

HUNTERS, CLIENTS AND SQUATTERS: THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS OF BOTSWANA BASARWA

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ABSTRACT This paper examines the past and present socioeconomic situation of the Basarwa (Bushmen, San) of the Republic of Botswana. Changes in adaptive strategies are outlined, and it is shown that Basarwa groups have chosen a number of alternative lifestyles. In some cases, Basarwa have become clients of other groups: other people have been dispossessed and are now squatters on what used to be their land; and still others have continued foraging. Case studies of 5 communities are presented which range from the hunting and gathering !Kung of the Dobe region to the settled agropastoral Chwa of the Nata River area who are engaged in self-help activities. Changes which will have implications for the future of the Basarwa are discussed, including the land reform program in the tribal grazing areas, the remote area development efforts of the Botswana Government, and the militarization of !Kung and other Basarwa in Namibia. It is concluded that the future of the Basarwa will depend upon how political, economic, and environmental issues are resolved, and whether or not the Basarwa are included in decision-making regarding development action.

Key Words: Basarwa, San, Botswana, Hunter-gatherers, Clients, Development.

INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the present situation and potential for survival of one of the few remaining hunting and gathering peoples in the world. When the survival of traditional peoples is under discussion, far too often there is undue emphasis on technical and ecological solutions to their manifold problems. Though those kinds of solutions are definitely important to consider, we see the main stumbling blocks as social and political, not ecological. Survival and development of traditional societies will depend at least as much on their political mobilization as on the technical expertise that local or outside advisors can bring to bear. It is for this reason that we have dealt in this paper not only with the ecological circumstances of a hunting and gathering people but also with the political-economic relations that these people have entered into with neighbouring populations and with the state system.

The acknowledgement of the ability of indigenous peoples to create their own futures is a matter not only of essential human dignity but of the utmost practicality as well (Cabrál, 1971; McClester, 1973). If the people in question are not involved and initiatory at all levels, any change foreseen is doomed to failure. The perspective of indigenous peoples on their own future, especially as they increasingly perceive the

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wider context of both pressures and alternatives, is an indispensable key to workable solutions.

HISTORY OF THE SAN (BASARWA)⁽¹⁾

The San or Basarwa are those hunters and gatherers who live in Southern Africa below the Congo-Zambezi watershed. They have long been known as "Bushmen," a pejorative term that some researchers are trying to replace with "San," following the lead of Wilson and Thompson (1969). San means "aborigines" or "settlers proper" in the Cape Khoi-Khoi (Hottentot) language (Hahn, 1881; Schapera, 1930). Clark (1970) suggests that the San have occupied Southern Africa for at least 11,000 years. Before the Dutch arrived at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652, perhaps 150,000 to 300,000 San covered all of this part of Southern Africa (Lee, 1976). For two hundred years after the arrival of the Dutch, the San population south of the Orange River dwindled to almost nothing as a result of disease and conflict. In the eastern part of Southern Africa, San had long been in contact with Bantu-speaking populations. There was undoubtedly some warfare, but the disappearance of independent San groups there was probably due more to assimilation through intermarriage than to outright extermination. By the 1950's and 60's, there were perhaps 55,000 San surviving in Southern Africa (Tobias, 1956; Lee, 1965). Since then, there are indications that their population has increased in some areas. Today they primarily occupy the less well-watered areas of Botswana, Namibia, and Angola, although some groups and scattered individuals may still be found in Zimbabwe, the Caprivi Strip, Zambia, and the Republic of South Africa. In Botswana they number nearly 40,000 (Table 1). It can be seen that there are a variety of groups in the country.

Marks (1972) has pointed out that just as the Khoisan (San and Khoi, until recently called "Hottentot") had been able to adapt to new social and economic customs through contact with early Iron Age farmers, pastoralists, and metal-workers in

Table 1. Population size and distribution of major San groups in Botswana.

Group name(s)	Location	Population size
!Kung (Zu/wasi)	NW Kalahari	2,800
//Au//ei (Auen)	W & NW Kalahari	1,850
Nharo and other Ghanzi groups	W Kalahari	7,500
G/wi, G//ana	Central Kalahari	3,500
!Xo	SW Kalahari	3,100
S. Kua, Tahasi, E. = Hua	SE Kalahari	2,500
N. Kua	E Kalahari	3,150
Tyua (/Taise, Ganade, Danisan)	NE Kalahari	5,800
Hiechware, Tati, Tuli Block, and Motloutse groups	E Botswana	3,300
River Basarwa (Bugakwe, /Tannekwe, Deti, etc.)	Okavango Delta, Botletle River	2,550
Kwengo	N Botswana	850
Balala (Ngwaketse groups)	S Kalahari	1,450
Balala (Kgalagadi District groups)	SW Kalahari	550
Urban groups (e.g. Gaborone, Mochudi)	SE Botswana	450
		39,350 (Total)

prehistoric times, so also were they able to adjust to new situations through a variety of flexible strategies in historic times. They adapted themselves to new economic conditions where this was feasible, or they retreated into the mountains and deserts or made bitter warfare where it was not. What is thought to have been discrepancy in reporting by historical sources—some Khoisan groups are said to have had leaders, some not—can probably be seen as differential responses to various kinds of pressures, many of them brought about through contact with outside groups. It is also possible that, as in some parts of the eastern Kalahari, population pressure may have made more stratified forms of social organization necessary. For some Basarwa groups, as among American Indians, leaders may have emerged among what were basically egalitarian hunters and gatherers when and only when leaders were necessary—for war. Recent research among San groups in the Kalahari indicates that there is a whole spectrum of adaptations and social forms to be found there (Vierich, 1981, 1982; Hitchcock, 1982a, b). A group which spends its time one year on a cattle post, watching cattle in exchange for milk and meat, may the next year hunt and gather, and the third year may find them living on the outskirts of a large town, the women doing domestic labour while the men go to the mines in South Africa.

THE BASARWA TODAY

Hunters, Clients, Squatters

The Basarwa of today, faced with encroachment upon their water sources and their hunting and gathering territories by Blacks and Whites alike, are finding they can no longer subsist in the traditional way. Though many Basarwa are still largely dependent upon hunting and gathering for the majority of their calories, an increasing number are seeking work as cattle herders, agricultural workers, and wage labourers for other people. Farmers employ Basarwa labour in situations which run from occasional piece work to complete incorporation into patron-client or employee arrangements combining both feudal and capitalist elements. Workers receive payment in rations, clothing, livestock, and, in some cases, cash. The specific conditions of employment vary from barely tolerable exploitation to an agreeable but at the same time somewhat repressive paternalism. In return for their labour, the Basarwa are admitted to the lowest rung of the larger, economically-stratified society, a position from which it is difficult for them to move higher.

Basarwa who have had to leave their traditional areas often live as squatters around the settlements of others. Stock theft, imprisonment, and alcoholism are common problems in these squatter situations. It is similar with peoples of modest economy all over the world who are faced with daily visual reminders of their own social inferiority (Bodley, 1982). In contrast to the freedom and dignity of the independent hunter-gatherer life, these conditions are tragic indeed.

Pockets of initiative associated with the beginnings of political awareness do exist among the Basarwa, however. In some parts of Botswana, independent Basarwa communities have arisen, with their economic basis in agriculture, cash game hunting, cash firewood hauling, the working of hides and skins for others, and several types of

paid labour. As among the Batek of Malaysia (Kirk Endicott, personal communication), these activities can be regarded as a kind of "foraging" on the larger economy. As such, they do not really represent a large departure from the "hunter-gatherer style" or the "nomadic style" discussed in *Man the Hunter* (Lee & DeVore, 1968). There is still the opportunity of making the most of what the environment provides at any one time, still the hesitation to over-specialize in one direction in case any specific source of livelihood dries up.

Where it has been feasible for Basarwa to do so, however, they have followed the pastoral model presented them by the Blacks. At !Goshe in the Dobe area of north-western Botswana, for instance, a number of !Kung San do only a limited amount of hunting and gathering and are semi-independent pastoralists who pursue some agriculture as well. The end point of this sort of change might be projected by considering the case of the Sandawe people of Tanzania (Newman, 1970). These click speakers, whom some scholars believe to be a "relict" population of the ancestors of the San, have recently left a hunting and gathering mode of life and adopted many of the features of the African cattle complex.

Land tenure is the key issue in the question of whether the Basarwa will develop along similar independent lines in the future or be assimilated out of existence as a discreet group. The land situation in Botswana today can be compared to that of the first days after the American frontier ceased to exist as an endless promise. Suddenly, even in the Kalahari, land is not limitless and its tenure is a problematical and potentially explosive issue (Hitchcock, 1980; Cooke, 1985).

The Bechuanaland Protectorate became the Republic of Botswana on 30 September 1966. The new government intends to develop the country economically partly by shifting from the traditional communal agropastoral system towards an export-oriented private system of meat and mineral production. As part of this move, the chiefs and ward headmen, who under customary law were in charge of land allocation, have been replaced by Land Boards under the *Tribal Land Act* of 1968. More recently, a new policy of land use and tenure has been introduced, the National Policy on Tribal Grazing Land (TGLP) (Republic of Botswana, 1975). This policy, geared toward preserving the range and changing the system of land-holding from tribal to leasehold in some areas, has a number of important implications for the people presently residing in rural parts of Botswana. A land use planning exercise has been carried out over the past 10 years which is intended to divide the land into three types: commercial, communal and reserve. The commercial areas will be turned into ranches of about 6,400 ha each, and the owners of the water sources on these ranches will be given leasehold rights over the land. The consequences of this move, however, could make the Basarwa in effect "squatters" on their own ancestral land. Later—in the Case Studies—we will explore the productive relations and land tenure in greater detail.

Legal-political Issues affecting the San

Of the estimated 70,000 surviving San, about 40,000 live in the independent Republic of Botswana, although recent estimates indicate that the figure may be even

higher. Few of them realize that they have new rights as citizens of this Republic. Many Ngamiland San have not ever heard the name "Botswana": they refer to their country, if at all, as "B.P." for Bechuanaland Protectorate. The one government dispensation which touches their lives closely is their privilege, under the *Fauna Proclamation Act* of 1961, to hunt without licenses, providing they use traditional weapons. Under Botswana's "multiracial" philosophy the San should have the same right as all citizens, but sometimes the fact that they receive special dispensations, such as the privileged hunting position, results in arguments being made against their exercising full rights as citizens.

In Namibia approximately 21,000 San are living today. Many are employed on White farms under the apartheid system. In 1960 a reserve for the San was established at Chum!Kwe. This reserve enjoys even less control over its own destiny than do the Bantustans, as the San are considered by South African officials as even less able to run their own lives than the Blacks. Certainly there is no pretence that Chum!Kwe is in any sense owned or directed by the San themselves. The fact that the South Africans are presently guaranteeing the !Kung their protection from the invasion of their land by the Batawana and Herero such as occurred in 1956, and the fact that the White farmers who entered in 1954 in search of forced labour were prosecuted, is not relevant to the larger economic fact. Any discussion of San economic problems, at Chum!Kwe or elsewhere, goes back inexorably to the South African economy.

Environmental Issues

One of the big questions to which government development personnel are addressing themselves now in Botswana is whether pastoralism can in fact be intensified in the Kalahari without endangering the ecological balance there. A basic theme which has emerged from environmental research in the Kalahari is the extreme delicacy of this particular semi-arid ecosystem (see, for example, Botswana Society, 1971; Campbell & Child, 1971; Cooke, 1985). The surface and top few feet of the Kalahari sand is a life-support system of intricate complexity. It provides sustenance for many kinds of grasses, for low plants and vines with nutritious storage organs beneath the surface, for juicy melons and desert cucumbers, and in some places for good-sized trees, all in spite of an extremely low and chancy yearly rainfall. The Kalahari is host to two of the most highly proteinaceous vegetable staples in the world, including even domestic species: the mongongo nut (*Ricinodendron rauteneni*) and the tsi or morama bean (*Tylosema esculenta*). People like the San with hunting and gathering economies did not seriously disrupt the basic structure of the original Kalahari ecosystem, and they have been able to live off its bounty for thousands of years. Hunting and gathering peoples are not, of course, conscious conservationists: rather, their low population density, relatively simple technology, and extremely varied diet ensure that resource demands are kept at a relatively low level.

Besides gathering the vegetable products of the Kalahari, San have hunted the larger antelopes as well as many smaller species. The large ungulates, unlike domesticated species such as cattle, had adapted to life in the desert. They can go long periods without water, sometimes eating the same melons that San use. Increasing

pastoralism with non-desert-adapted species like cattle could potentially ruin the Kalahari irreversibly if it were not carried out with extreme caution. Unlike indigenous ungulate species, cattle tend to stay around a watering point, often grazing out the nearby area and trampling the vegetation close to the water source. An erosional cycle begins when the perennial grasses are removed and bushes encroach on the area; since there is nothing to hold the soil it tends to blow away. Overgrazed and trampled areas can be recognized by such danger signs as incipient dune formation and the replacement of perennial by annual species of grass. Encroachment of woody species and non-nutritious grasses upon an area renders it less useful to cattle and wild game alike.

In thinking about the effects of the extension of the cattle industry further into the area occupied by the San, we must remember that there are many different ecological areas in the Kalahari. San hunters—like the game on which they prey—have adapted themselves culturally to these different areas. Basarwa ecological adaptation is a finely-honed instrument utilizing a great fund of specialized knowledge about a given area. A cattle economy, on the other hand, can act more like a bludgeon in a fragile environment like the Kalahari if not carefully managed. Until recently the cattle economy was confined to the better-watered portions of Southern Africa; the Kalahari was occupied only seasonally, when rains filled the pans in the summer. But the digging of wells and its successor, the drilling of boreholes, have made possible its extension into the waterless areas of the desert; cattle are not able to stay year-round in areas where formerly they could graze only seasonally. It is suspected that boreholes may upset the hydrological balance of an area by removing water from aquifers more quickly than it is replenished. In the eastern Kalahari, for example, sip-wells have dried up since about 1940, when the first boreholes began to be drilled there (Hitchcock, n.d.). As cattle numbers increase in an area, they begin to compete with wild game for grazing. They eat foods such as melons which abound in the Kalahari and are also utilized by cattle, thus making it more difficult to find resources to gather in heavily grazed areas. It appears, therefore, that a cattle post economy such as that which is expanding into the Kalahari, is not compatible with a hunting and gathering way of life.

With the high producer price paid by the Botswana Meat Commission, there is a certain amount of pressure to expand the cattle industry and to make it more market oriented. Botswana has embarked not only on the Tribal Grazing Land Policy, which will result in the establishment of commercial ranches, but it is also attempting to upgrade its trekking and handling facilities under a World Bank funded program known as the Second Livestock Development Project (Livestock II). In the past few years Botswana has been carrying out experiments on cattle in various areas, seeing how they respond to different conditions, in an attempt to come up with a viable grazing strategy. Plans are being made to domesticate an antelope species, gemsbok (*Oryx gazella*), in a scheme which will involve Basarwa herders. But by and large it is difficult to see how the San will benefit in general from the expansion of the cattle industry, except, perhaps, in terms of having increased access to water and occasional job opportunities. The ecological changes that will doubtless occur, in spite of the

promises of better management and control of overgrazing under ranch as opposed to cattle post conditions, will have a profound effect on the resources on which the San depend and may force them to become increasingly dependent on alternative sources of income.

San Consciousness

Awareness is growing among the San that ordinary natural misfortunes are no longer their worst enemy. While it is hard for many of them to see the widespread nature of the conditions which they now find difficult, there do exist individuals who have travelled enough and talked to enough people to get an inkling of what is occurring. People are increasingly speaking of getting land of their own. As one !Kung woman put it:

I have no land of my own. I am just a little bird and have nothing to hold me fast to one place. For this reason I feel pain; my flesh does not feel at rest. I want the chiefs of Botswana to give us a place of our own where we may rest. No-one else is going to take care of us, feed us. Therefore I ask that education be given me so that I am full of sense and can support myself.

Some groups of San in northwestern Botswana are cooperating in digging wells for themselves by hand; this is a kind of cooperation unprecedented among these hunter-gatherers. Many would like to have cattle, goats, donkeys, dogs, chickens—all of which need water. Some speak of wanting their children to go to school; “Otherwise, how will they have sense, how will they find work?” people say. With occasional outside help, San have written letters and sent delegations to the Botswana government to ask questions and make requests. They protested by letter in both Gaborone and Windhoek against the raising of the border fence between Botswana and Namibia which made gathering and visiting in that area more difficult. They complained in person about their water problems in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve to the Vice President of Botswana. Confronted with the actual presence of 5 thirsty people in a land where thirst is familiar to all, the Government’s response was quick and humane. A !Kung man has recently taken a White man to court for non-payment of a promised wage and he has won. San of the Ghenzi area who have had prolonged contact with Whites speak incessantly of wanting land and permanent water sources to call their own. As San contact with outsiders increases, and as pressures on land and resources continue to mount, there is a corresponding increase in awareness of problems and attempts to cope with those problems on the part of the San.

Botswana Awareness

Botswana pastoralists and agriculturalists have long been in contact with the San, at least for 1,500 years. The attitudes towards the Basarwa range from indifference to kindly paternalism, and, in some cases, to severe prejudice. As one district official put it recently, “Why should we give these people land? They are like wild animals and they should be dealt with accordingly.” The future of the San is seen by a number of Botswana to be one of settled pastoralism and agriculture, much like their own way

of life. As they say, "These people ought to leave their nomadic ways and settle down," not realizing or caring that "settling down" in this environment presupposes not only access to water but also control of an area of land from which a living can be made. Many San would like to become stockowners, but it is often difficult for them to do so since even if they are able to scrape up the money, Batswana often refuse to sell them any livestock. Even those San who work under the *sejara* system, in which they are given a cow a year in return for herding labour on a cattle post, are often given male animals so that they cannot expand their herds through breeding. Batswana refer to a San who has managed to acquire possessions or stock as a *motho a magoma*—in effect, an "uppity Bushman".

While there may be a certain amount of tightfistedness with livestock, both Batswana and Herero pastoralists are notably generous in sharing food with the San, even with those who are not working for them. Many San ask for milk at the cattle posts and rarely, if ever, refused. Many cattle or goats die or are slaughtered on cattle posts, and some of the meat almost invariably finds its way into the hands of local San, among whom the news of its availability spreads like wildfire. There are those who attribute the cattle owners' willingness to part with livestock products and other goods in this way as a result of (1) their desire to reciprocate for San hunting lands abrogated without payment, (2) their wish to acknowledge services performed by the San which are outside their normal feudal connection, such as psychic curing, or (3) their attempt to avoid the poison arrows of a people who they regard as capricious and easily angered. Another way of looking at the situation is to see two essentially pre-state peoples dealing with each other in terms of generalized reciprocity. The cash nexus model of relationship introduced by capitalistic forms of social interaction does not yet operate in all parts of rural Botswana.

Unfortunately, this traditional cordiality has not gone very far in creating practical working relationships between the San and their new government. Until recently the general government position toward this minority was a shrug of the shoulders and a mention of several planned "settlement schemes" which were never implemented. But the government was not negative towards the idea that something should be done about the San; it was just baffled by the great complexity of the problem and was occupied with other extremely pressing matters commonly besetting a new government. In fact, the openness of the Botswana government to suggestions from outside parties has been noteworthy, as shall be discussed below. Before going into this discussion, though, it is important to understand the various social situations which Botswana San find themselves in today. The next part of this paper consists of case studies of 5 such situations, ranging from the near-traditional through settlement schemes to genuine self-initiated development.

CASE STUDIES OF FIVE SAN COMMUNITIES

One approach which can be used to illustrate the current status of the San people is to present a series of case studies. For the purposes of this paper we have chosen 5 cases, and although each area has its unique features, these 5 can be usefully arranged

along a continuum from isolated hunter-gatherers through fully proletarianized workers in a settlement scheme to self-motivated developing communities. Much of the published material on the San has referred to the hunting and gathering !Kung (e.g. Marshall, 1960, 1976; Lee, 1968, 1969) and the G/wi (Silberbauer, 1965, 1972, 1981; Tanaka, 1976, 1980). Lee (1965) has made the point that the majority of the San live in agricultural or pastoral communities in which labour is done, often for other people. The balance of this paper is geared toward providing data on these feudal and capitalist kinds of socio-economic relations. Research along similar lines has been undertaken by Silberbauer (1965; Silberbauer & Kuper (1966), Russell (1976), Vierich (1978), and Hitchcock (1978, 1980).

The 5 communities chosen for discussion are:

1. Dobe: with full scale hunting and gathering !Kung bands;
2. Kauri: where the !Kung have been incorporated into the Batswana semi-feudal system of patrons and clients;
3. Ghanzi: where San have been incorporated into the under-employed "squatter" labour pool on White-owned and Black-owned ranches;
4. Bere: where San work on a settlement scheme as pastoral smallholders and craftsmen; and
5. Nata: where one-time clients now live in independent pastoral and agricultural communities and are engaged in self-help projects and community development efforts.⁽²⁾

It should be noted that not all San communities have evolved through all 5 stages, and in fact, some groups have jumped from communities of types 1 to 3, or from 2 to 5. However, with the rapid disappearance of the traditional band organization, the situation in communities 2, 3, 4 and 5 represent alternative pathways of development (or, in some cases, of underdevelopment). And with the changes in systems of land tenure even the type 2 alternative is rapidly giving way to a more "modern" form of organization built around the production of commodities (mostly beef) for the market.

The first study area, Dobe, is the home of the last viable !Kung hunting and gathering populations in Botswana. At Kauri, 160 km to the east of Dobe, San groups perform traditional herding services for Batswana cattle owners. In the Ghanzi Farming Block in western Botswana some 8,000 San live as squatters and wage labourers on White-owned ranches. The Bere settlement in southwestern Botswana, originally set up as a cattle cooperative, is a private and more recently government-financed scheme to settle the San and provide them with schooling as well as technical training. Nata, a series of communities scattered along the Nata River in northeastern Botswana, is comprised of people who once worked as *badisa* (cattle herders) for the Bamangwato chiefs but who were released from this service and are now mostly involved in tending their own livestock and making baskets and other items for sale as well as being engaged in wage labour (see Fig. 1).

The subsistence base of the various groups differs. In the Dobe area, even among those !Kung working for Black patrons, more than half of the year continues to be spent in hunting and gathering. !Kung and other San who work on White farms in Ghanzi and Namibia live almost entirely on food they buy at trading stores with their

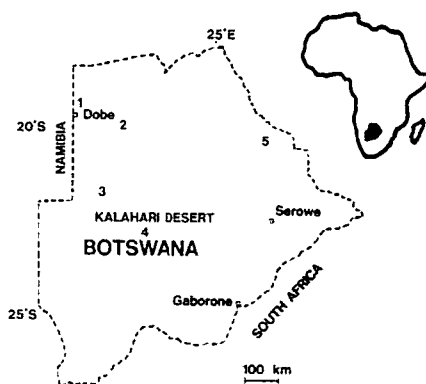


Fig. 1. Distribution of five San communities in Botswana.

wages for cattle work, although gathering still provides at least part of their diet. The Kauri groups' subsistence lies somewhere in between. The !Xo at Bere still hunt and gather, though domestic foods are increasingly part of their diet, while the groups in Nata depend almost entirely on domestic foods which they either produce themselves or purchase from others.

The range of adaptations to contact which will be dealt with in more detail below give some idea of the conditions under which the majority of San are living today. Points on this "continuum", our case studies, are only approximate, since each of the locations represents a very different and very special set of circumstances; nevertheless, the ordering of Dobe-Kauri-Ghanzi-Bere-Nata has a rationale which is useful in terms of gaining an understanding of the range of variation that exists in Botswana.

CASE I. DOBE: THE FORAGING STRONGHOLD

History

The Dobe area, 140 km west of the Maun-shakawe road in northwestern Ngami-land, is one of the last areas in Africa (if not the world) where people hunt and gather for a living. It was the persistence of this ancient way of life that first attracted one of us (Lee) there in the early 1960's to study the ecology of foraging (Lee, 1965, 1979; Lee & DeVore, 1976). The Dobe population in the period 1963-65 thus serves as a baseline against which subsequent changes and developments in other communities can be measured. Population data on the !Kung in the Dobe area are presented in Table 2. There are approximately as many non-!Kung in the Dobe area as there are !Kung.

Until the 1880's, the Dobe area was occupied exclusively by hunting and gathering groups of !Kung. The Batswana pastoralists from the east began making summer visits to Dobe and beyond for the purposes of grazing cattle, hunting game and trading with the local !Kung. At the end of each season the Batswana and the !Kung would meet for several weeks of feasting, dancing and trading at the site of the Batswa-

Table 2. !Kung living groups in the Dobe—/Xai/Xai region of northwestern Botswana, 1973.

Water hole	Camp		Client group		Water hole total		
	LG No.	Size	LG No.	Size	Camp	Client group	Total
Dobe	1	23			45		45
	2	4					
	3	18					
!Xabi			4	19		19	19
Mahopa			5	18		18	18
!Kangwa	6	21	8	10	38	25	63
	7	17	9	3			
			10	6			
			11	6			
!Kangwa			12	5		5	5
Matse							
Bate	13	25	15	8	55	13	68
	14	30	16	4			
			17	1			
!Kubi	18	24			24		24
!Goshe	19	30	22	6	67	6	73
	20	19					
	21	18					
/Xai/Xai	24	27	23	29	104	38	142
	25	15	26	7			
	29	24	27	1			
	30	22	28	1			
	31	16					
Total					333	124	457

na ox-wagon camp. This period, lasting until 1915, came to be known as the time of the "Koloi," after the Setswana word for "wagon". At the turn of the century, two aristocratic Batswana clans, the Bakubu and the Batau (the Hippos and the Lions) were "given" responsibility for the Dobe and nearby /Xai/Xai areas respectively. Under the semi-feudal system of indirect rule formalized with British help, the whole of the Batswana Tribal Reserve belonged the Paramount Chief of the Batswana, but every community and its land was parcelled out to aristocratic Batswana families. Members of the Bakubu, for example, have continued to allocate grazing rights in the Dobe area up to the 1970's.

The land tenure practices of hunting and gathering !Kung have been described in a substantial number of papers and books (Lee, 1965, 1968, 1972a, b, 1979; Marshall, 1960, 1976). The pre-contact !Kung were egalitarian without headmen; the ownership of land and resources was vested in a collective of siblings and cousins of both sexes called "Kxausi" (owners). Those people who could trace the longest history of residence at a waterhole were the "Kxausi", and if one moved away, his or her claim would lapse in the next generation (Lee, 1972a, 1972b). Boundaries between "n!ores", as the territories are called, are vaguely defined and undefended. Resources and water from the n!ores are shared as long as the visiting group asks permission of the "Kxausi".

When the cattle people first moved in, this flexible system of land tenure changed surprisingly little. The herds did not directly compete with the humans for forage.

and since the initial herds were relatively small, they could coexist reasonably amicably with the game herds and people who hunted them. Land tenure relations among the hunter-gatherers continued as before, and the Batswana headman only intervened when the San brought to him a dispute that could not be resolved internally (Lee, 1972c).

When cattle people wanted to move with their herds to a waterhole and previously occupied n!ore, they had to approach the "Kxausi" and satisfy them that first they would hire the local !Kung to watch their cattle, and secondly, that they would be generous in providing surplus milk and meat to !Kung residents, not just to their employees. In return the !Kung allowed their land to be grazed over by the herds. As the density of cattle increased, however, there was a marked diminution of game in the Dobe area. This did not cause much dislocation and hardship among the hunters and gatherers at first, initially, because the cattle owners always provided people with milk. In effect, then, the giving of milk can be viewed as a form of reciprocity for use of the land. Thus, the Batswana leading men who had the responsibility for allocating grazing land had to mediate between the interests of the cattle folk and those of the foragers. There is some evidence to indicate that the interests of the !Kung actually were taken into account, although in no case did the !Kung receive anything approaching adequate compensation for the thousands of hectares yielded to the pastoralists.

In the 1920's, Batswana and Herero settlers began to live year round in the Dobe area, and by 1963, over 300 pastoralists had settled among the !Kung residents. A few !Kung families entered into a patron-client relationship with the Bakubu and began to herd cattle under the traditional "mafisa" system, a system of absentee herd ownership which once operated over much of Botswana although details do vary from area to area (Schapera, 1943). In the Dobe area a wealthy cattle owner "farms out" portions of his herd to clients in distant grazing areas where the herd is watered and supervised in arrangements that may last for generations. The milk of the cows is consumed by the clients and their families. If an animal dies the meat may be consumed by the clients, though the owner must be informed. All new offspring belong to the owner except for one female calf, which is given to the client annually. Over the years, if the client's cows are fertile, it may be possible to develop a small herd which is grazed alongside that of the large cattle owner. The owner visits the cattle post infrequently, usually only three to four times a year, mainly to count the herd and to check on the client's worthiness.

In the early years of the mafisa system, the master would also hold court and administer justice in Batswana customary law, and generally oversee the well-being of the retainer and non-retainer community. Even marriages between retainers were sometimes arranged by the master. This system thus provided a loose articulation between the semi-feudal chieftainship of the Batswana and the band-organized !Kung communities. It should be noted that the mafisa system does not operate solely between Black and San peoples; in fact, the majority of mafisa clients are actually poor Batswana, many of them relatives of the herd owners. When they entered the mafisa system the !Kung became part of a system of production in which, like the poor

Batswana, they exchanged their labour for the products of someone else's cattle. But the means of production were not in their own hands. Since those clients who owned cattle paid taxes, the client communities took on some of the aspects of a peasantry; thus, we might call the process of incorporation into Batswana society a process of peasantization.

After 1948 when a local Batswana headman was appointed by the Paramount Chief, the Dobe area received an influx of Herero settlers from the east. The Hereros, non-Batswana Bantu-speaking people from Namibia, are highly successful pastoralists. However, instead of farming out their cattle to retainers as done by the Batswana under the mafisa system, the Herero owners live year-round at the cattle post and herd their own cattle. The Herero claim that their way is more efficient than that of the Batswana: reproductive rates are said to be higher and neo-natal losses fewer; however, there are no data with which to confirm or deny these claims. The Herero employ San cattle workers on a non-feudal basis that resembles the contract labour of modern capitalism in certain respects while in others it resembles the traditional mafisa system. The Herero will hire a young !Kung man for a year to herd their cattle; this man and his family live with the Herero on the cattle post. The master provides food, clothing, and a donkey to the worker; at the end of the year the young man receives a female calf in payment. If both parties are satisfied, the arrangement may continue for a second and third year. Like the mafisa system, there are no cash wages in the Herero contract and the payment is in kind. But unlike the Batswana with their mafisa system, the Herero deal with an individual !Kung and his family and not a whole band and for that reason they have the responsibility to resolve conflicts or arrange marriages involving employees.

In 1967, a third systems of labour was added, when a White-owned store was set up at !Kangwa in the Dobe area. The store sells goods for cash at inflated prices, but like many trading operations in rural Botswana its main business is buying cattle from the local pastoralists. The cattle are weighed on a scale in a paddock in front of the store. The price per hundred weight paid is considerably lower than the price paid in Maun, the district capital, or on the line of rail in eastern Botswana. In 1973 the price at !Kangwa ranged from R3.25—4.75³ per cwt, about R1.00–3.00 lower than Maun prices. When 100–200 head are purchased, the store organizes a drive or trek to Maun, a distance of approximately 350 km. This drive requires considerable labour as does care of the herd as it accumulates between drives. Over a dozen young !Kung men are hired by the store at wages of R13–20 per month plus rations.

The Present

Before 1970 the locus of Dobe !Kung decision-making still resided within the Dobe area community. It should be emphasized that the contact process which until recently affected the lives of the people in the Dobe area involved them with tribal peoples whose lives were not so very different from their own. Although the Blacks grew food, raised animals, and made iron tools, their social systems, like the !Kung's, were

based on kinship, and none had developed systems of exchange based on market principles or craft specialization. The Batswana were a chiefdom with internal ranking, and the !Kung were accorded a position at the bottom of the hierarchy, but they were not enslaved or enserfed, nor were they forced into the cash economy. The nature of the contact, in socio-evolutionary terms, was more or less between adjacent stages within the sequence of pre-capitalist economic formations.

But since 1960, when direct colonial administration began to affect the Dobe area with the founding of the South African settlement scheme just across the border at Chum!kwe, the pace of change has increased. By 1970 a very complex situation had developed with the San experiencing simultaneously the transition to farming and herding, as well as the appearance of wage labour and the potential loss of their land base. Some changes occurred up to that time without affecting the local nature of the decision-making process, and these include (1) improvements in hunting and gathering, (2) *mafisa* work on Blacks' cattle, (3) the transition to farming and herding, and (4) migrant labour, cash wage work, and petty capitalism.

Refinements in the existing mode of production of hunting and gathering included the adoption of donkeys (and a few horses) for transportation of people and produce. A modest use of firearms in hunting began in the 1960's, mostly with guns borrowed from Batswana and Herero, though legal restrictions on the use of guns ensured that a high proportion of the meat which came into the !Kung communities continued to be the product of bow-and-arrow hunting. Yet though the !Kung may appear at first sight to be full-time hunters and gatherers, one soon discovers that most of the men have had experience in herding cattle at some point in their lives; some of them even have cattle and smallstock of their own. In the past they assisted Black farmers in planting and tending their crops, and in good years they may have even planted their own crops. However, because of the extreme unreliability of the rainfall, not to mention cultural factors, none of the San had succeeded in establishing themselves on an agricultural basis. Livestock raising, on the other hand, does provide, under controlled conditions, an economically viable adaptation in the Kalahari, and it continues to be an important part of the economy of rural Batswana.

The possession of a herd of goats or cattle or of a field of maize and melons, puts a !Kung farmer-herder in an anomalous social position. The demands of the work routine require changes in life style: mobility is restricted, monotonous tasks become a part of everyday life, and children are pressed into service as herders (Draper, 1975). At the same time, women are confined closer to home and their work is more rigorously separated from the work world of men. But the most striking anomalies are observed in the tense relationships between those families of !Kung who have begun to farm and herd and their relatives who continue the foraging life. It is apparent that there are real contradictions between the organization and ideology of farming and that of foraging. The most important of these contradictions is that between sharing or generalized reciprocity which is central to the hunting and gathering way of life and the husbandry or saving of resources which is central to the farming/herding way of life. Food in a !Kung camp is immediately shared with residents and visitors alike (Wiessner, 1977), whereas for herders and farmers to do the same would quickly

put them out of business. When a !Kung family harvests or comes into possession of livestock, they come under intense pressure to share their good fortune with their kinfolk and affines. If they give in to these demands their stocks are depleted rapidly below the point of economic viability, whereas if they refuse, they are accused of stinginess, a serious social stigma.

In making the transition from foraging to farming, then, ecological factors are only part of the problem. There are also factors internal to the society which act as obstacles, and the transition is therefore discontinuous and conflict-ridden. With sufficient time, the San could probably make the transformation to small-scale farming and herding successfully and could at the same time restore reciprocity and equality on a new and higher level of surplus accumulation in which due recognition is given to the labourer's right to what he produces. But time has not been sufficiently long for such a transition: changes of an even greater magnitude were on the horizon.

By the late 1960's San men of the Dobe area had exchanged their early naïveté about the meaning of money for relative sophistication about wage work possibilities in their area and as far afield as Windhoek in Namibia and Johannesburg in South Africa. Local job opportunities included hiring on with the Tsetse Fly Control gangs to clear forest habitats of the fly, short-term wage work at the government station at Chum!kwe, and farm labour in the Gobabis district of Namibia. Migrant labour in the gold and diamond fields of South Africa lured about 10% of the adult male population from the Dobe area by 1968. In spite of the income generated, however, the relatively substantial monetary rewards have always been quickly dissipated on return to the Dobe area, much as any agricultural surplus would be.

In 1967 a trading store was established in the Dobe area at !Kangwa, and some of the men and boys found work with its owners. But the main effect of the coming of the store has been a drunkenness problem as a major item bought at the store is sugar, from which homemade beer is brewed. It is agreed by many !Kung, that the net effect of the store has been negative.

Change and the Future

The decade of the 1970's brought with it new challenges that threatened to change fundamentally the basic patterns of !Kung existence. In the early part of the decade, the Dobe people passed from a situation of local autonomy to one in which the direction of their lives came increasingly under outside control. The emerging dominance of outside agencies is seen particularly in the areas of education, land tenure, and administration.

A primary school was established in the Dobe area in 1973. Problems such as paying school fees, purchasing school clothes and providing sustenance initially kept the San from enrolling their children there. The San had other reasons, too, for being suspicious of the school's potential impact on their children, such as corporal punishment, something often administered in the schools (and which is frowned on by !Kung parents). Stories circulated about insulting behaviour shown to parents by children who attended school at Chum!kwe. Yet if the San did not put their children

into school to acquire basic literary skills, they felt they would find themselves severely disadvantaged in the rapidly evolving world of land claims, jobs, and international conflict that surrounded them. They saw the ability to read and write, in an age of increasing government encroachment on their lives with rules and regulations directly affecting them, was becoming an even more important skill than hunting in their struggle for survival.

A critical example of how the lives of the Dobe !Kung were becoming affected by government edicts is the implementation of the Tribal Grazing Land Policy. This policy, which was hailed by its proponents as the beginning of a new era in scientific and profitable livestock production, was seen by some as nothing short of the capitalist transformation of agricultural land which, like the Enclosure Movement in 17th century Britain, threatened to transform the people who lived on that land from independent providers of their own sustenance into tenants and landless squatters. Concepts of privately owned land and of trespassing are unheard of among those people who, like the !Kung, use land communally. In spite of safeguards against rapid takeover of land by unscrupulous speculators, San people were at a great disadvantage under the new policy. Lacking schooling, transportation, and finances with which to take part in the complex land allocation process, it all but passed them by, leaving them few alternatives. Further, since allocation was to be based on (1) stock ownership, and (2) possession of water sources, the San's claims to land would be rendered void since they did not hold the land under customary or common law as recognized by the Batswana. The old Motswana headman in the Dobe area, Isak Utuhile, advised the San that the best way to protect their land was to start digging wells themselves. His advice struck a responsive chord in the San and starts were made on several wells.

Since 1974, when the Basarwa (later Remote Area) Development Office was set up as a part of the Ministry of Local Government and Lands in Gaborone, Botswana's capital, a number of outside influences have come to bear upon the Dobe San which encouraged progressive thinking among them about their own real alternatives. The Kalahari Peoples Fund (KPF), formed in 1973 from the Harvard Kalahari Research Group, began to work in the area under the auspices of the Remote Area Development Officer. KPF sent several anthropologists to work among the !Kung including one (Biesele) who worked for 18 months as a research and liaison officer. Under this program the well-digging program was further encouraged with material and technical support, schooling was facilitated for those San who desired it, and the attention of the district Land Board was brought to the land needs of the hunter-gatherers of the area in the hopes of fostering support for both their traditional and their new land claims. The result has been that the San are much more aware of their situation and are positively motivated toward change. The Government has taken note of the utility of the research-liaison worker's job and is instituting this position in other Botswana districts. But progress of the well-digging program and well registrations as a basis for land claims has turned out to be heartbreakingly slow. Progress has been more substantial in agricultural development. Aided by a Motswana agricultural advisor the Dobe San have succeeded in registering and planting a number of fields. Change is clearly overtaking the one-time foraging stronghold.

CASE II. KAURI: A LIVELIHOOD WORKING OTHERS' CATTLE

History

The !Kung of the Dobe area have no oral tradition of having come there as a group from someplace else, though isolated individuals speak of various places in Namibia as the homes of their forefathers. The Kauri people, in contrast, are acutely conscious of their recent arrival in what they call "the East" (the Maun-Sehitwa-Tsau area of Central Ngamiland) as clients of Herero and Batswana cattle owners. "There is nothing to eat here," they say. "We wouldn't be here except for the cattle work." It is true that nowhere in "the East" are found the important staples, mongongo and morama, which have made the independent hunting and gathering life not only possible but rewarding at Dobe. Some 30 years ago, Central Ngamiland Blacks, seeking San labour, encouraged a large-scale !Kung arrival at their cattle posts, the people being lured there by the prospect of receiving stock to build up small herds of their own as payment for their labour.

The Present

The great majority of central Ngamiland San, including the Kauri people, live in patron-client relationships with cattle owners at the (relatively) abundant water sources that make livestock raising feasible there.⁽⁴⁾ The client situation at Kauri resembles the *malisa* system operative at Dobe. Some of the !Kung who came east, however, have become seriously disillusioned with the small returns they have received for their labour under this system. Some of the San have returned to western Ngamiland "to our fathers' and mothers' country", others speak of doing so in the near future. One such group had left the employ of cattle owners but was still in the area debating whether to make the precarious transition *back* towards independent hunting and gathering. The members of this group are desirous of moving back west if they can be certain that the land they move to will not be encroached upon the people moving westwards through the sinking of boreholes for water.

The Kauri community was a most interesting one in 1972 in that it contained both the "reactionary" group just mentioned and another one still enthusiastically working for Batswana cattle owners. One factor in the first group's continued presence at Kauri at that time was the employment offered by an anthropologist (Bieseke) who wished to learn what people knew of the long-ago times. In its disillusion with the actualities of working for cattle owing patrons, the "reactionary" group was actively reorienting toward the old values of the independent life and were therefore eager to talk about those things. Their decision was between returning to Muhauhoi some miles to the southeast of Kauri to continue the unrewarding life of labour for someone else, and returning to /nga, "the West," to try, a generation out of practice and a generation stiffer in the joints, to make a go of life in the old way.

This group of people was linked rather closely by kinship to the other group at Kauri. Both shared a golden memory of their "fathers' place" in the west, /Xai/Xai, on the border between Botswana and Namibia. For a number of reasons these two groups had differing experiences under Black employ, and consequent differing out-

looks and economic bases. The two groups that made up Kauri in 1971–72 were in a rather uneasy relationship to each other, the unease being reflected in the distance—about a mile—which they kept between their camps. a result of a decisive break early in 1971. The “progressive” group lives in Batswana-style huts of mud and thatch which laid out in an even semicircle oriented toward great kraals, on the model of a permanent pastoral village. There was greater intermarriage between the !Kung of this camp and neighbouring Blacks (including Batswana, Bayei, Mambukushu) than was true of the “traditional” group. There was also more Setswana spoken, more cloth worn, more beer drinking done, and more purchased goods in evidence. The group also had a number of cattle which ran with the cattle post owner’s herd.

The “reactionary” camp, in contrast, was a cluster of traditional grass shelters clumped in a rough circle in a grove of trees, the distance between them and the directions their openings faced reflecting personal friendships and family ties. These people too had goats and even a few cattle, but, in general, their non-traditional subsistence resources were meager. Taken together, the two camps at Kauri greatly resemble the present split situation among the Tanzanian Sandawe: Ten Raa (1970) has drawn a distinction between traditional hunting and gathering “Bisa” Sandawe and the more acculturated “Tehla” which has many elements of the Kauri distinction. The main difference, however, between the San and Sandawe situation is that acculturated Sandawe have become independent cattle raisers, whereas San in general have opted to be serfs to cattlemen. Investigation of the reasons for this difference—perhaps climatological, perhaps cultural—would seem to be crucial.

One way in which both Kauri groups did manage to forage off the Batswana economy without becoming ensnared in it was to gather and sell quantities of *n/n* and *koma-ko* berries in their seasons. The Black women were anxious to have these berries for brewing beer and they were willing that !Kung women should be the ones to labour in the sun far off in the bush where they grew. For the cash they got from the sale of these berries (R0.05 per cupful), the !Kung women bought small quantities of mealie meal, sugar, or tobacco from the trading store at Tsau, 13 miles east of Kauri. Other piece-work done by members of both groups for the Blacks included hunting (a man would be given the use of a horse, a gun, and a couple of bullets to bring down a buffalo or a large antelope), working hides, making chairs and other wooden objects, and cutting house poles and thatching grass.

Both Kauri groups, though they were to varying degrees dependent upon the Bantu for their livelihood, nevertheless retained their own independent living situations. Trance-dancing and singing went on largely unchanged from the way they were originally. Each group nearly always attended the other group’s dances and in that sense the two otherwise different groups comprised a single community. The presence of Blacks as occasional watchers at these dances did not change their basic character either (except on one notable occasion when the cattle post owner, drunk, was observed driving his Land Rover, its headlights glaring, practically into a dance circle). In general, the dance was the one cultural situation when the !Kung’s all-pervasive “inferiority” to the Blacks appeared reversed. Black and San alike, all over Botswana, are respectful of the power of San spiritual medicine, many coming to dances not only to watch but to be cured as well.

Change and the Future

What has happened to both groups at Kauri is, of course, an ongoing story. While Bieseles was still there, both groups made stabs at agriculture by clearing and planting land at the bottoms of molapos (dry river courses): some of these attempts were successful while others were not. The unpredictability of Kalahari rainfall was spectacularly dramatized in 1973 and 1974 when first there was an unprecedented drought, then an unprecedented flood, both of which ruined chances for crop success. One positive outcome of the agricultural attempt was that in 1972 the two !Kung groups were granted rights to the land they had cleared by the Batswana Land Board. This grant has proved to be an important precedent for the San in Botswana. The fields have continued to form an important source of subsistence for the Kauri groups up to the present.

CASE III. GHANZI: SQUATTERS IN A FREEHOLD FARMING BLOCK

History

In the early 1890's, in an effort to counter expansion eastward from German South West Africa, Cecil Rhodes proposed to settle a colony of Afrikaner ranchers in the western corner of the new British Protectorate of Bechuanaland (Sillery, 1952). The land was declared Crown Land by the British Colonial office in 1894 after the breakdown of negotiations with the Batswana chief Sekgome, whose people claimed ownership over the Ghanzi territory. This claim was not recognized by the British because the Batawana—living north and east of the Ghanzi territory (in what is now Ngamiland)—did not actually occupy the land but only used it for hunting, as well as for raiding San (Childers, 1976: 7). No land negotiations were entered into with the San, who were the principal occupants of the Ghanzi District, as it came to be known. There were several thousand San of the Nharo, !Kung, and G/wi linguistic groups. Other occupants at the time of contact were small communities of Rolong and Thlware Batswana, Bakgalagadi, and Nama (Khoikhoi) pastoralists who had migrated there in the last century from the north, south, and west respectively (Silberbauer, 1965: 114–118; Gillett, 1969; Childers, 1976: 6–11).

Some 50 Afrikaner families settled the territory between 1895 and 1899, occupying forty farms of 1,300 ha each which had been allocated to them by the Colonial government. Relations between the early settlers and the San appear to have been harmonious (Russell, 1976, Russell & Russell, 1979). Until 1933 the Ghanzi Block was largely unfarmed and large stretches of open veld lay between the few Afrikaner outposts on which game continued to graze and San continued to hunt. Thus, in the first three decades of settlement, the San had little or no feeling of being displaced. During these years the lifestyle of some of the White farmers was little different from their San or African neighbours: some Whites, for example, lived in wattle-and-daub huts. The early settlers were poor and had to augment their supplies with morama beans which San labourers collected and which were stored and used throughout the year for their own tables. The Whites also offered protection against the feared

Batswana raiders. Although there was no question that the non-Whites were in any way considered the equals of the Whites, the frontiersmen and women had to rely heavily on the Blacks and San for their labour and for companionship. To this day many of the older farmers speak the !Kung and Nharo languages fluently.

After the Second World War, and especially in the 1960's, the older generation of paternalistic settlers gave way to an increasingly profit-oriented type of businessman-farmer producing beef for the export market. The modern "rational" ranching business had little use for the highly inefficient labour-intensive mode of cattle herding of the old farmers. Under the old system, a farmer would send out a hired man with 50–100 head of cattle to an outlying corner of the farm up to 15–20 km from the farmhouse. The hired man, joined by several families of his kinfolk, would herd the cattle while members of his group subsisted on milk from the cows supplemented by wild game, bush foods and cultivated crops. The cattle post received a constant stream of visitors from hunting and gathering groups living on the periphery of the farms and from further afield. The farmer would visit the cattle post bi-weekly or monthly to bring rations and tobacco, to check on the herd, and to pay the hired man a modest wage. Periodically, oxen would be selected to make the long journey to the market on the line of rail in Eastern Bechuanaland some 600 km distant across the Kalahari. Because the cattle workers exchanged their labour for the means of survival, wages, the San population of the Ghanzi District underwent a process of proletarianization. But the worst was yet to come.

In the 1960's a number of the farms changed hands. As old people retired to the towns, white businessmen, mostly English, bought up the farms and set about running them more "efficiently". They brought in new blood lines of stock, improved inoculations and dietary supplements and, since they had no ties of sentiment to the San, they fired dozens of wage workers and drove hundreds of hangers-on off their land. The dispossession of the San had been implicit in their living situation since 1900, but the full weight of their loss did not strike them until full-fledged capitalist ranching came into their midst.

The Present

There are a substantial number of San in Ghanzi District (see Table 3). A recent

Table 3. Approximate number of Basarwa of different linguistic groupings, by area, in Ghanzi District, 1969.

Group name(s)	Ghanzi farm block	Southern villages	Central Kalahari game reserve	Other areas	Total
Nharo	2,400	600	100	900	4,000
Tssaukwe	300	nil	nil	500	800
G/wi	150	nil	1,300	50	1,500
G//anakwe	150	nil	1,300	150	1,600
Auen	900	nil	nil	300	1,200
Others (from Ngamiland)	a few	nil	200	100	300
Total	3,900	600	2,900	2,000	9,400

survey among the Ghanzi Farms San has revealed that 77% of the San are intensely dissatisfied with their life-situation on the farms (Childers, 1976). The remaining 23% appear to be content with life on the Farms either because they are employed as farm labourers or truck drivers and enjoy acceptable employment conditions or because they have adopted—as a very small number has—small-scale entrepreneurial activities which can be relatively profitable; for example, some people are engaged in fence-contracting, roof-thatching and saddle-making while others manufacture handicrafts.

The large majority of San, however, suffer from economic deprivation, unemployment, hunger and disease. A sense of despair and frustration is all-abiding as is a sense of collective ethnic inferiority and impotence vis-à-vis the White and Black settlers whose technologically advanced culture they regard as superior to their own (Guenther, 1976, 1979).

The plight of the Ghanzi San is due primarily to the process of “modernization” of the White ranching techniques. The San suffered doubly from this process. First, in the heightened competition for jobs the San worker stood little chance against the Bantu-speaking people in a job market where literacy and technical training were essential. Second, they became “squatters” on the very land they had traditionally occupied for centuries before the arrival of the Whites.

From 1965 on, there was a sharp increase in the incidence of cattle theft and the jail in Ghanzi began to fill up with San convicts serving sentences of six to twelve months at hard labour. To give an idea of the magnitude of the problem during the period 1966–68, over 90% of the cases tried in the Ghanzi Court were for cattle theft (Guenther, 1973, 1979; see also Childers, 1976: 43–44 for statistics on criminal cases in Ghanzi for 1973–1975). The pattern of “theft” was curiously uneven. Those farmers who continued to accommodate families of “squatters” experienced few or no losses while “evictions” of squatters were often followed by a rash of cattle thefts. The farmers appealed to the government for increased police protection and for the forced removal of squatters to some government settlement scheme conveniently distant from the privately-owned farms.

Change and the Future

When returning to the Ghanzi District in 1974 to do further field work after some 5 years’ absence, Guenther noticed a change in San attitudes from acquiescence and collective inferiority to resentment and positive assertion of their culture and identity (Guenther, 1975, 1976/76). Moreover, farm San displayed a higher degree of understanding of the political and legal institutions and processes—as well as rights. For example, in 1973 a San, unprecedentedly, had reported a White farmer to the police for mistreating him, which resulted in the conviction and incarceration of the farmer. Other incipient attitudinal changes are resentment over exploitation and land loss and sanguine and repeated insistence that they have control over their “own” land or “home” and have their own headman. These changes will probably intensify and the Ghanzi San of the near future will cease to be a timid and resigned “harmless people”, but will press for change and action in a spirit of anger and cultural revitalization.

The occurrence of such changes is the more likely in view of the expansion of the capitalist cattle economy which the future holds for the non-San sector of the Ghanzi District. In 1977 37 extension farms on the northern, eastern, and southern peripheries of the farming block were made available on freehold tenure to Black and White ranchers.

In recent years the government of Botswana has devised a number of plans for the development and resettlement of the Ghanzi San. These include such schemes as settling a number of stock-owning San families on one or two of the new extension farms to set up a cooperative stock-raising venture; a tanning and saddle-making shop; an agricultural training school, a game-ranching operation and a handicraft marketing system (Botswana Government, 1975). These plans are given strong priority by some government officials and some of them may be implemented soon.

The present plans for development are the culmination of over 20 years of thought and effort by the Botswana Government. In 1965 the anthropologist George Silberbauer published his government-commissioned *Bushman Survey Report* (Silberbauer, 1965) which included elaborate recommendations on the matter of Bushman development and resettlement. More recent official reports and recommendations on the same matter are by Sharp (1974) and Childers (1976). In recent years virtually every anthropologist who has conducted research in Botswana has been asked to submit a report on the subject (see, for example, Heinz, 1968a, 1968b; Guenther, 1974a, 1974b; Barnard, 1975; Hitchcock, Ebert & Ebert, 1975; Vierich, 1977).

All these plans notwithstanding, until recently only a few small-scale programs have actually been initiated in the Ghanzi area. In 1965 the Gereformeerde Kerk, the most fundamentalist branch of South Africa's Dutch Reformed Church, opened a mission station and Farm at D'Kar, 40 km east of Ghanzi. About 100 San, mostly Nharo and !Kung, were settled and given instructions in agricultural and pastoral techniques, along with Christian teaching. A study by Guenther (1975) traces the rise and decline of the mission station. The causes of the station's decline were numerous but an essential one was the contradiction of running a paternalistic, apartheid operation on the democratic, "multiracial" soil of Botswana. The immediate problems of D'Kar, squatting and overcrowding, manifested themselves in drunkenness and conflict; while D'Kar is thought of as "a place for Bushmen," it is not big enough to accommodate all those who want to be part of it. The problems at this mission station are a microcosm of a larger problem seen in the Ghanzi farming block generally, and they may reflect what could happen in other parts of Botswana if care is not taken to ensure that people living on what become ranches under the Tribal Grazing Land Policy have sufficient land of their own.

CASE IV. BERE: DIRECTED CHANGE IN A SETTLEMENT SCHEME

History

Bere is a most unique situation. It is a settlement scheme for a group of !Xo people 140 km southwest of Ghanzi. It was conceived and has been administered by a White

ex-professor of parasitology from Witwatersrand University. Between 1960 and 1968, H. J. Heinz carried out anthropological fieldwork among the !Xo. In the course of this research Dr. Heinz became aware of the problems facing the people he was studying, both in the form of encroachment on their traditional lands and waters and traumatic contact with dominant cultures—the Bakgalagadi, Batswana, and White. He feared that begging and/or serfdom would be the future for the !Xo unless assistance and encouragement came to them from concerned outsiders. In 1968 Heinz began to help them in various ways to improve their material standard of living. At first his assistance took the form of selling artifacts for them in Johannesburg at prices they themselves could not hope to command in Botswana. The cash returns from these sales were used by the people to buy desired trading store goods (e.g. blankets, pots, knives, mealie meal, sugar, tobacco) and to invest, with Heinz's help, in goats and cattle (Heinz, 1975).

While on a trip to the Okavango Swamps with a group of !Xo (Heinz, 1969) Heinz observed the interest shown by them in agriculture and herding. He concluded that the !Xo hunter-gatherers needed only the suggestion—and a little practical help—to make the transition to herding stock for themselves. Actually, it may have been Heinz's gift of a few goats (to those !Xo who had assisted him on the Okavango expedition) which led to the settlement itself. The people had already, throughout the 1960's, tended to gravitate more and more toward a Government borehole at nearby Takatswane. This move toward an easy source of water was not so much an indication of an explicit desire to settle, according to Wily (1973), as it was a result of the accumulation of goats, which reduced the mobility of groups in this part of the Kalahari.⁽⁵⁾

The Present

The !Xo people who live at Bere today made the decision—with a little help from a well-meaning friend—to become settled pastoralists. They also chose, with Heinz's guidance and encouragement, to clear land and raise crops (see Heinz, 1971, 1975).

I encouraged them to fertilise with cattle manure from the Takatswane Government kraal. I arranged for an agricultural advisor to teach them the correct method of sowing seeds for cultivating the land and endeavoured to obtain the most suitable seeds...I assisted by procuring rams and bulls of superior stock...I registered a brand for the band...and pointed out the health hazards of stock raising as regards the breeding of flies and showed them the necessity for greater cleanliness.

In 1971, Heinz set up a shop as an outlet for the sale of handicrafts and as a place where they could buy goods. Since then a school and a tannery have been started as well as a number of other projects. But despite Heinz's optimistic disclaimers, it appears that it may have been mostly his initiative and not that of the !Xo people themselves which led to the elaboration of the Bere Scheme.

Change and the Future

Elizabeth Wily (1973), a one-time school teacher at Bere who went on to become

the Basarwa Development Officer in the Government of Botswana, outlines the main problems of the settlement as stemming from the inherent significance of the instigator of the scheme. Essentially paternalistic in nature while claiming not to be, according to Wily (1973), the scheme did not sufficiently involve the desires, capabilities, and commitment of the people themselves at its most important levels. The settlement began to operate much as does any organization whose leader has made himself or herself "indispensable to the operation;" when Heinz was away, projects came to a standstill, waiting upon his direction and drive. The main difference between this place and places where San people live in close association with other cultures, however, is that Bere is in many senses their own place. It is at least in intention a cooperative ranch, with membership in the cooperative based on the ownership of two cows per family. Though Heinz himself now feels that cooperatives cannot work among the San (see Heinz, 1974), government officials now concerned with Bere are persuaded that genuine cooperatives can succeed.

As designed, Bere was to profit no one but the members of the cooperative, and in this sense it was quite different from the situations in which San work for either Blacks or Whites. In those situations, San enter an economy designed to profit from their labour while keeping them permanently on its most lowest level. Mayane (1978: 66) has pointed out that one underlying feature which marked the early attempts at development of San in Ghanzi District is that they were done *for* the people rather than *with* the people. The cooperative has not been as successful as had been hoped, and the tannery and community shop have run into difficulties.

These difficulties, according to Mayane (1978: 69), are partly a result of the local people's heavy dependence on outside support, particularly where new kinds of economic activities are being attempted. Yet in spite of the problems encountered in the Bere Scheme, it has been a valuable lesson in terms of development strategy in that it underscored the fact that the people who are being developed need to have a say in how that development is to occur. Attempts are now being made to organize a Village Development Committee which will function on its own and establish priorities for community development.

CASE V. NATA: FIRST STEPS TOWARD SELF-HELP

History

The groups which occupy the Nata River in northeastern Botswana differ in a number of important respects from San groups further west. Schapera (1930: 36, 38) notes that San groups in the eastern Kalahari have been influenced by the Batswana and other people to a greater extent than have the San in other parts of the country. While having a tradition of hunting and gathering in the comparatively recent past, the majority of the Nata River Basarwa live in settled communities which depend to a large extent on horticulture and herding. Archaeological, ethnohistoric, and oral history data indicate that these groups may have been sedentary for a substantial period of time, although some Basarwa groups to the north of the river were mobile until the mid-20th century.

Prior to the influx of Batswana and other pastoralists and agriculturalists, the Nata River Basarwa spent the majority of the year in dispersed extended family compounds along the river, where they cultivated small gardens and hunted and gathered. In the dry season groups of men under a *dzimba*, a specialized hunter, would go to pans away from the river and hunt large game, bringing home large amounts of dried meat. Some families would go to Sua Pan, where the Nata River emptied into a large basin (the Makgadikgadi Basin) and collect salt, which they would then take to the Bokalaka region further east; salt, meat, and sometimes animal products such as skins or reims were then traded for grains, tobacco and pots. In addition, the Nata River groups manufactured baskets of *mokolwane* palm leaves (*Hyphaene ventricosa*) which they traded (Ebert, 1977). The economy of the Nata River region, therefore, was based at least partly on export of products to distant places.

Organizationally the Nata River Basarwa differed from San in other parts of Botswana. Dornan (1917, 1925) notes that the Hiechware, as he called them, had totemic clans. Recent research indicates that there are at least twenty different totemic groups along the Nata River. It was also noted early on that the Nata River people were highly territorial (Hodson, 1912: 227), and this, too, has been confirmed by recent work. In a sense, then, the Basarwa in northeastern Botswana are more similar to Batswana than they are to San, though many features of their social system, not to mention their language and adaptation, are akin to those of the San.

In many ways, the history of the Nata River Basarwa is intricately tied to the history of the chiefs of the Bamangwato tribe, one of the 8 tribes of the Batswana. The first record of the Bamangwato living in the Nata region dates to around 1826 or 1828, at about the same time as the Bamangwato chief, Kgari, was killed in a battle with the Mashona in the Matopos Hills in western Zimbabwe (Parsons, 1972: 139–141). Sekgoma, later a paramount chief of the Bamangwato, lived on a cattle post in the Nata area. The Bamangwato moved from there to Tsebanana, a pool on the Zimbabwe-Botswana border near where the Nata flows into Botswana, and after that to Victoria Falls. They then moved back to the Shua River area (the lower reaches of the Nata) before moving to areas further south, where the tribe has resided ever since. Parsons (1977: 115) points out that by 1863 the furthest Bamangwato cattle posts were on the Botletle River, along the Motloutse, and near the Limpopo. It was not until Sekgoma's son Khama took power in 1875, presumably, that cattle posts were established on the Nata River again. Judging from the diversity of totemic groups along the Nata, it appears likely that some Basarwa were brought into the area when these cattle posts were established, some of them from the Botletle and others from the regions around Serowe, Shoshong, and Palapye, the present Bamangwato heartland. In the early part of the 19th century the major contacts between Bamangwato and Basarwa was probably in the form of hunting parties seeking guides. As these contacts become increasingly frequent, it is likely that the Bamangwato began to use the Basarwa on a more regular basis, providing them with guns and ammunition and taking in return the meat and skins which the Basarwa procured. Once cattle posts were established along the Nata, more and more Basarwa would come in contact with Bamangwato, some Basarwa settling on the peripheries of cattle posts in order to gain access to milk and the meat of dead livestock. Some of

these Basarwa were employed as herders, and in the latter part of the 19th century Khama decreed that these *badisa*, herdsmen, should be given something in exchange for their labour, such as a goat or a cow.

In 1907, after a disagreement between Khama and his son Sekgoma (later Sekgoma II), Sekgoma and his followers were forced to leave the Bamangwato tribal territory. Accompanied by a Protectorate police officer and his Basotho policemen, Sekgoma and his people settled first at Tsebanana and later at Nekati (Hodson, 1912). This move increased the number of Bamangwato living in the Nata region and provided many new opportunities for local Basarwa to get herding labour and to procure ploughs and guns. Prior to Sekgoma's arrival there had been a border incident between the British South Africa Company and the Bamangwato tribe in which some Basarwa hunters were arrested, allegedly for violating arms regulations. This incident, which occurred in August, 1894, led to an argument over the boundaries of Khama's territory which was only finally resolved in 1910, when the Northern Crown Lands were declared by the Bechuanaland Protectorate (Lands) Order-in-Council. Basically, the promulgation of this order meant that the entire area to the north of the Nata River belonged not to the Bamangwato but to the British Administration. This somewhat anomalous situation in land tenure led to a number of disagreements, several of which involved Basarwa. When Sekgoma moved to the Nata area his father, anxious to avoid further disagreements, moved his cattle to posts south of the river. When, in 1916, Sekgoma and Khama were reconciled and Sekgoma returned to Serowe, a dispute arose over which Basarwa he could take with him. Officials of the Protectorate Administration held that he was only allowed to take those Basarwa who had come with him in the first place (BNA S.34/8)⁽⁶⁾. Other disputes arose over who had the right to the use of Basarwa as hereditary servants: Sekgoma claimed that the Basarwa belonged to him and that other Bamangwato headmen could not claim them, while other Bamangwato claimed that they, too, had rights to use Basarwa.

Two incidents occurred in the 1920's which focussed attention on the so-called slavery issue in Botswana. One of these incidents had to do with a Bamangwato headman who tried to force a Nata River Mosarwa to return with him to his cattle post at Serowe. The man refused and an altercation ensued in which several Bamangwato and Basarwa were injured. The headman tried to press charges against the Mosarwa, saying he was responsible for the fight, but the Resident Magistrate in Francistown found the Mongwato guilty and fined him. A second incident, which occurred in Serowe but which had implications for the Nata River Basarwa, involved the shooting and wounding of Tshekedi Khama, who had recently become regent (acting chief) of the Bamangwato. The shooting was done by a prominent Mongwato, Simon Ratshosa, who was immediately jailed for his act. While in jail he wrote a report to the Protectorate Administration on how the Masarwa (as they were called) became slaves; in this report he referred to the mistreatment of Basarwa on the Nata River and even mentioned specific cases of Basarwa being killed. These charges were investigated but little evidence could be found to substantiate them. Ratshosa's report did lead, however, to an increased interest on the part of the Administration in the treatment of Basarwa. The High Commissioner read a statement in the Serowe

kgotla (council-place) in August, 1926, which held that the Government would not permit any tribe to demand compulsory service from any other tribe and that slavery was illegal. Reacting to this statement, Tshekedi Khama called for an investigation into the Basarwa situation when he was in England meeting the Secretary of State in 1930 (Hitchcock, 1977). The Administration appointed a commission of inquiry in 1931 which resulted in a number of recommendations, including the carrying out of a census, which was conducted in the latter part of the 1930's.

The Basarwa in the Bamangwato region, including those on the Nata, had become *malata*, hereditary servants, of the Bamangwato, Bakgalagadi, and other groups by the 19th century. While Khama III declared before 1880 that serfs could not be bought, sold, or transferred from one person to another, it is clear that the practice of keeping hereditary servants did not cease, and in fact is still found in some remote areas. Khama later abolished the payment of tribute by serfs. In 1899, when the Administration introduced the Hut Tax, a number of people discussed the idea of freeing the serfs, primarily so that they would not have to subsume the tax payments for their servants. In 1936, when the Administration proclaimed that everyone who did work for someone else was to be paid a decent wage, there was further talk of emancipation. The emancipation issue struck fear into the hearts of British administrators as well, as is evident in a statement by the Francistown Resident Magistrate in 1928. In this letter the Magistrate expressed fears that Basarwa might wander around stealing and killing cattle, and he went on to say:

I point this out as it seems to me that the sudden release of more or less savage Masarwas who have been kept under control and authority of their lords and masters, the Bechuana, may wander around the country stealing and killing cattle when they feel inclined, and if they collect together in big communities, as they appear to be doing on the Crown Lands at the Nata, the Government will have a difficult business at Hand (BNA S.43/7).

As far back as 1908 the question of control over the Basarwa north of the Nata River had been raised. The fact that a Mosarwa actually fought back when struck by a Bamangwato headman in the 1928 incident was seen as evidence that the Basarwa were less and less inclined to submit to the demands of the Bamangwato tribe, and the Administration of the Protectorate was obviously concerned as well.

In 1943 an incident occurred which tended to substantiate the fears of the Bamangwato and the British: two fliers who had left Bulawayo were forced to land on Kwakaka Pan in an area northwest of the Nata River. They came down near a group of Basarwa which had just killed some game. The Basarwa realized that they were hunting on Crown Land and that two men who had just landed were wearing uniforms and carrying weapons. They presumed that they might be arrested for illegal hunting so they allegedly killed the two men while they slept. The Basarwa were informed on and in 1944 they were tried in the High Court but were acquitted for lack of evidence. The acquittal led to a series of administrative decisions which were designed to increase control over the Basarwa living north of the Nata. The family responsible for the deaths of the fliers was removed to an area near Serowe, and an order was sent out to disarm all the Basarwa living on Crown Lands. In 1946 a police post was established at Nata, the principal object of which was "to make contact with the

Masarwa and if possible make friends with them and induce them to adopt a more orderly and settled way of life (BNA S.303/8/1). Camel patrols became a regular feature of life in the Nata area until 1952, and a number of Basarwa claim that they were rounded up by these patrols and forced to settle south of the river.

The history of the Nata River Basarwa has thus been closely associated with the Bamangwato tribe, particularly the chiefs, and with the slavery issue and the issue of control. Khama III died in 1923 and his son Sekgoma became paramount chief of the Bamangwato. Sekgoma, who had left the Nata area in 1915, died not long after his father, in 1925. Another son of Khama, Tshekedi, became acting chief in 1926. Tshekedi inherited cattle from his father, and many of his herds were still in the Nata area. When Tshekedi died in 1959 his cattle went to his sons, one of whom, Leapetswe, continued to keep his cattle in the Nata area. Thus, many of the Basarwa worked for 4 different generations of the Bamangwato royal family.

Not all of the Nata River Basarwa were herders, however. Some of them put their hunting skills to use and accompanied safaris into the concession areas in the Crown Lands (later, after 1966, the State Lands). Others went to the farms in Zimbabwe and northern Botswana especially in periods of environmental stress such as drought years. When Khama lifted the ban on people in the Bamangwato Tribal Territory north of 22° latitude going to the mines in 1934, substantial numbers began to go to South Africa. Some went to the mines in Botswana, such as the gold mines found by Karl Mauch in the Tati District in the late 1860's, or to the copper mine known as Bushman Mine, near Mosetse, which operated 1909 and 1919. Still others worked as wage labourers for ranchers; the Colonial Development Corporation, for example, established fenced commercial ranches in the Nata area in 1949, and they employed Basarwa to help build fences and do other odd jobs, until the ranching scheme folded in 1957. The Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (known locally as Wenela) employed Basarwa for road- and dam-building, while a farmer named Van Haas used Basarwa labour to herd cattle and later plant and harvest his ground nut crops after 1968. In the 1960's drought, many Nata River Basarwa spent time collecting bones and wildebeest tails for sale to the local trader, while others increased their hunting activity, particularly ambush hunting of wildebeest and buffalo near pools in the river (Crowell & Hitchcock, 1978). But perhaps the biggest change in the Nata River economy occurred in about 1973, when Leapetswe Khama moved his cattle out of the area, leaving many of the people who had worked on the cattle posts of "the Chiefs" without employment.

The Present

By 1975, when a team of anthropologists from the University of New Mexico arrived in the Nata River area, the Basarwa population was settled and was engaged in herding, much of it for absentee cattle owners (mainly Kalanga from the Bokalaka region to the east), and horticulture. Data on the Nata River Basarwa population are presented in Table 4. A number of the Basarwa families owned ploughs, and they constructed fields surrounded by thorn fences in areas not far from the river. Livestock

Table 4. Population data for Nata River groups.

Population size	Villages										Total cases
	MN	KG	SG	CH	L	M	G	KT	S	TJ	
1		1									1
2	1		1						1		3
3	2		1			1					4
4	4			2	1	1		2			9
5	2	1		2	1	1		2			9
6	3	2		2	1	3					11
7	2			2		2	1	1	1		0
8	3	1	1	1		1	2	1	1	1	12
9	2	2	1			1					6
10	1	2		1			1		4		9
11	1			1		1	1		1	1	6
12							2				2
13+		1									
Total No. of households	21	10	4	11	3	10	7	5	8	3	82
Total population	129	93	22	73	15	68	68	29	68	23	588

were kept along the river until just after ploughing, then they were taken to cattle posts at pools away from the river for the duration of the rainy season. Once harvest was over the cattle were brought back and allowed to graze the stubble in the fields (and to fertilize those fields in the process). Some hunting was still going on, though by and large it was done surreptitiously, particularly since two game scout camps had been established in the area, one at Modala and another at Sepako. Gathering was largely seasonal, with *Grewia* berries, palm nuts, and *mmilo* (*Vangueria infausta*) being especially important: interestingly, though there are substantial numbers of mongongo trees in the area, mongongo nuts do not form a very important part of the diet for most Nata River Basarwa. Fishing is done in the river with hooks and lines in the wet season and with spears and woven traps in the river pools during the dry season. Trading is still going on, with baskets and salt being taken to the Kalanga villages to the east.

Three major issues concerned the Basarwa in 1975. First, there had been a gradual incursion of outside cattle owners into the region over the past thirty years. Back in 1931 the Resident Magistrate of the Francistown (Tati) District had suggested that one way of alleviating the overcrowded conditions in the area was to resettle some of the Kalanga (Makalaka) on the Crown Lands north of the Nata River (Schapera, 1971: 228). The recommendation was considered again in November, 1932, and a police officer was sent to carry out a reconnaissance of the area in question. While he concluded that the grazing was suitable, immediate action had to be postponed due to an outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth disease, which meant that cattle could not be moved for fear of spreading it. In 1935, when the proposal was again considered, conditions in the Tati District had improved, at least partly because of the loss of livestock due to the 1933 drought. In 1936 several Kalanga headmen visited the area but were unimpressed: besides, there was a good harvest that year, so once again the matter was postponed. The Administration did recommend, however, that

cattle be allowed to graze there, but even in 1943 only 6 people residing in the Tati Reserve kept cattle in the Crown Lands (Schapera, 1971: 229). By 1975 this number had increased to around 30, and some of them were actually resident in the area. The second issue which concerned local residents was the lack of employment due to the removal of the Chief's cattle a couple of years previously. While some Basarwa had jobs on Kalanga cattle posts, many of those who had herded the Chief's cattle were still unable to find any herding labour. The third and final issue which was of great concern to the Nata River Basarwa was the lack of social services in the area, particularly health facilities and schools.

The first mention of a school in the Nata area is that of Joyce (BNA S.263/9) in which he notes that he ran into a Seventh Day Adventist missionary in the region during his 1936–37 census tour. The missionary was busily engaged in teaching the Basarwa hymns and was also helping to construct a school. Choba Maposa, a Kalanga cattle owner, established a school in the area named after him in about 1957, and a regular (not private) school was established in Nata Village in 1961. Still, by 1975, there were no schools within 20 km of the middle third of the Nata River, where many of the Basarwa communities are located.

A dispenser lived in Nata Village, 33 km south-west of the area, in 1975, and a health post had been built under the Accelerated Rural Development Program, but no nurse had been found who was willing to work in Nata. Fleeting visits were made by the Regional Medical Officer, mainly of a reconnaissance nature. No other related health staff, such as Family Welfare Educators, were in the area.

In general it could be said that there was little, if any, social infrastructure in the region. There were two small trading stores in the area, but the prices charged were high. Medical attention for anything but minor problems could only be obtained in Francistown or the Bokalaka villages, none of which were within walking distance. The Agricultural Demonstrator who was posted to Nata stayed close to the village, so agricultural extension services did not reach the people on the river. There was no community development officer in Nata, either.

Wily (1976: 1) has noted that little development work among Basarwa had been done in the eastern part of the country, the concentration being mainly on groups in the western areas. This emphasis on the west was due in part to the assumption that groups in the east were more highly acculturated, which to a certain extent was true in some areas, but it was also due to a lack of knowledge of problems existing in the east. In 1975, when the University of New Mexico anthropologists applied to work in Botswana, they followed in the footsteps of many previous researchers and asked for permission to work in the Dobe area of Ngamiland. With the emphasis in Basarwa Development shifting to action-oriented research, the UNM team was asked to shift its research location to the Central District. The team was told in Gaborone to make a concerted effort not to set up a dependency relationship in the area where research was to be carried out. It was the opinion of the Basarwa Development Officer that anthropological researchers could be catalysts for the development of self-reliance among local Basarwa populations and that this should be the goal. So in mid-1975, when the UNM team arrived at Nata, it was hoped that the local population would continue to be self-sufficient and would continue to develop on its own.

Perhaps the most important factor in awakening the community to its own potential was the Tribal Grazing Land Policy's Radio Learning Group Campaign. This campaign was an attempt on the part of the Government of Botswana to involve the populace in decision-making. The TGLP was explained in detail over the air, and groups of local citizens who listened to the broadcasts were encouraged to provide feedback to the Government, telling the people in Gaborone what they liked and did not like about the policy. During the spring of 1976, when questions were answered over the air, the very first question answered was one submitted by the Radio Learning Group in Mman/otai on the Nata River. This event had an immediate effect: it convinced the Basarwa that the Government, long seen as an organization which attempted only to bring them under control, was actually interested in them. The Radio Learning Group campaign had other effects, as well. It gave the people a reason to form a group and it required them to elect a leader on their own.

One outgrowth of the meetings which occurred as a result of the Radio Learning Group Campaign was the establishment of regular get-togethers in which problems of community interest were discussed. Realizing that these meetings needed to be run efficiently, the Mman/otai people and those of other nearby villages set about electing a headman who could not only run the meetings but who could also represent the community to outsiders. The headman election process was interesting in itself. Two different people were considered, one a *dzimba*, a well-known hunter in the area, and the second a *cho k'ao*, a traditional Mosarwa doctor. These two roles were important ones in the traditional Basarwa social system. After a great deal of wrangling it was decided not to elect a local person but rather an outsider, someone who would be able to be objective in decisions and who would not favour one segment of the local population over another. A Village Development Committee had already been considered, and some members of the community had attended a Village Development Committee Training Course in Tutume in February, 1976. By mid-1976, then, the Nata River Basarwa had not only elected their own headman but had also elected a series of representatives to serve on a committee, and they were holding regular meetings.

The lack of social infrastructure issue came up repeatedly at the community meetings, so it was decided in June, 1976, that it was time a school was established. The community representatives approached a former teacher in the area who agreed to teach classes, and thus the Bosele Community School was born, with 50 children attending from as far away as Sa/a, 15 km to the north. At about the same time, the community decided to build their own health post in order to entice the nurses who had now arrived at Nata Village to come upriver. A Family Welfare Educator made her first visit to the Nata area in July, 1976, and the nurses began regular monthly visits not long afterwards.

Some problems did, of course, come up. Many of the women felt as though they had been excluded from the decision-making process and were angry that they were not represented more in the various organizations which were being formed (including the new Parents-Teachers Association). The women then decided to form their own organization, a Women's Development Committee, perhaps the first of its kind in Botswana. The lack of agricultural advice was countered with setting up a

Gardening Committee which made collections locally in order to purchase seed and implements. Numerous attempts to interest the Sub-Land Board in Sebina to come out and register the fields of the community met in failure, however, and there was an ever-increasing presence of cattle in the area. But the community, with a school teacher who was deeply interested in development, assisted them by helping them to write letters to the Ministry of Local Government and Lands and also the Central District Council, outlining their problems and asking for advice. The areas which were most often cited as being ones of importance to the people on the Nata included the hunting laws, taxation, land registration, land use planning, and community development.

Change and the Future

By 1978 the Bosele Community School had 130 students and 4 teachers and it was about to be taken over by the Central District Council, which would mean that its status would change from private to Council. The nurses were making regular stops at the Mman/otai area, although the health post was on the opposite side of the river from the road, meaning that it was difficult to reach in the rainy season when the river was flowing. Plans were being made to build a new health post. The Gardening Project was underway, and all the community organizations that were begun in 1976 was still functioning. There was a sense of pride in their accomplishments, and the people were still willing to attend meetings to discuss problems and outline strategies for dealing with them.

With the departure of the Chiefs' cattle the people on the Nata had shown that they were not only willing but able to change their lifestyle. Many if not most of the compounds had fields associated with them, and a number of families kept their own livestock. The community meetings had resulted in the establishment of organizations which dealt with local problems. Health care and education were attended to in a place that three years before lacked social infrastructure. Government officials were paying more attention to Mman/otai, and various officers and district personnel were visiting the area in increasing numbers. Up until recently the Basarwa perceived their contact with outsiders as largely negative; many of the men had been arrested for hunting illegally, and they were unable to trade the meat they obtained after the Dukwe Quarantine Camp and cordon fence were established in 1954. They had been disarmed and resettled, and many of them were justifiably suspicious about Government's plans for the area. "They are going to give our land to the Kalanga" they would say, having heard often of the Tati Resettlement Project. But the Radio Learning Group Campaign associated with the Tribal Grazing Land Policy convinced them of the Government's positive intent to involve them in development decisions. While there is some question as to whether the feedback process will indeed have any real impact on the planning process, it at least mobilized people in some parts of Botswana to take a careful look at the problems which surrounded them, particularly those pertaining to land.

The economy of the Nata is changing. More money is being brought into the area

by Botswanacraft, a handicraft buying organization which is part of the central government. With more money in the area there are more inherent entrepreneurs (hawkers) who have come in to take advantage of the cash availability, and there are more beer parties than ever before. A kind of economic stratification is beginning to develop which did not exist several years before. Thus, the shift to a cash economy has both its positive and its negative aspects.

The fields of the Basarwa are still not registered, and although a Remote Area Development Officer was appointed to the Central District Council in October, 1977, he has so far been unable to get the Sub-Land Board to make the allocation. When the land use planning exercise for the Tribal Grazing Land Policy was carried out the Nata River area was zoned communal, so there is little danger of commercial ranches being established close to the river. One serious problem remains, and that is the ever-increasing number of outside cattle owners who are bringing their herds into the area. As yet, the complaints to the Central District Council have failed to prompt a response on this issue.

The land issue is the major one which the Nata River Basarwa will have to face in the future. Until the village is established and the fields registered, there is an ever-present danger of people being dispossessed. Still, the atmosphere in the Nata region is highly positive. A group of one-time clients have become self-sufficient and at the same time they have undergone a kind of social transition in terms of leadership and community organization. Mechanisms have been developed from within the existing social framework through which the community can deal with the outside world, not as dependents, but as citizens in their own right.

BASARWA DEVELOPMENT: GOVERNMENT CONCERN

Concern for the rights of minority groups in Botswana has long been a feature of the governments in the region, whether those governments were tribal, a Protectorate Administration, or the legislative and administrative body of a newly independent African state. Most if not all of the Batswana chiefs made an effort to improve the status of the Basarwa: tribute collection was renounced, payment for herding labour was instituted, and *mafisa* cattle were given to them to care for. Still, the issue of slavery kept recurring, and a series of investigations into the status of the Basarwa began in the 1920's. Hermans (1977: 55) points out that the Protectorate Administration tended to deal with this question largely on an *ad hoc* basis. Serious incidents of mistreatment kept coming to the attention of district and central government officials, and the Ratshosa paper in 1926 discussed the matter in detail. A Commission of Inquiry was established in 1931 and a whole series of witnesses were interviewed in depth. The 1930's was an active period in terms of interest in the Basarwa, not so much in terms of research but in government decision-making. Proclamations were made on slavery and employment, and settlement schemes were suggested, though not implemented. Serious, long-term academic research among Basarwa began in the 1950's (Hitchcock, 1978) and continued into the 1970's.

In 1973-74, for the first time, the issue of the future of the Basarwa in Botswana

society became a nationally discussed question. Previously there had been investigations not only by academic researchers but also by Government-appointed officers (see Silberbauer, 1965, for example) which led to government action, but it was not until the 1970's that attention came to be focussed on the Basarwa on a national scale. Editorials, letters, and articles appeared in Botswana newspapers and magazines as the people of Botswana attempted to come to grips with the question of whether the Basarwa were second-class citizens in a land committed to racial and ethnic equality. The choice of the name "Basarwa" was in itself indicative of the changing climate of opinion, as it replaced the earlier Setswana term "Masarwa" (the prefix *Ma-* referring to non-humans, while the *Ba-* prefix signifies people). The new awareness was the result of a three-pronged initiative: First, Basarwa people themselves were becoming increasingly vocal in expressing their feelings of deprivation and of being excluded from the mainstream of society. Second, international attention was being focussed on the racial struggles in the neighbouring White-dominated states of Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. The existence of an oppressed minority—the Basarwa—in the context of an African people who were themselves oppressed by the White supremacists created an uncomfortable anomaly in Botswana's political posture. A third theme emerged from within the young Botswana elite. Liberal Western-trained Botswana and expatriate civil servants and legislators saw the Basarwa as in some ways analogous to the aboriginal minorities in Canada, Australia, Malaysia, and other Commonwealth countries, with whom they shared some of the same social stigmas and disadvantages. It thus became a sign of modernity to acknowledge the existence of this minority and to make some provision for their special status and needs.

The result of the increased attention paid to the problems of Botswana's minorities was the establishment in 1974 of an office for Bushman (later Basarwa) Development in the Ministry of Local Government and Lands. Armed with a budget of about \$35,000, the Basarwa Development Officer was given the job of enumerating the Basarwa, finding out what their special needs were, and giving grants to local District Councils earmarked for Basarwa citizens. Education, water development, craft marketing and agricultural extension work were the major kinds of projects funded by the Basarwa Development Officer, who worked closely with international funding groups. In 1975 Basarwa Development was incorporated into the National Development Plan under the heading LG 32 with a greatly expanded budget of between \$180,000 and \$375,000 per year. By 1978 that figure had grown to well over P800,000 (nearly \$1 million).

While the original intent of the Basarwa Development programme was to focus on the needs of Basarwa citizens, it soon became clear that the Basarwa were not the only populations in Botswana which were out of the mainstream of development. In spite of the Government's oft-stated commitment to rural development and the massive investment in infrastructure engendered by the Accelerated Rural Development Programme (ADRP) in the years 1973–76, there were still large numbers of people who still lacked access to basic social services. Accordingly, the Basarwa Development Programme became the Extra-rural Development Programme (to

indicate its concern with rural populations which were beyond the small villages and therefore outside the range of existing rural development programmes) and, later, the Remote Area Development Programme (RADP).

One goal of the Remote Area Development Programme has been to localize the administrative structure so that personnel are working hand-in-hand with District Councils, which are the bodies primarily responsible for development on the local level. Working under the Remote Area Development Officer are 20 local officers, some of whom are District Remote Area Development Officers (in the North West, Ghanzi, Kgalagadi, Kgatleng, and Central Districts), while others are assistants to the RADO's, agricultural advisors, and researchers carrying out specific projects for Remote Area Development; a few Remote Area Development personnel are teachers. These officers are responsible for country-wide information gathering, liaison work, and development planning in remote communities. The majority of these government workers and volunteers are not academics: most are volunteers on local contract or native Batswana. Many of the principles on which their work is based are emerging directly from work with the changing communities themselves. Discussions of the needs as perceived by the people concerned are an important part of the approach taken to development strategy formulation within the Remote Area Development Programme. As Peter Berger (1974: 13) puts it, "Those who are the objects of policy should have the opportunity to participate not only in specific decisions but in the definitions of the situations on which these decisions are based."

As of 1 July 1978, the Remote Area Development Programme had either implemented or was about to implement 60 different sub-projects in various parts of Botswana. These sub-projects ranged from well-digging to agricultural development, handicraft and tannery center establishment to a gemsbok domestication scheme. Anthropological, linguistic, and land use surveys were under way. A major workshop on remote area development was held in Gaborone in mid-1978, and local workshops were scheduled for other parts of the country. Clearly, the pace of remote area development is picking up.

BASARWA DEVELOPMENT: OUTSIDE CONCERN

When San requests for aid with their problems to members of the Harvard Kalahari Research Group culminated in the formation of the Kalahari Peoples Fund in January, 1973, the government of Botswana was for the most part welcoming and enthusiastic. The group was formed to assist the San (and other remote area populations) in their struggle to determine their own future. The members decided that their most valuable contribution would be to combine hard, practical work with the detailed knowledge of the San gained in the 15 year history of the San research project (Lee & DeVore, 1976). The first commitment of the Kalahari Peoples Fund was to help San communities to secure legal claims to their ancestral lands and waters. Accordingly, the KPF liaison officer (Bieseke) and later the North West District Council's Remote Area Development Officer set up a well-digging program, since possession of a water source is crucial to Kalahari communities: an attempt was also made to register

fields with the district Land Board in Maun. KPF also became a channel for funding projects, acting as a go-between in relations of outside donors and the Botswana Government. Thus, what began as an academic group of researchers turned out to be an organization with direct links both to the donor agencies important for funding projects and the people themselves.

Academic researchers have long had an interest in the welfare of the Basarwa in Botswana. Attempts were made in the late 1930's to set up an investigative body which would assess the status and problems of Basarwa communities, but the idea was dropped. Government had already undertaken a number of studies, particularly in the Bamangwato area, and District officials were frequently asked to seed in their opinions on the "Masarwa situation." Some outside researchers called for the establishment of areas which could serve essentially as reserves (see Hermans, 1977: Hitchcock, 1978), and this attitude was at least partly responsible for the establishment of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. But by and large, academic researchers have had, until recently, relatively little effect on policy making as regards remote communities in Botswana.

MILITARY STRUGGLE IN NAMIBIA

Much of the debate between scientists and administrators over the best development strategy for the Botswana Basarwa is rendered academic by the threat to the San of a far more serious nature emanating from Namibia. From 1915 on, South Africa administered the former German colony of South West Africa under a League of Nations mandate. After the Second World War when all the other Mandate Powers turned their mandates over to the jurisdiction of the United Nations Trusteeship Council, South Africa alone refused to relinquish its control over South West Africa. After two decades of diplomatic struggle, the U.N. declared South Africa's mandate null and void in 1966 and turned nominal jurisdiction of the territory, named Namibia, over to Council for Namibia, a U.N. body with headquarters in Lusaka, Zambia. In the same year, the people of Namibia, under the leadership of the South West African Peoples Organization (SWAPO) launched an armed struggle to liberate their land from South African domination. Since that time the struggle has intensified, particularly along the 800-km long northern border between Namibia and Angola. In the period 1973-77 South Africa moved an estimated 15,000 troops into northern Namibia, and built a massive military base and air field at Grootfontein, a town only 260 km west of the San settlement at Chum!kwe. It was from this base that the South Africans launched their ill-fated invasion of Angola in October 1975.

Such a massive build-up could not fail to effect the San of the central !Kung interior. Their once-isolated border area has become part of the frontier between the White-ruled South and the "frontline" states of independent Black Africa. Yet because of the area's isolation the military impact came late and in a less drastic form than in other areas of Namibia. But it came nonetheless. As recently as 1964 the border was marked only by a dirt-track patrolled every few weeks by South African police. The !Kung moved freely back and forth, hunting and gathering on both sides

of the line. In 1965 a fence was built the entire length of the border; it was periodically reinforced and increased in height until by 1973 the fence (called "chipi" by the !Kung, meaning "iron") stood three meters high and consisted of 17 strands of barbed and unbarbed wire. The !Kung were not specifically prohibited from moving across the line but the existence of the fence had an inhibiting effect and cut off the !Kung increasingly from their foraging areas in Namibia. Thus the fact that the Nyae Nyae !Kung were settled at Chum!kwe on the other side of the fence did not make available any additional foraging space for the Dobe area !Kung, and in fact the gathering range for the latter was significantly reduced between 1960 and 1970.

The South Africans also increased the frequency of their patrols through the period, from biweekly or weekly between 1965 and 1968, to daily ground and/or air patrols by 1977. But more importantly, after 1970 the police recruited Namibian !Kung trackers to patrol the border on foot. They set up and supplied base camps every 50 km or so along the border and trained scouts to make a daily trip up and down the line looking for fresh tracks of possible guerrilla incursions. In the Dobe-/xai/xai area there were two camps, one at !Kwidum south of /xai/xai and the other at /Dwi!ka north of Dobe. Each morning a scout would set out from each camp; they would meet in the middle, spend the night at Dobe, and the next morning set off back along the border. Any tracks seen were reported to the police vans on their daily rounds. Although the San scouts carried only bows and arrows on their patrols, a more recent report stated that they were receiving weapons training from the South African police. The trackers and their families have been largely drawn from the /Du/Da southern population first contacted by the Harvard Kalahari Research Group in 1968. From being the most isolated !Kung foragers witnessed, they have been transformed in less than 5 years into the most acculturated of all the San in the !Kung region. They are now fully incorporated into a force of wage-labourers whose activities and movements are directly controlled by the South African police.

Accompanying this militarization of the /Du/Da people has been a belated South African attempt to win over the "hearts and minds" of the Dobe area population. When the fence was built up to its present height, the police saw to it that a stile was placed at 30 km intervals enabling people (though not their animals) to cross into Namibia and back. Every week the police send word across of when a truck will be going into Chum!kwe; on the appointed day people line up at the stile and are given a lift into the Chum!kwe store to purchase things they need and are then returned to the border the same day. Since prices in Chum!kwe are generally lower than those in !Xangwa these shopping junkets have proven highly popular with the Basarwa and their neighbours, and this was helped to soften the image of the Boers as ruthless and cruel towards non-Whites. This has been an obviously calculated move on the part of the South Africans to secure the loyalty of politically unsophisticated minorities, while practising severe repression against more politically-conscious groups elsewhere in Namibia. Since SWAPO organizers are also active throughout the border areas of Namibia, it is almost inevitable that there will be an armed clash involving San on one or both sides in the near future, though such a clash has not occurred as yet. Once it does, the divisions which are even now being formed among the San

populations of north-western Botswana and north-eastern Namibia will become solidified, thus breaking down long-standing social ties and perhaps setting members of the same family against one another.

CONCLUSIONS

An examination of the varied situations in which San in Botswana find themselves today reveals that there are a variety of ways hunter-gatherers can respond to change. While some groups have become dependent on other ethnic groups for their livelihood, others have remained relatively independent hunter-gatherers. In most cases the San have adopted strategies somewhere between these two extremes. Even those populations which have been exposed to contact for a substantial period of time and are sedentary still gain at least a portion of their subsistence from hunting and gathering, supplementing their income through the trade of locally procured or manufactured goods. Adaptive flexibility is the key means of survival of Kalahari San populations (Vierich, 1978).

Historically the Kalahari San populations have undergone similar changes. Virtually all groups had come in contact with Batswana and other peoples by the 19th century. Whereas conflict and eventual displacement were the order of the day for San in other parts of Southern Africa, in Botswana the majority of San were instead incorporated into the social systems of the Black populations. This process of incorporation began in different ways in different places: in Dobe it began with trading parties coming into the area in ox-wagons in the "koloji" period; in Ghanzi it occurred during in the 1890's when San assisted White farmers by gathering products such as morama nuts for them; and in Nata Basarwa worked as hunters and later as cattle herders for the royal family and other Bamangwato. Changes in the subsistence systems of San populations, too, have been similar in different areas. At first cattle were brought into the Kalahari in relatively small numbers, but as well-digging and later borehole drilling increased, livestock numbers increased, causing marked changes in the Kalahari ecosystem and often resulting in a decrease in the availability of game and wild food plants. Hunting-gathering groups were thus forced to rely on alternative means of making a livelihood, and in many cases this meant reducing mobility and staying on the cattle posts belonging to Batswana and neighbouring peoples. Increased contact with outsiders and increased pressure on land and resources brought about an increase in awareness on the part of the San: while this awareness was sometimes simple frustration, at other times it was an awakening of self-pride and the realization of potential for bringing about positive change.

Political economic theorists often cite cases where colonial governments have brought about a state of underdevelopment in Third World countries, but few of them have pointed out that underdevelopment has occurred and is occurring within Third World countries which has nothing whatsoever to do with colonialism but rather is the result of a dominant population exploiting a less organized and less vocal segment of the society. It has been noted that many of the San in Botswana became *malata* or *batlhanka*, serfs, and that they had to pay tribute to their so-called masters. Even though some tribal leaders may have disliked this system, few made any real

attempts to change it. San were not even allowed to have their own property: once they began to receive payment in kind for their labour on cattle posts, mechanisms were instituted whereby that property could not multiply, the giving of male animals to cattle post labourers being an example. Thus, while on one hand the San were faced with the loss of their land base through the encroachment of outside populations, they were also being incorporated into a system of exploitation which they could do little to escape.

Outside pressures were increasingly brought to bear on San populations, not all of which were negative. Attempts were made by not only chief but also the Protectorate administration to improve the status of subject peoples. Academic researchers who came to Botswana pleaded the case of the San, asking for land for them and requesting that they receive assistance to develop themselves. Commissions of inquiry were established to look into the problems of the San, and government officers were directed to conduct censuses and make recommendations as to how to improve the living situations of San. In 1974 the government of Botswana took a firm step toward aiding the San when the Bushman Development Office (now Remote Area Development Programme) was established.

How to go about properly developing San communities was still an open question. One experiment in social development was that of Bere, in which an individual played a dominant role, but which failed largely because of the inherent significance of that individual. Another experiment was that of Nata, where local initiative was responsible for the establishment of much-needed social services as well as for community organization. These two cases illustrate the fact that it is absolutely crucial that the people themselves have a say in how development is to occur. Yet there are still constraints internal to the San social systems which need to be overcome in order for change to be positive. One of these constraints is the lack of an organizational structure for decision-making, and the lack of a leadership role which is important in dealings with outside agencies. In Dobe we have seen that conflict-resolution is often brought about by the bringing in of an outside (i.e. non-San) individual, while at Nata a Mosarwa leader was chosen, albeit not one from the local community. The sharing ethic which characterizes hunter-gatherer societies in Botswana, too, can be seen as a constraint in that it prevents the accumulation of property such as cattle (though in some senses this could be viewed as positive, in view of the fact that cattle have a substantial effect on the environment).

The future of the San in the Kalahari will very much depend on how the land issue is resolved. Thus far the Remote Area Development Programme has been relatively successful in establishing that the San need to be considered in land-use planning and that their land needs must be met. But it is far from clear whether or not they will have sufficient land to continue the kinds of lifeways pursued in the past. It is clear, though, that the San can and must be part of the decision-making process. As anthropologists, it is crucial that we cooperate with native peoples in their efforts to create their own futures. In the words of Amílcar Cabral (1970), "We know that on the practical level our own reality—however fine and attractive the reality of others may be—can only be transformed by detailed knowledge of it, by our own efforts, by our own sacrifices."

NOTES

- (1) San is the term that is used by researchers working in Southern Africa. It should be noted, however, that the officially accepted term in Botswana is "Basarwa". This term applies to a broader range of people than the San, including the so-called "Black Bushmen" of which the Nata River people are a part. In a technical sense, then, the Nata River groups are not actually San, though they do speak a click language and were until comparatively recently hunters and gatherers. For the purposes of this paper we have decided to use San rather than Basarwa since that is the term employed by the Harvard Kalahari Research Group and most of the other researchers who have worked in Botswana.
- (2) The data on Dobe were provided by R. Lee, on Kauri by M. Bieseles, on the Ghanzi District by M. Guenther, on Bere by H. J. Heinz and E. Wily (personal communications and typescript reports), and on Nata by R. Hitchcock.
- (3) At that time one Rand, which was then the currency used in Botswana, was equal to \$1.50 (U.S.) and £0.70 (Sterling).
- (4) The majority of cattle in Ngamiland are located on the fringes of the Okavango Delta. Cattle have not been extended in great numbers as yet into western Ngamiland (where Dobe and /Xai/Xai are located) only because of the scarcity of permanent water supplies.
- (5) While on the one hand there are those who believe that having livestock tends to reduce mobility because of the water needs of the animals, there are others who suspect that livestock, especially smallstock, can do quite well in waterless areas, simply by consuming melons and roots. This is the case, for example, in the northeastern Central Kalahari Game Reserve (Cashdan, 1977) and the eastern Kalahari sandveld (Hitchcock, n.d.).
- (6) BNA stands for the Botswana Archives; S.34/8 stands for the filing code number in the archives.

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