

Brewing Identity

Beer and the establishment of the Namibian nation



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“You can’t be a real country unless you have a beer and an airline. It helps if you have some kind of a football team, or some nuclear weapons, but at the very least you need a beer.”

- Frank Zappa¹

¹ F. Zappa with P. Occhiogrosso, ‘America Drinks & Goes Marching’, in: F. Zappa with P. Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book* (New York 1999) 231.

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Abbreviations

A.G.	Aktiengesellschaft
G.m.b.H.	Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung
GSWA	German South West Africa
Nafau	Namibia Food and Allied Workers Union
NAN	National Archives of Namibia
NBL	Namibia Breweries Limited
NLN	National Library of Namibia
NSE	Namibia Economic Society
NSS	Namibia Scientific Society
O&L	Ohlthaver & List
SAB	South African Breweries
SSS	Scientific Society Swakopmund
SWA	South West Africa
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
SWB	South West Breweries
UN	United Nations
UNTAG	United Nations Transition Assistance Group
WCARS	Western Cape Archives and Records Service

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Map of Namibia, 1990



Introduction

If Frank Zappa is right with his comment that a national beer is necessary for every “real” country, then Namibia is on right the right track. Namibian beer is available in eighteen countries all over the world, continuously wins international awards and makes Namibians proud. Since the independence of 1990 this alcoholic beverage has become one of the key characteristics of the newly constructed nation. But for decades the same brew was not available to the black population as a consequence of Apartheid politics and emerged as a national icon for white settlers. This shows that the history of brewing in Namibia is far more than a simple story of beer: the beer market is an important political, economic and cultural factor that is intertwined with the general history of the country.

The research question of this thesis is how European style beer was transformed from a settler’s drink under Apartheid politics into a symbol of the independent Namibian nation. The beer market is a broad term for a variety of interacting factors: breweries, bottle stores, shebeens, consumers, the government, and liquor laws are examples. Hence, different angles are possible for analysing such a market. In this thesis, a historical perspective on the breweries is central. Breweries are conceptualized here as economic actors that have had to survive within a continuously changing socio-political context. Namibia’s history is characterized by a succession of administrations and beer became an increasingly politically loaded product. Today however, the local brew is world renowned as Namibian beer.

The reasons for studying the beer market in Namibia are threefold. Economically, beer constitutes a large economic market with a tremendous growth. Beer is a widely available and inexpensive commodity that reaches all layers of society. The Namibian brewery is the largest private job provider and taxpayer and acts in one of the largest national industries. Culturally, beer is an economic product with great cultural significance. Beer and identity are closely related, hence the many different brands aimed to target different groups of people. Politically, beer also has implications. Historically liquor has been a way for governments to control the Namibian population and administrations are dependent on tax revenues. Furthermore, Namibian beer makes Namibia world renowned by exporting it to almost twenty countries and getting worldwide recognition in the form of awards.

This thesis has a societal relevance in the sense that it provides the first broad historic overview of the Namibian beer market, wherein the role of the breweries is highlighted. Over the past centuries, beer has played a central role in everyday life of Namibians: it is a product with a long history and many people have a personal connection to this industry. This thesis is

academically relevant in the sense that it builds upon ideas on the connection between markets and nationalism. In the development of nation states in Africa the convergence of consumption on a national level provides a promising field of research and this thesis aims to place itself in this research area.

The structure of the thesis is straightforward. The historiography shows that in the field of beer studies more attention is given to South Africa than to Namibia, although both countries share an intertwined liquor history. A small body of publications deals with beer in Namibia, but the story on the development of the breweries and its interplay with the government is largely understudied. The theoretical framework of this thesis is based on the idea that consumption can influence national identity. Concepts as the imagined community, invention of tradition and the commoditisation of identity are discussed. Subsequently, the methodological choices for a qualitative research using mixed methods are explained.

The prelude highlights the centuries long tradition of home brewing that exists in Namibia and continues up to today. It is important to note that beer is not a European invention, but existed hundreds of years before the first explorers set foot on Namibian soil. What follows is a broad historic narrative, divided in three chapters. The chronological division is not the traditional three-legged approach of many history books (pre-colonial – colonial – post-independence), inspired by the changes in administration. Instead, the chronology of the beer market is followed. The establishment of the first formal breweries in German South West Africa is discussed in chapter one (1900-1920).

Chapter two (1920-1970) describes how the beer market radically changes within in fifty years, starting out with three breweries and two racially separated markets and concluding with one brewery catering to one market. The remarkable transformation of Namibia Breweries is the focus of chapter three (1970-2015). The company had difficulties surviving as a small brewery for “South Westers”, but successfully transformed itself due to the threat of South African Breweries and the opportunity that the Namibian independence created. The conclusion describes how commercial beer has shifted from a settler drink to a national symbol because of the close relations between the independent government and brewery and the threat of South African Breweries, a foreign competitor from the country that once occupied Namibia.

Historiography

Alcohol studies is a broad research field and has in the words of Deborah Bryceson a “chameleon character.” The rich field offers a wide range of topics and therefore the character of the studied subject “depends on the light in which its intrinsic nature is viewed.”² For this reason, the vast literature on this subject is difficult to summarize. Until the beginning of the twenty-first century, the study on alcohol has been primarily restricted to anthropologists.³ Today a wide range of scholars deals with this topic and the aforementioned book of Bryceson gives an overview.⁴ Alcohol consumption has been researched for a long time.⁵ For a good entry point on southern Africa, see Jonathan Crush and Charles Ambler.⁶ The work of Justin Willis is a starting point for east Africa.⁷ For west Africa, Emmanuel Akyeampong wrote a classic book.⁸

Bryceson identified multiple facets of alcohol. According to her, alcohol has a strong religious and symbolic value. Rural ethnic areas often attach symbolic content to the production, distribution and consumption of traditional drinks. Urban-manufactured drinks are linked with ideas of modernity. Alcohol has furthermore a social and psychological value. It is used to celebrate social occasions, drinking is a leisure activity and drinking spots are meeting places for people where they can exchange information. Alcohol also has economic and political value. Traditionally fermented drinks provided basic food and drink, and alcohol is a medium for exchange. Furthermore, the state has a strong interest in alcohol: for example taxation on liquor provides revenues.⁹

A majority of the work in alcohol studies focuses on beer. Steven van Wolputte and Mattia Fumanti give four reasons to focus on beer instead of alcohol in the generic sense.

² D. Bryceson (eds.), *Alcohol in Africa: Mixing Business, Pleasure, and Politics* (Portsmouth 2002) 3.

³ D. Bryceson, (eds.), *Alcohol in Africa* 3-4.

⁴ Also, Curto and Heap provide an extensive lists with literature on studies on alcohol (in general). The last list was published more than twenty years ago but still contains relevant information. J.C. Curto, ‘Alcohol in Africa: a preliminary compilation of the post-1875 literature’, *A Current Bibliography on African Affairs*, Vol. 21 No. 1 (1989) 3-31; S. Heap, ‘Alcohol in Africa: a supplementary list of post-1875 literature’, *A Current Bibliography on African Affairs* Vol. 26 No. 1 (1994) 1-14.

⁵ I. e Garine and V. de Garine (eds.), *Drinking: Anthropological Approaches* (New York 2001); M. Dietler, ‘Alcohol: Anthropological/Archaeological Perspectives’, *Annual Review of Anthropology* Vol. 35 (2006) 229-249; M. Douglas(ed.), *Constructive Drinking: Perspectives on Drink from Anthropology* (Cambridge 1987); H. Hahn, ‘Consumption, Identities and Agency in Africa: Introduction’, in: H. Hahn (ed.), *Consumption in Africa: Anthropological Approaches* (Berlin 2008) 9-42; D.G. Mandelbaum, ‘Alcohol and Culture’, *Current Anthropology* Vol 6. No. 3 (1965) 281-293.

⁶ Crush, J., and C. Ambler (eds.), *Liquor and Labor in Southern Africa* (Athens 1992).

⁷ Willis, J., *Potent Brews: A Social History of Alcohol in East Africa, 1850-1999* (Athens 2002).

⁸ E. Akyeampong, *Drink, Power and Cultural Change: A Social History of Alcohol in Ghana c. 1800 to Recent Times* (Portsmouth 1996).

⁹ D. Bryceson (eds.), *Alcohol in Africa: Mixing Business, Pleasure, and Politics* (Portsmouth 2002) 5-9.

Firstly, alcohol as a term is too general: all sorts of brewing and distilling come with its own history and context. People do furthermore not consume ‘alcohol’ as such; they consume beer or wine, a specific brand, etc. Secondly, in modern discourse alcohol is a moralizing term: the distinction between soft and strong drinks is based on judgmental statements. Thirdly, beer is a product in high demand: cheap and readily available across the continent. Fourthly, beer is low in alcohol and is therefore the most social of drinks.¹⁰

The subfield of beer studies researches the beverage that has history of many centuries.¹¹ Similar to the larger field of alcohol studies, a wide range of topics exists. The main difference is that beer is the central subject, and not any other alcoholic beverage. In terms of geographical distribution, little work is done on North Africa.¹² This is not surprising since major parts of the North African population are Muslim and supposed to be non-drinking. In contrast, West Africa is a popular research area, with a main focus on Nigeria, Cameroon and Burkina Faso.¹³ Concerning East Africa, most of the work is done on

¹⁰ S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking Spaces, States and Selves* (Münster 2010) 4-5.

¹¹ For a popular work partly on beer in the history of the world, see T. Standage, *A History of the World in 6 Glasses* (London 2006).

¹² A. Foda, *Grand Plans in Glass Bottles: The Economic, Social and Technological History of Beer in Egypt 1880-1970* (unpublished thesis, 2015), University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

¹³ S. Heap, ‘Before “Star”’: The Important Substitution of Western-Style Alcohol in Nigeria, 1870-1970’ *Africa Economic History* Vol. 24 (1996) 69-89; S. Heap, ‘Beer in Nigeria: A Social Brew with an Economic Head’, in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking spaces, states and selves* (Münster 2010) 108-130; D. van den Bersselaar, ‘Who belongs to the “Star people”? negotiating beer and gin advertisements in West Africa, 1949-1975’, *The Journal of African History* Vol. 52 No. 3 (2011) 385-408; E.W. Dumbili, ‘The politics of alcohol policy in Nigeria: a critical analysis of how and why brewers use strategic ambiguity to supplant policy initiatives’, *Journal of Asian and African Studies* Vol.49 No.4 (2014) 473-485; S. Diduk, ‘European Alcohol, History, and the State in Cameroon’, *African Studies Reviews* Vol. 36 No. 1 (1993) 1-42; U. Röschenthaler, ‘The Social Life of White Man Mimbo, and Ancestral Consumption of Bottled Beer in South-West Cameroon’ in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking spaces, states and selves* (Münster 2010) 131-166; L. Schler, ‘Looking Through a Glass of Beer: Alcohol in the Cultural Spaces of Colonial Douala, 1910-1945’, *International Journal of African Historical Studies* Vol. 35 No. 203 (2002) 315-334; T. Haller, *Leere Spreicher, erodierte Felder und das Bier der Frauen: Umwelthanpassung und Krise bei den Ouldeme und Platha in den Mandarabergen Nord-Kameruns* (Berlin 2001); R.M.C. Netting, ‘Beer as a Locus of Value among the West African Koyfar’, *American Anthropologist (New Series)* Vol. 66 No. 2 (1964) 375-384; W. van Beek, ‘Kapsiki beer dynamics’, in: C. Raimond, E. Garine and O. Langlois (eds.), *Ressources vivrières et choix alimentaires dans le bassin du Tchad* (Paris 2005) 477-499; E. Jolly, *Boire avec esprit: bière de mil et société dogon* (Nanterre 2004); G. Müller-Kosack, *The way of the beer: ritual re-enactment of history among the Mafa: terrace farmers on the Mandara Mountains (North Cameroon)* (London 2003); J. Roberts, ‘Michael Power and Guinness Masculinity in Africa’, in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking spaces, states and selves* (Münster 2010) 29-52; F. Belliard, ‘Le preparation de bière de sorgho chez les Jóhéhé (Burkina Faso): étude ethnolinguistique d’une technique’, *Journal des africanistes* Vol. 71 No. 2 (2001) 49-76; S. Luning, ‘To drink or not to drink: beer brewing, rituals, and religious conversion in Maane, Burkina Faso’, in: D. Bryceson, *Alcohol in Africa: mixing business, pleasure, and politics* (Portsmouth 2002) 321-248; S. Helmfrid, ‘Thirsty Men and Thrifty Women: Gender, Power, and Agency in the Rural Beer Trade in Burkina Faso’, in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking spaces, states and selves* (Münster 2010) 195-222; B.L. Hagaman, *Beer and Matriliney: the Power of Women in a West African Society* (unpublished PhD), Northeastern University, Boston; M. Voltz, ‘Hirsebier in Westafrika’, in: G. Völger and K. von Welck (eds.), *Rausch und Realität* (Köln 1981) 174-181.

Tanzania.¹⁴ When it comes to Southern Africa, surprisingly little work is done besides South Africa and Namibia, two countries that will be discussed in more detail in the subsequent paragraphs, because their (beer) history is very much intertwined.¹⁵

By far most scholarly work is available on South Africa.¹⁶ The historical circumstances, a combination of colonial interests in alcohol, the mining industry and

¹⁴ J. Abbink, 'Competing Practices of Drinking and Power: Alcoholic "Hegemonism" in Southern Ethiopia', *Northeast African Studies* Vol. 4, No. 3 7-22; T.O. Beidelman, 'Beer Drinking and Cattle Theft in Ugakuru: intertribal Relations in a Tanganyika Chiefdom', *American Anthropologist* Vol. 63 No. 3 (1961) 534-549; O.B. Rekdal, 'Money, Milk, and Sorghum Beer: Change and Continuity among the Iraqw of Tanzania', *Africa* Vol. 66 No. 3 (1996) 367-385; C. Baroin, 'De la bière de banana au soda en bouteille: religion et boisson chez les Rwa du Mont Meru (Tanzanie du Nord)', *Journal des africanistes* (Vol. 71 No. 2 (2001) 77-94; J. Willis, 'For women and children: an economic history of brewing among the Nyakyusa of southwestern Tanzania', in: D. Bryceson, *Alcohol in Africa: mixing business, pleasure, and politics* (Portsmouth 2002) 55-73; J. Willis, "'Beer Used to Belong to Older Men": Drink and Authority among the Nyakyusa of South-western Tanzania', *Africa* Vol. 71 No. 3 (2001) 373-390; D. Pier, 'The branded arena: Ugandan 'traditional' dance in the marketing era', *Africa/International African Institute* Vol. 81 No. 3 (2011) 413-433; K.N. Dancause, H.A. Akol and S.J. Gray, 'Beer is the cattle of women: Sorghum beer commercialization and dietary intake of agropastoral families in Karamoja, Uganda', *Social Science & Medicine* Vol. 70 No. 8 (2010) 1123-1130; J. Holtzman, 'The Food of Elders, the Ration of Women: Brewing, Gender and Domestic Processes among the Samburu of Northern Kenya', *American Anthropologist* Vol. 103 No. 4 (2001) 1041-1058.

¹⁵ Colson, E. and T. Scudder, *For Prayer and Profit: the Ritual, Economic and Social Importance of Beer in Gwembe District, Zambia, 1950-1982* (Stanford 1988); B. Mpofu, 'Articulating regional and ethnic dissent? Bulawayo's politicians and their campaigns to legalize shebeens: 1980-2012', *Journal of Southern African Studies* Vol.40 No.3 (2014) 479-498; R. Pattman, "'The Beer Drinkers Say I Had a Nice Prostitute, but the Churchgoers Talk about Things Spiritual": Learning to be Men at Teacher's College in Zimbabwe', in: R. Morrell (ed.), *Changing Men in Southern Africa* (Scottsville 2001) 225-238; S. Haggblade, 'The Shebeen Queen and the Evolution of Botswana's Sorghum Beer Industry', in: J. Crush and C. Ambler (eds.), *Liquor and Labor in Southern Africa* (Athens 1992) 395-412.

¹⁶ A. Mager, 'One Beer, "One Goal, One Nation, One Soul": South African Breweries, Heritage, Masculinity and Nationalism, 1960-1999', *Past and Present* Vol. 188 (2005) 163-194; A. Mager, 'White Liquor Hits Black Livers: Meanings of Excessive Liquor Consumption in South Africa in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century', *Social Science and Medicine* Vol. 59 (2004) 735-751; A. Mager, 'The First Decade of 'European Beer' in Apartheid South Africa: The State, the Brewers and the Drinking Public, 1962-72', *The Journal of African History* Vol. 40 No. 3 (1999) 367-388; A. Mager, *Beer, Sociability and Masculinity in South Africa* (Bloomington 2010); S.J. Britten, *One nation, one beer: The mythology of the new South Africa in advertising* (unpublished PhD thesis, 2006), University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg; P. McAllister, *Xhosa Beer Drinking Rituals. Power, Practice and Performance in the South African Rural Periphery* (Durham 2006); P. McAllister, *Building the homestead: agriculture, labour and beer in South Africa's Transkei* (Leiden 2001); P. McAllister, 'Ubuntu and the Morality of Xhosa Beer Drinking: a Critical Appraisal' in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking spaces, states and selves* (Münster 2010) 53-78 [not all works of McAllister are listed here, for a more references for works on the same topic, see Van Wolputte and Fumanti's edited volume, page 294-295; D. Whelan, 'The central beer hall as social and municipal infrastructure in twentieth century Pietermaritzburg', *Historia* Vol. 60 No. 1 (2015) 75-91; J.F.R. Lues, 'Brewing and consumptions practices of indigenous traditional beer in a typical South African semi-urban area', *Indilinga* Vol. 8 No. 2 (2009) 163-174; D. Atkinson, 'Contradictions of community within local government in the 1950s with reference to municipal beer trading', *New Contree* No. 57 (2009) 149-168; D. Atkinson, 'Complex negotiations in local governance: the municipal beer hall debate in East London, 1956 to 1962', *New Contree* No. 55 (2008) 93-113; R.M. Ralinala, 'Countering municipal monopoly in Mamelodi: an economic struggle, 1953, 1961', *South African Historical Journal* No. 46 (2002) 203-218; D. Krige, 'Inequality and Class through the Drinking Glass: An Ethnography of Men and Beer Consumption in Contemporary Soweto', in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking spaces, states and selves* (Münster 2010) 223-256; E. Hellman, 'The Importance of Beer-Brewing in an Urban Native Yard' *Bantu Studies* Vol. 8 (1934) 39-60; P. la Hausse, 'Drink and Cultural Innovation in Durban: the Origins of the Beerhall in South Africa', in: J. Crush and C. Ambler, *Liquor and Labor in Southern Africa* (Athens 1992) 78-115; E. Rogerson, 'Drinking Apartheid and the Removal

urbanization, resulted in heavy drinking cultures.¹⁷ In the case of South Africa, the main focus of various authors is on the impact of alcohol legislation on the colonized population.¹⁸ This is what Anne Mager calls the control-resistance model.¹⁹ Most notably, the beer hall is a popular research topic. The case of South Africa is highlighted because it severely influenced Namibia, its western neighbour. Namibia was part of (Apartheid) South Africa for more than seventy years. Hence, the liquor legislation for Namibia was copied from South Africa and political and economic developments influenced each other vice versa.

A comprehensive body of work deals with beer in Namibia. In academia, the works can be divided into three strands of research. The medical and policy strand mainly deals with the large problem of alcohol abuse in Namibia. The anthropological strand focuses on shebeens, cucashops and *oshikundu*.²⁰ The historical strand mainly deals with the effects of the colonial liquor laws. All works are either book chapters or journal articles. While the literature on Namibian beer is comprehensive, a general work has not yet emerged. Therefore a description of each source is given in order to bring the different differing cases together. This is followed by a thorough discussion on the common grounds and differences of the literature.

Medicine and policy

The discussion on alcohol abuse from a medical- or policy point of view was started in 1990.²¹ Since beer is by far the most popular drink, these discussions are often linked to the heavy drinking of beer and the problems that derive from this habit. Akiser Pomuti and George Eiseb investigated right after independence the problems that emerged from heavy drinking in southern Namibia.²² A detailed overview of facts was given by the United Nations

of Beerhalls in Johannesburg', in: J. Crush and C. Ambler (eds.), *Liquor and Labor in Southern Africa* (Athens 1992) 306-338.

¹⁷ S. van Wolputte, and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa* 18, the authors paraphrase Bryceson: D. Bryceson (eds.), *Alcohol in Africa: Mixing Business, Pleasure, and Politics* (Portsmouth 2002) 277.

¹⁸ R. Gordon, Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 5.

¹⁹ A. Mager, 'The First Decade of 'European Beer' in Apartheid South Africa: The State, the Brewers and the Drinking Public, 1962-72', *The Journal of African History* Vol. 40 No. 3 (1999) 368.

²⁰ A shebeen is a small illicit bar, in Namibia exists at least thousands of them. In northern Namibia, shebeens are called cucashops. The second and third chapter deal with this phenomenon. *Oshikundu* is a low alcoholic beverage.

²¹ H. Siiskonen, 'Namibia and the Heritage of Colonial Alcohol Policy', *Nordic Journal of African Studies* Vol. 3 (1) (1994) 82.

²² A. Pomuti and G. Eiseb, 'Alcohol abuse: a southern Namibian survey' Windhoek: Namibian Institute for Social and Economic Research (1990).

Development Programme, almost a decade later.²³ Elizabeth Lightfoot *et al.* explored the relationship between alcohol use and HIV in a small Namibian community.²⁴

Anthropology

Steven van Wolputte embraces an anthropological approach to sketch the making of “margins” in Opuwo. The many meanings of different drinking places in this “last isle of civilization”, as the author put it, are analyzed. Opuwo is used as an example to look at marginal spaces where people experiment with ambivalent notions of identity. Beer is seen as a marginal commodity that mediates between different systems of value, belonging and identification. Furthermore, the chapter explores ideas on citizenship and the Namibian state. Bars are places where people discuss the young state. It concludes by stating that these places are characterized by strong symbolic boundaries (examples mentioned are the various beer brands or mobile phones), but also places where these boundaries can be negotiated.²⁵

Mattia Fumanti takes an ethnographic approach to explore how a group of young men in Rundu construct their masculinity through the consumption of beer. The researcher follows this group of men in their drinking activities, which is their main leisure activity. The drinking of beer gives the men status amongst their peers and women, but is fraught with limits: it leaves them vulnerable to moral accusations, economic failure and increases the risk of contracting HIV-AIDS. In conclusion, Fumanti stresses that masculinity is constructed through the consumption of beer.²⁶

Gregor Dobler elaborates with a participant-observation approach upon the social and political discourse surrounding alcohol use in northern Namibia. In 2006, the Namibian government tried to regulate shebeens (informal bars) by forcing the owners to obtain a license. A nation-wide controversy was the result. To understand why this was the case, Dobler uses the town Oshikango (on the border with Angola) to illustrate the significance and social practices surrounding it. The use of alcohol is a connection between political discussions about liberation and development on the one hand, and the everyday life of

²³ United Nations Development Programme, ‘Alcohol and human development in Namibia, *Namibia human development report* (1999).

²⁴ E. Lightfoot, M. Maree and J. Ananias, ‘Exploring the relationship between HIV and alcohol use in a remote Namibian mining community’, *African Journal of AIDS Research* Vol. 8, No. 3 (2009) 321-327.

²⁵ S. van Wolputte, ‘Beers and Bullets, Beads and Bulls. Drink and the Making of Margins in a Small Namibian Towns’, in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking Spaces, States and Selves* (Münster 2010) 79-105.

²⁶ M. Fumanti, ‘“I Like My Windhoek Lager”: Beer Consumption and the Making of Men in Namibia’, in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking Spaces, States and Selves* (Münster 2010) 257-274.

Namibians on the other hand. Shebeens are the most important place of everyday political exchange. In the controversy of 2006, one side viewed the drinking of beer as freedom and the other side as declining morality. Dobler ends with stating that the use of alcohol does not destroy independence, but that it is one of the few ways Namibians can experience a liberated life.²⁷

Werner Embashu *et al.* focus on the processing methods of *oshikundu*, a widely available traditional beverage, in northern Namibia. *Oshikundu* is a cereal based fermented drink, mainly brewed using water, bran, pearl millet, *mahangu* and malted sorghum. The brewing methods are passed on orally from generation to generation. Semi-structured questionnaires and interviews were used in the study to determine that *oshikundu* is an important daily beverage and brewed in many households, although its social value is decreasing. One of the reasons for the decline that the authors mention is the so-described “modern influence of emerging modern drinks,” most probably the steady advance of industrial beer.²⁸ The prelude of this thesis deals with this drink in more detail.

History

Harri Siiskonen focuses on the heritage of the colonial alcohol policy of Namibia. The author gives a short historic overview of how liquor legislation was meant to subjugate and govern African societies. During Apartheid in Namibia the black population was not allowed to drink, but in 1969 a new legal framework legalized the controlled selling of alcohol to Africans. The consumption of beer and other drinks increased rapidly but the question of alcohol abuse was only highlighted after independence. The Namibian government has an evasive attitude towards this problem. Siiskonen notes that Namibia’s alcohol policy is still based on legislation from the South African colonial period.²⁹

Jan-Bart Gewald uses a historical approach to explain the unlikely alliance of two Herero urban groups: the *Otruppe* (young males who were cut off from access to formal political power) and female *khari* beer brewers (who were almost solely responsible for the

²⁷ G. Dobler, ‘License to Drink. Between Liberation and Inebriation in Northern Namibia’, in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking Spaces, States and Selves* (Münster 2010) 167-191.

²⁸ W. Embashu, A. Cheikhoussef, G. Kahaka and S Lendelvo, ‘Processing methods of Oshikundu, a traditional beverage from sub-tribes within Aawambo culture in the Northern Namibia’, *Journal for Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences* Vol. 2, No. 1 (2013) 117-127. A selection of the authors dealt with the same topic in other outlets, namely: W. Embashu, A. Cheikhoussef, G. Kahaka, *Survey on Indigenous Knowledge and Household processing methods of Oshikundu; a cereal-based fermented beverage from Oshana, Oshikoto, Ohangwena and Omusati Regions in Namibia*, Multidisciplinary Research Centre, University of Namibia (Windhoek 2012).

²⁹ H. Siiskonen, ‘Namibia and the Heritage of Colonial Alcohol Policy’, *Nordic Journal of African Studies* Vol. 3 (1) (1994) 77-86.

supply of illicit alcohol). They struggled with the colonial state and black political elite over liquor controls. During the 1920s and 1930s, the state tried to undercut the illicit production of alcohol. The two groups formed a strong alliance and eventually the state was not able to eradicate the brewing of *khari*. In this way, Gewalt shows that by examining changing patterns of the consumption of alcohol, insights in political and social transformations in Windhoek can be provided.³⁰

Robert Gordon deals with the question how the settler population promoted a dominant-national ideology through developing a specific taste during the colonial era. The settler consumption was striking, drinking was the main leisure activity for the German colonizers. The settlers saw the black population as incapable of drinking alcohol, and used the liquor law to anaesthetize their fears and insecurities. Beer was an icon of their identity, but throughout the years, it became a general marker of social achievement. Today, Namibian beer is successfully used to distinguish Namibia from its dominating South African neighbor.³¹

Don Stevenson writes about the passive attitude of the management of South West Breweries towards the impending independence. This single brewery catered for the whole market and the beer only faced internal competition, in other words, competition from the other company brands. The marketing approach was *ad hoc* and mainly showed white males, while the company logo was the famous Reiterdenkmal (see chapter three for a detailed discussion on the Reiter). After independence the brewery changed its name into Namibia Breweries and the advertisement showed multi-racial settings. Stevenson notes that “the enjoyment of beer (...) is dependent upon your politics.”³²

The historiography on Namibian beer shows a strong connection between beer and politics. Namibia’s beer market does not solely consists of “modern” beer (clear, industrially manufactured European style lagers) but also has an important home brewing culture, as Embashu shows (often named as “traditional”). The production of “modern” beer however

³⁰ J.B. Gewalt, ‘Diluting Drinks and Deepening Discontent: Colonial Liquor Controls and Public Resistance in Windhoek, Namibia’, in: D. Bryceson (eds.), *Alcohol in Africa: Mixing Business, Pleasure, and Politics* (Portsmouth 2002) 117-138.

³¹ R. Gordon, *Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia*, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 117 – 134.

³² D. Stevenson, “The Mysterious Demographics of Beer Drinking,” in: G. Miescheir, L. Rizzo and J. Silvester (eds.), *Posters in Action* (Basel 2009) 103. Don Stevenson is a former managing director of Adfactory, the company that was responsible for the advertisement of South West Breweries in the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s (by then the brewery name was changed into Namibia Breweries). Stevenson has also been interviewed for this thesis.

increased tremendously over time. The government always had a far reaching interest in drinking. Stevenson demonstrates that through liquor legislation the state tried to regulate the beer market. For decades, the black population was not even legally allowed to drink beer. The government tried to eradicate the inevitable illicit brewing of alcohol, as Gewald shows. Stevenson concludes perfectly with his statement that the enjoyment of beer is dependent on politics.

Subsequently, there is a strong connection between beer and identity. Fumanti points out that identity can be constructed through the consumption of beer. Van Wolputte places an emphasis on bars: these are places where Namibians can explore ideas on citizenship and the young Namibian state. Dobler similarly sees these bars as places for political exchange, and even argues that through beer, Namibians can experience a liberated life in the new nation state. Historically speaking, different groups in the Namibian society associated themselves with beers. The white settlers, for example, took the “South West” beer as an icon of their identity, according to Gordon.

The role of the breweries in Namibia is underexposed in the literature.³³ More than twenty breweries were active in Namibia in the last hundred and twenty years and these economic actors had to navigate their way through a continuously changing socio-political environment.³⁴ Stevenson reveals how the South West Breweries awaited the impending independence, and changed into Namibia Breweries after 1990. Gordon touches upon the intimate relations between NamBrew and the state after independence. But history goes back much further. German, South African and Namibian governments took an interest in the production and consumption of beer, and this raises a myriad of questions on how breweries

³³ It is interesting to note that, in contrast to Namibia Breweries (the dominant brewery in Namibia), the history of other major African breweries have been documented in books. Its main rival South African Breweries is an example: A. Mager, *Beer, Sociability and Masculinity in South Africa* (Bloomington 2010). Also Heineken, another major brewing concern with activities in Africa is an example: O. van Beemen, *Heineken in Afrika* (Amsterdam 2016). Heineken is one of the largest brewing concerns active in Africa, and Van Beemen discusses its activities all over the continent, but excludes Namibia. Heineken has a minority shareholding in Namibia Breweries, which is discussed in the third chapter of the thesis. For a report specifically on Heineken’s presence in the Democratic Republic of Congo, see: P. Schouten., ‘Brewing security? Heineken’s engagement with commercial conflict-dependent actors in the Eastern DRC’, *CCDA Project Report* (2013). And Nigeria Breweries has for instance a special celebratory book on its own history: Y. Ogunbiyi, *Sixty years of winning with Nigeria: the history of Nigerian breweries plc 1946-2006* (Ibadan 2007).

³⁴ An immeasurable amount of homebrewers existed alongside the “formal” commercial breweries. Most commercial breweries are discussed in this thesis. The best known companies are obviously Namibia Breweries Limited (NBL) and Hansa Brewery, the two largest brewing concerns (nowadays they are merged). The total number of twenty breweries is reached when one takes into account the following: a number of breweries existed before the formation of NBL in 1920, during the apartheid era every township had a municipal beer hall and this beer was probably brewed on location, more recently smaller companies as Camelthorn Brewery and the Swakopmund Brewing Company emerged and South African Breweries now also has a brewery in the country (in Okahandja).

and states interacted in the country's past. This thesis aims to be a socio-political history of an economic market, by exploring how Namibian breweries influenced (political) identities.

Theoretical framework

The introduction of nation states in Africa in the late colonial period and the related advent of nationalism is a fiercely debated topic in African Studies.³⁵ An ever expanding stream of work deals with the ‘creation’ or ‘invention’ of nationalism. If Africans are subject to the creation of ethnic identity, then they perhaps also experience the creation of national identity.³⁶ For the theoretical framework of this thesis the notion of the imagined community is linked to national consumption and national cuisines to ask the question how an economic product becomes a ‘national’ product. Beer is a suitable case study to engage this question, which is situated in the debate on economic nationalism. By carefully uncovering the long historical roots of the relationship between this commodity and identity, the ‘invention of tradition’ that is often present in this market can be deconstructed.

The imagined community is thirsty

A fundamental part of nationalism studies in Africa is the theoretical concept of the imagined national community. Benedict Anderson made the convincing case that “‘nation-ness’ is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time.” In the modern world everyone “shall, can, should, will and ‘have’” a nationality, similar to having a gender. A nation, according to the author, is an imagined political community. Even the members of the smallest nation will never personally know all of their fellow members, but still feel connected to them in their minds.³⁷

If a national imagined community is developing, a subsequent question is if a national imagined stomach is also evolving. Paul Nugent rephrases a question of Ernest Gellner by asking whether a sense of national identity can be forged through everyday acts of consumption. In his view, consumption is also about citizenship. He shows that there have been significant convergences in consumption patterns within national boundaries.

³⁵ J.B. Gewald, A. Leliveld and I. Pesa, Introduction, in: *Transforming innovations in Africa; explorative studies on appropriation in African Societies* (Leiden 2012) 5. Much has been written on nationalism and Africa. For a recent general work, see the first chapter of E.J. Keller, *Identity, Citizenship, and Political Conflict in Africa* (Bloomington 2014).

³⁶ Vail *et al.* argued that in the southern African region, ethnic consciousness or tribalism is a historical creation. H.L. Vail (ed.), *The creation of tribalism in Southern Africa* (London 1989).

³⁷ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London 2006) 3-7. The original version was published in 1983. For this thesis, the second edition is used.

Consumption is partly constitutive of national identity and can therefore contribute to the existence of an imagined community. In other words, ‘the nation has a stomach.’³⁸

The codification of national cuisines in Africa is a striking argument for the existence of a national stomach. Igor Cusack argues that states and other actors in post-colonial Africa have appropriated cuisines and labelled it as national culture. Food contributes towards the quiet flagging of the nation, an everyday, often unnoticed form of nationalism. If a certain dish becomes a national dish, then the very mention of this will reinforce the sense of a national identity. Cusack makes a specific connection between consumption and the imagined community. Although he focuses on food, the step towards drinks can be easily made. The upgrading of a drink as a ‘national drink’ could have the same effect as Cusack describes with national food, and be an instrument in nation building.³⁹

A national product in a national market?

Building upon the idea of the ‘stomach of the imagined community’ with subsequent emerging national cuisines, this thesis explores the puzzle how a product becomes a national product. A pressing but highly problematic question is if a ‘national product’ is also placed in a ‘national market’. Defining a market however is a complicated endeavour, let alone deciding how this should be ‘national’. The market in neoclassical economic theory does not exist.⁴⁰ Greta Krippner identified a lack of adequate theorization of the market in economic sociology. She argues that researchers either study economic processes in social terms, whereby the sphere of the market is abandoned, or study the market as a theoretical unit without social content.⁴¹ James Ferguson argues that the modern notion of “the” economy has its roots in nineteenth-century European nationalist thought. An analytical focus on how

³⁸ Nugent shortly discusses the case of beer in South Africa as an example but focuses on wine in the same country. P. Nugent, ‘Do Nations Have Stomachs? Food, Drink and Imagined Community in Africa’, *Africa Spectrum* Vol. 45 No. 3 (2010) 87-113.

³⁹ Cusack focuses indeed on food, but does mention “European style beer from the British” as an element of the “national cuisine” of Eritrea (page 211). It is also mentioned in case of Namibia, where Cusack describes the considerable German influence in the cuisine of Namibia: one of the examples is that local beer adheres to the German Reinheitsgebot. He concludes by stating that ingredients exist for a unique African cuisine, but that this is not yet claimed by the builders of the nation (page 214). I. Cusack, ‘African Cuisines: Recipes for Nation-Building?’, *Journal of African Cultural Studies* Vol. 13 No. 2 (2000) 207-216.

⁴⁰ A neoclassical market exists out of four assumptions: perfect information, independent actors, homogeneous products and rational actors with complete information. G. Krippner, M. Granovetter, F. Block, N. Biggart, T. Beamish, Y. Hsing, G. Hart, G. Arrighi, M. Mendell, J. Hall, M. Burawoy, S. Vogel and S. O’Riain, ‘Polanyi Symposium: a conversation on embeddedness’, *Socio-Economic Review* Vol. 2 (2004) 119.

⁴¹ G. Krippner *et al.*, ‘Polanyi Symposium: a conversation on embeddedness’ 12-13.

national economies are constituted as national can “combat the dehistoricization and depoliticization that developmentalist analyses of economies promote.”⁴²

In terms of Africa, the decade-long preoccupation of scholars with the ‘development’ of African economies has resulted in a heated debate.⁴³ Economies are not the same thing as markets, but are clearly related. Already in the 1980s Jane Guyer described how most of the African continent lacked the centuries of layering of economic, social and political functions in constant territorial bases which would make markets. Population density was low and mobility was high, whereby permanent market places did not develop. Formal (or classic) market models cannot explain and predict African markets as they are meant to.⁴⁴

This topic is situated in a wider debate on economic nationalism and hence an economic interpretation of citizenship. Edmond Keller states that African administrations struggle to manage identity politics from their very inception as independent units. He argues that, theoretically, Africans in most of colonial Africa were not citizens, but merely subjects. The legal definitions of citizenship in post-colonial Africa are often conflated with nationality.⁴⁵ Sara Dorman *et al.* demonstrate that the meaning of citizenship is an issue of paramount importance in many countries. Defining the term ‘nation’ has however been neglected in Africanist scholarship.⁴⁶ For the sake of a clear argument, this thesis ultimately shies away from the theories on (economic) citizenship and instead focuses on establishing a relationship between beer as a commodity and the invention of tradition.

Beer as a case study

Beer is a suitable case study to analyse how a product becomes a national product. Firstly, beer always constituted a broad economic market. The beer market is one of the thriving industries on the continent.⁴⁷ Beer is relatively inexpensive and available to the masses, thereby penetrating all layers of society.⁴⁸ Secondly, beer and identity are closely intertwined.

⁴² J. Ferguson, ‘Paradoxes of Sovereignty and Independence: “Real” and “Pseudo-” Nation-States and the Depoliticization of Poverty’, in: J. Ferguson (ed.), *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham 2006) 68.

⁴³ For a starting point, see: P. Collier and J.W. Gunning, ‘Why Has Africa Grown Slowly?’, *Journal of Economic Perspectives* Vol. 13 (1999) 3-22; and for a more recent book see B. Berendsen, T. Dietz, H.S. Nordholt and R. van der Veen (eds.), *Asian Tigers, African lions: Comparing the Development Performance of Southeast Asia and Africa* (Leiden 2013).

⁴⁴ J. Guyer (ed.), *Feeding African Cities: Studies in Regional Social History* (Manchester 1987) 12-13.

⁴⁵ E.J. Keller, *Identity, Citizenship, and Political Conflict in Africa* (Bloomington 2014) 3; 22; 33.

⁴⁶ S. Dorman, D. Hammett and P. Nugent, ‘Citizenship, Nation and Africa’, in: S. Dorman, D. Hammett and P. Nugent (eds.), *Making Nations, Creating Strangers: States and Citizenship in Africa* (Leiden 2007) 4-5.

⁴⁷ S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking Spaces, States and Selves* (Münster 2010) 5.

⁴⁸ R. Gordon, *Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia*, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 3.

Alcohol has a strong religious and symbolic value, for instance rural areas often attach symbolic content to the production, distribution and consumption of traditional drinks. Urban-manufactured drinks are often linked with ideas of modernity. Alcohol has social and psychological value: it is used to celebrate special occasions, drinking is a leisure activity and drinking spots are meeting places for people where they can exchange information.⁴⁹ Beer is an icon of distinction and highly gendered: beer is often portrayed as a domain of males, whilst historically speaking the brewers were always women.⁵⁰ In other words, beer is both a marker and a maker of identity: a node between different systems of value and models of identification.⁵¹ In this respect analyses of marketing is interesting, as beer advertising promoted for instance images of national unity and multi-racial social drinking.⁵² Thirdly, beer has always been subjected to the political interests of the state. It is an opportunity to re-examine relations between states and economies.⁵³ Alcohol has economic and political value. Traditionally fermented drinks provided basic food and drink, and alcohol is a medium for exchange. The state always had a strong interest in alcohol as liquor taxation provides revenues and liquor laws were a way to control the population.⁵⁴

A simple bottle of beer offers the possibility of “commoditising identity”, in the words of Robert Gordon. Commodities can function as a medium for objectifying the nation. Through the consumption of a beer objectified as ‘national’, consumers are promised national personification, and hence the appropriation of the nation. Beer and the idea of the nation can be purposely aligned. The capacity for personalization is crucial for the success of nationalism and this is exactly what beer does, according to Gordon. Consumerist forces provide resources for fashioning a new national culture.⁵⁵ Mager argued in line of Gordon’s work that “Beer provided postcolonial Namibians with a “capacity for personalization,” a means of creating a national identity and of distinguishing their nation from its dominating neighbour.” The

⁴⁹ D. Bryceson, (eds.), *Alcohol in Africa: Mixing Business, Pleasure, and Politics* (Portsmouth 2002) 5-9.

⁵⁰ S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking Spaces, States and Selves* (Münster 2010) 11-22.

⁵¹ S. van Wolputte, and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking Spaces, States and Selves* (Münster 2010) 5.

⁵² Some examples from South Africa and Namibia: A. Mager, *Beer, Sociability and Masculinity in South Africa* (Bloomington 2010). See also: A. Mager, ‘One Beer, “One Goal, One Nation, One Soul”: South African Breweries, Heritage, Masculinity and Nationalism, 1960-1999’, *Past and Present* Vol. 188 (2005) 163-194; S.J. Britten, *One nation, one beer: The mythology of the new South Africa in advertising* (unpublished PhD thesis, 2006), University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg; D. Stevenson, ‘The Mysterious Demographics of Beer Drinking,’ in: G. Miescheir, L. Rizzo and J. Silvester (eds.), *Posters in Action* (Basel 2009) 103-106.

⁵³ A. Mager, ‘The First Decade of ‘European Beer’ in Apartheid South Africa: The State, the Brewers and the Drinking Public, 1962-72’, *The Journal of African History* Vol. 40 No. 3 (1999) 367.

⁵⁴ D. Bryceson, (eds.), *Alcohol in Africa: Mixing Business, Pleasure, and Politics* (Portsmouth 2002) 5-9.

⁵⁵ R. Gordon, *Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia*, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 3, 15-16.

neighbour is South Africa, the country that occupied Namibia for decades. Identity is often formed in opposition of something else.⁵⁶

The invention of tradition

The existence of national cuisines leads to the question how a food or drink emerges as a 'national' food or drink. The notion of the 'invention of tradition' as proposed in the edited volume by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger is vital for the understanding of this process. Hobsbawm claims that traditions which appear to be old are often recent in origin and sometimes invented. These invented traditions imply continuity with a suitable historic past. This is a relevant idea for the historical innovation of the nation, as the author puts it, because through symbols and rituals people become conscious of citizenship. History in this case is often used as a legitimator. Modern nations all claim to be the opposite of novel and the opposite of constructed: they present themselves as rooted in antiquity and 'natural'.⁵⁷

The beer market in post-colonial Africa is full of invented traditions as several breweries aim to be 'national' in various ways. In marketing campaigns the myth of a unified nation is reinforced, as is the case in for example South Africa.⁵⁸ Some breweries take over government tasks: Primus in the Democratic Republic of Congo not only provides healthcare and education, it also contributes to the development of infrastructure and uses the same colours as the national flag.⁵⁹ The symbolism can even be found in the names of African breweries. Namibia Breweries is not the only company that named itself after the newly established country.⁶⁰

The possibilities to conquer a national beer market are growing. In large parts of the continent Africans were not allowed to drink the commercially produced European beer, but these colonial restrictions on drinking have now vanished. A major part of the African beer market is still informal, but with a growing economy and an emerging middle class, breweries are increasingly able to persuade consumers to join the formal (commercial) beer market.

⁵⁶ A. Mager, *Beer, Sociability and Masculinity in South Africa* (Bloomington 2010) 128.

⁵⁷ E. Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', in: E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (New York 1983) 1-14.

⁵⁸ An example is: S.J., Britten, *One nation, one beer: The mythology of the new South Africa in advertising* (unpublished PhD thesis, 2006), University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

⁵⁹ P. Schouten, 'Brewing security? Heineken's engagement with commercial conflict-dependent actors in the Eastern DRC', *CCDA Project Report* (2013) 13.

⁶⁰ For instance Zambia Breweries, Sierra Leone Breweries, Southern Sudan Beverages, Tanzania Breweries, Nigerian Breweries and South African Breweries. Examples in Europe, or let elsewhere in the world, are scarce. A company called "Netherlands Breweries" or "Germany Breweries" would be unthinkable.

With the advent of independence it is tempting for breweries to align their products with the new emerging national identity.

Analytically, this thesis moves away from the realm of the state and takes a closer look at the realm of the industry. The symbols that make people conscious of citizenship, and subsequently remind them of the nation, as discussed by Hobsbawm and others are often symbols of the state: flags, anthems and ceremonies are classic examples. These symbols are largely invented and use a certain interpretation and representation of the past. This thesis asks whether companies can move their (economic) products in the same position, and in this case Namibian beer is used as an example. Namibian beer is unambiguously linked to the Namibian nation. Exploring the long historical roots can shed more light on how these claims are made. It is a historian's task to deconstruct the construction.

Methodology

Two sets of fieldwork

In this qualitative research project, a historical approach is central. A literature review formed the starting point to link this research to existing debates and point out innovative aspects. The core part of the data has been gathered during two fieldwork periods. For the fieldwork, a set of mixed methods is utilized. The combination of methods can be divided in three categories: archival research, semi-structured interviewing and the review of visual material. Although the thesis is partly an economic history of Namibia, statistical analyses are not a part of the research. The same goes for an ethnographic description of beer drinkers, because the topic of the research is the breweries.

The first fieldwork period lasted from August 2015 to February 2016 (six months) and was divided over Namibia and South Africa. The first findings were presented at the Namibia Scientific Society and as a result of this presentation, Namibia Breweries Limited offered to arrange a return to Namibia to help with the celebration of 500 years of Reinheitsgebot, the purity law which is the basis of the brewery's success. The research presented infuses corporate history because NBL is basically the national brewery, dominating the national beer market for almost a hundred years – it is impossible to discuss beer in Namibia without discussing NBL. The same goes for the work of Anne Mager, who, as a historian, is an authority on the South African beer market and did important work on South African Breweries.⁶¹

The second fieldwork period lasted from April – May 2016 (six weeks) and was conducted solely in Namibia. During this second period the author worked part-time as a consultant for Namibia Breweries Limited to assist the brewery with the celebration of 500 years of Reinheitsgebot.⁶² The objectives of the project were threefold: giving presentations on the history of NBL, providing information for a pop-up museum on the history of beer in Namibia and reviewing company material on historical accuracy. The remainder of the time was used for research and writing the thesis. The thesis stands separate from this project and NBL was not involved in the end product.

⁶¹ A. Mager, *Beer, Sociability and Masculinity in South Africa* (Bloomington 2010).

⁶² The Reinheitsgebot is a German purity law of 1516 that forbids the use of all ingredients for beer other than water, malted barley and hops. Yeast is also allowed, but this phenomenon was discovered only later after the microscope was invented.

In terms of accessibility, this project was of great advantage for the research. It opened up new parts and people of the brewery that were not accessed during the first fieldwork period. This greatly enriched the understanding of how a major Namibian company works. Namibian businesses shape lives in Namibia, but are understudied in academia.⁶³ Furthermore it was an opportunity to make a major part of Namibian history available to the public. Many Namibians have a personal connection with the breweries, liquor laws and adjacent topics. Their response was critical for the development of ideas for this thesis. It would be a missed chance to keep research behind the walls of academia.

An important question need to be raised when one works on and with a company. The affiliation with Namibia Breweries may influence the views expressed in the thesis, although the museum and the thesis were different projects and NBL has not even seen the thesis before it was finalized. The proof that the research work stands on its own is in the historical narrative: the story of the thesis differs and enriches NBL's corporate history. An example is the introduction of the Reinheitsgebot. While some employees believe that NBL has been brewing with this purity law since 1920, the thesis shows that the Reinheitsgebot was only introduced at NBL during the 1980s. Appendix 1 gives an overview of the additions on NBL's history.

Reflective methodology during field work

The researcher is also research instrument and this instrument is in constant need of reflection. A reflexive methodology allows for the need to make research processes as transparent as possible. Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldberg point out two characteristics of this reflective way of conducting research. The first is interpretation, which implies that all references are the results of interpretations. Interpretation is therefore at the forefront of research. The second is reflection, which is necessary on different levels: the person of the researcher, language, tradition. In other words, reflection is the "interpretation of interpretation."⁶⁴ It is crucial to make explicit what choices are made in the research and to be transparent to the reading public, making it thereby easier for peers to scrutinize the research.⁶⁵

⁶³ The economic history of Namibia is an underdeveloped part of Namibia's historiography. Namibia Breweries is the largest private employer and taxpayer of the country, but several other companies severely influence the daily lives of Namibia. Examples are Metje + Ziegler and Pupkewitz Holdings. A book on the Ohlthaver & List Group is forthcoming (written by Brenda Bravenboer, expected in 2019).

⁶⁴ M. Alvesson and K. Sköldberg, *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research* (London 2000) 5-6.

⁶⁵ J. Richie and J. Lewis (eds.), *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers* (London 2003) 22.

Fieldwork is a key element for working in the field of African history and severely impacts the available data. As Robert Gordon points out all fieldworkers are aware of the fact that they are 'labelled' when they commence fieldwork, sometimes causing them to be conceptualized as 'deviant' by their surroundings.⁶⁶ Field workers need to think about the labels that they constitute and reflect upon it. Although written in a time of Apartheid in Namibia, this notion is still relevant because many of the societal structures from this era live on in post-colonial Namibia. In this fieldwork project, this idea is accepted. The 'deviant' label of the fieldwork during this project possible influenced opinions that informants ventilated. Triangulation, combining these insights with a scrutinizing literature review and archival work, is used to compensate for this.⁶⁷

Next to the appearance of a researcher in the field is the use of language an issue that must be considered. During the research and in the final written product, several terms of the Apartheid era are used. Examples are "Ovamboland", "kaffir beer", "natives" and "coloureds." This thesis echoes Gregor Dobler when he says that "when writing about the Apartheid era it is sometimes unavoidable to use terms that were important instruments of Apartheid policy." These terms describe the realities of life under a colonial government.⁶⁸ Sometimes these terms are used in the thesis to correspond to the reality of pre-independent Namibia.

In the Namibian beer market many difficulties concerning interpretation and reflection come together. The beer market is politicized by past governments, highly gendered, influenced by a variety of ethnic groups and subject of several languages. In the quest for objectivity this research extensively reflects upon the labels that a foreign researcher constitutes in the field and the language that is connected with colonial regimes. Triangulation and restricting the use of Apartheid terms to its historical context are ways to overcome the abovementioned problems that become clear after careful reflection.

⁶⁶ Gordon has done extensive field work in Namibia and describes deviant as "a person who breaks the social rules of everyday live." In the reflections on his experiences he specifically names the liquor law as a factor that prohibited black and white people from mixing. Although times has changed since the 1970s, the idea that a field worker can be seen as deviant is still very true. R. Gordon, "The field researcher as a deviant: a Namibian case study", in: P. Hugo (ed.), *Truth be in the Field: Social Science Research in Southern Africa* (Pretoria 1990) 70-83.

⁶⁷ L.O. Aina, 'Introduction to Research', in: L.O. Aine (ed.), *Research in Information Sciences: An African Perspective* (Ibadan 2002) 23-24.

⁶⁸ G. Dobler, *Traders and Trade in Colonial Ovamboland: Elite Formation and the Politics of Consumption under Indirect Rule and Apartheid, 1925-1990* (Basel 2014) XXII-XXIII.

Three categories

The choice of methods is informed by the research questions. This research project aims to be a socio-political history of the production and consumption of beer in Namibia. A specific focus is on breweries, conceptualized as economic actors that, over a long range of time, need to navigate in a continuously changing socio-political environment. The principal method is archival research since the objective of the study is to take the long historical roots of beer production and consumption into account. To understand the behaviour of several breweries in the last fifty years, a series of interviews with brewers was conducted. The archives mainly deal with older material. Finally visual material is used to complement the story. Information does not only lay in the written or spoken domain of this world. The beer world is often a visual world: advertisement, photos and beer mugs contain many stories.

Firstly, archival research is essential for the craft history and does indeed form a major part of the fieldwork project.⁶⁹ An abundance in documentation is available in Namibia, which is why it is important to, in the words of Robert Williams, apply the principle of selectivity: only select what is important for the story. In order to do so, any researcher needs a thorough plan of what to study. During the research it is important to consistently keep notes, otherwise it is very difficult to create order in the vast amount of data.⁷⁰ Much consideration is given to the interpretation of the primary sources from the archives. Source criticism, asking all sorts of question to place the source in context, is thoroughly applied.⁷¹

Studies were done in four public archives: the National Archives and Library of Namibia, the Namibia Scientific Society, the Scientific Society Swakopmund (otherwise known as the Sam Cohen Library), all in Namibia, and the Western Cape Archives and Records Service in Cape Town, South Africa. The data comprised colonial laws, letters, books, recipes, reports, advertisements, government policies and more. A company archive of NBL was not available. Employees recalled that many documents were lost during the migration of the brewery in the 1980s and that there is not a current working archive.⁷² A few personal archives were consulted, resulting in an interesting collection of photos, contracts

⁶⁹ C. Hamilton, *Refiguring the Archive* (Berlin 2002); L.O. Aina, 'Introduction to Research', in: L.O. Aine (ed.), *Research in Information Sciences: An African Perspective* (Ibadan 2002) 11-12

⁷⁰ R.C. Williams, *The Historian's Toolbox: A Student's Guide to the Theory and Craft of History* (New York 2007) 51-52.

⁷¹ R.C. Williams, *The Historian's Toolbox: A Student's Guide to the Theory and Craft of History* 56-57.

⁷² Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Ender, 22 May 2015, and other informants during informal talks.

and stories.⁷³ Much Namibian history is still in people's homes and minds. All private materials are used with consent from the owners.

Secondly, semi-structured interviews have been conducted using the snowball sampling method: one informant often directed the author to another informant. Oral history is a rich source of information and can add valuable insight to the available written records.⁷⁴ Semi-structured interviewing allows for space to have an open conversation, while the topic guide ensures a certain structure in the interview.⁷⁵ Also here source criticism is important. Both the interviewer and interviewee can have a possible bias which is something to recognize.⁷⁶ Asymmetrical information, memories influenced by emotions or (political) agendas and a different view on sensitive themes as for instance the Reiterdenkmal are just a few of the possibilities.⁷⁷

In the end, twelve interviews were conducted with former and current employees from Namibia Breweries, South African Breweries-Miller, Hansa Brewery, Camelthorn Brewery and the Swakopmund Brewing Company. Since the focus of this thesis is on how the breweries as economic actors position themselves in a changing socio-political structure, all the interviews were conducted with people related to the brewing business. The interviews were not recorded in order to maintain a confidential atmosphere. Instead, extensive notes were taken during the interview and used to write out the conversation after the meeting.⁷⁸ None of the informants have been paid, nor did anyone ask for this. All informants received a bag of drop (liquorice) as a way of thanking them for their time.

In addition, three interviews have been conducted by Brenda Bravenboer. Bravenboer is a researcher who has been commissioned by Ohlthaver & List, presumably the largest private company of Namibia, to write a book on the company. In 2019 the company will exist a hundred years. She filmed the three interviews and gave permission to observe the raw unedited versions. It was a big opportunity, especially since one of the respondents regrettably passed away two years ago and is no longer available for interviews. This makes for a total

⁷³ On the difference between public and private archives in Africa: N. Mnjama, 'Using Archival Sources for Research in Africa', in: L.O. Aina, 'Introduction to Research', in: L.O. Aine (ed), *Research in Information Sciences: An African Perspective* (Ibadan 2002) 128-129.

⁷⁴ J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Suffolk 1985).

⁷⁵ B.H. Russell, *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Oxford 2006) 192; J. Ritchie and J. Lewis, J., *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers* (London 2003) 111.

⁷⁶ R.C. Williams, *The Historian's Toolbox: A Student's Guide to the Theory and Craft of History* (New York 2007) 154-155.

⁷⁷ The Reiterdenkmal is a statue to commemorate the German losses during the war with the Herero and the Nama between 1904-1908. The third chapter deals extensively with this controversial statue.

⁷⁸ This is a method that Emerson *et al.* describe as "recalling in order to write." For a detailed description, see R.M. Emerson, R.I. Fret zand LL. Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (Chicago 2011).

number of fifteen interviews. The brewers interviewed, form a group of mainly white males from German descent. It must be acknowledged that every member of society looks at history from its own perspective. The interviews however were focused on the behaviour of the brewery and not on the (political) course of Namibia. Furthermore, the literature and archival data supplement the expressed views.

Thirdly, visual material is studied. ‘Visual’ is meant in the broad sense of the term and this material is used to supplement the written and oral data. The most important subcategory is a collection of archival, private and self-made photos.⁷⁹ Permission has been given in all cases. Advertising is a second subcategory, especially (historical) beer posters contain a wealth of information.⁸⁰ Beer labels indicate which brands existed in the past and which image each brand wanted to bring forth. Finally, beer bottles and mugs are carefully examined artefacts. In some cases, for instance for the Omaruru brewery as described in chapter one, a wooden mug is one of the rare pieces of information. Over the course of both fieldwork periods, hundreds of photos and other visual items have been collected. Only a few are showcased in the thesis, in attempt to select visual items crucial for the story.

Limitations

The choice in methodologies is vast and some methods are promising for the study of the consumption and production of beer in Namibia. The use of data in economic history opens up a whole new range of possibilities. Aggregated (big) data and surveys can be used to quantify the market. On the other side of the methodological spectrum, an ethnographic description of beer drinkers can improve our understanding of how beer and identity are related. It is however important to limit the research to certain boundaries because of the problems concerned with the method and the available time for the research. Both methods could however be used for further research.

⁷⁹ Much inspiration is taken from the work on Namibian photographs by Hartmann *et al.* The editors argue that most researchers in Africa’s social history have limited interaction with photographs. In the case of Namibia, many photos of the National Archives do not even reach the “highly skilled and professional” researchers, let alone the general public. The aim of this thesis is to give much credit to the photos acquired during the fieldwork. W. Hartmann, J. Silvester and P. Hayes (eds), *The colonising camera: Photographs in the making of Namibian History* (Cape Town 1998).

⁸⁰ Tremendously interesting research has been done on the role of marketing in the African liquor market. See for example: S.J. Britten, *One nation, one beer: The mythology of the new South Africa in advertising* (unpublished PhD thesis, 2006), University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg; D. van den Bersselaar, ‘Who belongs to the ‘Star people’?: negotiating beer and gin advertisements in West Africa, 1949-1975’, *The Journal of African History* Vol. 52 No. 3 (2011) 385-408; A. Mager, *Beer, Sociability and Masculinity in South Africa* (Bloomington 2010).

Economic history has a serious flaw when it comes to the reliability of statistics. Morten Jerven eloquently shows the problems of using statistics in the African context, despite well-meant efforts from institutions as the Afrobarometer, United Nations and World Bank.⁸¹ The beer market still has a division between a formal and an informal sector: home brewing is expected to form a massive part of the drinking market but is very difficult to measure. A second problem is the availability of statistics. Neither the national government nor the national brewery have a numerical overview of the Namibian beer market. Only scattered information can be found through annual reports, interviews and newspapers. Therefore, the use of numbers in the analysis is limited and plays no crucial role. This project aims to be a socio-political history of an economic market – not a market research quantified in numbers.

An ethnographic description of beer drinkers does not entirely fit the research objectives. It is true that on the consumption side of the beer business, consumers are of foremost importance. Other studies have dealt with ethnographies of Namibian beer drinkers.⁸² This study nevertheless focuses on the long history of the various Namibian breweries: economic actors that in several ways influence those consumers.

⁸¹ M. Jerven, *Poor Numbers: How We Are Misled by African Development Statistics and What to Do about It* (Ithaca 2013).

⁸² S. van Wolputte, 'Beers and Bullets, Beads and Bulls. Drink and the Making of Margins in a Small Namibian Towns', in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking Spaces, States and Selves* (Münster 2010) 79-105; M. Fumanti, "'I Like My Windhoek Lager': Beer Consumption and the Making of Men in Namibia", in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking Spaces, States and Selves* (Münster 2010) 257-274; G. Dobler, 'License to Drink. Between Liberation and Inebriation in Northern Namibia', in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking Spaces, States and Selves* (Münster 2010) 167-191.

A centuries long tradition of home brewing

Namibia knows a centuries long tradition of home brewing, in which beer is a key drink. The idea that the history of beer brewing in Namibia began with the arrival of European settlers is a historical inaccuracy. Long before the establishment of formal European breweries the peoples that have in this area were involved in the brewing of so-called ‘traditional beer’.⁸³ More often than not these brews are marked as ‘traditional’, to distinguish them from bottled European-style beers. In essence the difference is home brewing versus manufactured, commercial brewing. Other forms of alcohol were also produced, such as wine- and brandy-like beverages. In order to counterbalance a narrow view on the commercial beer market, this prelude elaborates on the various cultures of home brewing in Namibia.

Virtually all ethnic groups in Namibia have rich drinking cultures. An important source of information on these phenomena are reports of foreign travellers and missionaries, who visited the south-western part of Africa prior to the establishment of the German protectorate.⁸⁴ In search of adventure, religion or fortune, they stumbled upon ethnic groups and their beer making rituals. The historian Jeremy Silvester noted that already in 1779 the European explorer Hendrik Wikar, who was employed by the Dutch East India Company for a few years, encountered a San family who had gathered around a pot of beer. This is perhaps the earliest written notion of beer in Namibia. Other European accounts followed.⁸⁵

An exceptionally detailed, although short, description of the Herero and Nama drinking culture was written by Heinrich Vedder, a well-known missionary and ethnographer.⁸⁶ Historians need to treat his work with care: Jan-Bart Gewald, Brigitte Lau and Jill Kinahan have argued convincingly that Vedder’s work is loaded with colonial prejudice.⁸⁷ An example is the claim that the Herero Revolt was partially caused by “the fact that the

⁸³ For more information on pre-colonial Namibia, see M. Wallace, *A History of Namibia: From the Beginning to 1990* (2011 Cape Town) 1-131.

⁸⁴ A few of them are T. Baines, *Explorations in South West Africa* (London 1864); V. Forbes, *Anders Sparman Travels in the Cape 1772-76* (Cape Town 1975); V. Forbes, *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa by George Thompson* (Cape Town 1968); H. Waterhouse, *Simon van der Stel’s Journal of his Expedition to Namaqualand, 1685-6* (London 1932); I. Rudner and J. Rudner, *Axel Wilhelm Eriksson of Hereroland (1846-1901): His Life and Letters* (Windhoek 2006).

⁸⁵ NAN, F002-NAMZ 0559, J. Silvester, A trail of broken beer bottles, the Namibian Weekender, 10/09/99.

⁸⁶ NSS, H. Vedder, ‘Notes on the Brewing of Kaffir Beer in S.W.A.: A History of Beer’, *Journal of the South West Africa Scientific Society*, Vol. 3 (1951) 41-43. Vedder’s most important work is H. Vedder, *Das alte Südwestafrika: Die Geschichte Südwestafrikas bis zum Tode Maharero 1890* (Berlin reprint 1985). Originally published in 1934.

⁸⁷ See the work of Jan-Bart Gewald, Brigitte Lau and Jill Kinahan in J.B. Gewald, *Herero Heroes: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia 1890-1923* (Oxford 1999) 5-6. Grotperter provides a short background of Vedder and pointed at his “pro-German missionary prejudice.” J.J. Grotperter, *Historical Dictionary of Namibia* (Metuchen 1994) 552-553.

paramount chief of the Herero was a drunkard” – academic studies have proven that the revolt was started for other reasons.⁸⁸ That does not mean however that all of Vedder’s ethnographic observations are immediately useless: his writings contain rare pieces of information.

Interesting is that the Herero supposedly did not have a drinking culture: the Nama introduced the intoxicating honey-beer to the Herero when an alliance was formed by the Nama chief Jonker Afrikaner and the Herero chief Kahitjene. Before this, the Nama tried to secure their secret by guarding stocks of wild honey. The increasing demand caused a shortage of this valuable ingredient; and sugar was used as a substitute. Sugar is now called *danib*, which means honey. Traders from Cape Town brought sugar to Jonker Afrikaner, who received it in return for cattle. A long distance trade with alcohol as a key factor was the result.⁸⁹

Beer played a central part in the “culture and diet” of the Oshivambo-speaking group, according to botanist Robert Rodin.⁹⁰ Anthropologist Hermann Tönjes, who spent nine years among the Ovambo at the start of the 20th century, describes beer (*omalodu*) as the “most important beverage.”⁹¹ Ovamboland is the colonial name of an administrative area in northern Namibia. The territory describes several polities whose inhabitants spoke closely related languages, collectively called the Oshivambo or Oshiwambo.⁹² These inhabitants made various beers, such as *omalodu* (“kaffir beer”⁹³), *oshikundu*⁹⁴ (“rough beer”) and *omanyeu* (“lighter beer”). Robin describes how the “rather complicated malting process” was in use for

⁸⁸ The quote comes from: NSS, H. Vedder, ‘Notes on the Brewing of Kaffir Beer in S.W.A.: A History of Beer’, *Journal of the South West Africa Scientific Society*, Vol. 3 (1951) 41-43. See for a proper academic explanation of the Herero Revolt: J.B. Gewald, *Herero Heroes: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia 1890-1923* (Oxford 1999).

⁸⁹ NSS, H. Vedder, ‘Notes on the Brewing of Kaffir Beer in S.W.A.: A History of Beer’, *Journal of the South West Africa Scientific Society*, Vol. 3 (1951) 41-43.

⁹⁰ Rodin gives an extensive overview of the plants that are used by the Ovambo, and made an interesting comment by writing that the complex malting process is “one of the evidences that a so-called primitive people are really not so.” R.J. Rodin, *The Ethnobotany of the Kwanyama Ovambos* (Lawrence 1985). This book is a reprint.

⁹¹ Tönjes gives detailed descriptions of how the beers are made and concludes delicately that the brews “will please a European’s palate.” H. Tönjes, *Ovamboland* (Windhoek 1996) 74-76. The first edition was published in German in 1911.

⁹² G. Dobler, *Traders and Trade in Colonial Ovamboland: Elite Formation and the Politics of Consumption under Indirect Rule and Apartheid, 1925-1990* (Basel 2014) XIX. Dobler provides a comprehensive historical overview of Ovamboland. Half of the population of Namibia lives in Ovamboland and this region played therefore a crucial role in the development of the commercial beer market. The third chapter deals with this topic. For a history on the Ovambo kingdoms see F.N. Williams, *Precolonial Communities of Southwestern Africa: A History of Ovambo Kingdoms 1600-1920* (Windhoek 1991).

⁹³ “Kaffir” is a derogatory term used to describe local population. In this case, the description comes from Rodin.

⁹⁴ For a contemporary study on *oshikundu*, see W. Embashu, A. Cheikhyoussef, G. Kahaka and S Lendelvo, ‘Processing methods of Oshikundu, a traditional beverage from sub-tribes within Aawambo culture in the Northern Namibia’, *Journal for Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences* Vol. 2, No. 1 (2013) 117-127.

hundreds of years before Europeans entered the area and that many households brewed beer daily.⁹⁵

A few recipes have survived the test of time and show the ingenuity of those brewers under rough circumstances. The term ‘beer’ is herein used in as a wide category of beer-like, low alcoholic substances. All sorts of ingredients with the ability to ferment were used: honey, sugar, fruit, mealie-meal, Boer-meal, corn and beans are examples.⁹⁶ Honey beer was widespread in southern and central Namibia, but other forms also existed, such as sugar beer.⁹⁷ Contrary to the practice of modern day breweries, the brewers in the aforementioned communities were and still are predominantly female.⁹⁸ Beer is a highly gendered drink.⁹⁹ It was very important that every household had a sufficient quantity of beer available. Beer was probably the most prevalent, but certainly not the only alcoholic beverage to be found in the region.¹⁰⁰ A recipe of sugar beer, written down by the German missionary Vedder, gives an idea of the creativity that was involved in brewing. According to Vedder, this beer was brewed several groups, including the Herero and Nama, and involve ingredients as peas and potatoes. Sometimes other ingredients are used, mealie-meal being an example:

⁹⁵ R.J. Rodin, *The Ethnobotany of the Kwanyama Ovambos* (Lawrence 1985).

⁹⁶ NSS, H. Vedder, ‘Notes on the Brewing of Kaffir Beer in S.W.A.: A History of Beer’, *Journal of the South West Africa Scientific Society*, Vol. 3 (1951) 41-43; NAN, F002-NAMZ 0559, J. Silvester, A trail of broken beer bottles, the Namibian Weekender, 10/09/99, NAN, F002-RARA/062, Native beverages 1931.

⁹⁷ NAN, F002-NAMZ 0559, J. Silvester, A trail of broken beer bottles, the Namibian Weekender, 10/09/99.

⁹⁸ NSS, H. Vedder, ‘Notes on the Brewing of Kaffir Beer in S.W.A.: A History of Beer’, *Journal of the South West Africa Scientific Society*, Vol. 3 (1951) 41-43; NAN, F002-NAMZ 0559, J. Silvester, A trail of broken beer bottles, the Namibian Weekender, 10/09/99; NAN, F002-RARA/062, Native beverages 1931.

⁹⁹ Tönjes writes for instance that in Ovamboland, all brewers were women, based on anthropological studies around 1900. H. Tönjes, *Ovamboland* (Windhoek 1996) 74-76. Several contemporary scholars dealt with the idea that beer can make a nation gendered. Van Beek argues for instance that beer is a male-dominated discourse, but that local beer is often brewed by women. W. van Beek, ‘Kapsiki beer dynamics’, in: C. Raimond, E. Garine and O. Langlois (eds.), *Ressources vivrières et choix alimentaires dans le bassin du Tchad* (Paris 2005) 477-499. Mager focuses on beer the connection between beer and masculinity in South Africa. A. Mager, *Beer, Sociability and Masculinity in South Africa* (Bloomington 2010). Similarly, Fumanti argues that beer is a way for Namibian males to show their masculinity. M. Fumanti, ‘“I Like My Windhoek Lager”: Beer Consumption and the Making of Men in Namibia’, in: S. van Wolputte and M. Fumanti (eds.), *Beer in Africa: Drinking Spaces, States and Selves* (Münster 2010) 257-274. Stevenson recognizes that in the advertisement of South West Breweries/Namibia Breweries the beer drinkers were mainly male, the only difference being that the males in the advertisement posters were depicted in different social spaces. The marketing showed a hunter drinking a seasonal dark beer, African men plying football, and at best a man embraced by two attractive women. In the words of Stevenson, “The posters (...) draw on male fantasies and connect them to specific brands.” D. Stevenson, “The Mysterious Demographics of Beer Drinking,” in: G. Miescheir, L. Rizzo and J. Silvester (eds.), *Posters in Action* (Basel 2009) 106-107.

¹⁰⁰ Other drinks include wine made of various fruits (*omavinju*), brandy (*olambika*), mead (*lafaula*) and palm wine (*omavinju*). While the majority of the sources deal with the Ovambo, other groups also made several forms of liquor. The Oorlam community made for instance brandy. R.J. Rodin, *The Ethnobotany of the Kwanyama Ovambos* (Lawrence 1985); NAN, F002-NAMZ 0559, J. Silvester, A trail of broken beer bottles, the Namibian Weekender, 10/09/99; NAN, F002-RARA/062, Native beverages 1931.

“In a suitable receptacle (barrel, paraffin tin, etc.) 4-10 lbs. of sugar are mixed with a few pounds of peas and about ten potatoes cut into small bits in hot water. Cold water is then added until the receptacle is filled with lukewarm water. This mixture is made to ferment by keeping the receptacle warm with skins and blankets or by burying it in the earth to escape detection, until it has lost its taste of sugar.”¹⁰¹

There were multiple reasons for drinking beer. The homebrewed beer was a relatively healthy drink. Rodin describes the beer of the Ovambo as “very nutritious and an important dietary component.”¹⁰² Furthermore, it was used as a way of dealing with a poor quality of water¹⁰³, similar to the practices in medieval Europe. But the production and consumption of beer also had an important ritual function, something which is also recognized in other African societies.¹⁰⁴

It is important to note that these traditions keep carry on today. The advent of modern breweries with mass-scale production did not erase the existence of homemade beer, although the used methods and ingredients may have changed throughout time. It is estimated that local brewing of beer still formal a major part of the contemporary Namibian liquor market, although it is difficult to measure this. Especially the rural areas of the country are expected to have a lively home brewing culture, but even in Katatura, the township of Windhoek were an estimated 60 percent of the city’s population lives, are homemade drinks like *tombo* available.¹⁰⁵ Namibian home brewing would be a perfect topic for future research.

The reason to add this prelude is to make clear that home brewing is a crucial part of the Namibian beer market. It is correct when argued that Namibia Breweries dominates the Namibian beer market, insofar the commercial (formal) beer market is meant. Namibians have been home brewing beer for centuries and are still doing so. A substantial part of the actual beer market consists of these home brews, which form a vital part of Namibian societies. The existence of home brewing keeps coming back throughout the narrative of this thesis.

¹⁰¹ NSS, H. Vedder, ‘Notes on the Brewing of Kaffir Beer in S.W.A.: A History of Beer’, *Journal of the South West Africa Scientific Society*, Vol. 3 (1951) 41-43.

¹⁰² R.J. Rodin, *The Ethnobotany of the Kwanyama Ovambos* (Lawrence 1985).

¹⁰³ NAN, F002-NAMZ 0559, J. Silvester, A trail of broken beer bottles, the Namibian Weekender, 10/09/99.

¹⁰⁴ I. De Garine and V. de Garine (eds.), *Drinking: Anthropological Approaches* (New York 2001); M. Douglas (ed.), *Constructive Drinking: Perspectives on Drink from Anthropology* (Cambridge 1987); H. Hahn, ‘Consumption, Identities and Agency in Africa: Introduction’, in: Hahn, H. (ed.), *Consumption in Africa: Anthropological Approaches* (Berlin 2008) 9-42.

¹⁰⁵ *Tombo* is a very strong homebrewed drink. *Oshikundu* and other brews are also easily accessible.

I The first formal breweries

1900 – 1920

The popular imagine of the Namibian beer market is characterized by Namibia Breweries, but this chapter hopes to demonstrate that there is an elaborate history before the formation of the predecessor of NBL. A whole range of small breweries emerged in the early years of colonization. Only through specific historic events it became possible that two of these companies merged together as NBL and were able to gradually dominate the beer market in time.

The arrival of European settlers

The area that is now Namibia experienced a vast influx of European settlers after the establishment of the German Protectorate in 1884. During the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 the European colonization of Africa was regulated. This ‘Scramble for Africa’ resulted in the division of the African continent between European superpowers. Germany also felt the desire of becoming an imperial power and claimed inter alia ‘German South West Africa’ (GSWA). Already before that time European traders set foot on this area but the claims were finalized with the outcome of the Conference. This is the reason why the eastern border of Namibia is a perfect straight line – according to the stories, the European countries used a ruler to draw straight lines on the continental map.¹⁰⁶ The borders of GSWA are almost the same as contemporary Namibia, with an important exception of the port Walvis Bay, which was British territory.¹⁰⁷

A wide variety of goods were imported from Germany to support the new colony. German and other European settlers quickly began setting up an administration in this stretch of land that was still largely unknown to them. All sorts of goods were imported with the steamers from the Woermann Line: building materials, horses and rifles, and also beer. The settlers did not drink the existing local homebrews on a large scale, presumably because those drinks had a totally different character and relationships between the different groups were not well established.

¹⁰⁶ All standard works on African history deal with the Scramble for Africa. A starting point: J.D. Fage, *A History of Africa* (London 1988).

¹⁰⁷ M. Wallace, *A History of Namibia: From the Beginning to 1990* (2011 Cape Town) 9 and more; P. Hayes, J. Silvester, M. Wallace and W. Hartmann (eds.), *Namibia under South African Rule: Mobility and Containment 1915-46* (Oxford 1988) 3 and more; for a specific work on a highly contested area see B. Kangumu, *Contesting Caprivi: A History of Colonial Isolation and Regional Nationalism in Namibia* (Basel 2011).

Many of the imported beer bottles are still being found during the construction of buildings, and are a valuable items for collectors. Some of the labels are still intact and reveal interesting insights in the long-distance trade from more than hundred years ago. The bottles came from cities such as Hamburg and Munich and were imported to specific places like Swakopmund and Windhoek.¹⁰⁸ The bottles were made of thick glass to withstand the fermentation process during the sea trip. The glass was darkly coloured (black, brown or green) to block the light, as this could disturb the maturing process of the beer.¹⁰⁹

In those days, drinking was the main leisure activity for the settlers. Male settlers outnumbered females by two to one, and drinking beer was an important recreation for this group. Statistics from 1903 illustrate the heavy consumption. From the 167 firm licences in GSWA, 53 were concerned with alcohol – that is one third of all businesses! In Windhoek there was one bar for every 41 settlers!¹¹⁰ Later an exemplary complaint was the existence of “Windhoekeritis”: meaning the evil of drinking, gambling and prostitution, which spread all over the country from the capital.¹¹¹ After diamonds were discovered in Lüderitzbucht, prospector Fred Cornell visited the area. His impression was as follows:

“The first thing that struck me was the enormous number of empty bottles that lay piled and scattered about in all directions.”¹¹²

Following the occupation by South Africa in 1915, the indulgence of these settlers was widely deployed in an anti-German campaign. The following quote must be examined in its own context, but still shows a little bit of the drinking practices among settlers. Dr. H. F. B. Walker wrote:

“I believe the Germans here are heavy drinkers (...) A small place like Swakopmund had over thirty hotels and beershops. Breweries and distilleries abound (...) it would not be safe to walk anywhere in the country with bare feet, because you would cut yourself with broken glass. On the mountain-tops, in the desert or bush, you will find bottles; you see buildings and walls made of bottles and mud, garden paths and beds are ornamented with them (...).”¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ I would like to thank the Swakopmund Museum in Swakopmund for the chance to take a close look at the bottles and make photos. An address book from 1908 makes it clear that beer could be imported via various companies in Hamburg. NSS, Fitzner, R., Adressbuch für Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1908 (Berlin 1908) XXXV.

¹⁰⁹ E. Lastovia and A. Lastovia, *Bottles & Bygones* (Cape Town 1982).

¹¹⁰ R. Gordon, ‘Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia’, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 7.

¹¹¹ R. Gordon, ‘Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia’ 9-10.

¹¹² *Ibidem* 6-7.

¹¹³ *Ibidem* 7.

The import of beer was however not a long-term solution to provide for the thirst of the new inhabitants of German South West Africa. The beer was strong and dark, as it had to withstand a long sea journey. The hot and arid climate of the colony was, to be fair, quite unsuitable for such drinks.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, importing goods was expensive, and that it was difficult to predict the demand while the delivery took a long time. Soon it became clear that another solution was necessary: the settlers were on the eve of starting their own breweries in the territory.

But any industry could only emerge and grow after the colonial rule was consolidated, and this happened through war, most notably the battles that raged between 1904-1908 following the Herero and Nama uprisings.¹¹⁵ Conflict and tension led to these military actions, which finally resulted in the first genocide of the twentieth century and concentration camps.¹¹⁶ The “Namibian War” as Marion Wallace names it, is of “great historical significance” and the repercussions are still powerful. The fighting led to a structure of unequal and racial determined land ownership.¹¹⁷ After the wars, the German rule was much stronger established than before.

How to establish a brewery

The locations for the first formal breweries can be explained by an analysis of three key factors that are necessary to brew successfully. The first factor is the presence of people: a business cannot be sustained without consumers. The second factor is the availability of water: water is of extreme importance for brewing beer, especially in an arid climate as in Namibia. Both the quantity and quality of water are vital. The third factor is means of transport: transport is crucial for the import of brewing equipment and ingredients, and the export of the manufactured beers to other towns in the territory. An analysis of these factors is meant to give context to the history as laid out in the thesis. The geographical characteristics of an area heavily influence the historical events.

¹¹⁴ Mentioned in various NBL sources, such as NLN, 96/0511 B, Namibia Breweries Limited, 1920-1995. It also makes sense. Even today Namibian beers are generally relatively low in alcohol (a lager contains four percent alcohol, while a percentage around the five is customary).

¹¹⁵ For a detailed overview, see J.B. Gewald, *Herero Heroes: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia 1890-1923* (Oxford 1999).

¹¹⁶ C.W. Erichsen, „*The angel of death has descended violently among them*“ *Concentration camps and prisoners-of-war in Namibia, 1904-08* (Leiden 2005).

¹¹⁷ M. Wallace, *A History of Namibia: From the Beginning to 1990* (2011 Cape Town) 155.

This thesis makes a distinction between two kinds of breweries. The first are informal breweries, meaning home brewers. Informal breweries provide beer for a family or a small community. Often these beers are described as ‘traditional’. The second are formal breweries, meaning registered companies that produce manufactured beers for a commercial market.

Consumers

German South West Africa had a small and scattered population. Similar to other parts of Africa, the colonization of Namibia was a slow and uneven process.¹¹⁸ The judicial claims formulated during the Scramble for Africa did not immediately match the on-site presence by settlers. The first full scale census of the South African administration dates back to 1920.¹¹⁹ Population statistics from before this date are rare and difficult to obtain.¹²⁰ An example is an overview of the district of Otjimbingwe from 1896, roughly a decade after the establishment of the colony and a few years before the first breweries were founded. 339 white settlers lived in this district that contained some of the most important towns of Namibia, including Swakopmund, Omaruru and Otjimbingwe.¹²¹ While this picture does not account for the subsequent population growth and is therefore not representative of the white population between 1900-1920, it underlines the claim that the territory had a small and scattered white population. This is due to two other factors that are described below: the low availability of water and the sheer size of the country.

¹¹⁸ T.B. Hansen, and F. Stepputat, ‘Sovereignty Revisited’, *Annual Review of Anthropology* Vol. 35 (2006) 296. Hayes *et al.* argue that “Namibia is striking for the unevenness in the timing and spread of new capitalist and colonial relations.” When South Africa took over the German administration, the colonial state was still “ill-informed and weak.” In a period of thirty years, the “state had consolidated itself to a considerable degree.” P. Hayes, J. Silvester, M. Wallace and W. Hartmann (eds.), *Namibia under South African Rule: Mobility and Containment 1915-46* (Oxford 1988) 4.

¹¹⁹ NSS, Territory of South-West Africa, Report on the Census of the European Population, taken on the 3th May, 1921; NSS, Territory of South West Africa, Report on the Census of the European Population, taken on the 4th May, 1926.

¹²⁰ More research is necessary to provide a clear picture. A starting point could be the address books in the collection of the Namibia Scientific Society (from 1908 to the 1930s), which contain bits of information on the population.

¹²¹ Windhoek is not in the overview. In the early years of colonization, Otjimbingwe was a centre of the colonial administration. The government moved to Windhoek in 1892. After the railway was completed between Windhoek and Swakopmund, Otjimbingwe declined greatly in size. The population overview makes a distinction between Germans, Englishmen, Swedes, people from the Cape (“Kapländer”), Boers and Finish. The highest amount of settlers lived in Otjimbingwe, 73 Germans and 9 people from the Cape. Omaruru and Swakopmund come second and third. NSS, A. Bourquin, Omaruru: Die Geschichte einer Stadt (unpublished, 1969) 54.

Water

Access to water is fundamental for survival and in the history of Namibia, human movement and settlement has always been limited due to the availability of water.¹²² In pre-colonial times, people relied on surface and rainwater, springs, wells and cisterns. In the 19th century permanent settlements emerged, places that have now grown into modern towns. All of these places were close to rain- and groundwater supplies.¹²³ The first dams were built by missionaries, the first one probably erected in the 1850s.¹²⁴ One of the key tasks of the colonial administration was subsequently to harness and develop the water supplies.¹²⁵ The influx of settlers resulted in the expropriation of land from African owners and the emergence of towns. An infrastructure was necessary to support colonial trade and administration. The existing water supply was by far not sustainable when the settler economy emerged.¹²⁶ Dams were constructed, aquifers tapped, and with the introduction of drilled boreholes in the late 1800s and early 1900s, deep groundwater could be extracted.¹²⁷ Before 1906, the borehole drilling happened on an ad hoc basis. This changed in that year, when the activities were centralized.¹²⁸ The water supplied by boreholes remained the major water source in the German era.¹²⁹ Plans were made to build dams, as dams were the key factor in the German

¹²² The average rainfall is very unpredictable and varies from year to year and place to place. On average Namibia receives a rainfall of 250 mm per year. Along the coast this is less than 25 mm per annum, while in the Zambezi and the Karstveld area this is above 500 mm per annum. Besides a highly unpredictable rainfall is the high evaporation rate is a huge challenge for storing water. High temperatures, clear skies and low humidity result in a situation where the potential evaporation is five times greater than the average rainfall. 83 per cent of the rainfall is lost to evaporation, while 14 per cent is used by plants and released into the atmosphere. Only 3 per cent can be used to benefit people and animals. Permanent rivers are only found in the northern and southern parts of the country, and are shared with neighbouring states. Most of the country has no access to this water because of the enormous distances. The remaining rivers are ephemeral rivers, which means that they only flow for a short time after good rainfall. P. Heyns, S. Montgomery, J. Pallet and M. Seely (eds.), *Namibia's Water* 50; G. Christelis, and Wilhelm Struckmeier (eds.), *Groundwater in Namibia, an explanation to the Hydrogeological Map* (Windhoek 2001) 11; 24; 43; 46; 57; 157; G. Christelis, and Wilhelm Struckmeier (eds.), *Groundwater in Namibia, an explanation to the Hydrogeological Map* (Windhoek 2001) 11, 23.

¹²³ B. Lau and C. Sterk, *Namibian Water Resources and their Management: A Preliminary History*, ARCHEIA No. 15 (Windhoek 1990) 4.

¹²⁴ B. Lau and C. Sterk, *Namibian Water Resources and their Management* 26.

¹²⁵ P. Heyns, S. Montgomery, J. Pallet and M. Seely (eds.), *Namibia's Water, A Decision Makers' Guide* (Windhoek 1998) 159.

¹²⁶ B. Lau and C. Sterk, *Namibian Water Resources and their Management: A Preliminary History*, ARCHEIA No. 15 (Windhoek 1990) 5.

¹²⁷ P. Heyns, S. Montgomery, J. Pallet and M. Seely (eds.), *Namibia's Water, A Decision Makers' Guide* (Windhoek 1998) 159.

¹²⁸ B. Lau and C. Sterk, *Namibian Water Resources and their Management: A Preliminary History*, ARCHEIA No. 15 (Windhoek 1990) 63.

¹²⁹ B. Lau and C. Sterk, *Namibian Water Resources and their Management* 6.

water management policy.¹³⁰ Namibia is the driest country south of the Sahara and this drastically impacts where people live.¹³¹

Transport

Because of the sheer size of the country, mobility was always a central theme throughout history. Namibia is the world's thirty-four largest country but has, due to the harsh climatological conditions, a limited amount of inhabitants. Even today Namibia, after Mongolia, is the least densely populated country in the world. More than a hundred years ago during the German era the population was even smaller. The settlers entered an enormous and largely unknown stretch of land with a great variety of geographical features, including the oldest desert in the world, high mountains, wide and empty stretches of savanna and a delta in the north. Often settlers travelled by ox wagons or horses. The army even had a department with camel riders, while in the postal service indigenous boys transported the mail by foot, crossing large distances. Eventually the train was introduced to the territory, making it much easier to transport goods and people.¹³²

As soon as the settlers settled down, towns emerged and trade developed, a whole range of breweries popped up seemingly out of nowhere. Archival research shows that all over the country breweries were built. Most probably not all companies were properly recorded in the archives, which means that it is likely that even more breweries saw the light of day. This thesis focuses on the 'beer triangle': Swakopmund, Windhoek and Omaruru. The following paragraph describes these brewing towns in detail. Besides the triangle, a whole range of other breweries were found in this era. In northern Namibia there were breweries in Otavi¹³³ and Grootfontein¹³⁴. In central Namibia, the places Karibib¹³⁵, Okahandja¹³⁶ and Rehoboth¹³⁷

¹³⁰ Ibidem 26.

¹³¹ P. Heyns, S. Montgomery, J. Pallet and M. Seely (eds.), *Namibia's Water, A Decision Makers' Guide* (Windhoek 1998) 45; G. Christelis, and Wilhelm Struckmeier (eds.), *Groundwater in Namibia, an explanation to the Hydrogeological Map* (Windhoek 2001) 6.

¹³² U. Jäschke and B. Bravenboer (eds.), *History of the Namibian road sector* (Windhoek 2011).

¹³³ In Otavi a brewery was known in 1906. Karl Knatz was the owner of a hotel and brewery. E.P.W. Freyer, *Chronik von Otavi und Umgebung 1906-1966* (Windhoek 1966) 35.

¹³⁴ Based on a photo, the brewery was located in or near Grootfontein. NSS, Brauerei - Blick über den Staudamm der Farm Gemsbocklaagte auf einen Schweinekoben (links) und eine Brauerei (rechts) 1448/11/J11.

¹³⁵ In Karibib, a town on the Kahn River between Swakopmund and Windhoek, an address book mentions in 1908 a Bierbrauerei und Selterwasserfabrik from H. Kahl. Also the Karibiber Brauerei und Mineralwasserfabrik existed, in 1912. The director was Carl Hanke. NSS, Fitzner, R., *Adressbuch für Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1908* (Berlin 1908) 51; SSS, 2004.115.2, Rechnung der Brauerei Hanke in Karibib and Herr Hier.

¹³⁶ In Okahandja a brewery was owned by C. Bauer. This man has the same name as the Mr. Bauer whom started one of the largest breweries in Windhoek (see further in this chapter), but it is unsure whether the Mr. Bauer

had a brewery. In southern Namibia, Lüderitzbucht¹³⁸ (modern Lüderitz) and Keetmanshoop¹³⁹ established themselves as brewing towns. New breweries emerged throughout time.

The beer triangle

In the early 1900s three places in German South West Africa emerged as influential brewing towns: Swakopmund, Omaruru and Windhoek. The three towns are all part of the Central Namib-Windhoek area, but also share an interwoven history.¹⁴⁰ The main breweries of the beer triangle in 1920 merged into South West Breweries (modern Namibian Breweries).¹⁴¹ In this way their legacy is still tangible in the single company that dominates the national brewing market for the past century. The surprising stories of these predecessors have long remained hidden because they were never written down. For the sake of history, the thesis highlights the stories of the brewing towns until 1920.

Swakopmund: the beginning

Swakopmund formed the start of the commercial brewing industry of Namibia. Nowadays it is mostly a quiet place, but back then, Swakopmund had the hustle and bustle of a harbour that formed the beginning of many colonial endeavours. The coastal town was founded in 1892 as the harbour for German South West Africa.¹⁴² The already existing harbour in Walvis Bay was British territory and therefore not available for Germans. Through Swakopmund, the

from Okahandja is the same person. NSS, Fitzner, R., Adressbuch für Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1908 (Berlin 1908) 64.

¹³⁷ In Rehoboth a brewery existed by Breckwoldt & Müller. NSS, Fitzner, R., Adressbuch für Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1908 (Berlin 1908) 78.

¹³⁸ The coastal town Lüderitzbucht also had a brewery from Johannes Osbahr, the same owner as the brewery in Keetmanshoop. The link between those companies is uncertain. NSS, Fitzner, R., Adressbuch für Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1908 (Berlin 1908) 59.

¹³⁹ In 1908 Johannes Osbahr is mentioned as the owner of the brewery in Keetmanshoop. Karl Fischer established a brewery in 1911 in the same town: the Bürgerliches Brauhaus G.m.b.H., also known as the Keetmanshooper Brauerei und Mineralwasser Fabrik Karl Fischer & Co. It is uncertain if both companies were the same or different. A year before an ice-making factory opened up, which is part of the brewery. Mr. Fischer made Weissbier which apparently was a success: a part of the Brauhaus was turned into a beer garden, the Garden Café. NSS, Fitzner, R., Adressbuch für Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1908 (Berlin 1908) 53; SSS, 2004.115.26, Brewery Historical Information – How it was established in Keetmanshoop. A brewery in Keetmanshoop is also mentioned in the report of the Chamber of Commerce: NSS, Jahresbericht der Windhuker Handelskammer 1913.

¹⁴⁰ The term ‘beer triangle’ is coined because of their triangular connection on the map and the joint role they play in the history of German South West Africa. Identifying triangles is not uncommon: Grootfontein, Otavi and Tsumeb form for example the ‘maize triangle’. P. Heyns, S. Montgomery, J. Pallet and M. Seely (eds.), *Namibia’s Water, A Decision Makers’ Guide* (Windhoek 1998) 77.

¹⁴¹ P. Heyns, S. Montgomery, J. Pallet and M. Seely (eds.), *Namibia’s Water* 28.

¹⁴² For more on Swakopmund, see: H. Rautenberg, *Das alte Swakopmund: 1892-1919* (Swakopmund 1967); Scientific Society Swakopmund, *Swakopmund: Eine kleine Chronik* (Swakopmund 2006); C. von Dewitz, *Swakopmund: Der kleine Stadtführer* (Windhoek 2009).

building materials and many persons entered the territory for the first time. The word Swakopmund is a combination of the bastardized Nama name ‘Tsoachaub’ (the original name for the place) and the German ‘mund’ (mouth).¹⁴³ Two breweries will be discussed: the Swakopmunder Brauerei and the Kronenbrauerei.

The first formal brewery established by settlers was most probably the Swakopmunder Brauerei of Rudolph Jauch.¹⁴⁴ The brewery opened early 1900 and sold the beer ‘Bavaria-Bräu’. One source mentions February 1 as the starting date¹⁴⁵, while another source mentions February 25.¹⁴⁶ The Prince Regent Luitpold von Bayern sent a congratulatory telegram for the opening.¹⁴⁷ Advertisements of 1901 promoted the Berliner style Weissbier and dunkles beer, products that are suitable for sending to the interior of the country.¹⁴⁸ In 1902 Hermann Dietz announced to all the “inhabitants of Swakopmund and travellers passing through” that he had taken over the serving of the Weissbier-Brauerei in his former Hotel Germania. This place was next to the brewery.¹⁴⁹ An overview of companies in Swakopmund in 1902 shows that the company was listed as a beer brewery and employed two white and seven coloured people.¹⁵⁰ What happened with the Swakopmunder Brauerei is uncertain.¹⁵¹

A second brewery opened up in 1912: the Kronenbrauerei (or Kronen-Brauerei).¹⁵² Johann Heuschneider was the director, a key figure in the history of brewing in Namibia.¹⁵³ The brewery was in the middle of town and famous for its Kronenbrau. The water in Swakopmund had an excessively high saline content, it was after all a harbour town. Therefore the water needed to be distilled before it could be used for the production of beer.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴³ A.P.J. Albertyn, *Die Ensiklopedie Van Name In Suidwes-Afrika* (Pretoria 1984) 95.

¹⁴⁴ SSS, 2004.19.59, Anzeigen: Ein guter Spiegel der damaligen Wirtschaftslage.

¹⁴⁵ H. Rautenberg, *Das alte Swakopmund: 1892-1919* (Swakopmund 1967) 152.

¹⁴⁶ SSS, 2000.1.702, Hundert Jahre Südwestafrika.

¹⁴⁷ SSS, 2000.1.702, Hundert Jahre Südwestafrika.

¹⁴⁸ SSS, 2004.19.59, Anzeigen: Ein guter Spiegel der damaligen Wirtschaftslage.

¹⁴⁹ SSS, 2000.1.860, Geschäfts-Eröffnung; H. Rautenberg, *Das alte Swakopmund: 1892-1919* (Swakopmund 1967) 152.

¹⁵⁰ H. Rautenberg, *Das alte Swakopmund* 155.

¹⁵¹ An Adressbuch from 1908 mentions the existence of the foundation of a brewery in 1905 (“Brauereigesellschaft Swakopmund, G.m.b.H”), and in the existence of two breweries in 1908: “Bierbrauereien: Brauereigesellschaft Swakopmund, G.m.b.H. (Heinrich Eggert, Geschäftsführer; Engelbert de Fries, Stellvertreter); Fischer & Co.” More research is needed to see how this fits into the story. NSS, Fitzner, R., *Adressbuch für Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1908* (Berlin 1908) 16, 83.

¹⁵² SSS Gründung der Ersten Brauerei; also recognized in NSS, Jahresbericht der Windhuker Handelskammer 1912; NAN, F002-cp, H. Heuschneider, *Kleine Chronik der Hansa-Brauerei* 2005 3; SSS, 2004.19.33, Gründung der ersten Brauerei 1912, Felsenkeller-Brauerei in Windhoek.

¹⁵³ Johann Heuschneider was not only involved in the Kronenbrauerei, but also in the Felsenkellerbrauerei, Union Brewery and Hansa Brewery. All of these breweries are discussed in the thesis.

¹⁵⁴ SSS, 2000.1.907, Erweiterung der Kronen-Brauerei.

In 1914 Heuschneider and his company are mentioned in an overview of companies in Swakopmund.¹⁵⁵

The business of the Kronenbrauerei grew. A newspaper article from 1913 discusses the expansion of the Kronenbrauerei in Swakopmund. The brewing industry at the time was growing, and locally produced beers displaced almost entirely the import of the German beers. The company made a couple of significant enlargements to the brewery. A new boiler house was built, the ice plant was enlarged, and the fermentation and storage cellars were enlarged.¹⁵⁶ A few years later, in 1919, the company was able to build a brewery deep in the heart of enemy territory: Windhoek.¹⁵⁷ The brewers of Swakopmund had certainly left their mark on the brewing industry of German South West Africa.¹⁵⁸

Windhoek: the centre

Windhoek was the centre of the brewing activities. The city owes its existence to a few hot springs.¹⁵⁹ The Nama named the place /A//gams, which means ‘hot water’ or ‘fire water’. The Herero named it Otjomuise, meaning ‘place of the smoke’. The change of name to Windhoek is in itself surrounded by smoke. One of the theories is that Jonker Afrikaner named the place after the birthplace of his father, Jager Afrikaner. A second theory is that Jonker Afrikaner named it after the Winterhoek Mountains in the Cape Province.¹⁶⁰ A popular third story is that the name is derived from the fact that Windhoek is very windy. In the beginning of the 1900s, just when a new century began, two breweries emerged in Windhoek: the Schmidt Brauerei and the Felsenkellerbrauerei. Both companies merged in 1912.

In Klein Windhoek a brewery was opened by Friedrich Schmidt in 1902.¹⁶¹ Schmidt was born in 1867 in Nähermemmingen, Germany, as a son of a brewer. In search of adventure he arrived in Swakopmund in 1901. A year later he established a brewery in Klein Windhoek. Article 11 of the company’s Articles of Association said that whenever Schmidt was in town,

¹⁵⁵ H. Rautenberg, *Das alte Swakopmund: 1892-1919* (Swakopmund 1967) 324.

¹⁵⁶ SSS, 2000.1.907, Erweiterung der Kronen-Brauerei.

¹⁵⁷ SSS, 2004.31.28, Zur Feier der Eröffnung der Kronen-Brauerei in Windhoek.

¹⁵⁸ The building of the Kronenbrauerei in Swakopmund was later turned into the Grapevine Restaurant: NAN, F002-cp, H. Heuschneider, *Kleine Chronik der Hansa-Brauerei* 2005 3. Currently the place is transformed into the Swakopmund Plaza. Some of the remnants of the old brewery became visible during the construction work of the Plaza, but everything is now turned into modern glass and cement. What happened with the buildings of the Swakopmunder Brauerei and the Kronenbrauerei in Windhoek is not clear.

¹⁵⁹ For more in the history of Windhoek, see B. Bravenboer, *Windhoek: Capital of Namibia* (Windhoek 2004); C. von Dewitz, *Windhoek: A brief city guide* (Windhoek 2009).

¹⁶⁰ A.P.J. Albertyn, *Die Ensiklopedie Van Name In Suidwes-Afrika* (Pretoria 1984) 101-102.

¹⁶¹ Although the South West Africa Annual writes Heinrich, it is actually Friedrich, according to his granddaughter. NSS, *South West Africa Annual, 1953 / Suidwes-Afrika-Jaarboek, 1953*; Interview with Brijette Schünemann (4 February 2016).

the beer was free for his employees. A few years later he stopped with working as a brewer because of health reasons: Schmidt was no longer allowed to drink alcohol, and saw no use in being a brewer who cannot drink.¹⁶²

The Felsenkellerbrauerei was opened in 1902 by Karl Bauer and Richard Kretschmann.¹⁶³ The brewery was located on the intersection of Tal Street and Garten Street. At that time clear water flowed through the Tal Valley.¹⁶⁴ Bauer and Kretschmann bought a piece of land from the government on 17 April 1902 and are named in the documents as brewery owners and brewers.¹⁶⁵ Already on 28 October 1902 Bauer sent a letter with “Felsenkeller-Brauerei Windhoek” on the letterhead.¹⁶⁶ A large change in the company’s structure occurred five years later, in 1907. In this year Kretschmann became the owner of the land.¹⁶⁷ Subsequently, a contract from 1907 shows the establishment of the Felsenkellerbrauerei G.m.b.H. (Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung). Kretschmann is named as brewery-owner and Johann Heuschneider, the same man who later started the Kronenbrauerei, is named as the brew master.¹⁶⁸ Karl Bauer is nowhere to be found in the contract and following documents. Presumably he stepped out of the brewing business.

With the formation of the new company structure 1907 a number of personal changes followed. Two days after the signing of the treaty, Kretschmann began selling his shares. This also continued in 1908.¹⁶⁹ Documents from 1910 indicate that he left GSWA and moved to Canada.¹⁷⁰ In the meantime the public was informed about the new company via publications in the *Deutsch-Südwestafrikanischen Zeitung* and the *Windhuker Nachrichten* on 15 October 1907. The leaders of the company were brew master Heuschneider and director Franz

¹⁶² Interview with Brijitte Schünemann (4 February 2016). Brijitte Schünemann is the granddaughter of Karl Friedrich Schmidt. Together with a number of family members she showed me several photos, beer mugs, news articles, and a brewing diploma of Schmidt, and told me many stories. The interview was primarily conducted with Brijitte Schünemann. After Schmidt stopped working as a brewer, a heavy influenza in 1918 killed many brewers in the territory. This caused Schmidt to come back every day to supervise the brewing procedures. He used one of the first motor cars in the country. After forty years of living and working in South West Africa Schmidt returned to Germany, where he died and is buried with his family.

¹⁶³ C. von Dewitz, *Windhoek: A brief city guide* (Windhoek 2009) 50-51.

¹⁶⁴ NSS, South West Africa Annual, 1953.

¹⁶⁵ NAN, BWI 184, Grunderwerb. Felsenkeller Brauerei (Vormals Karl Bauer und Kretschmann): Verhandelt, 17/06/1903. While the file name says ‘Kretschmann’, the documents in the file say Kretschmann. The latter is used in this thesis.

¹⁶⁶ NAN, BWI 184, Grunderwerb. Felsenkeller Brauerei (Vormals Karl Bauer und Kretschmann).

¹⁶⁷ NAN, BWI 184, Grunderwerb. Felsenkeller Brauerei (Vormals Karl Bauer und Kretschmann): Gouvernementssekretär in Windhoek, 10/01/1908, to the Kaiserliche Bezirksamt.

¹⁶⁸ NAN, HRW 9, Handelsregistersache. Felsenkellerbrauerei Windhuk: Gesellschaftsvertrag 10/07/07; SSS, 2004.19.33, Gründung der ersten Brauerei 1912, Felsenkeller-Brauerei in Windhoek; NSS, Fitzner, R., Adressbuch für Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1908 (Berlin 1908) 18.

¹⁶⁹ NAN, HRW 9, Handelsregistersache. Felsenkellerbrauerei Windhuk: several documents show the selling of shares. They are all in this file.

¹⁷⁰ NAN, HRW 9, Handelsregistersache. Felsenkellerbrauerei Windhuk: Ausfertigung 06/12/1910, and other documents in this file.

Gramowski.¹⁷¹ Heuschneider was not long involved in the company. In June 1910, Leopold Mahler became the new director of the company.¹⁷² A few months later, in November, was Heuschneider replaced as a brew master by Fritz Hummel.¹⁷³ The reasoning behind this decision is unclear, but a conflict was born, as the remainder of this chapter shows.

For a few years, the two companies managed to brew and market their beers. They produced Helles Bier (a Pilsener type of lager) and Dunkles Bier (a Munich type of lager). Seasonally a Bockbier is produced. Draught beer was also present in Windhoek and throughout the territory.¹⁷⁴ The young brewing industry saw an increase in sales in 1910, partly because the construction of the railway resulted in an increase of thirsty domestic customers. Competition of imported beer however was fierce and the future of the young industry uncertain. The chamber of commerce in Windhoek recognized the difficulties the small breweries faced and pointed out that help from the government was desirable.¹⁷⁵ The next year brought no improvement. The newly constructed railway reduced the price for beer brewers and unfavourable new government regulations made it more difficult to serve beer.¹⁷⁶ The growing shortage of money and high freight costs troubled the Felsenkeller brewery in Windhoek.¹⁷⁷ Slowly the beer import from Germany decreased significantly because the breweries were able to conquer the market. The sale area became bigger and breweries bought or leased hotels. The price of beer remained very low, due to the high rail tariffs. This was an obstacle for the expansion of the industry.¹⁷⁸

Both companies merged in 1912, forming the Felsenkellerbrauerei A.G. Until 1912, the Felsenkellerbrauerei was known as the Felsenkeller-Brauerei G.m.b.H. Dampfbrauerei und Eisfabrik.¹⁷⁹ But on the 10th of February, the directors met in Hotel zur Kaiserkrone with a number of business people, including Friederich Schmidt, the owner of the Schmidt Brauerei. It was decided that the two breweries should be merged.¹⁸⁰ Six days later the Felsenkellerbrauerei A.G. (Aktiengesellschaft) was founded.¹⁸¹ The two independent

¹⁷¹ NAN, HRW 9, Handelsregistersache. Felsenkellerbrauerei Windhuk: Bekanntmachung 15/10/1907.

¹⁷² NAN, HRW 9, Handelsregistersache. Felsenkellerbrauerei Windhuk: Bekanntmachung 17/06/1910.

¹⁷³ NAN, HRW 9, Handelsregistersache. Felsenkellerbrauerei Windhuk: Bekanntmachung 03/11/1910.

¹⁷⁴ Ibidem.

¹⁷⁵ NSS, Jahresbericht der Windhuker Handelskammer, 1910-1911 11-22.

¹⁷⁶ NSS, Jahresbericht der Windhuker Handelskammer, 1911-1912 12. NAN, F002-JX/0195, Bericht der Felsenkeller Brauerei Aktiengesellschaft 1912.

¹⁷⁷ NSS, Jahresbericht der Windhuker Handelskammer 1912 17-18.

¹⁷⁸ NSS, Jahresbericht der Windhuker Handelskammer 1913 21.

¹⁷⁹ NAN, BWI 428 Getränkeanmeldungen der Felsenkellerbrauerei: Mahler und Hummel, 12/06/1911, to the Kaiserliches Bezirksamt in Windhoek.

¹⁸⁰ NAN, HRW 10, Handelsregistersache. Felsenkellerbrauerei: Ausfertigung 10/02/1912.

¹⁸¹ NAN, HRW 10, Handelsregistersache. Felsenkellerbrauerei: Statut der Felsenkellerbrauerei Aktiengesellschaft 16/02/1912.

breweries in Windhoek were finally merged.¹⁸² Schmidt was forbidden to start another brewery in German South West Africa, with a possible fine of M. 50 000 if he breached contract. The directors of the company were still Leopold Mahler and Fritz Hummel. Otto Berger was the chairman of the Board of Inspection.¹⁸³ In the same year a new brewhouse, beer hall and office were built for the Felsenkeller-Brauerei Aktiengesellschaft. The construction company responsible for the work was Koch and Schultheiss. After the completion, the brewery was the largest industrial site in the colony.¹⁸⁴ The Felsenkellerei flourished despite the difficult economic circumstances and even managed to acquire a brewery in Omaruru.¹⁸⁵

Omaruru: the mystery

Omaruru completes the beer triangle with a mysterious brewing history.¹⁸⁶ Omaruru is located at the Omaruru River and is an Otjiherero word for ‘bitter’.¹⁸⁷ The bitter bush (*Pechuelloeschea leubnitziae*) grows in and around the town, and when animals eat the plant, their milk and meat becomes bitter.¹⁸⁸ It is curious that the archival sources do not tell a clear story about the brewery of the town.¹⁸⁹ Unlike the companies in Swakopmund and Windhoek, annual reports are non-existent and archival documents are scarce. Carefully combining sources from three archives, oral histories, advertisement and a beer mug makes it possible to shed a light on the Omaruru Brewery.

¹⁸² NAN, HRW 10, Handelsregistersache. Felsenkellerbrauerei: various documents. Also shown on the new letterhead: “Felsenkeller-Brauerei Aktiengesellschaft - Windhuk. - Brauereien in Windhuk und Klein-Windhuk”. NAN, BWI 428 Getränkeanmeldungen der Felsenkellerbrauerei: Mahler and Hummel in Windhoek, 11/04/1913, to the Kaiserliche Bezirksamt.

¹⁸³ NAN, F002-JX/0195, Bericht der Felsenkeller Brauerei Aktiengesellschaft 1912; SSS, 2000.1.861, Bericht der Felsenkellerbrauerei Aktiengesellschaft 1914/1915.

¹⁸⁴ NSS, Peters, W., *Baukunst in Südwestafrika 1884-1914* (Windhoek 1981) 190-191.

¹⁸⁵ The next paragraph deals extensively with the Omaruru brewery. In 1913, Mahler and Hummel bought land in Okahandja. Although they never really used it for brewing purposes, it could be interpreted as a sign of the business growth of the company and confidence of the directors. The land was sold again after a few years. For decades the brewery on Tal Street remained functional, until it was moved to Iscor Street in the northern industrial area of Windhoek in 1986. The old brewery complex is currently being used by a mix of companies, including bars, a theatre and crafts centre. Musical concerts are held at the Cellar of Rock venue, possibly a wink to the former Felsenkeller. NAN, HRW 10, Handelsregistersache. Felsenkellerbrauerei: year reports from 1910/11, 1911/12, 1913/14; NAN, MOK 1/2/1, Felsenkellerbrauerei, Parzelle 36, Blatt 5: various letters; NAN, MOK 1/2/1, Felsenkellerbrauerei, Parzelle 36, Blatt 5. Dr. Fritzsche in Windhoek, 23/02/1921, to the Town Clerk of Okahandja; NLN, 96/0511 B, Namibia Breweries Limited, 1920-1995.

¹⁸⁶ For more on the history of Omaruru, see SSS, Pesch, L. and G. Murray, *Omaruru: Im Laufe der Zeit* (no publishing information); A. Otto and G. von Schumann, *Hoofstraat Omaruru* (unpublished, 1986).

¹⁸⁷ SSS, Pesch, L. and G. Murray, *Omaruru: Im Laufe der Zeit* (no publishing information) 2; I. Rudner and J. Rudner, *Axel Wilhelm Eriksson of Hereroland (1846-1901): His Life and Letters* (Windhoek 2006) 60.

¹⁸⁸ A.P.J. Albertyn, *Die Ensiklopedie Van Name In Suidwes-Afrika* (Pretoria 1984) 68.

¹⁸⁹ Various address books mention the existence of a brewery prior to the one that is discussed here. More research is necessary to find out what exactly happened. The earliest source found during this research was from 1908, with the Weißbierbrauerei from J. Michalla. NSS, Fitzner, R., *Adressbuch für Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1908* (Berlin 1908) 69.

The story begins in 1907 when the Damara und Namaqua Handels-Gesellschaft bought the piece of land where the brewery was located.¹⁹⁰ Three years later, in 1910, Daniel Bauer became the owner of the land. What happened in the meantime is uncertain, but Bauer (a former farmer) bought the land from Paul Canitz, who was by then the owner of the land.¹⁹¹ The plot was in use: the Bahnhofshotel was located on it.¹⁹² Bauer was unfortunately not a very successful hotelier. Already a year later, in 1911, he was indebted to the government and was forced to sell the land.¹⁹³ In 1914 Bauer sold the land to Leopold Mahler, who immediately sold it to the Felsenkellerbrauerei.¹⁹⁴

The Felsenkellerbrauerei in Windhoek had plans to open up a brewery in Omaruru. The company bought two adjacent pieces of land and in 1917 the brewery was erected.¹⁹⁵ The director was Conrad Piehl.¹⁹⁶ Mahler and Hummel, the directors of the Felsenkellerei, sent a letter to the Secretary for the Protectorate in Windhoek on 6 February 1918. They wrote that in a recent meeting of the directors it was decided to erect a brewery at Omaruru, “for the purpose of supplying beer to our customers in the northern portion of the Protectorate.” It is hereby suggested that the brewery had plans to export beer to the more northern part of GSWA. Mahler returned to Windhoek from a visit to Omaruru where he had spoken with the Military Magistrate, Major O’Reilly, who was in favour of the plans.¹⁹⁷ A site for the building was already secured. Only a license was needed.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁰ NAN, Grundstück Omaruru. Parzelle 11 Blatt 3. Besitzer Bauer (Felsenkellerbrauerei Windhoek): contract with the Damara and Namaqua Handels-Gesellschaft, 1907.

¹⁹¹ It is uncertain if this is the famous painter George Paul Canitz. Born in 1874 in Leipzig, Germany, Canitz was sent to live in German South West Africa for health reasons. According to his doctor, he needed the dry climate of GSWA. He arrived in the territory in 1909 and this would coincide perfectly with the sale of the land in Omaruru. In 1925 he settled down at a farm near Stellenbosch, South Africa. He ran his own art school and taught at the University of Stellenbosch. Canitz died in 1959.

¹⁹² NAN, Grundstück Omaruru. Parzelle 11 Blatt 3. Besitzer Bauer (Felsenkellerbrauerei Windhoek): Kaiserlicher Bezirksrichter in Omaruru, 10/12/1910, to the Kaiserlichen Gouverneur in Windhoek and the Kaiserliche Distriktsamt in Omaruru.

¹⁹³ NAN, Grundstück Omaruru. Parzelle 11 Blatt 3. Besitzer Bauer (Felsenkellerbrauerei Windhoek): Kaiserliches Distriktsamt in Omaruru, 20/09/1911; Gerichtstschreiber der Kaiserlichen Bezirksgerichts in Omaruru, 12/10/1912.

¹⁹⁴ NAN, Grundstück Omaruru. Parzelle 11 Blatt 3. Besitzer Bauer (Felsenkellerbrauerei Windhoek): 4 April 1913; A book on the history of Omaruru supports this claim but mention a different year. Archival records show however it is 1913. A. Otto and G. von Schumann, Hoofstraat Omaruru (unpublished, 1986) 35.

¹⁹⁵ A. Otto and G. von Schumann, Hoofstraat Omaruru (unpublished, 1986) 35; SSS, Pesch, L. and G. Murray, Omaruru: Im Laufe der Zeit (no publishing information) 15. According to Von Schumann, the hotel was demolished. But in the letters from 1920 it becomes clear that the hotel is still in use during the war. NAN, ADM 244, Claims: Felsenkeller Brauerei: Mahler in Windhoek, 10/02/1920, to the secretary of the Protectorate of S.W.A.

¹⁹⁶ A. Otto and G. von Schumann, Hoofstraat Omaruru (unpublished, 1986) 35. Also: The directory (Südwestafrikanisches Adressenbuch) of 1921-1922 mentions the existence of a brewery in Omaruru. Specifically the Felsenkeller-Brauerei A.-G. is named, with C. Piehl as the director. NSS, Südwestafrikanisches Adressenbuch 1921.22 / Directory of South West Africa 348.

¹⁹⁷ O’Reilly was the author of the Blue Book. When the German army was defeated the colony was governed under South African military rule. The Blue Book, which official title is “Report on the Natives of South-West

It did not take long before the business commenced. Mahler sent a letter in 16 December 1918 to the Military Magistrate in Omaruru. The contents of the letter was an application for a license to brew and sell beer. The brewing director writes that the brewery will commence with its work on the first of January 1919. The letterhead already says: Felsenkellerbrauerei Aktien Gesellschaft Windhuk – Omaruru (sic).¹⁹⁹ The Secretary for the Protectorate in Windhoek, D.F. Herbst, sent a letter on 28 December 1918 to the Military Magistrate stating that the issue of the license was approved.²⁰⁰

Little is known about the few years that the company was functioning. A beautiful undated picture shows the first crew of the brewery. On the beer barrels “Omaruru Urquell” is written.²⁰¹ Urquell was most probably the name of the beer brand. In the capital Windhoek Urquell was produced, as advertisements show. The beer produced by the Felsenkellerei was popular.²⁰² The Brauhaus in Swakopmund, a German style bar, has a wooden mug with “Omaruruer Urquell” as an inscription. The photo, the mug and advertisement are the only visual artefacts that remind us of the brewery.²⁰³

Africa and Their Treatment by Germany” was a detailed report of the German occupation of Namibia, including the horrible atrocities that happened during the genocide of the Namibian War between 1904-1908. It was originally published in January 1918. J. Silvester and J.B. Gewald (eds.), *Words Cannot Be Found. German Colonial Rule in Namibia: An Annotated Report of the 1918 Blue Book* (Leiden 2003).

¹⁹⁸ NAN, ADM 127, Breweries: Felsenkeller Brauerei establishment of a brewery at Omaruru: Mahler and Hummel in Windhoek, 06/02/1918, to the Secretary for the Protectorate.

¹⁹⁹ NAN, ADM 127, Breweries: Felsenkeller Brauerei establishment of a brewery at Omaruru: Mahler in Omaruru 16/12/1918, to the Military Magistrate Mayor O’Reilly Esqu.

²⁰⁰ NAN, ADM 127, Breweries: Felsenkeller Brauerei establishment of a brewery at Omaruru: D.F. Herbst, 28/12/1919 in Windhoek, to the Military Magistrate in Omaruru.

²⁰¹ An original picture is in the private collection of Gunter von Schumann. The same picture hangs in the Brauhaus in Swakopmund. According to the owner, it was given by a family member of one of the former employees. Unfortunately he does not know anything more about the history. The picture is also to be found in SSS, Pesch, L. and G. Murray, Omaruru: Im Laufe der Zeit (no publishing information) 15.

²⁰² SSS, Pesch, L. and G. Murray, Omaruru: Im Laufe der Zeit (no publishing information) 15.

²⁰³ The brewery was closed in 1920, and was later used as a tannery (looierij), then as an engineer shop and now as a hall for music and other purposes. The general economic depression in South West Africa resulted in a decline in the consumption of beer, and therefore the plant was closed by the South West Breweries. According to another source, the reason was the mass deportation of Germans after the First World War. Germans formed the main drinking market for the brewery. Omaruru as a whole suffered from the decision to close the plant and other economic misfortunes. Fear grew that the town would become deserted. A. Otto and G. von Schumann, Hoofstraat Omaruru (unpublished, 1986) 35; conversation with Gunter von Schumann on 29 October 2015. The NSS Annual Report notes the brewery was closed down between 1920-1922 NSS Annual Report, 17-18; NSS, Annual Report of the Windhoek Chamber of Commerce, 29th November 1920 – 31st March 1922 17-18; SSS, Pesch, L. and G. Murray, Omaruru: Im Laufe der Zeit (no publishing information) 15; NSS, Annual Report of the Windhoek Chamber of Commerce, 29th November 1920 – 31st March 1922 28; Interview with Gunter von Schumann (18 February 2016).

The Great War

In 1914 German South West Africa was invaded by South African forces as a result of the First World War.²⁰⁴ Great Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914, and through General Louis Botha the Union of South Africa offered help. In a telegram, the General and Prime Minister stated that the government was willing to deploy the Union Defence Force for the performance of the tasks entrusted to the Imperial Troops. Great Britain replied satisfactorily, and an invasion of German South West Africa quickly followed.²⁰⁵ The war impacted the brewing business in the country in several ways.

Firstly, the breweries were probably affected by a problematic import of goods. Normally the companies would import the brewing ingredients such as hops and malt from Germany or other European countries, but a total war raged in the old continent. The business at home also suffered from the ongoing fights and political uncertainty.²⁰⁶ Secondly, the properties of the breweries were sometimes taken over by foreign troops. The Felsenkellerbrauerei leased the Hohenzollern Hotel of August Ebrecht in Usakos for a period of five years.²⁰⁷ But, since the occupation of Usakos by the Union Forces, the hotel was used for military purposes and the directors could not execute their original plans. On 26 October 1915, Mahler and Hummel asked the Commandant of the Union Forces in Usakos to pay a suitable rent.²⁰⁸

Thirdly, goods were stolen. In early 1914 the Felsenkellerei received from their agents in Hamburg 1020 new bags for the transport of malt to and from Europe. The bags were in the brewery in Windhoek when the Union Troops arrived, but were stolen on 24 June 1915 by a unit of those Troops. Hummel wrote a claim to the Secretary for the Protectorate.²⁰⁹ Fourthly, properties were damaged. Two days after Hummel's letter a fire broke out in the Bahnhofs-Hotel in Omaruru because of South African soldiers. The hotel was next to the brewery and belonged to the company. The fire destroyed some of the furniture: six tables, three chairs and more. Mahler filed a claim but the assurance company did not acknowledge obligation for compensation of the losses. As "an act of grace" they did pay for half of the ascertained

²⁰⁴ See G. L'ange, *Urgent Imperial Service: South African Forces in German South West Africa 1914-1915* (Cape Town 1991); G. McGregor and M. Goldbeck, *The First World War in Namibia: August 1914 – July 1915* (Windhoek 2014).

²⁰⁵ G. McGregor and M. Goldbeck, *The First World War in Namibia* (Windhoek 2014) 12.

²⁰⁶ NAN, F002-JX/0195, Bericht der Felsenkeller Brauerei Aktiengesellschaft 1912; SSS, 2000.1.861, Bericht der Felsenkellerbrauerei Aktiengesellschaft: 1914/1915, 1915/1916, 1916/1917 (three editions in this file).

²⁰⁷ NAN, ADM 244, Claims: Felsenkeller Brauerei: Agreement of lease.

²⁰⁸ NAN, ADM 244, Claims: Felsenkeller Brauerei: Mahler and Hummel in Windhoek, 26/10/1915, to the Commandant of the Union Forces in Usakos. Several letters followed, all in this file.

²⁰⁹ NAN, ADM 244, Claims: Felsenkeller Brauerei: Hummel in Windhoek, 24/05/1916, to the Secretary of the Protectorate.

amount of loss.²¹⁰ From another event, 40 sheets of second hand corrugated iron for the same hotel were claimed by the brewery from the government.²¹¹ Even in 1924 the directors were busy with the claimed “war losses” caused by the Union Troops.²¹²

The South African soldiers enjoyed drinking very much. When the South African troops invaded Swakopmund it only took them a few days to conquer the town. In order to make the town a stronghold, the soldiers fortified their surroundings with all building material they could lay their hands on. After a while a new regiment of soldiers arrived. Among them was a private who accidentally put the bayonet of his rifle in the newly made wall – only to find out that clear beer was flowing out of it! Without knowing, the soldiers had used beer kegs to make the wall stronger. It did not take long before the wall was empty, after which general Botha put an end to the drinking. This caused the soldiers to make a mock grave where they ritually buried their bottles.²¹³

In 1915 German South West Africa was occupied by South Africa. The formal act of surrender by the German troops was signed on 9 July 1915.²¹⁴ The German control of the colony had come to its final end – on the same day the South African general Botha proclaimed martial law over the country.²¹⁵

The Beer War

When the Great War ended, a Beer War began. From all the small breweries that popped up when the settler economy emerged, only two companies were able to survive after the difficult war period. Those two companies dominated and divided the beer market. On the one hand there was the Kronenbrauerei in Swakopmund and Windhoek (led by Heuschneider), on the other hand there was the Felsenkellerbrauerei in Windhoek and Omaruru (led by Mahler). Both companies also obtained pieces of land for depots and hotels in other parts of the country. It can be assumed that Heuschneider and Mahler were great rivals. Heuschneider was

²¹⁰ NAN, ADM 217, Claims: Felsenkeller Brauerei: Boysen, Wneff (?) & Co. For Fire Insurance Magdeburg in Windhoek, 27/10/1920, to the Felsenkeller Brewery AG; Mahler in Windhoek, 10/02/1920, to the Secretary of the Protectorate S.W.A.

²¹¹ NAN, ADM 217, Claims: Felsenkeller Brauerei: Mahler in Windhoek, 10/02/1920, to the Secretary of the Protectorate S.W.A.

²¹² NAN, ADM 244, Claims: Felsenkeller Brauerei: Atg. Secretary for South West Africa, 18/06/1924, to Dr. Franz in Windhoek

²¹³ A similar story is can be found in Flamingo (May 2012, by Ed Jenkins), but does not contain sources. I contacted Mr. Jenkins, who was so kind to give the sources. The story have been checked. See: G. L’ange, *Urgent Imperial Service: South African Forces in German South West Africa 1914-1915* (Cape Town 1991). I would like to thank Mr. Jenkins for his help.

²¹⁴ M. Wallace, *A History of Namibia: From the Beginning to 1990* (2011 Cape Town) 205-206.

²¹⁵ G. McGregor and M. Goldbeck, *The First World War in Namibia: August 1914 – July 1915* (Windhoek 2014) 62.

after all one of the founders of the Felsenkellerbrauerei, but left when Mahler became the director. The rivalry between them resulted in what the newspapers described as a “Bierkrieg.”²¹⁶

It became apparent that both breweries aimed to increase their market share. In for instance 1913, the possible opening “in the near future” of an extension of the Kronenbrauerei in Windhoek was mentioned, together with an attack on the “unpleasant characteristics” of the Windhoek water of the Felsenkellerbrauerei. The brewers from Swakopmund wanted to “bring a defeat” in Windhoek by offering fresh draft beer (Fassbier) and bottled beer (Flaschenbier).²¹⁷ The Felsenkellerei was not standing still either. Several building plans from the post-war period show the many extensions of their breweries.²¹⁸

What followed was a heated debate that took place in the newspaper that is currently the Allgemeine Zeitung. To give an impression: on 19 July 1916 the Kronenbrauerei published a special newspaper insert with insults. Three days later, on 22 July, the Felsenkellerbrauerei responded with its own insert, accusing Heuschneider that he brewed his beer with seawater:

„Sie sind auch wahrscheinlich der einzige Brauer, welcher glaubt, aus Seewasser Bier machen zu können. Nun Ihnen aber kleine Wissenschaft das schlechteste Wasser der Welt zum Bierbrauen geeignet Machen...“²¹⁹

On the first of August the Kronenbrauerei responded, and this rivalry went on. In 1919 the Kronenbrauerei opened a brewery in Windhoek, deep in the heart of enemy territory. The Felsenkellerei was after all founded in Windhoek. To celebrate the occasion a special Bierzeitung was made, a satiric poem for a selected audience. The poem was nearly two meter long and mocked Mahler and Müller, directors of the Felsenkellerbrauerei, and a little bit their own boss, Heuschneider. An example:

“Windhuker Morgensprache.
Eind Gespräch zwi-chen zwei Handwerkem.

²¹⁶ SSS, 2000.1.1013, Der Bierkrieg 1916.

²¹⁷ SSS, 2000.1.907, Erweiterung der Kronen-Brauerei.

²¹⁸ NAN, ADM 120, Plans. Felsenkeller Brauerei. New Building; NAN, ADM 121, Plans. Felsenkeller Brauerei. New Building; NAN, ADM 122, Plans. Felsenkeller Brauerei. Shed; NAN, ADM 123, Building Plan. Felsenkeller Brewery. Tal Street. Additions: Beer Cooling Room. Plot 142/35 Section 4.

²¹⁹ SSS, 2000.1.1013, Der Bierkrieg 1916: 19 July 1916. The full original version can be found at the Namibia Scientific Society: NSS, Interimistische Zeitschrift für Übersetzungen (Von der Censur genehmigt.).

Müller: Na, mein lieber Maler, Sie sind ja so verschnupft?
 Maler: Ja das kommt von dem verfluchten Heuschn-hatschi!
 Müller: Heuschn-eider Tausend!
 Maler: Dummes Zeug! Heuschn-upfen!!
 Müller: Ach nee! Hatschi – Prost.”²²⁰

The formation of South West Breweries

Finally, the rivalry between the Kronenbrauerei and Felsenkellerbrauerei ended when both companies were merged into South West Breweries (SWB). The separate companies were struggling with the difficult economic climate, symbolized by the fact that they had to raise the prices of their beer.²²¹ Two young German bankers, Hermann Ohlthaver and Carl List, bought up the four breweries.²²² An anonymous author in *Das Brennglas*, a satirical magazine made by boy scouts, describes this event in the poem “Trinkt Felsenkeller! Trinkt Kronenbräu!”:

“FELSENBIER! hieß es, das Bier für Äestheten,
 KRONENBIER aber: Getränk für Proleten.
 (...)
 Leo gab Johann den Bruderkuß
 und daraus entstand der Zusammenschluß.
 (...)
 Trotz wahrhaft enormen Hindernissen
 Die Brauereien sind zusammengeschmissen!
 FELSEN und KRONEN jetzt ist einerlei
 Beides Produkt des SÜDWEST-BRAUEREI.”²²³

On October 29, 1920, the South West Breweries Limited (SWB) was officially founded. The Memorandum and Articles of Association specifically state that the company takes over the Kronenbrauerei and the Felsenkellerbrauerei, and that the breweries in Swakopmund,

²²⁰ SSS, 2004.31.28, Zur Feier der Eröffnung der Kronen-Brauerei in Windhoek.

²²¹ NSS, *Das Brennglas*, No. 1, Jahrg. 1920; different documents from Namibia Breweries Limited explicitly say that the difficulties of the breweries were the reason why Ohlthaver and List bought them. One of the many examples: NLN, 96/0511 B, Namibia Breweries Limited, 1920-1995. This is also echoed in B. Bravenboer, *Windhoek: Capital of Namibia* (Windhoek 2004) 48049.

²²² A year before, in 1919, the two men formed a company named Ohlthaver & List. Since then it has grown to one of the most powerful and large business groups of Namibia, active in brewing, real estate, farming, dairy, supermarkets, hotels and more. Brenda Bravenboer is writing a company history, expected in 2019 for the hundred year anniversary of O&L. O&L was founded in 1919, one year before the start of South West Breweries.

²²³ NSS, *Das Brennglas*. Leo is Leopold Mahler, the director of the Felsenkellerbrauerei. Johann refers to Johann Heuschneider, the director of the Kronenbrauerei.

Windhoek and Omaruru are amalgamated. List is one of the shareholders, Ohlthaver is not.²²⁴ SWB is the first brewery in the history of Namibia whose name is explicitly aligned with the (approaching) political reality. Two months later, on 1 January 1921, South Africa began to rule South West Africa on the basis of a League of Nations mandate.

In conclusion, the emergence of the beer industry can largely be explained in terms of war. The brutal colonization of German South West Africa made the settling of an increasing number of Germans possible. The settlers imported beer from Germany, but this practice became impractical after a while. A whole range of small breweries popped up. Their location can be explained through an analysis of the population, water and transport routes. The First World War changed the brewing scene, the territory was in an economic depression. Two companies survived: the Kronenbrauerei (in Swakopmund and Windhoek) and the Felsenkellerbrauerei (in Windhoek and Omaruru). After fierce competition (the so-called “beer war”) the companies were merged by Ohlthaver and List, forming the South West Breweries. After independence this company changed its name into Namibia Breweries.

²²⁴ NAN, F002-PA/0120, Memorandum and articles of the South West Breweries Limited 1920. Ohlthaver apparently left the country. The List family continued to dominate the brewery. Carl List remained the chairman until his son Werner List took over. Currently his grandson, Sven Thieme, is in a leading position.

Visual material

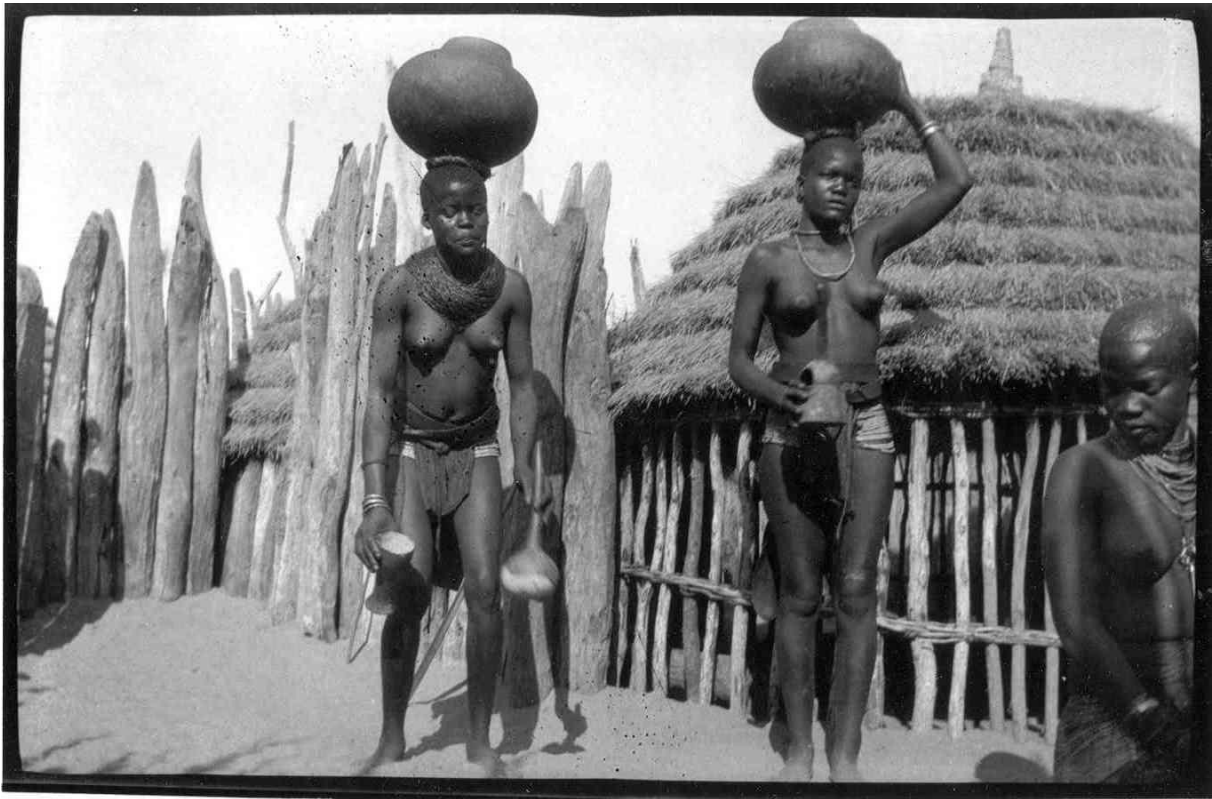


Image 2: Two young women holding beer pots on their heads, Ovamboland in 1930. National Archives of Namibia, 13796.



Image 3: Old imported beer bottles from Germany. Photo taken at the Swakopmund Museum. I would like to thank the staff for the possibility to take the bottles out and make photos of them.



Image 4: Schutztruppe soliders in Windhoek are drinking beer. Photo from the private collection of Manfred Goldbeck.



Image 5: Group of people outside a house, seated: Duft and Von Lindequist, standing left to right: Nitzsche, Von Goldammer, Gustav Voigts, Wecke, Paul Richter, Wasmannsdorf, Gutsche, Richard Voigts, drinking beer. 1898. National Archives of Namibia, 01407.

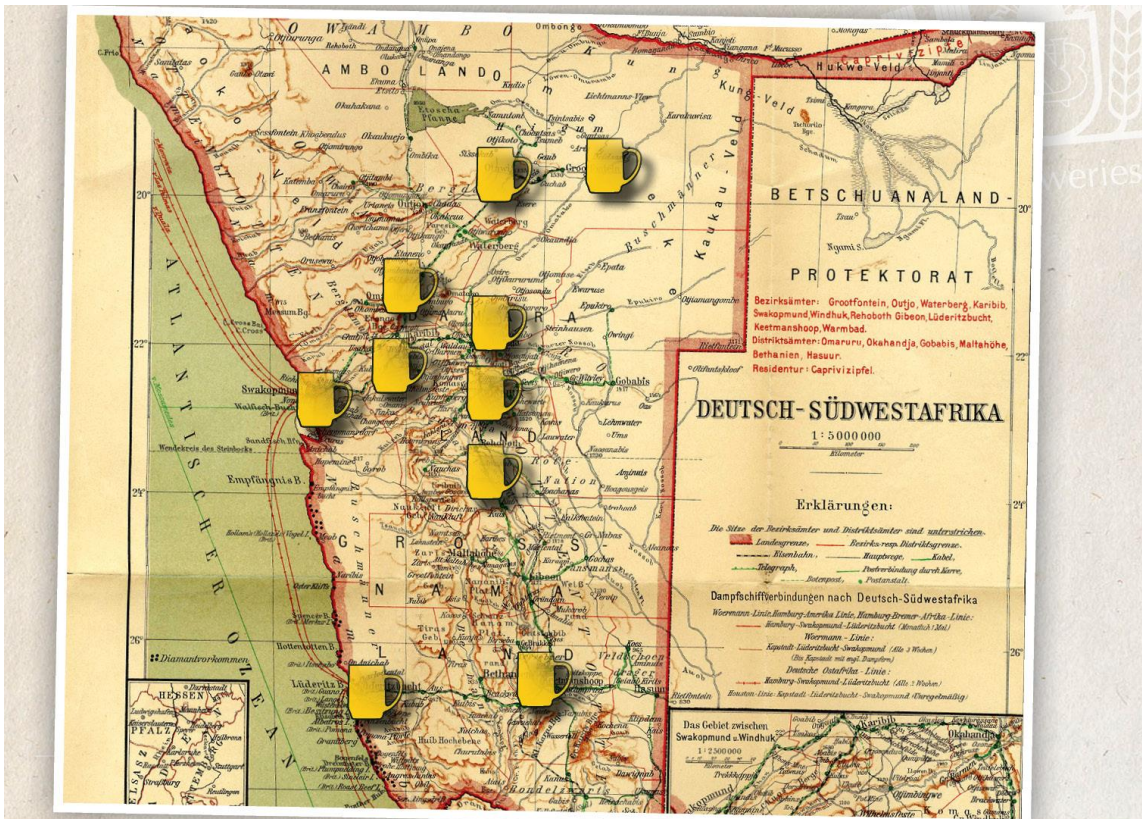


Image 6: Map with all known brewing towns prior to 1920. Some towns had more than one brewery.

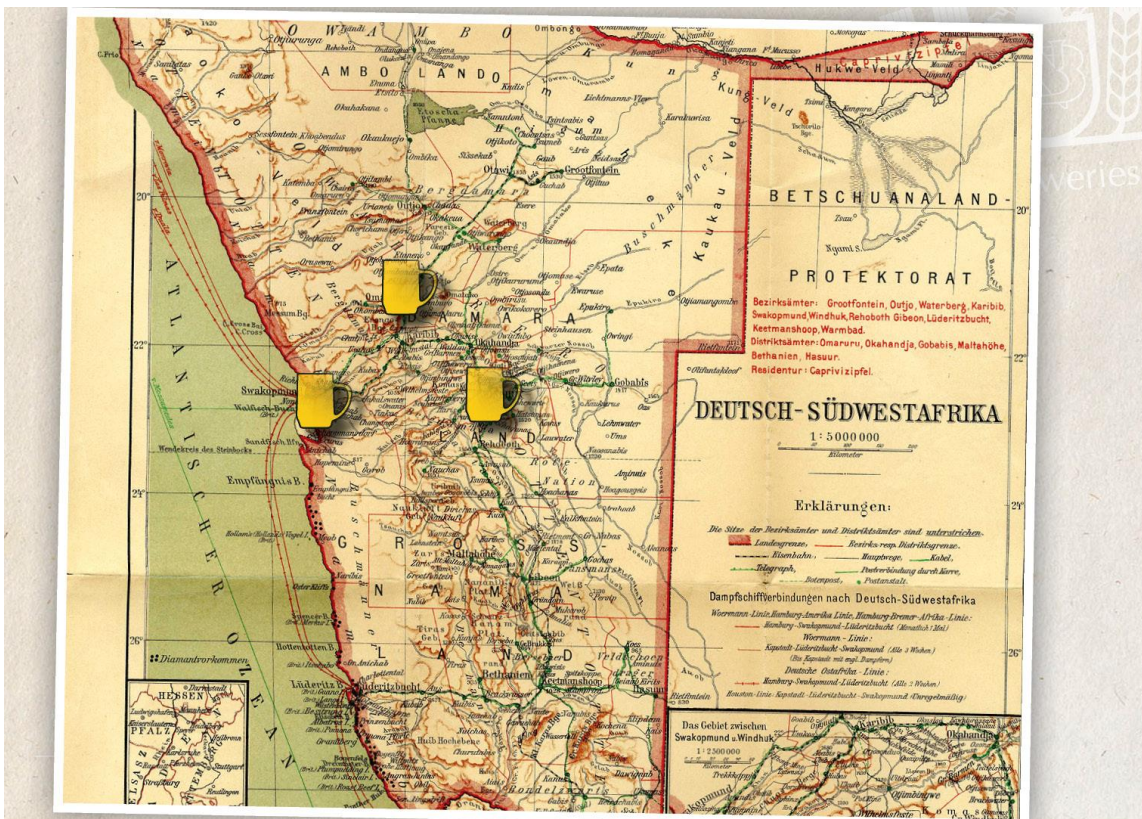


Image 7: The beer triangle: Swakopmund, Windhoek and Omaruru.



Image 8: The brewery in Otavi. Scientific Society Swakopmund, PKA A9069.



Image 9: The interior of a brewery in Keetmanshoop. National Archives of Namibia, 06201.



Image 10: Advertisement from the brewery of Rudolph Jauch. Picture taken at the Scientific Society Swakopmund by author. From the file: SSS, 2004.19.59, Anzeigen: Ein guter Spiegel der damaligen Wirtschaftslage.



Image 11: One of the old beer caps that were used by the brewery of Rudolph Jauch in Swakopmund. Private collection from Herbert Schier, photo taken by author.



Image 12: The Kronenbrauerei originated from Swakopmund. This is their brewery in Windhoek, that opened in 1919. Scientific Society Swakopmund, A OEE 5857.



Image 13: Felsenkellerbrauerei, children are congregating in Tal Street. National Archives of Namibia, 01921.

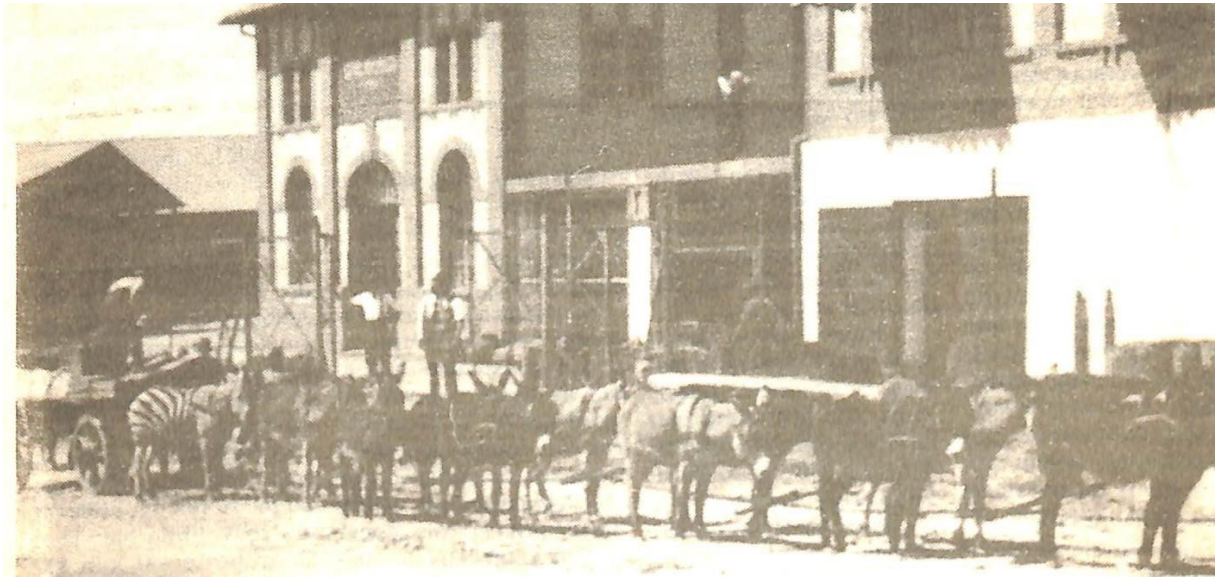


Image 14: Building process of the Felsenkellerbrauerei, photo is from the newspaper the Republikein, scanned at the Namibia Scientific Society. On the left you can see a zebra instead of a donkey.

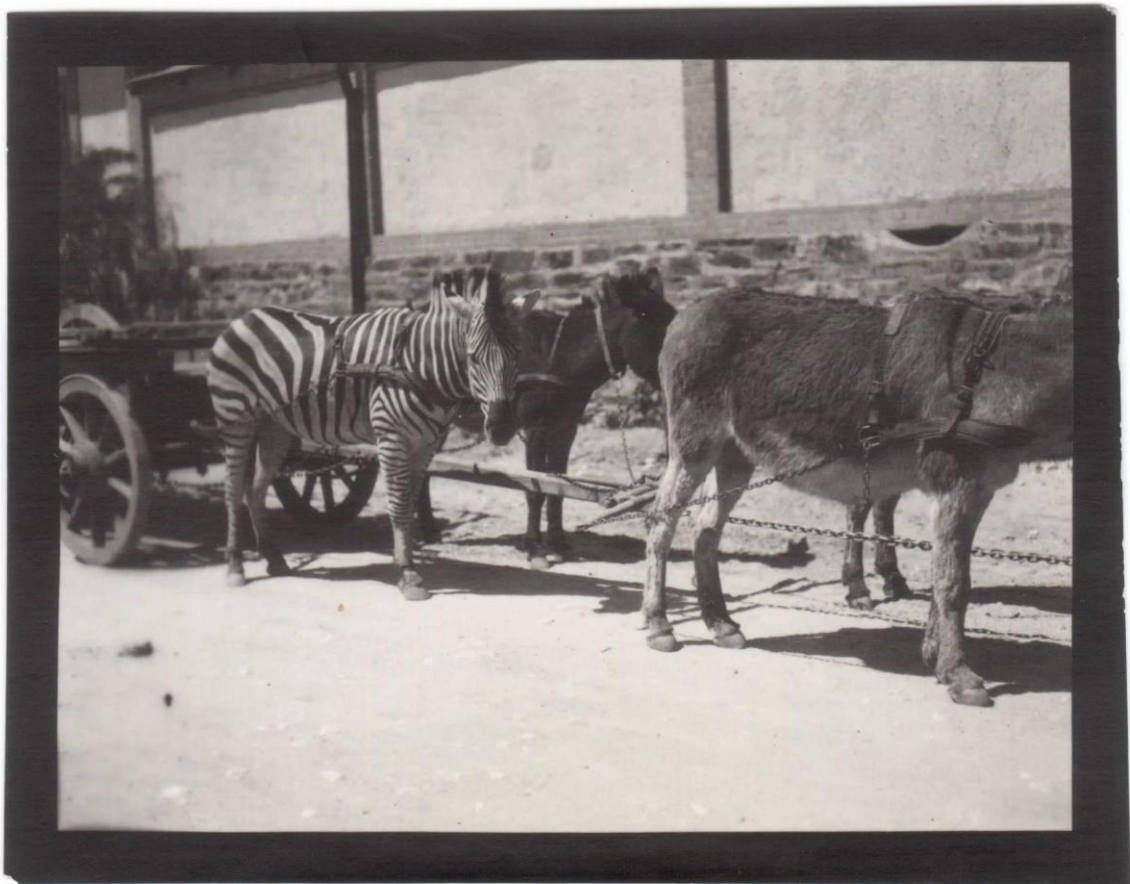


Image 15: The zebra was owned by one of the first brewmasters of South West Breweries, Julius Geier. The brewmaster had a house on the premises and received free beer as part of his contract. Interviews with his grandson Lothar Geier, 26 January and 18 February 2016. Photo from the private collection of Lothar Geier.



Image 16: A beer mug from the Felsenkellerbrauerei, from the private collection of Lothar Geier. Photo taken by author.



Image 17: A beer glass from the private collection of Brijitte Schünemann, photo taken by author.

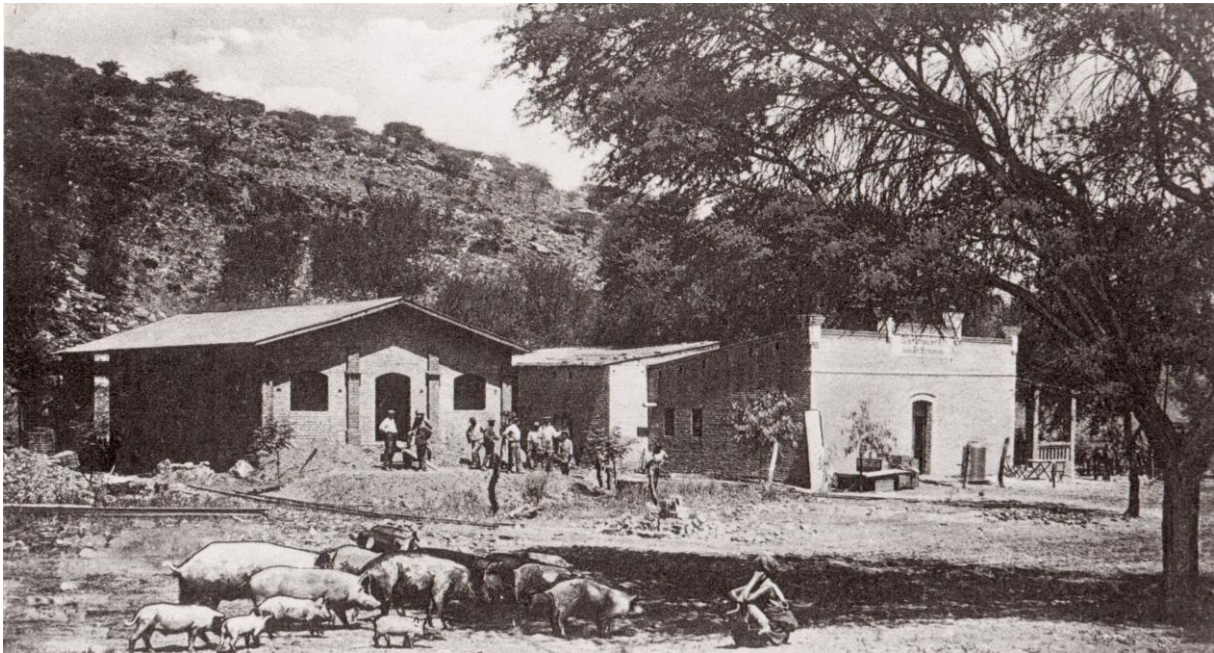


Image 18: The Schmidt Brauerei in Klein Windhoek. This was actually a postcard. Namibia Scientific Society, 5124/24/FA20.



Image 19: The interior of the Schmidt Brauerei. The man with the dark suit, hat and moustache was Mr. Schmidt. Article 11 (left corner) said that whenever he was in town, the beer was free for his employees. From the private collection of Brijitte Schünemann, his granddaughter.



Image 20: The Bahnhofs Hotel in Omaruru. The picture is from the private collection of Gunter von Schumann. The brewery was next to this building.



Image 21: The crew from the brewery at Omaruru. The picture is from the private collection of Gunter von Schumann. This is a rare photo.



Image 22: The wooden cup from the brewery in Omaruru. Picture taken at the Brauhaus in Swakopmund.

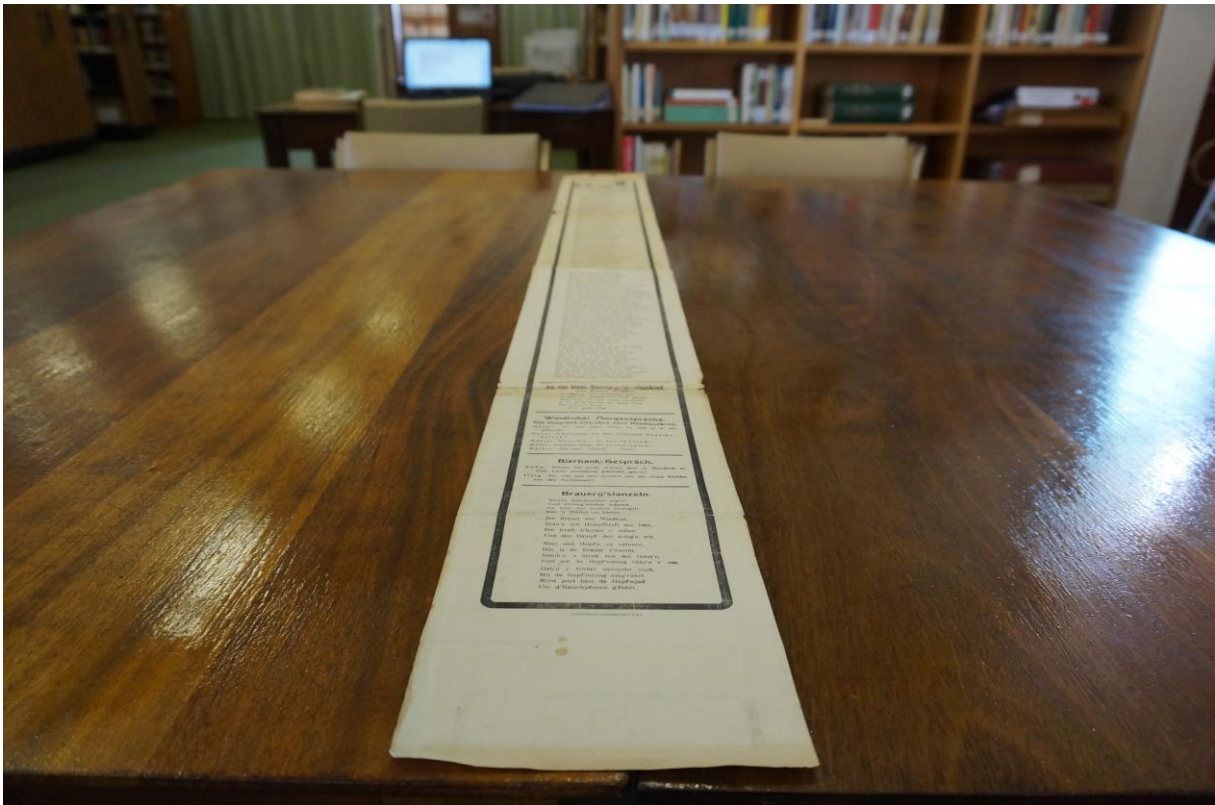


Image 23: The Bierzeitung from the Kronenbrauerei. Picture taken at the Swakopmund Scientific Society. File: SSS, 2004.31.28, Zur Feier der Eröffnung der Kronen-Brauerei in Windhoek.

II A changing beer market

1920-1970

The year 1920 does not only mark the start of a new era in the Namibian beer market, heavily influenced by the establishment of South West Africa as a mandate territory of South Africa. Three new breweries emerged, that immediately faced decades of difficulty: economic depression, war and a complex and racial liquor law were the main obstacles. In the sixties a number of historical events suddenly succeeded one another, marking the end of a fifty years' time period.

Legal consequences for beer

The new political situation had grave legal consequences for the making and drinking of beer. After the military campaign of South Africa had ended in 1915, South Africa occupied German South West Africa and military rule was established.²²⁵ A few years later, the territory was declared a Class C Mandate territory by the League of Nations, the predecessor of the United Nations. The Union of South Africa became responsible for the mandate territory and simply named it South West Africa. The Mandate Agreement was signed in Geneva on 17 December 1920 and the martial law period ended formally on 1 January 1921. At that moment, South Africa became the official mandatory power for Namibia.²²⁶ Article 3 of the Mandate Agreement dealt interestingly enough exclusively with alcohol, and hence had a profound impact on the decades to come:

“The supply of intoxicating spirits and beverages to the natives shall be prohibited.”²²⁷

Earlier legislation already dealt with the sale of European beer to the Namibian population.²²⁸ Alcohol was an important trading item when the first contacts between Europeans and Africans were established, during what Harri Siiskonen described as “the wild decades of alcohol trade.” However, the sale of alcohol to Africans was deliberated at the Brussels Conference in 1890 because increases in the supply of liquor made it more difficult to subject

²²⁵ P. Hayes, J. Silvester, M. Wallace and W. Hartmann (eds.), *Namibia under South African Rule: Mobility and Containment 1915-46* (Oxford 1988) 22.

²²⁶ M. Wallace, *A History of Namibia: From the Beginning to 1990* (2011 Cape Town) 206.

²²⁷ NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: Naturellesake: voorgestelde wysiging van drankwet om brou en drink van kafferbier deur naturelle op plase toe te laat; H. Siiskonen, ‘Namibia and the Heritage of Colonial Alcohol Policy’, *Nordic Journal of African Studies* Vol. 3 (1) (1994)78.

²²⁸ Pan, L., *Alcohol in Colonial Africa* (Helsinki 1975).

African communities.²²⁹ In German South West Africa, an Ordinance dated 27 May 1895 regulated the retail and sale of spirituous liquors. Innkeepers and those who wanted to sell alcohol had to obtain a written license. Beer and other liquor could only be sold to the local population if they obtained written permission from the chief, local police or a doctor in case of sickness.²³⁰

The Liquor Licensing Proclamation of 15 January 1920 gave a comprehensive legal framework for the intentions of the Mandate Agreement's third article. In many ways the Proclamation was an elaboration of the Brussels Conference of 1890 and GSWA's Ordinance of 1895, but it differed from it in two ways. The effect of the previous legislation was limited because the colonial administration in the early years of colonization had few resources to oppress the beer trade.²³¹ The colony was however much stronger established at the political transition of 1920, the capacity of the state was increased and the control over the various ethnic groups was severely strengthened. Furthermore, the government decided to actively use the beer market as a political instrument to control the population.

The Liquor Licensing Proclamation divided the beer market into two parts. It is an extraordinary document that gives much insight in the colonial minds of that time. The Proclamation was largely based on the South African Liquor Act of 1928 (No. 30 of 1928).²³² The law defined natives as "any person other than a European", an important definition that formed the basis for forthcoming laws. The sale of liquor to natives was prohibited – even if a local person had received liquor or had liquor in its possession he or she was guilty of an offence. No liquor licenses were to be issued within the limits of native locations or reserves. Importing liquor into South West Africa became unlawful. The penalties for selling beer to a local person were harsh and could add up to twelve months of imprisonment and hard labour.²³³ There is however one important loophole in this document, because it did not discuss home brewing in any way. In this way, two beer markets were created: one formal

²²⁹ H. Siiskonen, 'Namibia and the Heritage of Colonial Alcohol Policy', *Nordic Journal of African Studies* Vol. 3 (1) (1994) 77-78.

²³⁰ WCARS, GH 1/460, Papers received from Secretary of State, London: general dispatches. The liquor traffic in the German protectorate in South West Africa: M. Gosselin in Berlin, 05/09/1895, to Sir. E. Malet.

²³¹ Gordon notes that, discussing the alcohol trade in the 1880 that "The Government was forced to act but their Verordnungen were rarely successfully or forcefully implemented." R. Gordon, *Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia*, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 6.

²³² NAN, F002-AA/1996, The liquor law of South-West Africa: being the Liquor Licensing Proclamation, 1920 (Proclamation no.6 of 1920), as amended from time to time, with notes, references to decided casses (sic) and other relevant legislation.

²³³ NAN, F002-PA/0110, The liquor law of the South-West Africa Protectorate.

market for white colonials and one informal market for the local population. Beer became a marker for racial identity.

Three new breweries

In one decade, three new breweries emerged in the territory. The first is South West Breweries in 1920, located in Windhoek and discussed in the first chapter. The second is Union Brewery in 1922, also in located in Windhoek.²³⁴ The name is probably a reference to the Union of South Africa, of which SWA was now a part. Not much is known about the company, it is mentioned a few times in various but only two small archival files actually deal with it.²³⁵ The company had 8000 pounds sterling of capital, divided over four shareholders. The main shareholder was Ludwig Barella, who owned half of the shares. He is described as retired in the Memorandum of Association. The other three shareholders were members of the Heuschneider family: Johann Heuschneider was the brewer and his two sons, Hans and Paul acted as engineers.²³⁶ Johann Heuschneider was also the man who started the Felsenkellerbrauerei and Kronenbrauerei (see the first chapter).

It can be assumed that the Union Brewery was not a big success. It actually was in business, advertisements prove in April 1923, inviting the public for the grand opening on the first of May.²³⁷ In July 1923, a year after the founding date, Hans and Paul Heuschneider allocated their shares to Ludwig Barella. At this moment, Barella owned 7950 of the 8000 shares. The remaining 50 were owned by Johann Heuschneider, but he sent a letter to the Registrar of Deeds that he was leaving Windhoek and could no longer fulfil the duties of director. Barella was appointed as director.²³⁸ The Heuschneider's went to Mozambique, and what happened with the brewery thereafter is uncertain. Five years later, in 1928, the company was to be struck off the register and dissolved – ironically enough together with the Felsenkellerbrauerei.²³⁹

²³⁴ SSS, 2004.19.33, Gründung der ersten Brauerei 1912, Felsenkeller-Brauerei in Windhoek: Hansa-Brauerei Limited in Swakopmund, 17/01/1929, to Ernst Sievert in Swakopmund; 50 Jahre Hansa-Brauerei Swakopmund, DHPS 19/01/1979; Daten zur Eröffnung der "Hansa Brauerei Ltd," am 19/01/1929; Hansa Brauerei Limited: 50th Anniversary Celebrations This Coming Weekend, Namib Times, 16/01/1979.

²³⁵ The sources are also wrongly stored in the National Archives and are therefore not accessible, it was only possible to find them with the help of the former director of the National Archives, Mr. Werner Hillebrecht. I am grateful for his help.

²³⁶ The Memorandum of Association of the Union Brewery Limited was signed at 4 July 1922. The Certificate of Incorporation (No. 17/1922) was signed at 12 July 1922. The office was situated at Rehoboth Street, Old Limeworks, Erf 393/4, Windhoek, which was noted at 4 October 1922. NAN, COM 17, The Union Brewery Limited (Private Company): Registrations.

²³⁷ Advertisement from the Landes-Zeitung für Südwestafrika, 28 April 1923.

²³⁸ NAN, COM 17, The Union Brewery Limited (Private Company): Returns.

²³⁹ NAN, COM 17, The Union Brewery Limited (Private Company): Registrations: Notice No. 33 of 1928.

It is however strange that the Heuschneider family left the Union Brewery out of their family history. Heinz Heuschneider, grandson of the famous Johann Heuschneider, wrote in an article that his family moved to Mozambique after they were done with the Kronenbrauerei. He does not mention the step in between.²⁴⁰ Ernst (Emil) Heuschneider, Heinz's brother, declared the same in an interview.²⁴¹ Ludwig Barella, who largely funded the whole operation, seems to be the missing link to understand how this brewery came about and what happened.²⁴²

The third is Hansa Brewery in Swakopmund, founded in 1928.²⁴³ The name refers to the Hanseatic League: Swakopmund was also a harbour, but moreover the Heuschneider family had a strong connection with Hamburg, one of the Hanseatic cities.²⁴⁴ Johann Heuschneider and his family left Windhoek for Maputo in Mozambique to run a brewery, but found it unpleasant to settle at the eastern coast of Africa.²⁴⁵ They did not enjoy the climate and even contracted malaria. Swakopmund had by that time a schnapps company that went broke. Certain businessmen got hold of the premises and wanted to start a brewery again. When the family got the chance to open up a brewery in Swakopmund again, they purchased machinery in Germany and let it be brought to the coastal town of SWA.²⁴⁶

Swakopmund finally had its own brewery again, and the old rivalry between Swakopmunders and people from Windhoek was restored. 900 litres of beer and 400 sausages were consumed at the opening party.²⁴⁷ It truly was a family business.²⁴⁸ Hansa Brewery had

²⁴⁰ NAN, F002-cp, H. Heuschneider, *Kleine Chronik der Hansa-Brauerei* 2005.

²⁴¹ Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Heuschneider, 27 February 2012.

²⁴² The documents in the files are not signed by Barella, but are signed by John Hugo Hill, in his capacity as holder of general power of attorney: NAN, COM 17, The Union Brewery Limited (Private Company): Registrations. It might indicate that Barella was not physically present. In contemporary Windhoek is a Barella House and Barella Street. His obituaries appeared in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* of 21 May 1951, perhaps that can be a trail to find more information on him.

²⁴³ The company was registered on 30 November 1928, the business started at 1 September 1928 and the first beer was ready on 21 January 1929. SSS, Hansa-Brauerei Limited Swakopmund, 7. Geschäftsjahr 1935-1936 (uncatalogued).

²⁴⁴ The brewing equipment of Hansa Brewery came for instance from Hamburg, they had an agent in Hamburg and Johann Heuschneider signed a document from Hamburg. Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Heuschneider, 27 February 2012; NAN, F002-NAMZ 0528, Andreas Vogt, Wine, beer and song in hotels of old Windhoek, *Informanté*, 2006 9; NAN, SWAA 3115, Monthly Revenu Returns: Alleged customs fraud Hansa Brewery Swakopmund: Sgd. J.W. Naude, Inspector. District Commandant, Omaruru, 24/02/1939, to The Commissioner, South West Africa Police; NAN, HRW 9, Handelsregistersache. Felsenkellerbrauerei Windhuk: Vollmacht, Johann Heuschneider, Hamburg, 30/06/1908.

²⁴⁵ Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Heuschneider, 27 February 2012.

²⁴⁶ NAN, F002-cp, H. Heuschneider, *Kleine Chronik der Hansa-Brauerei* 2005; SSS, 2004.19.33, Gründung der ersten Brauerei 1912, Felsenkeller-Brauerei in Windhoek: several documents.

²⁴⁷ SSS, 2004.9.17, Ein Teil Südwest Zeitgeschehens: *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 16 January 1979.

²⁴⁸ The brewery had the involvement Johann, Emma, Hans, Paul and Ernst Heuschneider, in various functions. SSS, Hansa-Brauerei Limited Swakopmund, 7. Geschäftsjahr 1935-1936 (uncatalogued); SSS, Hansa-Brauerei Limited Swakopmund, 8. Geschäftsjahr 1936-1937 (uncatalogued); SSS, Memorandum und Statuten der Hansa Brauerei Limited (uncatalogued).

deposits all over South West Africa, but also in South Africa: Cape Town, Johannesburg, Mossel Bay, Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban are examples.²⁴⁹ They had a big customer in South Africa.²⁵⁰ In 1941 a new Brewhouse was installed, and in 1946 further enlargement were implemented such as new bottle washers, filling equipment and storage tanks.

What followed were decades of difficulty. In the 1930s a raging economic depression made it difficult for any business to survive. In the 1940s the Second World War made it almost impossible to get raw materials from Europe. And in the 1950s it became clear that the liquor law was highly problematic for both of the beer markets.

Economic depression

The 1920s and 1930s were characterized by severe economic depression. After the defeat of the German troops and the occupation by South Africa, the business climate became difficult. Many Germans had to leave the territory, whereas the German population constituted the main market for the breweries. To add to these problems, a drought and the “consequent dearth of capital impaired the purchasing power of the community,” writes the South West Breweries in its financial report of 1924-1925. This is at a time when the brewery even had horses in its budget!²⁵¹ The situation was only aggravated by the worldwide economic depression that spread from the United States in the 1930s.

The brewers had trouble keeping their head above the water. The depression resulted in a “considerable reduction” in the consumption of beer, according to the Windhoek Chamber of Commerce. SWB had to close down the breweries in Omaruru and Swakopmund and focused its production on Tal Street in Windhoek. The Chamber concludes its annual report with the statement that “the quality of the beers is excellent and (...) superior to that of Union beers.”²⁵² The brewers suffered from European competition. The ingredients, bottles, and machinery doubled in price, while the excise duty had increased fourfold.²⁵³

The excise officer of SWA noted a “sharp decline in the production of beer” of South West Breweries in July 1931, caused by the depression and closing down of copper and diamond mines in Tsumeb and Lüderitz. South West Breweries had to lay off employees and

²⁴⁹ SSS, Hansa-Brauerei Limited Swakopmund, 7. Geschäftsjahr 1935-1936 (uncatalogued); SSS, Hansa-Brauerei Limited Swakopmund, 8. Geschäftsjahr 1936-1937 (uncatalogued).

²⁵⁰ Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Heuschneider, 27 February 2012.

²⁵¹ NLN, South West Breweries Limited, Annual Report, 1924-1925.

²⁵² NSS, Annual Report of the Windhoek Chamber of Commerce, 29th November 1920-31st March 1922 17-18.

²⁵³ NSS, Report of Chamber of Commerce, Windhoek, 1923-1924 8-9.

reduced the salaries by twenty percent.²⁵⁴ Those difficult times were only aggravated in the years to come.

World War II

The Second World War impacted South West Africa.²⁵⁵ One example is the fact that the breweries were no longer able to acquire raw material from Germany, because this was considered trading with the enemy. The tension between the German and Afrikaner settlers was heightened because of the war, the administration feared a German uprising. South Africa only 'acquired' South West Africa fairly recently and was afraid to lose it unexpectedly. With the relatively large amount of German settlers in the territory and its already anxious stance against the South African government, the administration feared that this community would sympathize with fighting Germans abroad and therefore would take up arms.

The administration looked upon the breweries with great suspicion. At this time, two main breweries were active: South West Breweries and Hansa Breweries. Both companies employed mainly Germans and were also actively engaged in trading with Germany. Most raw materials and machinery were acquired in Germany, which was also a much larger country than it is now. The breweries found other ways of acquiring materials. During the war years, South West Breweries received for instance hops from inter alia Yugoslavia, the United States of America and Belgium.²⁵⁶ Hansa Brewery imported ingredients and equipment from Denmark, the United States, Canada, Australia and South Africa.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁴ NAN, SWAA 3113, Customs and Excise: Brewery Regulations: Excise officer in Windhoek, 17/11/1931, to the Secretary for South West Africa.

²⁵⁵ Gordon writes that "a study on the Second World War in Namibia might be a fertile area of investigation" and already provides a prospectus. R. Gordon, 'The Impact of the Second World War on Namibia', *Journal of Southern African Studies* Vol. 19, No. 1 (1993) 147. The best known (popular) book on WWII and Namibia is a story of two men who moved into the desert when the war came to their home: M. Henno, *Wenn es Krieg gibt, gehen wir in die Wüste* (Windhoek 1970).

²⁵⁶ It is remarkable how much effort was being put into transporting hops. Correspondence from 1940 with trading partners in London shows some of the difficulty. It was not possible to ship hops from the Yugoslavian port Susak because the Adriatic Sea was being menaced by Italy. The plan was to rail the hops to Istanbul, and then ship them through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea to Cape Town. There the hops will be put in wooden cases and brought to South West Africa. The government, in the meantime, suspected those specific hops to come from Austria, which was regarded as enemy territory and therefore the trade would be a contravention of Regulation 8 bis (2) of Proclamation 201 of 1939, most probably a war measure preventing trade with the enemy. NAN, SWAA 2569, Trading with the enemy. The South West Africa Breweries: The South West Breweries Limited in Windhoek, 23/08/1940, to the Secretary for South West Africa; Rosenfeld & Co. in London, 19/08/1940, to South West Breweries in Windhoek.

²⁵⁷ NAN, SWAA 2572, Trading with the enemy. Hansa Breweries, Swakopmund: Max B. Gleassner in New York, 16/07/1941, to Hansa Brewery in Swakopmund; The Secretary for South West Africa in Windhoek, 30/09/1940, to the Secretary for Commerce and Industries in Pretoria.

The government secretly put a watch on the cables of both breweries and checked all of their correspondence for any suspicious behaviour.²⁵⁸ Intelligence reports confirmed that the Hansa brewery was in contact with Siegfried and Hans Oppenheimer, who came from Belgium to the United States in 1939. They started a business from a hotel room in New York and were believed to be one of the biggest global exporters of German hops since the war began. Their company exported goods for a “Waffenexportfabrik”, not a typical hops company, putting goods on neutral Belgian ships to circumvent the law. The hops were given false certificates of origin and the traders used false names. The Belgium trade became impossible after a while. The Oppenheimers then used Leningrad as a new route, Istanbul and even the Trans-Siberian railway where the Japanese government allegedly made an allocation of two million yen to facilitate the trade. As a result of this information, a shipment was inspected and arms and ammunition for Germany were found. Moreover, the Oppenheimers were involved in the precious stone trade.²⁵⁹

This raised grave concerns for the Hansa Brewery, which, quoting a government official, “was looked upon with suspicion by the Union authorities because of its past activities.”²⁶⁰ The authorities most probably referred to an earlier series of “cleverly devised fraud” by the brewery management.²⁶¹ Governments in Pretoria, Washington and London worked together to investigate the concerns. In 1940 the South West African administration thoroughly inspected the books and records of the brewery. It was noted in the report that all

²⁵⁸ See countless of intelligence reports and copied cables in: NAN, SWAA 2572, Trading with the enemy. Hansa Breweries, Swakopmund; NAN, SWAA 2569, Trading with the enemy. The South West Africa Breweries.

²⁵⁹ NAN, SWAA 2572, Trading with the enemy. Hansa Breweries, Swakopmund; Secretary for Commerce and Industries, 09/04/1947, to the secretary for Commerce and Industry.

²⁶⁰ NAN, SWAA 2572, Trading with the enemy. Hansa Breweries, Swakopmund; Secretary for Commerce and Industries, 09/04/1947, to the secretary for Commerce and Industry. The same official writes to the High Commissioner of the South Africa House in London that “Hansa Breweries have behaved in the past in a manner to justify their being regarded with grave suspicion in the Union.” NAN, SWAA 2572, Trading with the enemy. Hansa Breweries, Swakopmund: Secretary for Commerce and Industries, day unknown, 11/1940, to the Secretary, office of the High Commissioner, South Africa House, London.

²⁶¹ Between 1932 and 1936 two managers, Joseph Sickel and Hans Willy Heuschneider, were accused of frauds. The authorities made a detailed description of these charges. Sickel was however able to get a golden chain and fur coat into the country without paying duty. In another instance, they would send a single shoe over the border (marked as “sample shoe”), and a week later the second shoe with a similar mark turned up, in order to avoid duty. The inspector, Sgd. J.W. Naude, writes that “There is no doubt that politically (...) as well as economically these people are set to defy the authority of the Union and Mandate Government (...).” When Naude challenged the brewers with this, “Sickel nearly went on his knees to try and persuade me to keep the case out of court. He assured me that the Brewery would pay anything to keep the case out of Court.” Naude advises however to follow the law as rigid as possible. NAN, SWAA 3115, Monthly Revenue Returns: Alleged customs fraud Hansa Brewery Swakopmund: Sgd. J.W. Naude, Inspector. District Commandant, Omaruru, 24/02/1939, to The Commissioner, South West Africa Police.

29 shareholders were “very strong Nazis.”²⁶² This was echoed in other confidential reports, and an investigation was started to the exact whereabouts of the shareholders.²⁶³ The accusations were that the ownership of the brewery consisted of “various influential Nazis” and was buying hops and other articles from German companies in Hungary or Slovakia.²⁶⁴

Many Germans in South West Africa were put in internment camps.²⁶⁵ Even in these places, heavily guarded by South African police, people were able to brew in certain so-called “Geheimbrauereien.” The prisoners were able to acquire sugar, raisins and grape juice, and went underground to secretly make the “Gungai”, as they named it.²⁶⁶ Above stories show two things. Firstly, the South Africans feared for their colony, making it very difficult for brewers and Germans in general to get on with their business and lives. Secondly, despite all the challenges, people were always able to make the beer. The breweries kept on brewing during the war years while the interned Germans went underground to make liquor.

Problematic liquor law

The state was very much occupied with the liquor law and its effects. In the 1950s Windhoek, liquor cases accounted for 57.6 percent of all criminal cases and 89.4% of all fines imposed on the black population. Drinking illegal beer was by far the most criminal activity and even exceeded notorious apartheid rules as the Masters and Servants Proclamation. The reason for this pre-occupation of the state is the fear of the settlers to lose control. There was a deep belief that black people had a lack of discipline and self-control and were not able to drink responsibly. As a consequence, settlers feared shortages of native labour as a result of absenteeism.²⁶⁷

The tax revenues were an advantage for the state, but mostly the liquor situation caused problems. The law was problematic on two different levels, following the racial divide

²⁶² NAN, SWAA 2572, Trading with the enemy. Hansa Breweries, Swakopmund: The Secretary for South West Africa in Windhoek, 30/09/1940, to the Secretary for Commerce and Industries in Pretoria.

²⁶³ NAN, SWAA 2572, Trading with the enemy. Hansa Breweries, Swakopmund: J.L. Human, Secretary for South West Africa, 30/09/1940, to the Administrator in Windhoek; Secretary for Commerce and Industries, 23/07/1940, to the Secretary, office of the High Commissioner, South Africa House, London.

²⁶⁴ NAN, SWAA 2572, Trading with the enemy. Hansa Breweries, Swakopmund: Secretary for Commerce and Industries, 27/04/1940, to the Secretary, office of the High Commissioner, South Africa House, London.

²⁶⁵ Including two shareholders of Hansa Brewery. Two other shareholders were marked down for internment, but because of their young age had been put on strict parole instead. NAN, SWAA 2572, Trading with the enemy. Hansa Breweries, Swakopmund: The Secretary for South West Africa in Windhoek, 30/09/1940, to the Secretary for Commerce and Industries in Pretoria.

²⁶⁶ H. Herre, ‘Erinnerungen an die Lagerzeit in Andalusia’, in: R. Kock, (eds), *Erinnerungen an die Internierungszeit (1939-1946) und zeitgeschichtliche Ergänzungen* (Windhoek 2003) 67-69.

²⁶⁷ Gordon describes the so-called “crisis in drinking” and colonial fears in more detail. R. Gordon, *Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia*, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 1-9.

of the two beer markets. The white settlers had difficulties interpreting and applying the complex law, and moreover there were conflicting ideas within the community. The local population on the other hand was not allowed to drink at all, but obviously found many ways to circumvent the dreaded laws.

The white population

First of all, there was much discontent within the white settler community. The administration had difficulties with interpreting the law, since the liquor laws formed a highly complex judicial system. The Proclamation was the first liquor law to be established in South West Africa and proposed quite a simple distinction between Europeans and natives. It was already one of the longest pieces of all legislation, but despite the detailed outline, the execution of the law proved to be difficult. Consolidation of the numerous amendments took place in 1936 and 1952. In 1953 L.C. Barrett published a lengthy book with the complete law, adding all amendments, notes, relevant cases and further legislation. It is an interesting example of how lawyers and judges struggled with the interpretation.²⁶⁸ G.G.R. Brebner, judge of the High Court of South West Africa, summarized the problem in the foreword:

“Since 1920 the Liquor Licensing Proclamation has been extensively amended and it became a tedious and difficult matter to follow accurately the various amendments and additions. More than one commission was appointed to recommend changes of the law.”²⁶⁹

The government was not only struggling with the judicial interpretation of the law, but also with the organization of the law. Again in the year 1953, the Administrator of South West Africa appointed a Commission of Enquiry to discuss the sale of liquor.²⁷⁰ The police, municipalities, church denominations, sporting bodies and hotels were represented in the Commission, and discussed important matters such as intoxicating liquor, rules for bottle stores and the exclusion of women from bars. It shows that the administration had trouble with the whole set-up of the liquor situation. The committee argues that: “In this Territory

²⁶⁸ NAN, F002-AA/1996, The liquor law of South-West Africa: being the Liquor Licensing Proclamation, 1920 (Proclamation no.6 of 1920), as amended from time to time, with notes, references to decided cases (sic) and other relevant legislation.

²⁶⁹ NAN, F002-AA/1996, The liquor law of South-West Africa: being the Liquor Licensing Proclamation, 1920 (Proclamation no.6 of 1920) V.

²⁷⁰ Gordon gives a short historical background on the emergence of the Commission: R. Gordon, Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 11-14.

there is generally speaking a clash between the original German culture and the new Afrikaans culture.”²⁷¹

The recommendations made it clear that the liquor law had many problems, but moreover it signalled a gap between South African culture and German and English settler segments in South West Africa. The administration aimed to use beer as a political instrument with South African inspired liquor legislation. These aspirations clashed however not only with local population, but also with non-Afrikaans white settlers, whom, according to the report, had developed a distinctive culture.²⁷² The Commission noted that “It is very difficult for somebody from the Union to adapt himself to local conditions”, implicating that the legislators might be ill-informed.²⁷³ In other words:

“South West Africa has its own traditions which are modelled on those of Germany. Contact with the Union and with Afrikaans traditions is more recent, and consequently there is a conflict of ideas in more than one respect.”²⁷⁴

The black population

Second of all, it became apparent that the legislation did not affect the local population as it was intended to. The legislative loophole of home brewing became highly problematic, because many locals were able to circumvent the laws. Home brewing grew tremendously and in the eyes of white settlers, indigenes were excessive and irresponsible drinkers.²⁷⁵ The smuggling of beer happened in northern Namibia, where cuca beer from Angola was transported over the border.²⁷⁶ That is the reason why today in Namibia shebeens in the north are called cuca-shops, and not shebeens.

The government opted for a ‘carrot and stick method’ in order to push the black population back in line. The liquor law crumbled apart before the eyes of the administration and the response was twofold. On the one hand the state reacted fiercely, while on the other hand an alternative was offered. The ‘stick’ consisted of a harsh government reaction to home

²⁷¹ NAN, F002-L.0781a, Commission of Enquiry: Sale of liquor and desecration of Sunday.

²⁷² R. Gordon, *Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia*, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 13.

²⁷³ NAN, F002-L.0781a, Commission of Enquiry: Sale of liquor and desecration of Sunday.

²⁷⁴ NAN, F002-L.0781a, Commission of Enquiry: Sale of liquor and desecration of Sunday.

²⁷⁵ R. Gordon, *Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia*, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 9.

²⁷⁶ H. Siiskonen, ‘Namibia and the Heritage of Colonial Alcohol Policy’, *Nordic Journal of African Studies* Vol. 3 (1) (1994) 78. It was also noted by the government that cases of liquor were smuggled over the border, see: NAN, SWAA 150, Ovamboland. Distilling of alcohol by natives: Extract from quarterly report by the native commissioner, Ondangua, Ovamboland, for the quarter ended 31st March, 1949.

brewing, for instance with notorious liquor raids.²⁷⁷ In 1947, the government demolished 352 stills in Ovamboland – in half a year’s time!²⁷⁸ The Native Commissioner invited the headmen of Ovamboland to read article three of the Mandate Agreement.²⁷⁹ The state started to take an active interest in home brewing and for instance sent samples of drinks to laboratories in South Africa for an analysis of the alcohol content.²⁸⁰ That the state was occupied with eradicating home brewing is also shown by the aforementioned crime statistics from 1950.

The best example of the ‘stick’ is perhaps the Dried Peas Control Ordinance from 1957. Dried peas constituted one of the main ingredients for making beer. The legislation declared that dried peas could not be sold, delivered, given or otherwise supplied to any native.²⁸¹ The opposition came, surprisingly, from the Chambers of Commerce. The Chamber in Walvisbay wrote a lengthy response to the Ordinance, starting with the point that for the “coloured”²⁸² fishermen in Walvis Bay, dried peas were a necessary foodstuff. It was requested that the Ordinance would only count for the Ovambo, since they were expected to be the main brewers. But most importantly, it put the stores in an “extremely difficult position” because the shopkeepers had to decide who fell under the category of native.²⁸³

“Many Europeans who look like near whites make it difficult (...) to decide correctly into which class they fall. Grocery assistants and even Grocery Managers would constantly be involved in embarrassing situations.”²⁸⁴

²⁷⁷ J.B. Gewald, ‘Diluting Drinks and Deepening Discontent: Colonial Liquor Controls and Public Resistance in Windhoek, Namibia’, in: D. Bryceson (eds.), *Alcohol in Africa: Mixing Business, Pleasure, and Politics* (Portsmouth 2002) 126; R. Gordon, Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 10-11; ‘NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: From C.F. Marais and P.J. Koen, 07/11/1957 or 13/11/1957, to the Administrator-In-Executive Committee.

²⁷⁸ NAN, NAO 071, Native Customs and Practices, Distilling Alcohol: Note from 29/8/47; H.L.P. Eedes, Native Commissioner in Ondangua, 12/09/1947, to the Chief Native Commissioner in Windhoek; NAN, SWAA 1504, Ovamboland. Distilling of alcohol by natives: Extract from quarterly report. Quarter April-September, 1947. Native commissioner, Ondangua, Ovamboland.

²⁷⁹ NAN, NAO 071, Native Customs and Practices, Distilling Alcohol: The Native Commissioner in Ondangua, 12/05/1947, to the Assistant Native Commissioner in Oshikango.

²⁸⁰ NAN, NAO 071, Native Customs and Practices, Distilling Alcohol: H.L.P. Eedes, Native Commissioner Ovamboland in Ondangua, 05/02/1949, to the Chief Native Commissioner in Windhoek, and several other small notes and letters in this archival file.

²⁸¹ NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: Dried Peas Control Ordinance 1957.

²⁸² The Apartheid administration divided people into racial categories: whites, blacks, coloureds and Asians.

²⁸³ NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: From C.F. Marais and P.J. Koen, 7/11/1957 or 13/11/1957, to the Administrator-In-Executive Committee.

²⁸⁴ NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: From C.F. Marais and P.J. Koen, 7/11/1957 or 13/11/1957, to the Administrator-In-Executive Committee.

Also other Chambers of Commerce rebelled against the Ordinance. The Chamber in Outjo complained that shopkeepers had large amounts of stock that became less valuable.²⁸⁵ Otjiwarongo had similar complaints.²⁸⁶ The Chamber in Swakopmund went the furthest, asking for a complete repeal of the law.²⁸⁷ None of these requests were met by the government. The response of the embarrassed shop-owners in Walvis Bay was significant. The Magistrate of Walvis Bay referred the matter to the District Commandant of the South African Police in Omaruru. The solution was simple, according to the police. In case a storekeeper was not sure about the whiteness of a customer, “an excuse could always be made that the commodity is out of stock so as to avoid giving offence.”²⁸⁸ In other words: nothing changed. The Chamber in Walvis Bay noted in a dreary reply that the brewing of illicit beer had not been curbed since the Ordinance came into place.²⁸⁹ It is a strange fact that the Dread Peas Control Ordinance has not been formally repealed – in theory, the legislation is still intact.²⁹⁰

The ‘carrot’ consisted of beer halls. A beer hall was a place where black Africans could drink beer under the supervision of the state. It was some sort of stepping stone towards the drinking of European beers. The beer halls sold an imitation of ‘kaffir’ beer, which was in the legal sense the beer “commonly brewed by natives from kaffir corn or millet or other grain and not containing more than 3% by weight of alcohol”²⁹¹ Sometimes ‘kaffir’ is used as a universal name for drinks as ertjies beer, karrie, !Khari, Otjikariha, bantubeer and other variants. It was a popular concoction made from several ingredients, ranging from potatoes, peas, beans, mealies and more, and for the fermentation sugar, golden syrup or other fermenting substances.²⁹² It was a relatively cheap drink.²⁹³

²⁸⁵ NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: Die Sekretaris, Ordonnansie om die verkoop van droë ertjies te beheer.

²⁸⁶ NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: Secretary of South West Africa, P.J. Koen in Windhoek, 14/09/1957, to the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce in Otjiwarongo.

²⁸⁷ NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: Chamber of Commerce in Swakopmund, 04/06/1957, to the Secretary for South West Africa.

²⁸⁸ NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: From C.F. Marais and P.J. Koen, 7/11/1957 or 13/11/1957, to the Administrator-In-Executive Committee.

²⁸⁹ Ibidem.

²⁹⁰ The Namibian reported in 2014 that the Law Reform and Development Commission identified that the Dried Peas Control Ordinance was never formally repealed. Ellison Tsjirera wrote in an Insight Namibia issue from December 2015 – January 2016 that this is still the case. The Liquor Act No. 6 of 1998 repealed the Kaffir Beer Control Ordinance and thereby legally reformed the liquor industry. For unknown reasons the Dried Peas Control Ordinance remained and is still to be found in Namibia’s statute books. W. Menges, ‘Native? Sorry, no dried peas’, *The Namibian*, 22 August 2014; E. Tsjirera, ‘Dried peas and the politics of inebriation’, *Insight Namibia*, December 2015 – January 2016.

²⁹¹ NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: Ordinance to provide for the brewing of Kaffir beer by natives on land outside urban area; and other legislative texts.

²⁹² NAN F002-RARA/062, Native beverages 1931: 3.

The beer halls were all over South West Africa.²⁹⁴ In every major location (township) of a town a beer hall was placed. The example came from South Africa, where beer halls were also in place.²⁹⁵ The municipality of Windhoek approached South West Breweries to make an imitation of the ‘kaffir beer’ for the planned beer hall in Windhoek’s Location.²⁹⁶ In 1934 a batch of 1000 litres was produced and supplied to the Location Advisory Board for tasting. The Advisory Board held meetings to discuss the quality of the brew. A municipal policeman who was not on the board presented his views:

“The beer is very clean and pure, just as clean and pure as the water in the tanks and has the same strength. (...) I know what liquor is and the beer supplied is no stronger than water.”²⁹⁷

The brew was clearly of an unsatisfactorily quality and it took a while before a brew was chosen. The official brewers were also troubled by their task. Two years later, the Secretary for SWA writes to government officials in Pretoria that a loss in beer can be partly explained by the “inexperience in brewing Kaffir beer” of the SWB brewers.²⁹⁸ In 1936 the municipal beer hall of Windhoek was opened, which G.O. Bowker, the superintendent of the location, saw as an exercise in “civilizing the native.” The beer hall was always a contested place.²⁹⁹ Beer halls emerged all over the country. In effect, the revenues were used to fund Apartheid amenities. Mager made a similar conclusion when she examined the beer halls in South Africa: “Africans were drinking themselves into the apartheid system.”³⁰⁰

A solution was found for the people outside the towns. With the Kaffir Beer (Rural Areas) Control Ordinance of 1957 it became possible for natives to brew beer on land outside

²⁹³ NAN, MTS 8, Non-European Affairs: Beer Hall: Lokasiesuperintendent, 11/05/1970, to the Stadsklerk in Tsumeb.

²⁹⁴ The National Archives are full of files concerning beer halls and this would be a tremendous separate research topic.

²⁹⁵ P. la Hausse, ‘Drink and Cultural Innovation in Durban: The Origins of the Beerhall in South Africa, 1902-1916’, in: J. Crush and C. Ambler (eds.), *Liquor and Labor in Southern Africa* (Athens 1992); WCARS, CMT 3/1086, Liquor: kaffir beer. General; WCARS, 3/CT, 4/1/9/1/137, Liquor. Proposed establishment of bantu beer brewery (also tour of up country establishments re same).

²⁹⁶ The location was the township where all black people had to live. Every town in South West Africa had a location.

²⁹⁷ Corporal Petrus as quoted in J.B. Gewald, ‘Diluting Drinks and Deepening Discontent: Colonial Liquor Controls and Public Resistance in Windhoek, Namibia’, in: D. Bryceson (eds.), *Alcohol in Africa: Mixing Business, Pleasure, and Politics* (Portsmouth 2002) 130.

²⁹⁸ NAN, SWAA 3113, Customs and Excise: Brewery regulations: The Secretary for South West Africa in Windhoek, 07/08/1936, to the Commissioner of Customs & Excise in Pretoria.

²⁹⁹ J.B. Gewald, ‘Diluting Drinks and Deepening Discontent: Colonial Liquor Controls and Public Resistance in Windhoek, Namibia’, in: D. Bryceson (eds.), *Alcohol in Africa: Mixing Business, Pleasure, and Politics* (Portsmouth 2002) 131.

³⁰⁰ A. Mager, ‘The First Decade of ‘European Beer’ in Apartheid South Africa: The State, the Brewers and the Drinking Public, 1962-72’, *The Journal of African History* Vol. 40 No. 3 (1999) 382-383.

of an urban area, as long as they had a written consent of the European land owner.³⁰¹ People were slowly warming towards the idea that beer became legal. In response to a proposed amendment of the liquor act in 1956, the Office of the Magistrate in Omaruru wrote to the Secretary of South West Africa: “In any case you will never stop them brewing potent liquor. In my opinion they should be allowed to purchase the ordinary liquor.” It took however more than a decade before this became a reality.³⁰²

The change of the 1960s

The 1960s changed everything. The War for Independence started in 1966. In 1967, the List family acquired the majority shareholding of South West Breweries. Carl List founded the company in 1920 and when he died in 1959 his son Karl Werner List took over. The company history so far was however a history of family fights: several wealthy families tried to obtain power of the brewing concern. At this point in time, E.A.H.F. Behnsen was the chairman.³⁰³ Werner List’s wife, Hilda, travelled all over the country to talk to SWB shareholders and she was able to persuade them to sell the shares to List. She did not have money, but the Ohlthaver & List group could finance the trade with its own shares. With the majority of O&L, Werner List entered the board room and told Behnsen that he was the new boss. Hilda List was however the key figure in Werner’s attempt to gain control.³⁰⁴

Also in 1967, South West Breweries bought out Hansa Brewery.³⁰⁵ With the newly acquired power Werner List was able to merge SWB with its only remaining competitor in the territory. Other people were also interested in Hansa Brewery prior to the merger, there were for instance talks between them and a brewery in Stellenbosch. The amalgamation of Hansa and SWB was an exchange of shares between Hansa shareholders and SWB. The main reason behind this was, according to the manager Ernst Heuschneider, the threat of South African Breweries. The relatively small turnover of Hansa is also named as a reason. The two companies were together, but worked separately.³⁰⁶ Finally in 1969, the Liquor Licensing Proclamation was repealed. The alcohol prohibition came to an end, making it possible for

³⁰¹ NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: Kaffir Beer (Rural Areas) Control Ordinance, 1957.

³⁰² NAN, JUS 156, Kaffir beer: Office of the Magistrate in Omaruru, 15/10/1956, to the Secretary for South West Africa (Justice Section) in Windhoek.

³⁰³ The Behnsen family owned Metje + Ziegler, a major company that still exists in Namibia.

³⁰⁴ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016.

³⁰⁵ NAN, F002-PC/0044, South West Breweries Breweries gazette.

³⁰⁶ Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Heuschneider, 27 February 2012.

black consumers to legally buy European style commercial beer.³⁰⁷ This led to the establishment of thousands of illicit bars.³⁰⁸

In conclusion, the beer market changed completely in fifty years' time between 1920 and 1970. At the start of this era, the market consisted of three breweries that were in competition with each other. In 1970, only one brewery remained. Furthermore, this time period started out with two separate beer markets: one for the white settler community, and another for the black population. In 1970, only one market remained. In other words: South West Africa now had a single brewing concern that could cater for the whole population. In many respects, 1970 is the end of an era.

³⁰⁷ Again, South Africa was the example, where the prohibition ended in 1962. A. Mager, 'The First Decade of 'European Beer' in Apartheid South Africa: The State, the Brewers and the Drinking Public, 1962-72', *The Journal of African History* Vol. 40 No. 3 (1999) 367-388.

³⁰⁸ H. Siiskonen, 'Namibia and the Heritage of Colonial Alcohol Policy', *Nordic Journal of African Studies* Vol. 3 (1) (1994) 80.

Visual material



Image 24: A Windhoek Lager bottle in the South West Breweries plant. This bottle shape was nicknamed “the hand grenade.” Photo courtesy from Namibia Breweries.

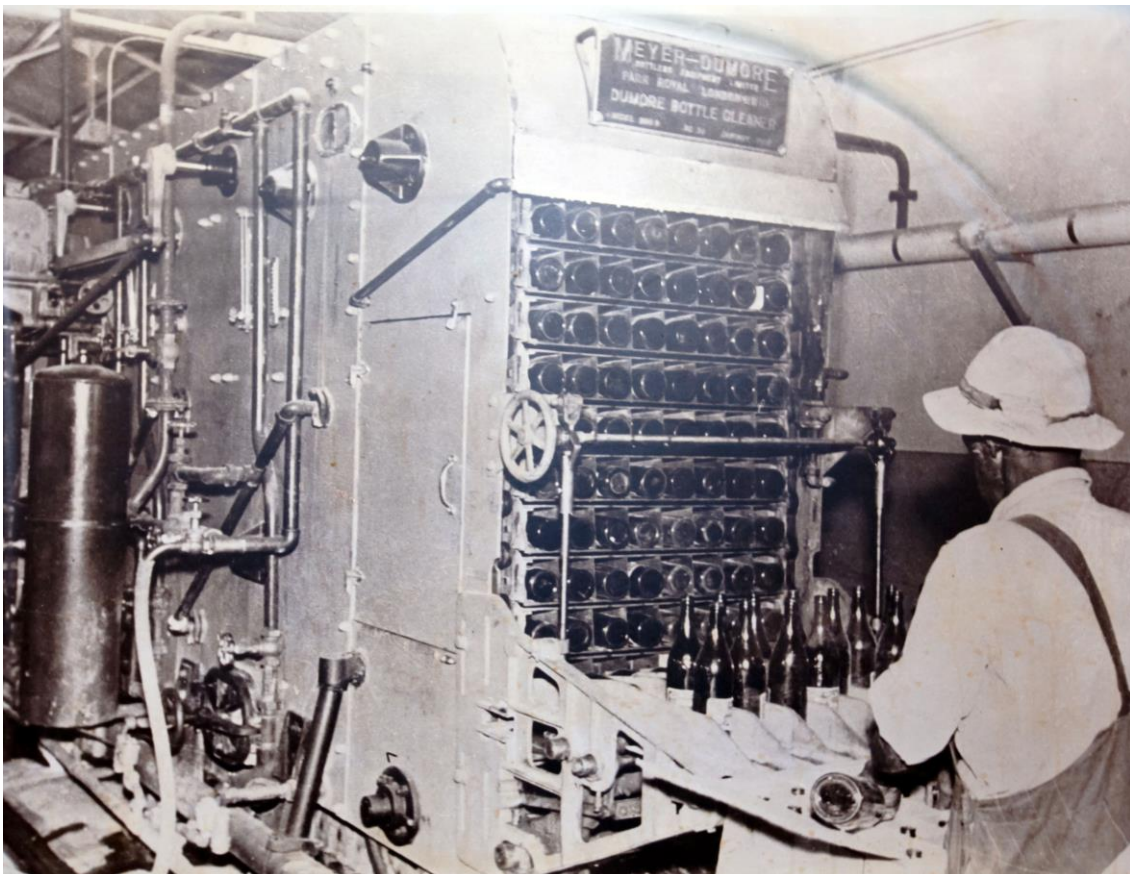


Image 25: Washing bottles in the South West Breweries plant. Courtesy of Namibia Breweries.



Image 26: The exterior of the South West Breweries plant in Tal Street, Windhoek. Courtesy of Namibia Breweries.

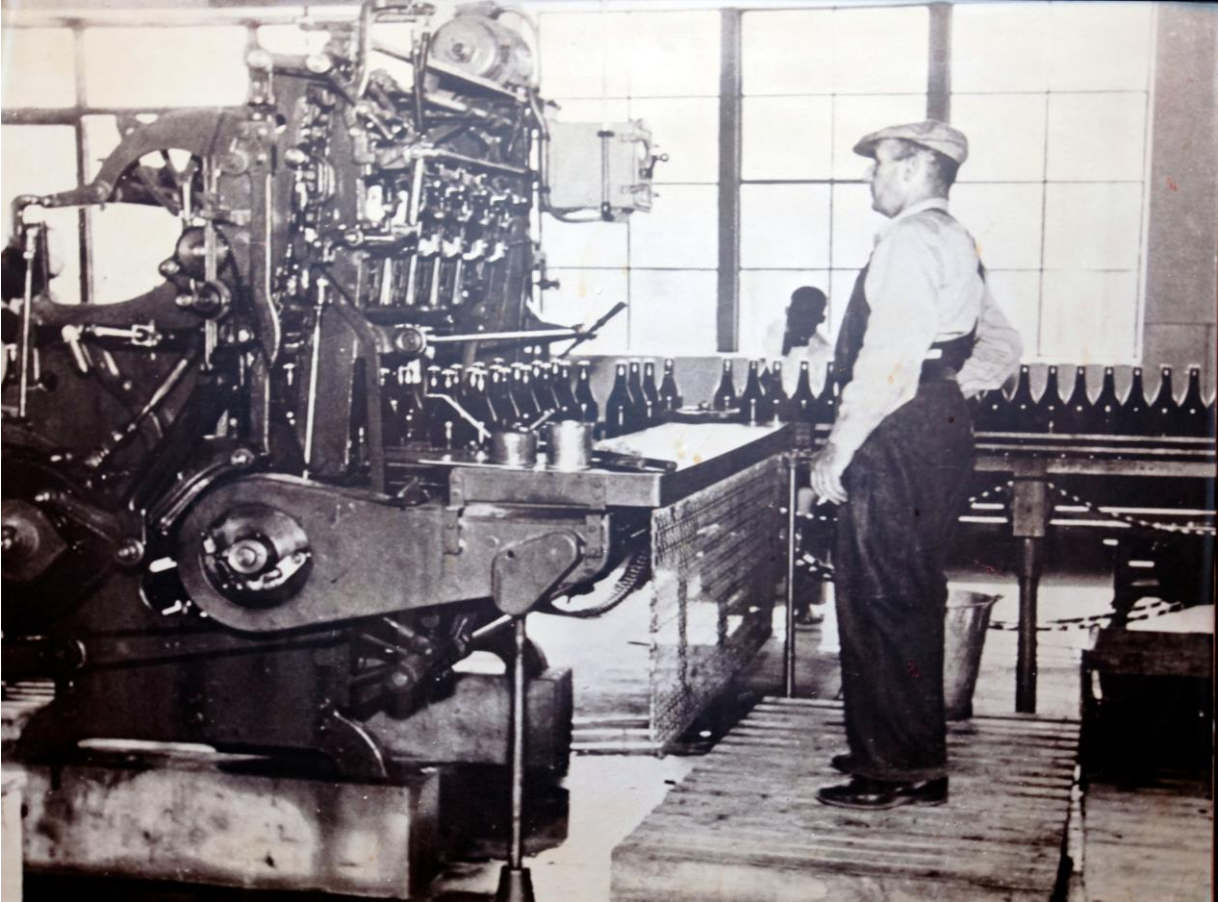


Image 27: Machines in the South West Breweries plant. Courtesy of Namibia Breweries.

Union Brauerei

.....
Ltd., Windhuk, Tel. 118, Box 78
.....

Wir geben hierdurch zur gefl.
Kenntnis, daß unser ERSTES

B·I·E·R

helles, Pilsener Art,
hergestellt aus bestem Malz
und feinstem Hopfen, am

1. M·A·I

zum Ausstoß gelangt. ∴ Wir
würden uns freuen, wenn Sie
sich von der Qualität durch
einen Probetrunk am Dienstag
(1. Mai), nachmittags zwischen
3 und 6 Uhr, überzeugen
würden. Sie sollen uns da-
zu herzlich willkommen sein.

Union Brauerei

.....
Ltd., Windhuk, Tel. 118, Box 78
.....

VERTRETER :

A. F. Howaldt, Lüderitzbucht, für Lüderitz-
bucht und Umgebung
Collisons (S.W.) Ltd. für Swakopmund,
Walfischbay u. den Norden

Image 28: Advertisement from 1923 where the Union Brewery announces its first beers. Landes-Zeitung für Südwestafrika, 28 April 1923. Gratitude goes to Brenda Bravenboer for pointing this advertisement out.



Image 29: A beer label from Hansa Brewery. Many old labels feature ships and the sea. Scientific Society Swakopmund, uncatalogued Hansa boxes.



Image 30: Caramel-Malzbier, one of the more experimental flavours of Hansa Brewery. Scientific Society Swakopmund, uncatalogued Hansa boxes.



Image 31: An employee packing Hansa Export Lager. National Archives of Namibia, 12606.



Image 32: The interior of the Hansa Brewery in Swakopmund. Scientific Society Swakopmund, 2009.20.54.

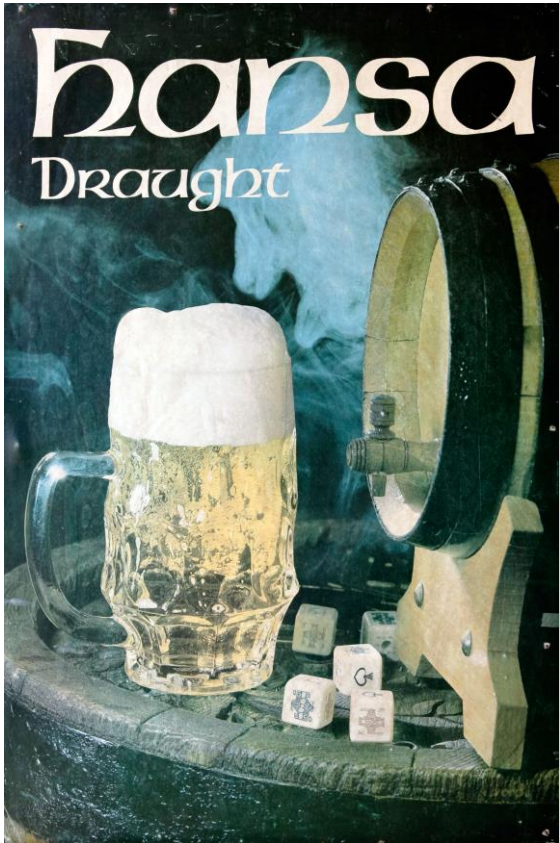


Image 33: Advertising Hansa draught. This brand still exists and is part of the NBL portfolio. Courtesy of Namibia Breweries.



Image 34: An old bottle of Tafel Lager. The bottle is from the Swakopmund Museum.

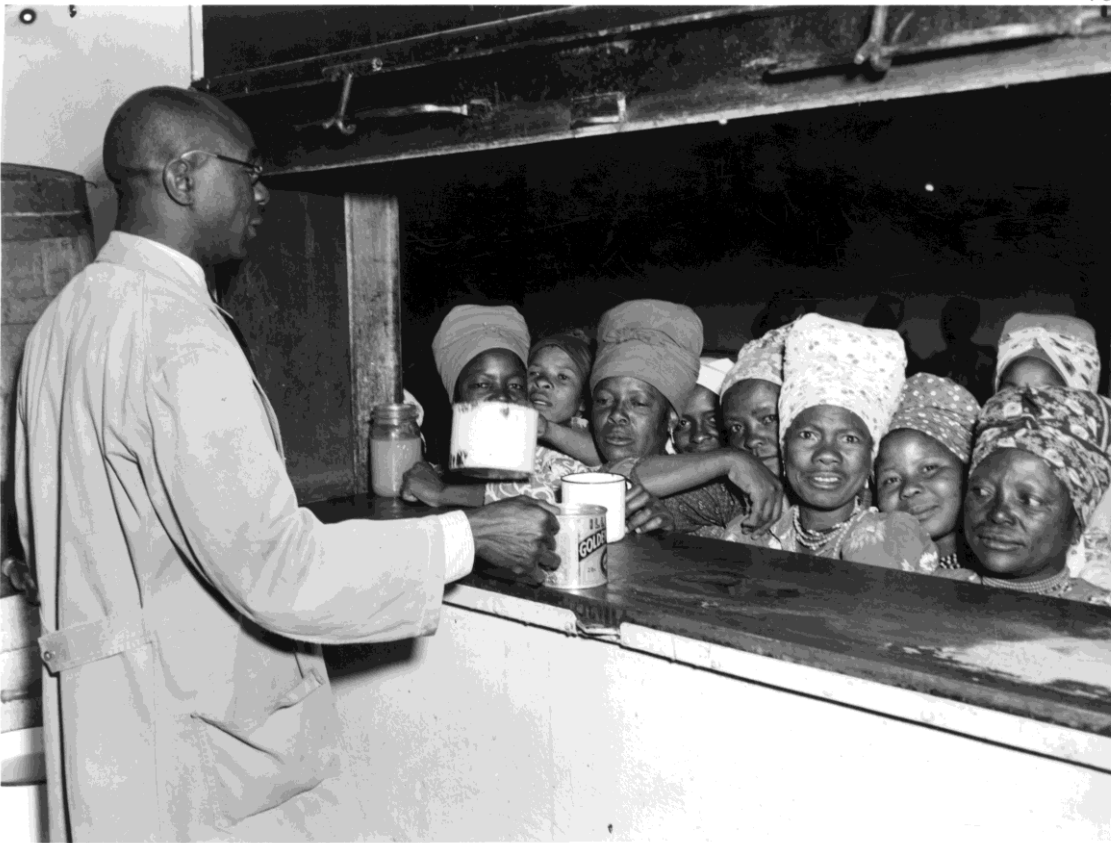


Image 35: Beer being served in the municipal beerhall in Windhoek, 1953. National Archives of Namibia, 03196.



Image 36: Customers drinking beer from tins in the beerhall in the Old Location, Windhoek. National Archives of Namibia, 24558.



Image 37: One of the thousands shebeens in Namibia. Often shebeens (or cucashops) have colourful names. Photo by Manfred Goldbeck.



Image 38: Welcome to the Hakuna Matata bar, one of the many shebeens. Photo by Manfred Goldbeck.

III NBL's remarkable transformation

1970-2015

At this point in time, South West Breweries was facing a new situation. For the first time in its history, SWB was owned by the List family (who had a majority of the shares).

Furthermore it was the only commercial brewing company left in the country (the remaining competitor Hansa Brewery had been bought out by SWB) and it could now cater for both the black and the white population (the former legislation had been repealed). The future ahead was however not that bright. Especially the desire of the foreign rival South African Breweries to set foot in South West Africa was a major threat. Similarly, the impending independence was a question with which the brewery had to deal.

A South West company

South West Breweries was still very much a South West company when this time period commenced. The brewery made beer for a small group of consumers: the white population of mainly German descent. The company's name was modelled after the political administration and the beer was promoted as the true South West Beer, which became a settler catchword.³⁰⁹ Illustrative is an article of the South West Africa Annual, a tri-lingual periodical that "played an important role in promoting and strengthening a sense of 'South West' identity in Namibia's settler society."³¹⁰ The beer was hailed as the "national drink" of the South Westers in an illustrative article with the roaring title "The Proud Boast and Toast of South West Africa Is Its Glorious Beer":

"For more than 50 years beer has been the national beverage of South West Africa. In fact, it might well be described as a national food. (...) There is much that is sound in the contention that beer produced in South West Africa is a national beverage (...)." ³¹¹

³⁰⁹ In the three main languages that were used, the slogans were: "The genuine South West beer", "Die ware Suidwes bier" and "Das echte Südwest Bier." Derived from a beer coaster; R. Gordon., Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 15.

³¹⁰ Suidwes-Afrika-Jaarboek, 1953. Besides articles, every edition of the South West Africa Annual featured advertisement from South West Breweries, according to Carl Schlettwein, this was a must for some companies, "not with the aim of increasing sales, but to underline their identity as part of colonial Namibia." G. Miescher, L. Rizzo and J. Silvester, 'Carl Schlettwein – Commercial Advertising in Namibia in the 1950s', in: G. Miescher, L. Rizzo and J. Silvester (eds.), *Posters in Action* (Basel 2009) 110-111.

³¹¹ NSS, South West Africa Annual, 1953

SWB beer became an icon of the national identity of these white Namibians.³¹² Many settler traditions that came to define their community were entangled with SWB beer:

“Once a year a ‘Bockbier’ is produced. This is a dark beer, very heavy, and its appearance for sale results in many a ‘Bock Bier Fest’. Usually this is combined with a ‘Schlachtefest’. Enterprising hoteliers and many private people slaughter pigs and prepare various pork dishes and, of course, pork sausages. These are served with masses of sauerkraut, washed down with copious draughts of ‘Mai Bock’. (...) Beer is also an important adjunct to a ‘Richtefest’ [roof wetting]. No building is considered properly established without a roof wetting and this consists of large quantities of beer served with Vienna sausages, fresh, crisp rolls and adequate helpings of mustard.”³¹³

When one travelled from South Africa back to the familiar South West Africa, a glass of beer was the symbol of coming home:

“An interesting vignette of the attitude of residents of the Territory towards their own beer is noticeable on trains leaving De Aar [Northern Cape, South Africa] for Windhoek. No sooner does the returning South West African board the train he immediately demands ‘a cold South West beer’.”³¹⁴

There is not a better embodiment for this observation than the brewery’s logo, which was the image of the Reiterdenkmal. The Equestrian Monument (better known as the Reiterdenkmal or Südwest Reiter) is a statue that commemorates the Germans that died during the war against the Herero and the Nama between 1904 – 1908.³¹⁵ The monument was inaugurated in 1912, on the birthday of the German emperor Wilhelm II and displays a soldier on horseback. Governor Theodor Seitz stated in the inauguration speech in 1912:

“The bronze horseman of the colonial forces surveys the land from this place and proclaims to the world that we are and shall remain masters here.”³¹⁶

The monument has been controversial for a long time, as it was seen as a symbol of victory, oppression and colonial rule.³¹⁷ Especially after independence it became a topic of debate and

³¹² R. Gordon., Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 15.

³¹³ NSS, South West Africa Annual, 1953

³¹⁴ NSS, South West Africa Annual, 1953

³¹⁵ G. von Schumann and G. McGregor, *The Equestrian Monument (Reiterdenkmal) 1912-2014: A chronological documentation of reports, newspaper clippings and photos/illustrations* (Windhoek 2014).

³¹⁶ J. Zeller, ‘Symbol politics: Notes on the German colonial culture of remembrance’, in: J. Zimmerer and J. Zeller, *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War of 1904-1908 And Its Aftermath* (Berlin 2003) 231.

strongly divided the population.³¹⁸ In 2013 the statue was unexpectedly removed and stored in the *Alte Feste* in the middle of Christmas eve, whereby the area was cordoned off by police to prevent the public from getting close.³¹⁹ For decades, including the 1970s when South West Breweries became the national brewer, the Reiter was not only the symbol of colonial administration, but also the symbol of the brewery. Every bottle, coaster and poster featured this monument prominently.

Challenge from South African Breweries

In the meantime, South African Breweries, the big rival from the neighbouring South Africa, wanted to enter the Namibian market. SAB was a brewing giant, a company that at this point in time owned more than ninety percent of the southern African beer market.³²⁰ The battle that raged between the two rivals came to define South West Breweries and in part also the Namibian beer market in general.

It is a curious fact that SAB used to have shares in SWB, although the exact details of this cooperation remain mysterious. The management group that was in charge of the brewery during the 1970s and 1980s vividly remember that SAB had a 25 percent shareholding of SWB, but has trouble recalling the details.³²¹ According to the website of South African Breweries, a minority shareholding was acquired in 1965.³²² The major project that both companies undertook was the launch of a new beer brand for the South African market, Hansa

³¹⁷ As argued by Zeller and others. J. Zeller, 'Symbol politics: Notes on the German colonial culture of remembrance' 231-251.

³¹⁸ The population from German descent was also divided over the question what should happen with this statue. E. Zuern, 'Memorial politics: challenging the dominant party's narrative in Namibia', *The Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol. 40 No. 03 (2012) 493-518. Some parts of society thought of the Reiter as a 'monument for all', G. von Schumann and G. McGregor, *The Equestrian Monument (Reiterdenkmal) 1912-2014: A chronological documentation of reports, newspaper clippings and photos/illustrations* (Windhoek 2014). The Managing Director of South West Breweries, Bernd Masche, strongly believes that the statue is a monument for all parts of society and should not be associated with the genocide. Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016.

³¹⁹ The *Alte Feste* was a German fort and the very first building of Windhoek. The *Schutztruppe*, German troops, were stationed here. The *Alte Feste* was situated on a hill in Windhoek and overlooked the larger area. It still exists, although there is not much to see. The National Museum was situated in the *Alte Feste* until it was moved. Currently the building is disintegrating.

³²⁰ Interviews with Bernd Masche, 22 January and 15 February 2016.

³²¹ It is problematic that the company archive of NBL is not intact anymore. After the moving of the brewery from Tal Street to Iscor Street, lots of documents were lost. (former) employees of SAB and NBL confirm however the agreement between SAB and SWB. Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016; Interview with Bogart Butler and Linda Buckingham, 17 February 2016; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Heuschneider, 27 February 2012; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Helmut Pfaller, 26 May 2015; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Ender, 22 May 2015; Interview with Bogart Butler and Linda Buckingham, 17 February 2016.

³²² An extensive SAB timeline, ranging from 1886 to 2012, mentions in the year 1965 "Minority investment taken up in South West Breweries." The timeline is difficult to find, one copy is on a website of SABMiller Romania, 5 July 2016: <<http://ursus-breweries.ro/sabmiller-in-lume/istoric/?lng=2>>.

Pilsener. It was brewed at the Hansa Brewery in Swakopmund and sold exclusively in South Africa. According to the brand's website, it was first introduced in South Africa in 1975.³²³

The cooperation between SAB and SWB was never a healthy relationship and the cooperation slowly crumbled. According to Bernd Masche, the managing director of SWB during this time, the relationship became more and more sour.³²⁴ Werner List, the chairman of the SWB board, did not pay dividend to the shareholders and SAB, being a major shareholder, also wanted more power. SAB was being accused of blocking important decisions for SWB, for instance concerning alterations in the Articles of Association.³²⁵ The brewers in SWA felt that SAB simply wanted a quick return on investment, something which they could not offer.³²⁶

The breaking point came during the building of the new brewery, halfway during the 1980s. As this chapter explains later on, a new brewery complex was being built in Windhoek for SWB. A massive amount of capital was necessary for this endeavour and it became crucial that the company increased its borrowing power. Changing the Articles of Association during a general meeting of the shareholders was required to make this possible, but SAB opposed this decision. SWB felt that SAB abused its power to disrupt the operations in South West Africa.³²⁷ A deadlock had been reached.

The solution for all the trouble was the Hansa Pilsener brand that SAB was selling under license in South Africa. Hansa Pilsener was launched in 1975 and after ten years the license had to be renewed. Instead of renewing, the SAB and SWB devised a clever deal. SAB received the Hansa trademark for South Africa and some of the surrounding countries, so that they could continue selling the Hansa Pilsener. According to the contract, Hansa Pilsener cannot be sold in Namibia. In return, SAB gave 20 percent of the shares back to SWB.³²⁸

³²³ Two years after the introduction the brand was relaunched, because the consumers were not buying the product. In 2001 it became the second largest beer brand in South Africa and in 2011 it was voted as the most popular beer in South Africa by the Sunday Times. Hansa Pilsener website, 21 May 2016: <<http://hansapilsener.co.za/the-beer/history>>

³²⁴ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016, also confirmed by SAB officials: Interview with Bogart Butler and Linda Buckingham, 17 February 2016.

³²⁵ Interview with Bernd Masche, 15 February 2016.

³²⁶ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016.

³²⁷ Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Heuschneider, 27 February 2012.

³²⁸ SWB feared that Tafel Lager, the brand that was taken over from the Hansa Brewery, could no longer be exported to South Africa as well. After all, SAB got the 'Hansa' trademark together with the Hansa Pilsener. Windhoek Lager (originally from SWB) and Tafel Lager (originally from Hansa) were two of the biggest brands. After the SAB agreement, SWB simply removed the Hansa from Tafel Lager, and kept exporting this beer to the South African market. Interview with Hans Herrmann and Christian Müller, 18 November 2015; Interview with Bernd Masche, 15 February 2016; Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Helmut Pfaller, 26 May 2015.

South West Breweries was only a tiny company, seen from a brewers perspective. Brewing beer for just a few of the white South Westers from German descent was not a viable strategy in the long term, especially in an industry where the economies of scale were becoming increasingly important. Worldwide breweries were getting bigger and bigger. The involvement of SAB in SWB and its desire to acquire market share in South West Africa made the regional industry increasingly complex. The rivalry has been described as a ‘David versus Goliath’ battle, with the ‘million dollar question’ for SWB brewers being: how do we survive?

The north opens up

Then something unexpected happened: the north opened up. Half of the country’s population lived in Ovamboland, in northern Namibia, which made this place a considerable market. Throughout history, the breweries were however never able to bring their beers to this substantial group of consumers. South West Breweries, up until the 1970s, could only reach the beer triangle (Swakopmund, Windhoek and Omaruru) and the surrounding towns in the territory.³²⁹ South West Breweries may have dominated the beer market in the sense that they were the only commercial brewery in South West Africa, they could not cover the whole beer market.

The fact that the brewery could not reach the northern market had two different reasons. First of all, the duty-free smuggling of cuca beer across the Angolan border was a problem.³³⁰ This is also the reason why shebeens in the north are often called cucashops. It was basically impossible to compete with the cheap beer that has historically been in Ovamboland for a long time. Cuca beer provided for eighty to ninety percent of the market. Secondly, the brewery was for a long time unable to acquire transport licenses to transport the beer via trucks. The transport industry was dominated by the railways and the brewery had to deal with them, which was expensive.³³¹ Thus, the Windhoek Lager and Tafel Lager (the two most famous brands) were virtually not available in northern Namibia.

³²⁹ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016; Interview with Bernd Masche, 15 February 2016.

³³⁰ H. Siiskonen, ‘Namibia and the Heritage of Colonial Alcohol Policy’, *Nordic Journal of African Studies* Vol. 3 (1) (1994) 78. Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Ender, 22 May 2015.

³³¹ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Heuschneider, 27 February 2012.

The Angolan war that broke out in 1975 changed the whole dynamics.³³² First of all it more or less stopped the massive smuggling of cuca beer, making the market more ready for another competitor. The brewery bought two Mercedes-Benz trucks from Angolan refugees – the very first start of their own transport fleet.³³³ After years of negotiating, they finally received a transport license and were thereby able to bring beer up north. A whole new market opened up for SWB, making the beer market finally national in terms of scope.

As a result, the production of South West Breweries grew tremendously and SWB put much effort in persuading the northerners to drink their products.³³⁴ A striking example was the launch of the “Wambo Lager”, a tropical looking bottle with a logo consisting of palm trees and text in Oshivambo, the common language of the Ovambo. In fact the contents of the beer was the well-known Windhoek Lager, but the brewery simply put a different label on it to connect with the newly discovered consumer base in the north.³³⁵ The brewery even designed its own cucabeer, with a label closely resembling the generic and already existing cucabeer. SWB brewed it for a little while, but it did not work out and the people behind the brand idea went to SAB. Another example was the newly erected sorghum brewery in Tsumeb, which is later discussed in this chapter.

A new direction

The unexpected access to the northern Namibian market gave South West Breweries momentum and a new direction was taken to withstand the threat of South African Breweries. It all started with the building of a new brewery, which was necessary since beer production was growing. The new brewery subsequently allowed for a new strategy based on market differentiation via the Reinheitsgebot. Finally the independence of Namibia was embraced by the management. A powerful alliance between state and industry was devised in order to protect the brewery and make export to other countries easier.

Brewery

The sudden increase in beer production resulted in the need of a brewery in Windhoek. Most of the production was done in the Tal Street brewery where the old Felsenkellerbrauerei

³³² M. Wallace, *A History of Namibia: From the Beginning to 1990* (2011 Cape Town) 279; P. Chabal and N. Vidal (eds.), *Angola: the weight of history* (London 2007); Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Ender, 22 May 2015; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Heuschneider, 27 February 2012.

³³³ Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Ender, 22 May 2015.

³³⁴ Interview with Bernd Masche, 15 February 2016; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Ender, 22 May 2015; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Heuschneider, 27 February 2012.

³³⁵ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016; Interview with Don Stevenson, 5 February 2016.

originated. The Tal Street brewery was however, in the words of Bernd Masche, “a museum.” The equipment was outdated and the production facilities inefficient. It was difficult to get a permit for a new brewery from the city government, but as soon as Masche threatened to move the plant to the nearby town of Okahandja, a permit was organized. In 1981 the company started with the work on a new modern plant, placed in the Northern Industrial Area of Windhoek.³³⁶ The construction was divided into two phases. Firstly, the bottling plant was erected and came in use in 1983. Secondly, the Brewhouse and other equipment was installed. In 1986 the complete brewery was finished and ready to use. A remarkable feature of the plant was the corrugated iron roof, apparently the first of its kind in southern Africa. The brewery tried to patent the roof, without success.³³⁷

Reinheitsgebot

The new plant allowed for a new strategy, and the key point of this strategy was to completely change the brewing process and introduce the Reinheitsgebot as standard for all alcohol drinks. The Reinheitsgebot was introduced after the opening of the new plant, in 1986.³³⁸ The Reinheitsgebot is a German purity law from 1516 that restricted brewers to make beer with malted barley, hops and water.³³⁹ The overall idea was that putting an emphasis on pure beer and the German heritage of the brewery would give SWB a chance to differentiate their products from SAB products.

Brewing the beer according to the Reinheitsgebot had three major advantages. Firstly, the beers could now be moved into the premium quality segment of the market, thereby distinguishing the products from South African Breweries drinks. According to Helmut Pfaller, the master brewer of SWB during the introduction of the Reinheitsgebot, the beers of SAB and SWB were fairly similar.³⁴⁰ South West Breweries used various ingredients that do not fall under the purity law. Archival research shows examples as sugar, maize, rice and

³³⁶ NLN, South West Breweries Limited, Annual Report, 1981. Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Ender, 22 May 2015.

³³⁷ The head engineer of the brewery, Manfred Redecker, was responsible for the innovative roof. Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Helmut Pfaller, 26 May 2015.

³³⁸ Interview with Hans Herrmann and Christian Müller, 18 November 2015; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Ender, 22 May 2015.

³³⁹ The Reinheitsgebot is a German purity law from 1516. In fact, it is the oldest still existing health regulation in the world. It prescribed that brewers could only use water, hops and malted barley. Yeast was an unknown phenomenon then, only to be discovered after the invention of the microscope. In Germany the Reinheitsgebot is still official law. Outside Germany, only a few breweries choose to brew according to the strict regulations.

³⁴⁰ Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Helmut Pfaller, 26 May 2015.

syrup.³⁴¹ SAB still uses maize as a main ingredient for brands as Carling Black Label. With the Reinheitsgebot, SWB differentiated their beers in the market.³⁴²

Secondly, the focus on pure beer connected better with an upcoming group of consumers that favoured a healthy lifestyle. A global health movement was growing in the 1980s. Reinheitsgebot beer is expected to be healthier and more nutritious than other production methods because it does not involve the use of additives.³⁴³ Indeed, the brewery brought out special advertising to market the beer as a wholesome drink. The great advantages, “proven by medical research”, were celebrated: greater life expectancy, a tonic for sleeplessness and the statement that beer drinkers are less prone to illness were among them.³⁴⁴ Thirdly, the Reinheitsgebot saved a massive amount of money in excise duty and made it therefore easier to export the beers abroad. Excise duty regimes were based on percentages of alcohol. With the new recipes, the SWB beers were lower in alcohol than generic beer (roughly four percent against five percent). This saved money.³⁴⁵

Introducing the Reinheitsgebot was a process that took a few years. South West Breweries started changing the recipes in the Tal Street plant and designed the new Iscor Street plant in a way that it would facilitate the new recipes and techniques. Only after a few years, the purity law could be introduced with confidence. It was of vital importance that the purity law claim was substantiated with facts. SWB hired a brewing consultant from Germany, Mr. Schmidt, to check if the beer was really made according to the Reinheitsgebot. Only after an official certificate the brewery was able to market the beers accordingly.³⁴⁶ The exact implementation of the Reinheitsgebot is disputed, probably because the whole process took a few years. Most probably the year is 1986, when the new plant was finished. The first Reinheitsgebot campaigns commenced in 1992.³⁴⁷

³⁴¹ NAN, SWAA 3113, Customs and Excise: Brewery Regulations: Breweries, 01/05/1928.

³⁴² Interview with Hans Herrmann and Christian Müller, 18 November 2015; Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Ender, 22 May 2015.

³⁴³ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016.

³⁴⁴ NAN, F002-PC/0044, South West Breweries Breweries gazette. [toevoegen] In a quarterly review of the Namibia Foundation, Bernd Masche supposedly even says that “Drinking up to a litre of Windhoek Lager a day (...) could increase one’s life expectancy, rather than do any harm!” NAN, F002-cp (in: JZ/0203) New sparkle for Namibian beer, 1985, Namibia Brief.

³⁴⁵ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016.

³⁴⁶ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016; Interview with Bernd Masche, 27 January 2016; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Ender, 22 May 2015; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Helmut Pfaller, 26 May 2015.

³⁴⁷ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016.

Namibian independence

The road to Namibian independence was fraught with uncertainties for the whole country, but also for South West Breweries.³⁴⁸ The brewery first had an ambiguous attitude towards the impending independence, but later the brewery saw the political change as an opportunity to renew its identity as a company. In June 1971 the International Court of Justice declared the occupation of South West Africa by South Africa as illegal. The General Assembly of the United Nations similarly condemned the occupation.³⁴⁹ International pressure on South Africa was intensified but it took decades before independence was reached. The fight for independence was dominated by the South West Africa's People Organisation (SWAPO), a movement that has been the ruling political party of Namibia since 1990.³⁵⁰

The question was how SWB would deal with the major political change that arrived in 1990. It was not easy for the brewery to cope with the liberation struggle, simply because SWAPO was known for planting bombs beneath trucks. The SWB drivers did not dare to drive the beer trucks anymore, until SWB transformed the trucks into mine-safe vehicles.³⁵¹ But furthermore, the position that the company took in these tumultuous political times was also challenging.

One might interpret the attitude of the brewery as passive, because it chose a reactive rather than an active approach towards the inevitable independence. An example is when the advertising company of SWB proposed in the 1980s to change the Reiterdenkmal logo and prepare plans for independence. According to the advertising director, Don Stevenson, this was not accepted by the brewery management.³⁵² The explanation for the seemingly reluctant attitude was, according to former managing director of SWB Bernd Masche, that before independence it was uncertain what direction SWAPO and the new government would take.³⁵³

³⁴⁸ Chairman Werner List writes in his annual report of 1979 that "The uncertainty regarding the political future of the Territory of South West Africa/Namibia remained unresolved (...)" It is interesting that he already uses both South West Africa and Namibia in this official document. NLN, South West Breweries Limited, Annual Report, 1979. Three years later List writes: "(...) unfortunately I cannot foresee an early peaceful solution (...)". The beer sales increased however with 21 percent during the year! NLN, South West Breweries Limited, Annual Report, 1982.

³⁴⁹ Wallace, M., *A History of Namibia: From the Beginning to 1990* (2011 Cape Town) 274.

³⁵⁰ Wallace notes that the struggle for independence is not simply a polarisation between SWAPO and the South African administration. Much of the literature is however focused on this dialectic relationship. She describes our understanding of the final decades of South African rule as "rudimentary" and points out that this topic is "an important one for future historical writing". M. Wallace, *A History of Namibia: From the Beginning to 1990* (2011 Cape Town) 273.

³⁵¹ Interview with Bernd Masche, 15 February 2016.

³⁵² D. Stevenson, "The Mysterious Demographics of Beer Drinking," in: G. Miescheir, L. Rizzo and J. Silvester (eds.), *Posters in Action* (Basel 2009) 103-109; Interview with Don Stevenson, 5 February 2016.

³⁵³ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016.

Right before independence the brewery encountered its greatest controversy yet, a tumultuous strike and boycott. In the election year of 1989, a shop steward of the Namibia Food and Allied Workers Union (Nafau) was fired because of unprofessional behaviour, and as a result 300 breweries workers went into a strike. The company gave the strikers 24 hours to return to work – those who continued to strike thereafter were to be fired.³⁵⁴ This caused a widespread controversy, leading the shebeens owners in the north, Namibia Tavern Association and the newspaper *The Namibian* to boycott the brewery.³⁵⁵ The strikers blocked the entrance with rocks and made anti-SWB posters. The non-striking SWB employees reacted by going out in the night with special “Night Action Teams” to hang marketing posters over the strike posters.³⁵⁶ The Hansa employees were not striking, so the plant in Swakopmund had to increase its production to maximum capacity.³⁵⁷ SWB and Nafau went to court and in November 1989 a settlement was reached.³⁵⁸

Independence arrived in 1990. It took time to adjust to the new situation, and the company continued as South West Breweries in the new independent Namibia for a little while. On the label of the special independence lager was still the old company’s name – nothing on the bottle made it clear that a Namibian company was the producer.³⁵⁹ Stevenson, the advertisement director, recalled that after independence the advertisement agency received a phone call from a brewery manager. The newly appointed Namibian Minister of Trade and Industry received a tour around the plant, and he commented with surprise that he thought that SWB was a South African company!³⁶⁰

Once independence was a fact, the brewery transformed in a remarkable way. South West Breweries changed into Namibia Breweries and embraced its new Namibian identity. With different name and identity of the company, the visual outlook changed as well. The

³⁵⁴ Chairman Werner List spoke of “(...) an unlawful strike and a boycott by certain dealers in sympathy with the strikers (...)” NLN, South West Breweries Limited, Annual Report, 1990.

³⁵⁵ H. Jauch, ‘Ghosts from the past’, *The Villager*, 27 May 2012.

³⁵⁶ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016; Interview with Bernd Masche, 15 February 2016.

³⁵⁷ Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Helmut Pfaller, 26 May 2015.

³⁵⁸ The problem however lingered on because some workers felt that they were not compensated properly. Even in 2012 a group of former SWB employees demonstrated outside the head office of Ohlthaver & List. H. Jauch, ‘Ghosts from the past’, *The Villager*, 27 May 2012.

³⁵⁹ Similarly, the year report of 1990 was still by South West Breweries and prominently featured the Reiterdenkmal on the cover. NLN, South West Breweries Limited, Annual Report, 1990. The next annual report looks however completely different. The chairman writes in his opening statement: “The name-change from ‘The South West Breweries Limited’ was phased in during the year under review. This is, therefore, the first time we report on the activities of the company under the new banner of ‘Namibia Breweries Limited’.” The structure of the report is completely different, making the whole report much more extensive. In contrast to previous reports, it elaborates on how the brewery provides community service, sport sponsoring, environmental conversation, human resources and health care. NLN, Namibia Breweries Limited, Annual Report, 1991.

³⁶⁰ D. Stevenson, “The Mysterious Demographics of Beer Drinking,” in: G. Miescheir, L. Rizzo and J. Silvester (eds.), *Posters in Action* (Basel 2009) 103-109.

Reiterdenkmal image disappeared from the logo and was replaced by a logo that closely resembled the new Namibian flag. A new advertising campaign was launched to let the public know that the brewery was truly Namibian. The posters were done as a newspaper insert to secure a nice quality and broad public.³⁶¹ Stevenson recalls:

“These advertisements informed the public that, not only was the Namibian Brewing industry locally owned and run, but that it provided employment for over 600 Namibians. The headlines of these ads proclaimed: ‘Whenever Namibians get together’, ‘Brewed in Namibia by Namibians’, ‘Spreading Good Cheer Throughout the Nation’, ‘Brought to you by 600 Dedicated Namibians’.”³⁶²

NBL put much effort in establishing a good and mutually beneficial relationship with the newly formed government. A state-business alliance was the result. The brewers had an efficient lobby and made clear to the government how important the brewery was for the Namibian economy. The brewing group had interests in basically all sectors of Namibian commerce and industry: hotels, supermarkets, a meat processor, livestock and dairy farms, fishing company, real estate, the list goes on.³⁶³ In another publication, NBL claimed to have a workforce of even 1000 people, while paying 12 million dollars in tax annually and supporting various organizations.³⁶⁴ In other words: this company had bargaining power.

On the other hand, the brewery needed the government’s support. Good liquor laws and protection against South African Breweries were of foremost importance to NBL. The interests of the two actors were mutual, and it helped that there was a good relationship between Sam Nujoma, the president, and Werner List, the chairman.³⁶⁵ NBL was involved in the writing of the new liquor act and the beer industry was protected against SAB for years, the next paragraph will elaborate on this. NBL invested heavily in Namibia. The brewery was an important sponsor of sport and culture and projects as a “Smart Center” and “Development Trust Fund” were used to finance development projects. When Nujoma had a birthday, Werner List donated six farms to the nation (meant for the university) and NBL was expected to provide free beer at the party.³⁶⁶

³⁶¹ Interview with Don Stevenson, 5 February 2016.

³⁶² D. Stevenson, “The Mysterious Demographics of Beer Drinking,” in: G. Miescheir, L. Rizzo and J. Silvester (eds.), *Posters in Action* (Basel 2009) 103-106

³⁶³ NAN, F002-cp (in: JZ/0203) New sparkle for Namibian beer, 1985, Namibia Brief.

³⁶⁴ NAN, F002-PC/0044, South West Breweries Breweries gazette.

³⁶⁵ Interview with Hans Herrmann and Christian Müller, 18 November 2015; Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016.

³⁶⁶ R. Gordon., *Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia*, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 4-5.

The beer war is back

The newly organized Namibia Breweries and its old nemesis South African Breweries engaged in an energetic beer war – the latest chapter in the development of the Namibian beer market. Both breweries now tried to build up a consumer base in each other’s home country.³⁶⁷ The following section discusses the interests of both companies and gives a short history of early trade relations between each brewery and the desired foreign market. Newspapers were filled with reports on the ‘beer war’, similarly to the 1910s, when a fierce competition existed between the Felsenkellerbrauerei and the Kronenbrauerei (see chapter one).

South African Breweries

On the one hand, SAB yearned for market share in Namibia, the home country of NBL. At the end of the twentieth century, SAB owned more than ninety percent of the southern African beer market – except Namibia. This enormous company had in contrast to NBL the advantage of the economies of scale: large breweries resulted in relatively low production costs. On a small scale, South African beers have been available in Namibia since roughly twenty-five years. The first brands in Namibia were Castle Lager and Carling Black Label through the partnership with SWB. However, the different philosophies caused tension and the cooperation was aborted.³⁶⁸

Another way that South African beverages found their way to Namibia was through the South African Defence Force. SAB had an exclusive contract with the army to provide beers for the soldiers. Especially northern Namibia experienced an influx of South African beer. The beer drinking soldiers were “the backbone of the trade” because a large percentage of their salaries was injected in the local economy through cucashtops.³⁶⁹ Even teachers, farmers and civil servants established unlicensed bars to gain extra income.

³⁶⁷ It must be noted that import and export of beer has been happening for a long time. Perhaps one of the earliest examples is in 1905, when beers were moved from the Cape Colony into German South West Africa. The beverage company wrote to the administration in Cape Town that “We are not certain whether a permit is really necessary, to remove such Luxuries across the border.” Roughly a century later, regulations were much more strict. WCARS, CO 8303, SA produce wine and brandy company: application for permit to send 10 tons of luxuries (beer etc) to German South West Africa via Ramonsdrift.

³⁶⁸ Interview with Bogart Butler and Linda Buckingham, 17 February 2016.

³⁶⁹ G. Dobler, *Traders and Trade in Colonial Ovamboland: Elite Formation and the Politics of Consumption under Indirect Rule and Apartheid, 1925-1990* (Basel 2014) 187. Dobler writes on the next page that beer consumption was officially legalized in 1973, but the new liquor legislation was already introduced in 1969. Furthermore he discusses “South West African Breweries”, whereby it is uncertain if he means South African Breweries or South West Breweries.

The UNTAG forces of the United Nations added to this development. In the Oshakati-Ondangwa region in February 1990, twenty percent of the licensed traders dealt in alcohol. In addition to this staggering amount, a calculated 800 cucashops were active in the region! The area was described as an “alcohol-driven economy”, with an estimated one cucashop for every 100 people, excluding formal bars and private homes as places to drink beer.³⁷⁰ In the early 1990s Castle Brewing Namibia was created, a special company to bring SAB beers to Namibia. It started very small with only a few depots in places as Windhoek, the south and the north of Namibia. The few South African expats that lived in Namibia formed the start of the consumer base.³⁷¹

Namibia Breweries

On the other hand, NBL was in desperate need of market share in South Africa, the home country of SAB. Namibia is a small country with a very limited market. The key to get the necessary production volume to survive in the increasing economies of scale is, ironically, South Africa. This country was relatively close by and has a large population.³⁷² The local beer market was by far not strong enough to withstand the larger breweries of the world. South West Breweries was already for a long time involved on a small scale in the South African market. German groups in Cape Town and Johannesburg formed an early consumers base.³⁷³ Only after the transformation of Namibia Breweries, with a larger production in a new brewery, distinctive products due to the Reinheitsgebot, excise duty advantage and a Namibian identity, the export to South Africa really took off.

The long road to a SAB brewery

Tension between the companies rose to a high point when South African Breweries made a first attempt to build a brewery in northern Namibia.³⁷⁴ This example showcases the strong

³⁷⁰ Interview with Bogart Butler and Linda Buckingham, 17 February 2016; H. Siiskonen, ‘Namibia and the Heritage of Colonial Alcohol Policy’, *Nordic Journal of African Studies* Vol. 3 (1) (1994) 81; R. Gordon., Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 5-15.

³⁷¹ Interview with Bogart Butler and Linda Buckingham, 17 February 2016.

³⁷² Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016. South Africa’s population is far greater than other neighbours of Namibia. Furthermore, there were close historic ties between the two countries, with lots of traffic between them. Exporting to Angola would for example have been much more difficult because of the Angolan war.

³⁷³ Interview with Hans Herrmann and Christian Müller, 18 November 2015. Already in the early 1970s South West Breweries went to court with South African hotels because of payment issues. WCARS, CSC 2/1/1/3741, Illiquid case. Goods sold. South West Breweries Ltd. versus Murraysburg Hotel (Pty.) Ltd.; WCARS, 2/1/1/3744, Illiquid case. Goods sold. South West Breweries Ltd. versus Criterion Hotel.

³⁷⁴ Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016.

alliance between NBL and the Namibian government, and sheds light on how a focus on “Namibian” beer became increasingly important for NBL to compete successfully with the South African rival. Since independence in 1990 the South African Breweries tried to get a brewing license from the government.³⁷⁵ SAB proposed in 1994 a 100 million dollar brewery in Ovamboland. The Namibian Trade and Industry Minister Hidepo Hamutenya gave it no chance of success:

“We have a company (NBL) that is Namibian, that pays tax, and is the largest manufacturing plant employing over 8700 Namibians. We cannot let it be overrun by SAB (...)”³⁷⁶

The matter became a nationwide debate, covered in countless newspapers and magazines. In many ways, the discussion organized by the Namibia Economic Society in 2000 is an epitome of this debate. The Society claimed that hundreds of people from government, corporations and scholars came together to discuss “the controversy” of the beer industry in Namibia. Several speakers were present. NBL protested against the “imperialist drive” and “selfish, monopolistic ambitions” of SAB, threatening that an admission of SAB into Namibia would cause losses in jobs and tax incomes. SAB on the other hand argued for a free market and pointed out that black empowerment was part of the new proposed new brewery.³⁷⁷

Still, the government rejected the request and protected NBL. In return, NBL promised the government to build a small brewery in Tsumeb, named Tunweni. In this small plant, locally produced mahango was bought up to create a kind of sorghum beer, resembling the oshikundu beer that home brewers had been producing for centuries. The beer fermented inside milk cartons and had a shelf life of three days. It was not a success but ran for a few years.³⁷⁸ This relationship is a fine example of the intimate ties between state and industry, who understood that they needed each other. Through the government protection NBL had time to reinvent itself as a company and build a strong export to especially South Africa. In return, NBL invested heavily in Namibia.

³⁷⁵ NLN, T16/0135, Namibia Economic Society Newsletter, Issue 19, March 2001; A. Mager, *Beer, Sociability and Masculinity in South Africa* (Bloomington 2010) 127.

³⁷⁶ R. Gordon., *Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia*, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 5.

³⁷⁷ NLN, T16/0135, Namibia Economic Society Newsletter, Issue 19, March 2001: various articles.

³⁷⁸ It proved to be difficult to transport the beer to all corners of Ovamboland without sufficient infrastructure. Furthermore, bottle stores did not even want the cartons because they were afraid they would leak and make the store dirty. SAB operated a similar operation in Johannesburg, South Africa, which was much more successful because the infrastructure was good. Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016; Interview with Bernd Masche, 15 February 2016; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Helmut Pfaller, 26 May 2015.

For many years the Namibian government protected NBL, but new policies emerged with a new president and this proved to be an opportunity for SAB.³⁷⁹ SAB had not given up and kept requesting the government for a license. It took them ten years to acquire such a license in Namibia, but in the end they managed to get it. But then a new problem emerged: the location. After ten years of the brewing license struggle, it took years to get the approval for a brewery location. Windhoek and Oshakati were favoured by SAB, but both proposals were rejected by the government. Finally an agreement was reached for Okahandja. Then, it took years before SAB internally approved the final business case to actually build the plant.³⁸⁰

After twenty-five years of waiting, the plant was opened. The SAB brewery in Okahandja is built on faith instead of economics because the current, relatively small, production volume it is not a profitable business. The reason that SAB still approved it was because of the fact that NBL and Heineken built a brewery in South Africa in 2011. “They built a brewery in our backyard,” says SAB manager Bogart Butler. The reason for the Okahandja plant was to irritate their competition. The advantage of this project is that costs of transporting beer from South Africa to Namibia are no longer necessary. The plant was running in September 2014 and the official launch was on the first of July 2015. Three beers are produced (Carling Black Label, Castle Lite and Castle) and 135 people are employed.³⁸¹

An ongoing rivalry

Besides the building of plants in each other’s home countries, the beer battle was fought via a succession of creative marketing campaigns. This resulted in cheeky advertising and ongoing law suits. A whole book can be filled with stories on how these companies competed, but for lack of space only three exemplary cases are selected: the Hofbräu incident, Windhoek’s Lager advertisements and the sewage rumour.³⁸²

³⁷⁹ Interview with Hans Herrmann and Christian Müller, 18 November 2015.

³⁸⁰ Interview with Bogart Butler and Linda Buckingham, 17 February 2016.

³⁸¹ Interview with Bogart Butler and Linda Buckingham, 17 February 2016.

³⁸² Another crucial item was the controversy on the quarts bottle. It is not discussed in detail in the main narrative of the thesis because it has been mentioned elsewhere. In the 1990s, NBL complained that SAB had introduced 750 millimeter non-refundable bottles to damage the Namibian market. In Namibia, these so-called “quarts” are the only way to make money. This is where the profit is, according to former managing director Bernd Masche. The SAB and NBL bottles now looked the same. NBL accused SAB of going to bottle stores and shebena to pick up the empty ones, so that NBL had to buy new bottles. NBL spoke of “bullying tactics.” NBL successfully went to the government and SAB was not allowed to take quarts back to South Africa. This saved NBL. A Mager, *Beer, Sociability and Masculinity in South Africa* (Bloomington 2010) 126; R. Gordon, *Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia*, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 4; Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016.

NBL was doing exceptionally well in South Africa, with an annually increasing export.³⁸³ Since NBL's unique selling point was the Reinheitsgebot, SAB sought an answer in the launch of a new product with a distinct German heritage: a beer called Hofbräu. The plans for this brand were however leaked to the NBL management, two weeks before the official launch. NBL quickly responded by printing labels of "Felsenkeller Hofbräu", filling the bottles with the already existing Tafel Lager and bring it to South Africa prior to the launch of the regular Hofbräu. The launch was successfully sabotaged.³⁸⁴

These tricks also worked the other way around. Windhoek Lager is the flagship brand of NBL. SAB placed large billboards in the Namibian capital promoting their Castle beer – with the addition of an enormous tagline that said "Windhoek's Lager." Another major Namibian brand is Tafel Lager. SAB placed large billboards with the Afrikaans tagline: "Maak seker daar is 'n Castle op die tafel" (make sure there is a Castle on the table). NBL went to court and won, SAB had to take these advertisements down. In response, SAB placed new billboards with the text "You can't make great beer from sour grapes."³⁸⁵

Both companies accused each other from unprofessional behaviour and as a neutral spectator it is difficult to assess what is true and what is not. A proper example is the sewage beer rumour.³⁸⁶ According to former NBL employees, SAB would hire people to go to shebeens, order a Namibian beer, and then theatrically spit it out on the ground while saying that it tasted like sewage, and probably also was made with sewage.³⁸⁷ SAB officials do not recognize the story, but do say that they applied a tactic called "wolfpacking": a large group of SAB people would to go a shebeen, to make sure that fifty percent of the customers were

³⁸³ Already before independence SWB was busy with new projects in South Africa. In 1984 SWB penetrated the South African market with a clever new beer, Windhoek Light. The liquor law of South Africa prevented the selling of beer in supermarkets. SWB came with the idea of Windhoek Light, a beer with so little alcohol it could be sold in the supermarket. With the help of Mr. Ackerman, who owned the Pick & Pay supermarkets chain, Windhoek Light was introduced in South Africa. It was a great success and caused a whole uproar in South Africa. The South African beer industry was furious and in three weeks' time the South African minister declared Windhoek Light by law as liquor – it had to go back to the bottle stores. Later the alcohol percentage of Windhoek Light was increased. Interview with Bernd Masche, 15 February 2016; Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Ender, 22 May 2015.

³⁸⁴ Interview with Bernd Masche, 15 February 2016. Mager writes a different account of this event in her book on SAB. Basically she turns the order around: SAB's Hofbräu was meant to fend off NBL's Hofbräu. Based on discussions with several NBL employees, another version has been put in the thesis. A. Mager, *Beer, Sociability and Masculinity in South Africa* (Bloomington 2010) 128.

³⁸⁵ Interview with Bogart Butler and Linda Buckingham, 17 February 2016.

³⁸⁶ R. Gordon, *Inside the Windhoek Lager: Liquor and Lust in Namibia*, in: W. Jankowiak and D. Bradburd (eds.) *Drugs, labor, and colonial expansion* (Tucson 2003) 5.

³⁸⁷ Masche is just one example: Interview with Bernd Masche, 22 January 2016.

employees. Then they promoted the SAB beers.³⁸⁸ This is just one of the many examples of accusations that both breweries made to one another.

New developments

Much happened in the Namibian beer industry in the last decade. NBL restructured itself in the O&L Group and found international partners to strengthen the brewery and enhance the export. The first Namibian microbrewery and pubbrewery were established - NBL managed to incorporate both of them in their own company. Last but not least a new product was launched: King Lager, the first ever beer brewed with Namibian barley. The symbolism behind Namibia, South African and German influences come together in this product.

Strategic partners

After the failed cooperation with SAB and the transformation into Namibia Breweries, NBL sought new partners to facilitate international growth. In 1992 a cooperation with Holsten commenced. An important change occurred in 1996 when NBL was listed on the Namibian Stock Exchange. Before this date, SWB included a whole range of divisions: brewing, retail, a butchery, dairy company, hotels, farming and property. The brewery management disliked this constellation because the brewery was effectively the cash cow for all other activities. The List family that owned SWB was renowned for running the company like a “one man show”: farms and failing businesses were unexpectedly bought up and added to the group. When the brewery went public in 1996, it was basically freed of these practices. Instead, NBL became a publicly owned company, with the Ohlthaver & List Group as the controlling shareholder.³⁸⁹

In 2000 NBL started a partnership with Becks. Not long after, Becks was taken over by Inbrev. According to NBL brewers, a different company culture emerged inside Becks and the cooperation became more difficult. In 2002-2003 a joint cooperation between NBL, Heineken and Diago was introduced. Together they formed Brandhause Beverages, a vehicle to export the products to South Africa. NBL started also working together with Guinness, and now cooperates with craft breweries in South Africa. Recently, the shareholding structure is changing again. The joint cooperation is working towards a situation where Heineken owns 49 percent of NBL, while 51 percent is owned by O&L. In the near future, NBL will own 49

³⁸⁸ Interview with Bogart Butler and Linda Buckingham, 17 February 2016

³⁸⁹ Interview Brenda Bravenboer with Ernst Heuschneider, 27 February 2012; Interview with Bernd Masche, 15 February 2016.

percent of the Sedibeng brewery in Johannesburg, South Africa, whilst Heineken will own the remaining shares.³⁹⁰

New small breweries

In 2008 the Camelthorn Brewery opened, the very first microbrewery of Namibia.³⁹¹ The founder is Jörg Finkeldei, a former chemical engineer of NBL. It was the first competitor of NBL since Hansa Brewery opened up roughly 80 years ago. The first beers were launched in 2009 and in six months' time, five different brands were launched. Soon the brewery had trouble surviving. The beer market in Namibia is small, dominated by NBL and craft beer was a relatively new phenomenon. In 2012 negotiations with NBL started about the question if Camelthorn should be liquidated or bought. In the end NBL decided to buy up Camelthorn Brewery, including the brand and the equipment. The Camelthorn Weissbeer brand was kept alive by NBL and is still being brewed today, because it resonated with the German Namibian market.³⁹²

In 2015 the first pub brewery in Namibia opened its doors: the Swakopmund Brewing Company. The small brewery is part of the Strand Hotel, owned by the Ohlthaver & List Group. SBC is meant as a place for the NBL brewers to experiment and brew different beers than the regular NBL range. Three beers are available at a time; all of them fall under the Reinheitsgebot. The brewery does not yet sell bottled beers because the liquor license does not allow it. Roughly 1000 litres of beer are produced per week, while the maximum capacity is 2000 litres.³⁹³ The Swakopmund Brewing Company is meant to be different from Namibia Breweries. The brewery is supported with for instance the supply of ingredients and NBL ensures the quality control. The brewmaster of SBC is employed by NBL, but remains however quite independent.³⁹⁴

King Lager

Perhaps the most exciting recent development is the launch of King Lager in 2015, the first beer brewed with Namibian barley in the whole history of the industry. For years, NBL has been experimenting with home-grown barley and King is the result. It is specifically brewed for the competition with SAB's Carling Black Label. Both beers have an alcohol percentage

³⁹⁰ Interview with Hans Herrmann and Christian Müller, 18 November 2015.

³⁹¹ B. Hesse, 'Africa's Intoxicating Beer Markets', *African Studies Review* Vol. 58, No. 1 (2015) 105.

³⁹² Interview with Jörg Finkeldei, 12 February 2016.

³⁹³ Interview with Stephan Koepp, 8 February 2016.

³⁹⁴ Interview with Hans Herrmann and Christian Müller, 18 November 2015.

of 5.5 percent and are not brewed according to the Reinheitsgebot.³⁹⁵ The symbolism behind the battle of the beers is interesting in the light of this research on beer and identity, because King Lager is in many ways the epitome of a Namibian beer, competing with the South African Black Label.

In the meantime, NBL still has a distinct German influence in its character. The Reinheitsgebot is the standard for all beers beside King Lager, and is proudly celebrated. Many employees, especially on the management level, have a German-Namibian background and conversation in the Windhoek plant is often in German. All brewers are trained for in Namibia for three years, where they learn the brewing trade from scratch. But after this, they train in Germany for a year and it is necessary for them to master the German language. NBL is a proud sponsor of the annual carnival and Oktoberfest, important events for the German speaking community.³⁹⁶ The result is a wonderfully interesting mix of German-Namibian identity.

In conclusion, South West Breweries reinvented itself due to the threat of a foreign competitor and the opportunity of a political change. In the 1970s, South West Breweries was synonymous with the national beer industry. There was no other competitor and the black population was finally allowed to drink liquor – except for northern Namibia, which was separated from the rest of the country in terms of drinking. SWB was however completely focused on the white settler community, which makes sense observing where it historically comes from. The desire of South African Breweries to set a foot in South West Africa was problematic and forced SWB to reinvent itself. The opening up of the north gave the brewery momentum. A new brewery, the Reinheitsgebot and Namibian independence changed SWB into NBL. An alliance with the new government ensured protection so that the brewery could grow and look for export markets.

³⁹⁵ Interview with Hans Herrmann and Christian Müller, 18 November 2015.

³⁹⁶ Interview with Hans Herrmann and Christian Müller, 18 November 2015.

Visual material



Image 39: A coaster of South West Breweries with the Reiterdenkmal. Private collection of Gunter von Schumann.



Image 40: The other side of the coaster of South West Breweries. Private collection of Gunter von Schumann.



Image 41: One of the many advertising objects of SWB. Private collection of Lothar Geier.



Image 42: The SWB trucks were made mine-proof during the guerrilla war for independence. Private collection of Bernd Masche



Image 43: The permit that allowed SWB use trucks to bring their beers to Ovamboland. Private collection of Bernd Masche.

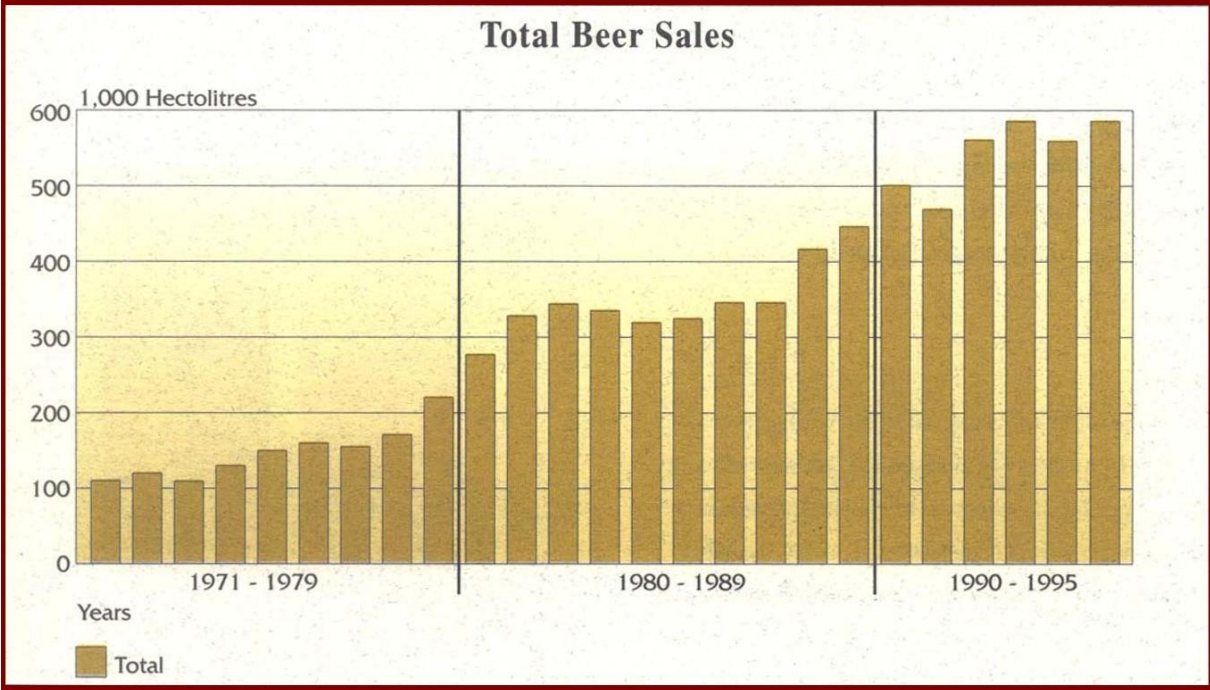


Image 44: The sales in beer increased steadily since the northern market opened up.

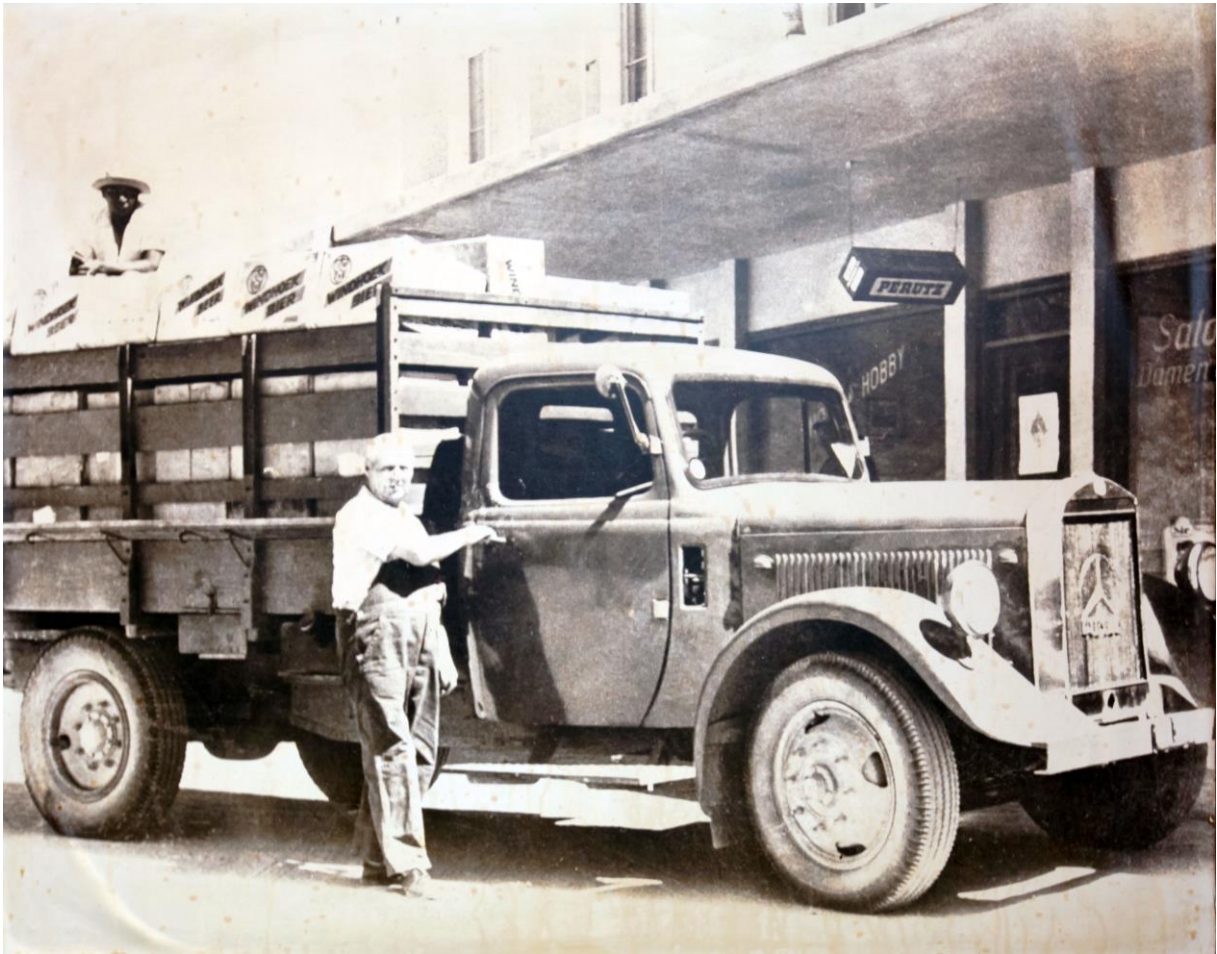


Image 45: A truck filled with “Windhoek Bier”. Courtesy of Namibia Breweries.



Image 46: A beer truck. Courtesy of Namibia Breweries.



Image 47: Posters of the strike. In the night, SWB personnel covered the strike posters with beer advertising. Private collection of Bernd Masche.



Image 48: Strikers laid rocks against the entrance of the brewery. Private collection of Bernd Masche.

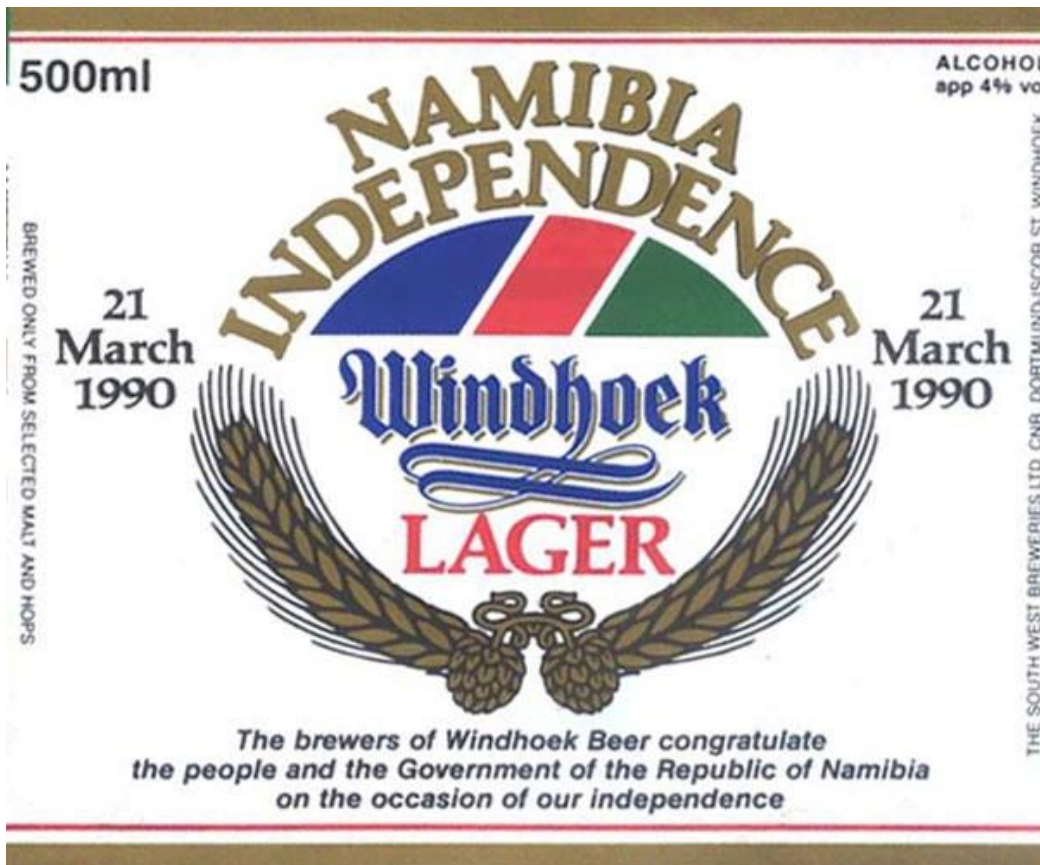


Image 49: The independence label, still from South West Breweries. Private collection of Bernd Masche.



Image 50: The independence label on a bottle. Private collection of Don Stevenson.



Image 51: The first president of Namibia, Dr. Sam Nujoma (on the left) with Werner List, of South West Breweries (in the middle, with the tie). Private collection of Bernd Masche.



Image 52: The core team that led the transformation of South West Breweries into Namibia Breweries. Standing: Wilfried Rupieper, Ernst Ender, Helmut Pfaller. Seated: Peter Kazmaier, Bernd Masche. Manfred Redecker and Mr. Schmidt are not on the photo. Photo from the private collection of Bernd Masche.



Image 53: Angola was in need of beer, but Namibia Breweries could not deliver it with trucks due to the civil war and dangerous borders. The solution was to fly the beer to Angola with large Russian planes. This happened in 1992. It was very expensive, but no other options were left. Private collection of Bernd Masche.

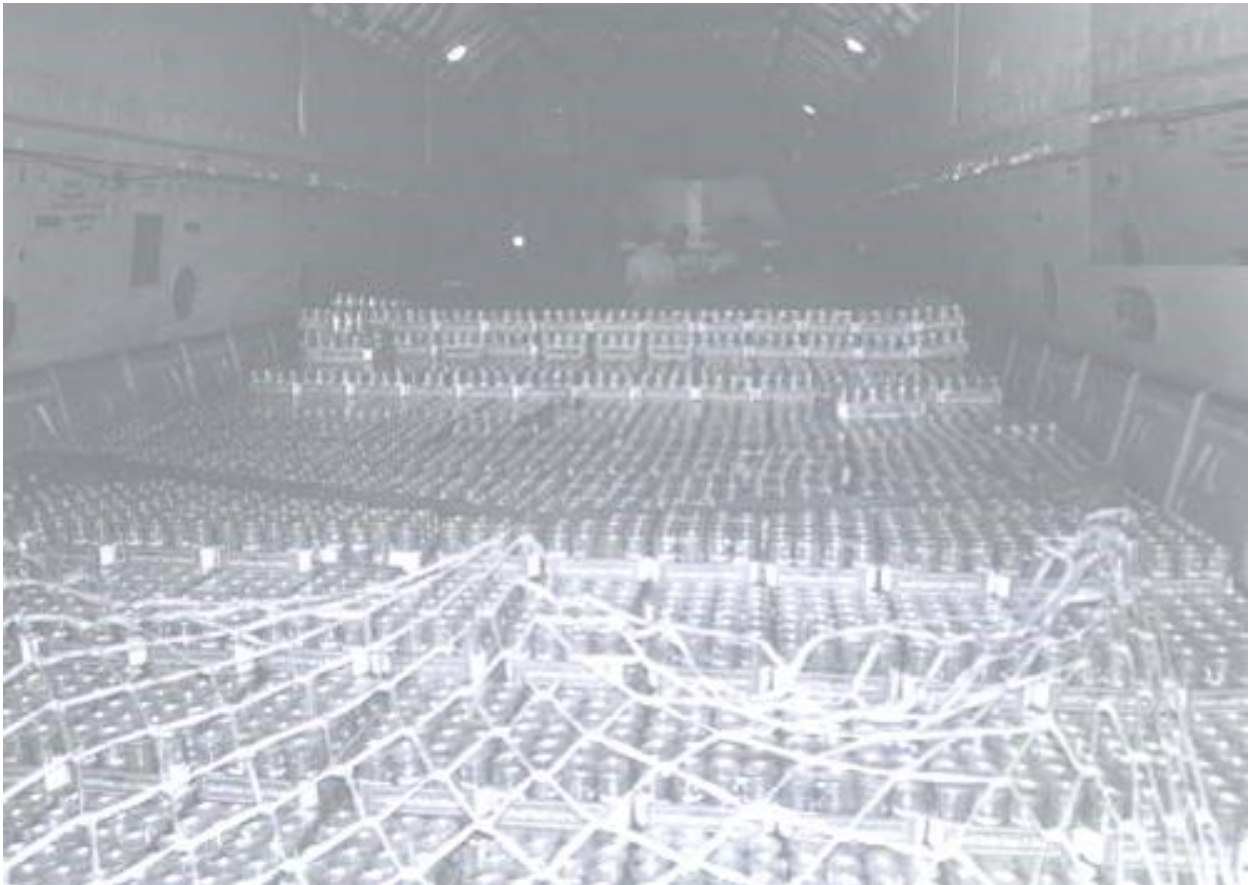


Image 54: The interior of one of those planes. They were filled with beer cans. Private collection of Bernd Masche.



Image 55: the NBL version of “cuca” beer.



Image 56: Felsenkeller Hofbräu



Image 57: Wambo Lager, Windhoek Lager for Ovamboland



Image 58: Hansa Pilsener.

Conclusion

To understand the puzzle how Namibian beer transformed from a settler icon into a Namibian symbol it is vital to take the long historical roots of beer brewing into account. Beer brewing existed for hundreds of years before the first European explorers arrived. When German South West Africa emerged, the administration followed a widespread legal consensus that Africans should not be allowed to drink European alcohol. The settlers imported beers from Germany, until the first formal breweries emerged in the 1900s. This industry could only arise after the colony was firmly consolidated, and this happened through war. The power of the administration grew as an oil stain from the centre to the far edges of the country. The commercial beer market went through a similar development. The first breweries in the places where white settlers lived, in the heart of the territory, and the reach of these breweries grew slowly over time.

At first, the small breweries were only able to produce beer for their own towns, hence the fact that almost every white settlement with a considerable size had its own brewery. Then for a long time the commercial brewing industry was centred in the beer triangle and the surrounding towns. South West Breweries was able to defeat or buy up competitors until it had a virtual monopoly. The commercial beer market was only available for white settlers, who hailed this product as their national drink. It became an icon of their identity. After decades of struggling, the prohibitive legislation was repealed and the scope of the beer market could also include the vast majority of the population. Shortly thereafter the brewery faced serious competition from South African Breweries, an outside competitor that owned more than ninety percent of the southern African beer market and wanted to challenge the virtual monopoly in Namibia. SWB had to find a new role for itself and thus needed a new strategy.

With the opening up of Ovamboland in the 1970s, northern Namibia became part of the beer market. Half of the population was now connected with the commercial beer market that emerged from the centre of the country. This led to a surge in sales of SWB products. The introduction of their brewing formula, embracing the German Reinheitsgebot, made it easier to fend off SAB. Following the Namibian independence of 1990, South West Breweries quickly changed into Namibia Breweries and embraced the new Namibia. It made a pact with the Namibian government and used its newly gained Namibian identity to counteract the pressure from its rival SAB, and make export to other countries easier. An alliance between

the state and the brewery management made it possible to win over black customers and protect the industry from SAB for twenty-five years.

The company was made up of clever brewers and businessmen who knew how to adapt to a continuously changing context, as if NBL was a chameleon. Throughout time, the company was able to brew beer and bring it to their public. During the colonial days, their products embodied the settler dreams. After independence, NBL started marketing the brewery and its beer as purely Namibian: the brewery was run by Namibians and the beer was meant for Namibia. NBL was very much involved with the government and had a well-functioning lobby. Namibian beer is world renowned nowadays and wins international award after award.

This case study demonstrates how precarious the relationship between markets and nationalism is. Breweries in Namibia are economic actors that navigate their way through changing socio-political realities. The consumption of their beer is continuously linked to an imagined community. Under colonial rule, when the black population was denied access to this market, beer was an icon for white settlers. But when the market became unified, the same brewery formed an alliance with the state to win over the population and defy the threat of an outside competitor. Today the beer is remarkably Namibian, but in a way this is an invention of tradition. The products of today embody a pro-Namibian and anti-South African message, but their background is unmistakably German. With the renewed beer war between NBL and SAB, these products become increasingly Namibian and therefore political. It shows how a product continues to commoditise identity in different ways.

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Appendix 1: Overview of breweries

Below is an overview of breweries that existed or still exist in Namibia. The list is not comprehensive, but it is a start.

Name	Place	Time	Director	Brands
Swakopmunder Brauerei	Swakopmund	Founded in 1900	Rudolph Jauch	Bavaria Bräu
Schmidt Brauerei	Klein Windhoek	Founded in 1902	Friedrich Schmidt	-
Felsenkellerbrauerei	Windhoek	Founded in 1902	Karl Bauer, Richard Kretschmann, Johann Heuschneider, Leopold Mahler, Frits Hummels, Peter Müller	Windhoek Urquell
Brauerei Grootfontein	Grootfontein	-	-	-
Bierbrauerei und Selterwasserfabrik	Karibib	Around 1908	H. Kahl	-
Brauerei	Okahandja	Around 1908	C. Bauer	-
Brauerei	Rehoboth	Around 1908	Breckwoldt & Müller	-
Brauerei	Lüderitzbucht	Around 1908	Johannes Osbahr	
Brauerei	Keetmanshoop	Around 1908	Johannes Osbahr	-
Bürgerliches Brauhaus G.m.b.H.; Keetmanshooper Brauerei und Mineralwasser Fabrik Karl Fischer & Co	Keetmanshoop	Founded in 1911	Karl Fischer	-
Karibiber Brauerei und Mineralwasserfabrik	Karibib	Around 1912	C. Hanke	-
Kronenbrauerei	Swakopmund	Founded in 1912	Johann Heuschneider	Kronenbrau
Felsenkellerbrauerei Omaruru	Omaruru	Founded in 1917	Conrad Piehl	Omaruru Urquell
Kronenbrauerei	Windhoek	Founded in 1919	Johann Heuschneider	Kronenbrau
South West Breweries/Namibia Breweries	Windhoek	Founded in 1920	Carl List, E. Behnsen, Werner List, Bernd Masche, Sven Thieme	Windhoek Pilsner, Windhoek Löwen Bräu Windhoek Bräu Windhoek Extra Stout, Spring Bock, Tafel Lager, Windhoek Lager, Windhoek Light, Windhoek Export, Windhoek Special, Urbock, Maibock, Camelthorn Weissbeer, King Lager
Union Brewery	Windhoek	1922-1928	Johann Heuschneider, Ludwig Barella	-
Hansa Brewery	Swakopmund	1928-2005	Johann Heuschneider	Tafel Lager, Urbock,

Tunweni Brewery	Tsumeb	1997	Part of NBL	-
Camelthorn Brewery	Windhoek	2008-2012	Jörg Finkeldei	Weizen, American Red Ale, Helles, Gold, Fresh, Bok beer, Sundowner
Swakopmund Brewing Company	Swakopmund	Founded in 2015	-	Three changing beers
Welwitschia Brewery/SABMiller Namibia	Okahandja	Founded in 2014	-	Carling Black Label, Castle Lager, Castle Lite

Appendix 2: Traditional recipes

The recipes below are copied from sources found in the archives. I have left the original description intact.

Kaffir-beer³⁹⁷

The following are the ingredients used in the preparation of this decoction – all, any one or a combination being used – they are raw potatoes, potato peels, peas or split peas, beans, mealies, raisins and certain starchy roots, and for fermentation sugar and Florylin are usually used, or otherwise golden syrup and any other yeast that is procurable. The method of preparation varies somewhat but the general principle is the same.

The usual manner in which this drink is made is as follows:

About one gallon of water is placed in a suitable receptacle (barrel, paraffin, tin, etc.) and heated, but not to boiling point. To this is added 4 lbs sugar and the contents stirred until the sugar has been completely dissolved. Then a few pounds of peas (usually split peas) and about ten unpeeled (sic) potatoes which have previously been cut into small pieces are added. Cold water is then added until the receptacle is almost filled with lukewarm water. To hasten fermentation yeast may then also be added. This mixture is made to ferment by keeping the receptacle warm with skins and blankets or by burying it in the earth so as to escape detection. It is left until it has lost the taste of sugar. The fermentation is allowed to proceed for 24 hours or even two or three days. According to the duration of fermentation the mixture contains a larger or smaller amount of alcohol. When ready for use it is strained and the strained liquid is the kaffir-beer. The residue is frequently used again, the only addition being sugar and water. The brewing is usually done by womenfolk and some have a better reputation for brewing beer than others. In fact there are “professional” brewers. The percentage of alcohol varies but a potency of at least 6% alcohol is usually obtained. It is stated that to give the drink a “bite” tobacco is added as an ingredient and it is also not uncommon for methylated spirits to be added to the finished product. This gives some idea of the vicious concoctions that are sometimes drunk.

Honey-beer³⁹⁸

Honey is mixed with the crushed bark of the Omuama tree or the crushed root of the bitter Ojiti tree in a receptacle of lukewarm water. The receptacle is carefully covered up and the mixture is left fermenting for 12 to 24 hours. This beer was excellently brewed by the Nama and their subjects, the Bergdama.

Sugar-beer³⁹⁹

In a suitable receptacle (barrel, paraffin tin, etc.) 4-10 lbs. of sugar are mixed with a few pounds of peas and about ten potatoes cut into small bits in hot water. Cold water is then added until the receptacle is filled with

³⁹⁷ NAN, F002-RARA/062, Native beverages 1931.

³⁹⁸ H. Vedder, ‘Notes on the Brewing of Kaffir Beer in S.W.A.: A History of Beer’, *Journal of the South West Africa Scientific Society*, Vol. 3 (1951) 41-43.

³⁹⁹ H. Vedder, ‘Notes on the Brewing of Kaffir Beer in S.W.A.: A History of Beer’, *Journal of the South West Africa Scientific Society*, Vol. 3 (1951) 41-43.

lukewarm water. This mixture is made to ferment by keeping the receptacle warm with skins and blankets or by burying it in the earth to escape detection, until it has lost its taste of sugar. This beer is brewed by the Hereros, Namas, Bergdama and Bastards. Small differences are attained by adding other substances, e.g. mealie-meal, boer-meal, beans, etc.

Marewu (pronounced Michau)⁴⁰⁰

Marewu is a beverage prepared from mealie meal and water to which a little flour is added. It is quite a wholesome drink provided these ingredients are adhered to, but by the addition of sugar and yeast an intoxicating beverage can be obtained – probably the purest made. The longer fermentation is allowed to proceed the more potent the drink becomes. The intoxicating beverage is prepared by cooking mealie meal to a very fine consistence. It is then allowed to cool and a little flour is added. A quantity of water is then added and the mixture allowed to stand overnight when it is ready for use. The supernatant fluid and the residue are both partaken of.

Omaongo⁴⁰¹

The fully ripe marula fruits are allowed to drop to the ground, upon which they are gathered and stored in heaps. Once there are enough, the women and girls press the juice out of them. Each one holds a pointed horn in her right hand, while two containers are positioned in front of her. She takes a fruit with her left hand, pierces it with the horn, loosening the kernel. The juice is left to ferment for 12 days. Water is poured over the kernels, to which some flesh is usually still attached, and this, too, is left to ferment, producing a significantly weaker omaongo which is usually drunk by women and children and called *oshinway*'.

⁴⁰⁰ NAN, F002-RARA/062, Native beverages 1931.

⁴⁰¹ NAN, F002-NAMZ 0559, J. Silvester, A trail of broken beer bottles, the Namibian Weekender, 10/09/99.

Appendix 3: Iconic beer posters

A wealth of visual material has been collected during this research, too much to give a complete overview in this thesis. However, a few iconic posters have been mentioned in the text and are showcased in this appendix. Below is a selection that gives an idea of the advertising of Hansa Brewery, Namibia Breweries (and its predecessor South West Breweries) and South African Breweries.

In the early days, advertising of South West Breweries was low budget and simple. After all, it was a producer's market, since virtually only one company was active. The late chairman Werner List was renowned for his quote: "Don't waste money on advertising – people drink our beer anyhow!"⁴⁰²

Hansa Brewery had even less advertising. It ran nicely on its own, according to former advertising director Don Stevenson. One problem was however the old logo: it featured a map of Swakopmund and the ocean, while Poseidon was rising out of the sea with his trident. An unconfirmed story is that a part of the black population believed it the logo showcased the devil and not Poseidon (because of the trident) and refused to drink the beer. The logo was changed.⁴⁰³

After independence, the advertising of NBL changed, emphasizing its Namibian identity and featuring mixed skin colours.⁴⁰⁴ The competition with South African Breweries opened up a whole new spectrum of tongue in cheek marketing.

⁴⁰² Interview with Bernd Masche, 15 February 2016.

⁴⁰³ Interview with Don Stevenson, 5 February 2016.

⁴⁰⁴ D. Stevenson, "The Mysterious Demographics of Beer Drinking," in: G. Miescheir, L. Rizzo and J. Silvester (eds.), *Posters in Action* (Basel 2009) 103-109.

The Man

The hunt was good;
the trophy won.
Now it's time to enjoy
the dark richness
of a Windhoek Bock.

His Beer

Advertising the Mai Bock beer of South West Breweries. The poster is from the private collection of Don Stevenson.

**go for the
good taste**

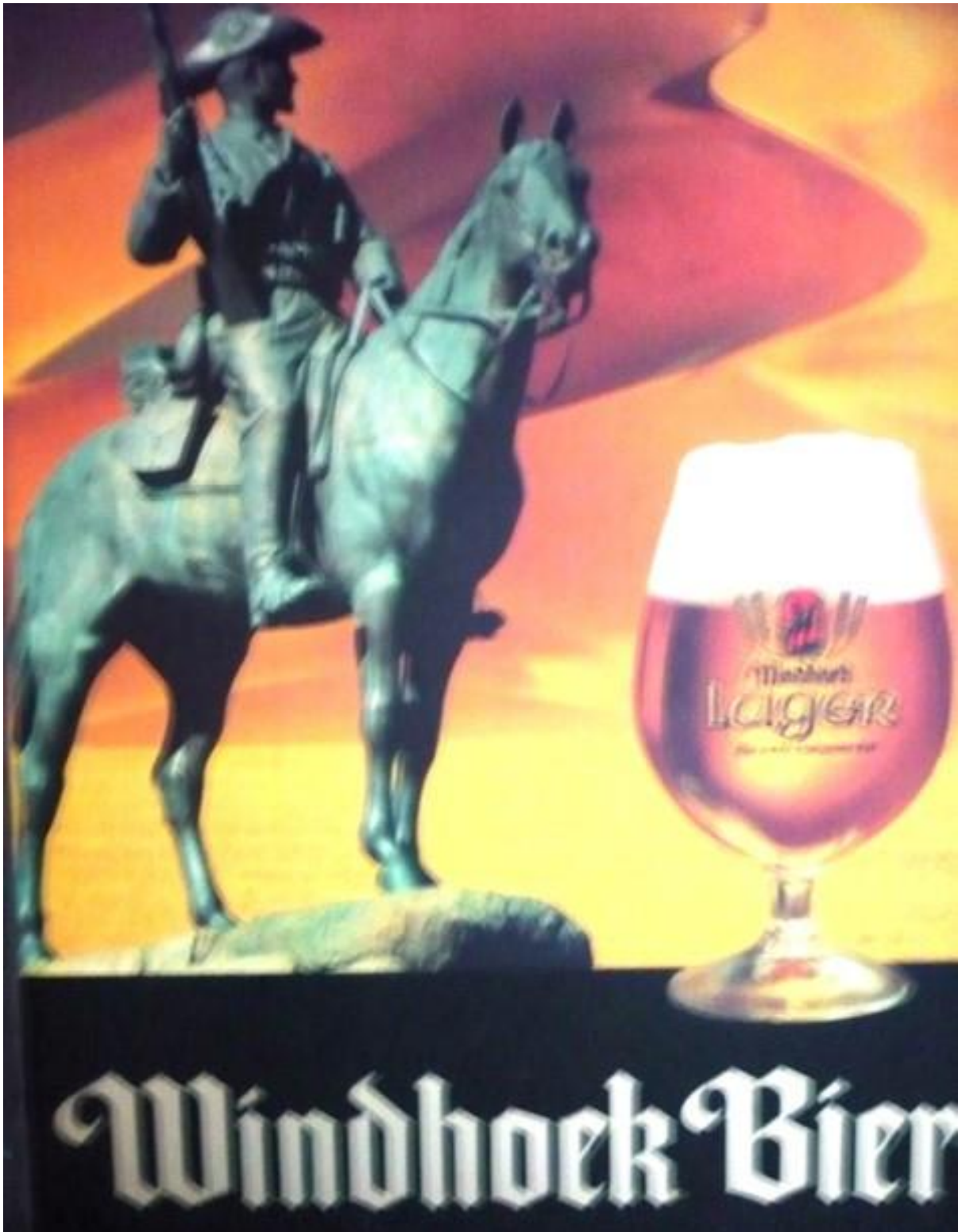
When you pick up a pack of Windhoek Lager, you know you're in for a great time. Wherever you go, whatever you do - whether it's quietly relaxing after a hard day's work or living it up with your friends. Brewed in the age-old German Tradition from only the very best barley malt and hops, a great deal of care and skill go into making Windhoek Lager. The result is a rewarding, refreshing beer, offering great taste and enjoyment with every sip. Pick up a pack (or two) of Windhoek Lager today - and taste the good life!

Windhoek Lager
Das echte Südwestar-Bier

Windhoek Lager
Das echte Südwestar-Bier

DESIGN: ADVERTORY WINDHOEK. PRINTED BY JUBA WINDHOEK (PVT) LTD, WINDHOEK.

A poster celebrating the good taste of Windhoek Lager. The poster is from the private collection of Don Stevenson.



The most famous beer poster in Namibia, showing the Reiterdenkmal. Copies of this poster are even sold at tourist shops like Peter's Antiques in Swakopmund. Private collection of Bernd Masche.

**Windhoek's
lager:**

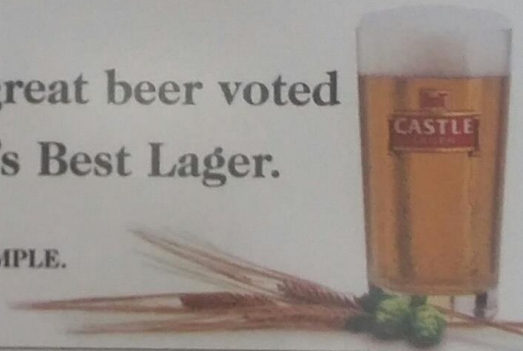


Windhoek's bitter



**Africa's great beer voted
World's Best Lager.**

PURE AND SIMPLE.



**You can't make a great
beer from sour grapes**



**Maak seker
daar is 'n Castle
op die tafel.**



Several SAB billboards in Windhoek. Basically every billboard resulted in a court case. Courtesy of Linda Buckingham, SABMiller.

Hansa Pilsener.

The beer that takes care of thirst.



Back in 1929, the people of Swakopmund asked Herr Johann Heuschneider, the founder of the Hansa Brauerei to brew them a very special beer.

A beer for their hot, dry country.

A beer with the traditional high standard of quality they knew so well, but a beer that was more refreshing. More thirst quenching.

In short, they wanted a 'wetter' beer.

We started with pilsener – a type of beer that's been known and loved in Europe for centuries.

And we used the best malts, the finest aromatic hops, and the most delicate yeasts.

But we added something.

We added refreshment and the ability to quench the hottest, driest thirst.

Today Hansa Pilsener is that kind of beer.

A cool, refreshing, golden beer born out of almost 50 years of brewing experience in a hot, dry land.



The 'wetter' beer – from the dry country.

Now brewed in South Africa in the true South West tradition.



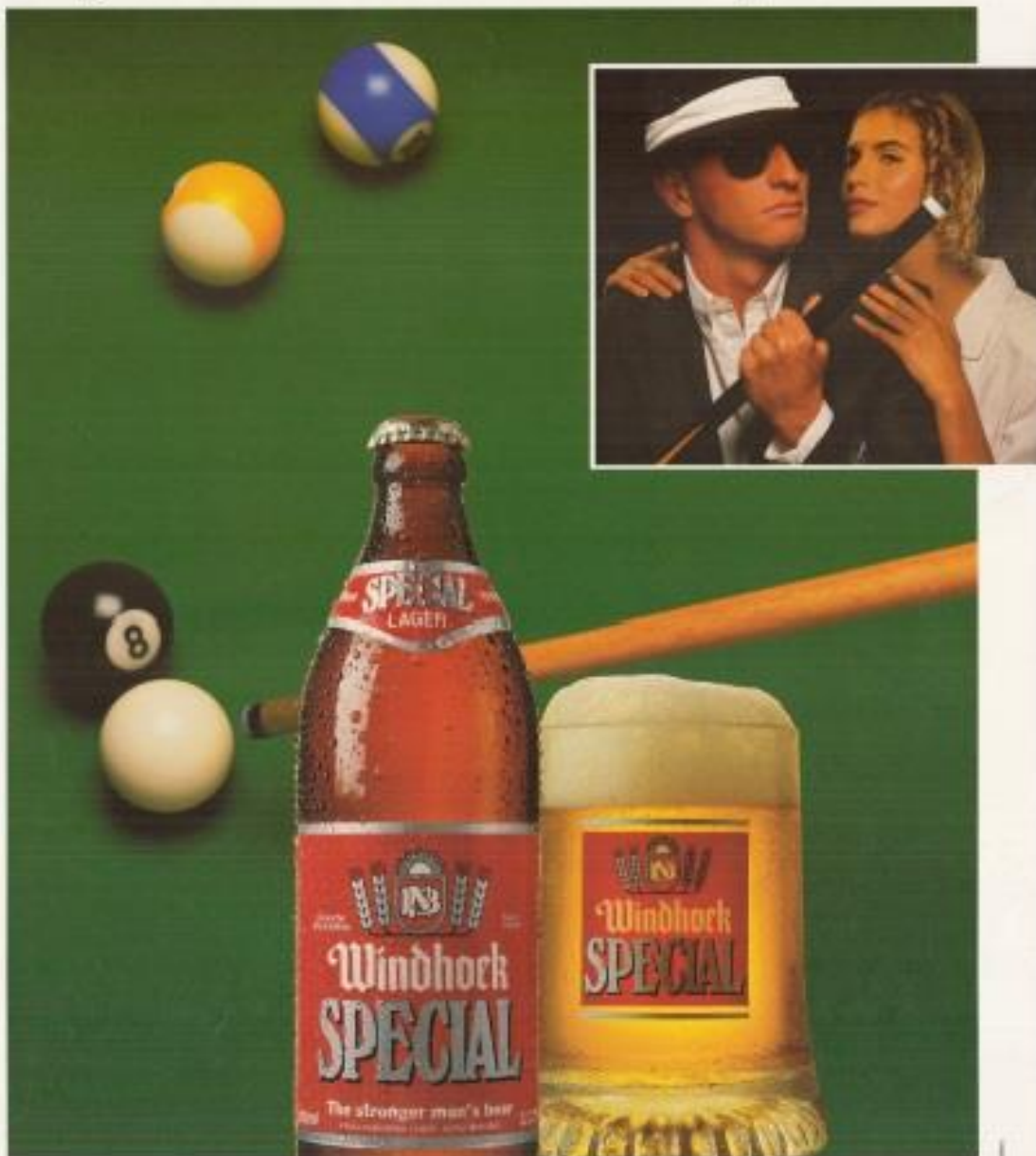
Hansa Pilsener.
Beer from the dry country.

Brewed in South Africa for the Hansa Brauerei Ltd., Swakopmund, S.W.A., by The South African Breweries Ltd.

SABOTTIE

A rare Hansa Brewery poster. This poster advertises Hansa Pilsener, the beer that SAB sold in South Africa under license, and was later used to trade for SAB shares. It also shows a rare photo of Johann Heuschneider and the old Hansa Brewery logo with Poseidon and his trident. From the private collection of Don Stevenson.

eight ball in the side pocket

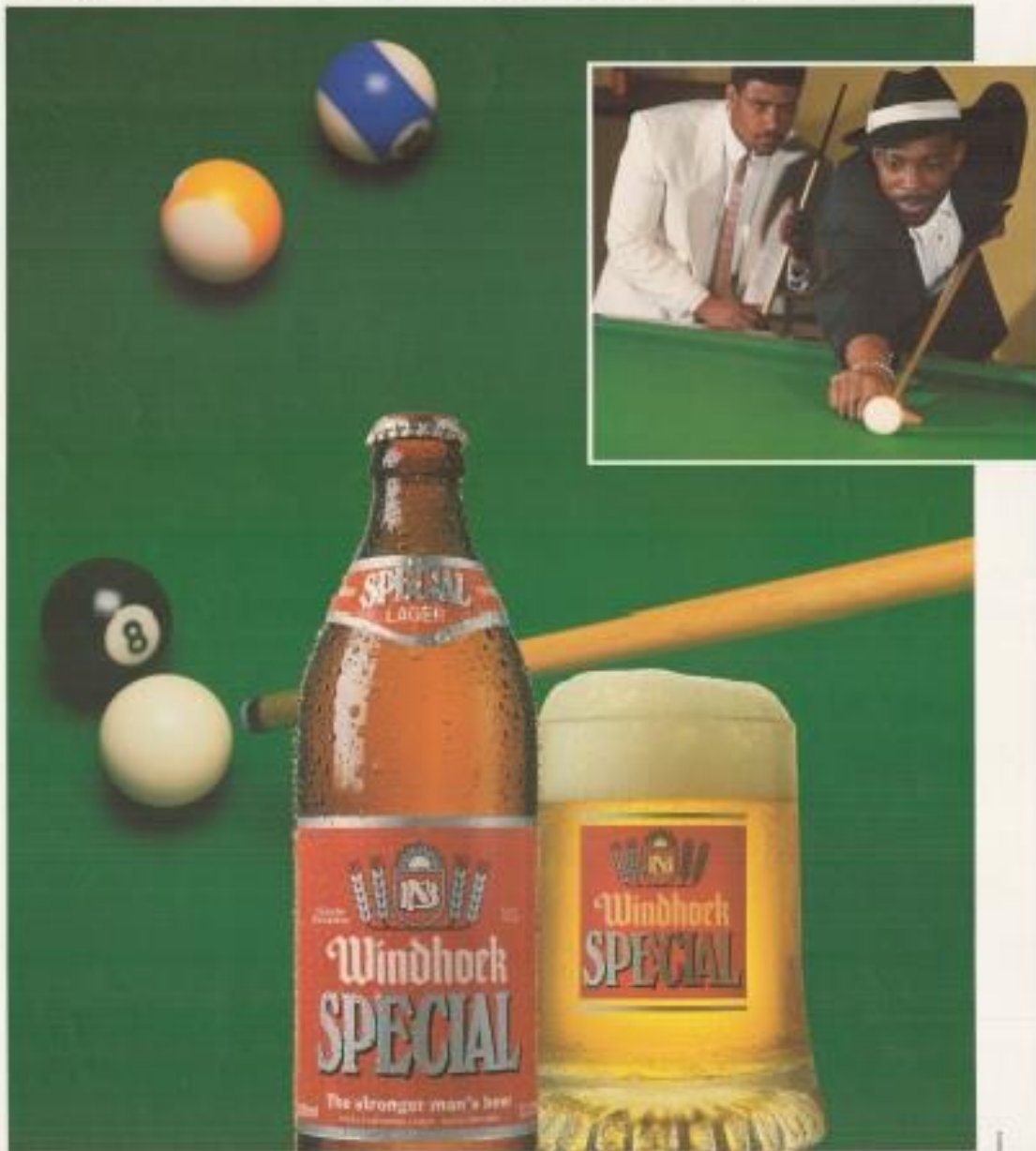


...and a **SPECIAL** for us

THE STRONGEST LAGER BEER

This is quite a special poster. Featured is Jörg Finkeldei, the founder of Camelthorn Brewery. Before he started the first microbrewery in Namibia, he worked as a chemical engineer for Namibia Breweries. For some reason, he was asked to participate in the photoshoot of the new poster. The woman is Michelle McLean, who later became the first Miss Universe for Namibia. Jörg and Michelle met during this photoshoot and fell in love. Jörg left NBL to follow Michelle in Los Angeles, where she was modelling, and later started Camelthorn Brewery. Private collection of Don Stevenson.

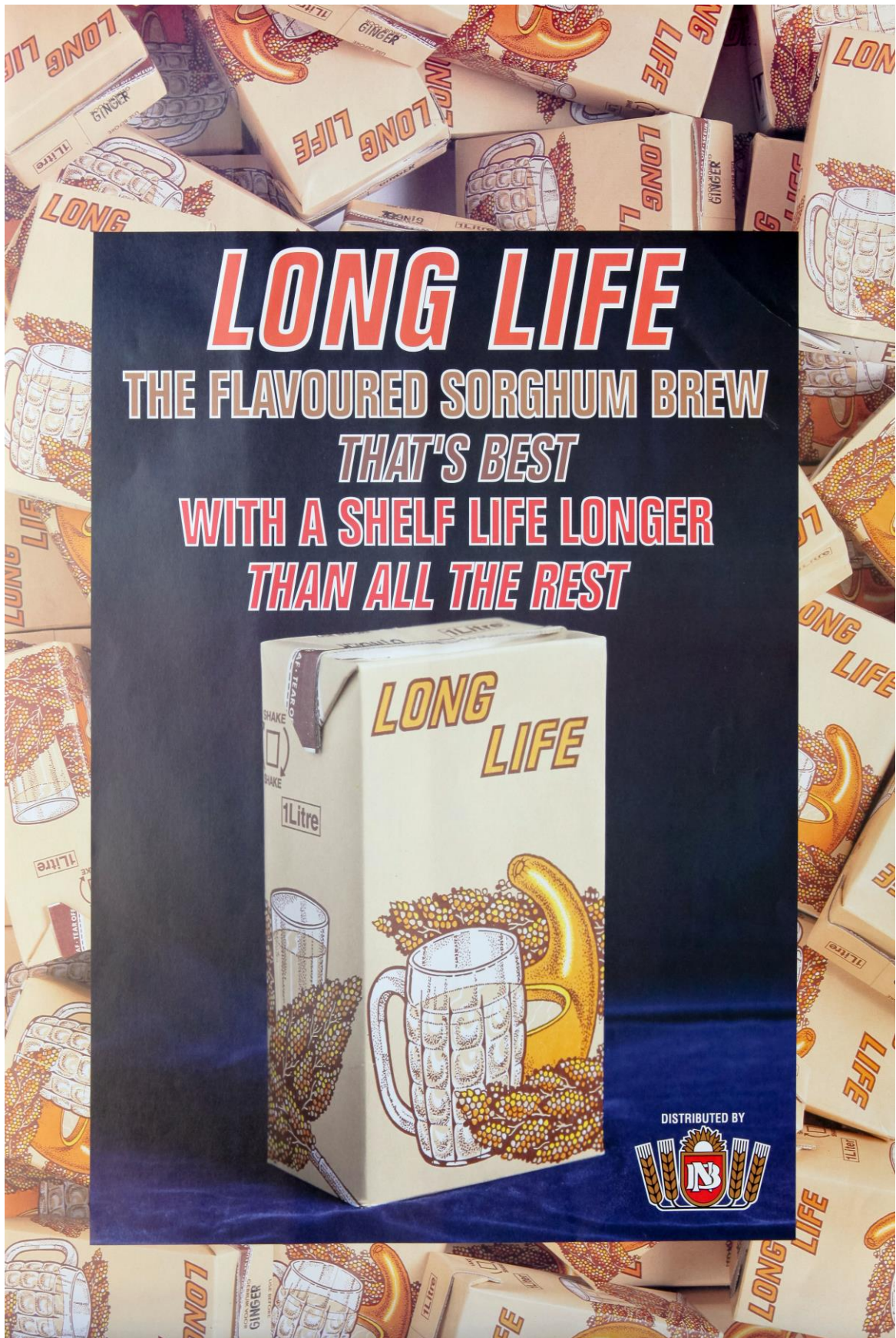
eight ball in the side pocket



...and a **SPECIAL** for us

THE STRONGEST LAGER BEER

You will notice that this poster is almost exactly a replica of the previous poster – except for the skin colour of the two people in top right corner. The previous poster was meant for the ‘white market’, while this poster focused on the ‘black market’. Private collection of Don Stevenson.



A rare poster from the sorghum brewery in Tsumeb, which ran for a few years. Courtesy of Namibia Breweries.

Brought to you by 600 Dedicated Namibians



It takes 600 dedicated Namibians to bring you the quality and pleasure you've come to expect from our locally brewed beer. Employed by the Namibian Brewing Industry, each one of these people is committed to the high standards of excellence for which our beers have become world-famous.

The Namibian Brewing Industry was established 70 years ago. Since then it has grown and developed to become one of the major contributors to our national economy. While advanced technology has refined our brewing methods, our traditional commitment to purity has not faltered. Only pure water, selected hops and the finest barley malt are used to brew our beers. The rewards can be tasted in each and every glass.

So, the next time you're enjoying a Namibian beer, spare a thought to those 600 Namibians who combine their skills, dedication and plain hard work to bring you pure beer pleasure!



THE NAMIBIAN BREWING INDUSTRY

DESIGN AGENCY: WINDHOK

After independence, South West Breweries changed into Namibia Breweries. The reinvention of the company was made public with a large advertising campaign. Four posters were launched as newspaper inserts. Every poster emphasised the Namibian character of the company and how the brewery contributed to the economy. Private collection of Don Stevenson.

Whenever



Namibians get together

Established in 1920, the Namibian Brewing Industry has brought enjoyment and companionship to Namibians for the past seventy years. Today the industry has become one of the most important contributors to our national economy. The range of Namibian beers has grown to include eight different brands – that's eight distinct beers, guaranteed to satisfy any taste. And, our beers are exported to many countries where they enjoy a proud reputation for top quality and purity.

So next time you're planning a get-together with friends, choose a Namibian beer and celebrate the good life!



THE NAMIBIAN BREWING INDUSTRY

DESIGN: ADHOCOPY, NIMBROCK

This poster is also part of the special marketing campaign to announce Namibia Breweries. It is interesting that the photo in the poster showcases people from all sorts of skin colours. Private collection of Don Stevenson.