

## Performing Our Past to Secure Our Future : A Look at San-Owned Cultural Tourism in the Kalahari

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## **Performing Our Past to Secure Our Future: A Look at San-Owned Cultural Tourism in the Kalahari**

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### **ABSTRACT**

San peoples have long been involved in various forms of cultural tourism. For over a century, they hosted explorers, anthropologists, and leisure tourists who sought to experience firsthand their distinctive cultural practices, languages, and physical appearance. Non-San tourism operators, many of whom employed or even coerced San individuals and families to perform cultural stereotypes, mediated and profited from leisure tourism encounters. Visitors often treated the San as ‘primitive’ objects of fascination to be gazed at and photographed. While these exploitative relationships still occur, there is an important shift in San involvement in cultural tourism. Increasingly, San peoples are participating in their own community-based tourism ventures. Mindful of outsiders’ fascination with their cultural heritage, they are establishing cultural activities and accommodation facilities in order to entertain and educate guests. The San use these projects to take pride in their culture, correct tourists’ misunderstandings about them, and above all, to earn an income. These tourism projects not only contribute to San livelihoods but also help increase political recognition by governments that support the expansion of national tourism economies. Based on a survey of San-owned cultural tourism projects in Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa, this chapter addresses how San peoples exert political agency by commodifying their own identities in the cultural tourism industry. Specifically, it addresses how they engage their ‘strategic essentialism’ by sharing their heritage through cross-cultural encounters with tourists.

### **CULTURAL TOURISM: EXPLOITATION OR EMPOWERMENT?**

On a cold yet sunny winter afternoon, my travelling companion and I head to the office of a renovated farmhouse to meet our Nharo guide who will lead us on a history tour and bush walk. When we arrive, a smiling man in his late thirties dressed casually in a t-shirt, cotton trousers, and baseball cap introduces himself and explains the agenda. He first takes us to a reconstructed cultural village about

450 meters away, where there are huts made with dry grass thatch and a lit campfire. There are several Nharo men and women dressed in traditional leather skin clothing and beaded jewelry entertaining a group of foreign tourists who are lounging in chairs or standing and taking photographs of the cultural activities on display. Along the way, our guide shares with us the history of the Nharo in this area of Botswana, including how the land of the game farm was returned to the community that was displaced when white Afrikaner settlers arrived in the late nineteenth century. Since the return of the game farm, the Nharo were increasingly involved in running their own tourism projects – from game drives to traditional dancing demonstrations and craft production – rather than working for white-owned farms, businesses in town, or tourism operations.

The Nharo are a linguistic and ethnic community of San from central Botswana, one of many ethnic groups who speak click-consonant languages of the Khoisan language family and who traditionally relied on hunting and gathering for subsistence. Widely considered *the* Indigenous peoples of southern Africa, the San are extremely marginalized throughout the region. However, southern African states, such as Botswana, resist labeling the San as ‘Indigenous’ or promoting special measures for ethnic minorities, so as to prevent further enabling the overt ethnic and racial divisions produced during colonization. However, this stance has only perpetuated the dominance of an ethnic majority (e.g., the Tswana in Botswana and the Owambo in Namibia) or of an ethnic minority (e.g., whites in South Africa). One way in which the Nharo and other San communities have sought to have their Indigenous and marginalized status recognized is by participating in activities and industries in which they can solidify or commodify their identities, such as in minority-based non-profits and cultural tourism.

San peoples have long been involved in various forms of cultural tourism. For over a century, they hosted explorers, researchers (including anthropologists), and leisure tourists – all strangers – who sought to experience firsthand their distinctive cultural practices, languages, and physical appearance. These overwhelmingly one-sided encounters are a testament to the colonization of Africa and its legacy. Since the seventeenth century, Europeans, those of European-descent, and other non-Africans, have travelled to southern Africa for economic, political, religious, scholarly, and personal reasons. Many of them sought to capitalize on land, resources, and free or cheap labor and either played a direct or complicit role in the eradication or extreme marginalization of African populations. By the late nineteenth century, growing fascination with the region’s interior enticed more individuals to explore the harsher environment of the Kalahari Desert. Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, leisure tourists and social science researchers sought out meetings with San (who have since been relegated to the Kalahari) in order to meet people who represent to them a more ‘primitive’ culture.

A tourist is defined here as ‘a temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change’ (Smith

1989: 1). Thus, I include types of tourists beyond that of the quintessential holidaymaker, or vacationer, because as others have noted (Crick and Lanfant 1995; Stronza 2001), certain explorers and academic researchers have similar motivations for travel. Besides, rather than define these actors using terms emic to them, due to the perspective of this chapter, I prefer to refer to them on the terms of their hosts. In this light, it is very difficult to distinguish how San peoples differentiated between different groups of visitors over the years. Nevertheless, one clear motivation for cultural tourism is an authentic encounter with the Other (Bruner 2005). Because of the desire for cultural authenticity, tourists consume the commodity of Otherness. Academics and certain governments in the developing world remain suspicious of cultural tourism, with some seeing it as being exploitative and detrimental to cultural integrity since cultural tourism exaggerates those ethno-products that please the tourist as consumer. Others see it as a potential driver for economic and social development for those who participate in the industry.

This chapter addresses cultural tourism projects that are owned and/or run by San peoples in southern Africa – South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana – to ascertain how they exert political agency by commodifying their identities in this industry. It is based on a survey I completed of San cultural tourism projects from 2012 to 2014. Given the dark history of encounters between the San and whites (and other Africans), this chapter interrogates whether or not there are potential benefits of cultural tourism, asking and answering two important questions: Does cultural tourism always exploit those whose culture is on display? What happens when communities are in charge of their own cultural tourism ventures?

## **LEISURELY ENCOUNTERS WITH THE SAN**

While this chapter primarily focuses on leisure tourism, exploration and research are two other important categories of tourism to San peoples. Most exploration in the Kalahari took place between the late nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth century. Published accounts by explorers would fuel a wider curiosity about both the Kalahari and San peoples (e.g., Livingston 1857; Passarge 1907; van der Post 1958). Overlapping with exploration in the twentieth century, though peaking by the late-1960s, social science research efforts expanded, with scholars interested in understanding as much as they could, from the foraging lifeways of the San to the complexities of the Khoisan language family (e.g., Schapera 1930; Draper 1975; Lee 1984; Hitchcock 1987; Biesele 1993). San peoples were accommodating visits by anthropologists, linguists, and scholars of other disciplines, and university students around the world were now reading about their cultures as part of their liberal arts educations. Finally, the last quarter of the twentieth century to the present is notable for the surge in leisure tourists, not only to the Kalahari, but all over the world as mass tourism has taken hold.

The influx of leisure tourists to southern Africa increased in the late 1960s

with the rising middle class in the Global North. Flight prices dropped, and international travel was no longer exclusive to the wealthy elite (MacCannell 2013). Many holidaymakers and the more spirited backpackers began trekking to reach places further off the beaten path; in fact, for some, travelling to hard-to-reach or remote places became a goal. In southern Africa, much of the tourism has been, and is still, focused on wildlife and nature. Tourists go on African safaris to experience, photograph, or in other ways (e.g., hunting) engage with the place's scenery, animals, and peoples. By the last quarter of the twentieth century, Africa became accessible to the growing middle class, who took advantage of the opportunity by participating in organized safaris and, later, in self-guided trips and volunteer tourism.

While it does not produce the same demand or command the same price tag as nature and wildlife tourism, cultural tourism appeals to visitors interested in the uniqueness of local inhabitants' lifeways and traditions. As part of their overall African experience, tourists desire to come into contact with authentic African cultures, and the further removed from modern urban areas, the more authenticity is presumed. Due to the Europeans' and white settlers' hostile relationship with most Bantu peoples during the colonial and apartheid eras, the sparse and already marginalized San were then romanticized as an African 'noble savage', such that, unlike Bantu peoples, San peoples were close to nature with gentler, conflict-avoidant personalities and were therefore more desirable. After the many large-scale wars in the first 75 years of the twentieth century, people in the developed world held a strong desire to find a simpler life (MacCannell 2013; Cohen 1979); for many, San peoples were symbolic of humanity at its purest form. Early cultural tourism to visit San peoples was offered as an add-on to safaris, enabling tourists the opportunity to photograph San 'Bushmen' still living in the wilderness of the Kalahari. Many San communities or individuals also performed their cultural dances and sold crafts to visitors. However, often the middlemen in cultural tourism were not San.

For a long time, tourism operators, many of whom employed or even coerced San individuals and families to perform cultural stereotypes, mediated and profited from leisure tourism encounters. In certain instances, it was because of tourism that the San were displaced, such as the Hai//om who were relocated during the formation of the Etosha National Park in Namibia (Dieckmann 2007). Some San peoples still had limited control over their participation in tourism, but were not provided with a deeper understanding of the broader tourism economy or their intellectual property rights, such as the ownership of photographs and other imagery and intangible properties related to their cultures. Indeed, the San were and are still projected as 'primitive' objects of fascination to be gazed at and documented, images that circulate globally, creating an imaginary of the San that perpetuates the tourist's fascination with them. This began prior to leisure tourism in southern Africa, with the exhibition of San peoples, other Africans, and Indigenous ethnic groups from around the world in curiosity shows and World's

Fairs (Corbey 1993; Gordon 1999; Parsons 2009). It has continued with the production of popular and documentary films and magazines (Tomaselli 1995; 2006).

For example, in the 1970s and 1980s tour companies visiting the Ju/'hoan community in the remote Tsodilo Hills, Botswana, by small plane or 4x4 vehicles would photograph 'Bushmen' next to 'Bushmen paintings', as the site possesses the largest concentration of rock imagery in the world. Tourists preferred photographs of the Ju/'hoansi in traditional leather skins – including bare-breasted women – performing traditional tasks. Professional and amateur photographs of the Tsodilo Ju/'hoansi were later published in books or as tourist souvenirs, thereby perpetuating imagery of them as stereotypical 'Bushmen' and even setting the gold standard for what a 'Bushman' should look like (i.e., short, slight build, light skin, epicanthic eyelid folds, etc.). However, while the Ju/'hoansi may have been compensated for posing for the photographers, they were not remunerated for their imagery being reproduced, sometimes en masse, sold, and utilized for other purposes. During one of my trips, I was startled to find a large glossy print of a Tsodilo Ju/'hoan woman's father in loincloth posing with a bow and arrow at the Victoria Falls Hotel merely titled, 'Bushman', with no reference to the language group or the site where the photograph was taken, reducing him to a generic representation of all San peoples.

Some governments originally did not encourage cultural tourism. For example, Botswana argued that it was tourism that kept the San from developing, as it would trap them in the stereotype of being 'primitive'. It was only later in the 1980s when tourism's potential was tapped, and development groups pointed to nature-based and cultural tourism as two means by which the San and other poorer populations might be able to profit. Community-based cultural, nature, and wildlife tourism followed the Community Based Natural Resource Management ('CBNRM') model, in which communities were incentivized toward conservation of natural or cultural resources by developing community trusts to hold and make decisions on communal profits (Rozemeijer 2009; Rozemeijer ed. 2001). The overall success of the tourism industry and, for a time, the CBNRM tourism projects helped to change the government of Botswana's views on cultural tourism, particularly that of the San and other ethnic minorities. In recent years, the government has encouraged its citizens to participate more fully in these sectors of the industry by maintaining their cultural practices and producing crafts, a far cry from its stance in the 1970s and 1980s.

In many instances, San peoples ultimately lacked control of their image and their commodification, while non-San peoples profited. This made some San advocates and social scientists look down on tourism as an exploitative industry at its core. In fact, several argued that tourism contributed to cultural corrosion through the commodification that was encouraged and owned by outsiders and that it provided simplistic representations that were often not reflective of the ongoing political and economic strife as well as the cultural genocide the San

were facing. However, in other parts of the world, Indigenous communities were increasingly harnessing the potential of tourism and cultural commodification to benefit their own agendas (Butler and Hinch 2007; Bunten 2010; Bunten and Graburn in press).

Although many social scientists might not identify themselves as ‘tourists’, since they are working (conducting research) while staying with San communities, there is a large element of leisure that they may not recognize. The sociopolitical and economic privilege that affords them the opportunity to choose a career in social science and the ability to conduct research at sites away from their homes signals their opportunity to travel for work and leisure. This is particularly true for social scientists, such as anthropologists, who have the chance to live with communities drastically different from their own (unless the researcher is from the community). The majority of people in the Global North do not have the privilege to choose career paths in which they can pose their own scholarly questions and pursue research in faraway places, and this is one reason to argue that research can be a category of tourism. Similar to researchers, some of those either working in the non-profit sector or volunteering abroad might also be considered forms of tourists. For example, foreigners working in the non-profit sector in order to participate in San development and health issues are able to use their employment as a form of tourism. Similarly, foreign volunteers, dubbed ‘voluntourists’, travel and then give away their labor for a period of time in order to benefit personally and professionally from the experience.

## CONTEMPORARY SAN CULTURAL TOURISM

While these exploitative relationships still occur, there is an important shift in San involvement in cultural tourism. Increasingly, San peoples are participating in their own community-based tourism ventures. The San were to varying degrees in charge of mediating tourism encounters for decades. There was always a power imbalance between them and white and other African ethnic groups, including people coercing the San into tourism or tourists directly interacting with the San without permission. But to claim that the San were completely exploited is not to view them as social actors capable of controlling their own fate, a patronizing view that many advocates and activists also blame for regional governments’ ongoing treatment of the San. This led to an obvious choice of tourism to help assist the San with community-based projects, which began in the late 1980s through the early to mid-1990s (Rozemeijer 2001). Some of these projects, like the ones in Botswana, are more complicated because of the state’s ultimate control over them through state policy concerning CBNRM (Pienaar et al. 2013; Republic of Botswana 2007). However, the ways in which the San do oversee these projects is telling, particularly regarding their relationship to tourism and the evolution of this relationship over time.

Mindful of outsiders’ fascination with their cultural heritage, San are

establishing cultural activities and accommodation facilities in order to entertain and educate guests. The San use these projects to take pride in their culture, correct tourists' misunderstandings about them, and above all, to earn an income. I surveyed many of these projects in Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa from 2012 to 2014. I was interested in learning about those cultural tourism projects that the San either owned or managed, and in some cases both, as well as what set these projects apart from those owned and/or managed by non-San persons. For the survey, I visited the cultural tourism projects and participated in as many of the offered activities as possible. I will briefly outline a couple of projects in each country.

In Botswana, the government has a staunch stance toward the San and other ethnic minorities; it does not formally recognize ethnic difference or condone giving ethnic (or racial) groups special privileges (though it does this anyway by forming a state worldview that affords the most rights to ethnic Tswana). Tourism has, however, opened up a special window on ethnic relations by demonstrating how the commodification of ethnic identity can be beneficial. The Dq̄e Qare San Lodge opened in 1998, five years after the land was returned to the Nharo through its purchase by the Dutch Government and the Netherlands Development Organisation ('SNV'). It now boasts large game animals, such as giraffe, eland, wildebeest, and zebra; various accommodations (lodge, grass huts, and camp sites); a dancing arena for the nearly annual Kuru San Dance Festival; and a reconstructed village for cultural activities (Figure 1). This project is primarily overseen by the Kuru Development Trust, one of the eight non-governmental organizations ('NGOs') of the Kuru Family of Organisations, and is managed by a



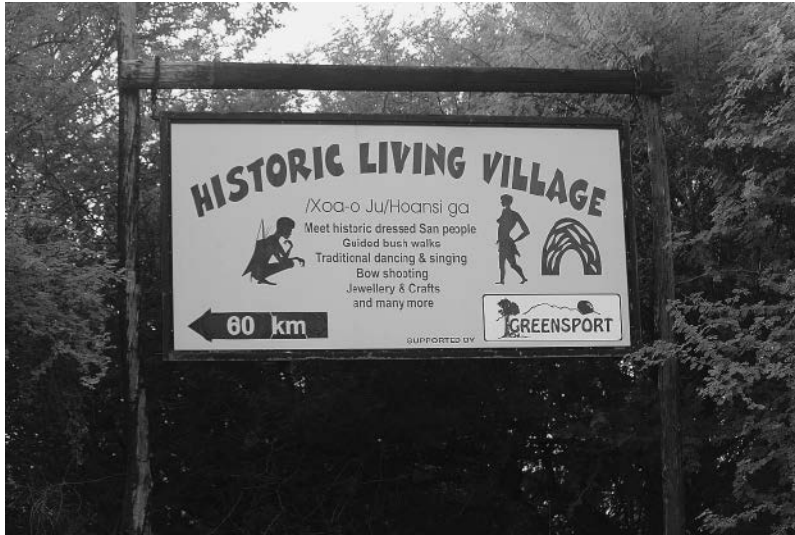
**Figure 1** Nharo guides and tourists at the Dq̄e Qare San Lodge's reconstructed San village in Botswana. (Photo by author, 2012.)



board, many members of which are Nharo from the nearby village of D'Kar. Although an NGO plays a pivotal role in the management of Dq̄e Qare San Lodge, the Nharo have a strong sense of ownership of it. During several stays over 10 years, I noted increasing professionalization of all its sectors, in some part due to training opportunities for employees, such as at !Khwa ttu, a San culture and education center located just north of Cape Town, South Africa (Staehelin 2006).

Another community tourism project is at the Tsodilo World Heritage Site in northwestern Botswana. The Ju/'hoan community here have participated in the tourism industry since the 1960s. After the government relocated them from the hills in 1995 to a nearby area, they were then rerouted toward working with the neighboring Hambukushu community on collaborative tourism ventures. A management plan that the government approved in 2007 and began implementing in 2009 redirected local involvement in tourism, further exacerbating tensions between the Ju/'hoansi and Hambukushu, both ethnic minorities competing over the limited resource of tourists' money. However, the Ju/'hoan community still continue to manage their own tourism as best they can, and this usually entails the sale of crafts, such as necklaces (made from seeds, mokolwane palm nuts, and ostrich eggshell beads), bow and arrow sets, and leather bags, as well as posing for photographs and performing cultural dances for visitors. Originally, guiding tourists to the rock imagery was an important part of Tsodilo Ju/'hoan livelihoods, but since their relocation and government and NGO management of the hills (declared a World Heritage Site in 2001) and of the communities themselves, guiding is now overseen by the Tsodilo Site Museum, a branch of the government's National Museum, Monuments and Art Gallery.

In Namibia, the government was formed in 1990, after a war for its independence from South Africa, and has made steps to embrace its multicultural populace. However, the San in the country still remain an underclass (Dieckmann et al. 2014). A substantial percentage of land designated as Bantustans before Independence has since been converted to communal conservancies in an attempt to give land rights back to non-whites. In the Otjozondjupa Region, formerly Bushmanland, there are two communal conservancies that boast San-owned tourism projects: N̄a Jaqna and Nyae Nyae. The Nyae Nyae Conservancy has even published its own tourism protocols for visitor behavior. In both conservancies, there are Ju/'hoan owned and managed 'living museums', which are facilitated by a German-Namibian NGO, the Living Culture Foundation Namibia. The communities operating the Ju/'hoansi-San Living Museum and the Living Hunters Museum of the Ju/'hoansi-San must build and operate the projects on their own with no financial assistance, though they do receive business-strategy input from the NGO, as well as marketing assistance. Both offer a full menu of cultural activities in reconstructed villages that cover partial-day to multi-day activities, including traditional dancing and singing, bush walks, modern village tours, and even hunting trips. The Ju/'hoansi-San Living Museum in the N̄a Jaqna



**Figure 2** Sign for the Ju/'hoansi-San Living Museum in Namibia. Most San cultural tourism projects are off the beaten path. (Photo by author, 2014.)

Conservancy (Figure 2) receives larger visitor numbers due to its proximity to the town of Grootfontein and a major road. The Living Hunters Museum of the Ju/'hoansi-San is remotely located northwards outside of Tsumkwe and receives much fewer tourists.

Treesleeper Campsite was opened in Tsintsabis, in Namibia's Oshikoto Region, where the Hai//om were relocated in 1954 during the formation of the Etosha National Park (Dieckmann 2007). Away from their ancestral land, the Hai//om – with the assistance of a Dutch NGO, including a Dutch anthropologist, Stasja Koot – created Treesleeper in the first decade of the 2000s (Koot 2012 and Chapter 12). Treesleeper offers overnight accommodation facilities, including chalets and camping spaces. While Treesleeper offers Hai//om cultural activities, according to employees, many Hai//om residents are not as willing to participate in them, especially filming. Additionally, a Hai//om employee told me that some tourists find that the Hai//om, who are tall with darker skin, do not fulfill these tourists' ideal of San 'Bushmen'. Instead, the nearby !Xun community, who are shorter and slighter in stature with fairer skin, do fit this ideal, and the community there is more receptive to potentially invasive cultural tourism, such as home visits. To some extent, the Hai//om, reluctant to commodify themselves, are managing the cultural tourism of the !Xun.

In South Africa, the history and presence of the San have been most impacted by the violence of colonialism. Several San groups were annihilated by Europeans and white settlers or were assimilated into other ethnic groups, such as 'Coloureds'. Those recognized or self-recognizing as San today are generally limited to the #Khomani and other individuals labeled as mixed-race during the

apartheid racial classification scheme (see also Puckett, Chapter 14). The focus of San cultural tourism in South Africa is on the #Khomani of the Northern Cape, where they are partial owners (with the Mier community) of a luxury lodge, !Xaus Lodge, and run a community campsite, //Uruke Bush Camp Adventures. !Xaus Lodge is located adjacent to the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, from which it is accessed, and from which the #Khomani were relocated in 1934 to make way for the former Kalahari Gemsbok National Park. At !Xaus Lodge, the current emphasis is on nature and wildlife tourism, though there are #Khomani-led nature walks and cultural activities in an area with grass thatch huts. //Uruke Bush Camp Adventures near Andriesvale (Figure 3) offers more extensive cultural activities, including heritage tours to learn about the effects of the area's colonial past, though during my visit in 2014, it was not receiving many tourists. This might be due to its reliance on NGO financial and managerial support, which at the time was crippled. More so than in Botswana or Namibia, the focus in South Africa is on cultural rejuvenation and the #Khomani reclaiming their land and relearning their language and traditional knowledge.

Overall, the San cultural tourism projects I visited are mostly located on land to which San have rights, whether it is communally owned or managed through a conservancy. Most projects are small, based in or near settlements, and managed by extended families, such as the Ju/'hoan 'living museums' in Namibia. Some projects are larger and involve more than one settlement, like //Uruke Bush Camp Adventures operated by the #Khomani in South Africa and Treesleeper Campsite operated by the Hai//om and !Xun in Namibia. There are only two lodges that the



**Figure 3** #Khomani guide at the //Uruke Bush Camp Adventures in South Africa explaining traditional uses of flora. This cultural tourism project is situated on land successfully reclaimed by the #Khomani since apartheid ended. (Photo by author, 2014.)

San own or manage. Dq̄e Qare San Lodge is owned and managed by the Nharo in Botswana and is the most accessible San-run cultural tourism project in the region. The upscale !Xaus Lodge is situated on †Khomani and Mier land inside and adjacent to the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park in South Africa. Though San-owned, it is operated by an outside management group in consultation with these communities and South African National Parks. Ju/'hoan tourism at Tsodilo is run by an extended family, managed by a community trust, and overseen by the government and an NGO.

### COMMODIFICATION OF SAN IDENTITY

The commodification of San ethnic identity is prevalent. Their image has been depicted in advertisements, film, and magazines, as well as on wine labels, playing cards, and postcards (Buntman 1996). However, perhaps the most intimate experience of their commodified identity takes place when they perform it for tourists. For the most part, it is outsiders who appropriate not only the image of the San, but other aspects of their unique lifeways and heritage as well. In tourism, it is primarily non-San who profit from these commodified performances. The commodification of culture and ethnic identity is at the heart of cultural tourism because it contributes to the production and promotion of ethno-products, thereby crystalizing ideas of what culture and ethnicity are. On one extreme, tourism contributes to the desecration of cultural practices because they are reduced to commodities for financial consumption (Greenwood 1989). However, an important counter-argument is that, if communities decide to commodify their identities for outsiders or for each other, then it is their decision, and they are asserting their agency to do so (Bunten 2008).

With awareness and understanding that they are perceived as iconic foragers, even if historical and current political and economic situations prevent this lifestyle, San peoples are savvy enough to capitalize upon and subvert this commodified identity, a stereotype, to suit their needs. Through tourism, the San experience the exploitation of their commodified personas, but also the potential benefits. San peoples participate in cultural tourism for profit. They need and want to earn money in order to engage in the cash economy that has engulfed their societies and replaced traditional forms of subsistence. Selling themselves has, sadly, become one of the only 'skills' available to a mostly remote underclass who possess less formal education and training than other citizens, fewer opportunities for steady jobs, and limited access to land and other resources that would make self-sufficiency possible. However, through ethnic commodification with cultural tourism, the San are also able to celebrate what makes them unique and uphold cultural pride. They are also able to educate visitors about their culture and history, including correcting inaccurate stereotypes. Here, there is strong compatibility between cultural tourism and cultural survival. They use cultural tourism to draw attention to their recent history and therefore to re-educate

visitors, by providing explanations, for example, for the presence of a reconstructed village that lies adjacent to a modern village, or for why they no longer hunt. They do so with an insistence upon greater respect for their culture through the development of visitor protocols, such as the one developed by the Nyae Nyae Conservancy in Namibia. The San are also able to educate their youth about cultural practices that might have been otherwise lost if it were not for the incentive to retain them for tourism. For example, they use tourism to pass down their cultural heritage and take pride in their culture, such as by teaching craft-production to their youth and by passing down knowledge of animals and the veldt beyond just the purposes of subsistence.

While tourism involving marginalized groups and Indigenous peoples can ultimately be an exploitative enterprise, it does not render the hosts without agency. In the case of San cultural tourism, those individuals and communities who set out – in many cases, with the aid of NGOs and donors – to develop their own tourism facilities and activities capture a piece of the economic market that can then help increase their political voice. For example, the San can perform a collective Indigenous identity by engaging their ‘strategic essentialism’ (Spivak 1987) as stereotypical ‘Bushmen’ in order to obtain greater national and supranational acknowledgment for their special minority status. This enables them to counter dominant narratives about their past and their future. They have the potential to use tourism to their benefit by controlling their own commodification, thereby altering a global imaginary about the San while also asserting their rights.

## CONCLUSION

As we continued our tour with the Nharo guide, he shared his concern that white farms in the area are competing and using images of San to lure tourists. This is a problem in this area of Botswana because land is private and San do not have access to it. Some lands are managed by Tribal Land Boards whose administrators discriminate against the San who apply for land; others are nationally protected nature and wildlife areas from which the San are generally restricted. Another concern he has is the prevention of non-San from appropriating San imagery for their own business branding, including tourism projects. Tourists are not easily able to distinguish a San owned and/or run tourism project from others if San imagery is used on all of them; thus, it is hard for the Nharo to redirect those tourists interested in supporting community tourism. Finally, he mentioned that it is challenging to market the community’s tourism projects, since the Nharo, like other San, have limited access to larger industry networks.

My 2012 to 2014 survey revealed important differences between San-based cultural tourism projects owned and run by the San and those owned and run by non-San peoples (primarily whites). Cultural tourism involves the marketing and sale of cultural commodities, including people’s identity. When outsiders are in charge of managing these markets, they can dictate what will be commodified.

Non-San tourism operators often peddle a fantasy about the San as primitive, docile, and/or racially distinct from other Africans. They also see most of the tourism profit, and the San participating in these projects can become exploited laborers. However, when San manage their own tourism ventures, they have more control over what they choose to share with visitors about their cultural heritage. They still cater to tourists' romanticized expectations, but some also seek to educate visitors about their history and current situation. These tourism encounters provide the San with a voice in the global community.

Even though cultural tourism is potentially very beneficial to San communities, there is much to be done, especially in terms of controlling the marketing of San identities and ensuring that San peoples have access and rights to resources to participate in cultural tourism if they find it desirable. The San are part of a rising trend of Indigenous peoples worldwide joining the cultural tourism movement (Bunten and Graburn, in press). Indeed, the World Indigenous Tourism Alliance ('WINTA') was established in 2012 to assist Indigenous communities worldwide in dealing with issues related to tourism. Development facilitators already realize the possibilities, and in South Africa for example, !Khwatla offers tourism and hospitality training for San youth from the region. Cultural tourism is not necessarily exploitative and can benefit communities who engage in it, but it is vitally important that communities have control in the decision-making process when creating a cultural tourism product.

Other cautions include recognizing that cultural tourism is a niche market in a region that is dominated by high-end nature and wildlife tourism. The tourism industry can also fluctuate along with the stability or instability of other global markets, and Africa's tourism market is no exception. Fear and incidents of terrorism and health epidemics can scare tourists from travelling too far from home. The San cannot, therefore, primarily rely on cultural tourism as a source of income. Because many of these projects are off the beaten track, they tend to attract international tourists with a particular interest in San or Indigenous cultures. Some projects could also stand to expand their marketing efforts to local tourists, who often do not know much about San cultures. It is also important to realize that these projects are unlikely to result in significant financial gains, though they can augment San livelihoods. Ultimately, San peoples need access and rights to land in order to increase their autonomy, which should include the ability to manage their own tourism projects and other businesses.

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