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# The Kalahari Peoples Fund: Activist Legacy of the Harvard Kalahari Research Group

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**Abstract:** The multidisciplinary Harvard Kalahari Research Group (HKRG) led by Richard Lee and Irven DeVore was expanded in 1973, after a decade of interlocking anthropological research projects in Botswana, to include an activist non-profit organization, The Kalahari Peoples Fund (KPF). KPF is one of the oldest anthropological advocacy groups in North America. Now past its 25-year anniversary, KPF remains active with a newsletter, a website, and substantial ongoing projects in community-based education and natural resource management in Kalahari communities in both Botswana and Namibia. In large part the success of KPF is due to the length and depth of the ethnographic studies—by Richard Lee and collaborating colleagues—that have underwritten it throughout its history.

**Keywords:** San, southern Africa, indigenous peoples, social movements, anthropological advocacy, Kalahari Peoples Fund

**Résumé:** Le groupe de recherche multidisciplinaire de Harvard sur le Kalahari (*Harvard Kalahari Research Group*) dirigé par Richard Lee et Irven DeVore s'est étendu en 1973, après une décennie de recherches coordonnées au Botswana, pour inclure une organisation activiste sans but lucratif: The Kalahari Peoples Fund (KPF). KPF est l'un des plus anciens groupes anthropologiques dédiés à une cause, en Amérique du Nord. Après plus de vingt-cinq ans, KPF demeure toujours actif avec un bulletin, un site internet, et d'importants projets en éducation communautaire et en aménagement des ressources naturelles dans les communautés du Kalahari au Botswana et en Namibie. En grande partie, le succès du KPF est dû à l'étendue et à la profondeur des études ethnographiques – de Richard Lee et de ses collaborateurs – qui ont soutenu sa crédibilité tout au long de son histoire.

**Mots-clés :** San, Afrique du sud, autochtones, mouvements sociaux, activisme en anthropologie, *Kalahari Peoples Fund*

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## Introduction: Activism as an Outgrowth of Long-Term Field Research

In 2001, Richard Lee and I completed a paper for a volume on long-term ethnographic research (Kemper et al, 2001) called “Local Cultures and Global Systems: The Ju/hoansi!/Kung and their Ethnographers Fifty Years On.” In it, we detail research over five decades, a period which has seen the Ju/hoansi drawn increasingly into the World System. Lee’s successive editions of *The Dobe !Kung* (Lee, 1984; later *The Dobe Ju/hoansi*, Lee, 1993) outline the challenges facing the Ju/hoansi in these decades, including the demands of the cash economy, poverty, class formation, bureaucratic and media manipulation, militarization and dispossession.

The responses of the Ju/hoansi to these daunting challenges make a fascinating and encouraging story. By way of perspective on the changes that have occurred, I start with some recent news. On March 28, 2001, Telecom Namibia finished installing telecommunications infrastructure in Tjum!kui, Namibia, only some 50 kilometers across the border from Dobe, Botswana. Namibian President Sam Nujoma and Tsamkxao =Oma, first chairperson of the Ju/hoansi’s Nyae Nyae Farmers’ Cooperative, spoke on the telephone at that time from Tjum!kui to New York. Since then it has been possible for the Kalahari Peoples Fund in the U.S. to have regular email contact with the Tsumkwe (Tjum!kui) Junior Secondary School and other entities in Tjum!kui via the Otjozondjupa Regional Council. Likewise, the world of electronic information on the Internet is now within the actual reach of Ju/hoan students, leaders and communities. This instant communication is a far cry from at least six weeks’ turnaround time for a letter from then South West Africa to North America when Richard Lee began his fieldwork in the area in the 1960s.

Starting with the Marshall expeditions in the 1950s and taken as a whole, the long-term research in the Dobe-Tjum!kui area contextualized and eventually doc-

umented the Ju/'hoan determination to take control of their resources, assert their political and human rights, and affect the way they were represented to a world largely ignorant of their way of life. As the Marshall studies were succeeded by those of the Harvard Kalahari Research Group (HKRG) and of the University of New Mexico Department of Anthropology, it became increasingly clear that integrated interdisciplinary research was the best way to encompass the complex and rapidly changing realities of Ju/'hoan life. Collaborative work on ethnography, ecological adaptation, world view and acculturation formed the backdrop to a comprehensive understanding of both traditional Ju/'hoan lifeways and their role in ongoing internal and external negotiations.

### History of the Kalahari Peoples Fund

Starting fieldwork in 1970, I was privileged to work with Lorna Marshall and also to be the last in the first wave of HKRG graduate students. Believing interdisciplinary understanding must prominently include the expressive forms through which people understand and comment on their lives, I convinced Richard Lee and Irven DeVore to include me in the HKRG, along with John Yellen, Patricia Draper, Henry Harpending, Melvin Konner, Marjorie Shostak, Richard Katz, and other graduate students and associates. I have written elsewhere (Biesele, 1990; 1994b; 1997) of the way research in Ju/'hoan expressive forms led me directly to what the people were most enthusiastic about: their present problems and their future.

I discussed these problems extensively with colleagues in the field and on my return to Harvard in 1972, asking how we as anthropologists could hope to be of help. At that time I found in my graduate school few sympathizers (beyond HKRG colleagues) with my dawning activist point of view, with the exception of those who founded Cultural Survival, Inc. Luckily, many of my HKRG colleagues had feelings similar to mine during their fieldwork. We all felt that somehow we must try to equalize our exchanges with the Ju/'hoansi, that somehow we must give back some compensation for the knowledge of their culture they had so freely given us.

In 1973 an opportunity came to discuss this responsibility many of us shared. Lee and DeVore were at that time finalizing the manuscript of an anthology of HKRG work to be published by Harvard University Press (*Kalahari Hunter-Gatherers*, 1976). At the suggestion of Lorna Marshall, we decided to hold a book workshop at an inn near Peterborough, New Hampshire, and to use the workshop additionally as a retreat to discuss

how our research group might redefine its role to address current Ju/'hoan issues. Out of these discussions came the idea of the Kalahari Peoples Fund (KPF), written up in *Newsweek* in subsequent years as one of the first people's advocacy organizations in the U.S. with professional anthropological expertise behind it.

Present at the 1973 meeting at which the Kalahari Peoples Fund was formed were, besides myself and Richard Lee, Irven and Nancy DeVore, Richard Katz, Marjorie Shostak, Melvin Konner, John Yellen, Patricia Draper, Henry Harpending and John Marshall. Other supporters and colleagues included Jiro Tanaka, Mathias Guenther, Stewart Truswell, John Hansen and Nicholas Blurton-Jones, all of whose work went into the *Kalahari Hunter-Gatherers* book as well. Royalties from this book have been a small but steady mainstay for the Kalahari Peoples Fund for over 25 years, continuing today, when the book is available only in electronic form.

The Kalahari Peoples Fund also received early funding from Lorna Marshall, through whose help it established itself as a U.S. 501©(3) non-profit organization in 1978. The late 1970s saw the beginning of a long series of KPF activities carried out jointly with the Ju/'hoansi, at first with those on the Botswana side of the international border with Namibia. Watchwords in KPF policy from the beginning emphasized

1. carrying out only locally-initiated (rather than top-down) projects,
2. being available when needed rather than creating "make-work" activities, and
3. using all volunteer labour, so that every penny of earmarked funds goes directly to projects in the Kalahari.

Most important in KPF's operations has been the continuous input of professional anthropologists in all phases of its activities. In recent years, as well, younger anthropologists have volunteered time to KPF, valuing the experience as part of their own training.

### The Kalahari Peoples Fund and Collaborating Organizations

There has been close KPF participation through the years not only with local people's organizations such as the Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative/Nyae Nyae Conservancy; First Peoples of the Kalahari; and Ditshwanelo—the Botswana Centre for Human Rights; but also sister NGOs such as the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia; the Kuru Development Trust and TOCADI (Trust for Okavango Cultural and Development Initiatives) in Botswana; WIMSA, the Working Group of

Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (Namibia and Botswana); and SASI, the South African San Institute. Documentation of the interactions among these organizations has been carried out by Robert K. Hitchcock and several co-authors (Hitchcock, 1997; 1999; 2000; 2001; Hitchcock and Murphree, 1998, etc. ) and by publications co-authored by Richard Lee and myself (2001), and by Richard Katz, myself and Verna St. Denis (1997).

During the 1990s and into the new millennium a series of papers (Biesele, 1992; 1993; 1994a; 1995; 2001; Biesele and Hitchcock, 1996) given at the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association detailed, along with the activities of collaborating organizations, the following themes in the Ju/'hoan and general San struggle to establish rights:

- Use of governmental land allocation processes to secure land, water and resource rights
- Defeat of "coercive conservation" projects such as game reserves that excluded people
- "Back to the land" movements by people who had been removed from their traditional areas
- Establishment of water infrastructure, cattle and agricultural projects to secure land tenure
- Integrated rural development projects, including ecotourism, crafts projects and other income-generation
- Promotion of community education projects in, and national policies favouring, the use of San languages
- Development of sophistication in the use of media and establishment of political voice in national context

These themes have been closely linked together in the histories of both Nyae Nyae, in Namibia, and the Dobe area of Botswana, as detailed in the following discussion.

### **Ju/'hoan Rights to Land, Language, and Political Representation**

Like other indigenous peoples in the late 20th century, the Ju/'hoan and other San have been gaining new ground in terms of land, language preservation, and political representation in the nation-states in which they live. In Namibia and Botswana, the Ju/'hoan San (also known as Bushmen, Basarwa) have been able to establish tenure rights in fairly sizeable blocks of land and to manage these areas themselves through government-recognized, community-based organizations (CBOs). They have also been able to promote the teaching of San languages in village schools and to obtain political representation and have their political leaders recognized at both the national and the international levels. These gains have not been easy, but they do suggest that there is optimism for the Ju/'hoan and other San in the new millennium.

The Ju/'hoan (!Kung) San of northern Namibia and Botswana are some of the best-known indigenous peoples in the world. They have been the subject of numerous anthropological studies, films (e.g. *The Hunters* and *N!ai: The Story of a !Kung Woman*, both by John Marshall), popular books (e.g. *The Bushmen* by Anthony Bannister and Peter Johnson), development-oriented studies (such as John Marshall and Claire Ritchie's book *Where Are the Ju/wasi of Nyae Nyae?*), and children's books (e.g. the book I wrote with Kxao Royal /O/oo for U.S. sixth-graders, called *San*).

The Ju/'hoansi, who number some 15 000 in Namibia and 2 000 in northern Botswana, have undergone substantial social, economic and political changes over the generations. One of the most important of these changes is the establishment of locally-owned and managed community organizations that promote the interests of the Ju/'hoansi and other San.

### **In Namibia**

The Nyae Nyae San development program in northeastern Namibia is an integrated rural development effort that began in 1981. Initiated originally as a "cattle fund" to provide Ju/'hoan San groups with livestock, tools and seeds, it has grown into a multifaceted development program that is characterized by close co-operation between a non-government organization, the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation (NNDNF), and a community-based organization, the Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative (NNFC), now called the Nyae Nyae Conservancy (NNC). A key feature of the program is the empowerment of Ju/'hoan communities through a bottom-up participatory development approach.

In the early 1980s, Ju/'hoansi began to move out of a government-sponsored settlement at Tjum!kui in Eastern Bushmanland in order to re-establish themselves as independent units that supported themselves through a mixed production system of foraging, pastoralism agriculture, and small-scale rural entrepreneurial activities. The local organization also represented Ju/'hoan interests at the local and national levels. In 1983-84, the Ju/'hoansi and their supporters, including organizations such as the Kalahari Peoples Fund, were instrumental in lobbying against the establishment of a nature reserve in Eastern Bushmanland.

In 1986, the Ju/'hoansi of Eastern Bushmanland (now called Eastern Otjozondjupa) formed the Ju/Wa Farmers Union (JFU), an organization that assisted local people in livestock raising and other development activities. The co-operative sought to protect Ju/'hoan land through lobbying at the local, regional and national

levels for their land and political rights. The co-operative later played a major role in the deliberations at the Namibian Conference on Land Reform and the Land Question held in Windhoek in June-July, 1991.

With assistance from a local non-government organization, the Ju/Wa Bushman Development Foundation (JBDF, now known as the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia or NNDFN), the Ju/'hoansi were able to set up new communities based on traditional kinship arrangements. By the time of the new millennium there were 37 such communities, many of them with their own herds and agricultural fields. The Ju/'hoansi have worked closely with the representatives of the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation and various aid agencies in locating and mapping the boundaries of their territories and in coming up with rules for how the land and its resources should be managed within these areas. They have also worked out methods for discussing issues facing local communities such as agricultural labour allocation, distribution of livestock and maintenance of physical infrastructure.

The formation of the co-operative was the result of close consultation among local Ju/'hoansi, few of whom had much experience with setting up and running representational bodies. Initially, the Ju/'hoansi had open meetings in which literally hundreds of people participated in the traditional style of consensus-based decision making. Later on, the communities began to delegate some of the responsibility for attending meetings to specific individuals. Elections were held, and two representatives, known as "Rada," were chosen from each of the communities to take part in the co-operative meetings. Women's participation in the NFC leadership was encouraged actively by the Ju/'hoansi, and it was decided in the early 1990s to have at least one of the members of the Rada from each community be female. Ju/'hoan women and men alike have stressed the importance of maintaining "the health of the land" in north-eastern Namibia. A potential environmental problem predicted by Namibian government planners was that the livestock owned by Ju/'hoansi would begin to have negative effects on the range in Eastern Otjozondjupa. Thus far, this has not happened, as herd sizes have been kept small through the Ju/'hoan recognition of range capacity.

The Ju/'hoansi have received assistance from various quarters, including donors in southern Africa, Europe and America. In the mid-1990s, the Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE) Project, a joint effort of the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Government of the Republic of Namibia, began provid-

ing funds and technical assistance to the Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative to enable them to become self-sufficient. Emphasis was placed on social and economic development as well as human resource development involving formal and non-formal education and training. The development workers used a variety of participatory development strategies, and the approaches employed have stressed communication and self-determination all levels.

Some of the activities of the Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative include seeking control over the land and resources of Eastern Otjozondjupa, promoting development activities, and taking part in land use and environmental planning with government agencies, non-government organizations, and people in the private sector. The NNFC acted as a corporate body in seeking to convince outsiders who have moved into the area with their cattle to move elsewhere. The Farmers Cooperative also collaborated with the Foundation in seeking ways to promote better financial and human and fiscal resource management. It took part in studies and land use planning exercises (e.g., a conservation and development planning exercise conducted in early 1991 with the then Directorate of Nature Conservation, now the Ministry of Environment and Tourism) that led to the formulation and implementation of recommendations on development and conservation.

The Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative was relatively successful in establishing a set of rules aimed at promoting conservation and sustainable development internally and preventing the overexploitation of local resources by outsiders. The Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative sought to draw attention to issues relating to land tenure and resource rights at national and regional conferences (e.g. the Regional San Conference held in Windhoek in June, 1992 and the meetings of the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa, WIMSA, which was founded in 1996).

The Cooperative operates as an independent body to consider public policy matters at its meetings. It undertakes trips to all the communities in the region in order to listen to the concerns of local people, and it provides them with information. It has made people aware of political, economic and environmental issues. It has its own bank account and it runs its own shop and handicraft purchasing operation. Over the decade and a half of its existence, the Cooperative has evolved into a flexible, generally participatory organization for internal communication and external representation. No decisions are supposed to be made without efforts being made to gauge the opinions of the entire popula-

tion. In some cases, this has meant that new projects have been held in abeyance until such time as all the communities were contacted, a process which is by no means easy in a setting in which 37 different villages are dispersed across a 6 300 square kilometer area of African savanna with only sandy tracks connecting them. The advantage of this approach is that once initiatives are agreed upon, they have the full support of the Ju/'hoansi, who then play key roles in the implementation of projects such as taking part in the construction of village schools and assisting in formulation of curricula for those schools.

The Nyae Nyae Development Foundation has had an important impact in northeastern Namibia in terms of employment creation. Some of this employment was related to the Farmers' Cooperative, which has a number of positions in the leadership and in the everyday management of the Cooperative. Other than this organization, there are few opportunities in Namibia where San could play important roles in decision making and management. This has been particularly important for the status of traditional Ju/'hoan leaders. Formerly, the Ju/'hoan *n!ore kxaosi*, oldest men or women core-group siblings in whom stewardship of resource and habitation areas were vested, maintained co-ordinating relationships with other *n!ore kxaosi* which involved balancing giving—and strategically withholding—key environmental accesses. With the independence of Namibia, both national and developmental expectations were that these leadership and resource management attitudes would vanish overnight and give way to smoothly functioning “democratic” structures and attitudes of commitment to the health of the region as a whole.

It was somewhat unrealistic, perhaps, to expect that Ju/'hoan leadership would rally without conflict to a regional or even ethnic cause. New Ju/'hoan leaders have been expected to transcend both the long-tenured social attitudes of their relatives toward non-self-aggrandizement and their own traditional altruism patterns as they forged new public selves and organizational functions. Individuals have suffered mightily in this process, and communities' early faith in the new leaders was steadily eroded by seeing the widening gap between old and new social values.

Fortunately, this situation is changing. Part of the reason for this change is that the Ju/'hoansi have collaborated with the government of Namibia and various non-government organizations (e.g., the World Wildlife Fund, U.S. and Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation [IRDNC]) in efforts to establish in a conservancy, an area of communal land where commu-

nities have control over natural resource management and utilization through a statutory body recognized officially by the government of Namibia. This conservancy, which was declared in November, 1997, was the first one established in Namibia, and has enabled the people to have greater control of what happens in their area. It has also served to instil new confidence and encourage new investment and entrepreneurial activities on the part of the Ju/'hoansi.

## In Botswana

Similar changes are occurring on the Botswana side of the international border. The Ju/'hoansi of western Ngamiland realized that they needed to gain greater control over their areas if they were to be able to ensure long-term occupancy and use of the region. The way that they chose to do this was to take part in the Botswana government's Community-Based Natural Resource Management Program (CBNRMP) and to apply for rights over Community-Controlled Hunting Areas (CCHAs). In the mid-1990s, the people of the community of /Kae/kae, the largest predominantly Ju/'hoan community in Botswana, formed a Quota Management Committee (QMC) as part of their efforts to gain access to the wildlife quota for NG 4,<sup>1</sup> a government-designated development area which covered an area of 7 148 square kilometers. In October, 1997, the people of /Kae/kae formed the Tlhabololo Trust, which applied for and received the rights to the wildlife in the NG 4 area. This trust engaged in a variety of activities, ranging from craft production to ecotourism. It has auctioned off a portion of its wildlife quota to a safari operator, who by the end of 2002 should have paid an estimated 2 500 000 Pula (about U.S. \$500 000) to the trust for the opportunity to bring safari clients to the /Kae/kae area. According to Charlie Motshubi, a representative of SNV Botswana, the Dutch non-government organization that is providing assistance to the Tlhabololo Trust, the people of /Kae/kae were able to generate 40 000 Pula from hunting, 20 000 Pula from phototourism, and 20 000 Pula from craft production in the first year of operation.

It is clear that progress is being made by the Ju/'hoansi as the new millennium starts, particularly in the areas of land rights, political representation and cultural promotion. This progress can perhaps best be seen in the fact that today there are hundreds of Ju/'hoan children attending village schools who are learning their own language and hearing about Ju/'hoan customs and traditions from Ju/'hoan teachers. These activities, which were pioneered with Kalahari Peoples Fund input



in the Nyae Nyae region of Namibia, are now influencing the ways in which rural development strategies are being implemented in Botswana, where Kuru Development Trust and its offshoot, Trust for Okavango Cultural and Development Initiatives (TOCADI), both San-controlled non-government organizations, have been working with the Ju/'hoansi since 1998. Kuru, with KPF funding support, has assisted the Ju/'hoansi and their neighbours in Botswana in mapping their traditional areas and applying to the North West District Land Board for occupancy rights to blocks of land in western Ngamiland. Kuru has also assisted the Ju/'hoansi and other groups in institutional capacity building and economic development. The collaboration among the Ju/'hoansi, non-government organizations, and the international community will hopefully continue to be beneficial to all concerned.

### **Namibian Ju/'hoan Land Tenure and the KPF**

In Namibia around Independence, highly important in the Ju/'hoans' process of establishing a national political voice was the excellent contact made between their organization, then the Nyae Nyae Farmers' Cooperative, and the South West African Peoples Organization (SWAPO). SWAPO eventually became the ruling party in the new nation, and relationships promoted by KPF and other advisers with party leaders just returned from exile were key in allowing their participation in the national life. Particularly important was the Ju/'hoan participation in the 1991 Namibian Conference on Land Rights and the Land Question. As never before, the land needs and abrogated land rights of the Ju/'hoan and other San were brought before the eyes of a government in formation—one that itself was under scrutiny as never before by the world. Gains made by the Ju/'hoan at that time laid the groundwork for the eventual Conservancy they were able to establish in 1998. It also made provision for the safety of their range when, early in the life of the new nation, Herero pastoralists and their herds were repatriated into Namibia via Nyae Nyae. Today there are 37 or more "outstation"-like communities in Nyae Nyae, forming the basis for local governance via the Nyae Nyae Conservancy. Presidential and Parliamentary awareness and respect of San land rights all over Namibia was given a great boost by the efforts of the Nyae Nyae Ju/'hoan. This entire process, spanning the decade following 1988, was perhaps the single most important contribution of the Kalahari Peoples Fund in Namibia.

### **Botswana Ju/'hoan Land Tenure and the KPF**

In both Botswana and Namibia, conservancy-like bodies have been established and are acting as models for further community bodies. At /Kae/kae, Botswana, the Thlabololo Development Trust was established, and the success of this comprehensive community project has been an inspiration for similar efforts at Dobe, some 20 miles to the north.

Dobe, of course, is the area so well studied by Richard Lee and his students and colleagues. The KPF has been deeply involved in land-securing activities in Dobe since the mid-1970s, when KPF supporters and activists, including Polly Wiessner, myself, Richard Lee, and Carl and Dr. Kathleen O. Brown, gave strategic help to the Dobe community to develop water infrastructure. Through the Botswana Government's Basarwa Development Office (BDO) in its Ministry of Local Government and Lands, funds and hands-on help was given towards the hand-dug well that was to help the Dobe people establish security of tenure in the area. More recently, due to a "window of opportunity" in Botswana land allocation, as well as to unprecedentedly generous international donations, KPF has been able to collaborate with Kuru Development Trust and TOCADI to advance the land and resource control of the Dobe community as never before.

The project at Dobe today involves land use documentation, genealogical work and *n/ore* (resource territory) mapping, and makes direct use of several decades of anthropological research stemming from the original Lee and DeVore team in the area. It also uses the successful Nyae Nyae, Namibia example from the NNDFN originally set up by John Marshall and Claire Ritchie as a "sister project" to the KPF. The success of Nyae Nyae in holding land was based on establishing water infrastructure as evidence of active land use and occupancy. As of April, 2001, two successful boreholes had been drilled, and two more were in planning phases. In October, 2001, Kabo Mosweu, Kuru's Team Leader in NG 3 (the Dobe area, Ngamiland), reported that consultations, permissions, and plans had been completed for deepening two more boreholes during 2002, and for beginning the same process for three more boreholes in the G!oci (Qoshe) area. Finally, a Representative and Legal Entity will eventually be established over NG 3. A large part of the support for this ambitious, but critical and timely, project came from the Kalahari Peoples Fund, with major funding from the Austin, TX high-tech

community. In December, 2002, a well at Shaikarawe, Ngamiland, one critical to land-rights efforts in the surrounding area, was brought in by TOCaDI thanks to KPF support.

## **KPF, Mentoring and Publications**

Best of all the news on this water-and-tenure project, perhaps, is that the two technical reports it has produced were written by local staff. There is in fact a number of reports and papers by Ju/'hoan and other San individuals which have come out of the development mentoring and training supported by KPF and its sister organizations. KPF considers that publicizing these written resources and spreading knowledge of the conferences and other international venues at which San people have presented them is an important part of its work. These papers may be found in the bibliography under these names: Arnold, Gaeses, Naude, /Useb, and =Oma.

There is also a growing number of publications co-authored by San with academic colleagues (Biesele and /O/oo, 1996; Lee and Daly (eds.), 1999; etc.). Again, KPF has taken a lead role in this desirable development, as well as in encouraging colleagues to designate San people or organizations as beneficiaries of publication royalties (Katz, Biesele and St. Denis, 1991; Lee and DeVore (eds.), 1976; Schweitzer, Biesele and Hitchcock (eds.), 1999; etc.).

## **KPF Projects and Consultancies**

Many of the Ju/'hoan efforts to establish rights and to control resources were supported partially by Kalahari Peoples Fund contributions and volunteer efforts. Further, KPF's Ju/'hoan projects have successfully inspired neighbouring communities in both Namibia and Botswana to start similar projects, and to apply to KPF for funding and advice on them. A listing of KPF projects and consultancies related to land and community development includes the following:

### *Some Highlights of KPF Projects, 1975 to Present*

- Ngamiland Research-Liaison Officer for Basarwa Development, Botswana
- Ngamiland Agricultural Extension Officer, Botswana
- Brukaros Irrigated Gardening Project, Berseba, Namibia
- Rural Development Project, Manxotai, Botswana
- Women's Handicraft Grants, Central District, Botswana
- Community-Based Educational Projects:
  - Epako San Pre-School, Gobabis, Namibia
  - Oenie School, !Xoo Community Marienthal, Namibia

- Namibian College of Education Secondary Extension For Ju/'hoan San of Nyae Nyae, Namibia
- Gqaina School, Omaheke Region of Namibia, San Language Curriculum Development
- Moremogolo Trust, Bana ba Metsi School, Maun, Botswana

- Equipment and Uniforms for Nyae Nyae Soccer Team (Gift of Yo-yo E. Ma)
- Training for /Ui /Oma, Archaeology Laboratory, National Museum of Namibia
- Dobe Land-Mapping Project, Ngamiland, Botswana
- Okavango Sub-District Council, Community Action Planning, Dobe, Botswana
- Digital Photography of Lawrence Northam San Artifact Collection, College Station, TX
- Shipping costs for vehicle for Regional Education Coordinator

### *Some Highlights of KPF Personnel Research and Consultation*

- Impacts of the Tribal Grazing Land Policy (TGLP) on Peoples of the Kalahari
- Impacts of the Special Game License (SGL) System on San Peoples, Botswana
- Provision of Technical Assistance and Information to Local-Level Resource Management Projects, Namibia and Botswana
- Documentation of the Formative Years of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy, Namibia
- Village Schools Project, Ju/'hoan Orthography, Curriculum Development, Nyae Nyae, Namibia

### *Current Activities of KPF*

The current mission of the Kalahari Peoples Fund, stated broadly, is to benefit the San and other peoples of the Kalahari region. It works through local NGOs in Botswana, Namibia, and the semi-arid regions of surrounding countries, responding to locally initiated requests for development aid. KPF raises funds and provides technical and advisory assistance, principally in the areas of community-based education and land and resource rights. Most critical in its mission are progress in education, human rights, development, land use planning, and institution building, all with professional anthropological input, on the local, national and international levels.

One current project, promotion of community-based, San-language education initiatives, is rooted in work begun by KPF anthropologists and linguists over 15 years ago. KPF is currently developing and helping to implement an interlocking set of proposals for comprehensive coverage of projects requested by San communi-

ties, ranging from preschools to help develop a culture of literacy to collaborative development of appropriate and effective curriculum materials in San languages. Both preschool and literacy materials development in the Ju/'hoan-speaking areas of Nyae Nyae, Namibia, and Omaheke are proceeding with the close co-operation of the Namibian National Institute for Educational Development (NIED).

Since 1999 KPF has a website at [www.kalaharipeoples.org](http://www.kalaharipeoples.org). This website acts as a channel of communication between rural southern African peoples and the wider world, bringing information about their cultures and their needs to interested individuals, groups and agencies who are able to help them. It also acts as an online resource for students, researchers and the general public who wish to learn more about the San and their neighbours. It contains an extensive outline of scholarly articles, maps and recent updates about the people, along with information about current projects, needs and volunteer opportunities.

Since 2001 KPF has had a newsletter, available by writing for a subscription to KPF at the address at the end of this article. The newsletter features headline sections of late-breaking news on the situations of indigenous peoples in the several countries of the Kalahari, information about progress and needs for KPF projects, updates on regional organizations and listings of books and films.

#### *KPF Sponsorship*

Starting in 2001, KPF gained two corporate sponsors, each manufacturing and distributing a Kalahari-related product. The first was The Redbush Tea Company, based in London, which made a corporate decision to dedicate a portion of its income from its organic herbal tea, native to southern Africa, to KPF for its projects. The second is Kalahari, which makes a number of flavours of rusks, familiar to all who have spent time in the Kalahari as a most durable and delicious form of desert bread, as well as the rooibos tea now being successfully marketed as "Red Tea" in the U.S.

Through the years KPF has been sustained financially by a few grants and by donations from individuals. Several individual donors must be recognized for their outstanding generosity, some contributing over \$50,000. They include Lorna J. Marshall, Carl and Dr. Kathleen O. Brown, Lawrence W. Northam, and Steve Smaha and Jessica Winslow. Such donations have enabled KPF to invest a portion of its funds to ensure ongoing support to Kalahari projects, which is particularly important in the case of community education initiatives.

KPF volunteers have centred their activities in recent years on the day-to-day work at the organization's current U.S. base in Austin, TX. Volunteers have included anthropology students, electronic engineers, teachers, free-lance editors, human rights activists, a nurse and an accountant.

Affiliated projects include The University Centre for Studies in Namibia (TUCSIN); The Windhoek International School (WIS); Monday's Child Productions (promoting international storytelling); the Pilgrim Society (development projects in Nyae Nyae); Mobile Outreach Ministry (transport for indigenous projects); and Deep Roots (local language survival and literacy).

*New KPF projects and those with ongoing needs include:*

- Epako San Pre-School and Hospital Play-Group, Gobabis, Namibia
- Gqaina School, San Language Curriculum Development, Omaheke Region of Namibia
- Strategic Support and Infrastructure for Land Claims, NG3 (Dobe Area, Botswana)
- Development of Elementary Ju/'hoan Readers for Tjum!kui School, Otjzondjupa, Namibia
- Provision of Computers for Tjum!kui School, Otjzondjupa, Namibia
- Second International Storytelling Conference, August, 2002, Cape Town, South Africa
- Addressing Problems of San in Formal Education Systems (Conferencing and Publications)
- Youth Community Theater Project in Nyae Nyae

#### **Conclusion: An Activist Legacy**

In the 1950s the Marshall family, and in the 1960s the Harvard Kalahari Research Group carried out research with San peoples which has become part of the ethnographic canon. These scholars joined the mass media in documenting what in those decades seemed a remote, exotic way of life. Today, the indigenous peoples of the Kalahari are remote and untouched only in our dreams (and in bad books and films). The achievement of organizations like the Kalahari Peoples Fund has been to bridge two worlds that a quarter of a century ago seemed impossibly distant from each other: the world of representation "about" these anthropological Others and the world of hands-on involvement in their own bid for autonomy and human rights. The challenge in making this bridge has been to bring the two halves of the San image together, the "romantic" with the "revisionist," for a centred, contemporary picture of real people "just living their lives."



The Kalahari Peoples Fund has found that the best way for anthropologists to help centre the image is to find ways for Ju/'hoan voices themselves to speak to the public. KPF's long-term work, based in its professional beginnings as a research group, has demonstrated the ability to contextualize San voices for public comprehension—to give faces and nuanced descriptions to the attempt to communicate contemporary San issues. As the Ju/'hoan and other San have come to political consciousness, groups like the KPF have been able to observe and document their emerging determination to take hold of their destiny. It has been possible to see, from HKRG and KPF work, how the imperatives and assumptions of their earlier lifeways have shaped both their assertion of rights and some of the problems they have experienced in assuming them.

Most recently, KPF members, like other activists the world over, have been met with the challenge of letting go of helping roles once they are no longer necessary. In this the anthropologists can take precious pages from the notebooks of development workers, many of whom faced this challenge earlier. Believing that "letting go" does not mean ceasing to pay attention, KPF's activism strives to create a more centred image for anthropologists as well, one in which they themselves are people "just living their lives," collaborating now for global understanding with the San people they have come to know through joint endeavors as well as through study.

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## Note

- 1 NG 4 stands for the 4th Community Controlled Hunting Area in Ngamiland, North West District, Botswana. Each district in Botswana is divided into zones for planning and wildlife utilization and conservation purposes. NG 4 has been designated as being community-controlled, one of seven such Controlled Hunting Areas (CHAs). Other CHAs are designated for purposes of (1) safari hunting, (2) photographic safaris, (3) citizen hunting, (4) multipurpose, (5) conservation (e.g., the Tsodilo Hills, which has been proposed as a World Heritage Site, and which is a national monument under the National Monuments and Relics Act). NG 5, to the south of NG 4, does not have a village in it. The community of /Kae/kae has rights to make decisions in both areas, although there is pressure to turn NG 5 into a multipurpose area that will allow the expansion of livestock (and ranches) into the area.

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