

**Gaop /Uirab, or Kaptein OTTO'S INAUGURATION 5 OCTOBER 2024, HK address, English and Afrikaans:**

Outgoing Kaptein Daniel Luiperdt, - and with all other decorum observed: Watter groot voorreg en plesier dit is om vandag op hierdie geleentheid hier iets te kan bydra. Dankie vir die uitnodiging!

Dear Uirab/Uiras and wider family, all guests, clergy, Government officials and elected officials.

First of all I want to extend my heartiest congratulations to my brother and nephew Kaptein Otto Uirab! May you bring wisdom, justice, and ever greater equality in social and in material matters to your people and to the Namibian people as such.

On behalf of a specific group of your relatives here today (and others who cannot be here today), I want to express our thanks for the open-heartedness with which you have embraced and included us in your families. Ek will dit ten sterkste beklemtoon, dat ons dit nie maar so aanvaar het nie: ons wat kom van die klas wat met voordeel, met vooroordele, en die weg om te kan kies, gebore is. Ons is steeds bewus van die uitwerking van 'n ongelyke bedeling en wat dit op ons en op julle gehad het en in sekere mate nog altyd het.

It was you who let us come through the door and welcomed us! May we always be grateful for that! And may our children carry a lesser burden on their shoulders that weighed on you and on us during our lifetime because of colonial and apartheid rule. May we never relent in pursuing the day when true and real social and economic equality defines the fabric of the society we live in.

Nou, hoe het dit gekom dat Swartboois nou sulke „Whiteboys“ soos ons as neefs en niggies het? En dat ons hier vandag saam gekom het?

Vergeet, vir 'n oomblik van Hollanders, Duitsers, Engelse of Apartheid. Ons verbintenis het tot stand gekom, hier op Namibiese grond in 1814 toe 'n Duitse sendeling van, die LMS ^erens tussen Pella langs die groot Gariep, via Warmbad na Bethanie. Daar het Sendeling Hinrich Schmelen vir Zara Hendriks-//Xaiggas 'n dogter van 'n Namaqua Kaptein gevra om met haar in die huwelik in te gaan. (Die troue was nie heel eenvoudig nie.....expand....)

But it happened AND it happened outside of any colonial authority and without the LMS authority. It happened between two people, who it turned out, built a strong and intellectual bond that created the Namaqua grammar in writing, who for the first time invented the 'click' sound in writing and who translated and had published: the Namaqua Bible in a Southern African language (you can go and see it.....)

Their middle daughter Johanna (Hanna), married missionary Franz-Heinrich Kleinschmidt --- and now you know a little bit more where I fit into Khoi lineage and ancestry.

But Zara and Hinrich are only the beginning of this story. Another daughter of theirs, Frederike, married into the Bam family. If I asked those with Bam blood to stand up now, many of you would stand. And even if you did not guess it by now, ons is almal familie van mekaar.

Just to make it absolutely explicit: If Zara Schmelen (nee //Xaiggas) was my Khoi- Nama gr, gr, gr grandmother then 4% of me is Khoi. – I can prove it; I had my DNA test done.

But then come the Swartboois. First in Rehoboth where Missionar F-H Kleinschmidt and his wife, Hanna, (the daughter of.....) were missionaries to the Swartbooi's. The missionary couple did not stand aside when Jonker Afrikaner attacked Rehoboth in 1864 fled west, - with their congregation, with their own and the other children, - to seek refuge in Otjimbingue. When my gr gr grandfather arrived in Otjimbingue, he was just over 50 years old, he died of exhaustion just after his arrival.

Jonker got away with much of the Swartbooi cattle, goats and burned the waggons of the people fleeing. (Why did he attack? - > Cape traders.....)

In Otjimbingue - Hanna was now alone with seven children and a large Swartbooi flock, all with their children. The young man F-H K junior and Sabata's and other young folk, presumably lived closely together until plans could be made for the future, after having been made into refugees. It is then that a child was born that links the Kleinschmidt's to the Uirab family that you see here – not least in the position of Kaptein Uirab.

But what I told you happened between 1814 and the 1860s and 1870's – and the German's had not yet tried to expanded their infamous Empire

here in Namibia. Racism and discrimination existed in social form but not as a law yet.

Now here it is:

When the Germans came after 1884, there were those in our family who “played white” - something that maximised their social and economic chances. You had to get away with it, even if people had curly hair or a darker complexion. My family belonged to those! – and if you played white you acted 150% white. At one point my father had to show in writing that he had no Black blood, and he, there and then, invented an ancestor other than a Nama, our Zara! He wrote down: Elisabeth Bam, she was not ‘white’ either but it sounded white and German enough. And before the age of computers and the internet to check and verify, he got away with it.

Vanaf die laat 1800s tot tien jaar gelede, omeneens 150 jaar, was ons family verdeel en geskei van mekaar: die wat wit wou wees, en die wat was, WAT hulle has. Dit is die meeste van die family hier teenwoordig vandag.

Kaptein, Kaptein my neef, Kaptein Uirab, one wens jou geluk. Mag jy jou familie tradiesie, jou familie geskiedenis, jou wysheid en jou sin vir justice en gelykheid die hoeksteen van jou amp verder dra so dat dit vir die nageslagte altyd ,n voorbeeld is.

Baie dankie.

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