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Marshall)

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pp 103-136

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In reading Lorna Marshall's (1961) paper on sharing, talking, and giving, it is striking to realize that, were the person and place names changed, her descriptions could aptly apply to San social relations in the 1970s at Dobe and /Xai/xai, despite the marked changes that have taken place in the intervening twenty years. Undoubtedly this similarity is partly due to Lorna Marshall's ability to capture and describe the essence of San social relations. However, it is also partly due to the cultural continuity and integrity the !Kung have managed to preserve in many areas of life, despite their varying relations with pastoralists, anthropologists, hunters, border police, and other groups of San. For instance, Lewis-Williams (1984) suggests there has been ideological continuity in San culture for at least two millennia and possibly for as long as 26,000 years, demonstrated by depictions of the trance dance found on very ancient, datable pieces of art mobilier. He argues that ideological continuity implies some degree of social continuity in that ideology underwrites social relations. Specifically, the trance dance reaffirms and strengthens kinship relationships, which in turn structure the aggregation and dispersal necessary to distribute people over available resources and vice versa. These San kinship relationships, which structure aggregation, dispersal, and redistribution, are characterized by specific qualities that have impressed past and present San researchers, namely modesty, generosity, and egalitarianism.

Marked continuity and integrity are also found in San material culture. Despite an apparent long history of trade relations with their neighbors, the San, who still lead primarily a hunting and gathering way of life, maintain a dress and material culture that distinguishes them from surrounding others. For instance,

although items foreign to San culture constantly move along !Kung hxaro networks (Wiessner 1981, 1982), at least until the mid-1970s many items of !Kung material culture did not undergo great change in more remote areas. The greatest outside influences were in the adoption of a few items of great utility, such as cooking pots, and the substitution of new materials for old ones in San tools and ornaments (i.e., metal for bone and glass beads for ostrich egg-shell beads). In addition, a San-specific repertory of material culture covers vast areas in space. For example, in the early 1970s among hunting and gathering groups, 90 percent of the material culture was shared by the !Kung, G/wi, and !Xo (Wiessner 1983). If material culture plays an active role in social relations, as is currently proposed by many researchers (Bourdieu 1977; Conkey 1978; Hodder 1982; Wiessner 1983; Wobst 1977), then this continuity in San culture should not be a matter of "lag" but an active expression of identity. In view of these many facets of cultural integrity observable in San societies, it is not surprising that many researchers in the 1960s and 1970s approached San studies from an "isolationist" stance.

San cultural continuity and integrity takes on an interesting new dimension in view of recent ethnohistorical and archaeological findings. A number of such studies argue convincingly, or perhaps conclusively, that the San have been involved in the wider world economy through relations with surrounding pastoralists, hunters, and explorers for the past 1500 years or longer (Denbow 1984; Gordon 1984; Schrire 1980; Wilmsen 1979, 1982). It is not evident that this long-term history of interaction is complex, can be related to changes within both the world and local systems (Gordon 1984), and is variable from place to place. For instance, at some archaeological sites, evidence of contact occurs very early, while at others, particularly sites in the sandveld, hunting and gathering appears to have played a predominant role in subsistence activities for some groups throughout the twentieth century. The evidence for cultural continuity in San culture in combination with the evidence for a long history of contact raises some interesting questions about the nature of interaction between

San and surrounding agropastoralists. In this paper, I would like to address this problem by looking at !Kung networks of reciprocal relations in the Dobe-/Xai/xai area and at how they function in the present and in a generational perspective, to see if this understanding can shed any light on the present and past relations between !Kung and surrounding others. First I will describe !Kung social networks as they were in the 1970s, and then go on to look at these networks in a generational perspective.

Hxaro

At the heart of !Kung San reciprocity and social networks is an exchange relationship called hxaro. This relationship involves a balanced but nonequivalent delayed exchange of gifts, whose continuous flow gives both partners information about the status of an underlying relationship - a bond of friendship accompanied by mutual reciprocity and access to resources. On the average, !Kung have sixteen hxaro relationships, each of which links them to broader hxaro networks (Wiessner 1977, 1982). The underlying obligations of hxaro partnerships remain loosely defined so that they can cover a variety of needs. Returns are not stipulated by quantity or time, as Sahlins (1974) has noted for hunter-gatherer reciprocity in general, but the person who has gives to the one who is in need, need being relative to the means of both. Hxaro relationships are geared to unpredictability, and returns are measured by their utility to the receiver rather than by a fixed quantity. The giver of assistance has no desire to be paid back immediately, therefore the relationship can not be considered even and is not open to cancellation. Rather, the aim is to store the debt until the situation of have and have not is reversed, allowing hxaro relationships effectively to cover unpredictable losses. However, to cover unpredictable losses, the terms of hxaro relationships are so loose that the status of the relationship, particularly for partners living far apart, can become ambiguous. The continual balanced flow of gifts lets each partner know that the relationship is still intact. Thus the flow of gifts is essential for the survival of all hxaro partnerships, although the content of the underlying relationship varies greatly according to the ability, needs, and location of both partners.

Because hxaro partnerships are not economic contracts with set terms but rather bonds of mutual help, it can be difficult for !Kung to avoid exploitation. The loose terms of the relationship are suitable for covering a variety of needs, but working out who has and who is in need requires constant surveillance and discussion. Most !Kung feel it is not only the responsibility of the receiver to reciprocate, but of the giver to make him want to do so. Establishing who has and who is in need is a constant game played with good humor and enjoyment in most cases. However, if joking fails, !Kung resort to gossip within the earshot of the offender. Eventually, to avoid exploitation, they may conceal what they do have or temporarily stop producing to establish themselves as "have nots" (Wiessner 1981, 1983). Hxaro partnerships may be discontinued if both parties lose interest (in which case the relationship dwindles out), upon the death of one partner, or after an argument about reciprocation. In the last case, which is rare, there is often much strife, because the lack of reciprocation is usually the symptom of a greater problem.

The management of reciprocity permeates many areas of !Kung life. Since returns must be enforced by social pressure, some hxaro partnerships may be designed for social rather than economic support. Regulation may also influence factors such as camp size, favoring camps no larger than about twenty-five persons so it is possible for everyone to know what others have and need. Finally, the values of egalitarianism and generosity, prominently mentioned in almost all the literature on the !Kung, can be directly related to the need to regulate reciprocal relations. If a system of reciprocity is to be effective, it is important to level those who excel and see themselves as "big shots," and the !Kung are careful to do so (Lee 1979). Each !Kung feels equal to all others, whether or not he or she is very productive at the time, so always feels free to ask partners for assistance, thereby allowing their families to make it through periods of extended difficulty. The strong emphasis on generosity and the high regard accompanying it rewards partners who must give with little hope of return over a number of months or years.

The !Kung hxaro system fills a number of important functions in present day !Kung life. Its first and most important use is as a means of reducing risk by spreading it widely over the population - hxaro provides !Kung with alternate residences and access to the resources of their partners in times of need. This role of hxaro is perhaps best demonstrated by the fact that virtually all the extended visits made by !Kung at /Xai/xai in 1968-1969 and 1974 occurred within the framework of hxaro (Wiessner 1981, 1982)¹. The hxaro system's second role is in arranging and sustaining marriages (Wiessner 1977). Thirdly, hxaro networks make it possible for !Kung to obtain material possessions unavailable in their own regions.

Distribution of Hxaro Partnerships

The average !Kung has sixteen hxaro partnerships, but the number of such relationships can range from two to forty-two.² Men and women participate equally in all aspects of hxaro. Training for hxaro begins early in childhood, and the number of hxaro partners gradually increases with age. By late adolescence, the average !Kung has ten hxaro partnerships, allowing him or her to travel widely and to visit San who lead other lifestyles and to look for potential spouses. The number of hxaro partners peaks among adults with mature children. These adults are at their height of social influence and are actively trying to help support their grandchildren and arrange marriages for their unmarried younger children. The number of partnerships decreases with old age and reduced mobility, at which time !Kung pass on many of their partnerships to their children and rely on them for support (see Table 1).

Table 1 gives the distribution of hxaro partners in space, and Figure 1 shows the major resources available in each of the areas listed. /Xai/xai !Kung have approximately 18 percent of their hxaro partnerships with kin in their own camps, 25 percent within a 24 km radius of their camps, 25 percent between 25 and 49 km away, 24 percent between 50 and 100 km away and 9 percent more

than 100 km away. For partnerships with !Kung living more than 25 km away, there is a strong preference to do hxaro with those living in areas with resources that complement those found in the /Xai/xai area (i.e. areas with stores, available wage labor, transport, etc.).

Distribution of hxaro partners by ability conforms closely to what would be expected from looking at the distribution of hxaro partners over space; that is, San choose a certain proportion of their partners from groups engaging in lifestyles different from their own. Table 3 illustrates this point by giving the distribution of hxaro partners for five households in a /Xai/xai camp in which all residents subsisted primarily on hunting and gathering. Approximately one-third of their partners are !Kung leading a similar lifestyle, another third are those leading a very different lifestyle and the remaining third are adolescents or old people who are not yet or no longer regularly participating in subsistence activities.

The broad distribution of hxaro ties in space and over persons with different lifestyles makes it possible for the !Kung both to import and export exchange goods and to make extended visits to other regions to become familiar with other ways of making a living. For the former purpose, many !Kung interviewed stated that long-range ties were much more important in the past than they are today, because today many of the desired trade goods are available at Tsumkwe (see Table 1). For the latter purpose, however, young !Kung, particularly young men, regularly make use of hxaro ties to spend a few years away from home visiting kin in other areas and trying their hands at wage labor, subsistence labor and agricultural activities. As will be seen later, a certain percentage of these !Kung eventually settle in other areas, bringing some kin with them, and do not return permanently to /Xai/xai. Others prefer to return to a primarily hunting and gathering way of life, but bring with them knowledge of a variety of means to supplement their hunting and gathering incomes.

In summary, because of frequent visiting to other areas within the framework of hxaro³, the degree of "acculturation" or amount of interaction with surrounding cultures cannot be described by history of outside influences in the local Dobe-/Xai/xai areas alone, but must take into account similar influences in areas within the hxaro network extending at least within a 200-300 km radius of Dobe and /Xai/xai. In addition, because most !Kung take advantage of hxaro ties to visit distant areas and can often remain there, leading a predominantly hunting and gathering way of life can be better understood as the result of a decision to exploit this niche rather than as the result of isolation.

Hxaro Paths

Until now, for ease of presentation, I have described hxaro in terms of partnerships between individuals. Hxaro exchange, however, operates in a chainlike manner linking !Kung into complex networks of reciprocity. Hxaro chains, literally "paths for things," extend for hundreds of kilometers, sometimes crossing linguistic boundaries, although knowledge of others on a hxaro path does not extend beyond a certain segment. Figure 2 portrays a hxaro path as seen from the perspective of different participants. Segment 1 is made up of A, his spouse, and their direct hxaro partners and spouses. It has four members and represents the most narrow range of knowledge of a hxaro path that I found among the !Kung in my sample. Segment 1 has nine members and represents the greatest knowledge the San in my sample had of the course of hxaro paths, except for hxaro chains at Tsumkwe where knowledge is much greater because paths wind through the densely settled community for a long time before leaving the area. Segment 3 has seven members and represents the average knowledge about hxaro paths (Wiessner 1977). !Kung feel by far the strongest debts to their direct partners, but some sense of obligation is extended to those two to three links down the path. Both direct and indirect hxaro could be said to activate kinship obligations. Most paths include two to three other individuals in a camp before they extend to other camps and other areas.

Approximately 60-70 percent of hxaro gifts received from partners in other camps and areas are passed on to the receivers' spouses, and the remaining ones usually go to siblings, parents, or children in the camp. Hxaro paths thus form bonds between affines, although direct hxaro between affines is rare. The !Kung say this system works better because people do not "know the hearts" of their affines as well as those of their own kindred members, so hxaro with affines is better handled indirectly through spouses.

Hxaro paths can vary in their course. This flexibility is essential since visiting patterns are not regular and all partnerships are not of equal intensity. Some partners exchange gifts every few months, others every year, and still others every few years. However, possibilities for deviation are bounded. Gifts received from one partner (except spouses) rarely have more than two or at the very most four possible courses, even though some San may have as many as forty partnerships. Deviation limits in hxaro paths are said to be necessary to prevent a person's hxaro partners from fighting over a desirable gift and to unite certain people on a regular basis. Approximately 20 percent of all gifts have a prescribed course, that is, one partner gives a gift to another specifying where it should go when his partner decides to pass it on. Once a gift has traveled a certain path, however, the return gift is expected to follow the same course. The San are always aware of outstanding hxaro debts, and, if a gift has not been returned, failure to reciprocate may be blamed on the next person down the path and so the buck is passed. Quarrels begin when San have received return gifts but do not pass them on in due time. Gifts are private property as long as receivers want to keep them. If they wish to keep gifts for long periods, they may substitute others so as not to interrupt the flow of gifts, provided that a gift did not have a prescribed course. The question then arises as to where paths end? This question is difficult to answer, but apparently the end of a path occurs when one member decides to keep a gift, uses it up, or channels it in a new direction and sends a new return gift back along the path. The flow of a gift may be terminated and the

return initiated after it has only passed through a few hands, as in the case of shoes, or through many hands, as in the case of ostrich eggshell beads.

Hxaro paths thus facilitate extended visiting by uniting cores of close kin, not just isolated individuals. When people visit a hxaro partner, they are not only welcomed by their direct partners but also by others in the area who have received their gifts indirectly and recognize them as generous and reliable friends with whom they have active kinship relations. This exchange system, then, allows persons to make extended visits of two weeks to two years to other areas and eventually to immigrate to these areas if they desire. Such emigration from the /Xai/xai area was not uncommon in the 1960s and 1970s. For instance, between 1964 and 1974 at /Xai/xai, 9 out of 130 !Kung immigrated for marriage and other reasons, while 9 San emigrated for marriage and another 10 emigrated to engage in wage labor and other nonhunting and gathering lifestyles. For the ten-year period then, this movement equals 7 percent immigration rate at /Xai/xai and 15 percent emigration rate. To see if emigration has increased in recent years, the number and percentage of first cousins who had moved to distant farming areas such as Sehitwa, Ghanzi, Gobabis, and Grootfontein and whose families were based in the Dobe-/Xai/xai or Tsumkwe areas were obtained for the !Kung in my sample. For the 16 "older generation" !Kung in my sample (i.e. !Kung over approximately forty-five years of age), 36 out of 124 (29 percent) of their first cousins had emigrated to one of these areas. For the 32 !Kung in the "younger generation," 38 out of 189 (20 percent) of their first cousins had emigrated. This result suggests a slightly higher emigration rate for cousins of older generation !Kung, although sample sizes are small.

Some San who emigrate for labor to other areas maintain hxaro relations with relatives at /Xai/xai. These !Kung are generally those who cannot find permanent jobs in wage subsistence labor, nor do they succeed in agriculture; thus they straddle two lifestyles, periodically returning to visit relatives in the Dobe-

/Xai/xai areas and to engage in hunting and gathering. Other San drop hxaro ties to permit accumulation of wealth or because they want to become permanently attached to a pastoralist compound and not be bothered by constant visits from relatives. As will be mentioned later, it is not easy for the latter group to return to /Xai/xai if they remain away more than approximately five years.

In addition to facilitating extended visiting and emigration, hxaro paths also allow trade goods to make their way from very distant points to /Xai/xai and Dobe without direct contact. It is possible that the far-reaching hxaro paths composed of twenty to thirty individuals are expansions of shorter paths developed for exporting and importing trade goods.

Gifts for Hxaro

Although hxaro gifts are symbolic of underlying relationships, they are also highly valued for their own inherent worth, beauty, utility, or comfort. Receiving a valuable gift confers social status, because it is a sign that others care greatly about that person. Gifts are given with modesty and discretion so as not to display arrogance or arouse jealousy, although in requesting a return the giver may stress how timely, useful, or beautiful the gift was as a metaphor for saying how much he or she cares about the relationship. Hxaro gifts are manufactured in a social context - when !Kung make gifts they sit in a group talking, laughing, and pausing to admire their work. It is as if gifts grow in social value as they survive conversation after conversation, and as if in the future many people will be able to recognize their makers and know how much effort they put into them.

Much time and energy are put into making or obtaining gifts for hxaro. Based on data concerning hxaro exchanges in twenty partnerships over roughly a year of fieldwork, the average value of gifts given to partners during this period was the equivalent

of fifteen full days of labor. Days of labor were measured by either the time it took to make an item or to earn the money to purchase it. Hxaro gifts were found to have a life span ranging from three months to more than five years. Only 25-40 percent of gifts, therefore, were used up by the receiver, the rest being passed on to other partners. Consequently, the real value of investment in hxaro gifts was approximately five days of work per partner per year. For the average !Kung with sixteen hxaro partners, about fourteen of whom he or she does hxaro with in one year, approximately seventy days a year were spent making hxaro gifts. Hxaro takes planning, and it was not unusual to hear San discussing their detailed plans for the next day - subsistence concerns, visiting, and gift making. Even on seemingly leisured days, !Kung often have plans and concerns about how best to use their time.

Virtually all goods circulate in hxaro networks, from pots to shoes to beads to arrows. Nonetheless, by far the most frequently given hxaro gift is beadwork. Beadwork is considered an appropriate hxaro gift for all circumstances. There is also some evidence that in the past beadwork may have been one of the only goods used to symbolize hxaro relationships, for the word sometimes used for sewn beadwork, "///ri", and the general word for hxaro gifts are the same. It is intriguing to speculate that beadwork may have symbolized hxaro relationships in the past, with other items becoming acceptable substitutes as trade developed with surrounding agriculturalists approximately 1500 years ago. At this time, hxaro may have expanded into a system that not only secured mutual reciprocity, but also played an important role in the import and export of trade goods.

Hxaro is the most important source of all !Kung possessions. A tally of the sources of 1483 possessions of fifty-nine !Kung interviewed indicated that 69 percent of all possessions were received in hxaro, 27 percent were bought or made recently and destined for the hxaro network, and the remaining 4 percent were gifts from non-San (Wiessner 1981). Different categories of gifts

of foreign origin have different fates in hxaro networks. With each change of hands, goods are often altered to add a personal touch, particularly goods of foreign origin. For instance, knit caps received in hxaro may be unravelled and re sewn into different patterns to add a personal element, so that after a few changes of hands they are no longer recognizable as store-bought items. Wooden tool handles may be carved, metal parts of tools reshaped, etc. Cooking pots, cups, and other items of great utility, which have long been accepted into the repertory of San material culture, may be kept after passing through a few hands if they are badly needed by a household. Shoes and blankets are also often kept after a few exchanges, although they have a short life in the Kalahari. New materials for traditional tools and ornaments (i.e. metal for arrow points and glass beads for headbands) are widely circulated and readily accepted, although they are fashioned into San-specific designs and are not, with a few exceptions, used to copy the products of surrounding agriculturalists (Wiessner 1983, 1984). Clearly foreign items of material culture with only marginal utility - radios, record players, sun glasses, textiles, and other items - are received with great joy but quickly passed on to solidify bonds with other partners. They are thus used for social strategies within San culture, but many San in the /Xai/xai and Dobe areas in the early 1970s felt uncomfortable keeping them on a long-term basis. In summary, since trade goods often pass through the hands of several !Kung on hxaro paths and may be altered at each stage, by the time they reach remote areas those items of material culture which are accepted and kept have often been altered to fit the existing repertory of San culture and/or to express San identity. The continuity and integrity still found in material culture in remote areas may thus be, in part, attributable to the structure of hxaro paths.

Hxaro in a Generational Perspective

To gain some perspective on continuity in hxaro networks, let us now look at hxaro in a generational perspective. Hxaro partnerships can be divided into two groups: those formed during a person's lifetime and those inherited from parents or grandpar-

ents (Table 4). The first make up 46 percent of the average !Kung partnerships in my sample and include hxaro with immediate family members (parents, children, and siblings), other close members of the kindred (grandparents, siblings' children, parents' siblings, and parents' siblings' children), and partners who are friends or affines, but not known as members of the kindred. Partnerships with nuclear family members are developed gradually during childhood. They are continued after the children mature, binding the children and their parents into a core of close kin that either forms the basis for a camp, or, in cases where siblings have married into other camps, for regular intercamp visiting. Ninety-three percent of nuclear family members are chosen as hxaro partners, making hxaro between these close kin almost a matter of course and thereby linking extended families, not just isolated individuals. Hxaro with other close members of the kindred involves more careful selection, and 36 percent of grandparents, parents' siblings, siblings' children and first cousins are chosen as hxaro partners. These relationships serve a number of purposes, depending on the location of the partners. In particular, because of their common ascendants and the system of land (n!ore) inheritance, these relatives often inhabit areas of land to which a person has only a weak hold. By maintaining reciprocal ties with such relatives, !Kung keep rights to these areas open.

Partnerships with the abovementioned relatives may be distributed among members of a family or carried out simultaneously by a number of them. Of the fourteen individuals in my sample for whom I had data on the hxaro patterns of all parents, siblings and children, 143 (63 percent) of their 227 partners were also hxaro partners of their parents, siblings or children, while 84 (37 percent) were not (Table 5).

When hxaro ties are of benefit to both parties, hxaro partnerships with close members of the kindred are passed on to the next generation. The specific genealogical link is often forgotten, and only the respective kin terms and hxaro relationships are remembered. When partnerships are not

particularly productive, however, they are allowed to lapse upon the death of one of the partners and the descendants of that partner are forgotten as kin over the years.

For instance, of the seven deaths that took place during the study period, for three of them, all the deceased person's partners had already been taken over by his or her descendants. Of the remaining four who died unexpectedly, twenty-two (39 percent) of the remaining fifty-six partnerships were apparently being dropped, although whether partnerships are dropped or continued may not be clear until five to six years after a person's death. In one case, there was an interest in maintaining the tie, but the partnerships were waning because of incompatibility during visits. The thirty-four (61 percent) partnerships that were taken over were resumed on the basis of need and compatibility. Partnerships were continued by either children, siblings, or grandchildren of the deceased and the original partners or their siblings and descendants. In approximately fifteen of these cases, more than one relative of the deceased took over a given relationship, and in one case as many as four took over one particularly desirable one.

Other partnerships formed during a person's lifetime are with affinal relatives or friends not of the kindred. These relationships comprise 9 percent of the average !Kung's partnerships. They are most frequently started to adjust to a residential situation - when persons marry into bands where they have no kin, when young men participate in wage labor together, or when parents remarry a spouse who already has children. The bond is usually discontinued with the death of one partner.

The second principal category of partnerships is those inherited from parents or grandparents. These account for 45 percent of the partnerships of the average !Kung in my sample (Table 4). I made extensive efforts to determine for how many generations inherited partnerships were continued, but this task

was difficult. Genealogical memories among the !Kung are short compared to most African societies, and in my sample only three persons could give all of their grandparents' siblings' descendants if the grandparent in question was not still alive. Nonetheless, by consulting older !Kung, it was possible to determine that 16 percent of the average !Kung's partnerships had been passed on for two generations. For thirteen individuals for whom it was possible to obtain more extensive genealogical information for at least one branch of the family from elders, sixteen (9 percent) of their partnerships had been passed on for three or, in two cases, four generations. No one holding any of these sixteen partnerships was aware of the exact genealogical link. The remaining twenty of the average !Kung's partnerships are said to have been inherited for many generations but were genealogically untraceable. It is likely that some of these relationships have been inherited for at least three to four generations as well. When marriage occurs between parents' children's descendants and their siblings' children's descendants, all direct hxaro ties (which may have been used to arrange the marriage) are dropped, and hxaro exchange continues via the married couple.

Hxaro partnerships that have been inherited tend to be secure and marked by smooth reciprocal relations, in contrast to those formed during a lifetime. Reciprocity has been worked out over at least a generation, both parties know what to expect, and partners are hesitant to damage beneficial relationships that take years to replace. However, there is no evidence that the exchange of goods and services is greater in the former than in the latter. Inheritance of partnerships is another way in which !Kung choose which kin they prefer to "remember" in reciprocal relations and which kin they prefer to "forget." Those remembered through hxaro ties are considered to be very close kin, although in the majority of cases the specific genealogical ties are unknown. As with partnerships formed during a lifetime, inherited partners usually do hxaro with several members of a family, not with isolated individuals (Table 5).

Inherited partnerships allow time-tried relationships to be passed on from generation to generation, equalizing the number of kin available to a person. As Howell has stated, "A particular demographic regime will produce regular distributions of individuals who have few and many kin. These distributions are characteristics of individuals, influencing their life chances and social position, just as characteristics of personality and skill do. Individuals have very little control over their position in the kinship group" (Howell 1979:329). Meillassoux has argued along similar lines, stating that "kinship cannot rely on blood" (Meillassoux 1972:101). Inherited hxaro ties allow !Kung to have reciprocal kinship relations stemming from past generations so they do not have to rely on kin born into their family in the current and former generation alone, a situation that could leave many persons at a serious disadvantage.

As can be seen in Table 6, persons currently having ten or less close adult biological relatives are not at a disadvantage in hxaro compared to those having eleven to twenty adult relatives, since they make up for their shortage in relatives by keeping more inherited partnerships active. Those individuals with twenty to forty close kin appear to have an advantage in hxaro, but when the age factor is controlled, this difference is not statistically significant (Wiessner 1981).

It might be added that the possible effect of the name relationship on hxaro was investigated. The name relationship allows the !Kung to extend primary kinship ties far beyond the boundaries of their kindred to other !Kung sharing their name or the name of one of their close relatives (Lee 1979, 1984; Marshall 1976). If the name relationship plays a significant role in the choice of hxaro partners, then the !Kung would be expected to have a greater proportion of hxaro ties with others either sharing their own name or the names of their parents and siblings. To test for this factor, the names of ego, mother, father, and siblings were obtained from genealogies of fifty-nine !Kung in my sample. Then the relative frequency of each name in the population was calcu-

lated from census data of seven hundred !Kung. Frequency of names in the population was then compared to frequency of names among hxaro partners who were friends, affines, or inherited partners. The names of ego, parents, and siblings were not found significantly more frequently in sets of hxaro partners than in the surrounding population (chi-square, $p=.05$). Consequently, the name relationship does not seem to play a role in structuring choice of hxaro partners, although it facilitates visiting by allowing San to classify strangers in the visited area as kin and thereby makes interaction possible.

In summary, from looking at hxaro in a generational perspective, it becomes apparent that the practice of passing on hxaro ties to the next generation allows !Kung to "remember" kin with whom they have had fruitful relations and to "forget" others. Hxaro networks are continued through time, with individual members being replaced by their children or grandchildren. This continuity of hxaro networks allows time-tried relationships to be continued, but old ones to be dropped or new ones to be formed as conditions change. However, inheritance of partnerships also means that once !Kung have dropped out of the hxaro system for a long period of time, it is not easy to enter again. Secure, inherited places in hxaro and kinship networks are lost to these dropouts, and new relationships may take years to become firm. If older !Kung are correct when they say they, too, inherited partnerships from their parents and grandparents, then the hxaro system should have considerable antiquity.

Hxaro and Socioeconomic Change

In the previous discussion, I have suggested that the hxaro system may have played quite different roles in the past, depending on distribution of traditional and non-traditional resources, outside demands for labor, and internal and external demands for trade goods. Today, the role of hxaro apparently is continuously readapted to meet the changing needs of the !Kung.

Recent socioeconomic changes have had uneven consequences, depending on developments in various localities. In most places, the hxaro system has flourished despite changes in the economic base, because modern options do not yet provide a secure way to establish an alternative family estate or life support system. At the Tsumkwe settlement scheme, for example, hxaro ties have been expanded to allow !Kung to take turns filling the limited number of available jobs and also to redistribute their incomes to support partners (Wiessner 1977). Extensive hxaro ties with !Kung in other parts of Botswana and Namibia have also been maintained to permit families to "rest" from their work, "rest" from the many social problems at Tsumkwe, and occasionally to return to the bush to hunt and gather. Exchange of goods today at Tsumkwe involves the export of desired store-bought items to more rural areas, particularly blankets, shoes, and glass beads, and the import of traditional !Kung crafts that are sold to buyers at Tsumkwe who channel them to the world market.

Similar labor arrangements have been made on some of the Ghanzi and Sehitwa ranches, where San who are employees periodically leave to hunt and gather. In contrast, on other ranches in these areas, some San have been adopted into Tswana or Herero compounds as permanent workers. With the security of lifetime employment and the possibility of switching to agriculture, many of these families have dropped hxaro ties. But for most !Kung today, hxaro ties do much to preserve their freedom and independence, allowing them to combine various ways of making a living and giving them the option to drop employment that is tedious and underpaid once they feel they have done their share.

Conclusions

Analysis of hxaro networks in terms of internal and external interaction today has shown that (1) they provide the internal framework by which !Kung import and export goods to and from local and world markets; and (2) they structure ties that allow !Kung to

redistribute themselves over traditional and nontraditional resources. One of their many functions involves paving the way for emigration to areas where !Kung can engage in other lifestyles on both temporary and more permanent bases. The rate of emigration and success of emigrants depends heavily on the demands of the other local systems and the attitudes of people from other cultures in accepting San emigrants. Historical studies have revealed that these conditions and attitudes have varied greatly throughout recent history (Gordon 1984).

Although the role of hxaro in the 1960s and 1970s cannot be projected directly into the past, these results should have at least two important implications. The first is that, because the range of hxaro networks in the past three generations has been broad, that amount of contact and acculturation cannot be explained by local history alone. Outside influences within the entire sphere of hxaro networks must be taken into consideration. This point has recently been made by numerous archaeological and historical studies and is reconfirmed by the above analysis from the perspective of internal relations. Secondly, since San have had ties that allow them to move to other, less remote farming areas for at least three generations, staying in the Dobe-/Xai/xai areas and leading a hunting and gathering way of life can be better understood as a choice to exploit a niche rather than as the result of isolation. Hunting and gathering has been perhaps the best alternative for many !Kung until recently. Agropastoralism is precarious in the Kalahari, attitudes of other peoples towards San are often degrading, keeping them in the position of lower-class workers (Motzafi 1985; Wilmsen 1983), and the arbitrary use of violence has often been used to control !Kung in the past (Gordon 1984).

Hand in hand with the decision to exploit a hunting and gathering niche comes the decision to remain in networks of reciprocity that insure against unpredictable losses. These ties are, to varying degrees, incompatible with accumulation of wealth, since partners and their kin usually can and do descend to collect

their share, quickly "eating up" another's wealth and ego. The hxaro system is also at odds with sedentism, since it is necessary to be mobile to collect returns. For these reasons the model proposed by Schrire, "unless a special case is to be made, we must assume that Kalahari San have switched from hunting to herding and back many times in the past" (Schrire 1980:26), is questionable from the viewpoint of internal !Kung relations. Such switches would require recurrent dissolution and reestablishment of reciprocal ties and would thus be incompatible with !Kung organization. In addition, valuable knowledge would be lost. Thus, shifts from hunting to herding and back are more likely for San who have dropped out of hunter-gatherer networks to take up other professions. They then shift back to hunting and gathering when their new professions cannot adequately support them.

To say that some San prefer to remain in a hunting and gathering niche, however, is not to say that they exploit only wild plant and animal resources. Rather, they exploit all available resources, but do not drop their ties and engage in full-scale food production or permanent, full-time wage labor. Surrounding resources that are utilized may include the resources of neighboring agriculturalists or the wages of fellow parttime employees, provided that the work input in some way pays off after relatives have collected a share. For this purpose, local histories, such as that outlined by Lee (1979) for the Dobe-/Xai/xai areas are essential to understanding current San subsistence strategies.

The idea that people choose hunting and gathering as a means to exploit a niche makes it much easier to account for continuity in ideology, in social organization, and in locations of hunting and gathering sites in the sandveld throughout this century, and for the integrity in material culture mentioned at the beginning of this paper. Continuity in social organization would be preserved since choosing a hunting and gathering niche necessitates belonging to hunter-gatherer social networks. Ideology supporting

relations in this network, such as is expressed in the trance dance, might even have to be strengthened to counteract conflicts introduced by increasing temptations to accumulate wealth. Finally, the integrity found in San material culture need not be seen as a remnant of the past, but as a continuing expression of hunter-gatherer identity that plays a role in both internal and external relations.

In the future, ethnohistorical and archaeological studies will uncover more evidence about the history of contact between San and surrounding cultures. Then it will be necessary to further reconcile archaeological fact with anthropological observations of the San. For this purpose we will be very fortunate to have the outstanding work of Lorna Marshall and her family to give us an observational base line concerning both the structure and the spirit of !Kung life at a time when local outside influences were much less strong than they are today.

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NOTES

¹I am grateful to Richard Lee for providing me with his data on visiting for 1968-1969.

²This paper is primarily based on interviews with fifty-nine !Kung San adults and fourteen children about hxaro in 1974-1975. This sample consists of all members and visitors of three randomly chosen camps at /Xai/xai, and fourteen more individuals selected from their lists of hxaro partners to cross-check the information. Each person was asked how hxaro operates, about giving and receiving, about balance in partnerships, etc., as well as asked to list each hxaro partner giving their age, sex, location, area of land rights, genealogical relation to ego, kin relation to ego, and intensity of relationship between the two. This information was supplemented by a tally of each person's possessions to determine their origins. The data yielded information on 955 partnerships and 1483 possessions. Data on partnerships were checked again in 1977 when people were asked to list their hxaro partners once more. The two lists were comparable with only a few alterations. For a more detailed analysis of the data, see Wiessner (1977).

³For instance, in 1968-1969 and 1974 the average !Kung at /Xai/xai spent 2.2 months per year visiting kin outside his or her area of land rights. Ninety-three percent of the eighty-six visits recorded were to areas in which the visitors had hxaro partners. For more data on visiting, see Wiessner (1981).

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Table 1. Number of hxaro partners by age category for seventy-three !Kung San.

| Age Category | hxaro partners | | |
|---|----------------|-----------|-----|
| | n | \bar{x} | sd. |
| Children | 14 | 4 | 2 |
| Adolescents and marriageable young adults | 10 | 12 | 4 |
| Adults with small children | 27 | 12 | 4 |
| Adults with mature children | 14 | 24 | 8 |
| Old, partially dependent adults | 8 | 12 | 6 |

Table 2. Distribution of hxaro gifts by area for thirty-five /Xai/xai !Kung

| Area | km from /Xai/xai | Number of <u>hxaro</u> partners in area | % | Number of <u>hxaro</u> gifts from area | % |
|---------------|------------------|---|------|--|-----|
| Own Camp | -- | 91 | 18 | 229 | 40 |
| /Xai/xai | 1-5 | 123 | 24 | 107 | 20 |
| Nyae Nyae-Due | 10-40 | 44 | 9 | 53 | 9 |
| N/umsi | 30-40 | 82 | 16 | 43 | 7 |
| /Gam | 50+ | 17 | 3 | 7 | 1 |
| Tsumkwe | 75 | 102 | 21 | 107 | 19 |
| Nxau Nxau | 100+ | 1 | 0.02 | 1 | -- |
| Grootfontein | 150+ | 12 | 2 | 14 | 2 |
| Sehitwa | 150+ | 26 | 5 | 11 | 2 |
| Ghanzi | 190+ | 12 | 2 | 2 | -- |
| Totals | | 510 | 100 | 574 | 100 |

Note: The number of gifts from an area equals the number of hxaro gifts mentioned in the tally of !Kung possessions that originated from a partner in the given area.

TABLE 3

Distribution of Hxaro Partners According to Ways of Making a Living

| Age Category: | Families Interviewed | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|-------|---------|
| | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Total | Percent |
| | Adolescent Female: Hxaro partner | Married Couple-- No Children: Gatherers | Married Couple w/ Mature Children: Hunter & Gatherer | Old Married Couple: Partially Dependent | Married Couple w/4 young Children | | |
| Wage laborer in Namibia | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 6 |
| Employee in Border Camp | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 11 | 12 |
| Subsistence laborer in Botswana | 3 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 13 |
| Hunter-bow & arrow and horseback | 2 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 14 | 15 |
| Trapper and/or gatherer | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 16 | 17 |
| Adolescent | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 9 |
| Old, partially dependent | 2 | 4 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 23 | 25 |
| Disabled | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Total | 12 | 23 | 31 | 15 | 12 | 93 | 100 |

Table 4. Average number and percent of hxaro partners according to origin of hxaro relationships and kinship for fifty-nine !Kung (total number of partnerships = 955)

| Partnerships started during lifetime | | Inherited Partnerships | | | Total |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|-------|
| Close kindred members* | Friends and affines | Gt-grand-parents' descendants | Gt-gt grand-parents' descendants** | Unknown | |
| 7.4 | 1.4 | 2.5 | 1.5 | 3.2 | 16.0 |
| 46% | 9% | 16% | 9% | 20% | 100% |

*Close kindred members include parents, siblings, children, grandparents, parents' siblings, siblings' children, and parents' siblings' children, both full and half.

**Adequate genealogy on great-great-grandparents' descendants was available for only thirteen !Kung in the sample.

Table 5. Number of hxaro partners who are also hxaro partners of other family members for fourteen !Kung for whom hxaro partners of all parents, siblings and children are known.

| | Hxaro partners who are also partners of: | | | neither parents, siblings nor children | |
|---|--|-----------|---------------------|--|--|
| | parents | sibling/s | parents or siblings | parents or siblings | neither parents, siblings nor children |
| parents, children, siblings or grand-parents/children n = 45 | 45 (100%) | 36 (80%) | 45 (100%) | 45 (100%) | 0 (0%) |
| parents siblings/sibling's children, parent's siblings children n = 68 | 19 (28%) | 26 (38%) | 37 (54%) | 37 (54%) | 31 (46%) |
| more distantly related inherited partners n = 97 | 21 (22%) | 36 (37%) | 52 (54%) | 52 (54%) | 45 (46%) |
| friends or affines n = 17 | 2 (12%) | 9 (53%) | 9 (53%) | 9 (53%) | 8 (47%) |
| total n = 227 | 87 (38%) | 107 (47%) | 143 (62%) | 143 (62%) | 84 (37%) |

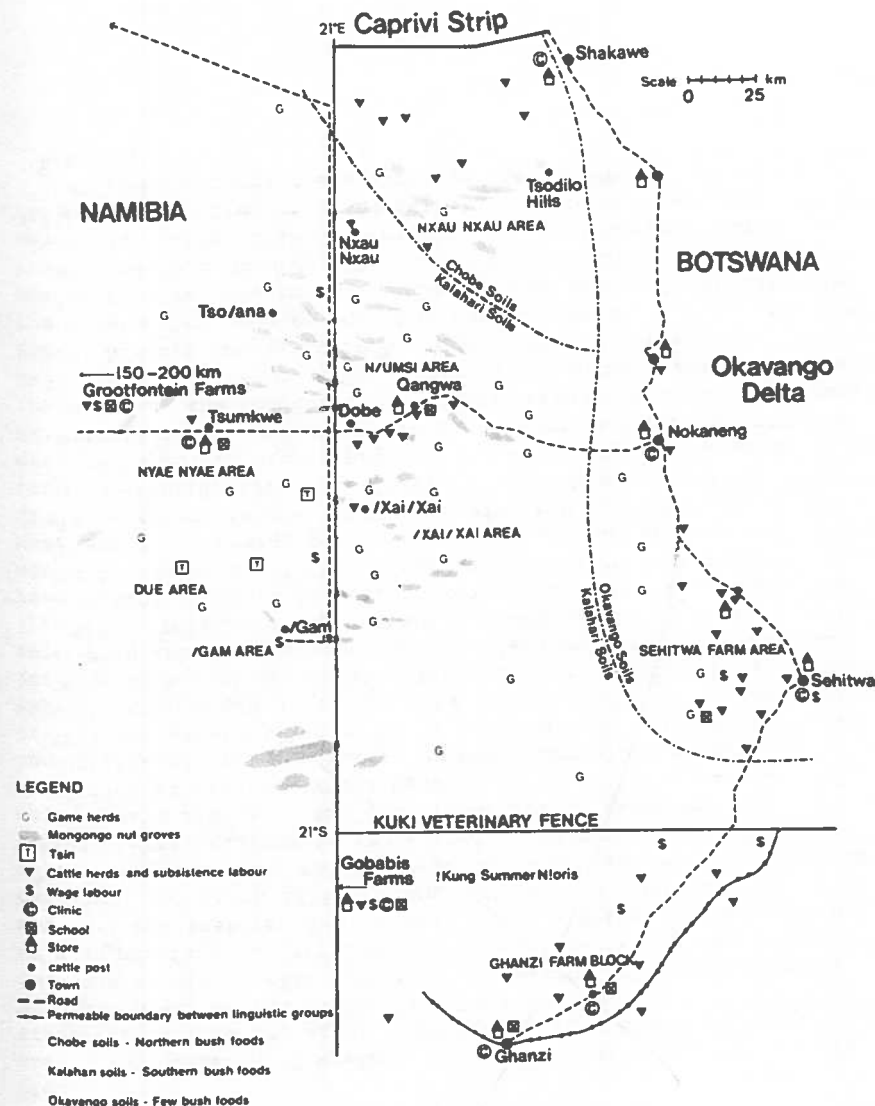
(n=total number of hxaro partners in each category)

Table 6. Number of hxaro partnerships by family size.

| Ego's number of close adult rel- atives ¹ | n | <u>number of Hxaro partners who are:</u> | | | | | | | | Total |
|--|----|--|-----|----------|-----|-----------|-----|------|---|-------|
| | | close | | friends/ | | inherited | | | | |
| | | relatives | | affines | | partners | | | | |
| | | sd | x | sd | x | sd | x | sd | | |
| 0-10 | 17 | 4.4 | 1.9 | 1.2 | 0.9 | 8.0 | 6.2 | 13.6 | 7 | |
| 11-20 | 25 | 6.9 | 2.5 | 1.2 | 1.5 | 5.7 | 5.6 | 13.8 | 6 | |
| 20-40 | 13 | 9.9 | 3.0 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 9.6 | 6.8 | 21.1 | 9 | |

Note: n = number of !Kung interviewed; x = mean number of hxaro partners per person; sd = standard deviation.

¹Close relatives include half and full parents, children, siblings, grandparents, parent's siblings, siblings' children, and parents' siblings' children.

**FIGURE 1:** DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES IN AREAS SURROUNDING /XAI/XAI

This map has been compiled from four major sources: Bieseke 1975; Marshall 1976; Yellen and Lee 1976; and Wiessner 1977. Please note that information on resources is sketchy for some areas.

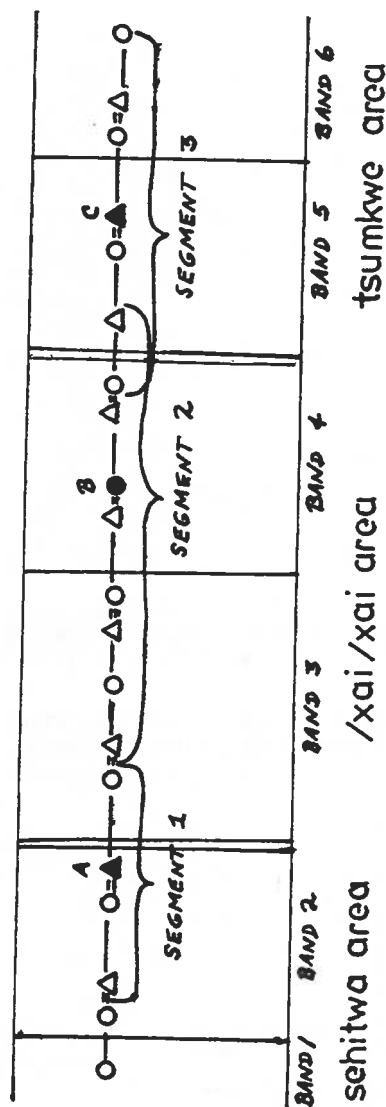


FIGURE 2: DIAGRAM OF A TYPICAL *HXARO* CHAIN AND ITS SEGMENTS

(Brackets enclose others along the *hazaro* chain of whom ego is aware and for whom he or she feels some responsibility.)

~~THE QUESTION OF HUNTER-GATHERER TERRITORIALITY:
THE CASE OF THE BATEK OF MALAYSIA¹~~

Kirk Endicott and Karen Lampell Endicott

The question of whether hunting and gathering peoples are territorial is important for understanding the conditions under which human beings evolved and, ultimately, for understanding human nature itself. Numerous definitions of territoriality have been put forward, varying with the interests and assumptions of the investigators (e.g., Ardrey 1966:3; Heinz 1972:406; Dyson-Hudson and Smith 1978:23; Hunn 1982:21; Cashdan 1983:47). The general consensus, which can serve as a working definition, is that territoriality is the exercise, by groups or individuals, of exclusive rights to the use or control of resources in a particular area. Several hypotheses about the occurrence of territoriality in humans have been proposed, most notably from the perspectives of human ethology and cultural ecology. The best known and most sweeping of these theories is Robert Ardrey's contention that all humans, like numerous other animal species, have an instinct to possess and defend bounded areas of space (1966). This behavior pattern was supposedly favored by natural selection because, in pair-bonded species such as humans, the joint attachment of the couple to a piece of land mysteriously enhanced the energy of the male provider and insured that he would stay with the female, thus improving the life chances of their young (1966:82-83, 103). Private ownership of land is "natural" to our species, Ardrey argues, and where, for ideological reasons, collective ownership has been instituted, as in some Communist countries, the unnaturalness of this arrangement will be revealed by the low level of productivity of the group. Ardrey does not test his hypothesis against the evidence of contemporary hunting and gathering peoples, but the implication is that, in the absence of strong reasons to the contrary, they will all exhibit private ownership and defense, presumably by individual couples, of bounded tracts of land. Yet even the most cursory glance at the ethnography of hunting and gathering peoples shows that the facts are far more complex and variable than Ardrey's view would predict.