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by: **Edwin N. Wilmsen**

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# AUXILARY INSTRUMENTS OF LABOR: THE HOMOGENIZATION OF DIVERSITY IN THE DISCOURSE OF ETHNICITY

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and
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> First they are mouths, then they become auxilary instruments of labor; later they are drawn away, and become the fathers and mothers of children, who shall become the fathers and mothers of children.
> James Agee
> *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*

## Introduction

In the creation of an image of national unity successful political states employ their power of cultural hegemony to facilitate the continual renewal of forms of involuntary ascription, such as ethnicity, that can coexist with a national consciousness without apparent contradiction precisely because they are cultural, that is ascribed, and therefore appear both natural and national from the perspective of individuals. Continued tacit acceptance of imposed ethnic terms for current political discourse (e.g., in Eastern Europe, Islamic Asia, southern Africa, USA minorities) reaffirms the established status of these terms as the most readily available avenue for collective self-identification and action. "So long as social practice continues to be pursued *as if* ethnicity did hold the key to the structures of inequality, the protectionism of the dominant and the responses of the dominated alike serve to reproduce an ethnically ordered world" (Comaroff 1987:xxx). It is particularly important to stress this at a time when a philosophy of primordial ethnicity is being widely reasserted as a form of neo-racism to justify new or continued suppression of dispossessed ethnic groups. In this paper, I will analyze processes of ethnicization, identity construction, and class formation in Botswana. In

ethnicity and tribalism are conflated (e.g., Vail 1989). But tribes, as Vail's authors make abundently clear, are a product of colonial engagement; they are essentially administrative constructs. On the other hand, ethnicity as a central logic emerged out of conflicts engendered in competition for favored positions among these tribal constructs. The emergent ethnicities were formulated out of an amalgam of preexisting indigenous and inserted colonial partitive ideologies. A dominant class - in colonial Africa, this was often an ascendent 'tribal' aristocracy - defined and determined the terms of subordinate class competition which is the seedbed of ethnicizing processes.

Theoretical prologomenon

Ethnicity arises in the exercise of power. It has no singular construction; there must always be two, usually more, ethnicities to be defined against each other. Silverman (1976:628) noted this more than a decade ago: "a group is ethnic only if there are 'outsiders' and if it exists within a wider political field." Furthermore, dominant groups are never ethnicities; they are in control. Ethnic consciousness is a product of "contradictions embodied in relations of structured inequality" (Comaroff 1987:xxx). However embellished by expressive signs or shielded in a cloud of symbolic values, the essence of ethnic existence lies in differential access to means of production and rights to shares in production returns. The terms, both as name and as condition, of ethnic identification are always given from outside (Mudimbe 1989). It is not necessary, perhaps not usual, that a designating term is itself introduced by a dominant authority; the name will likely have an older usage quite independent of its transformed application. But its acquired ethnic form and content are determined by relative position in a power context.

The function of ethnic terms in condensing once independent features into a single symbol of generalized identity does appear to be internal to the ideology of individuals who thus anchor a collective sense of selfhood. Galaty (1982:17) lists these condensible features: "descent, economics, praxis, political organization, language, and culture." It is upon this ideology of an identity center, Galaty argues, that "ethnosociological features" -- I would say those structures of the encompassing social formation -- that transcend any partitive identity, whether collective or individual are hung. The resulting identity nucleus transposes and attempts to transcend, for its constituent members, collective and individual partitive identity structures in the encompassing social formation. Thus ideologically centered, the identity nucleus with its icons and lexicon, with its indexical signs perpetually pointing to its legitimate ontology, serves as internal rationale for peripheral position in a social formation.

But it is just those partitive structures of the social formation that are prior to ethnic logics and creations; they include the economic and political power structures in which partitioning takes place. Consequently, these prior structures must constrain the forms into which previously independent features may be condensed; they also constrain the parameters of generalized identity and collective sense of selfhood. That is to say, while the 'ethnic' function of constructing a collective identity center may appear to be self-motivated and self-motivating it is actually dictated by the material conditions in which the ethnicizing function is realized. This is the role of ideology in local and regional factionalism today.

Ethnicity, thus, is a feature of class domination by means of which subordinate 'groups' are kept in conflict with each other; ethnicities grow out of this conflict. Ethnicity functions as one of a constellation of markers to assign class status to persons. Ethnicity then, as Galaty (1982:17) concludes, may represent one of the most accessible and easiest levels of discourse regarding general identity. But it is neither the most accurate nor is it explanatory. Ethnic identification can never be explanatory; it is necessarily a constituted phenomenon (cf. Comoroff 1987:xxxx who says something similar but not quite the same thing). That is, ethnicity and identity refer to diametrically opposite processes of locating individuals within a social formation, the one to objective conditions of inequality in an arena of social power, the other to subjective classification on a stage of social practice. As Comaroff (1987:xxx) puts it, "ethnicity takes on a cogent existential and experiential reality when sociocultural features are reified into a justificatory premise for inequality." Thus, ethnic consciousness and class (to paraphrase Silverman 1976:633) "represent two entangled systems of stratification." Ethnic identity arises when -- and if -- these processes intersect; it is constituted in partitive ideologies within the framework of class struggle (cf. Friedrich 1987:xxxx). ~~Ethnicity acquires a cogent existential and experiential reality when cultural features are reified as justificatory premises for inequality. Thus, ethnic consciousness and class represent two entangled systems of stratification.~~

Conditions for ethnicity

With this framework of ethnicizing processes in mind, I turn now to the discourse of ethnicity in Botswana and trace some trajectories along which individual and group identities became homogenized. I argue that the intersection of ethnicity and class lies in the creation of what Wolf (1982:380) has called "a 'disposable mass' of laborers out of diverse populations." In this creation, the basic relation between capital and labor is reproduced at the same time that the heterogeneity of labor sources is reinforced. This is accomplished "by ordering the groups and categories of laborers hierarchically with respect to one another, and by

continuously producing and re-creating symbolically marked 'cultural' distinctions among them" (Wolf 1982:380). It was in just this intersection that indigenous Tswana and colonial European partative ideologies converged to create the class structure with its ethnic divisions found in Botswana today.

Within Botswana itself in recent years, issues of ethnicity and inequality have received increased attention, frequently in conjunction with politically motivated arguments concerning the causes and consequences of rural and urban squatter poverty (Gadibolae 1985:17; Leepile 1988; Mautle 1986:19; Ramatokwane 1987). However, although an objective of at least some parties to the discussion appears to be the elimination of partative logics as motivating principles, continued tacit acceptance of imposed ethnic terms for current political discourse reaffirms the established status of these terms as the most readily available avenue for collective self-identification and action. The protectionism of the dominant is manifest in this discourse and becomes eminantly visible in attempts by political parties to secure larger constituencies by promoting identity consciousness and ethnic solidarity. The contradictions inherent in such policies are readily apparent. Their historical roots will also become apparent in what follows.

Isaac Schapera (1952) noted, forty years ago, that Tswana 'tribes' in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, now Botswana (Ngwato, Kgatla, Kwena, Ngwaketse, Rolong, Tawana, etc.), were neither ethnically nor linguistically homogeneous. He (1952:68-102) also noted that an anomoly existed in the 1946 Census of the Protectorate; this was that, while Bayei then constituted a majority of the population in Ngamiland (as they do today), there were very few Yei wards. This came about because subjugated non-Tswana peoples were, moreso in the past than now, incorporated by Batswana into their regional merafe (usually glossed 'tribes', I prefer 'polities') by creating separate wards for them under the administration of junior elite members of the local Tswana morafe appointed as headman by his kgosi (chief). Members of a ward are by definition members of their headman's morafe; in the past, it would seem this also conferred Tswana (in this case, Tawana) identity on those peoples, hence they became Batswana of the appropriate morafe. That this was no longer the case in mid-20$^{th}$ century and Yei members of the Tawana 'tribe' now retain 'ethnic' Yei identity underscores the processes of ethnicization I discuss.

It also underscores my argument that ethnic consciousness is a product of contradictions embodied in relations of structured inequality. Thus, while the Bantu- and Khoisan-speaking peoples of Botswana now rearrange their divisions according to a logic long internal to themselves, they do so with respect to relative positions of power in an overarching social formation that is itself the creation of colonial and postcolonial power relations. The resultant constructed ethnicities rarely conform to a people's prior self-identification. For example, during the past 150 years or so, all Khoisan languages spoken in the Kalahari region, of which

as many as ten are mutually unintelligible, have been lumped undifferentially by Setswana under a single term, Sesarwa (the language of Bushmen), while the speakers of these languages became undifferentially marked as Basarwa (the Bushmen/San of ethnography). In like manner, independent eponymous Sekgalagadi-speaking Bangologa, Bakgwatheng, Bashaga, Baloongwe, and others living in the dry sandveld were undifferentiated as Bakgalakgadi when they were reduced to subordinate status (Schapera 1942; Okihiro 1976; Ncgoncgo 1977). Again, when Batawana established themselves on Lake Ngami in about 1795, they rather quickly subordinated indigenous Bayei and other Okavango Delta peoples who were collectively, and disparagingly, called Makoba, a term often still applied to them today. Even weaker Tswana-speaking peoples, more distantly related to the emerging hegemonic polities (principally Ngwato and Kwena) could be categorized according to the dictates of hegemonic Tswana merafe. Thus, small groups of Tswana-speaking Bapedi were gradually dominated by Bangwato and subjected to tribute levies, labor extraction, land appropriation, and resettlement in the Tswapong Hills where they, along with subjugated Bakaa, Bakhurutse, and other Tswana-speakers acquired the designation, Batswapo, as a mark of their collective subordination (Motzafi-Haller 1987). Jones and Hill-Burnett (1982:218) argue that it is just this homogeneous treatment of diverse peoples that brings about the formative stage of ethnicity.

Two initially separate but ultimately converging processes combined to create the ethnic distinctions currently found in Botswana. The first lies on a trajectory of social relations with ancient roots in the region that came to a crisis during the difaqane wars of the early 19$^{th}$ century when a large proportion of southern Africa's peoples became realigned socially and politically. Marks (1982:10) calls attention to the manifest fluidity of political boundaries in the region at that time, when the objectives of leaders and societies were to "secure a certain degree of control over people, followers, not units of wage labour. In this situation, amongst Africans ethnicity would appear to have been of relatively little significance." That is, historically constructed assumptions about individual and group identity associations were, in practice as well as in ideology, what Worsley (1984:242) has labelled "relative, situational categories."

At the beginning of the 19$^{th}$ century, there was not yet an overarching Tswana political structure, only several small independent polities whose leaders were descendants of eponymous Tswana founders. In this "complex web of Tswanadom", as Murray (1986:12) has called it, personal and political allegience was directed by kinship relations to one or another of these local leaders; the concept of a larger Tswana entity defined in overarching political, social, cultural, and geographic terms did not exist (Denbow, Kiyaga-Mulindwa, and Parsons 19859:2). Then, on what is today the opposite end of a social-political scale dominated by Batswana, Basarwa was an economic epitaph and group

signification followed either self-designated usage or referred to a local leader, as with other peoples (Parkington 1984:164; Wilmsen 1989:31). From the middle of the last century, however, the consolidation of power in a few hands coincided with, and was in large measure stimulated by, the insertion of European mercantile capital into the region. It was as a consequence of struggles to control commodity production for the newly created market -- that is, to control labor units -- and to channel access of the resultant product to its market that secondary rationalizations (Worsley 1984:235) were invoked to first concretize ideologically then stigmatize in practice those peoples who became progressively more disenfranchized.

A brief recapitulation of history is in order to set the discussion in perspective. When Batswana entered what is now Botswana in mid-18th century, they found the land occupied1 by peoples speaking closely related dialects now lumped together as Sekgalagadi and other peoples speaking Khoisan languages. There began a slow process of disruption of indigenous land tenure and economic production; the process operated simultaneously along two interrelated trajectories. At first, coercive means were seldom available and rarely needed to recruit autonomous, self-sufficient foragers and pastro-foragers into becoming commodity producers through hunting ivory and black ostrich feathers (the former traded to the Moçambican coast, the latter to Zulu regimental units). Resident Kalahari pastoralists were apparently readily induced to take on the daily maintenance of Tswana cattle. As these production relations became more asymetrical a particular class structure along with its attendant exploitative property and surplus extraction relations was established in the region. This was initially institutionalized in the kgamelo (milk-jug) system by Kgari, Kgosi of Bangwato, in about 1826-28 (Parsons 1977). Through this system, older forms of property relations were replaced by stronger suzreignty of Tswana royals and for the first time the formerly bipartite royal/commoner division of Tswana social order was expanded to include an intermediate administrator class and an underclass of malata, serfs (Mautle 1986:23). Whereas exchange relations between indigenous peoples and Batswana appear to have been previously reasonably balanced, from the second quarter of the 19th century direct force was increasingly applied to extract ever larger levys of 'ground rent' (in the form of tusks, white ostrich feathers, hides, livestock, and labor) from increasingly dispossessed non-Tswana Bantu-speaking peoples, principally those collectively called Bakgalagadi, as well as Khoisan-speakers. The impetus for this demand for greater commodity production came from European traders who were penetrating into the interior from the Cape and Natal coasts.

The transfer of livestock work to other groups by ruling Batswana took two forms. In one, cattle were taken to distant water sources and left in the care of resident people; this would seem to have been a form of mafisa. Subsequently, young men and women were taken from their homes and transported to established Tswana locations where they were used as herdboys,

milkmaids, domestic servants, and hunters. This transpositioning of labor appears to have been initially mutually agreed upon and perhaps mutually beneficial. By the beginning of the 20th century, however, in the eastern and southern parts of what had become the Bechuanaland Protectorate, it often amounted to kidnapping; in Ngamiland, it continued usually, but not exclusively, to be included in labor negotiations (Parsons 1977; Tlou 1979:367). These geographical differences appear to reflect accurately the differing degrees of hegemony achieved by the different Tswana polities.

As part of this process, the mobility of increasingly dependent peoples became a function of the wishes of Tswana administrators and masters, preventing thereby the growth of a free labor market which might have given those peoples some advantage. In retrospect, it seems clear that the form subsequently taken by the labor reserve in the Protectorate during the 20th century was conditioned by these earlier developments. The large economic differences, which became more pronounced during the 1920s and 1930s, found today between patron villages and remote-rural client settlements can be traced directly to this historically developed pattern.

In this atmosphere, the native category, Basarwa (which in its root connotation of aboriginality was neutral, or perhaps positive), acquired negative denotations. These denotations became reciprocally marked in symbolic ordering, with Basarwa 'Bushmen' increasingly consigned to a peripheral "wild, uncontrolled 'nature'" in Tswana ideology, while in much, but by no means all, San ideology, Batswana took on the central attributes of overlordship. Other groups were drawn into positions between these polar nodes.

The second process that brought about ethnicization was that "self-fulfilling ... colonial prophecy that foretold the existence of 'tribes' and, through an administrative order, created what it could not discover" (Galaty 1982). This was also essentially a labor process that relegated stigmatized peoples to lower echelons in the labor pool while insulating -- through the legal structure erected by colonial administration -- hegemonically higher strata from lower echelon competition. For example, British official policy "announced that if Basarwa were allowed to leave their masters they should do so only in a recognized and controlled manner" (Gadibolae 1985:28).

The cumulative effect of these congruent processes was the consolidation of a generalized ethnic inequality inserted into precolonially existing structures of inequality. These preexisting structures were overridden when local group autonomy was subverted by the stereotyping recategorization that was a salient feature of Tswana hegemonic consolidation begun with the kgamelo system. As Cooper (1977:4) remarks, "this itself reflects the ethnio-politico 'state formation' [of the Tswana polity]." Wolf (1982:xxx) noted that, "Such ethnicities are therefore not 'primordial' social

confers neither approbrium on the mothers nor illegitimacy on the children, neither the mothers nor the children will derive any social or material support from the fathers. Furthermore, the children have no claim on their paternal family or its land; this places them at a severe disadvantage with respect to those children in the community who can call upon full kindred support. While a few of these "fatherless" children may overcome their disadvantage, most will probably live a life of poverty. They will be forced, as are their older cousins now, into an overly full labor pool where the ethnic label, Basarwa, will deepen their disadvantage.

The structure of Zhu class relations in the regional economy is rooted in these specific conditions of production and accumulation. These relations have been defined in a particular history of political struggle over access to land resources and their products and to the attendent power conferred by recognized legitimate entitlement to manipulate the disposal of these products. Cashdan (1986:313) provides a complimentary case. She says of the Bateti (a people whose original language, Deti, is of the Khoe branch of Khoisan); "the Bateti are today wealthy cattle owners" who employ Lake Xau Basarwa as herders on the same terms as do their Kalanga and Tswana neighbors. Bateti give out to the Lake Xau people, who are generally poor and own few cattle, nearly half the animals the latter keep in mafisa. In keeping with their wealth, Bateti "do not like to speak of themselves as Basarwa" (Cashdan 1986:312). A Mokalanga told Cashdan that they become angry if called Basarwa by others; he added significantly, "the Bateti are only rich because they had land". Joyce (1938:15) did not include Bateti among the 'Bushmen' of his 1937 survey of the Ngwato Reserve because he said that economically they could not be distinguished from their Tswana and Kalanga neighbors, though "in appearance and language they were Masarwa." Forty years later, Hitchcock excluded Bateti from his socio-economic survey for the same reasons.

Subordinate tiers in the labor reserve

I now return to the history of labor in Botswana begun by Schapera (1947) and to the creation of labor reserves in the 20th century to examine the conditions under which these current linguistic and ethnic relations were formed. I (1982, 1989) have argued that a multi-tiered system of reserves was required in the Bechuanaland Protectorate to free Tswana men from otherwise inescapable duties in domestic production and allow them to take advantage of cash income opportunities on the mines and farms of South Africa. These options were at first denied to others in the Protectorate. One subordinate tier in this system is the female-headed household which is especially prevalent in the southern and eastern parts of the country from whence the greater proportion of migrant labor is drawn. Research is well advanced on such households, upon which falls the major burden of reproducing labor migrants' social relations of production (Kerven 1979; Cooper 1980; Izzard 1982). A second subordinate tier is composed of ethnic

minorities, among whom Khoisan-speakers are prominent but hardly alone. The essential role of this group in maintaining the labor system within Botswana is only now coming to be appreciated.

The initial stages of this process were completed in their essentials by the middle of the 19th century. Parson (1980), citing Marx, points out that the dissolution of persons to laborers in the employ of others does not presuppose the disappearance of previous conditions of property, only transformations in their mode of existence. It was precisely this form of transformation that took place, subverting autonomous social control to effective servitude. Necessary to this process of subordination was an undermining of self-sufficiency and a reorientation of relations of production stimulated by competition for favored positions in the only available labor market. That market - limited and exploitative as it was - provided the only means for acquiring investment capital and the exotic goods which were coming to be demanded and available in greater quantity through the intervention of European merchants.

To accomplish this, Batswana imposed a straightforward form of native colonialism upon the peoples of the region by expropriating the productive capacity of their land as well as their labor and by pursuing a policy of relative underdevelopment of facilities for these subordinated peoples. The transfered value for labor, usually in the form of payments in kind, was less than the cost to ethnicized laborers of their social reproduction, forcing them deeper into varying degrees of serfdom or clientship. Foraging offered an option to escape this dependency, but it was an incomplete one not open to all; those who fell into this form of subsistance depression, as foraging had become in the overall social formation, were further removed from participation in the political economy and became the 'Bushmen' of modern ethnography.

In the emerging colonial economy, there were substantially fewer places for herders than for hunters, even though cattle production was expanding. It is readily apparent why members of the rural underclass, mainly Basarwa but also substantial numbers of Bakgalagadi, Bayei, and others should compete for available labor positions as herdsmen. The system had quite suddenly alienated their labor from the land more thoroughly than had been possible either in the pre-European indigenous social formation or in its 19th century transformation by merchant capital. A captive surplus labor pool was created with essentially only one outlet. Those who could capture a cattlepost position obtained a measure of security in the system -- at the bottom of the heap, but in it.

The dependency of Batswana developed as the obverse of that of dispossessed minorities and was one over which they retained for themselves a large measure of control within their own political sphere while becoming, in their turn, subjugated to the labor needs of industrializing South Africa. Batswana --

intensified in 1934 -- were in much the same position as San peoples. While some Bakgalagadi retained or gained cattle wealth and a measure of political power, most found themselves between Batswana masters to whom they owed labor and/or products of labor and Basarwa from whom they could, in turn, extract forced labor as well as products such as furs.

The imposition by British administration of a hut tax in 1899 increased the pressure. Massey (1980:11) has stressed that, while there is no decisive record from which to argue that this tax was primarily intended to force labor migration to the South African mines, "colonial officials were well aware that the introduction of such a tax would necessitate such a movement." This was especially true after 1909 when the tax was doubled (to £1) and a heavy monetary fine (£5) for non-payment was imposed. Tswana household heads found themselves in need of immediate cash which the poorer among them could obtain only through migration to jobs. At least part of their consequently absent domestic labor had to be replaced. As Parson (1984:25) observed, this "quickly created a pattern of oscillating migratory labor that touched almost all the people who lived in the protectorate." Thus began the transformation of the rural poor, among whom ethnicized serfs and clients were among the very poorest, into what Parson (1981:240; see also Marks 1982; Cooper 1982:297) has called a peasantariat, a proletarian industrial working class with a retained agricultural base. In this transformation, former Sarwa and Kgalagadi serfs, who had nothing to offer but their labor, increasingly found their place in this partly proletarianized agricultural base; they filled the homestead labor gap created by absent Tswana migrants.

Force was sometimes necessary to keep them there. Tshekedi Khama, Regent of the Bangwato, testified in the trial of a Mongwato accused of killing his runaway Sarwa serf that "Masarwa were deserting their lords and masters in Bangwato Reserve and finding work or squatting in Northeast District [Francistown]"; he said that Bangwato go on "slave hunting" tours to return them, and kill them sometimes if they resist too much (Botswana National Archives 1930). Less harsh, perhaps, but at least equally effective was the decision taken 10 years later to confiscate all Sarwa firearms in Central District, thus forcing them to seek out work on cattleposts (Gadibolae 1985:29). Resort to these measures was taken because "all Tswana are agreed that migration [of labour to the mines and farms of South Africa] has led to deterioration in the herding of cattle, and that losses due to straying and neglect are far more numerous than before" (Schapera 1947:164). The hiring of casual labor to replace men absent on the mines became "fairly common" for those who could afford to do so. Kerven (1979:11) documents evidence that this practice continues today. The only peoples available to be hired in any numbers were Basarwa and Bakgalagadi; in large measure, this is why they are to be found on almost every cattlepost, rather than only those of the wealthy, in the region today. Ethnic minorities, San-speakers in particular, played a critical role in providing a second tier labor pool,

thereby releasing Tswana men for labor migration who would otherwise have been indispensible for immediate household productive activities.

A major consequence of this historical development was that Tswana men were able to respond in large numbers to wage labor opportunities on the South African mines and farms when these opportunities were made available to them. In Cooper's (1979:35) term, the structural transformation into a labor reserve was now complete. A look at some of the dimensions of this structure is revealing. Schapera (1947:222) tabulates the numbers of Protectorate men away from home on labor contracts for every year 1910-1940 inclusive; there was an increase in 1925 of 48% over 1920, and of 119% in 1935 over 1930. The pressure on secondary labor sources was correspondingly intensified during these periods, and it is just in these years that court and kgotla records contain by far the highest proportion of all cases involving abuse of Sarwa labor.

Language and identity

Substantial numbers of individual members of Khoisan "ethnic" divisions in the rural poor underclass of eastern Botswana have responded to their exclusion from labor and education equity in largely unorganized, unselfconscious ways. This has been accompanied by various forms of language change; one form, as in the case of Seyei and Deti, is individual adoption of Setswana as a first language. A revealing case of conflict between ethnicity and identity, and of language loss, was found among Bateti. Deti, an eastern Khoe language, has been entirely replaced by Setswana among the several hundred people who identify themselves as Bateti; no more than ten persons were found to retain a command of Deti and even these no longer spoke it among themselves. An elder, Braai, in his nineties when he died in 1983, was no doubt the most competent and respected remaining authority on Teti history and language; he bore living witness to what Teti self-image may have been in former times. Braai's son (then 62 years old), who speaks no Deti, expressed admiration for his father's traditional views, while disparaging everyone who speaks click languages. It seemed no contradiction to him to refer to the few Deti speakers among the Bateti, his father among them, as 'Bushmen' while at the same time considering himself to be non-Bushman (see Wilmsen and Vossen 1990).

A second form of change is systemic click loss from some Khoisan languages. Apparently this is perceived as a means of legitimizing these languages and of weakening identification of the speakers of these languages with an underclass. The southern African situation is, of course, complicated by the presence of Bantu languages (Sindebele, Kizulu, Isixhosa, and Sesotho) which are respected means of communication in spite of their large phonetic-phonological inventories of clicks. These languages may have retained respectability because they are spoken by peoples who were hegemonically dominant in their

geographical areas well into the 19th century and because Khoisan-speakers, who may in the later 19th century have presented a subdued minority, low-status contrast there, had by then long been absorbed into dominant Bantu click-speakers in those areas. Only when Bantu and Khoisan click-bearing languages coexist geographically in a context of hierarchical dominancy would a differentiation in their repective social statuses be expected.

It may be that this phenomenon is being expressed in an interesting way in eastern Botswana. Of the four basic clicks in Khoe languages, only the non-affricated (alveolar and palatal) clicks are replaced by clickless consonants while the affricated (dental and lateral) clicks remain stable (Traill 1986). Furthermore, the process is taking place predominantly in eastern Botswana where speakers of several Khoe click languages are intimately intermingled with speakers of Sindebele and Isixhosa who are economically dominant (to some extent even over Batswana) although numerically and politically in a minority. It appears to be highly suggestive that the affricated clicks retained by Khoe in this area are those most prominent in Bantu click inventories while the non-affricated clicks being lost by Khoe are comparatively uncommon in those Bantu click languages most often heard in Botswana. It is as though the sounds of the dominant classes set the tone for the subordinant. On the other hand, click replacement is not common in western Khoe languages (although it does occur to a minor extent) and appears to be completely absent from Zhu; if this analysis is valid, then a significant factor in this particular phonological contrast would seem to be that Bantu click languages are not well represented in western Botswana. Ts'ixakhoe provides an instructive case; these people speak an eastern Shua dialect of Khoe which like other Shua languages underwent significant click loss during the recent past. More recently, Ts'ixa moved into the western Mababe area and developed strong associations with Bugakhoe people. Since then, most of the clicks previously lost by Ts'ixakhoe have been reintroduced as a result of close interrelations between these Ts'ixa and Buga Khoe-speaking peoples (Vossen n.d.).

The click consonants of Khoisan languages are thought by relatively many Batswana to be peculiar and are often laughed at (it is sometimes even asserted that such sounds cannot be a property of a 'real' language), while the Bantu languages, Isixhosa and Sindebele, containing many click consonants raise no eyebrows when heard in the highest circles of power in the country. In ideological terms, in the first instance this reflects the relative class positions of the speakers of these languages. In the larger ideological arena, retention of negative attitudes toward Khoisan protects not only the cultural identity of the hegemonic class but also the economic advantage of the ambitious bourgeoisie. The obverse of this ideological negativity is found in the negative attitudinal frameworks and degraded self images formed over years of servitude by some Khoisan-speaking ethnic minorities in eastern Botswana, especially those who identify themselves as

(Tawana, Ngwato, Kwena, Kgatla, etc.) rather than the cover label, Tswana. The same result was obtained in response to the question of first language knowledge; Setawana rather than Setswana was the standard answer given by Batawana. In sharp contrast, Ngamiland Tswana-speakers of non-Tswana origin -- especially Bayei -- predominantly said they spoke Setswana even although they clearly spoke the Tawana variant which is dominant in the District. From these results, it would appear that persons who are attempting to enter more fully into national discourse are accepting -- at least tentatively as an initial step to social and economic leveling -- labels sanctioned by state ideology along with an undifferentiated Tswana nationality and a position in a pan-national class. Obversely, persons who are already perceived to be fully Tswana are free to superordinate their morafe/tribal subidentities within a holistic Tswana ideology. This usually carries no serious economic penalty, although social and political barriers (for example, parental disapproval of marriage partner selection and voter resistance when standing for elective office) may be raised along morafe lines. The process, as Friedrich (1987:306) notes, is pervasive and subliminal.

Zhu, Teti, Kwa, Herero, Yei, Tawana, Ngwato, Kwena along with other currently used terms (whether included on a tribal index or not) will doubtless remain significant in the construction of individual identities for a long time to come. But, already among the emerging bourgeoisie, identification as a member of a community is taking precedence over tribal/ethnic specification. At a meeting held at CaeCae in 1975 to discuss hopes for drilling boreholes in the vicinity and to draw up a petition to District Council for a school, speaker after speaker affirmed that, "Yes, we here are both Zhu and Mbanderu, but we are all CaeCae people." Although there is in this declaration a rhetorical oversight of the fact that at CaeCae some people are more equal than others, the speakers made it clear that any government development scheme would have to serve them as a community, not as fragmented units. This is not some newly discovered altruism on the part of advantaged CaeCae people nor a residual, aboriginal egalitarianism but the current expression, in terms of perceived present political realities, of attempts to redefine their social order; it also reflects a growing awareness of the value of a united front in negotiations with District Council.

Subsistance farmers have replaced subsistance foragers as the poorest of the poor in Botswana while commercial farming and employment in the formal labor sector (mining, construction, merchandizing, civil service) provide the most rewarding avenues for economic security. In the competition to enter those avenues, rural non-Tswana minorities lose out more frequently and more thoroughly than do those whose identification as Tswana goes unchallenged. In this atmosphere, a tension has developed between the need to join in a consolidation of security through shared identity -- even if doing so guarentees continued economic marginalization --

and the need to join the economic mainstream in order to escape marginality. The terms for joining are determined by a dominant class, which thereby defines the terms in which subordinate class competition may take place. In Botswana, as in many other national states, this has led to ethnicization as a means of coordinating and controlling class factionation.

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