

國際關係研究

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The Korean Journal of International Studies

Publisher & Editor: Chong-Ki Choi

An English-language quarterly founded in 1970, the *Journal* includes articles by both Korean and overseas specialists, review articles and source materials.

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Bureaucratic Domination of Hunter-Gatherer Societies: A Study of the San in Botswana

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ABSTRACT

Social science analysis of hunter-gatherer societies has highlighted their economic and cultural subordination to neighbouring peoples. This article shows that, at least in the case of the San in Botswana, state bureaucratic domination is becoming the determining factor in social change. The authors provide evidence of bureaucratic domination with respect to settlement of the San, the establishment of headmanship, extension of social services and environmental legislation. In this new environment, hunter-gatherer self-determination requires the creation of effective political organizations to counter the bureaucratic state. Some San groups in Botswana are already reacting to the expanding presence of the state by dramatically increasing their involvement in various aspects of Botswana's electoral politics. While the outcome of the San political challenge to the state is still in doubt, the authors conclude that San settlement is a precondition for political change in spite of the serious cultural sacrifice involved.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, hunter-gatherer peoples in various parts of the world have begun to change their life styles, raise their standards of living, promote conservation and seek ways to determine their own futures (Clay, 1984; Brosted et al., 1985; Hitchcock, 1985a; Bodley, 1990: 152-78; Burger, 1990: 136-55). Analysts examining this process have tended to overlook two critical social developments: (1) that external domination of hunter-gatherer societies is increasingly structured by the bureaucratic state rather than the market, and (2) that hunter-gatherer survival in this new context depends on establishing political organizations to confront the modern state.

Hunter-gatherer populations in Africa have long endured harsh

Development and Change (SAGE, London, Newbury Park and New Delhi), Vol. 24 (1993), 305-338.

treatment from more powerful adjoining societies. These neighbours have at various times forced foragers to pay tribute, assume slave status and work on farms for minimal wages. Many African foragers have had their rights to hunt taken away or severely limited (Woodburn, 1968: 45; Newman, 1970: 68; Turnbull, 1986: 349).

This domination of foragers and former foragers has had both economic and cultural bases. In economic terms, they have been dispossessed of their lands and homes, coerced into selling the products of their labour for almost nothing and paid minuscule wages for long hours of work. Ultimately, hunter-gatherers have faced a choice of either migrating to a more favourable territory or entering into formal subordinate economic relationships with those who have taken their resources.

Economic exploitation is aggravated by the attitude of neighbouring African and European groups, who have almost always treated foragers as culturally subordinate ethnic groups. They perceive hunter-gatherers stereotypically as uncivilized, unproductive and naïve. Until recently, political authorities have often not even accepted that foragers had a right to organize politically or to otherwise speak for their interests. In many cases, foragers were barely treated as human beings, let alone subjects. Whether this cultural discrimination is economically based is open to debate. In any case, cultural discrimination over time obtains a life of its own which is not affected by improvement in the economic condition of the oppressed groups (Horowitz, 1985: 105–35).

As bureaucratic organization has expanded in contemporary African societies, foragers have become subject to the administrative state with its scientific and efficiency concerns (Waldo, 1984). Public officials, human rights activists and anthropologists debate and plan the future of these people whom they frequently perceive as poor and helpless. The result has been massive social transformations engineered from above, in spite of the claims that foragers are participating in decision-making. Various governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) settle, train and otherwise organize the new lives of former forager populations. Hunter-gatherers have no choice but to cope with the reality of the state, whether it be for health care, education, commerce, housing or even hunting and gathering. They must have the approvals of this new system in the form of permits, certificates, subsidies, land titles and regulatory interpretations in order to conduct their lives. Economic

domination — by farmers, employers or traders — is eclipsed by bureaucratic domination in this new social context.

Academic analysts have tended to neglect bureaucratic domination, assuming that it supports economic exploitation or serves the cause of emancipation. These analysts thus almost always recommend that the state's control of forager society be extended through various education and development programmes. Our contention is that long-term forager self-determination, at least in Botswana, is much more a matter of overcoming bureaucratic domination and must involve organizing for political action. We will make this argument by examining the plight of the San in Botswana.¹ The Republic of Botswana in southern Africa is one country where government policy has been committed, at least on paper, to encouraging self-determination for its main forager population, the San (more popularly known in English as the 'Bushmen' and in Setswana, the language of the Batswana, as the 'Basarwa'). The critical question is: what conditions must be met for this policy to succeed so that the San will have some control over their own future social, economic and political evolution? We contend that two conditions are minimally necessary. First, the San must develop an institutionalized and cohesive partisan political structure in their communities. Second, they must use this structure to manipulate bureaucratic decision-making to realize their interests. While there has been some progress along these lines in Botswana, the long-term outlook is at best uncertain.

The San of southern Africa are the second largest former forager group in Africa, the largest being the Pygmies of central Africa. There are approximately 95,000 San in six southern African countries. The Republic of Botswana with approximately 45,000 San has the largest concentration of San of the various countries (see Table 1 for a breakdown of the various groups in Botswana, and Figure 1 for the locations of those investigated most intensively). However, the San make up less than 4 per cent of the total population of Botswana.

This analysis begins with a brief overview of the San's place in precolonial Botswana society and a sketch of their changing socio-economic existence during this century. We then turn to the changing character of Tswana domination of the San in this context, tracing the move from economic and cultural subordination to contemporary bureaucratic rule. The last section focuses on recent San attempts to develop their own political organization.

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

Group name(s)	Location	Population size
!Kung (Zu/wasi)	N.W. Kalahari	3175
//Au//ei (Auen)	W. and N.W. Kalahari	2100
Nharo and other Ghanzi groups	W. Kalahari	8200
G/wi, G//ana	Central Kalahari	3900
!Xo	S.W. Kalahari	3450
S. Kua, Tshasi, E. ≠'Hua	S.E. Kalahari	2900
N. Kua	E. Kalahari	3600
Tyua (/Taise, Ganade, Danisan)	N.E. Kalahari	6700
Hiechware, Tati, Tuli Block, and Motloutse groups	E. Botswana	3600
River Basarwa (Bugakwe, /Tannekwe, Deti, etc.)	Okavango Delta, Botletle River	2850
Kwengo	N. Botswana	1025
Balala (Ngwaketse groups)	S. Kalahari	1670
Balala (Kgalagadi District groups)	S.W. Kalahari	700
Urban groups (e.g. Gaborone, Mochudi Maun, Molepolole, Serowe)	S. E. Botswana	1250
TOTAL		45,120

Source: Hitchcock (1988: 39, Table 3.4). The figures have been recalculated to account for population growth.

THE PRECOLONIAL POLITICAL EXISTENCE OF SAN IN BOTSWANA

As Wilmsen (1989) has demonstrated, the San have been in regular contact with neighbouring Bantu-speaking agropastoral populations for 2000 years. At first, population densities were relatively low, and interaction between the San and other groups appears to have been fleeting, consisting largely of trade. Later, as the Bantu numbers expanded in the territory which is now Botswana, the Tswana groups gradually incorporated many San into their social structures, where the San performed tasks such as hunting, guiding expeditions and message-carrying (Schapera, 1930: 233-4; 1938: 30-1, 250-3; 1943: 30; 1953: 37; 1970: 88-9; Silberbauer and Kuper, 1966; Tlou, 1977; Gadibolae, 1985; Hitchcock, 1987: 235-6; Wilmsen, 1989: 284-7).

Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, a series of Tswana states emerged in what is now Botswana and contiguous

Figure 1. *Most Studied San Locations*

Source: Hitchcock's personal data, based on map by the National Museum and Art Gallery, Gaborone, Botswana.

parts of South Africa (Parsons, 1973, 1977, 1982; Tlou, 1977, 1985). These states expanded by incorporating other non-Tswana peoples besides the San. Most of these groups (e.g. Bayei, Bakgalagadi and Bakalaka) received some or all of the civil and political rights of Tswana peoples. Among other things, they were likely to be allowed to retain their own headman and to be protected by many Tswana laws. On the other hand, the San who were incorporated in Tswana society had little personal freedom or community voice. Schapera (1970: 250-3) points out that San were not allowed to secure land from the chief. If San belonged to a Tswana family in a serf type of condition, they could not transfer their allegiance to another person (Schapera, 1938: 251-2; 1970: 89). Some San were passed

down from one generation to the next (Schapera, 1938: 31, 252). Male San could not marry Tswana females.² Some San were forcibly taken from their homes and required to work for Tswana.

The San were more than just an economic and social underclass: they were excluded from participation in Tswana political life. They could not attend public assemblies (MacKenzie, 1871: 128-55; Schapera, 1938: 252; 1953: 36-7; 1970: 89); they did not have a voice in court, so they had nowhere to turn with their grievances. Chapman (1971: 145-6) notes that San were sometimes murdered and their children carried off into captivity without any concern being expressed by political authorities. In effect, the Tswana approach to governance of the San was to strip them of all political rights, except for those granted by the Tswana family head who possessed them.

THE CHANGING SOCIO-ECONOMIC EXISTENCE OF THE SAN

Most anthropologists have characterized the economic existence of those San who were not part of Tswana households during the first half of this century as hunter-gatherers (Schapera, 1930; Lee, 1979; Marshall, 1976; Silberbauer, 1965, 1981; Tanaka, 1980; cf. Wilmsen, 1983). They were said to possess many of the characteristics of foragers (Lee and DeVore, 1968: 4-7): subsistence based upon exploitation of wild plant and animal foods; small social units generally made up of aggregates of families linked through kinship, marital, economic and friendship ties; division of labour along lines of age and sex; decision-making on the basis of consensus; and leaders with very little independent authority.

Some have raised questions about the extent to which the San have depended upon wild foods as opposed to domestic products (Schrire, 1980; Hitchcock and Ebert, 1984; Wilmsen, 1989). Whatever the relative proportions of foraging and domestic production in the past, the last few decades have witnessed a substantial move among the San away from foraging to domestic food production and wage earning. In the drought period of the early to mid-1980s, most San subsisted on maize meal, oil and powdered milk which they obtained from government drought relief programmes. Estimates of the numbers of San dependent upon government food and cash-for-work projects have run as high as 80-90

per cent (Gulbrandsen et al., 1986; Hitchcock, 1988; Hitchcock et al., 1989).

This new economic existence is but a part of a larger transformation which is taking place in the life of the San as they come to reside in permanent settlements. In the process, social forces unleashed by Botswana's rapid economic growth (an average of 10 per cent per year in real terms over the last twenty years) are engulfing the San in many ways and sweeping them into the country's modern social structures. The question is: what are the prospects for the San to determine their own future during this transformation? To answer this question, we must first consider the character and extent to which non-San dominate the social existence of the San. In the following sections we will consider three aspects of this domination: economic, ethnic and bureaucratic. Our argument will be that the latter is becoming increasingly critical to San survival and emancipation.

ECONOMIC DOMINATION

From the turn of the century, reform-minded Batswana with British support began pressing for better treatment of San. Khama III, the chief of the largest Tswana tribe, directed that San workers be provided with cattle as payment for their labour (Schapera, 1970: 89; Parsons, 1973: 35; 1982: 19). In 1911 Khama abolished the payment of tribute by San clients (Schapera, 1970: 89). Chiefs of some other Tswana tribes subsequently made similar rulings (Schapera, 1970: 90). Whether or not these reforms were effective is open to question. There was little evidence of economic emancipation at the time. Parsons, for example, observes that 'while Khama was the model master, his reforms of Sarwa status and his control of other Ngwato masters were incomplete in execution' (Parsons, 1973: 35). Even to this day, in the more remote parts of the country, some San still refer to themselves as being 'owned' by a cattle post proprietor.³

Over the last two centuries the San have been entering the labour market. This has made only marginal changes in the San's economic existence. As Peters (1983: 112) notes, water is the crucial factor determining economic power in twentieth-century rural Botswana. Under customary law, open surface water is free to be used by anyone who wishes to do so. Where water is obtained through the

expenditure of capital or labour, as in the case of drilling a borehole or digging a well, those making the investment may reserve the water for personal use. As this century has proceeded, borehole drilling technology has steadily improved, allowing penetration to greater depths. Tswana cattle owners have taken advantage of these improvements to move further out on the *sandveld* to find water for their herds. The result is that much territory on which San have long foraged has become Tswana grazing land.

In this context, most San had little alternative but to either migrate to the towns or mines of South Africa, or become employees of the expanding cattle post economy. At the cattle post, they maintained the pumps and herded the cattle in exchange for the right to establish residence and to obtain water and some milk. In most cases San employees were joined by numerous relatives and friends who could not find work elsewhere. For Tswana cattle owners such settlements (sometimes numbering over a hundred people) amounted to an undesirably high price for finding permanent help. The changes in water technology thus facilitated the process of restructuring social relations among San and Tswana (Hitchcock, 1978, 1980, 1985b; Peters, 1983, 1984). The San were tied to their Tswana employers by the fact that they had no alternative employment or residence rather than by a feudal relationship. In addition, since foraging had become a less viable means of existence, more San had to submit to Tswana economic control.

In the last two decades a good number of cattle post owners have begun to pay wages to their San employees. These wages are very low, ranging from P10 to P60 per month, with most in the P20–40 range.⁴ The cattle owners feel such low wages are justified by the fact that they give their employees free land for housing and cultivation as well as 'gifts' in kind such as a cow or food (food sometimes obtained by the owners from government drought relief programmes). When their employees also have relatives and friends living at the cattle post, the owners believe they have provided more than adequate compensation for their labour.

The government has refused to pass any law which would establish minimum wages for herding or other forms of agricultural labour.⁵ There is no question that the San's economic existence in this context is perilous. Almost all other groups in Botswana have enjoyed some increase in real income levels, however slight, as the GNP has steadily grown. For the San, while their average wages on the cattle post have risen from P5 per month in the mid-1970s to

around P25 in 1991,⁶ this income is still grossly below the average monthly rural household cash income, which stood at P104.55 in 1985 (Central Statistics Office, 1988). Most San desire an alternative economic existence. Some have gone to the mines, others have found urban employment and many are sending their children to school so that they at least may have greater career opportunities. For their part, the Tswana cattle owners would like to rid their cattle posts of those San who are not employed, which is usually the majority of the residents. The owners have little interest in transforming San society as such. Their view tends to be that government must take responsibility for educating and finding permanent settlements for the San. Many cattle owners thus support the idea of government providing schools, settlements and social welfare for the San.

CULTURAL DOMINATION

As a cultural group, the San occupy the lowest possible status position in modern Tswana society, significantly below all other non-Tswana groups. At the beginning of this century they were in many cases still serfs, which was not true of the other non-Tswanas by that time. The colonial government's main policy preoccupation in terms of the San was to free them from this bondage — a difficult objective, which seems to have been accomplished for the most part by the end of the 1950s. Even then the San's political standing was not altered. For instance, Adam Kuper (1970) undertook the fieldwork for his classic study of the politics of a Kgalagadi village just as independence was approaching. He makes almost no mention of San participating in any governance activities, even though there were many San living in the village and Kuper was trying to establish that the politics of the village were in some respects democratic.⁷

The social status of the San remains to the present little better than that of a serf. It was only in the mid-1970s that the government began to insist in official documents that the San be called *Basarwa*, a term which means they are of equal status with other Tswana groups, rather than *Masarwa*, which has the disparaging quality of 'Nigger' in American English or 'Kaffir' in the South African lexicon.⁸ Many older people, including elected politicians and chiefs, still use the term *Masarwa* today in public meetings.

The manifestations of the San's low status in contemporary Botswana can be seen in many ways. For most Batswana the idea of intermarriage with a San person is inconceivable. Many Tswana community gatherings will not allow San to speak up in their discussions.⁹ It is not unusual for politicians and civil servants to comment in public that development programmes for the San are a waste of time because the San are 'uncivilized'. From the politicians' perspective, this means that the San know only a nomadic life of hunting and gathering and are not able to work with 'modern' ideas and technology. Among Tswana cattle holders there is a pervasive concern that the San are a shiftless lot who steal and kill cattle.

Some Tswana intellectuals hold a more progressive view, believing that San ought to be given equal opportunity to become a part of Tswana towns where they can take advantage of the market and an increasing array of government services — although even this group insists that the San should not expect to become modernized in the remote areas where they have traditionally lived, because of the high costs involved. Only a small group of Tswana analysts believe that any kind of affirmative action is needed for the San in the remote areas. Some in this group, however, believe that the main objective of these programmes is to 'civilize' the San.

Those Batswana who realize that prejudice exists and is wrong are still most hesitant to speak up when San are abused in public:¹⁰ Tswana society has not yet reached the point where it is considered acceptable, even in educated company, to condemn public expression of prejudice toward the San. By contrast, this is not the case for Bantu groups such as the Kalanga and the Bayei.

Outside consultants are well aware of the extreme degree of Tswana prejudice toward the San. While they talk generally in their reports about the discrimination against the San, they provide almost no concrete evidence of the depth of humiliation the San suffer, let alone any analysis of the pervasiveness of its effect, such as how it is reflected in San self-perceptions, the labour market and policy-making (see for example, Kann et al., 1990: 93–4, 97–8). This is because such discussion might cause angry reactions from government officials and undermine the chances of programme proposals.

Even the more radical Batswana political activists and radical journals (such as *Clarion Call*) largely fail to recognize the San as a group which has suffered more discrimination than others in

Botswana. They view international cultural rights groups as misguided trouble-makers who degrade Tswana society by preventing the modernization of one of its backward groups, or even worse as seeking special privileges for a 'tribal' group. They see the San as just one among a number of economically disadvantaged peoples. As a result, the cultural rights groups from North America and Europe receive almost no support within Botswana from Tswana who are most concerned with social justice issues.

In sum, while the San are being forced further into Tswana society, Batswana are refusing to recognize the extent of their prejudice against the San or to deal with the ways and means by which this prejudice or, more importantly, its effects can be reduced. The predominant Tswana assumption is that San will assimilate Tswana culture as they become more educated; they will change their diet, build modern houses, take part in modern professions and accept the authority of headmen and chiefs. There is much research to indicate that such changes will not bring a shedding of ethnic identities and prejudice. The institutional framework within which ethnic groups interact is of critical importance (Horowitz, 1985): for the San in Botswana, this means that we must understand their involvement with the rapidly expanding state bureaucracy.

BUREAUCRATIC DOMINATION

Both the colonial and post-independence regimes have had to deal with the so-called 'Bushman problem'. For officials, the 'problem' is that Europeans and North Americans periodically discover that the Batswana are in one way or another grossly abusing and exploiting the San. Each government has responded to this foreign outcry with a formal investigation which inevitably proposes remedial programmes. In spite of the rhetoric of local participation, the resulting programmes are essentially the transfer of the San from their previous conditions of economic servitude to various forms of dependence on and control by government, or the exchange of one form of domination for another. As the twentieth century has progressed, the process has accelerated with increasing amounts of government resources and staff being committed to it.

This bureaucratic encroachment began in the 1920s when the League of Nations looked into allegations of the San being held

in slavery by the Batswana (Hermans, 1977: 61-2; Botswana National Archives (BNA) file S.34/8). As recently as 1988, Survival International generated considerable international concern when the Botswana government sought to force some San groups out of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. The government's response in almost every case has been to sponsor some type of commission or study.¹¹ In recent years there has been a continuous stream of researchers under government contract to look into aspects of the Bushman problem. It is our impression that no other rural social group, except possibly the cattle owners, has received anywhere near this amount of attention.

After each inquiry government officials declare that San must be treated equally with other Batswana. They condemn the abuses which prompted the outcry, whether it was beatings of San, as in 1931, or an attempt of Tswana landowners in Ghanzi to take over proposed San collective ranches as in 1991. Finally, plans are announced to rectify the situation.

Overall supervision of government programmes dealing with the San has come to reside in the Remote Area Development Programme (RADP), located in the Ministry of Local Government and Lands (MLGL). RADP was first called the Bushman Development Programme, but its scope was broadened in the latter part of the 1970s to include all persons living outside villages. The European officers in charge proposed this change because they feared that if only the San benefited, a majority of Tswana politicians would abolish the programme at the first opportunity. This was much less likely to happen if other ethnic groups like the Bakgalagadi, Herero and Bayei also benefited (Wily, 1979a; 1979b; 1981).

RADP has never had more than forty staff officers, of whom three at most have been San. Most are Batswana; a few are Europeans from volunteer organizations. The programme has never been able to fill all its authorized positions: for most civil servants, a posting to RADP is undesirable because of the low status of its constituency and the harsh conditions in which officers must live and work. For the most part, the staff lack energy and experience.

Effectively, the overall government strategy for solving the 'Bushman problem' has four elements: designation of San settlements; establishment of traditional authorities in San areas; fostering social infrastructure within suitable reach of the San; and protection of the more nomadic San through 'environmental'

programmes. We will examine each in some detail, showing that San are increasingly coming under the supervision and control of state bureaucratic structures in terms of land ownership, civil and criminal law and various essential services related to education, health and development.

Designation of Settlements

The idea of settlement is that a San group agrees either to build a stationary community where they are currently residing, or to move from an existing residence which is unacceptable to the government and establish a community at an approved location. In exchange, the government promises a long-term grant of land and, in recent years, regular provision of services such as schools, health centres and development assistance — services which virtually every other citizen already receives. The first advocacy of a settlement approach came during the early 1900s from officials in the Ghanzi farms region where the idea was viewed as a means of reducing stock theft and preventing the setting of bush fires (BNA file S.156/3; Russell, 1976: 189-90).

The critical problem has been securing land which has some economic worth and is not possessed by other groups or individuals. While almost all land in Botswana is directly or indirectly under government authority, most of it including tribal land is occupied (e.g. by cattle post boreholes) or legally restricted in one way or another (e.g. by existing and proposed national park and wildlife management areas which constitute 34 per cent of the country). Thus, despite Botswana's size and relatively small population of 1.3 million, finding land for the San is not an easy task.

Two factors have made the securing of land for the San particularly difficult: the Tribal Land Act of 1968, and the Tribal Grazing Land Policy (TGLP) of 1975. The land act stripped chiefs of their land allocation powers and gave these instead to local land boards (Republic of Botswana, 1975; Wynne, 1989: 347-58). The boards are authorized to allocate tribal land (71 per cent of the country) to 'tribesmen' for residential, arable, grazing and conservation purposes. The right of San to their traditional foraging areas is not specified in the Act nor in any subsequent legislation. A number of land boards have concluded that local San are not 'tribesmen', even though San have lived in a given area for at least three or four

generations (Wily, 1979a: 33). In several cases, most prominently in the Kgatleng, the government has simply given up seeking land for San settlements because of this attitude.

An even more serious barrier to acquiring land for the San has been the TGLP. The policy's primary objective is to limit and regulate the rapid spread of Tswana cattle posts on the *sandveld* as a result of major improvements in borehole drilling technology. The idea is to allocate land to cattle owners who adopt a commercial approach to herd management. The originators of the TGLP hoped that rural employment would be increased and that the country's large cattle herd (around 2 million head at the time) would become a productive asset instead of a drain on savings and a force for destruction of the *veld*. The TGLP was also supposed to ensure that poor Batswana, most especially the San, did not become worse off (Republic of Botswana, 1975). In fact, the various ministries involved have never obtained the implementation capacity to realize any of these objectives.

Ranches were nevertheless allocated under the TGLP, putting the San in a difficult position. Many had for years been foraging, or partially settled, in areas where the government proceeded to allocate ranches. The San could not apply for ranch land, however, since they did not own cattle. A small group of officials in the Ministry of Local Government and Lands as well as anthropologists working among the San fought for recognition of San land rights. They first stalled the allocation process by doing population surveys demonstrating that a considerable number of people, mostly San, were living in the areas to be allocated as ranches. For example, a survey in the western *sandveld* region of Central District showed a population of approximately 4000, 75 per cent of whom were San (Hitchcock, 1978: 219). Vierich (1977) and Fella (personal communication, 1977) found a similar situation in the Kweneng and the North West respectively, although the numbers were somewhat smaller.

Most local land boards showed little concern for these 'discovered' citizens. The North West District Land Board decided that land allocations would not be made to San on an individual basis but only as groups. The Kgalagadi District Land Board said that San should not be given rights over sipwells, which were their traditional sources of water (Axel Thoma, personal communication, 1977). At a special meeting of land use planning advisory group members in Central District in January 1977, a high-ranking

district official said that San, 'if they are in the way, should be gotten out of the way so that we can put up our fences' (Hitchcock, 1978: xix). A litigation consultant to the Attorney General issued an advisory opinion stating that 'the Masarwa have always been true nomads, owing no allegiance to any Chief or tribe. . . . Tentatively . . . 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, MLGL file 2/1/1).

The Minister of Local Government and Lands rejected this discriminatory approach, stating that 'any land board using the ethnicity of Bushmen as a reason to accept or reject an application would be dealt with severely' (Wily, 1979a: 125): in fact, his ministry almost never overturned blatantly discriminatory land board decisions. Nevertheless, something had to be done about the 20,000 people, mostly San, who were discovered on the land where ranches were to be established and were in danger of being forced off by the new leaseholders.

Over several years the ministry created three devices to secure settlements. The first was to establish villages for San groups. This had already been done in the Ghanzi district at D'Kar in 1964, Bere in 1968 and Ka/gae in 1973. In response to the TGLP, the Ghanzi District Council has subsequently established three new settlements at East and West Hanahai and at Groot Laagte. The second approach was to encourage councils to grant ranch areas to San for agricultural development. Thus far the Ghanzi council has been the only one to do so, and even this was only finalized after a prolonged political battle in which foreign governments and NGOs prevented several powerful politicians and their allies from blocking the Council's allocation.

The third approach is somewhat more convoluted. The Ministry of Local Government and Lands decided that there would be 'communal service centres' in each block of TGLP ranches. Supposedly these centres would contain space in which government and commercial services could be made available to local ranches. Supporters of San land rights obtained approval that San displaced from the ranches could settle in the service areas. In fact, few ranch services exist in these areas: the centres are really San settlements where the government maintains a borehole and provides a number of social services. Outside the Ghanzi district, the ministry has found these 'social' service centres to be the only means to provide

land to the San in compensation for their exclusion from TGLP ranches.

The settlement approach in these three forms has a number of serious problems. First, the size of the settlements has little to do with San population numbers or economic needs beyond the recognition that water must be available on a regular basis. In the case of San villages in Ghanzi district, the Council follows a principle of allocating blocks of land 20 km by 20 km for each. The three Ghanzi ranches are the size of the other ranches in the area. The service centres vary from the size of a normal ranch area of 6400 ha to 45,000 ha at Diphuduhudu in the Kweneng. Opportunities for foraging and hunting are of no great concern; neither are commercial or employment possibilities.

Second, in most cases the resident San community is unable to regulate access to their land. Outsiders, particularly those with sizable herds of cattle, take advantage of this situation with sometimes devastating consequences for the San. The invaders run wells dry, overgraze range land, decimate *veld* foods, destroy field crops and even ruin homes. In almost every case, the central government has been unwilling to intervene to uphold land rights of the local San, in spite of overwhelming evidence of severe health and economic consequences.¹²

Finally, since the settlements have no income-generating capacity, the San tend to stay only as long as the settlement functions as a drought relief food distribution centre. In June 1990 the government stopped providing food under drought relief. The result was that many San left their settlements for nearby farms and cattle posts where they believed that they had a better chance of obtaining food. Most distressing to the RADP was that attendance at settlement schools declined drastically. As a result, the food distribution programme was restarted in December. In 1991, RADP officials began looking for alternative approaches to free food distribution to retain San in the settlements. They appear most inclined to promote a series of development projects designed to employ large numbers of unskilled labourers.

To summarize, the government's settlement option has meant that San are beholden to it for title to their land and many of their subsistence needs. To secure a more viable future for these settlements, they must acquire an economic productive capacity. As things stand, the settlements are refugee camps for those not employed on the farms and cattle posts.

The Establishment of Traditional Authorities

For both colonial and post-independence officials, the essential result of the settlement process is institutionalization of the national system of law and order among the San. Most important, this means designation of a local headman who serves in conformance with Tswana tradition. The process of designating headmen has been a slow one. As of late 1991, the government had only gazetted 19 San headmen. As Table 2 indicates, this means that only a quarter of the total San population has this minimal form of governance. A few San live in Tswana villages under Tswana headmen; however, as of 1991 at least half and probably close to three-quarters of

Table 2. *Settlements and Service Centres with Gazetted Headmen*

District name	Name of settlement or service centre	Land area allocated (ha)	Population size
Central	Lepasha	13,000	850
Central	Mmaletswai	19,200	825
Central	Kedia	20,000	800
Ghanzi	Bere	40,000	297
Ghanzi	Dekar	600	380
Ghanzi	Groot Laagte	40,000	345
Ghanzi	Hanahai (East)	40,000	455
Ghanzi	Hanahai (West)	40,000	398
Ghanzi	Ka/Gae	40,000	414
Ghanzi	Metsimanthso	100	273
Ghanzi	New Xanagas	40,800	481
Ghanzi	!Xade	40,000	791
Kgalagadi	Inalagolo	40,000	367
Kgalagadi	Kokotsha	40,000	900
Kgatleng	Kgomodiatsaba	6400	540
Kgatleng	Khurutshe	6400	223
Kweneng	Diphuduhudu	45,800	731
North West	Phuduhudu	6400	350
Southern	Thankana	6400	350
TOTAL	19 settlements	485,100	9770

Note: The communal service centres are Lepasha, Mmaletswai, Kedia, Metsimanthso, Diphuduhudu, Phuduhudu and Thankana. Groot Laagte, Inalagolo and Kokotsha are communal areas in or adjacent to Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). New Xanagas and Dekar are church-related settlements, and !Xade is a settlement in a game reserve.

Source: Data drawn from the Remote Area Development offices in the Central, Ghanzi, Kgalagadi, Kgatleng, Kweneng, North West and Southern District Councils.

the San population still have no governmentally-recognized traditional form of governance.

The government's inertia in establishing headmen is partly explained by the belief of many officials that San are ill-adapted to participate in governmental hierarchy because of a lack of experience with such a form of governance. There is some truth to this position; however, significant evidence to the contrary also exists. In some areas of Botswana, bands of San have participated in larger social units described as 'group clusters' or 'nexuses', based on kinship, marriage and locational or totemic affiliation (Heinz, 1972, 1979; Lee, 1979: 340-3). Among the Tyua and Shua of northern Botswana, for example, the position of *kaiha* (headman) was institutionalized to the point where it was passed down from one generation to the next, usually through the male line. These leaders had the authority to make binding decisions and to adjudicate disputes between bands. Some organized region-wide ritual activities, large-scale hunts and even warfare (Hitchcock, 1982: 136-7; Cashdan, 1979: 41-5; Hitchcock, field notes).

The San themselves are changing their perspective on governmental hierarchy. Many are coming to realize that the close living conditions of settlement life require a social organization performing governmental functions similar to those existing in Tswana communities. This change is reflected in the establishment of headman positions in new San settlements even before government officials suggest such an idea.

Various other factors have also slowed the institutionalization of headmanship among the San. There are a number of instances of non-San, such as local Tswana cattle post owners, becoming headmen. This leads to the difficult problem of easing this person, usually influential among Batswana in the area, out of his position and gaining general community consent for an election. A further problem is the government requirement that headmen be literate. Most San who occupy positions of traditional authority have not attended school at all. Since the government has been relatively rigid on this literacy condition, San communities have often been frustrated in choosing someone who has their respect. *Ka/Gae* solved the problem by electing a literate young man as headman with an informal agreement that he would accept the advice of a respected elder.

Judging from information obtained during interviews in 1988 and 1990, San headmen who have been gazetted have had some

success in establishing their authority, particularly in terms of handling court cases (Hitchcock, 1988; Kann et al., 1990: 104-7, 133-40). Most of the people who were questioned said that the headmen had been fair in their decisions, although a few people thought that fines and other penalties imposed had been too stiff. In one case, fines were levied on non-San cattle owners for damage done by their cattle to the crops of San. When these owners protested the amounts of the fines, the San headman refused to back down.

Other problems which occur in San communities are fairly predictable. Local development committees, ranging from the village development committee to parent teacher associations and agricultural groups, cannot function without the expertise of the local extension agent, who is often resident in another community as much as 100 miles away. When an extension agent is present, he or she tends to frustrate most local participation by giving orders. In some cases, different local institutions such as the headman and the VDC fight for dominance. Various manifestations of factionalism involving support for or opposition to a headman or wealthy villager can paralyse community decision-making (Childers et al., 1982; Zufferey, 1983; Hitchcock, 1988). Such realities are a good indication that headmanship, elite competition and civil service intervention are giving San communities a political context very similar to other Botswana villages.

Several factors still seriously compromise the legitimacy of San headmen in the nineteen villages where the position has been officially gazetted. One is the headman's dilemma of facing constituents who want him to uphold San custom, while being pressured by the Botswana government to enforce Tswana law. A more serious problem is that government officials sometimes force San headmen to drop criminal cases against non-San. These officials are responding to prevailing Tswana prejudice that a San, even if he is a recognized headman, should not have the authority to assess the actions of a Botswana. The impression given to the San is that their headmen are not equivalent to those among the Tswana.

In short, bureaucratic domination has required the development of headmanship within San communities. However, it has moved to ensure that this authority is primarily in service to central political authority. While the headman is elected by the local community, he is gazetted by government and must be literate so he can understand central directives. Because of Tswana prejudice against the

San, the headmen have difficulty in regulating relations with non-San, which often revolve around the continuing economic power of large Tswana cattle owners.

The Development of Social Infrastructure

Critical to the bureaucratic state's domination of the San is the provision of welfare and extension services in their areas. These services include education, preventive and curative health programmes, emergency food distribution during drought, labour-based relief projects and community development services. This approach is often closely tied to settlement in that most government services are provided at settlements.

The first National Development Plan contained the earliest serious statement of intent to extend social services to the San, involving some educational and livestock projects suggested by Silberbauer (1965: 132-8) and the Ghanzi District Council. As it turned out, none were implemented. In July 1972, in response to increasing foreign interest in the plight of the San, the Ministry of Education recommended that an interministerial committee be established to deal with San issues. This committee obtained a small budget for 1972-3 which was allocated largely for a few education projects. By the end of the 1970s, the RADP budget was averaging about P150,000 and was expanding to include agriculture as well as continuing to support schools. As the 1990s began, the figure reached a million Pula annually, and a number of employment-generating projects were being included.

There are four aspects of the resulting government initiatives which are worth noting. First, the RADP has obtained little support or direction from local organizations or politicians.¹³ The result is that, in so far as it is concerned with responding to San public opinion, the staff has had to arrange for San and other remote area dwellers to be interviewed or consulted. In many cases, this has meant foreign volunteers, Tswana RAD officers, missionaries or NGO employees visiting local communities to enquire about their ideas on particular development projects, whether it is a school, an agricultural development scheme or a crafts co-operative. This consultation is referred to as local 'participation' but the results often depend on who does the interviewing and the nature of their perspective on the San. Few of the resulting projects involve support

for existing San activities, such as petty trading or labour on cattle posts or farms.

Second, development projects usually involve collective organization of the community. This approach is attractive to government and foreign donors because it means that extension agents can reach the maximum number of people with the minimum effort. However, there is very little evidence to indicate that co-operative organizations at the local level work effectively either among San or any other group in Botswana (e.g. Willett, 1981). The fact is that issues such as communal conflicts and skill levels render this approach difficult to initiate, let alone manage.

Third, the extent to which various social services are provided depends on the personality of the local RAD or NGO officer. Where the officer is energetic and creative, government services can penetrate many aspects of a San community. Where the officer does little, government departments turn to competing concerns. This is not surprising since in most cases the San are living far from the extension officers for the various ministries. The reality of the penetration of social services in many San communities is that RAD officers concentrate on the one service they can perform easily. In most cases this means taking care of San children staying in boarding schools: the RAD officers collect firewood, buy food and uniforms and transport the San students to and from the schools at the beginning and end of term.

Fourth, most RAD development funds have gone for building hostels at schools, providing for permanent sources of water and paying the salaries of special field officers. Only recently has the government begun to think in terms of 'economic' projects which will have an employment effect. Indeed, the *de facto* objective of the RADP is to educate San children so that they can leave the rural areas and enter Tswana society to find jobs. At the family level, parents are asked to allow their children to become cultural Batswana. While this is happening, San adults receive a few health services, some free food and the right to settle down in a village where they can have an assured source of water.

In sum, the social infrastructure strategy is a carrot to induce San to settle down in locations where the government can establish its authority. Most importantly, it involves education for children, health clinics, water and, in times of drought, food. For a few villages there will be government development projects such as a tannery or a crafts project. In the process, the San are becoming

much more dependent on government than they ever were on cattle owners. Their mobility is reduced; their children are wards of school officials most of the year; and unknown bureaucrats from Gaborone and abroad decide the direction of economic development.¹⁴

Environmental Strategy

Over the years the government has developed a stop-gap approach for managing San who still engage in substantial hunting and gathering. The idea, usually implicit, is to protect the San along with local flora and fauna. The apparent advantage of this strategy is that it brings powerful European and North American environmental groups to the defence of the San. Silberbauer initiated the first important step in this direction after the Protectorate Administration appointed him Bushman Survey Officer in 1958. He carried out investigations on the condition of the San and came up with a series of recommendations, one of which was the establishment of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. He envisaged that the Reserve would protect the people and habitats of the vast central Kalahari region (9 per cent of the country) and allow local people the opportunity to change at their own pace (Silberbauer, 1965).

The law establishing the Central Kalahari Game Reserve required that environmentalists' concerns for controlled hunting be taken into consideration. Thus, the San and other hunter-gatherers are allowed to hunt without licences as long as they use traditional means (spears, bows and arrows, and clubs) and do not sell any meat, skins, feathers or other products (Wily, 1979a: 150-1). In 1963, at Silberbauer's urging, the government also established regulations prohibiting the keeping of livestock in the reserve and the use of firearms. In effect, the San are constrained from modernizing their economic existence within their traditional areas, although they are also protected from some adverse 'modern' encroachments in that the reserve is declared off-limits to other groups who might use the area for hunting and grazing purposes.

A similar approach to protecting the San's traditional foraging rights emerged in the 1980s as the government began establishing Wildlife Management Areas. By 1991 proposed WMAs had expanded to cover about 17 per cent of the land area of Botswana.¹⁵

Within these areas, San and other traditional hunter-gatherers are given hunting privileges, though they must obtain licences. Some environmentalists would like to see this privilege limited to hunting collectives, which could be more effectively controlled.

The protection the San receive under the environmentalist umbrella has serious drawbacks. The Batswana living outside the protected areas perceive that the San are receiving special treatment. In their view parks and reserves are part of a generally wasteful concession to foreign tourists and hunters. Thus whenever foreign environmentalists conclude that the San are harming the ecosystem of these areas, there are many Tswana officials ready to evict or otherwise punish the San, sometimes with a vengeance. The most recent example of this was in 1986 when environmentalists led by the Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) decided that the San were keeping too many domestic animals and hunting too freely in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. The government promptly made plans to move the San out of the Reserve. The programme came to a temporary halt when Survival International and other human rights groups raised an international furor, and Tswana populations neighbouring the Reserve resisted giving up their crop and grazing areas for new settlements (Harden, 1988).

The environmentalist strategy provides little room for change. The San must find a subsistence strategy acceptable to government wildlife officials and their allies among environmental lobbying organizations. At best, this approach has allowed a few San groups to retain their foraging life style for a few decades in the face of the radical economic change engulfing the rest of Botswana.

The Future of Bureaucratic Domination

We have already emphasized that foreign concern has been the driving force behind the Botswana government's expansion of its control over the San. This is especially true of funding and programme planning, as foreign governments provide most of the funding. For instance, in the most recent Accelerated Remote Area Development Programme the Botswana government has invested a total of 7 per cent from its own funds, with the Norwegian and the Swedish governments providing most of the remaining 13 million Pula (Kann et al., 1990: 112). Both these governments have attempted to use their financial influence to give policy direction to the

programme, particularly in terms of allocating more funds for employment-generating projects and insisting that more state lands be allocated to the San.

Without this most aggressive outside influence, it is doubtful if much would have been invested in San-oriented projects over the last two decades. Moreover, it is likely that any programmes undertaken would have put much more emphasis on San assimilation into Tswana culture, and the number of settlements would have been much smaller in the expectation that San should settle on the edge of existing Tswana villages. In effect foreign influence has countered the ethnic prejudice of Batswana toward the San. However, this foreign tutelage is not likely to continue in the long run. A San political force must emerge to challenge Tswana bias. To understand the extent to which such a development is possible we will now look at the political activities of San communities in response to their increasing involvement with government programmes.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SAN

Until the San obtain political influence relative to the bureaucratic leviathan engulfing their social and economic existence, the possibilities for group self-determination within contemporary Botswana remain very limited. The San form just 4 per cent of the total population of Botswana; they are the poorest ethnic group in economic terms; few read or write. None of their number has entered the super-rich class of urban entrepreneurs, and none has been elected to Parliament or been promoted to the top levels of the civil service. No political party has seen fit to elect even one San to be a member of its national executive committee in the twenty-five years since independence. Many Batswana still believe that San should not participate in their politics, whether this means voting or speaking up in the traditional community meetings at the *kgotla* (Lekorwe, 1989: 219).

Throughout the 1970s and into the early 1980s, there was little evidence of any significant San participation in Botswana's politics at national or local level. There were no San councillors or members of parliament, even in the Ghanzi district where more than two-fifths of the population is San. Indeed, no San even stood for an elected office. This low level of contestation manifested the fact

that San simply took little interest in modern politics. In the 1984 election, Ghanzi district had one of the lowest turnout rates in the country. Had it not been for the fact that commercial farmers in the district used their trucks to take their San residents to the polls, Ghanzi would have been well below the national average. At best the San were unthinking supporters of the ruling BDP. For the few interested in other parties, their opportunity to listen to opposition candidates was hampered by farm owners who refused to allow party organizers to canvas for support among residents of their land.¹⁶

In the 1989 election the pattern of San participation changed dramatically in the Ghanzi district. Out of twenty candidates, seven San ran for the office of local councillor.¹⁷ In two cases there were San running against San. Two were elected.¹⁸ Even more significant, the number of people registering to vote increased by 67 per cent in Ghanzi, and the number voting more than doubled. Most of these new voters were San. This change was particularly impressive because registration figures nationally changed little, and the total number of voters actually declined.

The immediate stimulus for this transformation in Ghanzi was the Botswana National Front, the country's major opposition party. Its leaders decided to make a major push to win constituencies where Remote Area Dwellers were in the majority. Grassroots organization building was supplemented by a long tour by the BNF's leaders through the RAD districts (Ngami, Ghanzi, Kgalagadi, Boteti, Kweneng West, Ngwaketse West) in the early part of 1988. During this trip the BNF appealed to the San in terms of their exploitation by cattle post operators and their neglect by government. In the Ghanzi area in particular, the ruling BDP leadership feared that the opposition might gain a number of council seats and might even upset their MP seeking re-election. They countered with their own strategy to mobilize the San vote. They added nine new polling stations in the more remote San areas to respond to realities of San residence rather than the traditional Tswana patterns of concentration in a few villages.

The BDP's recognition that times have changed continued after the election. Most importantly, the government continued its food distribution among the San after the drought ended: the BDP does not want to alienate its San voters. A further indication of the BDP's new attitude is that three San were appointed to the district land board for the first time. By appointing one San who had run

and lost in the BDP primaries, the BDP was using a classic strategy to patch up the divisions created among party members in a community during the primary. By further appointing a losing BNF council candidate, the BDP was seeking to woo opposition supporters into the organization through patronage.

This is not to say that the San are very effective yet in manipulating the post-colonial state. Indeed, they still appear overwhelmed. The new San councillors, for instance, rarely speak up at council meetings. Neither can read council documents; both must request that discussions in English be translated into Setswana. When, in 1991, several ministers in the Cabinet tried to stop the Ghanzi council's recommendation that three local farms be allocated to San, the intervention of foreign aid organizations and NGOs was critical in sustaining the council's position.¹⁹ However, San did at least have their representatives on the council observing first hand the Tswana cattle owners' efforts to block a San attempt to acquire land.

In other parts of Botswana the mobilization of the San is still virtually non-existent. Part of the problem is that the numbers of San involved are generally small compared with other groups in the area. San are also very spread out, the majority still living on cattle posts where they can be easily manipulated by the owners. In contrast, in the Ghanzi district their numbers are sufficient to make a difference in the outcome of both the council and parliamentary elections. Also, since the settlement process in Ghanzi has been much more extensive, including nearly half the San in the district, the San are concentrated in a few areas where they can be easily mobilized.

The Ghanzi experience in the 1989 elections is instructive. Where hunter-gatherers such as the San are settled in permanent villages and have sufficient numbers, they can quickly be motivated by political parties and by their own leaders to become active in electoral politics. This change in turn gives their communities some control over the expanding bureaucratic state in terms of land allocation and social services. Where hunter-gatherers are dispersed and form a small proportion of the total population, they are likely to be ineffective in giving direction to government presence.

The degree of San influence also varies greatly with the capacity of San political activists. A recent example of success was a quick community meeting arranged by activists at New Xanagas when the

Minister of Local Government and Lands paid a visit in the autumn of 1991. While the meeting was not on his itinerary, the Minister listened for several hours to demands by irate San that something be done about non-San cattle owners watering their stock at the community borehole. Most surprisingly, he ordered that ministry officials come up with a plan for dealing with the problem by the time he returned to the district in the spring. This was the first time in the history of the district that a top government official had demanded action on the problem of Tswana cattle damaging San land areas.²⁰ The San leaders were able to make it clear to the Minister that something had to be done if the BDP was to retain San votes in New Xanagas. Many more such incidents will be needed to demonstrate that the increase in the San voting rate has converted the state bureaucracy to a permanent concern for their interests.

CONCLUSIONS

There has been a tendency for those studying the hunter-gatherers to emphasize their economic and cultural subjugation. We have shown that in the case of the San of Botswana, the post-independence state is moving to place hunter-gatherers under bureaucratic control. Economic and cultural domination continue to exist, but within an expanding bureaucratic context. Foreign governments and intellectuals are aggressively pushing bureaucratic development as a means of overturning these previously prevailing forms of domination.

The fact that this new form of domination has largely been ignored by scholars has tended to obscure the issues of who is engineering the current transformations of hunter-gatherer societies and for what purposes. By focusing primarily on economic domination (and to a lesser extent on ethnic prejudice), analysts are overlooking the fact that it is foreign aid organizations, their academic advisors, NGO leaders and top ranking civil servants who are actually deciding the substance and rate of social change among the San. While the planning and investment undertaken may be on the basis of good intentions and continuous consultation, we would contend that the San are still almost completely missing from the decision-making process.

The primary benefit of the new bureaucratic domination may be to bring hunter-gatherers into partisan politics. The San are participating because they see an opportunity to affect this new form

of domination. In this regard, the settlement process is critical, for without some form of concentration of hunter-gatherer populations, party organizations cannot perform their mobilizing function. Those who criticize the settlement strategy for destroying hunter-gatherer culture need to recognize that without political power these cultures can only survive through foreign support, which at best will provide short-term protection.

The irony of this process is that the liberation of the San in Botswana will primarily involve their emancipation from those who perceive themselves as protecting the hunter-gather way of life through the state. This is not to say that bureaucratic power has not been, and will not in the future be, required to break the hold of economic and cultural domination. Rather, we must recognize that the critical force in producing change in hunter-gatherer communities is now the post-independence state, and it need not, indeed probably will not, lead to San empowerment.

NOTES

We wish to express our appreciation to Nancy Howell, Richard Lee, Richard Librock, Mike Main, Jackie Solway, Richard Werbner and the journal's referees for their critical and most helpful readings of earlier versions of this article.

1. For a discussion of the spread of bureaucratic domination in other parts of Botswana society, see Molutsi (1989) and Holm and Somolekae (1988).

2. Women could and did marry Tswana men, but in most cases there was no brideprice paid, thus leaving the legal status vague. In addition, the children of such a union were not recognized as members of the father's agnate group. (Communications from Nancy Howell, 4 August 1991 and a referee of this paper.)

3. Communication from Mike Main, 8 August 1991. See Campbell and Main (1991a and 1991b) for documentation of this condition.

4. A Pula in 1991 was worth about US\$0.50. The minimum wage in the formal sector was P256 per month in August 1991. The figures on cattle post wages come from Campbell and Main (1991a: 23 and 1991b: 45).

5. The most recent statement of this position was *Government Paper No. 1 of 1990* (Government of Botswana, 1990b: 39) which included a rejection of a minimum wage for the rural sector. This was a response to the *Report of the Presidential Commission on the Review of the Incomes Policy* (Government of Botswana, 1990a: 34-45) which had contained such a proposal.

6. A Pula in the late 1970s was worth about US\$1.40 while in 1991, as stated in note 4, the value was US\$0.50. This devaluation reflects the significant inflation rate that Botswana had experienced in the 1980s. Thus much of the increase in San income in the last 15 years is only an inflation effect.

7. The authors are indebted to the late Morris Glickman from the University of Botswana Sociology Department for this point.

8. In Setswana, 'Ba-' is the plural prefix for people and 'Ma-' for things and animals.

9. At a funeral a few years ago, a University sociologist observed a San member of a community being shouted down by the Batswana present when he stood to express his feelings regarding the deceased. (Communication from Patrick Molutsi, November 1987.)

10. Kgosi Linchwe II stated at the Symposium on Democracy in Botswana in August 1988 that the Basarwa and other minorities in Botswana 'were chasing wild animals, picking wild berries, and digging for roots whilst we were developing invincible armies' (quoted in Wiilmsen, 1988: 31). The only person at the Symposium to criticize the Chief's remarks was Dr Maripe, the leader of the Kalanga-oriented Botswana Peoples Party and a non-Tswana.

11. The list of resulting reports is a long one, beginning with Simon Ratshosa's report on 'How the Masarwa Became Slaves' in 1926 (BNA files DCS 5/2 and DCS 8/6; Hermans, 1977: 62-3; Miers and Crowder, 1988: 181-4). The more prominent subsequent reports are those by Tagart and his commission (1933); Joyce (1938); Schapera (1939); Silberbauer (1965); Childers (1976); Hitchcock (1978); and Gulbrandsen et al. (1986).

12. The most direct effect is that the San must travel further to collect wild foods. Besides this, tension levels in the settlements increase with conflicts over land and water.

13. A few Ghanzi councillors are supportive, but they are in the minority on the council and are fearful of being too aggressive.

14. For an alternative approach which involves local people in a conservation programme, see the description of a project in Namibia in Owen-Smith and Jacobsohn (1989: 21-8).

15. Whether this total area will actually be gazetted is an open question. Only the WMA in the southern part of Ghanzi has been formally approved so far.

16. This is a common complaint of opposition party organizers, and a fact confirmed in interviews with farm owners.

17. There was also one female whose mother was a San. In an interview with one of the authors, this woman reflected keen awareness and support for San interests (26 July 1991).

18. Or three, if the female candidate mentioned in note 17 is counted.

19. The government backed off its opposition in August 1991. See *Mmegi*, 16-22 August 1991, p. 2.

20. We are most grateful to Richard Librock, Business Advisor to the RADP in Ghanzi, for bringing this incident and its consequences to our attention (interview 23 July 1991).

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The Samoan Farmer: A Reluctant Object of Change?

Per Ronnäs

ABSTRACT

Stagnation and a failure to break out of a subsistence-oriented type of production continue to characterize the agricultural sector in Western Samoa. The lack of dynamism in agriculture has variously been ascribed to subsistence affluence and limited wants, the inhibiting impact of *fa'asamoa* — the Samoan way of life — and, more recently, to the effects of migration, remittances, aid and bureaucracy on economic development. This article suggests that the explanatory power of these factors by themselves is unsatisfactory. Instead, it argues that an absence of secure market outlets offering predictable and sufficiently attractive prices to farmers and the lack of rural-urban links in general are at the heart of the problem. The economy seems to be caught in a vicious circle where farmers fail to commit themselves to production for the market because of a lack of secure outlets, while adequate downstream distribution and processing channels do not develop for lack of secure supplies. The interchangeable nature of commercial and subsistence production in agriculture, widespread access to overseas remittances, and the smallness of the domestic economy serve to perpetuate the deadlock.

STAGNATION IN AGRICULTURE

The agricultural sector in Western Samoa suffers from prolonged stagnation and in some respects even decay. It remains largely subsistence-oriented with limited production for the market. Attempts to develop and reshape the agricultural sector from above by government planners and policy-makers, individual government agencies and, not least, international development agencies have met with, at best, limited success. The perceived resistance to change and to 'develop' among the rural population has been attributed variously to socio-economic factors, such as 'subsistence