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## Introduction

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### AN OVERVIEW OF SAN STUDIES

While the San (or ‘Bushmen’) of southern Africa are considered to be some of the most intensively studied indigenous people on the planet, their involvement in activism, social movements, and development is less well known. Many San groups are especially well documented, thanks in part to detailed studies and analyses (some of them long-term and interdisciplinary) by anthropologists, sociologists, geographers, historians, linguists, ecologists, film-makers, and others (Schapera 1930; Lee and DeVore 1968; Lee and DeVore eds. 1976; Lee 1979, 2013; Barnard 1992; Skotnes 1996; Bank 1998; Gordon and Douglas 2000; Saugestad 2001; Hitchcock et al. 2006; Vierich 2008; Vossen 2013; Bolaane 2013; Güldemann 2008, 2014; Tanaka 2014). The San also have a lengthy prehistory and history, as revealed by work in archaeology, genetics, and ethnohistory (Yellen 1977; Ikeya 1999; Mitchell 2010, 2012; Lombard 2015; Pargeter et al. 2016; Ikeya and Hitchcock 2016).

Extensive work among the San has been carried out by development agency personnel, educational specialists, and individuals concerned with indigenous people’s rights (see, e.g., Silberbauer 1965, 1981; Wily 1979; Hitchcock 1988; Mogwe 1992; Chr. Michelsen Institute 1996; Bollig et al. 2000; Nkelekang 2000; Cassidy et al. 2001; Saugestad 2001; Suzman 2001, 2017; Sapignoli 2012; Biesele 2013; Biesele and Hitchcock 2013; Koot 2013; Zips-Mairitsch 2013; Sylvain 2014, 2015; Ninkova 2015, 2017; Hays 2016; Lawy 2016). Biographies, including those on San women, have had enormous impact, especially in schools and colleges and with the general public (e.g., Shostak 1981; 2000). Documentary and popular films have been made on the San, which have also brought significant attention to them (Marshall 1974, 1980, 2003; Wicksteed 2005; Strong 2011, 2015). Popular treatments of the San in such publications as *National Geographic* have contributed to the popularity of the San as well (see, e.g., Godwin 2001; Paterniti 2017).

A crucial development in San studies involves the San increasingly speaking for themselves, rather than having others speak for them or about them (Hardbattle

1993; Kiema 2010; Sekere 2011). Scientific studies on San demography, nutrition, health, and wellbeing have been carried out (Nurse and Jenkins 1977; Susser 2009; Howell 2010) as have detailed genetic investigations, which have underscored the diversity and lengthy prehistory and history of the San (Schlebusch 2010; Schramm 2016). Crucial areas of concern for the San in recent years have been investigations of biological, cultural, and intellectual property (Wynberg, Schroder, and Chennells 2009; Chennells 2016).

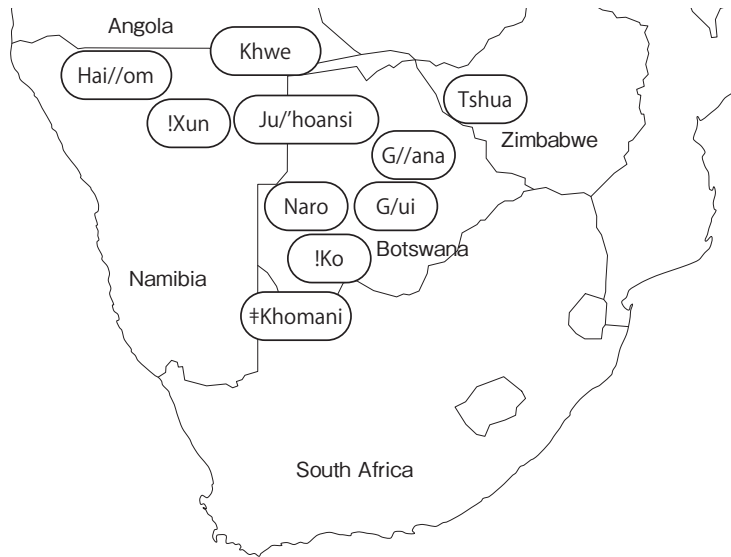
In addition, the complex sharing, kinship, marriage, naming, reciprocity, and conflict-management systems of the San have been the focus of detailed analyses (Marshall 1976: 200–286; Ury 1990, 1995; Barnard 1992, 2007; Wiessner 2002, 2014). The San are also known for their elaborate healing, dancing, traditional medicines, and ability to enter into a state of trance (Katz 1982; Katz, Biesele, and St. Denis 1997; Biesele 1993; Marshall 1999; Keeney 2010; Keeney and Keeney 2015). And last, but by no means least, there is the widespread presence of rock art including petroglyphs and paintings in southern Africa, some of which are tied to the San and their ancestors (Lewis-Williams and Dowson eds. 1989; Jolly 1996; Prins 2000). Some of these rock art sites have become important places for tourism, which has had significant (although mixed) benefits for local communities.

## SAN POPULATIONS AND LANGUAGE GROUPS

There are several ways to characterize the diversity that exists among the San. One way is to examine them through their languages (a socio-linguistic analysis). A second way is to look at the diversity of San in terms of their adaptations and livelihood strategies. A third way is to assess the environmental contexts in which they live today: savannas, coasts, wetlands, deserts, and mountains. A fourth way is to look at the effects of social change including colonization, development, urbanization, and incorporation into (or resistance to) the global, regional, national, and local systems.

From a linguistic standpoint, it is possible to distinguish three major San language families, which correspond roughly to geographic areas: (1) the Ju/'hoan !Xuun (Northern Khoisan), (2) Khoe-Kwadi (Central Khoisan), and (3) the Tuu in the southern Kalahari extending from Namibia and Botswana into the Cape region of South Africa (southern Khoisan) (Heine and Honken 2010; Vossen 2013; Güldemann 2006, 2008, 2014). For our purposes here, we focus most of our attention on those groups that are considered in this volume (e.g., Ju/'hoansi, Naro, G/ui, G//ana, !Xuun, Hailom-#Aakhoe, #Khomani, and the Tshwa) (see Figure 1).

One cannot stress sufficiently the enormous linguistic diversity that exists among the San. It should be noted that there are some groups that are not shown on this table, notably the AmaTola of the Maluti-Drakensberg Mountains region of South Africa and Lesotho. The AmaTola are sometimes called 'Secret San' (Prins



**Figure 1** The distribution of language groups among the San in southern Africa.

2000) because in the past they tended to hide their identity, although this is changing. A number of the people in the mountains, foothills, and lowlands now claim San identity. One driving factor is the increased awareness of what is happening in the San movements of South Africa, Botswana, and Namibia. Another factor, apparently, is the desire to claim rights over rock shelters and other sites that have rock paintings and engravings, in order to take advantage of heritage-related tourism opportunities. Some of the rock art sites contain scenes that show hunting, trance dances, people herding or moving livestock, people on horses, use of the bow and arrow, and intergroup conflicts. The AmaTola (who also sometimes identify themselves as abaThwa) are increasingly speaking out about who they are. It is estimated that today there are 400 people who claim to be AmaTola in South Africa and Lesotho. See Table 1 for estimates of the number of contemporary San peoples in southern Africa.

Similar to a trend among Native Americans in the United States, more and more people in southern Africa are claiming San identity, some of whom are using this as a strategy for gaining land rights, water points, grazing, employment, and development resources.

### 1) The San of Botswana

The !Xóǀ San, who have received particular attention from anthropologists and development workers, number 3,800 in Botswana and 550 in Namibia. The !Xóǀ, like a number of other San groups, are located on two sides of an international border, mainly in Kgalagadi District in Botswana and southern Omaheke Region in Namibia (Barnard 1992: 62–76; Heinz 1994; Dirkx and Thiem 2014). The Xóǀ

**Table 1** Numbers of San in Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

Country	Population Size (2017)	Size of country (in km <sup>2</sup> )	Numbers of San (National)
Angola	29,310,273	1,246,700	10,500–14,000
Botswana	2,214,858	581,730	63,500
Lesotho	1,958,042	30,355	400
Namibia	2,484,780	824,292	38,000
South Africa	54,341,552	1,219,090	7,900
Zambia	15,972,000	752,618	1,500
Zimbabwe	13,805,084	390,757	2,600
TOTALS	116,657,316	2,658,955 km <sup>2</sup>	ca. 130,000 San

Note: Data obtained from the Southern African Development Community (SADC), *The World Factbook* (2018), *Ethnologue* ([www.ethnologue.com](http://www.ethnologue.com)), accessed 21 April 2018, from fieldwork, and from the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDNF), Nyae Nyae Conservancy (NNC) (Namibia), Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) (Namibia), Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN), Botswana Khwedom Council (BKC) (Botswana), First People of the Kalahari (FPK) (Botswana), the National KhoeSan Council (South Africa), and the Tsoro-o-tso San Development Trust (Zimbabwe).

San live alongside thousands of Bakgalagadi, Herero, Nama, Barolong, and Europeans with whom they interact extensively. One of the concerns of the people in southern Namibia and Botswana has been rights to water, including the rights to what are known as sip-wells, places where water is obtained from beneath the soil through the use of straws. Thus far, the Kgalagadi Land Board in northern Kgalagadi District, Botswana, has not granted water rights to the !Xóǀ San (Kgalagadi District Land Board, Maotoanong Sebina, and Richard White, personal communications 2015).

The largest group of San in Botswana are the Naro (Barnard 1992: 134–155). The Naro, like the !Xóǀ, reside on both sides of the Botswana-Namibia border. In Botswana they live mainly in what is now the Ghanzi District, and in Namibia the Naro live in the Omaheke Region, in the Gobabis District. The Naro have been described as the ‘lords of the desert frontier’ (Guenther 1997). The town of Ghanzi is the administrative center of Ghanzi District, which covers an area of 117,910 km<sup>2</sup>. Ghanzi District has a diverse population consisting of San, Bakgalagadi, Herero, Nama, and Tswana (one of the eight major Tswana groups), as well as Europeans, some of whom are descendants of the Ghanzi Ridge settlers of 1898. The Naro number around 8,000 in the western Kalahari. They live alongside 800 ǀX’ao-l’aen, Ju/’hoan-!Xuu speakers, who are located mainly in the northern part of the district at Groot Laagte and Kuke. There are 2,000 Naro in Namibia, mainly in the Omaheke Region (Dirkx and Thiem 2014).

Relationships among the San, Bakgalagadi, Tswana, and Europeans have undergone significant transformations over time, ranging from symbiotic to exploitative (Russell 1976; Wily 1979; Mogalakwe 1986). The area containing the Ghanzi Ridge, which has a high water table and good grazing, was declared ‘Crown Land’ in 1894, the year before Bechuanaland became a British

Protectorate. Commercial farms were established on the Ghanzi Ridge in 1898, partly as a buffer against German expansion from the west. The Naro and other San were largely dispossessed as a result of the changes in the farm tenure situation and the fencing of the farms. Many of the pans that in the past were important sources of water, and which served to attract game, were within the boundaries of these farms, and this limited access to wild animal resources for San on the Ghanzi Ridge.

A substantial portion of the Ghanzi San population became, in effect, landless laborers on land that was now in the hands of others. San men worked as cattle herders and carried out other livestock-related labor such as fence-building, while San women performed domestic labor and other jobs around the farmsteads (Tobias 1975; Guenther 1986). At first, they were paid in kind, usually in the form of food, clothing, and tobacco, but later on they began to be paid in cash. The result of these processes was impoverishment and marginalization for a sizable number of Ghanzi San (Russell 1976; Wily 1979). In response to this marginalization and dispossession, a number of Ghanzi and other San formed an NGO – First People of the Kalahari – aimed at promoting their rights. One of their goals – along with their neighbors, the Bakgalagadi – was to reassert their land and resource rights as ‘indigenous people’ (Sapignoli 2012; 2018).

The government of Botswana has taken the position that *all* residents of the country are indigenous and so does not accept the designation of ‘First People’ (Saugestad 2001; Sapignoli 2015). Instead, the Botswana government has chosen specifically not to target assistance based on ethnicity. The government’s Remote Area Development Programme has concentrated its development efforts on a target group defined on the basis of its (1) spatial location (remote areas outside villages), (2) socio-political status (marginalized), and (3) socio-economic status (impoverished and subject to discrimination). Remote area populations, along with people living on cattle posts, ranches, farms, and in urban areas in Botswana, are minorities in a numerical sense as well as a socio-political sense.

The government of Botswana, unlike Namibia and South Africa, does not have a policy of educating San children in their mother-tongue languages. Nevertheless, many San – especially the Naro, Ju/’hoansi, and Khwe – are now becoming literate in their own languages, thanks to the efforts of linguists and the Kuru Family of Organizations (Bollig et al. 2000). An examination of the socio-economic systems of Botswana and other southern African countries reveals that there are significant numbers of people who are living at or below the Poverty Datum Line (‘PDL’). This figure is equivalent to the ‘minimum income needed for a basic standard of living’ and is used by some social scientists as a means of determining household socio-economic status relative to other households. Some of these groups are referred to as ‘historically disadvantaged and marginalized’ and others as ‘vulnerable groups’. Most of the people who fall into these categories are members of minority populations (Saugestad 2001; Chennells 2009; International Labour Organisation 2010; Solway 2011; Sapignoli 2012).

A fairly substantial number of San households lack some or all of the necessary means of production in Botswana. There are households that have too little land to provide for their needs. Others lack livestock, which are crucial for making up plowing teams. Still other households do not have sufficient cash to pay for inputs such as seeds and fertilizers. The lack of male labor due to migration to the mines, farms, or cities is an important variable in some of the households who are lowest on the socio-economic scale. In part as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis, a portion of San households are child-headed, and the number of people with HIV/AIDS is on the increase among the San, although at slower rates than for other groups in southern Africa (Susser and Lee 2009).

Freehold farm workers, cattle post laborers, and peri-urban residents in towns and cities tend to have relatively low incomes, uncertain access to land, small numbers of domestic stock, low levels of literacy and education, low to moderate health standards, and limited access to development. Some of these people are at least partially dependent on livestock- and farm-owners for some of their subsistence and income. Many San households supplement their income through foraging, doing temporary work in towns, or selling handicrafts, thatching grass, edible insects, and firewood, as can be seen, for example, among the San in the western Kalahari region of Botswana, including the Ghanzi Farms and surrounding areas (Hitchcock and Sapignoli 2016). The only San-owned land in Botswana is Dqae Qare, a former freehold farm run as a tourism operation on behalf of the Naro of D'Kar (Bollig et al. 2000; Lawy 2016). The Kuru Arts Project, based at D'Kar, also provides training and income-generating opportunities for Naro San in Ghanzi.

It is possible to see changes over time in land access, income, and general wellbeing of San, not only in Ghanzi, but also in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve ('CKGR') area, where over 2,200 people were resettled by the Botswana government in 1997 and 2002 (Saugestad 2001: 224-225; Solway 2009; Ikeya 2001, 2016; Maruyama 2003; Sapignoli 2012, 2015, 2017; Tanaka 2014). The government points out that it has provided millions of Pula worth of development assistance through its Remote Area Development Programme in the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and that these efforts have enhanced the wellbeing of rural people, including those in the government-sponsored settlements of New Xade, Kauduane, and Xere (Akiyama 2001; Maruyama 2003; Republic of Botswana 2009; Ikeya 2001, 2016, and Chapter 9). However, it appears that sizable numbers of people in the settlements are less well-off today than they were prior to resettlement (Ikeya 2001, 2004; Maruyama 2003, 2016; Hitchcock, Sapignoli, and Babchuk 2011). For example, the diets of people are generally less diverse and nutritious. Alcohol use is causing difficulties in these and other San communities. Levels of inter-group conflict and crime in some of the settlements have increased. Wages have not kept pace with inflation in rural Botswana, and poverty is on the rise. The ban on hunting in Botswana in January 2014 has also had negative impacts on wildlife-related jobs and income

(Hitchcock, Sapiñoli, and Babchuk 2011). On the positive side, San in Botswana have benefitted from government social safety-net programs, schooling for San children is common at the primary, secondary, and increasingly at the tertiary levels, and the numbers of San in the formal-sector workforce have increased substantially.

Botswana, like Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, has established protected areas, including national parks, game reserves, monuments, and World Heritage Sites. These protected areas have had both direct and indirect effects on San populations, including the Khwe of the Okavango Delta, who were affected by the establishment of the Moremi Game Reserve (Bolaane 2013), and the Ju/'hoansi of the Tsodilo Hills, Botswana's first World Heritage Site, established in 2001 (Giraudó 2011). The most recent World Heritage Site to be established in Botswana, the Okavango Delta, was gazetted in July 2014 (UNEP/WMC 2014). The Okavango Basin is the fourth largest international river basin in southern Africa, and the Okavango is the largest river in the region that does not empty into an ocean. Estimates of the Okavango Basin area range from 570,000 km<sup>2</sup> (Pallett 1997: 73) to 721,277 km<sup>2</sup> (World Heritage Site database). Tourism and conservation have been important foci of Okavango Delta development, and one result of the conservation emphasis has been government pressure for San and other communities to curtail resource-extraction activities and to relocate outside of the borders of the World Heritage Site (Mbaiwa 2016; 2017).

The San of Botswana realize full well that they need to gain greater control over their areas if they are to safeguard their long-term occupancy and resource use rights. One way that they have chosen to do this is to take part in the government's community-based natural resource management ('CBNRM') programs. Botswana's wildlife policies empower the Department of Wildlife and National Parks in the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife, and Tourism to work out arrangements with local communities and district authorities on how the wildlife resources within their areas are to be managed (Republic of Botswana 1986; 2007). Through such programs, a local community can apply for a quota. They can then use some of that quota for their own purposes, or they can lease out some of the quota in exchange for cash and other benefits.

CBNRM policies do not – and cannot under the law in Botswana and other southern African countries – promote community *ownership* of either wildlife or wild plant products. The only way a community can gain legal (*de jure*) ownership rights over land and natural resources is to purchase freehold land, something that is difficult for most rural residents, who generally lack sufficient cash to pay for the land. The Okavango Delta and the Tsodilo Hills provide examples of how conservation and development programs affect local populations.

Another area of Botswana that is complex from the standpoint of land tenure, conservation, and development policy is the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, the largest protected area in Botswana (52,730 km<sup>2</sup>) and the second largest game reserve in Africa. The occupants of the CKGR are primarily Khoe-Kwadi (Central



Khoisan) speakers, including G//ui, G//ana, Tsila, Tsassi, and G//olo (Dxoro) (Hitchcock and Sapignoli 2016). There are also people in the Central Kalahari who self-identify as Kua (Valiente-Noailles 1993; Kiema 2010). In addition, there are #Hoan people who in the past lived in the southeastern part of what is now the Reserve, but who now live in the western Kweneng District. The government decision to relocate people out of the CKGR, made originally in 1986, was implemented in 1997 and 2002. The San and their neighbors, the Bakgalagadi, brought a legal case against the government of Botswana in 2002, which the San and Bakgalagadi eventually won in 2006. This resulted in the granting of their right to return to the Central Kalahari and, at least on paper, their right to continue to engage in subsistence hunting (Sapignoli 2015). This decision to engage in legal action is a clear example of 21<sup>st</sup>-century San activism.

The issue of involuntary resettlement is a tremendously sore point among the San in all of southern Africa's countries. In 2013, for example, people (some of whom were Naro) in the settlement of Ranyane in Ghanzi District, Botswana, expressed consternation after having been informed by the Ghanzi Land Board and by other Ghanzi District and central government officials that they were going to be displaced to another location in the district that was dominated by a different San group, the !Xóǀ. The people of Ranyane took their case to court in 2013, but the case was dismissed by the High Court in October 2015. The people of Ranyane have lodged an appeal in the Court of Appeal in Botswana, and they have taken their case to the international community as well, lobbying for land and resource rights at the international and regional (Africa-wide) levels, in addition to engaging in local-level politics. One G//ana San from New Xade, one of the CKGR resettlement sites, was elected to the Ghanzi District Council in October 2014, and he has pushed hard for fair treatment of San at the district level.

## 2) The San of Namibia

As shown in this volume, it is not just Botswana where social and legal activism are occurring among the San. The same is true for San in Namibia, who have been pushing for fair treatment before the law since the time of independence in 1990. To take one example, in October 2015, the Hai//om of northern and central Namibia filed a collective-action legal case against the government in order to gain benefits from, and access rights to, Etosha National Park (Koot, Chapter 12). The Hai//om are speakers of the Hai//om language, part of the Khoe-Kwadi (Central Khoisan) family of languages. Some Hai//om speak Khoekhoegowab, and many of them are multilingual, speaking Otjiherero, Oshiwambo, Afrikaans, German, and English. The Hai//om are divided into a number of different socio-linguistic groups according to linguists, anthropologists, and the Hai//om themselves (see Dieckmann 2007: 112). Some northern Hai//om also self-identify as #Aakhoe (Widlok 1999). As part of their social activism, the Hai//om negotiated with the government of Namibia to obtain rights to a set of freehold farms south

of Etosha National Park beginning in 2007. As of 2017, there were six farms that the government of Namibia had purchased for the Hai//om, some of whom had chosen to relocate outside of the national park (Lawry, Begbie-Clench, and Hitchcock 2012; Hitchcock 2015; Division of Marginalized Communities, personal communication, 2017). The Hai//om are hoping that their 2015 legal action will result in the gaining of co-management rights and benefits from Etosha National Park, similar to what the #Khomani obtained as a result of their land-claim actions in South Africa from 1995 to 1999 (Puckett 2013 and Chapter 14).

Namibia, which gained independence on 21 March 1990, is located on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean and is bordered by Angola, Zambia, Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. Namibia boasts a diverse human population, speaking some 38 different languages. It has a rich natural, archaeological, cultural, and historical heritage including the World Heritage Sites of Twyfelfontein, the Brandberg, and the Namib Sand Sea. One of the driest countries on the planet, Namibia contains two major deserts: the Namib and the Kalahari (Mendelsohn et al. 2009). Like many arid countries, Namibia has a very low population density, less than two persons per square kilometre, the second lowest in the world.

Namibian government reports indicate that some 28.7% of the households in the country are classified as poor, while 15.3% are classified as severely poor (National Planning Commission 2012). In part because of the presence of high-value minerals and government policies aimed at diversification of Namibia's agricultural, manufacturing, tourism, and fishing industries, Namibia has become a Middle Income Country ('MIC') according to the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme. One result of this new status is that Namibia has faced a decline in international development assistance.

Namibia has a highly inequitable socio-economic structure, with a small percentage of people who are very wealthy and a substantial number of poor. Nearly two-fifths of Namibia's population live below the Poverty Datum Line. Unemployment in Namibia in mid-2016 stood at 39%. A sizable proportion of the Namibian population (23%) derive at least a portion of their subsistence and income from agriculture and natural resources, and 48% of the population depend on wages and pensions for the elderly.

Namibia's San population makes up approximately 2% of the national population (Dieckmann et al. 2014a; 2014b). San in Namibia reside on commercial farms, resettlement farms, and in communal areas alongside other ethnic groups. There are also San who live in communal conservancies, community forests, national parks, and in urban areas (Biesele and Hitchcock 2013; Dieckmann 2014). All of the San groups in Namibia share a history of marginalization and dispossession. Levels of poverty are greater among the San than for any other ethnic group in Namibia.

San are found in many parts of Namibia, especially in the north, northeast, and central parts of the country (Gordon and Douglas 2000; Dieckmann et al. 2014). Some places, such as the Namib Desert, support relatively few San today,

many of them having left for other parts of the country where they could obtain employment. There are sizable numbers of San living in the Otjozondjupa Region and in Omaheke Region, along with !Xun in the northern part of the country and Khwe in Zambezi Region (Taylor 2012; Takada 2015). Tsumkwe District in Otjozondjupa Region consists of two parts (West and East), which together are comprised of some 60 settlements scattered across an area of 17,850 km<sup>2</sup>. The settlements are linked by sand tracks, and there is a major gravel road through the area that links the highway at Grootfontein with Tsumkwe and beyond to a point on the Botswana-Namibia border near Dobe.

Most of the people in the Tsumkwe area are San from a number of different groups (e.g., Ju/'hoansi, Hai//om, Vasekele !Xuun, Mpungu !Xuun, and Khwe). In Tsumkwe West, there are 24 settlements scattered across a semi-arid, tree-bush savanna area that is 9,303 km<sup>2</sup> in size. The Tsumkwe District West region, including the area around Omatako and M'Kata, is the traditional ancestral territory of people who self-identify as '!Kung'. The administrative center of the Tsumkwe West people is Mangetti Dune, which was the site of an old South African Defence Force military post in the 1970s and 1980s. There is another town at Omatako which is the seat of the !Kung Traditional Authority, currently led by Chief Glony Arnold. There is a Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Forestry ('MAWF') office at M'Kata, around which 600 people are living in scattered compounds, some of them as much as five kilometres apart. Most households in Tsumkwe West engage in a variety of economic activities, including the cultivation of crops, raising of livestock, foraging, grass and timber collection, craft production and sales, and wage labor. In 2003, Tsumkwe West was designated as a communal conservancy, Nᵛa Jaqna Conservancy.

Tsumkwe District East, also known as Nyae Nyae, contains 36 communities scattered over an area of 8,992 km<sup>2</sup>. There is also an administrative center, Tsumkwe, which is not part of the conservancy itself; it is an independent municipality with its own governing body and, as such, is separate from the two conservancy areas and two community forests in the district. In 1998, the Nyae Nyae area was designated as the first communal area conservancy in Namibia (Biesele and Hitchcock 2013: 198). The Nyae Nyae Conservancy ('NNC') management committee is involved in local-level conservation and development projects. The people of Nyae Nyae have collaborated for over 36 years with the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia and with the Ju/'hoan Traditional Authority ('JTA'), headed by Chief Tsamkxao ≠Oma. In 2012, a Nyae Nyae Community Forest was established (Biesele and Hitchcock 2013: xxiv; 225). In July 2015, with the collaboration of the Nyae Nyae Community Forest Committee and the JTA, a legal case was brought against four illegal grazers who had entered the region with their cattle. Charges were brought against two additional illegal grazers in 2016. These cases currently rest with the public prosecutor in Grootfontein. Those charged with illegal grazing have taken their case to the President of Namibia in an attempt to bypass the High Court, and as of May

2018, no decisions had been made about their status by the government of Namibia.

Ethnographic work was carried out in the Nyae Nyae region by the Marshall family (Marshall 1976: 2–11; Marshall 2003), Megan Biesele (Biesele 2013 and Chapter 2), Hays, Thiem, and Jones (2014), and Richard Lee (Lee 2016 and Chapter 8), among others. The Nyae Nyae Ju/'hoansi and the people of N̄a Jaqna receive support from the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia, including capacity-building, training, and technical assistance for the Nyae Nyae and N̄a Jaqna conservancies. The Nyae Nyae region has also seen important work take place in the field of education, including the establishment of an innovative Village Schools Program (Biesele 2013; Hays 2016; Heckler, Chapter 1). The Ju/'hoansi and their neighbors in Nyae Nyae receive some government support in the form of food and pensions. In addition, the NNC provides employment opportunities and occasional annual cash benefits, and Ju/'hoansi receive some paid work and meat from the safari hunters operating in the area.

Tourism generates income for both Nyae Nyae and N̄a Jaqna conservancies and for the individuals working in them (Koot and van Beek 2017; Hitchcock 2018). An interesting aspect of tourism is the degree to which it contributes, on one hand, to identity-formation and, on the other hand, to social conflict and socio-economic stratification. The people of Nyae Nyae, for example, currently face several vulnerabilities, on which anthropologists and development workers should focus more of their attention. Problems and risks in Nyae Nyae today include the vulnerability of the Ju/'hoansi to land encroachment by outsiders (e.g., pastoralists); the government's decision, without consultation, to place a military base on Ju/'hoansi land; the far-reaching impacts of poaching; the unlawful allocation of communal land to individuals; the over-exploitation of resources (e.g., firewood and high-value plants such as Devil's Claw) by tourists and other visitors to the area; the influx of excessive numbers of film-makers on San lands, often generating community frustration due in part to inequitable payments; and the arrival of geneticists seeking to take samples for their research, without proper controls or consents. These problems are perhaps exacerbated by some of the same human rights issues that the Kalahari Peoples Fund ('KPF') and other NGOs have attempted to resolve. It is particularly difficult to maintain an 'island of cooperation' (NNC) in this proverbial sea of competition (i.e., the outside world's hunger for San grazing land, natural resources, intellectual property, etc.). In some ways, the San have come to be seen as the property of the world – living in the open air and free for the taking – because of the romantic myths that have grown up around them, despite the efforts of social scientists, NGOs, San organizations, and other advocates to promote valid research, community-centered development, and human dignity.

Another important San group in Namibia is the !Xuun. The !Xuun, many of whom live in the Oshana, Oshikoto, Ohangwena, and Omusati regions of Namibia, are attempting to learn from the efforts of the Ju/'hoansi and their neighbors in

the Otjozondjupa Region (Takada 2015), as are the Khwe in the West and East Kavango and Zambezi regions (Taylor 2012; Dieckmann et al. 2014). Critical concerns revolve around land, economic development, education, health, gender, youth, representation, and decision-making, issues which are being discussed extensively at the local level (Biesele and Hitchcock 2013; Wiessner 2014; Takada 2015; Hitchcock 2015). The !Xun, Khwe, Ju/'hoansi, and Hai//om San of Namibia all face the complex issues of land hunger on the part of other groups, inequitable government decisions about land allocation, and the desire of outside agencies, both governments and international institutions, to place biodiversity conservation and protection over the interests of local communities.

### **3) The San of South Africa, Angola, Zambia, and Zimbabwe**

Similar concerns are being expressed by the San of South Africa, who number some 7,900 as of 2017. South African San include #Khomani in the far Northern Cape, !Xun and Khwe who were resettled from Namibia to the Kimberley area of the Northern Cape in 1990, and members of several other smaller groups (De Wet 2010; Puckett 2013; Maruyama 2018). An important emphasis for the South African San has been the struggle to gain political recognition at the national level. In September 2015, the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Bill was introduced and was referred to the Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs in Parliament (Jansen 2016: 456–457). The National Khoi and San Council supported the recent enactment of this bill, which, it is hoped, will ensure greater access to decision-making at the national level (see Puckett, Chapter 14).

In response to the penchant for resettlement in the name of conservation and development and the non-recognition of indigeneity on the part of southern African governments, the San have increasingly begun to form NGOs and community-based institutions to lobby on their own behalf. They have sought to build local-level capacity for engaging in development activities, decision-making, conflict management, negotiations, and legal actions. This has been undertaken – with varying degrees of success – by forming San associations and regional San organizations, including the Working Group for Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa ('WIMSA'). In the process, the San have worked with legal bodies, including Ditshwanelo (the Botswana Center for Human Rights), the Legal Resources Foundation (South Africa), and the Legal Assistance Center in Namibia.

Angola, Zambia, and Zimbabwe also have human rights organizations that San have approached for assistance. San activism in Zimbabwe, while complex given the political realities of the country, has led to the formation of Tsoro-o-Tso San Development Trust and the holding of workshops dealing with language and culture (Hitchcock, Begbie-Clench, and Murwira 2016 and Chapter 13). Changes in government leadership in Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe in 2017–2018 hold the promise that the San will be able to participate more extensively in decision-making at the local, national, and regional levels.

#### 4) The San of Seven Southern African Countries

Beyond forming new organizations, various San groups have come together in social movements, seeking recognition and rights that are on par with other groups. This has been done at the local, district, state, regional (southern Africa), continent-wide, and international (United Nations) levels. Strategies employed in such social activism have included the following:

- forming associations, community-based organizations, and NGOs;
- seeking media attention (working with journalists, media associations, and filmmakers);
- taking part in direct action (demonstrations);
- getting involved in the political process (elections) (Hitchcock and Holm 1993);
- seeking legal redress for actions against them (engaging lawyers and going to court);
- forming alliances with other groups, e.g., multicultural associations, such as Reteng in Botswana (Nyati-Ramohobo 2009) or the National Khoe and San Council in South Africa ('NKC') (De Wet 2010).

Some San organizations have joined the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee ('IPACC'), and others have sought to take part in negotiations with governments, as has been the case in Botswana, with efforts to negotiate with the government over the status of the people of the CKGR. While there are sometimes state suspicions about San involvement in secessionist movements, there is no evidence to suggest that San have sought to secede from any of the countries in which they reside.

The San of seven of the southern African countries have sought local, national, and international attention and support and have lobbied for socially just policies that provide them with equal opportunities before the law. For a full list of such San-based organizations in southern Africa, see 'Land, Livelihoods, and Empowerment among the San of Western Zimbabwe' (Chapter 13) in this volume.

Ultimately, greater coordination and collaboration among anthropologists, linguists, geographers, activists, development workers, San-related NGOs, and San communities, families, and individuals would go a long way toward resolving social, economic, and political constraints and would contribute substantially to greater wellbeing for the San and their neighbors in southern Africa. In addition, cooperation among the various stakeholders seeking to promote government policies that favor mother-tongue language education and cultural preservation is critically important. It would also be particularly beneficial if the social, economic, linguistic, political, and environmental impacts of key development projects across southern Africa were compared and examined in more detail, so that recommendations could be made in order to help avoid pitfalls and replicate important successes in other communities. Indeed, there is much work still to be done.

## STRUCTURE OF THIS VOLUME

Megan Biesele introduced Fleming Puckett to the concept of ‘activist anthropology’, and we know that all of our contributors – academics, researchers, educators, and practitioners from around the world – are proud to be part of this movement.

We have organized these contributions into three broad categories: language, storytelling, and education; San research and advocacy – a blending of voices; and politics, livelihoods, and land. What follows is a ‘taste’ for what each chapter brings to today’s key discussions in the fields of southern African, indigenous, hunter-gatherer, and San studies.

### 1) Language, Storytelling, and Education

In ‘The Story Mind: Education for Democracy – Reflections on the Village Schools Project, 1990–2015’, Melissa Heckler (Chapter 1) recalls the formation and history of Nyae Nyae’s Village Schools Project. In doing so, she explores the power of storytelling and culturally based education to preserve a Ju/’hoan conception of democracy, which includes one-on-one mentoring relationships and consensus-based decision-making. In sharp contrast, she notes, the overly formalized, hierarchical, capitalist-based education offered by Namibia’s public schools squelches the creative, individualistic, and experiential learning successfully developed for centuries by the Ju/’hoansi as an adaptation to their environment. The Village Schools Project, thus, creates an essential bridge from the community-based education of the village to the legally required system of state-run ‘town schools’. In doing so, it is increasing the confidence of Ju/’hoansi community members to assert ownership and control over their own settlements, lands, stories, images, and cultural practices.

Megan Biesele (Chapter 2) describes the collaborative language-documentation work and mother-tongue education programs underway in Nyae Nyae, in ‘People of the Eland/People of ELAN: The Ju/’hoan Transcription Group and Ju/’hoan Mother-Tongue Literacy’. This work represents the fruits of 25 years of academic support, funding, and community enthusiasm in Namibia, and the impacts are both significant and unique. As a result of these vanguard recordings, transcriptions, technologies, and curriculum-building efforts, the formerly threatened Ju/’hoan language now has the opportunity to be learned by Ju/’hoansi children, disseminated around the globe, and used by the Ju/’hoansi themselves to celebrate their history and their creativity and to continue telling their own stories long into the future.

Kazuyoshi Sugawara (Chapter 3) investigates the thought life of Botswana’s G|ui people, particularly as regards their relationship with lions, in ‘On the G|ui Experiences of “Being Hunted”: An Analysis of Oral Discourses on the Man-Killing by Lions’. By analyzing stories of lion attacks, he reveals the process by which narrators re-edit and retell events from their memories. Vivid words, strong emotions, and mental images of particular body arrangements coalesce to

render certain phrases, scenes, or descriptions within a story particularly stable, despite numerous retellings and re-enactments. This work represents an important contribution, not only to an anthropologist's ability to understand the power and processes of storytelling among former foragers, but also to younger generations of San, who, through government settlement programs and formalized schooling, are losing contact with the tools, concepts, and practices that constitute important elements of the foraging mindset.

## **2) San Research and Advocacy: A Blending of Voices**

In 'An Archaeology of Relevance: Community Empowerment Through Archaeological Research and Heritage Management in Botswana', Cynthia O. Mooketsi, Nonofho Ndobochani, and Mulalu Mulalu (Chapter 4) address the desire of San communities to increase their involvement in the research and management of culturally significant archaeological sites. These authors argue that it is co-research and co-authorship that will allow communities to gain the skills and confidence to tell their own stories and to participate fully in the analysis and construction of their own past, including adding their local/indigenous knowledge and their own traditional definitions of, for example, land uses and boundary lines to depictions of their past and current lives. Top-down research endeavours and development projects, they argue, can never be as rich, fertile, relevant, insightful, adaptive, and empowering as those that include the voices and needs of the communities, not just as research assistants, but as full collaborators.

In 'Tracking in Caves: Reading Human Spoor in Ice Age Caves with San Hunters', Tilman Lennsen-Erz, Andreas Pastoors, Tsamkgao Ciqae, Ui Kxunta, Thui Thao, Robert Bégouën, Megan Biesele, and Jean Clottes (Chapter 5) provide a vivid glimpse into prehistoric lives, utilizing the indigenous knowledge of three professional Ju/'hoansi trackers from Tsumkwe, Namibia. Their work succeeds in combining two different knowledge systems that together effectively reinterpret and significantly increase our understanding of the spoor left by Pleistocene humans. It is hoped that, in a time in which San youth feel increasing pressure to abandon their traditional knowledge and practices, such enlightening, groundbreaking applications of tracking expertise will engender increased interest in learning and adapting traditional knowledge in ways that bring pride, inspiration, and recognition.

Gertrud Boden (Chapter 6) tells the fascinating story of Oswin Köhler and the creation of his vast collection of papers, photographs, and recordings in 'The Khwe Collection in the Academic Legacy of Oswin Köhler: Formation and Potential Future'. Not only does this collection represent largely untapped, immensely valuable first-hand ethnographic and linguistic research among the Khwe, but it also provides a poignant portrayal of the impacts of self, power, community, and politics in the production of research itself. Thus, in addition to a painstakingly collected review of Khwe language and cultural heritage in the Okavango region of Namibia, continued work with Köhler's academic legacy



promises to add significantly to our reflexive understanding of how our identities, preferences, and choices impact the stories our research ultimately tells and the voices that are thereby allowed – or not allowed – to be heard.

Jenny Lawy (Chapter 7) analyses the conflicts that arise between formalised state education and traditional San cultural practices in ‘Female Initiation or School? Practicing Culture in the Kalahari’. Focusing on the female initiation dance and associated rituals of the Ncoakhoe of Botswana, Jenny describes the importance of the Ncoakhoe *duù* ritual as a female rite of passage, as well as the difficulties girls face as they balance the timing of this ritual with end-of-year exams and the consequences for choosing one route or the other. This chapter is particularly interesting in that, whereas much indigenous-studies research focuses on national and international efforts to support, represent, lobby, and advocate on behalf of various marginalized indigenous groups, here we see a powerful example of a San family that is successful in advocating for itself, even amidst significant pressures, competing priorities, and negative ethnic stereotypes. The processes by which this power is achieved, recognized, and exercised clearly seem to be important areas for future research.

### **3) Politics, Livelihoods, and Land**

In this volume, we are particularly honored to be able to include a contribution from Richard Lee (Chapter 8), ‘Persistence of Foraging among Tsumkwe Ju/’hoansi in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’. Documenting subsistence practices and seeking informants’ perceptions of life in the ‘bush’, Richard’s research clearly demonstrates that 50 years of ‘development’ and settlement life (whether more permanent or more temporary/seasonal) have had impacts on the regard for, and observance of, traditional practices that were far from expected. Rather than diminishing the desire to hunt, gather, and live in the bush, recent years have seen a significant increase in such practices. Despite also incorporating some new religious beliefs, medicines, technologies, and a cash economy, a huge majority of Tsumkwe Ju/’hoansi today are expressing (for a variety of reasons) a strong desire to retain access to the bush, a clear and continuing reliance on foraging, and importantly, the inter-generational knowledge transfer that allows for such an adaptive foraging strategy to continue to be successful.

Kazunobu Ikeya (Chapter 9) paints a detailed and fascinating picture of the livelihoods and settlement patterns of the San and their Kgalagadi neighbors in the region of Botswana’s Central Kalahari Game Reserve in ‘Settlement Patterns and Sedentarization among the San in the Central Kalahari (1930–1996)’. Tracing population movements in the district over the past century, he explores the impacts of forced relocations, employment opportunities, legal restrictions, water sources, schools, clinics, desertification, and land available for wild-food gathering, crop-growing, livestock-grazing, and various forms of hunting. Interestingly, this study provides strong evidence for the continuation of traditional San adaptability and mobility in Botswana today, despite changing economic circumstances, population

increases, and government settlement policies.

In ‘Socio-economic Impacts of a National Park on Local Indigenous Livelihoods: The Case of the Bwabwata National Park in Namibia’, Attila Paksi and Aili Pyhälä (Chapter 10) look at livelihood opportunities for the Khwe living in the Caprivi’s BNP. Attila and Aili’s analyses include new, detailed data on current sources of income for the Khwe in Bwabwata NP East. Despite sizable funding and high visibility, top-down Community Based Natural Resource Management programs in BNP are not, it turns out, providing the level of significant, reliable income that Khwe families expected, especially in a time when the Khwe find themselves subject to increasing government restrictions on access to their local environment. The authors conclude that, in efforts to increase effective rural development on a long-term basis, communities must be allowed back into the decision-making processes, which not only determine control over natural resources, but also serve to prioritize livelihood options that are critically in need of the improvement and diversification that only local knowledge could provide.

In ‘Performing Our Past to Secure Our Future: A Look at San-Owned Cultural Tourism in the Kalahari’, Rachel Giraud (Chapter 11) explores the impacts of San-led cultural tourism projects among communities in Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa, as the San strategically commodify their own cultural identities. Based on her analyses of several such tourism ventures, Rachel finds that, rather than instances of mere financially motivated cultural essentialisation, these ventures truly represent savvy demonstrations of San agency and expressions of cultural pride, which ultimately improve the economic circumstances of the San and have the potential to increase their political voice as well.

Along similar lines, Stasja Koot (Chapter 12) explores the agency of the San to capitalize on their hunter-gatherer image in ‘The Bushman Brand in Southern African Tourism: An Indigenous Modernity in a Neoliberal Political Economy’. Stasja provides evidence from South Africa and Namibia that San-run tourism operations can significantly increase the ability of communities to take back control over their own imagery, while also increasing cultural pride, maintaining important cultural practices, and generating critical income. The marketing of this imagery to tourists has produced a ‘Bushman brand’ – a distilled image that conforms to consumers’ pre-existing ideas of the ‘authentic’ – which has significant financial value in today’s global capitalist economy. However, rather than serving necessarily as a source of exploitation, such branding can serve to strengthen the identities of San communities who embrace this asset as a potentially beneficial, if immaterial, indigenous modernity.

In ‘Land, Livelihoods, and Empowerment among the San of Western Zimbabwe’, authors Robert K. Hitchcock, Ben Begbie-Clench, Davy Ndlovu, Ashton Murwira, and Ignatius Mberengwa (Chapter 13) present entirely new research on the history and status of Zimbabwe’s ‘forgotten people’, the Tshwa. Like San groups across southern Africa, the Tshwa have a history of

marginalization, forced relocation, severe legal restrictions on their traditional hunting-and-gathering practices, and a lack of official state recognition as indigenous minorities. Current critical issues for the Tshwa include gaining increased control over natural resources and hunting operations (particularly as a source of employment and income), developing a Tshwao language curriculum, obtaining enough land for their subsistence needs, and securing recognition and funding for the Tshwa people's important, newly established Tsoro-o-tso San Development Trust in order to increase their ability to collaborate with national and local governments.

Finally, in “‘The Space to Be Themselves’: Confronting the Mismatch Between South Africa’s Land Reform Laws and Traditional San Social Organization among the #Khomani”, R. Fleming Puckett (Chapter 14) presents evidence that the #Khomani of today continue to see themselves as ‘San’, ‘Bushmen’, ‘hunters’, and ‘indigenous’, and he argues that – despite #Khomani dispossession, farm labor, and suffering under apartheid – the inward-facing cultural identities of the #Khomani as ‘traditional’ hunter-gatherers remain. As such, their preferred social organization would appear to involve smaller groups, organized temporarily for specific tasks on defined pieces of land and loosely led by individuals who can provide expert advice for each particular endeavor. This, Fleming contends, stands in significant and problematic contrast to South Africa’s land reform laws, which require clearly bounded land-recipient communities that share a common vision and have leadership committees that make decisions for the entire community, based on hierarchical representative structures that Western and agro-pastoral peoples often take for granted. After watching ‘failed’ #Khomani attempts (from 1999 to 2008) to implement such structures on their new lands, Government temporarily abolished these community-wide committee structures under a kind of punishment, known as ‘administration’. However, soon after they were freed from these externally imposed structures, this heterogeneous, formerly dispersed San group quietly began taking the reins of power in their own ways and, for the first time, are now beginning – in a ‘San style’ – to lead smaller livelihoods projects with the promise (particularly since 2012) of real momentum, enthusiastic community participation, and long-term sustainability.

In all, the science, field observations, arguments, and new thinking presented here, we hope, will prove both helpful and inspiring to San researchers, writers, and activists in multiple disciplines and areas of the world. In addition, we hope that the emotion that these authors clearly felt as they wrote also comes through as you read their descriptions of, for example, violence against San who are trying to maintain access to their traditional lands or the suffering produced by San interactions with imposed educational or governance structures, as well as the joy of new discoveries, new voices, and new beginnings.

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