

## Preface

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## Preface

The papers in this volume were originally presented at the 11<sup>th</sup> Conference on Hunting and Gathering Societies, known as ‘CHAGS’. This conference, held in Vienna, Austria, was the latest in a series of Conferences on Hunting and Gathering Societies that have spanned the globe, with previous entries in such diverse settings as Darwin, Australia, and Fairbanks, Alaska, as well as Moscow, Paris, and London, plus the 1998 CHAGS held at Minpaku, Japan’s own National Museum of Ethnology, located in Osaka. The Osaka CHAGS in turn produced a rich harvest of six earlier issues of *Senri Ethnological Studies* between 2000 and 2009 (see Appendix).

As the revised, updated, and further developed proceedings of an all-day panel organized for CHAGS 11, this volume is truly a collaborative effort. The Vienna CHAGS conference, themed ‘Refocusing Hunter-Gatherer Studies’, took place from 7 to 11 September 2015 and was supported in a number of ways by the Wenner-Gren Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the International Society for Hunter Gatherer Research (‘ISHGR’), the Open Society Initiative of South Africa (‘OSISA’), and the University of Vienna. The chapters in this volume grew out of our CHAGS 11 panel entitled ‘Research and Activism Among the Kalahari San Today: Ideals, Challenges, and Debates’, which was organized by Richard B. Lee, Jennifer Hays, Robert Hitchcock, and Megan Biesele, and which included presentations by new and established academics, researchers, advocates, and activists from around the world. We were particularly grateful to be able to include participants from southern Africa, including members of San communities themselves, on our panel and in our discussions in Vienna.

San studies have been a fixture of CHAGS conferences since the beginning. Research on San people living in the Kalahari Desert in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and surrounding countries has been a prominent focus since the 1960s. Case studies of the G//ui, G//ana, Twa, Khwe, Naro, !Xun, and Ju/’hoansi, among others, have been key sources of evidence and insights on hunter-gatherer lifeways for over a century. Early research by the Marshall family, the Kalahari Research Group from Harvard University, and Japanese researchers from Kyoto University and Minpaku focused on, among other areas, documenting and describing subsistence strategies, healing practices, kinship networks, child-rearing, language, mythology, and relationships with other ethnic groups.

Since the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a new generation of scholars and activists has entered the field, and our CHAGS 11 panel was organized to include a number of these new voices. The focus was on current research and activism among San communities who are dealing with rapid social change and loss of land, as well as the ways in which these San communities are mobilizing for resistance.

Along with our sincere gratitude for the support and leadership of the CHAGS organizing committee and our panel organizers, sponsors, and chairs, we wish to thank the editorial committee of *Senri Ethnological Studies* (‘SES’) at the National Museum

of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan, for making this publication possible. In 2017, Minpaku celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its official opening. In addition to serving as a museum – currently housing 345,000 artifacts – Minpaku has a mandate to foster collaborative research in cultural anthropology and ethnology among scholars from across the globe.\* This SES volume is published as part of that mandate, disseminating knowledge to promote a deeper understanding of the variety, diversity, and richness of the world's cultures.

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\* For more information on Minpaku's history, museum collections, research activities, and publications, see <http://www.minpaku.jp/english/>.