

Harmless hunters, fierce fighters or persistent pastoralists ? The policy implications of academic stereotypes of Kalahari San

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Introduction

The African continent today is beset by massive problems. Famine, civil conflict, environmental degradation, and economic stress as a result of huge debts and less-than-successful development projects have resulted in what Stephen Lewis, Special Adviser to the Secretary General of the United Nations, has called 'a chronicle of despair' (Lewis, cited in UNICEF 1989:20). Sadly, much of the burden has been placed on the poorest and most vulnerable of Africa's people—children, small farmers, refugees, and indigenous minorities.

Given the tremendous difficulties facing so many of Africa's people, it should not come as a surprise that journalists, researchers, and the public at large have looked for bright spots in what is otherwise a bleak picture. One of the continent's success stories has been said to be the Republic of Botswana (Figure 1), a country which is well-off economically and which has maintained a multi-party democratic system since the time of its independence in 1966 (Parsons 1984; Picard 1987; Holm and Molutsi 1989).

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Botswana is well-known to anthropologists because of the presence of over 40,000 San (Basarwa, Bushmen) (Table 1). The San have been the subject of intense scientific scrutiny for nearly four decades, making them perhaps some of the best-known indigenous peoples not only in Africa, but in the world as a whole (Silberbauer 1965, 1972, 1981; Marshall 1961, 1965, 1976; Lee 1965, 1968, 1969, 1979, 1984; Lee and DeVore 1976; Guenther 1976, 1979, 1986; Wiessner 1977; Tobias 1978; Tanaka 1980; Marshall and Ritchie 1984; Yellen 1977a, b, 1985; Cashdan 1984a, b; Hitchcock 1978, 1982a, b, 1985a, b, 1987, 1988a, b; Hitchcock and Ebert 1984, 1989; Vieirich 1977, 1981, 1982; Wilmsen 1982, 1989a, 1989b). These peoples have managed to capture the popular imagination, in part because of some of their lifeways, which have been portrayed as picturesque and extremely well-adjusted to the sometimes harsh conditions of the Kalahari ecosystem. The popularity of such books as Elizabeth Marshall Thomas's *The Harmless People* (Marshall Thomas 1958) and Laurens van der Post *The Lost World of the Kalahari* (van der Post 1958), as well as Jamie Uys's film *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (Uys 1980), have served to reinforce the idea that 'bushmen' are, as Wilmsen (1989) puts it, the 'quintessential foragers'.

An examination of the literature on San reveals that a wide variety of opinions have been offered about these populations, some of them somewhat romantic, others definitely the opposite. One of the more telling comments is by C.F. Rey, one-time Resident Commissioner of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, who made the following remarks in 1936:

Table 1 : Population Size and Distribution of Major San Groups in Botswana.

Group Name(s)	Location	Population Size
! Kung (Zu/wasi)	NW Kalahari	2,950
//Au//ci (Auen)	W & NW Kalahari	1,950
Nharo and other Ghanzi groups	W Kalahari	7,600
G/wi, G//ana	Central Kalahari	3,600
! Xo	SW Kalahari	3,200
S. Kua, Tshasi, E. /Hua	SE Kalahari	2,700
N. Kua	E Kalahari	3,350
Tyua (/Taise, Ganade, Danisan)	NE Kalahari	6,200
Hiechware, Tati, Tuli Block, and Motloutse groups	E Botswana	3,350
River Basarwa (Bugakwe, /Tannekwe, Deti, etc.)	Okavango Delta, Botletle River	2,650
Kwengo	N Botswana	950
Balala (Ngwaketse groups)	S Kalahari	1,550
Balala (Kgalagadi District groups)	SW Kalahari	650
Urban groups (e.g. Gaborone, Mochudi Maun, Molepolole, Serowe).	SE Botswana	1,150
Total		41,750

In the first place, I saw no reason whatsoever for preserving Bushmen. I can conceive no useful object to the world in spending money and energy in preserving a decadent and dying race, which is perfectly useless from any point of view, merely to enable a few theorists to carry out anthropological investigations and make by . . . writing misleading books which lead nowhere (C.F. Rey, 6 November, 1936, Botswana National Archives file S. 469/1/1).

Contrary to Rey's opinions, anthropological research has had a profound effect on the status of San populations (Hermans 1980; Hitchcock 1989a). Ethnohistorical, ethnographic, and administrative data can be brought to bear on the question of how the San have been portrayed. Anthropologists have been taken to task for representing the San as isolated hunter-gatherers (Schrire 1980; Wilmsen 1983, 1984; Denbow 1984, 1986; Denbow and Wilmsen 1986). Government planners have been criticised for describing the San as 'primitive', 'unwilling to change', and 'ineducable' (Marshall 1984). Social scientists and administrators alike were taken aback by the use of San as counter-insurgency troops in the South African Defence Force, whose officers hailed them as 'fierce fighters' and extolled their 'instinctive bush-living abilities' (Poos 1980; Kolata 1981; Lee and Hurlich 1982). While the various labels applied to the approximately 100,000 San (Table 2) have been debated upon in scientific and popular literature (Lee 1979; Silberbauer 1981; Guenther 1986; Wilmsen 1989a), it is important to realize that the stereotypes created have had significant effects on policies that directly affect the well-being of these and other rural populations in southern Africa.

Table 2: Population Data on San (Basarwa, Bushmen, Batwa) in Southern Africa

Country	Population	Reference (s)
Angola	15,000	C. Rostart (personal communication)
Botswana	41,750	Hitchcock (1988a)
Namibia	33,000	Marshall (1989)
South Africa	2,500	A. Traill (personal communication)
Zambia	1,500	Zambia National Parks and Wildlife Service information
Zimbabwe	450	Tsholotsho District Council information
Total	94,200	

Note: The data contained in this table are based on official and unofficial population estimates. It is possible that undercounting occurred in some cases, while in others people who are not ethnically San or Bushmen have been grouped under this heading (e.g. in Namibia; see Marshall 1989).

San as Hunters

The image of San as hunter-gatherers has had several important impacts. First of all, the notion that San lived 'in the bushes', and that 'they moved around a lot, eating wild animals and plants' contributed to the argument which led to San being denied land rights. In the mid-1970s, the Government of Botswana embarked upon a major land reform and livestock development program known as the Tribal Grazing Land Policy (Republic of Botswana 1975; Hitchcock 1978, 1980, 1985a, 1988a). With financial backing from the World Bank and other donors, district-level authorities undertook to carry out land-use surveys and zoning activities in rural areas of Botswana. Some portions of the Kalahari Desert and adjacent areas were zoned as commercial ranches, which were to be leased out to individuals and small groups of cattle owners by district Land Boards.

The problem was that there were over 20,000 people already residing in these areas, the majority of whom were San. When the demographic data were presented to District Councils, Land Boards, and the government of Botswana by anthropologists and other survey team members, questions were raised over whether or not San should have their land rights recognized. One point made by government planners was that San did not have a fully developed concept of land tenure. In order to substantiate their position, they referred to discussions in the anthropological literature which questioned the concept of territoriality.

While there are differences of opinion among anthropologists as to the degree to which San defend their claims to land (see, for example, Lee 1965: 47, 137-48, 1979: 58-61, 117-19, 333ff.; Heinz 1972, 1979; Marshall 1976: 71-72; Hitchcock 1978: 238-60, 1980:23-24; Guenther 1981; Cashdan 1983, 1986; Wilmsen 1989a: 51-64, 1989b:158-94) there is no disagreement about whether or not San have a concept of land tenure and territoriality. In spite of the data on San land matters, the Litigation Consultant to the Attorney General's Chambers ruled in 1978 as follows:

As far as I have been able to ascertain, the Masarwa have always been true nomads, owing no allegiance to any chief or tribe, but have ranged far and wide for a very long time over very large areas of the Kalahari in which they have always had unlimited hunting rights, which they even enjoy today in spite of the Fauna Conservation Act. The right of the Masarwa to hunt is, of course, very important and valuable as hunting is their main source of sustenance... without much clearer information it is impossible to give a confirmed opinion about the Masarwa. Tentatively, however, it appears to me that the true nomad Masarwa can have no rights of any kind except rights to hunting (D. Will, 'Opinion in Re: Common-Law Leases of Tribal Land', 23 January, 1978, Ministry of Local Government and Lands file 2/1/1).

In other words, the government's main legal body had decided that the San lacked land rights. Similar statements were heard at the district level, both in Land Board and District Council meetings, and at the National District Development Conference.

In order to circumvent the problem of dispossession, anthropologists and administrators recommended that San and other rural people's rights to land be recognized (Hitchcock 1978; Childers 1976, 1981; Wily 1979, 1981). It was also suggested that land be reserved for hunting and gathering purposes (Hitchcock 1978: 412-31). As it worked out, some of the areas zoned as commercial ranches were de-zoned, and some other land was turned into what came to be known as 'communal service centers', including Mmaletswai and Lepasha in Central District and Tankana in Southern (Ngwaketse) District. In spite of these efforts and the promise in the government White Paper that special attention would be paid to the needs of 'those people who own only a few cattle or none at all' (Republic of Botswana 1975:6), relatively little land was earmarked specifically for San groups.

After several years of discussions and efforts to get land allocated to San by the Remote Area Development Program and District Land Boards, it was agreed that portions of the country should be zoned as Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), places in which people would be allowed to continue foraging if they so chose. By mid-1989, over 145,000 square kilometers in Botswana had been zoned as WMAs, over 28 per cent of the surface area of the country. Some commercial ranches were turned into communal areas where people could get access to social services as well as arable and grazing land.

The image of San as hunter-gatherers also led policy-makers and donor agencies to deny development assistance to these people because, as they put it, the projects would 'destroy their hunter-gatherer culture'. There was marked opposition, for example, to a proposed game ranch for !Xo San in the Kgalagadi District in the southwestern part of Botswana. An anthropologist of the United States Agency for International Development who reviewed the project identification document recommended against it because, as she put it, 'it would turn the hunters into herders, an adaptation for which they are psychologically and culturally unsuited' (Ministry of Local Government and Lands files). It might come as some surprise to her to learn that the majority of the Kalahari cattle herd—over 1.5 million head—is managed by San and has been so over a substantial period of time. In interviews conducted over the past 15 years by government development personnel and anthropologists, it has been found that most of the San households have members who have either worked as herders or possessed at least a few livestock of their own at some stage.

Another area where the image of the San as hunter-gatherers has had negative repercussions was in terms of drought relief assistance. In 1979, when a serious drought affected the southeastern portion of the Kalahari, anthropologist Helga Vierich attempted to convince the government of the seriousness of the situation

facing San and other remote area populations in the region. At first, little was done. When asked why no efforts were being made to help drought-afflicted San groups, the response was that hunter-gatherers did well in drought periods. One government planner went so far so to cite Marshall Sahlins' (1968, 1972) concept of 'the original affluent society' in his efforts to justify not assisting Kalahari foraging populations. After all, he said, Richard Lee did his fieldwork in the early 1960s, at the height of one of the worst droughts in the history of Botswana, and he found that people had to do relatively little work and were still well-nourished. Thus, in his opinion, there was no reason to provide drought relief assistance to remote area populations.

Fortunately, nutritionists and medical personnel agreed to accompany anthropologists and Remote Area Development Officers on their field trips to drought-affected areas. Assessments were done of weight for height and weight for age, and it was determined that a significant number of San and Bakgalagadi children were malnourished. Eventually, a drought relief feeding system was set up for the Kweneng and five other districts. It was this relief system which was to be so important at preventing starvation among rural populations in the drought of the early 1980s, when an estimated 90 per cent of the population in remote areas were receiving some sort of government assistance (Hitchcock, Ebert, and Morgan 1989).

It is not unlikely that there were other reasons for the lack of willingness to provide drought relief assistance to San besides the hunter-gatherer stereotype. Some cattle-owners stated openly that they did not want their laborers to have alternative sources of food. As one large-scale cattle-owner put it, 'If the government gives food to the Basarwa, they will desert my cattle posts and I will be left with nobody to care for my herds'. Another person said, 'Giving people food just because they are hungry is a pretty weak reason.' He went on to say, 'Instead, we should wait until the time just before the elections and give it to them then, saying that it came from the local district councillor'. Fortunately, these perspectives were uncommon. The majority of Botswana felt that the drought relief system instituted in the country was necessary in order to ensure that income losses and subsistence difficulties could be overcome.

An examination of change over time and across space in Kalahari animal and plant populations reveals that foraging strategies vary in the degree to which they are successful in maintaining San and other remote populations. Cycles of wet and dry years have different effects on faunal and floral resources. There is not a one-to-one correspondence between abundant rainfall and high productivity or between droughts and resource scarcity. While !Kung in the Dobe area of north-western Botswana may not have faced subsistence stress in the drought years of the early 1960s, they certainly did in the higher rainfall years of the 1970s. Wiessner (1977:xxx, 27, 154) reports that in 1973 the mongongo nut (*Ricinodendron rautanenii*) crop in the /ai/ai area was decimated by high intensity rain showers; the

result was that local people went hungry. One of us (Hitchcock) saw a similar case in the eastern Kalahari in 1977-78 when high rainfall resulted in substantial growth of grasses and other annual plants. The luxuriant plant growth reduced the numbers and densities of food species, especially melons, and people complained bitterly of hunger.

Not all of the implications of the hunter-gatherer image were negative. The fact that government planners and some anthropologists believed that foraging was a crucial aspect of the lifestyle of San, contributed to efforts to ensure that San maintained their rights to hunt. Under the *Fauna Conservation Proclamation* of 1961, hunter-gatherers were allowed to continue to obtain game as long as they used traditional methods (for example, spears, bows and arrows). In the 1970s, questions were raised concerning whether or not rural people should continue to be able to hunt without licenses. Anthropological data on hunting from Lee (1965, 1968, 1969), Silberbauer (1965, 1972, 1979), Tanaka (1969, 1976), Yellen (1974, 1977a, b), Marshall (1965, 1976), Crowell and Hitchcock (1978), and Wilmsen (1976a, b) were used to illustrate the degree to which San and other rural populations in Botswana subsisted on wild animal foods. This information was combined with that from wildlife biologists in the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (for example, Murray 1976, 1978) and a strong case was made for the need for a subsistence hunter's license. In 1979, a 'special license' was created for traditional foragers under the Unified Hunting Regulations (Government of Botswana 1979).

During the course of the twentieth century, the Botswana livestock industry became more and more commercialized. Freehold ranches were established in the Ghanzi District of western Botswana, along the Limpopo River in what is known as the Tuli Block, and in the southeastern part of the country (in the Gaborone and Lobatse Blocks). Large companies such as the Tati Company set up farms and ranches in the North East District, while the Colonial Development Corporation (CDC) established ranching operations in the Nata, Pandamatenga, and Molopo areas in the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1970s, large-scale donor-financed land and livestock projects were initiated, such as the World Bank's First and Second Livestock Development Projects and the United States Agency for International Development's Range and Livestock Management Project. These ranches and projects had a number of effects on local populations, ranging from an expansion of employment opportunities on the one hand to a reduction in foraging success rates on the other. In the case of the Ghanzi Farms, many San essentially became landless laborers who were dependent upon the Afrikaner and Botswana farm owners for their livelihood (Russell 1976; Russell and Russell 1979; Guenther 1976, 1979, 1986; Childers 1976; Barnard 1979, 1980; Wily 1979, 1982).

In many parts of the Kalahari, competition between foragers and agropastoralists was seen. Cattle eat many of the same plants as people. Vines of *morama* (*Tylosema esculenta*), for example, were browsed fairly frequently by livestock, thus reducing the numbers of nuts available to foragers and making the tubers more

difficult to discern. Heavy grazing pressure also reduced the numbers of melons (for example, *Citrullus naudinianus*) which were crucial sources of moisture for people in the dry season. In the area of water points, trampling by cattle reduced the plant cover, forcing people to walk farther in order to obtain wild foods. In general, the higher the livestock density, the lower the dependence upon full-time foraging on the part of local populations.

The Botswana government and various development agencies encouraged the process of commercialization of the livestock industry. Trek routes were established in rural areas so that cattle could be brought to market more easily. Livestock research activities and breeding programs were undertaken. Information was provided to cattle-owners in order to improve the quality of their herds and increase the productivity of their animals. One of the effects of this process was that the numbers of livestock increased overall. Borehole drilling technology was improved, and the numbers of water points in rural Botswana increased substantially in the 1950s and 1960s.

The commercialization of the livestock industry and direct effects on the well-being of local people who did not have cattle of their own. In some cases, San cattle post laborers were prevented from using the animals that they were overseeing for draft power purposes. The reasons given by cattle owners was that the oxen used to pull plows and wagons were more emaciated and they had whip scars, and as a consequence they fetched lower prices at the slaughterhouse. Another effect was that cattle-owners attempted to keep their herders (*badisa*) from milking their animals, ostensibly because they wanted the milk to go to the calves.

The expansion of the livestock industry was accompanied by an increase in livestock-related infrastructure, including roads, ranches, and trek routes. Under Tswana customary law, it was not possible to fence tribal land, but freehold farms were often fenced. San in the Ghanzi District pointed out that fences reduced the need for laborers to herd livestock, and they blamed the expansion in fencing for contributing to rising unemployment in the cattle industry in the 1960s and 1970s.

Large-scale fencing operations were initiated by the Botswana government in the 1950s in an effort to control livestock movements for disease prevention purposes. Some of these veterinary cordon fences, such as the east-west trending Kuke Fence that separated Ghanzi and Ngamiland Districts, cut across major game migration routes. It has been argued that the fences were a major factor in the deaths of large numbers of migratory herd animals, especially wildebeest and hartebeest (Owens and Owens 1980, 1981, 1984). San in the eastern Kalahari and the Central Kalahari Game Reserve claimed that the fences were at least partially responsible for their problems in finding sufficient animals during hunting expeditions. Tens of thousands of animals died in 1979-80 in the Lake Xau region of western Central District, for example, and people were hard-pressed to find antelopes in good enough condition to warrant dispatching them for food.

Heavy grazing pressure contributed to increased problems of overgrazing in

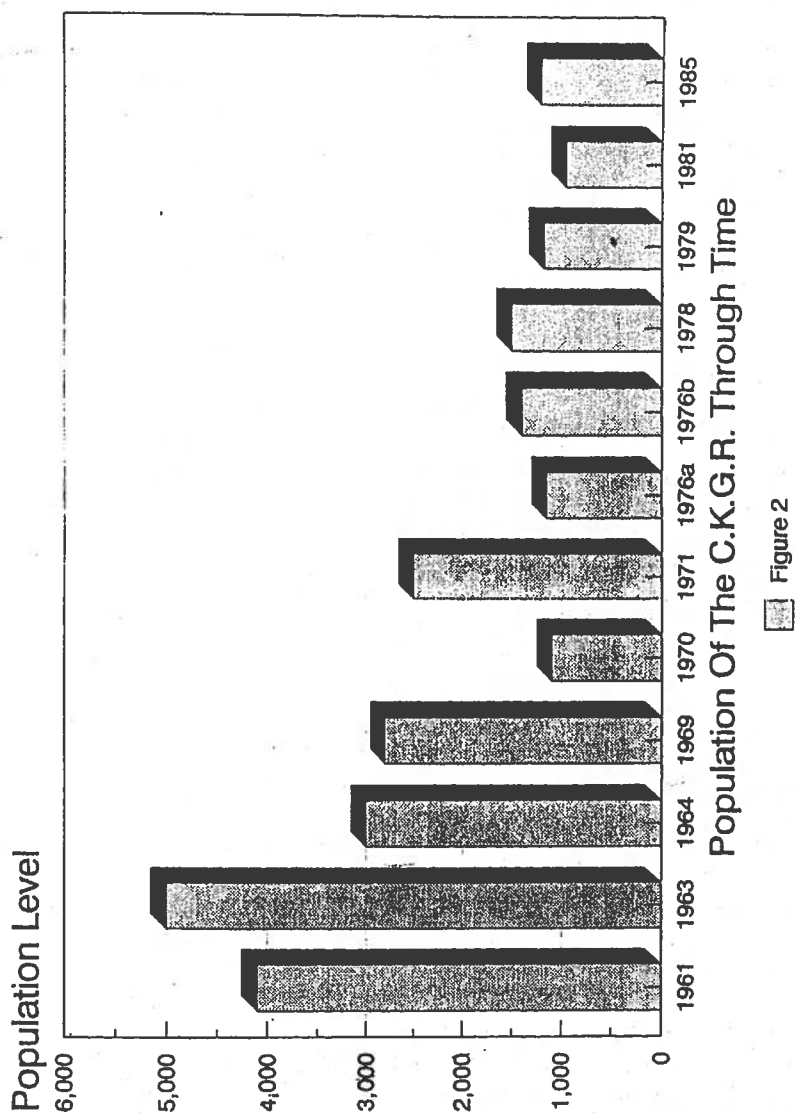
numerous areas. In the late 1960s and 1970s, calls were heard for changes in the ways in which grazing land was managed. Botswana government and development agency efforts were undertaken in order to promote better range management through extension programs. In a government-sponsored report on rural development published in 1972, it was recommended that the land tenure system be changed in the communal areas (Chambers and Feldman 1972). The idea was that providing people with private rights over blocks of land would give them the incentive to manage the grazing properly. It was this approach upon which the Tribal Grazing Land Policy was based (Republic of Botswana 1975). As the numbers of cattle posts and ranches increased in the Kalahari, mobility patterns changed. Many of the movements of San households in the 1970s were related directly or indirectly to pastoralism. In the Nata River region of northeastern Botswana, for example, 67 per cent of the households (N-55) had moved to their present locations because of livestock-related employment (Hitchcock 1982a: 321). By the early to mid-1980s, however, it was found that a number of the leasehold ranches had been overgrazed, and some of them had been abandoned completely. The few San who had been able to find work on the new ranches were thrown back on their own devices.

San and other remote area populations had to turn to alternative ways of making a living, something that was not as easy as it had been in the past. Not only were many of them living in degraded habitats, but they were also having to contend with greater numbers of people and a serious drought situation. Some people resorted to scavenging meat and bones of dead animals. Others migrated out of the Kalahari, seeking work in towns or, in some cases, in the mines of Botswana and South Africa. Still others turned to stock theft or illegal hunting and were jailed for their activities. Withdrawal and loss of male labor left many families incapable of carrying in full-time foraging or agriculture.

In a number of instances, land-use patterns changed, with people moving out of their traditional foraging areas. In the Central Kalahari region, for example, population dropped from approximately 5,000 in the early 1960s to less than 1,000 in the mid-1980s (see Figure 2). Part of the reason for this decline was that new boreholes were being drilled on the peripheries of the reserve, and small villages were springing up. Some people moved to these places in order to obtain work, while others wanted to be close to their relatives. San communities on the peripheries of such towns as Serowe, Letlhakane, and Salajwe expanded, at least temporarily.

The San as Herders

It was in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, conceived originally by the Bushman Survey Officer of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, George Silberbauer, in the early 1960s, where the image of San as herders was to have deleterious effects. Because of the fact that there were too few resources to sustain full-time foraging in the



Central Kalahari, most households there had diversified economic systems (Murray 1976; Sheller 1977; English *et al.* 1980; Government of Botswana 1985; Hitchcock 1988a, Appendix 4). Some households purchased small herds of goats and donkeys, and a few of them obtained horses which were used primarily for transport and hunting purposes. Conservation-oriented researchers working in the Central Kalahari argued strenuously that because the San there were no longer 'traditional' (i.e., because they kept livestock and occasionally hunted with guns), they should be removed from the game reserve and relocated in settlements on the peripheries.

The status of the Central Kalahari as a game reserve under the *Fauna Conservation Proclamation* of 1961 has meant that hunting was not allowed in the region, except for those people who were dependent upon foraging for a living. To a certain extent, hunting strategies have changed somewhat in the CKGR, particularly with the introduction of horses and steel traps. Analysis of the limited information on hunting with the aid of modern weapons suggests that almost all of the people who engage in gun hunting are from outside of the reserve. The Department of Wildlife and National Parks has attempted to control poaching in the reserve, but it has had relatively little success, in part because of manpower and transport constraints.

One of the arguments used for justifying the removal of people from the reserve was that 'most of them had become pastoralists'. An examination of data on the numbers of domestic animals possessed by G/wi, G//ana, Kua, and Bakgalagadi families in the reserve, however, contradicts this assumption. There were very few households in the reserve which had enough animals to be considered self-sufficient. Those people who did have large herds owned small stock, mainly goats. Data on cattle ownership reveal that only a tiny number of reserve residents own cattle, and none of these people kept their livestock inside the reserve. Parenthetically, it might be noted that some individuals who did not favor the presence of livestock in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, which had been prohibited since 1963 under the *CKGR (Control of Entry) Regulations*, took it upon themselves to ensure that the numbers of domestic animals were controlled, sometimes through resorting to killing goats and dogs belonging to local residents. Under these conditions it is not surprising that people in the Central Kalahari were reluctant to discuss their livestock holdings with government development personnel and researchers.

By the mid-1980s, substantial changes had occurred in group structure and settlement patterns. People in the CKGR had aggregated into a relatively small number of settlements which they occupied either year-round or for most of the year. This trend was seen particularly in the !Xade area, where the numbers of people grew from 200 in the early 1960s to over 1,000 in 1988 (see Figure 3). One of the impacts of this demographic growth process was an expansion in the amount of area utilized for food, a trend associated with sedentism in these areas. Another impact was the degradation of the local environment in the !Xade area as a result

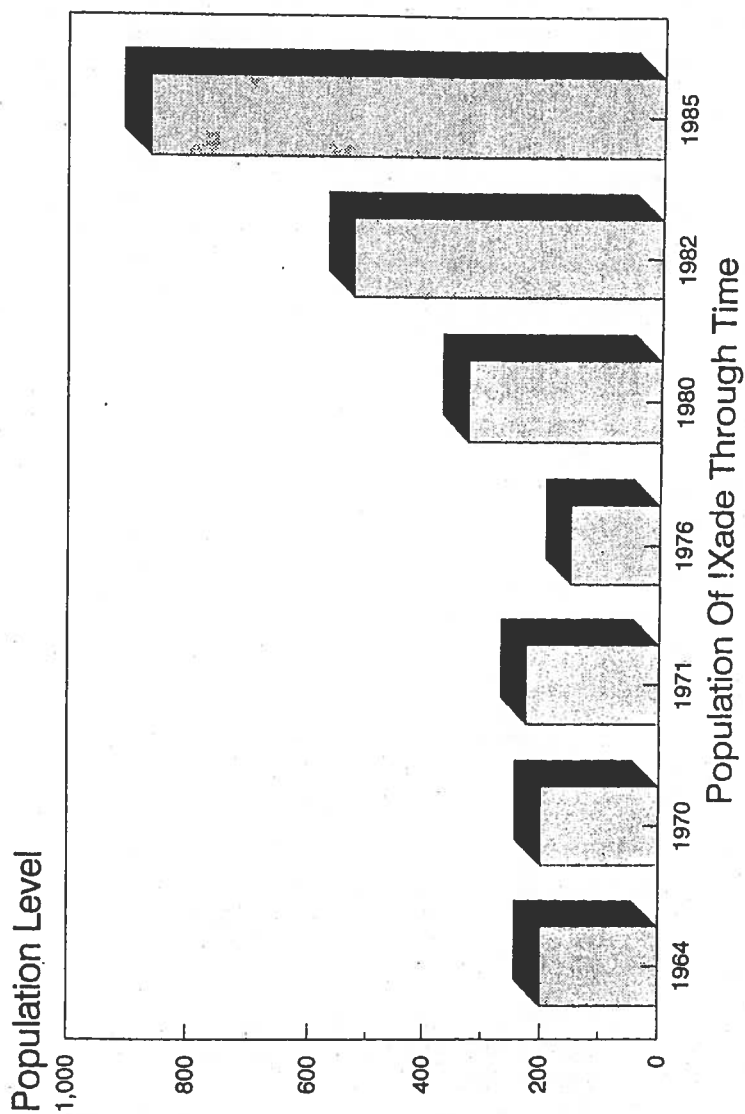


Figure 3

of the larger numbers of people and domestic animals in the area.

In some cases, the overexploitation of resources in the vicinity of settlements contributed to an increase in nutritional stress among some of the residents of the CKGR, especially children. Data provided to the CKGR Fact Finding Mission in October, 1985 by the staff nurse at !Xade Health Post showed that growth failure among children under five years of age was much greater at !Xade than it was at other settlements in the region (Ngaire Reid, letter to the CKGR Commission, 10 October 1985). In order to counteract these problems, the government of Botswana initiated a drought relief feeding program in the CKGR. Local people were provided with maize meal, beans, and vegetable oil. In addition, the program included a cash-for-work component in which people did tasks such as road clearing in exchange for wages of approximately two and a half Pula (about U.S. \$1.50) per day.

The Remote Area Development Program and the Ghanzi District Council have provided development assistance to the people of !Xade, and, to a lesser extent, other areas in the reserve, since the mid-1970s. A borehole, school, health post, staff housing, and other facilities were established at !Xade under the auspices of the Ghanzi District Council. Community Service Scheme (*Tirelo Sechaba*) participants were posted to !Xade, along with a number of other extension personnel (for example, Remote Area Development Assistants, health workers). Non-formal education activities have been undertaken, and the *kgotla* committee there is relatively active.

In the 1980s, a number of different recommendations were made concerning the future use of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. In 1981, Owens and Owens recommended the removal of the resident human population and the creation of a national park, tourist areas, and a research area (Owens and Owens 1981 : 20-25). The government-appointed CKGR Commission recommended in 1985 that portions of the reserve be de-gazetted and turned into a Wildlife Management Area where people would be allowed to continue to reside and utilize local resources. It was also recommended that 'communal cells' be created in those areas, such as !Xade, where there were significant population concentrations. (Government of Botswana 1985: vi, 33ff.). These recommendations were rejected by the ministry that oversees parks and reserves in Botswana (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 1986). Instead, it was stipulated that the residents of the reserve be encouraged to move to areas outside the boundaries of the CKGR where they would be provided with facilities. In a speech to the Botswana Parliament on 1 December 1986, the Minister of Commerce and Industry stated that the reserve would lose its integrity if people were allowed to continue to reside there, and he went on to say that the government had a mandate to make decisions in the national interest (*Botswana Daily News*, 3 December 1986).

Several justifications were given by government officials to CKGR residents as to why the resettlement was necessary. First of all, they noted that the move would

help ensure conservation of the resource base in the reserve. Second, they argued that it would enhance the tourism potential of the region. A third reason given by government officials for removal of local populations was that it would enable them to have direct access to development assistance.

The government's decision to resettle people out of the reserve met with opposition both at the national and local levels. One Member of Parliament threatened to resign his seat if the government went ahead with the eviction of people from the reserve. He pointed out in Parliament that the decision was against the wishes of the Ghanzi District Council which oversees the CKGR and that it was also opposed by the people themselves. Some San and Bakgalagadi residents of the reserve voiced their opposition to the idea of resettlement during a series of *kgotla* meetings held by two government ministers in the reserve in May-June 1988. The period from 1988 leading up to the elections in October 1989 in Botswana saw people of remote areas becoming increasingly vocal in demanding social justice, and recognition of their rights in addition to opposing the idea of being resettled away from their home areas.

It has been suggested that a possible underlying reason for the decision to remove people from the reserve was to respond to the interests of environmentalists who were pressurising the European Economic Community, the United States Congress, and donor agencies to withdraw financial support from Botswana unless greater efforts were made to conserve wildlife and other natural resources. A second suggestion has been that the mining companies operating in the reserve wish to have complete access to the area for mineral exploitation purposes, and that it would be easier to have local people out of the way in order for them to carry out their activities. A third suggestion is that some individuals in Botswana feel it important to 'villagize' remote area dwellers and thus bring them into the mainstream of life in the country. A few people have postulated that large-scale livestock owners would like to see substantial portions of the reserve degazetted. These places would then be turned into communal areas where people could get drilling rights and establish new cattle posts. Finally, there are those organizations and individuals that believe strongly that it would be in the best interests of conservation and development if the reserve was turned into a full-fledged game reserve.

Whatever the reasons behind the decision to resettle people outside the CKGR, attention must be paid to the potential impacts of population relocation. The major problem with the relocation recommendation—besides the fact that it denies basic socio-economic rights to local people—is that there is insufficient land for them to be resettled. Assessment of the areas surrounding the reserve reveal that there are few, if any, places that are unclaimed by other groups or individuals. It is not unlikely that conflicts could erupt over questions of land rights. There is a real danger that the removal of people from their ancestral lands could serve to erode their socio-economic status.

If it does transpire that the government goes ahead with the resettlement plans,

special efforts will have to be made by the district Land Boards to adjudicate land claims prior to any movements of people. A compensation package will have to be worked out in detail, as well. If the experiences with the Tribal Grazing Land Policy ranches are any indication, there is a strong possibility that the amounts of land set aside for CKGR groups will be insufficient to sustain them over the long term. The government and the District Councils will also have to see to it that economic assistance is provided to people who are relocated so that they are able to be self-sufficient in the new areas.

The Government of Botswana was far from unaware of the problems faced by San. While some of the early efforts to assist them were largely *ad hoc* in nature (Hermans 1977), more recent activities concentrated on the development of alternative economic opportunities (Wily 1979, 1981, 1982; Hitchcock 1988a). A key concern of what came to be known as the Remote Area Development Program (originally, the Bushmen Development Program) in Botswana was the establishment of land and water rights for Basarwa and other rural people. This effort achieved the most significant results in Ghanzi District in western Botswana (Wily 1982). In that district, three 'land and water schemes' were established, two at West and East Hanahai and another one in the Groot Laagte area north of the Ghanzi Farms. At these places, assistance is provided to local people in agriculture, livestock production, rural industries, education, health, and community development. It is too early to judge the degree of success of these schemes in terms of meeting the land and other needs of local people.

Evidence from the Namibian San settlement at Tsum!kwe, established in 1960, indicates the kinds of problems one might expect to occur in resettlement locations. At Tsum!kwe San have been found to suffer from high levels of malnutrition (Marshall and Ritchie 1984). Morbidity and mortality rates were high, so much so that the Ju/wasi there called Tsum!kwe 'the place of death'. Foraging resources were almost totally depleted in the immediate vicinity of the settlement. Tensions were high, and fighters were almost a daily occurrence. People there complained that they had lost all of their self-respect and had nothing to live for. Similar remarks were made by San living in the Ghanzi township area in Botswana.

The arguments of conservationists have also had negative effects on Namibian San subsistence systems. In 1984 plans were made to establish a nature reserve in eastern Bushmanland (Marshall 1984; Ritchie 1984; Gordon 1984; Volkman 1986). Local Ju/wasi would be allowed to stay in the area only if they got rid of their stock and gave up their gardening activities. San clad in skins were supposed to serve as guides for tourists, showing them how they hunted and gathered in the 'traditional manner'. John Marshall and others were able to generate enough publicity about this plan to have it shelved in 1987. Efforts to promote expansion of game populations and tourism continued in the eastern Bushmanland area nevertheless.

Because of conditions at Tsum!kwe, combined with a desire on the part of

Ju/wasi to be self-sufficient, a number of groups of San moved out of the settlement and established themselves in their traditional territories (*n!ores*). By mid-1989 there were 15 categories of San who had set up communities which were based upon a mixed economic system that combined foraging, livestock production, agriculture, and income-generating activities (Marshall 1989). They had small herds of their own—a total of about 400 head of cattle. They also have small gardens which they watered from boreholes drilled in their areas.

The Ju/wasi communities in eastern Bushmanland face a number of severe constraints which affect livestock production. One of the most important problems is the presence of predators. There are over 400 lions in the area. Some San communities have lost as many as half a dozen head of cattle to lions in a single night. Under existing wildlife legislation in Namibia, San are not allowed to use guns to protect their herds. The irony in this situation is that South African, European, American, and Japanese recreational hunters *are* allowed to use guns to kill lions. San complain bitterly about this issue, saying, 'Lions are the dogs of Western conservation'.

A similar problem has arisen with elephants. The Namibian Department of Nature Conservation has had boreholes drilled in eastern Bushmanland in order to attract game, which, in turn, they hope will lead to an increase in the number of tourists visiting the area. San have had to take elaborate steps in order to protect their own water installations from elephants, including placing large rocks around the boreholes and stringing costly electric fences around the facilities. Now that the Conference on Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) has imposed a ban on the ivory trade, San and other people could be prevented from protecting their assets. This international agreement could also have negative effects on the subsistence and incomes of families who have members who work as assistants in safari operations or as rural artisans (for example, ivory carvers). It is clear, therefore, that conservation decisions being made in the United States, Europe, Japan, and other African countries have significant effects on Kalahari San.

The San as Fighters

The San have been caught up in a number of events that have had important effects on their well-being. The issue which has received the most attention in the past decade has been their involvement in the military struggle between the forces of apartheid and liberation in southern Africa (Lee 1979: 428-31; 1984: 147-49; 1985: 38-41; 1986: 92-96; Lee and Hurlich 1982; Kolata 1981; Poos 1981; Gordon 1984: 18-23; van der Post and Taylor 1984: 110-14; Guenther 1986: 199-200, 202-204; Biesele *et al.* 1989: 144-46). The perception of San as fierce fighters could potentially have negative implications for their well-being in the 1990s and beyond. The knowledge that some San had joined the South African military has led politicians to question their status. In Botswana, for example, it was recommended

that anyone serving in a foreign military should lose his or her citizenship, and a few Members of Parliament suggested that these people should be tried for treason privately.

In Namibia the situation is even more complex. There are approximately 2,200 San in the army, where they receive high wages, rations, and other forms of assistance (Marshall 1989:38, Table 4). A total of 10,400 people are dependents of the San soldiers, most of them living next to military bases such as Camp Omega in the Western Caprivi, where they get water, food, housing, clothing, and schooling for their children (Marshall 1989:38).

The problem now is that since the South West Africa Territorial Force (SWATF) units are being disbanded as part of a negotiated international agreement, San ex-soldiers and their dependents will be left to fend for themselves. The new Namibian government is faced with the prospect of having literally thousands of people with no sources of subsistence and nowhere to go. It is not unlikely that there will be an influx of demilitarized groups into the communal lands in Namibia, a process which will place additional stress on resources. The Ju/wasi in eastern Bushmanland have voiced their concern over the possibility that their land could be ceded over to other groups. Without their land rights being protected constitutionally, the Ju/wasi remain potentially vulnerable to dispossession. Namibian San are also worried that their herds and gardens will be plundered by roving bands of ex-soldiers.

The incorrect stereotype of San as uniformly supportive of the struggle against liberation forces could well have negative effects on their chances for being treated equitably in post-independence Namibia. It is ironic, however, that the publicity given to San in the South African military by the news media has resulted in many Namibians and others becoming more aware of the plight of these people. In the past few months, numerous people in Namibia have asked, 'What do we do with the Bushmen when the army leaves?' Tsamko, the chairman of the Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative, suggests that development assistance be provided to San communities so that they can become independent, self-sufficient farmers, part-time foragers, and entrepreneurs.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is important to point out that significant efforts are being made to promote socio-economic development and human rights among the San and other peoples in southern Africa. Non-government organizations such as the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation are working hard to assist San in obtaining access to land, water, livestock, and other kinds of resources. A large-scale Accelerated Remote Area Development Program (ARADP) has been initiated in Botswana, with substantial funding from the government and the Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD). Grassroots, sustainable, participatory develop-

ment approaches are being attempted, and feedback indicates that people are appreciative of the fact that they are able to take part in decision-making and planning processes. It is only through explicit recognition of the realities of the situations that local people face that relevant, effective development policies can be designed and implemented.

As one San woman put it, 'We do not want to take our clothes off and dance for photographers anymore. We want the world to know that we are like other people, struggling to make a living and trying to make sure that our children have a bright future.'

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