

Topic: The significance and preservation of the “triple cup” among the Ovakwanyama of Omhedi ~~in~~ Namibia.

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Abstract

This research paper discusses the results of the research done on the cultural significance and preservation practices surrounding the Eelongo a wooden cup that was returned from the Berlin Ethnography Museum. The mysterious cup called Eelongo it was recorded as a “Triple Cup” in the accession records of the Berlin Ethnographic Museum. However, this artifact among the Ovakwanyama people of Omhedi Village is known as Eelongo, which is a reference to triplet children. The data was collected from various members of the Omhedi Village and historical experts by means of a semi-structured interview. The gathered data was subjected to thematic qualitative analysis. The results of the study demonstrated that, on the one hand, some respondents had more knowledge about the significance of the triple cup; some viewed it as just an ordinary cup like the rest of the cups (omaholo) with the same significance.

Keywords: Triple Cup, Significance, Cultural Symbolism, Ritual Practices, Cultural Preservation, Indigenous Traditions, Cultural Heritage, Restitution, Repatriation

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all the participants in Omhedi village for the immeasurable Support throughout my data collection and an amazing community engagement.

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I am grateful to the Almighty for giving me the strength, unconditional love, and blessings he shows me toward my entire life.

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Lastly, I would like to thank all my colleagues (the class of 2023) for an amazing teamwork.

DECLARATIONS

I, Evangeline Ndalinoshisho Nghifikwa, hereby declare that this study is my own work, and that is a true reflection of my research and that this work or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

From 1884 until 1915, Namibia was a German colony known as German South-West Africa. During this period, significant cultural and historical items, including artifacts, were seized, and transported to Germany (Cunningham, 2023). The acquisition of these artifacts often occurred through a combination of methods, including theft, looting, and trade with Indigenous communities, sometimes under coercive or exploitative circumstances (Labadie, 2021). One of the most notable events in this context was the 1904-1908 Herero and Nama genocide in German South-West Africa, during which thousands of Herero and Nama people were killed, and their possessions, including cultural artifacts, were confiscated by German colonial authorities and settlers (Philip, 2021).

However, in recent years, there has been growing international awareness and advocacy for the return of these artifacts to their places of origin. Efforts to return these artifacts gained momentum as Namibia and Germany engaged in discussions and negotiations to address this historical legacy. In May 2021, Germany formally apologized for the atrocities committed during the colonial period and agreed to return certain artifacts, including human remains and cultural objects, to Namibia (AL JAZEERA, 2021).

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned issues, the study reported in this report set the stage for an in-depth investigation into the Triple Cup's significance within the Ovakwanyama culture. Through an exploration of historical narratives, cultural practices, and community perspectives, the researcher aimed to investigate the origin, cultural symbolism, and current state of preservation of the "triple cup" within the Ovakwanyama community, with the goal of contributing to a comprehensive documentation of this valuable cultural heritage. Additionally, this research seeks to address potential challenges and proposes strategies for the sustainable conservation and safeguarding of the "triple cup" for future generations. The research paper commences with an overview of relevant literature, which followed by the research design,

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

According to Ramdhani, Amin, and Muhammad (2014), a literature review's objectives are to establish the background for the research, support the research, identify knowledge gaps in earlier research, and demonstrate how the research fits into the body of knowledge. The "triple cup" holds a central place in the cultural heritage of the Ovakwanyama, an ethnic group residing in Omhedi village. This unique artifact, with its distinctive design and cultural significance, has been a focal point of communal gatherings, rituals, and ceremonies for generations. This literature review aims to provide an overview of existing research pertaining to the "triple cup" and similar cultural artifacts in Africa, with a specific focus on the Ovakwanyama community.

Provenance Research

Provenance research is a systematic investigation into the history and ownership of an object, artwork, or artifacts (Heuberger, 2022). The goal of provenance research is to establish the authenticity, origin, and ownership of an item, particularly in the context of artworks and cultural property. This process helps to determine if an object has been stolen, looted, or unlawfully acquired at any point in its history (Heuberger, 2022).

Provenance research involves examining documents, records, archives, and other historical sources to trace the ownership and location of an item from its creation to the present day. This can include information about previous owners, exhibitions, auctions, and sales (Bartley, Buchanan, Reed, Klor, and Ercolin, 2023).

It is of particular importance in the field of art and cultural heritage, where issues of theft, looting, and illegal trafficking of cultural property are prevalent (Heuberger, 2022). Provenance research plays a crucial role in addressing issues of restitution and repatriation, especially for items that have been illegally taken from their countries of origin.

The findings of provenance research can have legal and ethical implications. For example, if an artwork is found to have been stolen or unlawfully acquired, efforts may be made to return it to its rightful owners or country of origin (Bartley, et al., 2023). In cases where a clear and legitimate provenance is established, it can enhance the value and authenticity of the item.

Overall, provenance research serves as a means of preserving cultural heritage, ensuring ethical practices in the art world, and providing a deeper understanding of the historical context of artworks and cultural objects.

Traditional wooden cups Namibia and Africa

Traditional wooden cups are common in many African cultures, including Namibia. These cups are often carved from a single piece of wood and are used for various purposes, including drinking, serving beverages, and as decorative or ceremonial items. Here are some examples of traditional wooden cups from Namibia and Africa:

Eholo (Namibia)

In Namibia, the Ovambo people use wooden cups known as "eholo" a traditional cup (made from wood), specifically designed to serve a traditionally brewed beverage of the Aawambo people called, Omalovu giilya (Anchor Adventures, 2019). A drink prepared for different celebrations for family gatherings, a smile always compliments the sip decorated with intricate designs. The traditional cup 'eholo' is also reserved for serving omaongo (marula wine, cider, or beer) custom maintains that a half-filled cup is drunk (Botelle, 2001).

Calabash Gourds

Bottle gourd, (*Lagenaria siceraria*), also called white-flowered gourd or calabash gourd. While not made of wood, calabash gourds are commonly used as drinking cups in various African cultures, including Namibia. These gourds are dried and hollowed out to create a vessel for drinking water, milk, or other beverages (Petruzzello, 2023). They are often decorated with carvings, engravings, or beadwork.

Zulu Beer Mugs (South Africa)

Brewing beer has a long tradition with the Zulus, the largest ethnic group of South Africa. The beverage was traditionally prepared by women at home in ornate ceramic vessels specially made for this purpose (Jolles, 2015). In South Africa, specifically among the Zulu people, wooden beer mugs are used during traditional ceremonies and gatherings. These mugs, known as "ukhamba," (beer pot) are carved from wood and have unique designs and patterns (Lombo, 2021). They are used to serve traditional Zulu beer, which is typically made from fermented sorghum.

Ethiopian Coffee Cups

In Ethiopia, traditional coffee ceremonies are an integral part of the culture. Wooden cups, often called "jebena cups" or "finjal," are used to serve coffee during these ceremonies (Maral, 2016). The cups are typically small and ornately carved, and they are part of the rich cultural heritage associated with Ethiopian coffee traditions.

Masai Milk Gourds (East Africa)

The Masai people in East Africa use wooden milk gourds, known as "enkii." This gourd is used to collect milk and blood. Masai blood/milk jugs are made from calabashes or gourds which are picked from vines. The Maasai clean the insides of the gourds as well as decorate them with leather and beads. Milk, blood, water, honey, and cornmeal are stored inside the gourds (Safaris, 2014). These gourds are intricately carved and have a long, slender shape. They play a significant role in the daily life and rituals of the Masai community.

These traditional wooden cups and vessels not only serve practical purposes but also hold cultural significance and are often considered works of art. They are crafted with great skill and diligence, reflecting the cultural heritage and traditions of the people who use them.

Museum Objects

Museum objects, also known as artifacts, are physical items that are collected, preserved, and displayed by museums for educational, cultural, historical, or scientific purposes (Beier-de Haan, 2010). These objects can come from a wide range of fields, including art, history, science, anthropology, archaeology, natural history, and more. They serve as tangible records of human creativity, cultural heritage, scientific discoveries, and natural phenomena. Museum objects can include a vast array of items, such as artworks, historical artifacts, archaeological finds, natural history specimens, and ethnographic artifacts (Lewis, 2019).

These objects serve as valuable resources for research, education, and public engagement (Lewis, 2019). Museums often display them in exhibits to provide context, tell stories, and share knowledge about the cultures, history, and natural world they represent. Additionally, they may lend objects to other institutions for temporary exhibitions or for research purposes (Beier-de Haan, 2010).

Repatriation and Restitution

Repatriation and restitution are two related concepts often discussed in the context of cultural heritage, artifacts, and human remains. They both involve the return of objects, artifacts, or remains to their places of origin or to the communities or descendants to whom they rightfully belong (Scovazzi, 2014). However, they have distinct meanings and implications.

Repatriation

Repatriation refers to the process of returning cultural artifacts, sacred objects, or human remains to their countries of origin or to the Indigenous or cultural communities from which they were taken (Scovazzi, 2014). This practice is often associated with museums, institutions, and governments acknowledging historical injustices and addressing the consequences of colonialism, looting, and illicit trafficking of cultural property.

Repatriation can involve negotiations between the parties holding the objects and the communities or nations seeking their return. These negotiations may consider legal, ethical, and cultural factors to determine the rightful ownership and the conditions of the return (Garabedian, 2023). The goal of repatriation is often to restore a sense of cultural identity and heritage to the affected communities and to rectify past injustices. It is a way to acknowledge the historical trauma caused by the removal or theft of cultural property (Scovazzi, 2014).

Restitution

Restitution is a broader concept that encompasses the return of property or assets that have been wrongfully taken, stolen, or acquired. While it can include cultural objects, it is not limited to them and can apply to various types of property, including land, artworks, and assets seized during conflicts or wars (Hamburger and Heidtmann, 2019).

Restitution is typically guided by legal principles and international agreements. It aims to rectify historical injustices by returning the property to its rightful owner or their descendants.

(Garabedian, 2023). In the context of art and cultural property, restitution often involves addressing cases of Nazi-looted art during World War II, where artworks were forcibly taken from their original owners. International efforts and legal mechanisms have been established to facilitate the restitution of such artworks to their rightful heirs (Hamburger and Heidtmann, 2019).

In summary, repatriation, and restitution both involve returning objects, artifacts, or property to their rightful owners or places of origin, but they can vary in scope and context. Repatriation is specifically associated with cultural heritage and often focuses on returning objects to Indigenous or cultural communities, while restitution is a broader legal concept that can encompass a range of property rights issues. Both processes aim to rectify historical injustices and acknowledge the importance of preserving cultural heritage and property rights (Garabedian, 2023).

Traditional conservation

Traditional conservation methods for African wooden traditional cups are crucial for preserving these culturally significant artifacts and ensuring their longevity. These conservation practices are often rooted in local knowledge and traditions.

Owners of wooden cups often clean and maintain them regularly to prevent dirt and grime buildup. They may use soft brushes, cloths, or leaves to gently wipe the surface and remove dust or residues (Hanks, 1984). Additionally, to keep the wood from drying out and cracking, traditional methods involve applying natural oils or fats to the wooden surface. These oils, such as palm oil or shea butter, not only nourish the wood but also enhance its appearance (Law, 2021).

Some African communities use smoke to treat wooden cups. The cups are exposed to the smoke of a specific type of wood or plant, which is believed to have preservative properties (Hall, 2020). This process can help protect the wood from insects and decay. In cases where the wooden cups show signs of wear or damage, traditional artisans may re-carve intricate designs or motifs and repaint them using natural pigments. This process rejuvenates the cup's aesthetic while preserving its cultural significance (Law, 2021).

Wooden cups are often stored in dry, well-ventilated areas to prevent moisture-related issues like mold growth and wood rot (Law, 2021). Some people use racks or shelves to keep the cups off the ground. Traditional methods may include using natural substances like leaves, herbs, or ashes to

deter insects from infesting or damaging the wooden cups. These substances are believed to repel pests effectively.

Wooden cups used in ceremonial or ritual contexts are often managed with care and reverence. Ritual offerings and libations may be poured into the cups, and traditional prayers or chants are recited to honor the cups and their spiritual significance (Ogwu and Osawaru, 2022). Communities often have specific cultural norms and taboos associated with the use and care of wooden cups. These norms guide how the cups are treated, ensuring that they are respected and protected (Ogwu and Osawaru, 2022).

Traditional knowledge about the cups, including their origin, age, and cultural significance, is often passed down through oral history (Joffroy, 2009). Elders and community members play a crucial role in preserving this knowledge. Some wooden cups are actively used in cultural ceremonies and practices. The act of using them keeps the cups in good condition and reinforces their cultural importance.

Cultural significance

Traditional wooden African cups hold immense cultural significance across the African continent, with variations in shape, design, and purpose depending on the specific region, ethnic group, and tradition (Fubah, 2012). These wooden cups are often more than just functional vessels; they are rich symbols of cultural identity, rituals, and social cohesion. Here are some common traditional significances associated with wooden cups in African cultures:

Wooden cups are frequently used in various ceremonies and rituals, including coming-of-age ceremonies, marriage ceremonies, initiation rituals, and ancestor veneration (Fubah, 2012). These cups may be used for pouring libations, sharing ceremonial drinks, or symbolizing the passing of knowledge or authority. Wooden cups are used to serve guests and visitors in a hospitable and welcoming manner. Offering a drink in a traditional wooden cup signifies friendship, respect, and a warm reception.

The design, carving, and ornamentation of wooden cups often reflect the cultural identity of a particular ethnic group. They serve as visual representations of a community's history, values, and artistic traditions. In many African cultures, wooden cups are believed to connect the living with

the spiritual realm and ancestors. They are used in rituals to communicate with ancestors, offer prayers, or seek protection and guidance (Ogwu and Osawaru, 2022).

Wooden cups are considered works of art, with intricate carvings and decorative elements. These cups display the artistic skills and creativity of the community's craftsmen and serve as a form of cultural expression. In some African cultures, certain wooden cups are used for medicinal and healing purposes. They may be associated with traditional healers who use them to mix and administer herbal remedies (Ezaluomba, 2021).

The ownership of elaborately carved or adorned wooden cups can indicate the status and prestige of an individual or family within the community. Some cups are passed down through generations as valuable heirlooms (Ezaluomba, 2021). While the cultural and symbolic aspects are essential, wooden cups also serve practical functions in daily life, such as holding water, milk, beer, or other beverages (Anchor Adventures, 2019). The continued use and appreciation of traditional wooden cups help preserve cultural heritage and traditions, ensuring that they are passed on to future generations.

It is important to note that the significance of wooden cups can vary widely from one African culture to another. Additionally, the specific meanings and rituals associated with these cups are deeply rooted in the unique histories and belief systems of each ethnic group. As a result, the symbolism and cultural significance of traditional wooden cups in Africa are diverse and multifaceted.

The History of the Returned Objects/ Artifacts

The presence of African artifacts in German museums is primarily a result of colonialism, exploratory expeditions, and cultural exchanges that occurred during the 19th and early 20th centuries. During the colonial era, European powers, including Germany, established colonies in various parts of Africa. These colonies were often acquired through force or negotiation and led to the exploitation of African resources, labor, and cultural heritage (van der Heyden, 2019). According to Gbadamosi (2021), European explorers and colonial administrators collected artifacts, artworks, and cultural objects from these colonies and brought them back to Europe.

On the other hand, many European explorers and scholars traveled to Africa with the aim of studying its people, cultures, and natural resources. These expeditions often involved the collection.

of artifacts, ethnographic objects, and specimens for scientific research and museums (Maranda & Soares, 2017). German explorers, anthropologists, and ethnographers were among those who contributed to this process.

German museums, universities, and cultural institutions were actively involved in the acquisition of African artifacts. These institutions considered these artifacts as valuable for research, education, and the understanding of human cultures. Some of the most notable museums involved include the Ethnological Museum in Berlin, the Linden-Museum in Stuttgart, and the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum in Cologne (Grimme, 2016). Some artifacts were obtained through trade or purchases from individuals, traders, or local communities. In some cases, these acquisitions may have been conducted fairly, while in others, they might have been obtained under questionable circumstances (Hodge, 2021).

Many of the artifacts that were returned from Germany museums lack proper documentation regarding their origins and how they were acquired. This includes the triple cup that is the subject of this research. The 23 pieces which were obtained between 1860 and 1890 from Namibia, are currently housed in the National Museum of Namibia. The objects need to be documented through the rewriting the history surrounding the artifacts from a Namibian perspective, to explore the true origins and meaning of the objects.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Design and Methodology

This research took a qualitative approach, specifically a case study approach. Qualitative approaches, according to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011), entail gathering textual or spoken data. According to Rahman (2017), one of the primary advantages of qualitative research is that it generates a full account of participants' thoughts, opinions, and experiences, as well as analyzes the significance of their actions. This research paper used a qualitative research design to obtain quality data from the community of Omhedi.

Participants

The participants consisted of members from the Omhedi village and historical experts, in total there were 20 participants. Seven of whom (four females and 3 males) were regarded as elders in the community and thus hold significant knowledge about various cultural practices and traditions; eight (five females and three male) members from the community and families who have lived in.

the community long enough to have had firsthand experience with the “triple cup” and five (three female and two male) historical experts.

The study participants were on average 30 - 70 years old (55–70-year-olds – community elders, members from the community and families; 35- 50-year-olds 35 – 45-year-olds). The subjects reported having different knowledge concerning the “triple cup” and its significance.

Data collection and analysis

The data were gathered by means of a semi-structured interview. This interview format was chosen intentionally since it uses a set of prepared in advance guiding questions and prompts and interviewees are encouraged to elaborate on the problems raised during it (George, 2022). In this type of the interview, the interviewer provides guidelines and direction (hence the ‘-structured’ part in the name) but is also keen to follow up interesting developments and to let the interviewee elaborate on certain issues (hence the ‘semi-’ part). During the interview, the researcher attempted to encourage the respondents to describe their knowledge of the triple cup. This was a necessary step as it allowed the participants to really give more details about their answers.

To obtain relevant data, the following questions were asked:

- Did you ever see this kind of cup among the community?
- Are such cups still made? (If so for what purposes)
- What is the traditional name of this cup and what does the name mean?
- How is the cup made? Materials? Is there a specific tree from which the cup could be carved? If so, what was the significance of using only that wood? Who was responsible for carving the cup?
- How was the cup conserved in the community?
- The cup contains patterns, do the patterns have any meaning?
- What is the cultural significance/ importance of this cup?
- Why is this cup different from other cups (oshiwambo cup Eholo)?
- What was the cup used for?
- Are there rituals associated with the cup and how were those rituals performed?
- Who can use the cup and why?
- Is the cup made for someone special/ specific and why?

- How was the cup collected from the community?
- Do you think this cup should be returned to the community or should stay in the museum?

The gathered data were subjected to qualitative analysis. The analysis started with partial transcription of the important parts of the data on a computer word processor program Microsoft Word 2016. Then the transcribed parts of the data were read several times to look for common themes and frequently occurring information. The recurring ideas were coded and recoded, revised and updated. The researcher used the highlighting function of the word processor program which allows the user to highlight the text on the transcript with different colors and comments to record any observations and thematic categories recognized in the data. The emerged categories were reviewed, compared, modified and either merged or abandoned.

Ethical Statement

Participants were asked for their written consent to participate voluntarily in the interviews. Their written consent to use the interviews in the research report while ensuring their anonymity was also requested. The interviewees were informed of their right to withdraw from the interviews or not to answer questions if they felt uncomfortable with them. The participants' written consent was sought for the use of any personal material such as pictures in the report and any future publications that may result from this study. I undertake to acknowledge all my participants and their respective communities in publications that will result from this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings/ results

A thorough analysis of the data yielded the following thematic categories: knowledge on the cup, cultural significance, ritualistic uses, artistic and craftsmanship value, social status and hierarchy, the creation of traditional cups, preservation efforts, comparison with other traditional cups, and views on restituting the triple cup.

Knowledge on the cup

When showed a photograph of the triple cup, most respondents identified the triple cup as “Eeholo” which translates to a traditional drinking cup. When asked if they have seen such a cup from the photograph, most respondents from Omhedi said no, they have not seen the cup in their community but among other communities like the Ovakwanyama from Angola, in Ondonga and Ambaja. Because this cup was mostly owned by the Ovakwanyama from Angola and most of them now resided in Angola and by the Ambadja people.

A few respondents confirmed seeing the cup in the community. When asked if such cups are still made, majority of the respondents in the Omhedi community said no and a small number said yes. The respondent’s who confirmed to seeing the cup in the community also said that although the cup is still made, they do not have any purpose because the cup is made as other normal cups (eeholo). The respondents also revealed that, the person who made the cup does not make them for a specific purpose but to those people who buy them from the person that made them use them for different purposes.

Cultural significance

The "triple cup" holds some cultural significance among the Ovakwanyama, dating back several generations. It played a pivotal role in traditional ceremonies, special occasions, or communal events. Participants revealed that, the cup was made to serve traditional drinks like "omalodu" which is traditional beer and "Omaongo" which is a marula drink. The cup was also used at special occasion like weddings, which currently people today use it from the Ovakwanyama from Angola still see these cups in the wedding of wealthy people especially in Ondjiva Angola. The cup was used to serve the king especially the king from Ondonga that is where most of Ovakwanyama people last saw it. It was also used to serve the orphans, as traditional orphans were looked as they should be served in bigger cups or plates; they should be given a lot of food to satisfy them because they do not have parents.

Ritualistic use

When asked if the triple cup had any ritualistic uses, some participants said that there were no rituals associated with the cup. The family of late Mr. Kakololo who used to make traditional cups (omaholo) said he was a talented man in designing the traditional cup where he used to make similar traditional cups like the triple cup but his contain only of two as known (omakwana) and he only made them for selling purposes. However, some respondents revealed that whoever brought the cup they performed their ritual with it by first anointing the cup for it to be effective for use. Participants also revealed that there were some occasions where small rituals had to be performed concerning the cup. For instance, occasions like when young men were being circumcised traditionally, young man will have to drink from this cup which contains herbs before being circumcised. Also, on occasions like Ekululo/ Epetifemo lokaana (when a new born baby hair is cut off for the first time, whoever is cutting the babies hair will be offered traditional beer (omalodu) in the cup), traditional weddings (olufuko), young women who took part in the traditional wedding will drink from this cup, so the brides would look attractive to get husbands. The cup was also used by the Ayota people (well experienced witch doctors) used the cup for witchcraft. Traditionally doctors used the cup for traditional herbs to heal the people in the community. The cup was also used to serve the king.

Artistic and craftsmanship value

The triple cup possesses intricate designs that reflect the artistic traditions of the Ovakwanyama. This includes unique patterns, engravings, or materials used in their construction. Contrary to what the researcher thought, participants revealed that the patterns on the cup are designed by the person who carves the cup solely for decorative purposes and to appeal and attract customers.

Social status and hierarchy

To some extent the ownership or use of the "triple cup" was associated with particular social statuses or roles within the Ovakwanyama society. Respondents revealed that although anyone, can use the cup; it was most owned by wealthy people in the community. That is why it is difficult to find it in today's communities.

The creation of the cup (materials used, artists responsible)

The cup could be carved using different wood like it can be carved from wood like *Terminalia sericea* (omwoolo), *Peltophoram africonum* (omupalala), *Hebeclada* (omutoka), *Colophospermum mopane* (omufyati), *Albizia anthelmintica* (omuhanguti), *Combretum engleri* (omulondaxuxua), *Berchemia discolor* (omuve), *Ricinodendron Rautanenii* (omunghete), it depends what wood is available the artist can use.

The community revealed that the triple cup was made from hardwood which is made from (omumboo/omukanga) *Commiphora Africana* and *C. Angolensis*, the reason the omumboo/omukanga was used was because looking at the pictures of the cup and the videos they clarify that the cup is in good condition and the omumboo wood doesn't not deteriorate fast. When asked if a special person was required to carve the cup, respondents revealed that wood carving is only done by men in the Ovakwanyama community, however, the triple cup could be made by any individual (men) who is talented in wood carving from the community there is no specific person who made it.

The respondents also shared the process that goes into the making of traditional cups. The person, collect the wood and caved in the sun from one to three months, being turned over every day. The bark is not removed until the carving begins. Different tools are used for example the small spatulate knife (ononga) and the heavier onghonlolai which has a pipe handle use to carve the inner side of the cup. Creativity of the patterns and the designs the artist keep his tools very sharp by burning narrow designs he uses an oshihengo to widen flat parts to be burned he use omukanda.

Through the process of carving, he keeps his instruments in the fire as he works as soon as one tool cools, he can pick up another of the same. To decorate the cup, it will take three to four hours or a day depending on how fast the person is.

Preservation efforts

People who bought this cup treated it special and it was as kept safe to be used for specific occasions only. Which it was difficult to identify in the community who owned it. Respondents revealed that there are some threats or challenges faced in preserving the "triple cup." One of the challenges is lack of interest from younger generations, this makes it hard to pass the traditions on to younger generation.

Comparisons with other traditional cups

There is no major different between the triple cup and other traditional cup. Participants revealed that, the cup is different because only of the designer's skill who made it. It is the creative of the artist but it still serves the same purpose as other cups (eholo) because the traditional cup would be used to serve important visitors or used a different occasion too. The artist who made the cup only make it for the same use as the rest of the traditional cup (Eeholo) used for drinking, traditional drinks.

Views on restituting the triple cup

Since its return, the triple cup is housed at the National Museum of Namibia. When asked how the triple cup can end up in someone else's hands, respondents revealed that the cup can only be donated or gifted because in the community people would gift each other with this cup and one of the subjects from Omhedi was gifted the triple cup in his wedding. The participants expressed their desire to have the cup in its rightfully place in Angola to the Ovakwanyama. The cup should be return to the community of omhedi just to showcase because the generation of today don't know the cup and also even local artists who make other cup (eholo) they are not aware of this design and would like to practice making them, as they were mostly only done by the Aakwanyama from Angola, that's why people from omhedi village today do not have any of them made in their community apart from those who got them as gifts from family members from Angola. The aim of returning the triple cup to the community is to highlight it to the community and the museum can preserve it for the future generations because the cup does it belong to the Ovakwanyama of omhedi.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The "triple cup" holds immense cultural significance among the Ovakwanyama of Omedi village. It is deeply intertwined with various aspects of their traditions, rituals, and social practices. The "triple cup" is not merely an object but serves as a symbol in various ceremonies and rituals within the community. These rituals play a crucial role in defining social roles, relationships, and milestones in the lives of the Ovakwanyama.

There is a disconnect between the current artist and the current generation among the Aakwanyama and the particular cup that was restituted to Namibia, this disconnect was caused by the time difference the object was collected a hundred years ago and many of the artists and respondents to this particular research have never seen it and didn't know about it, they saw it for the first time. However, they know similar cups that are not of cultural significance but of importance to their community. Apart from that, this disconnect exists in communities that were interviewed arguing that they will be very happy to receive the cup so that they can be inspired to create new cups that are based on the old ones. However, they do not claim ownership of the cup they believe that the cup should be shared with the whole world, people should see this cup. They just want to have it for some time and then being inspired to create new ones for the future. This calls for strong commitment to preserving cultural heritage in the face of modernization and external influences. The knowledge and practices associated with the triple cup need to be passed down from one generation to another. Elders play a crucial role in ensuring the transmission of this cultural artifact's significance to the younger members of the community.

To conclude, as far as restitution is concerned for restitution to be successful it must be relevant and useful to the communities where the object is being returned and one way this object can be relevant to the Aakwanyama community is by inspiring new designs among fashion designers and crafters or artists. Another way it can be relevant to the communities is by inspiring different forms of cultural significance. However, one must bear in mind that culture is not static it changes, therefore, the materials and other designs might be different, but they are inspired by the "Eelongo."

Recommendations

Further in-depth provenance research and documentation of the "triple cup" and its associated practices are essential. This will contribute to a deeper understanding of its significance and help.

in preserving this cultural artifact. The triple cup may have entered Namibia through other means that still need to be investigated. It is not originally from the Aakwanyama of Namibia. It may be evidence of precolonial trade or precolonial relations between the two Aakwanyama groups. It can be an indicator of cultural networks between the Aakwanyama from both countries and the Aandonga/ or even between the Kwanyama and Ndonga Kingdom. Furthermore, Initiatives should be undertaken to educate both the younger and older generations about the historical and cultural importance of the "triple cup." Workshops, seminars, and cultural events can serve as effective platforms for this purpose.

Establishing a dedicated space, such as a museum to highlight the "triple cup" and its origin and associated practices can serve as a tangible reminder of its significance. This can also attract attention and interest from visitors, fostering cross-cultural understanding. Encourage interactions with neighboring communities and international partners to share knowledge and experiences related to cultural preservation. This can lead to mutual appreciation and support for cultural heritage.

Promote the craft of creating the "triple cup" as a means of sustaining traditional craftsmanship. This can also provide economic opportunities for artisans and contribute to the preservation of this cultural artifact. While preserving tradition is crucial, there may be room for adaptive practices that allow the "triple cup" to remain relevant in contemporary Ovakwanyama society. This could involve exploring new uses for the artifact.

Although it is clear how the cup ended was in the Berlin Ethnographic Museum it is also crucial to return the triple cup back to its rightful owners which are the Ovakwanyama people. This will allow the Ovakwanyama people to connect with an important part of their history. It will make it accessible to its people so that it is easier to learn about it and to transfer any traditions associated with it to the younger generation.

By implementing these recommendations, the Ovakwanyama community can take proactive steps towards preserving the cultural significance of the triple cup for future generations while navigating the challenges posed by modernization and globalization.

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**SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND ARTS**

Consent Form

Post Graduate Diploma in Heritage Conservation
and Management (UNAM)

Research Project Title: The significance and preservation of the “triple cup” among the Ovakwanyama of Omedi village

Researcher: Evangeline Nghifikwa

I _____ hereby confirm that I have read the information sheet concerning this research project. The researcher Evangeline Nghifikwa has informed me of the objectives of the project and my expected participation therein. I am participating voluntarily and am aware that I can withdraw from the interview at any time. I am also aware that I can choose not to answer question with which I am not conformable. I understand that my responses will be used confidentially and anonymously for the purposes of doctoral studies and further research.

I give my consent to participate in the interview and those materials that I may share with the researcher such as personal archives may be used in this research.

By signing this form, I confirm my consent.

Signature _____

Date _____

For any questions you may contact the researcher, 0813186517 nghifikwa21@gmail.com \or project supervisor Goodman Gwasira +264 61206 3236 or ggwasira@unam.na

**SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND ARTS**

13 September 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This letter serves to confirm that Ms. Evangeline Nghifikwa is currently enrolled in the Postgraduate Diploma in Heritage Conservation and Management programme at the University of Namibia. I am writing in my capacity as her community. Ms. Nghifikwa is required to consult some archives, museum documentation and objects as part of her research. She is also required to conduct oral history interviews with identified participants. Her research proposal was successfully accepted by the Heritage programme in the History Section. Kindly see attached to this letter her informed consent form and an information sheet that describes her research topic, objectives.

We shall be very grateful if you could grant her permission and assist her to carry out her research in your organization or community. The research results will be shared with the participants. For any further information please do not hesitate to contact me on the details below.

Yours Sincerely



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Senior Lecturer: Archaeology and Heritage Studies

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