htm> (accessed January 15, 2013).

<sup>92</sup> Xwama, “Xwama Cultural Village”, <http://www.xwama.com> (accessed June 8, 2013).

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Jennifer Moseley, Lindsey Sturgis, and Melissa Wheeler, *Improving Domestic Tourism in Namibia: An Interactive Qualifying Project Report Submitted to the Faculty of Worcester Polytechnic Institute*, MA thesis, Worcester, Polytechnic Institute, 2007: 73.

<sup>95</sup> Rabinow and Rose, “Biopower”: 198.

<sup>96</sup> Saarinen, “Local tourism”.

temporal regime, and act as a distancing mechanism that denies coevality.<sup>97</sup> Such traditional representations foster unequal power relations and perpetuate stereotypes of whom or what belongs.<sup>98</sup> Alongside 'tradition', 'experience' is also emphasised in township tourism. *Face-to-Face Tours*, a Windhoek based township tour guiding service, provides tourists with the chance to "Experience Katutura Face to Face".<sup>99</sup> As a key discursive concept that the company upholds, "experience" emphasises the unknown, the exotic, and the strange.<sup>100</sup> Such tourism discourses mould spaces in accordance with dominant notions of tourist expectations and often produce realities that exclude alternative or subaltern ideas and political realities. They can in turn depoliticise and justify the exploitation of Katutura as a site for consumption by visitors from the Global North. These practices transform and translate foul representations associated with racial inequality (i.e. poverty, disease) into "quaint representation[s] of Otherness" which can glorify human suffering and desensitise the tourist to the impoverished conditions and social inequalities of tourist spaces.<sup>101</sup> According to Bianchi, material inequalities, such as those differentiated by class, ethnicity, and gender, provide the foundation for shaping the consumption of tourism.<sup>102</sup> Township tourism is often founded upon affordable experiences that can devalue the feelings and experiences of township residents.

Since the demise of colonialism and apartheid rule in 1990, an urban Black middle class has emerged. However, a disproportionate number of Black Namibians continue to experience poverty, unemployment, and inadequate housing and "Katutura remains a testimony to this racial and economic divide".<sup>103</sup> The ongoing promotion of Katuturas as poor and traditional perpetuates negative perceptions and understandings that are typically associated with Africa and Africans.<sup>104</sup> The power to (re)invent, (re)produce, (re)capture, and (re)create particular sites and subjects transforms spaces and subjects into consumable tourist possessions.<sup>105</sup> In Katutura, this process of objectification, which is an effect of tourism, may facilitate the establishment of regimes of exception and thus suspend the norm in two ways: "suspension of disbelief on the part of the tourist; and

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<sup>97</sup> Keir Martin, "Living pasts: contested tourism authenticities", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37, 2010: 537-554 (538). See also: James Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 2006: 87-190.

<sup>98</sup> d'Hautesserre, "Politics": 396. See also: Ferguson, *Global Shadows*: 87-190.

<sup>99</sup> Papen "Exclusive": 84.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Iyunolu Osagie and Christine N. Buzinde, "Culture and postcolonial resistance: Antigua in Kincaid's *A Small Place*", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38, 2011: 210-230 (221).

<sup>102</sup> Raoul Bianchi, "The 'critical turn' in tourism studies: a radical critique", *Tourism Geographies*, 11, 2009: 484-504 (488).

<sup>103</sup> Papen "Exclusive": 88.

<sup>104</sup> See Ferguson, *Global Shadows*.

<sup>105</sup> Salazar, "Tourism imaginaries": 866.

the suspension of many of the external rules that apply to the outside world”.<sup>106</sup> The zone of exception created through the suspension of the norm has the potential to alter the way in which the tourist views local inhabitants. Residents may be seen as detachable and replicable, understood as authentic exhibits of spectacle that blur the line between “theatre and living ethnographic display [...] cultural performance and staged re-creation”.<sup>107</sup> This form of biopolitics on display, as the object of curiosity, voyeurism, and consumption, is often a potential ramification of the niche tourism market of township tourism.

The perceptions tourists have of Katutura vary. Emotions range from affection for the quaintness and perseverance of the township, to indifference and abhorrence of its filth, crime, and poverty,<sup>108</sup> to viewing it as the ultimate vacation destination “where everything goes”.<sup>109</sup> These views suggest that through township tourism, the space of Katutura can be transformed into a zone of indistinction. The existing realities of those living in the township have been obscured and therefore made politically unqualified by virtue of tourist perceptions from the Global North that are shaped by tourist companies and the broader tourism industry.

Katutura residents often view the tourists as White foreigners who travel in large groups and with a tour guide.<sup>110</sup> Clothing can sometimes distinguish the tourists who might wear “‘full khaki’ despite the urban setting” and travel in “tour and safari type vehicles”.<sup>111</sup> Some Katutura residents are highly critical of the “big safe high-sprung safari vehicles driving through the township as though on a wilderness safari spotting dangerous animals in the bush”.<sup>112</sup> One resident states “they just come to see us as [if] we are animals”.<sup>113</sup> Here, tourism assists in the formation of particular landscapes that aids in the production of a “willing suspension of disbelief.” Such a suspension allows tourists to be amused by sites of, or involvement in, what might otherwise be perceived as socially unacceptable.<sup>114</sup> In this case, the inequalities experienced by Katuturans provide amusement for tourists. These zones of amusement and pleasure for tourists can be defined as entertainment camps. Minca states that such camps facilitate the “biopolitical reproduction of a specific [...] standardized de-personalized body”.<sup>115</sup> Such repro-

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<sup>106</sup> Minca, “Island”: 94.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.: 101.

<sup>108</sup> The images tourists have of townships are predominantly negative: “‘Township’ is associated with crime, squalor, drugs, poor housing conditions, apartheid, unemployment, etc.” with the most frequently mentioned image being poverty. (Steinbrink, “Slum!”: 217).

<sup>109</sup> TripAdvisor, “Katutura Township Reviews”.

<sup>110</sup> Saarinen, “Local tourism”: 719.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Minca, “Island”: 97.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.: 100.

duction connects with how tourists may view Katutura residents, particularly in ways that depoliticise their bodies and subject them to a logic of performance that transforms communities into an assemblage of bodies. The extraterritorial status of tourism makes possible mechanisms of inclusive exclusion, regimes of exception, and the suspension of the norm.<sup>116</sup>

While this paper has presented a critique of township tourism, the practice itself should not be understood in strictly negative terms. As discussed by Scheyvens, and Nemasetoni and Rogerson, township tourism can generate revenue and create jobs in areas where it is much needed.<sup>117</sup> It can be a credible and successful practice that allows tourists to engage in meaningful and productive activities. The intention of this paper is to shed new light on a practice that requires more scholarly attention. As a tourist zone and entertainment camp, Katutura exists as a place where de-personalised and de-politicised bodies are biopolitically reproduced and subjected to logics of performance that are based on the diverse ways in which Katuturans are (re)presented as traditional and poor. What we see here is the implementation of a specific spatio-temporal regime where bodies are subjected to voyeuristic and consumptive practices for the purposes of meeting the demands of the tourism market and tourist expectations. However, there is another side to this story.

### **The limits of biopolitics: The political spaces of Katutura**

Many Katutura residents are rendered vulnerable through a logic of biopolitics that exposes them to new biopolitical governing initiatives, authorities, and expert advice. International development aid organisations, such as USAID, and others, categorise the poor in terms that stress poor health, poor diet, and poor fitness. Similarly, successive government and international NGO-funded food and health promotion programmes view Katutura's poor along the lines of sick, disabled, and abandoned children, pregnant women, weak and breast-feeding mothers, and those living with HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. The practice of touring is essential to the extension of this biopolitical logic. For example, Chambers notes how the short visits made by development workers to communities may be likened to the phenomenon of development tourism. This phenomenon consists of brief visits made by unperceptive urban professionals to rural locations.<sup>118</sup> Touring companies are also implicated in this classification process as they offer tourists the opportunity to assist the township's residents by giving back to the community and engaging with Katutura assistance-based projects. *Chameleon Safari's*, a Windhoek based touring company, aims to "provide direct and immediate help" to Katutura residents through partnerships with various organisations. For example, *Dolam*

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid.: 102.

<sup>117</sup> Scheyvens, "Poverty Tourism"; Nemasetoni and Rogerson, "Developing small firms".

<sup>118</sup> Robert Chambers, *Revolutions in Development Inquiry*, London, Earthscan, 2008: 39-46.

*Children's Home* and the *Orlindis House of Safety* work with vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS that live in "dilapidated shacks".<sup>119</sup>

On a broader scale, however, Katutura houses small-scale progressive NGOs and political groups that are linked to national and international initiatives. These groups foster and sustain activists who are working for social, economic and political change, and demanding social and legal justice. For example, *Base Fm*, originally *Katutura Community Radio*, was established in 1995 as the first community radio station in independent Namibia.<sup>120</sup> The station opened "in response to the appalling living conditions, white control, and social and political inequalities" and aimed to provide a "platform for participatory communication, education, and advocacy".<sup>121</sup> Supported by numerous NGOs, such as NANGOF (Namibia NGO Forum), trade unions, and the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN), the station's objective is "to encourage the communities of Katutura, Khomasdal and their environs to take part in producing ethical, creative and responsible radio", facilitate communication, celebrate difference, and enhance participation in vital decision making processes.<sup>122</sup> The organization, *Sister Namibia*, works towards the development of a new feminist politics and consciousness. This organisation aims to enhance a Namibian "society that recognises, protects and celebrates the full personhood of all women and girls including respect for [female] dignity, diversity, sexual choices and bodily integrity". In order to achieve this, *Sister Namibia strives* to inspire and equip women and girls "to make free choices and act as agents of change"<sup>123</sup> through various programmes and projects, and education, information, collective action and celebrations.<sup>124</sup> Another progressive organisation situated in Windhoek, with ties to various Katutura social justice affiliations like *Sister Namibia*, is the *Legal Assistance Centre* (LAC). The LAC works "to protect the human rights of all Namibians through a multifunctional approach".<sup>125</sup> As the only organisation of its kind in Namibia, the LAC works in five areas: litigation; information and advice; education and training; research; and law reform and advocacy. It focuses on four main projects: Human Rights and Constitutional Unit; Gender Research and Advocacy Project; Land,

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<sup>119</sup> Chameleon Safari's Namibia, "Katutura Projects", [http://www.chameleonsafaris.com/katutura\\_projects.asp](http://www.chameleonsafaris.com/katutura_projects.asp) (accessed January 13, 2013).

<sup>120</sup> Base Fm 106.2 Namibia, Facebook Home Page, <https://www.facebook.com/BaseFM/info> (accessed June 20, 2013).

<sup>121</sup> Ilcan and Lacey, *Governing the Poor*: 165.

<sup>122</sup> Base Fm 106.2 Namibia.

<sup>123</sup> Sister Namibia, "Vision and Mission", <http://www.sisternamibia.org/about-us/vision-mission> (accessed June 19, 2013).

<sup>124</sup> Sister Namibia, "Vision and Mission"; Sister Namibia, "Programmes/Projects", <http://www.sisternamibia.org/programmes-projects> (accessed June 19, 2013). Programmes include feminist forums, a young feminist programme, a sexual rights campaign, and a media programme.

<sup>125</sup> Legal Assistance Centre, <http://www.lac.org.na/about/default.html> (accessed June 19, 2013).

Environment and Development Project; and the AIDS Law Unit. All of their services are free of charge, with the exception of litigation.<sup>126</sup>

Social uprisings and movements are also occurring in Katutura. For example, on May 30, 2008, at the Katutura Community Hall, a “highly charged and emotional event” took place that centred on the centennial of the release of Namibians from the German concentration camps which had been established and run between 1904 and 1908. Hundreds of people gathered at the Hall, along with local leaders, to commemorate the genocide and recall “the emergence of other massive problems, including poverty, unemployment, and landlessness”. This shared communication generated discussions and reflections on how to continue “to survive displacement, poverty, underemployment, and much more”.<sup>127</sup>

The emphasis on biopolitics can provide scholars with a critical lens from which to analyse historic or contemporary practices of control. , It can also, however, encourage scholars to envision camp spaces in ways that reproduce Orientalist mappings which deny subjectivity and maintain social distinctions. Viewing the camp in a political and politicised way would deorientalize and disrupt binaries of exclusion and transform how researchers analyse camp spaces.<sup>128</sup> In this regard, and as we have demonstrated, such a view would allow greater attention to be given to moments of contestations and the political subjects who constitute them.

## Conclusion

Contemporary postcolonial Namibia serves as a distinctive case for understanding how the extension of the logic of camp biopolitics is inherent within practices of township tourism. In Katutura, township tourism facilitates the formation and perpetuation of zones of exception and the suspension of the norm. Here, the marginalised poor are subject to the striation of space in ways that support processes of encampment in the context of biopolitical efforts and that supplement Agamben’s view of bare life in postcolonial configurations of biopolitics. However, Agamben’s approach to biopolitics ahistoricises and depoliticises space, and thereby obfuscates the presence of a political subject or political space. While this paper has introduced the framework of biopolitics and its connection with tourism generally and township tourism in the context of Katutura specifically, it has also emphasized the limits of biopolitics. It has revealed how Katutura is a political space made up of active subjects who participate in social movements, who challenge authorities, and who can bring about social and political change in diverse and multifaceted ways.

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ilcan and Lacey, *Governing the Poor*: 165.

<sup>128</sup> Kim Rygiel, “Politicizing camps: forging transgressive citizenships in and through transit”, *Citizenship Studies*, 16, 2012: 807-825 (807f., 811); Michel Agier, “Between war and city: Towards an urban anthropology of refugee camps”, *Ethnography*, 3, 2002: 317-341 (333-336).

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