“Whose nation?”

A study of nation-building in Namibia

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Using a critical discourse analysis this study focuses on the Namibian nation-building process. The former colony gained its independence in 1990 from the South African apartheid administration. It was this oppressing social structure that gave the people a common enemy to unite against. It was from this unity that the Namibian identity sprung.

This study took place during three month in Namibia where nine people were interviewed. They all had contributed, or still contribute to the nation-building process in different ways. Some for example active in the liberation struggle, active in government or in political youth organizations. To further contextualize the Namibian society three local newspapers was followed during this time. The material is here discussed and analysed along with theories on nations and nationhood, identity and nationality as well as with post-colonialism and globalization.

The results show that the colonial history has affected many social structures of today. Both on an individual level as well as on an intergroup and a society level. The empirical material show tribalistic tendencies in the sense that tribal heritage sometimes is considered more important than a uniting Namibian identity. To put this in a wider perspective there is a discussion on how this relates to a global capitalist system.

Keywords
Nation-building, Namibia, tribalism, post-colonialism, critical discourse analysis.
Preface

This study took place in Namibia in the spring of 2012 as a result of a student exchange between Linköping University, Sweden and the University of Namibia (UNAM).

When this study was conducted 22 years had passed since Namibia was declared independent from South Africa. It is therefore a relatively young nation that is forming itself in the context of a globalized world.

The South African colonial administration meant that the apartheid system reached out to its colony. This led to ethnical and racial segregation. The people of the land back then called South West Africa, a name given by former German colonizers, was divided in accordance to tribal heritage. As a reaction to the social system a liberation struggle emerged led by an organization called SWAPO (South West African Peoples Organisation). After independence was won SWAPO received a majority of the votes at the first democratic elections held in late 1989. When Independence Day was celebrated on the 21th of March 1990 there were many and high expectations for the future.

This thesis will focus on nation-building. It’s a wide subject that in this particular study has led to discussions of nationality, identity, tribalism, post-colonialism and globalization. Those are some of the discourses that have revealed themselves from the empirical material.

The quote that has named this thesis comes from a discussion with tutors from UNAM. When presenting the initial thoughts for this study the recommendation came to consider the question of whose nation we are talking about. This critical perspective then followed throughout the process.
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1 - Outline

In this section the main focus of this thesis will be presented and it will serve as a basis for the analysis.

1.1 - Formulation of problem

Namibia comes from a background of colonization like many other African nations. The circumstances may though, generally speaking, differ in two ways. Firstly, the region, back then called South West Africa, was relatively late colonized when Germany in late 19th century claimed the area (Hishongwa, 1992). Secondly, when many other colonies gained their independence after the Second World War, South West Africa was kept as a colony until 1990. After World War One it was South Africa who controlled the region and doing so with the intention of making it a domestic region (Berg, 2004). So it is from this background, and the colonial administrations that came with it, that Namibia was born.

There are some concerns regarding the concept of a nation in Namibia. Since the first democratic elections held in late 1989, SWAPO\(^1\) has been the dominating political party. They have the task to develop a nation based on the colonial foundation with its borders not drawn after local cultural interests, but instead after the interests of former European colonial powers. This causes a problem since the nation state is not the obvious factor for unity between the people of Namibia (Berg, 2004).

Namibia is still a young nation with its 22 years of independence. After being colonized in late 19th century various tribes was forced into and then restricted within new borders. It’s these borders, and not the ones set up by the nation’s people, that surround the region today called Namibia.

This thesis will focus on nation-building. It’s a process that could be said to last as long as the nation itself. Nations are continuously being built and re-built. What makes Namibia unique from many other nations is its young age. The foundation consists of a variety of people uniting against colonial rule and who now needs to continue to hold together as Namibians in order to further build the Namibian nation. To what extent is the Namibian people united? Do people see themselves as Namibians first and then their tribal heritage as second? In this thesis these matters will be discussed based on stories from Namibians who play their own part in the nation’s history, either in its coming to be and/or in its current development.

Hopefully this study can contribute to conceptualize and discuss the complexity of creating post-colonial nations. Namibia has its own set of diversities and contradictions. Maybe this thesis can contribute to some of the discussions on nation-building that occur in the country, as seen from the interviews. These domestic discussions could prove important for the success of the Namibia nation-building process.

\(^1\) South West African Peoples Organisation
1.2 - Aim

The aim is to reveal and discuss discourses concerning the Namibian nation-building process up to and after independence won in 1990. Interviews will be joined by a view of the media flow and studied together with theories on nationality, post-colonization and globalization amongst others.

1.3 - Central questions

In order to problematize the concept of nation-building in Namibia, the following questions will work as guiding factors:

- What main historical background, based on the views of the respondents, constitutes the foundation of the Namibian nation-building process?
- What are the major factors in forming, and maintaining, a Namibian identity?
- How can we contextualize the Namibian nation both theoretically and from the views of the respondents?
- Why a nation? Were there, theoretically, any alternatives?
- What are the domestic and global circumstances for the young Namibian post-colonial nation?

1.4 - Limitations

This study will partially consider historical factors that date back to the late 19th century. However, the main focus will be on events taking place from mid-20th century and forward. Some of the respondents have been active since this time making it possible for them to speak from experience. As for the time period prior to this, this study will have to turn to published studies on the subject.

Concerning the background-section of this thesis there are also some limitations as of what has been considered relevant for the understanding of the context. For example European colonization in Africa stretches several hundred years further back than the colonization of Namibia. Even if an overall view of the European imperialism and strives for world domination could be of interest for discussing the colonial mind-set, it is not the actual aim for this thesis. Consequently the background will start with the colonization of the region today known as Namibia. It will of course be a short summary since Namibian history could fill up several studies on its own. It is difficult to capture the history of a country, even if it’s a young one. Therefore the background will focus on some key events that in one way or another have affected the stories of the respondents.
The subject is quite broad since a whole nation is in focus. Namibia is a country with about two million people. It is not possible to interview them all, thus making an empirical limitation necessary. The respondents have been chosen for their roles in the nation-building process. They have been, and are contributing in different ways to the nation-building. To complement the interviews the Namibian news reporting has been followed during the visit to Namibia. These play a secondary role in the contextualization of Namibian nation-building.

When it comes to the theoretical approach the base for this study is quite broad. It will concern theories on nationhood, citizenship, identity, post-colonialism and globalization. It could be possible to go deeper into any of these. In doing so the perspective of the thesis would be quite different. The aim is to combine these and relate the different perspectives to one another. In doing so we’ll hopefully get a broader perspective for the discussion.

2 - Background

Namibia, located along the west coast of southern Africa, gained its independence in 1990. The population is about two million. Since Namibia might not be well known to Swedish readers a historical context is necessary for the upcoming analysis of empirical data. In order to understand a society of today we need to look at its historical background. Therefore a historical prologue is relevant and will thematically be presented below.

2.1 - Pre-colonial times

The name Namibia derives from the Namib Desert which covers most of the western coastline. Namib means shield and the desert has deserved its name since it for many years kept colonialist away with its unwelcoming landscape. The Portuguese came as the first Europeans in 1486 but they did not find the landscape suited for any form colonization. It would take almost four centuries until the land today known as Namibia became colonized. The region was although visited by other Europeans during this period of time. Before the colonization it was the San people, later named ‘Bushmen’ by the colonialists, who occupied the country. They were mainly hunters and gatherers. (Hishongwa, 1992)

Minerals were mined in the region long before the Germans arrived in late 19th century. Mining of natural resources together with farming was the biggest sources of income for the Germans in the colony. The societies conducted long distance trade with the regions that today lies in neighbouring countries Angola and Botswana. In these societies the differences in wealth among the people was small since the people could have influence over the tribal kings. With colonial occupation the trading conditions changed. The colonial powers brought mass produced
goods rendering competitive difficulties for the local traders. Some businesses survived but the mines no longer met the local needs. (The Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1983)

2.2 - German colonization

In 1884, a time when most of the African continent was under colonial rule, West South Africa as it came to be called, was assigned to Germany. This decision was taken by the major European powers at the Berlin conference where they divided the African continent among themselves. Among the German colonies, South West Africa was considered the only one suitable for German migration. As a result many migrants were encouraged to settle there. (Hishongwa, 1992)

The colonialists required cheap labour for their mines and farms which led to the development of a contract labour system. The contract labour meant several months of work away from both home and family for a minimal wage, not in itself enough to support a family. All the colonialists needed to do were to make sure that the natives, mainly Ovambo from the northern region, got dependent on western economy. Money was not used as currency in the region prior to colonization. In order to create a need for money the Germans, for example, used taxation and offering of western goods such as weapons to the natives. They also needed to keep the population poor, and thereby making people and their families dependent on the sources of income available, mostly the contract labour. (Berg, 2004)

The Namas, and later also the Hereros, revolted against the German colonial rule in 1904. A war was fought until 1907 when the Germans crushed the revolution. It has been referred to as genocide. An estimated total of 100,000 Nama and Herero lost their lives, which consisted of about two thirds of their population. This is the main reason as to why the Ovambo-people later became the main source of contract labourers due to the shortage of Nama and Herero men. (Hishongwa, 1992)

2.3 - South African rule – Apartheid and contract labour

In 1915, the year after the outbreak of the First World War, South Africa entered South West Africa and took over as a result of a British initiative (Berg, 2004). Six years later, in 1921, South Africa got an official mandate from the League of Nations to, as it was said, “... promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being of the inhabitants” (Hishongwa, 1992: p.9).

The mandate was given with the intention that South West Africa was to be returned to the inhabitants when ready. Instead South Africa intended to make it a province of their own country, mainly to be used as a source of labour force to the mines and railroad constructions in the south. When the League of Nations changed into the United Nations in 1945 they indented to give all former colonies early independence. All countries with mandates, with the exception of
South Africa, accepted this. Instead South Africa kept South West Africa under its control. (Hishongwa, 1992)

In order to ensure a cheap labour force for the economies dominated by the white population the apartheid regime used a contract labour-system. This was done through limiting the resources for the black population. There were also restrictions of movement with several laws forbidding migration to the white areas where most of the work opportunities were. In order to work in the white areas the people had to go through the contract labour system. The contract labour became a more reliable source of income than the small self-sufficient farms in the overcrowded “Bantustans” or “Homelands” where the black population was forced to live. Through enclosing people in these Bantustans or Homelands poverty was created among the black population, leaving little choice other than to take the poorly paid contracts. (Hishongwa, 1992)

The contract labour went through recruiting companies. After 1943 there was only one, namely South West Africa Native Labour Administration (SWANLA). This was also a form of governmental control system over the movement of the population. The contracts were usually between 12 and 18 months, but sometimes up to 30. The working hours were not fixed. In 1975 it was estimated that working days was around ten to fifteen hours. To break the contract was illegal for the employee. While waiting for work in compounds the workers was graded according to health, age and experience. (Hishongwa, 1992)

According to Hishongwa (1992) there were 50 000 worker in Namibia in 1971, of which 43 000 was contract labourers. However, these figures has been said to be to low according to both the UN and SWAPO. The working conditions were poor with primitive accommodation, unsanitary conditions, diseases and insufficient food. As for wages it was estimated that in 1975 the average black unqualified employee earned R18 per month while the average unqualified white employee earned up to R352 per month. The R18 was not considered sufficient to support a family. Some even called these conditions worse than slavery. Even if the slaves were bought as cattle, the employers of contract labourers could just ask for a new worker if one became unable to work. In that sense the slave owner had a reason to keep the workers healthy. (Hishongwa, 1992)

As tens of thousands left their homes in the northern parts of the country in order to work in the south the social and cultural lives were affected. The men were not allowed to bring their family and correspondent was limited since most people were illiterate. The system prevented the men from fulfilling their cultural roles as husbands, fathers and members of society. It was not until 1977 that the black and coloured population gained the right to look for jobs by themselves and bring their families. (Hishongwa, 1992)
2.4 - Political scene

After this short background we move on to the political scene of today. In order to discuss the Namibian nation and society there is a need to review the political scene of today. Here will follow a presentation of the dominant political party in Namibia, namely SWAPO. At the latest general elections they received 75.27% of the votes, with the two following runner ups getting 11.31% and 3.17% (African Elections Database, 2011). Thereafter short presentations will be made of other parts that relate to the aims of this thesis.

2.4.1 - South West African Peoples Organisation - SWAPO

The Ovamboland People’s Congress (OPC) was formed in 1958 in Cape Town, South Africa. They worked partially as a union for contract workers from Ovamboland. In 1959 they changed their name to Ovamboland Peoples Organisation (OPO) when they established themselves in Windhoek, the capital of today’s Namibia. (Berg, 2004)

In 1960 OPO changed into South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO). They later had an armed branch, People’s Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), who conducted guerrilla resistance between 1969 and 1989. This ended when South Africa accepted the UN resolution 435 that proclaimed that Namibia was to become an independent nation. The UN recognized SWAPO as a representative of the Namibian people. Some of the aims were to gain total independence by any means, unite the Namibian people, co-operate with other independence movements, establish democratic government, social ownership over the means of production and resources, and also to work against oppression and create a classless society. (Hishongwa, 1992)

Prior to independence the political foundation of SWAPO came from an idea of scientific socialism. However, they adopted a mixed economy after winning the first democratic elections in 1989 and took office in 1990. The Namibian constitution is quite liberal in giving all citizens extensive and fundamental rights. The aim of the politics was reconciliation with the past without forgetting the former inequalities. (Berg, 2004)

3 – Methodology

Before presenting the actual method of this thesis it is important to discuss matter of acquiring knowledge. This is a qualitative study based mainly on interviews. According to Patton (2002) Qualitative studies provide good opportunities for creativity from the researcher in the analysis of the material. There has been an abductive approach in this study. In an abductive study the researcher bases the study on the empirical material without ignoring his theoretical pre-understanding (Fejes & Thornberg, 2009). Through an abductive approach the researcher can, with the help of theory, see general tendencies in the material at hand (Danermark et al, 2003).
Furthermore, an abductive standpoint can be a means as to re-contextualize different phenomena’s (Danermark et al, 2003). This would mean that the different contexts that will be in focus for this study can be seen out of a new context. This new context will be provided with the analysis and the theoretical framework of this study. The main focus with abduction is not to discover new phenomena’s, but to instead find new connections and relations to interpret them from (Danermark, et al, 2003).

The main scientific approach in this thesis is based on the view that events and phenomena’s in society are socially constructed. Our world is both being constructed by and at the same time constructing people within societies. Therefore processes, meanings, interpretations and other social phenomena’s are not structurally determined but instead shifting over time. They therefore need to be interpreted on the basis on their unique historical and cultural context. This view is in line with social constructivism.

Discourse analysis is based on social constructivism. It has a critical view on knowledge in the sense that there are no direct objective truths. The world is available to us through categorizations and our interpretations of them. A statement is always affected by historical factors since our interpretations change over time. It’s also affected by cultural factors. (Winther Jörgensen & Phillips, 2000)

So this leads us from a social constructive to a discursive approach. Then there are some different discursive approaches to consider.

The main difference between discursive analysis and critical discourse analysis (hereafter referred to as CDA) is that CDA acknowledges a difference between discursive and other social practices. A discursive practice is a social practice that shapes the social world. A social practice on the other hand can be both concrete and contextual acts as well as institutionalized and socially based. (Winther Jörgenssen & Phillips, 2000)

For this study it’s important to see the difference between social and discursive practices in understanding the stories told by the respondents and put it into context. Therefore a CDA approach has been chosen. There are other reasons and consideration concerning this choice that will be presented in the last section of this part. Now we turn to a more in depth presentation of CDA.

3.1 - Critical discourse analysis

Fairclough (1995a) describes CDA as a mean to systematically explore causalities within relationships and discursive practices. It’s power and struggles over power that ideologically shape these practices. Discourses are also shaped by their historical and social contexts. At the same time they are constitutive, meaning that they are at the same time socially shaping. The CDA aims to explore these tensions. (Fairclough, 1995a)

The relations between discourses are a complex matter. There can be a variety of discourses, sometimes contrasting and competing, that have to coexist. These can be on both ‘micro’ and
‘macro’ level, two conditions that affect one another. To handle this, the method of CDA includes linguistic descriptions of practices. It also includes interpretation of relationships between different discursive processes. There is also a need for explanation concerning the relationship between social and discursive processes. (Fairclough, 1995a)

Fairclough (1992) also talks about intertextuality that refers to events being based on previous events. In this sense there are no completely new events since everything is based on something previous. He also talks about intertextual chains that are sequential as one text are transformed into one or more new texts, which in turn is transformed into yet another on, and so on. (Fairclough, 1992)

In this sense the interviews in this thesis are texts that in turn are based on a chain of intertextual events. These events are from the respondents’ lives and even further back historically. It is the objective for this study to trace all those intertextual chains of the respondents’ back to the time prior to independence and how those have affected the recent texts, namely the interviews. So there are several discourses in motion affecting one another.

Fairclough (1995b) refers to three dimensions when it comes to analysing communicative events. The first one is texts, which can be written or oral. Then there is the discourse practice concerning the production and consumption of texts. Thirdly, there are sociocultural practices that the communicative events are part of. (Fairclough, 1995b)

All three of the dimension above will be considered in this thesis. Interviews, newspaper articles and other publications will constitute the texts. These texts will then be analysed in reference to both their discursive and sociocultural practices.

The critical dimension in CDA comes from the aim to, through analysis, make different social processes of ideological- or power-relations visible. These may not be obvious for the producers of these relations, especially when it comes to the connections between language and power. In conversations there is a wide range of assumptions concerning roles and identities that affects the relationships. (Fairclough, 1995a, 1995b)

This part was initially an obstacle when scientific approach was to be chosen. Even if objectivity is basically impossible within the social sciences, since we always have a certain degree of pre-understanding, a choice of CDA would mean that a power-relation had to be assumed. To assume that there are power-relations might not be too farfetched. But that is up for the study to show, not for the researcher to decide. With social sciences there can be a problem with the researcher subjectively finding what he is looking for, whether it’s there or not, as a result of his determination to find it. So to avoid such scientific trap, the decision of CDA was postponed. After arrival in Namibia some power relations showed themselves thus making CDA a legitimate choice.
3.2 - Method and selection of data

Interviews stood for the main part of the data for this qualitative study. According to Patton (2002), interviews can enable an in depth view into other people’s lives and their own personal perspectives. According to Kvale (2009) the main focus for interviews is to search for meaning and central themes in the personal experiences of the respondents. This is central for this study since it’s mainly the perspective of the respondents and their views on the Namibian nation that is to be analysed.

Recording an interview is a good way to make sure that as little data as possible is lost (Patton, 2002). The interviews has been transcribed in whole. Even as it takes a longer time than just picking out parts, the thought of missing out on information made up for the extra time. The interviews were conducted around three months before this thesis was to be finished. To listen through the recordings again would take a substantial amount of time. It was therefore important that all interviews were transcribed in full so that when the time came to go through them again nothing, or as little as possible, was lost. Patton (2002) writes that transcriptions are a good way to get an overview of the interviews. What might have seemed uninteresting three months ago in an interview might be interesting on a later occasion. Should then the transcriptions not be complete valuable data could have been lost.

The interviews were of a semi structure. A semi structure consists of a set of themes and basic questions from which the interview can be adapted to the situation (Patton, 2002). This enabled the respondents’ stories to lead the interviews. The basic structure was not the same for every interview since the respondents operate in different fields. The focus was more on follow-up questions than on pre-written ones. This was to enable an openness towards the stories.

The aim for this thesis concerns points of view and work of Namibians both during the liberation struggle and post-independence. Therefore the search went out for people whose stories would seem to be of interest for the study. This was not an easy task coming from another country and not knowing anybody local. The search initially started with help from Swedes who had been in Namibia and could refer to people they had met. Some of these in turn would recommend others. This is what Patton (2002) refers to as a snowball sampling where one informant leads to another.

In order to get an understanding for the social and political situation in Namibia the newspapers served as a source of information. Through following the media flow certain discourses showed themselves. The interviews were then influenced by these discourses. The newspapers also showed possible respondents. Amongst these were politicians, columnists, people from different ministries etc. Then the work began to try and contact these people and some of the respondents were found with this method.

Since SWAPO has been the dominating political party since independence, and considered the leading force during the liberation struggle, it was of interest to interview present and former members of the party. Attempts were made to reach active members in both SWAPO and its
youth organization SPYL. None of the respondents are currently directly active in the party, although some has been but left the party for different reasons or some are still members but has other work at the time being.

It was also of interest to interview people who in different ways contributed or contributes to the nation-building process. This is a quite wide base and the respondents also come from different backgrounds. Nation-building is a complex matter and the spread of material can and was in this case favourable.

After a few interviews some discourses started to appear. Therefore the search for respondents changed during the process. It helped to narrow down the field of potential respondents. For example there was some interest to look into the mining sector which is the largest contributor to the Namibian economy. Two aspects stopped this from being a bigger part of the study. Firstly there was a problem with connecting to the field, although attempts were made. Secondly it became of less interest along the way as the empirical material showed tendencies in society that didn’t seem to directly relate to the mining sector. It could still have been of interest and this should be seen as a limitation in the field of this thesis.

There has been no direct observation in this study although three months were spent in Namibia. This could possibly be considered as an in-direct form of observation. To some extent the nation the respondents were talking about was therefore being observed. Off course this was to a small extent considering the historical perspective of this thesis. Also, the “Namibian-life” was not being experienced, it was just under observation.

According to Patton (2002) it’s important for the researcher to keep a well-adjusted distance to what is being observed. In order to see the cultural tendencies you should neither stand too far away nor too close. In the case of using both interviews and observation as method this is called triangulation. This means that the researcher narrows in on the research objects. (Patton, 2002)

Even if there was no direct observation like mentioned, it is important to keep in mind that the whole experience was an indirect observation. And the interviews and the newspapers helped with this observation. In the same sense the observations helped to prepare for the interviews as well as analysing them. This thesis would be very different if it was conducted without actually visiting Namibia. Therefore we can talk about a kind of triangulation in this study.

In order to further contextualize the social phenomena’s discussed in this thesis, a look at the news reporting has taken place. During March and April of 2012 three of the major daily newspapers in Namibia were followed on a daily basis. Some of these articles will be referred to directly in the analysis. In other instances there will be and overall reference to the medial discussions. The focus has been on articles portraying current social debates.

Media flow is a form of mass communication that has its own special properties. It is partly a matter of time and space. Whereas with direct communication the participants have a direct contact, the media communication has a separation both in time, when it’s written and when it’s
read, and geographical, the writer and the reader are seldom in the same place. The production of the text is disjoint from the receiver. (Fairclough, 1995b)

Newspaper reporting can therefore be perceived as a one-way communication, from reporter to reader. In the material relevant to this study a focus has been put on written reactions to social events and discussions, written both by journalist and other people from different fields or institutions writing columns.

Fairclough (1995b) discusses the medial monologues where the audience cannot directly respond to the communication. The producer of a text must therefore write articles based on assumptions on what the reader wants. It’s a sort of quasi-interaction. The media communication can be seen as an extended chain of communicative events that links the readers to the social events and debates. At the end of the chain is the reader who has to try and recontextualize the written story. (Fairclough, 1995b)

One of course has to be critical when it comes to media reporting. In the end it is a business and should be perceived as such. It is difficult to know to what extent the reporter may be limited or to what extent she may be more interested in selling articles rather than writing what she wants to communicate.

3.2 - Empirical material

A total of nine interviews have been conducted for this study. They all relate in one way or another to the concept of building a Namibian nation. Some have been or are politically active. Politically active is a wide term, by voting in the general election you could be considered politically active. In this thesis a more narrow view on the term is used meaning that the respondents have been more directly active in the activities of any political party or its youth organizations. The presentation below will be short summaries that will later be elaborated in the analysis.

For the following thesis the respondents will be referred to by traits relevant to the study. Some have similar backgrounds, for example more than one has lived in exile but only one of the respondents will be directly referred to that fact. There is no valuation in the choice of relevant traits; it is for practical reason only. These traits will be italic in the presentation below. The interviews will be presented in the chronological order in which they occurred.

The first interview was with a local entrepreneur who was born in the early 1980’s. His main contribution to this thesis is an insight in the entrepreneurial opportunities in Namibia, both in sense of market and enabling political environment.

When it comes to participating in the liberation struggle the second respondent gives an example of how the SWAPO Party Youth League (SPYL) contributed. He was an active member and will be referred to as former SPYL activist in the following. Today he’s got an academic career in political sciences.
The third interview, with a journalist and editor, shows yet another perspective. She’s been writing social critique since prior to independence which has caused some conflicts with the governments, both the colonial administration and SWAPO after independence.

During the apartheid era many people went into exile. The woman in exile did just that and spent 16 years in other parts of Africa and Europe where she focused on education. About referring to her as the ‘woman in exile’ neither means that her main trait differing her from the other respondents is being a woman or that she lived in exile. This is merely in order to make the referring easier.

The fifth interview was with a principal who has previously been active in the SWAPO leadership but was suspended after some differences with the party. During apartheid times she spent some years in exile but also did a lot of work in Namibia with different nation-building projects. She’s principal over a school she herself co-founded and runs it with a philosophy of teaching critical thinking and taking active roles in society.

We’ve already covered politically active youth during the liberation struggle with the second interview. For the sixth we have a leading NYC2-member politically active post-independence. He has been politically involved since the 1990’s in different positions and organizations. He can contribute with a view on the active work of the youth today and how they can influence the national politics. He is also a member of SWAPO.

The seventh interview can contribute with a view on the political scene and how it has evolved up to this day. The opposition party leader is currently a member of parliament and has previously been so in SWAPO. He was a leading member in SWAPO during the liberation struggle in which he fought in the armed wing PLAN.

For yet another critical view on society we have the founder of project for democracy. Also a former SWAPO member prior to independence he now works on projects with the aim of teaching critical thinking amongst the citizens.

The ninth and final interview was with a man, actually born in South Africa, who worked on and was a founder of nation-building projects in Namibia prior to independence.

3.4 - Ethical considerations and discussion of method

Since the study was conducted in Namibia where English is the official language there would be some problems with writing in Swedish. The choice of writing in English is partially based on the will to enable the respondents to read the final result. Another reason for the choice of language is that the interviews will be conducted in English. Therefore a translation problem could occur when translating quotes should the thesis be in Swedish.

2 National Youth Council
When conducting a study there are some ethical principles and criterions to take under consideration. Central for this is the protection of the individual. His or her participation should not cause any negative effect to his or her life. (“Good research practice”, 2011)

Before the interviews the respondents was informed about the purpose of this study. It was made clear that the participation was voluntary and could be stopped as any moment. The respondents were asked for permission to record the interview. It was promised that the recording, as with the interview itself, was only to be used for this thesis and that the recordings would be deleted after this study’s completion. They have been offered to read the final result.

The Swedish research council (2011) gives some recommendations and guidelines concerning research ethics in “Good research practice”. They may seem general and obvious but anyway important to discuss. As a researcher you are expected to be truthful about your research and make account for the purposes (“Good research practice”, 2011). There has been no reason to withholding any truth concerning the purposes or presentation of this study. Neither while conducting the study in relation to the respondent nor to the readers of this thesis. The truth has been considered the best way to go so that line has been followed. The researcher should also openly make account for the methods and the results of the study and not steal from other researchers’ results (“Good research practice”, 2011). The aim is to present the methods and reasoning behind the analysis as thoroughly as possible. Other studies will be referred to when they appear in the study.

It could be questioned whether a Swedish student after a three month visit could say anything about the Namibian nation. This is a consideration worth to be aware of and needs some discussion in order to raise the question of credibility of this thesis. According to Kvale (2009) the interviewer must have knowledge about the topics in question. Coming to a new nation this caused some difficulties. There were about four weeks between arrival in Namibia and the first interview. This time was spent mainly on reading in to the Namibian history and current social debates. Since there were no interviews booked prior to arrival this time was also spent trying to find people to interview. Doing this background work enabled a sense of who would be of interest to talk to and more importantly a sense of what would be relevant to talk about. The search for respondents went on along most of the trip and the final interview was made on the last day.

Three months is of course a short time to get to know a nation. The core of this thesis is although not experiencing Namibia, it’s rather the stories from Namibians and the Namibian press that is being interpreted. This is, unavoidable as it is, seen through European eyes.

Coming from the outside may cause some problems in capturing the big overall picture, but then again who can? This same distance to the material can also allow an objectivity, to whatever reasonable extent, that otherwise would be impossible for someone born in Namibia who also grew up with the same nation-building process that he or she tries to analyse.
It should be remembered that this questions could be raised in most academic studies, regardless of national or international approach. So, like all other studies this is the researcher’s analysis of a social world presented by the empirical material.

As the Namibian nation is still only 22 years young at this moment, the whole liberation struggle and nation-building may still be politically sensitive. Oppression from apartheid is still in the memories of many Namibian citizens. From the interviews the subject did not seem too sensitive. There were no direct questions about oppression and so forth but those factors were discussed by the respondents themselves. There seems to be a sort of forgiving tendency, after all, the liberation struggle was won.

Some of the respondents were clearly trying to answer the question with the topic of my thesis in mind; instead of saying what might have first came to mind. In what ways this actually affected their answer is of course impossible to say. Also, it does not mean that they don’t stand for what they said.

There is always a difficulty with studies of historical events. The historical studies referred to in this thesis were conducted in late 20th or early 21st century. And they are talking about a time from the late 19th century. How do we know these claims to be factual? The short, and possibly boring, answer is that we can’t know for sure. They base their claims on older studies and interpret them on the basis of their own historical context and values. In turn this study will interpret these from yet another historical context. Historical retelling is always based on a set of assumptions. It is also based on the narrators picking of sides as there are two sides to each coin. Without these assumptions, and with appliance of a strict social scientific approach, nothing could be said. The distance between the discourse of this thesis and the discourse of regional markets in southern Africa in the late 19th century are just too far apart. The only way to bridge this space is to keep these circumstances in mind and problematize accordingly.

This student exchange was partially finances by a scholarship from Linnaeus-Palme. There have although been no obligations concerning the aims and focus for this thesis. Therefore they have had no effect on this study other than enabling it.

4 - Theoretical approach and previous research

The following theoretical framework is derived both from the initial aims of the study and from the empiric material. The initial aim was to study a nation in a globalized context. So first of all we need to establish what we mean by the concept of nation and nation-building. What is a nation? How does a nation come to be and how is it maintained? Then in the second part we need to discuss the nation’s relation to other nations. Therefore we’ll take a look at some globalization theories. The focus on globalization came partly from a pre-understanding concerning the interconnections between nations. Inspiration also came from reading about
Namibia in the beginning of the study. The theoretical approaches that then became relevant are solely based on the study itself.

Post-colonialism for example relates to both the nation concept and its relation to a globalized world. From the data collected it became apparent that the colonial past has formed the Namibia nation. Also from the empirical material, and related to all of the above, a discussion of citizenship, nationality and identity became relevant.

The theories and their relations to the study and each other will be discussed below. A further discussion will follow in the analysis.

4.1 - Nation-state and nation-building

When it comes to nations the perceptions may vary between the different continents. European nations have not, generally, been formed under the same circumstances as African nations. In order to widen the discussion on unique conditions of Namibia, a theoretical framework around nations and nation-building will be presented below. These theories may not speak directly about Namibia, but they consider African states.

Praah (2006) takes a quite critical stance towards nation-building. He argues that the African states, as inherited by the Western colonialists, are not nations. Instead they are merely states aspiring to be nations. They are the result of decades of failure to create a shared sense of collective identity. This causes problems for the states as a framework for an entrenched institutionalization of democracy and development is missing. (Praah, 2006)

Furthermore Praah (2006) claims that people have been forced into irrational loyalties based on the borders of the so called nation-state. This view shows a critical stance towards the concept of the nation-state, at least an African nation-state. It provides a theoretical view on the matter of establishing an African post-colonial nation. It shows that the Western concept of a nation-state that applies in, for instance, Sweden might not be as given when it comes to African states. This is a factor that is important to consider as it otherwise could be easy to make assumptions based on Swedish nation-state factors.

For a similar stance when it comes to the concept of African nations we can turn to Pillay (1991). His study is based mainly on South Africa. But he also talks about Africa in general. Since Namibia has a history of being under South African control, his thoughts might apply.

Pillay (1991) describes South Africa as a colonial invention that has disregarded the traditional tribal lands. ‘Nationalism’ is a modern European idea that gained currency among white people in the 19th century. The white dominance in South Africa resulted in constant interruption of the local communities. This could be through different economic factors such as taxation which forced people to work for white land owners, in accordance to the goals of the white-economy. (Pillay, 1991)

Furthermore Pillay (1991) claims that neither of the white and black populations were socially or economically self-sufficient. Even with the South African apartheid politics with its
aim to segregate the political instrument has always been undermined by the economic interdependence (Pillay, 1991). But were not the native communities self-sufficient before the colonial rule? This would imply that they needed the European influence, as was a common European though in the colonial times. The white settlers on the other hand made themselves dependent on cheap, black labour for their capitalist industries and farm with the aim to be more than self-providing. The white population, through domination, made the black communities dependent on white economy as Pillay (1991) explained. So if the two were dependent on each other it was because they created that dependency themselves.

Pillay (1991) also discusses some differences between what would be a South African nation-state and other nation-states. Countries like France or Japan has got a long history of cultural cohesion and homogeneity, which South Africa has not. It also differs from states like the USA who, though without cultural homogeneity, has a sort of melting pot with different groups who was joined together in struggle for independence and religious freedom. South Africa also differs from nations like Britain with its strong cultural groups, periodically at war with each other, who after centuries came to accept a confederate national image. As for South Africa, the only way to national solidarity is through political solutions. (Pillay, 1991)

Ramos and Cassim (1991) talk about nation-building projects as unique in the sense that specific territory and population is used to construct new national unity. At the same time colonialism has destroyed many social bonds that held people together. Colonialism led to cultural heterogeneity and social stratification which causes problems for the nation-building process. (Ramos & Cassim, 1991)

Anderson (2006) discusses the concept of nationalism and claims that it is an imagined political community. Since most members of the nation will never know each other the imagined notion of an abstract nationality becomes the uniting force. It is at the same time limited since there are finite, yet elastic boundaries with other nations on the other side. The nationalism implies a deep, horizontal comradeship based on these imagined communities. (Anderson, 2006)

4.2 - Globalization

Most theories around globalization are based on Western circumstances and how other regions relate to this system. They talk about already established nation states and how they change due to new global circumstances. Namibia is in a different situation. It is a young country trying to establish itself and does so in relation to the globalized world market. Therefore the theories presented here will focus on the concept of globalization. Later, in the analysis, they will be discussed on the matter of to what extent they can be applied and relate to Namibian nation-building.

Scholte (2005) defines globalization as a change in the social space giving geographical distances less meaning. Globalization can be understood from a capitalist context and how the capitalist system has emerged and developed. The economically expansive characteristics of
capitalism have driven globalization forwards with development of new markets, increased production, etc. Globalization has spread capitalism over the world creating a sort of hyper capitalism. (Scholte, 2005)

Castells (1997) discusses the relationship between globalization and the nation-state. The world market has created a dependency between the actors, giving the nation-states less control over their economic policies. This loss of control has been further accentuated by the production and trade networks flexibility. This is due to the means of production rarely being geographically bound. (Castells, 1997)

4.3 - Post-colonial theories

When it comes to previously colonized countries they differ depending on the time of colonization, the colonizing countries and local contexts according to Goldthorpe (1996). Colonization usually meant European domination, whites over natives. The decolonization did not necessarily mean abolishment of the white communities’ domination in all post-colonial countries. For instance in South Africa where the colonial situation became internalized and the white community continued to dominate during apartheid times. (Goldthorpe, 1996)

Even if not all colonies were acquired with a direct prospect of economic gain, it was still important that the colony paid its way. It needed economic activity in order to generate a tax base. The economic institutions in the colonies were generally aimed at export of primary products. This led to an infrastructure, which can be seen on African maps, where railways were built to connect the mines with harbours instead of connecting to other African countries. This has also had the effect that many post-colonial countries still have a dependency on export. (Goldthorpe, 1996)

Goldthorpe (1996) also talks about exploitation. He discusses the common claim that rich countries of today owe their affluence to exploitation of the poor, both in the past and present. Based on the argument that five of the seven countries with the highest GNP per capita in 1991 did not have colonies, he claims that colonies were not a must for prosperity (Goldthorpe, 1996). Firstly this is not entirely true. Among the five countries both Sweden and Denmark are mentioned. Sweden actually had a colony in Africa in today’s Ghana in the 17th century. This colony was lost to Denmark in the same century. For the sake of argument we can admit that this colonization was not to the same extent as British or French. But even as this may be true, Goldthorpe (1996) doesn’t discuss the fact that colonies may have helped the economic and industrial expansion prior to the decolonization, since these statistics are based on the time after decolonization. Can we know how countries like England, France or Germany would be like today, if they didn’t have colonies? Of course we can’t. Goldthorpe (1996) bases his argument on the global economy of mid 1990’s. It can say that ‘after all’ it was not helpful as to take them to the top maybe. But the development of the world market is not yet at its end so can we talk about ‘the long run’?
Loomba (1998) gives another view than Goldthorpe (1996) and claims that the economic imbalance created with colonization was a necessity for the industrial and capitalist growth in Europe. This view seems more adequate when it comes to the colonial impact on European capitalist development. Since historical developments are complex matters it can’t easily be said that colonization was not the ultimate mean for (European) success. We must consider that colonization didn’t just stimulate the colonial rulers market; it helped stimulate the whole world market.

Among examples of exploitations, Goldthorpe (1996) mentions forced labour and depriving people of land or other resources. These lands were often used and necessary for their subsistence. Without it many people had to go and work for white farmers or in industries, which led to forced labour. Goldthorpe (1996) claims that these farms or plantations got more productive under white settlers control and that this in turn led to a source of employment. (Goldthorpe, 1996)

This may be true, but was that what the natives wanted? They had the means to support themselves but were deprived of that right. And the new source of income was more in others interests than their own. So can the fact that it was more productive be used as an argument for the exploitation? This seems to be a quite neo-liberal stance with its market focus. Let go back to Loomba (1998) who takes a more Marxist stance.

In order to form a community in a new land it was necessary to unform or re-form the existing ones. In that sense colonialism means the conquest and control over the natives’ lands and goods. Colonialism can be divided in two periods, a pre-capitalistic and a more modern version that developed alongside the European capitalism. The latter version did not only extract wealth from the colonies but also reconstructed the economic systems in the colonies. (Loomba, 1998)

Even if this is a quite materialistic definition of colonialism, it gives an interesting starting point to the discussion of the nation-state. Could it be that the foundation of the nation-state, the very thing that keeps it together, is the economic dependency created by the capitalist world economy? The UN was a driving force in the independence of former colonies. But at the same time the UN-work was based on the principal of nation-states (Berg, 2004). The forming of nation-states was a presumption for UN-supported independence. So to some extent there was not much of a choice when it came to forming of nation-states on the foundations of global capitalist economies.

Now that we have covered some theories concerning the overall society and nation, it’s time to turn our focus to the individuals and groups. In order to contextualize the theories above in a Namibian perspective we need to look at the foundation of the country. That is to say its populations and their relations to each other.
4.4 - Citizenship, nationality and identity

Marshall (2009) divided citizenship into three parts; civil, political and social. The civil citizenship is associated with individual rights, freedom and equality before the law. Political citizenship refers to the right of participating in exercising political power. This is either as a politician or an elector. Finally, the social citizenship consists of the rights to economic welfare, security and a living standard as prevailing in the society. These three elements are usually institutionalized in courts, parliaments, hospitals, educations system etc. The citizenship is in itself a status for those who fully are members of a community. (Marshall, 2009)

Since Namibia has declared itself a nation state we need to conceptualize its foundations. These thoughts on citizenship can give a perspective of the foundation of communities, namely its citizens and their relation to the state.

Wallerstein (2002) analyses the terms race, nation and ethnical groups in relation to people of a certain nation. Race is a genetic category assumed to have certain physical traits. A nation is a socio-political category related to a state’s actual or potential borders. Finally, an ethnic group is a cultural category associated with certain behaviour and is not necessarily limited by borders of a nation. These terms can be used in societies to enable influence and to address political demands on certain groups. It’s from these factors that a nation’s people are defined on a genetic or socio-political basis. This makes ‘people’ a social construction with shifting definitions. (Wallerstein, 2002)

These categories enable us to rationalize processes and structures of today. By rationalizing the past you can create an identity. The ‘past’ can be divided in two parts: the actual past and the social interpretation of the past. In this sense it doesn’t matter if we define the past with racial, national or ethnical terms since they are all social creations. (Wallerstein, 2002)

Since ethnic and racial factors has showed themselves as discourses in the empiric material these thoughts could be helpful in discussing as to why those factors are important. It can also contribute to the discussion of how these discourses relate to the Namibian nation-building.

When it comes to creating identities Castells (1997) gives an interesting theoretical perspective. People use identity in order to create meaning and as a source of experience. It is about social actors constructing meaning, based on cultural attributes, for themselves in a process of individualization. These are of higher priority than other meanings. Any individual may have several identities that may contradict each other. Identities are not the same as what is commonly called roles within sociology. Roles are more orientated around functions whereas identities focus on meaning. (Castells, 1997)

Identities are constructed of a variety of building blocks. From history, biology, collective memory and individual fantasies and so on. They are also created and marked in a context of power relationships. Castells (1997) gives three forms of identity building: legitimizing identity, resistance identity and project identity. When dominating social institutions need to rationalize their domination over other social actors they may try to legitimate differences in identities. Resistance
identity is a social reaction to domination by people who are devalued and/or stigmatized. This creates trenched of resistance to the dominating institutions in society. This also creates the formation of communities. For example ethnically based nationalism often arises from a sense of alienation and resentment against unfair conditions. The third, project identity, could be used when moving out of the trenches of resistance. Social actors create and build a new identity on whatever cultural materials available. This is in order to redefine their social positions and change overall structures of society. (Castells, 1997)

In order to go deeper into the discussion of citizenship and ethничal factor and how they relate to a nation we need to ask ourselves why we create these identities. So Castells (1997) theory can help us take that discussion on step further and get us closer to the core.

4.5 - Previous research

This section may not be as extensive as one would prefer. The reasons for this may be a shortage of studies made on this young nation that relates to the aims of this thesis. It may off course also be due to lack of availability or problems in finding existing studies that directly relate to the subject at hand.

The previous research presented below can contribute to the discussion and put it in a wider perspective since these studies partially concern other subjects than this thesis.

**Jauch – The impact of globalization on Namibian society**

Prior to independence, Namibia was treated as a fifth province of South Africa. There is still dependency on South Africa since they stand for about 90% of Namibian import. With all major mineral exports owned by foreign companies, there is also a dependency on transnational companies (TNC’s). At independence, Namibia imported 90% of what it consumed. So the Namibian economy is at large shaped by the interests of South Africa and western TNC’s. (Jauch, 2001)

The mining industry has played a key role in the colonial exploitation. As a result many of the infrastructures were developed in accordance with the demands of the mining industry. The TNCs that dominated the mining sector had vested interest and together produced competitions of labor among their mines, thereby keeping the costs of labor low. (Jauch, 2001)

There is a belief that Namibia can benefit from globalization with its competitive opportunities. But there is a need to develop skills and production. The government follows a neo-liberal line. The focus lies on export since the domestic market is quite small. The private business sector is seen as the engine of economic growth. They therefore seek investors. However there are some tensions between various policies as the government tries to help local industries but are bound by international trade rule stopping them from intervening to much with the market. (Jauch, 2001)
Berg – A study on racism in Namibia
The main interest of Bergs (2004) study is not the racism per se in this thesis. But he gives a good view on the historical background and how it has influenced the Namibian politics of today.

Berg (2004) writes that there is an ambivalent view on ethnicity in Namibia. The categorization of the former colonial powers has been internalized even though people don’t believe in the principles. The term ethnicity is closely associated with the apartheid system but Namibia doesn’t want to see itself as a federation of ethnicities but rather a nation of Namibians. So in a resistance to the apartheid system the Namibian identity became more important than ethnical differences. (Berg, 2004)

Berg (2004) also talks about the time after independence. There was a big moral victory in the sense that the Namibian politics have focused on forgiving rather than on retaliation. It’s a moral triumph to rise above the violations you have been exposed to. The reconciliation politics does have its problems and now the main obstacles are class-based. Reconciliation demands justice, primarily economic justice. (Berg, 2004)

When European nations withdrew from their colonies during the 20th century there was an indirect demand that they should become nation-states. There is a discrepancy between its idea and reality. The decolonization did not mean that the European states gave up their will to politically and economically dominate their former colonies. It was replaced with a system of indirect influence through a form of neocolonialism. (Berg, 2004)

5 – Results and analysis
In this part the results will be presented alongside with both discussion and analysis. From the empirical material some discourses have been found. These will be presented thematically in the following. To some extent they have occurred in most of the interviews.

The main discourse in this analysis, serving as a common overall factor, is the nation-building discourse. Everything in the analysis will relate to this one in one way or another. The first part, headlined fundamentals for a Namibian post-colonial nation, deals with Namibia pre-independence. A time of colonization that lay out the fundamental prerequisite for an independent Namibia. To understand what is today we must reflect on what was yesterday in a chain of discursive events. After discussing the background we here move on to the subject of forming a national identity, a discourse in its own right. The aim is to take the discussion from the first part one step further in problematizing the very concept of a nation and nationhood. This section has been divided in two due to different discourses related to the subject. From the interviews there has been discussion on the democratic system as well as national unity and tribalism.
After the first parts we have laid up the base for the third, establishing a post-colonial nation in a globalized world. Here we lift the discussion to yet another level looking closer at both domestic and global political discourses. The main questions here are how the factors from the first two parts of the analysis are handled politically and also to what extent Namibia are influenced by, or are able to influence, globalized structures.

Finally, in the section named concluding thoughts on the nation-building process, a final discussion aims to summarize and conceptualize the first three parts and from this discuss the potential future of Namibia.

In addition there is a fifth part dedicated to reflection on the researchers’ role and further studies.

5.1 - Fundamentals for a Namibian post-colonial nation

As presented in the background the colonial era has been influential in the forming of a Namibian nation. And not only the colonization itself but also the struggle against it. Most of the respondents have contributed in different ways to the liberation movement and the nation-building prior to independence.

This part will mainly concern the time from mid-20th century up to the liberation of Namibia in 1990. As mentioned in the background, the colonization of this region started in late 19th century. Since this study is based on the stories of the respondents it leads to this limitation.

During the South African colonial administration the effects of the apartheid system reached out to its colony. This racially segregating politics had its impact on the lives of the people in the country back then called South West Africa:

I tell you, that when we were growing up, you see, you could not do anything that you want to do on your own. But things are already defined what you can become… The education was limited up to that level where they want to keep you as a black person. (Woman in exile)

This is an example of what was presented in the background. Hishongwa (1992) spoke of the apartheid system controlling the black population through limiting their resources and restricting their movement. Here the woman in exile talked about the resource of education and the colonial administration controlling what people could become. This is part of a so called Bantustanization where black people were forced into restricted areas and where they were meant to live their lives (Hishongwa, 1992). The policy of Bantustanization aimed at dividing the country into ten homelands, or Bantustans, based on ethinical groups that should have their own social systems under the apartheid rule (Berg, 2004). These systems had no power against the apartheid rule and the founder of nation-building projects remembers the idea as “…absurd from the beginning because the people of Namibia had already been integrated on all levels, socio-economic levels” (Founder of nation-building projects). He also pointed out the fact that one of these groups only
consisted of 0.7% of the total population (so around 10-14,000 people) and was too small to handle its own health care, education and other social systems.

The apartheid system also affected other parts of society like working for the media. The journalist spoke about her line of profession in the country prior to independence. During this time there were few journalists critical of South Africa according to her and she claimed to have been one of them. This had some consequences:

... I was arrested on a number of occasions. I had attempts on my life… lived with death threats both day and night, offices were firebombed, so it was a very tough time to be a journalist. (Journalist)

Wallerstein (2002) refers to an ethnical group as historically created by structures enabling cheap labor and accumulation of capital in a capitalist society. This has been a factor in Namibia during colonial times, especially during apartheid. Under South African rule people were segregated and divided according to tribal groups and a variety of races. They were also limited in their ability to support themselves either by farming or by mobility in order to find work. If we go back to early colonial days, during German rule, we can see how the colonialists, driven by the capitalist system, created a dependency on the western economic system. As presented in the background the different tribes of this particular area were self-sufficient prior to colonization (Hishongwa, 1992). They were then restricted in areas such as to where they could grow their crops, where they could sell their cattle and so forth. Then, after taking away their ability to support themselves, the colonizers gave them the opportunity to trade under European conditions. As a result a dependency was created both by producing goods to sell and by buying products to survive.

During apartheid this social order was further established. People were still restricted and kept poor. This enabled a cheap labor force to the mines and big farms, supporting the expanding economy. Wallerstein (2002) also talks about center and peripheral as constitutive for this dividing of labor. By keeping people far away from the center it incapacitates them to influence the conditions. “Under apartheid the South Africans tried to divide, which they did very effectively…” (Journalist).

The former SPYL activist speaks of the time up to independence and mentioned that one of their political aims was to come up with alternatives to the South African system. For instance “South Africa emphasized the teaching of Afrikaans. We had to come up with an alternative to Afrikaans and that was English” (Former SPYL activist). This was not the work of solely SPYL but still was a rebelling reaction to the apartheid system. It’s a quite interesting matter as to why people would change their official language, even if they did not chose it in the first place. Could it be done just to do the opposite of what the colonial power tells them to do? To this it is important to remember that there may be no natural official language in Namibia since the Namibian people consists of a variety of different tribes and therefore a variety of languages. To unite them as
Namibians a joint language was needed. The South Africans wanted it to be Africans and the people’s reaction was the use of English.

To what extent is language important in creating a national unity? Balibar (2002) talks about creating ethnicity and that language and race then are the most important factors. This is not the case in Namibia since they are not trying to create a new ethnicity. They are instead trying to create a nationality where ethnicity, or tribal heritage, comes second after the Namibian identity. However, can language be said to be the most uniting factor in Namibia? Not really since there are still people who don’t speak English and prefer their tribal languages. The most uniting factor would seem to be that all of these tribes were colonized by the same forces.

About being a political activist in the 1980’s the former SPYL activist spoke of harsh responses from the South African government. There was violence and “…quite a lot of young people who were chased away from home because they had taken on a NANSO\(^3\) or SWAPO membership… We could be arrested; there were quite a few people who were kidnapped” (Former SPYL activist). He continues with explaining the methods: “Then also South Africa in most cases did not act directly, they were using local community members to do some of their dirty work. Beating up people, disrupting meetings, intimidation and so on” (Former SPYL activist). However, SPYL had their methods when it came to retaliation:

"There would be times that we would talk about retaliating and hit back through other ways. Hit back at the school, or hit back through, if you know where one of the soldiers is living, who participated in a violent attack, then we want to hit back at that specific individual when he or she is off duty.“ (Former SPYL activist)

Most of SPYL’s work was focused on agitation and mobilization. Together with NANSO they focused on the schools. “By 1988, NANSO and SWAPO Youth League\(^4\) was widely represented almost in all government schools throughout the country” (Former SPYL activist). During that time there were also extensive public demonstrations rejecting South African colonialism. According to the former SPYL activist SWAPO’s role at the elections in late 1989 became much easier due to the youth being mobilized and ready to vote.

Prior to independence the objective was clear within the liberation struggle according to the former SPYL activist. There was a reaction to the segregating apartheid system that focused on the racial difference between not only black and white, but also to the extent of tribal characteristics. There was one common enemy to unite against making the objective clear. In the eyes of the victorious struggle there was to be “… one Namibia, one nation” (Former SPYL activist). So to what extent has those goals that once united the people of Namibia been fulfilled? Has the

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\(^3\) NANSO = Namibia National Students Organisation.

\(^4\) The SWAPO Youth League is the same organization as SPYL (SWAPO Party Youth League)
tribal definitions been overthrown by a Namibian identity? These issues will be discussed in the following part.

5.2 - Forming a national identity

It is apparent from both the interviews and the media flow that there is a debate on nationhood in Namibia. 22 years after independence there seems to be some questioning amongst the respondents concerning the sense of nationality in the country. In order to discuss this subject it might be of interest to start on a political level. The matter of a Namibian nationality started as a political goal during the liberation struggle and it’s the same political forces, mainly SWAPO, who received the responsibility to ensure this after independence.

Balibar (2002) talked about nations being portrayed as continuous stories. In creating these stories we chose different historical aspects to be central in the development of the nation. In doing this we create the sense of the nation as being a destined result of fate. (Balibar, 2002)

This is what the respondents are doing during the interviews, as well as what is being done in the presentations in this thesis. We all chose different elements from history and associate them with the establishing of a Namibian nation and thereby giving it meaning and rationalizing its coming to be. But in what way can we talk about fate? It can’t really be said here that the respondents view the Namibia society as a result of fate. But at least they present their stories in ways that rationalize the chain of events that has led up to this moment in time. But what meaning can be given to colonization or to the apartheid system from a Namibian perspective? In one way those factors enabled a sense of national unity in bringing different tribes together and giving them new boarders and boundaries. Giving something meaning is not the same thing as thinking that it was supposed to happen or that it was for the best. It is merely about rationalizing social events. But if we say that the meaning behind the liberation struggle was to have an independent Namibian people, we should also give meaning to what was before. So was the meaning behind colonial times to create something for the liberation struggle to fight for and that being groups of people within the borders of the colony?

5.2.1 – National unity and tribalism

From the interview with the former SPYL activist, it seems as if the concept of a Namibian nation has changed since independence. Prior to independence there was a clear objective in the liberation of Namibia. There was a slogan “... the nation is SWAPO and SWAPO is the nation” (Former SPYL activist). In this context ethnical differences, apart from black and white, was of minor importance. After independence there has been some change and for example some discussion around Ovambo, the domination tribal group in SWAPO. Some feel that they are dominating the party from an ethnically unequal perspective. Ethnical reasons are often invoked
in other instances like job recruitment. This could possibly derive from a disappointment concerning the changes after liberation. The expectations were high among people and when prosperity is not available for everyone they search for rationalisation. This leads many people to ethnical arguments according to the respondent.

SWAPO, formerly called Ovamboland People’s Organisation, has still got its main, and a strong, voting base in Ovamboland. According to the journalist the Ovambo tribal groups represent over 60 percent of the total Namibian population. So the claim that SWAPO could have something to do with fueling tribalism derives from Ovambo domination in politics. And this may or may not lead to Ovambo people getting more privileges than others. She further claimed that, as an example, there is more happening in the northern parts of Namibia, namely Ovamboland, than there is in the other parts. As another potential explanation she mentioned:

... when a country has over fifty percent unemployment that obviously exacerbates those feelings that people do not feel part of a nation, they hoped after independence to reap the fruits of independence and that hasn’t happened. So I think that negativity is largely leading to an increase in tribalism... I think that the black white racism is not as much of an issue as the inter-tribal rivalry between black groups in Namibia. (Journalist)

At the same time she says that it’s not a big problem today. But people are starting to “... think more in terms of who they are, in terms of their race rather than that they are Namibians first and foremost” (Journalist). On this matter she’s also critical against the government for not handling matters with enough discipline. There had recently prior to the interview been a debate in the media around a minister talking down in a certain tribe and not getting disciplined for it. This leads her to the quote: “… when somebody does something really crazy people are going to say well nothing happened to the minister, why should I pay the consequence?” (Journalist).

Furthermore on the subject of SWAPO and tribalism she said that SWAPO is being perceived as an Ovambo movement, but she also said that it’s not exclusively so.

... we look at the politics of patronage and government, looking at the money, the people who are becoming rich with tenders and with corruption and you will largely find that it is happening within that particular group. So that is also, I think, contributing to a certain polarization of tribes in Namibia. (Journalist)

The opposition party leader also speaks of tendencies amongst people to look at inequalities as based on tribal or ethnic differences and says: “that is not the case but that is how it’s seen”.

It’s a country, a nation that is very poor. Many people are trapped in their conditions which are seriously under developed. So people are trapped in this, they cannot really move together with the nation... So this is another way of retarding almost the process of nation-building. But nation-building involves bringing people together in terms of sharing resources as well. (Opposition party leader)
The leading NYC-member also talked about the importance of balancing economic opportunities for all Namibians in order to handle tribalism; “It’s a threat towards forming a national identity” (Leading NYC member). He also talks about grouping tendencies in societies; “Unfortunately in Africa they tend to be based on tribalism or race considerations” (Leading NYC member). This can relate to what Marshall (2009) refers to as the social citizenship that consists of the rights to economic welfare, security and a living standard as prevailing in the society. In the sense that the economic opportunities in the country are not balanced, as said by the leading NYC-member, this could, in Marshalls (2009) theory, lead to the social citizenship being undermined and therefor keeping those away from being full members of society. So by not balancing resources one could say that some people are set aside making them feel as if they are not part of society. It’s then this feeling that drives them towards tribal rationalization of the situation. This could also relate to the previous discussion of the political system keeping certain people away from the centre and instead in the periphery where they cannot influence the national politics.

According to the journalist, the Namibian people were more united prior to independence. She also said, as mentioned earlier, that the South Africans tried their best to divide all the ethnical groups and did so effectively. And the resistance of this separation was the main uniting factor. Then she elaborated:

… But that is changing and it may or may not have to do with SWAPOs more than dominant two thirds majority and the facts that other smaller tribes feel marginalized in this new nation that is Namibia. So tribalism is in fact becoming more manifested now than it was before independence. So I’d say in terms of nation building, nationhood that in fact we have taken a couple steps backward. (Journalist)

The leading NYC-member also talked about the sense of nationality and how it hasn’t increased since independence. Instead he believes that tribalistic notions have actually been entrenched. As an example he mentions: “… every time a new political party is formed in Namibia, they are always formed on the basis of narrow tribal interest” (Leading NYC member). He continues:

I think the SWAPO-party represents an opportunity to move away from that. It is really one of the only solid alternatives that we’ve seen towards that. (Leading NYC-member)

This shows a different point of view from other respondents towards SWAPO and its role when it comes to tribalism. The important thing here is not to look for someone to blame. So we can just conclude that SWAPO may, or may not contribute to the tribal debate.

Bergs (2004) study showed that the majority of the people wanted to see themselves as Namibians rather than their tribal heritage as advocated by the apartheid regime. On this matter we can reveal a difference between the results of our studies. From my interviews there it seems to be quite the contrary due to the focus on tribalism. There may be various reasons for this. First
we must consider the context of time. There are eight years between the publishing of Bergs (2004) study and this thesis. Things may change. Two things speak for this theory. Firstly there seems to have been a general debate on the subject during the time of this study in accordance to the media reporting. So that might be the reason as to why the respondents talk in tribal terms. Secondly, and a possible answer as to why things could change in just a few years, expectations were high just after independence. So there might be an amount of disappointment that is now reaching the surface, people have waited long enough.

On the subject of politics after independence the former SPYL activist argues that: “… we promoted the concept of nation building, based on non-ethnic understanding…” (Former SPYL activist), then he added: “But I think after enthusiasm of independence passed you started to see many of the young people from that era trying to embrace the ethnical identity of a different kind” (Former SPYL activist). A question that could be raised from this is whether people in the search for something else to base their unique identity on drives them to tribalism? Is it about being unique or different from others? Firstly they became Namibians as an answer to the apartheid systems ethnical dividing and then back again as tribal identities against the Namibian identity? Castells (1997) talked about identity being a source of meaning and experience. Maybe we can see it as a constant work in motion; it is after all socially constructed and therefore bound to its contexts. The meaning behind the Namibian identity has changed after it won its ground from the apartheid system.

The discussion on tribalism continued and the respondent claimed that:

… with the independence came the issue of service delivery were maybe people are seeing that, in terms of service delivery, certain groups are benefitting more compared to others. It also came with issues of contestations, social contestation mainly for self-survival. Some people lose a job, or are in line for a promotion and don’t get it. Somebody else gets it and when they try to look for answers to this, sometimes, in their eyes ethnicity becomes the only explaining factor. … The conception of a nation is more problematic today… I think the issue of independence was very closely linked to the concept of a nation, because we were talking Namibia becoming an independent nation. Not a nation of independent ethnic groups or so on…. (Former SPYL activist)

According to the leading NYC-member the main challenge when it comes to a sense of equality is due to a legacy of apartheid and colonialism; “It is only now with the younger generations that we see an effort to take more to the same schools, to have the same development for all Namibians” (leading NYC-member). He then adds that there are still “… remains of those psychological as well as that socialization of people into separate ethnic groups” (leading NYC-member). This is central in the question discussed in the previous part of the analysis; what background do the Namibian people come from? It raises the follow up question of how fast people’s mentalities towards each other can change.

The thought of a Namibian nation and a Namibian people started during colonial times. With colonial rule and oppression they had something, call it a common enemy, to unite against.
In relation to claims by some of the respondents that the national unity-factors are going backwards one might raise the question of to what extent the Namibian people really was united prior to independence. Was the main objective to be one people or to be free people? The opposition party leader talks about Ovambo dominating SWAPO and says that “all the main commanders in all the most important government institutions are Oshiwambo speaking” (Opposition party leader). So has the politics post-independence showed us that being Namibian is more important than being for example Ovambo?

To answer the last question we must first consider the possibility of it being pure chance that the people considered most suitable for those positions just happened to be Ovambo. Maybe it really isn’t a factor within the deciding circle but instead we’re making it a factor by raising the issue and therefore ourselves creating that ethnical-discourse. This is something that must always be considered when it comes to discourses. Since they are created by people it might as well be the researcher who creates it. The researcher’s objective is to discover discourses and then in discussing and maybe questioning them she might also reproduce them.

In this case there has been some talk from respondents about SWAPO actually fueling a tribal debate. The opposition party leader talked about a time just prior to independence and gave some examples on what could happen within his former party. He put this forward as one of the reasons for leaving the party. In the 1970’s there was a war between SWAPO and South Africa, in which he himself fought. During this time and into the 1980’s internal problems arose:

SWAPO started to claim that there were spies, South African agents within SWAPO and thousands of people were arrested within SWAPO and detained. Hundreds of these people died under very uncertain and devious circumstances… They tended to be from certain ethnic groups only… Which in the end translated really into a some kind of tribal bias within the leadership of SWAPO that was considering certain groups to be more tending to be spies or to be wrecking the struggle. (Opposition party leader)

The groups he is talking about are mainly from the southern parts of Namibia. Even if this was a time when South Africa was in actual rule of the country we could discuss Marshalls (2009) term of civil citizenship, which gives the people equal rights before the law. The acting of SWAPO during this times were not based on laws, they were if fact rebelling against the official laws of the country. But still this could say something about the view on civil rights. If this is true, that there “… was a kind of ethnic cleansing within SWAPO” (Opposition party leader) as the opposition party leader put it, then there seems to have been little or no respect for a coming civil citizenship of a united Namibian people.

A newspaper article (Kazondovi & Nunuhe, 2012) covers an event where a leader of the Ovaherero Traditional Authority (OTA) accuses the government of fuelling tribal conflicts. There are claims that the government is taking sides with certain tribes and even “hating” others. The issue in this case was settlement in areas formerly controlled by a certain tribe who didn’t want anyone one else to settle there. (Kazondovi & Nunuhe, 2012)
5.2.2 – Democratic system

According to the leading NYC member the constitution recognizes the family as the most basic unit in Namibian society. It also recognizes traditional authorities and cultures as important for preserving a Namibian identity and culture. “So we definitely have what we call a Namibian identity and a Namibian culture” (Leading NYC member). But is it enough for the constitution to recognize something in order to make it true? Could the constitution not say one thing and then the implemented politics say another? The founder of project for democracy claims that there is a difference between what is written in the constitution and what is actually implemented in society, “… is just on paper, not in real life” (Founder of project for democracy). He may not have been talking about the family unit per se, however he was talking about the openness to political pluralism in Namibia.

On the subject of the constitution the woman in exile was focused on its being during the interview. On the question as to what extent tribalism is a factor in Namibia she answered:

If it is there I think it is not no more segregation because of our laws are made to unify people. It's no more segregation at all… As you can see there is nothing that can prevent something to happen totally. Something can still come up. Like tribalism, an individual can practice tribalism but you cannot say that there is tribalism in Namibia. I’m talking according to our constitution and our laws. (Woman in exile)

The respondent is more focused on the hard facts that the liberation struggle was won and the constitution recognizes equal rights. As she puts it her political activity stopped after independence and she seems reluctant to think less of what she fought for.

Amongst some of the respondents there has been concern about the level of competence in government positions. According to the founder of project for democracy the governmental positions are only for those loyal to SWAPO: “They can make you a minister even if you don’t have any competence for that portfolio” (Founder of project for democracy). According to him this is strategic in order to ensure influence in all governmental spheres: “If they are there people become afraid to criticize” (Founder of project for democracy). The entrepreneur sometimes has to work together with government officials in his line of work. He relates a sort of incompetence for the positions with the problems occurring, like corruption for example:

… for people who have no prior experience to the position that they're in, what can one expect? It's one of the big problems with government. I tell you that tomorrow you’ve got to handle ten billion euros, and that your money. What do you expect? I’m talking about coming from, like these guys grew up in huts. You know and, shady areas, not being allowed to afford cars, not affording vehicles or nice things, and then taking that and then winning the country's independence and be put in these high profile positions. Remember, these people, all they did is have a voice. A lot of them only had
their education once they were installed in government. So what do you expect? If you’re living in a hut yesterday and have five million dollars today, what do you expect?. (Entrepreneur)

Some of the respondents have previously been active within SWAPO. Some of them left the party due to political disagreements. The founder of project for democracy was a soldier in PLAN while active in SWAPO:

While we were in military training we found that there was a lot of corruption. They neglected the soldiers. There was also this tribalism amongst the people. So we challenged a lot of those things. That put us in some problems with the leadership. We wrote to the leadership to discuss some matters but it just got us locked up… After 15 months in prison without trial we came to understand what democracy means. (Founder of project for democracy)

In the case of the now opposition party leader the matter of nationhood was one of the factors behind him leaving the party. He felt that “… SWAPO wasn’t putting in sufficient effort to avoid tribalistic tendencies and to bring the people together” (Opposition party leader). This may be because of several factors but he mentions an example of inequality and a possible reason behind it:

There is a selfish approach to looking after individual interests I think….why does the president have a farm? Why do 80% of the cabinet ministers who has been there for the last 20 years, why do they all have farms and still less than 50% of the youngsters at school pass? They fail but the ministers do not fail to acquire farms. (Opposition party leader)

The leading NYC-member also talked about an issue called land-grabbing where people fence of land for their own use and how it affects the inequalities in the country. “It is when we start to become selfish and individualistic that they start to become harmful” (leading NYC-member). This could also relate to the previous discussion about economic balance in society and how it can contribute to the sense of citizenship.

Since independence there has been a land redistribution act with the goal to give back land owned by white to the black community. According to some of the respondents there seems to be a problem with the implementation of this act. It has led to a situation where those who need it the most are finding it difficult to acquire land. As the journalist put it: “… of course what has really happened is that the political elite to a large extent got hold of farms” (Journalist). She adds: “most of those political elite could be going to commercial banks and get a loan to buy a farm. But they are not doing that, they taking it through affirmative action…” (Journalist).

From the newspapers we can see some examples of such issues. Haikera (2012) wrote an article about four high ranking government officials accused for land grabbing in the northern part of Namibia. They allegedly were given 2500 hectares each and two of them have confessed. When it comes to land grabbing the people involved usually start fencing of land. In this case land was fences of on school property and closing in government boreholes where the locals
fetch their water (Haikera, 2012). In another article reports that the deputy minister of Lands and Resettlement is threatening those who illegally grab land (Shivute, 2012). As in many other situations this is about people fencing of big part of communal land instead of the land meant to be distributed.

The opposition party leader also spoke of the issue of the taking of land from white settlers and refers to it as being “… the same system, it’s just the individual who changes” (Opposition party leader). This can also relate to what the leading NYC member refers to as “… a new class of elites and very wealthy blacks” (leading NYC-member). The principal also spoke on this matter saying that “nobody is spreading the wealth of the country, it’s colonized by a small group” (Principal). This also refers to the redistribution of resources and land as just being a matter of changing the owners on top but not the equality structure itself.

The discussion in this part has been on a meso-level of society concerning relations between groups. If the conditions were such as the people of Namibia saw themselves as one people this would have been a macro-level discussion. But from the empiric presented in this thesis the conclusion is that some people rather use tribal identities before a national one. In the next section it is time to lift the discussion to a macro-level analyzing the bigger society and its relations to other societies in a globalized world. As we now previously have discussed the creation of a nation and nationality, we now turn to the matter of maintaining it.

5.3 - Establishing a post-colonial nation in a globalized world

With independence Namibia was established as a democratic nation. Although from the interviews there seems to be some questioning on this matter. First of all we need to define democracy in order to discuss it. The people of Namibia have what Marshall (2009) call a political citizenship in the sense that they have a right to participate and to exercise political power. The people of Namibia have the opportunity to vote and they can vote on whoever they prefer. From the elections that has been held in Namibia SWAPO has claimed the majority of the votes. So in that simplicity there seems to be no reason to question the democracy of Namibia.

But this study is not about finding the simplified versions; it’s about finding what is behind what may seem obvious within the discourses. Since there are different views among the respondents on the subject, this shall be further discussed.

The principal claimed that there is a lack of critical thinking amongst the people when it comes to politics. When it comes to peoples voting patterns and drives to use their democratic rights she stated:

... 22 years after that you are still sitting in a shanty town in a shack. Or you're sleeping under the bridge. After 22 years of independence, but when election comes what do you do? You vote for the same party. (Principal)
So why are people not acting on these issues when election days come? There may be several reasons for this. The principal talks about the lack of critical thinking and how that leads to people not realizing that they can change things. This is according to her partially due to a colonial mentality that “… took away peoples initiatives and you would do something only if you are told to do so” (Principal). She continued with the statement that “colonialism completely dehumanized people” (Principal).

The interview with the woman in exile, serves as a good example of what the principal is talking about, Namibians who lack a critical view and just votes SWAPO without question as shown earlier in the analysis. The reason for not being critical can be several. Firstly, one can do so on account of solidarity. SWAPO, as a former socialist movement, had the unity and solidarity among Namibians as their main drive. They were considered as the forefront of the struggle and one should stick to them to make sure that all the pre-independence promises can be fulfilled in times course. Secondly, and related to the first, there might be a factor of betrayal. Thirdly, there might just be a lack of critical thinking, either from lack of knowledge or lack of interest. One might not want to know. As the woman in exile talked about, they won their independence and got their constitution.

During the time pre-independence when the principal was working on nation-building projects they focused these on the southern parts of the country. This was because other projects tended to be directed to the north, Ovamboland. When it comes to critical thinking she compares the south to other parts of the country by saying that “… democracy in the south is much more pronounced…” (Principal). The core of this difference lies, according to her, in the relationship between leaders and the people.

… in the north people have more respect for people in leadership positions. In the sense that even if you know the man is talking nonsense you will say ‘yes’. But in the south they’ll say to you ‘with all respect you’re talking nonsense’. (Principal)

She also relates this sort of leadership dominance with SWAPO as one of the reasons for her parting ways with them. According to her you could not get along with the SWAPO leadership if you were to question the leaders. There was a saying that “… when I’ve said I’ve said” (Principal). It was due to questioning the leadership that she was suspended from the party, and she still is today.

The opposition party leader also speaks of strong hierarchies within SWAPO saying that the seniors are not to be questioned:

It is very difficult to stand up against this hierarchy in parliament if you are a member of the ruling party. Because it is already written within the hierarchy that the senior cannot be countered. So if the prime minister tables anything in the house, not any other members of the ruling party can have any other idea that may not go along with that one. (Opposition party leader)
From the interviews there are some stories of how SWAPO treated their opposition. The opposition party leader gives an example of how he as a member of an opposition party was treated after elected into parliament:

The police didn't salute us, even though they were guarding the parliament. And the normal situation is that they stand on attention when members of parliament pass... there is still about some remnants of that. So the reality is quite far from what the constitution is calling for. (Opposition party leader)

According to the journalist there are some problems concerning how opposition parties are treated by SWAPO. She mentioned campaigns to discredit the opposition and also that there is a “…huge fear factor among the population, even if people would like to support the Congress of Democrats or the Rally for Democracy and Progress, they feel it is unpatriotic or you are flirting with the enemy if you support the opposition” (Journalist). This is something that would go against the constitution since it promotes pluralism. If we again look at Marshalls (2009) view on the political citizenship there seems to be some questioning amongst the respondents on whether SWAPO are enabling the citizens’ right to participate and influence the political power. If we look merely at the constitution we can draw the quick conclusion that: yes, they have that right. But through different means of social interventions like strong hierarchies not to be questioned or career opportunities based on your political loyalties rather than your qualifications, this could be questioned on a more philosophical level.

An article in New Era shows an example of the difficulties of leaving SWAPO and joining the opposition. In this case it’s a man who claims that his businesses’ has been affected by him leaving SWAPO (Ndjebela, 2012). The politician said “we had an electrical company, which employed quite a number of people but it collapsed. Councilors at local authorities said they are under instructions not to give tenders to RDP people” (Ndjebela, 2012). RDP is the opposition party of which he is a member.

Yet another article shows an example of life for the opposition. It portrays an opposition party leader who left his party to join SWAPO (Sasman, 2012). It seems as if he has given up and claims that he joins SWAPO in order to influence and that “small parties are wasting their time” (The opposition party leader quoted in: Sasman, 2012).

Another possible reason as to why people don’t use their votes to change the government can be discussed with the question of whether there is any real alternative. The opposition party leader says that there is no real strong force against SWAPO at the moment. The journalist goes further and claims that these parties hardly differ from SWAPO anyway. She further claims that there are some problems with not voting SWAPO:
... the stay-away vote was immense which shows that, and that was particularly geographical in certain areas where the north voted as one for SWAPO but other areas of the country like the south was a very disappointing turnout so what does that tell us? It tells us that people don’t want to vote for SWAPO but they don’t want to vote for the opposition either. For fear of being labeled, so they stay away, they don’t vote… and feeling they are not part of the situation. (Journalist)

This again shows a potential difference between north and south. At the same time there seems to be some alienating tendencies.

Maybe the most important question in this discussion about critical thinking is why people should vote differently? If people from Ovamboland see that they get more from voting SWAPO, why shouldn’t they? In this case with Ovambo being the majority of the population it could just be about protecting your own interests in a capitalist liberal fashion. It may or may not be on the expense of others but that is not the main concern of capitalism anyway. The main thing here is rather the people who are not Ovambo. But then again it’s not that simple. Being Ovambo does not mean that you are rich and not being Ovambo does not necessarily mean that you are poor. There is of course a mixture. The main thing might just be a class struggle and the tribal discourse, which is getting much attention at the moment of this study, is just influencing the class discourse.

Earlier in the analysis the conditions for journalists prior to independence was mentioned. Even if these conditions have changed after independence the journalist claims that there were measures taken against her newspaper for being critical towards SWAPO. The former president and founding father Sam Nujoma ordered that no government departments were to advertise or purchase the newspaper. “… that ban was in place for over ten years and finally president Pohamba lifted it…” (Journalist).

The opposition party leader claims that when it comes to government institutions or facilities, it’s controlled by the state, “… like radio and TV, all the info facilities, they are bias towards the ruling party” (Opposition party leader). He further said that “you can’t work for the NBC unless you are singing the songs of the ruling party” (Opposition party leader).

When it comes to Namibia and its international relations there is a strong economic dependency on others. The domestic market is not sufficient enough thus making export the main part of the GDP (Jauch, 2001). There are some issues to be discussed on this economic level and it also relates to ideology. SWAPO considered themselves as a socialist movement during the liberation struggle but at independence a mixed economy was put in place. As the opposition party leader puts it the modern economy was forced upon the people of Namibia. To what extent could this be a fact? On a political level, was the mixed economy forced upon socialist SWAPO? Berg (2004) discusses the decolonization of Africa and mentioned an indirect demand on the liberated

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5 Namibian Broadcasting Corporation
countries to form nation states. In this way the European dominance could continue.

The opposition party leader raises the question “well what can Namibia do economically” (Opposition party leader)? He refers to the Namibian economy’s strong connections to South Africa and other world economies. When it comes to Namibian natural resources the mining is the major contributor to the GDP. Prior to independence this sector was controlled by foreign companies and South Africa. Even today this sector is dominated by foreign companies. According to the opposition party leader these companies “… do more or less what they want in Namibia” (Opposition party leader). A relationship he doesn’t consider equal:

It is characterized by exploitation. More or less it can be called a neo-colonialist relationship because it deals with Namibia as a supplier of cheap raw materials. Namibia to be some resource place and its economy and politics are geared in that direction. Even if it’s decided by the locals we cannot endanger the relationships with certain capitalist countries. (Opposition party leader)

This leads to the question: to what extent is Namibian economy dependent on others? Has the capitalist economy been forces upon Namibia and controls them through economic dependency?

Off course it’s said that it’s bought but it’s more or less taken for free. Because it is not developed here, the Namibians do not benefit anything from that mining apart from a few cents in the pockets of the workers who are directly involved. (Opposition party leader)

So doesn’t the government change these conditions? According to the opposition party leader this is due to individual desires. It gives people of high rank the possibilities to get tenders for selling for example fishing or mining rights. The journalist also spoke about tenders and how they can be attained through a sort of bribing or commissions. It seems as if Namibia is a “stereotype of the economy which produced what it does not use and uses what it does not produce” (Jauch, 2001, p.24).

In 1989 SWAPO started advocating for a mixed economy. The former SPYL activist remembers that this was a change that the youth did not accept easily. He says that there was an impression that this was only “… a strategic tactical retreat only for the time of the transition” (Former SPYL activist). But this led to the agenda being entrenched and in doing so making the possibility of radical transformation out of the question. According to him “the mixed economy was justified on the basis of the global economic changes that were taking place internationally” (Former SPYL activist). This is a time of the late 1980’s when SWAPO had good relations with other socialist and communist countries like the Soviet Union. By the late 1980’s communism was falling apart in Europe making SWAPO’s allies weaker. The opposition party leader did also speak about the transition:
Throughout the years of struggle it became more clear through the utterances of SWAPO leaders that the way the constitutions was written was simply to impress, or to keep certain people under certain impressions, for example taking into account the cold war at that time, the ideological differences and the political economic differences in outlook of the various powers of the world at that time. (Opposition party leader)

The founder of nation-building projects also spoke of how this change was influenced by the cold war. According to him the armed struggle had to start negotiating after losing their biggest support from abroad:

In 1989 the Soviet Union ceased to support SWAPO in a military sense. I think that factor in itself more than any other single factor brought about an election for an independence Namibia. So the Namibia liberation came about due to some extent the activity of the Namibian people themselves. But to a greater extent as a bi-product of changes in the international relationship of forces. (Founder of nation-building projects)

The journalist also spoke about SWAPO and the level of socialism. Her view is that SWAPO was always capitalist orientated and that it has been proven since there is hardly any component of socialism in the constitution. “Survival for the fittest really and that is the capitalist system in its purity” (Journalist).

6 - Conclusions and further thoughts on the nation-building process

In order to discuss the Namibian nation we must also reflect on the question: why a nation? Namibia wasn’t a nation prior to colonization; it was instead an area of southern Africa where a variety of tribes had their own regions. Namibia is in the same situation as many other African states, as Praah (2006) points out, in the sense that the people have been forced into, what might be irrational loyalties based on the geographical borders drawn by colonial imperialists. This would question whether the Namibia people have a reason to be united at all. But there is no reason to go that far. Even if we can look back 120 years in time, just prior to German colonization, and say that the people in this region had their own boarders, it doesn’t rule at the possibility of them developing a sense of unity. The notion of belonging to a nation or tribe is a social construction, just as the definition and racial separation of black and white. Through social interventions we give those terms and definition meaning and we can change the meaning any time we wish. The social world is a dynamic force, not static.

According to Anderson (2006) the concept of nationality are imagined since most people in nations never actually meet or get to know each other. So in that sense the social construction of a Namibian identity, or any other national identity for that matter, gets a quite loose foundation
to build from. As one of the possible reasons behind tribalism the opposition party leader mentioned a lack of understanding for each other. This in turn derives from the fact that Namibia is a large country with long distances between towns. Many people don’t visit other regions and therefore they are not exposed to each other, so “they didn’t have the opportunities of knowing each other and living without fear of each other” (Opposition party leader). This serves as a good example of what possibly could be a, what Anderson (2006) call, imagined community.

From the interviews presented in this study we can see how the people in this region have united against a common enemy. And in that rebellion they have called for a new and united, socially constructed entity by calling themselves Namibians. So to question Praah (2006), why should this be irrational? And to push the question forward to Anderson (2006): couldn’t this be sufficient ground for a national identity?

But this doesn’t answer the question of why a nation. To answer this we must also look at the concept of nationalism. Pillay (1991) describes nationalism as a modern European idea from the 19th century. So not even the concept of a nation is static, it is socially constructed as well. This means that the liberation movement chose to strive for this European social construction. Or was it really a choice? A look at the globalization-aspect might bring us closer to the core.

Berg (2004) was discussed earlier in the analysis when talking about an indirect demand on formation nation states from the former colonizers. In this sense the creation of a Namibia nation is an effect of a global interdependency between economic forces. Scholte (2005) talked about the capitalist system and its expansive characteristics creating an economic bound between countries. According to Jauch (2001) Namibia imported 90% of what it consumed around the time of independence. The colonial and capitalist system had created a dependency on other states around the globe. Not just for the Namibian consumption, but also for the exports that constitute the main part of the GDP (Jauch, 2001). So maybe the question should rather be if there really was any alternative to a nation? From the interviews there was no discussion on this matter. The concept of having a Namibian nation was never questioned. Even if a nation is a social construction, does the globalized capitalist system allow any alternatives at this point in history?

As discussed earlier in the analysis there was a system during colonial times that ethnically and racially defined and divided people in order to control them. The colonists put racial and ethnical strains on the people. So how far from this system of racial and ethnical strains have Namibia come? By looking at the Black Economic Empowerment that is mainly visible through the land redistribution we can still see factors of racial strains. In its simplicity land owned by white people are taken away from them and given to black people. This is of course not to say that the system of today is no better than the apartheid system. The point is that one controlling system is replaced by another one. The change has really been made on the top of the hierarchy. Where there were white people in control there are now Namibian, or Ovambo more specifically if we consider the empirical material.
The legacy of apartheid and the power that came with it is difficult, if not impossible, to grasp for a young white male from Sweden who grew up under far different circumstances. The South African colonial administration left social structures of both ethnical and social inequalities behind. It developed a capitalist system in its purest form with *survival for the fittest*. It’s an immense task to change that and it could not be expected to be done swiftly. SWAPO gave up their socialist ideology just prior to independence and instead chose to fight one capitalist administration with another. It’s still survival for the fittest in the capitalist sense. However the definition of who’s *fittest* has changed from *white people to economically advantaged people*. The class differences are still there but they are just no longer based on *black* and *white*.

From the interviews there seems as though people of Ovamboland has taken the place of controlling the center, keeping others in the periphery. All top political positions are given to people of Ovambo heritage. Both the principal and the journalist spoke of people in the south and how they felt as if they were not able to influence the political structures. So whether it was intentional or not, the Ovambo domination has been successful in staying in the center of power.

It was also concluded earlier that the capitalist system of oppression gave the people of Namibia a common enemy to unite against. So now Namibia is trying to come away from that oppressing system using another capitalist model. SWAPO went from fighting capitalism with socialism but in the end retreating to capitalism themselves.

In the second part of the analysis the focus was on creating a national identity. Now that we have gone through the other parts of the analysis it is time to go back to that subject and try to further contextualize the establishing of a Namibian identity.

Castells (1997) proposed three types of identity building. All three of them could relate to what today is referred to, or idealizes as, a Namibian identity. Dominating social institutions try to *legitimate identity* in order to rationalize their politics (Castells, 1997). This relates to the South African apartheid administration prior to independence. It was a system of divide and rule with the aims to benefit the Afrikaners and the white population according to the founder of project for democracy. In order to rationalize their politics and secure the domination over the black community they put emphasis on racial differences and relating those to social status.

As a reaction to the apartheid system the liberation movement advocated for an alternative and united identity. Castells (1997) talks about a *resistance identity* that is created as an opposing answer to a dominating and stigmatizing identification. It was here, as a social reaction to apartheid that the liberation movement pushed for a united Namibian identity.

The third type of identity came after independence. A *project identity* comes after the resistance as the social actors try to create a new identity with whatever cultural materials available (Castells, 1997). After independence the people of Namibia tried to change the social structures and thereby establish the Namibian identity. And this is where the process is at today as it seems from the interviews. The social structures were changed with a democratic election and the implementation of a Namibian constitution. However the project identity is still forming itself. As we discussed in previous parts of the analysis, especially in 5.2, there are still tribalistic
tendencies in the Namibian society. So the Namibian identity is either still in the process of being a *project identity*. Or the tribalistic tendencies stipulate yet another *resistance identity*, this time against being Namibian. However in this study there is nothing speaking for the second alternative. It doesn’t seem to be a question of whether people want to see themselves as Namibians. It’s a question of what comes first, the tribal or the Namibian identity.

Castells (1997) is talking about nation states that through a process of globalization lose their power, but not their influence, over the national territory. But how can Namibia fit in this model? In a way it doesn’t since Namibia was born under the influence of globalization. The ideological direction of SWAPO changed alongside with the demise of communism and socialism in Eastern Europe and finally with the fall of the Soviet Union. Prior to independence SWAPO was said to be a socialist movement and they also had connections with socialist states. Then when times got closer to the actual liberation and the first Namibian elections in late 1989 SWAPO advocated for a mixed economy.

Castells (1997) also discussed the nation-states loss of control over economic policies due to global interdependency on the world market. When it comes to Namibian policies concerning their natural resources this was a control they never had from the beginning. It was lost during colonial times and the influence of foreign investors still remains.

According to the former SPYL activist there is a debate in Namibia about the differences between SWAPO and its youth league. In addition to this there is debate around how SPYL has changed since independence. On the differences between SWAPO and SPYL prior to independence the respondent said that there, among other things, it could concern the level of militancy and ideology. He mentioned that the internal leadership would advocate for a non-violent resistance. When it came to ideology he mentioned SWAPOs change to advocating for a mixed economy when it came to the elections, thus taking a step away from the socialist foundation. As the respondent said: “It took a lot of work to convince the youth who believed in communism…” (Former SPYL activist). Even if they could not stop that change he feels that SPYL could influence the political debate in Namibia when it came to the nations policies.

The circumstances for militancy and political activism certainly changed after independence:

…before independence the enemy was clear, it was colonialism. After independence there was a new Namibian government, it was partner in development. So sometimes even when the government policies were not up to scratch on delivering these things, the level of militancy or activism in order to address those problems became subdued. So I think the very transition had quite a lot of impact on the militancy, the activism and the organizational efficiency of the student movement. There were quite a lot of contradictions, new contradictions that unite, which the youth league and the student movement could not effectively manage. (Former SPYL activist)
The former SPYL activist mentions that there would also be problems when it came to being critical towards the politics after independence:

…because we were part of, advocating for that particular policy then it becomes very difficult for you to agitate for its rejection… You cannot apply the same militant strategy that you were using against the South African government because this is your party and you helped to bring it in to power. (Former SPYL activist)

So where do the youth stand today in a time when the country is already liberated and the objectives are no longer as clear? According to some of the respondents there seems to be a less political focus today. The leading NYC member is concerned about the younger generations not discussing important issues that create frictions in society.

…the youth themselves needs to really become more serious… the parents have taught them, i.e. “how do we make money?” you know, this is not “how do we make a contribution? How do we get the skill? How do we develop? How do we love what we do?”, and contribute to our nation, it’s just “how do we make as much money as possible?. (Journalist)

The opposition party leader also talked about a “...lack of attention and focus from the young generation” (Opposition party leader). And he adds, like the journalist, that there is more focus on getting money and material things than anything else.

A part of this problem, if it should be called one, could be the lack of a common enemy to fight against like the respondents mentioned. It could be a matter of taking society for granted. It could also be an indication on Namibian youth becoming more Westernizes:

Popular cultures tend to appeal to us much more. In Namibia this is becoming a worry because the things that young people value, you'll find for example young people can recite hip hop lyrics from end to end but unable to do that with their school work. And I think as Africans as well there are some cultures that are coming in that actually denigrate what our entire anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggle is about. For example if you have young people calling each other niggers and so forth. I think these are things that worry our elder generations. (Leading NYC member)

Are the Namibian youth just like youth in many other countries, mainly those in the West? Is it just the capitalist way of life of constantly wanting more and caring less about the social consequences? The entrepreneur discussed the racial segregation in Windhoek into black and white communities stating that the white population during apartheid times wanted to keep a distance the poverty in the black townships. Leaving it “… out of sight, out of mind” (Entrepreneur). Isn’t this the way dominating groups in a capitalist society works? It’s about maximizing profit and personal gain and the easiest way to handle it is to not look to the other side. Scholte (2005) talked about the development of capitalism leading to a society based around consumption. In that sense we should not say Namibian youth, but rather capitalist youth.
6.1 – Reflections on the researchers role and further studies

Now that we have gone through most of the analysis it is time to raise some questions to what we’ve learned so far. We’ve discussed Namibia and its nation-building process as well as the creation of a Namibian identity. So how should we reflect on Namibia? It would be a mistake, a quite colonial as well, to on beforehand assume that Namibia fundamentally differs from Sweden. This is not a question of the white imperialist studying the exotic Africa. If we enter the field with the assumption that Namibia is different and exotic we will tend to focus on what makes it different. As mentioned the researcher should not create the discourses, they are instead to be revealed from what is already there.

Let us once again break it down to the meso level discussed earlier, where we have a variety of ethnic groups trying to work together in the Namibian society. Could this not happen in Sweden? Isn’t it happening in Sweden to some extent? It is a big question that could make the subject for a thesis of its own so it will not take up too much space here. It’s easy to think of Africa as exotic and far different from our Swedish society. It would be interesting to look at ourselves and our own society when trying to understand another nation. In Sweden we have a wide variety of ethinc groups living together and our social institutions do their best in order to integrate people into the Swedish society. We already have a base population for the Swedish identity. To some extent the Swedish society tries to make immigrant Swedish, where Namibia instead tries to make everyone, in their case not immigrant but people born there, Namibian. In Sweden there is to some extent a conception of us and them. They should become like us. In Namibia it is rather we should become Namibians. Sweden has got its own problems when it comes to national unity. So there is no reason to be colonial in thinking that the European way is better than the African. The main point of this discussion is that this thesis is not based, to whatever reasonable extent, on a colonial mind set. The aim is to study a society and its unique circumstances.

In another way it is impossible to not view this from my Swedish background. Whenever you study something, however trivial, you always compare it with your own experiences. So yet another question could be raised from this: what am I looking at exactly? Am I looking at Namibia or am I looking at Sweden and use Namibia to put it in perspective? A highly philosophical question that we will be followed by a quite dull answer: at least the ambition was to study Namibia.

So has this thesis been optimal for studying the Namibian society? As the work has progressed there have been some realizations of things that could have been done differently. Or rather that emphasis could have been put elsewhere. The question of class has been given some space in the analysis. There has also been some discussion on whether that should be the main focus instead of tribalism when it comes to social inequalities. The most apparent discourses from the
interviews indicate that tribalism is the main problem. But the analysis of this material show that tribalism might just be a part of a bigger problem in the social structures. It could be seen as a symptom of a capitalist system in relation to apartheid. The capitalist ideology of dividing people was channelled through ethnical and racial segregation putting emphasis on tribal heritage and ascribes human value thereafter. Tribalism seems to be easier to point out given this recent history of tribal segregation. The liberation struggle did not mainly concern class, even if it was said to be a socialist movement at the moment. The emphasis was rather independence for one united Namibian people as opposed to the racially dividing apartheid system. If this study was to be followed up a study of social and economic class would be of great relevance. This would also be a matter of taking away the ‘exotic’ discussed previously. Let’s not look at the exotic tribal life of an African country but instead focus on the social structures that we could see in any capitalist society.

Another interesting study could be the conditions that the entrepreneur talked about. Unfortunately it has not been given substantial space in this thesis due to the discursive focus from the rest of the material. This is also due to the focus of this thesis trying to stay on a meso/macro level, whereas the entrepreneur could give a better insight into the micro/meso level. His businesses are based in a Windhoek township called Katutura that is considered as one of the more disadvantaged areas.

Katutura was created in 1968 after the Old Location expanded to close to the white areas. As a consequence the people there, only black and colored, were moved to Katutura by the apartheid administration. (Berg, 2004)

Today Katutura is not as ethnically segregated like during the apartheid years, but still only consists of black or coloured. According to the entrepreneur, the only time some people in Katutura see a white man is when they go to the city. He further claims that this enhances the sense of inequality. With his businesses he hopes to have more white people, the tourists, visit Katutura and thus make the presence of white people more common. With more tourists in Katutura there could also be increased business opportunities for the local markets and also through direct subcontracting from his business. In all he hopes that this could help the integration process and enhance a feeling of equality.

It would be interesting to look into a certain township in Windhoek, the Namibian capital. And also to see what can be done on a local business level to increase the integration and create a sense of unity. This could make the subject for a study by its own.

Another interesting discourse that could be investigated further is the media discourse. The opposition party leader claimed that some of the local and national media, such as radio and TV, are bias towards certain ethnical groups. In addition not all radio and TV-channels are in the official language English. So many people listen to radio stations in their own tribal languages. To what extent can this contribute to the sense of nationhood? From my own reading of local newspapers there sometimes seems to be and racial undertone. Maybe the media is fuelling the tribalistic tendencies in Namibia? Newspapers have been used as a source of information in this
study. However the difference is that here it plays a minor role helping with the contextualization of nation-building. What is suggested here for an alternative study is that the media itself could be in focus.

This experience started with an exchange program. After three months in Namibia and many impressions later this is the result. It has been much to grasp and a difficult task to put all thoughts into words. Much more could have been said but maybe it’s best to leave it to future exchange students and their studies.

Maybe it’s time to explain the quote that is the headline for this thesis: “Whose nation?”. When discussion the initial thought for my thesis with some Namibian tutors this question came up. It was a good question that has followed throughout the process. We should never assume that what is on the surface reflects what is underneath.
7 - Bibliography

7.1 – Literature


7.2 - Reports

7.3 - Newspaper articles

7.4 – Internet publikations
Appendix – interview guides

01 – Entrepreneur
- Background. Work, career development.
- Past projects – future visions
- Development of Katutura? Of Namibia?
- Being an entrepreneur in Namibia; possibilities, necessities, problems, bureaucracy?
- About current projects and businesses
- Inspiration?
- Importance of entrepreneurship for development of Namibia.

02 – Former SPYL activist
- Your background and political activity within SWAPO
- SWAPO development during that time
- Your work today
- The SWAPO-view of the Namibian nation-state as of what it should be, the foundations for success.
- Has this view changed up to independence, after independence?
- Consensus within SWAPO concerning the political direction?
- Opposition?
- Future of SWAPO?

03 – Journalist
- Background – career
- Your take on the development of the Namibian Nation? Diversities? Before and after independence.
- How has the government handled the transition to independence? (Question based on articles about corruption)
- How has the political scene changed during your time as a journalist?
- How is it like working as a journalist in Namibia? Has it changed since prior to independence? How enabling is the environment for writing social critique?
• (Question refers to an article she wrote about tribalism and other inequalities) Elaborate the claim from the article that not much has been done to stop inequalities.

• What role does tribalism and ethnicity play in Namibia today? (Also in reference to article). In what ways has that view changed over the years?

• In what ways, or to which extent, has the expectations of liberation been fulfilled? In reference to public opinion.

• Young vs. old in politics (refers to another article on the subject).

• Any major opposition to SWAPO?

• Namibia’s future?

04 – Woman in exile

• Background

• Connection to SWAPO

• Life in exile – where, when, how, founded by whom?

• Education in exile, social life. Only SWAPO members?

• Education organized by SWAPO?

• How did those in exile look at the liberation struggle? How could they contribute?

• Life after independence? How was it to come home? In what ways has the liberation lived up to the (your) expectation?

• How has SWAPO changed over the years? Opposition?

• Work in Namibia? Political activity?

• View on Namibia as a nation?

05 – Principal

• Background – growing up in Namibia, political activity, independence, post-independence.

• Life in exile?

• Liberation movement?

• Time in SWAPO. Why joined, why left? Your relation to SWAPO

• Other forces than SWAPO in the liberation movement?

• Opposition to SWAPO, what possibilities to influence political direction?

• Aims for the liberation movement, how did your path clash with SWAPO:s?

• Nation-building process – what were the overall goals? Have they been achieved?

• In what ways did the liberation, and the years after, live up to the expectations?

• On what foundation is the nation being built? Solely SWAPO?

• Your nation-building project – origin, aims, political reasons?

• The projects aim compared to the politics of the government?
• Life in Namibia today – inequalities, education, gender, tribalism etc.
• Work at the school

06 – Leading NYC member
• Your political background? Work today?
• The work of the national youth council? Connections to political parties?
• From the NYC-aims: “... to address the challenges, opportunities and obstacles facing young people...”. What are the main challenges? Opportunities? How handle that? Progress?
• From the NYC-aims: “... foster spirit of national identity...”. In what ways has that been a problem? How to go about that aim?
• In what ways, or to what extent, does Namibia have a politically active youth?
• To what extent can the youth influence the national politics?
• From a newspaper interview you mentioned negative influence from popular culture, could you elaborate that? What effects have you seen? How is that being handled on a political level?
• Also from newspaper interview, mention difficulties with bureaucracy, in what ways?
• Also from newspaper interview, mention class differences, in what ways is that showing among the youth?
• Youth unemployment is at high levels, what is being done? What could be the reasons behind the youth being over represented in the statistics?
• In the newspapers issues such as tribalism are often mentioned, is that a factor among the youth in Namibia and if so, in what ways? How to address that?
• Economic founding of NYC?
• NYC view on the Namibian nation and nationality? Goals? Are people striving in the same direction?
• Youth economic empowerment – methods?

07 – Opposition party leader
• Your political background? Work today?
• (PLAN – Robben Island – SWAPO – Opposition party)
• Possibilities for an opposition party to influence the political directions?
• The main goals of your party?
• How can an opposition party stand out and collect votes in the competition?
• Main challenges in Namibian society? What is being done? What should be done?
Based on an article with you in the Namibian from 23/3 2012: you claim that there is a “… lack of practical dimension of democracy within the ruling circle”. In what ways? Also mention in the article that there is more corruption today, in what ways? How to handle that?

The party’s view on the nation building process? Central objectives? Challenges?

From the newspapers there seems to be some diversity between younger and older generations, what is you take on that?

What makes Namibia unique compared to other African countries? Possibilities?

About the liberation struggle, to what extent has the goals been fulfilled?

Namibian possibilities on a global market?

To what extent are Namibians generally active when it comes to politics?

08 – Founder of project for democracy

Your political background? Work today?

About the project? Main focus? Opportunities? Obstacles?

Why is there a need for this type of project in Namibia?

From presentation on homepage: say’s that the majority of the people, the rural people and the urban poor, are excluded from influencing politics. In what ways? Effects on society? How can that change? Also mentions nation-building and Namibian identity. In what ways can the project promote that? To what extent? The homepage also talks about economic justice, could you elaborate?

How has Namibia changed since independence?

09 – Founder of nation-building projects

Your political background? Work today?

About the nation-building projects. Results? Opportunities in Namibia? Obstacles?

About life in exile, how to contribute the liberation struggle from abroad?

To what extent has the goals of the struggle been reached?

How has Namibian politics developed since independence?

What are the main challenges in Namibia today?