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Disorderly development:

Globalization and the idea of "culture" in the Kalahari

A B S T R A C T
The San (Bushmen) of southern Africa are currently engaged in global activism and local struggles for rights as indigenous people. As their identity becomes globalized, the San are encouraged to promote a stereotypical image of themselves as isolated, pristine primitives. In this article, I argue that primordial expressions of San identity reflect the globalization of an essentialist idea of culture. I examine how this idea of culture is instrumentalized in local contexts of disorder and corruption. Finally, I outline how disorder and primordialism combine to sustain systems of inequality for an underclass of farm San in the Omaheke Region of Namibia. [*globalization, indigenous identity, Bushmen, San, development, ethnotourism*]

In postapartheid Namibia, the San (Bushmen) have been increasingly exposed to the effects of liberalizing trade markets, the global flows of capital and people associated with a booming tourism industry, and a massive proliferation of nongovernmental organization (NGO) activity.[1] Since Namibian independence from South African rule in 1990, the San have become engaged in rights-based activism as indigenous peoples. With the assistance of the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA), San people throughout southern Africa now participate in international indigenous peoples' rights forums and are organizing as a vocal and sophisticated political community. The current integration of the San into the new global order introduces important opportunities for empowerment and ''development'' but is also fraught with contradictions and challenges inherent to local identity politics and global indigenous activism. One of the most puzzling features of postcolonial life for the San is that, at the very moment they are beginning to travel the world, speak at international conferences, and keep in regular e-mail communication with interested parties overseas, primordialized and essentialized representations of primitive ''Bushmen'' are being vigorously reasserted in mainstream media and NGO rhetoric. These representations are often difficult to distinguish from colonial stereotypes.

In this article, I examine the environment for development that globalization is currently creating in the Kalahari and, more specifically, how globalization is influencing San struggles for rights, recognition, and resources. I first bring into focus one form of collusion between the processes of globalization and the indigenous peoples' movement that results in the promotion of a particular idea of culture—one that meshes uncomfortably with the idea of culture inherent in the anthropology of ''separate development'' in southern Africa. I then illustrate how this idea of culture is played out in the Omaheke Region of Namibia.

My case study examines three interconnected processes. I first describe how local systems of class exploitation are shaped by racial and ethnic

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stereotypes about ''primitive'' Bushmen, and I juxtapose these stereotypes with a description of the class-shaped cultural life of the Omaheke San. I then describe the promotion of primordial and essentialized expressions of Bushman identity by ethnic entrepreneurs who capitalize on the confusion, chaos, and corruption associated with postindependence administrative vacuums and a proliferation of uncoordinated NGO activity. Finally, I outline the convergence of so-called ethnodevelopment and the commodification of culture in the tourism industry.

Globalization and culture

The central problematic in most analyses of globalization is the relationship between global forces and local-level responses. Specifically, scholars seek to address the apparent paradox between ''the homogenizing tendencies which appear inherent to globalization'' and the ''continued or even intensified [cultural] heterogeneity'' asserted on the local level (Meyer and Geschiere 1999:1; see also Appadurai 2000 and Kalb and van der Land 2000). Many studies of the cultural aspects of globalization focus on how the content of global capitalist culture, global consumer culture, or global political culture influences the content of local cultures. As a result, reified notions of culture are often embedded in definitions of globalization, and global culture is assumed to be homogeneous. For example, Peter Kloos describes globalization as ''the emergence of a world economy, a world polity, and perhaps a *world culture*'' (2000:281, emphasis added; see also Giddens 1991). Ulf Hannerz asks how local cultural processes ''affect the way the periphery is drawn into *world culture*'' (1997:116, emphasis added; see also Wolff 1997).[2]

This focus on the interactions of global and local cultural content contributes to a picture that pits global homogenization against local resistance to it. With this view of globalization operating in the background, explanations of the ubiquity of ethnic assertions on the local level standardly resort to universalistic (and essentialist) assumptions about psychological needs. The uncertainty that globalization creates—the political, economic, and cultural shifts—results in ethnic movements that reflect ''a search for fixed orientation points'' (Meyer and Geschiere 1999:2) or a search for ''solid ground'' (Hall 1997:35–36); they are a means for people to ''regain their bearings'' (Wallerstein 1997:104; see also Friedman 1994) or ''fix the flow'' (Meyer and Geschiere 1999:7; see also Appadurai 2000; Featherstone 1990). Kloos, for example, explicitly resorts to speculative psychology when he claims that people's awareness of global forces beyond their control ''results in feelings of insecurity and a quest for configurations people feel they can trust'' (2000:291).

These explanations, however, are unsatisfying for three reasons. First, such explanations are tautological: People fix ethnic boundaries because they feel the need to fix ethnic boundaries. Second, they tend to limit their characterization of local-level responses to parochial reactions against globalization—a mere circling of the wagons. Finally, this view also neglects the widespread phenomenon that Richard Falk describes as ''globalization-from-below,'' which ''consists in an array of transnational social forces [especially NGOs] ... [dedicated to] the strengthening over time of the institutional forms and activities associated with global civil society'' (1993:39). One may be able to get around the apparent paradox between universalizing, homogenizing tendencies of globalization and the intensification of local, primordialized ethnic heterogeneity—and better understand why identity movements, particularly ethnic assertions, are such a common local response—if one asks what it is that is being globalized and homogenized. Stuart Hall addresses this question by claiming that globalization produces a ''global mass culture'' that entails a ''homogenizing *form of representation*'' (1997:28, emphasis added). According to Hall, global mass culture recognizes and absorbs ''differences within the larger, overarching framework of what is essentially an American conception of the world'' (1997:28). But one important component of a Western conception of the world is a Western idea of ''culture.'' So I would put Hall's point differently and suggest that it is not, or not only, a U.S. or Western culture that is being globalized but also a Western idea of what culture is—specifically, the idea that cultures are bounded, ahistorical ''facts of nature.''[3] This is already implicit in Hall's claim that ''forms of representation'' are being homogenized; but, as researchers, we need to make explicit that among those forms of representation is a particular way of representing culture.

Rather than narrowly viewing identity politics as distress-driven attempts to impose order on an increasingly chaotic world, we should also consider the extent to which people on the ground are manipulating the idea of ''culture'' as a tool for securing political, economic, and development resources. The international indigenous peoples' movement is an important example of ''globalization-from-below'' (see also Appadurai 2000), and it is a good example of a global deployment of a particular Western idea of culture.[4]

Important examinations of cultural essentialism in indigenous identity politics focus on its strategic value, or potential dangers, in fields of unequal engagement (see, e.g., Conklin 2002; Dombrowski 2002; Hodgson 2002; Jacobs 1988; Ramos 1994; Turner 1991). Adam Kuper notes that the current conception of culture that dominates U.S. multiculturalism ''often comes to serve as a politically correct euphemism for race'' (1999:240), and he expresses a common misgiving about contemporary culture talk when he claims that ''in the rhetoric of the indigenous

peoples movement the terms 'native' and 'indigenous' are often euphemisms for what used to be termed 'primitive' '' (2003:389). Although interrogating particularly powerful ideas is important, so, too, is examining the dynamics that make these ideas powerful. So, here, I focus instead on the ways that this idea of culture is advanced as an outcome of struggle in contexts of disorder and corruption. I suggest that the ubiquity of essentialized notions of indigenous culture is less a result of the power of activist discourse than of the ways in which ''places of recognition'' (see Hall 1995 and Li 2000) are shaped by ambiguities produced at the intersection of class inequalities, identity politics, and privatized development initiatives, particularly ethnotourism ventures.

Ethnotourism is a site at which identity politics joins with market demand, and this union has inspired concerns about the commodification of culture, the perpetuation of Western imperialist nostalgia, and the promotion of a neocolonial quest for the authentic exotic Other (see Bruner 1995; Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1994; Crick 1989; Greenwood 1989; MacCannell 1973, 1984; Nash 1989; Urry 1990; van den Berghe 1994). Ethnotourism's appeal as a development strategy is enhanced by its perceived value as a ''pedagogical instrument'' (see Lanfant 1995:4): The industry increasingly accommodates tourists seeking a cultural encounter of the anthropological kind. Edward M. Bruner notes that ''colonialism, ethnography, and tourism occur at different historical periods, but arise from the same social formation'' (1989:439). A naturalized and territorialized conception of culture is advanced most conspicuously at the confluence of ethnotourism and international indigenous identity politics: Here the ubiquity of localizing and essentializing identity-based movements is not a paradoxical result of globalization at all but a very understandable outcome of the globalization of a particularly potent idea.

My picture at this point suggests that the proliferation of essentialist claims to identity is owed to a globalizing idea of culture that proves useful for generating income and securing recognition, particularly for indigenous peoples. The situation, however, is more complex. My case study shows how a globalized idea of culture, embodied in the identity expectations imposed by donor agencies and the tourism industry, converges with historical habits of racially based misrecognition operating within a context of local corruption and disorder. Ironically (but not paradoxically), this convergence both promotes essentialized and primordialized images of indigenous Bushmen and perpetuates their underclass status.

Indigenous identities in southern Africa

Indigenous peoples' activism arose largely in response to the disenfranchisement and dispossession that followed from development strategies dominated by megaprojects and imposed by states and multilateral agencies during a wave of developmentalism in the 1960s and 1970s (Bodley 1990; Brysk 2000; Maybury Lewis 1997; Ramos 1998; Wright 1988:377). The roots of the indigenous peoples' movement are commonly located in the post–World War II elaboration of an international human-rights apparatus (see, e.g., Kymlicka 1999; Niezen 2003; Warren 1998). Ronald Niezen identifies four features of the postwar world that facilitated indigenous rights activism: First, the Holocaust in Europe sensitized the world to issues of racial discrimination and the need to protect minorities. Second, the process of decolonization established new international norms that could be used to promote self-determination for indigenous peoples. Third, assimilationist policies produced an educated elite equipped to organize and lobby for rights. Finally, a rapidly expanding global NGO community provided support structures through which indigenous elites could network and promote their cause on an international scale (Niezen 2003:40–42). The first two trends encourage indigenous activists to couch their demands in the language of decolonization and self-determination (Muehlebach 2003; Warren 1998:6–7). Establishing a basis for particular rights for indigenous peoples involves crafting a unique, locally grounded but globally recognizable indigenous identity, which would bear enough of a family resemblance to nationhood to be suitable for some form of self-determination.[5] Indigenous elites associated with the Center for World Indigenous Studies and the promotion of Fourth World Theory provide an important example of a global self-fashioning of essentialized indigenous identity.

Fourth World Theory emerged during the 1970s as a critique of the emphasis placed on Third World development and of the general failure within the development industry to acknowledge that decolonization did not apply to Fourth World peoples but, rather, made them subject to internal colonization under current state systems (Seton 1999:12). The term *Fourth World* came into popular usage in 1974, following the publication of *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality,* authored by Chief George Manuel, a Shuswap Native from British Columbia, founding president of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, and cofounder of the Center for World Indigenous Studies. The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) adopted Manuel's definition of the Fourth World, outlined by Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz in the following terms: ''the name given to the indigenous peoples descended from a country's aboriginal population and, who today are completely or partly deprived of the right to their own territories and its riches. The peoples of the 4th world have only limited influence or none at all in the national states to which they belong'' (1984:82). The UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the most

significant site for the articulation of a global indigenous identity (Muehlebach 2001; Niezen 2003), draws from the definition of *indigenous* provided by the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 (1989) and from the working definition provided by UN special rapporteur José Martínez Cobo:

> Indigenous communities, peoples and nations ... form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories and their ethnic identity, as the basis for continued existence as peoples in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems. [1986:1]

Both the ILO's and Cobo's definitions of indigenous peoples remain true to the original formulation of Fourth World peoples; the elaborations on the significance of territorial roots for indigenous identity are also in keeping with the emphasis placed on the link between territory and identity emphasized by Fourth World theorists. According to Fourth World theorists, Fourth World nations are ''aboriginal peoples who have special, non-technical, non-modern exploitative relations to the land in which they live and are 'disenfranchized' by the States within which they live'' (Seton 1999; see also Griggs 1992).

At the heart of indigeneity is an overt link between cultural, or ''national,'' identity and a unique relationship with ''the land'' (see also Beckett 1996 and Muehlebach 2001). The idea of culture mobilized here is adapted from familiar nationalist rhetoric. As Niezen notes, indigenous identity developed within the institutional framework of successful nationalisms: ''International legislative bodies of states have provided the conceptual origins and practical focus of indigenous identity'' (2000:121). Indigenous peoples come to represent the most natural of nations, however, through what Liisa Malkki calls ''sedentarist metaphysics'' (1992:32), in which territorial—and familial—metaphors naturalize nations as discrete, territorially grounded and bounded entities (Malkki 1992:32).[6] Alan Barnard evokes these naturalizing and territorializing metaphors in his description of (Khoi)San national identity: ''Khoisan identity through 'blood'... is only really meaningful as a sense of belonging conferred by the land'' (1998:54).[7]

Such territorial conceptions of national culture provide the basis for a ''globalized aboriginality,'' which Maximilian Forte describes as ''the embryonic creation of a worldwide indigenous macro-community seemingly with its own indigenous macro-culture'' (1998). One need not doubt the utility of a concept of culture, or even that some groups see their identities as owing to a particular relationship to the land, to recognize that essentialist conceptions of national culture assume a discomfiting salience in postapartheid southern Africa, where conflated notions of ''culture'' and ''race'' have been politicized as natural, territorial national units more explicitly and consequentially than in most other areas of the world. The essentialized idea of culture mobilized by the global indigenous movement—particularly its ''blood and soil'' rhetoric and its perceived agenda of ''ethnic separatism''—conjures up images of apartheid ''homelands'' (Muehlebach 2001:439) and harks back to the Herderian Romanticism that so strongly influenced apartheid anthropology.[8]

One would be hard-pressed to find a more ''natural'' nation than the Bushmen, whose colonial designation explicitly signifies a land-linked, organic identity. The historical processes of Bushman iconography are too vast and complex to address here (but see Dubow 1995; Gordon and Douglas 2000; Guenther 1980; Suzman 2000; Wilmsen 1989). It is widely recognized, however, that the trope of the Bushmen as the ultimate African Ur-race figured prominently in the colonial formulation of a ''civilized'' white racial and national identity (see Gordon 1988:43). Bushmen came to embody the original, primitive condition of humanity, generally, first as ''brutal bandits'' and later as ''harmless people'' or ''noble savages'' (see Guenther 1980). Mathias Guenther notes that ''the motif of the noble Bushman ... consists of such themes as ecological sensitivity and responsibility, the innocent, the beauty, the humanness, and the harmony'' (1980:123).

Today, the San's activism as indigenous people is most positively received in public forums when they present themselves, in stereotypical terms, as Bushmen whose identity is organically linked to the land. For example, the South African ǂKhomani San won 65,000 hectares of land in and around the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park in March 1999, and, as Steven Robbins notes, ''Media representations of the San land claim comprised a series of stereotypical images of timeless and primordialist San 'tribes' reclaiming their ancestral land'' (2001:833–834). Robbins also points out, however, that ''the colonial stereotype of the pure and pristine bushman hunter gatherer'' has also been ''embraced 'from below' '' (2001:839). For example, Dawid Kruiper, the traditional leader of the ǂKhomani San community, has publicly promoted the image of primordial, hunting-and-gathering San by claiming that he is ''an animal of nature'' (White 1995:19).

Although arguments have been made for the use of such ''strategic essentialism'' (see Lattas 1993; Lee 2000), what is important here is that the San are not asserting ethnic or national identities in an effort to get their bearings so much as they are mobilizing an idea of culture made available by globalization to secure resources and social, economic, and cultural rights. Rather than circling the wagons, the San are responding to identity expectations placed on them by the local mainstream society, the state, NGOs, and the international donor community, all of whom expect to find a bounded cultural entity to

which rights can be attached and a discrete target group for development (see also Robbins 2001). Nevertheless, although the idea of culture may be a useful tool in the hands of some, it can also serve to obscure other groups of San, whose living cultures and identities are, in the vernacular of globalization, of the ''hybrid'' variety.

Taming the "wild" Bushmen

The Omaheke San, whose identity is owed to a confluence of race, class, and ethnic relations, is one such hybrid group. The San are the third largest ethnic group in the Omaheke Region (Central Statistics Office 1996:19). The largest group is the Bantu-speaking Herero, who raise cattle in the former reserves–homelands, now known as the ''communal farming areas.'' Nama-Damaras are the second largest group, and they, along with the San, constitute the largest proportion of farmworkers in the region. A small minority of Bantu-speaking Tswanas raise cattle in the communal areas in the south of the Omaheke. The German and Afrikaner descendants of white settlers constitute only eight percent of the population but own 65 percent of the land in the Omaheke, where they operate approximately 900 cattle ranches in what is known as the ''commercial farming block'' (Suzman 1995:4).

The 6,500 San in the Omaheke belong to three main language groups: Ju/'hoansi are found in the central and northeastern parts of the region; Nharo-speakers are concentrated in the east, along the Botswana border; and !Xûn-speakers live primarily in the south. These groups of San are not self-contained; because they are highly mobile, a great deal of intermarriage has occurred, not only among Ju/'hoansi, Nharo, and !Xûn but also between these groups and Nama-Damaras. Ethnicity is often reckoned opportunistically, depending on employment opportunities and the proximity of kin who can provide support and assistance during periods of economic distress.

The class system in the Omaheke was shaped by deeply essentialist notions of bounded and territorially grounded cultural entities. Stereotypes of ''feral'' foragers—and the definition of the Bushmen as an ethnic group—did not, however, result from a straightforward imposition of colonial ideologies onto passively subaltern San (contra Gordon and Douglas 2000; Suzman 2000; and Wilmsen 1989). Rather, these stereotypes emerged out of struggles over land, labor, and political position as white settlers attempted to secure a livelihood in the Omaheke.

Large-scale white settlement began in the region in the 1920s, as poor whites moved in from South Africa and, especially, after a substantial number of Afrikaners from Angola were resettled in the Omaheke in 1928 and 1929 (van Rooyen and Reiner 1995:40).[9] Most new arrivals were poor *bywoners* (tenants) and were highly dependent on the colonial administration for subsidies and infrastructural inputs. The settlers required two things to establish viable farming ventures: land and cheap labor. Both were supplied by the dispossession of local Africans. Hereros and Tswanas were relegated to overcrowded reserves (later, ethnic homelands), whereas the San and Namas were eventually completely encapsulated as white farms overtook their traditional territories.

The San did not simply acquiesce to land dispossession. They retaliated by stealing and mutilating the intruders' livestock. Many farmers saw this behavior as evidence of the innate wildness of the Bushmen: Being beyond the bounds of civilization, Bushmen were unable to distinguish between game and domesticated animals, and so were seen as hunting the farmers' cattle out of ignorance. Other farmers interpreted the mutilation of their livestock as evidence of the innate cruelty and depravity of ''brutal Bushman bandits'' (see also Suzman 2000:32–33). Although white settlers were concerned to protect their livestock from ''Bushman depredations,'' calls for tougher measures to deal with ''the Bushman problem'' were also demands to have recalcitrant natives pressed into service on the farms. Furthermore, efforts to pacify the Bushmen and acquire cheap labor were at the same time attempts by white settlers to assert greater political influence. For example, a 1923 letter to the newspaper *Swakopmund Zeitung* from farmers in Grootfontein (just north of the Omaheke) asked:

> Why is it not possible to enact a law empowering the Magistrate—or better still forcing him—to send idle natives or those who have offended against the laws requiring passes to some farm for a definite period where they would have the opportunity of getting used to hard work? Unfortunately nothing can be looked for in this respect so long as we have the infamous ''One Man Government'' and have no say ourselves. [National Archives of Namibia 1923]

White farmers and colonial administrators were not always like-minded when it came to defining the Bushman problem. In 1927, the native commissioner responded to complaints of stock theft in the following way: ''As is well known, the Bushman by instinct is not a thief but changed circumstances are driving him to slaughter cattle when game and 'veldkos' [bush food] are not available'' (National Archives of Namibia 1927). The existence of a few sympathetic explanations of San behavior reflects the divergent class interests and ethnic–national backgrounds that divided the white community. Whereas a few administrators—many of whom were British South Africans enjoying a more privileged social position—could afford to assume a benignly paternalistic stance toward the San, impoverished Afrikaners were struggling to secure a livelihood and gain a political voice.

Although land expropriation secured cheap labor by undermining traditional subsistence patterns, it failed to ensure a stable labor force, especially in the case of the San. Initially, San only selectively participated in the white economy, working on the farms during the dry season when veld food was scarce and returning to the veld to forage when the rains came. This dual subsistence strategy was a response to inadequate subsistence resources both on the farms, where workers were inadequately remunerated, and off the farms, where the diminishing and increasingly denuded veld was unable to sustain full-time foraging. Many in the white community, however, consistently interpreted the San's dual subsistence strategy as evidence of an innately feral nature. For example, in 1939, the magistrate of Grootfontein expressed an attitude that many white farmers hold today: ''[The Bushman] is independable [*sic*] as, after the rains have fallen, he often cannot resist the call of the wilds and simply deserts from his master's service. For this reason farmers prefer more reliable native labour, although at a considerably higher wage'' (National Archives of Namibia 1939).

By the 1930s, farmers were becoming increasingly aggressive in their attempts to bind San workers to the farms year-round. One method was to recruit San children for apprenticeships (often a euphemism for slavery in southern Africa [see Morton 1994]), which not only provided cheap and steady labor but also ensured the ''good behavior'' of nearby ''wild'' Bushmen. Such coercive tactics were rationalized by an elaborate system of stereotypes centered on the distinction between ''wild'' and ''tame'' Bushmen. Initially, coercive forms of labor recruitment were justified on the grounds that taming the Bushmen required exposing them to the civilizing effects of hard work. After white settlement had reached its peak in the 1950s and the San were completely encapsulated within the white political economy, more nostalgic sensibilities prevailed: Exposing the Bushmen to civilization threatened to bring about the disappearance of these ''children of nature.'' The discordant vocabulary that developed during the process of class formation served to rationalize the widespread exploitation and marginalization of the San.

The Omaheke San today

Today, the San in the Omaheke exist at the bottom of the local ethnic labor hierarchy as third- and fourth-generation farm laborers and domestic servants. On white farms, they are the first to be laid off when drought hits or when market conditions deteriorate; they face the greatest difficulties securing employment because white farmers generally prefer to hire non-San workers; and they are paid on average less than half the wages of non-San workers.[10] Remuneration for farmwork consists of a balance between monthly wages and weekly rations.[11] The wages and rations are usually inadequate to support an entire household, and so the San are compelled to purchase food from the farmer on credit, leaving many San families tied to the farms through a system of debt bondage.

About one-third of the Omaheke San work on Herero or Tswana cattle posts in the communal areas. San men tend livestock and San women cook and do laundry. They receive some food or only homemade beer for their labor. San children, usually girls, are recruited by Hereros and ''adopted'' as servile household members.

After independence, jobs on white farms became scarce as farmers adapted to liberalizing markets, new labor legislation, and drought by retrenching large numbers of San workers. Life on Herero or Tswana cattle posts, however, is often one of extreme poverty and eventual alcoholism and, so, is unattractive to many San. Thus, many San are on the road in a perpetual search for employment, traveling from farm to farm where they have friends or family who can provide food and shelter while they ask local farmers for jobs. These job hunters often must squat illegally because farmers discourage visitors. Many prefer to stay with friends or kin in the squatters' villages along the edges of urban centers and in government resettlement camps, which were established to resettle indigent people shortly after independence. The majority of the more permanent resettlement camp residents are San, many of them too old or too sick to work on the farms. In the camps, the San have access to sporadic supplies of drought-relief food, water, housing, small plots of land for kitchen gardens, and grazing land for those who have livestock. The major source of personal income is old-age pensions. Those not old enough to collect pensions gather camelthorn seeds and truffles *(tsotso)* to sell to local farmers or sign on for piecework when farmers come into the camps to fill their pickup trucks with seasonal, casual laborers. A few San men tend livestock for absentee Herero, Tswana, or Nama-Damara stock owners in return for milk and a small wage. Very often, however, the wages offered are never paid or are only paid after intervals of several months, during which time the San must get by without money. San women are able to get extra food by tending the gardens and doing the laundry of non-San camp residents. Given the alternatives—camp life or the cattle posts—most San prefer more steady work on white farms, where historically entrenched stereotypes continue to sustain their underclass status.

Today, white farmers frequently report that San workers will disappear without giving notice, only to return months or years later asking for their old jobs. The explanation usually given by the farmers is that Bushmen are incorrigibly—perhaps even innately—nomadic. Whereas farmers explain the San's ''unreliability'' in terms of their innate ethnic character, the San themselves

provide class-based explanations for their disappearances. One former San farmworker explained the situation to me this way:

> It's about money. If you are on a farm and they [the farmers] are not very good and don't give enough money, then you have to go to another farm. If that farmer is not very good, he gives enough money, but the rations are not very good, then you leave for a different farm. If there is enough food and money, but he is cruel, then you leave and go to another farm.

Other justifications for lower pay continue to be underwritten by reference to ''traditional'' Bushman culture. Farmers claim that, just as San ancestors gorged themselves after a kill and then went hungry for long periods before the next successful hunt, the contemporary San spend all of their wages on payday, with no thought of saving for the days ahead. Many farmers are still unable to see the San in terms of their class position, and so they often miss an important part of how the San see themselves.

Many San I spoke to differentiated themselves from non-San—and especially white farmers—on the basis of moral behavior. San widely consider ''stinginess'' the most iniquitous vice (see Lee 1993) and often attribute it to white farmers and other non-San employers. By contrast, the San insist on high standards of generosity among themselves—and this expectation contributes to San self-definition as a community. The widely scattered farm San maintain community ties through elaborate networks of kinship and mutual support. Widespread visiting, child fostering, and generalized reciprocity sustain a dynamic moral community. San struggling with unemployment or cash shortages can count on kin and friends to supply food, money, and shelter as they are able, and few San, whether kin or not, are denied such assistance (which explains why the San are ''unable to save money''). Generosity is a highly valued personality trait, not just because it is culturally prescribed but also because it enables the San to cope with the hardship of their underclass condition. Their coherence as a community—the dynamics of cooperative conflicts that characterize their own forms of sociality—is shaped by the ways in which they are compelled to engage with others as Bushmen in their efforts to cope with their material conditions.[12]

Despite the existence of the class-shaped and dynamic cultural life of the Omaheke San, the general conviction that Bushman culture and character are innate was expressed by a phrase repeated to me by a number of Omaheke farmers: ''You can take the Bushman out of the bush, but you can't take the bush out of the Bushman!'' (see also Suzman 2000). Farmers with more romantic and nostalgic sensibilities lament that there are no ''real'' Bushmen in the Omaheke anymore—because the Omaheke San no longer hunt and gather, they are no longer ''wild'' and ''authentic'' Bushmen, but only detribalized workers dressed in tattered Western clothing. Thus, the Omaheke San must negotiate a complex and contradictory terrain at the intersection of class and cultural identity politics: Whereas their definition as ''Bushmen'' consists of a number of stereotypes that justify their exploitation as an underclass, their status as an underclass also disqualifies them from counting as ''real'' Bushmen.

The formation of the idea of the ''Bushmen'' was as disorderly and discordant as the process that turned various groups of San into an ethnic underclass. This process was characterized by hegemonic struggles within the white community; by genuine, if ideologically driven, misinterpretations of San strategies of resistance and survival; and by opportunistic stereotyping that continues to justify their exploitation. Although the nature of uncertainty and disorder has changed in the Omaheke since independence, the modes of ethnic differentiation and class exploitation developed during the colonial encounter are sustained and intensified.

Disorder, corruption, and class consciousness

The argument that assertions of primordial ethnic identities are defensive responses to forces of globalization suggests too tidy a picture. As the case of the Omaheke San demonstrates, identity is formed and negotiated in contexts of power asymmetries. An analysis of the politics of identity politics will need to include a consideration of local power struggles—unfolding in contexts of chaos, corruption, and class exploitation—and the role they play in promoting primordial expressions of identity.

Africanists have recently turned their attention to two trends associated with globalization and the decline of the state: on the one hand, the suggestion of democratization, associated with the increasingly important role that NGOs are assuming as agents of civil society; on the other hand, the escalation of disorder and conflict.[13] Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pierre Daloz suggest that these trends derive from the ''instrumentalization of political disorder,'' which is a ''process by which political actors . . . seek to maximize their returns on the state of confusion, uncertainty and sometimes even chaos'' (1999:xviii). As I show in the following discussion, the ''instrumentalization of political disorder'' contributes to both the promotion of an essentialized definition of Bushmen identity and the exploitation of the San as an underclass.

In the Omaheke, liberalizing trade markets, contracting economies, and the decline of state resources have shifted the responsibility for economic and social upliftment onto NGOs and private entrepreneurial ventures. Postcolonial Namibia, however, has also witnessed a general deterioration of human-rights standards and

an alarming increase in corruption (see Bauer 2001). This situation, combined with an explosion of uncoordinated NGO activities, has created new opportunities for the exploitation of the Omaheke San and for the exploitation of their popular image as pristine Bushmen.

When I first arrived in the Omaheke Region in 1996, I met /In!gou, shortly after his cattle had been stolen by a group of local Hereros. As is common practice in the Omaheke, /In!gou was required to track the cattle thieves, locate his stolen cattle, and then report to the local police (who are also Herero). /In!gou located his cattle and went to the police with the names of the men who had stolen them. A few weeks later, /In!gou made the day-long journey to the police station to inquire about the status of his case. He was told his cattle had been recovered and that charges were pending; to get his cattle back, he need only sign the document the police put in front of him. /In!gou informed them that he could not read English, so the police explained that the document outlined the details of the case. He signed the document and returned to his home in a nearby resettlement camp. A few weeks later, he returned to the police station to inquire, again, about his stolen cattle. He was then told that he had already signed a document stating that his cattle had been returned and that he had dropped the charges.

While /In!gou was struggling to recover his cattle, the San people in the resettlement camp in which he lived were dealing with an even larger problem. The camp manager—who had gained her position through her connections with the ruling South West African Peoples Organization—was withholding the monthly supplies of government drought-relief food. She gave some rations to San people who agreed to work for her. For instance, Gase, an elderly man with one leg, cut the grass in the area surrounding the manager's house, crawling on his belly with a pair of sheep shears, in return for mielie meal, a tin of fish, and some cooking oil. The San who worked for the camp manager received only a small portion of the drought-relief food; the rest the manager fed to her pigs.

Overt corruption is not always necessary to create conditions in which the San are vulnerable to exploitation—general disorder and ambiguity are often sufficient. For example, since my first visit in 1996, the number of areas set aside for indigent people in the Omaheke has grown from two resettlement camps (Skoonheid and Drimiopsis) to an indeterminate number. By June 2001, nobody was clear about how many such areas existed or which areas inhabited by indigent people counted as resettlement camps, government farms, squatters' areas, or simply well-populated cattle posts on abandoned farms.

Most San refer to these ambiguous areas as ''reserves,'' falling back on the colonial term for land designated for nonwhites; most non-San refer to them as ''resettlement camps,'' even if their official status is not known. The distinction is important because resettlement camps fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Land, Resettlement and Rehabilitation, which is accountable for management practices and utilization of resources in the camps. Within the political and administrative vacuum in these areas, non-San designate any settlement area a resettlement camp, assume positions of power, and control the distribution of resources.

When I first visited one of these informally proclaimed resettlement camps near the border of Botswana, I was advised by the San residents to present myself to a Damara man who was described as the ''manager'' and ask him for permission to visit. When I enquired about the official status of the camp, the ''manager'' replied, ''Well, I guess I *could* call this a resettlement camp.'' I later learned, from other San informants, that several other Damaras also claimed to be the camp ''manager.'' These various ''managers'' were not in competition with each other, but all claimed official power over the San in the camp. A number of Damara residents also formed a ''water committee,'' took control of the borehole, and charged the San N$10 per month for water. The San were not convinced that the water committee was legitimately empowered to impose these fees, but they were coerced into paying for water after Damaras placed guards at the communal borehole. Few San could afford to pay for the water, and so they were forced to sell their livestock and to seek work on nearby commercial farms or work for their Damara neighbors in return for food and a small wage.

Taking control of land and water, by assuming positions of power in unregulated areas off the farms, is one common method non-San use to keep the San in servitude. One enterprising group of Mbanderus (an ethnic group linguistically related to Hereros) found a more novel way to profit from the San's identity and labor by manipulating newly opened channels of development funding. In 1993, a group of Mbanderus in the northern Omaheke secured funding from the aid organization Terre des Hommes for what was ostensibly a San development project. They received development inputs, such as breeding cattle and infrastructural equipment, and relocated 50 San people onto a newly designated farm project. While the San labored on the new farm, the Mbanderus made all the decisions; they also limited San presence on the farm to three years (just long enough for the San to build the fences and drill the boreholes). In effect, the Mbanderu were simply building a new farm, financed by Terre des Hommes, and using unpaid San labor. The San's Bushmen image made them an attractive target for donor money, and their underclass status made them easily exploitable labor.

Experiences of corruption and exploitation convinced many San of the need for a San leader in the Omaheke. With the assistance of WIMSA, two chiefs-designate were elected by the San who live in communities off the farms,

and both now regularly attend leadership training workshops initiated by WIMSA. Of course, a leader must have a community to lead, and so WIMSA's activities are contributing to the formation of a self-consciously cultural community—locally referred to as a ''nasie,'' or a ''nation''—among the widely scattered farm San. The formation of a self-conscious and increasingly politicized pan-San cultural community in the Omaheke, however, is not entirely a result of efforts to defend culture; it is also a result of the widely recognized need to address the twin problems of exploitation and corruption that keep the San in conditions of servitude and poverty.

Moving targets

Corruption and confusion are not the only factors that contribute to development difficulties in the Omaheke. The majority of San in the region are farmworkers who do not live on land they own or to which they have de facto rights. Also, as I have shown, the San's extreme economic vulnerability means that many are compelled to move almost constantly in search of employment. Those San who are able to maintain steady employment on a farm are isolated and largely inaccessible. Thus, the Omaheke San do not constitute a sedentary, fixed, and territorially contained community. Nevertheless, much mainstream development theory and practice is dominated by Malkki's ''sedentarist metaphysics,'' and the combination of conventional development wisdom and indigenist agendas of ethnodevelopment encourage the San to reinvent themselves as a culturally homogeneous, bounded and territorially grounded ethnic community. The incongruity, however, between popular conceptions of indigeneity and the daily realities the Omaheke San must deal with creates problems for putting development models into practice.

The need to address the problems faced by the San, as a group stigmatized and exploited on the basis of their identity, suggests an approach to development that emphasizes empowerment along ethnic and cultural lines. Any development or advocacy work that addresses San issues will therefore also inevitably contribute to the creation of an identifiable and manageable San constituency (see also Garland 1999 and Robbins 2001). As Robbins notes, the ''strong interest of international donors in the 'cultural survival' of vanishing cultures and languages'' (2001:849) contributes to the pressure put on indigenous communities to be recognizably indigenous, according to the terms of global indigenist discourse. As a result, the Omaheke San are, ironically, encouraged to conform to the very picture of pristine Bushmen that continues to justify their exploitation as an underclass.

These pressures also cause some difficulties for local NGOs, which must struggle with the contradictions inherent in their role as advocates for the San: On the one hand, they are committed to promoting the San's human rights, which involves challenging the stereotypes that denigrate and dehumanize them; on the other hand, securing funding and promoting cultural survival means that they are compelled to strategically adopt the very stereotypes they challenge. These difficulties become even greater when mainstream development wisdom and global indigenist agendas confront the untidy realities of San life on the ground. For all that culture brokering is inevitable and even necessary, the primacy placed on culturalist conceptions of indigenous identities and issues has important consequences for the definition of target groups in the NGO community and also for what development entails. The Omaheke San, as an underclass of indigenous people, therefore present important challenges to both Third World development paradigms and to Fourth World models of ethnodevelopment.

In 1998, WIMSA facilitated the establishment of the Omaheke San Trust (OST), an NGO concerned exclusively with the San people in the Omaheke. The OST and WIMSA have been instrumental in the establishment of culturally appropriate educational programs, building ''traditional'' leadership structures, and supplying development inputs for a range of projects.[14] The aims and activities of the OST are commendable, but its strategies also reveal the implications of an almost exclusive emphasis on the cultural aspects of ethnodevelopment.

In its first report, the OST notes that ''the San work as farm laborers for commercial farmers and wealthy communal farmers who often pay them the lowest wage'' (Moore with Omaheke San Trust Board of Trustees 2000:3). Yet the description of its target group reads as follows: ''The majority of the population of the Omaheke lives on communal land or resettlement farms and it is in these areas that the San *communities* eke out a living'' (Moore with Omaheke San Trust Board of Trustees 2000:3, emphasis added). The OST recognizes 26 such communities: 25 are clusters of San people living in small pockets off the farms, many of them in conditions of servitude with non-San neighbors in ''resettlement camps.'' The remaining community—more than two-thirds of San residing in the Omaheke—consists of farmworkers and domestic servants scattered widely throughout the commercial farms and cattle posts in the communal areas. Each community is entitled to elect two representatives to attend OST meetings, vote, and exercise membership rights on behalf of their community (Omaheke San Trust 1999:4). The result is that a minority of San who live off the farms have 50 representatives, whereas the majority of farm-dwelling San have two.[15] Many of the San in the 25 communities off the farms only live there part-time, compounding this representational balance. Many leave to look for employment when food runs out and return when government drought

relief appears. The OST's definition of ''community'' remains true to both Third World and Fourth World development models, insofar as both assume sedentarism and territorial boundedness. Labor relations are largely beyond the scope of the OST's mandate, and so the majority of the Omaheke San remain invisible to the one NGO in the region that explicitly targets San people.

Although there are practical constraints to addressing class issues in the Omaheke—namely, the difficulties associated with accessing San living on the private property of farmers—class exploitation is also a common feature of San life off the farms, and, so, one could fairly say that ideological reasons exist for marginalizing class in the OST's mandate. Whereas indigenous discourse has politicized culture to great strategic advantage, class has become depoliticized and, to be recognized as indigenous people, the San are compelled to present themselves as largely uncorrupted by historical and political–economic contexts. As I have already suggested, one important component of this essentializing move has been to insist on a special relationship to the land. Thus, one finds that struggles over land rights are often couched in terms of retaining or regaining a traditional (primordial) cultural identity.[16] But, in the Omaheke, San calls for land also reflect their self-consciousness as an underclass. ≠Oma described the problems of the Omaheke San this way:

> You must improve things or resettle. If you resettle then they [Damaras and Hereros] will steal your things. The government says we must develop things here, like a garden. But if you do it the other people will just destroy it. We should get a place of our own so that we know what we can do with it, so that the government can work directly with the San.

N≠isa, a middle-aged San woman living in one of the communities near the Botswana border, described the situation this way: ''When we stay together with the Damara people we are not free. When will we get our freedom? That is the most difficult thing. Like now, we must pay for the water. Where will we get the money? Now, we are asking ourselves, 'Where will we have a place to stay?' '' N≠isa is a respected traditional healer, and on the same day she said these things to me, she and other women from her community dressed themselves heavily in beadwork and animal skins to perform what they described as a ''traditional dance.'' But it is still class consciousness that shines through in her complaints. Whereas indigenist discourse emphasizes the relationship between indigenous peoples and the land, the Omaheke San emphasize the relationship between themselves, the land, and non-San peoples with whom they are in unequal relationships.

NGO networks in the Omaheke are quite new, and so NGO activity is still relatively chaotic and uncoordinated. Many of the directors of local NGOs do not know each other, and they have no idea how many or even which NGOs are working in the region. The San themselves are unfamiliar with NGOs and are not clear on the distinctions among development projects, government or church-funded food-for-work programs, drought-relief programs, and temporary employment opportunities. All of these efforts are broadly described by the San as ''projects.''[17] The San are, thus, vulnerable to exploitation as local Hereros, Tswanas, and Damaras approach unemployed San to initiate what they describe as income-generating ''projects.'' One fairly typical such project used San women at a remote community to knit sweaters; Herero women dropped off large quantities of wool, returned after a couple of months to collect the sweaters, and sold them in town. The San women were never paid. Other so-called projects—which draw explicitly on the San's cultural image—enlist the San to perform their traditional dances at local political events and tourism venues.

Ethnic entrepreneurs and ethnotourism

The globalized idea of culture—specifically, the notion of a primordial indigenous culture—is also reinforced in a context of local disorder, in which identity-based entrepreneurial ventures, both formal and informal, take on development functions. Koba described how a Damara woman approached her and five other San women and offered them money to perform in various venues:

> The first dance we did was in Gobabis. . . . Then we went to dance at Buitepos [on the border of Botswana] when the [trans-Kalahari] road was opened. . . . The work was not good for me. If you dance there, you are not wearing any clothes. We are wearing the !gu, like we were wearing in the old time. [But] we didn't get any money [and no food].

//Aese, who lives on a cattle post in a communal area 250 kilometers (about 155 miles) south of Koba's camp, told me about his community's experiences performing for tourists at the behest of Hereros:

> They were there, the people from other countries. . . . The Hereros came and picked up the San people to dance—they said it was a concert. My son was also a performer. But he didn't get money in his hands. All the money goes to the Hereros—the money that comes from other hands [i.e., from the tourists].

In a village settlement approximately 200 kilometers (124 miles) northeast of Koba's camp, Tchi!o, a middle-aged San woman, described how a group of Hereros

offered the women in her village an opportunity to earn money by performing at a cultural festival:

> The Hereros came and took us from here. When we got [to the town], they took off our clothes in front of many people. And they put a !gae [a leather apron] on us and they took off our doeks [head scarves] and tied them between our breasts. And our breasts were out. Hereros made us like that so that we could go and dance for them. They said, ''You must come and play. You will be paid, and you will also get some food. Come and eat. You are suffering a lot.''. . . The women said, ''Let's go and get food and money!'' That's why all of us stood up and went—we were hungry. When we came back home, they gave us a small packet of tea and sugar and soup . . . [but] no money! They wasted us. They made us dance, and made us naked, and they left us with nothing.

In Tchi!o's story, the Hereros transformed their San recruits according to a familiar conception of what pristine primitives should be—naked dancers. The San who were recruited, most of whom were unemployed former farmworkers and domestic servants, clearly saw these ventures as income-earning opportunities, not as opportunities for cultural assertion.

Informal ethnic entrepreneurial activities represent an extreme form of cultural exploitation. The same dynamics, however, are often reproduced in formal-sector cultural marketing because the conditions for ''acceptable'' expressions of identity and the conditions sustaining class inequalities are often the same. The IMF now considers tourism a viable export strategy for debt-ridden countries, and tourism is being promoted by industry members and states as a means for achieving sustainable development (World Travel and Tourism Council 2001b).[18] Tourism is also one of the fastest growing industries in Namibia, with a projected growth rate of ten percent per year (United Nations 1999).[19] Tourism is also one of the least-regulated industries in the world, and the Namibian farming sector—in which most commercialized ethnotourism ventures are initiated—is itself characterized by a lack of regulation, especially with respect to the enforcement of labor laws.

Many white farmers, feeling the pinch of liberalized trade markets and decreased government subsidies, have begun to diversify into the tourism sector, using the Bushmen to draw tourists to their newly established guest farms. A visitor to the Omaheke Region can now find brochures marketing Bushmen as tourist attractions. For example, the brochure for San World invites tourists to ''meet the last survivors of an ancient society . . . living in close harmony with nature'' and to ''come and explore the secrets of the Bushmen.'' San World is a guest lodge owned and run by a local white farmer and had been, prior to 2001, a cattle ranch where San worked as farm laborers.

A recent brochure for Bona Safaris, a tour company based in Gobabis, provides the following description of the Omaheke San for potential customers:

> Amid these desolate expanses [of the pristine Kalahari] the Bushman clans have wandered for thousands of years. . . . This race of people is ancient—as shown in their ability to store fat reserves in their buttocks, to be used when food is scarce. Bushmen live on game and wild fruit. They are still mainly hunters and gatherers. . . . They are unable to comprehend what happens beyond their world.

According to the itinerary, tourists will visit, not the pristine Kalahari, but a lion farm, a leopard farm, and an ostrich farm. This tour is careful to perpetuate a mythical image of the hunting and gathering Bushman, and this requires that the real San in the Omaheke—the farmworkers and domestic servants—remain invisible.

Unfortunately, the working conditions on many of the guest farms differ little from those on the cattle ranches. San I spoke to complained that they were not getting paid, their rations were inadequate, and the farmers kept the money that the tourists offered to the San role-players. Oba, an elderly man from /In!gou's resettlement camp, was recruited by the owners of the lion farm promoted by Bona Safaris. At the farm, they replaced his tattered clothing with a loincloth and put him to work showing tourists how to track animals and make arrows. He described his experience on the guest farm in the following way:

> I bought food [from the farmer] with the money I received from the government—my pension. I received nothing from [the farmer]. . . . When [the tourists] came to see me, they were only interested in my weapons like my spear, the hunting equipment that I made; [we danced for them], but they gave me nothing . . . they took pictures, but they gave us nothing. . . . When I refused to give [the farmer] my pension money, he stopped giving us food.

Oba worked on the guest farm for less than a year before returning to the resettlement camp, where at least he could get drought-relief food each month. By this time, the camp manager had ceased feeding drought-relief food to her pigs, so conditions in the camp had improved enough for Oba to believe that life there would be better than on the lion farm.

Other ventures capitalize on the recent trend toward ecologically and politically responsible tourism. In August 1998, members of the !Xûn community—a group of unemployed farmworkers in the southern Omaheke Region—entered into a joint tourism venture with Intu Afrika Lodge (located outside of the Omaheke Region). With the assistance of WIMSA, a contract was drawn up to ensure

appropriate housing and remuneration for the San and to secure a share in the returns from the venture (Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in South Africa 1998:40). The lodge promotes itself to tourists by claiming that

> the Intu Afrika corporation has developed a project that it believes will provide a blueprint for the successful implementation of development projects with the Bushmen and other indigenous minority peoples. . . . The objective of the Intu Afrika Bushman project is to empower the community in order to regain their dignity and pride. This has been done by creating employment opportunities and giving the Bushmen scope to practice cultural activities that utilize traditional Bushman skills in order to generate income for the community. [Intu Afrika Game Lodge n.d.]

The only identity given scope for expression, however, is the one that is marketable; that is, the traditional foraging identity as it is defined largely by stereotypes feeding the demand for this kind of ethnotourism. The manager of Intu Afrika Lodge even contributed his own idea of authentic Bushmen behavior and required the men to rub the blood from a recent kill onto their legs while tourists watched.[20]

Problems plagued Intu Afrika almost as soon as it was opened. Before the lodge owner recruited the Omaheke !Xûn, he had tried to import Bushmen from the Schmidtsdrift army base in South Africa. These San had been relocated to Schmidtsdrift from the Caprivi strip in northern Namibia, where they had been recruited by the South African Defence Force to fight in covert operations units during Namibia's liberation struggle.[21] The lodge owner had inadvertently hired a motley crew of ex-combatants. Even worse, they were not the Bushmen of popular imagination but the tall, dark Kxoe ''river Bushmen.'' The irate lodge owner eventually sent the Kxoe back to Schmidtsdrift because ''they were not short and yellow'' but were merely ''ordinary folk'' who ''wore trousers, shirts and dresses'' and ''did not appreciate having to sport animal skins''; some drank too much and ''refused to behave like 'genuine bushmen' '' (Mail and Guardian 1995).

The lodge owner's concern to have ''real'' Bushmen working at his lodge was only in part a product of apartheid stereotypes: Market demand also imposes an authenticity imperative on such ventures. For example, shortly after the South African ǂKhomani San signed a historic land deal in 1999, the *Cape Times* uncovered the ''Great Bushman Tourism Scam'' (Robbins 2001:839). According to the *Cape Times* exposé, ''fake bushmen'' were being marketed at the world-famous Bushman village at Kagga Kamma—the lodge's bogus Bushmen were at worst actually ''Coloured'' people and at best not ''one hundred percent pure Bushmen'' (Robbins 2001:839).[22]

This was not the first time Kagga Kamma had been accused of marketing inauthentic Bushmen. In October 1997, an article entitled ''The Search for Authenticity,'' published in the *Nation,* complained that the Bushmen at Kagga Kamma were wearing ''Mets baseball caps and Nikes'' and so were obviously not the ''real thing.'' The author eventually found ''real'' Bushmen in Namibia:

> My search for authentic Bushmen finally took me to the northern extremity of the Kalahari Desert. . . . I had hoped to make some contact with ''the wild Bushmen in all of us''—the free spirit that once resided in all men and that all men still hanker for; the way we were, *uncomplicated,* uncluttered, at peace. I'd been told that the Ju/'wasi Bushmen in this desolate outpost were as close as I would get, and this turned out to be true. . . . Any doubts I had about their authenticity were obliterated the day I went hunting with the village elder, a wiry man in his late 60s named Old Kaece. . . . They say a true Bushman twangs with the bush and watching Old Kaece sniffing and twitching and sensing everything around him . . . *it was as if he was a part of the natural world himself.* [Boynton 1997: 19, emphasis added]

Complaints from those on the consumer side of the tourism industry (including journalists) consistently cite the failure of real San to conform to idealized images of ''Bushman Noble Savages.'' The expectation of an organic link between the Bushmen and the land or nature—already imposed by donor behavior in the development industry—is now reinforced by market demand. Where Bushmen ethnotourism ventures—whether in the formal or informal sectors—are in the hands of non-San, the same disturbing pattern recurs. The very people who help to sustain the myth that the Omaheke San remain pristine foragers, in need of nothing but game and wild fruits, are the first to believe that myth when payday comes.

The San are themselves quite critical of others marketing their identity. One San man told me, ''At the lodges—the places of the white people—they are just busy making money for themselves.'' A San woman I spoke to exclaimed, ''Everybody likes to steal our traditions!'' At the same time, the San recognize tourism as an opportunity to both make money and express cultural pride. The same woman who spoke out against tradition theft told me that she is hopeful that she and other San living at a small cattle post in the southern Omaheke will be successful in their own tourism scheme because ''our culture is very good to us . . . it is beautiful.'' When I asked Koba, the San woman who had been recruited by Damaras to perform traditional dances, if she was still interested in identity work, she said, ''Yes, so that our traditions don't die out.'' Kxao Moses ǂOma and Axel Thoma argue that ethnotourism can revitalize traditional culture and that

''the recent introduction of tourism-based undertakings among San communities has made the San aware that their culture is a valuable social and economic asset'' (2002:40).

Involvement with WIMSA and the OST has already produced a visible impact on the ways the San choose to present themselves to outsiders. During my fieldwork in 1996 to 1997—before WIMSA and the OST were operating in the Omaheke—when the San I visited learned that I had a camera, they often asked to be photographed. To prepare themselves, San living on the farms put on the best clothes they could borrow and posed with their most prized possessions—usually with radios or, if one was available, with a bicycle. Those who had no such symbols of affluence often asked to be photographed standing in front of, or leaning against, my truck. But now, in the communities in which the OST is active and development work has begun, an opportunity to be photographed sends the San residents to dress up in beadwork and animal skins. However inextricably class and culture are interwoven in the lives of the Omaheke San, their images are easily separated for the camera. For all that, the displays of the San in beadwork and animal skins were genuine expressions of cultural pride.

Conclusion

I suggested at the outset that one part of the explanation for intensified ethnic and cultural assertions in the face of globalization relates to the globalization of an increasingly essentialized idea of what culture is, and, so, ethnic and cultural assertion is often an expression of globalization rather than a reaction against it. In the confusion that follows in the wake of globalization, the idea of culture becomes an instrument in the struggle for resources and, in the processes by which it is instrumentalized, culture is also essentialized. The international indigenous peoples' movement, as a form of ''globalization from below,'' adds another layer of essentialism to the idea of culture by using it to provide a crucial part of the contrast between indigenous peoples and impoverished ''ordinary folk.'' Predicating the survival or resurgence of an indigenous identity on a unique relationship to the land—itself an essentializing move—has proven a strategically useful tool in the struggle for resources. Furthermore, discrete and bounded communities make easy targets for donors and for ethnodevelopment projects. Finally, a booming global industry in ethnotourism, which requires that indigenous culture be a suitable subject for photography, contributes a glossy finish to how a pristine culture looks in the global marketplace.

The Omaheke San illustrate the consequences of these instrumentalizing and essentializing trends. When the idea of culture becomes instrumentalized in the struggle for resources, then, in situations of extreme marginalization and class inequality, it easily becomes another instrument for continued exploitation. And, as the idea of culture becomes essentialized, the San's own distinctive but class-shaped culture—the lived patterns of practices and beliefs that make up their moral identity—goes unnoticed.

Notes

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1. From 1884 to 1915, Namibia (then South West Africa) was a German colony. In 1920, South West Africa was mandated by the League of Nations to South Africa as a Trust Territory. After a lengthy liberation struggle (1966 to 1989), led by the South West Africa Peoples Organization (SWAPO), Namibia achieved independence on March 21, 1990.

2. More sophisticated analyses of the cultural effects of globalization examine the process of hybridization, which Jan Nederveen Pieterse defines as ''the ways in which forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices'' (2000:101–102; see also Appadurai 2000). As a ''counterweight to introverted notions of culture'' (Pieterse 2000:105), these studies are valuable. Nevertheless, they are unable to explain why ''introverted notions of culture'' are such a common feature of identity movements. Interestingly, even studies of cultural hybridization attempt to examine the logic of global culture, as though global culture were a coherent, homogeneous whole (or an introverted culture). For example, Roland Robertson claims that ''the unitary view of the nationally-constituted society is *an aspect of global culture*'' (1997:87). Thus, Robertson sees ideas of ''nationally constituted societies'' as a feature of a homogeneous global culture rather than as ideas that have been globalized (i.e., as an aspect of globalization) and so misses a rather obvious explanation for why ethnic–nationalist movements are such a common feature of localization. Such frameworks that pit global culture against local culture produce a paradox that encourages opaque descriptions of the relationship between global and local dynamics, such as that offered by Arjun Appadurai: ''The central feature of *global culture* today is the politics of the mutual effort of sameness and difference to cannibalize one another and thereby proclaim their successful highjacking of the twin Enlightenment ideas of the triumphantly universal and the resiliently particular'' (2000:330, emphasis added).

3. Some scholars have associated identity movements with the history of modern nationalisms. But the standard focus on the logic of a global culture has prevented most from exploring how this influenced a globalized definition of cultural identity (see Appadurai 2000; Hall 1997:26–27; King 1997; Pieterse 2000; Robertson 1997; but see Buell 1994 and Wallerstein 1990 for promising approaches to this issue).

4. I focus here on one particular idea of culture—that is, the popular notion of culture as a bounded and territorially grounded entity that corresponds to a nation—because exploring the various

ideas of culture that have developed in popular and academic discourse is beyond the scope of this article. Adam Kuper (1999) discusses the evolution of various concepts of culture, from mid-20th-century European traditions to the U.S. postmodern turn, and criticizes contemporary identity politics as politically dangerous and atavistic (see also Kuper 2003). His argument entails a problematic dichotomy, however, between essentialist conceptions of culture and identity and constructionist approaches, and his characterizations of each rely on problematic presuppositions about what it would take to make a culture (or cultural identity) ''real.''

5. Will Kymlicka locates the substance of debates surrounding indigenous peoples' rights in the gap between article 1 of the UN Charter, which establishes the right of all ''peoples'' to self-determination, and article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which establishes the right of ''members of minorities'' to ''enjoy their own culture . . . in community with other members of their group'' (1999:283). Nonetheless, as Kymlicka notes, ''the right to 'self-determination' is too strong, for it has traditionally been interpreted to include the right to form one's own state,'' whereas article 27 is ''too weak, for 'the right to enjoy one's own culture' has traditionally been understood to include only negative rights of non-interference, rather than positive rights to assistance, funding, autonomy or public recognition'' (1999:284). Because article 27 is too weak to address the concerns of indigenous minorities, ''self-determination'' has dominated the vocabulary of indigenous activists. Because this right is traditionally understood as the right to form an independent state, however, it is limited by the ''salt water thesis,'' which restricts the right to self-determination to peoples colonized by overseas powers (Kymlicka 1999:284). Given that most indigenous activists are not seeking secession, a weaker sense of self-determination needs to be articulated and accepted by the international community.

6. James Clifford also notes that ''the idea of culture comes with it an expectation of roots, of a stable, territorial existence'' (1988:38).

7. The term *Khoi* is often used to refer to Nama-speaking peoples, who are linguistically and culturally similar to San.

8. The anthropological wisdom that shaped the apartheid system saw nations as ''fundamental human entities'' (Gordon 1988:541). The particular conception of culture that underpinned the ideology of apartheid was developed by Afrikaans-speaking anthropologists who, drawing from their training in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, adapted the German ethnological notion of ''volkgeist'' to the South African context. Werner Willi Max Eiselen—widely recognized as the intellectual architect of apartheid—was among these German-trained anthropologists, was one of the founding members of South African *volkekunde* anthropology, and was, according to Robert Gordon, ''obsessed with the organic analogy'' (1988:540). Eiselen insisted that culture, not race, determined behavior (Gordon 1988:540; see also Kuper 1999:xii). But for Eiselen, culture was itself conceived in terms of biological metaphors—that is, as an organism. Another member of the volkekunde school, J. P. Bruwer, served on the Odendaal Commission, the body responsible for the establishment of ethnic ''homelands'' in South West Africa (Namibia) in the 1960s (Gordon 1988).

9. The Angola Boers were the recipients of the largest and most expensive resettlement and financial-aid scheme in the territory's history. They were the descendants of the Dorsland Trekkers who had passed through the Omaheke en route to Angola 50 years earlier and who returned in the late 1920s to constitute the largest single influx of settlers into the region.

10. On the farms I surveyed in 1996, the average wage for San male workers was N$82.00 per month (equivalent to US$20.50). This compares to an average monthly cash wage of N$166.12 for non-San farmworkers, or N$300 a month if payment was made in wages only (Devereux et al. 1996:x, 23). The average wage for San domestic servants was N$45.00 per month (US$11.25). Wages for non-San domestic servants reported by the Namibian Domestic and Allied Workers Union averaged N$221.90 per month (Fuller and Hubbard 1996:114–115).

11. Rations usually include mielie meal, coffee, sugar, tea, milk, and, sporadically, meat.

12. For details on the intersection of San class and culture, see Sylvain 2002. For a description of the intersections of race, class, and gender inequalities, see Sylvain 2001.

13. For recent work on disorder, corruption, and the ''criminalization'' of states in Africa, see Bayart et al. 1999 and Chabal and Daloz 1999.

14. WIMSA and the OST initiated a Devil's Claw harvesting project in two small communities off the farms and are assisting the !Xûn San in the southern Omaheke with establishing a tourist camp site.

15. The chief-designate of the northern Omaheke San suggested a remedy for this imbalance by pointing out that farm San could be counted as belonging to the community located closest to the farm on which they work.

16. This is also illustrated by the case of the ≠Khomani San in South Africa (see Robbins 2001).

17. This was the situation as of June 2001. WIMSA and the OST have been working tirelessly to raise awareness of their activities and to forge fruitful networks with other local development and advocacy organizations.

18. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2001a), tourism, which represents 11 percent of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 8.2 percent of world employment, is one of the world's biggest industries and one of the world's largest employers.

19. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2001b), tourism contributed 7.8 percent to Namibia's GDP in 2001. The director of tourism at the Ministry of Environment and Tourism estimates that ''tourism will be the largest contributor to the national GDP in six or seven years'' (United Nations 1999).

20. For a detailed description of the touristic experience at Intu Afrika, see Guenther 2002.

21. In the mid-1970s, the South African army began recruiting Ju/'hoan and Kxoe as trackers and reconnaissance troops in covert operations units against SWAPO's armed wing, the Peoples' Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN; see Gordon and Douglas 2000; Lee 1988).

22. In his study of the Kagga Kamma settlement in the Western Cape, Hylton White (1995:42) describes many of the same stereotypical justifications for low wages that I found in the Omaheke: ''Bushmen'' are too primitive to handle money, and besides, ''real'' Bushmen have no need for it anyway.

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